

EARTHDAWN

JOURNAL

Vol. 5

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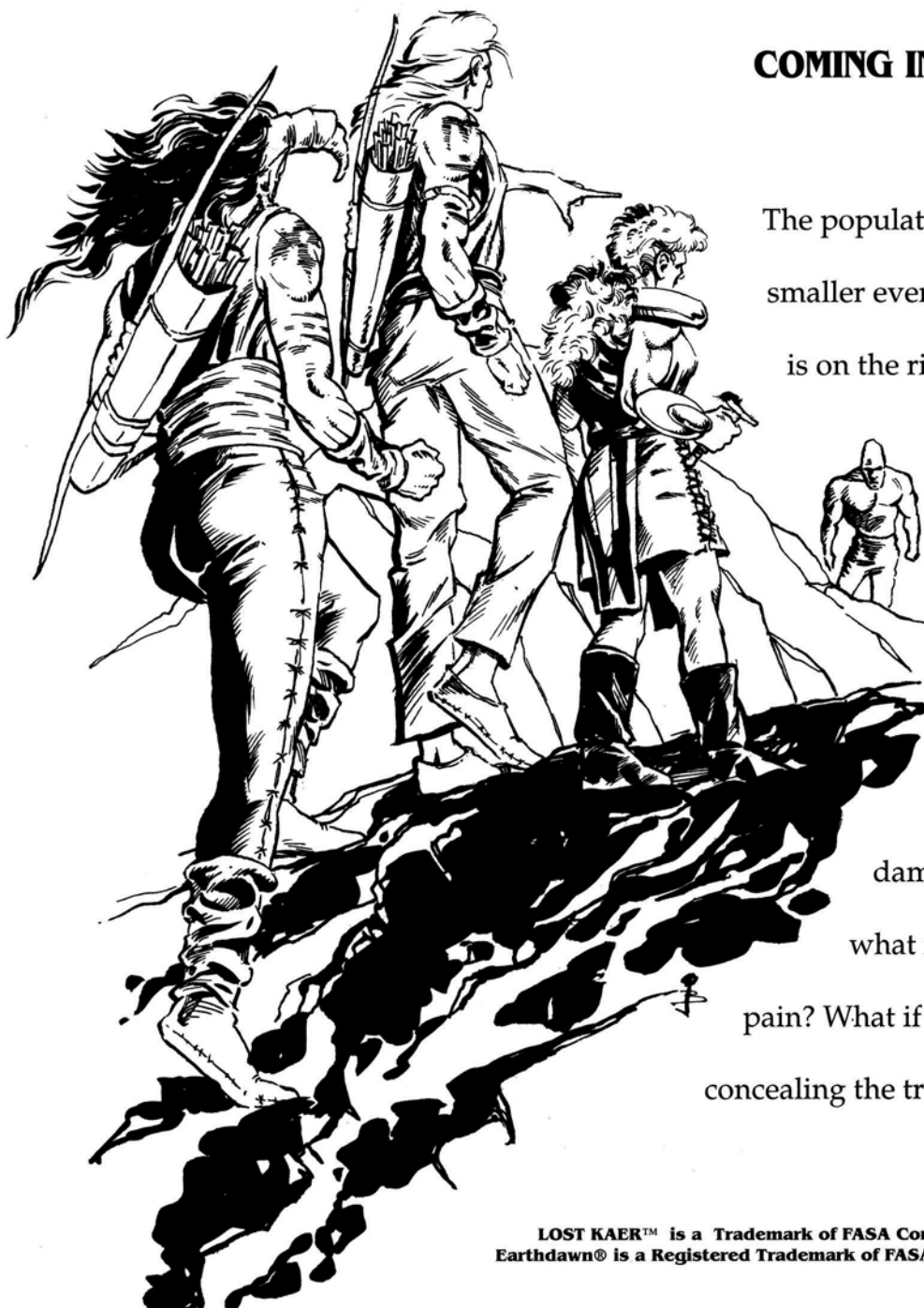
The Scourge is Over.

But they don't know it.

LOST KAER

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COMING IN OCTOBER 1995 FROM FASA



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THE EARTHDOWN JOURNAL

**An Official
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Roleplaying Game**

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The Editor Speaks...

Greetings and welcome to the fifth issue of the Earthdawn Journal! As you may have noticed already, we are very late with this issue. Why, you might ask? Wellll... to have a magazine, one must have articles to put in said magazine and we didn't have enough articles! So PLEASE send us ANYTHING you have for Earthdawn that you want to see in print. I promise we will take a look at it and, if it is good enough, it will see print!

Richard took a break this issue, so FASA let us use a piece of their artwork from *Denizens Volume I*. Hope you like!

Kevin Knight

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How Are We Doing???

Please take the time to fill out the questionnaire located on the tear out piece in the middle of this book. Each respondent will have their name placed in a drawing for a free copy of next issue. A lucky three will receive free copies of the Earthdawn Journal Volume #6.

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Artwork (Christian Royse)	4.29
Artwork (Greg Fisher)	3.17
Overall Satisfaction	4.15

Free copies of Volume #5 were sent to John Stanfield II, Vince Mariotte Jr., and Daniel Smith. Thanks to the other 50 people who sent their cards in!!!

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THICKER THAN WATER

BY VICKI KIRCHHOFF-MARTIN

{I am Malthus, underscribe for the library of Throal. This tale was passed on to me by an ork beastmaster who gave her name only as Varda. She said she did not want any of the other things she has been called written down.

These are her words as she gave them to me...}

"Okay, scribe, pay attention. This really isn't my tale, but the others say I tell it best. So be it. Life's too short to argue over stories.

I was the one that found the Kaer while Sanjia Quickfeather and I were hunting. She's an elven archer and the one whose tale this really is, but she can't tell a story to save her life and doesn't remember most of it anyway.

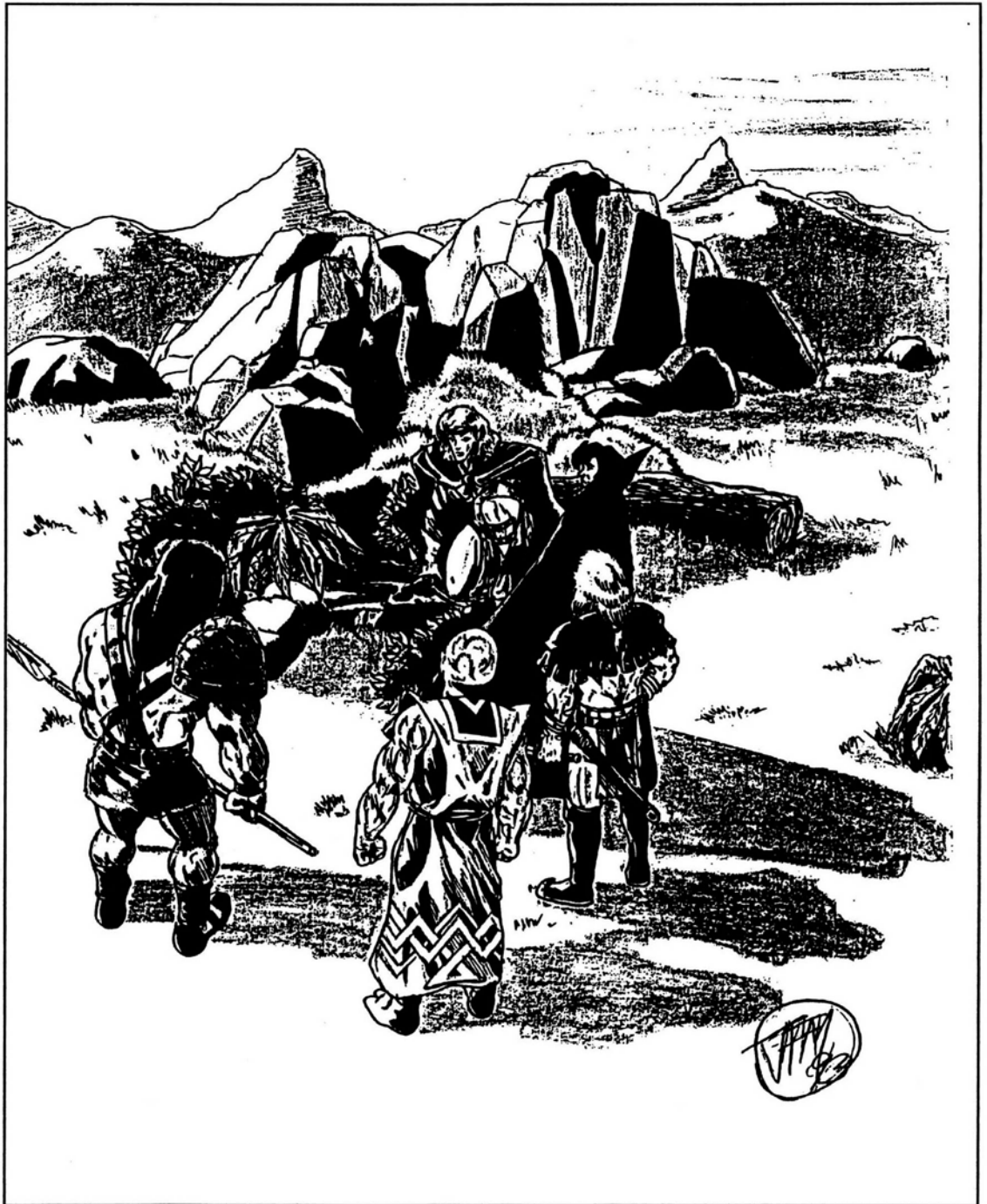
So, like I said, we were hunting and a hare I chased under a thicket led me to a flash of orange. The tiny orichalcum coin was no bigger than the nail on my little finger and was covered in writing neither of us recognized. Nobody mints orichalcum anymore which meant it had to be really old and, of course, really valuable.

Sanjia went to get the rest of our group while I cleared out the underbrush. I have no idea why she made so much fuss over one little coin but, by the time she returned with the others, I'd uncovered what looked like part of an entrance to a Kaer.

It wasn't much more than a hole; barely big enough for an elf to squeeze through or maybe a human. There was no way we were going to

get our troll or obsidiman through it and I wasn't too sure about myself.

Some folks might think the heroic thing would have been to immediately widen that hole in the hopes of freeing the poor people who didn't yet realize that the Scourge had been over for a hundred years or looting the treasures of a lost civilization. To be honest, sometimes, there's really not much difference between heroism and stupidity. A lot of your really heroic deeds were stupid ideas that worked. Of course, that's just the way I see things.



Unopened Kaers are a dangerous business. There's no telling what you might find and it's usually not a village full of people ready to shower gifts on you for helping them into the sunlight or a tomb with its jewels laid out for the taking. More often than not, its only occupant is the Horror that decimated the population and is looking for its next meal and you and your group look really tasty.

So we sat and we talked. We never want to deal with Horrors we don't know anything about if we don't have to. Anything powerful enough to lay waste entire cities isn't something you wake up one morning and decide to kill. Any adventurer who disagrees might as well tattoo 'Horror food' on their forehead.

It's not like the five of us haven't dealt with Horrors before. All of us are Adepts. The troll, Druhl, is a skyraider and as big and strong as they come. He's got a knack for turning stupidity into heroism. The obsidman, Onaruun is an elemental. There's an odd race for you. He or she or whatever spends most of his time asking questions about why we do what we do, most of which have to do with what he calls courtship and mating rituals. The human, Nathan is a nethermancer and as creepy as are all I've met who follow that art. Don't travel with a nethermancer if you don't have a strong stomach. Then there's Sanjia, who is just too much of an optimist, and me.

Nathan spoke first and said that he'd be interested in seeing the aftermath of a Horror's work. Sanjia insisted there might still be people there and they might all still be fine and would need to know that the Scourge was over. Onaruun was interested in the knowledge we could gain and Druhl was all for complete plunder. Me? Well, I usually wait until they've said all the important stuff and have started arguing over details and then I stop them and lay out my plan which we usually follow. Guess that makes me the leader.

I was about to do that when I noticed something I hadn't seen before. Someone had squirmed through that little opening to the Kaer recently and hadn't come back out. That meant there was another way out or that someone was still there somewhere. So, I pointed that out and told them we'd better get going if we were going to get anything done before sunset.

After we cleared out a troll and obsidman sized opening, Nathan looked down and told us that there was some type of magic still active. If that meant that the seal was still intact, Sanjia just might be right about there being people there. Of course it could be one of any number of deadly magical defenses that had outlived its creators.

Sanjia and I went first. The dirt was loose which made the footing treacherous. We ended up tumbling and then sliding out of control. Sanjia reached out to me. I know she was trying for some security but I shoved her away. The last thing I wanted was to land on her.

Suddenly, we stopped, but instead of hitting solid ground, we were floating in the air with nothing but darkness underneath us. Magic lowered us gently until our feet touched the ground and then released us. Our only light was from the entrance which seemed like it was miles above us.

Sanjia lit a torch and I hollered our position up to the

others. They made one try at sending down a rope, but it floated above us, way out of our reach. Whatever the magic was, it looked like a one way trip. Magic can be really annoying that way.

Sanjia ran her hands over the huge Kaer door. The orichalcum plug was still in place and the runes, though worn with age, still stood out clearly. Those are both pretty good signs. Just as she was wondering out loud if Nathan could read them, he landed behind her looking really unhappy. I figured him being next hadn't really been his idea. He stood in the light of Sanjia's torch and traced the carvings with his fingers. He said it looked like some type of magic to keep the Kaer safe from Horrors.

Onaruun and Druhl followed, the magic making even their landings soft. The troll tested the orichalcum plug while the obsidman also examined the runes and said that they were designed to ward off Horrors. Of course, I could have figured that out for myself. What else would you put outside a Kaer?

Druhl was still pulling on the plug which showed no sign of moving. Of course, if it was that easy, fewer Kaers would have survived. The others were still concentrating on the runes.

I didn't forget that someone had been there before us, someone whose footsteps were being obscured as we wandered around kicking up the dust. Luckily for me, it only takes one clear print and I found one off on the side. I was just about to use my tracking magic when I noticed the crack.

More than a crack, really. It was a fissure wide enough for Onaruun to fit through and high enough for Druhl. By the looks of it, it had happened many years ago.

Onaruun examined it over my shoulder and said that these cracks happen naturally when the rock shifts and that there was nothing evil or even magical about it.

Maybe not, but it's just like inviting a Horror for dinner.

By flickering torchlight, we entered the crack. The smell hit us first. It was the musty smell of age mixed with something else. Something familiar and horrible and you aren't sure what and you really don't want to find out. It seeps in through your nose and soon is all you can smell.

I kept waiting for the bodies. Every time the torchlight flickered, I expected to see something vile slide out from the shadows or to hear a scream from one of those behind me and see nothing. It was a creepy, horrible feeling that turns your fingers to ice, while the rest of your body shakes. Any adventurer who tells you they've never been scared is either lying or has never been on an adventure. That place was just plain bad.

We finally reached the inside of the Kaer and nothing happened. I wondered about the source of the smell. The rubbish heap where we climbed out had its own brand of stench, but it was nothing like what we'd experienced on our way there.

I could see people moving in the village. They seemed to be going about daily tasks just as normally as anywhere else. Perhaps some poor soul had gone exploring and died down there. Maybe no Horror had found this place after all.

Yeah, and maybe I'll win an elven beauty contest.

We stayed out of sight. There was no sense in spooking the villagers. We figured living penned up for your entire life is bound to make you pretty paranoid.

We made our way toward the sealed opening, hoping that showing up there would be less threatening. It was a good plan, I suppose, except for the child whose ball bounced right at my feet. His scream echoed through the entire Kaer.

With arms and hands clear of our weapons, we walked openly toward the center of town. I usually prefer the direct approach anyway. Villagers fled, locking themselves in their

band of children. Ten of them surrounded us, brandishing long, poles with blades in trembling hands. The terror in their eyes showed even under full helmets.

Still, we kept our hands out, showed no resistance and made no threatening gestures while Sanjia tried to tell them we meant them no harm.

Someone said, 'Clever words, Horrors, but we have seen your kind before.'

Ever hear a voice that is so arrogant, so self important, that all you want to do is just slice that person into little bitty pieces? Maybe it's just me.

The voice belonged to a human who looked just barely old enough to be called man instead of boy. Beside him stood an elven woman with a warbow carved with runes. Everything about her branded her Adept and she had that look of one of the ancient elves, like before they went off and got that stupid thorn idea.

Sanjia said, 'We aren't Horrors. We've come to tell you that the Scourge is over.'

The human scowled and glared at Onaruun and Druhl and said, 'You bring these abominations with you and claim you're not Horrors?'

Then he waved at the elf and said, 'Ratania, tell me, are these who stand before us what they claim or Horrors?'

The elf refused to look at us, but what I saw in her eyes made me sure that she knew she was lying when she told him yes.

'Take them,' the boy said.

Sanjia made one last attempt. Or at least I think she did. She shouted something off in that fruity elven language. The elf's reply was one word and then she left as the militia fell upon us with a strength born of utter terror and, since we weren't resisting, it was over pretty quickly and more than a little painfully.

Our cell was a cave with bars over the entrance. Four guards stood nervously outside it. I wondered what they'd done to earn Horror duty.

We were also not alone in our cell. There was human man who looked as though he'd gotten a worse case of the treatment we'd gotten. Like us, he had no weapons, and was pretty badly beaten up. I figured he had to be the unlucky one that had arrived before us.



houses, barring doors and windows. You'd have thought we were all Horrors, the way they behaved.

Nathan chuckled under his breath as if he, alone had been responsible for their terror. When he does that kind of thing, I really feel the urge to put my fist into his face, but I get over it.

Then the militia arrived. They were like a half trained

Our biggest concern now was getting out without injuring the guards. They didn't want to be down here any more than we did. Besides, it wasn't their fault that their leader was a... uh, never mind. Don't want you writing that down.

Where was I? Oh yeah, we needed to get rid of the guards. Nathan volunteered, giving us his best creepy look. He went over to the bars and just stared at them.

One by one, they fled in terror of Nathan's favorite spell until we were alone and the nethermancer stood by the door looking way too pleased with himself.

The man in the corner perked up. After taking a quick look to make sure the guards were gone, he pushed his way to the door, muttering apologies and popped the lock open in seconds.

Now, I'm not in the habit of traveling with thieves, but they sure can come in handy.

There were no guards at the top of the stairs. The halls were empty. In fact, we didn't see anyone until Ratania herself came walking toward us. She said, 'It took you less time than I thought to escape. I was just coming to help you.'

I wanted to tell her that we wouldn't have had to escape if she hadn't had us captured in the first place, but something in the way Sanjia looked at her made me keep my mouth shut. I figured I'd let her do the talking as long as it stayed in a language I understood.

'Why didn't you tell the truth?' she asked.

The elf sighed. 'I couldn't, not then, not to him. I couldn't let him think that I knew you were any different than the others.'

She kept her eyes on Sanjia. 'My sister, Arelia, had eyes like yours.'

Sanjia's voice was quiet. 'My great, great grandmother's name was Arelia.'

Ratania looked as if she wanted to cry but just gasped. 'Passions help me.'

Maybe it's just me, but I didn't really think it was the time or the place to be having a tearful family reunion and told them so.

Then, Ratania told us what was going on.

Seems that about 200 years ago, a Horror found that crack. Ratania called it Dread Thought. She and the few other Kaer adepts went to kill it. Each time they thought it was dead, usually at the cost of one or more of their number, it would return as strong as before.

It took over the minds of the ruling family and convinced them that the magic protecting the Kaer was fading and could only be made stronger by blood magic requiring a ritual sacrifice once every several days.

Of course, the remaining Adepts were the first to be killed. They were accused of being Horror spawned and their own people gladly put them to death. Anyone showing sign of any magical ability was immediately branded Horror marked and led up to the sacrificial tower. Dread Thought fed on the despair of the people as much as it feasted on their blood.

Once the Scourge was over, adventurers, brigands and thieves who discovered the fissure and came, as we did to explore the Kaer and set its folk free, were proclaimed Horrors. Their claims that the Scourge was over was used

as an argument against them, that the Horror who controlled them was trying to trick the village into leaving the safety of the Kaer. Their blood joined that of the villagers that had fed Dread Thought for so long.

I was just starting to wonder what her part in all this was when she said she aided Dread Thought. She helped the ruling family as she helps Ranok, the boy lord destroy the people's hopes and murder strangers as well as her own people. She said it was the only way she could survive and someone had to. Someone who could learn.

For two hundred years, she had stood by and hoped that a group like us would come and do what she couldn't do alone.

Her eyes filled with tears. 'I had to live. I had to learn what I could about Dread Thought so I could help...'

Lucky for her, she'd convinced Sanjia because I was running out of sympathy.

Then, Onaruun says, 'I fail to understand. You allowed these atrocities to go on and did not fight it?'

I'd been about to ask the same question.

Ratania's eyes burned when she told him, 'I am fighting the Horror. I have been for 200 years. I'm fighting it right now. If it knew what I'm doing...'

She shook her head and stood tall, saying, 'What I've done is not what matters now. What matters now is what we can do to free my people. I know now that part of Dread Thought's powers come from a red crystal. I don't know where it is exactly, but I'm sure that if you destroy that crystal, you'll be able to do what I and my companions could not: destroy Dread Thought.'

Now, I don't know what it's like to watch your own people killed for 200 years. I don't know what it's like to watch them live every day in terror. All I do know is that life is too short to stand around arguing over who did what when there's a Horror to be killed and a village full of people who have never seen the sun.

'Come on,' I told them. 'Lets get our stuff and go.'

Ratania met my eyes for the first time. There was something like hope in them. 'Be careful,' she told me, 'Dread Thought has powers that warp the mind. Things may not be as they seem.'

Then, quietly, she led us to where our weapons and supplies lay in the store room of the boy-lord's house.

Back we went into the fissure that had let the Horror into the Kaer. Now, there was a name to that fear that had gripped us as we'd entered: Dread Thought.

We nearly missed the entrance. Ratania had been correct about its powers of deception. That entrance looked to me as much a part of the walls as any other, but, once Nathan walked through it, how could I doubt? Still, I had to close my eyes to follow.

