



BOOK OF TOMORROW

JULY 2000

# July 2000 Contents

Issue 1



FEATURE

**5 Retribution** by *Kathleen E. Czechowski*  
A Dying Legacy seals the fate of the culprit in this tale of love, intrigue, murder and, most of all, Retribution.

**9 Dream Weaver** by *Edward Chegwiddden and Jason Raynor*  
“Just let me sleep in peace!” will become a common utterance among your players when you introduce this new Horror into your game.

**12 A Night at the Grinning Turbit** by *Chris Perkett*  
A setting, song, and item all in one article, who could ask for more?

**14 Trosk** by *Jason Raynor*  
This town of Questors seeks to heal the damage the Scourge wrought upon the Badlands.

**19 The Little Judge** by *Kathleen E. Czechowski*  
Kaj brings us a glimpse of Cathay in the form of a delightful children’s tale.

**20 The Ambush** by *Attila Hatvagner*  
The anything-but-unique protagonist in this story sees great tragedy in what some might consider a dangerous encounter.

**21 Troll Festivals** by *Ian Fay*  
Explore the troll culture, as seen through the eyes of the Name-givers who know it best.

**26 Glamour** by *Attila Hatvagner and Keith Richmond*  
Might there be aspects of illusion-making yet unrevealed? Do Blood Elves have thorns? Find out how to make your illusions a little more *glamorous*.

Editor’s Notes .....	3
Legal Information.....	4
Legal FAQ .....	4
EDPT Workshops .....	8
Write a Column .....	13
Storytelling Contest.....	18

**Contest:**  
Find out how you can win a copy of *Barsaive at War!*  
Details on page 18.

 For more information, please visit the EDPT website:  
<http://www.earthdawn.com/edpt/>

# BOOK OF TOMORROW

How to Reach Us

**Editorial Office:**  
c/o S. Keith Graham  
515 Roswell Hills Place  
Roswell, GA 30075

**Editorial E-mail:**  
[edpteditor@yahoo.com](mailto:edpteditor@yahoo.com)

**Submissions and comments:**  
[edpt-fanzine@egroups.com](mailto:edpt-fanzine@egroups.com)

**Mailing List:**  
*To subscribe*  
[edpt-l-subscribe@egroups.com](mailto:edpt-l-subscribe@egroups.com)  
*To post a message*  
[edpt-l@egroups.com](mailto:edpt-l@egroups.com)

**EDPT Administrative Board:**  
Edward Chegwiddden  
Kathleen E. Czechowski  
Sako Eaton  
S. Keith Graham  
Josh Harrison  
Attila Hatvagner  
Philipp Kausch  
Chris Perkett  
Keith Richmond  
Inge Vermelyn

**Submission Guidelines**  
Submission guidelines are available at the EDPT Web site (see URL below) and by sending a blank message to [edptsub@yahoo.com](mailto:edptsub@yahoo.com).

**Deadline for next issue:**  
***August 30, 2000***

**On the cover:**  
Illustration © Inge Vermelyn



# Book of Tomorrow July 2000 • Issue 1

## PUBLISHING

PUBLISHER THE EARTHDAWN PUBLISHING TRUST

## EDITORIAL

EDITOR EMERITUS JOSH HARRISON  
INTERIM EDITOR SAKO EATON  
ASSISTANT EDITOR KATHILEEN E. CZECHOWSKI  
CONTRIBUTING EDITORS S. KEITH GRAHAM  
PHILIPP KAUSCH

## PRODUCTION

ART DIRECTOR INGE VERMEYLEN  
PUBLISHING CONSULTANT SAKO EATON  
SENIOR WEB DEVELOPER S. KEITH GRAHAM  
WEBMASTER SAKO EATON

## CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE

**WRITERS:** KATHILEEN E. CZECHOWSKI, JASON  
RAYNOR, ATTILA HATVAGNER, LAN FAY, CHRIS  
PERKETT, PHILIPP KAUSCH, KEITH RICHMOND,  
EDWARD CHEGWIDDEN

**ARTISTS:** INGE VERMEYLEN, EZUSTSZEL

## ONLINE

THE EARTHDAWN PUBLISHING TRUST  
<http://www.earthdawn.com/edpt>  
FOR THE MAILING LIST AND ARCHIVES  
<http://www.egroups.com/groups/edpt-1>

# EDITOR'S NOTES

## A Letter from the EDPT

Our favorite game has endured quite a bit of turbulence in the past two years. First, there was FASA Corporation's announcement that the Earthdawn line was to be discontinued. Then, there was the temporary suspension of activity at the ever-popular Strands Web site. For a while, it seemed that there would be no future for the Fourth World.

This, of course, was a great concern for the game's fans, who were unwilling to let their pastime pass away. But, without a publisher, what were they to do? There was much discussion and debate about the future of Earthdawn, and only one path became clear: The fans should publish their own material to continue the development of the game. This organization, the Earthdawn Publishing Trust (EDPT), is one of the offspring of those discussions. It is the goal of our organization to engage the game's fans in the practice of actively contributing to the on-going development of the game.

In the meantime, a new publisher has emerged. Living Room Games has licensed Earthdawn from FASA, and will be producing new material including their upcoming adventure *Path of Deception*, the long-awaited *Barsaive at War* epic, and *Dragons*.

But there's still plenty of work for the EDPT to do. We intend to provide a place where the Earthdawn fan community can work together to improve fan-written material. We will provide a place to electronically publish that work, in the form of our Web site (see URLs on left) and the fanzine you are reading now. We have several projects to create unique Web-based content for Earthdawn and we intend to publish full-length sourcebooks as well.

We are publishing our work under the Open Content License, so you may redistribute copies of our work. More importantly, however, you may create new stories, adventures, and articles based on what you read here.

## How can you contribute?

We hope you will become a part of the EDPT. The EDPT needs writers, editors, artists, Web designers, play testers, and reviewers. We especially need new articles and artwork for future issues of the fanzine. If you have an idea for an article, please submit it, and we will help you get it in shape for publication. We are even having a contest (see page 18) to encourage new submissions! The deadline for submitting draft versions of articles for the next issue is **August 30, 2000**.

## About the Name of this fanzine

When Earthdawn was still a futureless game, the EDPT came together with the goal of publishing a fanzine that was then being called *The Legacy*. This title was deemed unsuitable when Living Room Games announced that it obtained a license to publish Earthdawn products. We have chosen to re-Name this fanzine in keeping with our outlook on the game's future: If the game is to have a tomorrow, the fans will need to take an active role in its development. The *Book of Tomorrow* kept the denizens of Barsaive together though the Scourge; we hope it will now keep the game's fans together as Earthdawn ventures out and explores new territory. We hope you will join us as we do some exploring of our own.

**The EDPT Administrative Board**

## LEGAL INFORMATION

This page contains legal information about some of the trademarked and copyrighted material referred to in some parts of this publication.

Listed authors and artists retain the copyright for all contributions contained herein. Unless otherwise indicated, all other material Copyright © 2000 Earthdawn Publishing Trust.

*Earthdawn*™ is a Registered Trademark of FASA Corporation. Original Earthdawn material Copyright © 1998 by FASA Corporation. All Rights Reserved. Used without permission. Any use of FASA Corporation's copyrighted material or trademarks in this publication should not be viewed as a challenge to those copyrights or trademarks. Any use of copyrighted or trademarked material without indication of such status in no way implies that said material is not so protected by applicable law.

## Open-Content License for the EDPT

*Adopted on October 29, 1999*

This section outlines the principles underlying the Open-Content License for the EDPT. For legal purposes, this section is the license under which EDPT content is made available for use.

This license is modeled after the OpenContent License (OPL). The original version of this document may be found at <http://www.opencontent.org/opl.shtml>

## LICENSE

Terms and Conditions for Copying, Distributing, and Modifying

Items other than copying, distributing, and modifying the Content with which this license was distributed (such as using, etc.) are outside the scope of this license.

1. You may copy and distribute exact replicas of the EDPT's content (hereinafter "content") as you receive it, in any medium, provided that you conspicuously and appropriately publish on each copy an appropriate copyright notice and disclaimer of warranty; keep intact all the notices that refer to this License and to the absence of any warranty; and give any other recipients of the content a copy of this License along with said content. You may not charge a fee for the sole service of providing access to and/or use of the content via a network (e.g. the Internet), whether it be via the World Wide Web, FTP, or any other method.

2. You may modify your copy or copies of the content or any portion of it, thus forming works based on the content, and distribute such modifications or work under the terms of Section 1 above, provided that you also meet all of these conditions:

a) You must cause the modified content to carry prominent notices stating that you changed it, the exact nature and content of the changes, and the date of any change.

b) You must cause any work that you distribute or publish, that in whole or in part contains or is derived from the content or any part thereof, to be licensed as a whole at no charge to all third parties under the terms of this License, unless otherwise permitted under applicable Fair Use law.

These requirements apply to the modified work as a whole. If identifiable sections of that work are not derived from the content, and can be reasonably considered independent and separate works in themselves, then this License, and its terms, do not apply to those sections when you distribute them as separate works. But when you distribute the same sections as part of a whole which is a work based on the content, the distribution of the whole must be on the terms of this License, whose permissions for other licensees extend to the entire whole, and thus to each and every part regardless of who wrote it. Exceptions are made to this requirement to release modified works free of charge under this license only in compliance with Fair Use law where applicable.

3. You are not required to accept this License, since you have not signed it. However, nothing else grants you permission to copy, distribute or modify the content. These actions are prohibited by law if you do not accept this License. Therefore, by distributing or translating the content, or by deriving works therefrom, you indicate your acceptance of this License to do so, and all its terms and conditions for copying, distributing or translating the content.

## NO WARRANTY

4. BECAUSE THE EDPT'S CONTENT IS LICENSED FREE OF CHARGE, THERE IS NO WARRANTY FOR THE CONTENT, TO THE EXTENT PERMITTED BY APPLICABLE LAW. EXCEPT WHEN OTHERWISE STATED IN WRITING THE COPYRIGHT HOLDERS AND/OR OTHER PARTIES PROVIDE THE CONTENT "AS IS" WITHOUT WARRANTY OF ANY KIND, EITHER EXPRESSED OR IMPLIED, INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, THE IMPLIED WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY AND FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE. THE ENTIRE RISK OF USE OF THE CONTENT IS WITH YOU, THE USER. SHOULD THE CONTENT PROVE FAULTY, INACCURATE, OR OTHERWISE UNACCEPTABLE YOU ASSUME THE COST OF ALL NECESSARY REPAIR OR CORRECTION.

5. IN NO EVENT UNLESS REQUIRED BY APPLICABLE LAW OR AGREED TO IN WRITING WILL ANY COPYRIGHT HOLDER, OR ANY OTHER PARTY WHO MAY MIRROR AND/OR REDISTRIBUTE THE CONTENT AS PERMITTED ABOVE, BE LIABLE TO YOU FOR DAMAGES, INCLUDING ANY GENERAL, SPECIAL, INCIDENTAL OR CONSEQUENTIAL DAMAGES ARISING OUT OF THE USE OR INABILITY TO USE THE CONTENT, EVEN IF SUCH HOLDER OR OTHER PARTY HAS BEEN ADVISED OF THE POSSIBILITY OF SUCH DAMAGES.

## Frequently Asked Questions About the Open-Content License

*Q:* What does all this mean?

*A:* It means that the EDPT will let you freely distribute copies of this work.



*Q:* So I can give this to my GM or the other players in my gaming group?

*A:* Yes.



*Q:* But I cannot sell this stuff to them, right?

*A:* That is correct, yes. FASA Corporation does not allow other people to make unlicensed commercial use of Earthdawn.



*Q:* What if I make a bunch of photocopies, can I ask for some reimbursement?

*A:* You might be better off asking your friends to make their own photocopies.



*Q:* What will happen to me if I do try to sell this material?

*A:* You will risk exposing yourself to something far worse than a Horror mark: litigation.



*Q:* What if I take something I find, modify it, and post it on my Web site?

*A:* That's fine, so long as you properly attribute your source(s). Contact us if you are not sure how this is done.



*Q:* So I can write an article based on one of the EDPT's articles and post it on the Web?

*A:* Absolutely, but first you must give credit to the original author. Also, you must include the license from the original work, and anything derived from the original work.

# RETRIBUTION

by Kathleen E. Czechowski

**Getting murdered will ruin even the best relationship. For Adepts, however, not even Death can deny the power of Love.**

**Sovati paused.**

The unfinished city of Hustane spread out before her, its deep shadows inviting to a Name-giver of her Discipline. She stalked from one shadow to another, cautious, but confident. Sovati did not think anyone was following her, but it did not mean that no one was. The practice felt good, too.

Crouched behind an uncompleted foundation, Sovati glanced at her surroundings, grinning ferociously. The false information had been artfully placed in tonight's conversation. Following the fabrication would give clues about likely associates. The trail of contacts could then be neutralized...or used. Best of all, the obsidiman was unaware of her connection to the Throalic government. To him, she was a simple human, working for the document dispensary branch of the Library.

Now, she had to get to the offices to make her report, then meet her intended, Karavath, for a late supper. She rolled the ring on her finger with her thumb, watching the emerald flash in the dim glow of the construction light quartzes. The gold band was forged by Karavath himself, the inside inscribed with the words 'Karavath Loves Sovati'. While the inscription seemed trite, the sentiment was not. It took a great deal of strength for him to make that admission. She had not accepted his proposal yet, but she would tonight. Once she accepted, another 'Loves' would be added after 'Sovati', creating a circle of words symbolizing their undying love, as was the custom in his home village.

First, though, the office. She tread

lightly, moving forward only on the balls of her feet. Wooden frameworks loomed over her head, decorated with hods of cut and dressed stone, and workman's tools. Hustane's grand plaza was no more than a large circle of chalk on the bare rock floor. A pit filled with gristle and greasy bones marked the construction site mess. Sovati's nose wrinkled as she passed; her pace quickened. She was more than halfway across the city, and once out, she would slip into one of the halls, where her contact awaited her.

The sound of falling rock interrupted her thread of thought. She chanced revealing herself and poked her head up, slightly, examining her immediate surroundings. Suddenly, a wave of warmth passed over her mind, and she forgot why she was in Hustane, where she had to go, and who was waiting for her.

"Are you all right, miss?" a smooth, concerned voice asked, very close to her ear. Sovati thought it a man's voice, its timbre rich and deep. "Can you get up?"

Apparently, she was on the ground. How silly of me!

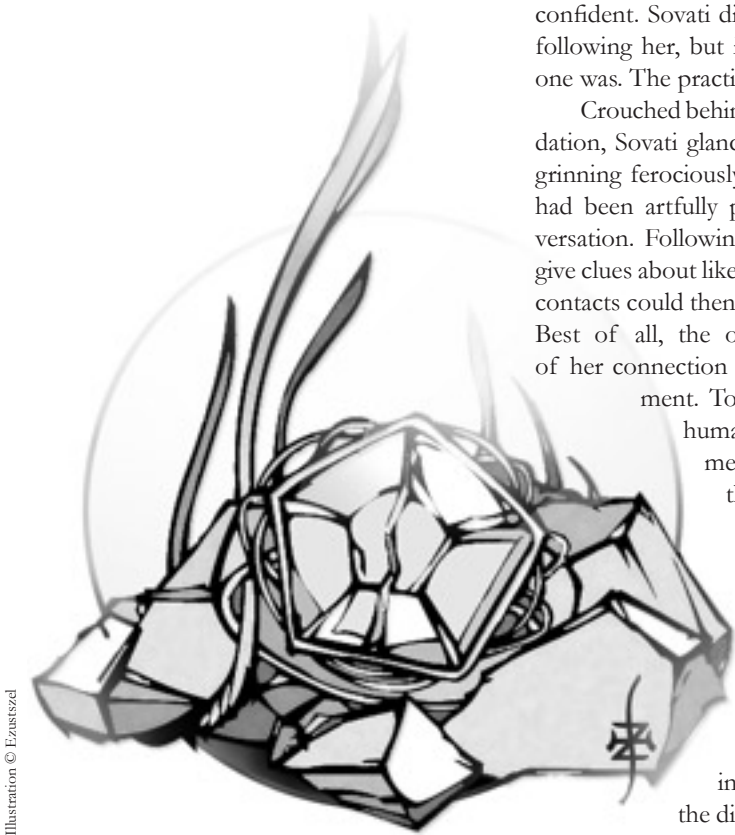
"Come this way, I have something to show you," the voice continued, its tone wrapping her thoughts in thick folds of dark velvet. A warm hand touched hers, gently leading her away.

Away from what? she thought. Wait a minute...

Her hand tensed. The other gripped it mercilessly, twisting it around her back. Sovati struggled, but her arm was held fast, strong fingers digging cruelly into her wrist.

She felt something drop at her feet, something light and soft. "Put on the blind-fold," the voice demanded. Sovati felt the sting of a dagger pressing the small of her back. "Put it on!"

Slowly, the dagger still in place, she knelt, picked up the fold, and tied it on.



A pile of rubble conceals foul play and Retribution lies in wait.

Illustration © Ezaustszed

With any luck, she thought, I can catch him off guard, and...

"Walk straight ahead," the voice said. There was a note of command in it that she could not resist. Obediently, she moved forward.

Her tenth footfall did not meet with solid floor. Instead, she pitched headlong into an unseen crevice, falling nearly thirty feet onto broken rock.

Her bones battered and snapped, her eyesight fading, she took a final glance at the ring adorning her finger. "Karavath," she breathed, her throat thick with blood.

Clarity came to her before her last breath. She had been murdered. "By my will, not again. Never again." Her eyes closed. "My Retribution...."

### Three Hours Later...

The 'Sign of the Stag' was the scene of jolly times every night. This night was no different, except for one corner of the establishment, where a dark young human sat, drumming impatiently on the table with thick fingers.

While the nightly party swirled around him, Karavath sat, radiating self-doubt and anger. Most of the patrons kept their distance, unwilling to be infected by his melancholy.

Again, he picked up the lily he had plucked from someone's garden on the way to the tavern. He rolled the stem between his fingers, bruising it. "Where are you?" he whispered to the flower.

A barmaid passed by, noting his silence. "Would you like anything?" she asked sweetly, quietly.

"Not now," he brusquely answered. She pulled away from the table, looking upon his tortured expression with pity. Karavath was left alone again.

"Where are you?" he repeated. "Did you change your mind? Why aren't you here?"

His mouth turned downward, giving his face a sour cast. Patrons moved further away. Somewhere, far off, a bell began to toll. Twenty-fourth hour. Most Throal bars would be declaring, "Last chance!" This was Bartertown, however.

Where the party never ends, Karavath thought sullenly. His frown deepened. There was little doubt in his mind. She had refused him.

Pain clawed at him. How could I have been so hopeful? His last relationship had ended so badly; the one before had been no better. Why should Sovati be any different?

Unknowing, he had crushed the flower in his hand. It fell to the floor, weeping bitter sap from its torn stem. "Barmaid!" he roared, pounding on the table. "Barmaid!"

Wary of Karavath's unexplained anger, patrons lifted their stone mugs and moved further away, revealing the dwarf. "Y-yes?" she mewled, quailing before his explosive temper.

At the softness in her voice, he deflated, slumping into the wooden chair. He tossed a bag of silver at her feet. "Ale, and keep them coming," Karavath muttered miserably. As she dashed off to fill his order, he leaned over the table, and ran his fingers through his hair, clenching his forelock. "Why?" he sobbed to himself, his voice raw and hollow.

Silently, the other patrons left the tavern, seeking happier places to play. The bartender's mouth twisted bitterly. Drove away all m'best customers, he did, the sallow elf thought. He grunted. Looks like a big one. Might need Dreng's help to get him out of the door tonight...

### The Next Day...

Birsen wiped his hands with an oily square of canvas, and got a better grip on the rock. Prevor looked over at him, and asked, "Ya need some help with that?"

"Nah," Birsen mumbled, hefting the stone with a deep grunt. "You just take care of your end, eh? Gotta close off this part."

"Another pocket of rotten rock, eh?"

"Uh-huh. Gotta close it off before anyone falls in." Birsen pushed the rock into position, and pulled out his trowel.

Prevor looked around, his eyes hooded. "You sure they got out all the equipment?"

"You kidding? Nobody's gonna be loosin' silver on my watch. Don't worry. All the stuff was taken out t'other day. Let's just seal this thing up and get home. My wife's cooking mutton tonight."

Prevor laughed. "Ya think I can get in on some of that?"

"Like Haldana wasn't expecting it, ya lousy mooch!" Birsen joked.

The noise created by the shifting of the rocks and the clinking of work tools covered up the sound of pebbles falling on metal below...

### Your Adventurers, One Year Later...

"You'll never guess what happened to me in Hustane," the human challenged.

The t'skrang picked his teeth and looked bored. "What?"

"Well," the human said, "I was walking through the city, and I saw this woman... pretty thing, dark hair, nice shape..."

The windling rolled her eyes. "Go on."

"The thing was," the human continued, annoyed, "she was wearing a blindfold, see? And she walked right over to this crevice

---

**Clarity came to her before her last breath. She had been murdered. "By my will, not again. Never again." Her eyes closed. "My Retribution...."**

---

in the floor. I went to stop her, but -- and this is the weird thing -- my arms went right through her!"

Now interested, the windling urged, "Go on!"

"She was a ghost or something, ya see. I figured, if there was a ghost there, a body might be, too. So I went down into the crack."

The t'skrang stopped picking his teeth.

"The rock down there must have been cracked, unsteady, or else the construction crews wouldn't have abandoned it and closed it off like they did. Couldn't keep me out though, so I went down real careful..."

"And?" The windling's eyes were bright with curiosity.

"And, there was a skeleton down there. Everything was pretty much rotted off, but I did find some change..."

The t'skrang snorted. "Figures."

The human gave the t'skrang a supercilious glance, "...and I found this." He opened his hand to reveal a gold ring, set with a huge emerald.

The t'skrang's mouth dropped open. "Lemme see that!" He snatched it from the human's hand. Examining it carefully, he shook his head. "Not worth as much as you might think. Got a crack in it. Emeralds're too soft..."

"That's what you think," the windling interrupted, contemptuous. "I can see it, too. It's got an interesting Pattern. It's magical."

Two heads snapped toward the windling. "That must be why that word was there."

"What word?" the windling asked.

"It looked like, before she died, she was able to write something. Looked to be in her own blood. I think it said 'Retribution', but



it looked pretty shaky." The human thought. "Could that be its Name?"

"Could be. Couple ways of finding out." The t'skrang rolled the ring around in his palm, then held the inner side of the band to the light. "'Karavath loves Sovati'," he read aloud. "Sovati sounds like a woman's

human's thumbnail. The gem has a crack down the center line, split in half during the fall. Despite the flaw, the emerald remains firmly in the prongs. Inside the band is the inscription, 'Karavath loves Sovati'. Information on Thread Ranks may be found below.

---

***Retribution, a threaded item created through a Dying Legacy, is the key to solving the creator's murder. The Key Knowledges of each Rank get the wielder one step closer to finding the culprit, and ultimately bring him to justice.***

---

Name. Mebbe we should find this Karavath."

#### **Game Information**

Retribution, a threaded item created through a Dying Legacy, is the key to solving the creator's murder. The Key Knowledges of each Rank get the wielder one step closer to finding the culprit, and ultimately bring him to justice. The Effects are designed to help protect the wielder from being killed or injured in the same manner she was.

Sovati Wornstaff, the deceased, was a Thief adept employed as a freelancer by the Eye of Throal. Her assignment was to pass falsified information to a suspected Theran spy, in hopes of uncovering his network. She did so, but one of the obsidiman's confederates did not trust her, and followed her from the Library, using his Talents as an Illusionist to keep her from discovering him. When he chanced a look at her Pattern, he knew she was lying. When she indulged in the use of her Talents while traveling through Hustane, he realized she must be a spy. The realization angered him, and in a fit of cold rage, he orchestrated her death.

The Eye of Throal, while aware of her disappearance, and concerned about it, decided not to investigate. Certain parties would possibly notice an undue interest in Sovati, and jeopardize the cover of others. Besides, she was low Circle, and only a freelancer, not a full agent. For the good of the organization and the kingdom, her disappearance would go unremarked, and unsolved.

The ring itself is made up of a gold band, set with an emerald the size of a

#### **Elements for Consideration**

##### *Karavath*

Karavath, the anguished suitor, never completely recovered from that night. A jeweler and metalsmith of some talent, he cast his old life away that night, beginning a new life as an alcoholic and beggar. It is likely that, while investigating the ring, the party might unknowingly pass

him a few copper, or walk over his unconscious body, passed out in a Bartertown gutter.

The party, upon seeing him in this state, may decide to assist him, and get his life on track. In any case, he will have little information on the ring's magical qualities, knows nothing of her involvement with the Eye, and will be devastated and furious to hear of Sovati's death, but also a little relieved. She didn't abandon him, after all. She still loved him.

##### *The Ring*

Because of the nature of its creation, the ring itself may provide clues for the Key Knowledges, through dreams or visions. Though any such visions produced through emotional resonance in the ring would be limited to Sovati's point of view, they will provide a few clues the party can explore. More information on this may be found in the narrative section of this article.

At gamemaster's discretion, the ring may retain some residue of her personality, and her spirit may, in a limited fashion, be able to communicate with the wielder. This could also help provide clues to Key Knowledges.

##### *The Apparition*

Though only appearing until the ring is found, paying attention to the motion of

Sovati's apparition in Hustane could reveal clues to her murder. Descriptions of her motions can be found in the narrative section of this article.

##### *The Killer*

The Illusionist may, in all likelihood, remain a shadowy figure throughout most of the research. This is intentional. It wouldn't be a murder mystery without unknown factors, like the identity of the murderer. However, when he is finally revealed, he should be Eighth Circle, with the spell Clarion Call and the Mind Wave Talent. It is also likely he would have a moderately high skill in Unarmed Combat. Prototypical statistics for a human Illusionist can be found in *Prelude to War*. Feel free to modify as necessary for your campaign.

As an Eighth Circle Illusionist, the killer will have a Legendary Status of at least 2. The discovery of his identity could create problems for the party. As a well-known and (probably) respected adept, it would be his word against theirs, even when the Rank 6 Effect of the ring is achieved. If given any indication of a possible plot, he would use his influence to discredit the party.

##### *The Eye of Throal*

When the party begins to ask around about Sovati, the Eye will take note. The organization's reaction may vary, depending on the party's awareness of the Eye, their relationship to the organization, and the status of the investigation of which Sovati was part. It is quite likely, however, that the Eye will not appreciate the party's investigation. The exact nature of the Eye's reaction is up to the gamemaster.

##### *The Passion*

With a Name like Retribution, it is not improbable that the wielder will come to the attention of Raggok. Gamemasters may use this angle, or disregard it, but it may be prudent to keep it in mind, especially if the Illusionist finds out about the ring's Name. He may use the suggestion of the Mad Passion's influence to further discredit the adepts, if they discover the truth about the murder and make their play. ❁



Illustration © Inge Vermeylen

## RETRIBUTION

**Maximum Threads:** 1

**Spell Defense:** 15

Retribution is a simple gold ring with a huge emerald, split exactly down the center. Carved inside the ring are three words: “Karavath Loves Sovati.” Its magical powers are the result of a Dying Legacy by its former owner, a human thief Named Sovati.

### Thread Ranks

**Rank 1 Cost:** 200

**Key Knowledge:** The wielder must learn the Name of the item. (Retribution)

**Effect:** The wielder gains +3 points of armor for the purpose of resisting falling damage only.

**Rank 2 Cost:** 300

**Key Knowledge:** The wielder must learn who created the ring’s magical Pattern through her death, and her Discipline. (Sovati Wornstaff, Thief)

**Effect:** The wielder gains +2 steps to his Climbing Talent, or +2 steps to Dexterity when making climbing tests.

**Rank 3 Cost:** 500

**Key Knowledge:** The wielder must learn the Name of the spell that was involved in the creator’s death. (Clarion Call)

**Effect:** The wielder gains +2 to his Spell Defense.

**Rank 4 Cost:** 800

**Key Knowledge:** The creator was employed by a Throalic organization at the time of her death. What is its Name? (The Eye of Throal)

**Effect:** The wielder gains the talent of True Sight at Rank 1. If the wielder already has True Sight, add +1 Rank to it. This rank does not count toward Circle advancement.

**Rank 5 Cost:** 1300

**Key Knowledge:** At the time of death, the creator was involved in an investigation of an individual. What was that individual’s Name, and why was the individual under investigation? (Merenden, an obsidiman suspected of being a Theran spy.)

