



Shadow World™

SKY GIANTS of the Brass Stair™

High in the mountains, the ancient, hundred-mile Brass Stair winds its way to the heavens. At its top, a village of Giants stands amidst abandoned gold mines.

Rumors of a winged Dragon guarding the site frighten away most adventurers, but not all...

Shadow World™ is the planet Kulthea, a unique fantasy environment for use with both *Rolemaster™* and *Fantasy Hero™*. It is also adaptable to most other fantasy role playing games.



SKY GIANTS OF THE BRASS STAIR™

CREDITS

Author/ Designer: Tom Kane

Editor/Developer: John D. Ruemmler

Cover Illustration: Tony Roberts

Interior Illustration: Paul Jaquays

Layouts: Steve Sullivan

Color Maps: Ellisa Martin

Project Specific Contributions: *Series Editor:* John D. Ruemmler; *Content Editor:* Terry K. Amthor; *Page Design:* Jennifer Kleine; *Layout:* Andrew Christensen, Edward Dinwiddie; *Cover Graphics:* J. M. Ney

ICE MANAGEMENT — *Art Director/Production Manager:* Terry K. Amthor; *Sales Manager:* Deane Begiebing; *Editing & Development Manager:* Coleman Charlton; *President:* Peter Fenlon; *CEO:* Bruce Neidlinger; *Controller:* Kurt Rasmussen.

ICE STAFF — *Marketing Consultant:* John Morgan; *Print Buyer:* Bill Downs; *Production Supervisor:* Suzanne Young; *Editing & Development Staff:* Kevin Barrett, Rob Bell, Pete Fenlon, Jessica Ney, John Ruemmler, Terry Amthor; *Graphics & Production Staff:* Andrew Christensen, Edward Dinwiddie, William Hyde, Jennifer Kleine, I. Haines Sprunt, Kevin Williams; *Sales & Customer Service Staff:* John Brunkhart; *Finance Staff:* Heidi Heffner; *Shipping Staff:* John Breckenridge, Kurt Fischer, David Johnson.

Copyright © 1990 by Iron Crown Enterprises. All rights reserved. No reproduction of transmissions is permitted in any form, whether electronic, mechanical or manual, without the express permission of the Publisher.

Produced and distributed by Iron Crown Enterprises, Inc., P.O. Box 1605, Charlottesville, VA, 22902.

Phone: 804-295-4280; FAX: 804-977-4811. First U.S. Edition: 1990.

Stock #6012

ISBN 1-55806-089-8

Guidelines

An Introduction to the Shadow World

I Introduction to Narlshaw

- 1•Narlshaw's Past6
- 2•The Land and Waters7
- 3•Weather8
- 4•Botanical Lore8
- 5•Beasts9
- 6•Magic in Narlshaw10

II The People

- 1•The Nobility and Urban Life11
- 2•Language11
- 3•The Men of Alaros12
- 4•The Lot (Sky Giants)13
- 5•The Men of Tharn15
- 6•The Men of Garlon16
- 7•The Dwarves17
- 8•The Elves18
- 9•The Lugrôki18
- 10•The Fishing People of Belgor19

III Economics of Narlshaw

- 1•Commerce20
- 2•Currency Exchange Table20
- 3•Comparative Price List21

IV Politics and Power

V Arms and Armies

- 1•The Leonines of Tharn24
- 2•The Brazen Horde26
- 3•The Troops of Alaros26
- 4•The Dwarven Fyrd26
- 5•The Bolteers of Garlon26

VI The Realm

VII People of Note

VIII Cities, Strongholds and Ruins

- 1•Aka Narlta40
- 2•Onopole42
- 3•Castle Marsh47
- 4•The Brass Stair51

IX Adventures

- 1•Jealous Crowns54
- 2•Act of Crime54
- 3•Secure in Wisdom55
- 4•Forbidden Haven55
- 5•Where Crime Is55
- 6•The Half-Blood56
- 7•A Lesson in Diplomacy56

X Charts

- 1•Master NPC Charts57
- 2•Master Creature Charts59
- 3•Master Herb and Poison Charts61
- 4•Master Military Charts62
- 5•Master Encounter Chart63



• GUIDELINES •

This book is the latest addition to the *Shadow World* line, an ongoing series of guidebooks designed to detail specific sections of the planet Kulthea. Each book covers a specific area of the world, whether an island, an isolated keep, or like this one, an entire realm. This work is designed to be used in conjunction with the *Rolemaster* and *Fantasy Hero* Role Playing Systems, and all character statistics (as well as spells, combat abilities, etc.) are presented accordingly. Obviously, if a Gamemaster feels that any of the statistics and situations contained herein do not fit his or her concept of the game world as a whole, (s)he should feel free to alter them. Care must be taken to maintain the play balance established.

For more information on the campaign world, the GM should consult the *Shadow World Master Atlas*. In addition, data can be found in the rulesbooks of the *Rolemaster* system; these include previously published works *The Rolemaster Companions* (volumes 1, 2 & 3), *Character Law & Campaign Law*, and *Creatures and Treasures*. Combat abilities and rules are in ICE's *Arms Law* and *Claw Law*, and the complete magic system is in *Spell Law*.

For those GMs who wish to work the world of Kulthea into a much broader, science-fiction based framework, ICE's *Space Master* system provide coherent guidelines and is fully compatible with the *Rolemaster* rules. In the Imperial time of *Space Master*, the world of Kulthea is known as "Ceril VII", located at coordinates 35X, 20Y, 80Z. It is technically under the jurisdiction of the Inner Province of Devon (see *Imperial Crisis: House Devon In Turmoil*), but this claim is currently contested by at least one other Royal House, as well as the Imperium itself.

This work is presented in ten parts. Part I presents a detailed introduction to the Narlshaw area, its geography, flora, and fauna. Part II presents the peoples of the region. In Parts III and IV, the economics and politics of the Narlshaw receive considerable treatment. The armies are documented in Part IV, as are the cities and lands of the region in Part VI, which is keyed to the insert map. Part VII presents the major Figures of Note. In Part VIII, four important sites are laid out and discussed. Seven Adventures comprise Part IX, while Part X holds all *Rolemaster* and *Fantasy Hero* Tables of Note.

HANDLING PLAY

The Adventures presented herein are geared to characters of various classes and experience levels (suggestions are included with each Adventure). Each Adventure is divided into seven standard parts:

- 1. The Setting**, which gives a general idea of the sites included in the Adventure.
- 2. Requirements**, which lists the PC types most suitable for the Adventure, as well as any equipment or knowledge required.
- 3. Aids**, which details key items or data which the GM will be able to provide for the PCs.
- 4. The Tale**, which describes the initial plotline and events leading up to the Adventure itself.
- 5. The Task**, which presents methods of starting the Adventure, along with obstacles and encounters awaiting the Players.
- 6. The Reward**, which describes the rewards given the PCs should they succeed in the task.
- 7. Alternate Adventure**, which provides other means of running the same basic plotline.

The GM should become familiar with the land of Gethrya by reading the book before attempting to run the Adventures. Before running an Adventure, the GM should familiarize himself with the sequence of events described therein. You may wish to create some additional layouts or elaborate upon the provided material. This preparation minimizes the detail-hunting required during play and allows you to tailor the plotline to better suit your players.

DIFFICULTY MODIFIERS

Tasks in *Shadow World* modules are often described in terms of Difficulty Modifiers. Each term corresponds to a numerical modifier in *Rolemaster* or *Fantasy Hero*.

Term	RM	FH	Term	RM	FH
Routine	+30	+4	Very Hard	-20	-2
Easy	+20	+2	Extremely Hard ...	-30	-4
Light	+10	+1	Sheer Folly	-50	-6
Medium	±0	±0	Absurd	-70	-8
Hard	-10	-1			

Note: *Sky Giants* gives *Rolemaster Companion* professions for some characters, this chart provides the corresponding *ChL* professions.
A = Arms; E = Essence; C = Channeling; M = Mentalism.

RMC Prof. (Realm)	RM Prof.	RMC Prof. (Realm)	RM Prof.	RMC Prof. (Realm)	RM Prof.	RMC Prof. (Realm)	RM Prof.
Archmage (C-E-M)	Mystic	Craftsman (A)	No Prof.	Macabre (A-E-C)	Sorcerer	Sailor (A)	Rogue
Assassin (A)	Rogue	Crystal Mage (E-C)	Sorcerer	Magus (C-E)	Mystic	Scholar (A)	No Prof.
Barbarian (A)	Fighter	Dancer (A)	Warrior Monk	Montebanc (A-M)	Bard	Shaman (C)	Animist
Bashkar (A)	Fighter	Delver (A-E)	Bard	Moon Mage (A-C)	Monk	Sleuth (A-C)	Bard
Beastmaster (A-E)	Ranger	Dervish (A-C)	Monk	Necromancer (E-C)	Sorcerer	Trader (A)	Rogue
Bounty Hunter (A)	Fighter	Dream Lord (E)	Illusionist	Nightblade (A-M)	Monk	Warlock (C-M)	Astrologer
Burglar (A)	Thief	Druid (C)	Animist	Noble Warrior (A-M)	Ranger	Warrior (A)	Fighter
Cavalier (A)	Fighter	Duelist (A)	Fighter	Paladin (A-C)	Ranger	Warrior Mage (A-E)	Bard
Chaotic Lord (A-C)	Ranger	Farmer (A)	No Prof.	(The) Professional (A)	No Prof.	Witch (E-C)	Sorcerer
Conjuror (E)	Magician	Gypsy (A)	Rogue	Runemaster (E)	Alchemist		
Crafter (E or C or M)	No Prof.	High War. Monk (A)	Warrior Monk	Sage (M)	Seer		

• AN INTRODUCTION TO THE SHADOW WORLD •

A NOTE TO THE GAMEMASTER

Each *Shadow World* module is designed to be used with ICE's *Rolemaster*[™] and *Fantasy Hero*[™] Fantasy Role Playing systems. All character statistics, spells, combat abilities, etc. are provided along with guidelines for use with both systems. As always, you as GM should feel free to change certain game statistics or scenarios; however, please take care to maintain the established play balance.

KULTHEA

Kulthea is a large planet of extraordinary contrasts. With a circumference of 27,000 miles, this seventh of fifteen worlds holds relatively few large land masses compared to the vast seas which cover most of it. Numerous volcanic atolls and islands dot the rugged surface of the Shadow World, which is largely unexplored and seismically unstable. A dearth of heavy elements keeps technology at a primitive level; for example, no chemical explosives exist, other than through the direct and extremely rare use of Essence. The world holds in orbit five moons, but only one — Orhan — significantly affects tides and currents. Flora and fauna of every manner flourish, as do several races of intelligent beings isolated from one another by natural barriers, Essence Flows, and eras of distrust and superstition.

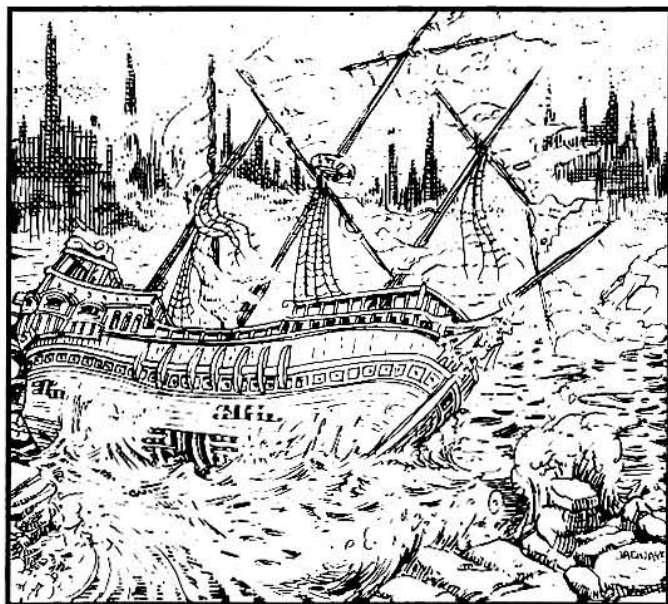
FLOWES OF ESSENCE AND THE LORDS OF ORHAN

The most fascinating aspect of Kulthea is the presence of Essence Flows, shifting and unseen energy fields akin to radiation. Essence originates in another universe where the laws of physics differ from those which we study and employ. Like a gateway, Kulthea rests upon the threshold of that other universe and is thus affected by the Flows passing to and from that other plane. In all other ways, the Shadow World of Kulthea is firmly anchored in the dimensions of time and space which we all recognize.

Some powerful beings have learned to tap the flows and to channel the Essence for both good and evil purposes. A precious few draw power from within; the most powerful of all deities are the Lords of Orhan, immortals (from Kulthea's largest moon) who predate the First Era. Rarely intervening in the affairs of the Shadow World, Orhanians are immune to the vagaries of Essence Flows and can transport themselves instantly between their home-moon and Kulthea. The virtually mythical Lords of Orhan are unparalleled in powers and often appear as extraordinarily beautiful humanoids, or alternately stand 15' high, a form more easily recognized as impressive.

Invisible and almost undetectable, Essence Flows shift haphazardly and can form temporary but genuine barriers (which can also be erected by skilled Essence-users of the highest degree). The ordinary player would rarely recognize an Essence Flow and would most likely be baffled and frustrated by it, without the costly guidance of a Navigator. No shield or spellcasting mastery can completely overcome or defy the Essence, which is the basis of all living things.

Even more terrifying are Essence Storms, a radical flux in energy that can drain or quadruple power points in an instant. Triggered by a solar flare or a conjunction of moons, Flow-storms are accompanied by high winds, lightning, and other unusual and destructive weather patterns. When caught in a flow-storm, the best advice is to take cover and to offer prayers to the highest deity.



A more reassuring aspect of the Essence (if you are a Navigator) is its tendency to form foci, permanent and temporary. Such a concentration of pure Essence occurs upon Nexus, home-isle of the Navigators. One of a handful of key Foci on the planet, Nexus serves as a gathering place for power and as a "springboard" for the Navigator's transport. In addition, hundreds of Greater and Lesser Foci exist, often rooted to a location or an object (an ancient tree, for example). Foci might boost power points or even distort or increase the intrinsic power of spells cast in proximity to the foci. A few skilled users can control and even tap some Essence Flows.

GM NOTE: the function of Essence Foci is an important part of *Shadow World*. Greater Foci have an effective radius of 1 to 100', while Lesser Foci exist as waves or mutable clouds. Here are some options regarding Foci:

1. Foci may be seen as a shimmering, more severe at its center.
2. Foci may be felt as a tingling on the skin.
3. Foci may be smelled as a unique, ozone-like odor.
4. Foci may be heard as a high-pitched whine or a barely discernible thrumming.

THE LORDS OF ESSENCE AND THE THREE ERAS

(A WHIRLWIND HISTORY OF KULTHEA)

Imbued with extraordinary powers by a freak flare of Essence, the immortal Lords ruled over the lands and waters of Kulthea for thousands of years until two camps formed. A titanic struggle ensued, tearing the world apart. Races were buried by rock and flooded by mountainous tidal waves; lands sank, and islands emerged. The wicked Empress Kadaena was slain, her head severed. This upheaval ended the First Era, and with it faded the power and presence of the Lords of Orhan.

The Second Era saw the healing of the land and the reawakening of the few races of beings who survived the cataclysms. Erratic Essence Flows tortured the world for 100,000 years, if certain Loremasters are to be believed. Perhaps descendants of the Lords, Loremasters appeared to guide and to speed the healing of Kulthea in the Second Era. Able to tap Essence Flows at will, the remote and power-shy Loremasters tutored Elves and Men in their recovery over the course of several centuries, then all but disappeared into the mists of myth.

THE UNLIFE

The coming of the Unlife, a vast power which feeds upon destruction, brought to light (and to darkness!) cults and orders dedicated to evil; Great Demons were fashioned by the most powerful of the Lords who had fallen under the influence of the Unlife, led by the Empress Kadeana. Wise but twisted in spirit, the servants of the Shadow offered knowledge beyond that which the Loremasters deigned to give such "lesser beings," and the power of the Unlife grew unfettered in the Second Era.

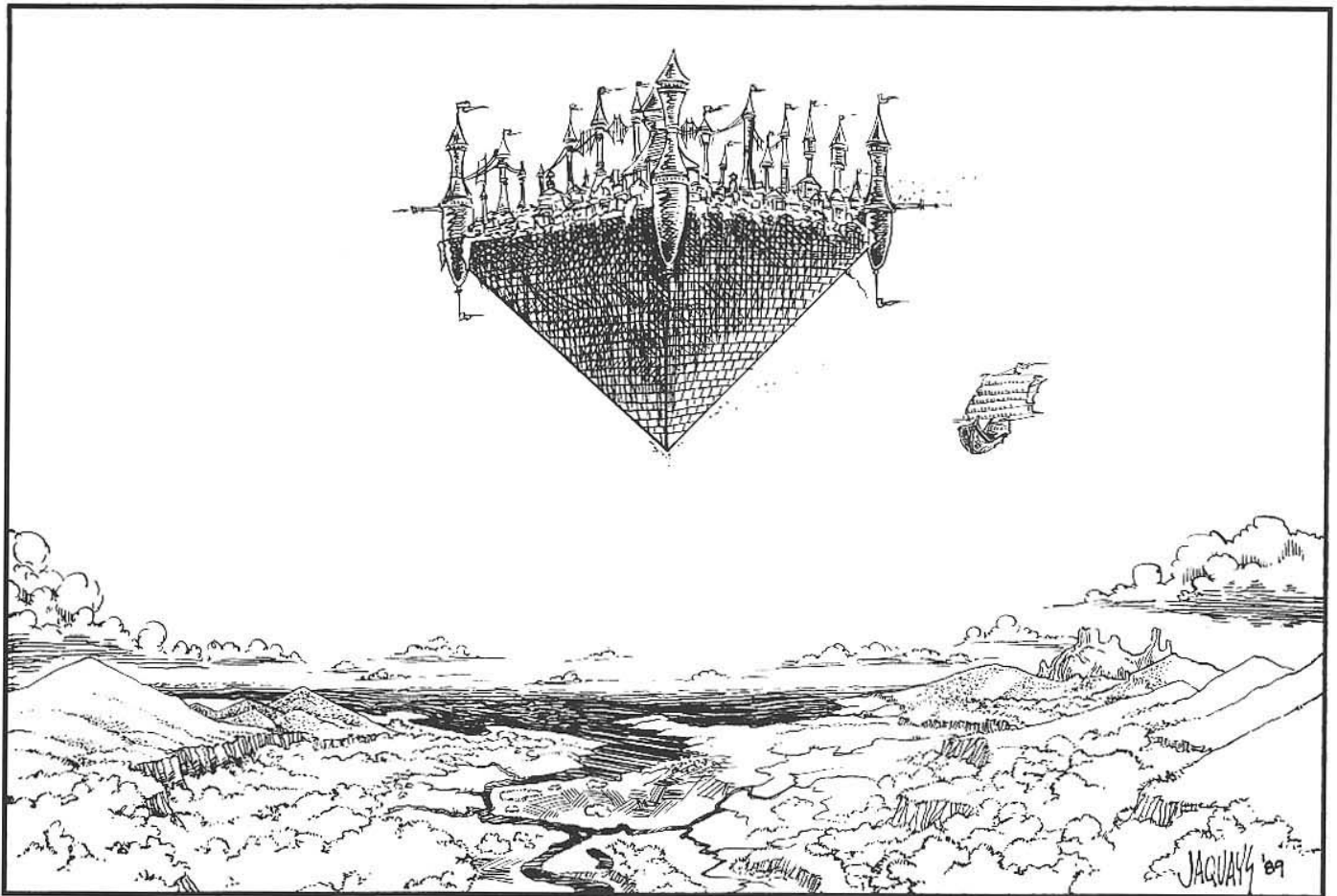
The 300-year-long Wars of Dominion concluded the Second Era. Weary Loremasters at last overcame the forces of the Unlife. At great cost in blood and power, the world was once again at rest, however uneasily, at the dawning of the Third Era.

NOW

It is the year 6,050 TE (in *Space Master*, Imp 475). The mighty and righteous Lords of Orhan remain aloof from the affairs of Men and Elves; dark cults have arisen, and black religions flourish and multiply with impunity. Right-thinking Loremasters are rarely seen and offer only words of advice, never the promise of power or weaponry. This is the Third Era, the Time of the Shadow.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK IN SHADOW WORLD

Set in northeastern Jaiman, *Sky Giants* takes place in Wuliris, bordering the realm of the Dragonlord Sulton Ni 'Shaang. The icy heart of the continent can be reached by crossing the Grey Mountains or by sailing the Baren Waters up the Bay of Urulan (see insert map). Two Navigator Obelisks stand ready to transport adventurers with money to and from anywhere on Kulthea (see map).



PART I

• INTRODUCTION TO NARLSHAW •

This section of the book presents a brief history of the troubled and isolated region of Jaiman known to its current Mannish inhabitants as Narlshaw, a rugged territory located in the icy northern heart of Wuliris, a remote territory ruled by the rapacious Dragonlord Sulton Ni'shaang. Unusual plants and animals are discussed, and the harsh climate is noted in some detail. Vital information about magic use in this part of Jaiman concludes this section.

From the Book of Dark Tales...

The Winds of Fate blew Death.

Kadaen awoke;

The earth obeyed her,

Bowing in frigid obsequies.

Who stood, Who fell,

Not one is left to tell...

Andraax
(SE 1784)

1•NARLSHAW'S PAST

The First and Second Eras Of Ire passed in relative quiet and calm in the fjords and rocky inlets of Narlshaw. Elves studied under wandering Loremasters and taught their learned ways to the sparse tribes of Men. Gradually, Elves built small but elegant villages along the coast and south, along the Bay of Urulan. As Men multiplied, their leaders founded farming villages and larger communities, where the Fair Folk helped them freely. In gratitude, Mannish tribes grew food for the Elves and celebrated their brilliance in song and story.

Further inland, a Dwarven King hollowed vast underground strongholds high in the Lotshaw and Garlon Mountains. Mines within the mountains poured forth a fortune in gold, silver, and especially, copper and zinc, which the Dwarves worked into brass. The Dwarves' central citadel in Narlshaw lay beneath Shaw Kuran, a snow-cast peak of obsidian, iron and other ores. One entered Shaw Kuran through a vast gate built at its summit. To reach this portal, guests climbed a stupendous staircase of brass, a monumental pathway which switchbacked one hundred miles up the rugged cliffsides. Built by the superstitious Dwarves as a symbol of thanks to the bountiful earth, the Brass Stair became this land's most renowned route, leading tortuously to the Dwarven stronghold (and invaluable mines) standing at its summit. (For more about the engineering marvel known as the Brass Stair, see Part VIII and the adventure in Part IX.) Elves and Loremasters from across Kulthea occasionally met atop the Stair, far from the bustle of the settled lands to the west, riding on tailored Flows Of Essence.

Throughout the windswept plateaus and snow-capped peaks of Narlshaw, the Unlife remained dormant for much of two Eras. Then, through an emissary disguised as a shepherd, Tethior the Smith warned the folk of Narlshaw to prepare for the worst when the Wars of Dominion began, in SE 6450. Although Evil had not yet touched this realm, the Elves of Wuliris tirelessly moved warriors across the Grey Mountains and over the seas, via the Bay of Urulan. Men and Dwarves joined them, often leaving their own homes without protection and their families without guarantee of survival.

In the year 6600 of the Second Era, servants of the Unlife infiltrated Narlshaw. Some arctic Men fell to its power and worshipped the Unlife, subverting the wisdom and knowledge given them by the Elves and creating the grotesque Tower Of The New Moon high in the Lotshaw Mountains. Corrupted Men guided Fell Beasts from Jamiil Targ (in the western wastes of Zor) to their lands and helped the Dragonlord sack the Dwarves' mountaintop realm atop the Brass Stair. Eventually, the Loremasters, Elves and Men who fought beside the Dwarves triumphed, but one third of their peoples lay slain. In the very next year, the corpse-plagues began. The Dwarven stronghold at the summit of the Brass Stair was abandoned, their gold mine forgotten. A wandering race of Giants known as the Lot took up residence in the Dwarves' neglected halls, pleased to find shelter from the elements.



Men suffered the worst — yet they also reproduced fast enough to recover, and since Dwarves and Elves could not, humanity crowded them out. Villages and even a small city or two flourished in the Garlon Mountains, where Men blissfully forgot both Elves and the Unlife. They worshipped Iloura, the gentle goddess who brought fruit and plentiful wild game. Every male householder lived as a hunter-warrior, although all respected the fathers of their clans and the High King of Narlshaw, who was born to rule them all. Bandits squabbled over the meager wealth of the villages; other men tended pastures and meadows which Elves had once owned. When it became obvious that the Elves would never return to their old role as benevolent rulers, petty warlords saw nothing to restrain them, and they plagued the region like hungry wolves.

Men who learned most from Elvenkind yearned to restore order and to ensure peace and calm. In the year 5000 of the Third Era, Lord Ordaax of the capital city of Aka Narlta declared himself King of Narlshaw. His people, the Men of Tharn, recalled and practiced the smithcraft, a discipline that most of their race had lost. Over the next fifty years, the legions of Ordaax conquered the flatlands of Tharn, besieging first one petty noble, then another. After that, merchant-lords south of the Bald Mountains formed a League to save themselves. Ordaax's son Mokor the Motiveless, known for his caution, decreed the conquest over. He claimed that his father had built his empire to end anarchy, not to capture land. The fact that his enemies could unite and form a League was as much a triumph as if he had annexed them.

In TE 5500, gold sails appeared in the Barren Waters, off the coast of Wuliris. Circumspect Navigators guided longships of a strange race of High Men to the seaside towns and cities. These guests came to stay, bringing as gifts sacks of gold, a fleet of ships and books of high knowledge. League cities welcomed them, allowing their philosopher-king to establish his capital at the port of Alaros. The newcomers established shipping routes up and down the coastline and south to Urulan, causing an explosion of seafaring everywhere. High Men revived arts which none had practiced since the Elves faded. The New Men of Alaros brought magic, shipping, trade routes, new crops, and the art of forging Eog. It seemed that the old days were returning, with High Men, like the Elves, guiding the people toward a renewed and great civilization. Events proved less idyllic. Although the High Men would not explain their presence or their past, historians guessed that the Unlife had appeared again in their land.

The native Imperial Family of Tharn hated Alaros. Before the High Men, only the Empire retained Elven lore. Only its tutors taught the scientific manipulation of Essence, and only its forges worked steel. Furthermore, the New Men of Alaros stimulated prodigious seagoing trade, and Tharn owned no large ports. First, the Emperors of Tharn tried to learn from the newcomers. The Empire officially welcomed the Men of Alaros and proposed diplomatic marriages between the Imperial family and prominent Alarons. The Ice-Winter of 6039-40 caused great suffering, and the New Men seemed to suffer the fierce cold and frigid temperatures as if they were born to such a climate.

Twenty years ago, in TE 6030, the enmity between the native rulers of Narlshaw and the New Men began to accelerate. First, soldiers of Tharn seized the harbor of Balth. The High Men of Alaros slowly recognized Tharn as an enemy and began preparing to defend themselves. Meanwhile, the Dwarves of the Bald Mountains threw off Mannish rule and crowned a Dwarven King, a development which can only injure Tharn, since the Tyrant of the nearby city of Onopole paid tribute to the Tharn Empire. The Empire has threatened to invade the Bald Mountains, and the forces of Alaros promised to defend them. Those Elves who remained in Narlshaw have retired into the wilderness, to avoid the coming storm.



NARLSHAW'S PRESENT

The Wars Of Dominion tore Narlshaw from the world. Indeed, the very name "Narlshaw" means "Every Land" in its peoples' tongue, for isolated as they are, they know no other world. Seas, mountains and impenetrable Flows Of Essence divide this realm from the rest of Jaiman; the Dragonlord's Skyriders patrol the region, pleased by the dissent and animosity that plague the remote highlands. With the Elves largely slain and the Loremasters quiet, Men have formed considerable fiefdoms of their own. Now, the leaders of these fiefs recklessly flirt with a second great war of their own making. Rumors of a dragon flying through the night sky and numerous reports of Cloudlords have spooked and worried a tense and divided populace.

2 • THE LANDS AND WATERS

The Bald, Lotshaw and Garlon Mountains compose the rocky spine of Narlshaw. Their foothills pock most of the lowlands. The region's largest flat region is Tharn plain, nestled between the two mountain ranges of the North. Mountain streams feed two great rivers, the Goldflow and the Kingsriver, which runs southwest to the ocean. The rough terrain continues to the sea, where black cliffs rise above the pounding, rock-studded surf.

Scores of rocky islands lie off Narlshaw's coast. The Isle of Belgor shelters Tharn and Alaros from the sea's storms, receiving them on its eastward coast, which has narrow fjords offering refuge for beleaguered ships. The south suffers more damage, especially during the autumn hurricane season. Inland, barges and galleys travel the Kingsriver and Goldflow, while smaller boats venture into their tributaries. Finger lakes dot the mountains and several broad valleys flood regularly, where the gorges are surrounded by steep cliffs.

3 • WEATHER

Considering its location, Narlshaw experiences relatively temperate weather, with long, cold winters typical of a sub-arctic climate. The mountains divert rain from Tharn's plain, but the flat ground and fertile soil help to make farms productive nonetheless.

TEMPERATURE AND PRECIPITATION CHART				
Month	Coast	Tharn Plain	S. Inland	Mtns.
Narlnew (spring)	35-50' Very Heavy	30-45' Heavy	40-55' Very Heavy	15-30' Very Heavy
Thera (summer)	50-65' Moderate	45-55' Dry	55-70' Moderate	35-55' Moderate
Omnon (Autumn)	35-55' Heavy	30-45' Moderate	35-50' Moderate	30-50' Heavy
Chithe (late fall)	30-45' Moderate	25-40' Dry	35-50' Moderate	10-25' Moderate
Chikaga (winter)	10-35' Moderate	-10 to 20' Dry	-30 to 20' Dry	-40 to 5 Moderate

Precipitation Codes: Very Dry = less than two inches; Dry = two to four inches; Moderate = four to six inches; Heavy = eight to ten inches; Very Heavy = over ten inches. The inches refer to inches of rainfall in that area over the period of the seventy day month.

Precipitation Types: On any given day that the temperature is below 30-35°, the precipitation will be snow, snow depth being ten inches = one inch of rainfall. Also, possibilities of sleet and hail, the latter more likely in the coastal and lowland areas. The coast is also prone to mists and fogs, especially during the spring and fall. Precipitation above 8,000' is usually snow.

4 • BOTANICAL LORE

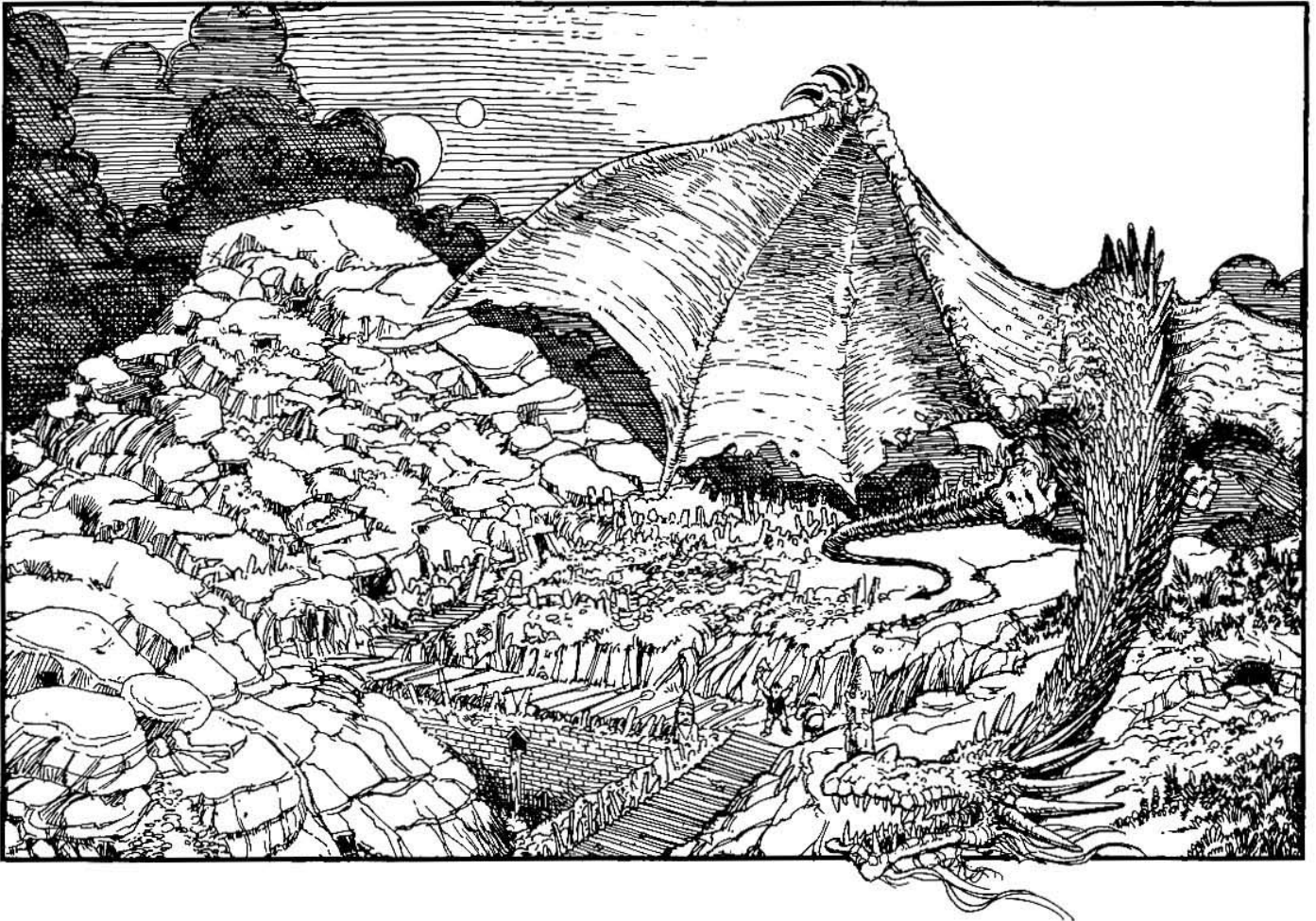
The moors of Alaros and flatlands of Tharn contain broad heaths, but forests spring up everywhere in Narlshaw. Evergreens dominate the upper slopes of the many mountains. Only alpine grasses grow on the peaks. The hardy folk of this region cultivate the countryside, growing wheat, millet, oats and vegetables; they tend fruit orchards and wide, dreary fields of chate (see below). Most Men remain ignorant about herbs. Only the Elves and certain wisewomen of Garlon understand what medicines, chemicals and poisons the fields freely offer.

CHATE

When the High Men now called the Alarons came over the sea, they brought no gift more precious than chate. Its stringy rootlets are nutritious, filling and, when seasoned, tasty. Cooks serve it boiled, in tangled masses like pasta. It tastes mildly savory but can be fibrous when undercooked. Chate shrubs require almost no care; a solitary farmer can manage acres of it. However, occasional blights devastate this tuber, withering the crops of whole fiefdoms. Chate Blight spreads through contaminated dirt. The dust on a traveller's shoes can carry it, which makes refugees from chate famines unwelcome in lands untouched by the blight.

FOAM-FLOWER

Scarlet lichen blossoms in the foam of Narlshaw's waterfalls, sustained by the pounding of aerated water. Elves especially cherish this plant. They crush Foam-Flower into a chew which enhances one's awareness, allowing the user to hear and see twice as well as usual (+40 to all Perception involving sight and/or sound for 2-10 hours) [Aid = +2 to all Perception rolls.].



NUBER

This oily black herb pokes up from rich dark ground, looking like short, thick grass. Nuber contains a poison. Despite popular legends, victims seldom die. Nuber-venom must be dissolved in grain alcohol and distilled before it can kill. The venom does cause terrible cramps though, and its juice sears wounds, preventing healing. (If distilled: 10th level, Extreme conversion poison and healing rate is 10% of normal for 10-100 days. If not distilled: 5th level, Moderate conversion poison and healing rate is 50% of normal for 1-10 days.) [If distilled, 5d6 Body destruction, 3d6 Recovery destruction. If not distilled, 5d6 Stun destruction, 3d6 Recovery destruction.]

5•BEASTS

Deer, wild pigs, bear and many small animals flourish in Narlshaw. The hills are also home to herds of torkaan (large wooly sheep-like beasts) and many species of goat and sheep, which readily adapt to life in the icy crags and treacherous peaks. People hunt avidly, especially in the Garlon Mountains, where the Brass Stair climbs. Country-dwellers revere wolves and wildcats, out of a superstition that their spirits protect the homes of Mannish friends. Civilized herdsmen poison predators with nuber, to keep them from eating farm animals.

GIANT CLAM

These enormous mollusks grow to be three feet long and thrive in heavy surf. They eat plankton carried by waves and thrive where the foam is wildest. Fishermen pry them off rocks and boil them. This action requires some bravery; although Giant Clams seldom injure people, powerful waves sweep their habitats whenever the tide comes in. The clams can also snap their shells shut on a hand and then hang onto the crushed fingers until forced open.

GRYPHON

More than just a few of these eagle-like beasts with the haunches of lions soar over western Garlon. Countless tales mention heroes who tame and ride gryphons. Yet few Gryphon-riders exist, because these ferocious beasts take joy in tearing people apart. Mannish Clans who live near their territory call gryphons "Sky-demons" and hate as well as fear the terrible beasts. To train a Gryphon, one must raise it from infancy. still, it lusts for the scent and taste of human blood.