The smell was much worse on the other side of the illusion. It was the unmistakable smell of blood.

The passage was rough hewn and damp. Moisture hung in the air and clung to the walls like a hot day in the jungle. It's as if the water hangs in the air, waiting for something to cling to. It took no time for my hair, skin, and clothing to be covered in tiny wet droplets.

Up ahead, we heard a steady, slow dripping sound. As we went on, it grew louder and louder until the passage opened up to a cavern lit only by a brownish glow coming from what looked like an upside down glass dome. It didn't take long to realize that the glow was brown because the bowl was full of blood, and we were standing beneath the sacrificial tower.

There was a hole in the bowl that let one drop at a time through. The blood ran down a heavy iron chain to drip into a huge pool beneath it. The pool had to be ten trolls wide and was surrounded by the bones of two hundred years worth of victims.

I can't describe the feeling when I realized just what we were looking at. It certainly wasn't a burning desire to meet whatever it was that had created this cave of carnage. I steadied myself against a wall and when I pulled my hand away, it came back red. Those droplets that were clinging to my clothing and my hair were blood and it was everywhere. It was in the air and so even in our lungs.

If ever there was a Horror's lair, this was one. It reeked of blood, fear and death. A Horror's paradise.

Onaruun stepped forward, his face in one of those contemplative looks he gets every once in awhile. 'I want to try something,' he said. He reached a hand toward the pool of blood and then touched the vile substance to his lips. Either Onaruun is more brave than I ever would have believed, or he has an unrealistic view of his own mortality.

Anyway, he touched the blood again, muttering under his breath and, for a moment, a small area turned pink, swirled, and then was gone. 'What did you do?' I had to ask.

'I wanted to see what would happen if I purified the blood.

The magic is very strong so I wasn't able to affect much, but it was interesting.'

Deep inside the Horror's lair, the obsidian wants to see what happens when he messes with its stuff. Remember that mortality part?

Now, this is what happens when you anger a Horror.

The bones around the pool began to rattle and then were pulled in. They were drawn to the center of the pool and then formed into a moving mass of bone and blood.

There, in the center of the pool it stood, twice as tall as Druhl and twice as wide as Onaruun. Bones formed eyes, nose and mouth and made up a frame filled with oozing, half jellied blood.

Now, standing on the shore five troll lengths away, there wasn't much I could do. I am, after all, a close fighter. I prefer to look my enemy in the eyes and feel their dying breath on my face. Druhl, however, in one of the most brave or most foolish things I have ever seen, leapt across the center of the pool and through the Horror; polearm first. Yes, I said through. He jumped in one side and came out the other, covered in Horror fouled blood.

Sanjia fired her bow, Nathan and Onaruun cast spells and I even tried a crossbow shot but I was more concerned with what Ratania had told us about the Horror's crystal and spent most of my energy looking around for some sign of it but it was nowhere to be seen.

The thief apparently decided that it must be in the blood pool because he had Druhl toss him in and dove to the bottom. Now, that isn't a job you could have forced me into at swordpoint, let alone have me volunteer. Anyway, he came to the surface covered in blood and holding a large crystal in his hand. He tossed it to Onaruun who smashed it on the rocks.

The Horror screamed and fell apart.

Then it was quiet. The entire room was still except for



the steady drip of the blood from the chain. I don't know if any of us really believed it could be over that quickly. Onaruun got that expression on his face again and said, 'Something about this is not right.'

And then we hear, 'Dread Thought is not dead. I am still his captive.'

Ratania stood in the entrance to the cave, looking truly like the Adept she was. 'Show yourself, demon!' she cried. 'I am through being your prisoner.'

The bones gathered again as the Horror reformed and said, 'I no longer need you, Elf. I have plenty here who would serve me just as well.'

Now, I'm sure you've heard all the stories about heroes and how they wait for the Horror to make its final threats before they do anything. Well, I'm more practical than that. Whether or not Ratania was around, she hadn't been able to kill the thing in two hundred years and we still didn't know where the crystal was. So, while the Horror was going on about its servant, I had Druhl toss me out to the chain. I caught myself just above the Horror's head and started to climb.

That doesn't mean I wasn't paying attention.

Ratania fired one bright shot out of that bow of hers and the Horror screamed. 'Foolish elf! If you no longer wish to serve me, then I will take back what I gave to you.'

It was Ratania's turn to scream. Apparently, her gift had been long life because she aged before our eyes and was nothing more than a pile of dust under armor and bow in less time than it takes to tell it. The Horror laughed and gave us a choice. We could have her gift or her fate.

Personally, I'd rather have my skin peeled of layer by layer than submit to any kind of slavery. It doesn't matter if it's a Horror or Therans. (S'cuse me while I spit) So there was no doubt in my mind what my choice would be.

Sanjia ran to where Ratania had been, shouting at Dread Thought in elvish which is too bad since cursing in elvish still sounds like love poetry.

As Sanjia picked up the bow, a silvery form that vaguely resembled the fallen archer arose from the dust. It hovered over the remains and said, 'Yes, I see it so much more clearly now.'

It drifted over Sanjia. Silvery arms embraced her arms and a halo of silvery hair framed her face. She stood up, much taller than normal. With an unearthly grace, she drew back the bowstring and took aim with an arrow that was pure light which was something I'd never seen her do before.

For the first time, Dread Thought looked worried. I was a little worried too because it looked for all the world like she was aiming at me.

The Horror laughed as the first shot went wide, but the second struck the end of the chain, you know, the one I was hanging from, and there was a shattering sound. Shards of something I would swear had never been there dropped into the pool.

I never did see what shattered but it wasn't hard to figure out because this time, the Horror's scream was genuine. Its body became more solid and there was muscle and some decaying flesh on the bones.

It howled at Sanjia, 'You fools! I will destroy you all!'

Those are the words which tell you a Horror is in trouble, is done playing with its food and is coming for the kill.

Having something solid to concentrate on within my reach was a benefit, although it is not easy to attack while trying to hold on to a slippery chain. It didn't stop me from doing it, it just made it harder. No one said this kind of life is easy.

The Horror's arms grew long enough to reach any corner of the room. It reached for Sanjia first and she ducked away. Druhl waded into the blood pool and tried slashing at the body. Onaruun cast darts of earth at it and Nathan ducked and concentrated hard. He brought his head up in triumph as the Horror began to gyrate wildly.

Now, I've seen Nathan do this to people and animals, but I never thought he had the power to make a Horror dance.

That was signal enough and just the break we needed. Onaruun abandoned his magic and picked up a staff, I slashed at its head with one hand and clung to the chain with the other, Druhl stood up to his waist in the blood pool hacking away, and Sanjia shot arrow after gleaming arrow into the mess.

And though troubadours like to make it sound like one final blow from the great hero fells the foul fiend, if truth be told, it was all of us, working together, that finally destroyed Dread Thought.

Unfortunately for me, when the Horror died, I discovered that it was magic and not glass holding the blood pool above us and, with the Horror gone, so was the magic and the red waterfall cascaded down on me. There are few things I have experienced as disgusting as that flood of Horror tainted blood.

But it was over. Druhl lay near death. Sanjia had sunk to her knees, Ratania's bow still clenched in her hands and all evidence of that ghostly presence gone. Nathan stood with his back pressed close against the wall. Onaruun surveyed the mess in the lair and the thief and I did what we could to clean off the worst of the blood.

Then, slowly, we picked ourselves up and dragged Druhl back into town.

Tired, injured and covered with blood, I was in no mood for an unpleasant reception. The residents fled from us again and this time, so did the militia. Of course, we must have looked a pretty vile sight, plodding along the street dragging Druhl and covered in blood, especially since the last they'd heard, we were Horrors. Guess we looked the part, right then.

The leader child, Ranok showed up with two very unhappy looking guards. 'Stop those Horrors!' he cried.

His men exchanged glances. Now, if I'd been a half trained militiaman facing five angry, battle-bloodied Adepts, I'd have done the same thing they did. One of them put down his weapon and ran. The other one followed on his heels.

That was when Sanjia said it was over. The Horror was dead and the people were free. She made sure to add that Ratania had given her life for their freedom.

Sometimes, Sanjia is just too nice. Guess she'd figured he's been under the Horror's control and would be happy that

we'd ended his little tyranny.

The boy smiled and said, 'Good enough. With Dread Thought dead, that makes me undisputed leader.'

The kid moved up from needing a good spanking to needing a good beating. 'Look,' I told him. 'We're in no mood to argue about this. You've lied to these people long enough. You can stay here if you want, but we're leading the others out.'

He smiled again. A look that I'd have sworn was Horror influenced except that I knew the Horror was dead. 'Anger me and you will never leave.'

I opened my mouth to say something and then closed it. We could easily go back out the way we came in, but we already knew there was no way back up to the surface.

The kid's smile got bigger. 'You were saying...'

I could see the anger in my companions' faces. Sanjia's knuckles were white around Ratania's bow, Nathan was muttering to himself and even Onaruun's fists were clenched. The thief was missing, but that was no big surprise.

'Wait,' Onaruun said. 'I fail to understand why you still wish to keep your people prisoner. The Scourge is over. They should be free to live upon the rock instead of within it.'

Yup, Onaruun just failed to understand that kid was clinging to his last little bit of power. If he let his people free, they'd know what he'd done and likely tear him apart... something I'd pay money to see.

So I told him, 'It's only a matter of time. Sooner or later, they'll figure it out.'

'But no one leaves unless I say so,' he cried.

The thief was suddenly with us again, almost as if he'd never left. He tugged on Sanjia's sleeve and said, 'Excuse me, lovely lady, but I think this might come in handy.'

As the orichalcum key dropped into her palm, the kid's mouth dropped to the floor. It even took him a little while to gain his composure enough to demand to know where he'd gotten that key.

The thief shrugged and said, 'Divine inspiration.'

Like I said, I don't make it a habit to travel with them, but once in awhile...

It took several booster potions before Druhl was feeling better... well enough, in fact, to climb up to the top of the sacrificial tower and drop the kid down into the Horror's blood pool.

The villagers were starting to gather around. Rumors of what had happened were already spreading and you could almost feel the fear fading.

A crowd followed us to the gate. Sanjia's trembling hands fitted the key into a slot on this side of the orichalcum plug and the door swung open. A ramp extended up to the surface and the setting sun cast orange light for the first time on the villagers.

What? You look like you've never seen ork tears before.



Listen, scribe, when you've been there, when you've watched people see things we take as natural for the first time and have helped them and their children out into a world that is as strange to them as it is familiar to us, you can't look at things the same way. It's something you never forget.

Life's too short to hold back your tears."

ON DINGANNI SPIRITUALISM

BY BRIAN MCCALLISTER

Preface

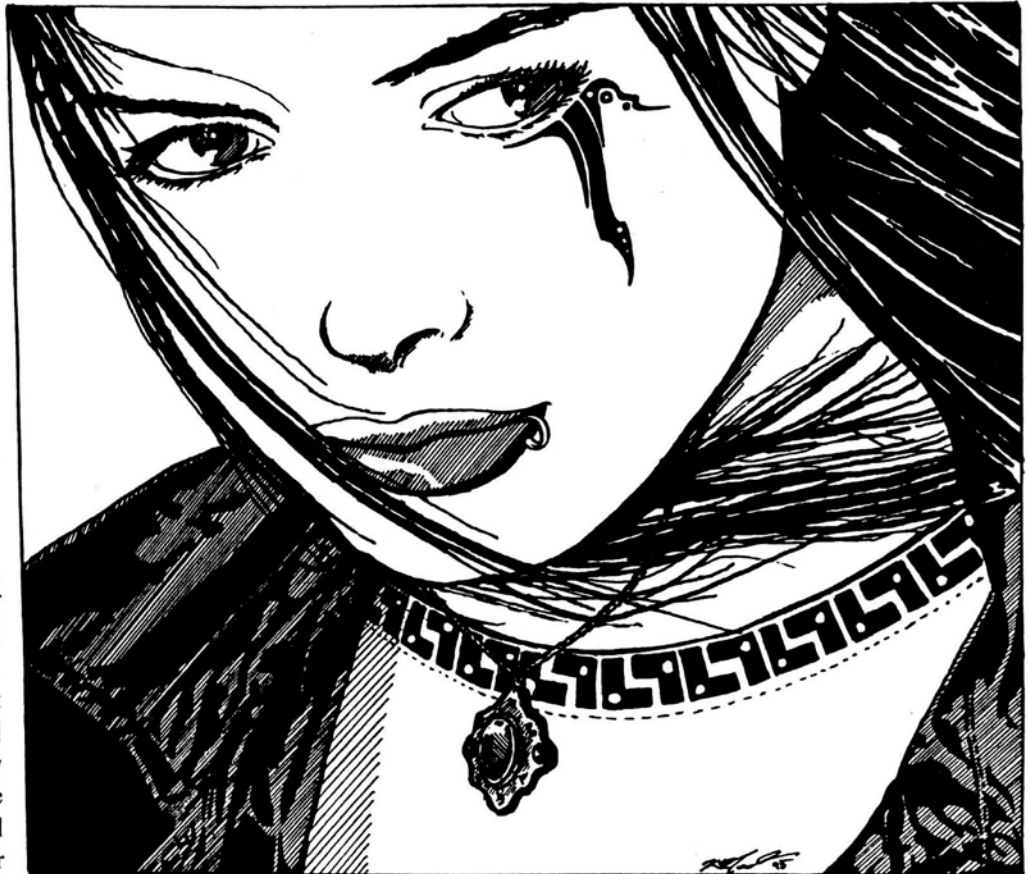
The Dinganni are a very strong part of the human population of Barsaive. While not numerically important, these people have a strikingly different spiritual view than most other Name-givers I have encountered.

First of all, the Dinganni live in a definite cosmology. By cosmology I mean a living, interacting universe. Barsaive is not a place where the Dinganni live. They do not ride on the plains and travel after herds and water. They are a part of Barsaive. The Dinganni are a river. Water moves in a river from one place to another. The river alters the land it passes through, and the land alters the river. The Dinganni are a part of the world, not beings that exist within the world. This point is vitally important to understanding the Dinganni. Most of Barsaive, and certainly Thera and the Elves of Wyrnwood, believe their Namegiver status puts them at a higher level than most of the life around them. The Dinganni do not believe this. They are the same as any other thing, living or dead in the environment, they just serve a different role. They name things and add to the Great Pattern.

The Scourge served to shift much of the focus of Dinganni spiritualism from the Great Pattern to kinship. The Dinganni were not known as the Dinganni before the Scourge, but by the word in their language for People. However, I will refer to them as Dinganni for simplicity. By themselves the Dinganni people before the Scourge could not have possibly survived the coming of Horrors. They were widespread, and often fought each other. There were definite bonds between the people as a whole, but the individual clans took precedence to a level where blood feuds could erupt between clans. With the coming of the Scourge the Dinganni were forced to work for surrounding people for protection. The Dinganni were a warrior culture, they traded this for protection from Horrors. The Dinganni grew separate in the years before the Scourge, especially

considering this was over the course of several human generations. Children were born and raised not knowing any other clan but their own. The clans separated in order to survive. Some hired their warriors out as mercenaries. This is one way in which the Dinganni grew to hate the Riders of the Scorched Plain. One clan, Deep Lodge, or Dark Lodge, the word translates to either, actually moved north of the Serpent River and traded their skills against the Riders to earn a place in a Kaer.

Another clan, the Silver Mane, all but died out before the Scourge when the clans separated. As their numbers dwindled one, Dim Stars, had a dream. He dreamt that silver stars fell out of the sky, leaving it empty of lights. As they fell they landed among embers. When the stars fell they



rekindled the embers and fire sprung anew. The fires grew and spread across the plains until all the plains burned from the fires of the different embers, rekindled from the falling stars. Dim Stars was an Elder in his dying clan, and counseled that all of the people of the Silver Manes were to master the history and myths of the Dinganni, then separate and live with the other clans in the coming Scourge. The Silver Manes spread out and went in to the Kaers with all the other clans, all but one.

The Silver Manes sought to continue the culture of the

Dinganni. The original Silver Manes all had died soon after the entering into the Kaers. The legacy had not. The tradition of setting aside historians and myth keepers had existed, but now it served a greater purpose. The Dinganni grew to feel a close kinship for all the people they never knew scattered under the ground all over Barsaive. These ties of Kinship caused the Dinganni to travel back to their old lands between Kratas and the Mist Swamps as they emerged from different Kaers. The Dinganni came together as a people and the clan structure lessened as effort was made to cross that and build the people to a united whole.

Dinganni feel kinship towards their people as a whole, but actual kin are especially important. You are not more important than any of your relatives. If a cousin admires your sword, you give the sword to that cousin. He deserves it, and the kin is far more important than anything physical.

The second basic concept is the Great Pattern. The Great Pattern is a source of energy that pervades everything in the universe. Everything has its place, and most things form a part of the pattern if just a tiny nexus. Named things have an entire tiny piece of the pattern themselves. Their piece meshes with the pattern around, then draws and lends power to and from it. This power is called halkan. Whenever energy is needed, it is lent through halkan. When a pattern is created halkan is drawn into that pattern, giving it form. This energy is not to be taken lightly, and can be very dangerous. It is power, it is numinous. In it is the potential for everything, good or bad.

All of Dinganni spiritualism draws from these two ideas.

Part I, the Five Rituals

Mourning

The Dinganni people practice a curious ritual of mourning, though for them it is not considered mourning. Everyone is a tiny piece of the Great Pattern and when someone passes who was, perhaps, a larger piece of the pattern, the Dinganni keep that person's part of the pattern alive and active. Halkan continues to flow through the pattern and the world doesn't leave the person. This ritual is referred to as Pattern Keeping.

I was lucky enough to meet a Dinganni who was in the process of keeping a pattern. He is in fact where I draw most of my knowledge of the Dinganni from.

When a person dies and someone believes that person to be especially important, as a friend, or a good worker, or a person especially espousing the ideals of life, the ritual of pattern keeping commences. One person chooses to be the Keeper. The keeper first divulges themselves of all their possessions. Everything is given away down to their last clothes. The one exception to this is thread items with a thread connecting them to the Keeper's pattern. These are considered a part of the Keeper's pattern. Standing naked the Keeper begins a ritual which is lead by another who has gone through it. Shadow Jar, my Dinganni friend, would not relate the details of the ritual. He said that the knowledge of it drew halkan from the ritual, and was unnecessary. If I were ever to desire to perform the ritual, it would be taught to me.

I do know that during the ritual the Keeper adds the deceased's name to their own. After the ritual the Keeper takes possession of all the deceased's material possessions. These are still the property of the deceased, who now has his pattern extended through the Keeper.

Also, during the name taking ceremony, a bundle is made for the deceased. The bundle contains items personal and representative of the deceased. I believe that it basically contains pattern items associated with the deceased. The Keeper keeps this bundle with him at all times for the remainder of the ritual.

For the next year the Keeper speaks for the deceased who's pattern is being kept. He represents that person, as well as himself. Having traveled with Shadow Jar as he underwent this ritual for his brother, I watched as his personal pattern changed. I can only assume that it drew to incorporate the deceased's name into the core of his true pattern. Shadow Jar said that the ritual keeps the best of the deceased alive in the Keeper.

At the end of the year, the best parts of the person being kept have become a part of the Keeper. As such the pattern may be released as the important things exist in the Keeper now.

The possessions of the deceased are all given away, and a feast is held by the relatives of the Keeper. At the feast goods are given to the Keeper to help him in his life. I have seen where Shadow Jar gave up the pattern he'd been carrying the nine months I'd known him. He was happy at the event for the essence of the pattern now lived in him. He ended up receiving gifts from all the Dinganni present. I personally think he was better off materially at the conclusion of the year long ritual than before.

Sinclair, Elven Troubadour

GM's notes.

What happens with this ritual is the Keeper takes the name of the deceased and adds it to his own. As the year passes the Keeper attempts to behave in a manner fitting the one being kept. As time passed the Keeper's pattern changes to incorporate the name and changes. It never matches the kept ones pattern, obviously, but a harmony of patterns develops.

Reward anyone completing this ritual with a nice dose of LP's. This ritual hurts, and is grueling to do correctly. The player must consciously try to think as the deceased would, as well as his own thoughts.

MORE ON ADVENTURE LOGS IN EARTHDOWN

BY AARON K. FUNK

In the Gamemaster Pack by FASA there is a section on adventuring logs and their place both in the game and the world of Earthdawn. In this short article I'd like to share the positive impact that a log has had on my game and how it could add to your own.

As partly stated in the GM pack an obvious and important use of a log is as an outlet for characterization. Here's how it works in my own game. The player whose character will be recording this session's events makes notes on the places, encounters, and settings. Then until the next session (we play once a week) the player has time to turn the notes into entries in the log. While sometimes there is a bland listing of happenings, often the player will take the time to embellish the report with their character's outlook and feelings on the subject. Sometimes this is simply a way for the shy or new players to add some initial depth while they get a feel for the game. It can also inspire them to flesh out their character's past by relating similar 'past experiences'.

There may also be uses for the log that you did not intend but are still beneficial. For example, the log is very valuable for new or potential players. I had a close friend who asked to read the log. She had never played ED and had no idea about the game. Here, entirely in story form, was an excellent example of the game. All at once she could get a general feel of the world, the characters, and even my GM style in what they had experienced. This is part of what makes the entire ED game so easily graspable. The rules and setting are almost inseparable, in a story-like format that has the books talking to you, not at you. Even if you have someone who knows they want to play, the log is a quick way to catch up on current events. So although their character does not know something, the player is not sitting there asking the other players who, what, and where every few minutes.

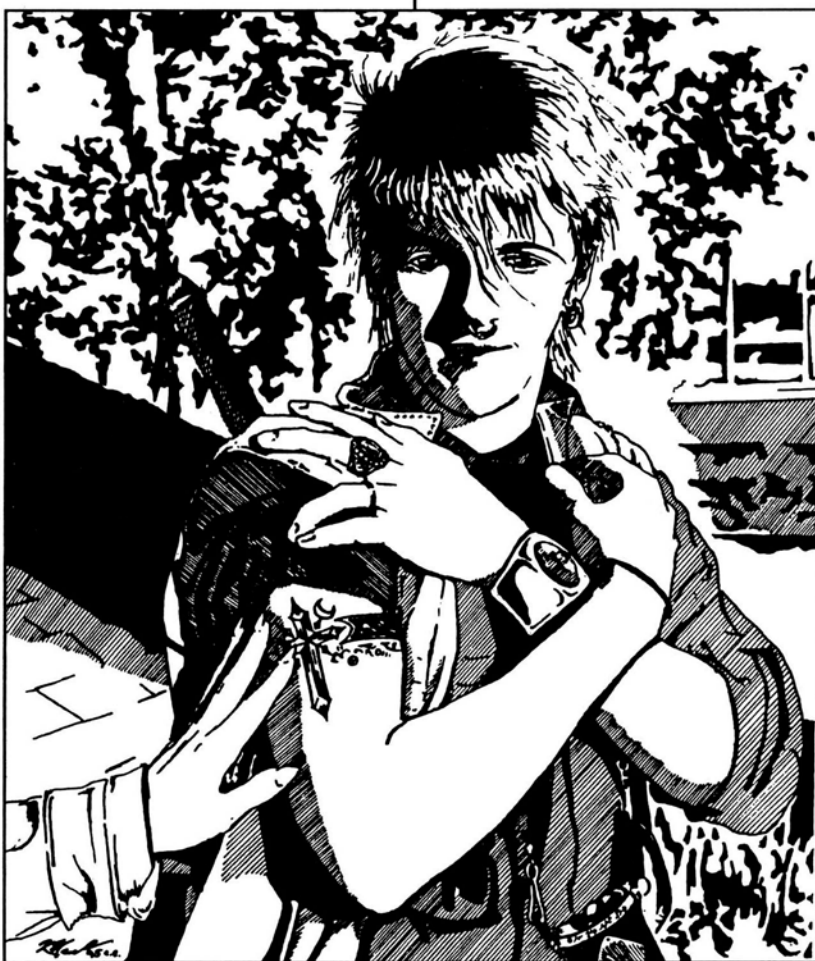
Another good use of the log, as stated in the GM pack, is its record keeping function. As the game goes along, I try to take copious notes of the important events, but who can say if an event will be important months or years later in game time? With both myself and the players keeping track of everything there is far less chance of forgetting an important date. In a world of blood magic and horror marks that remain for a year and a day this can be very vital to game and story. You can also go over old entries and make past events that seemed unimportant at the time into the signs of or starts of major plot elements in the future (read Roger Zelany's Amber series for many excellent examples of this).

One difficulty you may have though is getting your players to start a log.

The first solution you may want to try is explaining the logs place in the world of Earthdawn. As the GM pack states adventure logs are important to the fabric of society. The scholars want to learn more about the reclaimed world and common folk wish to hear their tales in this Age of Legend. A good roleplayer might be willing to keep a log at first only for this reason. The second solution is to cite the rules in the GM pack. They state the legend point and monetary rewards from the Kingdom of Throal once each game year for a log. There ought to be at least one player to take that bait. Whatever way you get a log started in your

game hopefully, they will soon see the many benefits of one and keep the log for those reasons as well.

Those are just the ways an adventure log has helped my ED game so far. Surely there are ways other games have benefited from one and benefits I have yet to discover myself. But still, adventure logs may not be for everyone. I do hope to be playing Earthdawn at a con or two and be able to swap logs around for fun. I hope to see yours there!



NIGHT OF DESIRE

BY DAVID CARALEY

Listnar wiped the perspiration from his brow. Usually, a person of Listnar's importance would not be found in an establishment such as Norina's House of Veils. He was an illusionist of great reknown and status, and the House of Veils was hardly the type of place one of his stature would frequent.

Still, Listnar could not help himself. He had come, as had most of the patrons, to see the new dancing sensation, a young lass named Philana. It was getting near the time for her next performance. Listnar could tell.

The crowd grew quiet as the musicians began to play. The light quartz lanterns began to dim as a beautiful raven haired maiden made her way out onto the stage. Listnar felt his heart start to pound as the lithe dancer moved with the music. The crowd gasped as the first of the silken veils fell to the floor.

Hours later found Listnar sitting in the tower he had managed to claim in the western district of Kratas. Thoughts of Philana filled his every waking moment, and he knew he would have to have her. No matter what it took.

PLOT SYNOPSIS

Lately a new dancing sensation has appeared in Kratas. A beautiful young woman by the name of Philana has been dancing at a tavern known as Norina's House of Veils. Her skill at dancing, coupled with her exotic appearance, has won her many admirers, and attendance at the House of Veils has skyrocketed.

Unfortunately for Philana, she has attracted the attention of an illusionist named Listnar. Though Philana dances for everyone in the audience, Listnar always believed that she was dancing for him. He has fallen madly in love with her, and believes that she must be equally in love with him, though maybe she hasn't realize it yet.

Recently Listnar has decided that he doesn't wish to wait for Philana to come to her senses. He has decided to have her abducted and brought to his tower so that he can help her realize how deep she cares for him.

Of course Norina, owner of the House of Veils, is upset. Philana was her star performer, bringing in the crowds that spent money on the drinks and dancers that kept the House of Veils going. The loss of Philana has crippled her business and Norina wants her back.

At this point, Norina hires the characters to find out what became of Philana, and to bring her back. She promises the

characters 100 silvers each if they can find the missing dancer and return her to the tavern.

A NIGHT ON THE TOWN

OVERVIEW

This encounter starts at Norina's House of Veils. The characters are out for a night of drinking and relaxing when they get to see Philana, the newest dancing sensation in Kratas.

This whole encounter should be used to set the stage for things to come. Allow the characters time to socialize, drink, and interact with the locals. Once they are relaxed, have one or more of them drawn into a good, old-fashioned bar fight. Every good set of heroes should get into at least one bar fight while adventuring.

During the bar fight Listnar will have his ruffians abduct Philana. This will not be noticed until it is time for her next performance and she is no where to be found.

SETTING THE STAGE

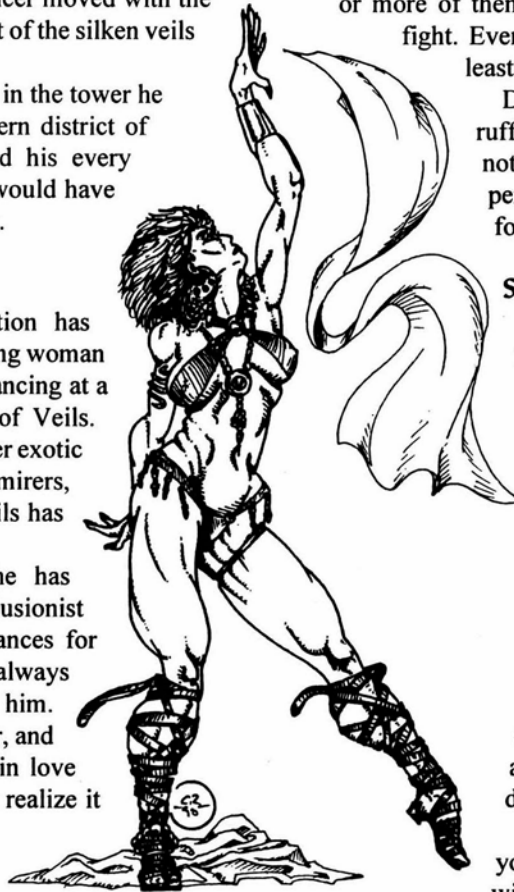
It has been quite some time since all of you have managed to get together and enjoy a night on the town. Kratas may not be the best of cities, but it certainly has more to offer than the small towns and villages you have been travelling through for the past few weeks.

After wandering through the streets and enjoying drinks at several taverns, you find yourself outside a two story building with a sign that reads House of Veils over a picture of a maiden's face smiling from behind a veil. By the sound of laughter and raucous music, and the amount of people crowding to get in, you decide that this must be a place to visit.

After managing to get inside, you find yourself in a comfortable tavern crowded with Namegivers of all shapes and sizes.

Three musicians are busy providing a beat for the two attractive dancers who are slowly removing various articles of clothes while moving seductively to the music. The crowd is cheering and whistling while barmaids move through distributing drinks.

The crowd applauds as the two dancers finish their routine and head offstage. The lights dim slightly as the music changes to a more romantic tone. The crowd grows quiet as a lone dancer takes the stage. She is a dark haired beauty with exotic eyes whose appearance takes your breath away.



She is layered in the finest silks and moves more seductively than you thought possible.

As you look around the crowd, you realize that the effect she is generating is universal. The men are staring, unable to take their eyes from her, as are some of the women. She continues dancing, removing pieces of silk, one at a time.

She finishes to thunderous applause, and coins are flung from the crowd. Not copper with the occasional silver, but silver with the occasional gold. The girl disappears from the stage, leaving the barmaids to gather the tips.

BEHIND THE SCENES

Philana retires to the dressing room to await her next performance. The characters can ask people in the crowd about her. Make anyone asking about the dancer roll a Charisma test, target of 5. A Poor success will insult the person being questioned, and the bar fight will start. A failure will get the response that the girl is a new dancer at the club. An Average success will get the answer that the dancer is named Philana, and she has been dancing at the tavern for the past month. An Excellent success gets the previous information and a drink bought out of fellowship.

During this time, a group of ruffians will start a bar fight to distract people from the kidnapping going on back stage. Read the following once the characters are relaxed and enjoying themselves:

A man in a torn leather tunic staggers into your table, spilling his drink on (fill in the character most likely to be annoyed). He looks at you and says, "You clumsy oaf! You made me spill my ale." With that, he takes a swing at you.

Make the character roll a Perception test with a target of 6 to avoid being taken by surprise. Once the fight starts, more ruffians will join in (up to 3 for every 2 characters) and the brawl will spread throughout the tavern. Let the brawl go for six rounds before the bouncers and what passes as the town watch in Kratas break up the fight. See Cast of Characters for the Ruffians' stats.

By the end of the fight Philana will have been kidnapped and taken to Listnar's tower. When it is time for her next performance Norina, the owner of the House of Veils, will take the stage. When that happens, read the following:

The crowd grows quiet once more as everyone gets ready for Philana's next performance. A sandy haired woman takes the stage, clears her throat, and begins to speak.

"Ladies and gentlemen, I'm afraid I have bad news. Philana seems to be missing. I think she has been abducted."

The crowd boos and moans at the news. Many of the patrons start to leave. The lady on stage looks upset. "Isn't there any heroes in the crowd? Heroes who would help a maiden in distress?"

Allow the characters to interact with Norina. If they wish to help, Norina will invite them backstage.

TROUBLESHOOTING

If the characters do not volunteer to help Norina, she will offer free drink passes for anyone willing to help. If the characters still refuse, they are out of the adventure.

BEHIND THE VEILS

OVERVIEW

The characters get taken backstage at the House of Veils. They will get to examine Philana's dressing room for clues. They should be able to figure out that she was taken by force, and will hopefully be able to find clues as to who did the kidnapping.

SETTING THE STAGE

You follow the maiden through the door leading to backstage. You pass a couple of the dancers in various states of undress. They smile and look you over as you go by. You get led to a small room that serves as an office. The maiden turns to you and says, "I am Norina, the owner of the House of Veils. I hope you can help me. The dancer who was abducted is named Philana. She is currently my main attraction, and I suspect foul play. Do you think you can help me?"

BEHIND THE SCENES

Norina is upset. Philana has been bringing in almost twice the normal amount of customers. She is willing to pay the characters with free passes to the tavern, and free drinks. If pressed, she is willing to pay the party 500 silvers. Once the bargaining is done, read the following:

"I am glad you are going to help me. It is difficult for a woman to run a successful business in Kratas. Many people want to control my tavern, and even me. Whoever took Philana may be trying to put me out of business. Let me take you to her dressing room, maybe you can find something that will help you. Then I will have to go back out and soothe the remaining customers."

With that, Norina stands up and takes you to Philana's dressing room. "I wish you the blessings of the Passions, my friends. For both Philana's and my sake." She then turns and heads back out to the tavern. The dressing room is small and crowded with a table set before a mirror, a chair, several trunks, and a few costumes hanging on pegs. The chair is lying on its side, and some of the costumes are scattered across the floor.

Characters can make Perception tests or Evidence Analysis tests against a target of 6. Success will allow the characters to recognize the fact that there was a struggle, and that Philana did not go willingly. A Good success will allow the characters to find traces of blood, and a piece of torn cloth with a symbol of a jagged edged dagger embroidered onto it.

A second Perception test, target of 6, will allow the character to remember that the ruffians in the bar fight had similar symbols on their tunics. A successful Streetwise test, target of 8, will remember that the symbol is worn by the Jagged Blades, a minor streetgang in Kratas.

Once the characters have examined the dressing room, they will have to decide what to do next. If they were unable to identify the symbol, they will have to ask around at the seedier bars in Kratas. This will require a Streetwise test or a Charisma test with a target of 8 every hour. For every 20

silvers spent while searching, add +1 step to the tests. Only one test is allowed per group of characters searching. If the characters split up, they will get to make more tests, but will be weaker if they get into trouble. Once successful, read the following:

The bartender at the Dead Crow looks you over. "Yeah, I know who the Jagged Blades are. They hang out in a run down tavern a few blocks from here called the Sealed Tomb. They're a rotten bunch, willing to do just about anything for a few silvers."

Allow the characters to gather and discuss the next course of action.

TROUBLESHOOTING

If the characters do not find the clues left in the dressing room, allow one of the other dancers to find the scrap of cloth, and let her bring it to the characters, asking if it is anything of importance. If the characters do not find out anything by dawn, let them catch a glimpse of a ruffian wearing the same symbol heading for the Sealed Tomb. The characters can follow him there.

THE SEALED TOMB

OVERVIEW

The characters track the ruffians to the Sealed Tomb, a tavern controlled by the Jagged Blades. Once there, they confront the gang and find out who hired them to abduct Philana and where she was taken. Once the characters have this information, they can head for Listnar's tower.

SETTING THE STAGE

After traveling down a side street and through a couple of alleys, you found it. A crumbling one story stone structure with the words The Sealed Tomb scrawled across the front wall in black paint. There is light coming from the broken windows and you can hear the sounds of talking and laughter coming from inside.

Once the characters go inside, read the following:

You see a dark room lit by sputtering torches. Several people look up from their drinks as you come in. They are in torn leather, and you can see the embroidered dagger on each of them. The bartender standing behind a rough wooden table holding a couple of casks and several dented pewter tankards look at you, frowns, and says, "I think you are in the wrong place."

BEHIND THE SCENES

There are eight ruffians sitting at the assorted tables. They are all armed with various blades, and regard this tavern as

theirs. If the characters can make a Charisma test with a target of 6, an Excellent success will get them to admit to taking Philana from the House of Veils and bringing her to an old stone tower owned by a spellcaster named Listnar. They will even tell the characters where the tower is. If the characters are unable to get an Excellent success, the ruffians will tell them nothing. A poor success will cause an immediate fight.

The only other way to get the information is to defeat the ruffians in combat. Once they are defeated, a Charisma test with a target of 6 will get the characters the information on a normal success.

Once the characters know the location of Listnar's tower, they can head there to recover Philana.



TROUBLESHOOTING

The only thing that can go wrong is if the characters are defeated by the ruffians. If it looks as if this is likely to happen, have some of the famous Kratas town watch (working for Garlthik One-Eye, of course) come by to break things up. Of course, the people being rescued will have to pay 10 silvers each to the town watch in order to compensate them for their services.

THE TOWER OF DESIRE

OVERVIEW

The characters arrive at Listnar's tower, make their way inside, confront Listnar, and rescue Philana. Once they have her, they can return to the House of Veils and collect their rewards.

SETTING THE STAGE

It has been a hectic night. There is still a little amount of time before dawn, and you are standing before a crumbling stone tower where you believe Philana was taken. You see no windows, but the upper floors and walls of the tower have long since collapsed. If it wasn't in Kratas, you wouldn't believe anyone lived there. Every now and then some sort of mysterious green light comes from the top of the tower. Rough stone steps lead up to the single wooden door at the base of the tower.

BEHIND THE SCENES

Listnar is trying to use his magic to bind Philana to him. The ritual will be completed at dawn, in which case Philana will be his, heart and soul.

1 Front Door - Rough stone steps lead up to an iron bound wooden door covered with runic writing of some sort scratched into it.

The door is locked, needing an 8 to open. The runes are written in magic, needing a 7 to read. They say, "The tower of Listnar the mighty". The door has a rating of 8/25.

2 Lower Floor - You see a room decorated with a beautiful rug, a nicely carved wooden table with four matching chairs, a large fireplace with embers still glowing, several cabinets, and shelves containing small carvings of animals. A stone staircase leads up to the floor above. A spark of light comes from under the table.

Underneath the table is Listnar's pet lightning lizard. He raised it from the egg and uses it as a guard dog. Once the characters have entered, it will cover itself in the Crackling Armor (the spark of light under the table) and attack.

Lightning Lizard

See *Earthdown Basic Book*, p. 306, for stats.

Once the characters have defeated the lightning lizard, they can continue. The cabinets have food stuff, plates, tankards, and several bottles of wine. The small animal statues were carved by Listnar and have little value (maybe 5 silvers each). Of course, things may be on fire if the lightning lizard has missed anyone with the Twinbolts. If this happens, make things seem rushed as the characters try to complete the rescue before the old tower burns down and collapses.

2 The Stairs - You can see the old stone stairs leading up to the floor above. You can hear some sort of chanting coming from above.

Listnar has placed an Alarm spell on the stairs, the Effect number is 12. Anyone going up the stairs with a Spell Defense equal to or less than 12 will trigger the alarm. It will start shouting "Begone, intruders, begone. This is the tower of Listnar the Mighty." This will prevent Listnar from being surprised. (As if he didn't notice the characters fighting the Lightning Lizard...)

3 Second Floor - As you reach the second floor you see a chamber fit for a king. The ornate king-sized bed is covered with satin, and tied to the four posts is the almost naked form of Philana. Glaring at you from behind the bed is a black haired man wearing robes covered with arcane embroidery. His eyes look wild as he releases a bolt of greenish magical energy at you.

The man behind the bed is the illusionist Listnar. He is almost finished binding Philana to himself, and is very annoyed that the characters are disturbing his plans. He has already cast Displaced Image on himself and will Ephemeral Bolt the first person up the stairs. To sense the Displaced Image a character has to make a Willpower test with a target of 15. Any successful attack on the image gives the attacker an immediate Disbelief test with a target of 7. Success will reveal Listnar's true location in the corner of the room. Once he is discovered, Listnar will plead for his life. He is more concerned with living than he is with keeping Philana.

Commentary: Listnar is an overly proud, self-important spellcaster who believes that he is destined for greatness. However, his main interest is in keeping alive and he will always surrender before being put to death. If he believes that his opponents will not spare him, he will use his Dead Fall talent against the highest Spell Defense of any character who sees him. Of course, he will try for vengeance at a later date. He will then use his Nobody Here spell.

Once Listnar is defeated, the characters can rescue Philana. If they believe Listnar is dead, they can search the tower.

In the room there is the bed, a desk, bookshelves, a trunk, and a wardrobe. The desk has writing supplies, paper, and an ivory letter opener (worth 25 silvers). The bookshelves have various books on art, romance, and adventure. The trunk is locked (needing a 7 to open). Inside is Listnar's Spell Book, 2 Healing Potions, a bag with 25 gold pieces, and a small box with a single diamond (worth 500 silvers). The wardrobe has extra robes, boots, clothes, and a Dwarven Winternight Cloak.

There is little of value in the tower, and most of the furniture is old and worn, covered by Glamour to appear beautiful and exotic. Listnar is usually too afraid to adventure and has nothing in the way of magical items.

Philana will be grateful for being rescued. Let each male character make a Charisma test against her Social Defense of 9. The character with the best result will be the one she feels most grateful to. On a Good result or better a character may start a romantic liaison with her.

TROUBLESHOOTING

The only thing that can go wrong is if they are defeated by Listnar. If that happens, Listnar will marry the beautiful Philana, and the characters' legends will be over. Such is the peril of being heroes.

If at all possible, let Listnar escape with his life. He will Dead Fall using his Karma, thus projecting an illusion of his own death. He is the major antagonist in the upcoming Days of Vengeance.

BACK TO THE HOUSE OF VEILS

Creative Roleplaying

Rescuing Philana with no thought of reward 75 points
Other actions at the Game Master's discretion 75 points

OVERVIEW

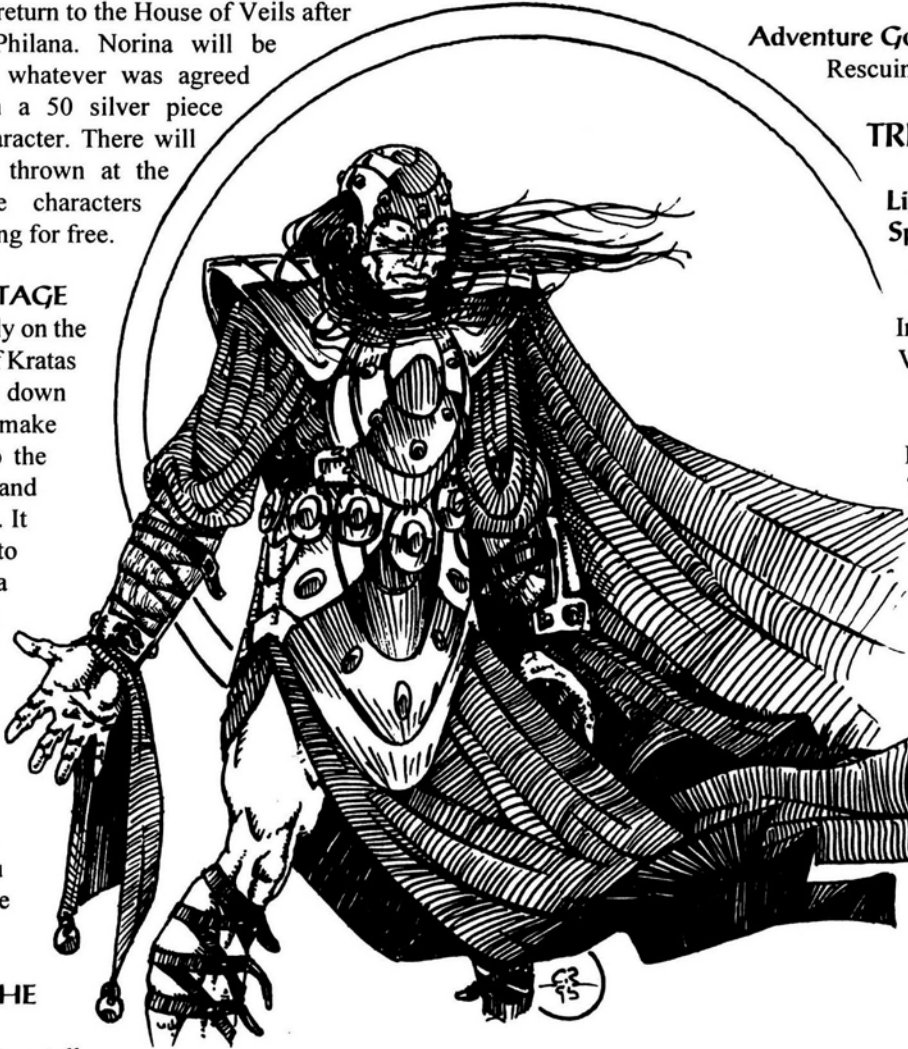
The characters return to the House of Veils after having rescued Philana. Norina will be grateful and pay whatever was agreed upon, along with a 50 silver piece bonus to each character. There will be a large party thrown at the tavern, with the characters treated to everything for free.

Adventure Goal

Rescuing Philana 150 points

SETTING THE STAGE

The sun is finally on the rise, and the city of Kratas is starting to close down for the day. You make your way back to the House of Veils and knock on the door. It swings open to reveal Norina dressed in silk bedclothes. She lets out a shriek and hugs Philana to her. "Come in, come in. Let me get you something to eat. Tell me how you managed to rescue her?"



TREASURE

Listnar the Mighty's Spell Book

Circle 1 Spells

Best Face, Displace Image, Light, Unseen Voices

Circle 2 Spells

Epheneral Bolt, Monstrous Mantle, True Epheneral Bolt, Weather Cloak

Circle 3 Spells

Alarm, Mind Fog, Nobody Here

Circle 4 Spells

Improved Alarm, Stop Right There

Circle 5 Spells

Flying Carpet, Pleasant Visions, Wall of Unfire

Circle 6 Spells

Bouncing Blaster

BEHIND THE SCENES

As the characters tell their tale the other dancers and employees will gather around, dressed in their bed clothes. Upon hearing the characters' tale, Norina will pay whatever was agreed upon, plus a 50 silver piece bonus to each of them. She will let the characters stay in the common room and rest for the day, promising a tremendous party for the coming evening. The characters will be asked to retell their tale, and drinks will flow. The dancers will dance and a good time will be had by all.

LEGEND POINT AWARD

Creatures and Opponents

Ruffians at the House of Veils 60 points each
Ruffians at the Sealed Tomb 60 points each
Lightning Lizard 150 points
Listnar the Mighty 250 points

Treasure

Lightning Lizard eyes 300 points

CAST OF CHARACTERS

RUFFIANS

Attributes

DEX: 13: 6/D10 STR: 13: 6/D10 TOU: 13: 6/D10
PER: 9: 4/D6 WIL: 10: 5/D8 CHA: 10: 5/D8

Initiative: 6/D10

Physical Defense: 7

Number of Attacks: 1

Spell Defense: 6

Attack: 9/D8+D6

Social Defense: 6

Fist: 8/2D6

Damage:

Fist 6/D10

Club 9/D8+D6

Short Sword 10/D10+D6

Number of Spells: NA

Armor: 2

Spellcasting: NA

Mystic Armor: 0

Effect: NA

Knockdown: 6/D10

Recovery Tests: 2

Death Rating: 35 Combat Move: 30
 Wound Threshold: 9 Full Move: 60
 Unconsciousness Rating: 27

Legend Points: 60
 Equipment: Short sword, club, dagger, leather armor
 Loot: 1D6 x 10 silvers

Skills: Melee Weapons 3: 9/D8+D6, Streetwise 2: 6/D10,
 Unarmed Combat 2: 8/2D6

LISTNAR THE MIGHTY (5th circle illusionist)

Attributes
 DEX: 14: 6/D10 STR: 8: 4/D6 TOU: 11: 5/D8
 PER: 16: 7/D12 WIL: 16: 7/D12 CHA: 14: 6/D10

Initiative: 6/D10 Physical Defense: 8
 Number of Attacks: 1 Spell Defense: 10
 Attack: 6/D10 Social Defense: 8
 Damage: 6/D10
 Number of Spells: 1 Armor: 0
 Spellcasting: 12/2D10 Mystic Armor: 2
 Effect: Knockdown: 4/D6
 Recovery Tests: 2@D8

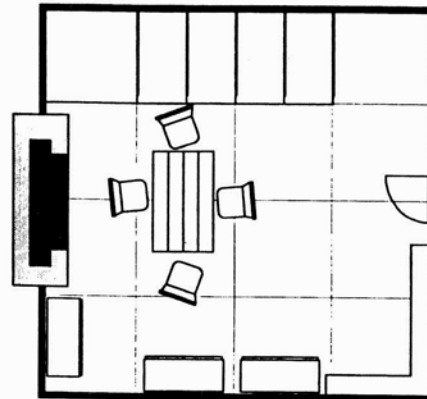
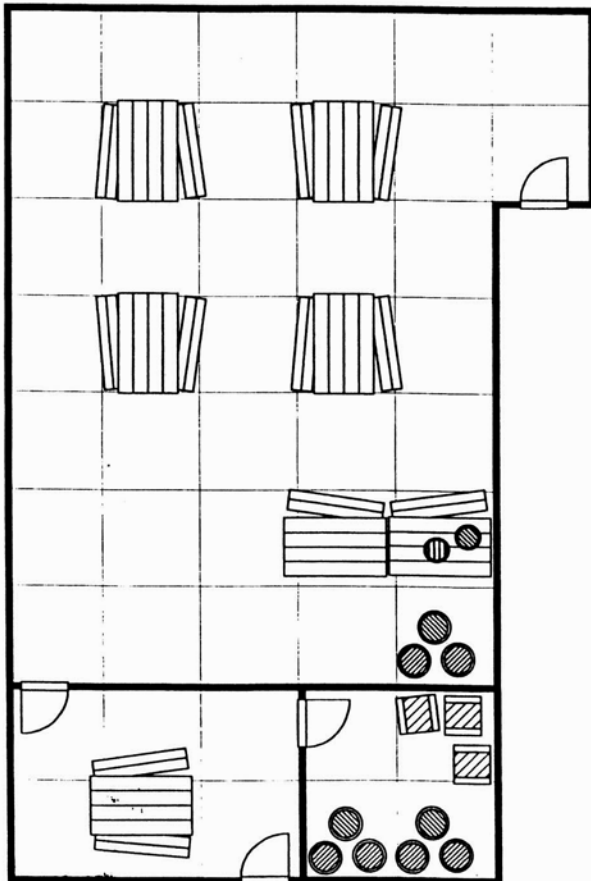
Death Rating: 52 Combat Move: 33
 Wound Threshold: 8 Full Move: 65
 Unconsciousness Rating: 39

Karma Pool: 12 Karma Dice: D8

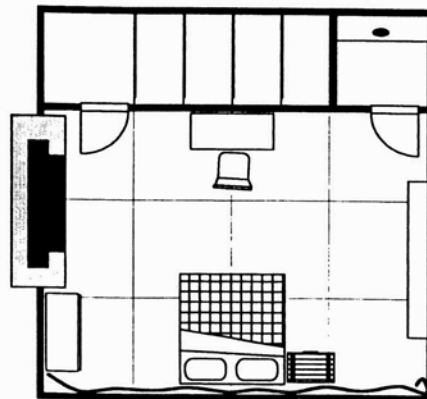
Legend Points: 250
 Equipment: None
 Loot: What is in the room.

Talents: Anticipate Blow 3:10/D10+D6, Dead Fall 5: 12/2D10*, Disguise Self 3: 10/D10+D6, Durability 5, False Sight 5:12/2D10*, Karma Ritual 3, Read/Write Languages 3: 10/D10+D6, Read/Write Magic 5: 12/2D10*, Speak Languages 3: 10/D10+D6, Spellcasting 5: 12/2D10*, Spell Matrix 5, Spell Matrix 4, Spell Matrix 3, Spell Matrix 2, Thread Weaving 5: 12/2D10*, Willforce 3
 * Can spend Karma

THE SEALED TOMB TAVERN

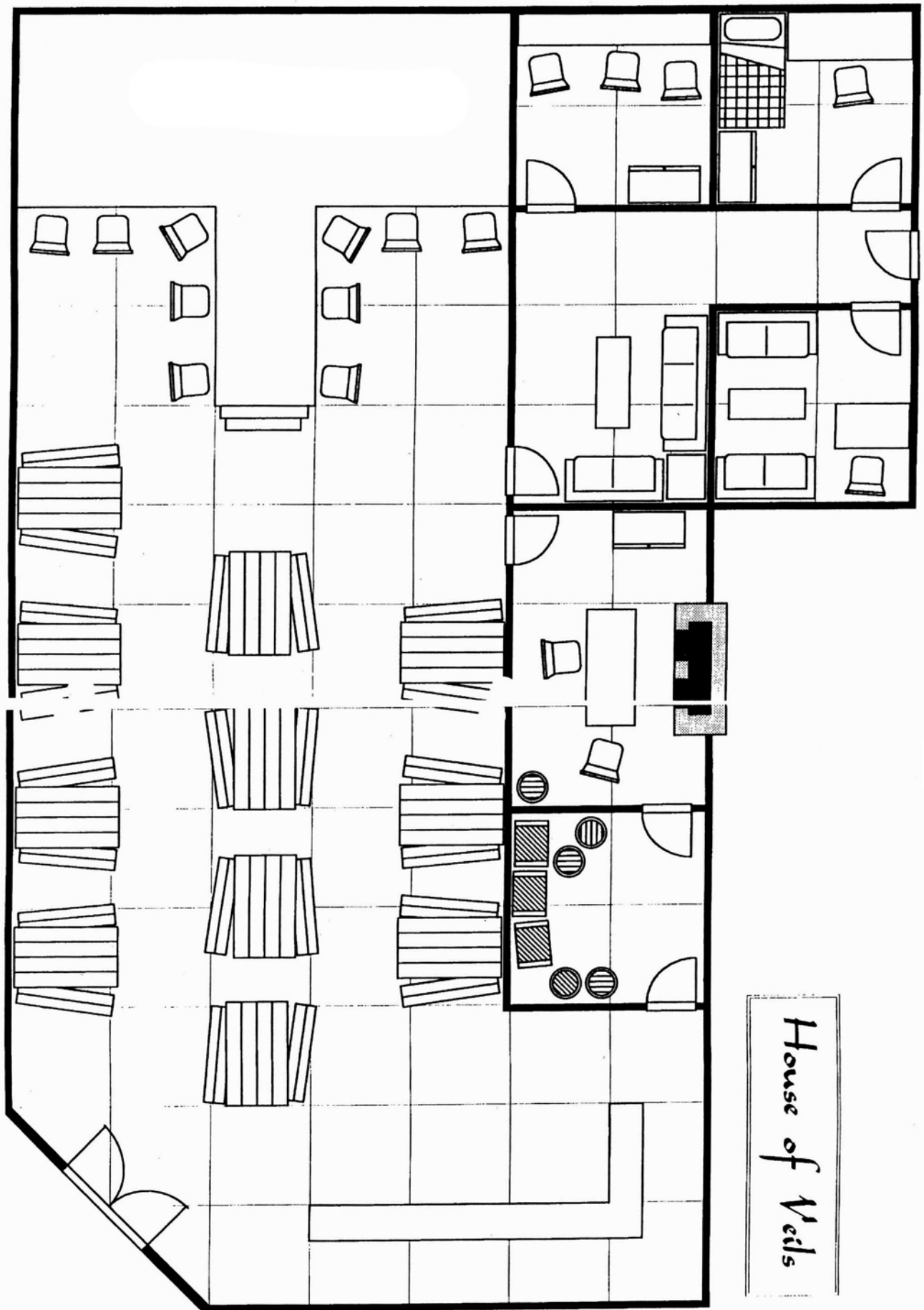


Ground Floor



Upper Floor

Tower of Listnar



House of Veils

DAYS OF VENGEANCE

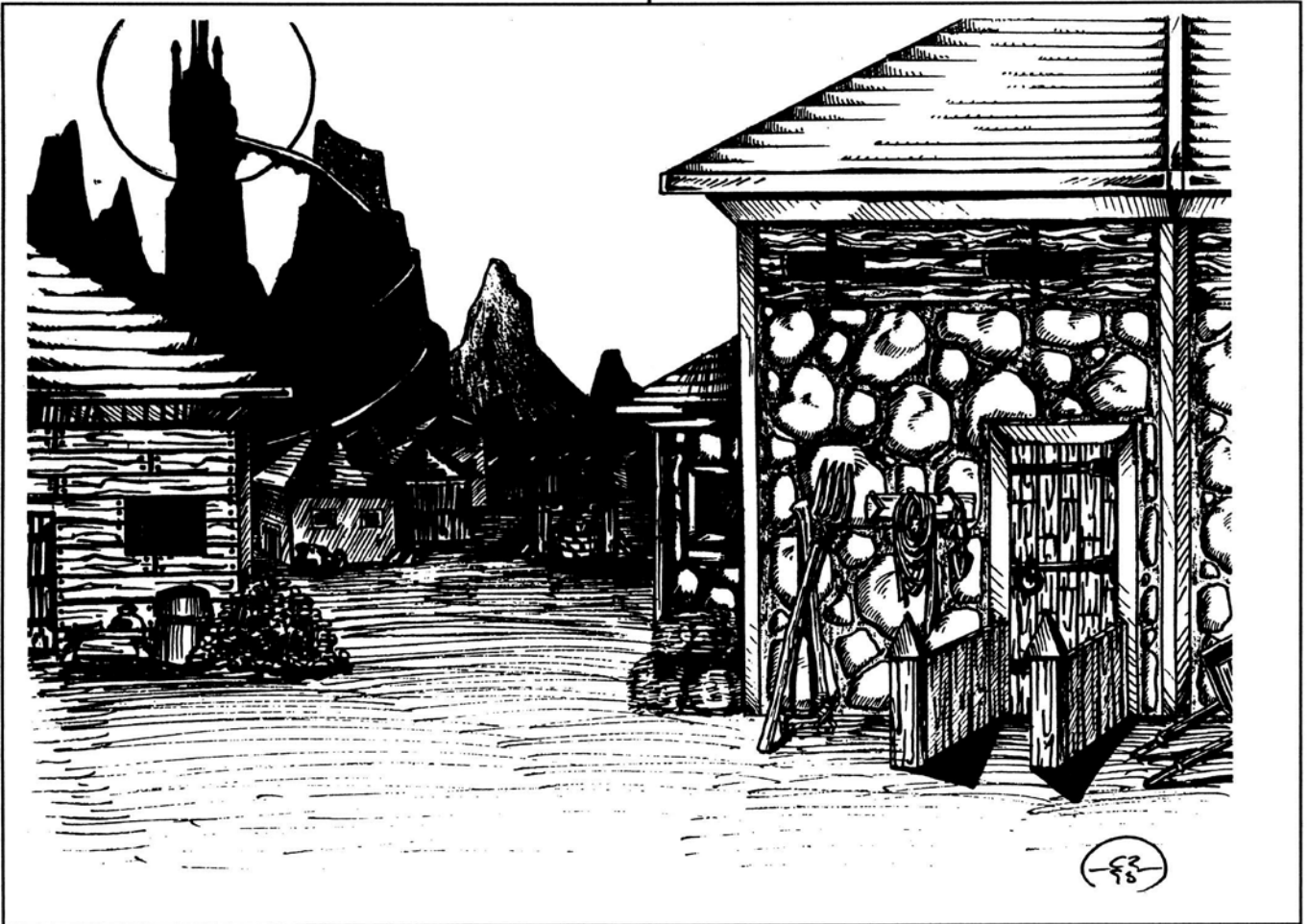
BY DAVID CARALEY

Listnar the Mighty was furious. He had been doing so well. In the few years since he had settled in Kratas he had managed to obtain a small tower, decorate it to his tastes, gather together a little wealth, and take control over one of the local band of thugs that seemed to gather in the city of thieves. He had even fallen in love with a woman he felt sure that Astendar had meant for him.

But it had all come collapsing down around him. He had managed to get the woman delivered to his tower, and had been in the process of binding her to him, heart and soul, when a group of interfering adventurers breached his tower and engaged him in battle.

belongings? He could not let this insult go unpunished. And he could not let his spell book be taken by another. He would loose face in Kratas. And to loose face in Kratas was to take the first step towards doom.

It was time to call in on a few favors that were owed to him. It was not difficult to find where the adventurers were staying. And it was easy enough to have someone observe them. Now, it was a simple matter of time before he would strike, retrieving his possessions and avenging his honor. But first, he would require the proper bait. Something that would entice a band of heroes.



At first Listnar had thought that he would be triumphant, but they had managed to defeat him, causing him to flee. They took the girl, a fair amount of his gold, his Dwarven Winternight Cloak, and his spell book.

Listnar had spent the next few days watching his tower to see if they would return, but after a week, he decided that the so called heroes were not going to return. Now, seated once more at his desk in his tower, Listnar was still furious. How could he have allowed a young, inexperienced band of adventurers drive him from his own tower, and loot his

PLOT SYNOPSIS

The story begins after the characters gave completed Night of Desire. They have angered the illusionist Listnar the Mighty and he is seeking vengeance. He has taken an old treasure map to an abandoned kaer that he had explored several years back, and arranged for a friend of his, a thief adept named Dooley, to play the part of a down and out adventurer with a map to a forgotten kaer, and the rumors of a magical pendant called the Sorcerer's Eye, an item reputed to greatly enhance the spellcasting abilities of any

mage who possesses it.

Dooley is to join the heroes, help them arrive at the old kaer, lead them inside, and take them to where Listnar and his rouges would be waiting.

DOWN AND OUT IN KRATAS

OVERVIEW

This encounter starts at the Raven, a seedy inn in the city of Kratas. The characters are busy eating dinner when an out of luck adventurer named Dooley approaches them with a tale of woe, a map to an abandoned kaer, and the legend of the Sorcerer's Eye. He will do his best to convince the characters to launch an expedition into the forests south of Kratas.

SETTING THE STAGE

It is early evening and you are seated at a table in the Raven eating a light meal before deciding what to do next. The barmaid brings another round of drinks and you continue relaxing in the smoky room.

A dark haired man dressed in slightly tattered and stained padded armor, a shortsword in a torn scabbard hanging from his belt, and scuffed, dirty boots wanders over to your table and looks you all over. His face seems worn and unshaven, and he seems to be working up the courage to speak to you.

"Excuse me. Are you the heroes who helped Norina at the House of Veils?"

BEHIND THE SCENES

The stranger is Dooley, the thief adept who is working for Listnar the Mighty. He is attempting to infiltrate the characters and convince them to go into the forests to the abandoned kaer that Listnar and Dooley had adventured into years before. Once there, they will be led into an ambush.

Once introductions have been made, read the following:

"I am no beggar, I am Dooley, an adept who has fallen upon hard times. My companions and I adventured into the forests south of here, in search of an abandoned kaer. Legends and rumors hinted that the mystical Sorcerer's Eye rests inside (a Legends and Heroes test, target of 6, will tell the characters that the Sorcerer's Eye is a powerful magical item able to augment any spellcaster's power immensely, rumored to have been lost during the Scourge).

Five of us went forth, but we were unprepared for what awaited us. We lost Branwyn on the journey through the woods, a manticore killed her before we even made it to the kaer. After a week of traveling, we arrived at the huge stone structure.

Between Lorinar, a dwarven wizard, and myself, we managed to open the doors and went inside. The kaer seemed long abandoned, and we explored deeper. I knew the Passions had abandoned us when Lorinar was killed by a swarm of krillworms, sucked dry of his life fluids.

Still, we did not turn back. Koric, an elven swordmaster, Brogwa Eye-Gouger, an ork warrior, and myself. Koric fell to a shadowmant, the poison killed him before we could give

him aid. At that point Brogwa decided to turn back, and I went with him, unable to continue alone.

On the way out, Brogwa was killed by a spear trap we had bypassed on the way in. I was forced to continue back through the forests on my own. I was lucky to survive.

I managed to return to Kratas a few days ago, broke, injured, and alone. I am looking for a band of brave heroes who would return with me to the kaer. I do not care who keeps the Sorcerer's Eye. I just wish to avenge my fallen companions. To give meaning to their deaths. Otherwise they have perished for nothing."

Most of what Dooley is saying is true. He has left out the part about Listnar being one of the companions, and the fact that it was several years ago. He has also neglected the fact that they searched the entire kaer and never found the Sorcerer's Eye.

Dooley will do his best to seem like a brave adventurer who is down on his luck. He should clear his throat upon occasion, needing an ale to continue with his story. He wishes for the characters to feel sorry for him, and wish to help him out of both sympathy and greed.

Once the characters have agreed to help, let them buy supplies and make plans for the expedition.

TROUBLESHOOTING

If the characters do not volunteer to help Dooley, he will comment on how their reputations had made him think that they were brave heroes, the type that would help a fellow adept when they could. Apparently their reputations were undeserved. He will comment that there must be other heroes, brave ones, that would be willing to make the journey if it is too dangerous for the characters.

At this point, Listnar will have to resort to a simple ambush with a bunch of ruffians before the characters leave Kratas. During this ambush, Dooley will arrive and help the characters drive off the attackers. He will explain that he heard the sounds of the struggle, and only did what any hero would do, leapt in to help out his fellow adepts. This should inspire the characters to return the favor.

INTO THE WOODS

OVERVIEW

The characters are now outfitted, and make their way into the woods south of Kratas. They will have to deal with the wild animals and creatures of the forest, while making their way to the abandoned kaer.

SETTING THE STAGE

It has been several days since you left Kratas and headed into the forest. Several days of eating trail rations, sleeping under the trees, and keeping an ever watchful eye on the underbrush for any creature or monster that might try to make you into a meal. Dooley has been a pleasant traveling companion, telling tall tales of places he's been and things he's seen.

Suddenly, there is a large crashing sound as several

branches and leaves fall from above you. A loud roar gets your attention as a lion-like creature's wings down from above.

BEHIND THE SCENES

The characters are about to be attacked by a manticore. Roll randomly who the creature will attack first (though do not allow it to be Dooley). It will take two attacks at the same target, and the following rounds it will attack whoever seems to be the biggest threat. Dooley will do his best to disappear from sight. He will be setting himself up to use his Surprise Strike towards the end of the combat so that he can appear to have saved the characters.

MANTICORE

See Creatures of Barsaive, p. 58

This manticore knows Mind Dagger, Ice Mace and Chain, and Resist Fire.

The manticore will have already cast Resist Fire on itself. Remember that Dooley is waiting for his Surprise Strike, but he is willing to let the manticore do the most damage possible before he acts.

See Cast of Characters for Dooley's stats.

TROUBLESHOOTING

If it looks as if the manticore is going to kill the characters, use Dooley's Surprise Strike. This will get the manticore's attention if it does not put it down. Hopefully, this will give the characters a chance to finish off the creature.

THE FORGOTTEN KAER

OVERVIEW

The characters arrive at the kaer, actually a citadel standing in the midst of the forest. They will enter the citadel in search of the Sorcerer's Eye, make their way to the heart of the citadel, and into Listnar the Mighty's ambush.

SETTING THE STAGE

It has been three days since the manticore attack. Three days of hiking through the brush, waiting for whatever else may decide to attack. Dooley has been sure that you are near the kaer for the past several hours, though there has been no sign of it. You have begun to doubt his story when you enter a small clearing and see the crumbling stone steps that lead up to the vast stone doors of an ancient citadel. The walls are overgrown with vines obscuring the magical runes of protection carved into the stones, runes designed to keep the Horrors at bay. The late afternoon sun reflects off the stones, giving the whole structure a mystical appearance.



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BEHIND THE SCENES

The citadel of Tar Maktor was built by the combined efforts of the elves from the forest and humans from a large town nearby. They combined their resources and magical might to try and ensure their survival.

The citadel was breached two hundred years after it was sealed, and the populace was slaughtered entirely. It was discovered many years ago by Listnar, Dooley, and the rest of their party. Listnar and Dooley were the only survivors, and they never succeeded in finding the treasure vault. They believe it was looted before they discovered it.

1 Front Doors - You see steps forty feet wide leading up to massive stone doors. The doors are old and cracked. The runes are worn and faded, but you know that the physical condition does not mean that they are any less powerful than when they were carved. One of the doors stands half open and you can see the dark hallway leading inside.

The runes on the door were protective runes designed to keep the Horrors out. There are other writings, in human tongue on one door, and in elven on the other. They tell the story of the human settlement of Mak and the elven

settlement of Tor. It tells of the spirit of cooperation between the two peoples and how they managed to build the citadel to protect themselves from the Horrors.

Dooley will tell of a magical trap that was on the doors, but that it had been dispelled by Lorinar, the dwarven wizard that had accompanied them. In fact, Dooley is telling the truth and the doors are quite safe.

2 Entrance Hall - You look inside to see a hall leading deep into the citadel. The hall must be twenty feet wide, and you can see arrow slits along both walls. The hall ends in another large set of double doors. Again, one is pushed halfway open.

There is a pit trap half way down the corridor.

Pit Trap

This is the typical pit trap found in kaer entrances throughout Barsaive. It is twenty feet deep and ends in a six inch pool of acid.

Detection Difficulty: 7

Disarm Difficulty: 7

Trigger Condition: Pressure plate

Trap Initiative: 8

Trap Effect: Damage Step of 10 for the fall, and a Damage Step of 4 for each turn spent in the acid. Armor protects completely, but it will damage the armor at the rate of 1 point of Physical Armor per turn. Magical armor will not be damaged in this way.

Dooley will neglect to mention this trap, and if questioned later will say that it never sprung while his party passed by, but maybe it was stuck and so many people traveling over it had unjammed it. On the bottom of the trap is a large skeleton of some sort, though it doesn't look humanoid.

3 Defensive Halls - One past the double doors, you realize the passage splits to the left and right, doubling back on itself. You can see the original hall through the arrow slits on one side, but there are more arrow slits on the other side. Apparent he designers made the entire entrance way into a death trap where various fields of fire could cover the halls as the invaders were forced to go back and forth, up and down the halls. Lying on the floor, halfway down the hall towards a single door, is a huge skeleton. There are old and rotted shafts still protruding from its rib cage.

Opening the door, you can see the corridor doubling back once more, with more arrow slits covering the passage you were just in. As you continue you eventually come to another set of double doors. One is pushed partially open.

4 Spear Trap - This is the trap that killed Dooley's ork companion. He will warn the characters of this one, allowing it to be bypassed. He hopes that this warning will confirm his story, and make the characters trust him more. He will say that he buried the ork out in the forest rather than let him rot in here where Horrors had breached.

5 The Market Square - You enter a vast chamber littered with debris. Pieces of wood, barrels, carts, and awnings lie all about. From the other three entrances and the ruins about the huge chamber, you can guess that this must have been the market square for the citadel. Your eyes catch a glimpse of movement coming from the darkness above.

The characters will be attacked by three shadowmants who hatched when Listnar and his ruffians made their way inside.

3 SHADOWMANTS

See Earthdawn Basic Book, p. 308

Once the characters have defeated the shadowmants, they can search the room. This will take 30 minutes and will allow each character a Perception Test or an Evidence Analysis Test, target of 7. If successful, roll a D4 on the following table to see what is discovered:

1 A small bag containing 45 sp (pre-Scourge)

2 A wooden box with 4 vials (3 are broken, 1 is a Booster Potion)

3 A dagger (forged to +2)

4 A metal box (engraving tools and a 150 sp emerald)

6 Hall of Stairs - You pass under a vast arch to find yourself in a huge hall. There are many doors leading from the hall, and two huge marble stairways leading to the level above you.

All around you are piles of splintered wood and scraps of old, torn cloth and tapestries. The wood seemed to have once been furniture, tables, benches, and cabinets, but all of it has been smashed and destroyed. Upon occasion you spot the skeletal remains of one of the kaer's former residents, its ribcage smashed or spine broken. The darkness and feeling of death seems all around you.

The Horrors destroyed everything in their path when they breached the citadel.

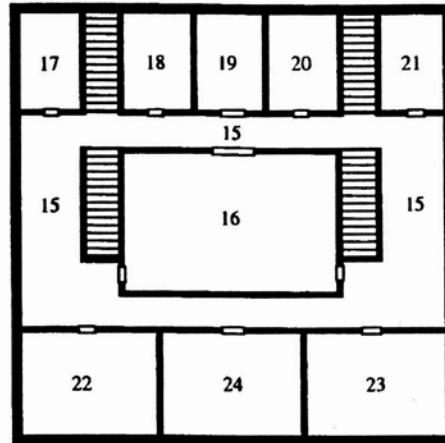
7 Barracks - The door to this chamber lies in ruins on the floor. Inside you can see what remains of many cots, and the smashed ruins of what used to be soldiers' trunks. Several skeletal bodies litter the floor, still clad in tattered leather armor or rusted and torn chainmail. Chipped and broken swords and broken shields are scattered throughout the room. There is a door on the other side of the room, broken and hanging from one hinge.

There is little of value in this room. An Evidence Analysis Test with a target of 6 will show that there was a major battle in this room. The creature must have been large and immensely strong. It tore apart the defenders and left them dead or dying. It will take a half hour to search the room, and no matter what the characters roll, they will find nothing of value.

8 Commander's Office - This room is as devastated as the previous rooms. The remains of a desk lies in broken pieces on the floor, the matching chair lying in splinters next to it.

Half of a large wooden table rests near the door, while the other half is across the room by another broken door. Moldy papers and rotted maps litter the room and a single skeleton, still wearing a steel breast plate and torn chain seems to have been the only defender here.

A search will take 15 minutes, needing a Perception test with a target of 9. If successful a single spear will be found,



A wardrobe lies shattered on the floor, and faded, rotting clothes cover everything.

It will take 10 minutes to search the room. On a Perception Test of 8 the party will find a dented iron box, still locked (needing a 7 to open). It contains two broken ceramic vials and two unbroken vials. Each contains a Booster Potion.

10 Weapon Practice Room - The door to this chamber is missing entirely. There are three skeletal bodies lying across the threshold, their leather armor rotting away. Inside you see what you first believed to be more bodies, but at second glance you can tell they were practice dummies. Even the walls in this room are scarred by claw marks. The remains of archery targets lie against the wall to the right, and broken bows and shattered arrows litter the floor.

Searching the room will take 15 minutes. There is nothing of value to be found.

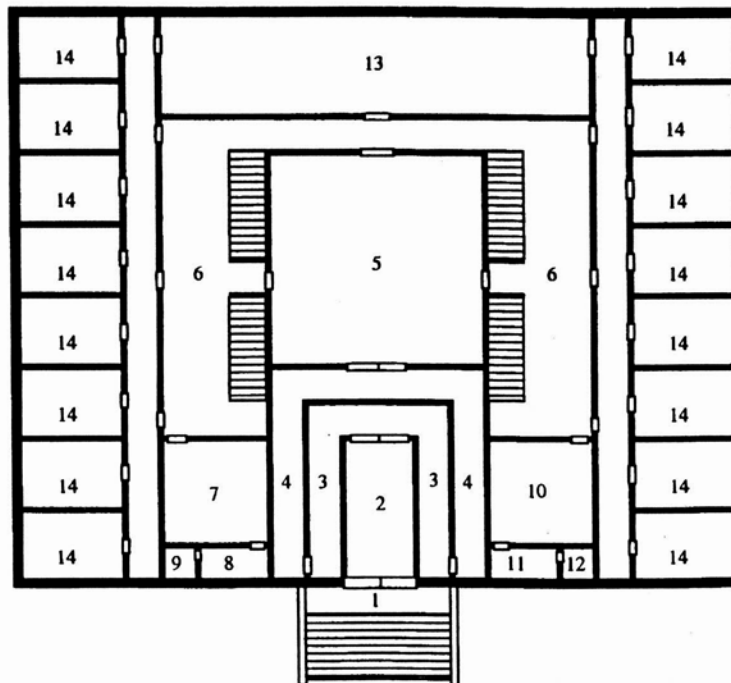
11 Forge - This small chamber houses the broken remains of the citadel's forge. An anvil lies on its side, and tools of various types are scattered on the floor.

Searching the room will take 15 minutes. On a Perception Test, target of 9, the following will be found:

You have found a section of the stone around the forge that slides open. Inside the small niche something gleams. Drawing it out, you see it is a broadsword. It gleams silver in the dim light. This sword is forged to +3.

12 Armorer's Room - This small room was obviously some sort of living chamber. A broken bed and smashed cabinet are all that remain. A single skeleton is some sort of rotted leather tunic lies clutching a large hammer.

There is nothing of value here.



in which case read the following:

After searching the room thoroughly, you find a single item of interest. A broken spear was lying under the rubble. The spear point seems made of gold, gleaming softly in the dim light. There are runes down the blade, written in Sperethial. It reads "Impaler". The shaft was shattered two feet below the spear head. See Treasure at the end of the adventure.

9 Captain's Room - This small room has been destroyed. A single bed lies in ruins, claw marks deep into the wood.

13 Plant Growth Area - Looking into this vast chamber, you almost swear that you are back outside. Plants of all shapes and sizes still grow under the artificial light of the light quartz fixtures.

Again, there is little of value. The plants have grown wild after years of neglect. Resourceful characters can find edible food here.

14 Living Quarters - The remains of this chamber is littered with broken furniture and smashed wooden walls. Apparently these were the living quarters of some of the

citadel's inhabitants, though they now lie in ruins. You can see the bones of the residents peeking out from under the rubble.

These chambers are more or less the same. It would take 15 minutes to search a single chamber, and a Perception Test with a target of 10 to find anything of value. With a success, the item will be worth a D6 x 10 silvers (a small figurine, a rotted pouch with some silver, a small gem...)

Upper Level

15 Upper Hall - You find more bodies at the top of the stairs. Skeletal bodies still wearing torn and broken armor.

There is nothing of value here.

16 Great Hall - The doors to this room are splintered and lying in pieces on the floor. Inside you see a sight that takes your breath away. Lying amid the broken tables and shattered benches of the great hall are the remains of the citadel's inhabitants. The skeletons of over a hundred people must litter the floor and you realize that this is where the populace fled when the Horrors breached the outer defenses. Another large skeleton lies over a collapsed table, spears and rusted swords embedded through its rib cage. Judging by the size of the rib cage, you guess that the creature must have been over fifteen feet tall.

Searching the room will reveal broken plates, dented goblets, and everything else one would expect in a great hall. There is nothing of value.

17 Healer's Quarters - The broken door hangs loosely on its hinges. Swinging it open reveals a room containing several broken cots, and many splintered cabinets. The remains of a single individual, dressed in dirty, blood stained white robes bearing the symbol of Garlen lies torn in two on the floor. A broken sword lies by its side.

This room was the citadel's healing chamber. It is also where the citadel's questor to Garlen made his last stand. Searching the room will take 20 minutes. A Perception Test of 9 will find the following:

In one of the smashed cabinets you find one intact vial (containing a Healing Potion).

18 Upper Storeroom - The door to this room is missing entirely. Inside are numerous smashed crates and broken barrels.

This room held food stuffs, wine and ale. The food has

long since gone bad, and the barrels are all broken.

19 Upper Kitchen - This door is hanging from one lone hinge. Inside you can see several large fireplaces, huge pots, and other cooking equipment. Most of it is scattered across the floor, along with three more skeletons.

There is nothing of value left in this room.

20 The Brewery - Inside this room you see more smashed barrels, bent copper tubes, and huge copper tubs.

There is nothing left of value here. The brewing equipment has been destroyed.

21 Library - This room looks as if a small fire had burned out of control. The broken tables are covered with old, torn books. The few shelving units that still cling to the walls contain even more books, but the library is only a shadow of its former glory.

The library is still semi-intact. It can be used for research at a -2 step penalty. None of the tomes are magical.

22 Chambers of Lord Xandis - This huge chamber is a mess. You can tell that it used to be divided into smaller chambers by the remains of the wooden walls that have been ripped down. The furniture is smashed, and the stone walls have deep scratches in the stone.

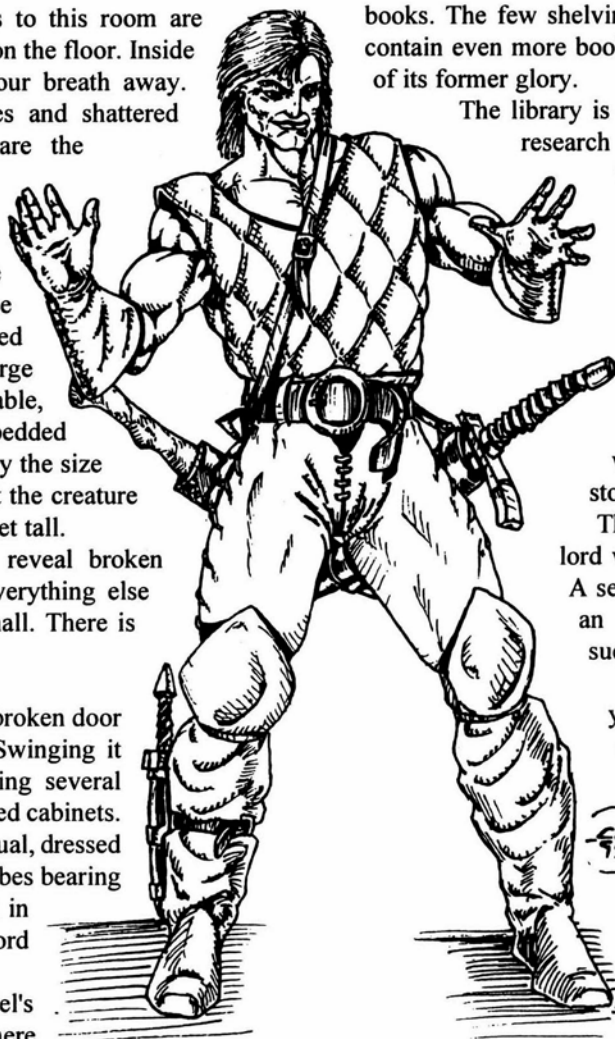
This was the living suite of the human lord who shared rulership of the citadel. A search will take an hour, and requires an 8 or better to find anything. If successful, read the following:

After searching through the rubble, you have come upon a single broken chest. Inside is a canvas bag (containing 20 sp and 5 gp), a ceramic vial (containing a Kelia's Antidote), and a small felt bag (with two sapphires worth 40 silvers each).

23 Chambers of Lord Lyndolyn - This vast chamber was once divided into many smaller chambers. The wooden partitions are splintered and lying on the floor, covering the smashed and shattered furniture.

These chambers belonged to the elven lord who co-ruled the citadel. It will take 30 minutes to search the chamber, and a Perception Test, target of 7. If successful, read the following:

Buried under the pieces of one of the partitions are two skeletons. One is obviously one of the Horrors that breached the citadel. The other is humanoid, still wearing gleaming



chainmail made of small, intricate rings. A broken sword is still clutched in the skeletal fingers, the other half of the blade embedded into the skull of the long dead Horror. Sparkling gems still adorn the hilt of the sword (3 emeralds worth 100 sp each).

The chainmail is Faerie Chainmail.

24 Temple to the Passions - The huge doors are lying on the floor, torn from the stonework of the portal. Inside you can see a vast room containing broken marble statues of the Passions. A large marble alter stands on a raised platform at the far end of the room. There seems to be an odd chill in the air, and suddenly a monstrous creature emerges from behind the alter.

This is where Listnar the Mighty has made his stand. He had an Improved Alarm placed on the entrance to the citadel to warn him when the characters arrived, and a second in the upper halls. Listnar has a Nobody Here spell cast upon himself, needing an 18 to be sensed and a 9 to be disbelieved. He has cast a Monstrous Mantle on Gerrik the Strong, an ork warrior friend. The illusion is one of a terrible Horror adding +3 steps to the ork's Attack Tests, Damage tests, and Physical Defense. It also gives Gerrik 12 extra Damage Points. Once the characters have entered the room Listnar will cast a Mind Fog on one of the spellcasters. He will then start casting True Ephemeral Bolts.

Listnar - (See adventure Nights of Desire in this volume for stats)

Listnar is an overly proud, self-important spellcaster who believes that he is destined for greatness. He is now seeking vengeance on those who ruined his plans in Kratas and stole his spell book. If it looks like he is loosing, he will try to escape under the Notice Not spell, using a Flying Carpet once he gets outside. If captured, he will use Dead Fall to make the characters think he is dead and escape later.

See Cast of Characters for Gerrik the Strong's stats.

Once the final battle has been engaged, Dooley will attempt to Surprise Strike one of the characters, and then he will fight on the side of Listnar. If the Monstrous Mantle spell holds out, the characters may believe that Dooley was Horror Marked during his first expedition.

This battle should be one of surprises and betrayal. Listnar will abandon his companions in order to escape with his life.

Once the battle is over, the characters can search the room. A Perception Test of 12 is needed to find the hidden chamber built into the ceiling, twenty feet up. Of course, the characters will have to find a way to get there. Once opened, the characters can see a small chamber above the temple. This is where the citadel's treasure was stored. Do not be surprised if the characters do not find it. It was designed to remain hidden. If they do find it, and manage to get to it, read the following:

As you peer into the dark chamber above, you can make out three chests, made of wood and bound in iron.

All the chests are locked, needing an 8 to open.

Chest 1 - 1000 silvers

Chest 2 - 200 gold pieces

Chest 3 - A golden crown adorned with emeralds (worth 1500 silvers), a silver crown adorned with sapphires (worth 100 silvers)

(Note: GM's will want to adjust the amount of treasure found to suit their campaign)

TROUBLESHOOTING

The only thing that can go wrong is if the characters are defeated by Listnar. Listnar will want to kill the characters, but if Gerrik is still alive he will be unwilling to let Listnar put them to death. He will help in looting the characters, however. Of course, this would lead to the characters trying to catch up to Listnar for their own vengeance.

LEGEND POINT AWARD

Creatures and Opponents

Manticore	425 points
3 Shadowmants	300 points
Dooley	200 points
Gerrik	150 points
Listnar	250 points

Treasure

Manticore's tail	5D6 x 10 points
Shadowmants' stingers	1D10 x 10 points each
The spear Impaler	400 points

Creative Roleplaying

Praying to the Passions in the shrine to lay the dead to rest
150 points

Adventure Goal

Surviving Listnar's trap 150 points

TREASURE

THE SPEAR IMPALER

Location: In the room of the commander of the Citadel of Tar' Maktor. The spear was forged to +3 sharpness and is mixed with steel and orichalcum, gleaming a soft gold color. Elven runes decorate the blade, spelling out the name "Impaler".

Maximum Threads: 1

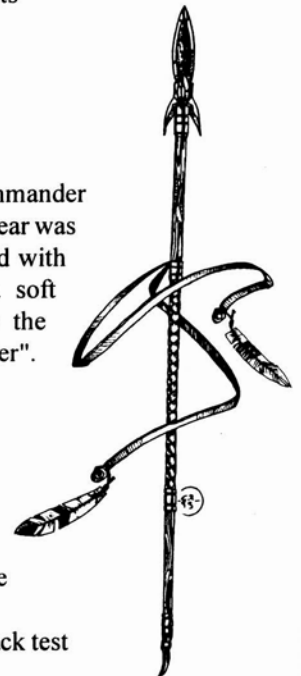
Spell Defense: 12

Thread Ranks

Rank 1 Cost: 100

Key Knowledge: What is the spear's name? It is named Impaler.

Effect: Impaler adds +2 to the attack test when it is thrown.



Rank 2 Cost: 200

Key Knowledge: What was the name of the citadel that Impaler was supposed to defend? The citadel was Tar' Maktor.

Effect: Impaler adds an additional +2 steps to attack tests made with it.

Rank 3 Cost: 300

Key Knowledge: Who forged the spear? The spear was forged by the elven weaponsmith Relanin, his sigil is on the blade.

Effect: Impaler adds +2 steps to damage tests made with it.

Rank 4 Cost: 500

Key Knowledge: How was the spear first broken? Thrusting into a Horror that breached Tar' Maktor.

Effect: The spear pierces armor on a Good Success instead of an Excellent Success on the attack roll.

FAERIE CHAINMAIL

see Earthdawn Gamemaster Pack, p.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

DOOLEY - Fourth Circle Thief Adept

DEX: 16: 7/D12 STR: 13: 6/D10 TOU: 11: 5/D8
PER: 16: 7/D12 WIL: 11: 5/D8 CHA: 11: 5/D8

Initiative: 6/D10 Physical Defense: 9
Number of Attacks: 1 Spell Defense: 9
Attack: 11/D10+D8 Social Defense: 7
Surprise: 11/D10+D8
Damage:
Shortsword 11/D10+D8
Surprise: 18/D20+D12
Number of Spells: NA Armor: 2
Spellcasting: NA Mystic Armor: 1
Effect: NA Knockdown: 6/D10
Recovery Tests: 2

Death Rating: 52 Combat Move: 38
Wound Threshold: 8 Full Move: 75
Unconsciousness Rating: 40

Legend Points: 200
Equipment: Short sword, club, dagger, padded cloth armor
Loot: 1D6 x 10 silvers

Karma Pool: 15 Karma Dice: D8
Karma: Can spend Karma on actions using Perception only.

Talents: Avoid Blow 4: 11/D10+D8*, Climbing 4: 11/D10+D8, Durability 4 (5/4), Fence 3: 8/2D6*, Karma Ritual 2, Lock Pick 5: 12/2D10*, Lock Sense 3: 10/D10+D6*, Melee Weapons 4: 11/D10+D8, Picking Pockets 3: 10/D10+D6*, Silent Walk 5: 12/2D10*, Surprise Strike 4: 11/

D10+D8*, Thread Weaving 3: 10/D10+D6*, Trap Initiative 3: 10/D10+D6*

* Can spend Karma

Skills: Acting 4: 9/D8+D6, Legends and Heroes 1: 8/2D6

Commentary: Dooley is a thorough scoundrel working for Listnar the Mighty. He will attempt to ingratiate himself to the characters, but will always let them get as injured as possible before helping out.

GERRIK THE STRONG - Third Circle Warrior Adept

DEX: 14: 6/D10 STR: 16: 7/D12 TOU: 16: 7/D12
PER: 11: 5/D8 WIL: 11: 5/D8 CHA: 11: 5/D8

Initiative: 3/D4 (6/D10) Physical Defense: 11 (14)
Number of Attacks: 1 Spell Defense: 7
Attack: 10/D10+D6 Social Defense: 7
(13/D12+D10)
Damage:
Broad Sword 12/2D10
(15/D20+D6)
Number of Spells: NA Armor: 6 (9)
Spellcasting: NA Mystic Armor: 0
Effect: NA Knockdown: 7/D12
Recovery Tests: 3 (2)

Death Rating: 66/63 (75) Combat Move: 38
Wound Threshold: 11 Full Move: 75
Unconscious Rating: 57/54 (66)

Legend Points: 150
Equipment: Broad sword, ringmail, shield, Death Cheat Blood Charm
Loot: 1D6 x 10 silvers

Talents: Acrobatic Strike 3: 9/D8+D6, Air Dance 3: 9/D8+D6, Anticipate Blow 2: 7/D12*, Avoid Blow 3: 9/D8+D6*, Durability 3, Karma Ritual 2, Melee Weapon 4: 11/D10+D8*, Throwing Weapons 2: 8/2D6, Tiger Spring 3, Unarmed Combat 2: 10/D10+D6*, Wood Skin 3: 10/D10+D6*

Commentary: Gerrik owes Listnar his life, and considers this repayment of the debt. He considers it a matter of honor, and Listnar has held it over his head for years. Because of this, Gerrik will fight to the best of his abilities, until he falls unconscious. Still, he doesn't trust Listnar completely, and has a Death Cheat Charm bound to him just in case.

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USEFUL MAGICAL ITEMS

BY ANDREW RAGLAND

Hey! Welcome to Mosta Verdeen's elemental goods shop! Are you enjoying your stay in Servalen? No? Well, you've found a bright spot, and I don't mean my outfit. Oh, mind that -- never mind, they're cheap. Yes, it's kind of cluttered in here, but I know where everything is, and besides you'll never find this much variety under one roof anywhere else. If it's got true anything in it, I have it. Or I can make it. You want to discuss maybe some custom work? No? Sure, let me show you some of the latest stuff.

Light Pack

A pack with elemental air woven into it. The weight of the pack stays the same regardless of how much stuff is loaded into it. You'll probably want to add elemental water to keep the contents dry. That's more silver, but let me tell you, it's well worth it. No, you can't load everything you own into it. It's a pack, not a bottomless pit. However, if you're smart, and you look like a clever person, you'll load your smallest and heaviest items in the light pack, to concentrate all the weight where you won't feel it.

Mechanics:

The pack weighs the same as an empty normal pack of the same size. Its volume is the same as a normal pack.

Pack Size	For	Weight	Cost
Small	Windlings	2	225 silver
Medium	Dwarf	3	250 silver
Large	Elf, Human, Ork, T'skrang	4	280 silver
Extra Large	Troll, Obsidiman	5	325 silver

Theft-Proof Bag

Ever have your pocket picked or your purse cut? Never happen again. This belt pouch has true earth woven into the lining. On purchase, the bag is linked to the buyer with blood magic. If anyone else handles the bag, the true earth makes it heavier than a thundra beast. Only the rightful owner can pick up and handle the bag without difficulty. Someone else touching the bag while it's in the rightful owner's possession will not trigger the effect.

Mechanics:

Cost: 150

The pouch takes 1 point of blood magic, which can be recovered by unlinking it (thread weaving by the owner against a 6, by anyone else against a 14). An unlinked pouch doesn't trigger the weight effect. Theft-Proof Bags weigh 1 to the owner but 800 when triggered.

Flight Shoes

Those boots are heavy, aren't they? That's because they've

got true earth woven into the soles. Obsidimen wear them when they have to travel by air. Lets them maintain a link with earth no matter how far away the ground is. Disadvantage is they're heavy, and can't be worn by anyone save obsidimen and trolls. Flight boots will make you harder to knock down, but they'll weigh down your feet and slow you in combat.

Mechanics:

Cost: 300

Flight boots increase the knockdown step by 4, but tack on an initiative penalty of -2.

Long Singing Lyre

This lyre has elemental air woven into the frame. It'll double the effective range of the performer's voice and playing. Every now and then you'll find one you can weave a thread to, but the effects will vary according to the history of the instrument. Other musical instruments with true air amplification are also available. I've also used the same technique to make signal pipes. You can hear a whistle from the pipes halfway across the mountain range.

Mechanics:

Cost: 400 to 5000 depending on instrument, complexity, history, etc. Named instruments will of course be more expensive than instruments with no history.

The lyre or any other long singing instrument doubles the effective audible range of musical performance. Troubadour Talents that involve performance, such as Emotion Song, have their effective radius extended similarly. Signal Pipes can be heard clearly for many miles, although their volume at the point of origin is not apparently that loud.

Scarless Pitons

For Name-Givers who care about preserving the natural beauty of cliff faces, or are concerned for other reasons about leaving traces of where they've been, these pitons are a fusion of metal and true earth. On a command word, they fuse into any stone they are held against, no hammer required. On another command word, the piton being held emerges from the stone, leaving no mark behind.

Mechanics:

Cost: 150 per piton.

The pitons will hold up to 2000 pounds each before breaking. Weight is normally distributed among pitons in a group of climbers.

EARTHDOWN Q & A

WHEREIN LOUIS J. PROSPERI TAKES TIME OUT OF HIS BUSY SCHEDULE TO ANSWER ALL OF THOSE EARTH SHATTERING QUESTIONS THAT WE EARTHDOWN PLAYERS AND GAMEMASTERS HAVE...

Q: To use a weapon that has been improved with the Forge Blade talent do you need to attach a thread to the weapon? If not, then what is the point behind a number of the thread weapons mentioned in the *Earthdown Companion*? Wouldn't it be a lot cheaper to just get a weapon improved not only in terms of cash price, but also in terms of Legend Points?

A: No, using a weapon that has been improved with the Forge Blade talent does NOT require a thread be woven to the weapon. As far as thread weapons are concerned, they are not simply more expensive weapons, they are magical in nature. Thread weapons are often those which become magical treasure. Also, thread weapons are most often weapons of an unusual sort, such as crystal broadswords or stone daggers. These weapons are difficult to wield until a thread is woven to them. Also, many of these weapons have features aside from damage which are improved with higher thread ranks, while Forge Blade only improves a weapon's damage.

Lastly, keep in mind that in *Earthdown*, magic is used in many different ways in order to achieve a certain result. While some adepts might prefer a weaponsmith improve their weapons with Forge Blade, others adepts rather weave threads to their weapons, establishing a link between their pattern and their weapons.

Q: When a character looks at a magical sword with astral sight what do they see that makes it different from a normal sword? And does a sword that has been improved by the use of the Forge Blade talent show as magical, or is it just a superior quality weapon?

A: Looking at a magical weapon with astral sight reveals the weapon's astral pattern. The difference between the pattern of a magical sword and a mundane one is that a magical weapon's pattern will glow with magical energy. This energy will often take some sort of form or shape representative of the weapon, or in some rare instances, its wielder.

A sword that has been improved with Forge Blade does not have the same type of astral pattern as a magical sword, but it does appear as slightly magical. Most often, the pattern of such a sword will also show aspects of the weaponsmith's pattern, reflecting his influence on the weapon's pattern.

Q: Is an updated version of the EDGE character generator planned with the new Disciplines from the supplements?

A: There are plans for EDGE II. The updated version will include the new Disciplines from the *Earthdown Companion* and *Denizens of Earthdown Volumes I & II* the new version also covers skills, and has a new layout with space for up to 40 Talents and over 30 spells.

For those of you with the current version of EDGE, when the update is available, we will contact you via postcard or letter. Upgrading will cost only \$2.50 for Shipping/Handling.

Q: When a player damages the limb of an opponent in combat, the limb gets damaged but the opponent doesn't lose the limb. How could you integrate the fact of losing one of your limbs in game play, for example losing an arm or even your head (which naturally would result in death)? For example, the 'The Adept's Way' there is a description of Oaken Avedel, an elven archer, who kills the Horror Plan Crumbler by shooting an arrow through its head.

A: I wasn't sure if this question was asking how to resolve the damage done by loss of a limb, or the effects of having lost a limb to a character in the game. Since I wasn't sure, I figured I'd answer both.

First, there are few attacks which could result in the loss of a limb. Of these few, the most common would likely be a bite attack from a large animal or creature. The *Creatures of Barsaive* (p. 114) book offers some guidelines for severing limbs. In the specific case of Oaken Avedel slaying the Horror, that was most likely a successful Armor-Defeating, Called Shot to the head. Also, assuming Oaken was over 6th Circle at the time, he probably spent Karma on the Damage test.

Second, the rules for damage to limbs discussed in the *Earthdown Companion* are left somewhat vague to allow gamemasters to decide how they wish to resolve these types of injuries. As for losing limbs, depending on the limb lost, such an injury would likely result in the end of an adept's career in his Discipline. Certainly the loss of a leg would keep an adept of virtually any Discipline from further adventuring.

Q: The Spellcasting SKILL- How is it used? Especially with spells that require threads?

A: The Spellcasting skill is used most often by adepts with magical items that hold Spell Matrices, such as a Spell Matrix Staff. Unless a character has an appropriate Thread Weaving talent (Wizardry, Illusion, etc.) the Spellcasting skill is only useful for casting spells with 0 (zero) threads.

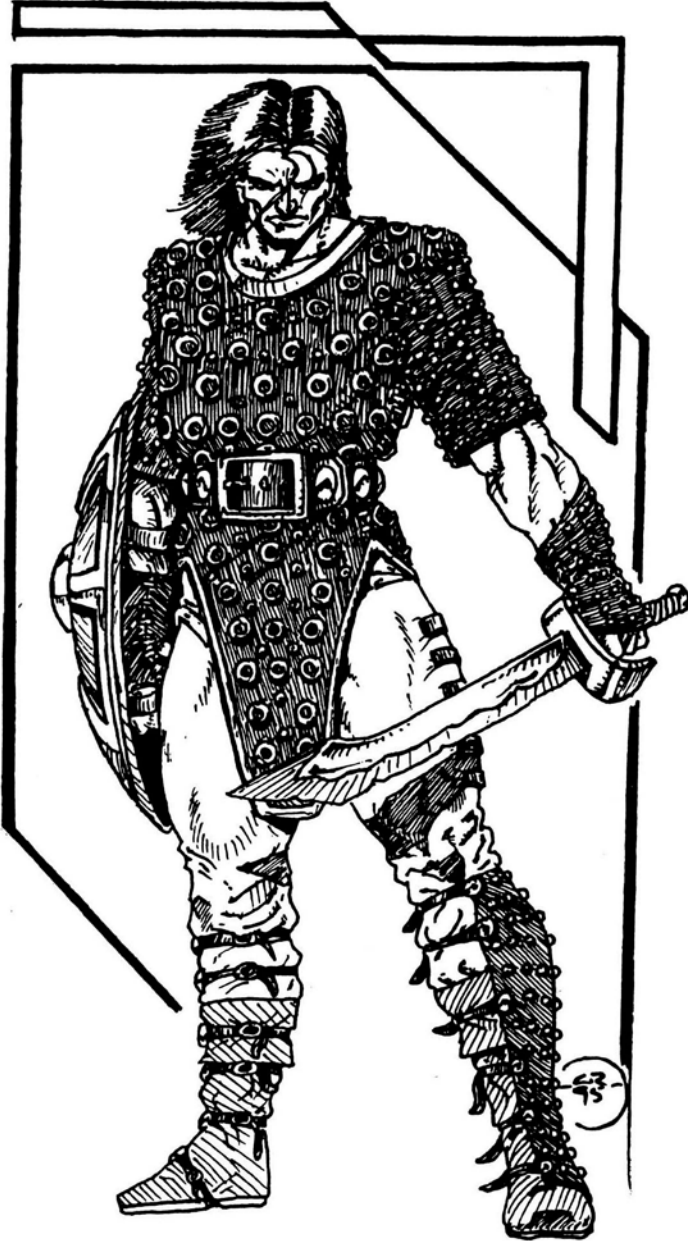
Q: My question deals with a reference you made in the *Adept's Way* to an Orichalcum Adept. I am currently running a 7th Circle Elementalist who would like to become an Orichalcum Adept. Are there plans to follow with a description?

A: No, there are no plans for a description of the Orichalcum Adept. Whether or not Orichalcum Adepts really exist is unsure in Barsaive. As noted in the marginal notes, many elementalists and scholars in Barsaive believe the Orichalcum Adept and Orichalcum spirits are just nonsense.

THE WINDSONG

BY DAVID CARALEY

As you walk down the main street of Bartertown, marvelling at the sights and sounds, you come upon a quaint three story building constructed of wood, except for one side wall made of stone. The Windsong Inn is written in Dwarven on a sign hanging above the door. The windows show the flickering of shadows over light that attests to the crowd inside.



You enter to see a crowded tavern. You stand near the end of a long wooden bar looking out onto the common room. And what a sight. The tables are arranged in a horseshoe and are crowded with patrons eating, drinking, and cheering. The cheering is for the entertainers in the

center of the horseshoe. There are singers, dancers, and acrobats, all performing for the crowd. A large Ork wanders over behind the bar. He is dressed as an innkeeper, but still carries himself as a warrior. "Well met, travellers. What can I get ya?"

The Windsong is a Merchant Inn that caters to the adventuring crowd that travels Barsaive. The inn is owned and run by an Ork named Brak, a retired mercenary who has become an innkeeper. Brak has a staff of 13 people working for him. This includes 2 cooks, 2 stablehands, 2 chambermaids, a bartender, 3 bouncers, and 3 barmaids.

The inn is a three story wooden building with one wall made of stone. The entire ground floor is made up of the common room and kitchen, with an underground storeroom. The second floor is made up of 8 private rooms with 2 beds in each. 4 of them have private baths. The third floor has 4 more private rooms with 2 beds each, Brak's room, and a large room for the staff with 6 cots for those who need to stay the night. There is a stable with room for 10 horses in the back. Brak charges 5 cp per night for boarding horses.

The Windsong is known for its entertainment. Minstrels, storytellers, troubadours and dancers all come to play and entertain, hoping for tips from the clientele. The entertainer rolls his or her skill. They generally earn 5 silver pennies in coppers and silvers for each number above 5 that they roll. For example, if a dancer with a Step of 8 rolls an 9 on 2D6, she would earn 20 silvers that night. It would probably be mostly in coppers, maybe 150 coppers and 5 silvers. It is considered impolite to hog the stage, and anyone is given a chance to tell a story or entertain. Because of this, it is difficult to get a spot on the lineup for the evening. A person has to convince Brak, needing a successful Charisma Test against Brak's Social Defense. Bribery sometimes works, as does Hagglng.

All meals and entertainment take place in the common room, a large room with the tables set up in a large horseshoe so that the entertainers can perform in the middle. It also makes it easier on the barmaids to deliver food and drink. Food consists of simple meals (3 cp), average meals (1 sp), and good meals (3 sp). The drinks served are ale (5 cp), good ale (1 sp), Dwarven stout (2 sp), bottle of wine (5 cp), bottle of fine wine (5sp and up). Rooms go for 3 silvers a night, or 5 silvers with bath.

The inn opens at first morning light when Llara and Trevin start making the simple breakfasts for the patrons that stayed the night. At noon the rest of the staff shows up and starts the day, continuing to work until closing at mid-night. At this point, the doors are barred and clean up begins. Patrons who are staying in the common room are encouraged to aid in the clean up, given a free ale for their troubles.

The Staff

BRAK - FORMER ORK SCORCHER, OWNER

DEX: 13: 6/D10 STR: 15: 6/D10 TOU: 12: 5/D8
PER: 10: 5/D8 WIL: 9: 4/D6 CHA: 10: 5/D8

Initiative: 6/D10 Physical Defense: 7
Number of Attacks: 1 Spell Defense: 6
Attack: Social Defense: 6
Melee 11/D10+D8
Second Attack 7/D12 Armor: 0 (OR 4)
Damage: Mystic Armor: 0
Short Sword 10/D10+D6
Spiked Mace 12/2D10 Knockdown: 6/D10
Dagger 8/2D6 Recovery Tests: 2@D8
Number of Spells: NA
Spell Casting: NA
Spell Effect: NA

Death Rating: 34 Combat Move: 30
Wound Threshold: 9 Full Move: 60
Unconsciousness Rating: 26

Legend Points: 130
Loot: 5D6x10 Silvers
Equipment: Padded leather, short sword, spiked mace

Skills: Rune Carving 1: 6/D10, Legends and Heroes 2: 7/D12, Local Lore 3: 8/2D6, Melee Weapons 5: 11/D10+D8, Second Attack 1: 7/D12, Conversation 3: 8/2D6, Speak Languages 8: 13/D12+D10 Obsidiman, Ork, Elf, Troll, T'Skrang, Windling, Human, Dwarf

Commentary: Brak is a former Ork "mercenary", actually a former scorcher, who retired with enough money to open the Windsong. He is a jovial man who no longer wishes to risk his life and is quite content running his simple inn.

MORLEY DRAGO - HUMAN BARTENDER

DEX: 9: 4/D6 STR: 9: 4/D6 TOU: 10: 5/D8
PER: 12: 5/D8 WIL: 9: 4/D6 CHA: 10: 5/D8

Initiative: 4/D6 Physical Defense: 6
Number of Attacks: 1 Spell Defense: 7
Attack: 6/D10 Social Defense: 6
Damage: 4/D6
Number of Spells: NA Armor: 0
Spellcasting: NA Mystic Armor: 0
Effect: NA Knockdown: 4/D6
Recovery Tests: 2

Death Rating: 31 Combat Move: 24
Wound Threshold: 8 Full Move: 48
Unconsciousness Rating: 22

Legend Points: 40
Equipment: Bar things, dog...
Loot: 3D6 x 10 silvers

Skills: Conversation 4: 8/2D6, Legends and Heroes 2: 7/D12, Local Lore 3: 8/2D6, Music: Flute 1: 6/D10, Speak Languages 8: 13/D12+D10 (Dwarven, Elf, Human, Obsidiman, Ork, Troll, T'skrang, Windling), Unarmed Combat 2: 6/D10

Commentary: Morley has been tending bar at the Windsong for over five years. He knows of Brak's past, and looks out for his friend in case anyone carrying a grudge comes in and tries to get even.

Morley is a middle-aged man whose hair is going gray, but he still thinks quite clear, and is often the one whom entertainers go to when they want a chance to perform.

LLARA - FEMALE ORK COOK

DEX: 11: 5/D8 STR: 14: 6/D10 TOU: 12: 5/D8
PER: 13: 6/D10 WIL: 8: 4/D6 CHA: 11: 5/D8

Initiative: 5/D8 Physical Defense: 7
Number of Attacks: 1 Spell Defense: 7
Attack: 6/D10 Social Defense: 7
Damage: 9/D8+D6
Number of Spells: NA Armor: 2
Spellcasting: NA Mystic Armor: 0
Effect: NA Knockdown: 6/D10
Recovery Tests: 2

Death Rating: 34 Combat Move: 30
Wound Threshold: 9 Full Move: 60
Unconsciousness Rating: 26

Legend Points: 55
Equipment: Craft tools (including something used as a club), padded cloth armor
Loot: D6 x 10 silvers

Skills: Appraise Food and Drink 3: 9/D8+D6, Cooking 3: 9/D8+D6, Melee 1: 6/D10, Trading 3: 8/2D6

Commentary: Llara and Brak are lovers and she helps him run the inn. She is a good cook, and enjoys her work. She is a good hearted individual who sometimes feeds the poor from the back door. She is also fond of strays, and there is usually a few dogs and cats out back.

TREVIN - HUMAN ASSISTANT COOK

DEX: 12: 5/D8 STR: 11: 5/D8 TOU: 11: 5/D8
PER: 13: 6/D10 WIL: 10: 5/D8 CHA: 13: 6/D10

Initiative: 5/D8 Physical Defense: 7
Number of Attacks: 1 Spell Defense: 7
Attack: 6/D10 Social Defense: 7

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Initiative: 5/D8
Physical Defense: 7
Number of Attacks: 1
Spell Defense: 7
Attack: 6/D10
Social Defense: 7
Damage: 8/2D6
Number of Spells: NA
Armor: 2
Spellcasting: NA
Mystic Armor: 0
Effect: NA
Knockdown: 5/D8
Recovery Tests: 2

Death Rating: 32
Wound Threshold: 8
Combat Move: 29
Unconsciousness Rating: 24
Full Move: 57

Legend Points: 50
Equipment: Craft tools (including something used as a club), padded cloth armor
Loot: D6 x 10 silvers

Skills: Appraise Animals 3: 9/
D8+D6, Animal Handling 3: 9/
D8+D6, Melee 1: 6/D10, Trading
3: 8/2D6

Damage: 8/2D6
Number of Spells: NA Armor: 2
Spellcasting: NA Mystic Armor: 0
Effect: NA Knockdown: 5/D8
Recovery Tests: 2

Death Rating: 32 Combat Move: 29
Wound Threshold: 8 Full Move: 57
Unconsciousness Rating: 24

Legend Points: 50
Equipment: Craft tools (including something used as a club), padded cloth armor
Loot: D6 x 10 silvers

Skills: Appraise Food and Drink 3: 9/D8+D6, Cooking 3: 9/D8+D6, Melee 1: 6/D10, Trading 3: 8/2D6

Commentary: Trevin is a simple cook who works at the Windsong. He is a quiet man who goes home at night to his family. He is in his mid-40s and tries to live a simple life.

SEVVI, GUNNIR - HUMAN STABLEHANDS

DEX: 12: 5/D8 STR: 11: 5/D8 TOU: 11: 5/D8
PER: 13: 6/D10 WIL: 10: 5/D8 CHA: 13: 6/D10

Commentary: Sevvi is an old man and Gunnir is his grandson. They care for the horses and other mounts that are kept at the inn. They both love animals and are quite good at their jobs. Sevvi wishes he could get training for Gunnir to become a Beastmaster Adept, but can not afford it.

HELVA, FRAN - DWARVEN CHAMBERMAIDS

DEX: 12: 5/D8 STR: 13: 6/D10 TOU: 14: 6/D10
PER: 13: 6/D10 WIL: 10: 5/D8 CHA: 11: 5/D8

Initiative: 5/D8 Physical Defense: 7
Number of Attacks: 1 Spell Defense: 7
Attack: 6/D10 Social Defense: 7
Damage: 9/D8+D6
Number of Spells: NA Armor: 2
Spellcasting: NA Mystic Armor: 0
Effect: NA Knockdown: 6/D10
Recovery Tests: 3

Death Rating: 36 Combat Move: 24
Wound Threshold: 10 Full Move: 48
Unconsciousness Rating: 28

Legend Points: 55
Equipment: Craft tools (including something used as a club), padded cloth armor
Loot: D6 x 10 silvers

Skills: Appraise Own Craft 3: 9/D8+D6, Craft 3: 9/D8+D6, Melee 1: 6/D10, Trading 3: 8/2D6

Commentary: Both of these Dwarven women moved to Bartertown to try and find husbands who struck it rich. So far they have had no luck, though Helva is falling for Roarc despite his present poverty.

ELLA, GWEN - HUMAN BARMAIDS

DEX: 11: 5/D8 STR: 9: 4/D6 TOU: 10: 5/D8
PER: 11: 5/D8 WIL: 10: 5/D8 CHA: 14: 6/D10

Initiative: 5/D8 Physical Defense: 7
Number of Attacks: 1 Spell Defense: 6
Attack: 6/D10 Social Defense: 8
Damage: 4/D6
Number of Spells: NA Armor: 0
Spellcasting: NA Mystic Armor: 0
Effect: NA Knockdown: 4/D6
Recovery Tests: 2

Death Rating: 31 Combat Move: 27
Wound Threshold: 8 Full Move: 45
Unconsciousness Rating: 22

Legend Points: 50
Equipment: Clothes, smile
Loot: 2D6 silvers

Skills: Bartending 2: 7/D12, Flirting 3: 9/D8+D6, Singing 1: 7/D12, Unarmed Combat 1: 6/D10

Commentary: Ella and Gwen are in their early 20s. They are both good-looking. Ella is a blond haired, blue eyed tease who plays the dumb blond to perfection. Gwen is a red haired, green eyed girl who simply smiles seductively and does her job.

MURIEL - WINDLING BARMAID

DEX: 12: 5/D8 STR: 5: 3/D4 TOU: 7: 4/D6
PER: 12: 5/D8 WIL: 10: 5/D8 CHA: 16: 7/D12

Initiative: 5/D8 Physical Defense: 9
Number of Attacks: 1 Spell Defense: 7
Attack: 6/D10 Social Defense: 9
Damage: 3/D4
Number of Spells: NA Armor: 0
Spellcasting: NA Mystic Armor: 0
Effect: NA Knockdown: 3/D4
Recovery Tests: 1

Death Rating: 27 Combat Move: 16 / 33
Wound Threshold: 6 Full Move: 32 / 65
Unconsciousness Rating: 18

Legend Points: 65
Equipment: Clothes, smile
Loot: 2D6 silvers

Skills: Bartending 2: 7/D12, Flirting 3: 10/D10+D6, Singing 1: 8/2D6, Unarmed Combat 1: 5/D8

Commentary: Muriel is a dark haired, violet eyed girl who is always curious. She is always trying to hear stories about foreign places and adventures. Though she sometimes gets distracted, customers seem to like her.

ORIN, ROARC - DWARVEN BOUNCERS

DEX: 11: 5/D8 STR: 15: 6/D10 TOU: 16: 7/D12
PER: 12: 5/D8 WIL: 12: 5/D8 CHA: 8: 4/D6

Initiative: 5/D8 Physical Defense: 7
Number of Attacks: 1 Spell Defense: 7
Attack: 7/D12 Social Defense: 5
Damage: 9/D8+D6
Number of Spells: NA Armor: 3
Spellcasting: NA Mystic Armor: 1
Effect: NA Knockdown: 6/D10
Recovery Tests: 3

Death Rating: 39 Combat Move: 24
Wound Threshold: 11 Full Move: 48
Unconsciousness Rating: 31

Legend Points: 60
Equipment: Leather armor, club
Loot: D6 x 10 silvers

Skills: Melee 2: 7/D12, Streetwise 2: 7/D12, Unarmed Combat 2: 7/12

Commentary: Orin and Roarc are two cousins from Throal who thought they could make a fortune in the ruins of Parlainth. They were wrong, and ended up deep in debt. Since that time they have been working to pay off their bills here at the Windsong, and staying on the third floor. They both still own shortswords that they keep behind the bar. They tend not to interfere in normal brawls until the inn gets damaged or things escalate out of hand. Orin is a balding Dwarf with a brown beard, while Roarc is a red haired Dwarf who likes to flirt with the ladies.

LLARG - TROLL BOUNCER

DEX: 11: 5/D8 STR: 17: 7/D12 TOU: 15: 6/D10
PER: 11: 5/D8 WIL: 13: 6/D10 CHA: 10: 5/D8

Initiative: 5/D8
 Number of Attacks: 1
 Attack: 7/D12
 Damage: 10/D10+D6
 Number of Spells: NA
 Spellcasting: NA
 Effect: NA

Physical Defense: 7
 Spell Defense: 7
 Social Defense: 6
 Armor: 3
 Mystic Armor: 1
 Knockdown: 6/D10
 Recovery Tests: 3

Death Rating: 35
 Wound Threshold: 9
 Unconsciousness Rating: 27

Combat Move: 27
 Full Move: 54

Legend Points: 60
 Equipment: Leather armor, club
 Loot: D6 x 10 silvers

Skills: Melee 2: 7/D12, Streetwise 2: 7/D12, Unarmed Combat 2: 7/12

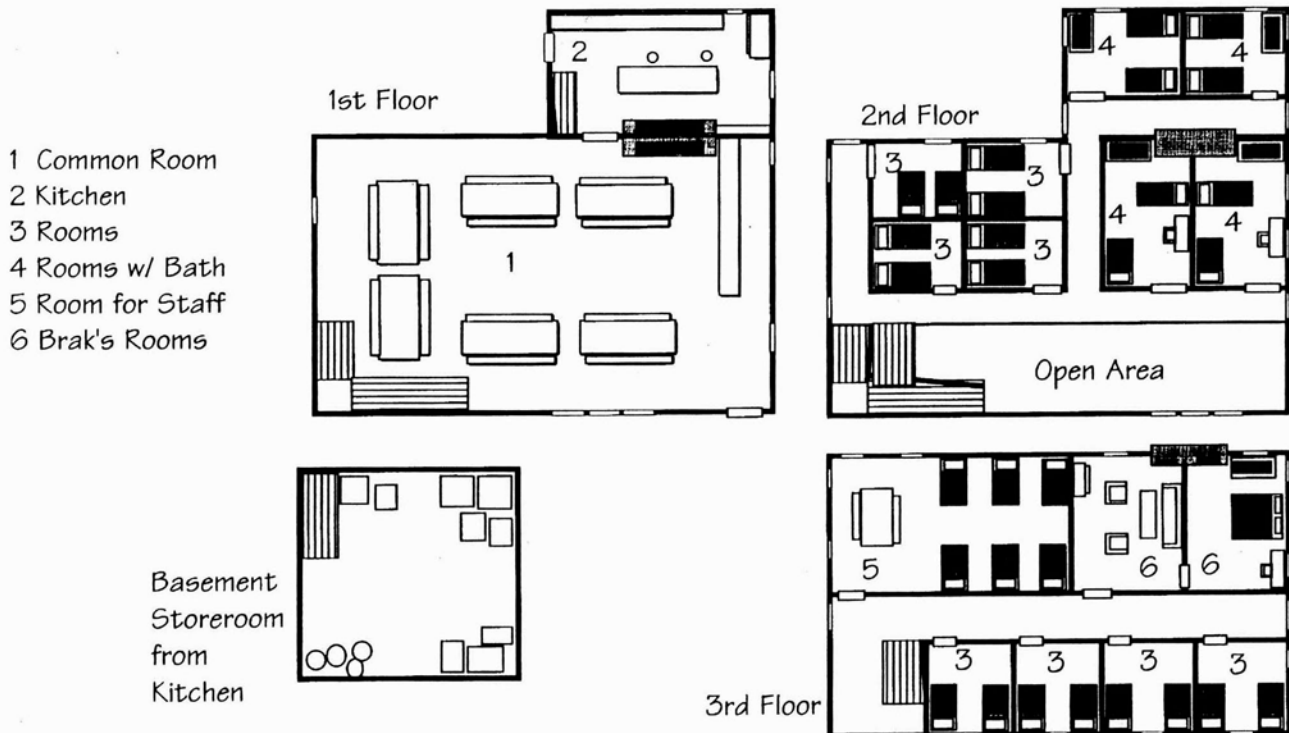
Commentary: Llarg discovered early on that he didn't enjoy sleeping on the cold ground, trekking overland for days on end, and getting rained on. He did, however, enjoy the occasional fights that adventuring brought. When he arrived in Bartertown, he gave up wandering, and became a bouncer at the Windsong.

Adventure Seeds

1) The Windsong is an excellent place for adventurers to hear rumors, stories, and tales about anything that you can think of. There are entertainers and storytellers with any type of clues to places where heroes are buried, long forgotten kaers, and lairs of creatures with hordes of treasure. Of course, not all are true, but such are the perils of adventuring.

2) Llarg the bouncer knows of the location of the lair of a Jehuthra. This is where he lost two of his companions, one of which was wearing the mystic Ring of Takka'kar. Llarg was never really sure what the ring did, but he knows that it was magical, and worn by the Elementalist in his group. For a marginal fee of, say, about 250 silvers, Llarg would be willing to tell where this lair could be found.

THE WINDSONG



THE FLOATING KAER

BY ANDREW RAGLAND

Journal Text:

From the journal of Azeat Paurre, Wizard of the Fifth Circle:

Recently, in my research, I have come upon evidence that the Floating Kaer of V'Derinzorn is not merely a story, but an actuality. A merchant, whose drakkar was blown off course in a gale, has actually seen what he believed to be the kaer. He described it to me in sufficient detail that I believe his tale. Now, if only I can locate it.

The trail of V'Derinzorn has been a difficult one to follow. While he left his stamp upon the land, in stories that are told from one end of Barsaive to the other to this very day, his final fate remains uncertain. He consorted with dragons, faced down great Horrors as the kaers were being constructed, and mastered not only his own Discipline but that of the elementalists as well. It is this last that leads me on my search now.

Before the Scourge rose and the kaers were sealed, the tales have it that he made his own preparations. Using his powers over Earth, he hollowed out a mountain. With his control over Water, he caused a spring to rise in its center. Fire gave light and warmth to the great cavern. Finally, he wrapped the entire mountain in True Air, setting it afloat like a Theran kila.

Within the kaer would be a wealth of knowledge nearly beyond imagining.

The complete works of a wizard of the Thirteenth Circle and elementalists of the Twelfth, including his grimoires and his journals, would be in the kaer's library. All of the experiments he pursued during the Scourge, all of the artifacts he made for those who would come after him -- I am nearly beside myself with anticipation.

Finding the right drakkar captain and the right Name-Givers to accompany me will be difficult. I must be certain that none of them will come between me and the library for which I have searched half my life. There will no doubt be

great perils involved in boarding the kaer. Traps will wait within for the unwary and the undeserving. But a lifetime of research in one place -- !

GM Text:

Azeat Paurre may himself contact the group, or they could come into possession of his journal by any number of means. An inheritance to a distant relative, an estate sale, or the somewhat overused device of finding it on his body in a back alley all are viable options.

V'Derinzorn's kaer is not actually a mountain. It's a massive sphere of carved stone, surrounded by a thin mantle of True Air.

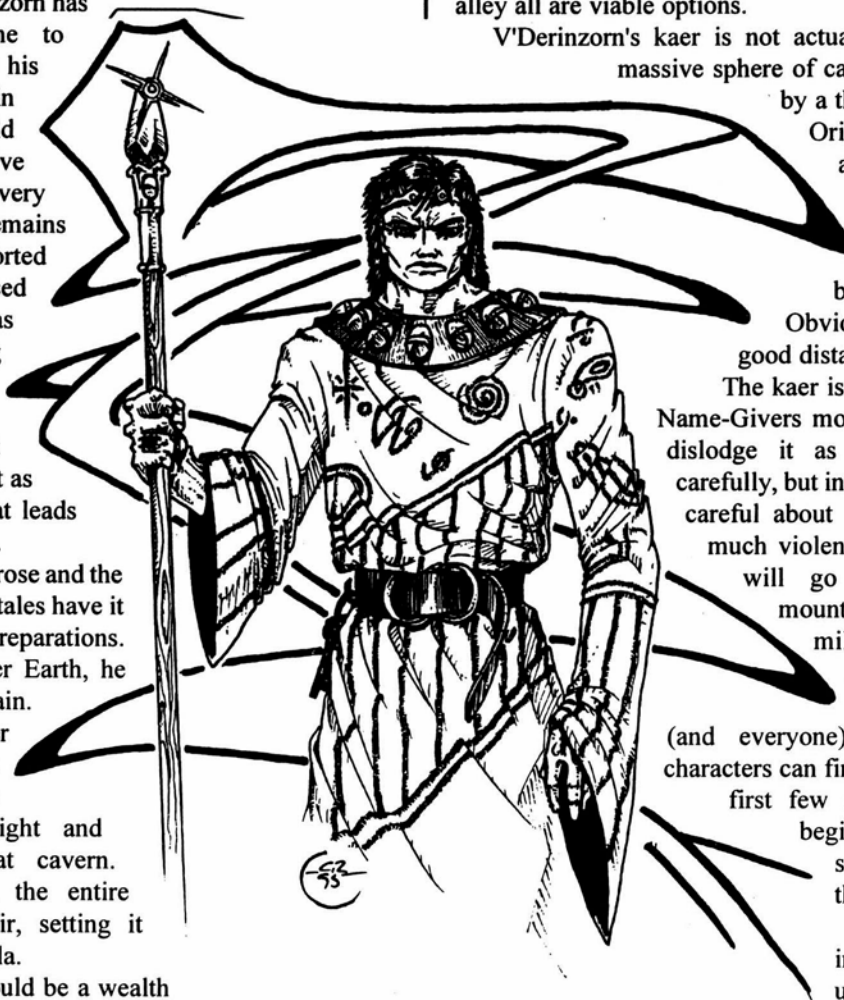
Originally, it floated well above the mountains, but with the ebbing of magic, the sphere has come to rest between two peaks.

Obviously, it has drifted a good distance from its origin.

The kaer is balanced precariously. Name-Givers moving inside should not dislodge it as long as they move carefully, but in a fight, people aren't so careful about their movements. Too much violent rocking and the kaer will go crashing down the mountain, shattering into millions of tiny shards, and taking with it to destruction everything (and everyone) inside. Unless the characters can find a way out within the first few rounds after the kaer begins to slide, or a way to survive the plunge, they're done for.

As to what's actually in the kaer, well, that's up to the GM. If V'Derinzorn's library

and workshop are really there and intact, however, surely that much of a concentration of magical knowledge and equipment will have attracted at least a minor Horror. This might explain why the kaer was never opened from within...





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CHILDREN OF JASPREE

BY ANDREW RAGLAND

Storm Spirit

This one properly should be filed in the Magical Studies collection. I am having a copy made for just such a purpose. However, since the record does describe a unique entity that does represent a threat to travellers, I am filing the original in our collection.

-- Kylara B'Tenn, Master Clerk, Fauna Room

Forward a copy to Karon Foll as well. I am certain he would have some comments to add.

-- Merrox

While my primary expertise deals with those creatures that have solid form, that breathe and eat and reproduce, as well as plants and other living, growing things, I have by necessity gained some knowledge of non-physical beings and Horrors. As Vasdenjas said in his recent work, what the traveller does not know about can quite easily kill him. This particular Horror, due to its nature, can attack without warning, and easily drive unwary adventurers to their doom.

While the climate throughout most of Barsaive is in general calm, with little variance (see my recent work on Weather), in the mountains severe storms can and do occur frequently. High winds and driving rain are accompanied by the stabbing forks of lightning and the crash of thunder, often loud enough to set off rockslides on steep slopes. Travel during such climatic outbursts is difficult enough already, but the presence of an entity I can only call a storm spirit can make being out in such doubly dangerous.

The storm spirit is either a type of Horror not previously classified, or a Horror construct not catalogued before or during the Scourge. Considering the difficulty of detecting its existence, and the rarity of encountering one, I cannot say that I am terribly surprised that there has been no record. I would also



not be surprised to discover that other scholars have observed the existence of the storm spirit but did not survive to file their reports. This is a terrifically dangerous entity. Do not let its lack of material existence convey a sense of lack of physical threat. Indeed, its nonphysical nature is one of its greatest

strengths.

The storm spirit manifests within mountain storms of already forbidding savagery. Once present, the spirit whips the storm into a frenzy, raising winds that can sweep horses off their feet. Hail falls like sling bullets, denting metal armor and injuring unprotected flesh. Lightning strikes with uncanny aim. During my (thankfully brief) encounter, one of my guards was transfixed with a searing white bolt. The poor ork spasmed once, then curled up like a spider touched with fire, and his smoking corpse, fused with the remains of his mount tumbled off the path and down the cliff face.

Therein lies the true danger of the storm spirit. In the midst of all of the storm's fury, a reaction of fear and confusion is to be expected. The storm spirit enhances these feelings, raising fear to stark, unreasoning terror. In the grip of panic, Name-Givers and their mounts make serious, often deadly mistakes, plunging to their death in crevasses and over cliffs. I have seen a troll warrior seized with terror attack anyone and anything that came within blade's reach, slaying his friends without realizing what he was doing. After the storm and its driving force passed, and we resumed our travels, we came upon the remains of another caravan, shattered on the rocks at the base of a high cliff. From the look of it, the horses bolted, and stampeded over the edge before their riders could regain control -- if indeed they even attempted to.

Powerful magics are needed to protect oneself from a spirit of this type. We were fortunate in that we had a nethermancer of high rank travelling with us, who was able to ward most of the party, and a troubadour who kept our spirits up and our minds focused. We were, however, restricted to defensive measures, lacking any way to attack a non-physical entity. I have heard tales of Adepts who could turn their weapons ethereal, or reach into the spirit world. Abilities such as these might prove effective against the storm spirit. I know that it did not seem to notice our Swordmaster's attempts at insulting it.

The troll moots living in the Crystal Peaks have a creation legend involving a spirit they call Grandfather Thunder. I wonder if there could be a connection between their creation spirit and the entity we encountered? If so, then I would have to reclassify the storm spirit. Referring to a relative of another Name-Giver's ancestral spirits as a Horror would be a terrible insult. Perhaps the storm spirit is the result of Horror taint infecting the troll thunder spirits. There is no simple way of answering any of these questions.

Game Mechanics:

DEX NA STR NA TOU NA
PER19 WIL 23 CHA 20

Initiative: 22 Physical Defense: NA

No of Attacks: 4 hail /

1 lightning

Spell Defense: 18

Attack Step: 17

Social Defense: 22

Damage Step: 12 hail /

18 lightning

Physical Armor: NA

Number of Spells: 2

Mystic Armor: 15

Spellcasting: 24

Knockdown: NA

Effect:

Recovery Tests: 8

Fear 20 (vs target's Willpower):

Average: Victim is Harried

Good: Victim is Harried and flees area unless a WIL save is made against the Effect result. PER saves to find a safe path are at -2 beyond the Harried penalty.

Excellent: Victim is Harried and flees area, no WIL save possible. PER saves to find a safe path are at -5 beyond the Harried penalty. Victim attacks anything that gets between him and escape, but will break off combat if the obstruction gets out of the way.

Extraordinary: Berserk fury. Victim aggressively attacks anything within reach until a WIL save against the Effect result is made. Victim automatically makes all Knockdown saves. Victim's spell defense is doubled against all mental effects, but not against physical effects.

Confusion 20:

Average: Harried

Good: Harried, save at WIL+5 vs Effect to decide on a course of action.

Excellent: Harried +3, WIL save vs Effect to decide on a course of action.

Extraordinary: Harried +8, victim unable to decide on a course of action. Social Defense doubled against all suggestions.

Death Rating: 150

Combat Move: 200

Wound Threshold: 30

Full Move: 400

Unconscious: 150

Legend Points: 24,500

Equipment: none

Loot: none

Notes: The storm spirit can attack two different targets with its two spell effects with no reduction in attack step. Fear and Confusion effects are cumulative.

Kwaltec

If Evanten Farseeker travels much further south, he'll leave Barsaive entirely. While the flora and fauna of the Theran Empire are no doubt interesting, they are not appropriate for inclusion in works about Barsaive.

-- Merrox

I'll try and get word to him about this.

-- Kylara

The kwaltec, or ovenbird, is a large flightless bird

inhabiting the far southern reaches of Barsaive in the region of the ancient Ork kingdom of Cara Fahd. While it travels in large flocks, and vaguely resembles the tabri, the kwaltec is by no means as ill-tempered, and far more useful.

It stands about the height of an Elf, including the brilliantly-hued crest on the males. The females are a drab brown hue with flecks of darker brown and black, but the males are really quite impressive, bright blue and white with green edges on their wings and tail. The male crest is

fledged in hues of red, and stands erect when the male is defending his territory or his harem. Both genders have spurs on the back of the foot, the male's being somewhat larger and sharper.

Kwaltecs live in communal groups, small flocks sharing territory to form larger flocks. Each small group, or harem, is presided over by a dominant male. His harem consists of as many females as he can hold against challenges from other males, plus chicks and fledglings. Males are turned out of the harem when they molt to their adult plumage, at about two years of age. They must then carve out their own territory and collect their own harem, or live on the fringes of the flock. Some males seem to discard the idea of building a

harem, and serve out their lives as guardians at the edge of the flock's territory. These males are perhaps the most dangerous to Name-Givers, as they will fight to the death to preserve the flock.

Each harem builds a large dome of mud and twigs, strengthened with strands of tough prairie grasses.

Resembling a large bread oven, hence the name ovenbird, the dome is partitioned into an antechamber and several nesting rooms. The dominant male has his own chamber, and each hen who has clutched has her own, which she shares with her chicks and fledglings. Males line their nesting chambers with feathers from their hens and from defeated males, over a bed of grasses. Females line their nesting rooms with grasses only, and frequently change their bedding to clean up after their chicks. Kwaltecs use their homes for several

years before abandoning them and moving to new grazing territory. The domes bake brick-hard over the years and are useful as shelter by the smaller Name-Givers.

Trolls will find it awkward as there is not sufficient headroom for their massive frames. Colonies of ovenbirds can be mistaken at a distance for Name-Giver villages, several domes clustered together in a small area.

Territory seems to be a complex issue with male kwaltecs. The dome itself is considered harem territory. No males other than the dominant bird and his fledglings are permitted inside. The area immediately around the dome is a neutral ground, where combats can and do occur. The open spaces be-

tween domes in the flock's "village" are apparently uncontested neutral ground. Beyond the village, each harem has a preferred feeding ground, which the dominant male and sometimes his hens will defend. The flock's entire range is another defended territory, watched over by the guardian males. Interestingly, the



dominant males will ignore a guardian male passing through their territory, or even sleeping in the antechamber of their domes. Non-guardian males from the fringes, however, are attacked on sight if they pass within a dominant male's boundaries.

Challenges to a male's dominance occur under three circumstances. Another male can attack the dominant male to take a specific hen from him. This usually is a young hen, just coming into her fertility. The aggressor, most of the time a young male building his own harem, circles the hen to cut her off from her harem. The dominant male puts up a token defense, but it seems to be more for show than serious. Nine times out of ten, the intruder makes off with the hen with only a few scratches for his effort. From a breeding standpoint, this is a logical response. Dominant males would not want to breed with their own daughters for the sake of the strength of the flock.

Disputes occur at the borders of feeding grounds. Males, or sometimes the older hens, will challenge one another over prime areas. Fighting is more serious, usually leaving the loser injured, although not mortally. The winner shifts the border between feeding grounds, marking the new territory. The new border stands until the next challenge. Other birds will not intervene in border challenges under normal circumstances, but if a bird gets too close to the combatants, the opposite side may attack as a preemptive strike. Entire harems can quickly become involved in full-scale war when this happens. Even the chicks will peck at each other. Fortunately for the welfare of the flock, this does not happen often.

Young males can challenge dominant ones for the possession of the harem. This is a fight to the death, with the winner taking the harem, dome and all. Possession challenges are rare things. Most young males prefer to challenge for young hens one at a time, and build their own harem slowly. The occasional larger specimen, however, can decide that this takes too long for their satisfaction. Most often, the young male attacks an aging dominant male, and wins the fight. His first act after the fight customarily is to clean out his new nesting room and line it with the plucked feathers of his fallen enemy.

Ovenbirds are occasionally eaten by the local Name-Givers, but hunting them is a risky business. Only the younger birds are truly edible, older ones developing a gamy taste and the meat becoming tough and stringy. Unfortunately for the would-be gourmand, the younger birds are fiercely defended, both by their dominant males and by the guardian males. Hens will also attack without quarter if their young are threatened. I have seen entire harems converge on predators, ripping the intruder to shreds in a flurry of spurs and jabbing beaks. Better use is made of the birds by leaving them alone and taking over their villages when they move to fresh hunting grounds.

Game Mechanics:

DEX 9	STR 9	TOU 8
PER 5	WIL 4	CHA 4

Initiative: 10	Physical Defense: 12
Number of Attacks: 2	Spell Defense: 7
Attack Step: 12	Social Defense: 5
Damage Step: 13	Physical Armor: 0
Number of Spells: 0	Mystic Armor: 0
Spellcasting: 0	Knockdown: 13
Effect: 0	Recovery Tests: 4

Death Rating: 44	Combat Move: 65
Wound Threshold: 13	Full Move: 130
Unconscious: 36	

Legend Points: 180

Equipment: None

Loot: None, although tailors will pay for the male's feathers

Notes: None

Tonduy

This was in the last packet from Evanten. Apparently he's been making good on his promise to catch up on his work while laid up from the jidwars. File this in the Servos Jungle collection.

-- Kylara

Tree-dwelling life in the Servos Jungle produces a wide variety of species. Life aloft poses less of a threat than ground-dwelling existence, as the larger predators cannot climb into the thinner upper branches. This is not to suggest that there aren't smaller predators, but the prime requisites for defeating them are cleverness and agility rather than brute strength and savagery. Very few of the denizens of the Servos can even approach the tonduy in these.

A large animal, approximately the size of a small hunting cat, the tonduy is built lean and long. Its muzzle is roundly pointed like a rodent's, its eyes set forward for binocular vision. Some experimentation has proven that the animal can see colors. A long, bushy tail gives the tonduy excellent balance for scampering along narrow tree limbs or leaping from tree to tree.

The tonduy's forelimbs are highly developed, being smaller than the hind limbs and having grasping paws nearly as dexterous as a Name-Giver's hands. Indeed, the animal has proven itself capable of amazing feats of ingenuity. In an environment rich in food sources, the tonduy has become choosy, picking its diet with the manner of a rich merchant browsing the selections his cook has prepared. I have observed tonduys using sticks to dig termites out of their mounds, stones to crack nuts, and bits of animal bone to dig for roots on their occasional trips to the jungle floor. By no means

are the tonduys Name-Givers in their own right, but they are quite clever and capable of using primitive tools.

Diet is highly varied. I have observed tonduys making raids on bird nests for the eggs, and stalking lizards. Nuts, berries, roots are all included. I have yet to see a tonduy actively eating leaves, although I did see one chewing desultorily on a twig at one point. I'm not sure if the animal was actually eating the twig or using it to clean her teeth, however.

Their smoke-grey fur blends in well in the shadows under the leaves, making them difficult to spot. Like many arboreal rodents, however, they let trespassers know their displeasure with showers of twigs, stones, nut shells, and whatever else comes to paw at the moment. Tonduys tend to live in large groups, being generally unhappy on their own. They can be encountered in the singular, but never far from the main group. Like blood monkeys, they will rush to

each other's aid when a distress cry is heard.

Windlings should avoid these creatures at any cost. Tonduys are fascinated with butterflies and other brightly colored fluttering things. They don't eat them, but will play with them, sometimes destructively. A windling coming too close to one could find himself an involuntary toy, possibly resulting in serious injury.

Again, I must stress that tonduys are relatively bright. They can learn simple behaviors by observation and imitation -- drinking from a cup, opening doors, untying knots, etc. Name-Givers other than windlings may find their gear in danger when traveling through the Servos. The usual expedient of securing things in a canvas bag tied to a tree with stout rope and complex knots may not protect them from the tonduy, especially if they see you tie the knots.

Game Mechanics:

DEX 10	STR 6	TOU 6
PER 7	WIL 8	CHA 6



Initiative: 12 Physical Defense: 13
 Number of Attacks: 1 Spell Defense: 9
 Attack Step: 12 Social Defense: 8
 Damage Step: 9 Physical Armor: 0
 No of Spells: None Mystic Armor: 4
 Spellcasting: None Knockdown: 10
 Effect: None Recovery Tests: 3

Death Rating: 36 Combat Move: 80
 Wound Threshold: 10 Full Move: 160
 Unconscious: 28

Legend Points: 175

Equipment: None

Loot: None usually, although virtually anything could be found in their nests, depending on who's traveled through their range.

Notes: Tonduys can make a PER test against the Social defense of any Name-Giver to copy simple behaviors, such as drinking from a cup or opening a simple catch. Once successful in imitation, no roll is required to repeat the behavior.

Walking Heads

Brrr.

-- Kylara

I have seen evidence of many aspects of Horror personalities. Cruelty is the most prevalent, a sadistic bent that surpasses the most evil of Name-Givers. Horrors have also evidenced a manic glee in their workings -- the Named Horror Joie is an obvious example of this. Up until now, however, I had not anticipated a Horror having a sense of humor. Granted, it's a macabre, twisted thing, but only a being with a truly sick sense of humor could have created the walking heads.

I have no idea how to classify the heads. They reproduce by releasing spores like a fungus. They put down roots and feed off dead matter, which has been observed in plants growing on the jungle floor in the Servos. However, they are highly mobile when mature, and have a rudimentary social order, traveling in packs. Whether they are plant or animal is beyond me, and Jaspre has not seen fit to guide my hand in these words. I shall therefore refer to them as constructs, although they do not demonstrate any of the powers previously observed in Horror constructs.

In appearance, the walking heads resemble the severed and slightly decayed heads of the Name-Giver races, with the exception of windlings and obsidimen. The mouth gapes open slightly, the eyes are rolled upward and dull, and the features have a slack expression. In general, they look dead. From the base of the neck springs forth a multitude of insect-like black legs. These function like roots while the head is immature, becoming mobile only at maturity. The

heads sway randomly when moving, in a disturbing fashion.

The mature heads travel in packs, observed to range from five to thirty-two in number. I suspect that the pack size remains small due to their manner of reproduction. When a walking head becomes fully ripe and ready to reproduce, it begins to swell, attaining a bloated, decaying appearance, like a corpse will swell if not buried properly. Parts of the interior decay, producing gases that build in pressure. I described this process in detail previously in an entry concerning the thunder tree, which uses a similar means of seed distribution. Eventually, the walking head explodes, sending a spray of spores across a wide area. When in a pack, an exploding head can touch off others, resulting in a cascade of sympathetic explosions. Even unripe but mobile heads can detonate if touched off by an explosion next to them. This phenomenon results in small packs, as larger packs are obviously at higher risk for cascades.

Walking heads can apparently bring about their own detonation if they feel threatened. Unfortunately, what makes a walking head feel threatened is the presence of anything large moving close to them. As a rule of thumb, if it's larger than a walking head and it gets closer than five paces, the walking head will probably explode. A mature head is annoying, as the cloud of spores is dense and choking, and the shock of the detonation can knock an Elf off his feet. Also, the spores must be treated as an illness, to keep them from growing in the lungs. Fully ripe heads, however, explode with a force sufficient to cause injury. The spores erupt with such force that they can cause injury themselves, in the manner of the legendary wingflyer.

Walking heads do perform a useful function. Like any plant that feeds off decay, they assist in cleaning up dead things, both in the immature, rooted stage and in the mature walking form. The danger they represent is confined to explorers of caverns and kaers, as they do not venture out in open sunlight. A large stone thrown into the middle of a pack will detonate them safely from a distance. Coming around a corner, however, and finding oneself confronted with a pack can be frightening.

Game Mechanics:

DEX 5 STR 2 TOU 3
 PER 3 WIL 3 CHA 2

Initiative: 8	Physical Defense: 6
Number of Attacks: 1	Spell Defense: 5
Attack Step:	Social Defense: 4
Mature 12,	
Fully Ripe 16	
Damage Step:	Physical Armor: 0
Mature 13,	
Fully Ripe 18	
Number of Spells: 1	Mystic Armor: 0

Spellcasting: 10 Knockdown: 4
Effect: 8 (choking) Recovery Tests: 1

Death Rating: 15 Combat Move: 10
Wound Threshold: 4 Full Move: 20
Unconscious: 9

Legend Points: Mature 85, Fully Ripe 335
Equipment: None
Loot: None

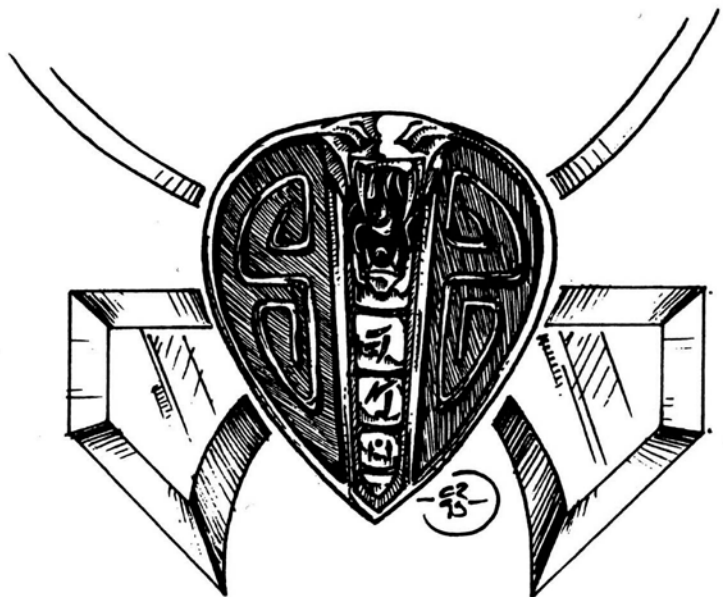
Notes: Any hit that does a Wound or kills a mature or fully ripe head causes it to detonate. When a head explodes, all heads within two yards must make a TOU save against an 8 to avoid sympathetic detonation. Any head that makes its attack is automatically destroyed. Both Physical and Spellcasting attacks are made

simultaneously and are rolled separately for all characters within the six-foot blast radius. Any character who takes choking damage from the spore (Spellcasting) attack must receive treatment from a healer or Questor of Garlen within three days to prevent the spores from taking root in his lungs. Characters who do not receive treatment take Step 2 damage on the fourth day, damage increasing by 2 steps per day until the tenth day. Damage continues to accrue at Step 20 for five more days, until the immature head dies from lack of room to expand. The fungoid head is not strong enough to break ribs and burst out of a Name-Giver's chest. Treatment at any point by a healer or Questor of Garlen can halt the progress of the infestation. Damage accrued then heals at normal rates.

Reflex Booster

Cost: 400
Weight: 1

The reflex booster charm causes 5 points of permanent damage to the wearer. Made of black sapphire which swirls with red when activated, the reflex booster charm can be used to increase its wearer's initiative step a variable amount. Each round the wearer wishes to use the charm she must take a number of points in Strain equal to the number of steps she wishes her initiative increased. For example, in the first round of combat Ilona wishes to use her reflex booster charm to increase her initiative step by three, therefore she must take three points of strain. If she wished to continue doing this, each round she would have to take three points of strain to give her the three step initiative bonus, or two points to give her a two step bonus, etc.



THE SONGSMITH

BY CRAIG WRIGHT

The Songsmith discipline is an elven discipline with a major focus on the arts, among other things. As capable of performing as the Troubadour, they employ illusions to enhance performances; they are also able to construct the fine examples of elven art as expressed in elven weapons. A cross between the the Troubadour and the Weaponsmith with minor Illusioncasting abilities thrown in, the discipline is appreciated far more by elves than the Weaponsmith and is therefore found in the elven population far more often than that discipline. However, the Songsmith has another

purpose also, one which has been lost with the corruption of Wurm Wood - Songsmiths originally acted as agents of the Elven Queen, both through preserving elven culture and through other means.

serve the Elven Queen; only with the creation of Blood Wood, and the splintering of the elven race, did single disciplined Songsmiths become relatively common.

Many of the legendary Songsmiths of Sereatha, for example, were also Swordmasters.

Attributes: Perception, Willpower, Charisma

Racial Restrictions: Elves only

Karma Ritual: A Songsmith performs his or her Karma Ritual through an artisan skill. Once the Songsmith begins performing, he or she cannot stop until the performance is ended; the Adept must be completely immersed in their artisan skill.

Artisan Skills: Acting, Musician, Dancer, Storyteller, Painter



purpose also, one which has been lost with the corruption of Wurm Wood - Songsmiths originally acted as agents of the Elven Queen, both through preserving elven culture and through other means.

Songsmiths of the present day are therefore a pale shadow of what they once were, although the Blood Elves may yet preserve Songsmiths who fulfill their original purpose. Songsmiths were rarely single disciplined, as the discipline was originally only taught to those elven Adepts who demonstrated a desire to

serve the Elven Queen; only with the creation of Blood Wood, and the splintering of the elven race, did single disciplined Songsmiths become relatively common.

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FIRST CIRCLE

Talents

Avoid Blow*
Emotion Song*
Karma Ritual
Melee Weapons
R/W Language
Skilled Artisan*

SECOND CIRCLE

Talents

Forge Blade
Item History
Speak Language*

THIRD CIRCLE

Talents

First Impression*
Thrown Weapons

FOURTH CIRCLE

Glamour: as per the Illusionist special ability

Talents

Empathic Sense
Thread Weaving (Illusions)*

FIFTH CIRCLE

Spell Defense: +1 to Social defense

Talents

Weapon History
Winning Smile

SIXTH CIRCLE

Karma: May spend a Karma on a Charisma Test only

Talents

Abate Curse
Resist Taunt*

SEVENTH CIRCLE

Social Defense: +1 to Social Defense

Talents

Disguise Self*
Mimic Voice

EIGHTH CIRCLE

Spell Defense: +1 to Spell Defense

Talents

Detect Weapon
True Sight*

NINTH CIRCLE

Social Defense: +2 to Social Defense

Talents

Armoured Matrix
R/W Magic
Spellcast

TENTH CIRCLE

The Kiss: as per the Troubadour special ability

Talents

Conceal Weapon
Lasting Impression

ELEVENTH CIRCLE

Spell Defense: +2 to Spell Defense

Talents

Life Check
Memorize Image

TWELFTH CIRCLE

Karma: +25 points Maximum Karma

Spell Defense: +1 to Spell Defense

Talents

Multi-tongue
Safethought*

THIRTEENTH CIRCLE

Spell Defense: +1 to Spell Defense

Talents

Spirit Talk
Thought Link

FOURTEENTH CIRCLE

Recovery: +1 Recovery test

Initiative: +1 to Initiative step

Social Defense: +1 to Social Defense

Talents

Poison Resistance
Tiger Spring

FIFTEENTH CIRCLE

Initiative: +2 to Initiative Step

Karma: May spend a karma point on a Recovery test

Talents

Astral Pocket
Slough Blame

* denotes discipline talents

SKILLED ARTISAN

Step Number: N/A **Skill Use:** No

Action: No **Strain:** None

Requires Karma: No **Race Restriction:** Elves only

Discipline Talent Use: Songsmith

Skilled Artisan is a talent learned by many elves over the course of their lives, which allows the elf to learn

and develop artisan skills using magic. Functioning in a fashion similar to the human talent of Versatility, each rank of Skilled Artisan allows an elf to purchase one artisan skill as though it is a talent of 1st to 4th circle. Each artisan skill must be paid for with legend points separately. The maximum rank in any artisan skill bought through Skilled Artisan is equal to the rank of Skilled Artisan itself. An elf may also choose to learn artisan skills without the use of magic, in which case normal skill rules apply; an elf may also teach others the skills, although without the Skilled Artisan talent these are taught without magic and learned normally. Available to any elf at 1st circle, the talent is available only to elves. Skilled Artisan applies for purposes of circle advancement only as part of the Songsmith discipline, wherein it originally developed.

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FOR SUCH IS THE TRUTH

BY STEVE KENSON

The Order of the Silver Twilight

Long ago, in the time before the Scourge, the discipline of the Nethermancer was not as misunderstood as it is today in the land of Barsaive. Nethermancers dealt with the paths of the spirit world even then, but they had not yet come to be so associated with the Horrors and the forces of Death as they are now.

The time before the Scourge was one of learning - and many scholars traveled to the Eternal Library at Thera to study. One such student was the nethermancer Eolim Belial, who worked as an apprentice for many years at the Library, becoming a student of the works of Jaron the Everliving.

When he returned to his home in the province of Barsaive, