

TWILIGHT OVER EMER

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This campaign was found on the the [Shadow World Internet Appendix](#) and has been edited for printing purposes.

You will need this books to play properly:

Shadow World Master Atlas

Emer Boxed set

Emer 1: Haestra and the Emerian Empire

Emer 2: Tai-Emer, Silaar and the isles of Namar-Tol

Thanks to the author, thanks to Terry and to all the people in Shadow World mailing list, carry on the flame!

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Kaitaine soldier, note the light cloths suitable for hot weather in south Emer

1. Campaign Secrets and Background

Introduction

The campaign you are about to read is of the "epic" style. The characters will become involved with grand, world-changing events. Their deeds may effect whole nations or peoples. From the beginning of the campaign, the characters will learn of powerful and subtle groups and individuals who, in their own way, threaten the civilizations of Kulthea. During the course of this campaign, the characters will move from a state of ignorance and relative ineffectiveness, to positions of knowledge and potential power. As the characters uncover secrets and gain experience, they will be able to effect the outcomes of potentially world-shaking events.

Note: The campaign draws heavily from the various source books of Shadow World. While not strictly necessary, the books *Emer*, *Jaiman*, *Land of Twilight*, and the *Shadow World Master Atlas (2nd Ed.)* are of extreme value.

The Role of Evil

The campaign will refer to "evil" in one of two ways. The first way is the "normal" evil of the peoples of Kulthea. This type of evil is created by the baser emotions and actions of men. In the broadest sense, this type of evil is NOT absolute. The very definition of what is evil and what is not changes depending on who you ask and where you ask it.

This type of evil influences the politics of the campaign, the people of the world and the characters themselves. But what is "wrong" and what is "right" is a grey line that will be left up to the characters to decide for themselves.

The other type of evil (which will be referred to as 'Evil') is very different. This Evil is an actual force -- a sort of negative energy which is not of this world. This energy's only purpose is destruction and corruption. The physical manifestation of this force is the Unlife.

The Unlife, and the minions of the Unlife, wish for the eventual destruction of civilization and all things living. True minions of the Unlife are completely insane individuals. Death is nothing to them and if the ultimate goal was completed and *they* were the only things living, then they would then destroy themselves.

Some servants of the Unlife consider themselves

free. They use the energy source of the Unlife for power and gain. But eventually, this connection to this energy source will destroy them. It is but a question of when.

The characters will encounter both types of evil in this campaign. An additional obstacle to overcome in the game may be the resistance of the temptation to take advantage of the power evil can bring. Depending on the players, this can be an excellent dimension to add to the game.

The Role of the Characters

The campaign works best with 5 or 6 characters with a good overall mix of professions. Here's what I recommend:

- Italian Mentalism User (may be Mentalist, Seer, even Mystic)
- Any race/culture Essence user
- Any race/culture cleric or paladin of Reann
- Any race/culture fighter
- Any race/culture rogue or thief
- A Rhiani of any class (monk would be cool)

Unfortunately, there are quite a few plot hooks which depend on the specifics of the PCs. Hopefully you will be able to adapt them to your group of players if they don't match the above.

The basic concept behind this campaign is twofold: First that the PCs are members of the fight against the Unlife. Second, they are on a quest to discover themselves -- more about this will be given in the *Adventures - Prologue* section.

Periodically throughout the history of the Shadow World (or at least since the Second Era of Ire) the Unlife, a force of completely malevolent Evil, has risen with the wish of the destruction of all civilization and of all things living.

Each time they have been beaten back, but always at great cost. The Wars of Dominion (which conclude the Second Era) caused such upheavals as to forever change the course of civilization. The peoples of Kulthea were centuries in the rebuilding.

Now, from time to time, various individuals and groups have become aware of the Unlife. And so, for whatever their reasons, declare war against this scourge. It is fate that these people arise to meet this enemy? Luck? No one knows. But one thing is true: the Unlife learns from past mistakes. In the Second Era, the Unlife marshaled great forces of creatures and did battle... force against force. And they were beaten. In this, the Third Era, the Unlife has decided to take a different tack: that of politics and subtle

uses of power. So the forces of Life must be strong as well as subtle. For they will find that knowledge is their greatest power.

The Role of Dreams and Divination

Visions, Dreams, and Divinations will play a large role in the campaign. If the party of PCs contains either a Seer or a Paladin or Priest of Reann, then you can use the adventures as written. Otherwise, some of the information that is given out through these mystic means must come from other sources.

Dreams in my game are sometimes allegorical, and sometimes (seemingly) straightforward and literal. However, while the character can choose the subject, he or she cannot choose the time frame. Dreams may represent the past, the present, or a possible future. The character should never be completely sure which.

Divinations also have their pitfalls. Many times the answer will come out as uncertain or the character will realize that the results are simply random. Other times the character will get a definite answer -- but whether this is a correct answer or the opposite is never certain. Usually the character will think what they want to think.

Dreams and Divinations can help to guide the characters and give them an overview of the bigger picture of the campaign. Without this, the goals and motivations of the murky enemies of the PCs would be completely obscure. Mystical visions help to focus the campaign at opportune moments.

Grand Overview of the Campaign

The campaign will revolve mostly around the evil machinations of the Unlife and their human minions. The characters will become involved through finding a strange artifact of the Second Era. They are similar in shape to a part of a brass knuckle, but only slipping over two fingers. They come in sets, minor, major, and master. Master rings go on the first two fingers, major on the 2nd and 3rd, minor on the 3rd and 4th fingers -- all on the left hand.

During the Wars of Dominion, at the end of the Second Era, these artifacts were used by the masters of the Unlife hordes for communication and for personal power. There were 23 minor rings, 13 major, and 5 master. At that time all of the rings were attuned to each other. Master rings could communicate with any other ring, majors could initiate communications with only the minor rings and other major rings. Minor rings could only receive. Since then, the bonds between the rings have broken down. However if a special attunement is performed, two rings can be made to recognize

each other. They will then function as they once did. (But only between themselves or between other rings attuned to a ring in the attunement "circle").

Slowly, the rings have resurfaced. Many were destroyed, but many have survived but were merely lost. When found, a ring will slowly work to pervert its holder to the purposes of the Unlife. This process takes place more quickly if the person has attuned to the ring. Also, the process is quickened based on the power of the ring.

When rings have surfaced, they cause their wielders to become evil. They are granted knowledge of the summoning and controlling of Unlife and demons. This is what the party faces. There are now several major and master rings that have been found in this time (~ 6050 Third Era). Each ring now has a powerful wielder. The organizations that have arisen around these profoundly evil people are loosely scattered around the continent. Some groups know of each other (and know that the rings were made to work together). When this is the case, they are loosely allied. However, the nature of evil is to be self-centered, even if you share the same ultimate goals. Other groups however have no knowledge of their evil brethren.

The attuned wearer of a major or master ring will detect the presence of another attuned ring wearer of lesser power within 100 feet. It does not give direction or distance.

The rings draw their power from the raw Essence a particular demi-plane. Unbeknownst to ALL of the current users of the rings, the creator of the rings is still alive there. He is a K'ta'viir who is in a suspended state of animation. He has great power and is extremely evil and twisted. If certain events occur, he will awaken and seek to reenter the normal world. However, it would take at least three holders of master rings, working together to bring him back. Unlikely at best.

Currently only three master rings have resurfaced. Obviously, these are the most important organizations to consider. Each group has control of a varying number of major and minor rings.

At this time there are also two groups that are headed by holders of two major rings. They also have in their possession several minor rings.

Several of these groups have been working for more than a century. Their goals are to insinuate themselves into positions of power within a domain so that they can weaken that domain from the inside. Then, when the time is right, they can marshal their forces, destroying that civilization. Holders of minor rings can be loosely controlled by holders of major

rings. In turn, these can be controlled by holder of master rings.

The Rings

The evil item in question is a strange looking ring that fits over two fingers, it seems the first and second finger. It is of an unknown silvery material and otherwise unmarked. It's powers are derived directly from Essaence so it will detect as Essence, Channeling, and Mentalism. It powers are related to how well the attuning person succeeds in their Power Awareness : Attunement roll.

- Powers (Master Ring)

(Below 120) User resists Light Essence and Channeling as Level 30

(Hard 120) x4 multiplier, gives AT 4 cast netherbolt 3x/day

(Very Hard 130) as above plus Dark Channels 3x/day

(Absurd 150) as above but multiplier is x6 and allows fluency (rank 6) in spoken and written Cuscucac and Var Arnak.

(Sheer Folly) as above plus knowledge to Rank 20 in all evil magician lists. Also allows user to cast one spell 1x per list per day.

- Powers (Major Ring):

Below 120) Caster resists Light Essence and Channeling as Level 30

(Hard 120) x2 multiplier, gives AT 4, cast firebolt 3x / day

(Very Hard 130) as above but allows user to cast Dark Channels 1x / day

(Absurd 150) as above but multiplier is x4 and allows fluency (rank 6) in Uscucac and the evil Channeling tongue

(Sheer folly 170) as above + knowledge to Rank 10 in three evil Magician lists.

- Powers (Minor Ring):

(Below 120) Caster resists Light Essence and Channeling as level 25

(Hard 120) x2 multiplier, gives AT 4, cast firebolt 3x / day

(Very Hard 130) as above but allows user to cast Dark Channels 1x / day

(Absurd 150) gives +20 to DB and allows fluency (rank 6) in Uscucac and the evil Channeling tongue

(Sheer folly 170) as above + knowledge to Rank 10 in one evil Magician lists.

However, with each granted power there comes greater evil. The better someone attunes to the item , the more likely they will be turned to evil. Also each time on of the powers of the ring is used, the character will get closer to evil. If the GM wishes, the Corruption rules may be used to simulate this effect.

Currently, one master ring is in the hands of the 13th tribe of the Rhiani, an outcast group, that is an evil slowly building to a boil. They currently also have control of a small number of major rings. One of these is currently in the hands of the PCs. Another is in the hands of the Katra of Stroane.

One of the other master rings is in the hands of Oan Lyak, the leader of the Cult of Stars, a fearsome group of female assassins. Oan Lyak is in turn a servant of the Jerak Ahrenreth.

The third master ring is in the hands of Voriig Kye, the Dragonlord of Vog Mur.

The Major Powers (Individuals and Groups)

When trying to meet with the Grey ring, the characters are intercepted by a member of the organization controlled by Voriig Kye, a Dragonlord who currently resides on the island of Vog Mur. These emissaries tell the PCs of various plots concerning the Unlife and the Rings. Hopefully the PCs will turn over their ring to them. This will begin a relationship in which Voriig Kye will use the PCs in attacking members of opposing forces within the ranks of evil. This will be profitable for the PCs, but nevertheless, they will be working for evil.

Eventually the PCs will realize that there is a problem with the person they are working for and that they've been duped. This point should be after they've been with the organization for some time. Along with them might be other people who were also duped. These people can become strong allies in the future as they might be the only ones the PCs will trust for some time.

Voriig Kye

Description: This Dragonlord takes the form of an air drake with a silver hide, giving him the name "The Silver Dragon". He has posed as many humans and elves, throughout the ages. His common form in this time is that of an older man, white of hair, probably of Laan descent.

Attitude: While evil and fairly fickle (as all Dragonlord are), Voriig Kye is somewhat different than his more twisted brethren. His plots are no less insidious but his attitude is changed after his in-battle

with Schrek of the Jerak Ahrenreth. He now fears for his life from his once allies. Living in reclusion on the island of Vog Mur, he rules over a peaceful people who know nothing of his past evils.

Voriig Kye could actually be well liked by a group of PCs. They could easily mistake him to be a sort of fatherly mentor type. Whether Voriig Kye acts this way to engender trust amongst his underlings or because he genuinely feels this way is unknown.

Goals: Voriig Kye has become aware of the Rings and of their powers. Now he wishes to either gather all the rings to him, or to turn their holders to his purposes. He believes that the group powers of the rings working in concert will give him an edge in his current cold war with the Daenku of Jerak Ahrenreth (of which he himself is a member). The fact that the characters have the ring draws his gaze towards them. He enjoys using basically decent people for ultimately evil ends. In his long life, he has discovered something that his brothers haven't fully grasped. "Good" people are more able to be manipulated and are less like to betray you for greed or power than those who follow darker paths. By tricking these people, he creates a veritable army of pawns willing to die for him because they see what they do as 'right' and 'good'. Voriig Kye likes to think of this technique as 'hiding in the sunshine'. If his enemies within various dark groups across Jaiman believe they are being attacked by those who hate the Unlife (which they do), then they will be unlikely to look to Voriig for revenge or reprisals.

To the world at large, Voriig Kye does not exist. To those in power and in the know, Voriig Kye is a has-been who has fled and now cowers on his island. But to Voriig Kye, Voriig Kye has a very long arm indeed.

See the NPC section for more details of Voriig Kye.

The Cult of Stars

The Cult of Stars is a branch of the incredibly evil and powerful Jerak Ahrenreth (I. "The Secret Circle"). For some time, the Cult of Stars has been at odds with Voriig Kye, being on the side of the Daenku, the leader of the Ahrenreth. (A being known as Schrek). Voriig Kye has foiled many of the plans of both Schrek and the Cult of Stars, and they are not pleased. In the past several years, retribution has been taken against Kye's organization in the form of assassinations of key servants of Kye.

For the most part, Kye has kept the full extent of his activities hidden from the rest of the Jerak Ahrenreth, but the Cult of Stars is getting ever closer.

The Cult (sometimes also known as the Sisters) is

made up of approximately 100 female assassins of at least level 10. An individual Sister is described in the NPC section.

The Cult of Stars members are primarily of Duranaki blood, although their ways are much different than that of the Duranaki. The Cultists' favorite weapons are the long and short Kynac (usually several of the short) and a crystalline shuriken (throwing star) made of Laen with seven points. The only marking on any of their weapons is a seven pointed star emblazoned on the pommel of their kynacs.

Goals:

The Cult of Stars does the bidding of the leader of the Jerak Ahrenreth, undertaking the assassination of key individuals across the face of Emer and Jaiman. The Cult has also been known to be used against other dark powers who thwart the aims of Schrek and Oan Lyak. Examples of this include attacks against Voriig Kye, the Priests Arnak, and the Yinka (of Jaiman).

The 13th Tribe of the Rhiani

The Rhi'saang-sun (Rhiani "Riders of the Blood") are an outcast clan of the clans of the Rhiani. Banished ages ago for great crimes, this clan has taken up their exile within the Barrier Mountains, near the fabled City of the Dead. There they practice evil rituals involving ritual torture, sacrifice, and cannibalism.

Powerful shamans summon great Demons of the Void to go forth and work their bidding. This group wishes to exact revenge on their Rhiani kinsmen and all they ally with. Due to few numbers, they do not have a great deal of power, but the acquisition of a master ring (described above) has increased their power.

Servants of the Rhi'saang-sun have traveled far and have recovered sever major and minor rings as well. These they use to tempt the powerful outside their lands and eventually turn them to their dark purposes.

The 13th tribe has a power warrior caste of Monks known as the Throk'ta'Shu (I. "Guardians of the Flame"). These Monk warriors are extremely highly trained in martial arts, weapons, and a strange Weapon Kata utilizing the scimitar. These warriors are extremely deadly, rivaling the vaunted prowess of the Changramai Monks in combat.

Incised on their skins -- over their entire bodies -- are tattoos of intricate complexity. These tattoos act similarly to Weapon Runes, except for the human body. The base tattoo is a network of lines which gives the Monk AT 4. Other common tattoos give

the ability to store spells useful in combat and at other times.

Goals: Of the four major rings the 13th tribe holds, two have been given to external wielders. One of these is Prince Lorek of Stroane, to the north of the Rhiani lands of Uj. Slowly this nation is being corrupted by the influences of its leader.

The other was given to a warlord of the Lankan Empire. This was stolen before the start of the campaign by a member of the Grey Ring and taken to the city located at the gap of Uj. It was then given to a caravan master heading to Kaitaine. His instructions were to deliver it to a Grey Ring member there. As Adventure I will detail, it never made it.

The Grey Ring

An organization beginning this Era in Sel-Kai. Originally a vigilante movement of several powerful citizens of that city, it has grown to become a fighter of evil across the continent of Emer.

It is about 1000 years old and present membership is approximately 200. It has links to both Gryphon College in Jaiman and the Loremasters. In fact it is rumored that several Loremasters are actually members.

There is some reason to believe that the Grey Ring is connected with the Ahn Sye Talaus (Old Emer "Order of the Ring") which was founded by the Emperor of Emer in c. 1400 TE.

If researched in the libraries of Kaitaine or Sel-Kai, with a Very Hard maneuver research roll, the PCs will uncover the following in a set of 'police' files:

5997 Spring, 45 - 2 people, known assassins, were found today outside the city guard headquarters, bound and gagged. The following inscription was painted on the ground below them: "The Grey Ring"

The Grey Ring (like Gryphon College) makes use of the Gryphon Pendants (see below) for verifying that couriers are true members of the organization.

The Gryphon Pendants

These pendants are small (about 2" wide) and are a thin carving of a silvery material. They are of ancient make, and the exact method of their creation is unknown.

They possess no special powers but can be attuned to. Once attuned they can be analyzed by someone with Power Perception to see a magical aura to verify their authenticity.

The order of the Grey Ring and a few others, such as Gryphon College, on Jaiman, use these pendants to make sure that messengers and others are truly

associated with the order. The attunement process is very difficult and can be only done using a special ceremony. Another (even slightly different) procedure will not result in the special aura. This magical signature is completely unforgeable.

The PCs have fully attuned pendants when the game begins. Members of the Grey Ring will believe that the Pendants are genuine, though they (as well as the PCs themselves) will not understand how they came to be in possession of them.

If the PCs try to research the Gryphon Pendants the following will be turned up, with various degrees of searching:

(Easy) the Gryphon is a magically created beast of the body of a lion and the head, wings, and front feet of an eagle. They are somewhat intelligent (slightly above animal) and live on high peaks and cliffs

(Hard) the Gryphon is the symbol of the Empire of Zor, an ancient kingdom of Jaiman, first to fall during the Wars of Dominion

(Medium) the Gryphon is a symbol of many noble houses of Reandor (many of these have large amounts of Zori blood)

(Very Hard) A symbol very like the pendants was found on the charred body of a man found killed in a Kaitaine noble's house 1 year ago

(Absurd) The Gryphon is the symbol of a college of northern Jaiman which reputedly offers magical training for the powerful of Rhakhaan (the most powerful region of Jaiman)

Gryphon College

The sphere of influence of Gryphon College is the continent of Jaiman. This small but powerful organization as contacts with Emer, the Grey Ring, and (reputedly) the Loremasters.

Gryphon College was originally founded by refugees fleeing the devastation of the ancient realm of Zor in the Second Era. Since this time it has become an influential behind-the-scenes manipulator of events of Rhakhaan and Jaiman in general.

Many influential members of the society of Rhakhaan are graduates of the College. The training (both magical and academic) received at the College is some of the best in the world.

Recent Events at Gryphon College

Emissaries of the College have located over the past years have located the complete set of Crown, Pendant, and Sword of the Gryphon from the ancient realm of Zor, Jaiman. Zaris (the Headmaster) has had the Gryphon Pendant in her possession for some time. Alarin, a major player at the College, is the

holder (and wearer) of the Gryphon Helm. It is currently used to protect the College and it's direct sphere of influence. The Sword was recovered only 2 years ago from a vault under the ancient city of Lomh, one of the last great cities of the Zori people. Lomh was built by Zori who were fleeing the cataclysm which engulfed their realm during the Second Era and caused it's fall. The city is located about 150 miles northeast of the College, just outside the border of ancient Zor.

In the first month of 6050, Gryphon College was attacked by the combined forces of Athimurl, Gaath, and Yarthraak. (Priests Arnak, see Jaiman, Land of Twilight sourcebook for details). This demon host consisted of the evil priests, thousands of Lu-Grok, as well as Type II, III, and IV demons.

Obviously something special must be used on the part of Arnak to overcome the defenses of a Crown of Jaiman. The following fragment may give the answer:

"...Through a dark victory, a Crown becomes the tool of the Unlife..."

-- Elor Once Dark

Could the Sea Drake or Wyvern Helm be held by the Priests Arnak? Perhaps.

In any case, the College was assaulted and eventually fell under the onslaught. Most members of the faculty of the College escaped as did most of the students and Guard. Escape was made through a Gate which was opened to a point not far from Norek. The major casualty was Alarin, who is now in a coma state, apparently due to the stresses of wielding the Crown. It is not known if he will recover.

Currently the major players of Gryphon College are located in the Remiraith Forest, under the protection of that realm's Prince. They are attempting to recoup their losses and plan their next move. The forces of the Iron Wind won a great victory.

Library Excerpts

On Gryphon College

"...also was trained by Gryphon College. In fact the number of high ranking mage born of the Rhakhaan Empire that were trained by this group over the centuries is staggering. Damian Falsuron has denied any association with any groups except for the Empire, and yet he has been seen to wear the pendant as well. The group apparently has ties to the highest levels of Haalkitain society."

-- Unknown (found in a sheaf of unmarked papers)

Campaign Document 1 (Adventure VI)

Found in the cache at the (now destroyed) Gryphon College.

Letter from Cassius to Laron:

Laron:

I hope this letter finds you well. By the time the courier arrives, I hope to be only a week away.

I've met with little success in finding 'our friend' in Norek. He seems to have disappeared utterly. There is something strange about this city which sets me on edge, but I can't pinpoint what. Perhaps it is because it is like a little version of Sel-kai. Thankfully, no Laen stars flying out of every ally way at me, though.

I have found several things of interest however.

First of all, the Brothers of Reann have told me that there is a young Brother of Vult in the city who is causing quite a stir amongst the higher Sisters of Eissa. It seems that several conditions for prophecy have been fulfilled by him. He is a young nobleman from none other than the Minon province! Barely a jump away from where you are! I went to the Temple of Eissa to see this man personally, and he does show promise. But my dreams of him are double-edged. I would be just as glad if he is NOT the one. After all, his coming foretells danger. But perhaps we will have a few years, as Daerik is quite young yet. We will speak more of this when I arrive.

Second, Z.'s contact here was useful in opening negotiations with the Remiraith. I believe I have convinced him of the Danger.

Third, I have had good luck in locating a henchman of 'our friend.' The man knew nothing of his current whereabouts (in fact did not even know that he was in the city) but did have knowledge of his Tower. My friend, we will have him yet! After questioning, he insisted that the Vale and Tower is located on the edge of Zor. He doesn't know exactly where as he has only been there through the southern Lu-Nak Portal, as we did last Spring. The Portal is too well guarded for a second trip. Our accidental appearance was the only thing that saved our lives. The overland attack seems to still be our only option. If we can find one!

Hopefully Danari has had more luck in Haalkitain.

-- Cassius

P.S. The included package contains an item taken from the henchman. See if Danari can make anything of it. I have determined that is it not evil (surprisingly) and is of the Mentalism Realm.

Reann's blessing.

Campaign Document 2 (Adventure VI)

Letter from Danari to Laron.

Laron:

I regret to report that I will be unable to get away from the Court in time to make our meeting. I feel that I am on the verge of something -- I must wait for the Emperor's call if it comes. I will be back north with you and C. and Z. as soon as I can.

However, please report to Z. the following:

Our earlier guesses are correct -- the Pendants are too powerfully shielded from location by means of magic. That damn Phoenix could be right under my toes and I wouldn't be able to detect it. I've been forced to resort to sorting through scrolls after dusty scrolls to find some clue.

Gryphon:

Little luck there. Mostly rumors, no hard facts. City of Lomh? I hate that place, I'd hate to have to go back.

Phoenix:

Ajkara was a wily one, there's no doubt of that. I still haven't figured out exactly how she escaped one such as the Magician. Here's what I've pieced together:

The Revolt of 5121 caught Ajkara relatively alone in the Imperial suite of the palace. Reports have it that rebel forces fought hand-to-hand with her personal guards for nearly 2 hours. History says that this was meant to be a distraction because when the loyalists were overcome, Ajkara was nowhere to be found. I believe that contrary to popular history, Ajkara WAS in her chambers but escaped through a hidden route to the Catacombs. (The Emperor himself mentioned this route to me in casual conversation: he said that the underground route had been built 500 years ago by Fasic II who had some strange religious beliefs having to do with the dead. The route had been sealed in the Emperor's grandfather's time, but had been open, most likely, in Ajkara's time. Perhaps the knowledge of it was unknown to all but the Imperial Family.

As is well known, Ajkara was fascinated with Tanaran peoples which were brought under Rhakhai rule by Ajkara's grandfather. She had many friends among the Duranaki and practiced many Duranak rituals. She was said to be a heavy user of Gort.

The Grey Road was reopened through Ajkara's efforts 10 years before the Revolt. Could Ajkara have used the Catacomb route to escape the city, then used the Grey Road to flee to Tanara and her Duranaki allies?

What I find interesting is that the Duranaki -- not 5 years later -- were able to throw off the Rhakhai control. Could Ajkara been part of that as well? Consider the amount of inside information she must have known! No wonder the nobles of Rhakhaan thought the Duranaki had made a pact with a higher power to out-fox them at every turn!

No one knows anything about what happened to Ajkara after she disappeared. Assuming she survived to get away, she must have completely discarded her previous life as an Empress of Rhakhaan.

Tell Cassius that I think it's time we went below Haalkitaine.

-- Danari Delnek

Campaign Document 3 (Adventure VI)

May be found in the Library of Lethys, or in the Imperial Library of Rhakhaan (Haalkitaine).

Story of Ajkara and the Nobles Revolt of 5121.

The Magician, seen several times in Rhakhai history returned near the beginning of Ajkara's reign. The same year in fact that she ascended to the throne. He attempted to ingratiate himself into her Court, but Ajkara's advisor, Sulanai, counseled against trusting him very far.

However, as hindsight shows, the Magician was able to make other friends at court, finally leading them in the Revolt.

That day was turbulent as riots broke out all over the city as various factions fought for control. This simple scholar leans heavily on the respected works of others to piece together what actually occurred.

Lord Veris Quintor was the Battle Commander of the 8th Legion. He and his legion, some 2000 strong, had returned from a successful campaign in Tanara, isolating the last of the Myri faction who resisted the control of the Rhakhai rule. Camped just north of the capital, the 8th was enjoying much needed rest before marching for duty in on the Melurian border.

It is now known that Lord Quintor had associations with the Magician before this, but until recent documents were uncovered, it had been unknown how deep this association ran. Under the council of the Magician, Quintor and several highly placed officers worked to convert a large proportion of his legion to his conspiracy.

He was not alone. Other nobles of several ancient Houses acted as well, supplying equipment and men to Quintor's leadership.

When Quintor was ready, he moved on the Palace in the dead of night. Those guards that were not

already under his pay were quickly subdued by those that were. Though the coup was executed with alarming efficiency, apparently the alarm was raised and the Empress got wind of the attack.

From the perspective of the Rebels, here is what occurred:

The Lower Hall was taken almost without conflict. The outer section of the South Wing was then swarmed and the honor guard stationed there was overcome. Before the Rebels reached the Imperial suite, they swept around the palace to seal it completely. The head Chamberlain was captured and made to give the location of the Empress Ajkara. As expected, she was in her suite.

Here the Rebels had some difficulty as loyalist forces (the Empresses personal guard) had barricaded themselves within the Imperial suite and were protecting it to the last man.

After some two hours of hot fighting, including the occasional exchange of bow fire, the last of the Imperial Guard were destroyed and the suite was taken by the Rebels. After a brief search the Empress was found and brought to Lord Quintor personally. But Quintor did not have the Empress, he was soon to find out, but instead had one of the Empress's ladies, albeit dressed in the Imperial robes and wearing the Rhakhaan Signet. Ajkara had somehow escaped. Under questioning, the Empress's lady confessed that the Empress was never actually in the Imperial suite.

Furious, Quintor called for the assistance of the Magician. Though great in magical prowess, the Magician was forced to tell Quintor that he could not pierce the veil created by Tethior's Pendant. The Empress was nowhere to be found.

Campaign Document 4 (Adventure VI)

May be found in the Library of Lethys, or in the Imperial Library of Rhakhaan (Haalkitaine).

Excerpt from *Falsuron: The Emperors of Rhakhaan*
Ajkara III ascended to the throne at the relatively young age of 27 in the year 5090 TEI. A charismatic Empress, Ajkara is known for invoking the loyalties of many disparate peoples across Rhakhaan and Tanara. To her eventual downfall, one group whose loyalties she never bound were her own nobles.

Her reign lasted until 5121 when a cadre of nobles aligned with the leader of a Rhakhaan legion and the legendary Magician, plotted to overthrow her. In this they succeeded -- but the subsequent disappearance of Ajkara prevented them from attaining their second goal. This would have been the forced abdication of Ajkara. No matter what

farce it would have been, it would have made the succession much smoother. As it was, puppet monarchy after puppet monarchy caused the decline of the Empire from the being *de facto* ruler of all Jaiman, to nearly the size of its original borders before the Wars of Dominion.

Noteworthy highlights of Ajkara's reign are many. Upon ascending the throne, she completed the task her grandfather had started -- the conquest of Tanara. It is said that only she could have done it as she used diplomacy as well as force. If attacked straight on, the Duranaki and the Myri peoples would never have bowed to a foreign ruler. As it was she took time to learn of the peoples she would conquer.

Perhaps this is why she succeeded -- instead of conquest, she saw it as adding another culture to the greater Rhakhai whole. She never intended to make the new peoples give up their ways or their lands, but instead add these ways to Rhakhaan's ways.

By allying with the once great House Arain of the Duranak, she succeeded in putting them back in power in their land. But in private they knelt to her. A series of costly bloodfueds and clan wars had reduced this powerful family to a shadow of its former glory. When Ajkara agreed to hand the "governorship" of Tanara over to the Arain family, the rest was simple.

The Myri were simple once she realized that they would fight to the end rather than give up their simple ways. So instead of bringing them war, she brought them new ways of farming and craft. For this they gratefully yielded up tribute.

The Yinka were the most onerous of the Tanaran peoples. Xenophobic and bloodthirsty, they would brook no diplomacy. However, over the years, they had made great enemies of both the Duranaki and the Myri. Together with Rhakhaan Legions 8, 12, and 13, the Yinka were subdued.

In the year 5110 she reopened the Grey Road which had once transversed the underside of the Grey Mountains and upon which had flowed gold, silver, silks and wine. And so it did again.

At home, however, Ajkara was always seen as eccentric to say the least. Often making use of strange Duranaki herbs, she would laugh, drink, and mutter incomprehensible things while in court. The balls she gave were considered the best and they made her popular with a certain element, but for the more conservative of Haalkitaine, she was something to be feared.

Ajkara took many official journeys to Tanara, and if reports are to be believed, many more unofficial ones.

There she met with the lords of the Arain family and spoke of many things.

During her reign she avoided assassination no less than 5 times (including, we assume the Revolt of 5121). The third such instance occurred during a Ball, in fact, and is noteworthy because the assassin was not of this world. First hand reports give the account: A large flash of light occurred and out of nowhere, a monstrous form appeared. Ten feet tall and black of hide, it walked on two legs but was not any form of human or elf. A Demon of the Void it is said to be, and it attacked her right there, in front of hundreds of guests.

The Demon (it is said) threw flaming balls of Essaence at Ajkara, which affected her not at all. In fact, she began glowing with the red fires of the Phoenix itself (which, by the way, did much to dispel current rumors that she was not truly of the Falsuron blood).

Then Ajkara held up the Pendant of the Phoenix which she wore instead of the Crown, and chanted in an unknown language. The demon was then forced back and made to return to that evil realm which begot it.

Document 5

Found in a secret cache in Cassius's old room in Gryphon College.

Map Case:

The map case has several parts.

- Part 1: (The northeastern Jaiman area map)

Areas labeled: Northern Rhakhaan, Zor Wastes, Lu'Nak, Ja'Miltarg, Wuliris

Cities labeled: Haalkitaine, Prevan, Kaytha

Sites of Interest labeled: City of Lomh, Gryphon College

Others: There are several numerical labels on the map as well. Exactly what these are is not defined. The one labeled #2 seems to indicate a region rather than a point. A dotted line circles a 50 mile radius in the Wuliris/Grey Mountains region.

- Part 2: Some sort of list

The list is numerically ordered.

1. "Tairken Reth'ta'hulumi" Broken Circle of the Clouds. Arion Springs
2. "Shu Farok" Forbidden Flame. Wuliris/Grey Mountains
3. "Larn-nakia" Land of Great Towers. Lu'Nak.
4. "Aek-then" East of Haalkitaine.

5. "Thos Ahren" Mountain Secret. Northern Tanara.

- Part 3. An excerpt from a book (copied in Cassius's hand)

"...the K'ta'Viir utilized these Portals to travel great distances in a fraction of a second. They are always in the shape of some sort of stone or metal obelisk covered in carvings, though the features beyond that were variable. Many of the carvings were of decorative value, certainly, but others seems to represent a way of utilizing the device. The Iruaric 'Fol-Ra' causes the obelisks to...[rest destroyed]"

Under this is some scribbling notes:

"Prime represents location NOW."

"Opposite to blank side is possible destinations."

"Left and right are carvings for decoration? I hope."

Document 6

Found in Cassius's cache

[the first page only, the rest is destroyed by age and mildew.]

Orhan 3, 22, 5349

I am Cassius, and I have been called by Reann to fight the coming evil. I write this journal to those who may follow in my footsteps, to give them, you, what aid I can should I fall to the darkness, or be unable to assist you more directly.

I was born on Orhan 3, Day 35 of the year 5327 Third Era of Ire, in the realm of Reandor on the east coast of Emer. I was born into a noble family of some status with a name other than Cassius. My father was a good man and a good friend to the lord of Reandor, who was like a second father to me. I never knew my mother who died shortly after I was born. As a youth I aspired to be a knight, defending Reandor in my fathers footsteps. Reann was almost forgotten in Reandor, but I learned a little of him through the study of my lineage. In ages past my ancestors were priests in a long forgotten temple of Reann.

In my 18th year my world changed forever. The lord of Reandor, Benedict, came to my room one day to tell me that my father had been a casualty of an ambush while return from a diplomatic mission with Benedict. Only Benedict and a handful of guards managed to make an escape. Such was my grief I did not see the emptiness in his eyes or in his soul. Benedict and my father had not been attacked by simple people, but rather by the Unlife. No one survived that attack and retained his humanity, but I would not know this for almost a year. Benedict

began to make war with the neighboring kingdoms. In did not question his motives but followed and fought for him, as did all but an handful of citizens did. The others disappeared unnoticed.

One night after a great battle I had a dream of unusual clarity and disturbing implications. I saw my father being consumed on the very field I had fought that day. So disturbed was I that I arose and returned to the battlefield. There I saw a sight that turned my blood cold, Benedict had shed his mask of humanity and fed upon the fallen. In a flash the truth hit me and I could see my father being consumed by Benedict as he now consumed a fallen soldier. Grief and rage blinded me as I charged. Benedict has no armor or weapon, but gradually I became aware that the steel of my weapon left no mark upon him. Encumbered by armor and enraged by grief I could not run. Slowly he wore me down, each nick or cut caused my already empty heart to grow colder and colder as if each wounded my soul as well as my body.

As my heart turned to ice I made one last strike at Benedict before the dark gods consumed my soul. I uttered a prayer to Reann and struck. In that moment my world changed, Reann's spirit filled me, healing my soul, setting fire to my heart and filling the empty places within it. My sword turned the color of true night, and I saw fear in Benedict's eyes as he realized the night was his enemy not his ally. Reann's wrath struck at him through my sword. He fell never to move again.

That night I hunted down every member of Benedict's party who 'survived' the ambush. After I left Reandor lest I be condemned by those who would not believe me. Strangely I felt no remorse, there was nothing left for me in Reandor.

I became a wanderer, and sometimes a mercenary. I was glad for Reann's spirit in my life, yet I felt directionless. Finally in my 21st year Reann came to me in a dream. He showed me a great darkness and bid me to prepare for it by searching out his temple in Kaitaine.

Miscellaneous ideas

The following things will be happening in the background with or without the character's knowledge.

Voriig Kye:

Voriig Kye will be moving to consolidate his position with the rings. If the characters are able to bring him a ring, he will begin to take a personal interest in them.

He will contact the characters when they are in Sel-

Kai.

The Grey Ring:

They will not give up searching for the characters and their ring. Eventually they will catch up to the characters.

Sarnak:

One of the members of the Directorate (the ruling body of Sarnak) is in league with the Cult of Stars. She "found" Vazia to kill the Katra of Stroane two years ago and recently engineered an assault on the Directorate itself. This is detailed in Heather's Character section. This attack resulted in one Directorate member dead, and two others severely wounded. (All three often oppose XX's opinions and proposals.)

Stroane:

Due to the PCs interference, Lorek has lost much of his power. 1-2 years later, he is executed for treason by the Lord General, Terell. Terell has recently embraced the religion of the dark god Andaras. Things continue to deteriorate in Stroane.



Misc Details of Various Places

Kaitaine

Shops/Inns: The Buckle (Leather Armor/Shields), The Rapiers Point (Fine weapons, mostly swords), Dead Bolt (a decent clothier), The 50 (a good tavern), The Salt Shaker (a cheap but decent inn/tavern), The White Feather (a lower end inn/tavern), The Copper Grail (a low end but decent inn/tavern), The Breast Plate and Buckler (a fine armoror).

People: Dalov (an alchemist friend of Tarna Dederon who makes the special item for the PCs), Tyrl (owner of the Breast Plate and Buckler, also friend to Tarna who owes Tarna a couple of favors. Will give the PCs good prices because of this.)

Sarnak

Shops/Inns: The Cloven Hoof (a moderate quality inn/tavern), The Golden Cup (a Lay Healer shop).

People:

Arakin

Shops/Inns: The Broken Tankard (a moderate quality inn/tavern)

Lethys

People: Zartin, Uscurac Orders

O'Banthe

People: Dotraine, High Priest of Reann; Boshkar, Prince of Vorn

Misc Names in Shadow World

Use these names when the PCs ask for someone's name that you haven't made up yet. :)

Male: Thelin, Krem, Galeb, Lenov, Kim, Sarad, Kel, Zartin, Serat, [more later]

Female: Yenor, Enca, Enra, Zartinya, Tyrla, Tia, Lini, Dalla, Kaiya, [more later]

Inns/Taverns: The Drink, The Red Cat, Last Copper, Sharp End, Tankard Seat, Tankard's Rest, Last Rest, Broken Flask, Broken Cup, Yellow Flame, White Flame, Red Flame, Hearth Fires, Tarney's, Yrrl's, Baan's, Iron Flask, Warrior's Helmet

After you use the name, make sure to make a note of where/how it got used! Thus you can always impress your players by your omniscient knowledge of Shadow World.

Synopsis of the Campaign Background

(As of the beginning of Adventure IV)

In about 5350 TE, Cassius, Laron, and Danari are 10th level members of the Grey Ring and have associations with Gryphon College. They are transported to the site of an enemy and they attempt to kill him and disrupt a ritual magic (Prologue)

Though partially successful, the party is cast through a rift in time to wind up in the desert of Uj with nothing but hazy memories of the past several years. Their childhood memories are intact: they are level 1 and the year is 6050. They all wear pendants of a Gryphon.

They meet a caravan which is promptly attacked Charn Raiders. The caravan master is killed, but gives to Cassius a box containing one of the major Rings of the Death Claw, recently stolen from the 13th tribe of the Rhiani. They are told that the box was to go to a member of something called the "Grey Ring" named Nerik. (The caravan master recognized the Gryphon Pendants).

In the first city, the party meets a "minstrel" named D'alaan. D'alaan is a member of an organization led by the Dragonlord Voriig Kye. He is in Uj to study

rumors of the 13th tribe. He decides to follow the party when, coincidentally, a Monk of that tribe attacks. He is obviously intrigued. When he learns that the tribe is following the party because of the box, he knows he must follow them and report as soon as possible.

The 13th tribe attempts to regain the item, but are unsuccessful -- the party makes it to Kaitaine, followed "casually" by D'alaan.

D'alaan reports to his superiors and they instruct him to bring the PCs "into the fold" so to speak. Eventually, the Ring will go to Voriig Kye, to further his ends. The PCs meet Tarna Dederon, the senior member of the Organization in Kaitaine. Tarna convinces the party that the Grey Ring is some kind of evil cult (at least in the current time). The PCs join Tarna's organization.

As a first mission for the Organization, the party goes to Stroane to verify that the Prince Lorek there also has a ring like the one they have. Kye wishes to simply know if this is the case. If the party brings him TWO rings, he will be VERY pleased.

The party scouts for several days, making contact with Selras, a young spy for Voriig Kye, posing as a distaff heir of a large merchant family who wishes to have trade relations with Stroane. They also make contact with the Lord Arryl, a high ranking member of the Namar-Tol House Arryl here to pursue a trade agreement.

Just after meeting with the party, Selras and the Lord Arryl are the victims of an assassination attempt. Selras is killed. This is from the Cult of Stars who learned that they were associated with Kye's organization. The Organization has thwarted the plans of the Cult of Stars on many occasions. (This is a message to Kye.) The Cult of Stars does not actually know that it is KYE that is their enemy, just Kye's organization.

Lord Arryl is associated (in a completely innocent way) with the organization of Voriig Kye. He owes them a favor or two and so "loans" the party the skills of two of the members of his house, Flynnried (an Illusionist) and Belric (a rogue).

Due to high PC confidence <grin>, the group is able to raid Lorek's Estate and gain the second ring. They are pursued by Lorek's senior house mage, an unlanded noble named Velnik Tre'Atha.

The party reports to Arryl who recommends that they contact the leader of the Organization. (Actually Voriig Kye). They head at full speed for Se-kai, overland. (Arryl recommends overland because he doesn't know if Lorek will be able to buy off any ship's captain to betray the party to him.)

Velnik sends out messages to Stroane outposts to watch for a group matching the party's descriptions. The PCs have a run in with one of these patrols.

A day or two later, Velnik himself catches up to the PCs and a great battle ensues. The PCs escape

(barely) and Velnik is temporarily thwarted.

The PCs make their way through a small pass in the Spine of Emer mountains and escape Stroane. Velnik will follow cautiously.

2. Campaign Timeline

I use the standard Library of Nomikos Date System which is Year-Month-Day. The months are:

- 1 - Winter
- 2 - Spring
- 3 - Summer
- 4 - Autumn
- 5 - Fall

The days are 1-70.

Date	Event	Secret Event
6050/1/3	Campaign begins. PCs awaken in the Desert of Uj without possessions or food. They meet a caravan traveling west.	
1/4	Caravan is attacked by Charn. Jasek the caravan leader falls to a poisoned knife. The Ring of the Death Claw is given to Cassius.	
1/6	Cham attack again, but in less strength.	
1/8	Evil Rhiani monk attacks caravan and damage and kill several.	
1/9	Caravan reaches the town of Garith on the Daluj River. Meet D'alaan.	
1/14	Caravan Reaches Tul. Caravan switches to a flatboat. D'alaan say his good-byes.	D'alaan catches a swifter boat to Ajan to wait for the PCs.
1/19	Caravan Reaches Ajan, capital of Vajaar.	
1/21	Caravan purchases passage on a ship and sails for Kaitaine	
1/22	Caravan and PCs arrive in Kaitaine; Cassius visits the temple of Reann	
1/23	PCs run into D'alaan -- he agrees to search for information about Nerik	D'alaan has the PCs shadowed for the next couple of days
1/24	Cassius undertakes the Heuith Dream ritual at the temple of Reann to learn more of his present situation; Danari meets with his distant relative Rayas Delnek, the Ambassador to Kaitaine (of Itanis).	
1/25	Danari goes to the Library of Kaitaine, meets Nerik but tells him little; Cassius learns about Nerik from D'alaan, they meet with a friend of D'alaan's to discuss evil tidings	Nerik tries to find the caravan Danari mentioned to obtain more information; D'alaan arranges a meeting with his superior to draw the PCs into the organization.
1/26	The PCs meet again with Tarna Dederon, D'alaan's friend, to discuss a possible mission to undertake.	The Nameless One is seen in Kaitaine, but he does not speak.
1/29	PCs leave Kaitaine on the <i>White Breeze</i> , bound for Sarnak	
1/35	PCs arrive in Sarnak after a couple of storms	Nerik, still tracking Danari, learns they've left Kaitaine. He is at an impasse.
1/37	PCs raid the Catacombs of the Elders to get information left by Danari's mentor, Viiri. (700 years ago)	Nerik learns the name of the ship the PCs left on.
1/38	PC hear a rumbling and Laron glimpses strange lights around the Directorate building.	Cult of Stars assassins attack several members of the Directorate.

1/39	Leave Sarnak as caravan guards, bound (eventually) for Arakin	Nerik has a Dream that the PCs should not be abandoned.
1/44	Get to the pass of Urij (source of the Urij river) at the Lake of Urij.	<i>White Breeze</i> returns to Kaitaine, Nerik questions the captain -- obtains descriptions of Cassius, Laron, and D'alaan. He leaves that day for Sarnak.
1/46	Laron has encounter with denizens of the Emerald forest. They give him magical herbs in exchange for 'being their eyes'	
1/49		Nerik arrives in Sarnak; begins searching for people who've seen the party. Learns within a day that they hired on as guards for a caravan traveling to Val'Teer.
1/56	PCs arrive in Arakin, capital of Stroane; meet with Selras	Nerik is on his way to Arakin after having learned of a group matching the party making inquiries about prices to that city.
1/58	PCs go to a ball at the court; have sighting of Lorek and his Rhiani guards	Two Cult of Stars members arrive in Arakin, ordered to kill Selras as a member of Kye's organization.
1/60	PCs meet with Lord Arryl to discuss an exchange of information regarding the 'taint' on Prince Lorek; Selras is assassinated and Arryl is badly wounded. (occurs just after meeting, as if followed).	Two Cult of Stars members attack Selras and the Lord Arryl.
1/62	PCs leave Arakin for Lorek's Estate	Nerik arrives in Arakin
1/63	PCs arrive at Lorek's estate; that night they enter the manor	Lord Arryl regains consciousness; sends messages back to Namar-Tol
1/64	The PCs run for Arakin; by evening they make it back exhausted and report to Lord Arryl.	A message arrives at the Broken Tankard Inn for Selras (from his contact in Sel-kai)
1/65	The PCs make for Sel-Kai, overland.	Lorek sends messenger birds to outlying patrol post to look for the PCs
1/67	PCs get attacked by a Stroane patrol	
1/69	That night Tre'Atha catches up to the party and attacks. Though hurt, the party remains uncaptured.	
2/3	PCs make it though the pass.	
2/4,5	PCs must leave the road and trek overland across Tai-Emer	Tre'Atha follows in bird form, tracking the PCs from the air and by divination.
2/10	PCs decide to split a small way to see what is following them and what exactly they are following. Tre'Atha attacks and almost succeeds in capturing the party.	
2/11	An Essaence storm boils up out of the south . The PCs are transported some 100 miles to the west to the middle of the Bleak Elder Lands.	
2/14	PCs make it to the city of Nan-Ro in Nuyan Khom	Tre'Atha is temporarily frustrated by the Essence Storm.
2/15	PCs take passage to Sel-kai	
2/20	PCs land in Sel-kai, stay at the Barge Inn	
2/21	PCs attempt to contact Voriig Kye in his Sel-kai persona (Lord Turac). He is gone but they are put up in the House of Dreams on Eidolon.	
2/22	PCs are attacked by an assassin sent to kill an ambassador who was staying in a room near them.	

2/23	PCs and Turac enter the Ethereal Plane	Velnik Tre'Atha arrives in Sel-kai. He has trouble locating the PCs because of where they are staying.
2/24	PCs are successful in banishing the evil Rings.	Turac is successful in tricking the PCs into believing they have banished the evil Rings.
2/25,26	PCs return to Sel-kai and make a trip to the library and the Temple of Reann. They capture while on patrol two members of the Red Dragons. Discover link to Cult of Stars.	The PCs actually kill a Cult of Stars member. The Cult will actively start hunting them.
2/28-29	PC's decide to go to Jaiman, they take passage on the <i>Sea Sprite</i> . Just before departing they are attacked by two Cult of Stars members. One is slain by Cassius, the other is driven off by one Taira do'Arus (Heather's character). They convince the captain to sail immediately. Taira and the party realize that they each have information that the other lacks about the Cult of Stars and of their own quests. They decide to join forces for the meantime.	The two Red Dragons are rescued by the Cult of Stars.
2/31	Pass through the Essaence flow that divides the trade route between Sel-kai and Lethys. No harm is encountered. Luckily.	
2/36-38	PCs land in Lethys. Make contact with the acquaintance of Turac named Zartin of the Uscurac Orders. They learn about current affairs in Northern Rhakhaan (war with the Usurper, Frelik); Taira makes contact with the Uscurac Orders; attempts to research the Phoenix pendant, the Gryphon symbology, etc.	
2/48	After no incidents (except horrible weather), the caravan the PCs hire on with reaches Haalkitaine. More research is undertaken.	
2/49-51	Research in the Imperial Library. Meet with Fenn of Pathfinders & Co, a guide.	
2/50	Leave Haalkitaine on the north road for Prevan	
2/54	Get to Prevan and PCs decide to go around it to avoid questions.	
2/55	Almost run in a Saralian patrol	
2/57	See a battle between Saralians and Rhakhai. Saralians are aided by a weird group of humanoids	(Mutants of Dansart)
2/59	Get to the Ranya river	
2/60	Find the remains of Gryphon College. Get into battle with Lugrok and Elf-Demon who are still there.	
2/61-62	Search Gryphon College and find Ahred a protege of Zaris who had been captured.	
2/64	Attacked by Mutants of Dansart, Cassius is injured and is in a coma	
2/69	Arrive in Prevan. Priestesses of Eissa heal Cassius who reports strange dreams while unconscious	Light contact by Reann
3/3	Arrive in Haalkitaine; conduct research in library; decide to attempt the Tomb of Kings	
3/5	Descend into the Tomb of King (via special opening found)	
3/7	Pass Test of Kings and emerge from the Grey Road in Tanara	

- 3/8 Encounter the Priests Lyak (not that they know this)
- 3/9-14 Discover Portal stone, travel to the tower of Ru'Ar'ac (the tower described in the Prologue section). Got chased away by Lu-grok. Traveled to the Sulini town/city of Ydru.
- 3/16-22 Arranged passage on a ship bound for Norek (U-Lyshak) by way of Port Ormian. PCs stop at the Library of Nomikos.
- 3/22 PCs do research on various subjects at the Library. That day, Laron sites an old friend: Ru'Ar'ac the mage the party fought in the Tower in the Prologue section! Ru'Ar'ac is also missing much of his memory. However, he has made contact with the cult of stars and tries a ritual to restore his lost past.
- 3/23 PCs follow Ru'Ar'ac but learn little. He is also researching in the library.
- 3/24 The group decides to not let Ru'Ar'ac know that they are alive and leave Port Ormian for their next stop: Norek.
- 3/29 The PCs make Norek, pick up supplies and abandon Se-Tal and Shalra (temporarily). They set out for the Remeriath.
- 3/31 The PCs enter the Remeriath and are received by their long lost allies: Zares and the survivors of Gryphon College.
- 3/33 The PCs learn much and plan an attack on the Priest of Yarthraak. Their goal is to break up a meeting between the priests and the Cult of Stars. The secondary goal is to take prisoners for questioning.
- 3/34 Carry out strike on Yarthraak. They capture two priests of Yarthraak but they cult of stars member is killed beyond chance of return.
- 3/35-37 Rest and interrogate prisoners with magical techniques. Learn of impending attack on O'Banthe in the province of Vorn (U-Lyshak).
- 3/38 Set out to make contact with allies in O'Banthe (Priests of Reann).
- 3/44 Arrive in O'Banthe. Make contact with Dotraine, head priest of O'Banthe Brotherhood of Reann.
- 3/45 Se-Tal returns! He has somehow traced the PCs to O'Banthe. He warns of a mysterious danger to them if they stay.
- 3/46 The PCs decide to leave. I'm surprised. They begin the return to the Remeriath.
- 3/48 See a patrol of Saralians (extremely far south into U-Lyshak.)
- 3/49 Reach the edge of the Forest. Laron goes into to meet with Zares. The PCs don't want to bring Se-Tal in.
- 3/50 Zares and Ragath return with Laron to inspect Se-Tal. They do not learn much other than his aura seems to be wrapped up in some sort of powerful magic. They suspect some sort of ritual.
- 3/51 The party and Ragath set out for Lethys -- eventually to head for Sel-kai.
- 3/52 Stayed at the Diamond in the Rough in Lethys, Taira passed the tests for first ring Uscurac orders.

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- 3/53 Cassius had Huith dream at the temple of Reann. People did research at the library.
- 3/54 Purchased passage on the sky ship the *Essaence's Wind*.
- 3/56 Set out to Sel-kai.
- 3/60 Arrive in Eidolon. Leave message for Turac.
- 3/61 Undertake research; receive message from Naryn, Turac's assistant as well as from D'alaan. Meet with D'alaan later that night.
- 3/62 Attack a deal between the White Hand and House Dolnegan. Inadvertantly rescue two Duranaki slaves.
- 3/64 The PCs discover that they are being tracked by a demon...apparently the work of Velnik Tre'Atha.
- 3/65 D'alaan learns of a meeting between the Cult of Stars and the Ynka.
- 3/67 Again followed by a demon...unfortunately leads to an ambush by Tre'Atha. Laron and Cassius are captured and interrogated (tortured). They reveal little -- luckily the rest of the party tracks Laron and Cassius using Danari's mindstore. They distract Tre'Atha long enough for Laron and Cassius to escape. Tre'Atha escapes however.
- 3/69 Meeting between Cult of Stars and Ynka. Taira sees the head priest wearing an amulet that resembles the Phoenix Pendant. Ynka CoS Meeting. Descides how to continue approach on attacking Rhakhaan.
- 3/70 Receive word that Turac is back in Eidolon. Go there to meet with him.
- 4/2 Set out for the Ethereal Plane and undertake the "ritual" to destroy the RoDC.

3. THE CHARACTERS

This section contains background information and the like on the characters that are actually playing in my game. Much of the plot is based around the backgrounds and personal goals of the characters, so adapting this campaign to another group's use could be difficult if they didn't at least resemble the characters described here.

This gaming group was a little on the small side, consisting of three characters at the start of the campaign. It would be extremely simple to change the encounters to be more suited for more PCs, as needed.

The Characters:

Cassius, Paladin of Reann

Danari Delnek, Warlock of Itanis (Seer)

Laron, Laan Ranger

Flynnfried, Linaeri Illusionist

Belric, Erlini Rouge

Taira do'Arus, Sarnak (Laan) Magician

Cassius, Paladin of Reann

Background Options [50 points]

Talents

Nightvision +50 -- Cassius can see to 50 feet in near darkness with no penalties. There must be some light available to see by, however. [5 points]

Dreams -- Cassius has the Dream I spell as a 1st level spell. [15 points]

Darkness -- Through his connection with his god, Cassius can summon Darkness. This acts exactly like the Magician spell Dark I. (10 min/lvl, range touch, 10' radius). Darkness is of darkest night. In addition to this, Cassius has the ability to make one attack at normal OB against an opponent if both he and them are encompassed by the darkness. If the opponent has no Darkvision ability then they are considered blind and are -80 for both attacks and parries. [15 points]

Item -- Cassius has an amulet of Reann, a holy symbol to the Priesthood, which acts as a +2 Adder. It also detects Unlife within 100 feet by becoming warm and vibrating slightly. [15 points]

Flaws

Foolhardy Bravery -- In certain circumstances, Cassius will take unwise actions or risks because he feels that his honor is at risk or because his god would want it this way, or because he simply overestimates his own prowess. While engaging in a foolhardy act, he gets a +10 to all actions but may not retreat unless forced to. Forcing can be physical

or mental. [0 points]

History

Raymond Shagal's father, Stelios Shagal, was a Knight and good friend to Lord Benadict of a minor kingdom. His family was well to do and he experience a rather upper-class life. Unlike his father Raymond had aspirations to be a lord someday. Raymond was a patient and disciplined young man and he started pursuing his goal by the most logical course available to him, the Knighthood. The early years of his life were consumed mostly by training for the Knighthood.

No temple of Reann existed in Lord Benadict's Kingdom. Indeed, Reann was mostly a forgotten god in the Kingdom. Raymond became aware of his existence while studying his genealogy (sp?) and coming across several priests of Reann. Being respectful of his family and realizing that night can be a soldiers worst enemy, Raymond began to pay his respects to Reann on occasion in a small private ceremony (Nothing really major, he probably spent 15 minutes every Sunday). Raymond also started researching his his ancestors who were priest of Reann as a hobby.

When Raymond was 19 Lord Benadict was returning from a minor diplomatic mission in the neighboring kingdoms when his camp was attacked by a band of the Unlife. Lord Benadict and Raymond's father put up a valiant fight, but their weapons could not harm the Unlife creatures. (Raymond was not with them). Afterwards several of Lord Benadict's party rose as Unlife themselves, including Lord Benadict, but not Raymond's father (His body was too mutilated). Lord Benadict, now an Unlife creature, returned to his castle spinning a tale of how a neighboring Kingdom had attacked his encampment at night. He promptly declared war on this kingdom, and Raymond now a Knight of the Kingdom was called to arms. Lord Benadict was not interested in conquest, he simply wanted more battles which made more corpses from him and his brethren to feed upon. Hence the war began was long and bloody.

During this time Raymond began to experience disturbing dream of his father's and Lord Benadict's death (The dream is of the actual battle, Raymond doesn't realize this of course). Raymond is disturbed by these re-occurring dreams, but is not willing to believe they are real, until on night he has a dream of Lord Benadict eating the corpses of fallen soldiers in a battle he had just fought.

Disturbed even more by this dream, Raymond

returns to the battlefield that night to find Lord Benadict feasting. Realizing his other dreams must have been true visions, Raymond attacks. Lord Benadict is Unlife, and Raymond's sword cannot hurt him however. After a few minutes of melee Raymond realized he is doom. Unthinkingly he shouts a final prayer to Reann he remembers his ancestors used to invoke, not realizing he is not using his usual tongue, and prepared for a final blow before his death. Lord Benadict, supremely confident at this point, lets him take his final blow before finishing him off. When Raymond's sword strikes, however, it glows with a strange light and Lord Benadict cries out in pain before collapsing truly dead.

Raymond then returns to the encampment to report what has occurred. He does not realized that Lord Benadict's son and several others are now also Unlife. Raymond is denounced as a traitor, and forced to flee. He then defects to the other Kingdom, telling them what has happened, and fighting with them until the Unlife are defeated.

After the war Raymond becomes a victim of circumstance. His own kingdom is unwilling to believe Lord Benadict was Unlife, and neighboring kingdoms want nothing to do with a defecting knight. Stripped of his titles and land Raymond takes up the life of a mercenary, changing his name to Cassius.

H'van's Tale (Minstrel of Cassius's mercenary troop)

"Reann, the god of the Night and of Sleep and Dreams. It is said that he only goes forth during the night -- and this separates him from the other gods. The legends tell of Reann wandering all of Kulthea by night... endlessly searching for true evil.

"The greatest evil of all shares Reann's domain: the evil of Unlife. The Unlife comes in many forms... some gruesome and some subtle. But all have one goal in common. The total destruction of all things living.

"Of great wars with the Unlife you know. Heard the tales of battles raging across the continent of Emer for 100 years. Heard the clashes so loud that they are still remembered, 7000 years later.

"The gods themselves fought in those battles. When they saw that the tides of evil were so great that it could not be turned, they came down from Orhan and did battle these ancient enemies."

[He pauses for a moment and gazes into the evening sky]

"There!" [He points over the trees surrounding the encampment] "The moon of Orhan shines as

brightly as it ever did. But on that day, even that bright place was darkened by the taint that had fallen over all of Kulthea.

"It is said that Reann fought the most fiercely. He did not wish to share his dark domain with this festering evil. He foiled all of the Unlife's plots of ambush by night. He chased them into their very lairs. In the silver moonlight, Reann's blade ran dark with the blood of creatures not of this world.

"Of the meaning of your dreams, it is not for me to say. But I will tell you this: your dream came on a special night. A night that is said, in some places, to be the most powerful night of Reann. For Orhan was full and I believe this has special significance.

"Of the Priesthood of Reann, I can honestly tell you little. True temples exist only in the far away cities of Kaitaine and Selkai. Priests are sometimes seen to wander the land, as their god is said to do. If they fight the Unlife as He did, I cannot tell you. However, they are sometimes known to offer advice on things that haven't yet occurred. Advice that is often of an intimate nature to people who are complete strangers and have never laid eyes on the priest before that day. But I can tell you this; if a priest offers you advice, do exactly as he says! Reann, the moons, and the stars tell him things that we cannot understand."

Dreams

Dream I

Eyes come open. Walking. Fresh night air wafts over you. Behind you, the full moon of Orhan lights your way, causing a shadow to dance in front of you.

Forest branches and vines brush you as you move past. Uncaring, you hardly bother to wave them aside. You cannot be distracted from your goal. MUST not.

The way parts before you and you pause. You look over a wide valley, and on the far edge a tower sits. It rests on a tall crag of rock; your eyes falter as you look towards it. At times it seems enormous, and at other times it seems small and distant. You take a breath, check the seat of your sword and step forward to begin the descent...

"Wait."

The voice comes from behind you without warning, but you are not alarmed. You stop, but do not turn.

"It is not time.... yet."

You look downwards into the valley. "But my Enemy is there. I must reach it!" You say, unable to tear your eyes away from the sight.

"Yes," the voice says. "You will reach it. But at the proper time."

A hand passes in front of your eyes, and when it is gone, the tower has disappeared as well. You stand in a dark forest glade. Turning, you face the source of the voice. He is a young man, dressed in sable, smiling sadly.

"Walk with me," he says, and beckons to you.

You fall into step beside him as he negotiates the winding forest path.

"You are young to know your enemy so well." He shakes his head slightly. "They all were. But it will only make you stronger, when the time comes."

The light of the stars and moon seems to dim slightly. Take on a reddish hue. You look up and see Kulthea's third moon, baleful Charon, looking down upon you. It is dark red, and the night seems suddenly colder. Your cloak doesn't seem to be enough.

The young man betrays no change of emotion. "The moons circle, the planets wander, and the stars dance... endlessly. I fear that the dark time is coming again. We are few who can See it."

He stops suddenly, and turns to face you.

You hear sounds in the distance. Unmistakable to your ears. The sounds of battle. A weight presses on your heart... but at the same time, a sense of elation fills you.

The man places a hand on your shoulder. You realize that you are wearing heavy plate armor. Were you wearing such before? The thought flickers through your head for only an instant. It is dark and non-reflective. The moonlight will not betray you in this armor. But no matter, you think. I was made for this armor as much as it was made for me. And you cease to think about it. Your bare sword is in your hand.

"It is as I thought. It has already begun," the man says, cocking his head to listen to the night.

"I await your command, Lord," you hear yourself say.

He smiles slightly. "Come then. On my flank!" He orders.

He breaks into a run, and you quickly follow, keeping a pace behind, on his right. Suddenly, battle rages around you. Cut, slash. Your mind loses its sense of time. Parry, cut. You duck under a blade as it rushes past, taking your foe in the side. More enemies fall and you find yourself fighting back to back with the man. You are being pressed from all sides. You raise your sword and cry out....

You are alone. A dank mist surrounds you. "My lord!" You call out. "Master, where are you??"

"I am with you," the voice says. You turn, joyfully, but no one is there. "I am with you," the voice says again. Strangely heartened by this, you turn in a new direction and make your way through the mist.

After a time, the wall of mist opens to reveal a large, sprawling city beneath you. It rests on a crescent bay, across a narrow straight from the mainland.

"Kaitaine," you whisper.

You are moving again. City streets surround you. Cobblestones pass beneath your feet. At the end of the street, a building rests. It seems to be your destination. The only possible destination. And above the great doors is marked a symbol. A crescent moon cupping a field of stars. The symbol of Reann.

Dream II (a set)

Subject 1 : Nerik (The man at the library in Kaitaine that I'm supposed to give the box to)

A long hall stretches before you. As you make your way down it you see several alcoves off to either side. You hear a scratching noise. And again. Perhaps the scratching of pen's on paper? But you see no sign of life...

At the end of the hallway, you reach a narrow stair. You go up and are stopped by a door. You try the handle but it is locked. Suddenly, the door is flung open! Behind it is very hazy and you can see little.

"Who is there?" Says a voice from within.

"A messenger," you answer after a brief pause.

"Hmmm, from whom?" the voice replies. "And how have you found me?"

"I..." you begin but are cut off. Either you or the doorway seems to get farther and farther away.

"Wait..." you hear faintly, but it is no use. You have lost control and are spinning away....

Subject 2 : The form our enemies next attack will come in.

Rain pelts your back. If I stay absolutely still, you think, maybe they won't sense me. Presenses move to either side of you and pass. You let out a breath and huddle deeper into the foliage where you are hidden.

Then you feel something. But it's within you. Anger. Why do skulk and run when I should take the fight to THEM! At least then I would be done with it. After all their backs are now turned to me and the night conceals me....

You sense another presence nearby. It is alone! An

opportunity to strike?

Slowly you rise and begin to make your way forward...

Subject 3 : Danari

Light, noise, a crowded festival. Dozens of dark skinned people move past you, a smile on their lips. Suddenly the way opens before you.

Leaning against a wall is Danari. He seems to be talking with an older Itanian wearing robes and many gold rings and necklaces. No wait! As you approach, you realize it's not Danari, but looking close enough to him to be his brother. In fact, the closer you look, you realize the two men, while of very different ages, bear a striking resemblance. They continue speaking, but you can't make out their words. The younger one is talking very quickly while the older man is shaking his head slowly in denial. He looks saddened by what the younger man is saying. Finally the older man, bows his head and the younger stops talking. The younger turns and begins to walk away, but before he gets more than a few steps, the older man calls out. The younger turns around.

"If you must go to work with the outsiders," the older man says, "At least say goodbye to your Sunha."

"Very well," the younger man says. "Goodbye and farewell. I hope that you can understand why I do this. Why we must not remain isolated from this conflict."

With that, he turns again and fades into the crowd. The older man bows his head once more....

Subject 4 : Laron

The walls of a keep rise above you. The day light streams in from above illuminating a small garden before you. A woman works there, kneeling, her hands working in the soil. As she turns, the light catches her hair, igniting the reddish gold hues. You feel your breath catch at her beauty.

A noise causes both you and her to turn in the direction of an opening into the keep. A man exits from it...it is Laron. He is dressed in simple but finely made clothes. He carries a two-handed sword, sheathed, in one hand. Grasped by the center of the blade.

The woman is not alarmed. She speaks:

"So you go to leave me again, Laron?" she asks. Her voice and eyes are sad as she stops what she was doing to gaze at Laron.

He drops to his knees beside her, uncaring of the dirt staining his fine cloths. He places his sword on

the ground and grasps her small hand in his two large ones.

"I would not leave you... leave this," he gestures to the garden and the keep, "were it not necessary. I must go because if I didn't none of this will exist."

"But there are others, Laron! Why must you be the one always?" She is pleading with him.

"Because I must." He takes up his sword again and rises, walking slowly back out the way he came.

A single tear rolls down the cheek of the woman. She sits for a time looking at the soil and then slowly begins her work again...

Subject 5 : Mistakes I've made since awakening in the desert

Darkness. Then suddenly light...and falling! You tumble over and over again, the world spinning crazily about you. When you finally stop, you are lying on your back on the ground. But you cannot move a muscle.

"What does it mean?" you hear a moderately bored voice saying. An enormous head appears in your line of sight. It looks like it is inspecting you like an insect. It takes you a moment, but you recognize the face! And it is your own. "You" speak:

"It's hard to read sometimes...divination's can be difficult to interpret or have several meanings."

Another voice, seemingly right by your ear: "Dreams too!!!" it says with a giggle.

Suddenly everything fades to white...

Subject 6 : The person who gave Jasek the box

Everywhere is pain. Your hands feel cold. Is it loss of blood, you think in a sudden panic? No, only that which you carry. You look down and you see the cold metal box still clutched in your hands.

You stumble once or twice but catch yourself. Luckily not drawing much attention as you move through the dusty streets. Your breath is shallow, favoring a pair of broken ribs.

Finally you reach your destination. A door. You knock. Eventually it is opened and you stumble inside.

"I must speak with Jasek." You hear yourself say.

"Very well sir. Who shall I say is calling." a small servant says.

"I am expected," is all you reply.

He bows and leaves. A moment later you are shown into a rather nice study. Jasek is there, seated at a desk, and he looks annoyed.

"What do you want this time?" He asks bluntly.

"Just one more favor and your debt will be done. I come in my official capacity," you say and slowly and painfully you pull out the Gryphon Pendant from within your shirt.

"Very well, what is it." His frown has deepened.

"You are going to Kaitaine in a few days. I have a package to have delivered. It is to go to Nerik at the Great Library." With that you pull out the box and a money pouch and place them on Jasek's desk.

Jasek doesn't move. "And after that will be finished?"

"After this we'll be finished," you hear yourself reply.

Jasek nods once and picks up the pouch and the box and places them in his desk without looking at the contents of either one....

Subject 7 : The 13th tribe

You seem to see the ground from a great height. You are circling, flying. Suddenly you catch a glimpse of movement on the dark plain below.

A man is run quickly and silently across the rocky ground. It is dark except for the stars but he moves with no difficulty. He stops suddenly as seems to sniff the air. He waits. During that moment, you can see that he is completely naked. But strange swirling tattoos cover his entire body.

Suddenly he begins to move again. This time in a slightly different direction. From above, you can see his quarry. It is a Shezru, one of the desert tigers. The man makes a fantastic leap and lands before it. The Shezru tenses and growls. The man begins to move closer.

The Shezru leaps! But amazingly the man is not there, he has moved to one side and as the tiger bounds by, he strikes out with a powerful kick.

A battle ensues. In a few minutes, it ends with the man's teeth locked in the tiger's throat. As the Shezru stops moving, the man disengages and with effort, lifts the beast so that the blood from the throat wound runs down over his head and chest. And his tattoos begin glowing with a sickly yellow-orange radiance...

Subject 8: About the organization represented by the Dragon Pendant (worn by the big baddie in the Prologue)

You are walking through a town. It is of good size, though the buildings seem to be mostly made of wood. It is night and a cold wind blows. A storm is coming, you can feel it.

You look up and see an enormous dark cloud

drifting above you. Flashes of light can be seen within it. You look around the buildings near to you and are relieved to see that they all are crowned in lightning rods. Suddenly a flash of lightning streaks out to strike one of the houses. The lightning rod takes the bolt, but before your horrified eyes, it began to glow with a sickly orange/yellow radiance. As if melting it is transformed into a serpent.

More lightning strikes around you -- in each flash you catch a glimpse of a serpent. You begin to run down the street and rain pelts you. In the momentary flashes, you see something else...the serpents are moving...and working their way through the thatched roofs and into the homes below....

Dream III

You awaken in a room. It is bare of all furnishings. You kneel and wait. There seems to be no exit.

You are wearing a thin neophyte robe. Around your neck rests the symbol of Reann.

You take a deep breath. A second. A third. A sense of deep relaxation begins to set in and you feel your mind begin to drift -- to hold no thoughts.

A bell rings. And you hear a voice:

"Changes come. They will rise again. We must be wary. We must watch."

Then whispered, as if from a different direction: "For 1000 hands hacking at the branches of evil, there is only one cutting at the root."

It fades of but repeats, "...at the root...at the root...at the root."

Your eyes open and a pool lies before you. It is only a couple of feet across. A mist seems to rise from it and you can't see the bottom. As you try, a ripple appears across the surface of the water. As it calms you seem to make out movement within...it is a vision.

A man stands amongst glowing fires. There is an anvil before him. He is tall and handsome...elvish...most likely Iylari. He has raven black hair and is shirtless. His skin glistens, as if from a great heat. He puts down a smallish hammer and raises what he had been working on. It appears to be a helm -- rough still and unpolished, but you can see that it has a delicate beauty. It is shaped in the style of a phoenix, wings rising from the sides of the helm, tail sweeping back to protect the neck. Beyond the figure, you can make out several other helms of similar quality.

"The old defenses are failing. We need a new strength." Comes the voice again in your ear.

The man in the vision, carefully places the helm next

to the others, but as he does he pauses as if thinking. Suddenly he spins, and for a moment seems to be looking directly in your eyes. The vision suddenly fades and ripples overtake the pool.

"Beware and be watchful. Allies are near, but so can be enemies."

Dream IV (A set)

Subject 1: Stroane

A room. Plushly appointed. Deep red carpet, gold leaf on every piece of furniture. An enormous bed. A man sleeps upon it -- he is a man in his prime and obviously a man of some wealth and power. Silk sheets are wrapped haphazardly around his body. His velvet nightclothes are in disarray.

Across the room, a single candle gleams. Sitting at a small desk, a young woman brushes her hair. It is long and golden. Her thoughts seem fair away, as the bush moves through her golden locks. She too is clothed, even for sleep, in the appointments of the extremely wealthy. A silk gown covers her slim body.

She places her gold brush on the desk and rises gracefully to her feet. Soundlessly she moves over to the bed. A small smile crosses her features as she looks down on the occupant.

Bending, she lightly brushes her lips over the sleeping man's cheek, making him murmur slightly in his sleep. The dagger goes through his throat without a sound.

Withdrawing it, she wipes it daintily against the corpse's pillow, and as softly as her kiss, presses the hilt against his cheek. As she moves away, the quickly fading mark of a star can be seen on the man's cheek.

The room lights suddenly with a flash...

Subject 2: The person who wrote the last entry in the Book of the Brotherhood

Coming out of darkness slowly. A room full of voices, murmuring together in close whispers. The room is not well lit. A pair of torches burn smokily at the front -- the direction the men of the room seem to be facing.

A man steps up and a hush falls over those assembled. He is of Zori descent, of strong build. He is...Cassius. The man says a few words that cannot be made out. It is as if he were miles away rather than a few feet. But the men of the room seem to respond to it. They nod their heads in agreement, and stern faces become like stone.

As one both the man, Cassius, and the others before him bow their heads. They seem to murmur

something and this time you recognize something of it. When it reaches the end, Cassius utters a final phrase...

"And Death Shall Have No Dominion."

"And Death Shall Have No Dominion," the assembled group returns.

Subject 3: *Are there / will there be other followers of Reann like Cassius.*

You look across a plain. The night is dark, and at first you see nothing. Then...movement.

As it comes nearer, you make out details: a group of armored knights, but riding with little more sound than the wind. You nod with pride. The knights are yours, trained with your own hands.

They approach your position and the lead man pulls up his horse. The rest pull up as one.

"1st patrol in, my lord. Nothing to report," he says.

You smile and nod slightly. "Very well, my lord." The corners of his mouth twitch upwards in the barest hint of a smile. You do not command this one, but he is like a brother to you. Of Zori blood as well, but while you wear the eye shaped symbol of Reann, he wears the tear-drop symbol of Eissa.

The other horsemen, young in the service of Reann, dismount and lead their horses into the encampment. A boy runs forward.

"My lord Dana, you are needed," he says with barely enough breath to get the words out.

"Very well. Lord Cassius, you have the watch."

You nod and continue making your rounds. The newer recruits do well to feel the presence of their commanders...

Dream V

Subject 1: The Gryphon Helm

The vision rises before you slowly, obvious features evident at first, then details. A large hall, carved from the living rock. The room has six sides, each covered with carvings.

A man walks forward, alone. Slowly he moves, as if with great deliberation. The center of the hall contains a short pillar, also with six sides, which rises to about waist height.

The man continues to walk towards the black pillar.

A few more strides and he's reached his destination. Reaching into his cloak, he removes a carefully wrapped bundle. Removing the coverings, the man pulls out what you can see to be a circlet constructed delicately of silver and gold. This he

places on the pillar.

Silence. Then... a humming. The room seems to vibrate -- the very stones are creating the noise you hear. Previously unseen torch sconces spring to light, emanating a blue glow.

The light flickers across the man's proud Zori face as he reaches down for the circlet. Face like stone, he slowly places it atop his head. Obvious startlement lights in his eyes and then fades to satisfaction. This expression does not last long, however, as it turns to...fear?

Turning about on one heel, the man strides purposefully from the hall. And as he goes, the circlet blurs and shifts. Becoming a large helm which seems to match the armor he wears beneath his cloak.

Subject 2: The Race of Zor

A sparkling city of white marble. A wide river of dark blue water cuts across the verdant plain. A proud people dressed in fine tunics of silk, wearing jewelry and adornments, go about their business of living.

On the widest street, a large procession moves towards an enormous and ornate building. In the center of the procession moves a large wagon pulled by six black horses. Atop the wagon is...an object.

Spherical, and the diameter equal to the height of a man, it moves almost proudly down the avenue. It reflects the bright sunlight in an iridescent array of colors which sparkle out over the crowd, making the children laugh and wave at the air.

Behind this globe rides a man, proud of face and stature. He smiles and nods to well-wishers in the crowd as the procession moves inward to the building at the city's center.

As you awaken, you can still almost hear the laughter and cheers of the crowd...

Dream VI

Subject 1: The Dragonlord

[Interactive]

Subject 2: The Library of Nomikos

Dream VII

Subject 1: The purpose of the ceremony in Tanara.

Step...step...step. Footprints appear in the sandy soil in front of you. You cannot see who made them. Moving cautiously, you follow.

A bitterly cold wind springs up, slashing through your clothing like they're not there. But an unseen hand steadies you. You pause only a moment and

continue following the footprints.

You notice that the ground under your feet has changed. You now step over a soft snow. The footprints lead you up a small path, almost a crevice cutting through a cliff.

The apex of the path rises just above you. As you top the rise, a fantastic site greets you: before you, on a high and snowy plateau, sits a fortress. It is positioned in the heart of a major flow of essaence. Blue lights flash around it in a continual dance.

The footprints have stopped in front of you. You hear a voice:

"To save the world, the eye must be blinded."

Subject 2: Who is summoning/controlling the Ordainers?

Your vision reveals an enormous tree. At least 50 wide and hundreds tall, it towers over the surrounding forests. Your awareness floats upwards, past the tops of the surrounding trees...up and up until finally you can see the top of the huge tree.

The trunk splits into two large branches which lift dozens of more feet towards the dark sky. At the juncture, however, there is a platform.

Inscribed in the center of the platform is a large circle, at least 20 feet in diameter. Spaced evenly about this circle are pairs of people. They are darkly shrouded so it's difficult to make out their forms. Only one man, standing alone, is lit with a strange reddish radiance. His fine and handsome features belie the coldness of his expression. A high elf, without doubt.

He begins speaking in an unknown language. After a few moments, one member of each pair of humans standing around the circle draws something from within their robes. A glittering knife.

With one well-timed thrust, each knife-holder stabs into the throat of their partner. The blood begins to run inward toward the center of the circle.

After a few moments the blood has formed a pool in the center of the circle. Soon, it begins to seeth as if heated from below.

Suddenly, the pool erupts! A large head appears followed by equally large shoulders and arms. A horrifying creature slowly pulls itself out of the pool, to stand nearly 20 feet tall beside it.

The high elf smiles.

Dream

A large red apple hangs suspended in the void. It

turns slowly, illuminated by an unseen source.

As it finally makes a full circuit in its rotation, you notice a blemish on the surface that you did not see before. The apple continues to rotate and the blemish seems to grow. More flecks of decay sprout at random on the side of the apple that you can see. As the apple rotates, the unblemished side becomes visible again. But soon the decaying side shows its face -- and it's only gotten worse.

A flash of blue light appears out of nowhere and seems to cut the fruit in half, along the line of the core. The light fades somewhat, but a thin blue line encircles the apple where the cut was made.

As the apple continues to rotate, you see that the decay has completely consumed half of the apple. The other half, on the other side of the line, remains unblemished.

Excerpts from the book gained from the Temple of Reann in Kaitaine

The book is about 7 inches by 8 inches and is about 100 pages in length. The writing within is scrawled and hardly legible. It is written by several different people.

On the back cover of the book:

And death shall have no dominion.

Dead men naked they shall be one

With the man in the wind and the west moon;

When their bones are picked clean and the clean bones gone

They shall have the stars at elbow and foot;

Though they go mad they shall be sane,

Though they sink through the sea they shall rise again;

Though lovers be lost love shall not;

And death shall have no dominion...

C.

This is written in Cassius's own hand! The writing is as old (seemingly) as the rest of the book.

On the Dana:

...and the Brothers of Reann met with the Dana of Eissa to discuss the tactics of the coming fight. That Lord fought with the strength of 20 men and had done such great deeds that he had, though not of the Brotherhood, earned the respect and devotion of all there.

Plans had been made and the morning of the attack came. The hordes fought us without feeling

exhaustion, but we beat them back. After the last charge, the field was in chaos. I saw the Lord Dana's standard fall and I knew fear. I rallied the brethren and fought my way to his party. Just as we broke through, I saw the Dana take a fearsome blow and fall. Howling our rage, we brethren smote the demonspawn until they crumpled and let their black icor upon the soil.

Leaping from my horse, I grasped the Dana's shoulder's in my hands but I knew it was too late. I wept over him, then, but I heard him speak.

"Fear not," he whispered to me. "I have served my purpose here today. Another will come to join the Fight. Another will come..."

He died on the field. But the field was ours.

On the coming of Reann:

We gathered on the hillock, a fair showing after a campaign which had protracted into a decades-long confrontation with forces which seemed limitless.

Then the earth opened and there gushed forth a seething tide of creatures. A churning mass of clawed limbs and burning, thirsty eyes streamed towards us. The rocky slope was nothing to their steely claws as they scrambled upwards. But the swarmed in silence, an eerie quiet somehow more unnerving than their wrenching bloodlust-shrieks.

There were literally tens of thousands of demons, such that I thought all of the Near Pales must be emptied. They were led by the pale Heralds of Night astride their ebon unicorns, and at the van a monstrosity; a Lord Ordainer from the Outer Planes. More than five times my height, his great reptilian wings spread larger than a dragon's, and in his clawed hand was a huge sword burning with runes of Chaos.

Titus Hiaz, Captain of the Titans, his skin white and sleek as marble, held forth his golden hammer and faced us to call the attack.

But before he could speak, the ground began to shudder. From the spreading cracks issued a great black smoke; the sulfurous odor was unbearable. Then at the center of the radiating cracks, amidst a hateful red glow of afflicted earth rose he whom I had hoped long ago I would never have to face again: Scalu. A dark god had come to earth to wage war.

For the first time in my life, I felt the ache of despair.

Without fanfare beyond a silvery luminescence, a presence materialized between me and Scalu. Pale skin, bare but for a tunic of azure, a simple youth

bearing only a broadsword had appeared before the dark god. Before the youth the Jackal halted and his mouth opened in a human expression of surprise. "Reann!"

And even as the youth grew in size to match Scalu in height, he held aloft his gleaming golden sword and spoke in a voice like music, yet is carried over the tumult: "Take heart people of Kulthea! Orhan has joined the fray!"

And I took heart indeed, for at last the very heavens had come to our aid.

Andraax

"The Battle at Maegriss" SE 6825

On the Brotherhood:

...the Priesthood of Reann also has within it an order devoted to the more martial teachings and actions of their patron god. They call themselves the Brotherhood.

Reann's domain is that of Night and Dreams. The members of the Brotherhood do not allow encroachments on this domain by the minions or the entities of Evil. Those who would destroy the purity of the Night are to be warned: the Brotherhood sees into every shadow.

The Brothers have renowned abilities in combat. The average member would be a welcome addition to any Lord's corps of officers. They are extremely well trained in the art of melee weapons. But more than this, they are trained in tactics and strategy.

Officer in charge of a non-Brotherhood troop: Du'Valt

Officer in charge of a Brotherhood troop: Ren'Valt

Normal Weapons: Broadsword

Armor: Generally a Plate type, but depended on mission

Cassius' Diary

Orhan 1, 1-45, 6050

I am Cassius, and I have been called by Reann to fight the coming evil. I write this journal to those who may follow in my footsteps, to give them, you, what aid I can should I fall to the darkness, or be unable to assist you more directly.

My past is not a single road, rather it is two roads that come together as one. I cannot tell you how this came to be, only that it is. The first road I can look back and see clearly, the second is obscure. I will tell you what I can of both.

On the first road I was born *<birth date>* in the

realm of Reandor on the east coast of Emer. I was born into a noble family of some status with a name other than Cassius. My father was a good man and a good friend to the lord of Reandor, who was like a second father to me. I never knew my mother who died shortly after I was born. As a youth I aspired to be a knight, defending Reandor in my fathers footsteps. Reann was almost forgotten in Reandor, but I learned a little of him through the study of my lineage. In ages past my ancestors were priests in a long forgotten temple of Reann.

In my 18th year my world changed forever. The lord of Reandor, Benedict, came to my room one day to tell me that my father had been a casualty of an ambush while return from a diplomatic mission with Benedict. Only Benedict and a handful of guards managed to make an escape. Such was my grief I did not see the emptiness in his eyes or in his soul. Benedict and my father had not been attacked by simple people, but rather by the Unlife. No one survived that attack and retained his humanity, but I would not know this for almost a year. Benedict began to make war with the neighboring kingdoms. In did not question his motives but followed and fought for him, as did all but an handful of citizens did. The others disappeared unnoticed.

One night after a great battle I had a dream of unusual clarity and disturbing implications. I saw my father being consumed on the very field I had fought that day. So disturbed was I that I arose and returned to the battlefield. There I saw a sight that turned my blood cold, Benedict had shed his mask of humanity and fed upon the fallen. In a flash the truth hit me and I could see my father being consumed by Benedict as he now consumed a fallen soldier. Grief and rage blinded me as I charged. Benedict has no armor or weapon, but gradually I became aware that the steel of my weapon left no mark upon him. Encumbered by armor and enraged by grief I could not run. Slowly he wore me down, each nick or cut caused my already empty heart to grow colder and colder as if each wounded my soul as well as my body.

As my heart turned to ice I made one last strike at Benedict before the dark gods consumed my soul. I uttered a prayer to Reann and struck. In that moment my world changed, Reann's spirit filled me, healing my soul, setting fire to my heart and filling the empty places within it. My sword turned the color of true night, and I saw fear in Benedict's eyes as he realized the night was his enemy not his ally. Reann's wrath struck at him through my sword. He fell never to move again.

That night I hunted down every member of Benedict's party who 'survived' the ambush. After I

left Reandor lest I be condemned by those who would not believe me. Strangely I felt no remorse, there was nothing left for me in Reandor.

I became a wanderer, and sometimes a mercenary. I was glad for Reann's spirit in my life, yet I felt directionless. Finally in my 21st year Reann came to me in a dream. He showed me a great darkness and bid me to prepare for it by searching out his temple in Kaitaine. So I seek off across the continent of Emer. It is during this crossing that the roads of my past meet.

The second road is far less clear. I know that in this road I was something greater than I am now. I fought a darkness with Reann in my soul and two friends by my side. My friends were Laron, a woodsman who harnessed nature's strength, and Danari an Itanian seer. Together we struck at a great enemy as he cast an evil magic of great power. We struck him mightily but were unable to prevent some part of his spell from succeeding. I do not know how much of his spell acted as he intended or what part of that spell we change as he struck him, but my friends and I were picked up in a mighty vortex and thrown through time almost 700 years into the future, to this time. We awoke in the desert in central Emer. We retained few of our memories of the battle and almost nothing of times before that. At this point my two roads meet and become one. I remember both but cannot explain how.

Most of our belongings had been lost or destroyed in the vortex, but an amulet of Reann survived. We each also had an identical pendant in the shape of a griffin. After wandering for a bit we occasioned upon a caravan owned by a man named Jasek. He agreed to take us out of the desert seeing as we had no food or water. Near the edge of the desert we were attacked and Jasek was killed by a magical attack. I was by him as he died and upon seeing my pendant became agitated and said we had brought this upon him. Nevertheless he asked my to take a small rune box to a Sage in the great library at Kaitaine.

After helping defend the caravan we Laron, Danari and I agreed to travel with the caravan that also headed for Kaitaine. The trip to Kaitaine was uneventful except for two events. First we were set upon by a tattooed warrior who fought with unnatural strength, I believe he wanted the item within the box. Second we met an elf name D'alaan whose proved to be a friend whose path would cross ours often.

In Kaitaine I found many answers and more questions. The temple of Reann from my dreams did in fact exist there. The priest there told me those of

my particular calling have not been seen in Reann's service for many lifetimes. We, you and I, are part of the brotherhood, we are warriors whose like has not been seen in centuries and we are here to fight a great evil. We must fight with cunning and intellect, however, not simply strength. In the temple I had a powerful vision. 'For 1,000 hands hacking at the branches of evil there is only one cutting at the root'. 'The old defenses are failing, we need a new strength'. So spoke Reann's spirit. We must forge this new strength, and we must find the root and destroy it. You and I will do this alone if necessary or with allied if possible. I am certain Laron and Danari are allies in this cause. I also believe D'alaan is.

The rune box contained an item of immense evil, vast and ancient in scope. If not for the special qualities of the box the item would corrupt any who held it for any length of time. Neither the priest of Reann or those of Eissa feel they can destroy it. Nerik is a member of the 'Grey Ring'. It is an organization based in Sel-Kai which uses the Griffin symbol as identification. While I have reason to believe that the Griffin may have once been a symbol of a defense against the darkness it seems to have a new meaning in this time. The 'Grey Ring' practices the dark arts, I can only imagine what they want the artifact for but it cannot be for any purpose Reann would approve of.

In Kaitaine I also came upon rumors of another such artifact, like the one I now possess, in Stroane. The Kings Uncle apparently wields this artifact freely. If this is true he is undoubtedly a force of evil to be reckoned with. D'alaan, Danari, Laron and myself have undertaken the task of find the truth of this rumor and recovering the item if possible.

All that you have read to this point has been written by me about $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way to Stroane. The trip has been uneventful save for two things. First Danari received a message from an Itanian seer of great power who live 700 years ago. Somehow this seer was able to pierce the barriers of time and speak to Danari. His message was brief by necessity, but he left information in the Catacombs of Sarnak for Danari to find. This message spoke of a disease striking down Itanian's over the years. This disease is an attack by some sentient force, or so believe Danari's friend. Laron also received a message for a powerful earth spirit. This spirit evidently was aware of the coming darkness and warned Laron of it.

To you who are reading this the only thing further I can say at this point is have faith. The evil in the world is strong, but it is not all powerful. You will find that Reann's spirit can give you the strength to fight even the darkest foe. Reann has fought this foe

before and won, he will do so again, and you and I will be his instruments. I will make further entries in this journal as time permits.

Personal Note

(I write this on the 52nd day of the first month, but it pertains to events during this entry)

I committed an error in judgment while exploring the burial catacombs of Sarnak. Sarnak is populated by pagans and I allowed this to color my judgment. When I entered the catacombs I assumed that since no god defended this burial ground that nothing in the catacombs could pose a threat to a servant of Reann. While this is basically true, I should not have avoided taking the most basic precautions against attack. Reann helps those in true need, but his strength should not be used lightly and never in place of one's own strength and common sense.

52nd day of the first month

Events of Note

On the 47th day of this month I believe the emerald forest may have been attacked by a magical force. On this day my friends (D'alaan, Danari and Laron) experienced minor earth tremor. A divination revealed its origin to be far to the north. This could indicate the Emerald forest or some point beyond it. There also appeared to me to be some magical force over the forest, although this could have been the magic of the Master of the Forest. A dream indicated abstractly that the forest was buffeted by some force but survived. On the following night our camp was attacked by a creature of the forest. D'alaan indicated such creatures, a shaggy giant, rarely if ever attacked human. I would guess the tremor and or attack on the forest left it in an extremely agitated and scared state. Our party killed the creature but not before it brought Danari to death's door. Fortunately Reann saw fit to grant Danari a reprieve and he is still among us.

Several days later Reann granted Laron a dream of unusual clarity. In this vision he saw a keep defended by Gryphons. I have seen this keep in several dreams, and believe Laron may have lived in this keep on the second road of our past. I am still uncertain of the purpose of Laron's dream. However, the keep most likely resides in Jaiman, I suspect this because one of my dreams of the keep was in the deep of winter, very unusual for Emer, and secondly because of the griffins. Research in the great library of Kaitaine has revealed that Jaiman was once divided into 6 countries. Each country was giving a magical helm that granted its wearer knowledge of all evil acts taking place within his country. Each helm was stylized after a different creature. The

creatures were a unicorn, a sea drake, a wyvern, a phoenix, a Pegasus and a Gryphon.

Unfortunately, these helms were not often worn by the rulers of the different countries because when worn they place unusual restrictions on the wearers' ambitions for conquest outside their realm.

Today on the sea of Votania, on our way to the capital of Stroane, we observed strange lights flickering across the isle of Votania, ancient home of the titans. I could detect no magical influence although they did not appear to be simple lightning. Sailors on the boat indicated this was not unusual.

Finally I recently had a dream of a golden haired noble woman murdering a man with a star marked on his chest. This occurred in Stroane although who the man and woman are I do not know. I fear the man may have been our contact in Stroane, but I have no basis for this fear. The man knew the woman and did not fear her.

The future

I have seen your coming. I take great heart in this knowledge. In time our number will increase and we will be joined by the brothers of Vult, as Eissa finally becomes aware of the evil to come. Despite this I know that now Reann's followers are becoming fewer rather than more. It is our job, as well as the priests of Reann, to change this. Many folk fear the night, tales of the Unlife and ignorance fuel this fear. This was not meant to be, the Unlife are a sickness festering in the night. Reann does not accept the Unlife, they must learn, through us, that the night is their enemy. As more of us begin this fight word of Reann will spread and his following will grow as the people lose their fear of the night. To this end be loathe to hide your identity, we must be known so that the people may know that Reann will protect them in the night if they accept him into their heart.

Personal note

I have considered events the night the forest giant attacked our caravan for the past few days and I have concluded that while my actions were correct I omitted taking certain actions that I believe would have been Reann's will. Upon awakening I saw my friends, except for Danari, and other members of the caravan heavily engaged with the giant. Danari lay in a pool of his own blood. Realizing I could not effectively engage the giant I went to Danari and opened myself to Reann's spirit so that he might take Danari from death's door. What I neglected was the giant, it was a creature of the forest not normally given to violence upon people, and I believe it acted out of fear rather than evil intent. As such it was

deserving of mercy, yet I allowed it to be cut down without raising a hand or word, and after it fell I made no attempt to touch it with Reann's spirit as I had Danari. It is inevitable in our calling that at some point we will be confronted by a creature or person that is not truly evil. It is not wrong to combat these creatures or people, even to deliver the ultimate judgment upon them if necessary, but such they should be granted mercy whenever it is within our power to do so.

Orhan 1, 56-58, 6050

Events of Note

On the 56th day of Orhan my companions and I reached Arakin. I have had several disturbing dreams of Stroane before arriving here. One I mentioned in an earlier entry. Since then I have seen an Unlife creature roaming the streets of what I believe is the city of Arakin. This creature chased me as a child through the street until I escaped aboard a passing boat in one of the local canals. I expect to verify shortly if this vision was truly of the streets of Arakin.

On a similar note I have had a vision of the focus of our enemies power. In it I saw a city with a great storm above it. As lightning rained down each stroke struck a lightning rod, each rod then transmuted into a snake which slithered into the city. Arakin has these lightning rods and bear a similarity to this vision, however, so do many other cities of Emer.

Worship is sadly lacking in Arakin, making it an even more likely place to be a seat of evil. Only a single priest named Sarad looks over the small temple in the city. He seems dedicated, of good heart and the city is a better place with him. He, however, has no knowledge of any Unlife or evil items in the city. As of this day I have no direct evidence that he is incorrect, however, most of my dreams, as I have described above, indicate otherwise.

On more earthly matters we have met our contact Selras. He is young, but has the makings of a gifted spy. He has supplied us with basic access to the castle through his official position as a minor ambassador. At a ball I have been within arms length of Lorek. I could detect no taint of Unlife upon him, this is not unexpected, however. Reann's amulet only warmed slightly when I touched it to the artifact. If Lorek was only in contact with his item for a relatively short time he might not show signs of it's taint yet. Of course it is also possible the item he has is simply a copy of the true artifact with no actual power.

I plan on examining the possibility of using either the head sage or lord general against Lorek. Such

ideas must be examined with care though, since we have no information on either. I expect we shall be in Arakin for several days if not weeks before our task is finished.

Orhan 59, 6050

Reann's spirit was truly with me this day. Earlier this day Selras brought word that an elven ambassador wanted to speak to him and any of his associates he might wish to bring. He used codes indicating he knew Selras to be part of the organization that guided us to Arakin. D'alaan, Selras and myself met this elven lord and two of his associates in the palace. We moved to the temple of Eissa hoping our conversation would be less assessable to prying ears. The meeting seems to go well, as our interests seemed to coincide with the ambassador's quite well. After departing the temple however, the six of us were attacked by assassins, this proved disastrous as none of use were armored.

The assassins first cast a blinding spell disorientating us for several critical seconds. I recovered quickly, but not before Selras, and the elven lord were cut down. One of the elven lord's associates fled to call for help, the second associate and D'alaan were both badly injured and unable to defend themselves. Realizing I would quickly be attacked by both assassins without the defense of any armor I uttered a prayer to Reann and struck at the first just as she strove to strike me down. Reann's spirit filled me and I turned her attack with easy as my sword, the color of true night, danced past her defenses laying open her chest and side in two viscous blows. Remarkably she did not fall but staggered back bleeding heavily to be rescued by a hidden magician who teleported her to safety, I do not know if she lived. I then engaged her comrade who was quickly rescued by the hidden mage before she fell to the same fate as her companion.

Selras was unfortunately was killed instantly by the first attack. A large shuriken had cleaved his skull. D'alaan, the elven lord and his second associate all lay at deaths door, but the spirit of Reann emanating from me, and the spirit of Eissa emanating from a priestess of a nearby temple saved them all. None of regained consciousness as I write this but they are all expected to recover in time.

I do not know who ordered or planned this attack, but from this point on I must exercise far more caution. If I had fallen in that battle the item I carry could very well have fallen to the hands of our enemies. I agonized over the decision to stay and fight with my companions or run to keep the item from falling to the wrong hands. My decision to stay is justified by hindsight, but the risk I took was a

grave one. It would be easy for me to lay down my life to prevent the item from falling to our enemies, laying down some else's life for the same purpose is far more difficult for me. I fear some day I will agonize over this choice again.

On another note, I no longer believe Arakin is the city in which I saw darkness roaming the streets and chasing children, because I have found that there are no canals in Arakin as there were in the city of my dreams. I also had a very clear dream showing a member of the 13th tribe giving Lorek an item identical to the one I hold, and Lorek accepting and becoming tainted by the item.

My current plan is still to find any possible way of using the Lord General or Head Sage against Lorek. I also need to find out whether the Elven lord and his associates can be trusted. My instincts tell me that they most likely can, but I will ask Reann for guidance before I make my final decision.

Orhan 1, 60-62, 6050

Events have turned in an unexpected direction. Two associates of the Elven lord, Flynn and Bryce, and our party took it upon ourselves to scout Lorek's Manor to the north of Arakin. I agreed to this on the off chance that Lorek was foolish enough to leave his artifact in his Manor while he was in Arakin. I had not expected him to be this foolish, but lo I had over estimated him. The item supplied by Tarna's colleague informed us that the artifact we sought was indeed below Lorek's manor.

We have decided to raid the manor this very night. I can sense two enemies of Reann aside from the normal manor guard. They are located below the manor near the item. A dream has shown me an opening in the roof which should give up the best access to the tower, beneath which the item lies. I worry vaguely that this may be a trap to lure me and the artifact I carry into the open. But I believe the risks do not outweigh the possible gains. Assuming this is not a trap I expect that penetrating into the manor will be no significant difficulty, especially without the presence of Lorek. I shall write more after I return.

I should also mention that previous to leaving Arakin I had opportunity to speak with a brother of Vult. He was unaware of the evil Reann has shown me, and I did not have opportunity to speak with the priestess of the temple. He did, however, relate to me that he had heard rumors that his Dana had come again. I take this as a good a bad sign. I am glad that he may have come again as I believe he will prove a valuable ally. I, however, worry that this may also be a sign that the evil is almost upon us. Only time will tell.

Orhan 1, 62-63, 6050

Success! The second artifact is now in my possession. Entering the manor itself was a relatively simple matter since it was guarded only by mundane means. Penetrating the tower and capturing the item was a more substantial task. Reann's spirit was, however, more than a match for these obstacles. The first obstacle was the door to the tower, with an essence ward. A simple exercise of willpower was sufficient to breach it. Unfortunately, I overestimated Flynn's abilities and allowed him to attempt it first. He failed and was injured, but not mortally. I would have thought this experience would have taught him the wisdom of restraint, Flynn, however, proved far more foolhardy than that.

Once we entered the tower we encountered 2 spear demons. They came at us when our party was split and several of the others were slightly injured before I could engage them. They fell easily to Reann's will. The artifact sat upon a pedestal, guarded by a magical trap, again of the essence realm. Since time was of the essence I steeled myself and simply took the item. A ball of cold left me with a mild case of frostbite which Reann's spirit healed immediately.

We then encountered our most significant obstacle as we were about to leave through an underground passage we had discovered. A member of the 13th tribe rushed our party while I was obtaining the artifact. As before several members of the party were injured before I engaged and dispatched the tribesmen.

The underground passage lead out of the tower into some sort of cellar area. We passed several rooms on the way out, although we only investigated one. The room we did enter was a study of some sort guarded by some ethereal demon. Here Flynn once again demonstrated a most unhealthy lack of judgment. He insisted on attempting to take some of the books despite the obvious guardian standing over them. He would not relent until I had physically removed him from the area.

The cellar ended and a more natural cave took its place. After almost a mile of spelunking we exited onto the bottom of a dry riverbed. At this point several patrols were scanning the area in search of us. The night is Reann's domain, however, and we evaded them without incident.

As I write this passage we are on our way back to Arakin where we will briefly consult with our Elven friend. After that I plan to find passage to Sel-kai and locate the sage Selras spoke of before his unfortunate demise. It is my hope that he may be able to suggest a way of permanently destroying both artifacts.

Orhan 1, 64-68, 6050

The others have seen the wisdom in my plan, and after a brief visit to our elven friend we have embarked on a voyage to Sehkai. We have decided on a northwesterly passage. This will skirt the borders of several unfriendly nations, but will save us valuable time.

Reann himself came to me in a dream after leaving Arakin. He spoke highly of my exploits and cautioned me that stealth is once again of paramount importance. Also, obviously anticipating problems with the more undisciplined members of our party, he has taught me some of the fine art of persuasion.

It is a great inspiration to me to have such a visit, once cannot truly understand how such a visit lifts the soul until one has experienced it.

The trip itself is proving most eventful. On the third day of travel our party was recognized by a passing patrol. We were forced to kill 10 of the 12 members of the patrol. Then on the night of the fourth day we were again attacked by a more carefully prepared band of 12 soldiers and a mage. Almost none of our party escaped without serious injury. This is most grave, for the enemy now almost certainly knows the direction of our travel, and attacks night after night will inevitably wear down the spirit of the rest of the party. I am considering changing the direction of our travel, and will write more once I have come to a decision.

Danari

Danari is a young Warlock of Itanis, currently undertaking his 'journeyman' training. He is traveling the lands of Emer to learn information for his small (but powerful) country. He comes from a old family in Itanis, the Delnek clan. They are respected and have a long tradition of bringing forth powerful Warlocks from within their ranks.

Danari's Family

Danari's family is a bit different than the normal Itanians. They are much less isolationist than the rest of their culture. And they are also very strong in magic.

Both of these facts were true when Danari was with them (some centuries ago, due to the rift thing...see the Prolog), but now things have gotten to more so if anything.

Two members of the family currently make their home in Kaitaine as the permanent representative to the Kaitaine council. They are Rayas and Selena. (See the NPC section for more details).

Before leaving his island home originally, Danari

had a mentor known as Viiri Delnek. Viiri lived almost 700 years ago from the current date (6050 TEI.) He was an extremely powerful Seer and had mastered many Arcane magics as well. Unbeknownst to Danari, he and his mentor were both involved in the fight against the Unlife.

Background Options (40 Points)

Talents

Special Item -- Mindstone (see below) [20 Points]

Ethereal Sight -- Danari, by preparing for 2 rounds (90% action) can slip into an ethereal sight. Maintaining this vision is considered a concentration action (50% action) but may be continued for as long as wished. While in this vision mode, Danari can see invisible objects, reality shifts, and ethereal gates. However he is at a -50 to normal Observation rolls. Being in Ethereal Sight will add +20 to Power Perception rolls. [20 Points]

Mindstone

Danari's Mindstone has many powers. It is possible that these powers will increase as Danari becomes more powerful himself. Current powers are:

+2 Adder

will detect Essence within 50 feet (the stone will become warm and vibrate)

causes a +30 Lightning Bolt attack (point blank) on anyone other than him who touches it

Store 1 spell per day that the caster knows. Imbuing the spell costs normal PPs, but the spell can then be cast later for 10% action.

Dreams

[Takes place on a ship bound for Sarnak from Kaitaine.]

You awaken to a tingling sensation. You open your eyes to find that the cabin is outlined by a pale blue radiance. Your companions are sleeping undisturbed and the ship is quiet, the only sounds come from the rhythmic creaking of the timbers and ropes, and the sound of the water brushing against the hull.

For some reason, you decide to examine your surroundings using your Other Site. You concentrate briefly and you have the feeling (as you've now come to describe it) of a second set of eye-lids opening.

The room has changed. It is difficult to see where the walls once were. A deep blue shape is below you. It seems to stretch on endlessly. The sea itself, you realize. But the blue glow has not been diminished. It is now accompanied by ripples which appear and

then disappear just as quickly.

Suddenly, just in front of you, the ripples coalesce into a swirling pattern. The miniature vortex widens somewhat and you begin to see something rise from the depths.

Before you can do anything, you see a face. An Itanian face, handsome, with eyes of green. After a moment of bewilderment, you whisper, "Viiri?"

"I have done it!" he exclaims. "And you are not dead!"

It is indeed your mentor's voice as well as his face. He is different though. Aged. When you last saw him, (as you remember it) he was still strong, a man still in his prime. But now he has the look of an old man.

"I have searched long for you, Danari. It is lucky that I found you. "

[He goes on to tell Danari about following his trail through time to find him. If Danari is smart, he will believe that the Flow that they are currently in helped Viiri to locate him. Let Danari speak with Viiri briefly. Eventually, Viiri will say:]

"My time grows short. Here is what I came to tell you: In the eighty years since I last spoke to you, a shadow has fallen across the Fair Isles. "

He continues: "A sickness has come to our land. At first it was only 1 or 2 every few years, fallen to a disease like which we had never seen. It effects only the Itanis. Most die. The one's who don't, wish they did. The only ones to survive have been Warlocks. But when their fever at last abates, they find they have completely lost their link with the Power. It is like a part of themselves have been destroyed. They usually die within a year or two, unable to bear the loss."

"My foretellings have been foreboding. I can only see a dark shroud rising to cover our race. In the time in which you have come to rest, the situation will most likely be dire. I go soon on a final journey into the Outlands to attempt to discover what has caused this disease and how to fight it. You say you will soon be in Sarnak... I will leave what I can for you."

He pauses as if thinking.

"Go to the catacombs of the Elders. There I can hide what I can for you without fear of it being found by the wrong hands. Search for the tomb of Tre'an. It lies deep within the north face catacombs. I'm sorry, I can think of no better. It should be able to endure the centuries. The Sarnaki venerate their dead like they do nothing else. He was a noble during their

127th Reign. You should have no trouble locating the tomb. It is quite organized." He smiles and for a moment you see him fully as you remember him.

"I will try to contact you again... Be careful, for I see many enemies for our gentle race. Why this is so, I know not. Be careful..."

The vortex spins again and the vision fades from view. Looking around you notice that the blue glow has faded from the cabin as well. Peering out the small port, you see the glow of a Flow falling behind the ship.

--

Subject: What did Viiri discover in the outlands?

Steamy, humid air rises up from the dark soil beneath your feet. The musky scents almost overpower you with each step you take. You have been making your way though this jungle for days, it seems.

Two days ago, the ground finally began to rise and you made your way into the foothills of the mountains. Now, you follow by sound the path of a large river, upwards toward your destination.

That night, you make camp and cast your stones to reveal the future. South, they say. The destination is always south. You shield the camp from the detections of the deadly denizens of this forest and sleep.

For days more you make your way over the increasingly difficult terrain... until finally the jungle opens before you. Stepping back quickly into the concealing dark of the trees, you survey your surroundings. Before you towers an enormous cliff face, and carved into it are mighty terraces, too many to count.

The first level that is open is more than a hundred feet above you. You close your eyes and focus your power...no there are no sentient creatures nearby. A quick shift of focus and the walls become transparent to your sight. A small flash of purple surrounds your hands and feet and you quickly make your way to the base of the cliff. Just as quickly you begin to climb, moving across the sheer face of stone as if it were a simple ladder. You make your way over a balcony and enter the dark room beyond.

<FLASH>

And the dream fades...

Laron

Background:

NAME: Laron Gert (Laron Darkwind)

HOME: Miir States

BIRTH: Tenth day of the fifth month

AGE: 29

FAMILY: Second son of Deela (Mother) and Caleb (Father) Gert. Has one legitimate older brother (three years), Jerta, and two illegitimate siblings, both younger: a sister, Anna (one year), and another brother, Karol (3 years).

PARENTS: Deela was especially loving toward her children. Caleb was a veteran of the military (light infantry) in his home province of Durn, and, in fact, was decorated several times for bravery. Unfortunately, he was also seriously wounded resulting in his inability to hold a job. Fortunately, he merited a small retirement from the military, enough so that the family didn't starve. Unfortunately, his disability didn't prevent Caleb from fooling around, and he fathered two illegitimate children. In a rather bizarre twist, he was convinced Laron was not his child, and always treated the boy rather coldly.

CHILDHOOD: Laron collected skulls and small animal carcasses as a small child, and was forever bringing home some small, wounded animal to be nursed back to health. When he was 12, his father ran away, and his mother began doing laundry for others to support her family. Laron also did odd jobs whenever he could to help out. Jerta was apprenticed to a blacksmith during this time, so at least there was one less mouth to feed. Things were tight, but Laron always knew Deela loved him and they were happy. Laron loved to explore the country, and when he was 14, he stumbled upon an (elf?) who was injured. He helped the young elf, and the two, sharing a love of the outdoors, became friends. It was about age 16, when the two were exploring some ruins, that Laron found an old chest that contained enough gold for his mother to live comfortably for the rest of her life! Things seemed to be looking up. But fate had one last slap to administer to young Laron. A local official, jealous of the family's new-found wealth, connived to take most of it from them, ostensibly to pay "back taxes" unpaid by Caleb when he ran away. This seemed to be the last straw for Deela, and she died within six months. Laron left home the day he buried her, and, in spite of being on reasonably good terms with all his siblings, has seldom returned. For a long time after he left home, he lived alone in the wild, preferring the company of animals and nature to his fellow human beings. Eventually he ran across an old man named Wharton living in the forest. In return for doing chores, hunting, and general upkeep, Wharton taught him about herbs. This was a happy time for Laron, and he looked upon Wharton

as the father he'd never had. When Wharton died, Laron moved on, serving for a time as a scout in a mercenary company. His closest friend during this period was Barton d'Alembre, a rogue/scout. When Laron left the mercenary company, he lost touch with Barton.

PERSONALITY: Laron harbors a certain amount of distaste, if not outright hatred, of his philandering father; hence his adoption of the epithet 'Darkwind' instead of his surname. He does care for his siblings, both legitimate and illegitimate. He has discovered great happiness in living in the wilderness with only animals and nature for companions. This has made him somewhat aesthetic; he requires little in the way of material goods to make him happy. He is fiercely protective of most wild animals, and he abhors cruelty to any animals; he hunts only for food, and dislikes trapping. He is suspicious of most humans, but is very faithful to those he befriends. His brush with the local government official who robbed his mother left him somewhat of an anarchist; while he probably would not lead a rebellion, he might join one if he thought the cause was just. He has little use for gods in general, preferring to "worship" nature.

BACKGROUND OPTIONS [50 points]:

Talents

Detect Ambush -- Laron will detect an ambush before it occurs a percentage of the time equal to 3 times his Intuition bonus. Enemies have to be fairly near (within 50 feet) for this ability to work. [15 points]

Specialized Weapon Master -- Laron will gain +10 with the Two-Handed Sword. [5 points]

Special Familiar -- Laron has a special familiar, a dog which on the outside looks like a mutt (some sort of large breed). The animal is more intelligent than other dogs and has the following abilities:

AT 3 DB 30

Attacks: Medium Bite 70; Small Claw 50

Level is equal to half of Laron's level (gains levels every other level Laron gains)

Can cast any spell that Laron knows up to half of Laron's level

Has PPs equal to half of Laron's

In addition, when the familiar is within 10' per level, Laron gets a +25 bonus to his Awareness Group. Laron can use his familiar's senses at up to 100' per level. If the familiar is ever killed, Laron will be at half PPs and at -25 for 4 weeks time. [30 points]

Flaws

Inflexible with weapons -- Laron receives a -5 penalty to all melee weapons OTHER than the Two-Handed Sword. (Note: only applies to hand-to-hand weapons). [-5 points]

Dreams

You are riding. The horse beneath you is of excellent quality. One of the finest you remember owning. It moves effortlessly over the varied terrain which consists of wooded hills and dales. It reminds you of home, though you haven't been there for a long time.

You reach the top of a small hillock, just after crossing a small stream. Below you lies a small keep. Its walls are tall, but it covers very little area, nestling just right into the field in which it sits. In the center of the keep, a tall tower rises above all else.

You blink and for a moment it seems as if the keep is not there. The field is empty of anything man made. But you shake your head and look again, and the keep is there again.

You make your way down the hill towards it. Home, you think to yourself. It's been a long time since you've called any place that. As you approach, you see the gates rise above you. On each side they are surmounted with a crouched Gryphon...

You are tossing and turning all night. Visions of a laughing Velnik Tre'Atha plague your dreams. You are back in the cold stone room, a jolt of pain flashes though you...

"Peace. Peace brother."

The voice breaks through the visions, through the pain. Dar...

"The dream is to look forward to the coming hunt, not look backwards."

"I know," you whisper. "But we are so surrounded by enemies..."

Dar appears before you. His tongue lolls to one side and he sits back on his haunches. He just looks at you and you can't help but laugh a little.

"I know you think humans are odd, but..." You trail off. Dar has risen and begins walking into the mist. Before he's gone too far he looks over his shoulder as if waiting. You quickly take the hint and start following.

After a time, he speaks. "I've been contacted...by one who's scent I know and yet don't know. I know it perhaps, from before..." He looks up at you and you know what he means.

"Yes, from before waking up in the desert," you say.

Dar gives a short snort which you have come to take as agreement. "This being who has contacted me, comes from the Emerald Forest."

You stop walking, in surprise. You hurry a couple of steps to catch up, but as you do, you see something rising up in the mist. A giant crystalline orb sits on a large metal pedestal. A light flickers deep within it.

"An Access Orb," you breathe. "The Forest knows of this too?"

Dar gives a short nod. "This is what I was contacted about, what I was asked to pass on to you." He pauses and sits again. As he does another shape begins to form beside the Access Orb. It looks to be a smaller vesrion...

"This is a minor Orb. The Forest possesses one. In all, there were 16 made, but only 4 major Orbs. The Forest believes that if several of the Orbs act in concert, then we may turn the tide of the coming Unlife. Exactly how, they are not sure but they know that these ancient items have more powers than are readily apparent."

"The Gryphon College controls one of the major Orbs," you say excitedly. "If we combined that with the minor orb of the Forest..."

"Yes," Dar replies. "But it will take more power than that to complete this hunt. But here is the last bit of knowledge they imparted to me: A major orb is connected in some way to Andraax. Not necessarily in his possession but in a location connected with him. And that location is somehow tied to his death."

"Andraax, the Lord of Essaence? Is he actually dead?" You're mind bubbles with questions and you realize you are fully awake and back in your bed. You are still linked with Dar.

"The location is not thought to be the cause of his death, just linked to it in some way. The Forest knows no more."

Dar's voice fades and you see sunlight filtering through the window drapes.

Laron's Journal

December 29, 1997 (3 Orhan 35 - 6050)

I have decided to keep a journal, at least for a while. I'm not sure why I begin doing this now. Perhaps putting down my thoughts and feelings on paper will help me sort them out regarding my present situation.

I talked with Zarus; she says I felt the need to fight this Unlife in the past; apparently it was very important to me. She showed me some of what she says will happen if it is not stopped. I'm not sure what I saw in that stream, but whatever it was, I think it would spell the end of the Ramerith, if allowed to continue. Perhaps it would wind

up looking like the Emerald Forest as I last saw it. Zarus says it's not just an assault on mankind, it's an assault on the earth herself. Looked at from that perspective, how can I not join the fight? I think Dar needs to be made aware of the situation as I see it. He has the right to choose his own way.

As for Zarus, she says we were once close. But of course that was a long time ago. She said there would be no strain between us, and it seemed whatever feelings she had for me in the past are truly in the past. I must admit to some disappointment on hearing that. She's a beautiful woman. But under the present circumstances, perhaps it's best this way. Love might only complicate the mission she has set for herself. A mission which I may yet adopt as my own. Still, I got the impression her feelings might not be buried as deep as she would have me believe. Perhaps there is a chance for us yet. I will just have to tread lightly and see what develops.

Spent some time away from the others this morning. They're questioning the prisoners. This is really a wondrous place! Dar wanted to investigate smells and chase rabbits. Unfortunately there were no rabbits around, so he wound up chasing butterflies! Butterflies! I told him he's reverting to his puppyhood. I think I wounded his dignity with that, and he refused to talk to me for a while after that. I finally got him to settle down and explained the situation to him. He didn't understand at first. He finally asked me if it was like the fire that sometimes consumes the forest and leaves nothing behind but ashes. I told him it would be worse, since there might not even be ashes left. And unlike after a fire, nothing would ever recover. I think that scared him then. He says this sounds like something that should be stopped if possible. He finally admitted, though, that his place was with me, and that whatever I decided would be OK with him. Then he took off after another butterfly! I hope I make the right decision for both of us.

Perhaps I am chosen in some way to help protect nature and her creatures from this incursion, as Cassius seems to be (or at least believes himself to be) chosen by his god to fight the Unlife. How else to explain being transported 700 years to just this time and to this situation? If I can prevent the loss of places like Ramireth to the foulness and pollution creeping down from the north, I think this is something I must do. Might this goal sometimes be at odds with Cassius' aims? Probably not in general, but perhaps in the particular. We've already disagreed about facing one who he believes is an enemy, but who I saw only as ambiguous at worst, at least in this time. Oh, well, there will probably be more such disagreements in our future. It seems to be the nature of our relationship. I only hope nothing will be serious enough to permanently damage our friendship(?). Only time (no pun intended) will tell. And what of Tyra? How does she figure into this? Again, only time might reveal her part in it. But I think I can make a commitment to this cause and to these people.

January 5, 1998 (3 Orhan 37)

Didn't seem to get much additional information from the second priest. Seemed mostly a waste of time. Although he did confirm some of what the first priest told us. And it seems the origin of the mysterious ring is in the west. A violet-eyed elf? Could Andrax still be around? And why would he be (apparently) working for the Yarthrak? Lots of discussion of what should be done next. It seems there are at least three good possibilities to pursue:

1. Obanthi (sp?). Travel there to gather whatever information we can and alert the locals of the impending attack. Wouldn't want to get trapped in the city because of the assault though. Cassius really wants to visit the temple!

2. Travel west to seek out the origin of the rings seen in Danari's vision. Seems pretty nebulous. Covers a pretty big area, although Danari could cut it down as we approached. But to what end? The rings have already been created and distributed; the elf may not even still be there.

3. The evil artifact. It should be destroyed as the first two we found were. But with the ring in possession of the college, it's probably safe for the moment. But Turak should be contacted. His expertise and power may be needed to destroy it. This would have the additional benefit of putting the two groups in touch and possibly lead to mutual assistance. The college and Regoth seem to favor the latter. He would like to travel to Emer and meet with Turak.

We decided to travel to Obanthi to do what we could there. Then we'll return to Ramireth to pick up Regoth and travel back to Emer to introduce him to Turak. This seems reasonable. The trip to Obanthi shouldn't take long, and it'll keep Cassius from pouting on the trip back to Emer! Cassius says the attack won't come for a while, but I'm still worried about being trapped in the city. We'll just have to take it as it comes. Didn't see much of Zarus and had no chance to speak to her alone, much less spend any time with her. Undoubtedly she's busy. I'll see how she reacts when we return again.

3 Orhan 44

Trip to Obanthi was uneventful. Another city. Had no trouble finding the temple of Reann. Left Cassius there and took a turn around the city. It looks pretty defensible provided there are enough men to man the walls. Only two gates, north and south. And the north gate overlooks the river pretty closely. I think we could get out over the north wall and escape either upriver or across it if the city were to be locked up. (Make sure we have enough rope to get down the wall, if necessary).

Returned to the temple only to be dismissed by Cassius so he could meet with the high priest alone. Interesting that even after all we've been through, he still has his secrets. Oh, well, I guess we all have things we don't share with one another. Finally did meet the high priest and got a look at their operation; he seems to be most competent. Sounds like a military man. They seem to be aware of what's coming and are preparing as best they can. Don't

know whether they have enough to swing the battle in the city's favor. But the high priest seems to be aware that the city will probably fall. Hope he's made arrangements to get away. He seems to be a decent sort.

Cassius wants to stay on here another day so he can have some kind of special dream. I guess it's only available at the temple! Anxious as I am to return to Ramerith, I guess we can waste one more day. Perhaps I'll spend tomorrow doing my own scouting outside the city.

January 12, 1998 (3 Orhan 45)

Saytol showed up and said we needed to get out of the city immediately. Couldn't say why. The high priest agreed, saying that the city was in danger by our being there. We left after close questioning of Saytol. Don't know what to make of him. Something has tied him to us. Cassius says it was something done by the Yarthrak and so cannot be good for us. I tend to agree, but I think Saytol truly believes he is to serve us, possibly even to sacrificing his own life. I find it difficult to condone "removing" him permanently if he is just a pawn. It seems some indications say even killing him might not rid us of him (!?), so perhaps that is not a decision we'll have to make yet.

Encountered a mercenary patrol on the way back. And warned the village that they might soon be invaded in force. Cassius wanted to stay and protect the village. Says we condemn them to death or a life of slavery if we don't. Interesting how I cannot condone the killing of Saytol in cold blood, yet, at least according to Cassius, I am doing much the same thing to these villagers. But no, the villagers still have the freedom to act, to save themselves, if they wish. Saytol it seems has had his free will taken from him.

Arrived back at Rameith. The elves like to play their little games with me even amidst all the danger! Zarus seems unaffected by my return. Perhaps she's just preoccupied. She must have a lot on her mind. Neither she nor Regoth seem to be able to determine anything useful about Saytol.

January 19, 1998 (3 Orhan 56)

Took ship for Emer today. I find I like being at sea. So relaxing. Almost like being in the wilds. Dar's not so crazy about it though! Too hard to keep his footing on the rolling deck I guess. Funny how I know what he "thinks" sometimes (and vice versa). I've never really thought much about the bond between us till now. It just seems he's always been there. But I'm beginning to realize how exceptional that bond is. Now he can cast spells as I can, so surely he shares a part of my mind or consciousness. Why? Is it just that he's exceptional? Or is he tied in with my "Destiny"? And if so, what's his role in all this?

Met another of Reann's followers on the ship. Cassius didn't seem too impressed, even though he seemed very devout (even compared to Cassius). Too bad we didn't get to spar. I would have liked to cross swords with another who shared my particular weapon passion. Maybe we'll meet again. With the coincidences that have happened to us already, it wouldn't surprise me a bit.

Had a very strange dream! Perhaps Zarus was right when she said nature would rise up. But will she act on her own initiative? Or does she really need help? It could be that the dream was showing me that the access orb has a part to play in awakening the earth's defenses. Could I have a part to play in that awakening? I must return to Ramerith and talk to Zarus. Maybe she can explain it.

January 26, 1998 (3 Orhan 59-61)

Arrived safely. Back at the Barge Inn. Turak is away and unavailable for a few days. Had a message from Deallan though. How'd he know we were back?! It sure seems like a lot of people know an awful lot about our movements sometimes! I don't think I like that very much. Even if it's Deallen. We'll meet him tonight. Maybe an explanation'll be forthcoming then...

Met Deallen at the Black Velvet. Interesting place! He's sure been into some strange stuff since we saw him last. Very dangerous. But then he's a dangerous kind of guy. He's asked for our help in a raid he's planning. Sounded like a worthy cause and I'd be willing to help out a friend. He's certainly helped us out enough in the past. But then he said something: slavers. Abducting people and selling them! Forced to give up all that they once knew and cared about to live at the whim of some parasite with enough money and not enough morals. I'd gladly do anything to strike at the perpetrators of this vile institution. Deallen says this should put dent in their plans. I'll be able to help out a friend and strike out at these maggots at the same time...

Flynnfried

Flynnfried is an Linaeri Illusionist trained in the Iylari nation of Namar-Tol. He is currently serving the Lord of House Arryl as a sort of journey man duty. The Lord Arryl is currently seeking to establish trade relations with the new (from the elves perspective) government of Stroane, the triumvirate regency. They will trade fine finished goods for high grade ores that Stroane mines in the nearby mountains. The Arryl and his entourage (of which Flynn is one) are currently in residence at the court of Arakin, in the imperial palace.

However, all is not that simple. After arriving, the Arryl witnessed the Prince Lorek of Stroane with a strange item: the Ring of the Death Claw. This mistake on the prince's part caused the Arryl to become suspicious of Lorek. Thus he and Flynn are investigating Lorek and his strange artifact. Namar-Tol does not wish to become trading partners with a tool of the Unlife.

Background Options

Mysterious Relative: This background will not play a huge part at the beginning of the game. A year or two ago, Flynn was called to a meeting with his uncle, an old merchant prince. He gives to Flynn the following item: a ring with a blue stone, non-

faceted. The ring is silvery but not actually silver. It is more milky white silver than normal. The ring is a +2 adder and also has the ability of increasing RRs by +10. It is for Illusionists only. The ring comes from an Aunt he never knew he had. The Aunt was actually part of the Ahn Sye Talaus, an ancient order of mage-borns. She disappeared over 400 years ago.

Naturally Fast Spell Caster: Flynn has an enormous quickness mod (+14 eventually) and a high reasoning. Because of this impressive combo, he is able to get a +30 to spell casting maneuvers which involve casting more quickly than normal. This bonus is ONLY used to offset penalties incurred by a lack of normal prep time.

Belric

Belric is an Erlini Rogue, currently serving the House Arryl of the elven nation of Namar-Tol. Belric is about average height for an Erlini, but he has somewhat odd coloring, being darker haired and eyed than most Erlini. This perhaps denotes some Iylari blood somewhere in his line...

Belric, like most Erlini, is an outdoorsman and feels most comfortable amongst the trees of a forest rather than the stone houses of the city. He is trained in animal handling and currently provides the functions of a groom and squire for the Lord Arryl and his wife on their diplomatic journey to Stroane.

Background Options:

Natural Archer: Belric's main weapon is the Longbow. His ranges when using any bow are increased by 25%. (This include Point Blank range).

Forest Friend: Belric is at home in the forest. In outdoor conditions of forest terrain, he will receive a +15 to stalking and hiding attempts.

Taira

Taira do'Arus is the daughter of a powerful member of the Sarnak government. The do'Arus family has always had members highly placed in the Sarnak military and government. One year ago, Taira's mother was elected to the Directorate, a ruling body made up of five women. This council controls all of Sarnak.

At a fairly young age, Taira was recognized to have the "Gift" of magic. She was quickly snatched up by one of the martial academies in the city for training. Sarnak doesn't have a large population and because of this does not have very many mage-borns within it's ranks. When one is recognized, that person is usually given preferential treatment.

Several years later, Taira emerged as a trained

Magician. Her first tour of duty in the military lasted for several years during which she became familiar with magical combat and troop support. During patrols she encountered enemy troops (Stroane), monsters (Garks and Hill Trolls) and even a demon or two.

In the current year (6050) her tour is almost up. To the great displeasure of her mother, Taira has decided not to re-enlist... for now. Instead she has decided to pursue a riddle left to her by her Aunt, Shalra do'Arus. This woman was also a mage of some power who served the Sarnak military for many years. However, according to her personal journal (which Taira came into possession of) she became plagued by dreams in which Sarnak was the object of some evil intent. Desperate to find something to protect her realm against the evil incursion she knew was coming, she left to search for an ancient artifact. This artifact may be able to stop the evil that was coming.

This was recorded 10 years ago. Shalra disappeared and according to Sarnak law was not declared dead until the mandatory time of 10 years and a day had passed. Her possessions were distributed according to the Will that was found in her rooms at the family manor. Taira received much of it.

Taira had a lot of respect for her Aunt's apparent power and worldliness -- after her obligatory tour with the military she decided to follow her own path and search for her missing Aunt, whom she believes is not dead. And, if worse comes to worse, perhaps she can complete the quest where her aunt failed.

One event of note should be mentioned. About two weeks before the date of her departure, Taira was given the honor of standing guard at the hall of the Directorate while it was in session. The council had been debating what to do about recent Stroane aggressions for two solid hours. Suddenly, all in the council hall were blinded by a flash of light. Taira and the other guards were shocked to see two women, dressed in black leathers, wielding odd weapons (later discovered to be Kynacs) appear out of nowhere in the room. Immediately, they threw dagger at two of the Directorate members and charged two more. Acting barely slower, Taira cast an Ice Bolt, temporarily distracting one of them from her target. The other guards acted and the second assassin was driven away from her target as well -- just as suddenly as they had come, they disappeared. The scene: one Directorate member lay dead with a knife embedded in her skull and two more lay injured. Their wounds were poisoned.

The two wounded later recovered but with difficulty. This episode only convinced Taira that her Aunt was

right -- someone or something is intent on destroying Sarnak. And Sarnak must act now to learn how to destroy them first.

Taira has the following Background Options [50 points]:

Item: Silver Ring [20 Points]

+2 Adder

Will allow the user to cast (as an instantaneous spell) Invisibility 1' 3 times per day

Made of a silvery (but not silver) metal and set with a blue sapphire, this ring was left to Taira by her Aunt. Inscribed within it is the following in the script of Old Emer: "Ahn Sye Talaus". (Which means Order of the Ring). The ring was found among the personal affects of Taira's aunt. These were willed to her after the 10 years and 1 day wait after someone is missing and presumed dead.

[More details on this will be forthcoming...]

Arcane Lore [10 points]

The next Arcane List Taira finds may be developed as an Open List (Own Realm).

Magical Background [20 Points]

Due to Taira's relationship with her Aunt, Taira has links to the extremely powerful Ahn Sye Talaus. Joining this group could result in interesting political connections, arcane knowlege, and more.

From the personal journal of Shalra do'Arus, of the Blue Protectors:

6039 – Orhan 1, 25

Attacks have been increasing from the Spine region as well as from the Scorpion Hills. Where these creatures have been coming from is still unknown.

The Garks are somewhat humanoid, but they are an extremely twisted race, using primitive weapons and speaking amongst themselves in harsh guttural syllables. Their numbers seems to be increasing and my patrol is the third one this month to encounter them. I fear that Sarnak is in danger.

6039/1/30

My request for information about these creatures has been answered: a courier from my friends to the south arrived today. They believe that the rising activity of these Garks indicate the growth of some sort of evil. Some believe that they have an otherworldly origin and that perhaps Spells of Controlling may work.

I continue to look for a way of protecting the Realm. In my dreams I sense evil hands grasping for the City.

6039/1/45

My researches bear fruit! I have discovered an ancient writing about an Alchemist called Tethior the Smith. This

Iylari elf created six sets of extremely powerful artifacts to protect the six ancient realms of Jaiman: Zor, Saral, U-Lyshak, Rhahkaan, Tanara, and Urulan. Each realm was given a crown, a pendant, and a sword. Together, these protected each realm from the forces of evil during the Wars of Dominion.

...no, the crown is worn by the single ruler of the realm – Sarnak has no such person. Perhaps the sword and pendant would be enough? Sarnak is a small region...

6039/1/46

Most of the artifacts have been lost. Rhahkaan is the only realm that still holds its crown. However its sword and pendant have been lost.

One rumor: The Empress of Rhahkaan, Ajkara Falsuron III, carried the Pendant of Rhahkaan. (Known as the Phoenix Pendant). She fled her capital when her nobles rose up against her. Here is a fragment:

...Ajkara fled using a route she had had constructed a decade before. From there she went to the place of the Gryphon to avoid detection by her rebellious nobles.

-- Journal of Semptic, Council of Advisors to Rhahkaan, 5122, Third Era.

What interests me the most about the pendant is the following:

In the Third year of the reign of Ajkara III, an assassination attempt was made against the Empress herself. The assassin however, was no creature of this world. While court was in session, a Demon of the Void appeared and attempted to destroy Ajkara. In front of a hundred witnesses, Ajkara used the power of her Phoenix Pendant to subdue the creature and finally, to destroy it.

If this is true, then the Pendant may have the power to defeat otherworldly life...

6039/4/19

Have returned from a journey to investigate the "Place of the Gryphon". The great library of Sel-kai was most informative. The Gryphon is the symbol of the realm of Zor of Jaiman. When Zor fell, its people were scattered to the wind. In Jaiman, the Zori race is quite common. Here on Emer, only one place has a significant Zori bloodline: Reandor, located in the Rust Mountains of Silaar.

I journeyed there but met with no information concerning my quest. They seem to be woefully ignorant of their own past. Only the greatest of their scholars knew that their race had originated in Jaiman.

I returned home.

6040/1/10 [Last Entry]

The realm has been at peace for several months now. My dreams have not ceased, however. I hear tales of Stroane hostility to the east. Their new Katra has tasted the fruit of conquest and has found that he enjoys its sweetness.

I have decided to embark for Jaiman. The Realm doesn't need me for another month or two. And if I can learn anything of the Pendant and sword, any time away would

be worth it.

On the advice of my friends to the south, I will travel to the realm of Rhahkaan. This "Place of the Gryphon" must be located near there.

Ethereal Mastery (Arcane List)

	Area of Effect	Duration	Range	Type
1. Blur	self	1 min/level	self	F
2. Shadow	self	10 min/level	self	F
3. Blink (C) *	self	1 rnd/level	self	F
4. Phase Store	1 item	1 day/level	touch	F
5. Conjuring Circle I	5' radius	1 min/level	10'	Fm
6. Ethereal Room	10'x10'x10'	10 min/level	30'	F
7. Shift *	self	--	self	F
8. Ethereal Vision (C)	5' / level	C	self	U
9. Conjuring Circle II	5' radius	1 min/level	10'	Fm
10. Lesser Ethereal Gate	7'x4'	1 day/level	5'	F
11. Ethereal Door	self	--	self	F
12. Mass Blur	1 tgt/ level	1 min/level	20'	F
13. Conjuring Circle III	5' radius	1 min/level	10'	Fm
14. Voice of Summons (C)	1 being	C	self	Fm
15. Traveller	self	--	self	F
16. Conjuring Circle IV	5' radius	1 min/level	10'	Fm
17. Signpost	--	Permanent	touch	F
18. Contact Other Plane	self	10 rounds	self	Fm
19. Conjuring Circle V	5' radius	1 min/level	10'	Fm
20. Greater Ethereal Gate	20'x20'	1 day/level	5'	F
25. Planar Displacement	1 target	P	1'/level	F
30. Conjuring Circle VI	5' radius	1 min/level	10'	Fm
50. Disjunction	30' radius	--	0'	F

1. Blur -- Caster appears blurred to attackers subtracting 10 from all attacks.

2. Shadow -- Caster and objects on his person appear to be a shadow and are thus almost invisible in dark and shadowy areas. +25 to +75 to Stalk and Hide skills.

3. Blink -- The caster is able to "blink" out of the normal plane for up to a number of rounds equal to his level. He will reappear after he ceases to concentrate. While "blinked out" the caster has no perception of anything done in his absence. He returns to exactly the same position with the same orientation as before.

4. Phase Store -- Caster can store inanimate material up to 5 lbs / level in an ethereal storage space. This space is completely invisible to the normal plane. The caster must specify a storage time (up to 1 day / level) after which the item will reappear at the exact spot it was "stored". If the caster is at the spot where he stored the material, he may cancel the spell and retrieve the material. However, there is a 1% chance per day of storage that someone or something from the Ethereal Plane will take the material and it will not return normally.

5. Conjuring Circle I (RR mod -20) -- Caster creates a conjuring circle. If the circle is placed around himself, it is a circle of protection against beings from other planes. The circle must be equal in "type" to the attacker. Eg for a Conjuring Circle I, only type I creatures are affected. If the circle is not made around the caster, then a demon is summoned. If its "type" is at least equal to the Circle, then it will be imprisoned. If it is not, then it will be free to do as it wills (which is normally to attack the caster and anyone nearby). If the True Race

Name of a demon is known and used in the summoning, then that type of demon will be summoned. Otherwise, roll to determine the type of creature: 1-60 it will be a demon or elemental (as desired) or equal type as the Circle; 61-80 it will be a lower type; 81-90 it will be a higher type; 91+ will be a completely random ethereal summoning. If the being is imprisoned, then the caster may order it to perform one simple task (kill someone, get an item, deliver a message, etc). The creature will attempt to perform the task (very literally) and then will return to the circle (if not destroyed). Performing the task must not take more time than the duration of the spell and it must not require the creature to travel more than 1 mile / level of the caster from the location of the circle.

6. Ethereal Room -- Creates and 10'x10'x10' ethereal space that is invisible from the normal plane. The inner surface of the room is uneven with lots of protuberances that things can be secured to. The space can be entered or exited from a 4'x8' door which appears randomly within 30' of the caster in a non-solid space (air or water). The door may be used by anyone but it is only visible to the caster and ethereal and undead creatures. When the duration of the spell is up, everything in the room will be dumped in the area immediately adjacent to the door.

7. Shift (*) -- The caster will shift to the ethereal plane and back again almost instantly, transversing up to 2.5 feet per level of distance in the normal plane. The caster may specify the direction and distance for the travelling -- the destination need not be seen. The caster will never reappear inside solid material and will instead remain on the Ethereal Plane for 1-100 rounds and then reappear in his original position.

8. Ethereal Vision (C) -- The caster can see invisible and ethereal objects within 5'/level (beings, gates, "signposts", etc).

9. Conjuring Circle II -- As Conjuring Circle I except a type II circle is created.

10. Lesser Ethereal Gate -- A Lesser gate is opened to the Ethereal Plane, 7' tall by 4' wide. Upon casting, a door shaped flash of light will appear, fading quickly to invisibility. After this it cannot be seen except on the ethereal plane or with ethereal vision. Only creatures "small enough" to fit through the door can pass, though unusually powerful creatures (level 20+) may "rip", producing a greater gate and come through. This spell may not be cast from the ethereal plane. Returning to the normal plane requires either moving through the original gate or through another one on the ethereal plane. Only one Lesser Gate may be active for the caster at any one time.

11. Ethereal Door -- The Caster may teleport with no error up to 30' / level. He must visualize his destination specifically and distance. He will not materialize in solid material but will instead remain on the ethereal plane for 1-100 rounds. Caster may fall if materializing over empty space. Reorientation always takes at least 1 round.

12. Mass Blur -- As Blur except a number of targets equal to the casters level may be affected.

13. Conjuring Circle III -- As Conjuring Circle I except a type III circle is created.

14. Voice of Summons -- Caster may summon by name any being on the ethereal plane. The caster must issue the summons into a gate or be ethereal himself. Each round there is a 35% chance the desired being will hear and a 15% chance a random being will hear. This spell does not control the summoned being though the being will be heavily influenced (-20 RR) to come to the caster.

15. Traveller -- Caster may move into and on the ethereal plane. The spell must be cast again to move back to the normal plane (at his original position).

16. Conjuring Circle IV -- As Conjuring Circle I except a type IV circle is created.

17. Signpost -- Allows the caster to make some sort of identifying mark on the inside of an ethereal gate (the ethereal side). The mark is used simply to identify a gate from thousands of other identical gates on the ethereal plane.

18. Contact Other Plane -- Caster sends his mind to another plane for advise, information, etc from a random being. The

chance of obtaining the information sought is based entirely on the being that is communicated with. There is a chance of temporary insanity resulting from the use of this spell based on the plane communicated with: 10% with another prime, 20% with an elemental plane, 30% with the positive/negative plane, etc.

19. Conjuring Circle V -- As Conjuring Circle I except a type V circle is created.

20. Greater Ethereal Gate -- As Lessor Gate except that any creature may pass though without effort. Visible dimensions are 20' by 20'.

25. Planar Displacement -- Transport target to a randomly determined plane. When cast against non-magic users, it is likely that they will never be seen again.

30. Conjuring Circle VI -- As Conjuring Circle I except a type VI circle is created.

50. Disjunction -- All magic effects and magic items in the radius except those on the caster's person must make a RR. Items failing by more than 100 are disjoined (separated into their separate magical components and thus usually destroyed). Each item failing by 61 to 100 is affected by a Planar Displacement spell (see above). Each Item failing by 01 to 60 is affected by a Shift spell (see above) Special artifacts and very powerful items may be given a special RR modifier by the GM.

4. NPC's (Dramatis Personae)

This section covers the NPCs that the players will encounter. They are listed in order of appearance.

Jasek



Caravan Master, Mixed man (Shay) Level 10 Rogue

OB: 110me, 95ms

AT(DB): 8(15)

Skills: Observation:60;Trading:75;Rigid Leather:35;

Notes: Jasek is an experienced caravan leader, having crisscrossed Emer several times. He is experienced with tactics and fighting to protect his cargoes. He has links to the Grey Ring and carries information and goods for them for special payments. He was told only to take the Kregora box to Nerik in Kaitaine.

Evil Rhiani Monk

All level 10 or higher Monks

OB: 120 with weapon kata (Halberd/Strike), 90sb

At(DB): 1(70 (w/ adrenal defense))

Skills: Any 4 Self Control: 65;

Spells: All Monk base to 10th

Notes: Special forces of the evil 13th clan of the Rhiani. Often have special tattoos which allow the casting of certain spells 1 per day. (Shield, blur, etc.) They can split their attack between people or make 2 attacks on one person at a -30 penalty. (2 attacks at 90 OB). Weapon Kata gives an additional crit one level lower on the slashing table.



D'alaan

Level 5 (Adventure I) Half elf Thief (Level 8 by Adventure VI)



OB: 90bs, 85th(dagger), 75sb

AT(DB): 10(30 + target shield (+15))

Skills: Stalk 100; trickery 85; ambush: 75(11 ranks); silent kill: 55; Observation: 55; Flute: 55; Tale Telling: 55;Prepare Poison: 50; Use Poison: 45; Adrenal Quickdraw: 45; Stunned maneuvering: 45;

Spells: Cloaking (Mentalism) to 5th

Trained as an assassin, D'alaan is a psychotic killer. He is fascinated to the point of worship of death. Slow death, fast, painful, peaceful. It's all like different flavors of ice cream to him: all delicious. He is actually quite religious, worshipping Eissa, and more than respecting Reann. He believes that all those sent to him (or hired to kill) are sent by the goddess herself and that it is her wish to see them taken off of this world and move on to the next. He is absolutely silent when walking (even when not trying) and has great skill in slight-of-hand. He takes the guise of a minstrel while operating and can actually play the flute quite well. He also knows many stories which he uses to lull and entertain people, or potential victims. Favorite tactics in battle include palming a dagger and then throwing when least expected. He also uses poison as well. He has learned the throwing dagger with the left hand so he doesn't have to switch weapons.

Nerik

Level 8 Shay Seer

OB 60sling, 25bs

AT(DB) 8(25) Magic cloak

Skills:

Spells: All Seer base to 8th, several open and closed Mentalism

Nerik is more of a scholar than anything. He has been a member of the Grey Ring for several years now. Within the past year he has relocated from his home of Sel-Kai to Kaitaine.

**Rayas (Itanian Ambassador to Kaitaine)**

Level 15 Itanian Seer



Rayas is part of the influential Delnek family of Itanis. Though marginally a Warlock, Rayas is partially exiled from his homeland for his odd beliefs and even odder devotion to his wife Selena, an outcast mage born female.

Appointed to the Ambassadorship in Fall of 6048, Rayas has been doing a respectable job of increasing the coffers of Itanis. Though he has many enemies within his own family (because of his marriage) he has many allies among the other families because of his performance. No one outside the family knows of Selena's true abilities. The couple keeps this information well concealed, and the other Delnek's do not wish to bring disgrace on their family by revealing it. Thus they tolerate Rayas' position in Kaitaine, but not his presence in Itanis.

Selena (wife to Rayas)

Level 17 Itanian Mystic

Cast out of Itanis when it was first noticed that she had the "gift" of magic, Selena wandered for many years. Her past is dark and she does not wish to be reminded of it, but the gist of it is that eventually she found a teacher who recognized her abilities and taught her to not hate those abilities in herself. Ten years ago, she met Rayas. Rayas was undergoing the Journeyman stage of his Warlock training, and immediately fell in love with Selena. After learning of her true abilities, Rayas was able to overcome his prejudices as passed down from his ancestors and married her. Unfortunately this caused his current falling out with the family.

Pha'os

Level 7 Laan Paladin (Brother of Vult)

Pha'os is a Brother of Vult, currently stationed with the Sisters of Eissa in Kaitaine. As to be expected, he is extremely devout, and would give up his life in protection of the Sisters or his (and their) ideals. Pha'os is a friend to Dana (Derrick) but does not know of his true nature.

**(The Dana)**

Level 25 Paladin

Dana is a shadowy figure who is occasionally seen in Kaitaine, Sel-Kai, Nomikos, and elsewhere. He has links to

the Grey Ring, Gryphon College, and probably the Loremasters.

Dana has an interesting past. Approximately 700 years ago, a young man left his ancestral home (in northern Rhakhaan) to become a Brother of Vult (in Haalkitaine). After progressing well he learned of a problem at home. Returning he was shocked to find that a twin brother had mysteriously returned and taken up residence. His father had become a senile fool. They battle and Dana (then called Derrick) lost. He retaliated in the form of a magical ritual that would seal off his lands from the evil of his brother (who was of the Unlife).

However, his brother was able to avoid this, though he was hurt by the magical attack. The brother, Daegoth, cursed Derrick, causing him to turn into a sort of Unlife (to his horror) as well as trapping him forever in his lands. At the same time, though, Daegoth could never set foot upon their father's lands again.

For seven centuries, Derrick remained trapped, sinking into the evil of his existence. [more to come]

Tarna Dederon [Day dur on]

Level 10 Laan/Shay Mystic

Tarna is the contact that the PCs meet with D'alaan. He is the next step up the chain to D'alaan's evil leaders. He is quite crafty and is very good with words, he should have no trouble convincing the PCs to work for him.

About 60 years of age (due to his Laan descent he looks 40 - 50), Tarna has been many things during his life. He is quite well respected amongst the higher circles of Kaitaine, having been an advisor to several members of the 50 merchant nobility families. For the most part, he is one of the primary eyes and ears of Voriig Kye in Kaitaine. He does not know of Kye's true nature, but he knows that he is a very old mage of great ability. He does Kye's bidding because of his greed of lost lores of the arcane sort more than anything else.



Selras

Level 10 Laan/Shay Rogue



Selras makes his living by providing information on foreign courts to the organization of Voriig Kye. He is but one of many such informers, in Kye's net across Emer. He is fairly skilled at diplomacy, and has set himself up as a representative of one of the trading concerns of Sel-Kai. This is mostly the truth, as Voriig Kye controls many such interests.

Selras is currently staying in the palace "waiting" for audience with one of the triumvirate of Stroane. He has cultivated a reputation as something of a bored (and rich) distaff heir to one of the trading families of Sel-Kai. For this reason, he is thought of as little consequence in the Courts of Arakin, and is being put off for his audience. This suits Selras well -- the cover enables him to move about in Court circles while not being pressured to complete his 'business'. To others, Selras whines piteously about the "lack of respect" the Stroane triumvirate has for him and his

family, but he actually does nothing to demand audience. This state has lasted for nearly 2 and a half months. (Shadow World months).

Lord and Lady Arryl

Currently on a diplomatic assignment to Stroane, the Lord and Lady Arryl are highly placed members of the House Arryl, a powerful trading family/concern of Namar-Tol.

Lord Arryl is a 15th level Healer, by profession. He has not practiced his art very frequently in the last century or so.

His Lady is a former member of the elite military of Namar-Tol. She is a 15th level fighter. She held the rank of Captain, until she partially retired (semi-permanent non-



active duty), 50 years ago.

Velnik Tre'Atha

Level 11, Shay(Mixed) Magician

AT 4(25) (with no spells)

OB 90 Firebolt, 60 Lightning Bolt, 50 Broadsword

Velnik is a landless noble who has served for many years in the Stroane military. Recently he was lured away by the promise of wealth, imperial appointments, and arcane knowledge by Lorek. Though Lorek is given knowledge by the Ring of the Death Claw, he needs a real magician or two to help him with his experimentation. While not a minion of the Unlife, he can be considered evil. He takes pleasure in other's pain and lords his powers over lesser men (as he thinks of them). He has all magician base lists to 11th, as well as:



- Physical Enhancement to 11th
- Essence's Perception to 11th (As a Base)
- Living Change to 11th (As a Base)
- Shield Mastery to 11th (As a Base)
- Spirit Mastery to 11th (As a Base)
- Invisible Ways to 4th (he just learned this list)
- Entity Summons to 11th (Evil Essence)
- Dark Summons to 11th (Evil Essence)

Velnik has an owl familiar. It is warped with the Investiture II spell giving it +20 to DB, +30 to OB, use senses 1000/level1, cast through familiar 200/level, make RRs as Level 8. If it dies, Velnik loses half Power Points and Hits for 1-5 weeks. Familiar also has a poisonous bite attack.

Items: If Velnik is killed then the PCs may recover the following items:

+3 adder (earring)

x2 multiplier (amulet)

silver ring of AT 4, +10 to DB

All in all, Velnik is an extremely dangerous foe.

Voriig Kye (Human Form, Sel-Kai)

Level 45 Mentalist/Animist Laan (apparently)

Has all Mentalism, Animist, and Evil Mentalism base lists to 50th and all open and closed Mentalism to 30th. Has an assortment of Arcane lists including Loremaster and Navigator base lists to 20th plus Ethereal Mastery (RMC I) to 30th.

In his Eidolon form, he looks like a Laan gentleman of approximately 150 years. His hair is completely white but he still looks quite hale. He walks with a silver headed cane which at a thought can turn into his weapon of choice, a +35 two-handed sword (unholy). His dress changes but he favors silks of dark colors, blue, green , or black.

See also the Shadow World Master Atlas for more info on Voriig Kye and the general powers of Dragonlords.

Naryn

Level 15 Shay Monk

Naryn started his career many years ago as a Changramai Monk. How he came to



be in the employ of a dragonlord is a convoluted story.

He is very polite and makes an excellent assistant / bodyguard for Kye. He is always well (if subduedly) dressed and is of average height for his race. He has brown hair and an otherwise unnoteworthy appearance.

His main duties are to see to Kye's business affairs while he is away, protect Kye from mundane attacks while he is there, and perform special "missions" for Kye from time to time.

Ahred

Level 7 Zori/Jameri Mixed Man Animist

AT(DB) 1(21)

45 OB QuarterStaff; 50 OB MA-Sweeps 1

Ahred is a talented young protégé of Zaris. He has an open and good-natured attitude with people, but his true love is Nature. Often ranging 100 miles or more from the College, Ahred searches all over the surrounding countryside to bring back rare cuttings for his mentor. This time he was on a trip into the foothills of the Grey Mountains when he found a particularly rare specimen which made him decide to return home early. Coming back, he saw the devastation and was captured shortly thereafter.

Skills: Ahred has superior abilities in all Outdoor-Animal and Outdoor-Environmental skills. (+75 average skill for any). He also has good skills in Lore (especially Flora, Fauna, and Herb), Region Lore - Northern Rhakhaan, Power Awareness, and Subterfuge-Stealth. (All are around +50).

Spells:

All Animist Base to 7th

Open Channeling -- Light's Way, Concussion's Ways to 7th

Closed Channeling -- Creations, Calm Spirits, Lore to 7th

Shalra do'Arus



Level 15 Sarnaki Magician

Shalra is the aunt of Taira (the PC) on the mother's side. Formally a high ranking member of the Sarnak Mage corps, she disappeared more than ten years ago. Before she left for parts unknown, she was known as a powerful and innovative mage, known for her tactical ability. Forceful of personality, but compassionate by nature, she had a strong influence on the early life of Taira.

Shalra is also a 3rd Ring holder of the order known as the Ahn Sye Talaus. (See the Shadow World Internet Appendix for details).

Currently Shalra has just been released from a magical trap. She was captured by it while searching for the Phoenix Pendant. The trap has warped Shalra somewhat. She can now be considered somewhat unbalanced.

Spells

All Magician Base to 15th

Essence Lists-- Gate Mastery, Lesser Illusions, Spirit Mastery, Invisible Ways,

Arcane Lists -- Ethereal Mastery

Items

Ring of the Ahn Sye Talaus -- +3 adder, x3 multiplier

Amulet -- Deflections 3x / day, Bladeturn 3x / day

Messenger of Arnak (Lyak)

Level 12 Fighter

AT 11 (70)

Attacks: 160 Mace or 2 attacks with 100 Armored Fist; 120 Double Shot Light Crossbow

The Messengers are extremely powerful warriors. They serve the Priest Arnak. They will fight to the death if commanded.

When they die, their armor transports them back to the tower of Lyak. There they may be resurrected.

Items:

Magical Armor protects as AT 11 with DB +50

Helm gives permanent Nightvision and Sidevision (no flank) when worn

Gauntlets act as +25 Mace when used together (hands clenched together)

Crossbow of Dir wood and steel. Can fire 2 shots in a round (Full OB with each shot)

Se-Tal (Minion of the Order of Lyak)

Level 7 Warrior

OB: 100bs, 80sb, 70da

AT(DB): 1(21)

Taken as a child from his home by the Lyak, Se-Tal has no memories except that of the Order which raised him. He grew up in a creche of other children who are taught a strange code of honor known as the Ki-a-Zo, the Way and the Purpose.

Se-Tal will be the only survivor of the battle with the PCs in the hills of Tanara. His purpose (as far as he knows consciously) is to willingly serve the wishes of the PCs. (More information in the Adventures section).



5. Adventures Part I - The Gathering

Note about the adventures format:

Each adventure is described in a standardized format so that the GM can quickly retrieve the detail he or she wants, no matter which adventure it is. The headings may be used more than once per adventure. This is so GM descriptions can be close to the PC story lines. Definitions of the parts:

Overview -- a three or four line summary of the adventure action.

The Story -- describes the action, plot points, places, and people from mostly the players view. Also describes any encounters.

Behind the Scenes -- describes the plot from a GMs only view and discusses possible goals of the PCs, their enemies, as well as giving more detail about the information the PCs might learn.

Encounters -- describes complex encounters with specific NPCs or with complex stories... anything that warrants more discussion than what was given in the Story section.

[Campaign Notes:] -- These sections are mixed in to provide insight on how my game is progressing. The purpose is for entertainment and to help GMs perhaps cope with some of the random things my players at least come up with. Your players might come up with them too.

Prologue

Overview

As mentioned in the Campaign Background section, the second major motivation in the campaign is for the characters to discover who they are. Here's why:

In my game, because most of the players had never played Rolemaster before, I decided I needed a campaign start that gave them a chance to learn the system and combat rules in a somewhat "safe" environment. (When making a character takes hours, you don't want them dead in the first 5 minutes because you don't know how combat works and make a mistake.) Running with an idea I got off of the Rolemaster mail list, I decided a good way to get the game started with a bang, help the characters learn the system, develop an instant party bond, AND have a great secondary backdrop for the campaign would be to:

When the campaign begins, have the players spend

about 15 minutes roughing out 15th level characters. This shouldn't be a complete distribution of development points for 15 levels -- it should be much more simplistic than that. For example, for a fighter's weapon skills, merely add 15 ranks to various primary weapon skills. They same would be true of other class's primary skills. Spell casters should add 15 ranks or so to most spell lists.

When this is done, hand out a few magic items... the kind of thing that any 15th level PC or NPC would have. Non-spell users would have magical armors and weaponry while spell casters will have adders, multipliers, or perhaps wands or staves and such.

When all of this is complete, you will describe a scene. (Details later). The summary is this: "You have been traveling/adventuring with this group for several years. You trust them with you life. You stand now together before perhaps your greatest enemy. The danger is truly great. However, you know that you must defeat this enemy or you (and others beyond counting) will surely die. Now is the time. Now is the place. Let the battle begin."

A great battle will ensue. Let your players have fun with this. After all most 15th level characters can really kick ass. It is not necessary to completely plunge the PCs into battle immediately. Let them get over their shock, a little.

The Story

Here's what I have in mind:

"You see before you a great tower, more than 300 feet tall. It is made of a craggy stone, and no entrances are visible."

In other words let them make their way to the enemy and give them a chance to play the strike team going into enemy territory. After all, you want them all to survive this. In general, make a situation where one big baddie is surrounded by lots of little baddies. The little baddies can be taken out quickly and with stealth. This serves to heighten the tension. Tell them little about what they're doing if they ask. They don't know much about the tower themselves. Only that they have to attack now whether they know anything or not. However, you do want to provide a few details so the players won't reject the whole idea. You want the characters to be put off balance by the whole thing, not knocked over. Some or all of the following information might be known:

the tower can be opened by a magical device, which you have in your possession.

The tower is guarded by human acolytes and warriors. Some stranger creatures might be present, but if so not in large quantities. (They are away from the installation at this time).

The big baddie is a powerful spell user -- you believe a magician or sorcerer.

The 6th level of the tower contains a passage to the big baddie.

The tower contains traps. But you know of signs to watch for.

Behind the Scenes

Now, this part of the adventure can be as complex or as simple as you wish. It might encompass most of an evening of gaming in itself. However it can also take up relatively little time...merely lessen the number of combats needed to get to the big baddie.

Basically the idea is to get the players on the edge of their seats and get the campaign started off with a bang. You are the final judge as to what this takes, based on your players.

[Campaign Notes:]

We spent about 1 whole session on the prologue. I had them appear in a flash (a teleportation of some sort) a half a mile from the tower. They spent some time creeping up on it and circling it. Eventually the magic ring warned them that there was an entrance nearby. They used the ring to enter. Inside they proceeded carefully, avoiding a pair of strange humanoid guards (type I demons). Up a flight of stairs, and into a combat with another pair of demons. Down a corridor, and had encounter with a Shadow. The paladin Repelled it. Up some stairs, felt a thrumming and chanting. This level was mostly empty. Had another encounter with two demons, this time they didn't attack, merely bowing to the Seer PC (who held the ring). They called him "H'zaa" for some reason. Finally located the source of the chanting, after some preparation, they went into the room and had large final combat with 2 demons, 2 mages and the big baddie. Just as they seem about to defeat the big baddie...

Now for the kooky part: Just as the PCs destroy their enemy, a rift is opened. The PCs are flung forward in time to the start date of the campaign (about 6050, TEI). I like to have them flung about 1000 years or so. But if you wish, they could have been part of the Wars of Dominion in the Second Era.

They awaken on a hillside -- a dry and hot plain stretches away as far as they can see. They have no memories of their past, they are now 1st level! They remember bits as pieces of the battle but (because you didn't tell them) they know nothing about what it was about or what happened to them. As for their belongings, they were either ripped away or destroyed. Even the clothing on their back is seared

and barely usable. Any armor worn is charred or somewhat melted and counts as either AT1 or an AT 4-8 levels lower than what it was before. If you want to be nice, any special belongings that they rolled (as a first level character) are still with them. Otherwise, they have no food or water and from the looks of things are in a desert.

One item that did seem to survive is a strange sort of pendant that each wears around the neck. They may not notice it on themselves but they will eventually notice it on each other. The pendant is of a silvery metal and is in the shape of a stylized Gryphon.

The desert is Uj, on Emer. Luckily they are not too far from a road... a caravan route.

Adventure I - Lost Souls

Overview

The characters get to know one another (all over again) and try to figure out what has happened. Meet a caravan traveling to Kaitaine. Travel and get attacked by Charn raiders. Receive mysterious box from wounded caravan leader and continue to Kaitaine. Meet a minstrel in a city in Vajaar.

The Story

By this time, the characters should have a fairly decent bond to one another. The players have worked together to destroy their enemy before the rift opens. They are now alone in a strange place with little idea of who they are. They have lost all of their past... they don't even (at first) remember their own names. The environment is uninviting and they have nothing in the way of sustenance.

At this point let them spend some time doing whatever they like. Hopefully this mostly involves questioning each other as to what has happened to them and then seeking food or shelter.

Before any searching has gone on too long, they will stumble across a road that has been etched into the desert plain over the passage of eons. Because roads tend to go places, they will follow it, or at least keep close to it.

Approximately at dusk, they will see a caravan traveling to the west (either in front or behind them, depending on their own direction of travel). The caravan consists of three wagons, 2 horses to two of them and 4 to one of them. The party consists of 6 humans, all male. All are armed to a greater or lesser extent and are wearing leather armor. They are the caravan's master, his guards and animal handlers.

If approached, the caravan will be very wary. Crossbows and shortbows will be drawn instantly and trained on the party. When the party approaches, the caravan will relax to some degree because of the groups bedraggled appearance and obvious state of disarmament.

If the party asks for help, a debate will ensue. This is carried out in a dialect of the Rhiani language. Any characters who speak this language will be able to follow it. The gist is that two of the guards are adamantly opposed to it, because they don't trust the party. Three guards however are just adamant about helping them (to a small degree at least) because "giving aid to the lost in the desert is a holy act." The characters can make of this what they will. If a Rhiani is in the party, he will inexplicably recognize this statement as being true. (Though his memory is gone, some aspects of his background are not

completely removed from his psyche. This is true of all the characters). The Rhiani character will recognize this as being religious (his religion).

Finally the caravan master (a slightly better dressed individual) will break in and end the argument by allowing the PCs to travel with them to the next oasis. He will offer water and a small amount of a tough travel bread. He will then begin to question them as to their origins.

When the characters admit that they aren't completely sure about that, a new murmured debate will be sparked amongst the guards. The PCs can't follow this.

Let role-playing take over for the next while. The group will travel until about an hour before sunset, whereupon they reach the oasis. The caravan master will send one guard ahead to scout the area for ambushes. He will return in a few minutes, and report nothing found. The caravan will move into the oasis and will set up camp quickly. The night will pass uneventfully unless you want to roll for a random encounter.

The next, the caravan will break camp and travel for several hours. At about midday, the group will pause to water the animals. One of the guards will bark out something in the Rhiani language.

"Something's moving."

The caravan master will reply in Shay, "Where?"

"The northern ridge" will be the reply (still in Rhiani).

Most of the character's will understand the master's side but not the guard's. The master will go on to order people to slowly make for weapons and to load crossbows. No one will even glance at the ridge.

Eventually, the caravan master will say, "They seem to be Charn, shouldn't be a problem." The PCs will be ignored until they start asking questions.

The Charn will be revealed as being sub-human denizens of the desert. They attack caravans from time to time, but are stupid, have no grasp of tactics, and tend towards cowardice. The master and guards are unworried, even though the PCs can now catch glimpses of movement of many (about 2 times the caravan's number) along the ridge line.

After weapons have been prepared, the group will move out. Shortly, the Charn will attack.

The basic strategy of the caravan will be to fire preloaded crossbows at the Charn until they are

too close, then maintain defensive patterns around the animals. The caravan master will stay atop one wagon and switch to a shortbow and continue to fire at the Charn. The caravaners will mostly ignore the PCs and will not ask for help, and will tell them to stay out of the way. The PCs may attempt to help if they wish but they are unarmed and will not be offered weapons.

The battle will be going well for the caravan during the first several rounds. Suddenly the other guard on top of the wagon will be surrounded by a dim purple glow. He will clutch at his throat and fall down choking. The caravan master will look over at him in shock. Then the caravan master will be struck with a dagger thrown into his chest.

Hopefully one of the character's will see to the caravan master (while the battle is raging). The caravan master will be in bad shape. Apparently the dagger was poisoned. In his dying breaths, he will catch sight of the Gryphon pendant. Here are his words to that character:

"You're with THEM?? Why didn't you say so? Ach, what am I saying, you people don't trust anyone." <he'll fade out for a moment>

"...bastards killed me...you bastards killed me. More than those heathen Charn did. This wasn't...normal...Charn don't know about this or...about magic. Here then -- it's your job now. Hope you choke on it!"

With that (laboriously) he pulls a small box from within his robe. It's made of a metal the PCs don't recognize, dark but shiny, like polished lead. It's also heavy, but not as heavy as lead. It has a small latch but no lock. It's about 2" by 2" by 2".

"Was to take it to one of yours...in Kaitaine. He waits in the Library of Kaitaine...ask for Nerik. Maybe you know him..."

He loses consciousness and dies moments later.

Meanwhile, the battle will most likely have ended. Two of the guards have been wounded, and the one that was attacked with magic is dead. If you wish you can roll for the combat for the guards, maybe more of them died.

If the battle is actually going really badly for the guards, they will shout to the PCs for help, telling them that there are more swords underneath the seats of the wagons.

Behind the Scenes

Jasek, the caravan master, is carrying a valuable cargo. And it's not what's in the wagons. The box contains a major Ring of the Cult of the Death Claw.

The ring resembles part of a pair of brass knuckles. Two rings are formed together and slide over two of the fingers. The metal is silvery, but is not silver.

The ring is the property of the evil 13th tribe of the Rhiani. This group has a master ring and a couple of major rings. A traveling member of the Grey Ring stumbled upon some of this activity. He managed to steal the ring and flee to the gap of Uj. He was followed so he sought to hide the item by giving it to Jasek who owes the Grey Ring for past favors. Jasek was to travel to Kaitaine and give the ring to the Grey Ring there.

The Rhiani finally learned of this subterfuge, and through magical sendings caused their Charn allies (or slaves) to follow the caravan.

The Charn parties have been sent to recapture the item. The Charn leaders have been given (by the outcast Rhiani clan) a few magic items. One of these is what killed the guard. (A wand which casts a choking spell on 1 target). The Charn will continue to attempt to regain the item until they are instructed not to or until they are killed or scattered. The Rhiani will send a Guardian of the Flame (evil monk) who is close to the area to track the party. The monk will take a day or two to arrive. The monk will follow the party until he knows some things about them, then he will attack.

Travel Through Uj

As the PCs make their way across the desert with the surviving guards, they will be harried from time to time by small parties of Charn. These will be much less effective than the first attack. The guards will mutter about strange behavior from the Charn.

Basically the guards and animal master will claim the cargo and everything off of Jasek. They will complete the journey and divide the profits. In fact one of the guards may demand the box from Jasek. However, another guard (a Rhiani) will defend the PC who holds the box, because Jasek gave it to him of his own free will. (Rhiani NEVER lie). The other guard will grudgingly accept this.

Given the strangeness of the attack and the fact that some of them got away, the remaining caravan members will offer the PCs a small wage to help guard. (About 2 bronze a day). If the PCs try to haggle, the guards remind them that they have been sharing their food and water with them. They can enjoy the hospitality of the desert if they wish. Hopefully this will end it - it would be

super-stupid for the PCs to get hostile with the guards. They'll be dead in seconds. But the wage will give them some cash at least.

After about 2-3 more mini-raids, the attacks will cease. This takes place over the course of several days of traveling. Finally they reach the river marking the edge of the Ujian desert and the beginning of Vajaar.

The group will pass through a few small villages populated mostly by human farmers (of the Vajaari or Shay races).

After leaving the desert, the terrain will become a dry grass. Within a few days, the party will reach Garith, a town of about 5000 on the edge of a river. The town was built on a part of the river where it flows slow and wide. The road dips into the river and comes out again on the other side.

The city consists of a few wooden and sod buildings surrounded by a sea of tents. Roads haphazardly wind through the place, making a maze where ever someone hasn't pitched a tent. The town mostly subsists off of some farming, cattle, and the gold brought by caravans.

Behind the Scenes

The PCs will by now be interested in going to Kaitaine to possibly discover what the dying words of Jasek meant.

If they ask questions about Kaitaine, the guards will answer them. If asked about the Gryphon pendants, they will have no idea.

The attacks will cease but if they PCs make a good Observation roll, they may get a glimpse of one of the dark Rhiani figures, on horseback. This is one of the evil monks.

The monk will attack just before they reach the town. Even though he is one against the whole group, he will probably do a lot of damage before he is brought down. The PCs should not wonder why he attacked. He should be close to winning. (They won't know what he came for though, though they will probably have suspicions.)

Vajaar

When the group reaches the city of Tul, located on the river which goes to the southwest, the caravan will offload some of the goods. The PCs may receive a bonus for their work at this time.

A fairly pleasant night will be spent here -- at last, sleep in a real bed! But first the PCs may want to look around.

The city is medium-sized, perhaps 15,000 people.

The normal shops, taverns, and inns exist here. The guards will recommend that they purchase better clothes and perhaps some travel rations here. Everything will be more expensive in Kaitaine, they are told.

The PCs will have enough money by this time to just squeak out the purchase of some new clothes (well, used new clothes) and some travel rations. Unfortunately other things that will be desperately wished for (like armor and weapons) will be out of their reach.

After 2 nights spent in Vajaar, the caravan will set out again for the seaport that leads to Kaitaine.

Behind the Scenes

Now the hunt for the missing artifact has been undertaken in earnest by the 13th Tribe. The party was followed throughout their journey by one of the evil monks. Now that they are in the city, the chance has arrived for their pursuers to learn more about their prey.

If the PCs wander around the town, they might (extremely hard maneuver) realize that they are being followed. The pursuer is a man, human, dressed rather shabbily, with a scruffy beard. If accosted, he will attempt to leave the scene - walking quickly, and running, if necessary. He will then circle and try to catch up with the group.

If the PCs go into a bar at any time, soon afterwards, a fairly well dressed elf will walk in. He will take a seat near to the PCs and order an ale. Then he will attempt to spark a conversation with the PCs.

If the PCs realized that they were being followed, then they may be suspicious. If they aren't, then you should try to get as much info out of the PCs as possible. (I.e., where are they going, where are they from, what they do for a living, where they are from originally, etc.

The elf (actually a half-elf) will introduce himself as D'alaan, a poet and performer seeking noble patronage in the area. If the PCs are at all communicative at the beginning, he will buy a round of drinks.

D'alaan (not his real name, of course) is actually a spy and assassin for the Dragonlord, Voriig Kye. He is a level 5 Thief. He does have real skill in poetry, the playing of the flute, and in amusing feats of slight-of-hand. He uses these things as a cover for his other activities. (See the NPC list).

He will attempt to find out the above questions about the PCs in a casual manner. His instructions are to learn about the character's and their

intended movements.

After having a drink or two, he will leave after he thinks he's obtained as much info as possible, wishing the PCs well.

[I changed this part later. D'alaan meets the PCs by coincidence and begins speaking with them. Later he will be with them when they are assaulted by a Rhiani Monk in the city. D'alaan's ACTUAL goal was to find out about this group and what their goals are. When he stumbles onto the PCs, he decides to follow them instead since they are being hunted by the Rhiani. D'alaan's purpose is to learn something of the 13th tribe and investigate links to Stroane. See the Campaign Secrets section.]

A Meeting on the Road to Kaitaine

The morning of the second day, one hour after dawn, the caravan will continue having sold the smaller wagon and associated animals.

At about mid-morning, the group will pass a company of warriors, members of the Serpent Guard, a branch of the Vajaan military which patrols the roads. They all wear green bandoleers.

At about noon, the caravan will stop to water the animals. A PC or a guard will catch sight of a rider coming from behind them. In about 15 minutes, who should appear but none other than D'alaan! And riding a mule, it seems.

"Well, we meet again, it seems! And you are in the position of causing me some small embarrassment, as well." He gestures to the mule.

"This filthy beast and I are bound for the Kaitaine port. My business didn't work as well as expected and I'll be glad to see my usual haunts."

If allowed, he will ride with the PCs, chatting about nothing as they go. He will ask about guard work, and so on. If you deem the time is right and the PCs have not mentioned to the guards not to say anything, one guard will comment about the strange circumstances of the caravan meeting the PCs.

"Really? Alone in the desert with no sustenance? Sounds quite mysterious! Or foolish, if you are less imaginative than I am, myself." He winks. "What caused you to be in this position?"

He won't appear to press the PCs very much, but he will be quite interested in their responses, and even body language reactions.

Over the course of the next several days, D'alaan will travel with the caravan, at times entertaining the group with flute playing and so on. Random encounters may be generated for this segment, if desired. D'alaan will fight beside the PCs (but will

not use any of his 'special' techniques unless he is sure no one will see him). The road is fairly safe as this is a highly patrolled area. (A hell of a lot of merchandise travels this road) so bandits would be rare. However if any do appear, they are to be pretty nasty. (High risk for high reward attracts only the most skilled).

D'alaan will not attempt to search the PCs belongings unless the opportunity is REALLY excellent. For now he is confident that he will be able to get it at any time. More information about the PCs and their possible contacts is what he is most interested in.

Several more days will pass until the group gets to the garden paradise of Ajan, jewel of Vajaan. Roll for random encounters for this time, both day and night. I recommend checking once each day (1 in 10 chance) and twice each night (1 in 10 chance each). The caravan people will post watches and if the PCs have been hired by them, they will be on a watch as well. D'alaan will take a watch out of politeness sake.

Ajan will be reached about mid-morning. The caravan will be brought directly to the docks and passage will be arranged for the cargo and group to go to Kaitaine. D'alaan will say his farewells at this point, but in leaving will recommend a couple of cheap, yet adequate inns in Kaitaine. He wishes them well.

The next morning, the ship will leave on the dawn tide. (The PCs will be expected to help with the loading).

The ship voyage will take only about a day and a quarter. The winds will be good and there should be no encounters, except for a passing ship several miles away.

Behind the Scenes

D'alaan will be quite friendly with the characters hoping to win their trust. If the characters actually confide in him, he will be most interested.

If the PCs ask him about the box, he will ask to see it. He will mention that he believes the box to be made from Kregora, a magic inhibiting substance, quite valuable in itself. Of the ring inside, he will know nothing. (He does know a little about it, and knows enough not to come in contact with it for very long.)

If asked about the Gryphon pendants, he will say that they spark a memory, but will not know. (He actually knows nothing about them.)

If told about their strange appearance in the desert, he will hypothesize with them. It may be

possible that he will recognize their accents and be able to tell them where they are from originally.

This may spark some new areas of interest and possible research ideas.

Thus far, the PCs know the following:

they had been part of some important battle before being transported and losing their memories

they had been from Emer originally as well, and are still on Emer

they all have Gryphon pendants, and this meant something to Jasek, some sort of secretive group perhaps

they were given the box to give to someone of the group of the Gryphon pendants

Cassius's Subplot

Cassius, a budding paladin of Reann will wish to go to the temple of Reann in Kaitaine. When he speaks to a priest, saying something about being 'called', the priest will be unsurprised. After all this is how ALL priests of Reann get their start. However, after asking about the dream that led him here, and possibly learning of Cassius' strange appearance in Uj, the priest will begin to get puzzled. If told about some of the 'powers' Cassius has displayed, he will become even more bewildered. Cassius will be led to the head priest of the temple. This priest will have some understanding of what he is -- a new member of the Brotherhood of Reann, a group not seen for several thousand years.

If the priests are asked about the various things that have happened:

they have no knowledge of the Gryphon pendant

they have no knowledge of the ring

they will turn up an ancient book which describes some of the actions of the Brotherhood during the Wars of Dominion. Cassius may take this book (may contain excerpts that are cool)

on the back binding of the book, a snatch of verse is found. The verse is signed with a "C" and seems to be in Cassius' own handwriting. The ink is as old as the rest of the book, it seems.

The head priest of the temple will suggest that Cassius undergoes a ritual to attempt to learn more. He will bid him to return the next evening. At that time, he will go through a Heuith dream. (See Dream III under Cassius's notes.)

Adventure II - Kaitaine

Overview

The PCs arrive in Kaitaine with little money and few prospects. They most likely attempt to meet this Nerik person at the library of Kaitaine.

The Story

The most likely avenue for the PCs to explore is meeting Nerik. Upon reaching the library, an enormous structure 4 stories tall faced with marble, the PCs can ask for Nerik as instructed. They will be informed that the cost of entrance is 1 silver piece per 4 hours per person, but that they can have a written message sent to "Master Nerik". (The sage they speak to seems to know him, or at least know of him.)

If they send a message, or actually pay to enter, Nerik will appear fairly quickly. He is a short and stout Shay in his early 40's. He wears a tunic, pants and boots, of earth colors and has 2 rings on the left hand, and 1 on the right.

Nerik will quickly question the PCs as to why Jasek did not come himself. Whatever the PCs say, Nerik will stop them before they've gone too far and motion for them to follow him to his personal work room, adjacent to the library's stacks.

He bids them be seated and asks them to continue their tale.

Depending on what the PCs say, Nerik will react in different ways.

Behind the Scenes

Nerik is a member (though not a high one) of the Grey Ring, an organization dedicated to fighting evil and the Unlife. The Gryphon Pendant is one of their symbols.

If the PCs show him their pendants, he will be visibly surprised. There are not that many of the pendants available and they are only given to a special few. He will question them as to their identities and how they got the pendants.

He does not know what Jasek, the caravan master was to bring to him. Jasek brings things and information from time to time.

If shown the box, Nerik will be intrigued. He will immediately recognize the Kregora. If opened, he will not recognize the ring.

He is a Seer of about 8th level (See the NPC list). He will attempt to analyze the ring as much as possible, if allowed. He will not force the issue because whether the PCs remember who they are

or not, he will trust the attunement of the pendants, and so will trust the PCs. He will learn that the item is powerful and evil. He will have the PCs hang onto it but warn them against trying to attune to it. He will set up a time and place the next day for the PCs to meet with him and a 'friend' to try to figure out what's going on.

Because Nerik doesn't know how closely the PCs are being followed, he knows nothing of the danger he is in.

[Campaign Notes:]

A member of the PCs met with Nerik but gave him little information. They are quite suspicious of Nerik... mostly because why would he have an evil artifact delivered to him? After he left, Nerik went to the docks to locate the PCs caravan they said they came in on. He found it, but the Rhiani guard refused to say much as well. So at this point, Nerik only ---

Meanwhile, D'alaan has informed superiors in Kaitaine of his journey. They will know exactly what the Gryphon pendants mean and will wish very much to verify that they are genuine. If the PCs mentioned Nerik's name to him, and where they planned to meet him, then D'alaan will have Nerik followed as well.

After consulting with his superiors, D'alaan will 'happen' to bump into the PCs near their inn. He will be happy to see them and said that he spoke to a friend, a scholarly sort about the Gryphon Pendants. He will go on to tell them that he believes their story (about amnesia) and believes them to be good people. At the PCs puzzlement at these words, he will go on to explain that the pendant is the symbol of an evil cult in the city. The pendants may be magical and could be dangerous to the PCs. HE will then want the PCs to meet with a 'friend' to check this out. He will send a messenger boy to bring this person immediately.

[Campaign Notes:]

The PCs swallow this one completely. <grin> The "friend" of D'alaan who is called is Tarna Dederon, introduced to be a scholar of some repute (true). Tarna verified that the pendants are genuine and spoke to one of the PCs at great length (Cassius). The next day, a meeting is to occur with the rest of the PCs.

The PCs now have the following problem: Who and what to believe. Nerik didn't seem evil, but after talking to D'alaan, D'alaan might be able to persuade

knows that Jasek died in the desert and was trying to reach him for some reason. The PCs are playing it pretty close to the chest.

While they were at the library, the PCs found out the following

- a small amount of info about the 13th tribe of the Rhiani
- the the Gryphon symbol originally came from Zor in Jaiman
- that Itanis trade has been decreasing steadily for 500 years
- a small amount of info about the Six Crowns of Jaiman (prompted from Cassius' Heuith dream).
- some info about Navigators and their obelisks (normally common knowledge).

them that this cult is very subtle. (Check D'alaan's influence skills in the NPC section).

Once the PCs have been inspected and the pendants are declared genuine (again), the PCs may be apprehensive about wearing them. They will be cautioned not to take them off because the spell that links them may have bad (or deadly) side effects if broken.

D'alaan's group will now know the value of the PCs. With them, they could be manipulated into infiltrating the Grey Ring and perhaps doing harm to it. But that will be much later, after the PCs are more fully bound to the Cult.

The Story

The PCs, now somewhat confused, may or may not want to keep their appointment with Nerik.

They will be suspicious of one or more of the two groups that they have now had contact. It may be that they wish to simply get rid of the ring and box, perhaps because of their limited finances.

Taking the thing to alchemists in the mage's quarter will allow the characters to buy the box, but not the ring. All licensed alchemists in town will be able to tell it's evil and will have nothing to do with it.

The only way for the PCs to sell it will be on the streets (the black market). After a Streetwise (Hard) roll, let the PCs get a meeting with a leader of a thieves clan in the lower part of the city. The deal will go through, and the PCs will get a good price. However the thief leader will be assassinated mere days later, the ring gone. The various factions fighting for control, will have only one thing in common: they think the PCs killed the leader, or had something to do with it. Thus they will be hunted.

(Thanks for the plot device, Greg!)

If the PCs don't take that route, they may talk to Nerik's friend. The situation will be disturbingly like the situation with D'alaan's friend: A lot of analyzing going on. If the PCs confront them about the activities of the Grey Ring, they will be shocked at the allegations. They will try to set the character's straight but there will be no real way for the characters to know who is telling the truth (unless one of the PCs is a Seer and has Detect Truth...did I mention that Seer's rock?)

If the PCs don't show for the meeting with Nerik, Nerik will use his abilities to try to find the group, starting with where they were staying.

Behind the Scenes

There are really only three options available to the PCs,

Go with D'alaan's group

Go with Nerik's group

Bail on the situation (neither group)

Situation One and Two:

If the PC decide to go with D'alaan OR with Nerik, then it will start the next part of the campaign. They will meet with a few people who ask them about their backgrounds. Then they will be sent on a mission to determine the where-abouts of another ring. The only difference is that in the first option, they'll be working for evil people to recover the ring for themselves, rather than working with the (good) Grey Ring.

Situation Three:

If the PCs are irritated with the lack of information and decide not to go with either group, then more power to them. However both groups will be after them. D'alaan's group will now send people to kill them and get the ring back. Nerik's group will want the ring back as well, but wishes to question them further (and study) about the pendants and such. So they'll be more gentle. However, they won't this powerfully evil item walk away from them again. So they'll take it by force is necessary.

My own opinion is to steer the party towards either One or Three, but not Two. One and Three give more ideas for stuff for later, and draw things out. The PCs should not REALLY become attached to the Grey Ring until they have a few more levels under their belt.

The way to do this is as follows: In One, D'alaan's friends offer a 'finder's fee' for the ring. Money will often persuade the PCs that D'alaan's group is good.

To go to three, the more conflicting info the better! The more annoyed the PCs are, the more likely they are to try to get away from the situation.

[Campaign Notes:]

The subplots for each of the characters can come in handy for this. Especially Danari's subplot with his 'cousin' Rayas and his wife Selena. He might want to go back to Itanis to try to recover his memory.

To NOT go to Two, you have to make D'alaan's arguments against the Grey Ring convincing. It would be best if they never see Nerik a second time.

Danari's Sub Plot

Upon reaching Kaitaine, Danari will see several Itanians (who travel from time to Kaitaine). Eventually he will be approached by one.

A conversation will be struck up, the Itanian talking about traveling in barbarian lands and such. He will (in a friendly way) ask about Danari's business in Kaitaine. If asked about his own, he will happily respond for as long as the PC asks questions. He is quite open.

Eventually he will ask the following:

"Are you of the Delnek family? You have that look about you...the shade of your eyes, the pitch of your nose...Yes! I'm sure of it! Tell me I'm wrong!"

He looks happy with himself like he's just won a game.

"I'm not surprised to meet one of you away from home. For such a sizable family, there are certainly few of you at home at any one time! I'm sorry if I am questioning on too personal a level, but have you any word of your Sunha? [A Sunha is a patriarchal leader of an Itanian family.]"

If drawn out on this topic without revealing ignorance, the PC can learn that the Delnek Sunha disappeared mysteriously about a year ago. He was a high ranking member of the Itanian Warlocks.

If asked about news of his "family", the Itanian will respond by saying that he doesn't know a lot, but many members of the family have been sent on missions for the Warlocks. [This is unusual.]

If he actually confides in the Itanian about his memory loss, the Itanian will recommend going back to Itanis for help.

"If the Warlocks can't help you, then nothing can."

Laron's Sub Plot

While in an inn or tavern room at some time in

Kaitaine, Laron will overhear a conversation. He will learn that Stroane is occupying his former homeland of the Miir States.

Adventure III - Search for the Ring

Overview

In this section, the PCs are given a task to complete. The mission is to travel to Stroane to determine the location of another of these rings. The PCs will be given a small amount of money and equipment.

The Story

If the characters decide to stay with one or the other group, then they will be offered a proposition. The group (they will be told) has very limited resources at this time. They are spread very widely and it is a "dangerous time."

There have been strange rumors coming from the area of Stroane. The Katra (king) has been assassinated two years ago. Before that, the Katra had been annexing land like mad. Stroane was quickly becoming the most powerful nation in at least western Emer, if not the entire continent. Now the government is in shambles, the new ruling body is made up of a triumvirate regency, ruling until the son of the old Katra reaches his 16th birthday.

"Now," the representative says, "We have received reports from various people who have agreed to pass information on to us. One apparently minor detail included in one is that it was remarked that the new Katra was seen to be wearing at one point a ring sort of item which matches exactly the ring you have discovered from the Grey Ring."

"We wish to learn if this is the same sort of ring. It is important because the nature of this ring may influence the personality of it's wielder. Great evil could be wrought by someone who didn't understand the true nature of an item like this."

"We have for you the following item." He holds up a small pendant.

"This has been enchanted to vibrate if an item like the one you have brought to us is within 100 feet. "

Behind the Scenes

This mission pits the PCs against one of the ruling triumvirate members of Stroane. He is the uncle to the 10 year old boy who will one day be the Katra. [Shadow World history: the old Katra was assassinated by his young wife in 6048, 2 years ago. A triumvirate consisting of the main advisor, the military advisor and the old Katra's brother now rule.] He has links to the 13th Rhiani tribe and is actually the holder of a major ring. This ring has powers identical to the one the PCs bear.

The Katra has managed (with help from the the Rhiani) to attune to the item at a high level of bonding. Thus he has slowly begun learning evil magic even though he is not a mage born naturally.

The PCs have the following reasons to go on this trip:

They have no money and D'alaan's group is willing to pay for them and supplies + plus some sort of payment

The Rhiani have been hunting them, and they may not stop simply because they get rid of the ring. They should know more about each.

Laron may be interested in returning to his homeland, near Stroane.

D'alaan will accompany them and he recommends it both for money purposes and a chance to strike back.

[Campaign Notes:]

Amusingly, the paladin, Cassius and D'alaan have become fairly close friends. Mostly because of D'alaan's apparent religious devotion to Reann and Eissa. (He really IS religious, just in a warped way... see the NPC section). D'alaan told Cassius that he would accompany them because it would be the 'right and noble thing to do' <snicker>.

Kaitaine

Starting out, D'alaan's group will offer the PCs a limited amount of money with which to purchase supplies and the like. Also included will be some traveling money to buy passage on a ship and to obtain lodging when they reach Arakin, the capital city of Stroane, located on the southern shore of the Sea of Votania. Within a couple of days after their meeting, they should be on their way.

A Sea Voyage

The trip will take the group first by sea, around the Scorpion Ridge peninsula and into the Bay of Izar. The sleek Kaitaine ship can make about 10 miles per hour, but even so, this leg of the trip will take about 5 days. The ship itself is called The White Breeze and is captained by a fairly stern looking Shay.

Sometime during the night of the first day, the ship will skirt the edge of the Essaence flow that passes Kaitaine and the mainland, to the south. Any PC on deck at this time will sense a tingling sensation and smell the scent of ozone in the air. However, sense the ship will not be passing through the Flow this time, the night should pass fairly uneventfully.

The weather at this time of year is some what unpredictable. The GM should roll occasionally for misc. squalls that might pop up. These weather systems are usually short but violent.

When the ship gets about 400 miles away from Kaitaine, the risk of pirates goes up. Each day, the GM should roll for an encounter, the chance is about 1 in 10, usually. This whole route is well patrolled by Kaitaine Navy and other allies, but sometimes piracy happens. In fact they may site one of the patrol ships, or another trading vessel from time to time.

Once the ship has entered the Bay of Izar, the chance for bad weather substantially decreases as the large bay is surrounded on all sides by mountains.

From the Gates of Izar (the opening to the bay) it is approximately 350 miles to Sarnak, the next leg of the journey.

Sarnak

The *White Breeze* will make port at Sarnak, a city-state nestled into the protective cliffs surrounding the mouth of the Urij River. As the PCs ship gets closer, a slow but steady buildup of sea traffic will occur. Many styles of ships can be seen, but the most prominent as they near Sarnak are some sturdy biremes. These fly the colors of the Sarnak fleet.

Sarnak City is an extremely imposing sight. In it's elevated position it looks nearly impregnable from every direction. Enormous walls and towers surround the city, constructed of a dark granite.

Docking facilities are located just inside the mouth of the river. Several warehouses also lie here, and a main road goes up the hill to the city proper. The ship will dock and the captain will see the party off. If they ask for advise for accommodations, he will gladly name a few taverns and inns.

The Story

The PCs will spend a day or two in Sarnak as they arrange for land transport up the Urij river which is too fast to be navigated in this direction. According to D'alaan, from there they will make their way down to the Sea of Votania where they will be able to purchase passage on on of the wide barges that travel the coasts of that mysterious freshwater sea. The next stop will then be Arakin, Stroane.

Entering the city costs the characters a bronze piece each. Unlike Kaitaine, this isn't as open a trading center. Looming walls of ancient granite meet the PCs eyes as they pass through the massive gates. Towers rise at random intervals within the city. The sight is softened somewhat by the existence of colorful murals adorning many of the buildings.

Most of the wooden doors to buildings are also painted in bright colors.

The people of Sarnak are of mostly a Shay descent but with clear Laan influences. They mostly have dark hair and eyes. Even at this time of year (winter) the temperature is comfortable during the day, usually around 60 degrees. The main style of dress leans towards simple tunics and breeches. The men almost always go bare-chested while the women usually opt for a practical tunic which usually leaves the left breast bare.

As noted in the Emer sourcebook, the Sarnak women are the ones that rule the land and hold all positions of authority. The men of Sarnak are subservient domestics who do the child-rearing, household chores, and so on. Bring this tradition home to the PCs by a few random (but minor) acts of harassment on the part of the female Sarnak natives. A pinched bottom or a wolf whistle at one of the more attractive male PCs should do the trick. (If the PCs take exception to this, note that most Sarnak females go armed. A major export of Sarnak is highly trained mercenaries.) D'alaan will attempt to head off any violence by acting embarrassed and flattered (as the Sarnak expect an unattached male to act).

A descent amount of trade goes on in Sarnak city. But the city does begin to close down when the sun sets. By the Fourth Quintar, the streets are pretty much empty.

The Sarnak military/guard can be seen at all times. Completely made up of women, the military's uniform is a gold over-tunic and white swordbelt. When on duty they usually roam in pairs as city guards, or along the walls. Other times they frequent taverns near the main fortress or are training.

[Campaign Notes:]

The PCs, acting on the advice of Danari, decide to try to retrieve the packet of information that Danari's mentor said he would leave for them in the Catacombs of the Elders. (See Dave's Character section for details about his dream.)

The catacombs are the final resting place of respected members of Sarnak society, the nobility, the military members and so on. Unlike you would think, the catacombs are well laid out, tunneling into the cliffs above and below the city in a fairly organized fashion. Once you find a number (representing a reign of a Directorate body) then you can make your way back to the number you wish to find. In this case the 127th reign. Then you can search for the tomb in question.

The catacombs contains miles of tunnels lined with the vertical standing coffins of the past dead. These coffins are of carved stone and are usually given facial and body features to mimic their occupant.

The Sarnakians are completely atheistic, but do respect their dead. To enter the Catacombs other than during the interment of a body is a very serious crime. The catacombs are sealed with a sort of magical lock, but one that is fairly easy to break. An enterprising PC must simply move through a series of gestures, touching various points on one of the elaborately carved entrances. To find this out, they must spy on a funeral procession. The Sarnakians look down on entering the catacombs, but otherwise have placed no other defenses. After all, they never bury anything with the dead other than a shroud. So what reason would someone have to enter the site?

Unbeknownst to them however, a subterranean creature has made sort of a home for itself here. Resembling the Mulrok (an orc like creature) these sub-humanoid creatures are viscous but quite uncreative. They are about 5 feet tall, hairless, and have a tough blackish hide which gives them a natural AT of 8. DB is 15 and they do a 60 OB claw attack. They usually move in groups of 5 to 10.

The PCs had two encounters with them but managed to find the packet and get out fairly quickly.

Behind the Scenes

One event of note will occur while the PCs seek land passage. During the middle of the first night they spend in town, they will be awakened by a loud rumbling which sets the windows to rattling. Upon looking out, they will see a couple of flashes of light coming from a large building up the hill from their inn. Then silence.

The next day, if the PCs investigate, little can be learned. The building that they saw was the building of the Directorate, the small ruling body of Sarnak. Otherwise, the only thing that can be learned is that the Sarnak Guard is at full alert. They seem to be even more ubiquitous than normal.

The truth of the matter is that an attempt was made of the lives of several members of the Directorate. Rumors of this will not become available for several more days. It is unlikely for the characters to know what has happened because they will be leaving soon anyway.

However, the attack was somewhat successful: one member of the Directorate was killed and two other were wounded. The assassin escaped, disappearing after it became clear she would no longer be able to complete her task. The assassin was a member of the

Cult of Stars. Basically, the PCs will not learn of this until much later. This just sets the scene for later stuff...

GM Note:

I think it's important to make sure that the world that is described seems real to the players and DOES NOT simply revolve around them. Make sure that they know that they move through the world, not the world moves around them. So in this vein, every once in a while I like to throw in little things which don't effect the adventure. These little events make the characters have to think more about what information IS necessary to them while serving the task of making them know that there are lots of things happening out there which has nothing to do with them. For example I like to have random things happen, like they encounter some ruins, or they see a fight break out. Weather, Flow activity, and misc. things like that help to snap the characters out of complacency. This is probably obvious to most GMs, but I thought I'd mention it. In Shadow World especially, which has thousands and THOUSANDS of years of history behind it, it's important for the characters to feel that weight from time to time. Makes for a better game, I think. OK, soapbox mode off.

The Emerald Forest

Without too much difficulty, the PCs find a caravan leaving for the Sea of Votania. The master of the caravan is a stern looking Sarnak woman in her mid 30's. She agrees to take on passengers for 3 silver apiece. Otherwise, the group can purchase horses for 4 to 6 gold pieces each.

The journey is underway without much further ado. Animal handlers lead several wagons up the narrow road that runs beside the Urij River. As the PCs make their way, they see large flatboats constructed of pine trees float down on the rivers sprightly currents. If they ask, they will be told that the boats carry merchandise, but also ARE merchandise. The logs themselves are later reclaimed and exported to other lands. As they head upwards into the mountains, huge evergreen trees surround them.

It is nearly 200 miles to the source of the Urij, a large lake at about an elevation of about 5000 feet. The group makes good time, however, covering about 35 miles in a day; the road here is old but is well constructed. Occasionally other roads or trails will lead off from the main road. These lead to villages that exist, often high in the mountains.

Past the lake of Urij, the group will enter a long pass. The mountains to either side tower up another 4000 feet. Rains may come from time to time, but

luckily this is not the rainy season. The tropical climate ensures that no snow forms, but the rain is cold and unpleasant. After the pass the road will head downwards once again. Stretched of to the northeast lies an enormous forest. This is the Emerald Forest.

Behind the Scenes

The road will skirt the edges of the Forest for a good 50 miles before ending at the Sea of Votania. The forest has many legends about it -- the most common of which is that it's inhabited by faeries. Interestingly enough, this is true. They are not evil, nor are they actively hostile, but they are protective of their isolation. Anyone attempting to enter the forest will feel a vague unease, finally forcing them to leave. (The person must save against 10th level channeling every minute or be forced to leave). See the Emer sourcebook for the Forest's other defenses against the uninvited.

When the party camps each night, they have a possibility of seeing lights occasionally hovering in the depths of the Forest. A particularly sensitive character may hear the sound of a wood flute, piping an eerie melody.

Through out the journey, roll each day for an encounter. This will take the form of a Brigand attack or perhaps some sort of more unnatural encounter. Here are some possibilities, in order of likeliness:

- a brigand attack
- a small earthquake
- a hill troll attack
- an Essaence storm

Any attacks will happen at night, while other events can happen at any time.

Earthquakes of varying magnitudes have been occurring for the past several years. No one knows why, because few parts of Emer are seismically active. However, the frequency has increased.

Laron's Subplot

One evening while camping near the Emerald Forest, while Laron is on watch, a strange piping music will be heard. Glancing over at his companion on watch, Laron will notice that only he heard the sound. If he asks his companion about it, he will get no response. The other person can't hear him.

"I see you Laron Darkwind..."

None of the members of the party can be awakened if he tries.

"Why won't you play with us again? It's been so

long... we didn't think we'd ever see you again."

The voice is playful, and childlike. "Where have you been all this time, Laron?"

The voices are those of the Faerie inhabitants of the Forest. And they seem to recognize Laron.

"We have seen things, Laron. Dark things. Since you left us. We fear. These are the days of fear. We do not leave our forests, we are blind to the outside. But we sense something coming. If you see the darkness, or see through the darkness, please remember us. Be our eyes....remember us. Remember us...."

The voices will fade, but Laron will glimpse a flash of motion towards his feet. Before he can react, it will be gone, but a small bundle will remain. The bundle is a cunningly woven pouch made from dried grasses. Inside lie several herbs which Laron can immediately tell are of the magical healing variety.

"We see danger for you...tread softly...and remember us..."

The Sea of Votania

The Sea of Votania is a huge body of fresh water. Most of the larger rivers of Haestra feed it. A variety of small fishing villages have existed on it's shores for centuries. However few dare ply the waters of this sea very far from the shore. A mist shrouds the inner portion of the sea, but legend has it that an island exists, some 50 miles away from the shore. From here it is said that the great Titans ruled all of Emer -- and indeed, live there still. The natives claim that the island is inhabited yet; strange flashing lights have been spotted on particularly clear nights.

When the PCs finally make their way to the shores of the Sea of Votania, they will see a village at the foot of the road. This small town of about 500 individuals is known as Val'Teer. The people here make their living from fishing and hunting in the area, primarily.

The Story

From here (D'alaan will make known) the PCs can purchase passage on one of the long boat the town people use for their fishing near to the shores of the Sea. The boats are keelless and are generally dragged up onto shore at night.

Passage to Ajan can be purchased for the nominal fee of 2 silver per person. If the group has horses, and they wish to take them, the price is 2 silver additional per horse.

The waters of the Sea are very calm. A mist rises from the water in the early morning, but where the PCs are, burns off by midday. To the north, the mist

never seems to burn off. It only thickens as one proceeds, they are told.

Hugging the coasts as the PCs will do, the journey will be about 400 miles. During this time, fishing villages will be seen at fairly regular intervals along the coasts. The only cities of any significant size are located at the mouth of the Umek river (located at the midpoint of the Sea's southern shore) and Khum-Ro river (located at the south eastern corner of the Sea). These small cities of about 45000 are mostly overgrown villages -- they have grown up in areas where the trade has become concentrated.

Fishing boats and other barge traffic is seen from time to time, as is sheep and goat herders tending their flocks on the hilly shores. To the south the hills rise steeply into the mountain range known as the Forbidden Ridge.

Politically, all of the villages, towns, and cities around the Sea of Votania are claimed by Stroane. All pay some sort of tribute in the form of tax moneys, but more often in goods and services. At one point the PCs may notice a group of workers making (or rebuilding) the South Votania Road. These are troops of Stroane and are uniformed in a red tabard. At other points the road has become very difficult to travel. Mud slides over the course of several hundred years have obliterated sections of it. However, in the past decade, Stroane has been working to rebuild these roads. Cynics say that this is so that Stroane can move troops more quickly, and cause more pressure on Sarnak, but the work has increased trade in the area. For the most part, traffic east and west is by boat on the Sea, as it has been for the last 200 years.

This part of the journey will go rather quickly. Few encounters should occur. The next several days will be spent sailing.

As the PCs make the turn to the north they will notice several things. First, the villages are becoming more frequent. Second they are looking more prosperous and well built. Throughout the journey on the Sea, the villages and towns will be constructed of wood -- large timbers taken from the hills above. Now as the group nears the heart of Stroane, well planned towns with a number of stone buildings will be noted. Also the water traffic will increase.

Arakin - Capital of Stroane

Stroane is a forbidding city built of dark grey stone. It has tall walls and defensive towers. And the red tabarded Stroane military is everywhere.

The PCs long boat is one of many making their way into Arakin at this time of day. Like Kaitaine,

Arakin has a fairly sophisticated bureaucracy for dealing with (and taxing) the incoming trade goods. Within minutes of docking, a man of Shay descent wearing a official looking badge of some sort will come aboard. The PCs may leave at this point.

Arakin is a city of approximately 30 thousand people. Most are of obvious Laan descent, like most cultures in Haestra, but with a significant Shay element. But like any large city, a smattering of other racial types exists as either itinerant travelers or permanent residents.

A large amount of land is contained with its high walls. The city streets are fairly narrow and winding. As mentioned before, most of the city is constructed of a grey granite, quarried from the hills above the city.

After paying their 1 bronze entry fee, the PCs may make their way into the city proper. Multi-storeyed structures along the major streets boast many fine shops selling all manner of goods. Inns and taverns are abundant and the street traffic during the day will be quite busy.

The most common language overheard will be Shay, although some Erlini can be heard spoken by outsiders, nearer to the docks and front gates of the city.

Overview

The PCs will meet with the agent Selras and learn that the Prince Lorek has been seen in the company of several Rhiani for several months now. He has a pair of them as guards at all times. More titillating information will be forth coming. At a second meeting with Selras, Selras will be assassinated with a crystalline throwing star which has seven points. The PCs will learn that Lorek has left the city to travel to his country estate.

The Story

The PCs will initially try to rendezvous with the 'agent' mentioned by Tarna Dederon. They were to go to an inn called The Broken Tankard. There they will meet the agent, known here as Selras.

Selras is of a Laan/Shay racial mix and blends in easily with the native population. He is of average height and build for that race and carries a broadsword.

After the PCs introduce themselves (perhaps through a message left with the inn keeper) and give the various pass codes, Selras will convey to them what information he has gleaned over the course of several months in Arakin.

This includes:

Lorek has been seen with several Rhiani, with great fighting abilities

Two of the Rhiani now serve as bodyguards

Lorek has an estate 40 miles north of Arakin

More rumors about Lorek doing weird things with servants and tales of servants disappearing

Lorek wishes to return to the conquest of other nations even though the Royal Sage and the Lord General both disagree (their forces are too strung out occupying what they already have)

The PCs now have several lines of investigation. Selras will be able to get them into the Arakin court where they may have a chance of using the item of protection given to them in Kaitaine by Dalov, the alchemist.

Or they may wish to go directly to Lorek's country estate and investigate from there.

Or they may wish to further investigate Lorek's tie to the evil tattooed Rhiani.

The following sections therefore can happen in any order, more or less. However, Selras's assassination will happen before they leave the city.

[Campaign Notes:]

The PCs in my game have discovered another choice -- try to meet with the other two members of the triumvirate to convince them to work against Lorek. At this time of writing, they have no idea of how to go about doing this, but that's what they are most likely to attempt.

The Arakin Court

The grand Court of Stroane does indeed meet the expectations a foreigner would have for the most powerful nation in Haestra. The Arakin Court is a multi-leveled affair of power plays and intrigue.

The large military class vies here for the best assignments and posts. Young officers hope to catch the eye of their superiors.

The merchant class grovels to the Stroane triumvirate for trading rights to various resources of this mighty nation.

The nobility sits on the sidelines, waiting to see how the power struggles of the Triumvirate will end. And plot how to come out on the upside themselves...

Alliances between these three main groups form a complicated (and variable) web. Families here stretch back centuries, sometimes millennia and ancient ties and grudges still run strongly.

Selras will recommend that the PCs stay out of direct sight of Lorek himself, but he will attempt to get the the PCs near enough so they they may use the item.

Assuming the PCs are dressed appropriately, Selras will lead the PCs through the palace gates, showing the guard his official ambassador's seal. The guard will wave them through with no more than a bored expression on his face.

The palace is mostly a large defensive keep that has been made over with a pretty veneer. When the PCs enter, this will become more noticeable. The walls, though carved and often gilded are all several feet thick.

After the main gate, the group will see a large field where foot troops of various kinds. Selras will explain that the Stroane government likes visitors to seldom forget about Stroane's military strength. Thus several troops are usually training out here 'in front' where everyone entering or leaving the palace will see them. Selras refers to this area derisively as the "Parade Grounds."

The second set of gates leads into the palace proper. Tall hallways stretch of in various directions from a large antechamber. Selras leads the group down one, towards the main audience chamber.

For several hours each day, one member of the triumvirate is available to settle disputes across the Empire, or locally.

Today, the Chief Sage is seated on the throne. He is an older Laan man, of normal height. He is dressed as befits his rank -- in silk and gold with many jeweled rings adorning his fingers.

Selras will just peek in for a moment until he determines that Lorek is not in attendance.

Selras will think for a moment and then say, "It is possible he is in his personal suite. We can try there -- no don't worry, I won't be admitted even if he is there. They'll just tell me to come back at a later time."

Lorek loses patience with him quite quickly, he explains with a mischievous grin.

The suite is located on the 4th of 5 to 6 floors of the palace. Going to Lorek's suite will tell them that he IS indeed there. What to do from there is up to the PCs. The suite is fairly large so it is quite possible that Lorek (even though he is there) is out of the range of the location item's spell. If the PCs attempt to go either above or below the current floor, then they may have more luck. Remember, however, that the sensing itself can be dangerous and lead enemies to the sensor. The PCs should be paranoid about this.

Mentioning this will serve to heighten the tension. Make them feel like if they make one wrong move, then they stand a good chance of being noticed -- noticed in the middle of the strongest center of Stroane.

Going above the floor won't work. Above Lorek's suite is more of Lorek's suite and above and around that are private meeting rooms and so on. No one other than the royal family will be admitted.

Going below may offer another opportunity.

This wing of the palace on the 3rd floor is used for visiting dignitaries. The suite just below Lorek is currently occupied by an emissary from Danarchis and his wife. The Ambassador is away but his wife is there.

The only way for the group to find out if the suite is occupied is by spells or by simply knocking. Selras will say that knocking isn't that bad an idea, he knows that this floor is for visitors (his own room is on it) and he figures that he can fast talk his way through any situation that might arise. He will want the PCs to come with him as it might be dangerous for them to be caught roaming the halls without an escort. Plus he doesn't have the ability to work the item.

A maid will answer the door and Selras will announce himself and 'friends'. An accented voice from within will be heard, "Quella, who is there?"

The maid (Quella, apparently) will answer and the same voice will call out for the group to be shown in.

The group will see a young woman, in her mid-twenties, with fine features and a graceful poise. She is of Shay descent and is dressed in a fine gown of silks. To sum up, the Lady Del'Tria is a diplomat's wife. And currently, she is somewhat bored. She will be impressed by Selras's silver tongue and apparent station, and will be intrigued by Danari's (Itanian) background, and not know exactly what to think of the others, but will judge them by their actions.

At some point the PCs may get a chance to distract her enough to cast the finding spell from the item.

There should be some amusing interplay going on here as the PCs are torn between hurrying to get the information they need and the need to not arouse any suspicion in the Lady. Lady Del'Tria will be slightly flirtatious with one or two of the more handsome characters, but will not go beyond the game of courtly love. For the most part, she is harmless.

Unfortunately, after the PCs have cast their spell, they will find that the item is not there. Either Lorek wasn't in range at the time of casting or else, the

item isn't kept in his suite. (It may be kept at his country estate.)

[Campaign Notes:]

The PCs did this part a little differently. Instead of directly trying to get into a position to cast the spell from the item (like going to a room adjoining Lorek's suite) they decided to first inspect the situation from a distance. With Selras's patronage, they were able to invite themselves to one of the many social gatherings that occurs regularly in the Arakin court. This occasion was the marriage of the Lord General's nephew, an up and coming officer in the Stroane military.

At the "Ball" they met several people of interest, including the Lady Del'Tria. Also met was the Lord and Lady of House Arryl, a noble house of the elven nation of Namar-Tol. The Lord and his entourage are in Stroane to negotiate trade agreements.

Between that session and the next, two more players joined our ranks -- a Linaeri Illusionist and a Erlini Rogue. Since they both decided to be elven, I let them be attached to the entourage of House Arryl.

So for my game, the Lord Arryl will be aware of a strange taint on Prince Lorek. He will want the Illusionist (a journeyman in training for House Arryl) Flynnfried and the Rogue (who serves as the Lord's animal handler and personal servant and guard) Belric to investigate. To move things along more quickly and get them together with the rest of the party, I am having the Lord Arryl have links to Voriig Kye's organization. (But he doesn't know much about it -- only the good side, i.e., that people in the organization fight against certain people who are known to be evil. Lord Arryl doesn't know that this is just Kye's 'evil' enemies, as opposed to his 'good' enemies.)

So because the above scene in the Lady Del'Tria's chambers has been changed, we will have a similar meeting with the Lord Arryl and make *his* chambers be the suite just below Lorek's. If the PCs wish, they can confide in Lord Arryl and his group. Lord Arryl will know of Selras's connection to the Sel-Kai side of the "Organization" through his excellent information sources and will invite Selras to his suite for a private meal. He will do so using one of the several pass phrases that have been developed in the organization. Selras will invite the party along as well as he will trust the code.

If the PCs cast the spell from the item, the result will be the same. Even if Lorek is there, the item will not be.

Finally, to bring the two groups of PCs together,

Lord Arryl will be assassinated at the same time as Selras. Lord Arryl will probably NOT die, as he is a Healer by profession. (See the NPC section.) He WILL be incapacitated for a decent amount of time, however.

After this, Lord Arryl will order the Illusionist and Rogue PCs to go to Lorek's estate to hopefully get the item. It must be destroyed (though he doesn't know how, yet).

Behind the Scenes

Any time the PCs get close enough to Lorek to cast the spell, they will find that the item is not in Lorek's possession. He actually keeps it safely hidden away at his estate. Several days after the PCs arrive in Arakin, they will learn that Lorek is going to be traveling back there. At that point the PCs may either try to follow Lorek, or move more quickly and beat him back there.

The Rhiani Factor

Because the evil Rhiani monks have been hunting them it seems, the PCs may wish to find out more about their link with Lorek.

As Selras mentioned, Lorek is now always accompanied by his two Rhiani "bodyguards." These look like normal Rhiani, however, and do not seem to have any tattoos.

At some random time, the PCs will be able to sight Lorek and his guards and see for themselves. Little else can be learned.

Behind the Scenes

If the PCs try to do a power perception, an extremely good roll (176+) will allow them to detect some traces of magic on the Rhiani guards. The guards are indeed the evil Rhiani Monks (to themselves, called Guardians of the Flame). But they are using Face Shifting spells to modify their features. As this spell is a real change, rather than an illusion, it is difficult to detect as magic except when the spell is actually cast.

The Assassination of Selras

Before the PCs leave the city (most likely to the estate of Lorek), Selras will be the target of an assassination attempt. Unless the PCs are extremely lucky and/or willing to use their precious supply of healing herbs on Selras to Lifekeeping him, Selras will be killed by a Cult of Stars member. (See the NPC section).

This will happen at night and preferably on the street. The group will be walking down a deserted section of street when a slight flash will be caught out of the corner of their eye, coming from above the street level.

Luckily for the party, they are not being targeted. They will only be attacked directly if they get in the way or otherwise try to interfere. Most likely it will be over before the PCs can react: Selras will be on the ground bleeding from wounds in the head and chest.

The flash seen before was a Cult of Stars member Longdooring into position on a roof top. A flash of light will envelope the party, most likely stunning them (Light Eruption, -10 to RRs). Next, two Laen throwing stars whip into Selras, one striking him in the head, the other in the heart.

If the PCs look nice and stunned, the Cultist will Longdoor down and retrieve her shuriken. She will be able to easily get one out of the heart of Selras but will have difficulty with the other as it is lodged rather firmly in Selras's skull. By that time, the PCs will be coming around and she will flee, leaving behind the star. She vanishes in a flash of light.

Give the PCs the following description of her: about 5'7" with black closely cropped hair. Her race is difficult to tell, she's not exactly like any that you are familiar with. [She is Duranaki.] Her skin is very pale and her body is completely covered in a leather armor, from her neck to ankles and wrists.

The Shuriken (or Throwing Star) that was left behind is of Laen, a kind of volcanic glass. Any weapon of Laen is considered enchanted and has a bonus of +25. The shuriken uses the dagger table at a +5. (So like a +30 total dagger). The star, oddly enough has seven points. If Cassius makes a memory roll, then he will remember that the star that was pressed into the face of the sleeping man he saw killed by a woman was seven pointed as well. (See Cassius's character section, Dream set IV.) The dream was about a Cult of Stars member who was hired (by Sarnak) to kill the Katra.

If the players move quickly enough, they can use healing herbs on Selras. Due to the extent of damage, Selras is already in Soul Departure rounds and will only have 5 rounds before death is irreversible. The PCs will most likely be stunned or fighting the Cultist for most of this, so Selras is not expected to live.

However if Selras does live, give the group extra



experience points.

When he recovers consciousness, he will recognize the shuriken and belonging to an enemy of the group both he and the PCs are now associated with. He will want to send messages to both his contacts in Kaitaine and his main contact in Sel-Kai. He will not be feeling up to accompanying the PCs to the estate of Lorek.

Behind the Scenes

The group that the PCs have now joined, ruled by Voriig Kye, has many enemies, one of which is the Cult of Stars. The Cult is part of the Jerak Ahrenreth, the Secret Circle, of which Voriig Kye is one of the leaders. However, there is much in-fighting between the different factions and Kye has foiled several of the Cult of Star's attempts at power.

While the Cult does not actually know the Kye is behind it all, they do know that Selras is a part of the group that has foiled them in the past. His assassination is a lesson and a message to that group.

At some point a message will arrive from Tarna and Dalov, in Kaitaine. It will tell them that they have located some one within their group which may possess the knowledge necessary to destroy the Ring of the Death Claw. He is located in Sel-Kai. (And is actually Voriig Kye, himself.) The message will instruct the party to journey there after they have completed their mission in Stroane. If they can actually retrieve another of the rings (from Lorek), so much the better. Then they should attempt to get to Sel-Kai as quickly as possible.

Voriig Kye has now taken a personal interest in the PCs and will wish to meet who has brought his group the very powerful Ring(s) of the Death Claw.

[Campaign Notes:]

The party has now met and partially united with the two new PCs, Flynn and Belric. Selras is completely dead and the Lord Arryl lies in a healing trance from which he cannot be awakened. Read Cassius's journal to see exactly what happened. Mark is doing a great job with that journal -- the fight was a little bit more difficult than he is letting on, but it is recorded exactly how Cassius would record it. He did go full OB at the end and luck out and score a huge double open-ended up attack. The Cassius character is really cool, by the way, because even though he is low level, he's had amazing luck when he needs it -- this has interestingly colored Cassius's perception of his own abilities. It makes him quite arrogant. I love it.

Because of my PCs actions and stated plans for attempting to contact the other members of the

triumvirate, I'm going to add a section below, before the Lorek's Estate scene. If you don't want to get into more intrigue than we currently have, then you can have something happen like Lord Arryl ordering them to get the item as soon as possible by going to the estate to look for it. If Arryl doesn't exist in your game, then have a message arrive or some such.

To Divide the Three That Are One

The PCs are now in a bad place. Their only completely trusted contact is now dead. They have a link with the House Arryl people, but the original PCs are wary to trust them too far. They don't know who the assassin's were nor who sent them.

The Story

The Lord Arryl will recover in about 2 days. He will not be fully mended, but he will regain consciousness at that time. Before then of course, the Lady Arryl will have to be informed of the assassination attempt. She will order everyone involved to not let the information leak that the Arryl was attacked until after more information is learned. The Lord Arryl will be taken to his suite and put to bed. The court will only be told that he is "unwell".

When he finally does awaken, he will most likely be told of the PCs plan to attempt to turn the other members of the triumvirate against Lorek.

Behind the Scenes

Frankly this is a nearly impossible task. The PCs may not even be able to approach one or both of the other triumvirate members without the influence and aid of the Lord Arryl.

Arryl will counsel the PCs to wait and bide their time. The Lord Sage and the Lord General will not be swayed by hysterical seeming arguments from random people who are not even citizens of Stroane. And in this case, especially not arguments from a Namar-Tol elf. (His people are not well trusted in other lands.) They will need complete and dramatic proof that the Prince Lorek has been corrupted by evil. While both of these people are not adverse to bringing down Lorek (Lorek disagrees with them far too often), they will not debase themselves in front of the people of Stroane by subscribing to wild superstitions.

The Estate of Lorek

Before Selras was killed, the party learned of an estate kept by Prince Lorek, about 40 miles north of Arakin. Also that Lorek was planning to return there within one week's time.

The party has several options at this point. Here's the knowledge they have:

Lorek is tainted by a corruptive influence

Lorek does not carry the item

The item is not at his palace suite

This means that most likely, the item is guarded at his country estate. The question now is, should the PCs go there before Lorek and attempt to get the item, or do something else.

The something else might include ambushing Lorek, or following him, hoping that he will then leave the estate with the item.

In my opinion, their best bet is to scout out the place at least before Lorek gets there. It is more likely the estate guards will be more lax with him not in attendance.

The Story

The terrain on the road north of Arakin is a pleasant combination of fertile rolling farmland interspersed with forest land. The journey is easy and goes quickly as the road is extremely well maintained.

About every 10 miles is a village or small town, usually numbering less than a couple of thousand individuals. They seem prosperous and well-kept little communities. The season being winter, there are few people in the fields. The farmland is lying fallow for now. Even outside the villages, the occasional cottage can be seen off of the road. Almost the entire way north seem inhabited to some degree.

The PCs don't know exactly where the estate lies, so when they get approximately to the place, they might slow down some. Eventually they sight a large stone pillar erected by the side of the road and marking a fork. The pillar is carved with (at the top) the symbol of Arakin, and below it the symbol of the house crest of the Prince Lorek. If the PCs have sighted Lorek before this, allow them to make a memory roll to remember that this is the same crest that he wears emblazoned on his cloak.

About two miles on the lesser road will lead them to the manor estates of Prince Lorek. The land here is mostly cleared farmland, although some stretches of forest exist. Trees also follow most of the small streams which are abundant in the area.

If the party leaves the road, they will be able to mostly make their way unseen towards the manor. There is some traffic, though not much. Mostly consisting of farmhands moving bales of hay in wagons from one part of the estate to another. If they are seen, they will be questioned. See the Behind the

Scenes section following for a list of possible encounters.

Once again, the terrain consists of low rolling hills. As the PCs top a final rise, they can see the manor.

First there is a wall of stone, about 15 feet high. There is only one gate. The wall is not a full defensive wall with parapets and such. It's only about two to three feet thick and it's obvious that defenders are not meant to walk on it. Apparently, Stroane has not seen war this far inland in some time.

The wall encircles a large house constructed completely of stone. The roof is three storeys above the ground and is covered with a slate shingling. The total diameter of the wall is about 100 yards -- the house is between 50 to 100 feet away from the wall at any given point. So the house and a couple of out-buildings take up most of the interior space.

The back right corner of the house consists of a tower like structure that rises another 30 feet above the roof of the house -- making the total height about 60 feet. It has windows starting about 10 feet above the roof. These windows are fairly small (I.e., difficult to climb through). The rest of the house has larger windows which start at the second storey.

The PCs can get to within 1000 feet of the walls without being seen (at least from the house). The remaining distance is difficult to cross because it is completely open ground -- apparently left as hay fields. However, night would be a different matter...

Behind the Scenes

The PCs will see the following interesting things when they get to the manor (during the day, for the first time):

A number of men (about a dozen?) training in the courtyard, within the walls. They seem to be men-at-arms.

There is only one gate to the wall

There are several doors to the manor -- one main one at the front, and two smaller ones on the right side and on the back side

There is a large set of stables, built onto the house, on the left side

The PCs may have the following encounters (roll randomly):

Peasant farmer(s) -- He (they) will wish to know who the PCs are and why they're here

A hunting party -- a horn blast will give warning before they are in site: they consist of a half dozen mounted men with longbows and broadswords. They

are also accompanied by 5-10 hunting dogs.

A patrol party -- consist of 10 men who patrol the estate lands (about 1000 acres), nearby villages, and the main road. One patrol is out at any given moment. They are armed and armored heavily (broadswords, AT 13, levels 4 to 5).

Obviously, scouting the place will be best done at night. At this time of the month the night is fairly bright (moon is half waning) and the weather is actually fairly clear. So it is possible that they will still be seen approaching the manor. Guards are stationed at the gate (4) and in the highest tower level (2). The rest of the wall is unmanned, though at some intervals a single guard may do a quick circle of the perimeter.

The main gate guards are changed every four hours if the PCs wait to check.

Anyone who goes over the wall will want to avoid the stable area. Approaching too closely may awaken the hunting dogs who are kenneled there. This noise will bring people to investigate.

Climbing the outer wall is not difficult -- it's relatively craggy so even people with little climbing skill should be able to scale it.

The wall of the house is a different matter. It's completely smooth fitted stone, finely masoned. The only way is by use of a grappling hook or similar device. Either the roof or a window may be grappled.

The two side doors are small, sturdy, wooden doors that are locked at night. They can be picked with normal difficulty but have a 75% chance of being barred from the inside as well. (Unenterable.)

The main doors are locked at night as well but are unbarred. They are quite large however and most likely make a decent amount of noise when opened.

The PCs have a chance of discovering another way in. This cannot be seen from any vantage point on the ground, but if the PCs use something which can enhance their sight (like Long Eye, Sight Merge, etc.) they will be able to see an opening in the roof near the tower. This is about 15 - 20 feet square and opens on the house atrium.

The atrium descends down to the ground floor -- three levels below the roof. On each level there is a balcony with a railing that opens onto the atrium. Vines and exotic plants line trellises located on each corner of the atrium.

If the PCs choose this route, the GM should roll for encounters with strolling denizens of the manor. They may be either armed or unarmed.

The main thing that needs to be known about the manor is where the ring is located. The party can utilize the item given to them in Kaitaine from as far away as just outside the walls. By moving around the walls, they can eventually get a "coverage" of the entire manor.

The ring seems to be located 35 feet below the tower. It would be a good guess to assume that the way to the ring is through the tower.

The tower has windows, but they are too small to climb through, plus they start 10 feet above the roof of the rest of the house (sort of the wrong direction to be going). The floors within the tower are interlinked with a spiral stone staircase -- but unfortunately this stair starts at the second level. The only entrance to the first level (containing a way downward) is a heavy looking door located on the 1st level of the manor.

If the PCs check for magic, they will sense essence on the door. (Actually a Rune). Anyone who makes a Read Runes skill will be able to tell that the rune protects the door in some way. (Door Rune: If anyone other than those keyed by the caster pass the door, then a +35 cold ball goes off).

Possible means of getting around the trap include:

Lock Lore spell list has a spell to disable magical traps

Someone with a high Read Runes and Attunement may be able to turn the rune off for short time (Attunement Roll of a Hard after a normal Read Runes roll).

Take it like a man!

The Cold Ball will go off an unlimited number of times. It makes a small amount of sound when it does, so the GM should roll for manor residents hearing it.

[Campaign Notes:]

My players found the atrium route through magical means and decided to do that. They scaled the walls (somewhat slowly, though they did have Silence spells up courtesy of the Illusionist) and descended to the 1st level without incident. They found the door to the tower, and the Illusionist tried to attune to the Rune by failed and got cold balled. He wasn't too injured. Just then a pair of guard looking types came down a hallway and the party assassinated them quite effectively. Ouch. I mentioned that these people might just be innocents, but the party rationalized it as "what you get when you work for an evil prince." OK.

So then the Paladin of all people tries to attune to the

thing and rolls super-well. This is killing me how often he actually DOES get the favor of the gods. So I allow him to "turn off" the rune for the time it takes them to pick the lock on the door and get through.

The normal manor residents DO NOT go through the door. They stay away from it. In fact, those that Lorek has taken into the tower, have not been seen again.

There is currently only one person who is keyed to go through the door: one of the evil Rhiani monks that is currently stationed here. He will come up later.

When (if) the PCs get through the door, they will be on the ground level of the tower. The room is circular, about 20 feet in diameter. The ceiling is bare stone, about 10 feet above and is braced with large wooden beams. The rest of the room is bare.

In the center lies an opening in the floor. This is the top of a spiral staircase descending into the darkness below. (Neither the tower room, nor the stair is lit. The PCs will have to provide their own.)

The stair is wide enough for two to descend abreast. It takes two and a half revolutions to go down approximately 30 feet. If the characters use the Ring Finding item, it will be quite near.

The stairs open to a large circular room. On the opposite side of the staircase pillar, lies the ring which the party seeks. Unfortunately it is guarded by two Spear Demons. Nearly across from the stair is a rough hewn passageway deeper into the earth.

Encounters

Spear Demons:

Level 10 Fighters, Spear (Melee) 120, Spear (Thrown) 90

150 Hits

AT(DB):13(40)

Extremely resistant to Stun (Treat as having a Stunned Maneuvering skill of 150)

Notes: The demons will most likely hear the characters descending. They will wait in the shadows and attack when they are sure that they don't recognize the PCs. Spear Demons fight with little sound. They never do more than grunt slightly, even at the most heinous of wounds. They will not call for help and will fight to the death. (They are controlled.)

Unless the PCs cause undue noise, most of the sounds of battle will have been muffled to and extent

that the rest of the manor will be unaware.

The Story

The PCs now find themselves in the large circular room, seemingly carved from the natural rock. On the other side of the staircase, they will see a small dais on which sits a silk wrapped package.

If the PCs probe the dais with Power Perception and/or detect magic spells, they will learn that the area is rich in natural Essaece. It seems most strong within one foot of the silk package. (Which can be assumed correctly to be the ring).

Picking up the item will cause the following to happen: A high pitched scream comes shrieking out of the item after it is picked up (not just touched). It cuts off almost as soon as it begins and the gathering of Essaece lessens in the area. At nearly the same time, the a 10 foot diameter area will be enveloped by a +35 cold ball

A quick thinking PC will shove the item into the shielding box with the other one. Give the PCs a brief moment to yell out actions. I like to do it in real-time by describing the situation, saying something about the scream and then calling out "Actions?!" Those who react within 1-2 seconds of real time get to do their actions, others just take the cold ball.

Behind the Scenes

The ring was sitting in this position to absorb Essaece over a period of time. This room is not particularly well suited to defending the item and the PCs may realize this. Spell Users may be able to answer the question, assuming they have some knowledge of Essaece nodes or flows. This spot is a sub-minor node.

It doesn't matter if the "scream" from the item was heard above by the manor residents: the Rhiani will sense the disturbance and will be through the door to the tower within 5 rounds. The guards of the manor will be alerted by the Rhiani, but will be unable to follow as they are not "keyed" for the tower door.

If the PCs are in visual range of the tower door, and the Rhiani has already passed through, the guards may forget their master's warnings and charge. They'll be cold balled just like anyone else, assuming the trap still exists on the door. As will anyone within 10 feet of the outside of the door and 5 feet of the inside.

The Rhiani will go after who ever holds the ring, if the ring is unshielded, and who ever is closest if it is already in the box. If the Rhiani gets the ring, then he will flee the area, and let the normal guards take care of the PCs. Otherwise, he will fight to the death.

See the NPC section for the abilities of the evil Rhiani monks.

If they can defeat the Rhiani, the way the PCs came in will no longer be the way they can leave. About 15-20 people stand in various positions outside the tower door, waiting for an opportunity.

The only choice is to attempt the passageway below and hope that there's an exit.

Under Lorek's Estate

The passage out of the circular sub-tower room is roughly hewn into the natural rock. It leads a short distance before a hole can be seen. There is a ladder-like thing made of wood which descends about 15 feet.

The passage at this point is somewhat lower than before. -- about 6 feet in height. It is 5 feet wide.

[description of underground area]

Cell -- this 20 by 20 foot room is a cell of some sort, having a lock on the outside, and moldering heaps of trash scattered about it.

Workroom -- this is Lorek's work room containing all manner of random, and mostly useless ingredients for ritual magic. Lorek is not a mage by profession and is slightly mad because of his contact to the Ring. If you wish, the PCs can find a couple of things such as a healing herb or two, or perhaps some poison. The door is locked and requires a Lock Picking Hard roll to open it.

Ritual Room -- this room is bare except for some chalk and paint designs in the center of the room. The room is obviously part of a natural cave and is about 40 feet in diameter. Any with Spell Lore can tell that this room has involved ritual magic. Any with a Circle Lore roll can tell that the latest thing cast was some sort of summoning ritual.

Study -- Lorek's underground study. This 40 by 40 room is better carved from the natural rock than the other rooms. There are tapestries of battle scenes hanging around the walls. The room contains a large wooden desk and two large wooden bookcases. The books are of many different types, some of arcane lore, some of more mundane knowledge. No spell lists are here, however. This room also has a guardian. It is an Air elemental. These creatures will show up to a Presence spell but will "feel" strange. Some one with the Ethereal sight background will be able to see it, but it is completely invisible to other people. It has the Magician spell list Wind Law to 10th and will protect its guarded area with these spells plus its own wind attack which causes Impact crits. (Treat the attack as a Directed Elemental attack with OB 70.) It guards the desk. It will ignore people

who do not attack or do not mess with the desk or come within 10 feet of the desk. Unfortunately, this includes the bookshelves. If a PC takes a book by hand, they will inadvertently incur the wrath of the elemental. The elemental cannot be harmed by normal weapons. It can be wounded by magical weapons or spells.

If the guardian is defeated, then an interesting thing can be found in the desk of Lorek. Among the misc. papers, the PCs can find a bound book. The book is a journal of Lorek's magical experimentation since gaining the Ring. This is written in Lorek's own hand. The following can be learned from reading this document:

The Ring conveys powers of evil essence lists

Some of the spells that Lorek have been using will be detailed

Lorek will express great enthusiasm for some of the directly damaging spells (apparently he practiced on random peasants from his estate)

Veiled references to the 13th tribe of the Rhiani. They gave him the ring, but why is not told

This information would go a long way towards damning Lorek in the eyes of the other two members of the triumvirate. If the PCs gain this, they will be able to combat Lorek in the political arena (or perhaps allow the Lord Arryl to do this)

Exits:

A large door at the end of the long and twisting hallway, is shut and barred from the inside (this side). It is made completely of iron and is actually trapped from the other side, magically. If a PC passes through it and then tries to re-enter, then they will take a +35 cold ball.

The other side of the door opens onto a fairly narrow ledge. The ledge overlooks a wide and deep chasm which falls away into darkness. The ledge descends at a steep angle for about 50 feet. The party, once reaching the bottom is now nearly 100 feet below the surface.

The bottom is a natural cave structure. With a few branchings, the group can wide their way for about a mile until they reach a narrow crack which allows only one to pass at a time. After this, they will find themselves in a cave which exits onto the bottom of a small canyon / riverbed. The entrance to the cave is almost impossible to see, even when you are standing right next to it (you have to squeeze behind a large rock).

Behind the Scenes

Luckily for the PCs, no one could pass through the

tower door to follow directly. However, Lorek keeps two pet mages at his estate. He does not trust them, so he doesn't give them access to the sub-tower. He works with them in magical rituals and uses them as magical bodyguards.

However, both of these mages have some idea that there is another exit from the underground area. They will quickly organize search parties of about 10 each + 1 mage + 6 dogs to search.

The senior mage is the one the PCs will have to worry about. The other group will start circling with the dogs trying to locate a scent. This will take a while. But the senior mage has the divination skill. He will use it to help him pick the right direction to start in. The two mages are not particularly fond of each other and will not combine efforts or abilities. Each one wants to be the one who returns the trespassers to their master. Note: They have no idea that the PCs stole the Ring because they don't know what the ring is nor where it is kept.

The senior mage is Velnik Tre'Atha. (See the NPC section.) Make Divination rolls for him -- if his rolls are good enough, then he may be able to be at or near the entrance to the cave when the PCs exit. If this is the case, he will fight them and will send the soldiers with him to their deaths but will retreat if the battle is going against him.

[Campaign Notes:]

He didn't roll that well for Divination, just got a basic direction. The PCs exited the cave a decent amount of time before Velnik got there. They ran on foot to where they left their horses (about 3 miles away) and escaped without ever being seen directly by Velnik's group. However, Velnik is about 3 hours behind them all the way to Arakin.

So my characters didn't run into him, and of course didn't get captured. Being captured is a bad thing. I leave it up to you.

Adventure IV -- From Darkness To Darkness

Overview

The party will flee to Sel-Kai and make contact with Voriig Kye himself. On the way there, they must deal with the crafty and relentless Velnik Tre'Atha. Depending on what happens, Velnik will follow until he has captured the ring.

After initial meetings, Kye will fake the destruction

of the Rings and will reward the PCs for their "efforts." He will draw them firmly into the fold and begin to make plans for using them against the likes of the Grey Ring. Kye will be wary of both Cassius' and Danari's ability to Dream. (For this could unravel his plans.) When necessary, Kye (who is a mystic/seer by profession, if a Dragonlord can have a profession) can manipulate their dreams personally. But Dreams can still occur that are outside of his influence. Because of this, Kye will use the group against evil targets as much as possible, such as the Cult of Stars, the 13th Tribe, etc.

Next to Voriig Kye, Velnik Tre'Atha and Prince Lorek look quite pathetic. But their stingers are not completely pulled...

The 13th tribe of the Rhiani will be relentless in their pursuit of the PCs. The PCs are now responsible for the loss of TWO major Rings! They have lost track of the group since they've been under Kye's influence, but they will not forget...

Finally, Nerik, the member of the Grey Ring from Kaitaine has not stopped his pursuit of the PCs trail. His dreams tell him that great danger for the Grey Ring surrounds the PCs and some "item" they carry. (He does not know what the item is). The Unlife and other forces are bringing enormous amounts of resources to bear. He lags behind the PCs by several weeks, but with the use of his spells, his Dreams, and his divinations, he is confident that he will eventually catch up to them. But he is afraid that he will be too late...

Out of Stroane

This section of the adventure should be a game of cat and mouse. If the PCs are smart they will make absolutely sure that they are not being followed.

When reaching Arakin, they will most likely wish to report to the Lord Arryl (and Selras, if he still lives).

Though Velnik will fall behind, he will not give up and will end up trailing the party all the way to Arakin. There he will consult with his master, the Prince Lorek.

Lorek obviously will have a fit when he learns that the PCs have raided his personal domain. By concentrating deeply, he will test his bond with the Ring. And because the Ring has most likely been placed in the Kregora box with the original one, he will be unable to sense it. He will fly into a rage, possibly killing a few innocent bystanders (further fueling the rumor mill).

When he calms down enough, he will command Velnik to return the Ring to him, or...

Velnik understands completely. He will take 12 men plus the estate's Master of the Hunt to hunt down the party. In addition to this, he will send messenger birds to Patrol outposts along the route he believes the PCs have taken from the city.

Lord Arryl will recommend strongly that the PCs contact the Organization in Selkai. The fastest route overland is by following the Arakin river up to the pass through the Spine of Emer. It is a difficult journey, but it is the fastest and probably safest (at least from Lorek's minions).

The Story

The PCs will travel away from Arakin as quickly as possible. Some time around mid-day of the second day of traveling, the party will be stopped by a Stroane patrol. The patrol was alerted by carrier bird that a party matching the description of the PCs should be detained at all costs.

The action will progress as follows:

The PCs are making their way on the river road which is heading to the Spine of Emer. Already the road has become more rough -- transversing hill after hill and rising in altitude steadily.

The traffic is modest, mostly heading towards Arakin. At intervals of every 10 miles or so, there are small villages. One or two patrols of Stroane military can be seen passing.

At mid-day on the second day, another such patrol goes past. However, just after they are past you, you note that the group has halted.

"You there!" you hear. "Stop, and stand by the edge of the road." The group is about 20 feet distant.

The patrol leader was somewhat slow to recognize the party, but now that he has, he will carry out his orders.

If the party flees, the patrol (consisting of 10 men) will give chase. Any battle ensuing will be the guards trying to take the PCs prisoner. They will not try to kill the PCs, unless the PCs kill a couple of the guards. Then they will kill first and ask questions later. The patrol leader will call for the PCs to lay down their weapons and surrender.

The guards are 4th level members of the Stroane military. The leader is 6th level. They fight with normal moral -- if the PCs succeed in killing several of them and/or the leader, then they should make a moral check. Failure indicates that they will flee.

If the party does happen to surrender (probably assuming that they will be able to escape later) the guards will take their weapons and armor and will strip them of any obvious belongings.

If the PCs run at any time, they will not have much luck in evading the patrol unless they leave the main road. The patrol members are not particularly good trackers and the PCs should be able to escape this way.

If the PCs wait to talk to the patrol, it will be somewhat more difficult to disengage from them. However, the patrol does not have any mage-born with it -- magic will work fairly well against them. If a fight ensues and magic is used, then the patrol members will flee that much more quickly.

If the PCs really get the upper hand in this and attempt to hunt down fleeing members of the patrol so that they can't report, the PCs might be able to do this.

Overall, after this encounter, the PCs will probably be more cautious about traveling on the road, and will assume that they are being followed.

Behind the Scenes

Meanwhile, Velnik Tre'Atha has not given up. He is about a day behind the PCs, but is riding hard, using his divinations to guide him and his men.

Velnik will most likely catch up to the PCs and when he does, the party will be in grave danger. At this point it is likely that Velnik will indeed capture the party.

It will be impossible to describe all of the possibilities surrounding this encounter, so I will first give some background on Velnik's personality, some strategies that he might use, and the strengths and weaknesses of his men.

Velnik is quite intelligent and should be played that way. However, he is also very cautious. Nothing is more important to him than his own life. Therefore he will flee if he feels that the situation is proving untenable.

Velnik will make use of his familiar to locate the party when he is close enough. One good thing for the PCs is that Velnik rarely utilizes his familiar to its full capacity. He usually keeps it away from dangerous situations -- not really because he cares about it, but because if it dies then he will be severely hampered.

Velnik's basic strategy is to locate the PCs, move 1/2 of his men to one side of their camp, and himself and the other 1/2 to the other side. Then he will get close enough to cast Slumber Mist to make the PCs fall unconscious. His men will then approach, holding the PCs under crossbows. When the men are positioned correctly, Velnik himself will step forward and wake people up, disarming them and taking them prisoner.

Weaknesses: The main weakness of this plan is that neither Velnik and his men are particularly stealthy. Alert PCs will hear something at least and realize that there is a problem. Another weakness is that Velnik has given specific instructions that the PCs are not to be killed at this time. (He can't kill any until he knows exactly where the Ring is.)

If a battle ensues, Velnik will attempt to use spells like Sudden Light and Lord Sleep to merely stun the PCs so that he can take them prisoner. If the battle is not going in his favor, then he will step up the attack to include more dangerous bolt/ball and Vacuum spells.

If actually engaged himself, he will of course utilize Shield Mastery spells to protect him. With all of those spells, he can achieve a potential DB of 170 + parry.

Over all, things do not look good for the PCs. If they somehow manage to escape, then Velnik will take what's left of his men and follow. If Velnik alone is left (because he was forced to flee), he will return to the nearest Patrol Post to get supplies and then continue after the group. He will not give up because he fears Lorek's wrath and he now has a personal vendetta against the PCs.

Captured!

If the PCs are captured, Velnik will strip them of all possessions, especially weapons, armor, and magical items. Danari's Mindstone is an interesting point: Velnik may not know that touch another person's Mindstone causes a point black Lightning Bolt attack (See Danari's character). This might be an opportunity for the PCs.

Otherwise, the PCs will be bound tightly and marched back to Arakin. This will take several days, depending on when Velnik caught up to the party.

For my PCs, I think it will be unlikely for them to go meekly. Especially the paladin. Strangely enough, he will flee alone if things are going badly enough so that the TWO rings do not fall into the wrong hands. He will definitely die for it. The others may be willing to submit because they hope to escape later.

If Cassius DOES die, then Velnik will likely find himself in possession of two Rings of the Death Claw. His master Lorek only mentioned one. He will agonize over attuning to one of them. (If he attunes to the wrong one, Lorek will know about it).

Otherwise, the PCs will be questioned on the way, and questioned about the Gryphon Pendants. (Velnik will not know anything about them, but will be able to sense them as magical in some way).

Each night, Velnik will summon a Type II demon to

watch over the PCs. The rest of Velnik's band will be nearly as unhappy about this as the PCs are.

Possibilities for Escape:

D'alaan is excellent at concealing weapons. He has an enormous Trickery skill. He is also fairly good at contortions. His poisoned blades might be able to take out a couple of guards.

Nerik should be just about catching up to the PCs at this point. If this seems a little too deus ex machina to you, then feel free to ignore it. Anyway, Nerik may not be able to do anything about it -- his only defensive spells are Light Eruption and Shock Bolt from the Brilliance list.

If the PCs are dragged all the way back to Arakin, then they will be thrown into the dungeon under the palace and held until Lorek has time to question them.

Lorek will want to know who they are, how they came to find out about his ring, and who they work for. Also what do the Gryphon Pendants stand for. he will torture them if necessary, to learn the answers to these questions.

The only possibility for the PCs to avoid torture and eventual death is that Lord Arryl learns of their capture and attempts to free them, or Nerik finds where they are and attempts to free them.

Not Captured!

If the some or all of the PCs manage to escape the clutches of Lorek, then they will have some hard journeying ahead of them, possible still being pursued.

The best case scenario is that Velnik is dead. Unlikely.

The next best case is that Velnik's men have all died or have fled. This means that Velnik must regroup, giving the PCs time to escape Stroane.

A bad case is that some of the PCs didn't make it away from Velnik's attack. Luckily for them, they will not be harmed much, and if wounded, they will be tended to. Velnik needs healthy prisoners to question. This opens the possibility of a rescue attempt or ambush by the other party members.

[Campaign Notes:]

My players got their ass kicked but they all lived, and actually won the battle by the barest of margins. It was good fun. Most of Velnik's men got killed and the rest fled. Flynn went wild with Tear Cloud spells which disrupted the attack long enough for every one to spread out some. Later, another tear cloud managed to stun Velnik for an amazing 6 rounds.

Flynn was lucky to catch him in the radius. Good guessing on his part.

Velnik left after he got stunned because most of his men were down. Also, the Paladin made good use of Detect Enemies to track him. They couldn't follow very quickly because the entire party was suffering from things like broken arms, severed muscles, etc.

The Spine of Emer

The road leads higher and higher into the mountains and the temperature drops alarmingly, especially at night. Normal day temperatures are in the 30's, just above freezing mostly. At night, the temperature drops to the teens and twenties.

The pass though the Spine of Emer is a difficult one. It is very high altitude and at this time of the year is blanketed with snow. Special precautions must be taken by the PCs at this point or they may be killed by the elements.

Traffic on the road will gradually fade away and villages will become much more scarce. Encounters at this point will be animals or monsters rather than

- humans.
- wolves
- a bear
- hill troll

Eventually the group will ascend to just above the timber line. There they will sight the pass though the Spine of Emer, beginning with a small plateau between two large peaks.

After about a mile, the plateau narrows to about 20 feet wide, and a great chasm drops off to the southern side. The road now follows this ledge on into the mountains.

This road will continue for about 30 miles of extremely bad terrain. The ledge is often completely iced over, and that's only when it's not covered by several feet of snow.

About 10 miles in there lies a Stroane outpost consisting of several hundred men. They guard this pass against incursions from the hostile Jaaderi forces on the other side of the mountains. However, few attempts have been made at Stroane in recent years. Stroane and the Jaaderi have an uneasy peace.

The PCs know by this time that they must avoid the military at all costs if they seek to escape Stroane. Getting around this outpost is a difficult task as the entire purpose of the outpost is to guard the pass.

In the dead of night it is quite dark due to overcast

skies. It may be possible to get by them that way. This becomes more likely if magic is used.

The PCs may also attempt to go around the outpost, by going above it -- up the mountain. This would mean abandoning their mounts.

When the party makes it past the outpost, they will have a couple of days travel through the very difficult terrain. New snow fall will be a likely occurrence and there's currently a couple of feet on the road.

For these days roll for encounters. These might take the form of

Blizzard

Gark patrol (5-10)

Jaaderi patrol (12)

The latter two encounter types could use some explanation.

Gark activity has been on the rise in the Spine of Emer mountains. The reason for this is currently unknown but both Stroane patrols and Jaaderi patrols have been attacked in the past year.

Towards the end of the pass, there is an outpost of the Jaaderi. Or at least there was.

When the PCs get within range, they might be able to scent smoke on the cold mountain air. When the outpost comes within visual range, they will be surprised at the carnage. Twenty or thirty bodies of Jaaderi lie crumpled in the snow. A small fort built of stone and large timbers lies partially destroyed. Smoke still rises from the shell of the building.

If the dead are examined, they all wear markings and uniforms of some sort of military. They are either dead because of arrows and sword slashes. However, if the fort is approached, some of the bodies within are scorched and burnt, but they don't lie near burnt furnishings.

Outside, footprints are everywhere. The odd thing about some of the foot prints is that they are unshod. The foot prints are large and vaguely human, but NOT like a normal human's foot. The Jaaderi are all in heavy boots as would befit the weather.

Nothing of value remains either within the fort, or on the bodies. The party's best guess is that the attack occurred about a half a day ago.

If a good tracking roll is made, the strange foot prints can be determined to be Garks. Why they have attacked the outpost is unknown.

After the outpost, there is only another mile of the high cliff road until the track becomes a more normal (if steep and treacherous) road winding down

though the other side of the mountains.

On this side of the mountains a great forest of evergreens stretch down until the foothills of the Spine of Emer. But beyond that lies a great plain covered in dried grass. Tai-Emer lies before you.

The Downward Spiral

The road leads down and down, cutting back and forth across mountain, descending into the hills. The road is much less well taken care of as in Stroane -- for the first couple of days, there will be no sign of civilization.

The road descends steeply for the next several days. The plains of Tai-Emer are not far above sea level while the Stroane region was three to four thousand feet above sea level. The mountains, now behind the PCs, look all the more impressive due to this relative altitude change.

When the party eventually reaches the foothills of the mountains, the road will turn to the north, heading more into the Lankan empire. Since the party will most likely wish to avoid travel through this area, they will most likely leave the road at this point.

Through Tai-Emer

The PCs will be skirting the southern plains of Tai-Emer. This region is a sort of buffer zone between the aggressive Lankan people and the pacifistic Y'nari of Nuyan-Khom.

Though it is not completely a desert, the southern planes are not very hospitable to humans. Hardy grasses and bushes cover the land. A few stunted trees grow here, but because of the lack of fertile soil and abundant water, few grow to be very large.

The plain is rolling however, and distances are deceptive. The party will want to travel to the city of Nan-Ro, a border city of Nuyan-Khom populated by Y'nari. This city lies 400 miles away from the base of the foothills, nearly directly to the east.

This is not as direct a route as the PCs might wish to travel to get to Sel-kai. But it is by far the safest. Non-Lankan (i.e. non-Jaaderi) people traveling are looked upon with suspicion and aggression. Sometimes traders from neighboring lands will trade with the Lankan but never from this direction. (Stroane does NOT trade with the Lankan empire). Thus the PCs will be an odd group indeed. Unless they take extreme precautions against being discovered, they will most likely be attacked by the first patrol to encounter them. If captured, they will become slaves to the Lankan.

Thus the detour to avoid these unpleasanties. Nan-Ro lies at one of the southernmost tips of the long bay that laps against the shores of Tai-Emer. For the Nuyan-Khom nation, Nan-Ro is the last city before an area called the Sor Rha Ki which clearly separates Nuyan-Khom from their more aggressive neighbors to the north.

The Sor Rha Ki (Y'nar meaning "Bleak Elder Lands") is a small desert approximately 50 miles across. Though the weather is similar to the plains nearby, for some reason, no seed can find purchase in the barren rock of this land.

Large wind-carved spires tower over ancient and dusty stream beds and canyons. No water has ran through them in generations. Some areas are almost maze like in complexity.

Even at this time of year, temperatures rise into the 90's. And at night, the temperature drops to almost freezing.

Few natural things live in this area. The only encounters likely are with a type of giant spider. These magically created monsters are anywhere from a 2 foot radius body to a gigantic 6 foot radius body. They live mostly in a set of ruins which lie hidden deep within the desert. You can make this into a small side adventure, if you like.

The party can either go straight through the Sor Rha Ki or take a slightly longer route and go around it. This would mean detouring another 50 miles or so to the north and then hugging the coast down to the city of Nan-Ro.

Nuyan-Khom

This nation lies cradled below the Rust Mountains and the Ash Mountains of Silaar. It is made up of a number of mostly peaceful city-states of Y'nari. Each of these states are ruled by a sort of prince and each pays tribute to a sort of high lord who holds the entire nation together.

The Y'nari people are a peaceful one -- they have slightly darkened skin, almond eyes, and somewhat flattened features. They live in villages and cities and are quite good craftsmen. (Tech level 4).

The Y'nari trade frequently with Sel-Kai, Namar-Tol, and Reandor. They are great consumers of timber, making excellent composite bows and other woodcraft items. They export delicate silver and gold work, fine silks, and are perhaps the most accomplished makers of glass products and art on the entire continent.

The military of Nuyan-Khom is few but highly trained. They are completely unaggressive outside their lands, but fight fiercely to protect their own

(usually from the Lankan). Their favorite arms are the mace and composite bow. They are also trained in the broadsword as well.

Nan-Ro is a bustling city surrounded by thick brick walls. It is the main port city to the bay of Tai-Emer. Much trade goes through this city, traveling inward to cities within Nuyan-Khom and outward to places like Sel-kai.

The party will first catch glimpse of the city from miles away. It lies nestled between the blue waters of the bay and the golden grasses of the plain.

Most of the building of the city are made of brick and wood, though many of the most important ones are of quarried granite taken from the Silaar hills to the north.

Much trade goes on in this city. Merchants can be seen on every street trading their wares and arguing about the latest price of silk.

The peaceful Y'nari prefer open air cafes and gardens as opposed to dark taverns. Most of the inns in the city have an large and bright common room, often adjoining on a small garden or atrium.

At this time of the year (early spring), the weather is quite good. The full heat of the summer has not yet arrived, and the damp and cold of the winter is leaving. When it is not raining, the days will be clear and pleasant.

The plains themselves are quite a sight as well. The dried golden grasses revive and become a multitude of greens and yellows.

The Story

The PCs will arrive in Nan-Ro in early spring. They may wish to consider the city a safe haven if they have been harassed by Velnik on their journey.

In any case, finding passage by sea to Sel-kai is not difficult and the rates are very reasonable. After all, almost all of the ships in port are going to Sel-kai.

If the party wants to do some shopping to replenish their supplies, then they will be able to. Nan-Ro will have most things the PCs will want. Prices will be about average.

Sel-kai

Overview

The party will arrive by ship in Sel-kai and will attempt to make contact with the man the Lord Arryl mentioned, actually Voriig Kye. Kye will be expecting them. The party will be made welcome and will be rewarded for bringing Kye the two rings. The culmination will be a ritual in which Voriig Kye fakes the destruction of the rings.

The Story

A hundred miles away from the port of Sel-kai, the sea traffic begins to pick up. Many ships hailing from lands as far away as Jaiman or the other side of the continent sail heavily laden either to or from the city.

The characters' ship will enter the wide delta where the city of Sel-kai lies, passing on it's way in several navy outposts used to defend the rich trade city.

Serenely, Eidolon hovers in the sky above Sel-Kai. At an altitude of about 2500 feet, the 2000 foot diameter city in the sky seems like jewel in the sun. Lush greenery can be made out at this distance, and at the highest point of the city, the palace of the Prince can be seen.

Wide balloons float slowly up to Eidolon and down to Sel-kai. And look there! One of the fabulous sky-ships seems to leaving the city: the characters follow it with their eyes until it is lost to sight, rising rapidly away.

In the city of Sel-kai below, the largest docks make a semi-circle approximately a mile long. Ships and craft of every type are anchored here in the smooth waters of the delta mouth.

The custom and medicine officers will board soon. They wear a dark uniform with red hems. In a few minutes, the passengers of the ship will be allowed to disembark.

The first thing the PCs will see is a large pavilion located on the west side of the main circle. (See the Emer Boxed Set for maps of Sel-kai and Eidolon.) This is the Navigator pavilion. Within it, there is of course, one of the strange 20 feet tall obelisks which can be used to summon a Navigator. It may be possible for the PCs to witness an incoming transport.

The PCs first set foot on the docks in the late afternoon. They may want to look around the city a bit, or they may wish to go directly to Eidolon to meet with their contact within the organization.

Eidolon

Eidolon is reached from the city below by air barge. These are large balloons of the hot-air variety. Nothing magical is used in their piloting, only the skill of the balloon masters. The cost for passage is two silver pieces per person.

The barge takes only a few minutes to float up to the city. It docks on the outer ring, below the level of the city proper. Wide stairways rise from the docks level to the first city tier. Passengers take these while cargo is lifted by large mechanical elevators.

When the group gets to within one thousand feet of the city, they may notice the following interesting fact: all high winds stop completely. The air is cooler than below and if the day was originally overcast, the sun may peak out after the players reach Eidolon.

The city is divided into four quarters -- sapphire, amber, <emerald>, and <cough>. (Emerald and ?).

Each area is marked with the color of its quarter. This is used for direction purposes, since the city rotates once every day, conventional map directions have little meaning. Roads in Eidolon are either like the spokes of a wheel or like concentric rings around the city.

The city consists of three tiers. They rise at 400 foot intervals as one travels from the edge of the city towards the center. The center level is the palace of the Prince and the government of the city state of Sel-kai. The Prince rules over only a mere few hundred square miles, but as anyone knows, it's not quantity, it's quality. From this aerie, he overlooks his realm.

The residence of the party's contact is located in the Sapphire quarter. This directly opposite from where their air barge landed. The easiest route is directly through the center, skirting the palace tier of course.

In general, blocks are made up of either residences or shops, but not both. The residences are exceptional in construction. Some are simple and airy and yet the ultimate in comfort. Others are gilded and ornate, covered in gold, silver, alabaster, and rare marbles. Interspersed with these are small gardens like parks.

The shops of Eidolon are something to behold. Though usually smaller than the normal (real estate is at an obvious premium) they are amazingly stocked. Everything can be had here. The quality of even the most simple items (such as fruit and vegetables) is exceptional.

The characters will get a sample of life in Eidolon as they stroll towards their destination. (Everything in Eidolon is just a short stroll away). The Sapphire quarter is marked by its blue street lamps and tile-edged roads.

When the PCs get to near the amber side of the Sapphire Quarter, they will locate their contact's residence. The Eidolon home of the Lord of Encla Turac (Voriig Kye) is quite beautiful. The entire front face of the building is surrounded by lush plants and several rivulets of water run from the roof down to small pools near the walk up to the main entrance. How these are constructed are unknown.

The building is only three storeys high, constructed of a milky white marble. The roof is made of a blue tile which matches that of the Sapphire Quarter. Wide windows of perfectly drawn glass are decorated with ornately carved hardwoods.

If the PCs bother to check, the entire building radiates with various types of magic. (None evil, however).

When the PCs knock, the door will be answered by Voriig's assistant in Eidolon, Naryn. Naryn is a 15th level Monk which has served Kye for many years. (See the NPC section for his abilities).

Naryn will let the PCs in and offer refreshments but will sadly say that the master is not in. He was called away for a short time, but will be returning the next day. In the mean time, Naryn will say that the group is expected, and will provide them with a small scroll. The scroll, he says, contains instructions to the proprietor of the House of Dreams, a fine inn found not far away. Naryn will make small talk until the PCs decide to leave. In parting, he will say that his master will send word when he is available.

The next day, the group will be summoned by messenger to the house of the Lord Turac. There they will meet Voriig Kye face to face.

Behind the Scenes

Voriig Kye takes the form of an elderly but still hale Laan. He is silver haired and walks with a silver headed cane. He is dressed in flowing silks of green and blue and wears soft leather boots of sable. His fingers are ornamented by a couple of rings, and one of his ears is pierced with a turquoise stud.

If the PCs attempt any detect magic spells or skills, then they will be able to perceive that he does indeed radiate faintly with Arcane magic. Any attempt to MindType him will result in learning that he is a Level One Fighter of the Pixie race. (A bit of a joke on the part of Kye.) Mindstore attempts are equally ineffective.

Kye has an extremely commanding presence. When he looks at you, it is as if the rest of the world ceases to exist. Kye plays this persona, however, as very benevolent. He will seem to be like a long lost grand uncle to the PCs, one who has the best interests of the PCs at heart.

Kye has the following agenda:

ask about the journey

ask about the mission in Stroane

do a quick analysis of the two rings and the box which holds them

ask some pointed questions to the holder of the box

to see if he has been tainted by the ring
 otherwise reassure the PCs as to his good intentions
 [Campaign Notes:]

In my game, it seems like every and their dog can do Dreams or otherwise divine the future. Because of this, Kye needs to be able to prevent people from learning anything about his true nature. Now Kye is obviously protected from intruding Dreams of Scrying -- you don't get to be a 45th level evil Mentalist and member of the Secret Circle without picking up a trick or two to protect your secrets. But in this case, Kye needs to actively manipulate various PCs attempts to learn more about him.

Doing this involves first Mindstoring the party and then using a few specialized spells that he has developed. Any Dreams then cast by the party members will be changed by Voriig Kye's spells.

These spells can be considered high level Mentalism or Arcane.

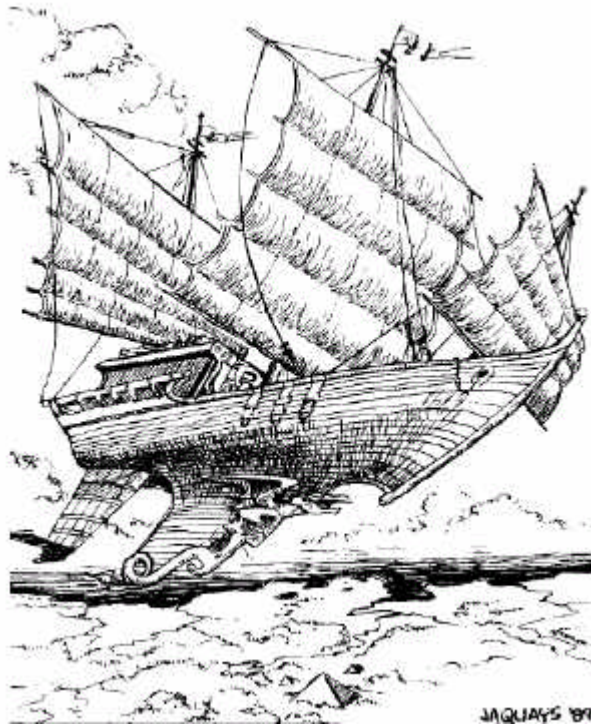
After the initial interview, Kye will make known his plan for ridding the world of the rings forever: By returning their evil to the place from which it came. To accomplish this, Kye says, the PCs must journey to another plane of existence.

Sub-Plots

The following plots may occur at any time after the PCs arrive in Eidolon and Selkai.

Assassination

While staying in their rooms at the House of Dreams, one evening near mid-night, a hoarse cry is heard, followed by silence. If the PCs leave their rooms to investigate, they will catch site of a black haired woman dressed in black leathers striding out of a room near to the PCs and down the hall to the nearest set of stairs. If the PCs recognize the description, they will realize that they have just seen a member of the Cult of Stars, the same group that killed their contact Selras in Arakin. Unless the PCs move extremely quickly, the Cult member will fade swiftly into the night.



Entering the room that the Cultist just left, the will be stuck by a gruesome sight: A man lies sprawled in a chair with his throat cut and a horrible wound to his abdomen. He is quite dead.

The man is a Loari elf, an ambassador from Namar-Tol. The doorman says that the last person to see the late ambassador was Kandorin, the ambassador from Vog Mur, and pawn of Voriig Kye. He did not kill the elf, but the Cult of Stars is attempting to lay the blame on him in an attempt to hurt Kye's organization.

If the PCs talk to Kye about this event, Kye will mention that Kandorin is a member of his "organization" and this is probably another attack against him, directly. He will be happy for the PCs to learn what they can of the Cult of Stars in Selkai. Some investigation in the lower city may prove fruitful for information.

The Temple of Reann

[Campaign Notes:]

Because of the paladin, the Temple of Reann is important to my game. The PCs may visit their.

The temple of Reann is located on the north side of the Avenue of the Gods in Selkai. The temple is approximately the same size as the one in Kaitaine, but is not so grandiose some of the other temples on this street. However, the place is quite busy.

Mass is given each evening at twilight so during this time it is quite crowded. About 250 worshippers come to say their respects to Reann at this time. At other times of the day, a handful of people can be seen in the pews, giving devotions.

Elsewhere within the temple complex, various priests are at meditation of training. In Selkai, in recent times, the Priests of Reann have taken up a slightly different role in their society. Due to the increasing negligence of the "Red Capes" (the city guard), the Priests of Reann have taken up patrolling the night to protect the citizens of the cities.

The story is that the Captain of the city guard is corrupt and that most of the guards he has hired recently follow his leave. Petitions to have him replaced have been met with silence.

Strange things heard by the Priests:

Disappearances have taken place all over the city -- both of tourists and locals

A building in the Warehouse district of the Canal Maze was found containing several bodies which has been ripped apart as if by animals.

An eerie green glow was seen in the swamps to the south of the city

The street gang the Red Dragons have become even more viscous of late

The Ethereal Plane

Overview

The PCs follow Voriig Kye to the Ethereal plane to perform a ritual magic designed to send the evil that resides in the artifact rings back to the plane it came from.

The Story

Between Here and There lies the domain known as the Ethereal plane.

More knowledge has been lost about this nearly mythical place than is currently known. The ethereal plane is that which lies between our normal plane of existence and those planes... outside our ability to even comprehend.

The ethereal plane can be reached through Gates which are magical constructs of arcane energies. They drive through the fabric of our world and into the one beyond. Some Gates are permanent, created by knowledge that is lost to most. Most however, must be opened for short periods of time. Both however open onto the same spot in the Ethereal Plane each time.

When first stepping onto the ethereal plane, the eyes are greeted by an otherworldly landscape of dense fog -- limiting the vision to around 200 feet. The ground cannot be seen as well, covered by a layer of mist a foot and a half thick. It consists of a fine gravel, grey when examined and is otherwise unchanging in its regularity. The terrain never changes from its flat plane-like topology.

The lighting is always the same, about the level of an overcast day. The temperature always remains a normal level, about 70 degrees. Occasionally small globes of light can be seen zipping through your field of vision. It is thought that these are actually teleporting individuals from our world, or a world very much like ours.

Within viewing distance, doors can often be seen. These usually stand 7 feet by 4 feet wide and are completely two dimensional. This gives an odd

scenery to the landscape, as the doors face random directions and so appear to be as wide as a rapier to their full width. These portals lead to usually unknown places. It is said that for every point in our world, there is a portal on the ethereal plane. Portals also lead to other realms and demi-planes. Most often, these gates are one-way. If you step through one, you might not be able to come back. It is hypothesized that some planes lack the magical capability for the user to draw upon so that they may create a Gate to return by, thus trapping them forever.

-- Excerpt from *Views of Otherness* by S'nak Delani, Ahn Sye Talaus

Behind the Scenes

Kye will create a magical portal inside his own house. He will step through and the PCs will follow.

Kye will pull out a grapefruit sized device which looks something like a compass. Instead of a needle, however, the compass has a small glowing insect which flits around inside of the glass dome. Kye will concentrate on the compass for a few moments and then lead the way, warning the characters to stay close and in single file so as to avoid falling into random portals which dot the eerie landscape.

The group will make for the City of Sustoth where the ritual can be performed. After 20 miles of unvarying terrain, a soft powdery soil can be felt under the characters boots. After travelling another 100 meters or so, the city walls can be seen, rising out of the mist. Many think that the entire city was carried, piece by piece, onto the ethereal plane. Others believe that it is actually a demi-plane -- one of those rare areas where a material plane touches closely on the ethereal.

Actually, both theories are true. The outer limits of the city, consisting of the walls and a few blocks of buildings inward, lies on the ethereal plane. The inner portions of the city lie on a demiplane -- a strange place where normal laws of space are not quite right.

The outer portion of the city provides an underlying structure to the city. This is because the inner parts of the city are not completely fixed. One day, you might find a shop on a street, the next day all you will see is a black wall. Some believe that the inner city actually consists of several "cities" existing somewhat simultaneously with each other. Parts of these "cities" manifest themselves at different times. Only the outer city -- the part which lies fully on the ethereal plane -- retains a constant structure.

The walls are of an unrecognizable black stone. They tower some 80 feet into the air. A huge gate

house looms before the characters. It is guarded by two (seemingly) men wearing full platemail. No skin or features of these two can be seen, only that they are armed with pikes and Two-Handed swords.

As the group approaches, one of them rumbles, "State your business in the City of Susthoth."

"Business," Kye will reply shortly.

"The entry is two bronze per person."

Kye will hand over several bronze pieces and the gate will open a few feet. The group steps through.

The city differs from the ethereal landscape that surrounds it. Instead of an even lighting of grey mists, the city seems to go through night and dark cycles, though these periods are very unpredictable to non-natives.

Day periods last from 3 to 20 hours. During this time the sky lights up fairly evenly but all that can be seen is a murky yellow haze. Bright times are generally safer to be out in the street. A few of the city's more nasty denizens only leave their shelters when the light falls.

Night periods also last from 3 to 20 hours. When night falls, the sky generally dims over the course of half a Quintar. After that, the sky becomes pitch black. All light comes from the city itself. Unlit streets (which are common) are extremely difficult to navigate. During these dark times, a yellow mist curls about the ground, making deceptive shapes. At times, the mist itself seems to be almost alive.

The light/dark cycles do not follow a predictable schedule. A "day" might last 5 hours, followed by 20 hours of "night" followed by 10 hours of day. Temperature drops slightly during the dark periods and rises again during the lighter times.

There is little in the way of weather in the City of Susthoth. The temperature only varies by at most 10 degrees. Precipitation occurs only in the form of a light drizzle and only lasts for a few minutes.

The group arrives in the city during a light period. The narrow and twisting streets are unlike any city the PCs have known. Some buildings are gloomy and not well lit. Others are a riotous mass of otherworldly colors. Creatures of all types roam these streets. Most are at least humanoid, but this is by no means the only type of creature that lives in the city.

"Do not use magic within the city walls," Turac warns. "It is forbidden by Susthoth. And I assure you, the laws in the city are strictly enforced. We go now to remedy that situation as we need magic for the ritual."

"There is a.... an entity that I know who can supply us with tokens of Susthoth which will circumvent the law.

Turac leads the group deeper into the city. The full area that it covers is difficult to guess as there are no high points from which to get an overall view. Turac frequently consults his compass. (See the NPC section for details of its powers.) But one thing is definite, the city is huge. Greater in area than Kaitaine, and seemingly more dense than Se-kai. The twisty streets seem endless.

During this time, roll for encounters every few minutes. Possible encounters usually take the form of otherworldly brigands. (The City is very dangerous).

Eventually, Turac seems to find the door he was looking for. It is plain enough, and yet it is guarded by two towering humanoid forms in plate armor. They are armed with two-handed swords which they hold hands on hilt, point into the dirt. Bare blade exposed.

"I would have words with your master." Turac commands.

One of them cocks its head as if listening to something. Then it says, "No one may disturb the master."

"Your master knows who I am. He will have words with me." Turac responds.

"He is not to be disturbed."

Turac motions for the PCs to follow him and he makes his way around a corner, out of site of the strange guards.

"This is a game that this creature likes to play. We must kill the guardians of his gate. Then he will see us." Turac smiles grimly. "He is *very* tiresome."

The Guardians are extraplanar entities with the following stats:

AT(DB) 20(50)

OB Two-handed 150

Hits 200

Stunned Maneuver skill of 100

The guardians must be defeated before the group can get into the House of Moog. They will not flee, no matter how hard they are pressed.

After entering this dark domicile, Turac will lead the group down a hallway and into a parlor-like looking room. There, reclining on a plush divan, sits a creature that most resembled a frog. His body is mostly humanoid, but he does not have a detectable

neck and his head has an odd triangular quality to it. His skin is a warty green.

"Welcome Silver Lord!" he says to Turac. He bows slightly. "It has been some time since we last spoke, has it not?"

"You know what we are here for, Moog."

Moog's face looks crestfallen. "Ahh, my silver friend -- you disappoint me! Have you nothing else to say? Is your only reason to visit business?"

"Yes," Turac says stonily.

Some bargaining begins and Moog will part with several "Mage Badges" for 10 gold apiece. They are good for 48 hours. Turac will pay and the group will depart.

Someone who wears one of the Badges now has implied permission from Susthoth to cast magic. In some ways this makes the group less likely targets for random acts of violence.

From the House of Moog, the party will make its way through the winding streets of the city.

Finally, the PCs find themselves at the end of a cul de sac where a courtyard is surrounded by 4 and 5 storey buildings. In the center of the courtyard sits a crumbling well constructed of a grey stone. Turac points to this.

"That is what we seek. Follow me."

He leads the group up to the well where they can look down into its depths. A strange and otherworldly sight will meet the eyes of the PCs that do this. The well has no bottom. Instead, just below ground level, extends a void space. It is as if the characters look upwards into a dark night sky rather than downwards into a well.

"We will purchase rooms in a building near here. The ritual will be conducted from there. And if all goes well, the items will be exorcised. Come, let's see to our rooms."

Turac will negotiate with a strange looking humanoid in a language the PCs can't understand. Then a pouch will be given over and the "proprietor" will show the group to their room.

The room is on the first floor, has a small window overlooking the courtyard where the well lies. The window is only 5 feet or so above the ground. The room is square, about 20 by 20 feet. There are four beds and a table. Otherwise, it is fairly barren.

The ritual will take about 3 hours to gain strength, Turac says. He begins drawing some sort of arcane circle on the floor with some large pieces of chalk.

The idea is that Turac will protect himself with a

Circle. Then he will surround the Rings with another circle within the first. First he will destroy the physical manifestation of the rings, and the evil will be released. It will be contained within the inner circle. Then he will open a link to the well. As quickly as possible he will begin forcing the evil power back into the void from which it came. However, during this time, something might be able to come through the gateway which he has opened.

Behind the Scenes

This is all an elaborate charade engineered to stand up to the most exacting tests that the PCs can come up with.

Kye will open the gateway to the Void plane, and during this time several creatures will come through. I am going to play it like this:

Roll for an encounter each round. There will be a 2 in 5 chance of an encounter each round. In rounds one through five, somewhere between 3 - 6 Type I or II undead or demons should arrive. In the next set of 5 rounds, 2 - 4 Type III or IV undead should come. In the next set of 5 rounds, 1 - 3 Type IV or V undead should come.

This battle will be extremely dangerous unless the PCs plan out some good tactics ahead of time. Killing the monsters is good but is not the ultimate goal. The goal is to protect Turac while he completes the ritual. Losing sight of that while in the pursuit of a kill could be deadly.

Play this by ear: if the PCs are having an easy time or few encounters are being rolled, then hit them with a more powerful undead earlier. The idea is to convey a sense of wave upon waves of demon and Unlife hordes.

The room itself is fairly defensible. The Unlife will follow the thread of magic linking Turac's circle with the well. This means they will attack through the window. If the group has decent archer or mage support, they should be able to hold the room for quite a while.

Things will get rougher when demons and Unlife appear that have magic capabilities. But nobody said it would be easy.

The total amount of time that Turac will need is up to the GM and Turac. Kye's plan is that the PCs will be much more convinced and dedicated to his cause if they are frightened a lot by the encounter. Turac will hold the gate open until the PCs get enough opposition. The struggle amuses him greatly. If the PCs look like they are in danger of being destroyed, then he will help them to a degree.

After the battle, the triumphant PCs and a

(seemingly) weary Turac will flee the city as quickly as possible.

Thereafter they shall return to Voriig Kye's home on Eidolon.

Here ends Part I of Twilight Over Emer.