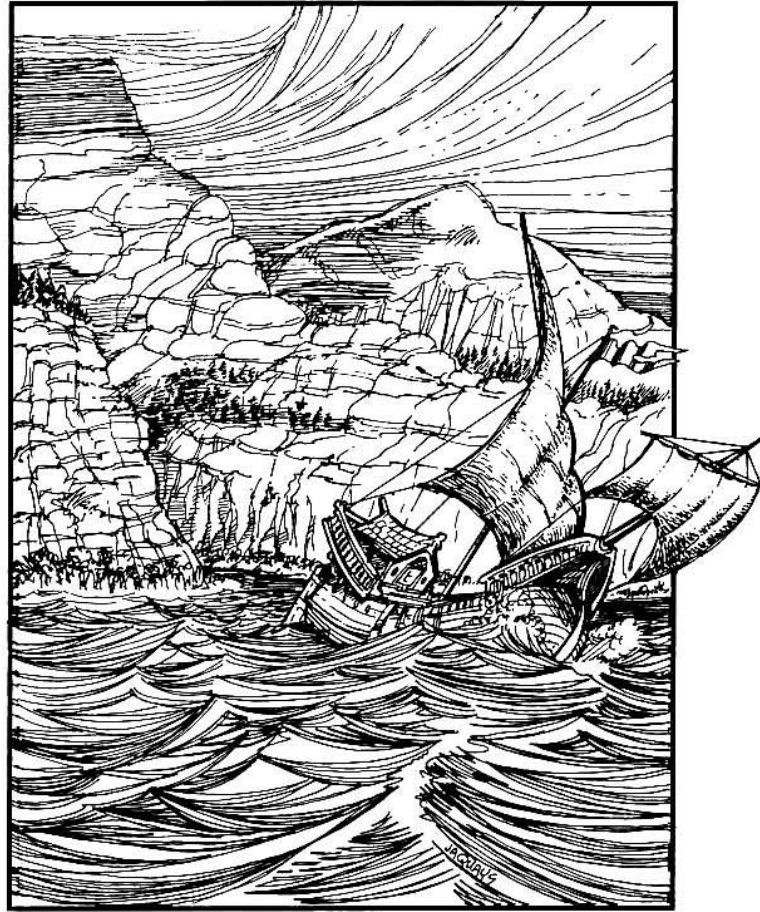
HILL-BEARS

These fat brown bears are much more cunning than others of their kind. They like meat and stalk prey mercilessly. Men are considered a delicacy.

SILK SEAL

Intelligent and monogamous, these slender seals leap like dolphins in Narlshaw's northern seas (the so-called Barren Waters or Hulkanen Arus). Their glistening black fur is smoother than silk, and traders consider them equally valuable. However, few hunters dare to trap seals, which have powers few people fully comprehend. When the sea is still, one can hear them chanting, grumbling deep in their throats, making the rocks vibrate. They may seem endearing, with their liquid-brown eyes and puppy-like games, but seals can kill with the cold fury of the sea. Many believe that the slick sea-animals can stir up storms, summon carnivorous fish and strike sailors with curses of ill luck. (In fact, they can do all three.)

Animists among the Fishing People of Belgor worship mother seals as totems. In return, they gain a semblance of power over nature. Scholars in Alaros debate as to whether their prayers reach the seals themselves, or whether Iloura rewards their piety. Only the seals themselves know, and they are not telling.



SLAG-RATS

These gruesome rodents grow to be four feet long, counting tails, and are infamous for spreading plague. Their black fur fades to gray or tan in sunlight. Slag-rats inhabit most of the Bald Mountains. They often make nests among mining debris. Although these omnivorous animals are too small to hunt Men or Dwarves, they happily devour helpless people, like miners trapped by cave-ins.

SPOTTED LIONS

Spotted lions slink along the upper branches of trees, poised to spring on prey. These majestic beasts often reach mature weights of 500 pounds or more and enjoy a meal of Man.

TANGIA

On moonlit nights, high mountain crags echo with Tangia bellows. These ebon goats are the size of oxen but are able to vault deftly from rock to rock. Tangia females grow fiercely jealous and territorial when in heat and must be avoided at that critical time in the Spring. When an ewe finds a mate, she stops sounding her normal cries. Instead, she patrols a territory, hiding behind stones. If she sees an intruder, she slips up behind and attacks.

Rutting Tangia secrete a musk from the flesh around their horns. Perfumers make exquisite scents from it, which supposedly act as aphrodisiacs. Therefore, some woodsmen hunt mated Tangia. Musk putrefies instantly on a dead Tangia, which means that hunters must capture the enraged ewes alive.

DOMESTICATED CREATURES

The peoples of Narlshaw tame a variety of beasts. Lowlanders raise cattle for meat and milk. Mountain-dwellers scorn such bovine animals, preferring hardy breeds of torkaan, goat and mountain-sheep which require little care or fodder. Although noble warriors like to ride into battle, Narlshaw's horses are poorly bred and often ill-treated. Dogs, cats and other pets are common throughout the region. Sky Giants sometimes live with Hill-Bears, although their relationship resembles a working partnership more than an example of domestication.

BURDER

These broad-shouldered oxen can pull loads of up to one ton. They resist their masters but can learn amazingly complex tasks if coerced. Most people hate Burders, whose bloodshot eyes and deformed horns give them a diabolical appearance. Tales tell of Burders that slew their masters by cunning deceipts, then ran away to serve ghosts or N'eng. Most lords of Alaros forbid citizens to keep Burders.

HILL-PONIES

Horses founder in the mountains of Narlshaw, but these jolly little animals thrive. Men of the Garlon Mountains and foothills raise the best ponies. Dwarves cherish Garlon's ponies because they can learn to work underground. Hill-Ponies are stubborn and fierce but usually attach themselves to a favorite master. Many owners claim that their favorite ponies saved their lives by trampling snakes or kicking wolves.



REDHAWK

Men treasure tame hawks, although more for prestige and superstition than for hunting. The most precious birds have crimson heads; less valuable hawks are a uniform coppery brown. Superstition holds that a Redhawk will only obey a master who is pure of heart and behaves kindly to strangers. Indeed, the birds do turn on brash handlers. They can smell the difference between males and females and are vigilantly protective of the latter, tearing at any man who approaches a woman in a threatening fashion. Therefore, some wives keep Redhawks to prove their fidelity.

MONTEX

These sheep-like animals have crooked legs and bulbous, bony foreheads instead of horns. People raise them for milk, meat and their long, curling wool. Tame Montex meander as if stupefied. Wild breeds seem more canny.

SAILOR'S PUPS

The men of Alaros raise these white dogs on shipboard. Sailor's Pups frolic like seals in water and can swim for hours. Alarons have trained many of them to rescue drowning men. Sailor's Pups also make trustworthy guard-dogs, since they seldom sound their piercing bark except when actually alarmed.

6 • MAGIC IN NARLSHAW

Earthshaking magic exists in Narlshaw, but few know how to master it, because the Second Era Wars Of Dominion largely exterminated Elven wizards and their pupils. Since then, magicians have known only a few fragments of Spell Lists. However, a few teachers disseminate their memories by word of mouth. Occasionally, fortunate researchers, surviving Elves or explorers of ruins reveal new spell formulas, yet some inept wizards forget them again after a few generations.

As revealed before, the Lords Of Orhan have granted miracles to their fervent followers, but few have the time or faith to become true Channelers. Narlshaw is home to a few of those who tap the power of the mind. Still, Mentalism is largely a private talent, available only to the gifted. All three Realms of Magic suffer from a lack of coherent knowledge. City-bound wizards have compiled small libraries of magical findings. However, rural witches and hermits often understand more about Power than any bookish scholar.

Mannish spell-users of Essence cannot learn either Spell Lists or higher-level spells from the Lists they already know without risking intervention and punishment by the Dragonlord Sul-ton Ni'shaang, a being of fearsome powers. Beginning Magicians, Illusionists, Alchemists, Sorcerers and Mystics can determine their Magic Skills normally. In order to let players design the characters they want to play, assume that their teachers knew whatever Spell Lists the PCs want to start with. Of course, the GM may always rule that a certain list is unavailable. After play begins, every new spell ought to come from a definite source based in the region. GMs may give the PCs magic lore when they choose but should remember that knowledge is scarce in Narlshaw. The quest for a new Spell or Spell List might make an interesting adventure, particularly if the Dragonlord becomes interested in the search.

Channeling and Mentalism spell-users are rare, but those who exist can gain and use their talents normally.

Elves can learn any Essence spell in Narlshaw.

PART II

• THE PEOPLE •

For the most part, the Men of Narlshaw live in the regions of Garlon, Alaros and Tharn. All of these peoples (but for the Alarons) descended from tribes of Common Men called the Narlbray, a dark folk with sallow skin and black hair. In general, the Men of Tharn and other northern regions are taller than those of the Garlon Mountians, but height varies widely everywhere. Of course, Alarons have different genetic roots. Their people originally had red hair and eyes of green or blue, but they have since intermarried freely with Narlbray natives.

The original Narlbray folk lived as wandering hunters. Powerful families led the tribes, and others served them, out of respect and in return for shares of the kill. In times remembered only by legend, the Elves brought civilization to Men. They taught the Narlbray to farm, forge iron, build communities and to read and write. Most tribal customs survived this transition. Farmers welcomed others onto their property, like tribal lords accepting lesser hunters. Landowners grew into lords who permitted others to farm their land in return for shares of the harvest.

1 • THE NOBILITY AND URBAN LIFE

Today, landed families have formed a hereditary nobility. The greatest lords rule the land while lesser clans fight for their liege-lords. The rest of society serves as serfs, men and women who depend on landlords for ground to cultivate and homes to live in. In general, tenant farmers respect nobles and serve them loyally. In return, landlords care for their tenants, although no legal power forces them to do so. Only craftsmen live outside this system. Smiths, wizards and merchants are not bound to farmland, and can move wherever their work pays the most. Some serve nobles as trusted retainers while others own shops in the many villages and the few cities of the region.

Five hundred years ago, the Alaron High Men came from the sea. They built ships, ports, roads and cities. The Narlbray grew remarkably more advanced, particularly in Tharn and Alaros, but as different peoples met each other, customs clashed. Worshipers of rival gods often entertain bypassers with roadside duels. Some fight in earnest. Others stage sham battles to attract donations from pious admirers. On a larger scale, contending lords soon found themselves in direct competition. Merchants bid against each other in markets; partisans faced one another in forums.

Urban life also dilutes the power of land-owning lords because the burghers of a city live outside their system. Nobody can classify townsmen as serfs or lords. They own little property but, unlike serfs, control their own affairs. This sort of exception tempts rebellious peasants to flee to the cities. It also forces lords to bargain with City Councils, who value prosperity far more than glory or tradition.

The Men of Alaros also brought new crops which made farming far easier. This gave farm-owners more leisure time and greater wealth to spend in the cities, but it rendered vast numbers of peasants unnecessary. One serf can tend acres of chate. Several hundred peasants live on most estates; superfluous ones merely tax a liegelord's charity.

Most landowners treasure their peasantry. They need farmers because chate can vanish in blights, and nobody wants to subsist on meal-roots. Still, a few barons find they cannot support all their peasants. They often let their old tenants stay but refuse to harbor their children. Dispossessed serfs trickle into cities, seeking work. Some become pickpockets, bandits or heroes instead.

2 • LANGUAGE

The people of Narlshaw share a common language, called Theros, which employs a free-form grammar, forming phrases and sentences by running shorter words together. This construction leads to a rolling speech with many distinct syllables. Words gain subtle meanings by being used in longer ideas. The name of a rock, for instance, might come to imply a town where people quarry for it, and ultimately be incorporated into names, proverbs and legal decrees there. This creates different dialects in different parts of Narlshaw. People in Tharn speak the same tongue as those in Garlon. However, noteworthy things in Tharn tend to have short, harsh names. Garlon bases its speech on longer, softer sounds. Speakers native to lands sound completely different to strangers, but they understand each other.

Some say that Theros contains deeper meanings. Wizards pursue word-roots beyond their common interpretation, searching for the First Words, which may function as incantations. They believe that the ancients lived in utter harmony with the Essence and developed speech to command it. Later, people began speaking to each other. They abbreviated the old names to make them convenient for communications and discarded magic for tools. Wizards search for backwards communities, where people still know the old dialects. They send apprentices to comb remote hills and forests for these people. Perhaps the wildest Lot (Sky Giants) remember scraps of these things.

The High Men of Alaros speak Theros too. They once used another language, called Mera, but allowed it to wither in the new land. Mera condenses sentences and ideas into abbreviations and omissions. A few scribes still use it for fitting large volumes of information on scrolls or for recording speech quickly.

3 • THE MEN OF ALAROS

Racial Origins: The Alarons came from over the sea five centuries ago. They appear to be High Men of the fair strain which intermingled with Arctic races.

Favored Ecosystem: Alarons have built their communities along rivers, or by sheltered coves near the sea.

Political Structure: Alaron cities rule themselves through democratic public assemblies called Referenda. These assemblies elect a Lord to manage accounts, command armies and execute the decrees of the Referenda. He also polices the forums. The Lord guarantees honest balloting and shelters unpopular men from mob justice.

No Alaron wishes to live under an ambitious Lord. The voters traditionally choose their ruler from the students at High Grove, a seaside enclave of philosophers. A Lord seldom desires the position. People dedicate themselves to the Grove out of love for solitude and logic, not power. Those who become Lords govern diligently, but they view their office as a duty, not a reward.

After the Alarons arrived in Narlshaw, many of them married into the local nobility. Their children now rule manors in the hinterlands as "Sons Of Alaros," who remember their roots as High Men but own fiefs (as do Narlbray lords). Most revere the Lord; however, if a community decided to revolt, he could not stop them.

Social Structure: Alarons live in loyal extended families.

Settlement Pattern: Most Alarons prefer to live in large villages or small cities, near forums and theatres. The Sons Of Alaros have abandoned cities to claim farmland and rule it.

Military Structure: Every able-bodied man in the cities belongs to the militia. These bands train during annual festivals, amidst uncharacteristic confusion and drunkenness. They keep their weapons in central storehouses. Some Alarons practice with and use arms avidly and sell their services as caravan guards. Other warriors volunteer to join the Lord's personal army, mostly for the honor. The Lord pays them five silver pieces per month out of funds raised by the Referenda.

Sons of Alaros maintain household warriors, as do lords of Narlshaw. They swear to fight for their Lord if he summons them and will do so without question.

Currency: As a trading people, the Alarons need a stable currency with coins of many different values. The Lord mints "surfs," or coins, of iron, tin, copper, bronze, silver and gold. His smiths employ a secret system of molds to produce a three-dimensional

ocean-wave pattern that frustrates counterfeiters. They pride themselves on coins with smooth edges, to discourage thieves from clipping off rough spots and collecting them for the precious metal.

Language: Most people know Mera, the original Alaron language but use Theros in daily life.

Appearance: A pure Alaron would have lily-white skin and red hair. After centuries of interbreeding with Narlbray, most have less striking coloration. However, a few children are born "Untouched," with flaming hair and bright green eyes. The Alarons view this as a portent. In popular tradition, an "Untouched" child must grow up a hero, but his heroism only hastens his death, and the doom of the Alaron people. Talin, current Lord Of Alaros, is Untouched.

Housing: Alarons live in stone mansions which house several families. Most Sons Of Alaros live in wooden fortalices. Those who can afford them built marble towers.

Diet: Alarons love chate. Their cooks bake mealroot into delicious loaves and roasts, unlike most people of the Narlshaw, who simply

boil chate and consequently consider it unappetizing. Men of Alaros also eat seafood, grains and exotic spices from abroad.

Worship: The Alarons follow Jaysek. They worship by meditating on the prophecies concerning their people and refining their philosophy of martyrdom, earthly power and possible racial "doom".

"Consider the sporting athlete who runs against cheats. Consider the honest man who offers shelter to a thief. Then consider the gentle king, bound by justice and courtly compromise, who meets a foe who knows no law but that of his own, unfettered force! What shall he do but fall from Grace?"

From "The Book Of Black Prophecies," an Alaron tome



Prophets, who held that good exists only to perish to evil after opposing it. A virtuous person does well to worship Reann, god of the night, for only darkness lies ahead.

The Alarons themselves know little about their origins. Sages teach that they fled an Empire which destroyed itself, corrupted by a force called Unlife. The first Alarons quixotically believed that they could exclude Unlife from Narlshaw and make it a paradise on Kulthea. However, this country has its own scourges: poverty, ignorance, injustice and war.

To the Alarons, the forsaken city of the Dwarves symbolizes Narlshaw's plight. This deserted castle contains a brazen pathway spiraling up a mountainside. Alaron thinkers call it the Brass Stair, at once both the Way Up and the Path Down. There, a common and violent people will climb to glory. There, Alaros must descend to its ruin. There, a fearsome race of Giants will stand and fall.

Yet for a moment, Alaros lives. While it survives, it hopes to spread its blessings and its visions. Alarons passionately help the unfortunate. They consider the politically unfortunate equally worthy of assistance. "How can we call ourselves free," they ask, "while others linger enslaved?" Alaron lords preach democracy and free trade, sometimes by force.

Some Alarons live far inland, among the Narlbray. These so-called Sons Of Alaros exist halfway between their own culture and that of the Narlbray. Most of them come from poor families and left to find respectability. Some came to rule estates. Others wander, selling their services as warriors. City Alarons consider them boors, who gave up art and etiquette to live among rougher peoples. The expatriates respond that only they had enough courage to leave their homes for new opportunities. They satisfy their honor by maintaining the Order of The Sons Of Alaros, a military society which pledges itself to enlightening the Narlbray, freeing the oppressed and serving their Lord.

4 • THE LOT (SKY GIANTS)

Racial Origins: The Lot originated in the Lotshaw Mountains from Giants native to the region.

Favored Ecosystem: Mountains.

Political Structure: The Lot organize their society around self-appointed leaders. A strong Giant usually establishes a village in a sheltered ravine and allows other families to live there in return for help on his raids. The Giant who builds a village rules it as chief. He tends to be the most powerful Lot in the region, with the largest treasure-ward and best sense for hunting. Citizens usually obey him loyally for these traits. They help him suppress rivals, knowing that the chief usually wins petty fights and can punish anyone who supported the other side. Still, if some warrior grows strong enough, nothing stops him from seizing the chiefdom.

Social Structure: Lot live in informal families. They seldom trace their ancestry beyond father and mother. Sometimes even this cannot be determined, since both males and females may take several spouses. No Lot considers this immoral, but polygamy often leads to murderous rivalries.

Settlement Pattern: See Political Structure above.

Military Structure: All Lot live in raiding tribes. Their Lord Bull can also muster them together, in a ritual described below.

Currency: Lot exchange valuables through barter, usually tinged with force. A strong Giant can trade his goods for much more than a "weak" one.

Language: Lot speak Theros clumsily and their own language, Kad, fluently. Kad is guttural and unintelligible to those of another race.

Appearance: Lot look similar to Narlbray Men but are more muscular and stand about 15' tall. Muscles ripple along their bodies, often bulging out in unexpected places. Every Lot needs powerful sinews along the thighs and back to support his massive body. Giants develop and lose other muscles remarkably quickly. Fighters gain exaggerated sword-arms but unless they carry shields, their



other arms tend to shrivel. Giants who wear heavy helmets develop knotted, muscular necks. Those who can piece clothing together out of stolen tents. A few capture slaves who can tailor complete outfits to their size, but most settle for shapeless smocks and rough hides.

Housing: Lot live in homes provided by their Chiefs. Some tribes must depend on lean-tos or tents, but stronger ones find caves, build or "borrow" strongholds or seize stone fortresses.

Diet: When they cannot get animal or Mannish flesh, Sky Giants eat raw vegetables and coarse bread. They steal most of their food from other peoples, and generally prefer the style of food nearby Men favor.

Worship: The Lot worship local nature-spirits, especially Lord Bull, who is described below.

Lifestyle and Mores: As children, the Lot observe rabbits in their holes and the wolves born to hunt them. Then, as the Giants mature, they see puny Men and Dwarves living in relatively undefended settlements. Surely, these smaller races of beings are the Giants' natural prey. Since nobody can farm their stony peaks, Lot live like the oldest Narlbray, in tribes of hunters. They call their people the "Bray'z Herde," meaning "Herd Of Battle."

Sky Giants hunt and roam the Garlon and Bald Mountains. (A substantial village of Giants stands at the top of the Brass Stair, in the north of the Garlon Mountains.) The Lot usually find it more profitable not to eat Men or Dwarves. Instead, they let people grow food, raise cattle and smelt ore. Then Lot raiders cull the harvest and steal desirable goods. They gather bags of food and force smiths to forge mammoth axes and whatever else they need.

In popular myth, a Chief of Lot maintains his power by leading glorious raids and through sheer charisma. Nobody would willingly forgo his leadership. When Chiefs cannot match this ideal, they bully subordinates savagely, hoping to cow them into submission. They struggle to keep potential rivals from becoming rich or popular enough to subvert their people. Whenever a chief dispenses honor or loot, he gives his weakest followers the largest shares. Therefore, the lame and the addle-brained enjoy special treatment. (Lot parents rejoice at the birth of a moronic child.) Of course, these customs make healthy young warriors even more eager to revolt.

Men and other "lesser" beings can sometimes join Lot clans. Contrary to popular belief, Giants do not hate other races; the Lot pillage Mannish villages because they are weak, but Giants do not object to accepting the help of Men on raids nor do they resist dealing honestly with powerful Men whom they cannot rob. Outcasts from Tharn and Garlon sometimes live among the Lot. A few foolhardy Mannish warriors have tried to establish villages rivaling nearby Lot strongholds, but unless Men can defend themselves with powerful sorcery, ambitious Lot almost always overpower them.

DAILY LIFE

The Lot practice few crafts. Clever Giants repair things they steal, but any ordinary Giant would be ashamed to learn farming, smithwork or other arts. A brave hunter can steal what he wants.

The Lot like to take slaves but usually only keep them for a specific task. They then eat the fattest prisoners and let the rest run away. Travellers in the Lotshaws often meet discarded and half-eaten thralls while searching for the way home.

Lot lead a cheerful life in their villages. Since nobody works, they spend their days talking, drinking, fighting mock battles and playing a game called "Chakea." One plays Chakea by setting up a pattern of precariously-stacked stone heaps. The players then climb to a nearby hillock and throw colored stones at the towers, trying to knock them down. The winner must not only hit the most towers; he must also surround the other players' scores with a ring of his own demolished targets. Sky Giants rarely gamble on Chakewa matches because of an ancient Lot superstition that anybody who wins a wager uses up his good luck for seven years.

The Lot loan possessions freely until nobody knows what belongs to whom. Visitors must share their belongings too, because the Giants often toss stingy people over cliffs in disgust. Lot gladly "loan" weapons they have borrowed to third people. This lack of concern for the possessions of others causes endless brawls over who must return what to whom. Giants occasionally kill each other over such matters, but they usually hold grudges for several years — until one sees an opportunity for revenge. In a minor dispute, the injured party might topple his foe into a convenient stream. When the Lot feel more serious, they may wait until a hunting expedition goes awry and then run away, leaving their enemy to face a score of Mannish warriors alone.

THE LORD BULL

As the old Lot saying goes, "One wolf leads the pack, and one Bull fathers the herd. So does a King Father watch over the Lot." He rules the Bray'z Herde as Lord Bull, the Horned One, whose antlers grow to the sky. The Lot prosper through his power, for he makes prey plentiful, enemies feeble and Lot mothers fertile. He has always protected the Giants and always will, for although Bulls die, the Horned One lives forever. When he appears to die, he is at once reborn as himself. The Lord Bull appears somehow related to the mystic species Loremasters call the Thalan. He was his own father and will be his own son.

Lord Bull looks like a huge Lot, with mossy, branching antlers. He lives at Stone Hall, a rift in the Lot Mountains. The walls of this pit are made of utterly black, smooth lava. A few volcanic tunnels trail deep below the surface, leading to places where only Lord Bull may go. The doughtiest Lot warriors guard his lair, and only the most desirable women marry him.

While the Bull lives, he never fathers a healthy child. His offspring come forth without limbs, or dead, or full-formed but absorbed by their own thoughts, uninterested in the world. They always rise to positions of power. Chieftains value cripples, for reasons mentioned before, and the Bull's children have an unerring talent for exploiting their handicaps. Each has some strength too. For example, some with no legs have powerful arms, and those lacking arms can run like racehorses. Unworldly children are the mightiest of all. They wield incredible powers of Mentalism and Channelling. In moments that they break out of their reveries they can do almost anything.

After a Bull dies, one of his wives always finds herself pregnant. She inevitably bears a son, with tiny cartilage bumps on his head. These harden into antlers as the new King grows. When great peril threatens the Lot, Lord Bull cannot wait to be born. His antlers form in the womb, and he tears his way out after a day of gestation, killing his mother. The newborn Bull has the body and knowledge of a child, but the mind of an adult. He remembers nothing but can speak. He leads the Herde.



Five hundred years ago, the King of Lot swore allegiance to the Grand Emperor Of Tharn. The Bull scarcely understood what the Empire was, but he realized that Tharn's Leonines could vanquish his raiders. By serving the Empire, he could trade gold from Garlon and obtain goods without fighting for them.

More recent Bulls spend more time in civilized lands. The crafts of Men amaze them. Wild Sky Giants force victims to forge iron tools, but they never realized how Men make the metal itself, burning it from worthless stones. Giant Raiders steal woolen cloth, assuming it to be the tanned hide of some unknown animal. Lot Kings now realize how wool can be spun into thread and woven into any pattern one desires.

Cucunain, the current King of the Sky Giants of Lot, lives like any of the Emperor's Overlords; in fact, more Men than Giants dwell in the Stone Hall. The Men of Alaros and Tharn believe that the Lot will soon forsake their barbaric habits and take on the customs of other and more civilized peoples. They corrupt the word "Bray'z Herde" to "Brazen Horde" and assume that it represents something like their own myth of the Brass Stair. Most treat the Lot like large, ill-bred students, thinking that the Giants want to learn the new crafts and civilize themselves. They are wrong. Cucunain never doubts that he is Lord Bull and remembers the ways of the Lot, celebrating their inborn right to feed upon the flesh of Men.

THE BELLOW

The Bull usually lets his Herde graze freely, seizing tribute, robbing travellers and occasionally sacking a town in Northern Garlon. The Bull rarely intervenes in the affairs of his chiefs.

When the King wants to assemble his tribe, he issues a Bellow. For two days, messengers spread the word. After that, Lot-warriors have two more days to journey to the Stone Hall. Anyone who refuses the summons becomes an outlaw, the enemy of the Herde, and is hunted down and killed.

When the moon rises on the second night of the Bellow, the Herde seizes the last warrior to arrive. They tear him apart with their bare hands to sanctify the muster. Then the Lord Bull provides a feast which lasts two days. Any Giant with a grudge or a debt must settle it now. Once the feasting ends, all claims become void. Anything which happened before the Bellow must be forgotten forever, because the Bull demands that his people stand united before battle or raiding.

5•THE MEN OF THARN

Racial Origins: Tharn's people descend from the native folk of the Narlbray, but many have Alaron blood.

Favored Ecosystem: Tharn is a cool country, with small fertile plains. However, its leaders want more territory and encourage expansion and raids upon neighboring fiefs.

Political Structure: The Grand Ruler wields absolute power. Owners of individual estates may not adopt any title other than "Lord," because they are merely administrators serving the fief. Rulers usually pass the Throne to their oldest child, but they are not required to. Each ruler writes an Imperial Will to name his successor. However, most rulers delay preparing this document. They feel that admitting their own mortality erodes Imperial prestige and invites revolt.

The Grand Ruler appoints Imperial Mandators to do the business of governing. These ministers supervise Offices such as Purse, Inspector, Lord Miner, Collector of Duties And Revenues and the punishment-post of Lord Palace Grounds. Mandators sometimes circumvent their superior, "forgetting" to tell him unpleasant facts or ignoring his orders. Any official who defies the ruler of Tharn will sooner or later lose his head. Since Mandators can only win the choicest Offices by displacing people that have them, the Capitol seethes with blackmail and scheming.

Social Structure: The father rules the family. Most households contain only immediate relatives, but many people have long family trees and boast eagerly about any connection with the Lords.

Military Structure: The Ruler's relatives form the Imperial Leonines, a professional army. Complete details appear under Arms and Armies.

Currency: The Supreme Ruler issues a gold currency bearing his own image and called by his name. For example, under the current reign of Malkus, a light horse sells for three Malkuses. Silver and copper coins depict local Lords. The coins of dead rulers are often worth several times their face value due to rarity, although many people consider them ill omens.

Language: Theros.

Appearance: The Men of Tharn have more Alaron blood than most peoples of Narlshaw. Sandy hair and light complexions predominate. The upper classes tend to be fairer, since their cosmopolitan ancestors met the Alarons more frequently. Tharn's peasants dress in simple woolen tunics, cloaks and dresses, like people throughout Narlshaw. The upper classes vie with each other in silk, lace, hosiery (colored for men, flesh tone for women) and fantastic hats. Gentlemen wear long coats as capes, with the sleeves loose.

Housing: Serfs live in log bunkhouses, and richer people build wooden villas. Only the Grand Ruler may own a fortified castle. However, Imperial Leonines maintain redoubts near most provinces of the Empire, and the Lords would assume command of these in war.

Diet: Richer imperial citizens enjoy a varied diet of vegetables, beef, grain, mutton from tributary tribes and seafood from Balth. Serfs subsist mostly on chate.

Worship: The Imperial House worships Kuor, King of Gods. His Highnesses' Own Curates emphasize Kuor's reluctance to intervene on Kulthea, calling this a mandate for the secular rule of an Empire.

Lifestyle and Mores: Long ago, the people of Tharn submitted to a Leader. In this chilly but relatively hospitable country, with its apathetic folk, no rebellious landlord can resist the Imperial House. All power in Tharn comes from the Capital, if not from the Grand Ruler himself. Generals, Curates and Mandators, and bureaucrat-judges rule like princes but only in the name of their Lord. Merchants and sailors, Lords and priests must all seek favors at the Court. None of this scheming interests common folk, who try not to be noticed.

Several small fiefs make up the Empire. The farmers of Tharn's plains tend to be the most loyal citizens, while those nearer the mountains resent their status. Balth openly agitates for recognition as a Free City. Imperial records count Lot as a province too, although most Giants would deny that the Empire exists. The Ruler of Tharn is often frustrated by the Sky Giants, particularly when Clans of Garlon demand reparations for goods lost to the Lot by pillaging.

Tharn absorbs everything it encounters. Its armies routinely subjugate neighboring fiefdoms, and its thinkers do the same. Imperial merchants buy up foreign businesses and shipping concerns. The Ruler's philosophers co-opt foreign logic too. They particularly like the gloomy themes of Alaros. Curates agree that the ruthless will overwhelm the kindly. Therefore, Tharn's leader must be ruthless. A favorite proverb among the rich and influential goes, "How insignificant is a person, compared to a Lord!" In time, a leader's sins actually perpetuate his mystique and as for the slain, the hills can cover them all.



6 • THE MEN OF GARLON

Racial Origins: Narlbray.

Favored Ecosystem: Mountains and rolling moors.

Political Structure: Landlords and local chiefs rule. Although nobles pledge to serve the so-called "Over-King", who is in reality a petty tyrant, they tend to ignore him. The Alarons have persuaded most of Garlon's cities to adopt Referenda, but many have consolidated into small, squabbling oligarchies.

Social Structure: Citizens of Garlon owe fealty to their Clan. They serve the eldest patriarch, or Clan Father. A Father protects his family and it obeys him, though gods and emperors stand against them. Some Houses fight vendettas, but the common danger of raids by the Giants fosters cooperation, especially in the north.

A Fathers' wives manage a Clan's finances and marriages. These Mothers arrange weddings and trace bloodlines. They publish the official geneologies of Garlon on the Kingdom Skein, a collection of tapestries embroidered with family trees and scenes from tales. The Over-King carries this Skein wherever he goes, for it represents the sacred Great Clan of the world.

Most clans support themselves and their landlords by raising sheep, goats and montex.

Military Structure: Youths flock to the warrior bands as soon as their mothers allow it. Garlon's soldiery, the Bolteers, live with their clans except during war. They meet nightly for hunts and revelry.

Currency: Garlon has no national money, but merchants mint coins from their own hoards. This leads to rampant counterfeiting. People of Garlon use the currencies of other lands freely and tend to have a canny sense of a coinage's value. The most common local coin is the Jayce Copper.

Language: Theros.

Appearance: The Men of Garlon favor long mustaches with shaved chins. Women wear elaborate braids, while males crop their hair short.

Garlon's challenging climate demands warm, rugged clothing but people still covet handsome wardrobes. Garlonese wear tunics and breeches dyed with russet bark. Rich families often import brighter cloth from Alaros or Tharn. People from every rank wrap themselves in hooded cloaks called pilans when outdoors. Pilans are usually gray or dark green. Both men and women take pride in their skill at weaving them, and proficient weavers can make the web dense enough to keep the wearer warm and dry during windblown mountain rainstorms.

Housing: People of Garlon build stout log halls on the flattest land they can get and surround their property with stone walls. Several generations of a family live in interconnected houses on the same property. Garlon's nobles commission stockades and castles when they can afford them.

Diet: The folk of Garlon love meat. They hunt passionately and raise herds. Cheese is commonly served and enjoyed. People consider salt and spices marks of wealth. They season all dishes as heavily as they can afford, particularly when trying to impress visitors. One can grow rich selling salt in Garlon's dangerous backcountry.

Worship: The hill-people like virile gods. Youths follow Cay, while their elders worship Phaon. Almost all the Lords of Orhan have representatives in the cities.

Lifestyle and Mores: Garlon is a land of heroes, as any Garlonese will say. Its people live for their family and family honor. They fight the Giants gallantly, boldly (some might say foolishly) repaying each robbery with a counter-raid into Lot. The Men of Garlon are as generous as they are fierce, and a traveller can expect hospitality wherever he chooses to stop. This chivalry is not limited to the upper class. Every family guards its honor, whether the Clan Father is a thief or a prince.

Several Clans thrive in port-towns where rivers meet the sea. The Sons of Alaros brought them stonemasonry and ships, building these once rustic villages into cosmopolitan ports. Garlon's seaside communities ferment with crime, while the merchant elite builds its power. These traders grow far richer and more worldly than any Clan Father ever considered possible. They flaunt wealth without a trace of humility.

None of this penetrates the mountains. A few remote clans behave like miniature Lot, pillaging and worshipping stone idols. Still, most of the people are civilized and scrupulously kind to strangers. The Clan Fathers preserve old, courteous ways. Their wise-women remember old hexes too. Narlshaw's wisest Mannish wizards come from Garlon's backcountry.

The people of Garlon revere noble heritage and respect the Over King as having the "richest blood" in the land. Clan Fathers swear tribute to him. He gathers this tribute by moving his court about the countryside visiting people. This way, the Over-King collects taxes in the form of lodging, feasts, entertainment and gifts. Clan Fathers feel honor in treating the King as luxuriously and obsequiously as possible while he visits. Then they "forget" his commands the moment he leaves.

7•THE DWARVES

Racial Origins: Scattered pockets of Dwarves have lived in Narlshaw throughout recorded time and have largely managed to escape the notice of the Dragonlord.

Favored Ecosystem: Remote mountains and deep gold mines.

Political Structure: After centuries of rule by Men, the Dwarves have a Dwarvenking at last. He rules, and his people gratefully obey.

Social Structure: Dwarves trace their lines through the father's extended family but live only with immediate relatives, or alone. Many devote themselves entirely to work. Social status depends on money, not birth. Still, Dwarven society discourages gaudy displays, forcing wealthy people to assert their riches discreetly.

Military Structure: The Dwarves of Wuliris mistrust formal armies, fearing that an army will attract the unwanted attentions of the Dragonlord. Those who wish to be warriors usually serve as mercenaries, either defending caravans or foreign lords. The King hires a few personal guards and relies on his Fyrd to defend the kingdom. This Fyrd consists of every Dwarf, male or female, with strength to wield axe and crossbow.

Currency: The King mints gold and silver coins called "forges," stamped with the image of an anvil. Few Dwarves are unpatriotic enough to accept foreign currencies without collecting the customary 10% exchange fee.

Language: A secret Dwarven tongue (Taman) exists, but Dwarves speak only Theros to outsiders.

Appearance: Stocky, with ruddy skin and dark hair. Dwarves wear breeches, jackets and hooded cloak. Their fine boots are legendary. Unlike other Narlshaw footwear, these boots come in different shapes for the left and right foot.

Housing: Dwarves dwell only in stone. In surface cities where rock is scarce, they share their homes. Otherwise, each family owns a house. Most Dwarves carve living quarters into the upper levels of their mines. The Dwarven stronghold built atop the Brass Stair was long ago abandoned and is believed to be cursed by the superstitious Dwarves of this region. (They fear the Sky Giants who have since occupied their fortress as well.)

Diet: Dwarves eat prodigious amounts of sourdough, pork, chate and ale. Roast boar is their favorite meal. They obtain most of their food by commerce and own few fertile regions. This makes Dwarves extremely protective of trade routes.

Worship: Narlshaw's Dwarves worship Iorak. They treat the matter of his wife Iloura warily, since priestesses of the Earth Goddess accuse them of despoiling her wilderness.

Lifestyle and Mores: As a people, the Dwarves shun upheaval. They settle their own disputes discreetly and remain neutral in outside quarrels. This allows them to base their diplomacy only on profit. Dwarven warriors, few as there are, will fight for the highest bidder, although many mercenaries have personal codes of honor and will not draw sword in an "unjust" cause. Due to these policies, Little Folk of the Bald Mountains enjoy enough peace to work their mines and have accumulated most of the gold in Narlshaw. (Dwarven legend suggests that most of the gold atop the Brass Stair has been mined already.)

A popular tale describes how Jerad, Son of Alaros, visited the town of Onopole to equip his army against Lord Rotan. In the smith's lobby, Jerad met Rotan himself. After Jerad ordered 50 sword-blades, Rotan triumphantly bought 100. Jerad then purchased 170 iron maces. Rotan ordered 300 pikes. Jerad won the contest by buying 1,000 cavalry lances. Both paid in gold, then returned to their castles to await delivery. The smith learned later that neither Lord had more than 150 men in his army.

Like many such folk, the Dwarves of Wuliris base their society on the wealth and health of their mines. To encourage prospecting, they allow any Dwarf who finds a mine to claim the land. He hires laborers at whatever wages they accept. Miners live in the tunnels, digging stone villages near the surface. Since it takes some time for a mine to produce profits, Dwarven merchants sponsor money-lending houses, which charge Dwarves 25% interest and others 40%. The mines of the Bald Mountains provide most of the metal used in Narlshaw. Since Dwarven craftsmen also excel at smithing, carving, stonework, tinkering and shoemaking, almost all Dwarves are comfortable and adore money. Although Dwarves relish feasts and golden baubles, most of them seal their treasure in vaults, hating to spend it.

Until recently, the Dwarves of this region had resigned themselves to the rule of Men. Their Kings fell in the Wars of Dominion, and after that, a family of Mannish Tyrants appointed themselves lords over the Bald Mountains. Few Dwarves resisted. The prejudice against disruption remained too strong.

In TE 6046, the Mannish Tyrant of Onopole imposed an excise on salvaged treasure to raise tribute for the nearby Empire of Tharn. A Dwarven adventurer named Dunel laughed at the tax. When arrested, he demanded trial by battle and challenged the Tyrant himself to defend the legality of his decree. The Tyrant accepted, and Dunel killed him. Facing the audience with bloody sword, Dunel called for Dwarves to rule Dwarves. Onopole's stunned and frightened citizens crowned him King.

To the people's delight, Dunel immediately abolished taxation. He went on to free prisoners, release mines from restrictions and buy lavishly from every merchant in the land. People never hoped that self-rule could be this wonderful. Dwarven Pride blossoms in the Bald Mountains. More than a few Dwarves now talk of retaking their abandoned lands to the west and south, including the stronghold atop the Brass Stair, and talk of uniting smaller Dwarven enclaves under Dunel's rule is rampant. Everyone hungers for ballads about their people's glory. Young Dwarves will unhesitatingly slay anyone unwise enough to insult Dwarvenkind or its current, revered King.



8 • THE ELVES

Racial Origins: Elves of Narlshaw descend from the Erlini and the Loari.

Favored Ecosystem: Woodlands, hidden coves.

Political Structure: Each small colony of Elves obeys an "Elvenking". They make few arrangements for succession because of their nearly-eternal lifespans, but a king's eldest child usually inherits the throne when the occasion does arise.

Social Structure: Elves live in tribes, each containing several extended families. They trace lineage through the mother.

Military Structure: Although Elves do not love war, they bear arms when times demand it. Elvenkings lead their people in battle. As homeless tribes, the displaced Elves must fight scoundrels and ravaging creatures almost constantly.

Currency: Elves treasure gems and fine jewelry but use no money among themselves. They use foreign coins for external trade.

Language: Elves have an Elven tongue. Most also speak Theros.

Appearance: Narlshaw Elves have hair black as obsidian, and their eyes shine a deep brown. Their skin appears light, although it has a healthy glow and does not flush easily. Elves usually wear Mannish clothes in the outside world. They also make a light silk in their hidden glens, and Elf-women wear gowns. Male Elves use loose silk shirts and carded-wool capes lined with satin.

Housing: Wuliris' Elves of old raised cities of white marble. Their descendants cannot sustain them. They live in hidden cottages or wander, dwelling in tents and pine lean-tos.

Diet: Elves savor fruit, cream and black bread. Their pastries and flavored ices once won praise throughout Narlshaw, but wandering Elves lack the leisure to make them. They rely on venison, berries and wild spices.

Worship: Elves once celebrated every divinity of Orhan. In these times, only Iloura of the forests succors them, and in return, they devote most of their worship to her.

Lifestyle and Mores: The Princes of Elves raised Narlshaw to civilization. They made its roads, wrote its manuscripts, built its communities and shared their glory with Men, until mankind discarded them. Later, Men audaciously sacked a few Elvish strongholds. More often, they simply crowded the Elves out. Elves do not age, but they seldom conceive, which allowed other races to outnumber them. After the Wars of Dominion, Men replenished their population; Elves could not.

Only hidden kingdoms remain Elvish, in mountain strongholds where Men seldom tread. Lesser Fey Folk adapted. Dryads became one with their trees while Pysk and Twylweth hide their unreal homes from the eyes of Men. The Ellyllon actually work in Mannish households, as uninvited servants. But true Elves cannot retire into streams or faerie mounds any more than Men can. They are too proud to live as vassals in the towns they first built. These tribes wander, subsisting on the forest's bounty.

Most Elves do not blame Men. They immerse themselves in nature, the stars, the trees and the tides of Essence. Elves act on impulse, drink strong wine and occasionally burst into their deep, rhythmic melodies. The ignorant perceive them as frivolous. Those who know Elves realize that they are simply compensating for the sadness of centuries.

Elves have many admirers but few friends. Alaron thinkers almost worship them, for Elves honestly follow the gentle, productive creed Alaros espouses. Unfortunately, Alaros does not do much to help the Elves, except for the few who consent to teach in their High Grove. The wise-women of Garlon respect Elvenkind's "faerie witchery." This reputation makes most people profoundly uneasy around them. Dwarves, Men of Tharn and many independent fiefs view Elves as rivals who one day might dare to reclaim their lands. Furthermore, artisans worry that they cannot surpass Elven craftsmen. Therefore, few people welcome Elves. In fact, the Men of Tharn persecute them.

Of all Narlshaw's people, Elves are best equipped to resist the Unlife. They also are most susceptible to its temptation. Faerie Folk have mastered Animism, Mysticism, Astrology, Mentalism, Bardic Rites, Wizardry and dozens of other techniques, all mysteries to the Men of Narlshaw. Elves revel in wholesome, goodly magic. Their rites and talismans celebrate joy, life or fertility. Still, sorcerers by nature flirt with peril, and Narlshaw's Elves could genuinely profit from a disaster. If Evil snuffed out the breeding Men, Narlshaw's Elves could reclaim their majesty. In the past, Loremasters have befriended the lesser Elvenkings of Wuliris, to keep them from becoming desperate enough for a covenant with Darkness.

9 • THE LUGRÔKI

Racial Origins: This foul race dwells across Kulthea. Lugrôki arrived in Narlshaw as soldiers of Unlife in the Wars Of Dominion.

Favored Ecosystem: Underground, or in dark forests and barracks. Lugroki hate sunlight, and lesser breeds can barely see in it.

Lesser Lugrôki suffer a -50 to all activities in the sunlight.

Political Structure: One cannot speak of a true Lugrôki government. In theory, these beings live under martial regulation, but they have little concept of respect. They obey slavishly but only as long as they must. Captains have power because they terrify their followers, or enjoy the support of a superior who can. Chiefs enforce orders with floggings and executions. In cases of revolt, most Captains would rather make an example of some weakling than directly challenge his enemies. When necessary, rival leaders often assassinate each other, or simply draw blades and fight. Despite their rebelliousness, Lugrôki fear and revere most of their leaders and will slay anyone who insults them.

Social Structure: The father is usually the strongest member of the family, and hence its dictator. Women and children would joyfully bullyrag their patriarchs if they had a chance.

Settlement Pattern: The availability of darkness and prey dictates these creatures' habitat. They cluster their lairs in caves near mountain passes, or near the abode of their foul patrons.

Military Structure: All Lugrôki are soldiers. Unscrupulous people often use Lugrôki in their armies and impose whatever organization they favor. Left to themselves, these creatures form bands of about 20 each under the stronger warriors. A higher Captain rules the bands, and sometimes a ruler (who might call himself "King") governs several Captains.

Currency: The Lugrôki have no settlements large enough to mint their own coins.

Language: Lugrôki speak their own language, a thumping guttural wailing known to Men as “Dawl,” but most also know Theros.

Appearance: Flattened noses, sharp tusks and slanted eyes deform the LUGRÔKI. Muscles bulge beneath their thick hides, but their long arms hang from gangly sockets. LUGRÔKI dress in leather and rough linens, or wool from stolen sheep. They favor dark colors which blend in with the night,

Housing: LUGRÔKI dwell in barracks-like caverns. Only their commanders have personal chambers. Lower ranks have no privacy, and the desire for it is considered a confession of crime.

Diet: LUGRÔKI devour food of every sort, including a range of coarse grains and grisly meats that Men cannot digest. Their underground life also drives them to consume slime molds and fungi usually regarded as inedible. However, truly poisonous mushrooms affect them like all other races. On the rare occasions that LUGRÔKI can choose their meals, they gobble barely-cooked flesh. These creatures covet meat from butchered foes.

Worship: LUGRÔKI mention the gods only to blaspheme them. Rarely, they may cry out for boons and divine miracles, calling on whatever deity seems most promising. Servants of the Unlife often lead LUGRÔKI armies, but these creatures do not have the reverence required for worship, even of Evil.

Lifestyle and Mores: All Mannish folk abhor the LUGRÔKI. Most people in Narlshaw assume that the Elves all but exterminated them in Wars of Dominion, and wise LUGRÔKI preserve that myth. LUGRÔKI hide in their lairs and leave no survivors to tell of their raids, atrocities which folk blame on the Lot.

Most LUGRÔKI in Wuliris serve the Dragonlord. A few foul-hearted lords have used LUGRÔKI warriors as mercenaries. With Mannish leaders, a LUGRÔKI army would be an imposing foe, to say the least. Currently, no ruler would think of supporting one. However, in war, Men become desperate.

10 • FISHING PEOPLE OF BELGOR

Racial Origins: The Fishing People of Belgor come from the same racial root as the Narlbray. However, they left the mainland early in the First Era and have few ties to them.

Favored Ecosystem: Belgor (Subarctic islands).

Political Structure: The eldest woman of each family rules it as chief. Once a month, the chiefs row kayaks into the open sea and hold council on the waves. Any woman who refuses to attend must abdicate in favor of the eldest woman who will. She may regain the chieftom later, if her successor forgoes a voyage. Therefore, leaders grow sharply more youthful each winter, when the oldest do not sail. In the summer, many younger chiefs abandon their rank to bear children, and the eldest rule again.

Social Structure: These tribes trace families through the female. Fishing People live from the sea, with few distinctions between rich and poor. They honor women for their capacity to bear young. The more children a mother has, the more people respect her.

Settlement Pattern: Fishing People cluster their huts wherever a cliff wall offers shelter.

Military Structure: There is none. The men of different families band together to harpoon white bears, whales and sea serpents. They form similar groups against two-legged foes. When a threat appears grave, the council of Chiefs coordinates these squads. Otherwise they act independently. This occasionally leads to disaster, when one matriarch welcomes visitors, and then warriors from her tribe attack them.

Currency: No standard currency. People use furs, ivory lumps and strips of meat in trade. Iron tools are invaluable.

Language: An offshoot of the Narlbray language, completely unintelligible to most mainlanders. (Fishing folk have nine words for “waves” and eleven for “current.”)

Appearance: Fishing People have golden skin, tanned to a patina of wrinkles by the frigid temperatures and frequent gales. They dress in bearskin jackets and trousers, with the fur turned in.

Housing: Fishing People build boulder huts, often using a cliff to form one wall. They line the inner walls with hide and stuff cracks with fish bones for insulation. Each hut contains a large firepit and chimney, hollowed into the cliff wall. The richest Fishing People own bronze braziers from Garlon. They fit them with tin chimneys that go through the stone roof. People covet these stoves because they go in the center of a hut, where everyone can huddle around them.

Diet: Most Fishing People eat nothing but seafood. They devour sealmeat, whale-blubber, clams and every variety of fish. They never hunt people for food, but when a Hunter kills an enemy, he sees nothing unusual about feasting on the meat. Except for a few kelps, Fishing People have no vegetables. They consider farming grains a feat of magic.

Worship: The Fishing People pray to Shaal, god of the angry sea. Their Animists worship seals, particularly mothers with pups. On their islands, the Animists master both winds and men. The few who travel customarily refuse to display their powers on the mainland.

Lifestyle and Mores: The Fishing People of Belgor live on the icy isles off Tharn. They subsist from the sea. Women rule their tribes and men fish, or hunt in the scant forests. Visitors seldom trouble them, for their isolated land is surrounded by rocky shoals and ice floes in winter. Fishing People do not sail abroad, except for a few who buy knives in Alaros.

The tribe’s traders bring Alaros walrus ivory, whalebone and hides in return for metal goods. Fishing People consider the mainlanders magical, but somewhat comical. Except for knives and stoves, mainland “magic” does not produce anything useful.

Fishing People believe that their ancestors made a pact with Shaal. He gave them Belgor and the seas around it in return for a promise that they would be content with it and not covet the continent. Therefore, the Fishing People never go farther than a few hundred miles from their archipelago. (Alaros City lies within this radius.)

Circumstances have forced a few barbarians to break this taboo. Slavers sometimes kidnap them. An expedition from Tharn once insisted that several Fishing Folk face trial before the Emperor for murdering their captain. The victims became terrified of their god. They struggled to flee inland and to hide from the sea they once loved. If these exiles should return to the ocean, gales and mysterious doldrums might plague their ships. This fact deters slavers from taking Fishing Folk captive.

PART III

• ECONOMICS OF NARLSHAW •

Since the High Men opened trade routes, merchants have grown ever richer. Mannish lords pride themselves on self-sufficiency, but as Alaros' farming techniques give them surpluses, they long to trade for luxuries. The cities would actually starve without imported food. Furthermore, some products must be traded for. Almost all of Narlshaw depends upon commerce for its metals.

Under the watchful if distant eye of the Dragonlord, Dwarves of the Bald Mountains nearly control silver, gold, lead, iron and tempered steels. Merchants trade ingots in the lobbies of Onopole and send them to the sea on barges, where traders ship them along Narlshaw's treacherous coastline. Only scattered Men attempt to dig ore. Tharn pressures its underlords to mine, but they hardly rival the Dwarves.

1 • COMMERCE

The Men of Garlon enjoy a monopoly on copper and its alloys. Red metals come from Ruddy Isle, a fief of Jayce, Lord of Thralls. The rulers of Garlon banish convicts there, where Jayce works them to death in his pits. Jayce's bronzes cannot match Dwarven steel, but they cost less, forcing Dwarves to lower their prices too.

The peoples of Narlshaw manage their commerce in different ways. Dwarves and merchant-clans of Garlon sell whatever they can and hoard gold. Tharn pursues almost the opposite policy. The Ruler imports all his people can afford, to glorify the Empire, and to make other lands depend on his trade. Alaros also spends freely, trying to stimulate future trade. Its ships, caravans and contacts with the Navigators allow it to sell silks and spices unavailable elsewhere. Fief-lords generally consider themselves too noble for business. They occasionally buy and sell through caravans but subsist from their lands and wars. Since most lords consider trade crass, they tax it heavily.

The old League which protected cities from Tharn now specializes in defending merchants against all powers. It demands dues of 100 gold coins per year from every trader and shopowner. In return, the League defends members against marauders, competitors and tariffs it deems unjust. Dues are used to hire Dwarven mercenaries who pursue bandits. The League manipulates civilized foes by

flooding the markets for their wares, or, in extreme cases, imposing embargoes. Merchants who refuse to join may not trade with League shops or caravans. They also suffer frequent, mysterious robberies.

The League holds annual meets to decide policy. Members may buy "franchises" at the convention for ten gold coins each. The Convention punishes enemies, plans trade-routes, and arranges markets to discourage competition. Five mysterious directors own over half the League's votes; their proxies control any election.

The following chart compares the prices of trade goods in different lands. It includes specific prices and modifiers for classes of item. For example, although hammers are not on the list, they are miscellaneous metal items, and cost half normal prices in the Bald Mountains. Obviously, shortages, wars and game events alter these values.

If the party wishes to sell something, use the tables on page 16 of *Character Law* to modify the amount they receive. Travellers who speculate in trade goods must join the League or face its wrath.

2 • CURRENCY EXCHANGE

Consult the following table once per month to determine the values of Narlshaw currencies in standard Rolemaster coins. Wars, counterfeiting, and others mishaps may modify these results at the GM's option.

Value Of:	Dice Roll (1-10)					Value Of:	Dice Roll (1-10)				
	1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	9-10		1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	9-10
Forge (Bald Mtns.)	7sp	1gp	1gp	15sp	2gp	Malkus (Tharn)	5sp	1gp	1gp	1gp	15sp
Gold Tower (Garlon)	3sp	6sp	1gp	1gp	15sp	Seahawk Gold (Garlon)	1sp	1gp	1gp	15sp	3gp
Jayce Copper (Garlon)	1tp	5tp	1cp	1cp	15tp	Surf (Alaros)	5sp	1gp	1gp	1gp	2gp

When a currency divides into smaller units, 1 gold = 10 silver = 100 bronze = 1,000 copper = 10,000 tin.

3•COMPARATIVE PRICE LIST

Item	Garlon		Alaros		Tharn		Bald Mts.		Item	Garlon		Alaros		Tharn		Bald Mts.	
	R	U	R	U	R	U	R	U		R	U	R	U	R	U	R	U
Arms									Rope (50')	5bp	3bp	5bp	3bp	5bp	3bp	8bp	4bp
Bows	x1	x1	x1	x1	x2	x2	x2	x2	Scabbard	30bp	28bp	25bp	20bp	30bp	28bp	30bp	28bp
Bronze Blades (-10 in M)	x1/2	x1/2	x1/2	x1/2	x2/3	x2/3	x2/3	x2/3	Silk, sq yard	150gp	50gp	50gp	10gp	75gp	25gp	75gp	25gp
Crossbows (-10 in RM)			Normal Prices						Manacles	8sp	3sp	10sp	8sp	9sp	7sp	9sp	7sp
Dwarven	x6	x6	x5	x4	x6	x5	x3	x2	Salt, pound	2gp	18sp	5sp	1sp	1gp	5sp	15sp	1gp
Blades									Strong Rope	15bp	9bp	15bp	9bp	15bp	9bp	30bp	16bp
Dwarven	x4	x3	x2	x2	x2	x2	x1	x1	Tharn-Scent oz	1gp	1gp	1gp	5sp	5sp	1sp	1gp	5sp
Crossbows (+15 in RM)									Vial, Crystal	40cp	12cp	20cp	9cp	24cp	12cp	15cp	9cp
Iron Blades	x3	x2	x2	x1	x2	x2	x1/2	x1/2	Food, Lodging and Services								
Leather Armor			Normal Prices						Tangia Spice	10gp	8gp	5gp	3gp	7gp	5gp	7gp	5gp
Metal Armor	x3	x2	x1	x1	x1	x1	x2/3	x2/3	Wine	8tp	2cp	3tp	5tp	5tp	3tp	5tp	3tp
Steel Blades (+10 in RM)	x4	x3	x2	x1	x3	x2	x2/3	x2/3	Chate Food	x1/2	x1/2	x1/2	x1/2	x1/4	x1/4	—	—
Common Items									Other Food	x1/2	x1/2	x2	x2	x2	x2	—	—
Alchemical									Livestock								
glassware	30gp	50gp	25gp	20gp	140gp	40gp	25gp	15gp	Burder	9gp	11gp	9gp	11gp	5gp	9gp	9gp	11gp
Arrows (20)	3bp	19cp	4bp	22cp	5bp	28cp	7bp	30cp	Illegal in Alaros.								
Backpack	12cp	1bp	15cp	2bp	22cp	2bp	24cp	3bp	Guard Mastiff	25sp	30sp	20sp	15sp	10sp	15sp	20sp	30sp
Bedroll (light)	15cp	18cp	17cp	20cp	19cp	23cp	19cp	23cp	Hill-Pony	15sp	40sp	30sp	30sp	50sp	11gp	6gp	15gp
Bedroll (heavy)	4bp	6bp	5bp	7bp	6bp	8bp	6bp	8bp	Montex	10sp	15sp	10sp	2gp	2gp	3gp	2gp	3gp
Boots	12bp	2sp	12bp	2sp	12bp	2sp	9bp	1sp	Mule/donkey	25sp	47sp	25sp	47sp	25sp	47sp	9gp	20gp
Bucket, copper	12bp	9bp	4bp	30cp	5bp	42cp	5bp	42cp	Ox	85sp	105sp	85sp	105sp	40sp	60sp	95sp	105sp
Caltraps (5)	12bp	9bp	10bp	8bp	9bp	7bp	9bp	7bp	Pony	10sp	30sp	15sp	40sp	25sp	55sp	15gp	10gp
Candle	4cp	3cp	3cp	2cp	4cp	3cp	6cp	5cp	Redhawk	5gp	10gp	20gp	17gp	10gp	50gp	10gp	15gp
Case	3sp	3sp	2sp	2sp	3sp	3sp	3sp	3sp	Up to ten times this price for prize birds.								
Cask	3sp	25bp	2sp	22bp	2sp	22bp	2sp	22bp	Sailor's Pup	10sp	20sp	5sp	5sp	6sp	7sp	6sp	7sp
Charcoal	20bp	20cp	25bp	27cp	25cp	27bp	30cp	35bp	Warhorse (either type)	x2	x2	x2	x2	—	—	—	—
Cloak	3bp	5bp	7bp	10bp	7bp	10bp	7bp	10bp	Travel								
Coat	9bp	15bp	10bp	16bp	13bp	17bp	13bp	17bp	Ship Passage	—	100gp	50gp	20gp	—	150gp	—	50gp
Dwarf-Boots	24bp	4sp	20bp	3sp	20bp	3sp	15bp	2sp	Chariot	24gp	32gp	12gp	16gp	9gp	10gp	24gp	32gp
Flint	21cp	15cp	11cp	9cp	11cp	9cp	7cp	6cp	Watercraft (k=1,000gp.)								
Fur	1gp	2gp	3gp	6gp	5gp	10gp	5gp	8gp	Alaron Ram	—	600gp	300gp	200gp	—	600gp	—	500gp
Garlon Carpet	1gp	5sp	1gp	5sp	2gp	1gp	2gp	1gp	Alaron Carrack	—	1k	900	800	3k	2k	—	—
Ingot (10lb)									Barge	100gp	80gp	80gp	40gp	—	70gp	80gp	40gp
Bronze	4gp	3gp	10gp	8gp	10gp	8gp	8gp	6gp	Coracle	7sp	8sp	7sp	7sp	2gp	1gp	2gp	1gp
Brass	5gp	4gp	12gp	9gp	12gp	9gp	9gp	7gp	Longship	—	200gp	400gp	200gp	—	500gp	—	600gp
Copper	3gp	2gp	6gp	5gp	6gp	5gp	6gp	5gp	Rowboat	7gp	10gp	5gp	9gp	—	10gp	20gp	10gp
Dwarf-Steel	20gp	15gp	15gp	12gp	15gp	12gp	12gp	9gp	Balth Cog	—	210gp	300gp	150gp	—	190gp	—	—
Gold	900gp	800gp	500gp	500gp	500gp	500gp	400gp	400gp	Tharn's only ocean port is Balth. The Bald Mountains' only port is Onopole.								
Iron	11gp	9gp	11gp	9gp	11gp	9gp	6gp	4gp	SHIP ABILITIES								
Silver	60gp	60gp	60gp	50gp	50gp	50gp	40gp	40gp	Ship	Sail	Speed	Oared	Speed	(1 hr max)	Length	Capacity	
Steel	12gp	10gp	12gp	10gp	12gp	10gp	8gp	6gp		Ft/Rnd	Mph	Ft/Rnd	Mph	Length	Capacity		
Tin	2bp	2bp	2bp	2bp	2bp	2bp	2bp	1bp	Alaron Ram	30	2	90	6	125	65 tons		
Ink	3bp	1bp	2bp	5cp	3bp	1bp	3bp	1bp	Operator can ram and sink a longship or ram by passing a <i>Very Hard</i> moving maneuver. It requires a <i>Sheer Folly</i> maneuver to sink larger craft.								
Ivory, lb	5gp	3gp	3gp	2gp	4gp	2gp	4gp	2gp	Alaron Carrack	120	8	—	—	120'	685 tons		
Lot-Musk oz	10gp	5gp	8gp	4gp	5gp	2gp	8gp	5gp	Barge	20	2	10	1	100sq'	200 tons		
Mirror	8sp	60bp	4sp	37bp	4sp	37bp	3sp	20bp	Coracle	—	—	30	2.5	7'	700lbs		
Misc. Cloth	x1/2	x1/2	x2/3	x2/3	x2	x2	—	—	Longship	120	8	20	5	120'	425 tons		
Misc. Metal	x2	x2	x2/3	x2/3	x1	x1	—	—	Rowboat	75	5	75	5	15'	1,500 lbs		
Montex Hide	1cp	2cp	2cp	4cp	2cp	4cp	4cp	8cp	Balth Cog	120	8	—	—	100'	150 tons		
Oar	5cp	7cp	2cp	3cp	5cp	7cp	10cp	15cp	Sailed ships can never move faster than 2/3 windspeed, except with oars.								
Oil Flask	8bp	6bp	5bp	4bp	5bp	4bp	3bp	3bp	Many other items are available locally. Their prices do not vary much except as governed by the Miscellaneous Metal and Miscellaneous Cloth entries. Use the prices listed on pages 16-20 of <i>Character Law</i> to determine standard prices.								
Padlock	6sp	5sp	2sp	20bp	3bp	2sp	2sp	1sp	R=Rural U=Urban								
Paper (10)	7sp	6sp	3sp	2sp	4sp	3sp	4sp	3sp									
Parchment (10)	5sp	4sp	2sp	1sp	28bp	13bp	28bp	13bp									
Pepper (oz)	2gp	1gp	5sp	1sp	8sp	5sp	8sp	5sp									
Quill-pens	6cp	3cp	4cp	2cp	5cp	3cp	5cp	3cp									
Quiver	5cp	5cp	1bp	1bp	1bp	1bp	1bp	1bp									

PART IV

• POLITICS AND POWER •

Fearing intervention by the powerful Dragonlord Sulton Ni'shaang (who has turned his attention to the south), the cultures of Wuliris are fragmented, isolated and uneasy neighbors. No legislated government exists in Narlshaw. Beneath the overwhelming threat posed by the Dragonlord, power rests with the nobles who own the land, for there is nobody to stop them from doing as they choose. In cities and centers of trade, every citizen is a freeman. Elsewhere, the lower classes accept serfdom on the estates, paying a portion of their labor to their landlords. Custom decrees that the peasants must obey their lord, but he owes them justice and safety in return. Powerful petty lords often govern a township too, or even a city. Independent towns officially pass laws with an elected Council, although this form of democracy often degenerates to tyranny.

Ideally, one Overlord would provide protection and law to nobles, just as they do for their peasants. He would force them to treat their subjects kindly and forbid war. However, nobody agrees on who the Overlord should be. As merchant caravans and travellers bring peoples into closer contact, this dispute becomes all the more troubling. The Sons of Alaros support their Lord. Dwarves prefer to be ruled by their own kind. Garlon follows the true-born "High King", although most of its petty lords ignore him. Sky Giants and the people of Tharn support their ruler, however halfheartedly.

Only the Grand Ruler of Tharn completely controls his fiefdom. Underlords must obey Imperial decree, providing grain, ore and warriors for the Empire. Nobody but Tharn's Mandators may authorize trade, plan policies or sign treaties, and only the Grand Ruler can go to war.



A LOT VILLAGE SCENE

PART V

• ARMS AND ARMIES •

Despite all the signs of war, armies remain small and courtly in Narlshaw. Traditionally, only nobles and warriors care about war, because no matter who wins, serfs will remain serfs. Few lords can afford to let peasants fight, for they grow the grain which nobles need to support their castles and soldiers.

Armies seldom march after frost falls. Food becomes scarce in the long harsh winter, making forage impossible and supply trains terribly expensive. Furthermore, snowdrifts and cold close the mountain passes early, cutting enemies off from each other. Since most nobles live from their farms, they do not campaign until the first planting is completed.

In the field, armies march as a body, clustered around a supply train of mule-drawn sledges. Most lords lead their armies and wear the best armor they can afford. Landless nobles and trained warriors make up most of the fighters while hordes of criminals, mercenaries and miscellaneous soldiery crowd into the train with them, hoping for loot. Lords often insist on carrying their supplies with them. If they allowed the army to forage, most common troops would desert to loot serf thorpes. Furthermore, every noble dreads antagonizing commoners, an action which in effect offers his enemy a peasant horde ready to do battle. After troops fight and win, nobles release them to pillage.

Such customs make armies painfully slow-moving organisms. The mountainous terrain of Narlshaw hampers armies further, often forcing them to rely on pack-mules instead of wagons. Every day of marching forces warriors to bring more pack animals, and the beasts themselves must eat. To determine how far an army can march, divide the total weight of baggage by the carrying ability of each animal minus that animal's share of the food. The tables below show what different draft animals can do and how much they eat. A second table indicates how much food an army needs.

TRANSPORTATION TABLE

Transport	Capacity	Speed (miles per day)
Garlonese Porter	70 pounds	10 road, 7 hills, 3 mountains
Horsecart	3 tons	15 road, 3 hills, none mountains
Lot	100 pounds	10 road, 6 hills, 3 mountains
Oxcart	6.5 tons	10 road, 1 hills, none mountains
Man	50 pounds	10 road, 5 hills, 2 mountains
Mule	220 pounds	12 road, 10 hills, 5 mountains
Pack Horse	180 pounds	15 road, 7 hills, 3 mountains

FOOD REQUIREMENTS TABLE (IN POUNDS)

Creature or Being	Daily Rations	Water*
Dwarf	5	5
Horse	13	80
Lot	40	40
Ox	25	160
Man	5	5
Mule	50	80

*Water can normally be found in streams and mountain springs. However, armies may have to carry it in deserts, high peaks or if the Giants poison wells.

SUPPLYING AN ARMY

Since excursions require vast amounts of food, armies usually struggle to decide battles without excessive delay. Lords with friends in other lands try to buy new supplies in the middle of their marches. They always need scouts to hurry ahead of the troops and find food. Large armies must roam constantly, always seeking a new source of rations. Obviously, the enemy tries to cut them off or steal the new supplies.

TACTICS

Enemies search for each other on marches through the countryside. They often miss one another entirely. Commanders seldom know what the foe is doing, or where he is. Weaker armies sometimes avoid the enemy on purpose, preferring to weave through enemy lands proclaiming "victory," robbing castles and challenging the enemy to stop them. This forces the enemy to waste its supplies in a chase. The victims of these tactics resent them bitterly and maytake revenge by slaughtering prisoners.

Once armies see each other, it takes them hours to assemble for combat. An enemy can easily run away before being attacked. Armies march as a ragged, confused band, which must separate, form a line and pull the supplies to safety before fighting. All leaders struggle to find an orderly system of organization, to attack before the enemy is ready or at least prevent anyone from doing that to them. So far, no commander has a working system. Battles begin when both sides are ready to fight.

Most warriors learn useful tactics after a few battles. They match spears against cavalry, set ambushes, strike from behind and crush footmen with lancers. The mobs which accompany armies often ruin these plans, charging at unexpected times or routing. Sons Of Alaros also forsake prudence when chivalry demands it. Many Sons have an amazing sense of strategy but must remember that there are higher goals than victory. Since their people are doomed, they would gladly die for honor.

Many battles end in reconciliation, especially if the warring barons are close relatives. War is the business of a noble, and few lords take it personally. Only tavern rowdies insist on killing each other over a minor scrap. Nobles can settle with enemies, even over the corpses of the slain. Heralds shuttle about during battles with messages of bravado or compromise.

These customs cannot last. The coming war threatens be a contest with few rules and no pity. Whoever wins will choose the Overlord, to rule every inch of the Narlshaw, with his idea of Justice and Law. Humans and Dwarves fight on one side, bestial Sky Giants stand on the other. Neither would offer mercy or compromise to the other. Nobles stockpile surplus grain for sieges and winter campaigns while the Lot swear oaths to subsist by eating prisoners.

1 • THE LEONINES OF THARN

The Grand Empire of Tharn formed this elite force to insure the Emperor's supremacy over its squabbling petty lords. Leonines keep peace within the Empire, patrol the Imperial City, and defend the Imperial Personage. They enforce Imperial judgments in disputes between lesser governors. Since the Grand Ruler (or "Emperor") has no time to consider every case of law, Leonine Officers often actually pass these judgments, usually after making a pretense of referring them to the Capital.

Everyone respects the Leonines. They receive salaries of twenty gold coins a year, plus housing in the Imperial Barracks and sumptuous rations. Although the Emperor cannot afford winter campaigns any more than other leaders, he keeps his troops ready year-round. They remain in arms for most of their adult lives, wearing golden badges and plumed helms. Older Leonines receive easier duties, but few retire from the force. Anyone who leaves without consent is burned as a deserter; Emperors trust that such stern behavior discourages revolts. No Leonine may take another job, so a general cannot hope to ever crown himself Emperor.



Custom and tradition work. Most Leonine troops scorn civilian office, preferring the efficiency of their hierarchy. A Leonine looks on humanity as children, who need protection and guidance. The warriors consider themselves utterly loyal to the Emperor. However, they may not follow his every command. They gladly twist Imperial words for the benefit of the Empire.

Of course, they must protect the Emperor's ego too. Leonine officers pay teams of mercenaries to do things they must disavow. Some of the Emperor's own bodyservants accept their bribes. They might go so far as to spy on Malkus himself, manipulate him with rumors, and occasionally incapacitate the Emperor with sleeping-draughts. Leonines also send spies and assassins into the courts of wayward Overlords. Their agents regularly infiltrate the Sky Giants' villages and strongholds, to keep the giants pacified. A few have already sneaked into Onopole, to subvert it.

All male relations of the Grand Ruler of Tharn must join the Leonines. This custom is supposed to maintain stability by making them ineligible for the Throne. Emperors always give their closest relatives generalships to keep them from resenting service. More distant relatives join gladly, eager for the pay and glory of a warrior. Some journey thousands of miles to enter the elite force. The Emperor accepts them all, without examining their lineage. Lesser soldiers usually have only tenuous claims to Imperial blood. This makes it easy for officers to expel the cowards and insubordinates.

The laws of the Empire recognize Leonines as the Emperor's flesh, and forbid anyone to shame them. This precedent makes it difficult to impose discipline. In practice, officers abuse lesser soldiers freely, knowing that they cannot prove their right to be true Leonines. High-ranking Leonines come from nobler classes and usually strive to serve their Empire with honor and ferocity.

There are punishments among the Leonines. Even noble warriors can be "trusted" with suicidal missions. Any soldier who deserts or refuses orders can no longer be considered a Leonine. Officers may order such a man to be burned to death. Thus, nobody may say that the Emperor has shameful flesh.

There are two types of Leonines: the Foot, and the Fleet. Foot Leonines form infantry, while the Fleet wear heavy armor and ride chariots. New recruits must buy their own equipment which means that rich soldiers can join the Fleet Leonines. Poorer ones always become footsoldiers.

Foot Leonines guard buildings, serve officers and form screens of infantry to distract the enemy while Fleet Leonines win glory and battles. They wear red plumes and tiny badges of a lion's tail, worth a gold piece each. Commanders arm them with full chain or leather jerkins, depending on how much mobility their task requires. They usually wield swords or crossbows. Commanders dislike these lowly troops, and the Foot Leonines know it. They live under strict discipline in the barracks but disobey orders when given a chance.

Fleet Leonines ride chariots. They have lion-claw brooches worth ten gold pieces each, which they use to fasten scarlet cloaks. Warriors of this rank wear half plate, since their vehicles carry the weight. Fleet Leonines carry an arsenal of javelins, lances and maces in their chariots, for different phases of battle. Most of them also carry large bags of personal gear and booty.

Charioteers command the Foot Leonines and rank themselves into ten Orders. Warriors begin at Tenth Order and receive promotions whenever higher-ranked Leonines consider them worthy. Fleet Leonines prefer to fight on flat terrain. They charge in a line, first hurling javelins then closing with lowered lances and scythe blades spinning on their axles.

Few Leonines rise above Fifth Order. Those that do can always trace a coherent family tree to the Emperor and expect complete freedom, even in battle. These warriors are the Leonine Officers. They stay behind the main chariot line. These warriors strike wherever they see opportunities, succoring friends, riding over wounded foes or sweeping around enemy flanks.

Only the Emperor can appoint Leonine Generals of the First Order. He reserves the post for brothers, uncles and other close relatives who must be flattered. These leaders wear golden breastplates, with a lion's whole body engraved across them. Only the Emperor himself displays a lion's head. These breastplates cost 1000 gold pieces each.

Leonines may hire anyone as a spy. They solicit beggars, adventurers and burglars, hiring them in Inns and alleyways. The officers keep their bargains informal, to avoid being publicly connected with the operations. Independent Overlords usually do business with the spies, knowing that the Leonines will reward them later. These Overlords always receive special treatment in property disputes or other cases.

The Leonines employ 10-50 illicit agents at any given time. They always consider proposals from prospective agents for new projects, usually offering to pay after the mission is complete. Secret agents typically receive five gold coins for a mission. The Leonine's spies identify each other with a half-twisted loop of parchment. They communicate using scrolls which contain innocuous messages. Each agent uses some trademark punctuation to indicate key words which form a message. Typical methods include ink blots or tears in the parchment. The Leonines also arrange for their agents to buy nuber-venom, for one gp per dose.

The Leonines raise support troops by pardoning criminals. When a serf on one of Tharn's estates breaks his lord's law, the Leonines may review his case. If they have use of the convict, they can remit his punishment by offering a term of indentured service. Overlords usually welcome this avenue for disposing of criminals. However, a few complain that their worst offenders escape execution by serving the army. Every twenty Foot Leonines receives one slave; charioteers are given one servant per two warriors. Officers sometimes use trusted helots to drive their chariots in battle, leaving them free to hurl javelins without worrying about the reins.

The Tharn Empire currently has 2,000 Foot Leonines and 400 Charioteers. Their officers control an Imperial Allotment of 50,000 gold pieces, intended for supplies, lodging, salaries, and such. A substantial portion is diverted to secret agents. Half the Leonines live in the Imperial City. Another three hundred footsoldiers and fifty Fleet Leonines dwell at several Lot castles, supposedly to show Imperial favor. They also prevent the Giants from plotting against Malkus. The rest of the Leonines patrol Tharn. They could muster at the Imperial city if needed. In case of war, the Emperor of Tharn could also raise an army of nearly 10,000 by calling on its Overlords to muster with their private forces — not including the Brazen Horde of Lot.

2•THE BRAZEN HORDE

Emperor Malkus has yet another army. The so-called King of the Sky Giants serves the Empire and can find a few score warriors for any task the Emperor desires to undertake. When the Lot go raiding, they usually have some mission from the Empire, or claim to. They constantly petition for Leonine reinforcements. Leonines scrupulously avoid becoming entangled in the petty banditry practiced by rampaging bands of Giants. Still they recognize an obligation to retaliate against Garlon's for raiding Lot villages.

Sky Giants can also raise a Bray'z Herde. It numbers 50-60 warriors, all of them powerful Giants. The Herde strikes terror into every foe, but Malkus himself hesitates to call for them, fearing that the Horde may run amok, robbing every land indiscriminately. The King Of Lot often bullies his Emperor into waiving taxes and tithes by hinting that he might be forced to use the Bray'z Herde to raise the money.

Despite this, the Giants of Lot support Tharn. They view the Ruler as a remote version of their Bull, perhaps a minor war-god from another land. Lot's warriors do not fear the Empire, but they respect it and would not rob Imperial lands unless there were no other victims anywhere.

The Lot laugh at logistics and supply-trains. They steal what they need and catch slaves to carry it. Fiercer Giants take vows to subsist on slain foemen, for one Mannish corpse provides a day's rations to a Giant. In practice, Lot depend more on slain mounts than people, since one warhorse feeds four Giants.

Sky Giants use poison avidly if grossly, coating their weapons with nuber-root when they can get it. Some Giants delight in polluting wells. Wiser warriors suppress this practice furiously, knowing that they may need to drink there too.

3•THE TROOPS OF ALAROS

Talin, Lord Of Alaros has 600 knights-of-his-body. He can rely on roughly 800 more troops from loyal Sons. If some emergency galvanized the whole realm, less committed lords might add 300 warriors to the host, and the Free Cities could surely commit their 600 militiamen. Still, a Lord has no power but his moral force to compel obedience from the Sons of Alaros.

4•THE DWARVEN FYRD

The Dwarves of Wuliris barely maintain an army. The Dwarven "King" relies upon 100 steadfast mercenaries to keep the peace and refuses to pay for more. However, Dunel himself must be reckoned with. He fights expertly, never counts his foes and wields a sword of fire. The Dwarven King presides over a small court of warriors and wizards.

Fewer than 1,000 Dwarves live in Onopole; Dunel can raise 300 armed troops from them. Dwarves work as smiths, miners and craftsmen and can leave their work when they must. All own axes, shields and chain hauberks. Dunel can call another 200 warriors from the hinterlands. Northern Dwarves would send 100 warriors too if Dunel called, although he prefers to leave them guarding his fortune. Anyone who manages to invade the Bald Mountains will discover that these are only Dunel's best troops. Every Dwarf — grandmothers, children and one-legged miners included — will resist invasion. They would eagerly spy, steal food, and even kill messengers to drive the enemy away.

5•THE BOLTEERS OF GARLON

The barons of Garlon owe homage to their lord and leader, the man they call "High King." They carry bolts of cloth from the Kingdom Skein as tokens of their vows, which give them their name. In theory, they number 1,000 nobles, 1,500 free land-holders and 500 city militiamen. Actually, only about half of these Men would readily obey their High King. However, most would unite against some hated enemy, such as the Giants.

Bolteers regularly form parties of five to forty warriors to raid the Lot. They think of these excursions as a violent game, taking delight in injuring the Giants and stealing their loot. These bands welcome anyone who dares to join. In return, Lot warriors assault their holdings more often than any Bolteer cares to remember.

The troops of Garlon never ride horses, which are rare in Wuliris. They carry their own gear and fight with longbows. Most wear rigid leather breastplates. They bear shields and broadswords for close fighting. Nobles often dress in chain hauberks since they can afford lackeys to carry gear.

Garlon's soldiers favor surprise attacks and are experts at striking sentries with well-placed arrows. They shun fair battles, using hill slopes and barrages of arrows to keep enemies from attacking them. The lords of Alaros and Tharn call the Garlonese cowards, and they are. Still, nobody knows exactly how to suppress these tactics.

The men of Garlon prepare their ambushes with careful scouting. They send stealthy rangers ahead of their forces to report on the enemy. This "spying" may give Garlon a tremendous advantage. No other army currently concerns itself with gathering such information before a battle begins, but in a future war, Garlon's victories may force them to adopt its methods. That would create new demand for experienced adventurers.



THE BOLTEERS OF GARLON

PART VI

• THE REALM •

The insert map and following key describe the major regions of Narlshaw and include a few notes about local histories, politics and mores.

1. The Grand Empire Of Tharn. Tharn is a flat country swept by fierce, frigid winds. The forests die out here, leaving lush steppe. The Lotshaw Mountains rise suddenly at the borders, with few foothills. Farmers work Tharn's plains and cultivate almost all the land. The wooden villas of lesser lords overlook endless miles of fields.

Lords generally administer their lands or hire seneschals to do it, but they lack the sovereignty of a regent. The Grand Ruler or Emperor controls the army. His Mandators decree policies for Lords to execute. Without real power, the nobles devote themselves to a privileged, almost snobbish, social life. They attend galas and balls, trying to impress one another with their refinement. Nobles ostracize anyone who defies the latest fashion.

2. Aka Narlta, Imperial Capital. Walls of white marble surround this compact city. Aka Narlta has withstood the cruel climate since the close of the Second Era, and the threats of the Dragonlord throughout the Third Era have not killed the town's sense of pride, however removed it might be from the greater part of the known world. Narrow homes and shops lean over the streets. The sprawling slums seem as dark as caves beneath the eaves overhead. Ruins of forgotten times litter the narrow streets.

The city's innermost ward belongs to the Emperor. Mandators live in towers around the wall. The Emperor's pinnacle rises at the city center, surrounded by statues and arches to Imperial might. Lords and Mandators vie incessantly for the Emperor's support. He awards it to those who flatter him most shamelessly. Intriguers lurk everywhere, eager for an excuse to condemn their rivals. Within the Imperial City, one must weigh every word he speaks.

3. Fist Of Emperors. A limestone butte rises out of the grass here, like a monstrous tooth. The crumbling walls allow horses to struggle up in places, but this 200' high pinnacle forms a natural citadel. Long ago, Elves fashioned a tower upon it. Tharn expanded the tower into a fortress, the headquarters of its Leonine Guard.

4. Awkor. The serfs of this town grow flax and chate, which they gather for export. Awkor has few defenses or stone buildings. The cloth trade does not make anyone rich, but few are impoverished. Wagon caravans visit Awkor frequently to buy linen. Most merchants come from Garlon; clans send inexperienced younger sons on this journey, because they consider it safe. The boys add excitement to the city. Travellers steal, get drunk, challenge locals to duels and do other rowdy things that might embarrass them closer to home.

5. Thale. Golden fields of wheat stretch in all directions here, broken only by stone walls and small farming villages. People know the serfs of Burlfields for their bigotry and ignorance. Petty lords spend most of their time in more luxurious places like Avero's Keep, leaving bailiffs to oversee their fiefs. These overseers force peasants to work without mercy and enforce laws strictly. Travellers can expect rude treatment and no accommodations in Thale.

6. Baltet. The Goldflow runs deep here, between two hillocks. Castles of black stone stand on either side, straddling the river. Ponderous chains lie coiled on the riverbanks. In war, the garrison can stretch them across the water to stop shipping. Villages of fishermen and barge-traders cluster around the forts.

A troop of 40-60 Foot Leonines man these forts. They obey the Emperor, not the Lord of Baltet. Leonine commanders consider him a threat to the Emperor's power, since he could hold this fort against them. Most think the Emperor should raze this castle. The Mandators of trade insist on keeping it, because of its influence over the Bald Mountains' trade routes to the south and west.

The Lord rules Baltet's people. They love him, and he labors to remain popular, since the Leonines deny him most other power. Imperial troops man Baltet castle and review his decrees. Imperial monopolists run the local inns and businesses. They charge exorbitant rates, pay their workers little and cheat local people. People often charge them in the Lord's court, demanding higher wages, lower prices or an end to various frauds. Lord Baltet always finds in favor of his people. Often, the Leonines veto these decisions. This increases the friction between Baltet's people and their Empire.

7. Avero's Keep. Rich grass grows on the rolling hills of Avero. A gilded villa overlooks its fields, ruled by Lord Avero, one of the richest men in Tharn. The estate forms a vast rectangle, surrounding courtyards and fountains. The Lord holds a continual fete here.

The revel centers around the courtyard and spreads into the palace rooms. Throughout the day, warriors tilt or play polo on the grass. Bards sing each evening beneath lanterns. Demure girls serve wine in crystal goblets at all hours.

Anyone of gentle blood may join the festival. Tharn's officials often come here to escape the stifling Imperial Court. Lords of Garlon and the Thousand Fiefdoms (small territories to the south and southeast) also visit the palace. One may win entrance by presenting the seal ring of a known noble house or by defeating Lord Avero in a joust. The rules for this tilt specify that a challenger must appear "in full plated regalia, with visored helm and blackened shield, on the finest warhorse in his possession." Avero provides only his own gear and blunted lances. They fight to first unhorsing. If each unseats the other, the challenger receives "full honor." Common folk may only enter as servants or entertainers. The aristocrats constantly aim barbed jokes at them.

The Lord permits almost anything within his villa. Guests may drink, gamble, philander, or even kill each other in fair duels. In the festive atmosphere, even sober lords give themselves to carousing. They also develop conspiracies. Bribery and conspiracy are common here. However, Avero does not tolerate boors. His heralds promptly eject anyone who curses, cheats, spits, strikes an equal outside of a duel or otherwise violates the honor of the genteel class.

The Emperor of Tharn seldom visits Avero's Keep. Imperial loyalists consider the fete vaguely subversive, since it attracts rulers from distant lands and treats them as equals. The Imperial family likes to feel that only it possesses noble blood. Still, the Emperor finds Avero invaluable for entertaining foreign diplomats. Also, Leonine spies learn interesting things from the drunken petty-rulers there.

8. Skor. Hills and ridges fragment the province of Skor. Forests of pale leafy trees cover the lowlands, full of little streams and fens. Crude shepherd people live in these hills. Giants of the Lotshaw Mountains occasionally raid them, despite numerous treaties not to trouble the Empire.

The wizards of Aka Narlta believe that rich iron veins run through Skor. Smaller deposits contain tin, nickel and silver. The Empire's Mandators press for more mines here, to dilute the influence of the Dwarves. Although Skor's three Lords try to run profitable mines, they seldom satisfy the greed of those in the Capital. Most of their mines cost more to find and operate than they produce. Then, the metal must be carted to market.

9. Jorda. Golden grasses waft in the breeze on these plains. There is little water, but chate grows here, and peasants plant wheat near springs. Others tend herds of toorkaan and Montex. Emperor Malkus' sister Shara rules these lands.

Shara lives in a white stone mansion, with one fortified tower. Its stables contain her famous tortoiseshell coach, which is worth 1,000 gold pieces. The Imperial Leonines provide ten guards, mostly to keep her from plotting rebellion. Peasants stay clear of such petty court intrigue, trying to please both their mistress and her watchers.

Shara is young, unmarried and, according to a discredited election, Empress of Tharn. A constant stream of young noblemen woo her. To encourage them, she maintains a fashionable court, with balls, art and famed musicians. Without a debut here, one cannot be truly accepted in Tharn's society. When not entertaining her guests, Shara visits the Capital, leaving her castle under a steward. She usually chooses a favorite suitor for this honor.

A dozen waiting-women, weavers, caterers and hangers-on attend Shara. The Lords and Mandators of Tharn send their daughters here, for training in social graces. They manage social affairs, do necessary work and occasionally compete for the men who visit their mistress. A crone named Morgau oversees the girls. Morgau wields all real power at Shara's castle.

Morgau knows the people and secrets which rule the empire. Her girls come from the most powerful houses in Tharn. The gossip, cliques and romantic rivalries of her flock seem innocent, but they can send noblemen to the block. Angry, Morgau was frustrated in her attempt to crown her mistress as Empress of Tharn. Now she plots to select and encourage Malkus' wife, planning to enter the Imperial Court that way, with her power intact.

10. Jarl Niord. Jarl Niord Villa stands on a small island in a cold lake under the eaves of Tharn's northern forest. A hillock raises it high above the water. The huntsmen and shepherds of this region produce less revenue than wheat farmers, making it unpopular among Tharn's Lords. Therefore, most of them rejoiced when the Emperor's sister Karlta requested it as compensation for losing the Throne. (Only the Leonines grimly speculate about her real motives.)

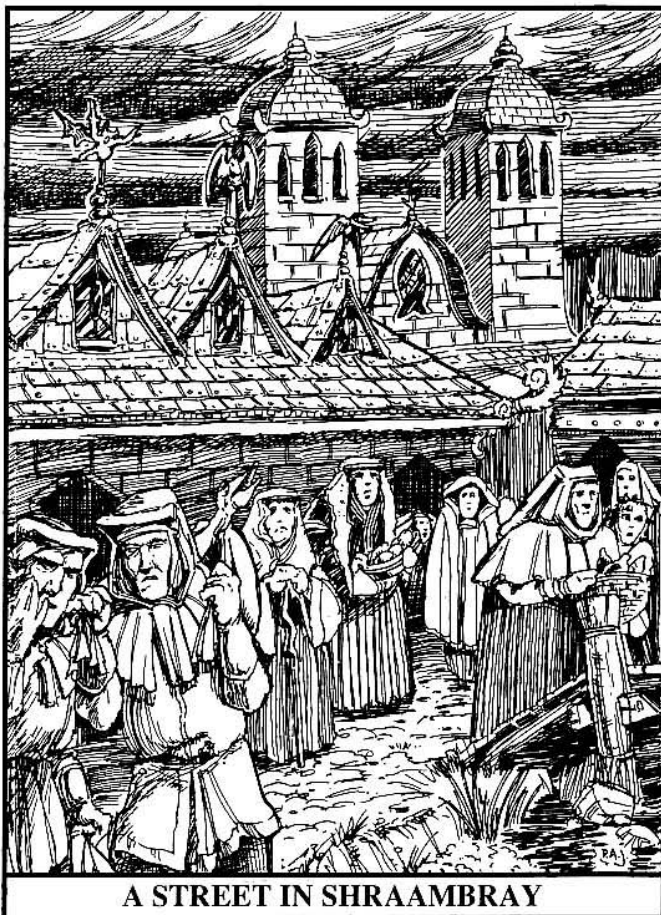
The island makes a wonderful fortress. Karlta rules from a wooden bailey on the hill, employing 30 trusty warriors as guards, along with 10 Dwarven mercenaries. Several tribes of Lot swear loyalty to her too. The terms of Karlta's Lordship forbid castle walls, but she has surrounded her island with a high wooden stockade. Nobody cares to order it removed. Other defenses include an earthen rampart above the beach, with tunnels beneath it and arrow ports in the sides.

Despite her defenses, Karlta behaves hospitably to guests. She has many friends among the older nobles of Tharn, especially the warrior-barons, who feel out of place in refined society. Karlta would always welcome a new

ally, including an adventurer who can serve as a spy or saboteur.

11. Hemlin. Wooded hills surround Hemlin, a village scarred by landslides. Logging and fires have destroyed much of the foliage, leaving the soil free to wash away. Avalanches of mud plague these hills in the spring. Slag fouls the streams. The Imperial Mandators ordered the Lord of Hemlin to mine the wealth of his lands, and he dutifully obeyed, despite the damage.

Lord Sten dares not disobey. Hemlin lies deep within Lot territory, and only Tharn's treaty with the Giants keeps them from sacking it. Giants frequently "forget" the contract anyway. Therefore, the Guard of Tharn posts 10-20 Foot Leonines under his command. He lives in a stone keep, with wooden outer walls.



A STREET IN SHRAAMBAY

Lord Sten rules a community of murderous serfs who pride themselves on their curving mustaches. He arms them and encourages raids on Garlon. They occasionally drive off hill-families and actually keep their land. Naturally, the Lord collects tribute from these raids, and uses it to make up for his mining losses. Whenever the Mandators demand new gold and silver from mines, he tries to dig them on foreign territory. Of course, the Bolteers retaliate. Lord Sten relies upon the Leonines to repel them, because the Empire always seeks new mines and new sources of wealth.

12. Balth. The gray sea flows into a deep fjord here, allowing the largest ships to dock in the few warm months of the year. Ice covers the harbor in winter, which lasts for six months. Icebergs drift past even in warmer months. A small city surrounds the inlet, Tharn's only port. Until recently, this was a free city. Then the Empire annexed it to counter Alaron seapower.

Balth's people hate the Emperor. Both their exiled lord and the Lord who succeeded him share their sentiments. Therefore, the current ruling Lord allows his city to be the continent's capital of vice. He secretly owns several of the largest bawdy-houses himself. His citizens shelter bandits, malcontents and pirates whose task it is to harass Tharn.

Furthermore, dock revenues remain far lower than the Emperor had hoped, due largely to an explosion of graft.

13. Belgor. The rugged islands of Belgor do their part to shelter Narlshaw from the sea. Great rifts sunder these isles, with white surf roiling between them. Waves crash against the black cliffs, sending foam hundreds of feet into the air. Huge clams live in the pulverized rock beneath precipices. Seals bask on the lee sides of the rocky, windswept islands.

Several tribes of Fishing Barbarians dwell on Belgor. These tribes live in its icy crags and row kayaks expertly around the treacherous sea. Fishing Barbarians are a dark people who dress in furs and subsist on seafood. Belgor's people generally treat guests kindly, unless frightened.

Ten years ago, Tharn attempted to colonize Belgor. The Leonines built several towers on the island. The Fishing Barbarians resolved to expel them, and several Sons Of Alaros came to help them. (As elsewhere, Alarons will not tolerate the presence of Tharn here). A strong fleet poised at Belgor could one day act to blockade Alaros. The two countries quickly signed a treaty restricting Belgor to the Barbarians and made it illegal for any ship to land here.

Pirates, smugglers and fur-poachers violate this ban. Barbarians sail to Alaros occasionally for iron tools (they can see Belgor on the horizon). The Alarons arm the tribes and encourage them to massacre intruders. The Fishing People barely comprehend their role in the complicated diplomacy of northern Wuliris. They still welcome any soft-spoken people who bring gifts and respect their ways. Others, they slaughter. Crafty pirates have persuaded the Fishing People to scout for them, finding merchant cogs and reporting their courses. Therefore, traders from Tharn and Garlon feel justified in shooting at Fishermen's kayaks with bows and arrows.

14. Mount Mirianda. A veil of clouds conceals Mirianda Peak from the lands below. This mountain looms above the eastern Lotshaw Range like a tree among wheat-stalks. All of its trails end at the base of towering cliffs, glazed with ice or wet with meltwater from unseen glaciers above. Lowlanders can scarcely breath here, in the rarefied air. Somewhere above, the slope levels to a mossy tableland, before arching up to the summit. No Man is said to have reached the ice-bound summit and returned to speak of the ascent.

Elves live on Mount Mirianda, hidden from lands below. They follow their Lord Cellion, Ghost Of The Eagle, an Elf who long ago ruled the Sky Giants. Cellion reserves special hatred for Hemlin and its mines. They despoil the mountains and defile pristine Elven streams. Someday, the Eagle's Ghost plans to repay them.

The winds themselves obey Cellion. Clouds cloak his fields, and gales sweep intruders from the rock-face. Only Elves may climb his cliffs unmolested. Cellion's people live in a town of mud brick, festooned with red lichens. Spells make their crops grow in the thin air. The Eves of Mirianda own jewels and wield laen swords unseen since the wars of Dominion; many Elvish artifacts hidden on the mountain top are worth a fortune anywhere on Kulthea.

Cellion pursues crueller enchantments too, magic long banned by his people. He flies abroad on a disc of sable cloth, seizing Men as scapegoats. The Elf slays them at a crevice on the summit glacier. As they die, his incantations reach the Void. Cellion calls to the Elf-Demons and has nearly become one himself.

This Elven-King forbids his people to climb the peak. The Elves parley with spirits of ice and stone, for power over Men. They prefer not to know what happens on the glacier, but if confronted with the gruesome truth, most would stand with their Lord.

Cellion soars into the clouds on rainy nights, combing the land for occult wisdom. The Tower Of the Moon (see below) fascinates him. He occasionally recruits fellow adepts of black magic for nights of mayhem. Cellion swoops down on his partner at sunfall, crashing through windows if necessary. He scoops him onto his disc and soars over villages, raining destruction and recklessly appealing to the Unknown.

The Ghost Of The Eagle welcomes Elves to his village, but no guest may leave, except on Cellion's errands. He wants information from the lands below, news about sorcerers who would barter with the Ghost, or ones who might be suitable for a midnight flight. Cellion can punish those who betray him; the Neng pursue his enemies.

The rarefied air causes lowlanders a -50 on all activity. When first reaching this altitude, climbers must pass a resistance roll against a level 1 attack; victims who fail the roll, faint. PCs may grow accustomed to thin air by attempting resistance rolls against a 20th level attack. Failure means no effect. One may attempt this roll once per day and each success reduces the -50 penalty by ten points. If the adventurer descends and returns, he must begin at -50 again. Add Constitution bonuses to all RRs dealing with altitude. [Rarefied air causes all activities to be at 2x END; if END rules are not being used, all activities are at -2. Con roll at +3 must be made when first reaching this altitude; failure results in unconsciousness. A Con roll at -4 is required to become "accustomed" to the altitude.]

Any non-Elf climbing the cliffs suffers a -40 on all Climbing Maneuver checks due to wind and ice. [-3 to Climbing Rolls]

Cellion's Disc is a circle of black canvas on a wooden hoop. It holds up to 500 pounds and flies at up to forty miles per hour in any direction [15 STR, SPD 2, 12" Flight]. The user controls it by pulling its material in the desired direction. If two people pull different ways, both should attempt *Very Hard* static maneuvers, modified by Strength [They should make STR vs. STR rolls.] The one who rolls higher chooses the direction. A loser can repeat the contest after one minute. If either one Blunders, the fabric rips, destroying Cellion's disc. Then both riders fall.

15. Tower of The Moon. Dense forests cover the site of Lunar Stronghold. Stands of pine and birch glades grow everywhere. Outcrops of rugged granite poke up from the years of leaf-fall, and little streams flow over them. One could believe that this was virgin woodland, untouched since the days of Elves. Yet sometimes, travellers fancy they see carved stones among the moss and rootlets. And the ground itself rings on moonlit nights, like a drum.

An early village of Men once stood here. In the years before the War of Dominion, Men chose to build their own stone fortresses, as did the Elves. The Imperial House of Aka Narlta owns the only archives from that period, and it suppresses them. Apparently, the ancestors of Tharn accepted unusual help in founding their city.

A mystic bonfire taught the city's founders to build. They received mental messages from an orb of white, cold flame, which they claimed was kindled on the moon Charon. These people came to worship this fire, as a champion of hunting, and stealth, and night. By law, citizens of the Lunar Stronghold worked in darkness and slept during the day. Hunting-Priests piled stolen jewels and silver beneath its altar and fought to exterminate peoples of the upstart Sun. In the Second Era Wars of Dominion, they joined with the legendary North Wind Dragon to fight against the Elves and Loremasters. Then, during one of the long eclipses common in those days, Charon passed in front of Orhan, and a conflagration engulfed the city. Years later, an Elvish host reclaimed these lands from the Dragon. They found only rubble where the fortress once stood. The Elves planted trees and left the stones to weather and wear away.

The Lunar Stronghold still exists. The rise of Unlife simply gave the Lunar Spirit enough power to take its people into its own domain, beneath the ground. His followers died, but continued their old lives, as Undead. During any lunar eclipse, an old Tower shimmers into view over the trees with a light atop it, replacing the shadowed Moon. It persists for 2-6 days afterward. The old citizens of the Tower emerge to haunt the nearby lands. People can enter the tower then, and if they choose or are trapped, may travel into the Lunar Spirit's underworld. Eventually, the city fades into the forest again, taking explorers and followers with it.

16. The Lotshaw Mountains. Rocky ridges, steep icy gorges and wooded valleys pock the land of the Sky Giants. On the south, Lot's hills rise to become the chill peaks of Garlon. In the north, they descend into the scrub trees and foothills of Tharn. Although Lord Bull of Lot technically serves the Empire, nobody really rules this land or its people.

Anyone who enters this land can expect to meet robbers. The hills and brush offer ambush sites beyond number. Punitive expeditions from Garlon pass through too, assuming that whomever they meet is a foe. Bears, Spotted Lions and nearly-invisible, brush-covered crevices add to the danger. The Giants respect anyone who overcomes these perils. Bold souls may actually prosper here. Many tribes of Giants welcome foreign warriors, although few Lot would refuse the opportunity to betray and despoil strangers.

17. Stone Hall Of Lot. A black canyon of volcanic stone slashes a deep cut the stark hills here. In places, its cliffs sink hundreds of feet into the mountains, where dark boulders contrast with pure, foaming waterfalls in the river at its bottom. Perfectly formed birches sway from the cliffsides. Brilliant fish leap from the water and despite the rocky terrain, deer, wild Montex and other beasts bound freely through the crags. The Lord Bull of Lot rules this gorge, and he insists upon eating fresh game.

Cucunain, the Bull, lives in a palace on a hill which commands the ravine. He ordered it built to resemble the greatest keeps in Tharn, with elongated, arched windows and graceful thin towers. (Elves built Tharn's keeps centuries ago.) Cucunain's engineers were less skillful, and his towers collapse regularly. Cables bind the standing towers together, for mutual support.

Lord Bull crowds a whole township of Men into his courtyard. He hires far more craftsmen than he could ever need, paying for tanners, astrologers, puppeteers and tinkers. Royal farms fan out into the rolling hillsides north of the spine of the central Lotshaws. Like the Emperor Of Tharn, Lord Bull maintains a court of counsellors, who call themselves Mandators. Lord Bull mixes social classes outlandishly in his staff, giving merchants positions alongside gentlemen, and actually consulting baseborn farmers about matters such as crops and weather.

Cucunain spends his time in the feasting hall. Dozens of Giants fawn on him, and his wives bring endless rounds of brandy. Giants from the Brass Stair and the hinterlands visit to seek Cucunain's blessings and prophecies. They freely pilfer from other guests. Traditionally, the victim settles his grievances with a duel. The Bull himself gladly challenges guests to wrestling matches and swilling-contests. Anyone who fights hard or drinks deeply can win a spot in his council.

Despite his revelry, Cucunain is a mighty king. If anyone irritates him, he might blithely smash the offender's skull. Hostages from many lands lie chained in the dungeons beneath his palace. The Giants worship Cucunain as their god. He can shatter armies with his magic and call upon hordes of fanatical Giants to scourge his foes. No enemy can pry Lord Bull from the treacherous cliffs and blind canyons of his Stone Hall.

18. Kabal Woods. Mists hang over these forests, occasionally shifting in the constant chill breezes. Stagnant water floods much of Kabal Woods, littered with fallen trees and cut stone. The ruins of small Mannish settlements lie in the frozen mud, left over from the domain of the Moon Spirit (see 15, above). Clans of lesser Fey Folk dwell in the old ruins and occasionally torment travellers with thefts and pranks. Others report that the Pysk saved them from quicksand — and then robbed them.

19. Free Keep Of Crossborders. The land is clear and grassy here, but hilly, with stands of pine trailing north from each rise. The borders of Alaros, Tharn and the Fief Of The Bald Mountains meet here. A walled town stands where the borders meet, surrounding a square keep. The Elves built the first walls here in the Second Age, but Men live here now.

The townspeople elect a Lord Mayor to rule their Keep, and a Lord Magistrate as judge. They have no noble family and are careful to avoid such encumbrances. The huntsmen and land-holding farmers of the surrounding territories jealously protect their freedom. With its high stone walls, the Keep can withstand almost any enemy. Citizens of the Keep vote for just laws, although visitors often find them strict. City codes prohibit public disturbance and drinking, impose a curfew at sundown and levy tolls on an amazing variety of bridges, gates and businesses, to keep harvest taxes down. Among other taxes, the town collects a one-third tithe of any treasure recovered from Pine Caves.

The Keep supports numerous smiths and craftsmen. People from all three of Crossborders' neighbors trade here. Visitors from Tharn and Alaros sometimes scuffle on the streets, although Keep Guards quickly set troublemakers in the stocks. The Keep depends on Onople for its richest trade. Dwarves buy much of their food and wood here and pay in gold.



BELL KNAP TOWN SCENE

The Giants of Pine Caves (see #20 below) waylay and rob travellers whenever they can. Giants occasionally make sallies at the Keep, but have no way to penetrate its walls and usually disperse after a few hours or days. The Giants have one agent in the town Akarn, an aspiring magician trades them information about caravans for artifacts. (The Lot have found many relics of the Moon Cult in the deeper caves) Akarn hopes to learn spells from them, but currently knows no more than a few minor enchantments and some sleight-of-hand.

A constant trickle of "honest burglars" use the Keep as a base for raiding Pine Caves. Townspeople mistrust them. Farmers say they should "work for a living." When someone commits a crime, the Keep Militia suspects them first. The Militia constantly emphasizes that it can fend off the Lot without help. Although people dislike the delvers, they tolerate them, because soldiers-of-fortune discourage the Giants and spend money at inns.

20. Pine Caves. These hills rise to sharp crests, which break off in summer rainstorms and sometimes cause mudslides. Stark evergreens grow from the slopes. Their roots hang across the dirty mouths of caves. Two underground labyrinths honeycomb these hills, linked by a rubble-filled tunnel. Several factions of Giants live in these holes, sometimes raiding the countryside and more often fighting each other.

The people of these lands view the Giants as outlaws, an attitude which inspires fortune-seekers to attack them for treasure. Almost a dozen adventurer-bands prowl the Pine Caves. Beneath the ground, no laws apply. Treasure-seekers freely make bargains and freely break them. The stealthy pick their companions' pockets, and the strong kill each other over loot. They follow two unwritten laws:

(1) explorers must never compromise with the Lot; and (2) explorers must never continue their feuds above ground. Occasionally, a burglar defies these codes. If other explorers catch him, they leave the traitor trussed in an underground passage, ready for the Giants to roast and devour.

In ancient times, worshipers of the Moon Spirit hid in these caves during sunlit hours. They kept ensorcelled charms here, artifacts which the Lot have dug up and learned to use. Many wizards search for lost knowledge and sometimes find more. Wraiths of the Moon Spirit's people wander the deepest chambers, devouring Men.

21. Alaros. Almost all the northern coastline of Narlshaw lies within Alaros. Cliffs and reefs dominate the northern sections, but wear away to sandy beaches around Alaros City. Inland forests and open plains cover the land. Deer, Montex and wolves roam wild everywhere. Most of the grasslands remain wilderness, because the people live on chate, which requires little space to grow.

Around the fringes of this land, most people live under Sons of Alaros or local lords who swear fealty to the Lord. Nearer the settlements, people have adopted the Alaron system of popular government. While some noble families who once ruled these lands plot to overturn the democracies, others pass secrets to Tharn.

Alaros enjoys peace, power and stability. The Sons scourge highwaymen from the roads, and villages have sensible laws with vigilant watches. Some Alarons practice sorcery, but they know their limits and do not meddle with demonology or cursecraft. However, one cannot dismiss this country as tame. Alaros wields great influence, through its wealth, armies and power in the Trader's League. Although it strives to use its power benevolently, people watch the lords of Alaros with fear.

30. Kartalspeak. Roads switchback madly as they climb the steep sides of Kartalspeak. Fields of sharp stones cover the summit, occasionally rolling downhill in landslides. The natural boulders mix with tailings from countless mines. Much of the Bald Mountains' iron comes from here.

The Dwarves protect Kartalspeak with a cliffside stronghold of tunnels (dug into the mountain) which lead to parapets and cross-bow galleries set on the cliff. A village of timber houses and underground tunnels sits beneath it. The mine-owners smelt their ore here and sell the metal to merchants from Onopole. Laborers flock to Kartalspeak's famed Twisty Shovel Inn, which sells the strong brandies Dwarves crave — and for only eight tin coins a glass! Men play raucous card games in the numerous hidden corners of this inn, although the Dwarves generally avoid risking their money.

The old Suzerain of Kartalspeak fled when the Tyrant in Onopole died. Dunel cannot decide who should replace him. He wants to make his favorite admirer, Istar, lord of the mines, but Barl, one of his old travelling companions, insists upon ruling it. Dunel finds Barl's personality unbearable. However, he owes him his life and cannot think of a satisfactory reason to deny Barl the power. Furthermore, Barl is a Dwarf, and Istar is an Alaron Man. For such reasons, Dunel gave Barl the High Seat of the Kartalspeak Stronghold. Yet he insists on keeping Istar in Kartalspeak's court, and Dunel's guards know that in any dispute, they must obey Istar. Barl hires disinherited swordsmen from the Thousand Fiefdoms, rough men who obey him. He also keeps a ferocious spotted wildcat. It occasionally "breaks its chain" and devours Barl's enemies. The clashes of Kartalspeak's two rulers make this province's laws, politics and judgments of criminals completely unpredictable.



31. Vondonnor. Trees and meadows of orange wildflowers soften the southwest of the Bald Mountains. Few Dwarves come here because the hills contain little ore. A small tribe of Elves lives in these woodlands. Their people have traditionally trafficked with Dwarves, and overcome the accustomed chill between those races. These Elves share the Dwarven love for cunning smithwork. They cast precious metals in the shape of leaves and form graceful ornaments of silver, jet, emerald and ruby. Vondonnor's Elves preserve many legends of Teithior.

Elves of the Bald Mountains cultivate few large farms but provide a great deal of food. They coax amazing volumes of fruit from their orchards and berry patches. Others plant chate, wheat and barley in sunny fields. The Elves thank Iloura for these harvests with wild feasts lasting several days. Fauns and Rural Spirits appear in the festivals, playing their pipes with abandon. The Men of the Bald Mountains whisper that these woods-spirits bewitch people and lure them into the forests forever.

Lord Orindil rules Vondonnor. He rejoices at the rise of Dunel, hoping that as Dwarves reassert their ancient role, Elves may regain some of their old power too. Orindil sometimes travels with the Dwarven King, although he is usually preoccupied with affairs in Vondonnor. The Lot sometimes raid his realm, despite its famed archers.

32. Castle Marsh. The land sinks into fens around this tributary of the Goldflow. Ragged evergreens sway above the marshes, with summertime mosquito-breeding pools in the rotting needles beneath them. An old castle stands at the center of the marsh. A maze of thorns and canals protects the castle's gate. Its copper-clad turrets point up like wizard's caps. Indeed, this was the keep of Tarminel, the last great Enchanter of Narlshaw. A few Giants live in its old courtyard, and undead infest the crypts below. These passages connect with a limestone cave far below ground. It holds Tarminel's chambers, built before arts of the Essence vanished.

GM Note: See Part VIII for more about Castle Marsh.

33. The Brass Stair. From a distance, this mountain appears blue, with a thread of brass glinting around its girth. Overgrown roads lead through the forests on its foothills, but only Sky Giants and wild beasts tread here. A great Brass Stair spirals up the mountain-side, to the gates of the Dwarves' ancient capital. The Brass Stair conveys great emotion and symbolizes the Great Past of northern Wuliris to the philosophers of Alaros and Tharn; Dwarves see it as a more pragmatic symbol of loss. Thousands of their ancestors lie buried and all but forgotten atop the mountain, along with extraordinary wealth buried within its gold mines.

Few explorers return from the pits under the Mountain. Pilgrims from the High Grove report that special breeds of monsters not seen elsewhere live on the Stair. (The Dwarves built their Stair to stop invaders, and it leads through numerous rifts and caves, intended as ambush sites.) Nobody knows what happened to the Dragon who conquered this Mountain, but Lot tales of a "lord under the earth" hint at the truth. The worm still lives beneath it . . . with his kin.

GM Note: See Part VIII for more about the Brass Stair.

34. Fief of the Free Dwarves. Lot and an occasional Dragon hunt in these lawless hills. The hardy Free Dwarves fight an endless war of self-defense from their fortified mine complex in a wooded mountain. "King" Jarn leads them. They sell exceptionally fine steels to Onopole. Dunel the Goldhearted trusts Jarn deeply and keeps most of his fortune in the Free Dwarves' vaults. He knows that neither Barl nor Rock Of The Blade can ever find it here. Dunel stores his money as a solid lump of gold, weighing over one hundred pounds.

35. Thousand Fiefdoms. These chilly plains resemble the settled lands of Alaros and Tharn, but possess rougher ground and thicker stands of woods. Several lords own petty fiefs here. Lesser nobles pay homage to greater ones, in a triangle which should culminate with the High King in Garlon. However, most chains of obligation end with an independent noble who refuses to acknowledge higher authority, or lead to one of the Sons of Alaros. Family honor and cold steel rule the Fiefdoms. Petty-lords fight at any pretext, but since most of them own fortresses, their wars seldom resolve much. Sometimes rival lords agree to leave their castles for single combat. This can decide the dispute. It also gives treacherous lords the perfect opportunity for a kidnapping.

36. Garlon. The Garlon Mountains tower in the west of this territory and decline as one goes east. The land becomes flat around the mouth of the Kingsriver and spreads to the sea. Several strange beasts live in the Lot-infested hills, including fierce Gryphons. A few people manage to steal their hatchlings and raise flying steeds, but most Gryphon-hunts end in disaster. Cold winds punish this rugged, rocky land. Although many forests appear in Narlshaw, no other land has so many thick stands of trees. Woods sprout up everywhere, except where farmers diligently clear them.

A patchwork of family territories spreads over Western Garlon. The fiery sons of Clanlords keep them free. These clansfolk own few possessions, but they would never think of themselves as poor. They have sheep, torkaan, homes and bows — what else could one want? Eastern Garlon resembles the Thousand Fiefdoms, but the lords concentrate more on squeezing their subjects than upon fighting each other. Trade flourishes in the villages along the Kingsriver, and merchants from Alaros and Tharn appear everywhere. Laws tend to be harsh in Eastern Garlon, but judges often forgo the executions and brandings if criminals agree to a term of servitude on Red Island.

37. Shaambray. The Kingsriver reflects Shaambray's gloomy streets and copper-roofed buildings. Fifty-foot high walls surround this village, and nobody has attacked it since the Lot marched east five centuries ago. Vendors, foresters, beggars, cheeky townspeople and the seneschals of landlords crowd the boulevards. Landowners sell their serfs' surplus here. The unfortunate sell themselves as indentured servitude. Merchants also deal in copper, lumber, bronze and slaves.

Shaambray is supposed to be the Capital of Garlon's "High King". The village government built twin stone towers as his palace, one on either side of the river, and added a copper causeway between them. However, the High King spends most of his time travelling between rustic castles. Otherwise, he would lose the tribute he collects as hospitality. Furthermore, the King knows that Lord Jayce of Shaambray would readily poison him.

Lord Jayce lives at the towers in his King's absence. He administrates the town, but his power comes from the copper pits of Red Island. Jayce spends his days with a quill, directing the great fleets which take slaves to the island and carry the metal to its buyers. He has made treaties with many of the region's pirates and bitterly hunts the rest. Jayce naturally resents the Dwarves, whose iron competes with his bronze. The Lord of Shaambray pays Rock Of The Blade, Onopole's master thief, as an informer.

38. Bellknap Town. The lighthouses of Bellknap Town wink over a silty delta. Bellknap is a sailors' town, of wharves, shipwrights, inns and disreputable merchants. Bellknap manages to accommodate the pirates and slavers which congregate around all ports. The Council Of Three passes draconian laws. Officially, Bellknap sentences pirate chiefs to hang, and their crews to blinding, branding and perpetual slavery. Similar injunctions forbid thieving, racketeering and private press-ganging. However, judges accept bribes freely. However, when a crime becomes too public, the culprit (or a convenient scapegoat) is convicted and punished with all haste. Authorities almost always know whom to arrest, since he probably paid his bribe in advance. Criminals restrain their behavior not because of the law, but because if they become too notorious, corrupt judges will no longer be able to justify pardoning them.

Many of the town's ship-captains earn their money in Garlon's Free Fleet. They carry letters of marque allowing them to seize the ships of Garlon's enemies, including all unlicensed pirates. The letters do not specify who chooses "Garlon's Enemies." According to law, it would be the High King, but in practice Jayce of Shaambray controls the Free Fleet. These authorized pirates provide many of the slaves for his island. They kidnap drunks, strangers and criminals from Bellknap's alleys. Dashing sailors sometimes seize crewmen from rival ships.

Shifting dunes of mud roll across Bellknap Bay in late Spring and Summer. Large ships cannot enter the town. A host of porters with small boats carry cargo in from the ocean, and upstream to a point where the Kingsriver becomes deep enough for galleys. They charge five silver pieces per boatload. The notoriously cruel KalKurry family administrates the porters. This clan owned the beaches before anyone built a harbor here and now collects dues from porters in a mockery of traditional family obligations.

39. Lew Welleen, The Red Island. From the sea, Lew Welleen looks like a hilly deserted island, with no signs of life. Exotic trees with huge leaves surround the beaches. Ships berth at an unadorned sandstone fortress. Racks of neck manacles stand on the docks, ready for incoming slaves.

Jayce's miners dig great pits which coil downward, open to the sun. His mercenaries patrol the harbor, fences and smelters but are content to survey the rest of their island from the back of a tame Gryphon. They pick the most sadistic prisoners as bosses to oversee the mines. In the bunkhouses, the fiercest prisoners rule, hoarding water and acceptable food. They beat or torture anybody who resists them.

Most of the island lies outside the prison fences. Escaped slaves roam these hills, and rumors say that they are the most vicious of Lew Welleen's deprived inmates. Fierce spotted wildcats lurk in the trees, ready to spring on prey. A tribe of savages lives on the eastern side of Lew Welleen.

Slaves and guards call Welleen's natives "barbs," which is an abbreviation of "barbarians." The barbs do indeed harpoon intruders on sight. They hate strangers, due to long experience with brutal guards and escaped madmen. Among themselves, the natives live peaceful lives and dress in cloth woven from pounded vines. They follow a matriarch clan system like that of the Fishing Peple on Belgor.

40. Narlskien Castle. Rolling, wooded hills stretch to the horizon in all directions from this position. Narlskien Castle stands on a cleared hilltop, near the Garlon Range. It is a white granite palace, with thin, round towers and pointed roofs. The High Lord of Garlon has his chief stronghold here.

The High Lord and his wife cannot spend much time here, since they collect tribute by travelling. One of his many sons usually acts as Castellan. The High Lord's household greets visitors with genteel courtesy enlivened by the customary hospitality of Garlon clans. The Lord's warriors also make forays against the Lot. When these fail to protect Garlon's people, they send petitions to the Emperor in Tharn. These embassies could have more influence if Jayce would back them with his financial power, but he cares little about the threat presented by the Lot because they do not raid this far east.

41. Elvenquay. Deep woods hide these cold, pristine beaches. The Elves maintain a hidden port here, where great-masted ships set sail for Avalor or Alaros. They also import sweet fruits from far to the south. The Elves here do not like strangers, especially those who trespass near the secret port. Still, dedicated explorers (and desperate fugitives) work to earn their trust; aside from the enigmatic Navigators, these Elves are the only people who know safe courses away from Narlshaw.

PART VII

• PEOPLE OF NOTE •

High Men and Giants, Dwarves and Mannish thieves, all vie for supremacy — or at least, for survival — in the rugged highlands of Wuliris. It is worthwhile to note that even the most potent regent of Narlshaw is but a pawn in the Dragonlord's greater game, however unaware he may be of Sulton Ni'Shaang's brooding presence nearby. In effect, this part of Jaiman belongs to the evil Dragonlord.

TALIN, GRAND MASTER OF ALAROS

Talin never wanted to rule, but since fate made him Master, he intends to govern with excellence. He permits himself only the briefest moments of relaxation. Pure Alaron blood runs in his veins, and he knows that he must fulfill some tragic yet monumental role. Talin studies trends and omens intently, hoping to meet his destiny as a hero.

He senses that his doom lies north, in Tharn. Therefore, the Grand Master refuses to make the slightest concession to the Empire. He rails against King Dunel for not going to war against the Emperor. Perhaps the Dwarves would fall before the mightier force, but they would buy time and offer a pretext for the ultimate destruction of Tharn. The Master feels that before his land can confront its enemy, the Sons of Alaros must annex, ally with or neutralize the Thousand Fiefdoms. Furthermore, Talin knows that he must establish central control over the Sons. Then, Alaros will be ready.

Talin seeks to form an alliance with Garlon for the upcoming strife. However, his negotiations are hampered by the fact that both he and the High King consider themselves rightful Overlord of Narlshaw. Their relations are extremely friendly, but neither feels comfortable in an alliance. Talin's harsh temper makes his diplomacy even less effective.

Before becoming Master, Talin was a healer. He loved his practice but never mentions it now, lest it distract him from rule. However, he uses his knowledge to quell plagues, both in cities and armed camps. Any courtier who displays medical expertise can expect a warm reception from Talin. The Master and his physicians will serve Alaros well in war.

ANTONO, PRIEST OF REANN

Dunel Goldhearted rescued Antono from the Lot. After that, the priest and his sister Findula devoted themselves to assisting the Dwarven King. This is not completely altruistic. As Dunel's chief ministers, they wield far more power than any mere cleric could expect. When Dunel goes wandering, he actually appoints Antono and Findula joint castellans of his land.

Antono comes from Alaros. In his twenties he crusaded against the Lot raiders and Unlife, but after suffering years slavery with the Lot, he has lost his fervor. He looks fleshy but not fat, and has a dry, studious face. Antono immerses himself in administration, letting his sister make public edicts and attend King Dunel's court.

AVERO, OVERLORD

Avero savors that particular debauchery which only the elite can appreciate. Like any hedonist, he loves drink, ribald pranks, vigorous sport, and nights of revelry. But to him, the demands of genteel propriety give these pastimes their true spice. Any lout can get drunk in a tavern. Avero relishes the challenge of appearing polite, erudite and witty while being hopelessly intoxicated.

Avero despises commoners who think that their money entitles them to mingle with the nobility. He hires a team of heraldic experts to screen his guests and to omit the lower classes. A visitor may bypass them by offering to prove his nobility in a joust, but that puts him at the mercy of Avero's prejudices. Avero assumes that true gentlemen have servants, dress expensively, yet discreetly, and share his sense of refined madness. If the stranger "looks noble" to Avero, the Overlord uses a blunt lance, and the fight ends after a harmless tumble. However, if Avero suspects the challenger of possessing common blood, his lance is sharp. Naturally, no visitor may wield a real weapon against the Overlord. The fight must end the moment Avero falls to the ground, but if he bests a low-born opponent, he shows no such mercy and may impale the fallen foe on his lance.



AVERO AND FRIENDS

Avero has pursed lips and delicate features, set rather incongruously on a paunchy, stout body. He fights dextrously, although years of luxury leave him somewhat soft. Avero resents any intrusion of statecraft into his life as Overlord. His bailiff, a commoner named Kerga, handles all judicial business. The Mandators sometimes send decrees, but Avero arranges for his courtesans to intercept and distract their messengers. Avero knows he is popular enough to escape the Emperor's wrath.

BARL, LORD OF KARTALSPEAK

Not even Barl's friends know when he might turn and strike them. He seems cheerful and generous, but loves to wreak destruction. Barl shares King Dunel's love of adventure, since it gives him a legitimate reason to loot. He often joins the King's expeditions, and is a valuable member despite his tendency to provoke unnecessary fights.

Barl insults Dunel freely. He has fought the king several times, has always lost and has always received mercy. Still, Barl boasts to friends that someday he will win, and when he does, he plans to kill Dunel and to seize the throne. Barl surrounds himself with henchmen, notably a teenage Lot who scorns weapons in favor of fists and is even more belligerent than his master. The Lord also keeps a spotted wildcat which obeys only him.

Barl's subjects serve him because he is a dwarf but cannot love their pugnacious lord. Since Dunel does not enforce laws or promote taxes, most people have little contact with the nobles. Barl wears a short black beard in several tufts. He is slender for a Dwarf and has olive skin.

CELLION

Cellion's charming face betrays no trace of his single-minded fanaticism. He has broad shoulders, sculpted features and stands over six feet tall. This prince of Elves feels driven by the decline of his people. He blames it on misguided altruism, which caused them to tolerate Men and to sacrifice their own lives to drive the Unlife from Kulthea in the Wars of Dominion.

Black magic fascinates Cellion. By harnessing the darker properties of Essence, he hopes to restore his people's old dominance. He hates Men, considering them the bane of his race. However, he behaves warmly with them when it suits his errands. He recognizes that Men know more Black Arts than do his idealistic people, and he dares to learn them. He also lures Men into traps, as offerings for the Hodhedhel, who in turn tantalize him with the lore of the Void.

Cellion's mystical connection to nature allows him to use the Open Channeling Spell Lists, Nature's Law and Weather Ways to 50th level while on his mountain. This is not related to his study of the Essence. [May cast Weather and Nature control spells of up to 150 active points while on the mountain.]

CUCUNAIN, LORD BULL OF THE LOT

Young, handsome (for his kind) and enormous, Lord Bull of Lot generates awe among his own people and inspires fear in the courts of Tharn. He avidly adopts the trappings of civilized Men. The moment he lay on a silk feather-bed, he vowed never to sleep on leaves again. Even when the Bull goes raiding in Garlon, a servant carries his mattress along. Advisors from Tharn fill Cucunain's hall, and he models a small priesthood on His Emperor's Own Curates of Orhan. The Bull wears Tharnese clothing. He talks like an articulate nobleman.

As Lord Bull of the Lot, he leads raids, has priests worship him and takes his people's most comely daughters for his harem. Cucunain feels supremely comfortable in both the drawing-room and mountain den. The Bull always speaks freely, unafraid of both ridicule and the Emperor. No human's chiding can faze him. If others consider him revolting or gross, that only shows their ignorance. He never doubts his own godhood.



LORD BULL

ORINDIL

Orindil often shares the road with Dunel Goldheart, since they both keenly enjoy seeking riches in the ruins of ancient peoples. The Elf can both wield a halberd and Channel magic from Iloura. Orindil forgives readily and rules justly. He insists on what he wants too and does not mind quarreling over a royal decree or bit of treasure found while travelling.

Although Orindil likes and admires Dunel, he sees no need to scrape before the Dwarf. He never consults Onopole about policies. This sometimes leads to chaos. Just after Dunel abolished taxes, Orindil levied a toll on timber. The Dwarves of Onopole's smelting district felt betrayed and nearly rioted. When Dunel issued his new currency, the Elves made fortunes by continuing to accept the old ones. Orindil's independence often saves Dunel from rash decisions though, since the Elf has a calmer temperament and several hundred more years of experience.

FINDULA

Findula faithfully serves both the goddess Valris and King Dunel Goldhearted. She sees herself as Dunel's conscience, who brings mercy and piety to his reign. Since she avoids prolonged moralizing, Dunel does not resent Findula's admonitions and usually follows her advice. The fact that Findula has lively eyes, long, lustrous braids and a comely face makes him especially willing to obey her.

Findula is an Alaron, who met Dunel when he freed her brother and fellow cleric Antono from the Lot. She studied at the High Grove and is much more adept at Channelling than her brother Antono. Therefore, she serves as a healer as well as a minister. Findula also speaks for Dunel when he cannot appear in person. He has her dispense Royal Alms and assist people who ask the Court for favors. Aside from Dunel himself, she is the most popular person in the Bald Mountains.

DUNEL GOLDHEART, "KING" OF DWARVES

Dunel likes nothing better than a leg of boar and a mug of ale. He enjoys feasting in his palace, but laughs at pomp and statecraft. Dunel's courtiers address him as Dunel. He once took the title "Goldheart," but now says, "I'm not notably generous, and I don't plan to be, ever." Although the so-called King relishes battle, he hates war and has little interest in the military. Dunel resists all suggestions that he write a code of Dwarven Law. Even murder is legal if one's cause satisfies the King. However, Dunel flies into a rage if anyone abuses the innocent. The very mention of "Rock Of The Blade" makes him grind his teeth. Dunel personally hunts and slays marauders.

Dunel loves an adventure. He leaves the throne regularly to hunt for lost treasures or punish bandits, accompanied by whatever followers choose to come. Dunel tends to squabble with his companions but recognizes this as a bad habit and tries to overcome it. The King expects to get what he sets out for. If anyone hinders him, he seeks revenge.

Despite Dunel's wanderlust, he shuns certain dangers. The Dwarven leader dislikes ships. He positively dreads disease and supernatural possession. He shies away from anything remotely connected with a plague victim. After a harrowing journey to the Tower Of The Moon, he vowed never again to explore haunted domains. Soon afterward, Dunel nearly married a female vampire in magical disguise and became almost suicidal with disgust when he learned of her true nature. (His priest Antono later exorcised the undead woman.)

Dunel takes pride in his enchanted devices. He always tries to intimidate enemies with his sword, which burns like a firebrand. Magicians speculate that it once belonged to a legendary hero and carries some great destiny. Dunel behaves uncharacteristically uninterested in this mystery, perhaps out of fear that it is involved in some doom. The Dwarven King also owns a ring which speaks. It can strike down foes, but Dunel cannot control this power. (Ring can cast a 10th level Channeling attack spell — the target is stunned 2 rd./5% failure.) [Ring can throw ECV 6, 8d6 Ego Attack.] The Dwarven Regent mistrusts sorcerous inscriptions, having read several cursed scrolls.

Dunel appears slightly haggard, despite his ample chest and stomach. He braids his thick black beard and wears his mail most of the time, over a quilted jacket. He greets new acquaintances warmly, especially if they flatter him.

Dunel's sword is +15 and causes 1-10 extra points of fire damage per hit. [Sword is +1DC, +1 OCV. Does 1/2d6 energy killing in addition to normal damage.]

Dunel's ring holds a spirit named Paphoron. It has ME 70, RE 80, IN 85 and EM 60 [INT 15, EGO 13]. Paphoron cannot see, but will give advice if its wearer explains the dilemma in which he finds himself thoroughly. The spirit may cast the Sorcerer Absolution spell once per week. This manifests itself as a brilliant flash. The wearer must ask the ring for these flashes, but cannot command them [12d6 Mind Control, only for inducing Catatonia]. Before Paphoron uses this power, it will demand to know an assortment of details, such as who the enemy is and why the owner is fighting him/ them. It always agrees to flash if its owner is near death. The ring does not like to flash at innocent victims, or when its owner could win the battle without it. Dunel cannot pinpoint any other criteria.

ISTAR

Lord Istar yearns to uncover the art of magic. He has no teacher, but Dunel gives him magical tomes whenever he finds them on his adventures. Although a trained wizard would consider Istar's incantations unorthodox, they work, and he defends Dunel's fiefdom with bouts of fire. The Dwarven Lord insures that Istar always holds the high post or another in Lord Barl's court of Kartalspeak.

Istar is slightly headstrong, but he always defers to Lord Dunel. As the son of Mannish colonists, many Dwarves mistrust him, but he serves Dunel with devotion. Like the rest of Kartalspeak Court, Istar lives in terror of Lord Barl. As Dunel's Lord, he knows that he is expected to restrain him. However, Istar lacks the power.

Istar has pitch-black hair and a long beard. He wears brown or scarlet hooded robes. One of his tomes recommended wearing conical caps to keep imps from settling on one's head, and Istar wears one after nightmares or other dire omens. He carries a long, finely wrought dagger everywhere, for protection against Barl's spotted wildcat.

JAYCE, LORD OF SLAVES

Jayce spends his days hunched over parchments. His Red Island Charter Company reaches into every affair in Narlshaw — but not beyond, for the Dragonlord would not allow it. Jayce scans debtors' rolls and court lists to find slaves. He must monitor markets, commission caravans, stroke rulers, placate the Traders' League, register ships and account for the regulations of every fiefdom which buys copper.

The Lord Of Slaves dares not employ an assistant, for he might prove to be less than trustworthy. The Red Island Company cheats even its co-conspirators. He pays the High Lord to pardon his felonies and incites other nobles to weaken the Regent. He exploits the League and dodges its tithes. Most dangerous of all, he plots with Rock Of The Blade to bedevil Dwarven miners. He also betrays the master thief's gangs to magistrates and, after their convictions, buys them as slaves.

Despite his clerk-like toil and years of paper corruption, Jayce believes in the warrior codes of Garlon's clans. He runs around the city walls each day, accompanied by puffing bodyguards. Jayce relishes a duel. He nurses both friendships and vendettas, although not at the expense of business. Despite his betrayal of Rock Of The Blade, he likes him personally and treasures those moments when the Master Thief feels enough at ease to reminisce about his felonies.

Jayce is a thin man with a trimmed mustache and goatee. He dresses in deep blue or maroon velvet. The Lord of Slaves always wears his sword (Fireteeth) and wears a light chainmail vest beneath his doublet.

Fireteeth is a +15 sword [+1 OCV, +1 DC Longsword].

KARLTA, IMPERIAL PRINCESS

Karlta does not let the loss of the throne trouble her unduly. She understands politics too well to take personal offense and is content to rule her own fief while she waits for a loftier calling.

Nobody can uncover any evidence that Karlta is actively plotting to overthrow the Ruler. She shuns any scheme that could incriminate her. However, she fully expects Malkus to fall and plans to seize control when he does. The princess savors anything which discomfits her brother, the Mandators or the Leonines. Many enemies of the State have found bounteous hospitality at Karlta's palace.

This would-be ruler administers her estate masterfully. Her people love her, and her troops are crack, although they appear ragged next to the Leonines. People report breaches of the law, and the guards swiftly arrest criminals. Leonine spies find Karlta's estate almost impenetrable.

Karlta is serene and capable, animated but never emotional. Her dark hair hangs in a short knot, which jumps if she tosses her head. The Imperial Princess can fence like a master and always bears a sword, although she does not flaunt it. Karlta wears serviceable cotton clothes and rides astride her horse like a man. She scoffs at her sister Shara's worship of silks and laces.

Karla holds her sister in the deepest contempt. The fact that the high society considers Karla a misfit only compounds this rivalry. The sisters' partisans fight each other frequently, in both tavern brawls and courtly jousts. Shara usually has the most supporters, since every social-climbing duellist wants to impress her court. However, Karla can usually win through some stratagem if she has time to prepare.

Karla's most steadfast retainer is her husband, Tirkor, who prosecutes her vendettas devoutly. She confides her secrets to him and, when worried, asks him for reassurance that her decisions are correct. However, Karla does not let him contradict her plans.

MALKUS, RULER OF THARN

Although Malkus is Ruler of Narlshaw's most powerful fief, the Leonines still snort at Malkus' horsemanship. He dreads riding. The generals ask how he can rule people if he cannot master a horse. Their favorite anecdote tells how Malkus' father, who loved horses, assembled the best stable on the Continent. The old Ruler remained dissatisfied with Narlshaw's poor horseflesh. After hearing rumors from a mysterious traveller, he hired the Navigators to procure a prize stallion from the steppes of a distant continent. He paid them with ten wagonloads of gold. They got him a beautiful beast: steel gray and twice as tall as any in Tharn. The Ruler insisted that his son Malkus ride it in celebration through the city. Malkus lost control of the horse and it fell, breaking its leg; the grooms had to kill it. Malkus was disgraced and did not appear in public for a year thereafter.

Malkus' pasty complexion and whiny voice add to his reputation as a weakling. However, he feels entitled to rule. He wants to look like a Ruler and make the people cheer him. Although he lacks the drive to demand awesome monuments, he insists on his titles, medals and purple-dyed furs. Everyone in the Empire must light bonfires and hold footraces on the Tenth Of Autumn, Malkus' birthday. The Ruler condescends to flatter his Lords and Mandators but resents any implication that he might need their favors. The clever ones manage to get whatever they want from his Court, since Malkus has no real ambitions for the Empire. He merely authorizes whatever seems appropriate. Malkus cares more about the idea of being Ruler than its actual practice.

This attitude does not make Tharn a placid land. Malkus considers making war a part of his role. Despite a touch of personal cowardice, he spends soldiers doggedly to avoid any suggestion of retreat. In the same vein, Malkus orders frequent executions. He is equally ready to pardon a prisoner if he thinks it will please a crowd.

LADY MORGAU, GOVERNESS OF SHARA'S LADIES-IN-WAITING

Strong warriors grow jittery beneath Lady Morgau's stare. She appraises everyone as if she knew his most sordid secrets, and quite often, she does. Her earthy imagination fills in any missing details.

Morgau has an unerring sense of *savoir-faire*. She glides through balls and ceremonies, flattering guests or castigating them with witty snubs. Despite her matronly face, Morgau has a gift for arranging trysts. She is equally adept at shattering romances and publicizing adulterous affairs. Women throughout Tharn owe Morgau favors or fear her blackmail. Through them, Morgau controls their husbands. Morgau very nearly saw her mistress Shara raised to the role of Empress through this network. Having failed, she plans to marry one of her agents to the Ruler himself. She still needs Shara to provide a castle and supplies of noble daughters.

Lady Morgau is extremely fastidious and a fanatic about etiquette. The Governess wears dark silken dresses, with a silver-and-pearl choker worth 500 gp glinting from her throat. Although Morgau carries a shining black walking-stick, she never leans on it. The Governess can give a lethal stab with its nuber-coated tip.



LADY MORGAU AND FRIEND

MORKOR, CAPTAIN OF LEONINES

Morkor yearns to rule Tharn, yet the idea of rebellion disgusts him, as it would any orthodox Leonine. "Why," he asks, "would I want a throne cheap enough to steal?" He projects his thirst for power onto the rightful Ruler and forges Imperial power with all the energy Malkus lacks. Morkor serves the State with his whole being.

Morkor loves to remind the Ruler, "An ocean of slaves obeys one whip." He believes in strict laws and calculated conquests. The Ruler's yearning for popularity annoys him. He burns for harsher action against the Ruler's sisters, who infuriate him. Karla strikes him as one who could rule the Empire with overwhelming competence, eliminating any role for advisors, including himself. Shara, however, appears lost in her social affairs. She could not govern at all. Morkor believes that he must save Tharn from both fates, and its current Ruler as well. The Captain of the Leonines often pushes Ruler Malkus aside to perform the ruthless deeds a leader must do.

Morkor is a giant of a man, both in height and girth. He wears a black beard and neat mustache. The Leonine Captain seldom dons his armor and uniform except when on campaign. He prefers a fur-trimmed jacket and red cap, though he always wears his sword, and carries an enchanted twist of silver to ward off assassin's blades.

Morkor's silver amulet gives him an extra 20 points of DB, which apply whether he consciously uses them or not [+2 DCV vs. all attacks].

OGARD OF BALTH

Ogard still dresses like the lord of Balth, despite his fall. He wears a sable cloak and a gold-trimmed helmet over his gray hair. The former lord has the manner of a kindly old stage magician, performing tricks for children. He is eccentric, genial and desperate to be liked. Ogard dreams of the day when he can do some favor or make some promise and win an ally to take back his city.

Ogard loves a much younger woman, Shantil Rakurk. She lives in Shara's court and is a servant of Morgau, who used Shantil to win Ogard's vote for Shara in the Imperial Council. The Lord of Balth did not need much persuading, since he always enjoyed seeding a fight. Now, Morgau entertains other plans. Shantil, who never cared much about Ogard, remains cordial but distant.

ROCK OF THE BLADE

Rock Of The Blade's name resounds in every tavern and alley. Almost nobody can claim to have met him. He supervises every sort of crime in the Bald Mountains and beyond, giving commands and receiving money at a number of drop points. Hired thugs back his orders. Rock himself is a master assassin. He performs only the most important missions himself.

Rock Of The Blade is a thin man, who wears trousers and a close-fitting jacket of dark brown leather, ready to blend into a shadow. He has an unassuming, shaven face, sometimes displaying a bit of beard growth. The master thief can seem personable, enigmatic, or diabolically clever, as he chooses. No one personality ever lasts long. He delights in committing crimes with sudden, unexpected strokes. Nothing stirs his ambition like the suggestion that some feat is impossible.

Rock takes his name and philosophy from an initiation his mentor once subjected him to. The ritual took place in a "sacred" alley. First the questioner asked, "What speaks louder than money?"

Rock, as the initiate, answered, "Your fist, master."

The next question went, "What is gripped in the master's fist?"

The answer was, "Your blade, wise one."

The master drew his dagger, an inch wide and a foot long, tempered of the finest steel. He placed it beneath the guttering street-candle. "And what comes higher than this?"

The initiate was supposed to say "Not man's law nor sun's own fire." Rock Of The Blade did not. He merely grinned, hefted a pavement-stone and brought it down on the knife. Shards of metal flew. "A rock, to begin..." Ever since, Rock has striven for unexpected audacity in his crimes.

Rock Of The Blade carries an arsenal of sorcerous devices for his heists.

His typical equipment includes the Death's Kiss, a dagger +25 which injects nuber into any wound [+2 OCV, injects nuber into any wound which does BODY]. He wears Gloves Of Make-Way, which allow him to push through three crowds per day at normal running speed, by magically moving people out of his path. His cap allows him to move silently and obliterates his odor and footprints. If he removes the feather in it, he becomes invisible too, as in the spell Invisibility I from the Closed Essence spell list. [Cap=+5 to Stealth rolls, -5 to Tracking roll of others attempting to track him. Invisible to normal sight (W/Fringe), +3 to General Perception.] He also carries a Ring Of The Dog which gives him a dog's senses (excellent hearing and nose but color-blind) when he wears it.

SHARA, IMPERIAL PRINCESS

Shara spends ten hours a day selecting dresses and planning her social schedule. Her staff of ladies-in-waiting advises her about fashion. She travels constantly from gala to cotillion, never missing an event. This irritates her bodyguards, who tire of travelling.

Shara bubbles with whatever emotion the moment brings, be it ecstasy or uncontrolled weeping. She changes her mood with the abruptness of a bard striving to please an unruly crowd. The Princess herself is not sure whether she really experiences such strong feelings or merely simulates them for public display. Shara treats everyone she meets warmly and although she is outraged by the slightest slip of etiquette, the Princess does not pre-judge anyone.

Shara's kindness does not extend to her sister Karlta. The two despise each other. Karlta can feign civility, but Shara cannot bring herself even to speak her rival's name without some insult. Her champions frequently steal from Karlta or try to spoil her plans.

Shara is short, blonde and extremely thin. Her bright blue eyes dart about expressively. She wants to become Empress and has begun to sense that Morgau no longer advances her ambitions. Shara needs a new patron.

THYTIS, OVER LORD OF GARLON

Men of Garlon say, "The only things quicker than Thytis are his eyes." Thytis is barely five feet tall, but he has marvelous reflexes and notices everything. The Over Lord wears no crown or ornament. Instead, he has tracteries tattooed on his dark skin, depicting an abstract pattern of braids and auspicious symbols. Some are blue, others a brassy red. Thytis banter freely with nobles and commoners. If anyone contradicts him, he does not hesitate to propose a wrestling match.

The Over Lord spends his time visiting the courts of his land. He confines most of his journeys to within the foothills of central Garlon. He does not go west because the mountain people are too poor to pay much tribute. Thytis also avoids the more urbane East, where greedy merchant barons begrudge him money and try to demand political favors in return for it. Furthermore, the Over Lord does not understand their modern customs. He follows Garlon's Clan traditions and does not like manners imported from Alaros and Tharn. Many of these nobles do not even wear pilans. Almost none can perform the hospitality rituals and medicinal incantations that a Clan Leader like Thytis should be able to expect from his hosts.

The Over Lord can overcome these prejudices to visit completely foreign lands. He often travels to Alaros, Tharn, Onopole and the more powerful of the Thousand Fiefdoms. These missions usually disappoint him. The High Lord feels personally offended by Ruler Malkus' failure to prevent the Lot, who are supposedly vassals of Tharn, from raiding Garlon. The Over Lord finds many interests in common with Alaros. Both, for example, see the need to contain Tharn. However, Thytis cannot keep from clashing with Talin, because both insist on being recognized as Overlord of Narlshaw.

The Over Lord's tattoos are symbols of Good Luck, which give him a +5 bonus on all rolls, in combat, for moving maneuvers, for static maneuvers, etc.. They also give him prestige. In addition, he gains a +20 on Interaction and Influence static maneuvers with anyone who understands Garlon's folklore. [Confers 2d6 Luck and +10 PRE to anyone who understands Garlon's folklore.]

In battle, Thytis wields a +20 bow and has three arrows which cause automatic criticals added to any other damage. [Bow=+2 OCV w/three armor-piercing arrows.]

TIRKOR, KARLTA'S HUSBAND

Two of Tirkor's traits make him invaluable to Karlta. He does exactly what she wants, and he does it without her having to ask. Whether Tirkor destroys a Leonine dossier or picks a fight with Shara's henchmen, nobody can blame Karlta. Indeed, as a wife in a male-dominated society, people often pity her and assume that she is caught up in her husband's intrigues.

Tirkor is a tall thin man, with a rumped patch of dark hair. He has a captivating smile and deep Alaron-blue eyes. He generally wears a breastplate with sword and has full armor nearby. Despite his submissive personality, he angers easily and responds to any insult by demanding a duel. Tirkor and Karlta love each other deeply.

PART VIII

• CITIES, STRONGHOLDS AND RUINS •

Two cities and two strongholds are detailed below; all are well-known in Wuliris and watched by servants of the Dragonlord Sulton Ni'Shaang for signs of independence and initiative.

1 • AKA NARLTA

The Capital Of Tharn, Aka Narlta is a walled city of elaborate defenses; buildings and statues of white marble abound on the broad, wind-whipped plains. Everyone who is anyone in the fief of Tharn deals (openly or surreptitiously) in Aka Narlta.

1. Walls. These white marble walls stand almost twenty feet thick in places. They gleam like teeth after rainstorms but often grow stained in summer dust. Frequent patrols of Foot Leonines and city militias walk the wall. Sneaking over the battlement is punishable by beheading. Ten gate-guards charge a toll of one copper, along with a one-third tithe on all trade goods, an outrageous tax which few merchants protest.

2. Garrison Arsenal. This arsenal holds weapons for the city militia and quarters for the Leonines assigned to the city. Twenty to fifty guards watch it at all times.

3. Imperial Way. This wide street leads past statues of Tharn's Emperors into the Emperor's Ward. The Leonines zealously chase and capture thieves and boot vagrants away. Visitors from the south will notice very little vegetation and a constant chill in the air.

4. Industry Way. Industry Way goes by the shops of smithies, glassblowers, chariot-makers, masons, cabinetmakers, coopers and other craftsmen. Scrap from their trades litters the alleys, where poor folk pick it up and trade it for food. Shoppers and pickpockets crowd this street. When the Mandators levy laborers for some project, they draft them from Industry Way. Therefore, people avoid this avenue during mobilizations.

5. Garrot Lane. Garrot Lane is actually a web of alleys and thread-thin streets which wind and lead into the darker section of Aka Narlta. The city's poor live in tenements here. "Abandoned" buildings sprout everywhere, concealing thieves' dens, houses of vice or warehouses for tithe-dodging smugglers. Many of this slum's criminals practice murder-for-hire. Most of them are in awe of Imperial officials. They seldom molest Imperial officials except when in the pay of higher ones.

6. Ward Of The Emperor. Iron rails and pillars of black marble fence the Imperial Ward from the rest of the city. Anyone with business inside may enter, but patrols of six to ten Leonines chase out unsavory-looking people.

7. Palace Of The Emperor. The Imperial Tower rises from a honeycomb of gilded domes. Thirty Leonines and forty servants live within. They receive their position by birth. Servants wear silk uniforms and receive excellent pay, up to 5sp per day.

The Emperor has a dozen bedchambers and dining halls. If he fears assassination, he can live in a different wing of the palace each day. However, few Emperors bother to change rooms so often.

8. Imperial Vaults. This brick monolith has no windows; its only decorations are a trio of life-size rusty iron dragons which stand on the roof. A single door leads into the vault (which holds a treasure worth 10,000gp in gold, jewels and weapons). Few people ever enter, even guards. When the Mandators Of The Treasury must tap the Vaults, they send a detachment of the city's strongest Leonines and magicians to guard over the action.

The building's statues depict real dragons, who live within. Tharn's warriors tamed them long ago as guards. They are only partially cowed. It takes a powerful party of Treasurers to intimidate these beasts into releasing the gold they protect. Two of the dragons are a mated pair; Mandators watch anxiously for a fertilized egg. If the dragons hatch one, Leonines intend to seize the hatchling at birth and to train it as a beast of war. Even if that fails, the Empire dares not tolerate a fourth guard in its treasury.

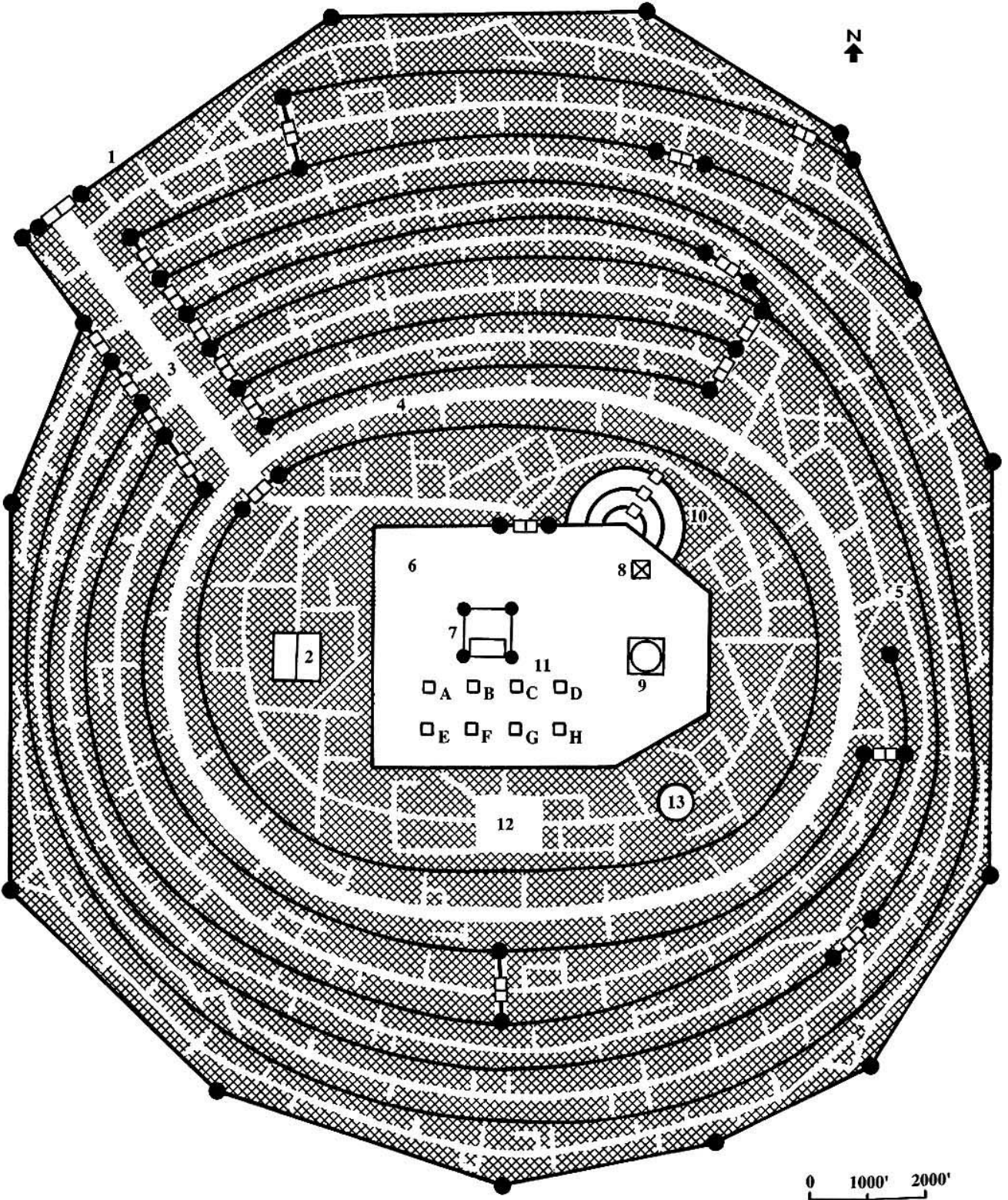
9. Grand Dome Of Kuor. The Emperor's priests administer this imposing temple. It contains neither altar nor statue. Instead, five black columns, each 10' in diameter and 60' high, support a white monolith bearing the words "Royalty," "Law" and "Duty." Citizens and leaders perform their most solemn ceremonies here. Marriages, funerals, decrees and declarations of war take place beneath the tablet. The temple's sermons generally exhort worshipers to serve their Emperor. Curates are pivotal in Mandator politics, because of their wealth and connection to the Emperor.

10. Academy Of The Essence Arts. This gray stone building lacks the grace of Aka Narlta's older, Elven-built structures. Men raised the Academy, constructing it as a series of concentric campuses. The most potent wizards live near the center, while novices dwell on the edges. Despite the many gold pieces Tharn allots for research, few of these lackluster magicians make much progress.

In *Rolemaster* terms, the Academy teaches the Open Essence spell lists along with Alchemist, Magician and Sorcerer base spells of fifth level and below. [The Academy teaches "Sorcerous" spells (as defined by the GM) up to 20 active points.]

11. Mandatoria. White, square-cornered towers house the Imperial Mandators. The officials have their offices near ground level and expansive apartments near the top. Rows of the Mandators' uniform buildings ring the Imperial City. The Mandators implement the power of the State; although their bureaucracy can seem endlessly dull, it occasionally involves skullduggery. Mandators are always rich, and their jobs usually make them richer. They host frequent social events. Nobody with any dream of government influence dares to miss these parties.

AKA NARLTA



Notable Mandatoria include:

A. Treasury Mandatorium. A sixteen foot tall Giant guards this building's gate, glowering at potential intruders. He looks uncomfortable in his tight silk finery. The Mandator of the Treasury keeps two to nine thousand gold coins here, to reduce the need for expeditions into the Imperial Treasury (see above). A force of 15 mercenaries from Garlon, the Bald Mountains and Tharn protects the money.

B. Military Mandatorium. Only civilians work in this sparse tower. The Mandator of Arms controls budgets and sets policy for the Leonines, who have their headquarters outside the city. The military resents civilian interference and hampers it whenever possible. The occasional spy found here usually works for the Leonines.

C. Archival Mandatorium. This graying tower holds detailed histories of Tharn, which often contradict each other on sensitive matters, such as the sins of past Emperors. Magicians occasionally search the archives for accounts of sorcery worked by the Elves who once ruled these lands. They occasionally find lost tomes on Essence among the histories. The Mandator of Archives is also always eager for new maps or accounts of current affairs.

D. Agricultural Mandatorium. The Petty-lords of Tharn scheme fiercely for influence with the Agricultural Mandator. He can allot lords land and bondsmen for farm projects, or punish them for failing to meet quotas. The Agricultural Mandator also controls mining.

E. Mandatorium Of Lordly Affairs. The Mandator of Lordly Affairs arbitrates disputes among Tharn's petty-lords and ranks them for fealty to the empire. He can order disloyal lords stripped of their wealth and lands.

F. Mandatorium Of Taxation. Tithes and taxes are levied here, but collected by others. Taxation is one of the most corrupt of all departments.

G. Mandatorium of Imperial Projects. This bureau commissions dams, roads and monuments. Its records of Elvish engineering arts contains some arcane lore.

H. Mandatorium of Justice. The Mandator of Justice punishes breaches of the Emperor's law and hears appeals from anyone who feels unfairly judged by a Lord. In the latter case, the Mandator of Lordly Affairs must refer the appeal here. The Empire often reverses the decisions of troublesome lords to shock them into obedience. The Mandatorium of Justice has trap doors which lead into a dungeon, where the Mandator can hold and question prisoners. Ten to twelve guards watch the jail.

12. Crimson Square. This public spot contains the Tall Woodsman, a mechanical axe used to decapitate or otherwise maim convicts. The Tall Woodsman consists of a razor-sharp blade on a J-shaped track. The victim stands upright in the curve. An executioner may regulate the speed, force and saw-like motion of its fall with gears and wedges.

13. Theater Dome. This green marble dome is the liveliest building in Aka Narlta. A troupe of bard-actors present extremely stylized musicals here. They charge an entire gold piece for admission. Tharn's elite incessantly discuss their latest presentation. Occasionally, the players spend a month doing nothing but rehearsing for an upcoming spectacle. During this period, they rent their dome for fetes. Stylish conspirators often rendezvous at Theater Dome.

2 • ONOPOLE

The Goldflow River rushes by this substantial town carved out into the foothills of the Bald Mountains. Rising above Dwarvendug gold and silver mines that were alive with the clatter of shovel and hammer in the Second Era, Onopole is now a Mannish town of several hundred inhabitants contained by the mountains and the watchful eye of the Dragonlord's minions.

1. Black Wall. The Dwarves hewed Onopole's walls out of the very mountains. Although its builders worked under Mannish tyrants, the Black Wall of Onopole is a masterpiece of Dwarven-style architecture. The Wall's craggy faces look as ancient and immovable as the mountains but, despite their rough appearance, they offer no ledge large enough for a handhold.

Ten Dwarven mercenaries in King Dunel's pay walk the walls each day. They wear chainmail and carry battle axes. Each group includes three archers with shortbows and a team of two that operate an enormous crossbow. Groups of civilian Dwarves patrol every few hours and often carry more weapons than do the soldiers.

2. Goldflow Banks. Barge ports line the banks of the Goldflow, and markets have sprung up around them. Some merchants have come to buy Dwarven metalwork. Others sell items shipped up from the sea, such as fish and imports from Garlon and Alaros. Men from across Wuliris mingle here, making this a center of commerce, such as it is.

3. Smithy District. Prosperous Dwarves live here, operating the furnaces which turn the ores of the Bald Mountains into weapons and other goods. Dwarvish forges, smelters, refiners and cold-hammering shops stand everywhere. Men find it difficult to stand in any of the houses here, and the owners want it that way. The Smiths form an informal brotherhood, which excludes Men, Elves and poorer Dwarves from this neighborhood. This organization also forms self-defense patrols against burglars and sends sentinels to the city wall.

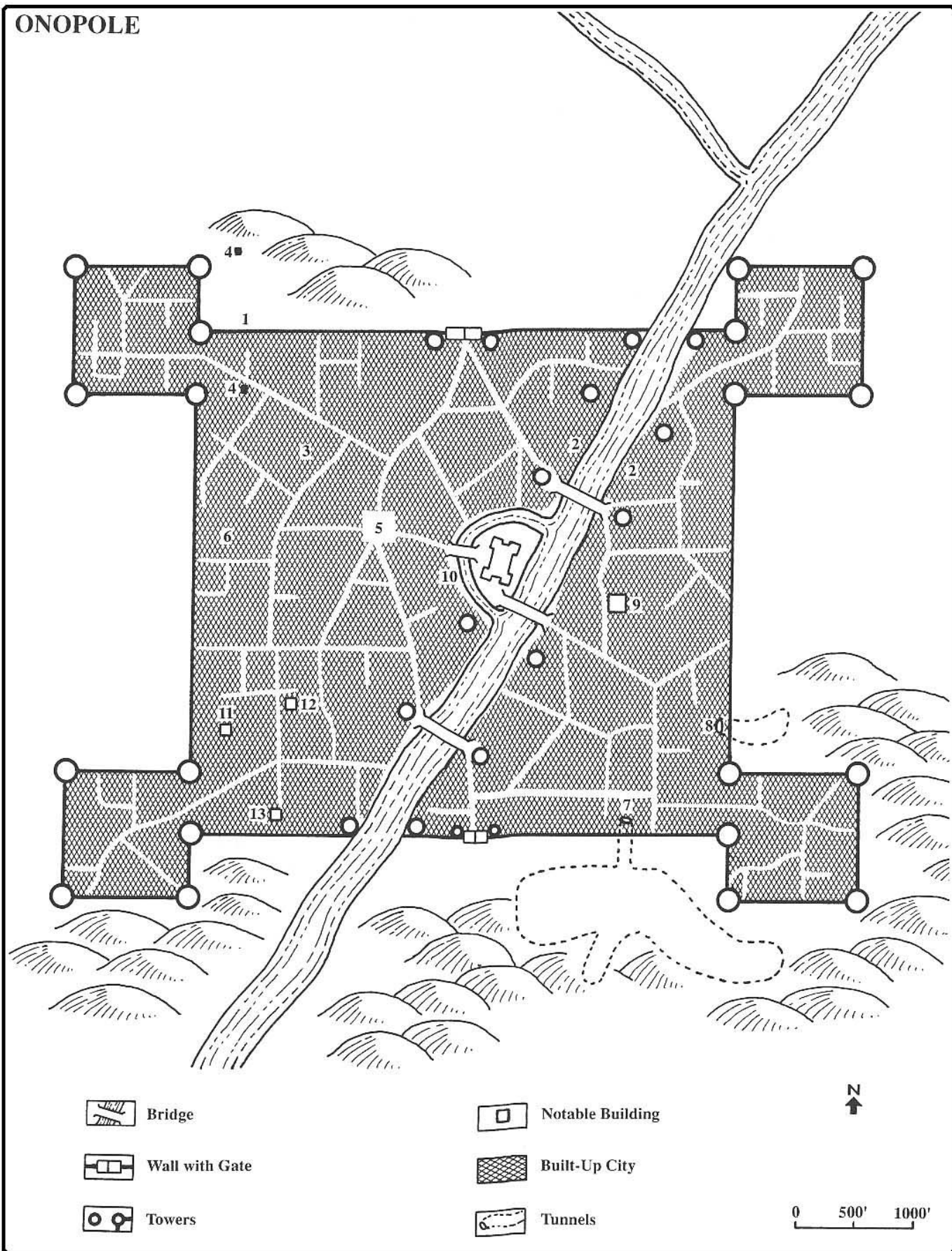
4. Slag Pits. Onopole's smelters drop their tailings into these crumbling mineshafts. People dump garbage and other debris in too. This breeds enormous rats, which sometimes emerge en masse after someone ruins their homes by dumping hot slag.

5. Duneldian Square. Banners drape this plaza, celebrating Dunel the Goldhearted. Someday, the Dwarves plan to display a marble statue of Dunel here, fifty feet high. Currently, a clay prototype for Dunel's statue stands over the square, waving a sword. Gangs of Dwarves stand near it, ready to maul anyone who does not show sufficient reverence for the King.

6. Mannish Enclave. Tall dismal buildings lean over the streets here. Many are made of wood, not stone. Robbers lurk on the streets and the narrow staircases which lead up the outside of many houses. Onopole's Men tend to be poor, especially now that there is a Dwarvenking. The Men who do manage to find money usually flee to wealthier parts of the city, despite derision from others.

Rock Of The Blade's thieves rule this region. Criminals and merchants alike find it wise to buy "licenses" from his gang. The robbers enjoy slight popularity among Onopole's Men, because they usually plunder Dwarves instead of their own race. Of course, the fact that Dwarves have more money contributes to this custom, but Rock tends his reputation carefully by defending Men against influential Dwarves. The Blade will not hesitate to assassinate any Man who dares scorn his "noble banditry."

ONOPOLE



People who want Rock Of The Blade's friendship often offer to hide him. Paupers scrape together money to install secret corridors in their shanties. The Blade uses each one and carefully dirties every stronghold with evidence of crime, to add to his host's fear of investigations. Several dozen people believe that Rock makes his base of operations in their home. They are all wrong. Rock Of The Blade actually lives in a private stronghold known only to his closest followers.

7. Old City. Onopole's Old City extends deep underground. Its citizens have homes, shops and inns in the tunnels. However, there are no forges or smelters, since furnaces might produce lethal fumes underground. Dwarves once mined iron and agate here. Although miners exhausted the main veins, homeowners occasionally find semi-precious stones when expanding their dwellings.

The Old City contains a magnificent palace cave, carved in agate, with flecks of silvery ores in its walls. It has several hundred rooms, each pleasantly furnished and ventilated. Many exits are artfully concealed and invisible from the surface. Stone trap doors allow inhabitants to seal off these shafts at will. Many Dwarves expected Dunel to reside here. However, despite Dwarven tradition, he preferred the above-ground fortress of the Tyrant.

8. Liberation Park. Whorls and translucent patterns dazzle all who step into this underground park. These caverns have polished walls of pure agate. Several skylights illuminate them. Liberation Park includes many chambers shaped like deformed eggs which merge at odd points. The Dwarves dedicated this park to Dunel's reign, but the vigilantes of Duneldian Square consider this spot too sanctified for harassing bypassers. People walk through this park reverently, admiring the stone. The lower caves provide a quiet place for secret meetings.

9. Tyrant's Crypt. The Tyrant of Onopole built himself this huge rectangular tomb. Dwarves visit it frequently but more to celebrate his death than to mourn it.

10. Royal Keep. The Royal Keep looms over Onopole like a thunderhead, but its gates stand wide. Dwarves go in and out freely. Most hope only to view Dunel. Onopole's citizens also consider visiting the palace a way of enhancing Dunel's prestige. They often visit armed, showing their willingness to fight for the Dwarven "King".

Furthermore, a surprising number of Dunel's subjects have business with the King. Since Onopole has practically no laws, everyone with a grievance must present it to the King himself. Dunel receives litigants whenever he feels in the mood. Dwarven explorers and soldiers-of-fortune visit frequently too, hiring the Goldhearted for expeditions.

The Royal Keep is a square building four stories high, enclosed by its own curtain wall and battlement. There is a tower at each corner. Steel helms occasionally glint behind the battlements, as Dunel's warriors peer out. Dunel keeps it well stocked with catapults, ballistae and other artillery.

11. Rock Of The Blade's Stronghold. Rock Of The Blade's stronghold looks like any other clump of growth on the edge of a city. Filthy, stunted evergreens press against the adjacent buildings. A net of ferns, weeds and blackberry-brambles give this foliage the density of a dust-kitten. Actually, it is more like the roof of a tent. A hidden trellis of wire keeps the area beneath these plants clear. All adjacent buildings contain secret passages into the space beneath the branches.

Under the shrubbery, one sees nothing at first. Bent horseshoes, broken glass and masonry rubble line the floor. Some of the mishapen flagstones can serve as furniture. One is actually a trap door to Rock Of The Blade's underground lair.

The entry tunnel contains several covered pits and crossbow traps. These pits are 10' deep, and all crossbow bolts contain nuber. Other rooms hold heaps of bags and chests. These contain silver, bits of colored glass which resemble gems and live serpents, which strike anyone who disturbs them.

The entry tunnel leads into a final trap room. Here, a ruddy glow betrays the edges of yet another pit. Anyone who peaks in sees writhing shadows, cast, perhaps, by serpents in torchlight. There is a door at the far end of the room. Actually, the pit is the only safe place in this chamber. One minute after anyone enters the room, the ceiling descends, smashing against the floor. Anyone in the hole is safe and can raise the ceiling using a pulley mechanism, or push it up manually. A small candleabra produces the shadows, using several foil streamers which dance in the heat.

The actual stronghold fills an old Dwarven mine. It contains several armories, a storehouse of ten months worth of food and comfortable living quarters. The Blade also stores his money here. However, he takes care not to keep more than 2,000 gold pieces in treasure. More would merely tempt his accomplices. Rock spends his surplus on bribes, new equipment and as bonuses to useful henchmen. Occasionally he gambles and loses it on purpose.

Rock Of The Blade has a secret way to escape if cornered in his stronghold. He has a sealed cannister, specially weighted to float upright just below the water. It is the size of an inn's largest keg and looks like a discarded wine barrel from outside. This vessel holds two people. Rock keeps this vessel in a tunnel which leads to the river. In an emergency, he could escape downstream in it. From there, he could proceed to Garlon, or to the sea.

Anyone who falls into one of Rock's pits suffers an unmodified attack on the Fall/Crush table [6d6N damage].

Rock Of The Blade's crossbow-traps fire as if they had an OB of +100. They merely fire in a straight line, of course, but the narrow tunnels make them almost certain to hit. [Traps have OCV of 12.]

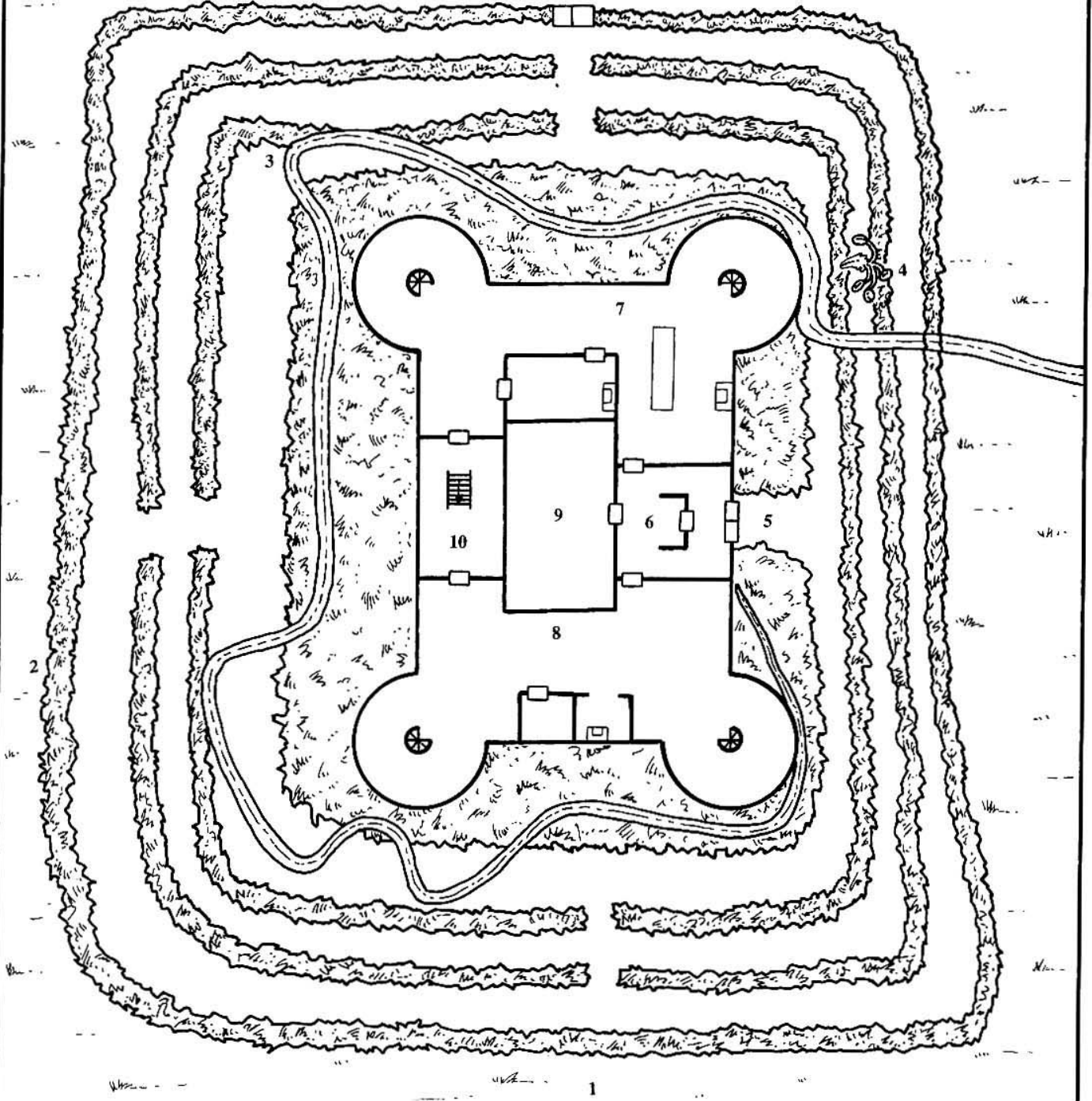
The falling ceiling in Rock's final trap causes a Fall/Crush attack with a +50 OB. To lift the ceiling without the pulleys, one must pass a *Very Hard* static maneuver modified by Strength. On a Blunder, an adventurer jerks the roof up part-way and then slips, allowing it to crash back on his head, causing full damage. [9d6N damage]



12. Under Mountain Inn. This building stands above-ground but the insides are fashioned to look like a cave. Real stalactites hang from hooks on its ceiling. The inn caters to foreign visitors who want to sample Dwarvish culture but would not like the bitter ale and stuffy caverns a genuine underground tavern offers. Most prices are several silver pieces higher than normal.

13. Diamond Tavern. A golden placard hangs over this inn's door, bearing a diamond-symbol in blue. This building looks like a respectable inn, with decent guests and good food. Regular customers notice that the Tavern's private rooms are always full, although nobody ever sees the occupants. The innkeeper allows Rock Of The Blade to use them, free of rent. Naturally, the thieves enter through windows, not the public barroom. This is Rock Of The Blade's most valuable concession because of its proximity to the city wall. He has a tunnel entrance hidden under the night-table in room #4. It leads out of Onopole, to an exit concealed by piles of mining tailings.

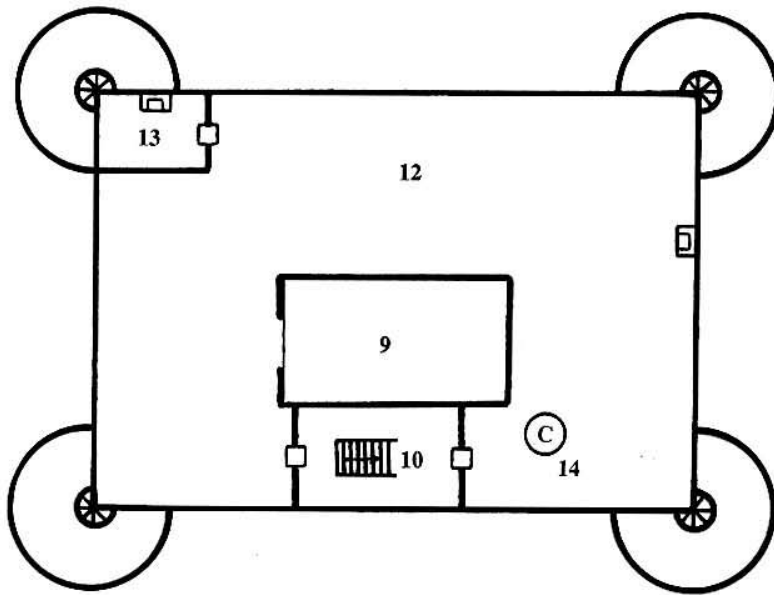
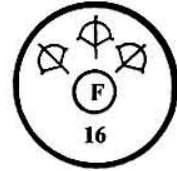
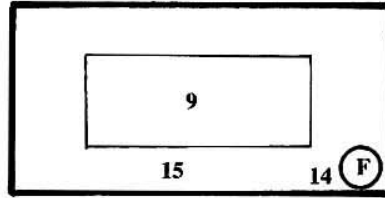
CASTLE MARSH EXTERIOR



0 20' 40'

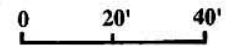
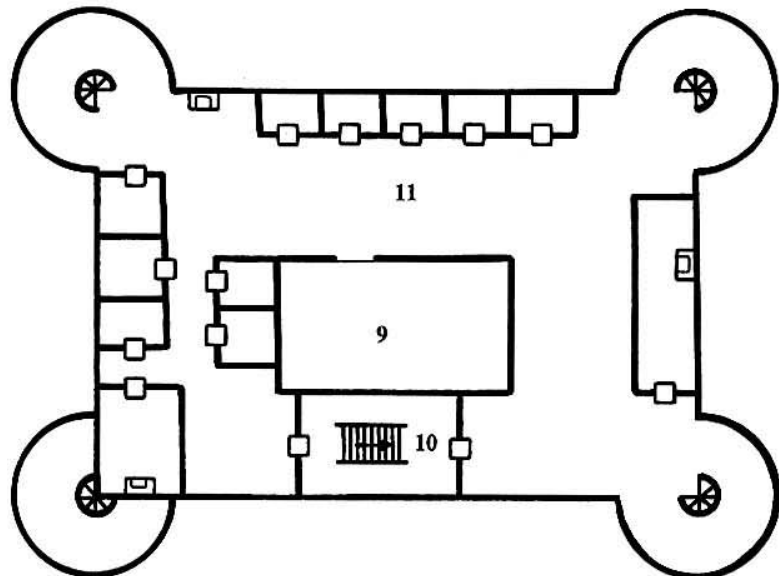
CASTLE MARSH UPPER FLOORS

ATTIC



THIRD FLOOR

SECOND FLOOR



3 • CASTLE MARSH

The ruins of Tarminel's Castle in the Marsh contain Narlshaw's only comprehensive library of Essence. However, Giants and other raiders infest the upper parts of his fort. Under the earth, an ancient struggle continues. After Tarminel died, his apprentice attempted to destroy the undercaves, claiming that without the Elves' guidance, it would be folly for Men to probe the Essence. However, Tarminel's five sons insisted on preserving their father's legacy. The factions destroyed each other in a battle beneath the ground, yet their spirits and sorcerous creations live on.

1. Outer Marsh. Travellers can only catch glimpses of Tarminel's copper towers before they arrive. It stands at the center of a forest, where several feet of water cover the black soil. A single Elven woman guards these marshes. Her name is Siriël, and she is an accomplished archer. Siriël also has the gift of forms and can assume the shape of a great swan.

Siriël has the smooth skin and jet hair a mortal might have at twenty. Still, she was born in the Second Era, when princes of Elves initiated Men into the arts Essence use. Her family gathered vegetables and made wine for the Elven Princes. Then Tarminel sickened and died. The Elven Princes went to war and did not return. Only Siriël's untutored family remained. Unlike other Elves, her relatives made no attempt to teach Men magic, for they knew little themselves. They steered travelers away, knowing that wizards' secrets are safer unmolested.

Siriël follows intruders in bird form to determine their intent. If the party contains Elves or behaves nobly, she approaches in Elf-Form, greets them graciously and warns them against the castle. However, if the adventurers remain steadfast and their objective is worthy, Siriël will lead them through the hedge maze by flying over it to view the passages from above. The Elf-woman does not approach unsavory groups. Instead, she attempts to drive them away with spooky noises and arrows fired at night.

2. Hedges. Hedges of briar and evergreen form a labyrinth around the castle. They grow over masonry underpinnings and are roughly ten feet thick. It would require great strength to break through one.

3. Stream. Brown water courses through the ancient maze, passing under culverts in the hedge and blocking passages. The water is 10' deep and 30' wide. Bits of blue-gray occasionally flicker among its ripples. A Giant Hellbender clings to the banks, ready to snatch anyone who wades into the water. This four-legged amphibian pulls victims off balance in the mud, drowns them, and then climbs onto their chests to feed, gobbling bits of flesh the whole time.

4. Vegetable Horror. Leafy masses the size of a person hang into the path here and lie sprawled on the ground. These are the appendages of a man-eating Giant Flytrap, which snap shut into traps. Tarminel bred these man-eating plants to discourage intruders.

5. Gate. Two stone doors, inlaid with copper, hang here. Lot vandals have knocked them slightly off their hinges.

6. Porters' Chambers. Five Giants live in the remains of the old Doorwards' chambers. They have knocked down walls to open communications between their lairs. These creatures want to loot intruders. They can call other Giants (from area 8) but prefer to fight alone and keep all the booty.

7. Dining Hall. Crystal windows once looked into the courtyard here, but now their frames gaze on twisted rubble. Anyone who examines this room will realize that somebody (Giants) have ransacked it quite recently.

8. Servants Quarters. Ten Giants live in the old Servants' Quarters. They have collected 100 gold coins worth of silver candlesticks and jeweled silverware from the dining hall. These creatures always want more money and food. Jarix, their leader, wields an Elvish battleaxe as a hatchet.

Jarix's hatchet is a +10 battleaxe [+1 OCV].

9. Courtyard. A vaulted copper roof covers the courtyard; skylights which let in an almost blinding glare. Chips of marble, bits of corrosion and broken statues cover the floor. Anyone who wanders through the rubble risks stepping on a spike.

Although nothing lives in the courtyard, several perils dwell near it. If anyone makes a noise in the Courtyard, Lugrōki on the third floor hear it and rush to the window. They demand that the intruders bring tribute to the third level, while leaving hostages here. If the victims resist, they pepper them with poisoned arrows.

If anyone spends more than five minutes here, a cockatrice from the attic (area 15) smells them, flies down and attacks.

Anyone in this room has a 30% chance of stepping on a nail or kicking rubble onto himself. This inflicts 1-10 hits damage. The victim must pass a *Very Hard* static maneuver modified by SD to avoid shouting. [8% chance to step on nail = 1/2d6k damage. Ego roll to avoid shouting if damage is taken.]

10. Stairwell. This leads from the Crypts (area 17) to the third floor (area 12).

11. Second floor. Tapestries lie scattered on the second floor. Combs, linen, shattered mirrors, and chamber pots strew the hall, many bearing the runes of ancient Elven Princes. Bupoterix, a particularly strong Giant, lives on this floor. Even other Lot consider him vicious to the point of insanity.

Bupoterix barricades himself in the largest bedroom. He is muscular, but his once-plump stomach has begun to sag, since few edible people come into the castle. The organized Lot on the first level make it difficult for him to leave and hunt. He attacks intruders madly. Only an offer of food can calm him.

Bupoterix might even pay for wholesome fare. He owns a diamond stickpin worth 300 gold coins, two silk pillowcases holding 400 coppers each and five poorly-rendered sunset paintings in the style of an Elvish artist from the Second Era. The paintings have no intrinsic value but are worth 1 silver coin each to a collector. This Giant dreams of forming his own raiding tribe and will share his treasure with people who agree to be his subordinates.

Bupoterix does not know it but his paintings are actually defaced scrolls of sorcery. Tarminel's Apprentice chose this method to destroy them, since they are fireproof and tougher than thick hide. If one scraped off the paint, they could be used as sheets of runes to cast spells. A wizard can also learn new magic from them, if he has enough power. As scrolls, these are worth 100 gold coins each.

The scrolls contain sigils allowing anyone who passes a *Medium* Runes static maneuver to cast one spell. A magician can also use them to memorize the entire parent Spell List, and use it later through his own skill. If anyone casts a spell directly from the Runes, all writing fades from that scroll. Any number of magicians may study the Spell Lists until then. Even magicians may be tempted to use the Runes though, since they often contain stronger spells than anything a sorcerer could cast with his own skill. The scrolls contain: #1, *Presence* (Essence's Perceptions List); #2, *Illusions X* (Lesser Illusions); #3, *Lord Teleport* (Lofty Bridge); #4, *Dispel True* (Dispelling Ways), *Fire Ball* (Fire Law). [Allows casting of various spells up to 50AP, or "memorize" a spell from the runes at a -2 INT roll. If successful, the spell can be bought at 1/2 experience point cost.]

12. Third Floor. A band of twenty Lugrôki have transformed this floor into a fortress. They fear the Giants who live on the lower levels and have barricaded all doorways with chains at 5'. This forces Man-sized figures to duck and makes passage practically impossible for Giants. The Lugrôki also broke down internal walls and spread the rubble around the center of the level. They left themselves a clear area around the edges. Anyone who wants to attack them must pick his way through the clutter while they fire arrows and sorcerous fire. Each Lugrok carries a broadsword, bow, and 20 arrows poisoned with nuber.

These Lugrôki come from the Brass Stair. Their masters sent them to discover magic weapons but all they found was a bag of herbs containing enough nuber to poison their weapons. They also have 200 silver coins and a cut crystal pitcher worth 30 gold coins. This band feeds itself by trapping birds in the towers (area 16). Weaker Lugrôki want to escape the castle and run away, to somewhere that they can spend their wealth. Currently, the leader forces them to continue their mission. However, if someone killed him, the group might break up.

The leader knows something of Essence and carries three silver rods. He shoots bolts of flame from one in battle. The other two mean nothing to him. They are actually talismans, which increase the power of a wizard. The Lugrôki found these items in the Council Room, on the fourth floor.

Anyone who moves at over 1/4 speed in the clutter must pass an *Average Moving* maneuver [DEX roll] each round or trip. Fallen characters take one hit damage and must spend a round doing nothing but standing up.

The Lugrôki's fire wand dispenses Fire Bolts with a 300' range. It can shoot ten more times. The other rods do nothing unless an Essence spell user grasps one in each hand. Then, they act as a x2 spell multiplier. Due to the magic of the rods, one can perform all normal gestures of spell-casting while holding them. [8d6 energy blast; allows spells to be cast at 1/2 END.]

13. Council Room. This room's reinforced walls were too strong for the Lugrôki to break. Burglars have stolen paintings and the silver inlay from this chamber, but, apparently, it was once a reception hall. Shreds of leather bindings lie discarded in a corner. Their contents are gone, but stretch marks in the hide indicate that they once held thin wands. A note on the wrappings reads, in an ancient dialect of Elvish, "Very good. When the master recovers from his palsy, you must convey these gifts below with all haste. When you reach the Spiral Stair, make a test of your Essence Power and no harm will come to you."

14. Trap Door. No light penetrates this tiny room. There is a trap door in the ceiling, marked with Elvish Runes, which are, of course, invisible in the darkness. The letters say "Cast down your eyes."

15. Attic. Tarminel kept a live pair of cockatrices in his attic, chained to the copper beams. When he died, his servants simply left them unattended, hoping the beasts would starve. They underestimated the creatures. The cockatrices not only sustained themselves by catching birds which flew through the skylights, they laid a clutch of eggs. Six of the Fell Beasts now live in the attic. Petrified mice and swallows adorn their lair.

An old chest hidden here holds Tarminel's personal belongings. His apprentice thrust it here, having too much respect for his master to prowl through it but not wanting anyone to find whatever magical devices were within. Most of it is old linen. The box also includes a gilded portrait of Tarminel's wife, an empty crystal vial, a gold-inlaid poinard worth 100 gold coins and some blank scrolls with sealing-wax. Tarminel's seal-ring lies here too. It bears a torus superimposed over a star.

The poinard is a +20 dagger [+1 OCV, +1 DCV].

16. Towers. Swallows and other fowl nest in these copper turrets, covering the floor with feathers and debris. The Lugrôki at area 12 set snares for birds here. Arrow slits provide fields of fire for the ballistae.

UNDERGROUND

17. Crypts. The graves of Tarminel's ancestors lie beneath his castle. Each corpse is buried in a square pillar, carved with scenes of Eissa's Gate. The dead cannot rest quietly in this castle of sorcery. An eldritch energy animates the Skeletons in each crypt, and their chill permeates the tomb, sapping life.

Two Skeletons wander free, released by grave-robbing Giants. They attack intruders relentlessly. A third haunt stalks the tombs with them. The Vampire of Tarminel's Apprentice can simply step out of its pillar, unhindered by corporeal stone. This being cannot directly affect the living, but it can still wield sorcery from its former training. It magically compels victims to open other tombs. Each grave contains a statuette of Eissa worth one gold coin, but it also holds another animated Skeleton, which creaks out to battle.

Tarminel's eldest son killed the Apprentice in single combat. The Apprentice fought that battle in the cause of destroying the sorcery of this keep, but now that it sustains his bones, he no longer wants it extinguished. Instead, he wants to slay mortals before they can meddle with it. He allows Elves and their companions to pass, since Tarminel taught that they were rightful wielders of the Essence. The vampire murders all others. He is a cunning killer, who may send Skeleton-assassins to ambush victims who escape him here.

The presence of the Skeletons drains one Con point/round from everyone in the crypts after the first three rounds. This is in addition to any Con points drained by attacking undead [1/2d6 CON drain/Turn].

18. Chasm. Steel rungs lead into a pit here. The stones are pale limestone, but they look black in the darkness. A silver plaque on the far wall reads, "Sanctum of Tarminel, Elf-Friend. Beware the way down, you who know not . . ." There is a scar on the wall next to it, where another sign once hung.

19. Trapped Stairwell. The chasm leads down to a stone floor, where a spiral staircase continues down. Its shaft looks like the receptacle for a great screw. Tarminel installed a trap here, *Very Hard to detect*, to protect his chambers. A combination of magic and clockwork causes the twisting stairwell to coil itself ever more tightly as people descend it. As the stairs contract, the walls close with them. Eventually, they squeeze the victim to death. Five minutes after springing, the trap resets itself.

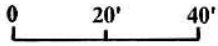
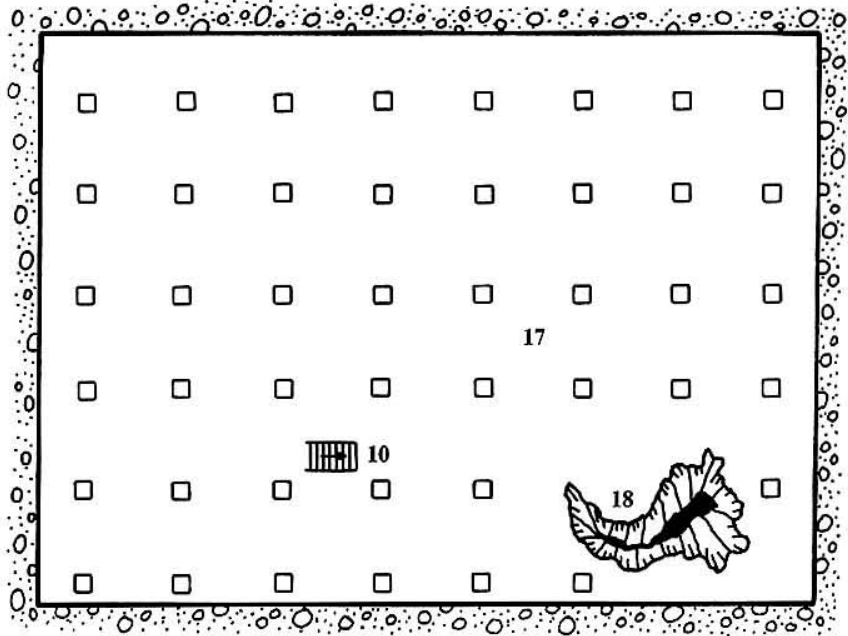
The more rapidly one goes, the faster this shaft shrinks. Therefore, somebody who panics and tries to flee will only crush himself faster. There is one way to disarm the trap. Anybody who casts an Essence spell while on the stairwell may climb and descend freely. Others may climb safely at the same time. However, once the spell-user steps off, the trap re-arms itself.

The staircase causes one attack on the Fall/Crush table per round, with a +50 bonus if victims attempt to run [5d6N damage, 8d6N if victims attempt to run].

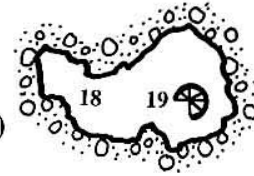
20. Undercave. The staircase ends abruptly twenty feet above the cavern floor. A rope ladder once completed the descent, but it rotted long ago. The stalactites which hang from the ceiling look eerily human, for one can discern eyes, noses and mouths in their stony wrinkles. Their expressions look calculating, as if they are evaluating the party for something.

CASTLE MARSH UNDERGROUND

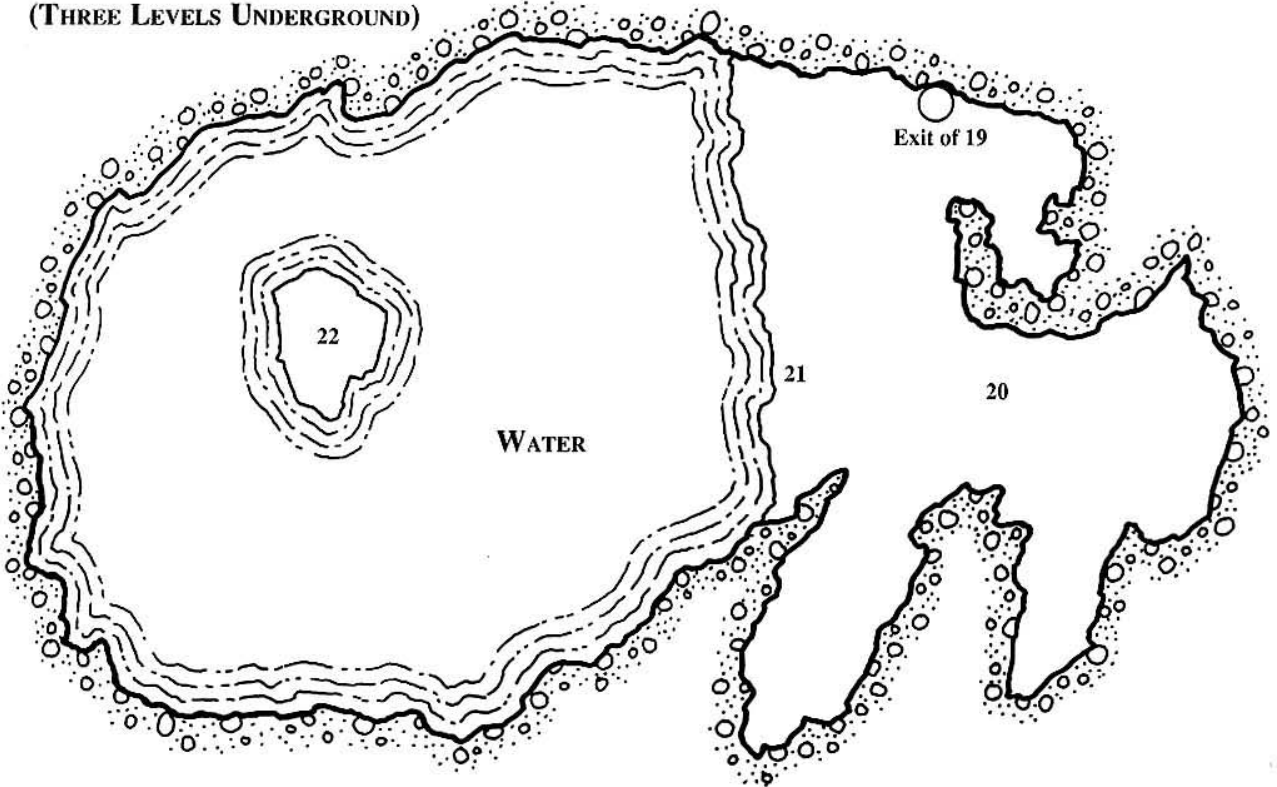
CRYPT LEVEL
(ONE LEVEL UNDERGROUND)



CHASM LEVEL
(TWO LEVELS UNDERGROUND)



UNDERCAVE LEVEL
(THREE LEVELS UNDERGROUND)



Tarminel's spirit-servants inhabit the stalactites. They are merely Constructs of stone but have the power of thought and an irreverent wit. The creatures served Tarminel loyally. Most continued to help his sons, although the children lacked authority. Now the stalactites have no master and happily exploit their freedom. They make saucy remarks as people pass. When one of them has an idea or clever insult, the stalactites next to him repeat it in a chain reaction until it reverberates throughout the chamber.

These creatures need no sustenance but love mortal food, drink and money. If the party betrays the slightest weakness, they pilfer from adventurers or even attack them. However, a commanding personality could win their obedience. They know little of Men and fear that their masters might return, despite the passage of centuries. Anyone who claims to represent Tar Tarminel and presents his seal could automatically win their obedience.

The stalactites served Tarminel as a library, work force, and guard force. They cannot move from place, but can extend stony arms to make things, passing them from one to another for different tasks. They have an assortment of forges, looms, sorting tables, pens and other tools. The Constructs have also collectively memorized an encyclopedia of sorcery. Each one knows a spell, and by calling to one another, they form a complete collection of lore. They can teach magicians these spells. However, if the sorcerer strikes them as weak, they may teach him the wrong spell. He might not realize it until he tries to cast it. Finally, each Construct can jab with its pointed tip, and any enemy who wishes to penetrate this chamber must run a gauntlet of them.

Anyone descending the stairs must pass a *Hard Perception* static maneuver or continue past the final step and fall 20'. This maneuver is Sheer Folly if the victim has no light source and has never climbed these stairs before. [-2 Perception Roll to notice stairs or fall 4"; -8 if no light source/no familiarity with stairs.]

The stalactites may serve as skilled artisans in any common craft (smithing, carpentry, weaving, cooking, barrel-making, fletching, scribing and wine-making). They have tools but no materials. [12-with various common artisan skills]

The Constructs know the following Spell Lists to the 10th level: Rune Mastery, Essence Hand, Guises, Illusion Mastery, Enchanting Ways, Essence Imbedding, Organic Skills, Liquid-Gas Skills, Inorganic Skills, Earth Law, Ice Law, Water Law, Gate Mastery, Invisible Ways, Spell Reins, Living Change and Spirit Mastery. They cannot actually cast these spells but may teach them [Elemental and Illusion/sorcery type spells to 40 active points].

21. Silent Sea. No ripple disturbs this icy water. Even if someone lobs in a stone, it will merely vanish in a soft gulp. The ceiling is often within a yard of the water's surface, forcing boaters to duck. Three Household Shaitan dwell in the water, summoned from their underground streams by Tarminel's sons.

These Shaitan look like human heads, propelled by yard-long eel bodies growing from the neck. Tarminel's sons commanded them to guard their father's isle from the Apprentice and his servants. They must obey until the Apprentice's spirit leaves this world. They desperately want his dual undead forms destroyed. They would grant one wish each for the Apprentice's exorcism. Of course, if the adventurers destroy the Apprentice without bargaining with these creatures, the Shaitan see no reason to be grateful. If the party does not help them, the Shaitan amuse themselves by dragging adventurers beneath the water.

Man-sized people suffer a -50 on all rolls involving combat or physical movement here, due to the low ceiling [=1/2 OCV, 1/2 DCV in combat; -3 to all rolls]. Anyone swimming in the chill water suffers -75 [0 OCV, 0 DCV, -5 to all rolls in water].

22. Isle Of The Enchanter. Tarminel's sanctum stands on this isle of pale stone. The cave ceiling rises 20' above it. A ring of stalagmites circles the isle. Each supports an orb of polished crystal. The four graves of Tarminel's sons lie at the center of the isle, each containing a short epitaph explaining how the occupant died. Each son tried to contact one of Tarminel's old tutors through the crystal balls. Every time, he perished at the hand of "this sad and broken world." A few bones lie by one ball, apparently the fifth son. By reading the tombstones, adventurers may learn the incantations which activate the crystal balls. Some are Windows, which merely provide a glimpse of distant places. With effort, one can shift the Window and both see and hear things within one mile of the area it points at. Other balls, called Gates, actually transport everyone on the isle somewhere else the moment someone looks in.

Adventurers can learn code words for controlling the Gates by studying details in Tarminel's sons' epitaphs. These phrases have three effects. They allow the speaker to selectively teleport some people away from the island but not others. They allow him to merely look through the Gate as if it was a Window. Finally, they let him move the Gate's destination to anywhere within half a mile of its current target. This changes both what it shows and the location it teleports to.

Tarminel's contacts have vanished. Some are now cities of Men. Others lie in rubble. The following list shows some prominent windows and gates, their labels and the effects of activating them. The GM should feel free to invent others.

A. Window On The Mountain Keep. This presents the image of a ruin, tangled with vines. Suddenly a Basilisk peeks from behind a rock, turning all viewers to stone.

B. Gate To The Land Of Ports. This once teleported the user to a great Elven haven but over centuries, the sea crept inland. If anyone activates it now, everyone on the isle falls into the ocean, half a mile from shore. If they reach land, they find themselves in Garlon.

C. Window On The Lords Of Dwarves. This ball shows the smoky chamber at the heart of the Mountain of the Brass Stair, near the Giants' village.

It shows the Chamber Of The Great Worm. One sees an enormous dragon, surrounded by Lugrōki. Whoever uses the window appears to the worm in its dreams. The dragon can converse with people who watch him, and cast spells through the window.

D. Gate To The Essence Master. This once showed the study of an Elven-Prince. His home is now a prominent "Garden Of Music" in Tharn, where Men can hire young female musicians and dancers to entertain them. The more one pays, the more entertaining they get. If anyone activates this ball, he finds himself teleported into its private chambers. There, they meet a Mandator in a very compromising condition. He will struggle to have them executed or assassinated if the Garden's guards fail to kill the "voyeurs" first.

E. Window To The Land Of Prophets. This window comes closest to functioning correctly. It shows a misty cave mouth on the distant land where the High Men came from. The cave once answered any question shouted into it. Now it can only prophesy about the questioner's death. Whoever activates this crystal ball will learn either the place, time or way in which he must perish. The GM may decide whether this prophecy is certain or merely probable.

One must pass a *Medium Read Runes* static maneuver [INT roll at -1] to learn what the tombstones say. It requires an *Absolute Success* to discover how to control the Gates. [Roll must be made by 1/2 to discover how to control Gates.]

4 • THE BRASS STAIR

Unwary adventurers have much to encounter and endure atop the windswept 100 mile long Brass Stair. Traps, wolves, Sky Giants and the rumor of Flying Dragons await the would-be rich and famous. What price will you pay for fame and fortune?

1. Dwarven Roads. Tufts of grass grow on these trails, but their cobblestone surfaces show that they were once great highways. The Sky Giants use these roads and keep the forest from covering them entirely. An occasional tree bears the initials of some Alaron pilgrim or Dwarf who recovered an heirloom of his ancestors. Crows fly overhead. Sometimes these birds follow travellers, cawing monotonously.

At night and during storms, nightmarish hunters stalk this area. Lugrōki swarm from hidden ravines to massacre travellers. They use trained Crows to locate victims and enslaved Giants for the initial assault. These four foot tall cannabals are masters of camouflage and always attack by surprise, with vast numerical superiority. If victims try to flee, the Lugrōki almost always know the road system well enough to find a shortcut and surround the fugitives. Tusked Lugrōki keep a few slaves but kill most victims and stack the bodies along the Brass Stair (see #2).

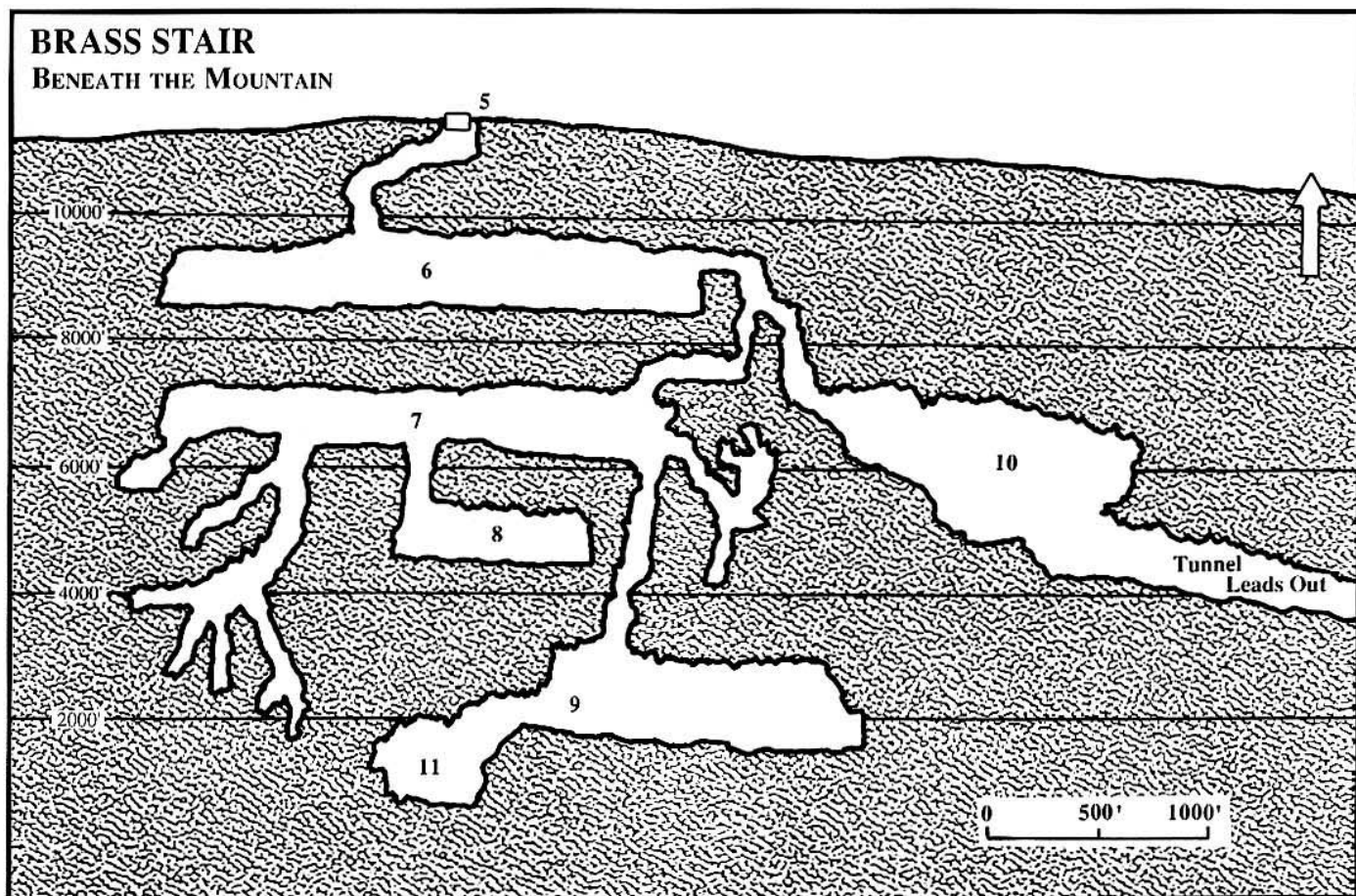
The Lugrōki are attempting to conceal their existence. Since they know that eventually a victim will escape, they fight in iron masks, painted with phantasmagoric faces. Therefore, of the many explorers of the Brass Stair, very few have reported Lugrōki. The few who survived these attacks believe they encountered purple-skinned demons, skull-headed ghosts and monsters with faces on both sides of their heads.

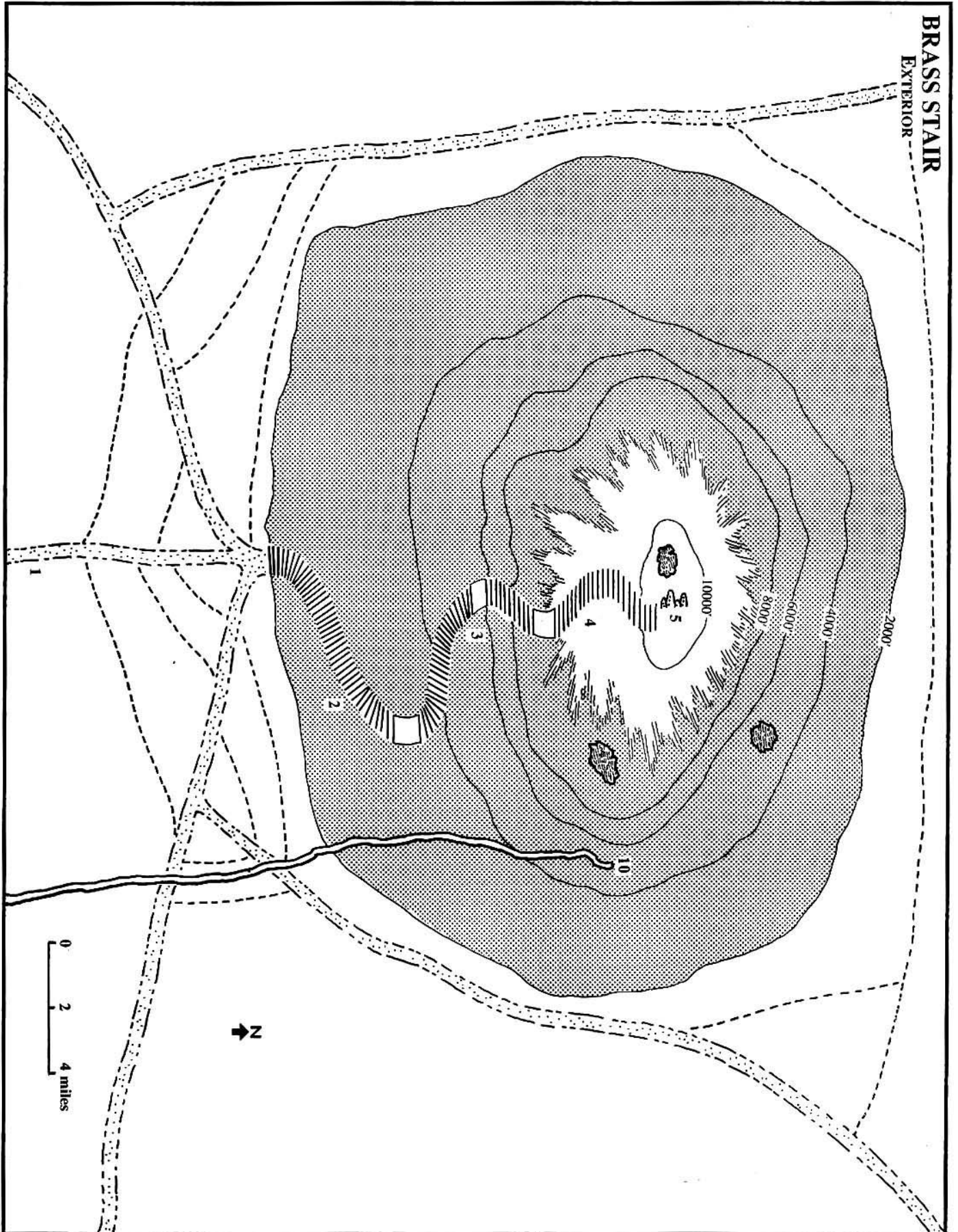
Anyone attempting to move off the roads travels at half speed due to underbrush and marshy obstacles. Lugrōki shortcuts allow normal forest movement but one can only find them by passing a *Hard Perception* static maneuver [Perception roll at -2].

2. Lower Stair. The Brass Stair glares from the underbrush, an intrusion of metal in the world of leaves and soil. Ten flights up, a foul smell develops. Two flights beyond, the stairs turn dark with dried blood. The corpses of Dwarves, Men and Sky Giants beyond number lie next to the stairs, laid in stacks of five, stretching up for miles. Lugrōki leave them here as a warning to intruders. They slice off the fleshy parts of victim's bodies for stews but leave the entrails and husks here. However, even carrion-animals shun this area, because of the Wolves. Hundreds of wolves live in the ravines, and dragon-magic gives them an unnatural delight in slaughter. Survivors report that this brood will turn from the choicest meal to pursue a live foe, even if the new victim is fast, scrawny and well-armed.

3. Upper Stair. Above the treeline, the Stair rises from the mountainside on stilts, allowing it to maintain a steady ascent along several thousand feet of vertical cliff. The Stair is six feet wide, but there is no rail; the steps glisten as if oiled.

Ten masked Lugrōki lie hidden in boulders near the top. They have a pot of oil boiling, to pour on intruders. Each one also keeps ten crossbows cocked and loaded nearby. After scalding victims, they fire each crossbow without bothering to reload and then run. The monsters launch their attack when victims are ten yards from the top of the cliff. Anyone who leaps or falls at this point tumbles 250'. The Lugrōki recognize allies by their painted masks. Adventurers might pass safely by stealing costumes from other raiders.





Treat the oil as a +20 Fire Bolt attack against each climber [3d6k (energy), OCV 8]. It is also slippery, and anyone standing on it suffers a -25 on attacks, DB and moving maneuvers [1/2 OCV, 1/2 DCV, 1/2 movement, -2 to DEX rolls].

4. Summit Flight. The Stair leads into year-round snow here, and an icy lace filigree its metal. The philosophers of Alaros' High Grove claim to read the future in this frost. It invariably predicts tragedy and war. However, pilgrims occasionally find a way to save themselves with this knowledge, or at least gain the consolation that their misery is universal. The GM may decide what prophecies would suit his campaign and if PCs can interpret them properly.

5. Gate. The Brass Stair ends by a heap of enormous slabs of stone, some hundreds of feet wide. There is no visible entry into the mountain. The Dwarves built one of their famous hidden gates here. One enters the mountain through a series of gatehouses, each within a boulder. At midday, the shadow of the Stair points to the entry stone. One opens it by rapping three times with a heavy object. Twenty Lugrôki guard the inner chambers.

6. The City Of Fire. These caverns once formed the Dwarves' greatest stronghold in all of Wuliris, but it is now the camp of nearly 1,000 Lugrôki, who live in nearly military drabness, and a hundred Sky Giants, who bully and battle the small cannibals daily. Forges and workshops cluster in central locations, worked by slaves. The ancient carvings have begun to crumble, and only a few of the city's fabled lanterns are lit. Lugrôki have pried the gems out of these ornaments and hidden them in their homes.

7. Mines. This mountain produces nearly every sort of mineral, including iron, gold silver, lead and traces of laen. Lugrôki and their slaves work here constantly, although they lack the skill and flair of Dwarves.

8. Vaults. These natural cathedrals once held Dwarven treasuries. Dragons have gathered most of the money into their hordes; Sky Giants and Lugrôki have taken the rest. However, this area still contains countless chambers, with thick walls of granite and iron. Ponderous gates separate them, secret doors conceal passages, and deep pits make exploring treacherous. The Lugrôki use these vaults as prisons and a final redoubt in battle. They hold several hundred slaves here, mostly injured and despised (by their own kind) Giants. Some hate their captors while others obey willingly due to sorcery.

9. Hall Of The Forest Worm. A faint glow fills this chamber. Fungoid stems and mushrooms cover its floor, ranging in size from microscopic to more than eight feet high. Roots of trees hang from the ceiling, revealing that this chamber is near the surface. Many of the plants here are Exploding Mushrooms, which spew poison if bruised.

One must use a light source to identify the different types of mushrooms. Men can eat several varieties. Lugrôki can eat even more, and may also digest some of the roots. They prefer flesh. This is a much more reliable source of food though, and the Dragon who rules the Brass Stair assigns one of his sons to guard it.

Tarakor, the Forest Worm, sits quietly in a dense fungus grove. He is a young, rash Dragon, eager to begin a treasure-nest. Currently, he must sleep on copper. He has 100,000 coins. Tarakor rends victims with teeth and claws rather than his fiery breath, since he does not want to damage the mushrooms. Several victims have led him on frantic hunts through the mushrooms.

10. Hall Of The Water Worm. Water hisses through this chamber. Underground streams converge here, and flow through a series of cave mouths onto the mountainside. The true beauty of this chamber appears only when one strikes a light. These caves glitter with flecks of gold.

Dwarves flushed away their mining waste here, and the Brass Stair's new miners continue that practice. Unlike their predecessors, the Lugrôki cannot extract all the gold from ore. Much of it stays in the tailings, and these streams naturally remove it, like a prospector's sluice.

Shinabula, the Dragon's eldest child, lives here on a bed of golden dust. Her mattress is worth nearly 1,000 gold coins. Shinabula is a lithe female with quick eyes and a talent for sorcery. Few can resist her hypnotic commands. She guards the river-entries against intruders, often capturing them with magic and turning them into enchanted slaves of the Brass Stair.

11. Hall Of The Great Worm. Harkor, the Ancient Worm, drowns in this tunnel, his immense body resembling a mountain itself. Once ruddy, he has turned nearly black with soot and years. His consort Marakor faces him from another pile. When they both raise their heads, their smoking noses nearly brush. Even those wise in the ways of Dragons tremble here, for these two worms combine their wit in conversation as readily as their strength in battle. Marakor knows to provide answers whenever her husband cannot solve a conundrum, lest he embarrass himself before strangers. He, likewise, weighs every word of praise to be sure it does not slight his wife.

The Dragons lay dormant here for many centuries. Although they do not doubt their strength, neither sees any reason to bother with petty thieves, budding heroes or anti-Lugrôki crusaders. Occasionally, news of the outer world interests them: the prospect of a victim sometimes entices them to venture out of their lair. When their Lugrôki servants report bitter weather or wartime conditions that leave a town isolated, the Dragons might venture forth to obliterate it. If a potential target seems near enough for the Dragons to raid and to recover its gold, they will certainly attack. Lugrôki porters lug back their treasure. Although the Dragons fought against Loremasters in the War of Dominion, they are no slaves of the Unlife. Harkor and Marakor serve only themselves. The prospect of another general war would tantalize these creatures although they would only join if they felt certain of profit.

As for treasure, Harkor and Marakor own the wealth of scores of thousands of Dwarves. Countless other victims have paid tribute since then, or lost their purses to Lugrôki raiders. There is a maze of tunnels within their bed of coins. Ivory tusks and rare woods form the supports. Twenty servants and bodyguards, all Lugrôki, dwell within these caves, to catalog valuable items and wait on the Dragons. However, although few know this treasure's fate, such riches are seldom forgotten. Every family Dwarven Will mentions what the family lost when the Brass Stair fell. Tharn also lays claim to anything under the mountain, saying that the territory belongs to the Empire. Anyone who acquires part of this pile will find rivals for his fortune.

PART IX

• ADVENTURES •

Adventuring in Wuliris can focus on any of numerous conflicts. The PCs could participate in the brewing world war, as agents of Tharn, Alaros, Dunel or the League Of Traders, which thrives on peace and free trade. Adventurers could also involve themselves in politics within one of the kingdoms. They might champion Karlta, Shara or Malkus for the Imperial Throne, or pursue petty intrigues in the Thousand Fiefdoms. Other skirmishes involve purely local affairs. The nobles of Garlon and Aka Narlta need champions for their affairs. Garlon's fiery hill people fight the Giants and their wise-women weave spells that trained wizards envy. Dunel needs help in his vendetta against Rock Of The Blade.

Other adventure possibilities concern the Unknown. Magicians seek the vanished arts of the Essence, and Elves seek a place of rest. Like everyone else, the Navigators consider Narlshaw a backwater, safe for their most bizarre experiments. Ruins of mystic times dot the countryside, ripe for exploration. Finally, although the Unlife is subtle, it exists. When Evil is invisible, as in Narlshaw, that only makes it insidious and more devastating when it finally appears.

You could also set a campaign in earlier parts of Narlshaw's history. Perhaps the adventurers are advance scouts for the Alaron Men, looking for a suitable place to found a new homeland. A Dwarven PC could oust the Tyrants and take the place of Dunel Goldhearted. Or the party could consist entirely of immortal Elves, who begin their careers in the Second Era and adventure in every chapter of time.

Some ideas for specific adventures appear below. Check your gear and say your prayers, freebooters!

***GM Note:** to locate the statistics of all NPCs mentioned in the following seven adventures, consult the NPC Tables in Part X.*

1 • JEALOUS CROWNS

Setting: The parlors of Tharn.

Requirements: A party of reasonably presentable PCs, who need a political favor (or just money) from Shara.

Aids: Someone to advise the PCs on Tharn's drawing-room intrigues. This could be a duelling rake or a lady bent on social climbing. Perhaps this aid is the party's rival for attention at Shara's court and not entirely trustworthy.

The Tale: Sir Bakor, one of Shara's richest suitors, recently appeared at Avero's pleasure-palace in the company of a dark-haired young woman. The resulting gossip is predictable, and Shara has wept for days about the insult.

The Task: Surely, the adventurers will not suffer an insult to their Imperial Princess — especially when she offers a pearl ring and a night's dance to the man who avenges her. However, Sir Bakor is a practiced duellist. Then Karlta's husband, Tirkor, agrees to fight by his side, pleased at this slap to his wife's enemy. The plot twists again when it turns out that Lady Morgau arranged Sir Bakor's liaison. His other mistress is one of Morgau's younger sisters. If she marries Sir Bakor, Lady Morgau will be able to tap the knight's fortune. Morgau insures that Shara's own court struggles to thwart the adventurers' errand.

The Reward: The pearl ring, worth 500 gold coins. If the PCs successfully chastise Sir Bakor, they also gain a web of friends and enemies in Shara's court. Details appear above. These people could prove invaluable — or disastrous — in future intrigues.

Alternative Adventure: If one of the male PCs is distinguished enough, he might become Sir Bakor. Shara falls in love with him, and Morgau simultaneously begins arranging encounters between the adventurer and her sister. No matter what he does, one or both of them will consider herself spurned and hire an avenger. This adventure can occur even if the party generally opposes Shara. The heart, after all, is seldom rational.

2 • ACT OF CRIME

Setting: The Brass Stair (See Part VIII/4).

Requirements: A party with underworld connections, or at least some reason to make contact with a Master Thief. Dwarves have a special interest in this adventure and a special question of loyalties. Do they serve King Dunel by betraying Rock, or do they use this opportunity to recover their ancestral treasures?

Aids: A few of Rock Of The Blade's servitors.

The Tale: Rock Of The Blade plans his most daring heist yet. His sources tell him that some of the Dwarves' ancient treasure is still within the Mount of the Brass Stair. He believes he can steal it without reaching the monsters which dwell on the mountain. The Master Thief knows of an aperture where underground streams flow out and thinks it will lead to the treasure.

The Task: Not foolish enough to enter the caves himself, Rock Of The Blade hires the adventurers to make the first journey beneath the Brass Stair. His choice was wise, since the Blade's tunnel leads to the lair of the Water Dragon.

The Reward: Rock Of The Blade pays each adventurer 100 silver coins. He demands any treasure his explorers find, but the party might “forget” a few gems, or perhaps an enchanted charm.

Alternative Adventure: Dunel Goldheart hires the party to apply for The Blade’s job offer and uses the opportunity to entice the Master Thief into ambush, to capture him. (See Adventure #5 below.)

3•SECURE IN WISDOM

The Setting: Narlshaw.

Requirements: A party familiar with the wilderness and friendly with Elves.

Aids: The Elven-Prince and some of his servitors.

The Tale: Cirbidel, Prince of Elves, spends his life hunted like an animal. His name remains entwined with an incident 200 years ago in Shaambray, where evil forces laid the city waste, consuming, among countless others, two sorcerers who had kidnapped Cirbidel’s daughter. Cirbidel maintains that the magicians themselves called the Demons. He notes that they took his daughter too.

In any event, the relatives and descendants of people devoured by the demons offered a bounty of 1,000 sacks of wool (worth 500 gold coins) for Cirbidel’s head. Other sorcerers, notably those in Tharn, offer the Elven-Prince sanctuary, in a thinly-disguised bid to squeeze magical secrets out of him.

Cirbidel hid in the forests of southern Garlon for two centuries. Recently though, he learned that Lot have uncovered his ancestral keep in northern Tharn. He badly wants to visit it and recover enchanted devices within. However, he knows that his many enemies will watch for him along the entire course of the journey.

The Task: Cirbidel hires the party to escort him across Narlshaw to his family castle. Bounty hunters and magicians pursue them. If Cirbidel and company arrive, they may encounter several Demons of the First Pale there, laying a trap for the father of their last victim.

The Reward: Lists of spells from Cirbidel’s Keep. (See the Master NPC Charts in Part X for Cirbidel’s stats.)

Alternative Adventure: The PCs discover Cirbidel’s keep. The Demons try to use them to lure Cirbidel there, while Garlon’s avengers try to set their own ambushes. If the PCs show them to the keep, these meddlers may encounter the Demons. If the adventurers are not careful, they, like Cirbidel, may find themselves accused of summoning spirits from Beyond.

4•FORBIDDEN HAVEN

The Setting: The northern seas around Belgor Island. (See Part IV, #13.)

Requirements: A party of seafaring adventurers.

Aids: A ship and crewmembers, at least some of whom can provide a brief background on Belgor.

The Tale: The fleets of Tharn and Alaros patrol near Belgor, close to war over some trivial piracy. Both of them fear that the other will ambush them from Belgor’s coves. Therefore, they scrupulously defend Belgor’s neutrality. No one but the natives may land, regardless of circumstances. Who is to prove that “marooned sailors” are not raiders?

The Task: A sudden storm swamps the party’s ship, leaving the PCs adrift on wreckage. If they violate Belgor’s isolation, either 20-40 Fleet Leonines of Tharn or a similar number of the Sailors of Alaros may land to punish them. (See Part V, Arms and Armies.) When a ship of one nation goes to shore, its rivals will come to resist it, and the PCs may find themselves caught in a battle at sea.

The Reward: Not drowning. Also, if by the end of the adventure the party has rendered service to one navy or the other, a captain may pay them a stipend of about 10 sp each.

Alternative Adventure: The PCs learn of a Demon which has appeared on Belgor and is bringing the Fishing People under its power. The party decides to intervene out of kindness, or perhaps in the pay of some wizard. When they try to land, they discover the warring fleets.

GM Note: the Demon’s statistics appear in Part X, the Master Beast Charts.

5•WHERE CRIME IS

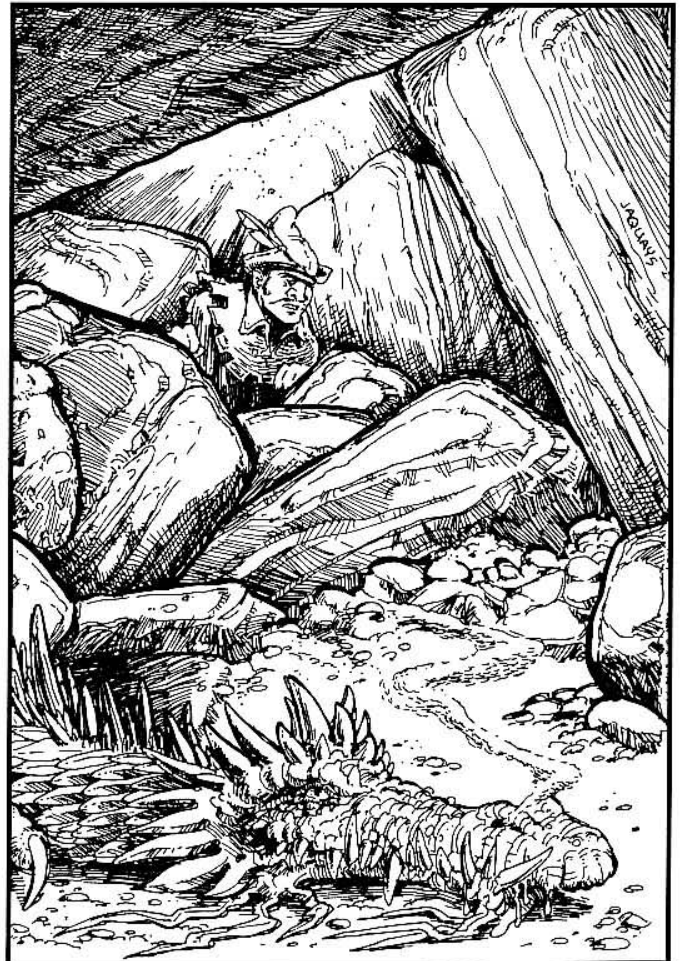
The Setting: Lew Welleen, the Red Island. (See Part VI, #39.)

Requirements: A party interested in capturing Rock Of The Blade.

Aids: A ship, and possibly some defectors from Rock’s gang.

The Tale: Rumors say that Rock Of The Blade was thieving under an assumed name in Shaambray. The constables arrested him and sent him to Red Island as a mining slave.

The Task: Dunel Goldheart hires the party to find the Blade and bring him to Onopole for Dwarven justice. First, they must get to the island. They may use their own ship, join a slaving crew, or disguise themselves as prisoners. On Red Island, they discover that the man who resembled the Blade vanished into the anarchical parts of the island, ruled by the prison gangs. The inmates there will certainly not talk to anyone but other prisoners unless bribed.



Eventually, the party learns that the Blade has escaped. Pursuing him through the island jungle, they encounter tropical beasts and escaped prisoners. The island natives hunt mainlanders with poisoned arrows, having suffered too much abuse from slavers and escaped felons. Finally the party finds the Blade — in an island fortress. A garrison of pirates serves him there. He merely disguised himself as a prisoner, to reach his stronghold without attracting attention.

The Reward: Dunel rewards the party with Dwarf-made weapons that have a non-magical bonus of +20. They may also recover loot from Rock Of The Blade's stronghold, up to 1,000gp worth of booty.

Alternative Adventure: Slavers or constables capture the adventurers and send them to the mines. They must escape, find Rock Of the Blade's fortress, and convince the pirates there to sail them back to the mainland.

6 • THE HALF-BLOOD

The Setting: Thousand Fiefdoms. (See Part VI, #35.)

Requirements: One of the party members discovers that he is distantly related to House Cambon, a petty noble family in Thousand Fiefdoms.

Aids: A helpful aunt who provides background about the family line.

The Tale: A curse haunts the nobles of Thousand Fiefdoms. In the Wars of Dominion, the Witch Queen Ashertar married a king of Lugrôki. Their sorcerous wedding ritual contaminated Ashertar's entire bloodline. The Men of Thousand Fiefdoms care deeply about genealogy. They have struggled to cleanse their family tree with arranged marriages. Despite it all, an occasional child is born Half-Blooded, with the teeth (tusks) and complexion of a Lugrôki.

GM Note: for more about the Lugrôki, see Part II, #8.

Recently, the Duchess of Cambon bore her first son. He emerged from the womb with teeth — the tusks of a Half-Blood. The Duchess is still recovering from a difficult birth, but spies and schemers fill her court. While still on her birthing stool, the Duchess extracted oaths of secrecy from the midwives. But, somehow, word reached Ulnashi, captain of a Lugrôki band under Horn Peak. His complex genealogical charts make him the boy's cousin. According to his documents, the Lugrôki are entitled to share the estates of House Cambon. Worse, Ulnashi could claim the post of Regent if the Duchess loses her ability to rule. The Lugrôki are capable of arranging such losses.

The Task: One of the adventurers is distantly related to the Duchess. If Ulnashi proves that the house Cambon is part Lugrôki, that PC will lose both inheritance and reputation. The party must save House Cambon. Perhaps they could force Ulnashi to renounce his claims, but he lives in a cavern fortress, guarded by over 100 Lugrôki. Moreover, if word of the birth and its consequences leak out, the House Cambon will become an outcast in Garlon and Thousand Fiefdoms. Greedy lords would love to usurp its lands on the pretext of expunging Lugrôki blood. It might be simpler to dispose of the child.

A-Parlan, a Son Of Alaros, fosters Half-Bloods. Most people consider this a mark of Alaros' enlightened philosophy, but others note that it provides A-Parlan with a household of warriors who can serve no lord but him. The party must get the child to him. They must keep the affair secret too, since a conversation with A-Parlan is tantamount to a confession. Spies sent by two of the Thousand Fiefdoms and one dispatched by Ulnashi watch the Alaron court.

The Reward: If the adventurers rescue House Cambon, the Duchess will give them interest in one of her estates, which pays an emolument of ten gold coins per year. If the GM chooses, he can make the PC a close relative. When the party disposes of Ulnashi, Duchess Cambon names this adventurer heir presumptive. He gets prestige and authority over her knights. He also makes a host of enemies, ready to kill for his position.

Alternative Adventure: One PC is the Duchess' Half-Blood child. The midwives secretly exchanged him for a normal baby belonging to another woman. Since the adventurer looks Mannish, nobody realized what he was. Now, Ulnashi has learned the truth. Lugrôki agents pressure the adventurer to claim his role as heir. Of course, claiming the throne by virtue of a polluted bloodline involves even more peril than a typical court intrigue.

7 • A LESSON IN DIPLOMACY

The Setting: Parlor in Tharn (or any noble court in Narlshaw.)

Requirements: Adventurers accustomed to noble courts, but penurious enough to accept this assignment.

Aids: As many personal concerns for the adventurers as possible. They should know that NPC diplomats have schemes of their own underway at court.

The Tale: Fahkar, a Mandator of Tharn, holds an annual feast for the nobility of all Narlshaw. This year, he finds himself forced to invite one of the Sky Giants. The Lord Bull sends his son, a drooling Giant named Thulain.

The Task: Fahkar hires adventurers to protect Thulain, instruct him in table manners and keep him from disturbing the banquet. The last task is by far the most difficult. Despite his moronic visage, Thulain has a lucid mind and the powers of a Mentalist. He uses his powers to play practical jokes on Princess Gwindolin of Garlon, another guest at court. The Lot prince maintains that he is in love with her and hopes to teasingly win her affections. He actually intends to humiliate the Princess, enrage her father and provoke a war in the mountains. (The Giants raid Garlon in war and peace.) In a formally declared war, Tharn would have to support its ally, the Lord Bull Of Lot.

The Reward: Fahkar will pay the adventurers 50 silver coins each for the evening's work. They may also win much larger rewards from the Lot or from Garlon, depending on how they manage Thulain's plot.

Alternative Adventure: One of the PCs must woo Gwindolin, either romantically, or for some political favor. Thulain starts harassing her, using subtle Mentalist spells to cast blame on the adventurer. The PC must unmask Thulain and take revenge to restore his reputation.

PART X

• CHARTS •

1•MASTER NPC CHARTS

ROLEMASTER NPC CHART								
Character	LVL	Hits	AT(DB)	Sh	Gr	Melee Ob	Missile Ob	Mov M
Antono	6	40	14(20)	Y10	N	40ma	10sl	15
Antono is a Cleric who knows the following spell lists to 10th level: Detection Mastery, Barrier Law, Purification, Concussion's Ways, Blood Law, Bone Law, Muscle Law, Nerve Law, Lore.								
Avero	7	95	1(40)	N	N	105ml	80lb	15
Avero is a fighter and wears full plate (AT 20) if prepared for combat. SD 54, Co 56, Ag 45, Me 60, Re 45, St 40, Qu 90, Pr 52, In 54, Em 45.								
Barl	8	120	13(30)	N	N	100ba	90sb	15
Cellion	10	40	1(0)	N	N	30da	-25	10
Cellion is an Evil Magician who knows the following spell lists to tenth level: Essence Hand, Lesser Illusions, Delving Ways, Invisible Ways, Living Change, Spirit Mastery, Lofty Bridge, Dispelling Ways, Shield Mastery, Gate Mastery, Fire Law, Ice Law, Physical Erosion, Matter Disruption, Dark Summons, Darkness. SD 40, Co 45, Ag 65, Me 76, Re 75, St 54, Qu 58, Pr 78, In 67, Em 85.								
Cucunain	20	250	12(70)	N	N	250ba	200lb/150ho	40
The 15' tall Lord Bull of the Sky' Giants has powers beyond those of ordinary mortals. His skin equals hide armor, and he can gore with his horns at a 150 OB. He knows the following Channeling Spell Lists to 40th level: Weather Ways, Detection Mastery, Nature's Law, Evil Cleric Lists Curses, and Disease, and all Animist base spell lists. SD 84, Co 96, Ag 95, Me 80, Re 95, St 150, Qu 190, Pr 92, In 94, Em 95.								
Dunel	14	150	17(35)	Y20	N	130bs	130lcb	20
Dunel is a fighter. SD 50, Co 80, Ag 70, Me 60, Re 50, St 90, Qu 95, Pr 80, In 54, Em 60.								
Findula	10	69	1(20)	N	N	50ma	15sb	5
Findula is a Cleric who knows the following Spell Lists to tenth level: Sound's Way, Light's Way, Purification, Concussion's Ways, Blood Law, Bone Law, Organ Law, Muscle Law, Nerve Law, Channels, Summons, Communal Ways, Protections, Repulsions.								
Istar	7	25	1(0)	N	N	20da	-25	0
Istar is a magician who knows the following spell lists to tenth level, with exceptions noted: Spell Wall; Essence's Perceptions, except for Long Ear and Long Eye spells; Lesser Illusions, Invisible Ways, except for Unseen; Spirit Mastery, except Charm Kind, Suggestion, Master Of Kind and True Charm; Rapid Ways; Fire Law; Ice Law; Earth Law; Light Law; Wind Law; Water Law. SD 45, Co 54, Ag 65, Me 80, Re 97, St 60, Qu 60, Pr 65, In 64, Em 88.								
Jayce	7	95	13(30)	N	N	95bs	95ja	15
Jayce is a fighter. SD 70, Co 55, Ag 73, Me 65, Re 66, St 76, Qu 67, Pr 80, In 76, Em 65.								
Karlta	9	100	5(40)	N	N	100bs	90sb	15
Karlta is a fighter. SD 80, Co 75, Ag 60, Me 64, Re 54, St 80, Qu 90, Pr 65, In 56, Em 54.								
Malkus	3	45	1(30)	N	N	60sp	60sb	5
Malkus is a fighter and can wear armor of any sort in battle. SD 30, Co 35, Ag 56, Me 66, Re 55, St 70, Qu 55, Pr 30, In 45, Em 50.								
Morgau	5	60	1(30)	N	N	80sp	80sb	10
Morkor	10	115	18(30)	N	N	115sp	115lb	15
Ogard of Balth	7	95	13(30)	N	N	90ss	85lb	10
Orindil	8	100	13(30)	Y10	N	80hb	60lb	15
Orindil is a Ranger who knows the following Spell Lists to tenth level: Path Mastery, Nature's Guises, Nature's Ways. He also knows Inner Walls to fifth level.								
Rock Of The Blade	20	105	5(35)	N	N	130da	90sb	20
Rock Of The Blade is a thief. SD 70, Co 65, Ag 80, Me 85, Re 67, St 80, Qu 98, Pr 70, In 65, Em 56.								
Shara	2	35	1(25)	N	N	50da	50sb	5
Shara can be treated as a fighter. SD 40, Co 45, Ag 60, Me 55, Re 54, St 25, Qu 24, Pr 50, In 45, Em 70.								
Siriel (Elf)	5	45	13(30)	N	N	50ls	50lb	15
Siriel is a Ranger who knows the Spell Lists: Path Mastery and Nature's Ways. (Swan Form shown under Creatures)								
Talin	10	120	13(30)	N	N	130bs	100lb	20
Talin is a fighter. SD 95, Co 96, Ag 56, Me 70, Re 85, St 56, Qu 54, Pr 78, In 65, Em 70.								
Thytis	15	155	13(55)	N	N	130bs	160lb	15
Thytis is a fighter. SD 67, Co 78, Ag 95, Me 50, Re 96, St 89, Qu 100, Pr 65, In 56, Em 65.								
Tirkor	8	100	13(30)	N	N	110bs	120lcb	15
Tirkor is a fighter. SD 86, Co 70, Ag 65, Me 50, Re 54, St 76, Qu 65, Pr 80, In 75, Em 90.								

FANTASY HERO MASTER NPC CHART

Name	STR	DEX	CON	BODY	PRE	tPD	rPD	tED	rED	SPD	REC	STN	OCV	DCV	Damage	Move
Antono A Cleric, Antono knows non-combat spells up to 30 active points.	12	14	15	10	10	6	0	4	0	3	6	25	5	5	1 1/2d6	6"
Avero A fighter, Avero wears 8 PD and 8 ED Armor in combat.	19	16	18	16	16	8	2	7	2	4	8	29	8	7	2d6	7"
Barl A Dwarf-lord and fighter of note, Barl threatens to overthrow the Dwarf-king Dunel.	15	16	13	13	19	7	0	6	0	4	7	26	8	8	1 1/2d6	7"
Cellion An Evil Magician, Cellion knows spells up to 30 active points.	10	14	12	10	16	5	0	3	0	3	5	19	7	5	1d6	6"
Cucunain The Lord Bull of the Sky Giants stands 15' high and knows spells up to 90 active points. His skin is 4ED and 4 PD in combat.	63	14	39	32	38	19	6	14	4	3	16	58	4	4	10D6	12"
Dunel A fighter, Dunel is the Dwarven "King."	20	17	18	15	15	12	5	10	5	4	8	28	12	10	2d6	7"
Findula A Cleric, Findula knows non-combat spells up to 30 active points.	10	15	12	10	18	5	0	3	0	3	5	19	8	5	1d6	6"
Istar A magician, Istar knows non-combat spells up to 30 active points.	12	15	17	10	11	5	0	4	0	2	6	22	4	4	1d6	6"
Jayce A fighter, Jayce is Lord of Slaves on Red Island.	22	16	21	17	18	9	2	8	2	4	8	35	8	7	2d6	8"
Karla A fighter, Karla is a Princess of Tharn and husband to Tirkor.	11	13	12	10	14	5	0	3	0	3	4	21	5	5	1d6+1	6"
Malkus A fighter, Malkus is the Ruler of Tharn.	16	13	12	11	13	6	0	4	0	3	6	25	9	6	1 1/2d6	7"
Morgau A Lady, Morgau is a wealthy court schemer.	13	11	10	8	9	4	0	3	0	2	4	18	7	4	1d6-1	6"
Morkor Morkor is a fighter and Captain of Tharn's Leonines.	20	17	18	15	14	12	5	10	4	4	8	34	13	9	2d6	7"
Ogard Of Balth, Ogard is an aged Lord.	16	14	14	13	12	11	4	9	4	3	7	30	12	8	2d6	7"
Orindil An experienced Ranger, Orindil is a powerful Elf-lord and knows nature-based spells up to 30 active points.	17	15	15	15	14	12	5	10	5	4	9	35	12	10	2d6+1	7"
The Blade A thief of great fame, the Rock carries many sorcerous devices.	12	17	14	15	17	5	2	5	1	4	5	30	9	6	1d6+1K	7"
Shara A female "fighter," Shara is an Imperial Princess "served" by Lady Morgau.	10	11	9	8	11	4	0	3	0	2	4	19	4	6	1d6	6"
Siriell An Elf Ranger, Siriell knows nature-based spells up to 30 active points.	11	18	14	12	17	7	2	5	2	3	5	28	7	6	1d6+1K	8"
Talin A fighter, Talin rules Alaros, the High Men of Narlshaw.	18	16	19	18	14	15	7	14	6	4	8	38	10	4	1 1/2d6K	8"
Thytis A remarkable fighter, Thytis is Overlord of Garlon.	20	18	19	19	16	15	6	15	7	5	8	40	12	4	1 1/2d6K	8"
Tirkor A fighter, Tirkor is Shara's husband and protector.	12	18	14	15	15	4	1	3	0	3	5	24	6	6	1d6K	7"

ROLEMASTER TABLE CODES

Codes: The statistics given describe each NPC or typical soldier, sailor, marine, etc. A more detailed description of the NPCs can be found in the main text. Some of the codes are self-explanatory: **Lvl** (level), **Hits**, and **Sh** (Shield). More complex codes are listed below.

AT (Armor Type): The number is the equivalent *Rolemaster* armor type.

DB (Defensive Bonus): Note defensive bonuses include stats, shield, armor, and other items when noted.

OB's (Offensive Bonuses): Weapon abbreviations follow OB's: ba-battle-axe, br-bastard sword, bs-broadsword, cb-composite bow, da-dagger, fa-falchion, ha-hand axe, ja-javelin, ky-kynac (short), la-lance, lb-long bow, ma-mace, ml-mounted lance, Mr-Martial Arts (both strikes and sweeps), ms-morning star, pa-pole arm, qs-quarterstaff, ra-rapier, sb-short bow, ss-short sword, sp-spear, St-Martial Arts Striking, Sw-Martial Arts Sweeps and Throws, th-two-handed sword, wm-war mattock.

Stats: Ag=Agility, Co=Constitution, SD=Self=Discipline, Me=Memory, Re=Reasoning, St=Strength, Qu=Quickness, Pr=Presence, Em=Empathy, In=Intuition.

2•MASTER CREATURE CHARTS

ROLEMASTER BEAST CHART										
Creature	Base Lvl	Max Rate	Pace/ MM Bonus	Speed MS/AQ	Size/ Crit	AT Hits	AT (DB)	Attacks	# Enc	Outlook (IQ)
Apprentice	20	90	Dash/20	FA/VF	M/SL#	150	1(90)	160da[Cold]/180MBi	1	Domin.(EX)
The Apprentice, a Vampire, drains 20-30 hits per round with his bite and 2-4 Con points per round by touch. A victim may escape the latter effect by passing an RR at -15. The Vampire cannot be harmed by any attacks except for magic weapons, silver weapons, wooden stakes used to cause puncture criticals and electricity spells. He can cast all Evil Mentalist spells per level, along with the following Essence lists to 10th level: Essence Hand, Physical Enhancement, Lesser Illusions, Detecting Ways, Spirit Mastery, Invisible Ways, Dispelling Ways, Ice Law. He can change himself into a bat, wolf or a cloud of vapor.										
Basilisk	6	80	FSpt/10	MF/MD	L/—	110	12(30)	60LPi/50LCI	1	Cruel(AV)
Anyone who hears a Basilisk hiss must pass an RR or flee in terror. Those who view this creature must pass an RR or turn to stone (RR failures: mild=1-100 minutes, moderate=2-20 hours, serious=1-100 days, extreme=1-100 years). A Basilisk can cast Cracks Call on these statues.										
Burder (Oxen)	4	60	FSpt/20	MF/MF	L/—	150	4(10)	50MHo/60LBa/70LTsBi	2-10	Noraml(IN)
Bupoterix	6	100	Dash/20	FA/FA	L/LA	250	4(30)	90Ba/80LGr/90Hcr	1	Bellig.(VL)
A Giant of Castle Marsh, Bupoterix can also hurl rocks or other large objects 100 feet, doing Large Crush damage at 60 OB. Multiply his weapon damage by two.										
Cockatrices	4	70	Dash/20	VF/MF	M/—	60	4(60)	50MPi	6	Greedy(AA)
On a critical, these creatures immediately make a 50Scl attack. Anyone who sees one must pass an RR (RR failures: mild=1-100 minutes, moderate=2-20 hours, serious=1-100 days, extreme=1-100 years).										
Constructs	8	60	Run/0	MD/MF	M/II#	250	20(5)	120sp	200	Mission(NO)
Crows	1	100	Dash/30	FA/FA	S/—	8	1(50)	0SPi/0SCI/20MCI	2-50	Normal(SU)
When Crows make their rightmost attack, they do triple damage.										
Flytrap	2	—	—/—	—/MD	M/II	50	10(10)	20SGr	1	Hungry(NO)
Once grappled, a victim suffers 5-10 hits per round due to digestive fluids. Flytraps can have varying numbers of buds, each capable of attacking once per round. The one in Castle Marsh has ten.										
Giant Clam	1	—	—/—	VS/SL	M/—	10	20(0)	40MPi	1	Hungry(NO)
On any critical, Giant Clams grip the victim and do not let go. The clam automatically makes another attack at a +30 OB each round, while the victim suffers a -50 on all rolls due to encumbrance.										
Gryphon	8	100	Dash/30	FA/VF	L/II	150	4(35)	90LCL/60LBa/100MPi	1	Bellig.(LI)
If the claw attack scores a critical, a Gryphon may make all its attacks at once.										
Harkor	66	180	Spt/0	FA/FA	H/SL	600	20(75)	125Hbi/150Hcl/130HBa/90HHo/120Fbr	1	Bellig.(AV)
Harkor the Dragon knows the spell lists: Spell Reins, Fire Law, Spirit Mastery, Shield Mastery, Spell Enhancement, and Elemental Shields to 20th level. His fire breath affects a cone 300' by 100'. This dragon has wings and can fly!										
Hill-Bear	10	90	Spt/10	MF/MF	L/I	230	8(30)	85LGr/65LCI	1	Aggres.
If a Hill-Bear scores a critical, it also makes a 70MBi in the same round. A critical also allows it to make a 90MBa attack in the next round.										
Hill Pony	2	70	Dash/30	MD/MF	M/—	70	3(40)	30ScR/20MTs	1	Normal
If a Hill Pony scores a critical, the next round it makes a 20Sbi attack.										
Jarix	6	100	Dash/20	FA/FA	L/LA	210	4(20)	60We/50LGr/80Hcr	1	Bellig.(VL)
Jarix is a Sky Giant who can hurl rocks or other large objects 100 feet, doing Large Crush damage at a 50 OB. Multiply weapon damage by two.										
Lot (Sky Giants)	6	90	Dash/10	Fa/MF	L/LA	200	4(20)	60We/50LGr/80Hcr	1-20	Bellig.(VL)
Lot can also hurl rocks or other large objects 100 feet, doing Large Crush damage at a 50 OB. Multiply weapon damage by two.										
Lugrōki										
Lesser	2	45	Spt/0	SL/MD	M/—	45	8(30)	40Melee/40Missile	1-10	Cruel(MD)
Greater	4	55	Spt/10	MD/MD	M/—	70	14(40)	80Melee/60Missile	1-10	Cruel(MD)
Marakor	50	210	FSpt/10	VF/FA	H/SL	400	20(75)	125Hbi/150Hcl/130HBa/90HHo/120Fbr	1	Varies(VH)
Marakor knows the spell lists: Spell Reins, Fire Law, Detecting Ways, Lesser Illusions, Shield Mastery, Gate Mastery, Spell Enhancement, and Elemental Shields to 20th level. Her fire breath affects a cone 300' by 100'. This dragon has wings and can fly.										
Montex	2	100	Dash/40	FA/FA	M/—	45	3(40)	60MBa	1-20	Normal
The round after scoring a critical, the sheepish Montex makes a 50MTs attack.										
Redhawk	2	150	Dash/30	VF/BF	S/—	30	1(5d)0	40MCI	1	Aggres.
The round after scoring a critical, Redhawks make a 25SPi attack.										
Sailor's Pup (dog)	2	100	Dash/30	FA/FA	S/—	45	3(50)	50Sbi	1-2	Normal
Shaitan	10	40	Dash/30	MD/MD	FA/FA	80	4(50)	110Msw	3	Varies(VH)
These eel-like underwater creatures can grant wishes and use the Force Information, Force Search and Force Analysis spells.										
Shinabula	38	220	Dash/25	VF/FA	L/SL	390	20(40)	100HBI/140HCl/110HBa/70HHo/100FBr	1	Varies(VH)
Shinabula knows the Spell Lists: Fire Law, Spell Reins and Spirit Mastery to 20th level. Her fire breath affects a cone 300' by 100'. This dragon flies.										
Silk-Seal	4	80	FSpt/20	FA/VF	M/—	65	5(60)	40MBi	1-6	Varies(VH)
Mother seals may also know 1-10 Animist and Channeling Spell Lists up to 20th level.										
Siriell	2	60	Dash/10	FA/FA	S/—	15	2(90)	10SPi/10SCI/20MCI	1	Aloof(VL)
This is her Swan form. See NPCs for her Elvish statistics. Multiply claw damage by three.										

Creature	Base Lvl	Max Rate	Pace/ MM Bonus	Speed MS/AQ	Size/ Crit	AT Hits	(DB)	Attacks	# Enc	Outlook (IQ)
Skeletons	3	60	Spt/0	MD/MF	M/I#	55	1(10)	40bs/50MBa	1-200	Berserk(NO)
These creatures drain one Con point per round after three rounds in a 10' radius. The victim may escape damage by passing an RR.										
Slag-Rats	2	40	MD/MF	FSpt/20	S/—	20	1(25)	20SBI	1-20	Normal
On a critical, these animals infect the victim with a bubonic disease, as per page 8 of Character Law.										
Snakes	2	40	Spt/20	SL/VF	S/—	20	1(40)	40Sst	1-10	Aggres.
These dangerous reptiles are found in Rock Of The Blade's traps and inject a 2nd level muscle poison.										
Spotted Lions	3	80	Dash/20	FA/MF	L/—	150	3(50)	60MBa/70MBi	2-10	Aggres.
The round after scoring a critical, Spotted Lions make a 60MCI attack.										
Tarakor	10	280	Dash/40	BF/VF	H/LA	350	12(60)	70HBI/120HCl/80HBA/50HHo/80Fbr	1	Varies(HI)
Tarakor knows the Fire Law and Spell Reins Spell Lists to tenth level. His fire breath affects a cone 300' by 100'. This winged dragon can fly.										
Tangia (Goat)	2	70	FSpt/20	FA/FA	M/—	80	5(30)	50MHo/40MBa	2-20	Jumpy
Wolves	3	110	Dash/20	FA/FA	M/—	110	3(30)	65MBi	2-20	Aggres.

FANTASY HERO BEAST CHART

Name	STR	DEX	CON	BODY	PRE	tPD	rPD	tED	rED	SPD	REC	STUN	OCV	DCV	DMG	MOVE
Apprentice	20	18	18	15	20	13	8	13	8	4	8	31	9	8	3d6K	8"
Notes: the Apprentice is a Vampire.																
Basilisk	28	11	17	16	29	10	4	8	2	3	9	29	7	6	2x1D6K	5"/9"fl
Burder	32	16	26	21	19	17	3	13	3	3	14	45	8	5	3x1D6k	15"
Notes: Burder are oxen-like beasts.																
Bupoterix	58	15	38	29	41	25	5	16	4	2	20	64	4	4	11D6N	10"
Notes: Bupoterix is a 15' tall Giant residing at Castle Marsh.																
Cockatrice	17	17	16	11	19	4	0	4	0	3	14	32	5	5	2xiD6k	6"/15"fl
Construct	42	11	—	21	33	—	9	—	9	3	—	—	6	4	3D6k	5"
Crow	-20	18	3	2	8	2	0	2	0	4	1	4	7	6	1 pip.	18"
Flytrap	10	0	6	5	1	1	0	1	0	—	1	20	4	4	1D6	—
Giant Clam	12	-10	14	8	2	4	0	2	0	1	3	11	0	0	1D6	—
Gryphon	21	18	14	15	15	8	3	6	3	3	7	26	6	5	2x1D6k	12"
Harkor	38	218	21	24	29	18	6	10	4	3	12	58	6	6	2x1D6+1k	5"/35"fl
Notes: Harkor is an ancient flying Dragon living atop the Brass Stair.																
Hill-Bear	29	18	21	18	28	14	3	9	2	3	12	45	6	6	2x1D6k	5"
Hill-Pony	18	11	8	11	5	9	1	3	1	2	6	21	4	4	2D6N	11"
Jarix	52	13	35	28	42	21	5	14	3	2	15	60	5	5	9D6N	13"
Notes: Jarix is a Sky Giant who can hurl boulders.																
Lot (Giants)	47	13	34	26	41	16	4	11	2	3	15	52	4	4	8D6N	11"
Lugröki																
Lesser	13	7	14	8	9	5	3	0	4	0	2	5	24	4	1D6+1k	5"
Greater	17	11	17	12	15	8	6	0	5	0	3	8	31	6	2D6k	6"
Marakor	73	18	23	24	25	22	7	15	5	4	17	81	6	6	2x2D6k	7"/35"fl
Notes: Marakor is the other elder Dragon of the Brass Stair and knows combat spells up to 80 active points.																
Montex (sheep)	9	8	10	9	8	4	0	2	0	3	4	16	3	3	1D6N	6"
Redhawk	-10	22	4	4	12	2	0	2	0	5	4	11	8	8	2X1/2D6k	18"
Sailor's Pup	6	13	7	5	6	2	1	0	1	3	3	14	4	4	1D6	6"
Shaitan	9	15	10	9	12	5	0	4	0	4	6	24	8	7	1D6k	7"
Notes: these eel-like creatures can grant wishes.																
Shinabula	42	17	18	17	19	16	6	12	4	4	13	48	7	7	2x1D6+1k	9"/40"fl
Notes: Shinabula is the Forest Worm's dragon-daughter.																
Silk-seal	12	14	13	7	5	9	1	5	0	3	7	14	5	4	2x1 pip	7"
Siriël	2	8	4	4	6	1	0	1	0	2	2	12	3	2	1pipk	5"
Notes: the above stats represent Siriël's swan form.																
Skeletons	10	11	0	9	8	4	4	4	4	2	2	0	4	3	1pipk	6"
Slag-Rats	-10	11	3	3	3	2	0	1	0	3	3	5	4	4	1/2d6k	5"
Snakes	5	13	5	2	8	1	0	1	0	3	2	7	4	4	2x1pipk	3"
Spotted Lions	21	18	19	13	18	10 21	7	0	3	8	3	32	9	6	3x1D6k	14"
Tarakor	37	17	16	17	18	14	5	11	3	3	10	45	6	5	2x1D6	7"/34"fl
Notes: Tarakor is the Forest Worm of the Brass Stair.																
Tangia (goat)	6	8	8	9	7	6	1	3	0	2	4	19	4	4	1D6k	6"
Wolves	9	17	15	10	14	8	2	4	1	4	7	25	7	5	2x1/2d6k	8"

3•MASTER HERB AND POISON CHARTS

ROLEMASTER HERB AND POISON CHART					
Name	Codes	Form	Prep/Apply	Cost	Effect
Exploding Mushrooms	mH20U	Mushroom	N/A	N/A	Bursts into deadly spores when brushed, causing 5-20 hits per breath.
Flytrap — See Creatures Table					
Foam-Flower	mD20U	Lichen	Chew	20gp	Doubles range of sight and hearing, +20 on Perception static maneuvers.
Nuber	MM25U	Root oil	inject/ingest	25gp	Doubles concussion damage from cutting weapons. Third level conversion poison when swallowed. If properly extracted with alcohol, it acts as a 10th level circulatory poison on blades and a 15th level reduction poison when ingested. Only an alchemist with specific training in nuber preparation can make the more potent poison. The operation requires a successful Extremely Hard static maneuver. Absolute failures result in the chemist swallowing ordinary nuber, while blunders inject him with the stronger variety.

FANTASY HERO HERB AND POISON CHART	
Name	Effect
Exploding Mushrooms	Touch causes mushroom to burst, leaving a 1" radius of poison gas, as Weak Venom.
Flytrap	See Creatures Table.
Foam-Flower	Chew. +2 to all Perception; +2 to Sight and Hearing only vs. Range Penalties.
Nuber	1 pip k attacks; if extracted with alcohol, victim takes BODY, affected by strong venom.

CODES FOR ROLEMASTER MASTER BEAST CHART
<p>Codes: The statistics given describe a typical creature of that type. Most of the codes are self-explanatory: Lvl (Level), #Enc (number encountered), Size (Tiny, Small, Medium, Large, or Huge), Hits, and DB (Defensive Bonus). The more complex statistics are described below:</p> <p>Speed: A creature's speed is given in terms of "Movement Speed/Attack Quickness": C = Creeping, VS = Very Slow, S = Slow, M = Medium, MF = Moderately Fast, FA = FAst, VF = Very Fast, BF = Blindingly Fast.</p> <p>AT (Armor Type): The number is the equivalent to the Rolemaster numeric armor type.</p> <p>Attack: Each attack code starts with the attacker's Offensive Bonus. The first letter indicates the size of the attack; T = Tiny, S = Small; M = Medium, L = Large, and H = Huge. The last two letters indicate the type of attack; Ti = Tiny, Pi = Pincher/beak, Ba = Bash, Bi = Bite, Cl = Claw, Kr = Crush, Gr = Grapple, Ho = Horn, Ts = Trample/Stomp, St = Stinger, and We = Weapon. These codes may differ slightly from Rolemaster codes. Each creature usually initiates combat using its "Primary" attack, which is the first attack listed. Depending upon the situation or success of the Primary attack, it may later use its "Secondary" or "Tertiary" (the next two attacks listed) attacks, perhaps all in the same round if previous attacks are very successful.</p>

4•MASTER MILITARY CHARTS

ROLEMASTER MILITARY CHART									
Name	Lvl	Hits	AT(DB)	Sh?	Gr	Melee OB	Missile OB	MovM	Notes
Alaron Militiaman	1	25	5(30)	—	—	35ha	35sl	10	600 "High" Men
Alaron "Knight" or Son Of Alaros	8	110	17(30)	40	—	125ml	70ls/65sb	20	1400 Fighters
Bolteer (of Garlon)	3	45	9(30)	—	—	40bs	80lb	10	1500-3000 Fighters
Dwarven Fyrdman	2	35	13(30)	20	—	50ba	—	10	500 Axe-wielding smiths
Dwarven Mercenary	3	45	15(30)	30	—	70ba	40lcb	10	100 warriors
Fleet Leonine	5	65	19(30)	30	—	65ml	65ja/30ma	10	Tharn's 400 charioteers
(These statistics apply to all grades. Important officers may be individualized as high-level warriors but this is not directly linked to their rank.)									
Foot Leonine	2	35	13(30)	—	—	40bs	40lcb	10	Tharn's 2000 warriors
Landless Lord	3	45	19(30)	20	—	70ml	70sb/20 da	10	Of 1,000 Fiefdoms
Man-At-Arms	2	35	8(30)	—	—	60bs	20lcb	10	Of 1,000 Fiefdoms
Sailor of Alaros	3	45	2(30)	—	—	70sp	40hcb	15	—
Sailor of Garlon	2	35	3(30)	—	—	20bs	60sb	10	—
Sailor of Tharn	2	35	1(30)	—	—	40bs	40hcb	10	—
Armed Peasant	1	20	1(25)	—	—	30sp	10sl	0	Of any fief or region

FANTASY HERO MASTER MILITARY CHART																
Name	STR	DEX	CON	BODY	PRE	tPD	rPD	tED	rED	SPD	REC	STUN	OCV	DCV	DMG	Move
Alaron Militiaman	14	13	12	12	11	9	5	6	5	4	3	12	4	3	1d6	6"
Alaron "Knight" or Son Of Alaros	22	21	19	18	23	14	9	11	7	6	5	29	6	5	2d6+1	8"
Bolteer	11	11	13	10	12	8	4	7	4	2	5	23	6	4	1d6	7"
Dwarven Fyrdman	12	12	11	10	12	11	5	9	5	2	5	22	5	4	1d6N	6"
Dwarven Mercenary	14	13	12	12	14	12	6	9	6	2	6	24	6	4	1d6n+1k	7"
Fleet Leonine	14	15	16	14	12	10	5	8	6	4	7	26	8	6	2d6	8"
Foot Leonine	12	12	11	10	13	12	5	8	5	3	5	23	5	5	1d6N	7"
Landless Lord	15	15	14	13	14	16	7	10	7	3	7	26	7	4	2d6N	7"
Man-At-Arms	11	12	10	9	10	10	4	6	4	2	4	19	4	3	1d6	6"
Sailor of Alaros	10	10	12	9	11	8	4	7	4	2	4	21	5	3	1d6	6"
Sailor of Garlon	9	9	10	8	10	7	4	7	4	2	4	19	4	3	1d6	6"
Sailor of Tharn	9	8	9	8	10	7	4	6	3	2	4	18	3	3	1d6-1	6"
Armed Peasant	7	6	7	8	8	6	3	6	2	1	2	16	2	2	1d6-1	5"

5•MASTER ENCOUNTER CHART

ENCOUNTER CHART					
Encounter	Tharn	Mountains	Alaron	Garlon	Brass Stair
Chance (%)	10%	20%	15%	15%	25%
Distance (miles)	8	5	6	6	4
Time (hours)	5	3	4	4	2
Folk					
Patrol	01-20	01-10	01-15	01-05	01-20
Hunter	21-25	11-20	16-20	06-16	—
Knight	26-30	21-22	21-25	17-27	—
Lot Raiders (1-10)	31-32	23-43	26-27	28-48	21-25
Lugrôki (3-30)	33-44	44-51	—	49-50	26-46
Farmers/Villagers	45-55	52-53	28-60	51-68	—
Monsters and Wild Beasts					
Basilisk	—	54-55	61	69	47-49
Burder, Wild	56-57	56-57	62-63	70-71	50-51
Cockatrices	58	58	64	72	52-57
Crows	59-69	59-60	65-70	73-75	58-68
Flytrap	70	—	—	—	69
Giant Clam (Coastal)	71	—	71-73	76	—
Gryphon	72	61-62	—	77	70
Hill-bear	73-83	63-73	—	78-80	71-73
Hill Pony, Wild	—	74-77	74	81-83	74
Montex	84-85	78-82	75-77	84-87	75-77
Redhawk	86	83-85	78	88-89	78
Silk-seals (1-10)	87	—	79-80	—	—
Skeletons (1-6)	—	86	—	—	79-80
Slag-rats (5-50)	88	87	81-82	90	81-83
Snakes (1-6)	89-90	88-91	83-90	91-93	84-86
Spotted Lions (1-6)	91-93	92-96	91	94-95	87-90
Tangia	94-95	97-98	92-95	96-97	91-92
Wolves (2-20)	96-00	99-00	96-00	98-00	93-00

In the above chart only, the Thousand Fiefdoms are included within Garlon.

Patrols are local military or, in the case of Belgor, tribesmen who keep an eye out for raiding parties, outcasts, bandits, and other assorted neer-do-wells (people like yourselves).

Use of the Encounter Table and Codes:

The GM should determine the group's location and the appropriate column and then roll for a possible encounter. The period of time covered by an encounter roll is either the **Time** given on the table or the time it takes the group to cover the **Distance** given on the table, whichever is shorter. If an encounter roll is less than or equal to the **Chance** of Encounter given on the table, a second roll of (1-100) is made to determine the nature of the encounter.

An encounter does not always require a fight of similar activity; a group can avoid or placate some of the above dangers/ meetings with proper action or good maneuver rolls. This table only gives the GM a guide for encounters with unusual or potentially dangerous sites or creatures.



PRODUCT LISTING



Look for these ICE product lines at your favorite retail outlet. Each of the role playing systems is supplemented with a variety of support material.

Middle-earth Role Playing Boxed

The Role Playing system perfect for novices as well as experienced gamers! Based on *The Hobbit*® and *The Lord of the Rings*™, *Middle-earth Role Playing (MERP)*™ provides the structure and framework for Role Playing in the greatest fantasy setting of all time... J.R.R. Tolkien's Middle-earth®! *MERP* is supported by a wide variety of Game aids, Campaign modules, Adventure supplements, and Ready-to-Run adventures. **\$15.00**

Rolemaster Boxed

I.C.E.'s advanced Fantasy Role Playing Game system, *Rolemaster* is a complete set of the most advanced, realistic and sophisticated FRP rules available and they have been reformatted and reorganized in the new Second Edition. The flexibility of the system allows it to be used wholly or in part. Each of the books can be used separately to improve the realism of most major FRP systems! Look for the new complement to your *Rolemaster* game: *Shadow World*™ adventures **\$38.00**

Shadow World

Shadow World, a whole new realm of adventure! The planet *Kulthea*™ forms the *Shadow World*, a unique fantasy gaming environment supported by comprehensive stats for both *Rolemaster* and *Fantasy Hero*. The *Shadow World* is a vast planet of scattered isles and lost realms, each land isolated by forces both tangible and supernatural. Not only is it a richly designed fantasy world unto itself, but it allows the GM to insert it into his *Rolemaster* or *Fantasy Hero* campaign whole or in part. It is also designed for use with most major fantasy role playing systems. **\$20.00**

Space Master

Adventure in deep space and alien worlds with ICE's Science Fiction Role Playing Game system! *Space Master* covers professions, races and cultures, settings, and much more. The range of technologies stretches from tomorrow to the far future. Now the cornerstone of this exciting system is a trilogy of boxed games; *The Role Playing Game*, *Star Strike*™, and *Armored Assault*™. Dogfight with the galaxy's most lethal starcraft. Infiltrate secret laboratories. Vaporize unsuspecting AFV compounds! Each stands alone for hours of enjoyment; together they form a massive sci-fi environment that provides more adventure than your humanoid heart can handle. **The RPG, \$30.00; Star Strike, \$30.00; Armored Assault, \$35.00**

Cyberspace

Set in the gritty near future where Megacorporation repression collides with Sprawl street warfare, this is ICE's newest Role Playing game system, fully compatible with *Space Master*™. Muscle-grafted Punks and jacked-in Netheads crawl out of the gutters to scrap Media Stars and Cybernetic Mercenaries, a conflict beyond the stature of Good and Evil. From depraved polluted cities to the surreal beauty of Earth's global computer matrix, this is the world of *Cyberspace*! **\$18.00**

IQ (Iron Crown Quarterly)

The *ICE Quarterly*™ is here! ICE's magazine for the Informed Games Buyer & Player. *IQ* features all the latest dirt from ICE up front, no nonsense (well, maybe a little nonsense). In the immortal tabloid format, *IQ* is sixteen pages packed with advance product announcements, inside ICE® information, humor, occasional fiction and reviews, and featured *MERP*, *Rolemaster*, & *Space Master*™ material — such as adventures, systems supplements, and new optional rules! If you're not getting the *IQ*, you're not getting the whole picture! Look for the *IQ* at better retail outlets. **\$1.00**

Champions the Super Role Playing Game

Don't just read comic books, live them! With the easy-to-use character design system, your only limit is your imagination. *Champions* is based on the *Hero System*™, the rules system of all Hero products. Because of this common thread, all *Hero Games*™ are compatible. Learn one *Hero Game* and you can easily play them all. *Champions* has just undergone an extensive revision, but all previous *Champions* material is still compatible. **\$28.00**

Star Hero

The wait is over: Hero gamers can finally take to the stars! This self-contained game includes the description of a complete sci-fi universe and several scenarios — everything you need to begin a campaign. Leave the earth far behind! **\$15.00**

Adventurers Club Magazine

The magazine for Hero Gamers! The articles and columns are dedicated to expanding and improving the already fine line of Hero Games. The *AC* answers your questions and keeps you informed on upcoming releases. And there's a complete ready-to-play adventure in every issue! **\$3.00**

These fine products are sold at better retail outlets worldwide. Ask for them at your favorite store...or order directly from us: Iron Crown Enterprises, P.O. Box 1605, Charlottesville, VA, 22902, USA. **Prices are subject to alteration without prior notice.** VISA & MASTERCARD orders call (800) 325-0479. Va residents, Canadians and overseas customers call (804) 295-3917. Please make phone orders during business hours: 9AM-5PM, Eastern Standard Time, Mon-Fri. **Allow up to 4-6 weeks for delivery.**

Shadow World™

SKY GIANTS of the Brass Stair™

Shadow World products form a rich, self-contained fantasy environment for

Rolemaster™

&

Fantasy HERO™

and may also be used as isolated or hidden areas in any Gamemaster's campaign world.

In Kulthea's Second Era of Ire, a Dwarven king hollowed out vast caverns high in the Garlon Mountains of northeastern Jaiman. His citadel atop the mountain was guarded by a gate — to reach it, guests climbed an immense brass stair a hundred miles up the rugged cliffsides. As the Wars of Dominion raged, servants of the Unlife gained control of the Narlshaw region, and the Dwarves' gold mines were abandoned.

Bewildering Flows of Essence divide the Narlshaw from the rest of Jaiman. The Dragonlord's Skyriders patrol the chilling air. Tales of a huge Dragon flying over the Brass Stair and of

Cloudlords astride their soaring mounts make the region ill-at-ease. In a land where all fear the Dragonlord and few serve the Good, adventurers seek ancestral treasures in an atmosphere of ever-increasing danger.

Sky Giants of the Brass Stair™ includes:

- **Seven adventures** in and around the realm of the Sky Giants and the Thousand Fiefdoms of Wuliris
- **Detailed descriptions** of five armies, including the Brazen Horde of 15-foot tall Giants
- **Layouts** of four cities and strongholds, including the Brass Stair and the ominous Castle Marsh
- **Color maps** of the mountainous region of Wuliris and the continent of Jaiman
- **GM aids**, including Rolemaster and Fantasy Hero stats for NPCs, Creatures and Poisons, as well as an Encounter Chart and a Master Military Chart

Adventures in this module take place on a small area of the planet Kulthea. The *Shadow World Master Atlas* (St. #6000) details the world and its inhabitants. Two Master Guides and a color 3' x 4' world map are included in the Atlas boxed set (available separately).



Made in U.S.A.

#6012



Produced and distributed by
ICE, Inc.
P.O. Box 1605
Charlottesville, VA 22902



ISBN 1-55806-089-8