The Candlekeep Compendium

Volume VI

Volume VI

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EDITORIAL

elcome to the sixth volume of the Candlekeep Compendium. A collection of the finest Realmslore selected from the shelves of Candlekeep and delivered to us from our wandering scribes, forever seeking to further our knowledge of the Realms.

Our first article of lore again focuses on the dwarven culture and is the first of a multi-part article detailing the various types of dwarven heroes. Again, we have our wonderful and varied writings on the Laborers of Toril, as well as those tales gathered from taverns and minstrels from around the Realms. Those covered in our Folk of Faerûn column this volume are a little more special, being two deities of our world - very interesting lore indeed.

Grimbuckle Thurn once again returns from his planar travels and tells of us his journey through Brightwater - certainly a change from the lesser delights of Dis! Another Lord of Waterdeep is unveiled for our pleasure; let us hope that this ongoing insight into these figures of authority continues with success... I dread to think of the cost of bail if our daring scribe should be caught. The mysterious and intriguing Blackglass Spellglobe is covered in our dissection of such artifacts this time, and finally we return to Olostin's Hold with Rikos Dughol, to continue the travels of our apprentice scribe,

I hope ye enjoy these latest articles and snippets of lore from the halls of Candlekeep. I'll leave ye to peruse the writings herein, and hope they bring ye many hours of enjoyment.

- Alaundo of Candlekeep

The Hammer's Stroke

Part VI

By Kevin Liss

dventurers in the Realms are given many choices in the nature of their development. Dwarves are given many options, particularly with Prestige Classes. Some are of obvious dwarven design, such as the Hammer of Moradin or the Runecaster. Other Prestige Classes, from various sourcebooks, may also be appropriate for dwarves. To take a break from examining the daily activities of dwarven life presented in previous volumes of the *Candlekeep Compendium*, we will explore the Realms-specific Prestige Classes that the common dwarf may adopt while earning their place in the ranks of heroes – or villains. Not every Prestige Class will be discussed, but the dwarven-specific ones and those of notable interest will be covered.

Divine Champion

The Divine Champion is a natural progression for many dwarves, regardless of sub-race. The dedication to one's deity is the main requirement for achieving some status as a champion, and any dwarf is a stout devotee of at least one of the Morndinsamman. Normal classes for dwarves would be those mentioned, as well as clerics, especially skilled holy warriors following militaristic factions of the dwarven gods. The abilities gained in following this path enhance those individuals following the ways of the paladin, and allow those trained in the martial path extra options for fighting their opponents.

Those advancing to the highest abilities of this Prestige Class would only be served if they also had a Charisma of some note, as the Divine Wrath ability would wasted on those of little personal charm. Paladins would benefit from the heightened abilities that double from those already known, while the fighter feats would give them a slight advantage in combat over those of similar skill.

Runecaster

Inscribing runes of power among the caverns and ways of a dwarven community falls to the Runecaster. Setting protective boundaries against the enemies of the dwarven people, they ward away unwanted intrusions. Since Runecasters are skilled in carving runes, the protection their work can provide is highly sought after, in even the smallest dwarf hold.

A dwarven Runecaster is most common in the protective embrace of the earth, among other dwarves who prize their abilities. This does not mean, however, that Runecasters do not venture out of hearth and home. When loaded with charged runes, the Runecaster adventures with the best, albeit for shorter periods, since they like to have a full complement of runes to cast at any time. When fully stocked with protective and combative runes, the Runecaster gives any group an extra boost, due to careful preparations on his part. Usually, though, Runecasters are found using their divine magic to help protect personal homes and their community.

Hammer of Moradin

Based in Citadel Adbar of the North, the Hammers of Moradin oppose the evil humanoids of the Spine of the World and the Underdark, who seek to expel the dwarves from their ancient halls. As a group, the Hammers are made up almost exclusively of

shield dwarves with ties to the Citadel. They answer to Moradin's call, and must study in the ways of the Soul Forger. They use their knowledge to bring the fight to the never-ending tide of goblins, giants and drow that threaten the North.

A Hammer of Moradin is never without his warhammer. This statement should not be taken to mean that they must have a specific warhammer that conducts their abilities; any warhammer, even a back-up hammer, will work to channel their mighty wrath. That said, each Hammer of Moradin prefers a special warhammer over all others. This may be a hereditary weapon, passed down from generation to generation. More likely, however, it is a weapon that the Hammer of Moradin has himself made during his training to become an instrument of his god.

In game terms, a Hammer of Moradin must be a level eight cleric/fighter before they consider entering into the Prestige Class ranks of the order; this is based on variations of classes used to meet the requirements. It is at this level that they become a member of the Hammers, and begin their training to achieve their first level of the Prestige Class. Taking this information into account, and considering that the Hammers of Moradin take the fight to their enemies while the Iron Guard defends the home front, an attack from a group of Hammers is an intimidating prospect. A group of them attacking goblin, drow, or giant lairs likely would consist of at least a half-dozen of the warrior-priests, of various skill levels. The possibility of being able to withstand such an assault is not likely for dwarven foes.

Hammers of Moradin seem limited by the classes they choose before joining the elite membership of the group. Upon closer examination, however, even a quick route to joining brings some interesting options to the Hammers of Moradin. Of note, the cleric/fighter combination, at the minimum achievable level, makes for a versatile warrior with minor divine spellcasting abilities. These dwarves are likely to make up the bulk of the fighting force of the group. Those trained exclusively as clerics are capable fighters with intimidating spells at their disposal. Most would benefit from choosing the Dwarf domain as one of their choices, to gain the extra edge given in fighting through the extra spells conferred for each attained level. Paladins who join the ranks of the Hammers of Moradin will benefit against powerful foes due to their smite ability. Also, they are mobile through the gift of their special mount, allowing quick strikes into areas their enemies might not expect them to be able to access. Finally, there are a few Hammers of Moradin who come from the ranks of the rangers. This blend of class and Prestige Class allows for a few unexpected surprises. The favored enemies of such progression would almost have to be the three races the group rallies against: goblin, drow (elf), and giant. The extra benefits of the favored enemy make this combination worthwhile. The other benefit is the combat style ability. Warhammers are one-handed weapons, and a dwarf wielding two warhammers with the Hammer of Moradin abilities would seldom be at a loss using a two-fisted warhammer barrage. Using two weapons, however, limits the dwarf on what armor they can wear, which is why there are so few ranger/Hammer of Moradin dwarves.

To be continued…

Laborers of Toril

Part IV

By Scott Kujawa

First Reader, here is the fourth scroll of the project that you asked me to scribe for the records of Candlekeep.

This set of laborers differs from my other three. As I mentioned in my last scroll, I was wandering west along the Golden Way. I decided to stay at a tavern/inn called Ashene's Hall. When the workers there learned that I was a scribe of the Binder and that I had ties to our great library, they begged me to write about them. I know, First Reader, you do not want me to write scrolls like this that often, and I won't. Besides, I don't wish to turn into another Volo. We all know what happened to him, and I, for one, don't wish to spend time as a frog.

As I said in my other scrolls, some of this lore might or might not be true, and I had to distill the details, lest they fill a whole tome. Besides, some of the information given to me was to be kept secret, and I gave my word as a follower of the Binder. As usual, I'm tracking down other folk who are willing to let me record what they do to make coin and survive.

Scribe Lychrina Surstyn of Candlekeep

* * * *

Ilondor (Neutral Good, Male Rashemi Human, Commoner 4/Fighter 2, Bhalla (Chauntea))

Ilondor is the owner and tavernkeeper of Ashene's Hall. Like most Rashemi, he has a full black beard and hair of the same color. He is taller by a foot than most of the males of his homeland, but is still stout and muscular.

Despite his apparently rough demeanor, Ilondor fiercely loves his wife and daughter, and is very protective of them. Even though he resembles a bear, it takes a lot to anger him. However, once he is in a temper, he knocks heads together. To do this, he usually uses the thick club that hangs next to the door to the kitchen. He tells me that it is enchanted and it likes to be called "Headsmasher." Yes, he claims that it is sentient, but it only talks to him and his daughter, and not to Qoyor or anyone else.

When I asked Ilondor where the mace came from, he only said that it is an item from his homeland, and that he couldn't say more than that, because the Witches have prohibited him from doing so.

From the little history he was willing to share, he took over this tavern after the war with the Tuigan. During that war, he was pursued by Qoyor, and he was surprised to learn that he did care for her, even though she was an invader and of different blood.

Ilondor and Qoyor share a room on the third floor. It is down the hall from the chamber of the bards, so the owner and his wife can get some sleep while the bards are practicing.

As tavernkeeper, Ilondor is usually found in the inn's common room. The room itself is fairly large, with two windows on the front and back walls, a stage dominating the left wall, and the entrance to the kitchen on the right. Many different weapons hang on the walls, interspersed with shields and banners

of merchants that have passed through over the ten years that this way-stop has been operating.

Qoyor (Neutral Good, Female Tuigan Human, Commoner 2, Grumbar)

Qoyor is Ilondor's wife and Vaesil's mother. As the main cook for the Hall, she rules the kitchen. As I watched her move around her ordered domain, she told me that before Vaesil was born, she traveled to Rasheman with Ilondor, where she had a private meeting with the Witches. She wouldn't speak about what they discussed, except to say that the female rulers of that nation allowed her to become Ilondor's consort.

Like the elemental deity she venerates, Qoyor is like a rock. She is slow to anger, and before she acts, she thinks long and hard about the events that her actions and thoughts might cause. If more of us did that, we might be better off.

As a Tuigan, she has yellow-bronze skin, but hers is a little darker. Her black hair is pulled behind her head and secured with a net of woven cotton. She often wears dresses that she herself has dyed a light red-brown color.

Vaesil (True Neutral, Female Tuigan Human, Druid 4, Bhalla (Chauntea))

Vaesil looks more like her mother, but she also has some of her father's appearance. Like her father, her shoulder-length hair is full and thick. Because of her mixture of the Tuigan and Rashemi blood, her hair is darker than that of her parents. She is also taller then a typical Tuigan would be, towering over her mother.

I believe her to be between twenty and twenty-five summers. She and Ryrevemal, her consort, breed and take care of the horses, ponies, and other animals that are kept in the stables. They share a small, one-story cottage just beyond the stables. Since the stables stand a few yards away from the main tavern, this arrangement allows the young couple their privacy.

One morning, as I walked across the grounds, I watched as Vaesil slipped away from the inn. Dressed in green robes and a brown ankle-length cloak, she headed away from the stables and through a small gate in the wooden fence surrounding the tavern. I believe, First Reader, that she is a follower of Chauntea. I am uncertain, because I didn't wish to disturb her morning rites, if that is what she was about to go celebrate.

Ryrevemal (Chaotic Neutral, Male Rashemi Human, Commoner 6, Bhalla (Chauntea))

Ryrevemal is Vaesil's consort. The two of them are the horse breeders and stable masters at the Hall, but he also makes and repairs tack and saddles. Like Ilondor, he hails from Rashemen, and was asked by Witches to come to the Hall to help Ilondor. He is taller than the elder Rashemi, and because of the work he does, he is even more muscular and stocky. He doesn't have a beard, because Vaesil makes him shave it each day. However, they agreed that he would be allowed to grow his hair, instead, and so his dark hair reaches past his shoulders.

I don't have much else to add about this member of their family, since he is open and friendly and he has no secrets, as far as I can tell. The last thing I can write about him is that he wears grey pants and a grey shirt. A symbol of Chauntea hangs from his belt, but I don't think he is anything more than alay worshipper of the Earthmother.

Rhialee "Hand Harp" Nyrendar (CN, Female Half-moon Elf, Bard 10, Finder Wyvernspur)
Venaeril "Birdpipes" Nyrendar (CN, Female Half-moon Elf, Bard 9, Finder Wyvernspur)
Ellynnya "Yarting" Nyrendar (CN, Female Half-moon Elf, Bard 8, Finder Wyvernspur)

These half-elves told me that they are triplets born from two half-moon elves, and that their parents reside in Mistledale. Rhialee is the eldest, or so she says, and she tends to watch over her younger sisters. Venaeril is the middle sister, and Ellynnya is the youngest.

All of them have blue-white hair, with traces of green through their locks. Ellynnya's hair

is the longest, but all three of them have hair reaching their backs or knees. I noticed, even though they denied it, that they dress alike; each of them wears blue, white, and yellow traveler's and entertainer's outfits. They wear the entertainer's outfits when they are performing in the common room.

They share a large room on the top floor, where they practice their instruments, songs, ballads, and stories. Their chamber contains many different instruments from all across Toril; I was surprised that they've managed to acquire items from across the seas and from lands beyond Faerûn. As you can see from their names, each of them plays a different instrument, which they use to accompany their singing, story-telling, and ballads.

First Reader, I have my own suspicions about these three half-elves and I might be wrong, but I think that they are clones of a half-elf. This trio is just too much alike in too many ways. They eat the same meals, with slight differences; they talk alike; move the same; and there are other signs, if you watch them long enough.

Niamh (True Neutral, Male Nar Human, Commoner 1, Ilmater)

Niamh appears to be about eight summers old. He was adopted by the family after they found him wandering outside, near the front gates. They tell me that he hasn't grown or aged in the five years that he has been here. It seems he is a bit touched in the head, because he doesn't speak and often stares at nothing, like he is seeing things the rest of us aren't. I think he is related to the Nars because of his deeply tanned skin, short black hair, and the strange love he has for the horses in the stables – all traits of the Nars.

Niamh helps Qoyor in the kitchen. He has a room on the third floor that Qoyor and Ilondor gave him. The half-elves keep watch over him, and they have taken it upon themselves to dress him in different sets, and shades, of blue clothing.

Burnt into the backs of his hands is the symbol of Ilmater. When I tried to use magic to divine why, my magic rebounded and left me with a raging headache that lasted for over a day.

Suletha (Neutral Evil, Female Damaran Human, Commoner 2/Rogue 2, Mask)

This tawny-skinned tavernmaid glared at me when I first entered, and again every time she saw me or delivered my fare and drink. I got the feeling that I had somehow personally insulted her, but when I asked if I did, she shook her head and swiped her long pig-tailed brown hair off her shoulders.

Trying to find out why she hated me, I decided to follow her one night. I was shocked to see that she disappeared into the shadows, which preventing me from finding out where she went. The next morn, in a secluded area behind the tavern, I saw her talking with a strange man. I believe the human is a member of the Shadowmasters of Telflamm, whom we've researched before, but I couldn't recall his name, and I wasn't sure if it was really him.

As their discussion was coming to a close, I quickly entered the tavern and made my way to my rented room. I waited a bit before I returned to the common room. Once there, I saw that Suletha had removed her dark leathers and dressed back into a loose cotton dress. As before, she glared at me as I sat and ordered a plate of sausage and rice.

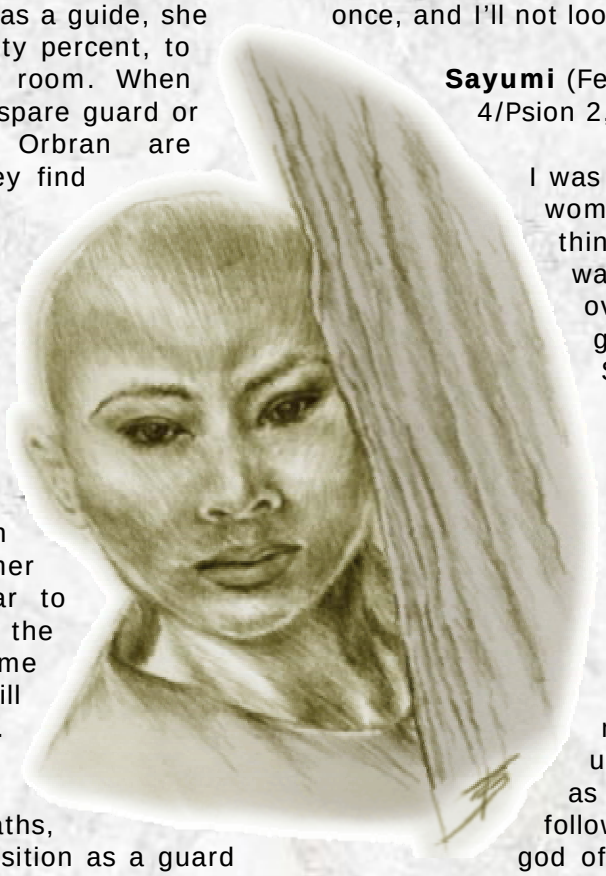
Kuruvarti (Female Half-orc, Ranger 5, Najm the Adventurous)

This wilderness guide from Zakhara has a room on the third floor, which she only uses when she is near the Hall or in need of a place to stay. How Kuruvarti learned her ranger skills, I'm not sure, though she did speak of a ranger of Mielikki that had explored the lands of Zakhara. The ranger was burned to ash by a fire gen that he had insulted, but he had apparently trained Kuruvarti before then.

She has some means of traveling from her homeland to the Hall. How she does it, I never managed to find out, but I believe it has something to do with translocation magics.

An arrow pointed upward, the symbol of Najm, her deity, is pinned to the chest of her tan flowing robes. Unlike most of the dark-skinned members of her homeland, she has pale white skin, and light green hair that reaches her jaw. Leather armor can be seen under her robes, and she carries two scimitars strapped across her back.

Of the fees that she makes as a guide, she gives a portion, about twenty percent, to the Hall for the use of a room. When needed, she also acts as a spare guard or bouncer. Kuruvarti and Orbran are occasional lovers, when they find the time to spend together.



Orbran of Amn (Chaotic Good, Male Calishite Human, Fighter 3, Tymora)

This dusky brown Calishite originally came from Amn, but left his homeland after witnessing the violence and death his countrymen caused in Maztica. A former adventurer, he traveled far to the east, before stopping at the Hall. There, Ilondor became impressed with Orbran's skill with his hammer and club. Seeing that Orbran could wield his weapons without causing unwarranted deaths, Ilondor offered Orbran a position as a guard and bouncer.

While speaking to Orbran, there were many times that I saw his dark eyes fill with horror. He would only tell me that it happens when he remembers the slaughter of the Maztican people.

He carries a feather token from that land in his long dusky hair. When I asked about it, he offered a rare smile and he said that it was a gift from someone that he saved from being killed. I believe there is more to this tale, but I'll keep my curiosity in check, for once, and I'll not look into it further.

Sayumi (Female Shou Human, Monk 4/Psion 2, Nung Chiang)

I was surprised by this demure woman. She is short, bald, thin, and lithe, but I watched her flip Kuruvarti over her shoulder. The guide had insulted Sayumi after stepping on a part of the Shou's herb and vegetable garden, which is to the left of the main building. I later learned, as I sat down with her and sampled the sweet tea she offered, that she knows how to use mind magic. Sayumi said her mind powers were unlocked while she trained as a monk. She is a follower of Nung Chiang, the god of agriculture and fertility, which is why she seems to fit in with the others that make up this strange collection of different bloods and races.

Sahastra – Lady of Omens

By Scott Kujawa

Sahastra (Lady of Omens, the Starlit Daughter, Daughter of Wildspace, Lady of the Stars)
Demipower of the Prime Material Plane, CG

Portfolio: Astronomy, Astrology, Omens, Prophetic Dreams, and Star Elves
Alias: Syhastra (elven name)
Domain Name: Shelu'Kiira
Superior: Selune and Sehanine

Allies: The Seldarine, Eilistraee, Lliira, Sune, Lathander, Mystra, Oghma, and Deneir

Foes: The deities of Fury, the drow pantheon (except Eilistraee), Shar, Savras, Talona, and Leira (now dead)
Symbol: A swirling six-pointed star
Wor. Align: NG, CG, LN, N, CN

Cleric Alignment: CG, CN, NG
Domains: Chaos, Good, Elf, Travel, Dream, Oracle, Knowledge
Favored Weapon: "Eldritch Circle" (Chakra)

ahastra, or Syhastra, as she is known to the elves, was once a powerful mortal diviner and chronomancer who used her powers to foretell the events that would affect her people, the star elves of the Yuirwood. When using her powers, she felt another watching her, and she sought out who or what this being might be. After the use of many spells and much energy, she soon learned that her unseen watcher was a male human, himself a diviner.

The two joined their powers together; their combined magics let them see more than either could see independently. Sahastra slowly found herself falling in love with the male human, who called himself Savras. However, all he felt for her was resentment and jealously, because she was his equal in the use of divination magics.

When he struck out at her with spells, she was shocked that he would try to destroy her. However, she managed to withstand his attack. As her body healed, her magics twisted until she started to see omens and dreams that related to the star elves. As the elders shifted their land out of Aglarond, she was forced to stay behind, because Savras struck out at her again.

This time, because she was still weak from the last attack, his magics shattered her body. She watched helplessly as her race vanished from Faerûn, and, in desperation, she cried out to Sehanine to help her. Hearing her cry, the elven moon deity journeyed to Selûne's realm, where the two deities reached an agreement. Each goddess would take a part of Sahastra's soul into herself, and they would together elevate Sahastra to godhood, making her a demipower that shared aspects with both moon deities.

Sahastra became a patron for the star elves, as well as a demipower of omens, astrology, astronomy, prophetic dreams, and other influences.

Since the star elves have returned to Faerûn, she has instructed her few worshippers to expand their influence with the good and neutral deities that absorbed the deities of the Yuir. Her current interest lies in contacting Sharess, and establishing ties between those two faiths, since Zandilar the Dancer is now a part of Sharess.

The Candlekeep Compendium

The Church

The clergy of the Lady of Omens is a diverse lot. As a whole, they tend to fluctuate, seemingly at random (though they will assure you it's due to the movements of celestial bodies!), between two extremes: a sort of meditative, transcendent state of being, and a highly dynamic, excitable attitude.

During the former 'phase,' they seem to embody all things mysterious and beautiful about the stars and constellations. They are primarily quiet, instead focusing on learning the portents of the world to come, so that they will be better able to mold it to their own clergy's needs. When in such a state, they seem almost too eldritch - as if at any moment, they might fade away and join the stars above. They are, during this period, intensely interested in contemplation and science; they can spend months or even years in their astrology towers, divining the future with their unique magic and celestial perception devices. They emanate both a supreme serenity and compassion, but sometimes in a detached fashion, as their own minds are on events broader (and most likely in the future) than most could imagine. Sometimes, they have a hint of sadness about their beings, as well, as they foresee unfortunate events they cannot stop.

Such 'serene' periods often precede times of great personal or universal distress - including their own deaths - right before they fall into deep, prophetic dreams, from which it is supremely difficult to arouse them to wakefulness.

Dogma: Study the heavens to learn the mysteries of life. Guide those who seek answers by giving them cryptic messages that will help them learn and advance. Gather and learn any knowledge about the stars, heavens, planets, and other celestial bodies, to predict and influence the omens that I send to you.

Day-to-Day Activities: When in their 'dynamic' phase, the clergy of the Starlit Daughter act as champions of personal choice, free will, and destiny. They roam all of the lands of Faerûn (and often beyond, into Realmspace and the Planes), using their personal magnetism and magic to promote these ideals. They not only strive to acquire information, but more importantly, they seek to make the truth known to all; to them, only when one is fully aware of the realities of a situation can they act with true independence. Thus, they act as harbingers of news, be it good or ill; liberal bestowers of lore (some ancient and powerful, though never given to the unworthy); and seek to draw connections between entities, just as they do with the stars and constellations - in a way both meaningful and altruistic. They act as diplomats, messengers, advisers, and guides - provided that one can get them to sit still long enough to hear their words, which can be quite difficult in their 'dynamic' phase.

Holy Days/Important Ceremonies: During the dark moon, her clergy gather together, if they can, and spend the evening drinking, feasting, and comparing their celestial knowledge. As soon as Lathander's light can be seen, they decide where the clergy is to gather next: the meeting place changes from one dark moon to the next.

The star elves also celebrate, with a festival, the anniversary of her apotheosis by offering her prayers. During this festival, elven bards and actors perform a play, with song and intricate dance, that reenacts her battle with Savras.

Perhaps the holiest of days to the clergy of Sahastra is the Greater Unilateral Alignment of Stars. This occurs cyclically, exactly once every century, always during a new moon. From sunset to sunrise, all of the clergy of Sahastra gather together in a communal ritual known as the Stellar Divination, which puts them all into a deep trance that lasts for exactly eight hours. At the end of the ritual they awaken, having received advice and certain knowledge of the fate of that which they hold most dear (whatever it may be for each individual); this blessing comes directly from Sahastra herself.

Major Centers of Worship: In Faerûn, the clergy of the Lady of Omens is very small. Sometimes ancient shrines and sanctuaries, which appear only in the full light of the

stars, spring up in remote, out-of-the-way places (especially in Aglarond), acting as temporary but potent places of worship for her. Other than this, the clergy of Sehanine Moonbow and Selûne primarily remember her in their prayers, particularly when looking to the stars for guidance or when seeking prophecy via dreaming. The largest of their temples or holy sites sometimes have smaller shrines in her name.

Clerics of Sahastra are exceedingly rare. Most often, they are moon elves, either of ancient, esoteric houses known for their mysticism, or young, rambunctious elves who want to make an impact on the world. Two such elves have settled in Silverymoon: the twin diviners, Faurynn and Saerdrie of House Starkeeper.

The star elves, of course, are an exception. Among their kind, she is still worshipped as a major deity. They remember her prophetic dreams that alerted them to dire peril and the necessity of shifting their home out of Faerûn. They mark her as a great legend, a prophet, and a patron. As a race, the star elves are naturally inclined towards some of her portfolios and her personal preferences, making Sahastra one of their most popular deities.

Many elves traveling in Realmspace, regardless of their personal religious preferences, pay homage to the Lady of the Stars, and ask for her guidance in using the constellations to guide their spelljammers. Clerics of Sahastra are highly sought after in Realmspace, and on isolated asteroids and within whirling constellations are some of the few remaining Sahastran temples outside of the star elven realm. The Spire Beyond the Stars, a mythical citadel of intense argentine beauty and great divinatory lore, is the most splendid of these. It is said to reside in the very constellation of stars in which the Starlit Daughter herself makes her home.

Affiliated Orders: The Order of the Gilded Sky is a group of mostly sun and moon elves that have dedicated themselves to protecting elven spelljamming ships, as well as elven ships that sail anywhere within Toril's material plane. Most of them are battle clerics, skilled in fighting with different weapons and using their spells for battle or defense. They also use their knowledge to steer ships away from aquatic and wildspace hazards.

The Knights of the Starry Sky is a group dominated by bards, though members from virtually all classes can be found within their ranks. They commit themselves to spreading news across the face of Faerûn. They do so to ensure that knowledge will not be lost or hoarded among a few elite members of society, which could lead to tyranny and oppression. Using the knowledge of fate gleaned from the stars (often passed on to them by clerics or wizards dedicated to the Starlit Daughter), they act as guides for those good-hearted folk who are ignorant of the tapestry of the heavens and all the knowledge it entails, leading them into more enlightened and willful states of being. This has occasionally led to the overthrow of jaded local rulers.

Priestly Vestments: Most of her clergy wear blue clothing with white trim, decorated with silver moons and stars. This honors Sehanine Moonbow and Selûne, since Sahastra is an aspect of these deities. All of her clergy carry her platinum holy symbol somewhere on their bodies, blending it in with the markings on their clothing and making it hard for others to find. The female members of the clergy tend to grow their hair long and keep it tied back with ribbons and silver chains, while the male clergy sport many different lengths and styles.

Adventuring Garb: Her faithful wear any armor that offers both protection and freedom of movement, while shunning any armor heavier then chainmail. Almost all of Sahastra's faithful carry a chakra, her favored weapon. Acknowledging the need for secrecy, they do not hesitate to hide all outward signs of their worship, if it would otherwise be harmful to them or their goals. Otherwise, they always try to make their holy symbol open and easily recognized by any who may need their guidance.

Folk of Faerun

Shaundakul

By Doug Raas

* * * *

"I have journeyed far and wide in service to the Rider of the Winds. He has taken me to places I would never have dreamed of as a child. And I have discovered new places for him, also, spreading his word and his faith. The greatest journey is the one I have just completed. After my last Windride, I found myself gently deposited at the very gates of Candlekeep. It was then that I knew that I was to pen the history of Shaundakul for all the others who will come after me. It was no great shock when I realized that there was an old and musty tome in my pack, allowing me entrance to this greatest of libraries.

It took many months of research and service to the scribes. Each new, fleeting piece of information spurred me onward to further research. In my almost three-year stay with the scribes, I must have read 1500 works of history, stories, and memoirs of ages past. I learned to read several new languages, though I cannot speak them at all. What I present to you is the culmination of this work. It is my hope that it will be looked upon favorably by the Rider of the Winds, and that upon my next Windride, I may be allowed to begin to distribute the several dozen copies I have made to important temples and libraries across the realms."

Humbly Yours,

Dathal Rhain
Ches 30, Year of Lightning Storms

Shaundakul could be called the 'father figure' deity, as he has always been depicted as an older man with a white or graying beard. Much like a wise father, Shaundakul speaks sparingly, conveying his intent and message by his actions rather than mere words.

Shaundakul is a generally kind and gentle deity, mainly concerned with exploration and travel. His domains and power have fluctuated over the years, from quasi-deity up through intermediate power. Currently he is a lesser power, albeit barely. His power level has been on a steady climb since the Time of Troubles, when he began to come out of a centuries-long decline that had dwindled his followers to numbers low enough to endanger him among more ambitious, evil deities. His survival at this time is most likely due to the rapid decline of his worshippers during the fall of Myth Drannor. With nearly all of his faithful killed during that terrible time, much knowledge of him also dispersed, leaving him somewhat outside the normal pecking order among the deities.

The Gentle Breeze

Shaundakul is an old deity by any means of measure. His worship in the Realms has come in gusts and still periods, much like the wind itself. However, also like the wind, it has been somewhat constant for a very long time.

Shaundakul is an interloper deity, but any clues to this are so well hidden or lost over time that nobody remembers this. It has been so long that even the Rider of the Winds himself is not so sure his memories of these distant times are as accurate as they once were.

Originally, Shaundakul was known as Shan'dak-ul, and came with some of the first genies in the pre-history of the Calimshan area. Early on, he was venerated for the same aspects as he is today, exploration and discovery. However, in those times, he also had an element of conquest about him that made him fit especially well with the genie rulers of the time, as they explored and conquered the areas around present-day Calimshan.

Quite quickly, however, due to the mingling of the new worshippers with the existing Realms deities, and the decrease in exploration as a primary interest, many of Shaundakul's worshippers started either worshiping newer gods, or venerating him primarily for his minor conquest aspect. Over time, Shaundakul grew tired of the constant bloodshed and knife-in-the-back-while-smiling-at-you attitudes, and decided to move on.

Shaundakul spent some time wandering the early Realms, learning much of its people and customs. He was surprised that humans had not expanded as much as he thought they could have. He found many smaller kingdoms and city-states, as well as many coastal communities.

The Rider of the Winds did not abandon his few true followers at this time, however. He encouraged them to explore, to travel far and wide, and to enlighten people as to the wonders of the world that one could see – if they just crossed that river, or traversed that mountain, or left the shelter of the forest. Everywhere that he went, Shaundakul did just that. He showed people the wonders of the world, and encouraged them to see it for themselves.

During his wanderings he managed to come across the realm of the Imaskari, truly an adventuresome and exploring sort of people. However, the Imaskari had no interest in what he had to tell them, believing that they were superior already in their own explorations of Toril, as well as the multiverse itself. There were some of the Imaskari who listened, of course, but they were few. Shaundakul became enamored of them, despite their lack of interest in his preachings. He saw them as great explorers, and he watched after them as best he could.

In the years that followed he observed many things in the area, not the least of which was the retreat of the Imaskari. This retreat surprised him, mainly because he did not know where they had gone. After many additional years of searching, he realized that they must have fled into the Underdark and shielded themselves with very powerful magic.

In the same general area at the time were the Rus, ancient predecessors of the modern Rashemi and people of Thesk. The semi-nomadic Rus, unlike the Imaskari, were very willing to listen to his dogma of searching and exploring, as they were engaged in much the same activities at the time.

Like many less-developed societies, they believed in and venerated many spirits. They felt that these spirits would guide and protect them, or threaten and harm them, depending on how they were treated. They also believed that the spirits resided in many objects and places, including rivers, lakes and mountains.

Shaundakul, the Helping Hand, began at this time to manifest assistance and warnings by using windghosts. The Rus were very receptive to this, as they saw the windghosts as spirits of the wind guiding them, which in a sense they were.

Although it is not a significant amount, Shaundakul still benefits from their veneration of some of the spirits there, mainly still in the form of windghosts. (*Chronicler's Note: It seems that at one time, many of the more learned Rus/Rashemi were aware that the Rider of the Winds was behind some of the air spirits' manifestations. Now, however, it seems likely that this knowledge is nearly lost. In fact, this belief is challenged by many Rashemi of today,

considering it more folklore and tales of fancy, much like the tales of the witch Stara Yaga. Some of these same people acknowledge that these manifestations may currently have some guidance from a divine source, but that it is a new development, not one from ages ago. – DR *)

It is rumored that several shrines to Shaundakul still exist in some of the most remote and difficult to reach areas of Rashemen. Shaundakul is said to grant a boon upon any traveler who finds one of these shrines, especially if they seem willing to hear of his teachings and beliefs, or are followers already.

Growing somewhat restless once again, Shaundakul then concentrated much of his energies eastward, as explorers, many bearing his holy symbol, had been moving steadily east for some time. He began to be mentioned more and more in the Moonsea area, and then also in the area to the southeast, in what is now known as the Dalelands.

The opening of Myth Drannor to non-elves overjoyed Shaundakul. Seeing a rare moment of unity between many of the races gave him the desire to become involved with the area more, and he eventually was able to construct a full temple, Shaundakul's Throne, inside the city. This was, interestingly, the first temple of his to be built since his time spent around Calimshan.

The Winds of Change

Sometime in the past, Shaundakul is said to have had a brief romantic interlude with Tymora, ignoring the advances of Beshaba, her sister of a sort. Tymora and Beshaba were new deities, arising from the remnants of Tyche, the former goddess of luck. This occurred during the Dawn Cataclysm, and it is supposed that not long after this event is when Shaundakul and Tymora were involved. Some early scribes believed that Shaundakul had observed the "birth" of Tymora and Beshaba, and that he may have attempted to watch over them to some degree. Tymora, clearly, welcomed this guidance, which may have also precipitated their brief dalliance. Beshaba is believed to have made her own advances, partially out of jealousy, and partially as an attempt to seize control of additional power by either controlling or destroying Shaundakul. It is supposed that either his relationship with Tymora, or his own keen observation, allowed him to see through the ruse and not fall prey to her plans. Beshaba, upset at being spurned by Shaundakul, vowed revenge upon him.

Shaundakul was apparently not overly concerned over this, as nothing came of it for quite a while. He experienced a lot of good fortune and his worship steadily grew. At his height during the heyday of Myth Drannor, Shaundakul's temple was considered to have the third greatest amount of influence among the temples of the city, behind only Mystra and Silvanus. (*Chronicler's Note: It is believed that whatever source cites this fact may have been ignoring or not including the worship of the Seldarine, either as individuals, or as a whole. This humble chronicler believes that the Seldarine may in fact have ranked as first, thus pushing Shaundakul back a pace into fourth place. – DR *)

At this high point in his history, Shaundakul had attained intermediate power status, rising much higher than he had been previously. This good fortune, it seems, was of a limited scope, and was destined to be the calm in the middle of the storm.

As the Army of Darkness descended on Myth Drannor, many believe that Shaundakul himself was very sorrowful at the event, calling many of his clergy and worshippers to come to the aid of the city. This action, brought on by what some believe was too close of an emotional connection to his worshippers, was quite possibly the one event that brought Shaundakul to the brink of becoming a non-worshipped entity in the Realms.

Possibly due to this close emotional connection to his clergy, or perhaps due to the dire sense of need they felt when the call for aid went out, nearly all of Shaundakul's worshippers came to the doomed City of Song. Like countless others, they were slaughtered during the futile defense of the

city. Certainly, Beshaba sat by and watched with much glee as the Army of Darkness fell upon Myth Drannor, driving off or killing the last of the defenders.

Myth Drannor became overrun and despoiled, becoming a rally point for many unsavory elements, as opposed to a bastion of defense of the woods, and to multi-racial cooperation. The only small element of Myth Drannor that survived the assault in a helpful way was its mythal, which served to keep locked inside it many of the vile extra-planar allies that the Army of Darkness had conned or coerced into joining its ranks. However, while somewhat protecting the rest of the Realms and the immediate surrounding areas from constant and increased raids of depredation, it had the unfortunate side effect of sequestering the primary temple of Shaundakul's faith, making it more difficult or impossible to reclaim the city.

At this time, Shaundakul had been making his home on the Prime Material Plane, spending much of his time in and around Myth Drannor itself, and specifically Shaundakul's Throne, therein. Being of divine status, the mythal did not prevent his travel to and from the city, but he had nearly no reason anymore to make any effort to leave. With nearly all of his clergy killed during the sacking of the city, there was little left for him to attend to. He became somber and reflective, taking many decades to think about his situation, as well as ways he could turn things around. Unfortunately, with no clergy left to speak of, and almost as few worshippers, his voice in the Realms had nearly been snuffed out all at once.

It is sometime around this introspective period that he came to the conclusion that it was possibly his own too close involvement in the day-to-day affairs of his worshippers that precipitated this decline. He believed that calling all of his clergy to the defense of doomed Myth Drannor was a mistake by a desperate deity, afraid of losing the city that had become so dear to him. For many years he continued along this line of thought, barely aware of the few remaining worshippers he did still have. It was many years later that he discovered, or began to believe in, the possibility that Beshaba may have had something to do with the dire situation that he was now in.

After the fall of Myth Drannor, almost all of Shaundakul's faithful had been killed, or transferred their faith to another deity. Primary among these were Waukeen, who embraced the traders, and Mielikki, who welcomed the rangers. Curiously, miners and explorers were not summarily embraced by any deity, and this was nearly the sole form of worship that Shaundakul received for many years.

In the years directly following the rapid descent of Shaundakul's faith, another deity arose in Myth Drannor. This was an orcish deity of pillaging and collapse. Nythren had been an orcish commander in the Army of Darkness, and was involved with several of the tactical maneuvers that helped bring about the city's demise. He was also one of the more popular commanders, allowing the orcs under him to freely loot and pillage after winning battles. Nythren, however, was killed in one of the last assaults on the city, slain while fleeing a particularly costly battle for the orcs. As fate would have it, he died on the steps of Shaundakul's Throne, uttering a curse as its defenders and the skirmishers who chased him cut him down where he stood. Nythren was sorely missed by many of the orcs under his command. Almost immediately upon his death, many of them began to use phrases such as "Nythren's bounty" when referring to a chance to pillage, or "With Nythren's favor", which was either a supplication for the desire to succeed at some assault, or referring to a past successful one. In a very short period of time, these phrasings began to take on a clearly venerating tone. A small band of orcs eventually made their way into Myth Drannor, and found the place where he had been killed. They forced their way into the walled compound and set about setting up an idol there, said to be a rough approximation of what Nythren looked like in life. The orcs worshipped this idol, and between that and the still-common use of some of the venerating phrases invoking his name, Nythren was granted godhood, becoming a minor power in the orcish pantheon.

Nythren's relationship with the rest of the orcish pantheon was one of unease at best, as he was an upstart, and did not represent a large number of orcs with his limited domains. Nythren had at least a grudging respect for Gruumsh, as well as Bahgtru. Ilneval and Nythren would get along most of the time, but served opposite ends of the battlefield, before and after. Nythren did not particularly get along with Luthic, Shargaas, or Yurtrus.

Nythren's rise to divine status completely vexed Shaundakul, however. Nythren the mortal had been killed on the steps of Shaundakul's Throne, and a crude idol erected inside to provide a center of worship. Several of the last surviving faithful of the Rider of the Winds in Myth Drannor even helped slay Nythren on those very steps. However, Shaundakul's power level was very dim indeed. He lacked the ability to call on support to root out the orcs, nor could he risk trying to take action directly against them, as there would be many other foes in the city, should he show himself.

What Shaundakul did, however, was to begin to try attracting more followers. Over the years, many brave souls entered Myth Drannor, for many reasons. Some came for personal glory, some came trying to enrich themselves, and some came to root out the evils that had taken residence in the city. To some of these people, he would make himself known. He would aid adventurers in trouble, in exchange for some task performed, and, at the same time, would try to enlighten them to his own views, in order to expand his power level.

Abruptly, however, this method changed somewhat. During the Time of Troubles, Shaundakul was thrown into a mortal form, as were all the other deities. Before being cast down, most of the other deities had resided on planes of existence beyond Toril. Shaundakul, however, lived there already, and this small fact may have given him a small edge.

During the Godswar, the Helping Hand stayed within the confines of Myth Drannor, continuing to do as he had: assisting people. However, he quickly became aware that the upstart orc deity Nythren seemed to have chosen Myth Drannor as the spot to manifest, taking the body of the orc shaman who was the de-facto leader of his worshippers in Myth Drannor. The Helping Hand wasted no further time, as he wished to cleanse Nythren's presence from Shaundakul's Throne once and for all. Shaundakul made it his purpose to eliminate Nythren, which he was successful in doing before the Godswar ended. Afterwards, he continued to assist people, as he had been doing for so long.

Following the end of the Godswar, Shaundakul was given a small degree of prominence. He moved his home off the Prime Material, and began to notice a definite upswing in his faithful. Shaundakul had never actually lost the portfolio of traders, and with the absence of Waukeen at the close of the Time of Troubles, he benefited by adopting many of the traders from Waukeen; thus his power began to rise again.

When Waukeen returned, many of her worshippers returned to her fold, although some chose to stay with Shaundakul. At this time, Shaundakul gained the portfolio of *portals* from Ao, a move that helped stabilize Shaundakul's worship at a time when many of his followers were returning to Waukeen, and his power, and continued existence, would have otherwise been at risk.

The Cooling Breeze

Shaundakul's worship has been on a steady increase since the Time of Troubles. The general populace did not know much, if anything about him before then. With his shepherding of some of Waukeen's faithful and his own re-invigorated efforts to attract more followers, this has changed. Shaundakul has reached out in many ways to attract more followers. He has created several internal orders for several purposes, and, upon Waukeen's return, increased his influence with the portfolio of *portals*. Since the end of the Time of Troubles, his clergy has increased, and now numbers several hundred. Not long ago, he attained enough followers to regain lesser power status.

During the low point in Shaundakul's worship he had very few worshippers, and even fewer clergy – just after the Time of Troubles, his clergy numbered just six members. These members, now referred to as the Wind Rider's Six, are among the most respected and stalwart of Shaundakul's faithful. At this point, Shaundakul's clergy composed mostly of clerics, with the majority becoming Windwalkers, and a few becoming crusaders, also known as Wind Fists. Some one in five clergy of Shaundakul are actually rangers.

Since the Time of Troubles, Shaundakul has gone through a number of changes. Mentioned above is his gaining of the portfolio of *portals*, which Shaundakul has embraced with open arms. To this end, he has charged his clergy with identifying and locating useful *portals*. *Portals* of primary interest are those that would facilitate ease of trade, or enhance exploration possibilities. A small group of his clergy have formed a loose fellowship to this end, calling themselves The Portalwalkers.

There is also now an order of Windwalkers and some few rangers called The Riders of the West Wind. They are available as mercenaries and guards for caravans headed through untouched wilderness, and traveling to far-off lands. Members of The Riders of the West Wind are credited with having recently returned from Sossal. They have denied any queries about their plans, but many speculate that they may in fact be heading an expedition to the long-lost lands of Anchorome.

Shaundakul has also broadened his calling for new members, sponsoring a small group of followers to take his word into Realmspace, and begin helping and preaching to the travelers that travel to and from other crystal spheres. It is not known at this time if Shaundakul is hoping to extend his own influence into other spheres, or whether he has arranged some sort of deal with similar deities in other spheres, such as Fharlghn of Greyspace, to shepherd his followers while there.

Shaundakul has also begun trying to clear his name in the Anauroch, where Beshaba has been tainting it for quite some time. Beshaba has been masquerading as Shaundakul to the Bedine. She has caused many ailments and misfortune, all the while misleading the Bedine into believing that it was Shaundakul who has been visiting these misfortunes on them.

Additionally, Shaundakul has begun to sponsor and look after some adventuring companies, even ones without direct ties to his worship. He sees these bold individuals as the next wave of explorers, and wishes their exploits and discoveries to be shared. He does not look so much at their outlook on the world as he does whether or not they are exploring and inquisitive. However, adventuring groups with clergy or faithful of several deities opposed to Shaundakul tend to be 'overlooked' most of the time, but even they may sometimes receive aid. Most of these groups, whether or not they have opposed clergy among them, never actually know that any aid has been received, and are even less likely to know the source. To this end, Shaundakul will occasionally send windghosts or other creatures, sometimes for something as simple as leading a lost group out of a twisted forest, or to distract powerful predators away from a wounded or outclassed group.

Untold Stories

Collection VI

By Chris Jameson (Adventures I – VI)
& Scott Kujawa (Adventure VII - XII)

Being a collection of adventure hooks and starting tales for use in the Forgotten Realms

Adventure Hook I

Donnor Gaelstod is worried.

A large and muscular man, Donnor Gaelston is a retired constal of the Purple Dragons. After serving the Crown for nearly thirty years, the grizzled warrior chose to settle in one of Cormyr's smaller towns. Accompanied by his young wife Starra, he came to the bustling town of Hilp, where he opened a smithy.

Over the years, business at Donnor's smithy has been brisk. The gods have blessed Donnor and Starra with five children, two boys and three girls. Though Donnor is reasonably content with his life, there has been one recurring source of concern: his second son, Ryn.

Ryn is a handsome, cheerful lad. He's kind-hearted, and would never willingly trouble another person. However, Ryn was touched by the gods at birth. Sometimes he hears voices inaudible to others. Sometimes he sees objects, creatures and people that aren't there. At other times, he seems oddly agitated, and has occasionally become quite fearful of familiar people or common objects. Donnor and Starra watch over Ryn as best as they can, but with a business and four other children, it can be difficult for them.

About four weeks ago, Ryn disappeared into the King's Forest. Though many of Hilp's residents searched for him, it seemed Ryn had disappeared without a trace. Even Nanger Treeseeker, a retired ranger, failed to find the lost adolescent.

Two and a half weeks later, Ryn emerged from the woods. Despite his prolonged absence, he was in excellent health and had apparently not suffered any adverse effects from his time away from civilization.

Within days it became obvious that something was different about Ryn. He was unusually calm, seeming almost detached from his surroundings. Though he wouldn't say anything about his experience in the woods, he was eager to tell people about the deity that had made Ryn his Chosen: Graethal Steelsong.

Ryn claims that Graethal is a patron of cities, and of those who would civilize the wild places in the Realms. As his cleric, it is Ryn's duty to spread the word and to help all civilized societies tame the wilderness that surrounds and separates them.

No one else has ever heard of Graethal Steelsong. His existence would have been dismissed by Ryn's parents and the people of Hilp, for they know well the many fantasies Ryn has spun over the years. However, since Ryn's return, not only has he been free of his odd compulsions, but he's also been seen casting various clerical spells!

Donnor isn't sure what's going on, but he's reluctant to believe that a previously unknown deity should have chosen Ryn as his mortal champion. He asks the PCs to investigate, hoping they can get to the heart of the matter.

Adventure Hook II

Ratham Sandoma is lucky in love – perhaps too lucky.

The son of a wealthy merchant, Ratham Sandoma has led a charmed life. Blessed with good looks, ready charm and a quick wit, Ratham has never lacked for attention from the opposite sex. He has enjoyed this attention, dallying with just about any woman who caught his eye.

Despite his excesses, Ratham has managed to avoid many of the pitfalls so common to men like him. He's encountered enraged husbands, angry fathers, and vengeful brothers, but always managed to talk his way out of trouble.

Recently, Ratham encountered a woman whose beauty affected him like no other. Tiala Kythos is a simple maid, but something about her captivated the young man. He began spending more and more time wooing her, convinced that his life would not be complete without her.

After nearly a year, Tiala's resistance crumbled. Believing she had turned him away from his freewheeling ways, she agreed to marry him.

Unfortunately, at the same time, Ratham's father Geledam decided it was time for his son to marry. Without telling Ratham of his intentions, Geledam arranged a marriage between his son and the eldest daughter of a minor noble.

Upon finding out that he had two brides waiting for him, Ratham realized he wasn't prepared to settle down and marry either woman. Rather than tell Tiala or Geledam the truth, Ratham has decided it's time to start over some place far away.

He hires the PCs with a two-part mission. First they must help him fake his own death – preferably in a highly visible manner. After his "death", Ratham wants the PCs to escort him to his new homeland.

Adventure Hook III

The Grey Mother has long been an honored member of the Kellina family.

No one is quite sure how long the Grey Mother has been haunting the Kellina family estate. Many of the records kept by the various Kellina patriarchs have mentioned the Grey Mother; she appears to have been haunting the family for at least three centuries.

Similarly, no one is quite sure who the Grey Mother was when she was alive. Most of the Kellinas believe she was the mother of the family's founder, Halwyn Kellina. The Grey Mother herself is silent on the matter, saying only that she has always watched over the Kellina family.

The Grey Mother answers to a number of names. Family members most often refer to her as the Grey Mother, while servants call her the Grey Lady. Among outsiders, she is normally referred to as the elder Lady Kellina.

Whatever her name and origin, the Grey Mother has long been a fixture at the Kellina estate. She is most often found in the library or watching over the children. She will readily converse with anyone who speaks to her. She is very friendly, offering motherly advice to all, or just giving a Kellina family member a sympathetic ear.

The Grey Mother appears to be a plump woman in her early fifties. Her grey hair is always elegantly arranged in a style unfamiliar to modern viewers. She is usually seen wearing a long and flowing gown, but has also been seen in simpler, more causal gowns. She seems to favor lighter shades of clothing, particularly light blues and soft greys. She is slightly transparent, and though she is usually incorporeal, she can become corporeal for brief amounts of time. Even when incorporeal, she can affect the material world in small ways, such as opening doors or carrying small objects.

About a month ago, the Grey Mother abruptly disappeared. Her absence came without warning, surprising the Kellina family.

Though they know she died centuries ago, she is still regarded as a close family member. Whatever the cost, the Kellina family wants their ghostly matriarch back.

Adventure Hook IV

Tarec Sanoval fears his family's past.

Cedron and Tarec Sanoval are brothers, though it is hard to imagine two brothers more different in appearance. Cedron favors his father, possessing the same square jaw, curly brown hair, and blue eyes. However, Tarec resembles neither his parents nor his brother. With reddish skin, fangs, and tiny horns, his appearance hints at a fiendish heritage, one not unknown to the people of Narfell.

Unlike his brother, Tarec is a tiefling. Though some parents have been known to abandon or destroy tiefling children, Tarec's parents were kind-hearted people, willing to give him a fair chance at life.

Tarec and Cedron were close, always looking out for one another as they grew to adulthood in Peltarch. Though many were put off by Tarec's appearance, Cedron's easy smile and incredible charm would put people at ease long enough for them to get to know his younger brother. Once people got to know Tarec, they understood that he was friendly and trustworthy, though quiet and shy, where his brother was boisterous and extroverted.

As soon as they were old enough, the brothers left home, seeking a life of adventure. Tarec became a skilled swordsman, and Cedron explored his newly-developed talent for sorcery. The two traveled far, always at each other's side. They saved each other's lives countless times, and won great sums of gold and magic.

Their happy partnership ended shortly after they met Lianna Windsong, a beautiful ranger from Raven's Bluff. Both brothers were smitten with Lianna, and found themselves competing for her affections. Cedron had always been particularly charming to the opposite sex; it was inconceivable to him that Lianna might choose his brother. When Lianna returned Tarec's affections, Cedron found himself consumed by jealousy.

Cedron confronted his brother, his anger pushing him past all reason. Tarec was reluctant to fight his own brother, but Cedron was under no such reservations. If not for the timely intervention of Lianna, Cedron would have slain Tarec. Seeing the woman he loved draw steel on him, something snapped within Cedron. Swearing revenge, Cedron fled.

He returned to Narfell, letting his anger guide him to places of dark power. Cedron studied much hidden lore, learning the ways of the demonbinder. His research enabled him to divine the name of his fiendish ancestor: a demon called Reilion. Cedron plans to summon Reilion and use him to destroy Tarec.

By chance, Tarec and Lianna have discovered Cedron's plot. They know they lack the power to stop him; they seek the PC's help in thwarting Cedron, and hope that they can lead Cedron back to redemption.

Adventure Hook V

Sometimes, following the latest Waterdhavian trend can have disastrous results.

Several years ago, the wizard Duhlark Kolat created a new spell called *Duhlark's Animerge*. A variant form of polymorphing magic, this spell allows the caster to combine two animals into a single creature. The caster can select individual traits, producing whatever kind of unique animal he can envision. Duhlark has used the spell to create a number of new creatures; the most successful of his "duhlarkin" are the badgeram and wolveraven.

When Duhlark created the spell, he was very careful, sharing it with only a few people that he truly trusted. Unfortunately, one of the people he shared the spell with was Lady Hlanta Melshimber, matriarch of Waterdeep's

noble Melshimber family. The two were in a relationship at the time; it was only later that Duhlark realized Hlanta was using him so that she could use his secrets to benefit her family.

Hlanta shared the spell with several others. This infuriated Duhlark; he's since spent a considerable amount of time tracking down and destroying all copies of the spell that aren't in the hands of those he trusts.

It appears, however, that the vengeful wizard missed at least one copy. Several months ago, a new breed of duhlarkin appeared on the streets of Waterdeep. These new creatures are a mixture of falcons and common housecats, producing miniature griffons the size of housecats. Properly trained, these "grifflings" can be loyal pets and fierce guard animals. Grifflings quickly became quite popular, with nobles and rich merchants buying these new duhlarkin as a kind of living status symbol.

However, a dark side of this new fad has recently become apparent. The miniature griffons are capable of breeding true, and wild, untrained grifflings have begun to appear in the city. The untrained grifflings are ill-tempered beasts, fiercely protective of their chosen territory. Many cats and dogs have been mauled, and even small children have been attacked. Tressym and other flying familiars have also come under attack from these feral duhlarkin.

Because of the attacks against citizens, their pets and their familiars, the Watch has been trying to capture the feral grifflings, and also to find out who has been selling them. Several wizards are also interested in this, for a variety of reasons. Duhlark Kolat himself has become involved, since he wishes to stop the misuse of his spell. Duhlark hires the PCs to investigate.

The PCs discover that the grifflings are being sold by a retired dwarven mercenary named Nessil Hammerhand. Nessil wanders from tavern to tavern; simply tracking him down can be a challenge. The dwarf is not the mystery spellcaster, nor does he know who it is; he is simply acting as a front for the wizard. Nessil was approached by a cloaked and hooded mage about a year ago; the mage never identified himself, but wanted to hire the dwarf as his salesman. He gave the dwarf a magic ring that allows him to communicate with the wizard once a day. Whenever another griffling is to be sold, the mysterious wizard contacts Nessil, tells him where to leave the payment, and where the caged griffling can be found. Usually the griffling is in a warehouse, but some have been left in back rooms at taverns or in rented rooms at an inn.

If the PCs capture or buy a griffling, Duhlark studies the creature to try to determine its origins. Based on the type of falcon originally involved in creating the griffling, Duhlark suspects that either the Nesher or Ilvastarr families are involved. It could also be a member of the Melshimber family, using those particular falcons to lay a false trail. Whoever the mystery mage is, he (or she) is likely acting without the approval of their elders.

Note: *Duhlark's Animerge* and the duhlarkin template can be found in the *Realms Bestiary, Volume 1*, by Eric L. Boyd and Thomas M. Costa:

http://www.ericlboyd.com/dnd/realms_bestiary_v1.pdf.zip

While some of the information that went into this hook came from the *City of Splendors* boxed set, I have to thank Steven Schend for his excellent suggestions and invaluable help in crafting this hook.

Adventure Hook VI

Note: This hook may need some modification if the DM has also used Adventure Hook VI on pages 14-5 of the *Candlekeep Compendium, Volume III:*

http://www.candlekeep.com/compendium/Candlekeep_Compendium-Volume_III.zip

That hook originally introduced Halyn Aleanoth, Keilevaryn, Celaessa Leiunara, and the unknown foe Jannus Delevaun.

Halyn Aleanoth has returned to Waterdeep.

Several months ago, Halyn and his intelligent animated longsword Keilevaryn left the City of Splendors, trying to find where Halyn's lady Celaessa Leiunara had gone. Calaessa had unexpectedly vanished in pursuit of Jannus Delevaun, a foe who was unknown to Halyn.

After journeying far and surviving several dangerous encounters, Halyn and Keilevaryn were reunited with Celaessa. The trio pursued Jannus Delevaun to Calimport, where he managed to escape from them. From there, the half-fiend sorcerer traveled north.

Jannus's destination was the one Sword Coast city where even a half-fiend could walk without drawing too much attention: Skullport. In Waterdeep's dark and lawless sister city, Jannus would be able to blend in with the crowd, and obvious champions of light like Halyn, Keilevaryn, and Celaessa would be at a disadvantage.

Jannus has another, darker goal. He found a copy of an ancient tome known as the *Yielding Tide*. The tome speaks of a forgotten city in the High Moor, home to powerful wizards who captured a minor goddess, hoping to steal her power. Though the wizards have long since crumbled to dust, it is believed that the trapped goddess is still buried in the city's ruins.

Jannus has discovered a ritual that will allow him to steal some of the goddess's power. The ritual requires three specific items; Jannus holds two already and believes that the third, a scepter, can be found in either Skullport or Undermountain.

After receiving word of Jannus's whereabouts, the two elves and the intelligent sword hurried back to Waterdeep. Halyn is a minor celebrity in Waterdeep, and is certain that he'd be recognized in Skullport. He hires the PCs to help catch Jannus.

Halyn, Keilevaryn, and Celaessa plan to enter Undermountain to search for the scepter. While they are searching Halaster's Halls for the ritual's final key, the PCs are to capture Jannus in Skullport and transport him to Waterdeep, where certain authorities are waiting to take the half-fiend into custody.

Adventure Hook VII

Falaern, a ranger from Tangled Trees, has been watching and studying the chimerae of Cormanthyr for years. The wood elf recently discovered a unique chimera that has him concerned. This chimera has the three heads and body common to the rest of its race, but it also has a fourth head: the head of a basilisk.

Falaern wants this chimera found and captured, if possible. Failing that, he would at least like to examine the beast's corpse, so that he can learn about its unique physiology. Falaern saw the four-headed chimera near Moander's Road, and he believes that the Darkbringer's corruption might have something to do with this beast's unusual number of heads.

Adventure Hook VIII

Emthrena and Khaldrel have a long-standing friendly rivalry. For years, they have played a series of magical pranks on each other. Several times, their pranks have gotten out of hand, and both have been called before the Magisters of Waterdeep to answer for their spells and magical creations.

This time, the rock gnome used a particularly devious spell to torment her human rival. She animated dinnerware and utensils, which she then inflicted on Khaldrel. Each time he thought he had dispelled the magic, they animated again with the dawn and rampaged though his home, causing a mess in each room.

Khaldrel has been trying to think of a way to get her back. He's quietly been spreading word through Waterdeep that he'll pay anyone a reasonable amount of gold if they come up with a good prank that he could use on Emthrena. However, it can't be deadly, nor can it cause her serious harm – though

neither will admit it to the other, the two of them really do love and care for each other.

Adventure Hook IX

A small harem of about a dozen pyrolisks has been plaguing the small city of Assam on the Shining Plains. The merchant rulers have asked the cities of Lheshayl and Ormath for help in removing the creatures, but no help has been forthcoming. The merchants, worried that the caravans and goods that come to Assam are at risk, are hiring anyone to find and kill the pyrolisks. Anyone who kills the beasts and provides proof to the merchants will receive a good amount of coins or minor magical items in payment. Such magical items would include minor potions or other less powerful magical items. (Any magical items up to about 1,000GP)

Adventure Hook X

Thaluron, a blind human druid, wanders the eastern lands of Faerûn at night, accompanied only by his bat animal companion. He wants a dire bat as an animal companion, instead of the bat, because the dire bat has a better chance to sense things and is stronger and more resilient then a normal bat.

Adventure Hook XI

Giant owls have been disappearing from the Yuirwood, and the half-elves are concerned. The Simbul and her court have listened to the half-elven fears, and they have agreed to hire adventurers to find out what is happening to the owls. Time is of the essence, since several of the owls have laid eggs. The eggs need to be incubated, and without the owls to heat them, the young won't hatch.

There are many possible causes for the disappearance of the owls. Red Wizards could be taking them for experiments. The owls could have been eaten by a group of owlbears that have grown to enjoy the taste of the giant owl flesh. The owls could have been moved by the star elves, or they could have accidentally entered the star elves' extra-planar realm. Within reason, anything else the DM wants to use could work.

Adventure Hook XII

A group of fifteen to twenty sivs, heretics who have turned their back on the rest of their race, have left the Vast Swamp. They are trying to get access to Steel Regent Alusair, or anyone who will listen to them, because they want to form a small monastery somewhere on the eastern edge of the Wyvernwater. There they intend to worship Eldath and lead quiet, monastic lives.

Planar Lore

A Revel in Brightwater

By Gray Richardson

Greetings, First Reader Tethtoril, from Grimbuckle the Gnome!

In my last report, I told you of how I rescued the repentant fiend Dyphne from the Forbidden Library of Furcas in the Iron City of Dis. We arrived by portal into the hilltop Garden of Fate's Whimsy. The scent of honeysuckle wafted through the air, tinged with fumes of smelted iron and brimstone from the plane we had just left. The golden sky of Brightwater illuminated the beauteous vistas around us, a warm and welcoming contrast to the greenish-grey miasma that overhangs Dis.

Yours in knowledge,

Grimbuckle Thurn
Itinerant Planographer

* * * *

Brightwater is a vibrant plane, the celestial home of the goddesses Tymora, Sune, Lliira, Sharess and Waukeen. The Garden of Fate's Whimsy lies atop Tymora's acropolis – and from this vantage, we had an amazing view of the city.

Around us lay Tymora's Quarter of the Great Wheel, the largest quarter. Its white marble buildings and fine archways flank broad avenues that radiate outwards, like the spokes of a wheel, from a central forum. Across the river lies Sune's Heartfire Quarter, whose labyrinthine streets and gardens are girded by smaller, more elegant buildings, each one a work of art. In the center of the City spreads an expanse of tents and stalls, where the commerce of the Marketplace Eternal teems with merchants and traders at all hours of the day and night. Beyond that lay Lliira's Quarter of the Orange Lanterns, whose streets seethe with revelers and dancers. Their raucous joy is occasionally punctuated by scintillating glamours and spectacular illusions that blossom above the streets and bring shouts of glee from the partiers below. And in the distance, nestled between Sune's and Lliira's quarters, we could just make out Rapture, Sharess's realm, whose dark alleys and twisted streets evoke the darker pleasures her quarter affords.

Below us we could see the river Brightwater, from which the city and the plane both take their name. Its waters sparkle and shimmer with golden flashes. The waters have a faint radiance, more evident in the evening hours, which provides a gentle glow along the river banks as it wends its way through the city and its many canals.

It is said that the river acquires its luster from the Evergold, a magical wellspring in Sune's palace. The Evergold is the legendary fountain of beauty and youth, whose waters spill into the channels of the Brightwater. The river itself does not have the spectacular powers of the Evergold, but its liquid is always pure and sweet, no matter what people may cast into the river, as if it has a constant *purify water* spell acting upon it. The river water is also holy, and will serve as ably as any holy water blessed by clerics for combating evil fiends and the undead.

As for the Evergold fountain, doubtless you have heard stories of this transplanar phenomenon. It exists simultaneously within

Sune's realm and also in Hanali Celanil's Crystal Palace in Arvandor, linking their two realms together. The fountain locus may also wander elsewhere among the planes, occasionally materializing in Eldath's realm, and sometimes in peaceful spots of beauty on the Material Plane. Those lucky enough to find and drink from it find their youth restored and their beauty multiplied. But it is never found in the same place twice.

As Dyphne and I took in the view, a vague unease came over me, as if strange and malevolent eyes surveilled us. My suspicion that baatezu seers were scrying us made me shiver, despite the warmth of the noonday sun. Though I had destroyed the portal through which we traveled here, no doubt the devils had other means of tracking us, and might soon be marshalling a force to retrieve my errant charge.

It is not uncommon for fiends to make incursions into the celestial planes. I knew there was a chance that Zimimar, Baator's Minister of Morale, might pursue a fiend turned stag – even into Brightwater – in order to exact retribution for her defection. When caught, deserters are usually made examples. They are oft strung from gibbets along the walls of Bel's castle in Avernus. I didn't want to see that happen to little Dyphne – nor myself! We were not out of danger yet.

I had to get Dyphne to Winifred, to perform her ritual of ascension. While no guarantee of protection, once a fiend has completed the rite, she is fully risen and her soul is attuned to her new homeplane. Zimimar usually loses interest and rarely pursues a deserter after the fiend has undergone the ritual. And so we quickly set out for Winny's temple.

Tymora's Quarter of the Great Wheel

Along the way we took in the sights that Tymora's Quarter of the Great Wheel has to offer. We descended from the acropolis, the wide, flat hill that dominates the edge of this district. Atop the plateau you can see the colonnades of Tymora's palace, temple complex, civic buildings and many gardens. A colossal wheel of fortune spins in the central plaza, a grand monument to luck. Tymora's priesthood uses the wheel many times a day to discern the outcomes of important queries from her petitioners. Some say the wheel is even used to determine what the daily weather should be for the plane. As for the acropolis itself, legend has it that this stony bluff is all that remains of a once-majestic mountain called Olympus that was razed by warring titans in the ancient past.

Tymora's Quarter is the largest and most populous district of the city. Tymora was the principal driving force behind the creation of this plane, and she, with the artistic guidance of Sune, was responsible for the majority of the civic planning.

The central district of her realm is arrayed, like the name of her quarter, in the shape of a great wheel. Twelve grand boulevards radiate outward, like spokes, from a central forum. On every street corner you can hear performers, orators, and bettors shouting from large marble blocks provided for the purpose of public speaking. Along the grand parkways you find gambling houses, pubs, festhalls, spacious plazas, arenas and amphitheaters. The style of architecture reminds me most of Chessenta, with all its columns and marble and arches; yet interspersed among the geometric edifices are softer, more colorful flashes of hin design.

Tymora is beloved of halflings as well as humans, and the size of the doorways is not the only distinguishing feature of their dwellings. The timber houses of the hin are as finely crafted as any shipwright's vessel, and their brightly painted facades and awnings, with their oval doors and windows, stand out in sharp contrast to the precise angles of the white stonework they abut.

But the buildings are not the only notable features of this metropolis. The petitioners here are competitive by nature, and so the people of this district are particularly proud of their victories. Everywhere are erected monuments to their many triumphs. Commemorative archways abound. Trophies from battles are displayed on walls and atop ornate columns. Adventures and fortuitous

events are memorialized in statues, stelae and friezes carved around the rooftops, or simply recounted on plaques at nearly every focal point that catches the eye.

As we walked down the avenue, we crossed many beautiful bridges over the canals and aqueducts that flow through all quarters of the city. Near the center of the quarter, many of the canals meet to form a large lake. You can always see boat races and water sports here. Crowds fill the promenades and parks around the lake to observe and bet on the races. As we passed by, Dyphne and I saw a water parade, with silver galleons, everwhales, tritons, selkies, and sea serpents processing in acrobatic splendor across the lake. Celebrating some famous victory, no doubt – although one rarely needs an excuse to celebrate on this plane.

As we approached the central forum, we crossed a bridge over the Midway, the most famous racecourse in the planes. The midway is a broad sunken raceway, lined with stadium seats, about a half a league in circumference. They hold chariot and horse races here. And, of course, the dragon races are ever-popular. In fact, they will race anything here that one can ride.

The Midway circumscribes the heart of the quarter, forming the hub of Tymora's Great Wheel. All twelve of the quarter's main boulevards cross over the Midway on grand bridges. Spectators come from all around to line the bridges and walkways and fill the stadium seats, cheering the racers on – and betting, of course, which is the favorite pastime in Tymora's realm.

Inside the Midway is the forum. Here are housed many of the quarter's administrative buildings, including a jail, a courthouse and a place of execution. Jurisprudence is adversarial and highly competitive in Tymora's court. Any accused must try to win the sympathy of the crowd in order to gain a pardon. Or an accused may seek the smile of Lady Luck to determine his fate, and so elect a trial by fire. Onlookers bet fiercely on the outcomes of such ordeals.

Did I mention that they love to gamble here? You can bet on anything in Tymora's quarter, whether a fly lands on a fruit or whether a prince will be crowned king. Tymora's clergy are always around to adjudicate a wager or safeguard a prize. Dyphne and I saw gambling houses on just about every street as we crossed the district.

We finally arrived at Winny's temple. A tiny halfling of tremendous girth and heart, Winifred is a favored priestess of Tymora and a longtime friend. She has the deep blue hair and bright silver pupils that mark her as an *Atalara* – a priestess who has at one time acted as a personal vessel for the goddess, allowing Tymora to possess her body so to act and speak for her. Though regal and graceful in her demeanor, Winny has a hearty laugh and a disarming presence; she's quick to hug you and put you at ease.

Winifred is well-known and, moreover, well-liked across the planes. She cultivates friendships. She corresponds with all the powers of the planes, fiends and celestials alike. She is Brightwater's unofficial ambassador. Her parties are legendary. Not only have the luminaries of the celestial planes attended her parties, she has even entertained the likes of Graz'zt and Dispater at her table. In fact, she often quietly mediates disputes between planar powers when they cannot, for whatever reason, be negotiated at Cynosure.

Winny greeted us warmly and took Dyphne into her care. Her luckmaidens took the cherubic fiend away to perform atonement and purification rites, while Winny and I enjoyed a tankard of ale in her garden. No tea or wine for her! That one could drink an ogre under the table!

Mindful of my report to you, Tethtoril, I took the opportunity to ask her of the history of this plane. And here, as best as I can record it, is the tale she told.

The History of Brightwater

Brightwater is one of the newest planes, formed only three score years ago, in the Year of the Griffon, 1312 DR. Yet it has a

story that is as old as any of the planes. It begins with the *War of Light and Darkness* between Selûne and Shar.

In the early days of the universe, Shar brought fiends from beyond deepest Shadow to attack Selûne and Chauntea for creating the sun. In desperation, Selûne set out upon the Infinite Staircase to seek her own aid from beyond. Some say that Selûne lucked upon Oghma, whose wise counsel allowed her to recruit such gods as Tyche, Silvanus, and Annam to her cause. Others suggest that Selûne first encountered Tyche in her travels, and that Selûne won Tyche's favor through her charm and grace. Tyche, in turn, blessed Selûne with the good fortune she needed to muster the celestial troops and divine allies to fend off Shar.

After the war, Tyche came to live within the Realms. She settled in the plane of the House of Nature, raising a divine mountain not far from Chauntea's Garden. Tyche called her new home *Olympus*, after the name of the plane from which she formerly hailed.

Tyche's mountain was the tallest in the House of Nature. This provoked the wrath of a jealous and petty mountain goddess, called Deronain by my folk. You may know her, Tethtoril, by a different name; she was worshipped as Sonnhild by ancient humans, though she is best known to scholars as Othea, the mother of giants.

As a nature goddess, Othea had her divine realm in the House of Nature. She attracted the affections of the all-father of the giant gods, Annam, who, like Tyche, hailed from beyond. Annam wed Othea and came to settle in her divine realm. He brought with him his entire brood, the giant pantheon. Together, Othea and Annam sired many children, who became the forefathers of the giant races of Faerûn.

Othea sent the eldest and largest of her lineage, the Voninbrud – a race we remember only in legend as the titans – to storm Tyche's mountain. The Voninbrud razed Tyche's mighty Olympus to the ground. Tyche cursed Othea and the titans with terrible misfortune. As a result, both Othea and the titans soon perished from the Realms. Othea was murdered by her firstborn son, Lanaxis, the father of the titan race; while legends say the titans themselves were killed by a falling star.

A humbled Tyche rebuilt her realm in the footprint of the leveled mountain. Her new palace stood atop a modest, central acropolis. Grand avenues radiated outwards from her palace like the spokes of a great wheel, with estates and buildings for her petitioners arrayed around it in rings.

After a time the elven gods, the Seldarine, emigrated to the Realms. The Seldarine also settled, at first, in the House of Nature. They established their divine realms near Tyche's Olympus, in the forest not far from the foothills of Othea's mountain range, where the giant gods had settled.

Annam's children, however, had long ago claimed the territory where the elven gods dwelled – a claim that was not without merit, as the giant pantheon had made some sparse efforts to settle the forest. They had built a few great halls and castles here and there around the forest. In fact, to this day, you can still find giantish ruins in Arvandor.

A great war erupted between the Seldarine and the giant pantheon. Tyche, who had no love for the giants, threw her luck in with the Seldarine, and the giant pantheon was swiftly routed. Corellon and the elven gods won the battle. But Annam possessed a giant's pride. Whenever he could gather enough strength and numbers, he would renew his assaults against the Seldarine.

Chauntea was much vexed by all this warring in her plane, and so she eventually banished the lot of them. She split the giant territory of Jotunheim off from the House of Nature to form its own plane. Likewise she severed the realms of Tyche and the Seldarine. Together, the divine realms of Olympus and Arvandor formed a plane called Arborea.

With Tyche's luck, the plane of Arborea flourished through the ages. There are many, many legends of how Arborea endured attacks by giants, fiendish armies, invasions by orc gods and dragon gods, and a war

with the Anti-Seldarine. But throughout the ages, Tyche and the Seldarine triumphed over all.

Over the years, other gods came to make their homes in the plane of Arborea. Trishina, a sea goddess and patron of dolphins (some consider her merely a beast lord, or a guardinal paragon), wed Deep Sashelas and came to live in his coral palace beneath the Sparkling Sea. Lliira, the goddess of joy, also came to settle near Tyche's realm.

Sune, a human goddess of love and daughter of Selûne, became fast friends with the elven love goddess Hanali Celanil. Hanali mentored young Sune in the godly arts for a time, and so Sune left her mother's realm in the Gates of the Moon to found her own realm of *Heartfire* in Arborea, next to Hanali's Crystal Palace, on the border between Olympus and Arvandor.

During the Dawn Cataclysm, a great tragedy befell Tyche. She was struck down by the corruption of Moander. Selûne burned Moander's rot from Tyche with a bolt of silver fire, splitting Tyche into Tymora and Beshaba, the twin sisters of good and ill luck.

Tymora kept Tyche's realm of Olympus, for her celestial realm did not suit Beshaba well at all. Beshaba left to seek her fortune on the plane of the Barrens of Doom and Despair, erecting her tower on a bloody tor on the banks of the River of Blood (as I described in a previous report to you, Tethtoril).

But Tymora did not possess the ties or nostalgia that her mother once had to the foreign pantheon from which Tyche had interloped. With time, the name *Olympus* faded from use and Tymora's realm came to be called *Fortune's Wheel*, or simply *the Great Wheel* – a name more fitting for a Faerûnian goddess of luck.

After many ages of peaceful coexistence and cooperation, the human and elven gods of Arborea decided to part ways. I have not been able to discern any deeper secret for the split. There seemed to be much admiration and camaraderie between them. But Sune had long since ceased to need Hanali as a mentor and had grown closer in recent years to Tymora and Lliira. Or, perhaps the Seldarine, foreshadowing the coming elven retreat, desired to distance themselves from the human gods. Maybe it was just time for a change. Whatever the reason, the three human goddesses – Tymora, Sune and Lliira – decided to divide their realms from Arvandor and create a new shining city called Brightwater as a separate plane of their own.

Thus, on Shieldmeet in the Year of the Griffon, 1312 DR, at the festival of Cinaelos' Cor, Tymora, Sune and Lliira feasted one last time with the Seldarine. A more joyous celebration has not since been known among the heavens.

That evening, the elven gods and the human gods formed a spell circle together to cast the ritual that would bisect their plane. Hanali, Sehanine and Aerdrie performed the *Melding of the Three* to become the Triune Goddess, Angharradh. Mirroring their hostess, Tymora, Lliira and Sune performed their own *Melding of the Three*, and before the night was done, Arvandor had become its own plane, while the divine realms of the three human goddesses merged into a unified city on the now separate plane of Brightwater.

Brightwater has prospered and grown since that time. After the Time of Troubles in the Year of Shadows, 1358 DR, the goddess Sharess, whom Sune had freed from Shar's influence, came to settle in Brightwater. She nestled her realm of *Rapture* between Sune's and Lliira's quarters.

And, more recently, Lliira became steward of Waukeen's realm during her long imprisonment at the hands of the demon prince Graz'zt. In the Year of the Sword, 1365 DR, Lliira relocated Waukeen's Marketplace Eternal from the House of Knowledge to the bustling heart of Brightwater, where it has stayed ever since – even though Waukeen has since been freed from Graz'zt's captivity.

So you see, Tethtoril, that for a city that is barely more than 60 years old, Brightwater has an ancient and storied history.

I left Winny's temple with an invitation to return in three days for Dyphne's ritual of ascension. A ritual that was to be followed by much merriment at a feast at Winny's adjoining estate. At last! I had secured an invitation to one of Winifred's famed revels. I left with a spring in my step, but tinged with a chill in my spine; as I walked on towards the Marketplace Eternal, I again had the feeling that malevolent eyes were spying on me.

Waukeen's Quarter – The Marketplace Eternal

Along the northeastern edge of Tymora's Quarter is the Marketplace Eternal, the most notorious bazaar in the planes. It stretches southeast from the river in a large, curved rectangle, bordered officially by the river and three major canals. Waukeen's petitioners have started to buy up buildings in neighboring blocks of Tymora's and Lliira's Quarters, so there is considerable spillover into the surrounding neighborhoods beyond the borders proper of Waukeen's realm.

As I already explained, the Marketplace only recently relocated to Brightwater, when Lliira took custody of Waukeen's faith during her imprisonment by the demon prince Graz'zt. Lliira moved the realm from the plane of the House of Knowledge and nestled it in the city center, next to her own quarter. With the help of Tymora and Sune, Lliira simply stretched the plane to make room, and the rest of the city magically reconfigured itself around the quarter, so that everything fit. Now it looks as if the Marketplace has always been there.

Not that much of the Marketplace is fixed or permanent! This quarter is a vast sea of tents, stalls, carts and portable buildings. The merchants rearrange themselves almost daily, always vying for the most advantageous location.

Though movable, some of these temporary structures are quite grandiose. There are opulent pavilions of tapestry and silk. There are vast canopies, supported like sails, cantilevered on elaborate riggings that would make a boatwright proud. Some of the tinier tents house commodious extradimensional spaces afforded by sorceries such as *Mordenkainen's Magnificent Mansion* and the like. These spells make the tents much larger on the inside than out. But be sure to check your *bag of holding* before entering!

There was a notorious disaster some years back in the Marketplace when a customer with a *bag of holding* entered one of these extradimensional shops. The catastrophic implosion sucked the whole shop and its environs into the Astral Plane. Since several of the adjacent tents also contained extradimensional spaces, as each proximal tent was swallowed by the vortex, it too exploded – adding to the chain reaction – until, in the end, about four city blocks of the Marketplace had been destroyed.

The remaining crater contained a massive planar breach to the Astral Plane! It took a host of Waukeen's goldeyes and mages a tenday to shore it up. Nowadays, it is customary to check one's bags and wondrous items before crossing the threshold of an extradimensional shop (be sure to tip a silver to the lass who minds your items). There are magical alarms and protections in place now to ensure that such an accident cannot happen again.

Along the river's edge on the northwest side is a network of docks for ships to berth. Not just local ships, but many equipped with planar helms. Visitors come to the plane by ship and by spell. They ride in on flaming nightmares and celestial hippogriffs. Planewalkers arrive by astral caravan and on jade palanquins carried by demons and dragons. Whatever their method of travel, they come from across the planes in droves to visit the Marketplace.

Inset just back from the river is North Port, a rectangular, inner harbor where the junction of several canals connects to the Brightwater River by a series of locks. North Port houses a waterworks that helps supply water throughout the city and regulates the flow of the canals. It also holds a fleet of barges,

skiffs, and vaporetti that transport goods and people around the city.

Along the edges of the quarter are stone buildings, including more permanent emporia, moneychangers and guild houses. You can find many stronghouses and safeholds that will guard money and treasure for you, for a fee. A myriad of inns and taverns accommodate traveling merchants and buyers during their visit to the Marketplace.

Along the Grand Canal, on the southwest side of the quarter, are stately merchant villas and manors. The most august of these is Waukeen's palace, The House of Barter, a majestic estate that easily outshines the most luxuriant houses of Sembia. Attached to it are many civic buildings, including Waukeen's court, which is administered by her clergy and a legion of devas, who record and bind contracts, weigh and tally goods, convene tribunals to resolve trading disputes, set rules (what rules there are) and perform whatever functions are necessary to govern the organized chaos that is the Marketplace Eternal.

You will also find, in the more exclusive district bordering Waukeen's residence, a number of smaller palaces that house permanent trading missions from other planes and spheres. I saw a large compound housing the embassy of Nephythys, the Mulhorandi goddess of wealth and trade. The dwarven gods Dumathoin and Vergadain also have embassies located on either end of the district, far from one another. Here also is found the Legation of Jauhar the Gemmed of Zakhara.

We saw strangely-garbed merchants passing to and from still other missions dedicated to deities of far distant lands and worlds – gods I had never heard of – bearing names like Shinare, Zilchus, Sera, Dallah Thaun, Kol Korran and Xerbo. You can find embassies from the Nine Hells and darker planes here as well. Shaundakul often visits the quarter, at the lead of great caravans, although he himself has no fixed abode.

I enjoyed my day in the market. Like many of the activities of the bacchae, their enthusiasm for haggling was contagious. I purchased many a trick and trinket that would help me in my travels, and I replenished my supply of spell components. The highsun sky faded from pale lemon, to goldenrod in the late afternoon, then a deep amber and peach at sunset. The red sky of twilight darkened to purple as the evening settled in, and after a sumptuous meal, my purse as empty as my belly full, I retired to a modest inn called the Serene Sphinx.

The Marketplace Eternal bustles night and day with the shouts of hucksters hawking their wares. Customers haggle loudly over prices, and a clamoring throng of buyers and sellers circulates through this perpetual pageant of commerce. They say that the grace of Waukeen makes it impossible to cheat on a trade here, but that doesn't stop them from arguing about it! The dull roar of the hollering crowd filters at all hours of the day and night through the windows of the cheaper inn rooms – the ones that do not face away from the market – making it hard for a poor little gnome to get his sleep.

Lliira's Quarter of the Orange Lanterns

Not quite fully rested, the next morning I made my way widdershins around the city to Lliira's Quarter of the Orange Lanterns. I rented a room there at the Coiling Couatl Inn – though I don't know why I bothered, as I never managed to sleep there.

Lliira's quarter is the most animated in the city. Music fills the air here night and day. The streets are always crowded. The masses are wont to burst into song and it is not uncommon for them to spontaneously break into dance.

Drinking is a favored pastime here. The wine flows freely in this quarter; in fact, I don't think I observed anyone drink anything else – which may account, in part, for the high spirits they have.

Friendly brawls erupt constantly among the revelers, followed by much shouting and laughing, and then clasping of shoulders in friendship when the fight ends and the drinking resumes. The furniture in the

taverns here magically mends itself when the fighting is over. The chair legs crawl over to their other parts and join themselves together. Shards of glass unite with their brother slivers and reform the drinking glasses. Truly an amazing sight to witness!

The daytime in Lliira's quarter is comparatively more sedate than in the evening hours. In the daytime the petitioners loll about on the many wide lawns. They have picnics and recite poetry or perform music. A few people run shops or pursue the quotidian activities of their afterlives. Many souls even pause to sleep in the daytime.

But at night, when the sun sets and the orange lanterns glow, this quarter explodes into an unceasing festival. The dancehalls and festhalls, ubiquitous in this district, blare forth with a raucous noise. Illusionists and evokers light the skies with pyrotechnic displays; they compete to produce blazing spectacles to attract the attention and awe of the crowds below and distract them, if only for a moment, from their wassails.

The carousing in Lliira's quarter, by the way, is as infectious as the bartering in Waukeen's. It is nigh impossible not to get swept up in the fervor of the throngs here, as the petitioners of this plane have several curious qualities.

The spirits of Brightwater are called bacchae. This plane, like its patron goddesses, brings out the deepest passions of its petitioners. The plane awakens in each bacchae an almost feral nature, a yearning to express and partake of his desires. The effect is magnified in groups, and when the bacchae frenzy in great numbers, onlookers are caught up in their joy. Overwhelmed with fervent ardor, everyone joins the mob. This yen to debauch often becomes all-consuming.

The bacchae have an uncanny fleetness when they swarm. They can arrive in an instant, traveling in a blur, and they disappear just as suddenly, leaving a shambles in their wake.

Once you lose yourself in a drove of bacchae, your higher mind surrenders its will to the multitude and you revel with them until you collapse from exhaustion. That night I was drawn in by a crowd of bacchae. I drank and cavorted all through the night. I awoke the next day at noon, sprawled under a tree in the arms of a dryad. I had little memory of the previous evening, save a general impression of great joy. I uncurled myself from the bark-like arms of the sleeping nymph, and continued my exploration of the plane.

Sharess's Quarter – Rapture

I left the Quarter of the Orange Lanterns and crossed the Brightwater River into Rapture, Sharess's Quarter, by way of the Bridge of Slain Scorpions (it commemorates a victory Bast once had over Set). At the far end, a sphinx sprawled languidly atop one of the bridge pylons. She stared intently as I approached.

"Hail and well met, my furry, feathered friend. May I pass?" I queried.

"I'm on a lunch break."

"So no riddle, then?" I asked.

"I haven't eaten yet. Are you volunteering?"

I ducked my head and hurried on my way.

The architecture here is eclectic, but strongly influenced by Mulhorandi and Calishite stonework. Buildings are often solid and square, with round columns. Thick stone and brick walls lean inwards, at just a slight angle. The skyline is punctuated by octagonal domes and the occasional minaret. Buildings of any height have many balconies, from which the occupants observe and call down to the revelers on the streets below. Mosaics abound, with intricate tilework prominently featured throughout. Wild and musky scents fill the air along with perfumes of every fragrance.

The streets here are narrow and poorly lit. Buildings do not touch; they are separated by slender alleys that twist and wend back behind the structures. Shadows proliferate, giving the quarter a darker feel than the rest

of the city. A darkness that reflects, in part, the darker pleasures that Sharess and her petitioners enjoy.

The canals in this quarter spill into many magnificent bath houses; communal bathing and massage are just some of the favored pastimes of Sharess's realm. The taverns and festhalls of this quarter are noted for their exotic fare. Connoisseurs come from far away to sample the long menus of wines and other intoxicants for which this quarter is famed.

The quarter is filled with cats, some of whom are petitioners. Sharess's faithful may select from a variety of petitioner forms, including human, lion, leopard, domestic cat, or cat-headed humanoid. Many of her human petitioners choose to spend their afterlife in cat form; amusingly, many of her feline petitioners choose a humanoid form.

In addition to petitioners, there are a variety of planar felines here: wemics, leopardweres, sphinxes, lamassu, celestial lions, and stranger cats. Even the occasional rakshasa feels at home in this quarter.

Sharess's priesthood are called sensates, not to be confused with *The* Sensates, who also have a strong presence and a headquarters (called the Gilded Hall) located at the edge of town, near where Rapture borders Sune's Quarter. The Society of Sensation is a planar faction that is dedicated to experiencing everything the multiverse has to offer. The Society of Sensation sponsors many performances and exhibitions of both conventional and more unusual art forms. They delight in stimulating all their senses.

They are not hedonists, per se, and resent comparison between their noble purpose and the hedonistic creed of Sharess's clergy. Although they certainly take great pleasure from the visceral knowledge they seek... But The Sensates are on a mission. A mission to experience the true scope and grandeur of the multiverse by cataloging and sharing every sensation of which the mortal condition is capable.

There is an off-shoot of The Sensates called The Children of the Vine, a sub-faction that seeks out pleasurable sensations above all others, and believes that every caprice should be satisfied in the moment. This more hedonistic branch of The Sensates has many adherents among the bacchae of Brightwater, and wields exceptional influence in Rapture.

Like the Marketplace Eternal, Rapture is a recent addition to the city. Sharess relocated her realm to this plane after Sune saved her from death. During the Time of Troubles, when the gods were incarnated into mortal bodies, Shar tried to kill Sharess and take her power. Sune intervened and doused Sharess in the waters of the Evergold, reviving her faded beauty and glory. Sharess cast off the influence of Shar, and has since bonded closely with Sune.

Sune's Realm – The Heartfire Quarter

I emerged from the dark streets of Rapture into the immaculately beautiful Heartfire Quarter, a district of elaborate formal gardens and winding, maze-like streets. There is no unifying architecture to this realm. The buildings are smaller, more private, but heartbreakingly stunning in their beauty. Each one is a singular work of art. No two are the same.

The feral passion of the bacchae is much abated, even stilled, within Sune's realm – or rather, it is channeled into more creative pursuits. Here, lovers seek romance, the inspired seek inspiration, and artists strive to create sublime works.

Many contemplatives and followers of true passion are drawn to this quarter. Those who have tired of physical pleasures find their succor in deeper passion within the Heartfire Quarter. It is more serene and blissful than the other sections. The night is filled with incense and lit by soft candles. The daytime is filled with quiet mystery.

The outer reaches of this quarter are filled with festhalls, matchmaker shops, craftsmen of musical instruments, workshops for every kind of artist, and the ubiquitous inns and restaurants. Sune has a courthouse here, for crimes of passion are not uncommon.

Parks and hidden courtyards are everywhere, secluded places where couples can steal away for a discreet rendezvous.

The Heartfire Quarter is separated from Tymora's realm by the river, which runs southwest across this portion of the city. Yet the two realms remain connected together by many splendid bridges. The most exquisite of these is Araushnee's Bridge, a gossamer-spun suspension bridge. Woven by an elven goddess of art from celestial spider silk strung between titanic pillars carved from boughs of the World Tree, the bridge has spanned the Brightwater for many thousands of years, crafted when the two planes were still one and that lambent weaver had yet to fall to darkness.

Along the river is a broad boulevard flanked by manicured gardens and parks. A vast complex of ornate greenhouses cultivates the most delicate flowers and beautiful plants from around the planes. The botanists maintain special environments for whatever best suits the plant. Underground, beneath the gardens, fire druids maintain a palatial kiln for blossoms from fiery planes. Likewise, the cryomage Joanzen (a former apprentice of the famed Snilloc) tends an ice warren of extreme frigidity for specimens that hail from frostfell regions.

These gardens also house a marvelous zoo, and an aquarium which collects the most beautiful fish and sea creatures from across the cosmos. Its caretaker is Marunaewan, a triton ranger whose extraordinary skills allow the creatures here to flourish happily under her care. Marunaewan is fit and lovely herself, although she wears a white porcelain mask at all times, so I have never seen her true face.

I haven't ever been able to elicit from her a reason for the mask. I find myself very curious if it hides a scar, or deformity, or serves some other magical purpose. I wonder if she is merely very shy – for in a realm as beautiful as the Heartfire Quarter, I suspect that some here feel great shame for even slight imperfections.

I made my way to the Goodly Demon Meadhall, on the Street of Red Sashes. Beneath this tavern is located the headquarters of the Benevolent Order of the Risen Fiend. Say the right word to Lilly, a sour-faced yet warm-hearted lillend barmaid, and she will let you into the basement below, a multi-level stronghold that dwarfs the tavern above.

The Order is dedicated to helping fiends defect to the celestial planes. Fiends like Dyphne, the erinyes that I had extracted from Dis. You see, the demons of the Abyss and the devils of the Nine Hells have no natural method of increasing their numbers. They have no gods in their planes to attract petitioners. They must forge pacts, corrupt mortals, seduce the weak and otherwise buy, trick or steal souls to populate their planes. They often trick or kidnap newly dead souls from the Fugue Plane. While many souls that end up there are suited to those planes, many are good souls that are wrongfully diverted from their just fate.

The mission of the Order is to help fiends escape, to help them undergo the rituals they need to atone and realign their souls. They also provide support to help them settle into their new afterlife on the celestial plane of their choice.

The order boasts a small legion of tanar'ri and baatezu double agents, and a network of safehouses and *portals* maintained by sympathetic denizens across the layers of the lower planes – all for the purpose of transporting fiends who wish to rise. I sometimes do work for them. Sometimes they even pay me.

The Order is run by Belazagora, a risen marilith. A master of strategy, logistics and intrigue, she once served as a general in Orcus's legions. She is a supremely able and efficient administrator who coordinates the many on-going "white ops" missions of the Order.

A fiend of her word, Belazagora paid me for my services in extracting Dyphne. She had several intriguing proposals for me, and one mission in particular captured my interest. Something completely different from anything I have attempted before. I cannot

report the details to you just yet, Tethtoril, but hope to be able to tell you of it soon.

The Ceremony

I returned to Winifred's temple on the day of Dyphne's rite. As friends and former fiends gathered round, luckmaidens accompanied the little erinyes to the altar. The guests circled in closer and Winifred began the ceremony.

I noticed a clutch of erinyes moving in from the back, and though I at first assumed they were fellow well-wishers, the scent of brimstone suffused the air as a hamatula and a squad of bearded devils materialized behind them. We were under assault!

Three more barbed devils and eight more barbazu were coalescing, and then a hulking horned devil hove into view. The very sight of him chilled my soul. Each one that manifested quickly summoned reinforcements and the invading force kept growing.

Magic circles of protection blossomed around the congregants, as several casters in attendance spun defensive wardings. Yet the diabolic strike force was clearly prepared for such tactics, as they freely plowed through the effulgent perimeter, unhampered by the wards.

They must have had some sly magicks of their own to defeat such spells, or they would never have been able to breach the interior of this consecrated and hallowed shrine. But it only stands to reason that, just as our side has sophisticated agents skilled at extracting defectors, Zimimar has his own elite shock troops trained to retrieve them.

The brutes closed in, slashing the crowd with their glaives and spines, while the erinyes cut through the heart of the throng, a flurry of claws and fangs and feathers, charging towards the altar to get at Dyphne. I snatched a scroll from my bandolier and recited a banishment that caught the lead erinyes by surprise. I grinned as she vanished with a satisfying pop of air. I began to abjure another, when the claws of the next one shredded the scroll from which I read.

She bowled over me. Planting her foot on my shoulder, she sprang upwards, vaulting into the air, above the fray. A tactical mistake for her! I cast lightning – the only offensive spell I had in my arsenal that could overcome her natural defenses. Though normally useless in a crowd, from my vantage I had a clear line of effect, unobstructed by my fellows.

The electric bolt arced from my fingers to her exquisite frame. It crackled about her, charring her flawless skin. Yet she shrugged it off and hurtled onwards toward Dyphne, unrelenting. But my bolt had encouraged three other casters, and next I saw a trio of crackling arcs triangulate on the flying fiend, frying her in mid-flight.

Then I noticed a curious thing. Our small circle of celebrants had increased in size. Bacchae were scrapping with the fiends and their whooping shouts of glee attracted more and more of their kind. Bacchae swarmed into the temple with remarkable celerity, moving in a blur. The bacchae wrested the glaives away from the barbazu and battered them with their own weapons. They dragged the hamatulas down by their spines.

The bacchae grabbed at the wings and horns of the cornugon, who at first tossed the bacchae aside with the ease of a mad bull. But for each hand he shook off, three more grasped him until the bacchae hung from him like a coat of briars. They wrestled him, pulling, gnashing, tearing, until they pinned him to the floor by their sheer weight. They soon dispatched him in a gruesome manner, suffering a fate he had never experienced in Baator.

The temple had become a battlefield as the band of baatezu brawled against a battalion of bacchae. And still the bacchae piled into the temple. Their infectious ferocity overtook the participants as we fought for our friend, for our honor, and for the sheer fun of fighting. We soon made short work of the hapless hellspawn, and a calm, of sorts, settled over the crowd as we basked in our victory.

Winifred concluded Dyphne's rising ceremony. Laughing, she presented the proud new celestial to the jubilant crowd. A joyous celebration followed that I only hazily remember, but will never forget.

Before the revel had ended, a group of artists tugged in gigantic blocks of marble and that very night began to sculpt a monument commemorating the triumph. An elaborate frieze depicting the battle now adorns the southeastern face of Winny's temple. You can see a little gnome among the combatants hurling lightning bolts. I think they captured my likeness quite well.

And so ends the tale of my revel in Brightwater. I hope you have enjoyed the recounting of it. May Oghma bless you, First Reader, and if he bless me also, I shall report to you soon of my next adventure.

Yours in knowledge,

Grimbuckle Thurn
Itinerant Planographer

Unveiling Waterdeep's Hidden Lords

Part 11

By Chris Jameson

Of all the forms of government found in the Realms, perhaps none is as intriguing as Waterdeep's unique system. With the exception of a brief and tumultuous period, the City of Splendors has been ruled by a hidden council of Lords for over three centuries. With one exception, Waterdeep's Lords have ruled fairly and justly, putting the needs and concerns of the city ahead of their own desires.

Another of the unique qualities of the Lords is that they have been drawn from all walks of life. Wizards, nobles, merchants and common laborers have all served as Lords. Lordship is not restricted by race; though most Lords have been human, there have also been elven, half-elven, and halfling Lords.

The citizens of Waterdeep believe they are ruled by sixteen Lords. However, the number was secretly increased to twenty in 1364, after an ex-Harper caused considerable turmoil within the city. *City of Splendors: Waterdeep* (pages 52-55) lists the following individuals as Lords: Open Lord Piergeiron the Paladinson, Brian the Swordmaster, Caladorn Cassalanter, Durnan the Wanderer, Mirt the Moneylender, Larissa Neathal, Khelben "Blackstaff" Arunsun, Nymara "Kitten" Scheiron, Sammareza Sulphontis, Texter, Kyriani Agrivar, Brianne Byndraeth, and Nindil Jalbuck. Ed Greenwood's short story "A Slow Day in Skullport", found in *Realms of the Underdark*, listed Mirt's lady Asper as another Lord of Waterdeep. *The Siege*, the second book of the Return of the Archwizards trilogy, named another Lord, Deliah the White.

With fifteen of the twenty Lords named, Dungeon Masters are free to create their own Lords, filling their own needs. Here is one possible Lord DMs can use. Following the tradition of past Waterdhavian supplements, only a minimal stat block is given.

Aerys Vellimar

Aerys Vellimar

Female water genasi, rogue3/warrior8

History:

When Aerys Vellimar was born, her unusual hair color immediately marked her has something different. Her parents, Georl and Risha Vellimar, were both human. Georl was a successful clothier in the Sembian city of Selgaunt, and his wife Risha was one of his assistants. Though they were both surprised and a bit troubled by their daughter's deep blue hair, they did their best to provide her with a happy, loving home.

Aerys's early life was unremarkable. She often helped in her parents' shop, learning to read and write as she did so. She also spent much time playing with the other children of her neighborhood. She had the occasional childhood fight, and her distinctive hair color often made her the target of bullies. At a young age she had to learn to defend herself, a skill that was useful in her various fights.

As Aerys neared adolescence, she began to feel drawn to the sea. In her free time, she was often found somewhere by the docks. Most times, she just sat and stared at the

The Candlekeep Compendium

sea, but on other occasions, she earned extra money by helping sailors and dockhands with various minor tasks.

Around this time, Aerys's uncle, himself a sailor, chose to retire to Selgaunt. Paelos took Aerys under his wing, becoming a mentor to her. Knowing that the area around the docks wasn't the safest place for a young girl to be found, his first priority was teaching her how to use a sword and dagger. She became skilled in swordplay, and her abilities with a dagger were nearly unmatched.

Paelos owned a small skiff, and often took the girl fishing with him. She learned how to handle lines and navigate, as well as a host of other useful seafaring skills. Under his tutelage, Aerys became a reasonably skilled sailor. A devout worshipper of Selûne, Paelos also taught the girl about his goddess, converting her to the Moonmaiden's worship.

Paelos died when Aerys was fifteen. He and his niece had become quite close, and the young girl missed him terribly. Paelos had left Aerys with a legacy that would shape her life: a love of the sea, and the knowledge of how to sail.

For the next two years, Aerys used her late uncle's skiff for fishing. She sailed up and down the coast, sometimes staying away from home for days at a time. Though she told her parents that these expeditions were for the purpose of earning more money, Aerys was in truth constantly testing her skills and trying to become a better sailor. The girl had her share of near-disasters, including having to flee from pirates and being run aground by a powerful summer storm, but her skills grew ever more polished.

Finally, in Aerys's eighteenth year, she got the chance for which she had been waiting. A ship owned by an all-female group of adventurers came into port. Aerys was both intrigued and captivated by these six proud women, and begged them to accept her as a member. The leader of the group, an archer named Solia Torange, decided to accept Aerys as a member of her company. Aerys became the youngest member of the Company of the Singing Raven. She said goodbye to her parents, and joined the Company on their ship, the *Raven's Kiss*.

As members of the Cormyrean Freesails, the Company of the Singing Raven spent several seasons hunting pirates and other menaces to shipping. Due to their frequent shipboard conflicts, Aerys became more skilled with the sword. Her sailing skills improved, to the point that she became second mate of the '*Kiss.*

Though primarily pirate hunters, the members of the Singing Raven followed other pursuits, as well. They took periodic breaks from their duties as Freesails to act as merchants, and more frequent breaks for adventure, be it ship-based or on land. Their fame grew, and they became widely known in almost all ports of the Inner Sea.

Aerys was truly happy. She'd found friendship and adventure on the high seas. The other women of the Singing Raven were like sisters to her, and she could imagine no finer life than one on the wind and waves.

Eventually, however, this time of chasing dreams had to end. The *Raven's Kiss,* en route to Lyrabar, was caught in a powerful winter storm, one that threatened to destroy the ship. Battered by huge waves and strong wind, the entire crew struggled to keep the ship afloat. Aerys was trying to lash down an errant boom when a powerful wave caught her in its strong grip and swept her overboard.

After living on or near the sea for so many years, Aerys had become a strong swimmer. Still, she knew her companions could not save her and that she had to struggle alone against the storm-tossed waves. Her chances of survival were incredibly slim, yet she had no choice but to fight.

Despite the helplessness of her situation, Aerys swam for her life. For many hours she battled the unrelenting waves, pushing herself to the limits of her endurance. Eventually her strength gave out, and the lost sailor slipped into unconsciousness. Thinking of the people she would never see

again, Aerys felt the rough waters closing over her head, and then fell into darkness.

Consciousness was slow in returning to the blue-haired woman. At first, Aerys was vaguely bemused by the unusual quality of the distant light, and by the odd chorus of whalesong, clicks and chirps and other sounds she heard in the background. As her awareness came back to her, she began to remember the events of the previous night. Amazed that she was still alive, Aerys became even more astounded when she viewed her surroundings.

She was at the bottom of the sea, some two hundred feet beneath the ocean's surface. Even more incredible, somehow she was able to breathe water without ill effect. Other than the lingering effects of her exhaustion, Aerys felt not only well, but oddly comfortable.

Aerys began to slowly explore her new environ. The girl marveled at the undersea world, a beautiful place she had never even imagined. Here were plants she'd never seen before, colorful fish, and aquatic creatures unlike anything on land. Aerys leisurely wandered about, full of wonder and delight at everything she saw.

She might have very well spent days in such exploration, but a new marvel came into view. A group of sea elves happened across the lost sailor, amazed to find a surface-worlder so at ease in their setting. Lacking a common language with which to communicate, the sea elves used hand gestures to tell Aerys of their intention to escort her to a nearby settlement. Aerys readily agreed.

Swimming with the sea elves, Aerys soon beheld another unbelievable sight: an entire city, built on the seafloor. The city was partially in ruins; some buildings were intact, some were rubble, and coral and sea plants covered other sections of the city. Even in such a state, it was one of the most incredible places the sailor had ever seen.

The sea elves introduced Aerys to Tamic Rensyl, a mage who'd left the surface world to explore the depths of the Sea of Fallen Stars. It was Tamic who revealed to Aerys her true heritage: like him, she was descended from a native of the Elemental Plane of Water. Though her parents were human, Aerys herself was a water genasi, someone who'd inherited some part of her ancestor's extraplanar heritage. It was this inheritance that had drawn her to the sea, and enabled her to survive in its depths.

Aerys found a new home in the fallen city of Alsyrrt. She joined in the restoration efforts, helping to reclaim the buildings from centuries of disuse. She made several new friends, some sea elves, some human, and even a couple of other genasi. She also met a half-elf by the name of Jazrik Teel.

Like Aerys, Jazrik had been born in Sembia. Unlike her, he had left home for a life of adventure at an early age. He had adventured far and wide, and even claimed to have ventured beyond the skies of Faerûn. Jazrik and Aerys quickly became good friends, and, as time progressed, their relationship deepened into something far more profound.

Aerys and Jazrik lived together in Alsyrrt for over a year. Aerys was happy in her new home, but she felt herself longing to see her parents again, and she wanted to see if her companions in the Company of the Singing Raven had survived. After some discussion, she and Jazrik decided to quit the city of Alsyrrt and return to Sembia. They began the long journey back to Selgaunt.

After swimming for weeks, Aerys and Jazrik were nearing Selgaunt when they came across a recently sunken pirate ship. From the wreckage, the two were able to recover a small fortune in coins and gems. It was a pivotal moment for the couple. They realized that many such ships lay at the bottom of the sea, and that people who could function as well in water as on land would be uniquely able to recover lost riches.

Once they were ashore, Aerys had a heartfelt reunion with her parents. She and Jazrik bought a home nearby, as well as a small skiff, the *Silver Egg*. For a handful of seasons, the two worked together reclaiming sunken goods and money. Sometimes they

sailed for no one but themselves; other times merchants hired them to recover cargo. On two occasions, they even had to recover the bodies of the sons of wealthy merchants.

All was well for the couple until the sinking of *Ibar's Glory*. The ship, owned by an up-and-coming merchant named Tofner Ress, was attacked and sunk just days before returning to port with an expensive cargo of Chultan teak. It was widely believed that pirates were responsible for the attack.

Ress hired Aerys and Jazrik to see if the teak could be recovered, and how difficult it would be. They found the ship, but once on board, they found clear evidence that a rival merchant, Kems Gothaer, was truly behind the attack. When Ress was presented with the evidence, he used it to publicly discredit and humiliate Gothaer. Gothaer fled Sembia, swearing his revenge.

Months later, Gothaer secretly returned to his homeland. Working from the shadows, he assembled a small force of thieves and mercenaries. Though not a large group by any means, it was enough for the merchant to achieve his multi-pronged vengeance.

On a moonless night in Kythorn, Gothaer launched his attack. He and a group of his men first visited the docks, where they fired Aerys's skiff to the waterline. A second group, at the same time, was starting another fire at Aerys and Jazrik's tallhouse. Neither Aerys nor Jazrik were home when the attack was launched, however. Jazrik was elsewhere, attending to business, and Aerys was at Gothaer's final target, her parents' house.

Both groups of his men rendezvoused nearby, then Gothaer himself led the attack against her parents' house. The men forced their way into the house, trapping the genasi and her parents in a bedroom. Aerys held the doorway, her sword slaying all who came near. Despite her successes, she knew it was only a matter of time before she was overwhelmed.

Help arrived then, in the form of Jazrik Teel. Striking from behind, his spells savagely ripped into the attackers. Several fell to his magic, including Gothaer himself. Now leaderless and facing a skilled and angry mage, Gothaer's men fled.

Jazrik and Aerys were victorious, though the price had been high. Aerys had lost both her home and her ship, and her parents' home and business had been severely damaged during the fighting. It was time for a difficult decision: stay in the place they had lost so much and attempt to rebuild, or relocate to another city and start over.

Jazrik himself added another factor to be considered. During the many adventures he'd had before meeting Aerys in Alsyrrt, Jazrik had served aboard a spelljamming vessel. When he returned to the Realms, he'd done so at the helm of his own ship. The spelljammer, a wreckboat he called *Sparno's Legacy*, was hidden in a nearby warehouse. If the group chose to relocate, he could have them in their new home by morning. After much discussion, the quartet decided to journey to Waterdeep, and they boarded the '*Legacy*.

After making sure her parents were settled in, Aerys resumed her former business of undersea salvage. It was not easy to start her business anew, but with the support of Jazrik, she was able to keep her business going for the first few years. Almost three years passed, and Aerys found her business slowly becoming more profitable. Aerys was able to purchase a new ship, the *Raven's Song*.

Time passed, and Lost Swords Recovery and Reclamation became a commercial success. Employing various aquatic races, as well as those who used magic to breathe water, Aerys's business was able to recover the cargo from dozens of merchant vessels. Her prices were steep, but many merchants found her rates more reasonable than a total loss of their cargo would have been.

During this time, the Lords of Waterdeep watched Aerys's business closely. When one of their own vessels, the *Lady Telassa*, was lost, Aerys was hired to discreetly find the ship, determine what had happened, and bring back a certain locked chest it had

carried. It was a difficult assignment, but the genasi admirably succeeded. Her investigations also revealed a few secrets the Lords didn't want widely known, which lead to them employing her as an agent.

The money the Lords were funneling into her business allowed her to expand in an important direction. Aerys was able to set up a network of informants in other Sword Coast cities. This served her business well, allowing her to stay abreast of the movement of ships she might have to later find. It also enabled her to surreptitiously monitor the flow of sea-borne commerce in other cities, as well as the movements of these cities' naval forces. The Lords of Waterdeep found this intelligence to be informative and highly useful.

After the turmoil caused by Garnet's actions in the Year of the Wave (1364 DR), the Lords of Waterdeep secretly chose to expand their numbers from 16 to 20. Because of her resources and her already proven worth to the city, Aerys was offered a Lordship. After some consideration, she accepted.

Current Status:

Aerys still runs Lost Swords Recovery and Reclamation. She stays in routine contact with her agents, both above and below the sea. Additionally, she spends time with the merfolk in Waterdeep's harbor, ensuring good communications and relations between them and the city. At the behest of her fellow Lords, Aerys is expanding her network of contacts downward, into Skullport.

Aerys tends to agree with the lawful-minded Lords in most matters, though she strives to maintain a balance between law and personal freedom. She favors expanding Waterdeep's navy, both to provide for safer passage of ships and to increase Waterdeep's sphere of influence. She also favors laws and measures that benefit families, especially the working families of non-nobles.

Her heritage and her history combine to give Aerys a unique understanding of the sea. Like many ships' captains, she possesses an extensive knowledge of sailing and sea-trade, but her genasi heritage also gives her great insight to what transpires beneath the waves. However, despite being an expert on most areas of sea-borne commerce, she is weak on other areas of trading, and readily defers to the more knowledgeable Lords on such matters.

Despite her love of the sea, Aerys has been spending more time on land since the birth of her daughter, Liara. Though she's only twelve summers old, Liara has already shown an affinity for water much like her mother's. She also possesses Aerys's distinctive blue hair, leading both parents to speculate that Liara may share her mother's genasi heritage. When Liara is old enough, Aerys plans to let her take over the business. She's slowly been involving the girl in some of the more minor business aspects of Lost Swords; despite her youth, Liara is already demonstrating a surprising competence at business matters.

Appearance and personality:

Aerys's blue hair still remains distinctive, even in a city as diverse as Waterdeep. She wears it in a single long braid, so that it doesn't get in her way. Only when she's in formal attire does the genasi allow her hair to be unbound.

In her youth, Aerys was an attractive but not overly beautiful girl. She is now past her fortieth summer, and time has had a gentle touch on her. Crow's feet have begun to appear around her blue-green eyes, but she otherwise remains a striking woman. Due to her active lifestyle, Aerys has been able to retain her slender figure, despite the effects of motherhood. The genasi has a slight frame, but she is surprisingly strong. She also possesses a noteworthy endurance, especially when swimming. Aerys stands just under five and a half feet tall.

Aerys has no particular preferences for the color of her attire. She is most often found wearing simple but functional trousers, tucked into boots, and a loose tunic. She usually supplements this clothing with a vest. She keeps several daggers scattered around her person, and one in each boot.

Aerys has a very serious personality. She is pragmatic, and doesn't concern herself with things she considers frivolous. She is known for her resourcefulness, and for having a keen eye for opportunity. Around friends, family, and colleagues, Aerys relaxes somewhat, but in public, she is often withdrawn and quiet. She possesses a dry sense of humor, but rarely expresses it.

Aerys has three passions. The first and most prominent one is her family. After years of separation from her parents, she is now quite close to them, and visits them frequently. The genasi is also very close to her daughter; the two are more like friends than they are mother and daughter. Jazrik is not left out; Aerys spends as much time with her husband as she is able.

Her second passion is her business. Aerys had little more than some gold and the clothes on her back when she came to Waterdeep; in the years since, she has built Lost Swords Recovery and Reclamation into a highly reputable and very successful business. Aerys oversees much of the business's day-to-day operations, and personally interviews and hires all prospective employees. Though she no longer goes on standard recovery missions, she often handles the odd "delicate" mission that her business undertakes. More than anything, Aerys wants to ensure that her daughter will inherit a profitable and stable business.

Aerys's final passion is maps. Though she lacks any skill in cartography herself, she appreciates the skill in those who have it, and she appreciates even more the results of their work. Aerys is always looking for maps or sea charts that she doesn't own, or for more detailed and accurate versions of the ones she does have. On one wall of her shop is an incredibly detailed map of the Trackless Sea, and on another wall, the Sea of Fallen Stars is depicted, complete with undersea features. It is reputed that the genasi owns a magical map that shows all major geographic features within a fifty-mile radius of the map-holder, but Aerys always denies this when asked.

Author's Note: I've long had an odd fascination with the idea of breathing water, so the water genasi race is a personal favorite. I wanted to have a genasi Lord, but I had a difficult time creating a concept for the character. It was a reference on page 129 of Races of Faerûn *that caused me to think of the underwater reclamation angle. From there, most of the character concept fell into place pretty easily.*

I chose to make her a bit older to avoid the "young and beautiful" cliché. I made her rather serious to avoid putting too much of my own personality into her. The passion for maps was a difficult one for me to think of, but I think it fits her: it's still something serious and useful, but it works as a hobby.

Her husband Jazrik Teel actually owns at least three spelljammers. The wreckboat is a favorite of mine, and it was one easy to use in a city. He also owns a vipership and a turtleship; I may detail Jazrik and his ships at some point later in time.

Spellbooks of Faerun

The Blackglass Spellglobe

By Jared Rascher

"Wizards are like any other men. They need to feel they are important, as if the world revolves around them. The problem with wizards is that they might just try to make it revolve around them, if no one properly tends their egos."

***Larissa Neathal**,*
after spending some time with the Thayan Ambassador Ethur Anszim.

* * * *

The Blackglass Spellglobe of Dancing Flames is one of Faerûn's most unusual spellbooks. The Spellglobe contains a unique collection of spells, but it has gained a mystique that far outstrips its actual usefulness. Rumors swirl about the Spellglobe; tales are told of it containing lost spells of unimaginable power, dating back to the ancient giant empire of Ostoria – magics that make modern Art pale by comparison. As several spellcasters have discovered, the item is not nearly so old or powerful as rumor insinuates.

The Spellglobe is a perfectly round globe about a foot in diameter, made of polished black glass. Anyone touching the globe with both hands and peering into it can see flames dancing within. After gazing at the flames for at least five rounds, the viewer can make a DC 15 Wisdom check to realize that the flames form flickering symbols. If the viewer knows Ignan, the flames will spell out a phrase that must be spoken aloud to unlock the next phrase to appear. When this phrase is uttered, the flames reform into more symbols, this time written in Giant. Once this phrase is spoken aloud, the flames form a list of spells written in any language the viewer chooses. From this selection, the viewer may study and prepare the spells as if the Spellglobe was a common spellbook.

Perhaps the most useful aspect of the Blackglass Spellglobe is its ability to store a nearly infinite number of spells. However, the means of transferring spells to the Spellglobe is not the standard for spellbook transcription. In order to store a spell within the Spellglobe, a caster must use a spell that has been prepared on a scroll. The spell is cast normally from the scroll, with any effects targeting the Spellglobe. The Spellglobe is not affected by the magic, instead absorbing the spell into itself. As the spell is written into the globe, flames will appear to swirl violently its depths. At the end of three rounds, the flames resume their normal flickering, and the newly absorbed spell can then be studied and prepared from the globe.

As soon as a spellcaster studies any spell from the Spellglobe, they will know of this property, and of the globe's locking property. The person that speaks the Ignan and Giant phrases first viewed in the flames may set their own command word, preventing any others from using the globe. This lock remains in place until the caster's death, or until he willingly lifts the command word from the Spellglobe.

The Spellglobe contains the following standard spells: *Mage Armor, Protection from Chaos, True Strike, Bull's Strength, Bear's Endurance, False Life, Locate Object, Resist Energy, Shatter, Whispering Wind, Dispel Magic, Haste, Heroism, Keen Edge, Magic Weapon (Greater), Rage, Slow, Fire Shield, Locate Creature, Scrying, Wall of Fire, Fabricate, Sending, Telepathic Bond,* and *Teleport.* It also has the following unique spells contained within it: *Boon to Bane, Curse of the Mindscream, Inspired*

Craftsmanship, Internal Winter, and *Transferred Learning*.

The Blackglass Spellglobe was created by Voraknus, a fire giant weirdner[1]. Voraknus was responsible for many of the other dedicated weirdners within the Fire Giant Palace[2]. While it is not known exactly when he lived, it is known that it has been at least several generations since his demise, meaning that the creation of his unique "spellbook" could have taken place over five hundred years ago.

Voraknus, as an elder weirdner, taught many fire giant spellcasters what they needed to know to perform their roles in giant society, such as aiding in the creation of weapons, armor, and feats of engineering. Weirdner training entails not only mastery of spells that might be of use in craft and war, but also the extensive study of metallurgy and alchemy. Voraknus was considered a fine weirdner, though he never achieved the high status that fire giant craftsmen, engineers, and warriors achieve, since the weirdners are expected to aid others in their pursuits, not to take a central role themselves.

For years, Voraknus was happy to enchant weapons that the Forgers created, or to cast the occasional spell to aid in inspiration for the Architects. On occasion, he even traveled with war bands to aid in battle. Then Voraknus took on Rarstal as an apprentice. Rarstal, unlike Voraknus, had received priestly training as well, and was greatly skilled in making weapons and armor without the aid of magic. Voraknus began to be jealous of his new apprentice, who had been trained in many different tiers of giant society, and was likely to eventually move into the Forger tier.

As time passed, Voraknus became convinced that Rarstal was trying to steal all of his secrets, and that Rarstal would use those secrets to gain even more status in the Palace. Voraknus created his "spellbook," the Blackglass Spellglobe of Dancing Flames, in part to show off his talent for the arcane, and in part to hide some of his spells from his talented apprentice. Voraknus also began to invent several spells to aid in his own defense, against the off-chance that Rarstal would perform a *maug*[3] act by betraying his master in a leaned trade.

Eventually Voraknus, Rarstal, the khan's son, and a war band headed out to eliminate a group of troublesome dwarves that had ventured too near to the Palace and its boundaries. The battle went badly for quite a while, as the dwarves' warpriests managed to erect wards that limited Voraknus's spells. Rarstal, who was trained in several arts, abandoned his spellcasting and took up a sword that he himself had made, joining the warriors in battle with the dwarves. His timely assistance turned the tide of battle against the Bearded Folk. Rarstal was a hero, and Voraknus was all but forgotten.

That night, Voraknus gazed into the Spellglobe, retrieving his defensive spells. He did Rarstal the honor of at least waking him, and taking him out into the wilds. Voraknus and Rarstal battled one another, exchanging spells far from the eyes of the other giants. Ultimately, the wounded warrior/cleric/wizard began to tire, and fell to Voraknus's spells. Voraknus realized that he had committed a horrid act of *maug***,** and fled into the wilderness.

Weakened from his battle, Voraknus was ill-prepared for his hasty flight. He encountered a band of dwarven warriors that had entered the region, intent on finding the remains of their dead kin. The dwarves took vengeance upon the first fire giant they found, slaying Voraknus. One of the dwarves, a follower of Marthammor Duin and a dabbler in the arcane, found the Spellglobe, and experimented with it until he could discern spells from it.

The Spellglobe was found many decades later by an adventurer, a ranger by the name of Sendrisk Longcoat, who brought it back to

[1] A weirdner is an arcane spellcaster in fire giant society.

[2] The Fire Giant Palace is located between the Three Sisters in the south Ice Spire mountains.

[3] Something that is maug is taboo or proscribed behavior in giant culture.

Silverymoon and sold it to a wizard named Toldusk the Wordbinder. A journal near the globe indicated that the dwarf had wandered off with a band of human adventurers and met his end in the wilds of the north near the Moonwood, where Sendrisk found his remains. The dwarf's journal mentioned only that he had secured the Spellglobe from a fire giant in his youth, and that he had learned a few minor magics from it, but did not mention anything else. Despite this lack of detail, it is obvious that at some point in time the dwarf either learned how to resize the Spellglobe, or that, for some strange reason, Voraknus had made the Spellglobe capable of resizing itself. The dwarf's original notes mentioned that the Spellglobe was as big around as he himself was, and nearly as tall, yet the globe in his possession was only about the size of a dwarf's head.

When Toldusk died years later, the Spellglobe was among the possessions claimed by his apprentice, a female wizard named Aeraega. She set off with an adventuring company, know as the Company of the Cold Walk, but nothing is recorded of either her or the adventuring company after they left Silverymoon.

Boon to Bane
Transmutation
Level: Sorcerer/Wizard 6
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Close (25 ft. +5 ft./2 levels)
Target: One creature with the cold or fire subtype in range
Duration: 1 round/level
Saving Throw: Fortitude negates
Spell Resistance: Yes

You say a quick phrase and then its reverse, moving your hands in an in-and-out motion, before pointing at the target creature. The creature visibly vibrates, but only for an instant.

The target of this spell loses any immunities to cold or fire, and gains the vulnerability to fire and vulnerability to cold traits (*Monster Manual*, pages 307, 309), if they did not already have them.

Curse of the Mindscream
Illusion (Glamer)
Level: Bard 6, sorcerer/wizard 6
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft. /level)
Target: One creature
Duration: 1 round/level
Saving Throw: Will negates
Spell Resistance: Yes

You make high-pitched yelps and cries while making an encircling gesture, then ring a small bell. You see your target clutch his ears and shake his head in pain, though all you can hear is a slight hum emanating from your target's head.

The target of this spell is afflicted with screaming sounds centered within their own head. Since the spell is centered in the head of the target, only a slight hum is heard by those around the target.

The target is deafened. Each round, they must make a Concentration check with a DC equal to the save DC of this spell; if they fail, they are dazed for one round.

The material component of this spell is a small dented bell.

Inspired Craftsmanship
Enchantment (Charm, Mind-affecting)
Level: Bard 4, sorcerer/wizard 3
Components: V,S
Casting Time: 10 minutes
Range: Touch
Target: Creature touched (see text)
Duration: 1 day/level
Saving Throw: Will negates (harmless)
Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)

After moving your hands in precise patterns and chanting long and complex phrases, you touch your intended recipient, and a slight flash of light flows from your hand into the head of your target.

The recipient of this spell gains the following ability:

Inspired Craftsmanship (Sp): Once a day, you may gain a +10 bonus on your next

Craft check. You may use this ability as an immediate action. If you are making Craft checks representing a period greater than a day's work (such as a week's work), you must use this ability once per day during that period of time.

If the target is not currently using the Craft skill or is not trained in a Craft skill, this spell has no effect.

Internal Winter
Evocation
Level: Sorcerer/Wizard 5
Components: V, S, M
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Target: One living creature within range
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Fortitude half
Spell Resistance: Yes

You speak words that require deep gulps of air. When you bellow the words forth, you touch your chest, then gesture to your target. Your target appears to brace himself as a cold blue-white light shines out of his mouth, nose, and eyes.

You create a blizzard within a creature. When you cast this spell, your target takes 1d6+1 points of cold damage per caster level, up to a maximum of 15d6+15. Your target can make a Fortitude save to halve the damage, composing themselves before the internal cold does too much damage to their internal structure.

The material component to this spell is any clear crystal or gemstone worth at least 10 gold pieces, wrapped in leather.

Transferred Learning
Transmutation
Level: Sorcerer/Wizard 3
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 10 minutes
Range: Touch
Target: Two creatures touched
Duration: 1 day/level
Saving Throw: Will negates (harmless)
Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)

After taking care to enact a precise ritual involving a rising and falling chant and swaying hand movements, you touch one target, and a slight magical discharge, like electricity, flows into your hand. When you touch your next target, the electricity flows back down your hand into the head of your next target.

Upon touching the first target, you encapsulate what that target has learned about a particular skill, then transfer this magical knowledge to the other target.

Choose one skill to transfer; the second target temporarily gains an insight bonus to that skill equal to the first target's ranks in that skill, and is considered trained for the purposes of that skill.

A target cannot have more than one instance of this spell granting them an insight bonus at any one time. If a new instance of this spell is cast upon them, the previous instance automatically is dispelled.

The material component for this spell is an item that grants some sort of bonus to the skill that is to be transferred, such as masterwork tools or a *potion of jump*.

Journal of an Apprentice Scribe

Olostin's Hold, part 11

By J P Hazelhoff

Well met, fellow scribes and learned scholars!

Allow me to introduce myself. I am Rikos Dughol, late of Saradush, in Tethyr. I have been traveling across Faerûn, at least across the regions known as the Western Heartlands and the North, as an apprentice scribe with my master Brin Orgul.

During my travels, I have kept a journal of the places I have visited and things I have seen. As I retrieve and edit these journal entries while staying in Candlekeep, I will make them available for all to read. My journal might resemble the works of Volothamp Geddarm, whose writings I came across during my studies, but are by no means copies of his excellent work, which has served as a wonderful source of inspiration.

Most of the journal has been written during those moments when I did not have to perform some tasks for my master, or when I wasn't occupied with the physical part of traveling. Because of this, the entries in the journal may sometimes seem disjointed. Also, the entries might not be published in chronological order; the pages were scattered during an unfortunate incident with an overeager air mephit.

I hope that for the places I've visited, the journals will provide you as much insight as Volothamp's journals provided me.

Till swords meet,
Rikos Dughol of Saradush

* * * *

Journal of an apprentice scribe by Rikos Dughol of Saradush

13th Eleint 1371, Year of the Unstrung Harp

I can't believe this! After the cold and rainy weather yesterday, we've gone to an outright blizzard today. There was no possibility of traveling to Everlund in this weather. It is as if the Frostmaiden wants to keep me here, in this nowhere village. So here I am, huddled in my cloak, writing the next entry in my journal. Yesterday's entry was about a general overview of Olostin's Hold. Today, during my forced captivity in the Flaming Flagon, I got a chance to talk to some of the locals, and to learn something more about the village, and why people choose to make a living here.

As I described in yesterday's entry, Olostin's Hold lies on a gently sloping hill, which provides a good view over a section of the Evermoor Way, as well as the track that leads from the Way to the village. Two small vineyards and a couple of orchards dot the slope. It is otherwise mostly reserved for grain, with the exception of a few meadows where cattle graze.

Not that there is much to graze now. The fields are covered in a blanket of snow. The only agricultural activity I have witnessed was the village's pigs being herded into the forest. Glyndra, while serving me another drink, told me that this happens daily, and the pigs are used in the search for acorns and truffles.

The pigs were led out of the keep's walls, something that made the corners of my mouth curl up in irony. It seems that the lord of Olostin's Hold, Baron Mardan Elthondsson, owns most of the property and activities in the village. The baron resides in the sturdy stone keep that dominates the low hill near the village. A dry moat has been dug around the keep, and a drawbridge provides access to the bailey. The road to the keep leads along a section of the wall, providing the defenders with a good view of the approach to the keep. The keep itself, Olostin's Tower, is a five-story squat stone affair with slightly sloping sides. The bailey holds the village's bakery, along with the grain storage and a smithy. Stables and a pigsty are also located on the bailey. A well has been dug some forty feet down, to allow for plenty of fresh water.

Once per tenday, a market is held in the bailey, allowing the local folk to trade their goods. Peddlers from out of town sometimes visit the market; they are given a pleasant welcome, and are often the source of news and gossip. Together, all these things are the source of a lot of daily activity in the bailey.

Olostin's Hold's trade goods are primarily timber and agricultural produce. The villagers grow fruit, grain, and vegetables, with a small amount set aside for trading. Most of this produce is traded with caravans passing along the Evermoor Way, but some is transported to Everlund, to trade on the market there. The vineyards produce a decent wine, most of which is for local trade. The trees cut in the High Forest are drawn by teams of sturdy draft horses to the mill, where they are either cut into planks or loaded onto carts for further transport to Everlund and elsewhere. The mill is property of Baron Elthondsson.

In the surrounding area of Olostin's Hold, most notably in the valley between the Evermoor Way and the village proper, several homesteaders have built small farms. Most are families of up to fifteen members, spanning sometimes four or five generations in one building. The excess produce of these farms is traded at the Keep's market once every tenday. The safety of the homesteaders is insured by the baron's troops and by patrols from Everlund.

On the fringes of the High Forest, several hunter-trappers have built their homes. Like the homesteaders in the valley, their homes are simple affairs: low field-stone walls topped by a wooden frame, with the spaces between the frames filled with straw and covered with plaster. These hunter-trappers venture carefully into the forest, making sure their activities do not upset the powers of the wood. There are horror stories aplenty of those who didn't respect the forest… and who never returned.

I was sitting in the commons, close to the blazing hearth, trying to keep at least a little warmth in my body. The curtain at the entrance parted, and a sturdy-looking man walked in, taking a seat across from me. After shedding some of the snow from his cloak, he warmed his hands at the fire. He introduced himself, and after I'd told him about my unfortunate situation, he started telling me a little more about the village inhabitants, starting with himself.

Keled Strongarm is a cobbler, and also serves as the constable. He is mostly occupied with his profession as a cobbler and leatherworker, but when the need arises, he functions as the town's law enforcement. That is, if the Baron doesn't take personal interest in the matter… Any culprits arrested are transferred to the keep to be judged and sentenced by the baron. The keep's dungeon, though seldom used, functions as a prison.

Keled operates alone most of the time, but when necessary, he can assemble a posse of villagers. This militia has been called upon a few times, most recently a couple of years ago, when the village was besieged by trolls.

Baron Elthondsson is a slightly rotund man. He has great plans for Olostin's Hold, trying to make the village more important in the political landscape of the Silver Marches. The baron is a scion of the Elthondssons of Neverwinter, one of the more prominent mercantile families in that city. Some of the family's wealth made its way to the Baron, and he has invested that both in improving the village and partaking in lucrative caravanning from Everlund to Waterdeep. His greatest concerns, at the moment, are a group of bandits roaming in the area, and the ever-increasing activity of trolls on the Evermoor Way.

The only noteworthy regional businesses in the village are Aedelvana's shop and The Farmer's Trading Concern. Aedelvana deals in various herbs, ointments and potions, based on ingredients found in the woods. She collects most of the ingredients herself, but sometimes hires local youths. Besides being the village's apothecary, she also accompanies the monthly trek to the Everlund market. She always chooses a few youths that have worked for her that month to accompany her to the city, an incentive that makes it easy for her to recruit them. Aedelvana's kitchen doubles as her store. Pots and jars are everywhere, as are bunches of dried or drying herbs. Eight straight-backed chairs surround a large, cluttered table, which dominates the room. There is almost always something simmering over the fireplace; either a soup or stew or a kettle of water for a cup of herbal tea.

Located on the west side of the village, with a clear view of the Evermoor Way, is the small trading concern of Albalast Farmer. The Farmers are a fixture in the area, having had a presence in the village for as long as anyone can remember. Some time back, Albalast's grandfather Gerast, a very talented and lucky merchant, shifted the main offices of the family business up to Everlund, for the many benefits the large city had to offer. For years, the Farmer possessions in Olostin's Hold were used simply as a way station for their goods moving south. Albalast, also a gifted merchant, spent a few years traveling the roads with the family's investments. This took him abroad, sometimes as far away as Amn. About a year ago, the young man came home from a trip south with a new wife, Hella. The Farmers moved into the rustic village once more – that is, Albalast and Hella did. With little effort, they adapted the old Farmer Trading Concern into a suitable home, though the attached way station for the Farmer caravans is still active.

The most prominent deity worshipped in Olostin's Hold is Lathander. A small chapel stands in the center of the village, and holds a shrine to the Morninglord. Borstad Nomephel is the shrine's caretaker, and the most important priest in the village. He also maintains the baron's private chapel in the keep. In addition to Lathander, the deities of nature seem to be venerated by almost everyone in the village, with Silvanus and Mielikki being the most popular. Even Malar seems to be tolerated, at least among the hunters.

Some of the farmers have taken to worshipping Yondalla, after several bountiful harvests on the Bramblebrook lands. The Bramblebrooks are one of the three halfling families living in Olostin's Hold. All three families are former refugees from the Purple Hills in Tethyr. Though I'd love to speak to my former countrymen, I fear they fled Tethyr for good reasons, and probably wouldn't like to be reminded of those times.

Felevel the Green lives in a difficult to reach marshy area of the High Forest. She likes her privacy, and spends most of her time near her dwelling or in the forest. Her home is a sod-covered cabin, built on a wooden platform supported by stilts. Felevel lets the grass on her roof grow, and plants from the marsh have joined the roof's vegetation, almost obscuring the building. The dwelling rests in the marsh, on the edge of a small lake. To reach her home, Felevel uses either a small, canoe-like boat or, as the more popular rumors go, animal forms. She is an opponent of further expansion of Olostin's Hold into the High Forest. She recognizes the inevitability of the community's growth; however, she tries to oppose the baron's expansion plans wherever she can.

The village has a mixed population, though the majority is human. I had already mentioned earlier the three halfling families;

in addition to the halflings, I have also seen a couple of half-elves. According to Keled, elves from the High Forest regularly pay visits to the area. The cobbler suspects that it has more to do with keeping an eye on human activities, rather than polite, neighborly visits.

I'm not sure if it was just children acting badly, or if there is a slight undercurrent of anti-elvish sentiment in the village, but I witnessed a group of children throwing mud and snow at a young half-elven girl. The girl seemed to take the situation in stride, as if it was something that happens regularly, and walked on, ignoring the unruly children.

I will have to stop writing now. Master Orgul wants me to work on another document, and there is little more that can be written about Olostin's Hold, anyway. Hopefully, tomorrow we'll be on our way again.

The Candlekeep Compendium

Credits

Volume VI of the *Candlekeep Compendium* contains the work of many people, who have put much time and effort into penning these articles of lore. Many thanks to all who contributed and helped on this project.

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We hope you have enjoyed this volume of Realmslore. Any feedback is greatly appeciated. Please email us at **compendium@candlekeep.com** or visit the Candlekeep forum at **http://www.candlekeep.com/forum**

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Volume VII

The *Candlekeep Compendium* is a quarterly publication. Keep an eye out for *The Candlekeep Compendium Volume VII*, containing new Realmslore and further installments of regular articles penned by our master scribes.