**Effect:** The wielder gains +2 steps to Willpower or Willforce for the purpose of resisting Illusionist spells.

**Rank 6 Cost:** 2100

**Key Knowledge:** The individual under investigation had a compatriot who was directly responsible for the creator’s death. What is the compatriot’s Name and Discipline? (Gysan, an Illusionist)

**Effect:** The wielder gains the Blood Guilt Weapon Talent at Rank 3 (p. 26, Earthdawn Companion)--with a twist. In all

respects the talent works as described, except when using it to find Sovati’s murderer. In this case, Sovati’s blood is unnecessary. With the expenditure of 1 extra Strain (total of 6), the emerald produces a single drop of blood from the fracture in it, which can then be used with the talent as normal.

**Rank 7 Cost:** 3400

**Deed:** The wielder must bring a murderer to justice. This Deed is worth 3400 Legend Points, or 6000 if the wielder brings the creator’s murderer to justice. In the latter case, the fracture in the gem seals itself.

**Effect:** If the wielder falls, he may make a Dexterity roll, adding three steps to his Dexterity Step Number. The result may be subtracted from the damage result for the fall. This is in addition to the Rank 1 ability.

## EDPT Workshops

### Think your writing needs some help?

We’re not going to lie to you, it probably does—but that’s why we’re here! One of the primary goals of the EDPT is to get fans actively involved in the game’s development. In order to do so, however, we must solicit ideas from the broadest possible cross-section of the Earthdawn fandom, because good ideas are not the exclusive province of professional writers.

So, if you have an idea that you think would make a good addition to the game, let us hear it! We will help you polish it up and make it ready for (and worthy of) publication. Not only will you get credit for your contributions to the game, but you will also leave each of our workshop sessions with a clearer understanding of what makes your ideas stand out.

Other publications may have their “slush piles,” but the *Book of Tomorrow* is different. It is published with the goal of helping everyone be heard. Does that mean we take whatever we can get? Of course not. It means we are confident that we can help you find the best way to articulate your Earthdawn-related ideas.

So what are you waiting for? Let us know how we can help you. From polishing your prose to honing your Horror’s stats, we got someone on staff who can give your ideas some real sparkle.

EDPT workshops are held immediately prior to the publication of each issue of the *Book of Tomorrow*. Anyone who offers a submission is welcome to participate. Contact the editor for more details.



## OF THE MIND-GAMES OF DREAM WEAVER

by Edward Chegwiddden and Jason Raynor

---

### Horrors populate nightmares throughout Barsaive, but this one brings them to life.

**T**he following are excerpts from the Journal of Torinus Delavear, a Dwarf Elementalist of some renown, who appears to have succumbed to Dream Weaver's powers. The fact that such an experienced man fell afoul of this Horror should serve to warn the reader of the danger this particular abomination presents to all Name-givers.

Livik Bindar  
Scribe and Researcher  
1509 TH

*Borrum 7, 1508 TH*

We have returned safely from the Badlands, but found none of the riches within the ruins of the village Kierra that were hinted at in the journal we purchased in Travar. The only thing of interest we encountered was a haunting melody that beckoned us from across the blasted plains, though we did not find its source and gave up after several hours of exhaustive searching. I am beginning to wonder whether the man we met in the marketplace really was the merchant he appeared to be, or rather the agent of some power that is either testing us, or trying to get rid of us. Whatever the case, we have survived and not wasted much time. The Badlands were harsh and unforgiving, and I do not think we prepared sufficiently. But it is hard to prepare for a journey when you must take a lot, and can bring no beast of burden. I think it best to befriend an obsidiman before returning to that foul and dry land.

As a side-note, the only way we survived was for me to summon a water elemental, no mean feat in such a dry area, and use its powers to supply our

group with water when we ran out. I for one will be happy to travel back up the Serpent to Bartertown, and return to my family. I must make a point of visiting a good shoemaker to get these damn boots repaired or replaced. They were my best pair of traveling boots too, now ruined by all those sharp rocks and countless days of marching.

*Doddul 5, 1508 TH*

It seems that, ever since returning from the Badlands, I have been beset by bad dreams and nightmares. I have a recurring dream involving the death of my wife and child, and wake sweating, expecting my hands to be covered in their blood. I must go and visit my old friend Chilode and get him to find what is the matter with me.

*Doddul 21, 1508 TH*

The dreams have not stopped. In fact, the nightmares are getting worse. I must see Chilode tomorrow; I do not know why I have not been yet.

*Doddul 22, 1508 TH*

I did not make it to Chilode's place today, for I heard news most terrible. Somebody, or more likely *something*, visited Chilode last night. They say that the only way to identify the body as Chilode's was by the presence of the astral eye in his still-intact skull. The majority of his flesh had been burnt off, his books destroyed. The authorities had no idea how this had been done. They were alerted to the crime by the burning building, and managed to stop the fire from spreading further. I believe that something elemental, or of elemental nature, may have caused this. In all

my dealings with the spirits of the elements, however, I have not yet met anything this malevolent. Something could be controlling this spirit, or it could be something else entirely. A Horror, maybe. It chills me to think that something like a Horror could affect such a secure place as Bartertown.

*Doddul 25, 1508 TH*

Strange things have started happening around the area, and it is beginning to affect my business. The authorities of Bartertown have called upon me to look into numerous problems that have bedeviled the quarter where I live. Just recently, the well appears to have been either poisoned or fouled. No one died in the incident, but I have word that a T'skrang family was struck horribly ill. May Garlen speed their recovery.

Also, friends of mine have come to me to solve a number of minor issues that have cropped up of late.

*Doddul 30, 1508 TH*

I am being persecuted or pursued, of this I am convinced. But I do not know the reason why. My business has taken a turn for the worse, with people starting to turn away from me, thinking I am somehow responsible for the events of the last week. I am innocent, I tell you. My very wife can vouch for my presence in bed on the night these incidents occurred.

My dreams are recurring regularly now, and though I am safe in bed, I am not rested. Maybe it is for the best that I have fewer clients, for I have been told that I am not looking well. Why have I not gone to see another Nethermancer after Chilode's death? I must

rectify that.

Two more of my friends have been killed, one of them drowned in her own bed. They say there were signs of a great struggle, and she appears to have suffered greatly. The other was another case of arson, and a number of buildings around this one also caught fire and burnt to the ground. I can see why elemental magic is being blamed for this, but I cannot see why they blame me.

#### *Strassa 1, 1508 TH*

It appears I am a suspect. The guard came calling last night to ask for my assistance in fighting the fire, but I was nowhere to be found. They discovered me an hour or so later in the back room of the shop, sitting in the dark, sobbing.

The dreams have driven me up from time to time during the nights, and not wishing to disturb or worry my wife, I have gone downstairs to the shop to recover. I have explained this to her, and she appreciates my candor about the situation. After interviewing me today, the Guard agreed that this could well be the case, but I know they still hold me in great suspicion.

#### *Strassa 3, 1508 TH*

It is hard to keep my hand steady enough to write. My wife and child are dead. I woke in my bed to find myself covered in blood. My wife was...

...I simply cannot write about it. I keep seeing blood, blood everywhere, especially on my hands and bedclothes. How did it get there? My life has been turned upside down. Why was I left to live? Who holds this anger against me? Selarra, my dearest wife, robbed of life, and my sweet, innocent Dearn, robbed of your chance to build a life! How I love both of you.

#### *Strassa 5, 1508 TH*

I do not know what is happening, everyone is edgy. No one trusts me, not even my oldest friends. The funeral is done with now. The dreams, nightmares, simply do not leave me alone.

#### *Strassa 6, 1508 TH*

I have not mentioned the frequency of fires that have occurred recently. It seems that someone is trying to burn down Bartertown. The watch has started patrolling with summoned Water Elementals. It must cost a fortune. However, they refuse my services. I am still not trusted. But I am really too drained to care...

**According to the Guard logbooks, Torinus was killed the following night. He was discovered in the home of a prominent merchant, surrounded by the bodies of the family he had murdered, and about to set fire to the building. Eye witnesses claim Torinus refused to respond to any requests, and that as the soldiers moved on him, the dwarf cried out in anguish and allowed them to strike him down. Not once did he use his**

**magic to defend himself. The Guard believes that Torinus was responsible for the series of gruesome attacks and murders detailed in his journal.**

**Livik Bindar  
Scribe and Researcher  
1509 TH**

#### **Game Information**

Dream Weaver is a creature of frighteningly subtle power, using its command of magic to alter the perceptions of its victims to its wishes.

Affected Name-givers can never be sure if what they experienced when meeting Dream Weaver was real or not. It is encountered primarily in the Badlands and surrounding area, although it does travel extensively in search of new victims.

Dream Weaver can be distinguished by several characteristics, the first being its large, pale blue eyes that glow brightly

#### **DREAM WEAVER**

DEX: 5      STR: 8      TOU: 15  
PER: 18      WIL: 24      CHA: 16

Initiative: 5/18      Physical Defense: 7/23  
Number of Attacks: 1      Spell Defense: 23  
Attack: 8/21      Social Defense: 20 (12 vs. music)  
Damage: 11/19      Mystic Armor: 20  
Number of Spells: 4      Knockdown: 11/ NA  
Spellcasting: 21      Recovery Tests: 5  
Effect: See below

Death Rating: 105      Combat Movement: 15/90  
Wound Threshold: 25      Full Movement: 45/270  
Unconsciousness Rating: 91

Karma Points: 25      Karma Steps: 12

Powers: Horror Mark 21, Dream Shape 24 (can be used at will), Horror Thread, Sleep (see Rules), Karma Drain 24, Suppress Horror Mark 21, Spells: Circle 8 Illusionist

Legend Points: 75,000  
Equipment: None  
Loot: None known

Note: The statistics after the slashes represent the Horror's abilities when in astral space

whenever it is excited or in the process of feeding. The Horror is also able to produce a calming, unnatural music of ethereal beauty, which is done by using the four nasal holes situated high on its thin, elongated head. The body of this monstrosity is thin, almost skeletal, and its two arms reach to the ground in a manner similar to the apes of the Servos Jungle. Its back is covered in a carpet of long, thin antennae that wave continuously, as if caught in a breeze. When it moves, it does so slowly on three short legs, which radiate from the creature's torso at even spacing about two feet off the ground. The creature's hunched posture makes it look about 7 foot tall, although its true height is closer to 10 feet.

Dream Weaver makes its lair in Tainted areas of astral space, leaving only to hunt down and mark new victims. Its favorite tactic is to create a new lair close to a person it is busy tormenting, where it will stay until the victim is no longer appealing. Due to its vulnerability on the physical plane, it moves about in astral space, manifesting only when necessary to mark victims. It almost always prefers to escape into astral space when threatened with physical harm, using trickery and magic to slip away. Anyone bent on destroying this Horror will have to come up with a very good plan to outwit the beast, or else face it in its lair, where it is exceedingly dangerous. It is a patient creature, willing to wait and slowly corrupt those it has marked. One journal, recovered from a ruined kaer, describes how the inhabitants fought the beast for three generations, each time thinking that their torment was finally over. The evidence in the destroyed kaer, however, would seem to indicate the ultimate victor. Whenever possible, it tries to conceal its true appearance and nature from its victims, much preferring to feed off their frustration and anguish at not knowing what is happening to them.

## RULES

Dream Weaver is highly attracted to the astral ripples created by summoning

magic, and will track such energy unerringly to its source. Once there, it will wait patiently for an opportunity to mark the unfortunate mage that attracted its attention, and has been known to follow a particularly enticing individual for months. When faced with apprentice mages, who are learning summoning, Dream Weaver often settles for marking the individuals and then suppressing the Horror Mark. This is done to allow the victims to gain more power and thus make their ultimate fall from grace all the more pleasurable. In addition, it allows the Horror to fall back on an established source of sustenance during lean times. Dream Weaver uses its Sleep power (see below) to lull victims to sleep and mark them while they are unable to defend themselves.

After the victim has been marked, the Horror studies the unfortunate's pattern and eventually starts weaving threads to it. During this period, the victim experiences vivid nightmares that grow more personalized as the Horror learns more about its victim.

Once the number of threads woven by the Horror equals the victim's Willpower (not Willforce) Step, Dream Weaver begins to possess the person while they are asleep, using their body to inflict suffering and misery on others, especially close friends and family. At any time after the first thread has been woven, the Horror can use its Karma Drain ability to supply itself with life-giving energy (this is how it feeds). If the victim is ever caught while possessed, the Horror immediately wakes the victim and feeds on the anguish caused by the victim's realization of what has been happening and what he or she has done.

If ever a Horror could be called cowardly, then Dream Weaver is deserving of this appellation. It prefers to flee if confronted and never reveals itself to its victims. If the Horror is ever forced into direct combat, it will use its spells and Sleep power to protect itself until it can flee into astral space. Music is this Horror's weakness, and can cause

it great discomfort. If someone beats the lowered Social Defense with an artisan skill or appropriate talent related to music, such as Emotion Song, the Horror becomes sluggish until the music stops. The horror must make a Perception Test vs. the result of the talent or

---

***Anyone bent on destroying this Horror will have to come up with a very good plan to outwit the beast.***

---

skill to take normal actions. During the period the music is playing, it will try to move toward the source and attack it, defending itself if attacked. For the purposes of combat, Dream Weaver automatically goes last during any round in which a musical talent or skill beats its Social Defense, and can only attack either the last person to strike it in that round or the source of the music. The playing of music also interferes with the creature's ability to enter into astral space, effectively trapping it on the physical plane.

## New Horror Power

### *Sleep*

Dream Weaver uses this power to cause drowsiness and lull victims to sleep with its unearthly music. It is only used in the physical realm, and allows the Horror to get close enough to its victims to mark them. Dream Weaver must physically touch the intended recipient for the Horror Mark to take effect. This power has a range of about 30 yards, but can be used at any time on marked victims. The Horror also uses this ability when confronted on the physical plane, in order to escape into astral space. The Horror makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense of any intended targets, and if successful, all targets, up to a maximum of eight, are put to sleep. Targets wake when they take damage, the Horror cancels the effect, or a sleeping character rolls equal to or greater than Dream Weaver's Spellcasting Test. Affected targets may roll their Willpower Step once per round to recover from Sleep.





## A NIGHT AT THE GRINNING TURBIT

by Chris Perkett

The crowd is thick tonight at the Grinning Turbit, the newest tavern in Bartertown and currently the most popular. Jokul Pridwell, the owner, keeps the wine and ale flowing cheaply and the entertainment lively. It is rumored that even Clystone, the magistrate, and Shadowswift, the infamous underworld boss, attend here in disguise.

Tonight's entertainer is a flashy young t'skrang troubadour, decked out in the latest style in blue and gold. He has been alternating between airs and reels and the occasional jig on a wooden flute, and ribald songs accompanied with a lute that plays sweetly for all the nicks and dents that wreck its surface. A grinning dwarf keeps time with a hollow drum as the dancers whirl around the room. Buxom barmaids deftly sashay between the dancing patrons to keep other Name-givers' cups filled to the brim. And from behind the bar, Jokul watches with a confident air.

The latest jig has just ended; a large round of applause has gone up to the elven maid that was able to outpace the troubadour's music with her feet. The t'skrang gives her a bold salute with a sly remark: "My lady, later I'll show you a dance where 'tis best to take one's time and do it right!"

Accompanied by laughter, he picks up his lute again.

"I've played many a song tonight, but this song I swear is true. Before the Scourge, a kingdom of dwarfs did dwell in the oldest mountains of Bar-saive. And that kingdom, long gone and almost forgotten, was ruled in those years by a king Named Peraxis. Now, Peraxis was perhaps one of the first Horror Stalkers ever; having fought and killed just about everything else, he turned at last to Horrors for the challenge of the thing. He never went toe

to toe with a Horror, but still he met his match. And here's how it all happened..."

With that beginning, the t'skrang begins to play and sing.

**The Seduction of King Peraxis**

*O the mighty king Peraxis  
A daring warlord be.*

*He fought and slew and conquered  
His many enemies.*

*And when he found there were no more  
Challenges to be had,*

*He chose to go horror hunting  
The baddest of the bad.*

*\*Refrain: fee fi fiddely I Fiddely I O  
Fee fi Fiddely I O*

*He chose to go horror hunting  
The baddest of the bad.*

*Long had Peraxis wandered  
And his throat had become dry  
So he thought the finest  
Of the taverns he would try.*

*The door he opened slowly  
And unmindful of his step  
King Peraxis all-unknowing  
Stepped inside the Spider's Web.*

*Refrain*

*The owner of the Spider's Web  
A pretty woman she.*

*With saucy curves and long blond hair  
And eyes of bluest green.*

*A lass of easy virtue  
With profits on her mind,  
When she spied King Peraxis  
A gleam came to her eyes.*

*Refrain*

*The wanton maid came forward  
And led him by the hand.  
She wined and dined the bero king  
With drink and foodstuffs grand.*

*He drank the wine, he drank the ale,  
And in the feather bed...*

*He did not find a horror,  
But found a whore instead!*

*Refrain*

*When the night was over  
Our hero did arise.*

*To the lass Peraxis tried  
To leave through quick goodbyes*

*Smiling and undaunted,  
The maid dropped all pretense.  
'Now, good king it's time to pay  
reasonable recompense.'*

*Refrain*

*Oh, Peraxis spoke of silver  
And Peraxis spoke of gold  
Peraxis spoke of jewelry  
As much as ships could hold.*

*The woman, though, held steadfast  
Her bargaining was keen-  
For while he was thinking money  
She was thinking queen!*

*Refrain*

*Peraxis defeated  
Marries the lady Miramelle  
He'd be the first to tell you  
Marriage doesn't suit him well.*

*'Whilst I may sometimes win a battle,  
I'll never win the war.*

*The moral of the song is never  
Argue with a whore!'*

**Game Information**

The Seduction of King Peraxis, besides being local color, can be used in many ways. For example, your characters may adventure in the Scol Mountains and come across other references to the reign of King Peraxis and Queen Miramelle. An adventure could be fashioned around the last surviving ancestor of the Miramelle line, seeking to recover some inheritance. Or a threaded magic item or two could be fashioned about the lovers (see following page).

## THE GIRDLE OF MIRAMELLE

**Maximum Threads:** 1

**Spell Defense:** 15

The Girdle of Mirabelle is a simple belt, made up of flattened bronze squares strung on a rawhide thong. Though made to fit a woman's waist, it can also be used by a man with little difficulty. Once a thread is woven, it sizes itself to fit the wielder.

There is some indication that the first wielder, Mirabelle, was one of the last adherents of a variant of the Troubadour discipline known as the courtesan, or for males, courtier. Never numerous to begin with, even among adepts, the onset of the Scourge dealt the killing blow to this specialty. Courtesans and courtiers were oriented toward serving an individual or a small group, something that the communal spirit of kaer living made difficult at best, useless and unappreciated at worst.

### Thread Ranks

**Rank 1 Cost:** 200

**Key Knowledge:** The wielder must know the Name of the item. (The Girdle of Mirabelle)

**Effect:** When worn, the wielder gains the First Impression and Winning Smile talents at Rank 1. If the wielder already possesses these talents, their Rank is increased by 1. These Rank bonuses do not apply when determining Circle advancement.

**Rank 2 Cost:** 300

**Key Knowledge:** The wielder must know the Name of the establishment that the first wielder owned. (The Spider's Web)

**Effect:** When worn, the wielder gains the Engaging Banter talent at Rank 2. If the wielder already possesses this talent, its Rank is increased by 2. This Rank bonus does not apply when determining Circle advancement.

**Rank 3 Cost:** 500

**Effect:** When worn, the wielder gains +1 to Social Defense, and +1 Step to Charisma. This bonus affects Charisma-based talents.

**Rank 4 Cost:** 800

**Key Knowledge:** The wielder must learn the Name of the Name-giver whom the first wielder seduced and wed. (King Peraxis)

**Effect:** When worn, the wielder gains the Hypnotize talent at Rank 2. If the wielder already possesses this talent, its Rank is increased by 2. This Rank bonus does not apply when determining Circle advancement.

**Rank 5 Cost:** 1300

**Deed:** The wielder must successfully seduce a Name-giver of the preferred sex, winning a boon from them. Receiving the boon completes this Deed, and earns the wielder 2100 Legend Points.

**Effect:** When worn, the wielder gains the Lasting Impression talent at Rank 2. If the wielder already possesses this talent, its Rank is increased by 2. This Rank bonus does not apply when determining Circle advancement.

*Contributed by Kathleen E. Czechkowski*

## HELP WANTED!

### SEEKING COLUMNISTS

Are you dying to get something off your chest? Do you have a unique viewpoint that you would like to popularize? Do you ever feel the need to climb up on a soapbox and rant? Do you feel that your experience might benefit others? If the answer to any of these questions is "yes," write a column for the *Book of Tomorrow!*

Columns can focus on any Earth-dawn-related topic and should be between 1,000-1,500 words in length. Topics that lend themselves to a continuing series (like role-playing advice or tips on gamemastering) are especially desirable.

Contact the editor more details or to work on a proposal. And remember: **Insights are meant to be shared.**

### SEEKING ARTISTS

Do you have art skills that would make an Adept jealous? Do your friends tell you that they like your drawings? Do your doodles make for passable trolls? Can you make mean-looking stick figures?

If you have art that you think would look good in the Book of Tomorrow, by all means, show us!

Hard copy submissions are acceptable, but digital ones are preferred. Hard copy should be mailed to the EDPT offices (see address on page 2); electronic ones should be e-mailed to the editor.

Illustrations for the fanzine should be 600 dpi or greater and may be submitted as TIFF (.tif), EPS (.eps) or Adobe Illustrator (.ai) files.

Graphics for the Web site should be 72 pixels/inch and may be submitted in either JPEG (.jpg) or GIF (.gif) format.

# A REPORT ON THE TOWN OF TROSK

by Jason Raynor

## Do the Passions have plans for the Badlands? Some of their Questors do.

To the esteemed Veritom Denairastas,

I, your humble servant Himla, submit for your review the following report, which was written by agents of the Copper Branch.

I received this report a mere month ago and have since confirmed the information is accurate as originally presented. In my capacity as Head Gatherer of the Copper Branch, I humbly request your permission to conduct a more thorough investigation, focusing primarily on the individual known as Blind Old Gingtoc. If the information provided by this storyteller proves accurate, I believe that further action to secure him as a tool to further the glory of Iopos would be justified.

A Devoted Child Of Uhl,  
Himla Kictain

To my dear aunt Gimmy,

*I hope this tale of your home brings a smile to you in times of hardship. Two nights ago, I came upon a small inn on Capis Street in Oshane, one of the underground cities in the Dwarf Kingdom of Throal. There was nothing particularly striking about this inn, but I was tired, thirsty and in need of a good meal, so I stayed there for the night. That I happened to hear this tale there was an act of pure serendipity.*

*Outside the entrance was an old dwarf, robbed of sight by his age but still plying a trade in small, carved stone figurines of great workmanship. Even though I did not stop at his table, he bid me a good day as I entered the inn's common room.*

*After a good meal and a few drinks, a local minstrel played some of the more popular miner's songs, with many of us joining*

*in. As the evening wore on, the locals kept pestering the blind old man from outside, whom they called Gingtoc. He had retired from his stall outside to a warm stool by the fire. It seems that, in addition to being a talented sculptor, he was also a storyteller of some renown in these parts. Even the minstrel seemed eager to hear the aged dwarf speak. Eventually, Gingtoc relented and, with his cane resting on his lap, an old bound at his feet and a mug of ale near at hand, he told the following tale.*

A tale, a tale!! Is that what you all want? Well, if I'm to get any rest this night, then I suppose that is what I hafta do. Now many a tale you have all heard, some true, some not, some of heroes and Horrors and many of times long past. However, for those of you not from around here, know this: The tales I tell are all true, and they belong to our time. They are the tales of the here and now and they concern us all, more so than most others--not because other tales are untrue or deal with past rather than the present, but because this is where we live and breathe...and die. Whether it is down the road, or across the sea, the lives of Name-givers everywhere are full of tales and stories to be told.

*Here the old man paused and talked quietly with his son, the tavern keeper, as everyone got settled. When everyone had a last drink, a pipe or a pretty bar lass to sit with and all were ready, he fixed his blind gaze on the crowd and began in a firm, strong voice.*

Tonight I will tell you of a town far from the safety of Throal, deep in the hinterlands of Barsaive, a place on the borders of the two most dangerous places of myth and legend, a place

called Trosk. To the west of this small hamlet lies the deadly Mist Swamps and its southern borders are uncomfortably close to the region we call the Badlands.

What was that? You doubt anyone would live in such a place?

Well, perhaps you would be correct in your assumption if not for the daring hopes of these people, for you see, most of them are followers of Jaspree, the Passion of all things green, wild and alive. Against all odds, these brave souls hope to one day rid our fair province of the scar the Scourge left behind and return the area to its former glory. But before the current tale of Trosk is told, it is necessary to know of the past, for only by understanding the past of a place can we hope to learn of its present.

In ages long ago, before the coming of the Scourge, this area was one of the most fertile farmlands in all of Barsaive. The denizens of this region fed themselves and their neighbors with ease. Those who dwelt there tended to be arrogant and comfortable in their wealth, for nearly everyone depended upon their generosity. They were among the first to purchase the Rites of Protection and Passage from the Therans and started building citadels long before most others. Thus, they were well prepared—but not necessarily ready—for the Long Night soon to come.

Some say they stayed open longer than most to help others with their kaers, others say it was arrogance or greed, but we will never know what really happened. During the long decades that followed, almost every citadel and kaer in the region was rendered lifeless during



the Scourge. Note my words carefully, for—as everyone who has survived the Badlands knows—most of these structures still stand today as they did generations ago. Only the former occupants no longer remain and, if they do, they are nothing like they were before.

---

***“Tell all who ask that we shall return when the land is in need, not before. The pain of mankind is not Jaspree’s concern. I will pray for your survival and bid you protect the grove, for these trees are the last of their kind in the world.”***

---

While the land was still fertile, and before those in power provoked the Orichalcum Wars, the city of Legadon grew and prospered on the shores of the Serpent. Originally, it was the most eastern port in the kingdom of Scavia, their principal trading port for the elemental fire they mined from the Scarlet Sea. Their beautiful, fireproof sailing vessels often docked there to unload their valuable cargo and take on more cosmopolitan goods from throughout Barsaive. The city was built well, with huge stone walls to defend against the t’skrang war ships and curving stone arches over the city itself to guard against any crystal raiders bold enough to come that far east. All in all, it was a peaceful place that managed to weather the storm of the Orichalcum Wars and profited heavily by supplying the increased demand for elemental fire.

Shortly after the wars subsided, a haggard band of Questors sought shelter within the city’s walls. Injured, paranoid and distrustful of most everyone, these worshipers of Jaspree came with next to nothing and only asked to plant a few seeds they had managed to save from whatever disaster had chased them from their home in the Servos. The city’s lord graciously granted them permission and, within three days, a grove of huge trees occupied almost the whole of the city’s central park.

Outraged, the lord approached the head Questor at dawn the next day to express his anger over what he saw as a breach of hospitality. While the lord threatened to have them all thrown out of the city, the Questor only smiled and said that most had already left. The lord stared in confusion, as he had personally watched all thirty or so of the Questors enter the grove only moments before. As he was about to order the guard to arrest the remaining “fanatic,” the Questor said, “Tell all who ask that we shall return when the land is in need, not before. The pain of mankind is not Jaspree’s concern. I will pray for your survival and bid you protect the grove, for these trees are the last of their kind in the world.”

Ignoring the lord’s protests, he then turned and walked into the grove of magnificent trees, barely making a sound. Now furious, the lord and his men charged into the grove only to find it empty. They searched for hours, eventually becoming quite lost, when they realized there was more to the grove than there appeared to be. Inside the grove was an entire forest! Over the next several days, they searched the grove from end to end but never found a trace of the Questors.

Eventually, the Scourge descended on the world and the Scavians had built their citadel well. A dome of living crystal was grown to fill in the spaces between the walls curving arches—or at least that’s what was intended. To this day, no one can find any evidence that the crystal dome of Legadon was ever there. Bits of surviving texts tell of payments made, crystal shipments from the Twilight Peaks, and even the magic incorporated into its making, but no one has ever found even a single shard of crystal anywhere near the ruins.

Perhaps it wasn’t completed in time or the shipments never arrived. It is a mystery still waiting to be solved.

Now, according to the eldest among those living in Trosk today, the town

was founded by an obsidian man Named Debnas Flinar around 1442. He was part of an adventuring band exploring the outer fringes of the Badlands on the orders of our king, may the Passions smile on him always, Varulus III.

His group came upon the ruins of Legadon while fleeing a horde of creatures that had been pursuing them for two days. Their numbers were dwindling and they were barely ahead of the creatures when they spied the crumbling ruin and decided to make their last stand in the relative shelter of its ancient streets. To the group’s surprise, in the center of the ruin’s main square was a grove of trees which appeared unharmed by the Scourge! They barely had time to stare in wonder before their pursuers charged from the streets into the square.

Desperate to know how this grove had survived, Debnas ordered his men to make a last stand and defend the grove from the horde. They fought bravely and took many of the vile Horrors with them beneath Death’s Sea, but in the end the outcome was inevitable, the number of Horrors was too great. Bellowing in fury, Debnas raised his great stone blade in what would be his final act, a Blood Curse on all those who would harm the grove. Just as his blade began its thrust, he felt a beautiful calm descend and time seemed to stop. Before him stood what could only be one of the Passions!

Smiling in gratitude at what Debnas was about to do, Jaspree banished the remaining Horrors from the ruins and accepted Debnar’s sacrifice for another purpose. What that purpose was, no one knows, but the grove stands even now and is one of the few places of true peace and harmony in our land.

Only those devoted to Jaspree can claim to truly understand the power of the grove and where those Questors of long ago went. When asked, however, none has been willing to explain. The common response to any query about the grove is simple enough, though: “In time, all return to the elements from whence we came...”

Here the old man finished his tale amidst cheering and shouts of triumph for Name-givers everywhere. Gingtoc talked long into the night, describing the town as well as any native could, often calling merchants by Name and giving directions to places in the town in terms of their proximity to others.

Curious, I approached the tavern owner, Gingtoc's son, and asked what occupation the old man had in younger years that had allowed him to travel so far? To my disbelief, Omtic told me that his father had been a foundry worker and had never gone farther than Bartertown in his life!

Mystified, I returned the next night and heard another tale of a town in the territory of Iopos, may Dis visit them often, that he told with a similar wealth of detail. It touches my heart to know that others know of the lands beyond their limited travels. I hope that you have enjoyed my rendition of the tale and pray that you to pass it on to cousin Thak, so that he may compare it to the other tales he knows of concerning the history of Trosk. May Jaspree smile upon your garden and plant hope in your heart. I should be arriving sometime next spring, hopefully in time for Jaspranon.

Looking forward to seeing you always.

Your Nephew,  
Limel Coldwater

The following is a detailed description of the Town of Trosk and its prominent residents. Where appropriate, I have included additional information based on what our agents learned while confirming the validity of Gingtoc's original story and descriptions.

Trosk is a small port town two days walk from the borders of the Mist Swamp. Almost all of the inhabitants

of this town are in some way devoted to Jaspree, giving Trosk the highest proportion of settled Questors found in Barsaive. The Questors of Trosk are focused on healing the damage to the Badlands that was caused by the Scourge. The town itself was built in the ruins of the ancient port city of Legadon.

A great citadel was planned to protect the inhabitants of Legadon from the Scourge. Sadly, however, the citadel's dome was never completed. The dome was supposed to be made entirely from living crystal and supported by seven great stone arches, which today seem to curve towards the sky like the rune-encrusted bones of some great beast. These stone arches still function as they were intended, providing light and warmth to those who dwell within the town's walls. The streets are lined with cobblestone and most of the buildings are made primarily from stone, a fact concealed by the plants that grow everywhere, covering the ancient stone in lush green foliage and flowers.

Outside the town, the Questors have managed to create a small tract of farmland between the Serpent River and the Badlands, which defies the damage wrought by the Scourge on this area of Barsaive. Amazingly, this small area manages to grow enough crops to support the town and export small amounts of fresh produce to Travar and the House of Nine Diamonds.

There is little livestock and most meat is in the form of fish from the river, which the locals smoke, dry, pickle and cook fresh.

The port supports three docks, only one of which can dock a true t'skrang riverboat. The rest serve the local t'skrang fishing fleet and a ferry for crossing the river. A regular visitor to Trosk, a riverboat Named the Jade Wanderer stops every other week or

so to trade and pick up passengers.

### The Crossroads Call

This large building was an inn before the Scourge, as it is now. There is a huge map of Barsaive carved into the east side of the building. The map is quite accurate and, for the price of one silver, patrons may have their home town placed on the map. The owner, Jasmina Lightfoot, is an athletically trim elven woman with short, raven black hair. She is charming to her guests and she runs a fine establishment. The Crossroads Call has only two rooms with baths but all the rooms, except the two common ones, have locks.

Unknown to most, she makes most of her money smuggling a variety of narcotic and poisonous substances from the swamps to the Theran city of Vivane. She has a small alchemy lab in the basement, which is run by her brother Elonmar, an alchemist of some renown in certain circles.

### The Wandering Quill

This is the establishment of Thalia Stonebinder, the local scribe and researcher. Thalia is a specialist on the Serpent River, especially the Southern Reach. She is currently researching the lost kaers of the Badlands and has funded three expeditions so far this year, two of which were successful. She is willing to research magical items for a fee and also performs the standard services of her discipline (or has her apprentice do it in her place).

Our agents have already discovered one of her most closely guarded secrets: Thalia is a Dweller for the Eye of Throal. They also suspect something more is going on in this shop and have indicated that they will keep a close eye on Stonebinder for the remainder of their mission in the area. Her given district includes all of the Southern Reach and Travar, though that city has Dwellers of its own. Currently, she has a lot of information on Theran activities in the Mist Swamps and some internal information about the House of Nine Diamonds. Her information is passed

#### TROSK

Population: ~1500

Ork: 25% Human: 29% Dwarf: 12% Elf: 9%  
Troll: 2% T'skrang: 22% Windling: 0% Obsidiman: 1%

#### Noteworthy Residents

Getaf Barkhide, Town Mayor - 8th Circle Questor (Jaspree), Ork  
Thalia Stonebinder, Scribe - 7th Circle Traveled Scholar, Dwarf  
Ibith Mallicon, Dock Master, T'skrang  
One-Legged Finn, Owner of the Hungry Croc, Ork  
Here Thistlebeard, Owner of Here's General Supply, Dwarf  
Jasmina Lightfoot, Owner of The Crossroads Call - 3rd Circle Thief, Elf  
Daved Brightsmile, Owner of The Restful Ghost - 6th Circle Troubadour, Human  
Nabar Surearm, Head Of Town Guard - 5th Circle Weaponsmith, Ork

infrequently to Throal, always heavily coded. She is under the impression that she is being watched by a Theran agent in the area, but does not know the identity of the spy.

### **Herc's General Supply**

This well-stocked warehouse carries most of the weapons and equipment an explorer could need and some of the more common thread items. It is owned and operated by Herc, an aging dwarf from Throal, and his family.

Herc has a deal with the town and local inns to purchase abandoned goods from missing patrons, and he generally makes a decent profit by acquiring rare items this way. He also buys ancient items recovered from explorers from the Swamps and Badlands. Nabar Surearm is his partner in this venture and provides the labor of repairing and identifying such items. Herc is always looking out for a shrewd buy and willing to cut a customer a deal if he likes them. He has a strong dislike for obsidimen and generally will not buy from anyone related to the Overland Trading Company. He will also charge obsidimen and anyone with them higher prices.

Our agents have learned that Herc knew Omasu in his youth and that the two had a falling out when Herc wanted to start up his own trading company. It seems that he blames the obsidiman for the failure of his company. He could be a valuable ally to our agents in the future. Herc made a fair amount of money during his brief career as a caravan merchant, but couldn't compete with Overland Trading. Most of his cash reserves have been used up on bad deals and failed enterprises over the years.

His operating capital and other valuable items are kept in a vault hidden behind the ancient suit of plate mail from Landis on display against the back wall. He is unwilling to sell the suit, claiming it was once the property of an old comrade, but in reality it is because it has been permanently fixed to the secret door which hides the vault.

### **The Restful Ghost**

This tavern is of medium size and is actually more of a town meeting hall, complete with a performance stage for traveling Troubadours. It is owned by an elderly Troubadour by the Name of Daved Brightsmile and run by his daughter, Tristan. The food and drink are of average quality, but their specialty is catering to larger gatherings, where they serve marvelous appetizers during performances. Daved is willing to train others of his discipline but requires a week's worth of performances on his stage in return (all money going to Daved). Tristan secretly loathes being stuck in Trosk and taking care of her ageing father. She hopes that she can persuade him to sell the tavern so she can move them to the nearby city of Travar.

### **The Hungry Croc**

If you're looking for the darker side of this town, then the Hungry Croc is where you will find it. The furniture is made of cheap wood due to the frequent brawls between the many slaver crews, adventurers, ork mercenaries, Theran fire miners and various locals. The food is poor but the drink is strong, cheap and comes in generously large quantities.

One-Legged Finn is a repulsive ork with a peg-leg that is the result of being on the wrong end of a crocodile during an expedition into the Mist Swamps. His entire company was lost to the hungry reptile, but he managed to reach Trosk and recuperate. In revenge, he returned to the swamp, tracked and killed the crocodile. It is now mounted on the wall above the bar. Finn is always willing to tell the story of "the Croc" to anyone who will listen and is full of advice about the swamps.

Finn keeps two flop rooms for those patrons who get too drunk to make it out the door. He charges anyone unfortunate enough to wake up there outrageous prices and always has a couple of the guards around to make sure they pay up.

### **The Central Grove**

These massive trees can be seen from anywhere in town. They stretch right up to the pinnacle of the arches and almost entirely fill the original citadel's central square. It is here that most

---

*It is not unusual to see people in Trosk who are more concerned with the comfort of a person's mount than the Name-giver who owns it.*

---

of the Questors meet, pay homage to Jaspre, and discuss town matters. This is a place of powerful magic that quiets the spirit and cleanses one's soul.

It is rumored that Jaspre manifests here from time to time, strengthening the pattern of the great trees. If one walks among the plants and trees of the grove, it seems as if the area is bigger than it actually could be, due to the buildings on all sides being hidden by wild growth. The grove's wooden benches serve as ideal resting places for those walking the paths and, although many people come here daily, they never seem crowded. A proliferation of noisy, colorful birds and other small animals make their homes here and throughout the many abandoned and overgrown buildings in the town itself.

Astrally, the Sacred Grove is considered a Safe area and will heal 2D10 Strain from anyone spending more than an hour inside. Fire of any kind is strictly prohibited, as is the act of removing any plant or animal from the grove. Those who break these laws are ejected from town and told never to return.

Also, it is not unusual to see people in Trosk who are more concerned with the comfort of a person's mount than the Name-giver who owns it. The residents of Trosk are extremely intolerant of people who mistreat animals and will most likely escort them from town.

### **Gut'aff's Roughnecks**

A small building within the market area of Trosk houses the headquarters of the Roughnecks, a motley crew of ork and t'skrang mercenaries for hire. Numbering about thirty in total, they



work exclusively on the southern Serpent and will make forays into the Servos Jungle or even the Mist Swamps for the right price. There are six adepts of various Disciplines and Circles among them and the Roughnecks take on almost any job that pays well. A few of the members have trouble with dealing with slavers, so any such job costs three times the asking price (although some of the Roughnecks have no such qualms). They see themselves as the real locals of Trosk and are often the first to start trouble with newcomers. Members of the Roughnecks can usually be found in Herc's, The Hungry Croc and down by the Docks.

### The Docks

Overseen by the careful eye of Ibith Mallicon, the docks operate efficiently and smoothly, morning, day and night. Though not a heavy trading port, the docks are always busy with net and boat

repairs, the curing and packaging of fish, the movement of cargo, and the general bustle of passengers. The Jade Wanderer only comes by every other week, so the small warehouse by the docks is more than sufficient. The other buildings are used for boat repairs, fish production and Ibith's office. The town has recently demolished two ancient buildings by the docks to allow Theran fire-mining ships a place to land if they feel so inclined (two have landed there in the past four months).

As slavery is illegal in Trosk, slavers carefully guard any ship they dock, remaining nervous throughout their stay. The Questors will protect any slave who makes it to the Sacred Grove and seeks sanctuary.

In direct violation of the town ordinance, Ibith is secretly running a small but lucrative slavery ring with the fire miners and some of Gut'aff's Roughnecks. There is a secret door under one

of the wharfs, which leads into the basement of Ibith's office. This is where the slaves are kept until the miners take possession of them. Most of these slaves are jungle tribesmen that the Roughnecks capture on their forays into the Servos.

### The Flaming Heart

This small forge is run by Nabar Surearm, a recently retired ork Weaponsmith from the southern areas of Barsaive. He has taken one apprentice, a dwarf by the Name of Killnic Knucklebasher and he also employs two human blacksmiths. His prices are high, due to the scarcity of raw metals here, but he does perform weapon identifications for reasonable prices. His work is decent and often done ahead of schedule. To help keep himself occupied, Nabar has recently taken over the post of Captain of The Guard and is performing his duties well. ❁

---

## So, you think you have a knack for storytelling, do you? Prove it.

### The EDPT Contest

The EDPT will give away one copy of the forthcoming *Barsaive at War* epic to the individual or group that contributes the best submission to the next issue.

Submissions that touch on any Earthdawn-related topic are fine, but all entries must include a story of some kind.

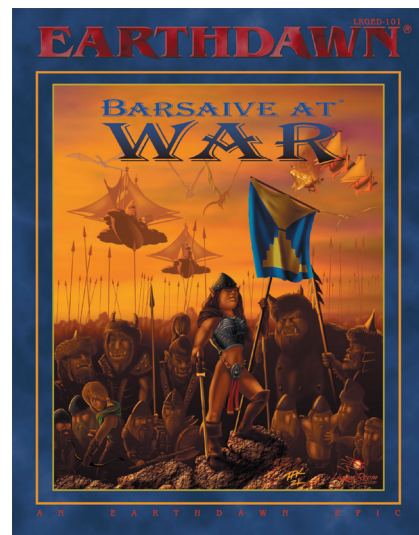
To enter, send your submission, along with your name and relevant contact information (a postal or e-mail address will do fine) and the names of any collaborators to the EDPT at either of the addresses listed on page 2. Digital submissions are preferred and any physical submissions must be postmarked no later than August 30, 2000.

The EDPT reserves the right to reject any entry it deems unsuitable. The EDPT further reserves the right to cancel the contest if the number of entries is deemed insufficient by a majority of the Administrative Board members.

The winning submission will be determined by a vote among the EDPT Administrative Board and the subscribers to the EDPT-L mailing list (see subscription instructions on page 2), with the result of the EDPT-L vote counting as one Administrative Board vote.

### Eligibility

Anyone who submits an entry before the August 30 deadline is eligible, with the exception of EDPT Administrative Board mem-



bers, who are ineligible.

### Announcement of the results

The results will be published in the next issue of the *Book of Tomorrow*.

For more details, please see:

<http://www.earthdawn.com/edpt/>

# THE LITTLE JUDGE

by Kathleen E. Czechowski

Illustration © Ezaustszel



While staying in Urupa, I had the pleasure of indulging in an informal meeting with the small enclave of Cathayans that have taken up residence in the Visitor's Quarter. Before I lost one half of my purse, I overheard one of the women tell a group of children a favorite tale of theirs, called 'The Little Judge.'

I have attempted to translate the tale here. Where there is no direct literal translation into Throalic available, I have substituted the closest possible word. Such are the limits of adept talents!

Nossirkaj ("Kaj") Tran  
Troubadour of Jerris

In the earliest days of the rule of the Most Wise,

Four Judges heard the case. They had Kuai Xiang brought before them.

*Four, on the other hand, is a very unlucky number, often associated with death, as the pronunciations are so similar. In fact, in Cathay, very few adepts travel in groups of four, preferring groups of three or (best case) five. No explanation was given in the story for why one judge was missing. --Kaj*

The senior Judge rose, and said this to Kuai Xiang. "Boy, you are accused of the theft of many things. Have you anything to say in your defense?"

Kuai Xiang stood up, hands shoved in his pockets. He tried to think of a way to get himself out of this mess. His hands felt the things he had in his pockets. An idea came to him. "If you free me, I will give you wonderful things."

The senior Judge looked at him sternly. "Indeed."

Kuai Xiang smiled. He was pleased to have the attention of the Judges. "I can give you enough food to last a lifetime. I can give you enough lumber to build many great cities."

One Judge laughed outright. The other three merely smiled. One Judge looked at Kuai Xiang. "How will you do this?" she asked.

Kuai Xiang pulled out the things in his pockets. He showed them to the judges. In one hand were five nuts from the strongest tree. In the other hand were five dozen grains of wheat.

*Yet another problematic word. Wheat, as such, does not exist in Cathay. This grain is somewhat similar to wheat, but is slightly reddish. When baked into bread, the result has a sweet-spicy smell, like carrameg, and is firm and crumbly. The impression was accompanied by what I thought was a fleeting taste of something not unlike dwarf nut-*

*A common beginning for most children's tales, or so I am given to understand. The Most Wise have ruled for so long, the start of their reigns are veiled by the mists of time. --Kaj*  
there lived a boy, Named Kuai Xiang. He had no mother, nor did he have a father. He dwelt on the streets, begging for food and clothing. When he could, he stole it. This made many merchants unhappy with him. Kuai Xiang was sought for stealing many things. Kuai Xiang was smart, and fast. He always evaded the merchants, except for one day...

Kuai Xiang walked down the Avenue of Pears, thinking he was hungry.

*This is the first of such problem words. The actual Name of the street was not Pear, but something else. I got the distinct impression of a soft, slightly acidic fruit with a fragrance like flowers. It was shaped like a miniature pear, thus the substitution. --Kaj*

He smelled goose cooking, and sought its location. When he found the booth, he tripped a customer to distract the cook. Then, he grabbed the stick with the sizzling cubes of meat. He ran off to a place to eat it.

The meat was too hot. He juggled it, all the while thinking of how good goose tasted. It was hot for too long. The merchants found him, after following the trail of goose juice.

*The last words of the sentence gave the children quite a giggle. It rhymes in Cathayan, too. --Kaj*

The merchants grabbed him, and took him before the Judges.

*The Judges, in Cathayan culture, are apparently not only judges, but advocates and jury, all wrapped up in one. Normally, there are five Judges, five being an auspicious number (as well as being handy for preventing tie votes).--Kaj*

*bread; but then, I always did have an overactive imagination. --Kaj*

The four Judges gazed upon Kuai Xiang's offering: one with great amusement, one with sympathy, one with astonishment, and one with serious thought.

The senior Judge stroked his braid. He waved for a private conference with his fellow Judges. Kuai Xiang shuffled from one foot to another. He was certain his doom was sealed.

Five upon five passed.

*Close to a quarter hour, by Throalic time.*

*--Kaj*

The Judges returned, the senior Judge standing while the others sat. "Step forward," the senior Judge said to Kuai Xiang. Trembling, the boy stepped forward. "You are accused of stealing many things," the senior Judge said. "Yet, you are very young. We feel you have need of guidance, not punishment."

"You have shown great wisdom in your defense. Much food can be grown from few seeds. Much lumber can be gathered from few trees, properly grown and tended.

"It is ordered that you assume the Fifth Place. Garments will be made for you, Little Judge."

Kuai Xiang could not believe his luck.

*And there, the story ended. When I realized I was still in a casting sticks game, I had lost most of my travel money to a smiling Cathayan matron. Perhaps she took advantage of my lack of knowledge of the game. Still, I didn't feel cheated, not with this story thrown into the bargain. It is my hope that the payment I receive from the Great Library for this will cover my losses.*

*There is some indication that this is the first of a series of Little Judge stories. However, as I have been told not to come back until I have lots more money, it may be some time before I am allowed to meet with the Cathayans again, and hear more of their stories. Perhaps, if the Great Library would be willing... --Kaj*

No. --Merrox



# THE AMBUSH

*by Attila Hatvagner*

The timing is a matter of life and death.

We slip through the bushes silently, clutching our weapons, moving toward their camp. They have moved farther along the trail than I had expected. Now we have to hurry to strike at them while we still have the advantage. They are better armed than we are. They have better armor. They live longer than most of us. But they can't understand our fierce stout-heartedness, our cunning courage, and the feeling that we are fighting on our own land.

We wade across the stream. We move silently, not in their ways. Their tracks are clearly visible to everybody, and they marched so loudly, as if the whole world is theirs. Fools.

We divide ourselves into two groups, the others go a bit farther down the river, we will encircle them from downstream. We will burst forth from the nowhere, and they will be dead before they realize what happened.

The timing is a matter of life and death.

Our lives are short, when compared to theirs. We have to take the time by the forelock to show them what we can do. Our sheer number is our greatest advantage. Our sheer number and our concerted actions. We work together as if we were one body. This is partially true. All of my comrades are flesh of my flesh and blood of my blood. I am their leader, and they will sacrifice themselves for me if it is required. There are no such bonds in the enemy's camp. How could they have such unity? They don't understand our way of life. They don't even want to try to understand.

The timing is a matter of life and death.

We are in position. Their animals are tethered in the camp, and their packs are near the campfire. I will eat well tonight.

We rush out together in the starlight. Our weapons seem miserable compared to their axes, but we outnumber them at least three to one. I stab at their leader with my rusty dagger, forcing him backward. Green writhing flames soar through the night sky. Magic. Get him, before he causes more damage!

Our timing was bad. We were late. I see my companions falling to the ground, and the only survivor from our other group appears at the border of the clearing. He was the youngest and the hardest of us, but he is falling to the ground from the magical flames, rapidly decomposing as he falls. My opponent turns to face me.

Taghor swung his battle-axe with a mighty blow at his opponent's head, and it burst open like an over-ripe melon. The clearing was filled with twitching bodies, all rapidly decomposing into frothy mush. The troll turned on his dwarf companion with an angry shout.

"Clear path, yeah? This damned forest is full of these damned things! Next time we'll go where I say, and we'll maybe have a peaceful night's sleep. Scrouge it, this one stepped in my food." He kicked his last opponent's body, grumbling selected troll and ork curses about incompetent magicians and forests in general. "This one seems to be stronger than the others. Maybe we have more peaceful days ahead of us," said the dwarf with a bored grimace. "But we better move along, this stench is disgusting."

Triplicants are unappreciated creatures.





# TROLL FESTIVALS

by Ian Fay

## Trolls are too often dismissed as mere brutes, says one of their former captives.

*Greetings to all, and may the wind of Florannus caress your face for all your days! My scholarly colleagues have asked me to write this treatise, as they seem to know about as much about the culture of The Dual People as your average espagra knows about Throalic trade law.*

*I am a Sky Raider of the T'skerang House of the Spirit Wind. Like most of my kind, I felt the call of the skies. However, on my pilgrimage to meet my fellow flying brothers, Sky Raiders attacked my caravan and I was taken prisoner. I later regained my freedom by saving a clan member. In time, I came to love my adopted family and their honorable ways. Thus, I became a member of the Thundersky troll moot.*

*I've been asked by some friends (who fail to understand my noble and complex adoptive tribe) to elucidate the mystery of the trolls. They seemed to feel that, because I know the ways of two worlds, I was the perfect candidate to teach others about the wonders of the life of the Tra'n'uli (or what you call a Troll) and to illuminate their very different ways of life. This missive (the first of many, Astendar willing) will attend to the matter of Trollish holidays.*

*Hel'Grak'Menar Groundshaker Thundersky*

### **Kor'Krennal'Jaspree (Jaspree's Gifts)**

This holiday is held two weeks after the end of the year's final harvest. It serves to give thanks for the harvest and commemorate Jaspree's Gift (see *Crystal Raiders of Barsaive* for more details) for the coming of the winter.

### **What happens**

The first event that occurs is called Gor'kal'renal ("The Repayment"). The flagship of the moot is taken out, with

its crew as well as all the Elementalists in the moot, and the competitors for the Fren'hal'Jaspree ("Jaspree's Test," see below).

The Elementalists (who have been preparing for this for several weeks) then spread seeds of appropriate types over the land that the moot claims, giving back to Jaspree what their people have taken, and helping to ensure the land's vitality.

After this is accomplished, the survival contest (Fren'hal'Jaspree) begins. The competitors are ritually stripped of all adornments, clothing, and weapons. They are then given a specially prepared spear that represents the troll's connection to Nature. The spear is carved from a tree that has been split by lightning. It is blackened in a bonfire, doused in a river, and then given a living crystal tip, signifying a relationship with all five elements.

The contestants, almost always the most powerful warriors in the moot, are dropped off at random areas at the farthest reaches of the moot's territory (usually several day's walk). They each then have to walk back to the alheim. Those who do are lauded and are awarded great honor. After the celebration (which takes about a week), life goes on at the moot, with no search for the missing (as it would be an affront to the contestant's katorr). No mourning is allowed unless the contestant's bodies happen to be found (again, if the contestant was not actually dead, this would be a grave insult to katorr).

After the survival test begins, the airship heads back to the alheim to begin the celebration itself. This usually begins with massive feast, consisting mostly of

whatever crops the clan could eke out of the steppe farms they use to grow what they cannot gain through combat. The hunters in the clan also spend several days gathering enough meat for this event.

During this time there are many norr (or tales) told. Not just any tales, though, the tales told during this time are tales of natural disasters and how the moot overcame them. Also told are tales of great beasts and the warriors who fought them.

While all the revelry goes on, any warriors on the survival test who return home are welcomed with great joy and honor. They always have great tales to tell of their time in the wild. (I myself feel that Jaspree sends beasts and obstacles to challenge the mighty warriors.) If the warrior managed to keep his spear intact, he has the option of keeping it as his personal weapon (many do, and these items often become Elemental Spears or take on other magical properties as their owner's legends spread).

*Presented here for your enjoyment is the Tale of Rel'Talen Haleheart Swiftwind, and his Fren'hal'Jaspree. This tale, by the way, was related to me at the time of norrs mentioned above and I have transcribed it to the best of my ability.*

Rel'Talen was a brute of a troll, nearly 10 feet tall and weighing nearly as much as a Thundra Beast. He was a gentle soul, however, and his jar'arak was the beautiful art he was known to create, like the large murals created on the cliff walls in his homeland, many of which have been magically preserved for future generations to see.

He was an adequate warrior, but even he would not call it dishonor to

admit his desires and heart lay elsewhere. He raided along with the clan, as his sense of honor and duty required,

---

***One of the most entertaining sights I have ever seen is the annual Rockhorn thundra beast race. Such a combination of ponderous grace and deadly strength is rarely seen in Bar-saive.***

---

but his mind was often back at home, creating art.

One year, at Kor'Krenal'Jaspree, a group of outsiders was present for the celebration. When the time came for the Fren'hal'Jaspree, he did not volunteer. The outsiders taunted him cruelly, doing him grave dishonor by suggesting he was too weak or cowardly to go. At this, Rel'Talen did not challenge the kava, as some tra'u'uli would. Instead, he merely stepped forward and volunteered for the Kor'Krenal'Jaspree for the first time in his life.

He was dropped off, skyclad as per custom, on the southern slope of Mount An'grak, and then he was alone with his thoughts and his spear.

Now, if you've never been to the area around Mt. An'grak, it is quite a sight to behold. Rivers of lava, some cooled and some not, sit side by side with the remains of the forests that spread in the area between the volcano's times of activity.

Rel'Talen traveled for days. His feet, hands, and lungs were burned by the red-hot ash and rocks. His eyes burned with tears from the fumes and smoke. His body wilted away due to the heat. Along the way, he mightily fought off wave after wave of angry fire elementals, fire eagles, and even a Magma Beast that had claimed an area near the Mist Swamps. (Now, the version I had heard places great details on these battles, but for the sake of brevity, I will omit them. I'd be happy to tell them, though, if anyone should meet me at a tavern somewhere. But back to the story.)

Rel'Talen's journey back to his alheim took him 12 days, the last three

of which were spent stumbling, blinded by hot ash. He went west, following the heat of the sun and the smell of his moot's cookfires. He then collapsed just inside the gates, and fell into a sleep-like state from which none thought he would ever awaken. He was taken to his bed, and his clan waited in great trepidation for several days.

What happened shortly after is the cause of some debate. All that is known for certain is that, on the night of the next full moon, a troll clad in a silver robe appeared at the gates of the alheim, and was admitted by the gatekeepers. She traveled directly to Rel'Talen's bedside, and pulled from her cloak a vial filled with a liquid as luminous as quicksilver. None of the healers at Rel'Talen's side hindered her (and they knew not why) as she held up his head and poured the liquid down his throat.

Then she said, "My heart will not allow a talent such as you to be dashed by the whims of chance. Live to create again." And then she turned and left the moot, never to be seen again.

Most believe that this is Garlen, known to the Trolls as Goran'der'alheim (Heart-fire-of-the-Moot) sent either by her own desire or on a favor for Astendar to save one of his chosen from a life denied of his jar'arak. But all are certain she came, as Rel'Talen awoke the next morning shortly before dawn, and as the sun rose with its usual splendor over the mountains, Rel'Talen left the moot with only his paints to begin another mural.

He was not seen again for 18 days, though many searched for him. At length, he returned, covered in paint and with a beatific smile on his face. He walked directly to his bunk in the longhouse and fell into a deep sleep for nearly a day. Many felt that his illness had relapsed and he was sure to die. However, when he arose, he told all present that he had a new work, one to rival all his previous attempts. At this news, the moot rejoiced, and traveled en masse to the site of this masterwork.

The mural was easily a hundred feet on a side, and as smooth as elven silk. It was carved on an eastward-facing cliff, so as to greet the rising sun each dawn. Depicted thereon was Rel'Talen's tale, from his early life all the way up to the precise moment when he showed his work to the moot. The final detail even included a crowd of trolls standing around, looking at a mural.

By the time the crowd's attention shifted back from the work to its creator, Rel'Talen was gone. Some say he simply walked off into the wild. Others say he transcended this mortal life and joined Astendar, Jaspree, and the other Passions in whatever awaits us after we pass from this life. But he was never seen again.

### **Katorr'Ga'i (The honor of doing something well)**

This holiday occurs during the vernal equinox and celebrates the passions Thystonius and Floranus.

### **What happens**

This competition, held on the first day of spring, is a grand time for all involved. It invigorates the raiders and prepares them physically and mentally for the coming seasons. Participation is widely regarded as a good way to keep basic skills honed and provides an important opportunity to refine them.

Races of all kinds are held during this event, which takes place over the course of several days. Foot races are the norm, and many clans also have mounted races. One of the most entertaining sights I have ever seen is the annual Rockhorn thundra beast race. Such a combination of ponderous grace and deadly strength is rarely seen in Bar-saive. Obviously, there are also airship races, wonderful ones, with the crews rushing to get the best rigging, and the captains trying to take the best advantage of terrain and winds to get to the finish line first.

There are also many kinds of tests. There is jousting (on granlains), quite the event for the moot's horseman and Cavalrymen. Blunt lances are used and

healers are always on hand to help out with broken ribs and other injuries. Strength tests are also the norm, like lifting increasingly heavier and heavier rocks (the largest larger than your average human!) There are also mock fighting trials, using cloth-covered wooden swords and soft maces and axes. Still, many warriors are hurt by the bare-handed blows that accompany the typical raider fighting style; so again, healers are on hand.

One particular contest, one that has a bit of history to it, is the endurance trial, called Gal'ar'and ("The Water Carrier"). This particular event is started by one of the storytellers in the clan telling the story of The Great Fire (called Shal'bor'anal) which in the pre-Scourge days of the great Skytoucher moot, nearly wiped out the great alheim. The tale starts with a simple misunderstanding. A fire elemental wandered into the area during a bonfire and, when the clan reacted in shock to the resulting conflagration, the elemental went berserk and set most of the area ablaze. The water supplies were inadequate (as the clan did not expect a raging fire elemental to destroy their homes) and water had to be carried in barrels from the local river to put the fire out.

The event itself is simple: contestants carry barrels from one place to another. However, these barrels are as large as small humans and filled with water. The challengers keep carrying water from one area to the other (about 100 yards apart) until only one is left standing.

For all that these events tell us about the trollish culture, I would venture that none compare to the surprising revelations to be found in the holiday's mental trials. I know most of you think trolls are large, violent barbarians with barely enough learning to count the notches on their axe hafts. I am here to change that notion. Not only will this next segment help you understand us better, but it will also augment the honor of all tro'o'astia in the process.

These particular events vary from clan to clan. They often feature strategy



Illustration © Inge Vermeylen

games that simulate basic airship combats, boasting contests, joke contests, and whatever else the clan can conceive. Most common, however, is the riddle contest.

In this contest, throughout the year anyone who wants to participate comes up with as many riddles as they can devise or find in texts. They then write them down on uniform pieces of vellum made ready at the beginning of the festival. All of these riddles are then put into a large barrel. The participants then line up (order is not important) and the clan chieftain (unless he is participating, in which case some other clan dignitary is chosen) pulls riddles from the barrel and begins to read them. The riddle is passed down the line. If you get it wrong, you are eliminated. Obviously, one is barred from answering one's own riddles. The contest, depending on the luck and skill of the riddlers, can last some minutes, or, in the case of a terrific story that I heard from Talks-With-His-Hands, a skald in my clan, days.

Enclosed is the tale of the Great Riddle Contest of Dor'gal Sharpwit and

Po'grang Earthskin of Clan Swiftwind. I have included it as an example of trollish storytelling and to illustrate the importance of the riddle contest

Now Dor'gal Sharpwit was the local master of the riddles. He was an old troll, scarred and wise, and had heard more tales and riddles than any other in his clan. He had won the riddle contest every year since his coming of age. Although many tried to usurp his throne, his quick thinking and vast experience saved him every year. It was often thought in those days that only Dor'gal's passing would bring a new champion riddler.

Po'grang, on the other hand, was an unruly youngster. He was an apprentice Elementalist, and rather smart in his own right. His true goal in life was to become a master of the Elements, but like many others in the clan, he enjoyed the riddle contest. He himself had never been allowed to participate before due to his age, but now that he was truly an adult, he would join his elders and friends on the battlefield of intellect.

Po'grang spent months finding the



best and toughest riddles in the land. He searched old tomes, questioned many spirits, and even ventured into the ruins of Ustrect to search for pre-Scourge books of tales and riddles to help him. On one of these attempts, after being attacked by jehuthras, he barely made it back alive. But, in the ruins, he found that which he had long sought: an old book of riddles located in the ruined house of a Troubadour. Clutching his prize like a mother to her child, he flew home on a Throne of Air.

When he returned to the moot, all questioned him about his absence, but he hid the book in his robes, keeping

*I'm often in tatters, and oft decked with gold.  
Though I never could read, yet lettered I'm found;  
Though blind, I enlighten; though loose, I am bound,  
I'm always in black, and I'm always in white;  
I'm grave and I'm gay, I am heavy and light-  
In form too I differ - I'm thick and I'm thin,  
I've no flesh and bones, yet I'm covered with skin;  
I've more points than the compass, more stops than the flute;  
I sing without voice, without speaking confute.  
I'm Throatlic, I'm T'skrang, I'm Elven, and I'm Obsidian;  
Some love me too fondly, some slight me too much;  
I often die soon, though I sometimes live ages,  
And no monarch alive has so many pages."*

After the reading, all in the crowd thought Po'grang was a sure winner.

***I hope that, through the lens of the festivities presented herein, I have offered you enough of a glimpse to make you reconsider your preconceptions about trolls and their culture.***

his secret to himself. At night he would venture outside the alheim and read the book by moonlight, choosing his riddles as carefully as one might choose dueling weapons.

At last, the festival of Katorr'Ga'i had arrived. It started off with the usual footraces, ship races, and the like. The riddle contest was slated for the evening of the second day. At the end of the first day, the riddles were collected and locked away.

When the contest finally started, both Po'grang and Dor'gal were surprised by the lack of competitors this year. Usually a spirited event with several dozen participants, only eight entered this year. Most attributed this to Dor'gal.

Both the wise veteran and the young prodigy advanced quickly to the later rounds. After 4 hours, they were the only participants remaining, and Dor'gal, as the defending champion, was required to answer first. As it was read, Po'grang rejoiced, as Dor'gal had drawn what he felt his best riddle:

*"I'm a strange contradiction; I'm new, and I'm old,*

Complete silence filled the room for several minutes. Then, suddenly, Dor'gal clear, deep voice sang out.

"Ah! A clever one! A book! Very good, young one!"

And so the contest continued. Po'grang stepped up and drew the following:

*"I heard of an invading, vanquishing army  
sweeping across the land, liquid-quick;  
conquering everything, quelling resistance.  
With it came darkness, dimming the light.  
Humans hid in their houses, while outside  
spears pierced, shattering stone walls.  
Uncountable soldiers smashed into the ground,  
but each elicited life as he died;  
when the army had vanished, advancing northward,  
the land was green and growing, refreshed."*

At this, the crowd was silenced again, but somewhat resigned. It seemed clear the master would win again. But quickly, no less than the span of 5 breaths, young Po'grang answered, tentatively.

"A rainstorm?"

And the crowd cheered, for he was right.

And so the contest continued. Both participants agreed to an interregnum after the barrel was emptied of riddles. It was well past sunrise and all involved were exhausted. Both contestants rushed back to their longhouses and sought out new riddles to continue.

This cycle went on for another three days. The festival ground to a halt as the

full clan was caught up in the drama. Both riddlers lost their voice after the second day, and alchemists were brought in to heal them. But at last, one riddle was given that was not answered.

*"A serpent swam in a silver urn.*

*A golden bird in its mouth did abide.*

*The serpent drank the water, this in turn*

*Killed the serpent. Then the gold bird died."*

And thus the contest ended and Dor'gal's reign as the riddlemaster of Clan Swiftwind was ended.

[*Author's note: In case you were wondering, the answer to the final riddle is a burning oil lamp floating in a silver bowl.*]

## **A'velar'yad (The Peace Within)**

Held during the Winter Solstice, A'velar'yad helps to cultivate the spiritual side of the moot (known as jar'arak) and gives each tro'o'astia time to know his own mind more fully

### **What happens**

This solemn event occurs at the dead of the cold mountain winter. As the days get shorter, the cooks in the clan prepare the ritual food that accompanies this time. It is known as al'nor'gola (rock-food) and is about as appetizing as dwarven mine rations. The hunters also cure large amounts of meat for jerky.

On the shortest day of the year, the clan is awakened at dawn without a word, with only the ringing of a bell to prepare for this day. For the entire week, no one speaks. All work stops. The only activities allowed are:

1) Eating: And even this is restricted to jerky, al'nor'gola, and water. The fast keeps the mind focused inward.

2) Sleeping

3) Art: Each troll pursues his own path. From the troll viewpoint, art is not created for the viewer, but for the artist. But often in the life of the tro'o'astia there is little time for music or sculpture. This addresses that need and tempers the often-mercurial nature of the artist with the inner peace that a well-made and beautiful piece of artwork can bring.

4) Meditation: This is, quite simply, inner thought, thinking about whatever and

whomever one wants. This serves to do away with useless and distracting thoughts and to focus the mind. Often when this is done, the winter seems less daunting and all tasks seem easier to complete.

This is quite a sight for anyone not familiar with it. An entire clan of trolls

sitting in their longhouse in complete silence, each contemplating his or her own inner self and bringing themselves closer to jar'arak. My first time among them, this brought me to tears at the simple dignity and beauty of it all.

I hope that, through the lens of the festivities presented herein, I have

offered you enough of a glimpse to make you reconsider your preconceptions about trolls and their culture.

*Till next time, Ter'vo'an!  
Hel'Grak'Menar Groundshaker Thundersky*



## Rel'Talen's Spear of the Elements

This spear is sized for a troll (Size 5, 6 feet long) and is described above. Unthreaded, it does STR+4 damage

### Rank 1 Cost: 500

**Key Knowledge:** The user must know the Name of the spear.

**Effect:** The user gains a bonus to his Wood Skin talent (or gains ranks of the talent) equal to his Thread Rank.

The spear now deals STR+5 damage.

### Rank 2 Cost: 800

**Key Knowledge:** The user must learn the Name of the warrior whose deeds made the spear legendary.

**Effect:** The second power of the spear is connected to air. It allows the user, at the cost of 1 strain, to add the user's thread rank to his Initiative step (thus, a user at rank 4 would add 4).

Also, the damage of the spear is now STR+6.

### Rank 3 Cost: 1300

**Key Knowledge:** The user must learn where the spear was created (what tree it came from and where it is (or was)). This will most likely entail visiting the moot and questioning its Elementalists and Troubadours.

**Deed:** Travel there, and thank the local elemental spirits for their gift to you. This deed is worth 1300 LP.

**Effect:** The user gains the talent Fire Heal at a rank (or a bonus) equal to his thread rank.

The spear's damage rises to STR+7.

### Rank 4 Cost: 2100

**Key Knowledge:** The user must learn of the history of the original user's clan.

**Effect:** The wielder may cast the spell Liquid Arrow by spending 3 strain. The user may substitute his Thread Rank for Spellcasting if he does not possess it. The spear now inflicts STR+8 damage.

### Rank 5 Cost: 3400

**Key Knowledge:** The user must learn the full tale of the original wielder's life and deeds. Whether this requires finding a trollish troubadour or hunting down a book in a lost kaer is the GM's choice.

**Deed:** The user must vow (not blood magic) to tell the tale of the spear and the warrior's life including his own tale at least once a season to a crowd of strangers, thus continuing and furthering the legend of the spear. Not performing this deed causes loss of all powers derived from the spear until it is fulfilled. This deed (not every telling of the tale, just the vow) is worth 2100 LP.

**Effect:** The wielder gains a new ability known as "The Strength of the Earth". Once per lunar month, the user, if he is in contact with either earth or stone, may call upon its power to aid a single blow

of the spear. It requires a successful Willpower (5) test (Willforce is not allowed, and this requires no action.) If the test fails, the user cannot muster the forces necessary.

If he succeeds, the stone or earth seems to flow around the user's ankles as the blow strikes, and +10 is added to the user's Strength step for purposes of damage.

### Rank 6 Cost: 5500

**Deed:** The user must recreate the spear's creation. He must do the following in order (all within one day):

- 1) Weave a single kernel of True Wood into the spear, revitalizing the wood of the spear. The user himself doesn't have to do this.
- 2) Cause the spear to be hit by lightning while he is holding it. This doesn't harm the spear, but will probably harm the user unless steps are taken.
- 3) Immolate the spear in a natural bonfire large enough to completely contain the spear. Again, this may harm the user.
- 4) Dunk the spear in the same river it was originally quenched in.
- 5) Affix a new living crystal tip to the end of the spear, replacing the old one.

This deed is worth 5500 LP.

**Effect:** The user has reached the last and most powerful level of power with the spear. It symbolizes orichalcum, a unity of the elements.

First, the user can sense elementals with 100' of himself (even those in the astral). He can even converse with them in their tongue. Also, he can sense True Elements within 100' of himself and can spot any adept with a connection to the elements (Elementalists, Purifiers, etc.) by their mystic bond with the elements. Purifiers seem bonded with the earth around them, and Elementalist specializing in fire will have flames dancing in his eyes, etc. The GM is encouraged to be creative.

Secondly, the user gains a second set of abilities. Using any one of these abilities precludes the use of the others until the next sunrise.

- 1) The user can subsist on a small amount of water (a pint) and sunlight as if he were a plant.
  - 2) The user can fly at a flight speed equal to 6 + their Dexterity. (Look it up on the chart as if the player were a windling.)
  - 3) The user may cause himself to burst into flame (as per the spell Inflammation). Damage is Willforce + 6. Duration is 7 rounds.)
  - 4) The user may turn his body, and all personal equipment he is in contact with, into water for up to a minute. He may flow on flat surfaces or down slopes sand stairs but cannot climb at all. He may thus flow under doors, avoid a spear trap, etc. The stress of reforming, however, causes a Wound to the character.
  - 5) The user can gain the effect of the talent Earth Skin at no cost to himself (the talent functions as if he possessed it at rank 6).
- If the user already possesses the talent, he may use it without the expenditure of a recovery test.

## It doesn't take long for Illusionists to become enamoured with glamour.

**The following document was donated to the Library by the famed and powerful Tessal Lightmaster, Illusionist of the 11th Circle. From his deathbed, Tessal had me record these heretofore-unrevealed secrets of the Illusionist Discipline. In keeping with his last wishes, I submit this document to the Great Library for the edification of all.**

**-- Hurik Gefner  
Dwarf Scribe of Throal**

*Unfortunately, Hurik failed to note that Tessal Lightmaster died more than 20 years ago. --Merrox*

Glamour is one of the most basic and most important facets of illusion magic, and the Illusionist Discipline. Glamour is the visual projection of the Illusionist's imagination and will. Most basic illusion spells are nothing more than traditionally formed, specially fashioned glammers.

*I attempted to get him to explain this point in more detail. He attempted an explanation that had something to do with learning of the use of 7 senses... the 5 we all know, of which sight is the simplest and easiest, as well as thought and instinct. When I explained this made no sense to me and conflicted with what I'd heard from other illusionists, he went into a coughing fit that robbed him of the use of his voice. -- Hurik*

Obviously, Glamour is an ability available to all Illusionists no matter their circle. Some Illusionists may have wrongly informed others that they did not gain this ability until later when they had almost finished their apprentice-

ship, but those Illusionists either concealed their powers or were negligent in their studies.

Glamour is versatile and not confined to a definitive pattern by a rigid spell definition. Rather, the ability creates a pattern open to suggestion and alteration. To me, this is a constant reminder to an Illusionist that the world is open to suggestion and alteration. What is now may not be later, may not have been before... and may not be by the time your senses register its existence.

*Here he began to create glammers as examples. I may attempt to have artists render some for me in the future, but my own attempted drawings of them were little more than stick figures and not a worthy representation of the master. -- Hurik*

You see the image I have created of a man. It is how I looked forty years ago, or at least a fair imitation. There are little things that are wrong... the eyes are dead, and bear no reflection. The details are blurred... if you looked closely at the skin, you would see no pores, no hair. You may even be able to see through the glamour to what lies beyond it, though I hope I was not so clumsy in its creation that you can.

Now, is that not better? I have refined the details of the glamour. Each strand of hair is individual, and no longer one close mass. If you can casually see through it, then I can indeed be glad I shall soon die. It is how I truly appeared back then!

*He had me place him on his carpet, which flew outside for his next demonstrations, complaining that there was not enough room inside. He was quite correct. While he concentrated for many moments, I watched in*

*amazement as his image grew in size, from a normal man to a giant perhaps 200 feet tall! -- Hurik*

You see, of course, how I had to make it grow in spurts? It is entirely possible that few other Illusionists alive today could manage such a feat, but a well-trained apprentice could make something the size of a horse or an ogre in this way. As this is almost blocking out the sun, something will surely need to be done to it. On to the next example! Go up to its foot and punch it, sir.

*When I did so, I almost fell over in surprise as it disappeared at my blow. I felt nothing. -- Hurik*

A standard glamour may not stray more than 10 feet from its master... the Illusionist, that is. This is a very rigid limitation that hinders many an Illusionist.

*A glamour of a hawk that he had made while speaking now leapt into the air and flew towards the village perhaps a mile away.*

When that hawk flies about the center of the village twice, they will know that I desire food for the two of us. It will take them some moments, of course.

Perhaps you can help me, however. Some small distance away, I have hidden a small chest. Rather than spend a great deal of time digging and refilling a hole, I found a slight depression and put the chest within. I then covered the hole with a glamour so that it looked like the common ground, and made it stable, so that I need no more concentrate on it, and refined the details so that it looked authentic. Finally, I made it live... no, not in the way you think. I meant that I made its pattern live, so that the glam-



our would react to conditions around it. The grass would show dew in the morning, or it would be covered in snow in the winter! In this way, no casual observer would ever see through it. Some animals might be confused as to the extra smell of the chest, but animals tend to be afraid of things of magic they do not understand. It is, no doubt, a lesson many Name-givers could learn.

This chest I mentioned is hidden perhaps twelve of your paces from my well, heading towards the setting sun as you can see it now. I'd suggest that you use a stick to prod in front of you, so that you do not fall in.

*I followed his instructions carefully, and still almost fell into the hole. It had looked so authentic a patch of ground that if someone had told me it was an illusion, I'm not sure I could have convinced myself of the truth. The stick I carried passed through it and hit the chest, and when I placed my hand on the ground where the stick had gone through, the illusion disappeared. Inside was the small chest he had mentioned. I wondered what riches it might contain: Gems, or powerful pattern items, or perhaps his grimoire. I hurried back to him and presented it.*

-- Hurik

Take this key, Hurik. Open up the chest, and I will give you some of what is inside. In all my adventuring days, it was one of the greatest comforts and treasures I encountered, and with my death approaching I feel no need to squander it anymore.

*My thoughts of riches doubling at his words, I opened the chest. Inside lay a thick book, surely his grimoire. On top of it were a dozen small blue gems, and on the side perhaps two dozen orichalcum coins glittered in the fading sunlight. Underneath it there appeared to be a wand! I reached forward at his command, and blinked as it all disappeared, and my hand closed around a bottle. Inside I saw that there were three bottles, dusty, of some vintage liquor.*

-- Hurik

Khelorm, my companion in arms used to make a type of brandy you wouldn't believe. We would sit for hours drinking and enjoying each other's com-

pany... we shall have some with our dinner. Hah! Surprised you, did I? That was one of the more powerful uses of Glamour in action. You expected something, and it fed off your expectations. Well, the night's almost through and our dinner approaches. I shall show you the final lesson for tonight.

*The villagers approached carrying a good deal of fine food. They looked fearful, often covering their eyes, and almost fled after offering up the food. I was surprised, given that people are not usually afraid of Illusionists, particularly ones who look like fragile old men and have lived in their town for years. I asked him of this, worried that he might have done them some harm. -- Hurik*

Ahh, there was my final example. It was much harder to observe, unfortunately. To them, I look like I did when I fought Horrors and explored Barsaive. A man of respectable, but not unwieldy years, garbed in a robe of blinding light, with a gaze that penetrates to the souls of men and reminds them of all the wrongs they have ever committed. Upon my shoulders ride the twin drakes of shadow and light I created, licking their lips as if ready to feast. That is how I was to their parents, told in their stories, and to some of them when they were children. When I returned here I used a glamour to make myself appear to them as they expected me to be, and so they reacted much differently than you had expected.

*Or be more simply concealed his true appearance from Hurik. --Merrox*

### Game Information

It is suggested that glamour become a half-magic ability that Illusionists can use at First Circle. If you feel that is too big a change, you can still use the following knacks with the original Fourth Circle version of Glamour. At Fourth Circle, the Illusionist might easily gain the ability to spend Karma on Perception tests, reflecting their greater ability to see the world around them from their studies in concealing it.

The new Glamour ability is a will-

power-based half-magic ability. Creating a glamour requires a half-magic test against difficulty number of 5. The result is a blurry, semi-transparent, three-dimensional image. It is maximally mansized, and generally an obvious illusion. Disbelieving is automatically successful, and sensing is relatively easy as well. A

---

**"Hah! Surprised you, did I? That was one of the more powerful uses of Glamour in action. You expected something, and it fed off your expectations."**

---

glamour's base sensing difficulty is 5. If the Illusionist achieves better than a normal success on the half-magic test, he may raise the sensing difficulty to be equal to the difficulty number for the success level.

**Example:** A Good success requires at least a 9, and gives a sensing difficulty of 9. An excellent success requires at least an 11, and gives a sensing difficulty of 11. An extraordinary success requires at least a 14. Rolling an 18 would give a sensing difficulty of 14. This glamour was incredibly well made, and is almost as believable as a first circle illusion.

Glamours cannot directly affect their surroundings, cause damage, or generate heat. Heat Vision is still affected, however, as the sense of vision is affected. Glamours may be used for illumination, providing maximally the light of a torch. Glamours are not as stable as spell or talent effects, and in no way affect spell and/or talent effects.

**Example:** An illusionist attempts to create a light inside of an Ethereal Darkness spell, but it can not affect the spell so has no effect.

Glamours are easily identifiable from astral space. Astral beings can automatically see through it and realize it's a simple illusion. Astral sensing spells, talents, and abilities need to roll a 7 or greater to do so.

Creating glamours costs no strain, but they must be kept within 10 feet of the caster (if the caster moves to a

greater distance, the glamour fades into nothing). Maintaining glamours requires little concentration. The caster may perform any other actions he wishes while maintaining glamours, and may maintain a maximum of his half-magic rank in glamours at one time.

Glamours can be refined with half-magic, by rearranging the astral energies of the picture, and knacks off the Illusion thread weaving talent by weaving temporary threads to the glamour to fuel it. Glamour is weak, and uses relatively small magical energy, but attaching temporary threads can refine and strengthen the illusion. These threads do not count against the maximum number of threads allowed.

Because it is only an image, touching a glamour will instantly dispel it. Glamours will not be detected by hearing or smell. A blind person would have no way of detecting a Glamour by himself. Someone who notices he can neither hear nor smell a glamour may make an automatic sensing test. If he makes a disbelief roll, it will automatically succeed even if altered by knacks.

All of these knacks require an existing glamour to alter.

### **Refine Details**

Talent: Illusion (3)

Cost: 100

The Illusionist can “sharpen” the image of the glamour. The difficulty number for this is the detection difficulty for the glamour. A successful use creates a more believable image, which has a sensing difficulty equal to the result of the Illusion roll. The glamour can no longer be automatically disbelieved unless touched. It has a disbelief number equal to the casters’ circle, or the sensing difficulty if that is smaller than the caster’s circle. Use of this knack costs 2 strain.

### **Grow**

Talent: Illusion (4)

Cost: 100

Use of this knack requires 2 strain and allows the Illusionist to make an existing glamour grow to up to double its

size. A check must be made against the sensing difficulty of the glamour. This knack may be used on the same glamour multiple times, up to as many times as the Illusionist’s half-magic rank. Each time this knack is used, it raises the difficulty number for all further alterations of the glamour by 1 point.

### **Make it Live**

Talent: Illusion (4)

Cost: 100

This knack makes an existing glamour have a life of its own independent of the Illusionist’s direct concentration. By summoning more magical energy into the glamour, it becomes able to respond to the effects of its surroundings (An illusionary wall will look wet in the rain, for example). To use this knack, the Illusionist must make an Illusion roll against the sensing difficulty of the glamour, and pay 2 points of strain and 1 of karma (the dice for which are not rolled). If successful, observers must achieve an Excellent success against the sensing or disbelief number. The Refine Details and Make it Stable knacks must be used before this knack.

### **Make it Stable**

Talent: Illusion (4)

Cost: 100

Using this knack on a glamour makes it more stable. The Illusionist makes an Illusion roll against the sensing difficulty of the glamour. If successful, the illusionist no longer needs to concentrate on maintaining the glamour and can leave the glamour where it is. It won’t fade away for test result hours. This knack costs 2 strain. By using Blood Magic (2 points of permanent damage), the illusion may be extended for a year and a day. The sensing/disbelief numbers for the glamour are unaffected by this knack.

### **Astral Glamour**

Talent: Illusion (5)

Cost: 100

The Illusionist spends 1 strain to give a glamour the same sensing and disbelief numbers in Astral that it has in

the real world. This requires an Illusion roll against the sensing difficulty of the glamour.

### **From Afar**

Talent: Illusion (6)

Cost: 100

This knack allows the glamour to move to and exist greater than 10 feet away from the Illusionist. The Illusionist takes 2 points of strain and rolls against the glamour’s sensing difficulty. An average success extends the glamour’s range to 50 feet; a good success to 200 feet; an excellent success to 1000 feet; and to any range with an extraordinary success. A clear line of sight is still required between the Illusionist and the desired location, regardless of the success level. The illusionist can only affect the glamour from within 10 feet, however.

### **Daydream**

Talent: Illusion (7)

Cost: 100

This knack costs 4 strain, and allows the Illusionist to connect a glamour to one specific person’s expectations and perceptions. A Good success is required on a roll against the target’s spell defense. For that person, the sensing/disbelief numbers are raised by the Circle of the Illusionist. More importantly, the glamour taps into the person’s expectations and reacts accordingly, as seen in the narrative section of this article.

### **Stage**

Talent: Illusion (10)

Cost: 100

This knack costs 4 strain per subject, and requires a Good success on a roll against the highest spell defense among the subjects. It then works the same as Daydream. Note that when several people believe differing things can happen, the glamour is generally easier to pierce and their sensing difficulties are not increased by the circle of the Illusionist, as in Daydream. In these instances, it may either show each what they want to see or attempt to make something in between their expectations. In extreme cases, it will shatter and be dispelled. ☼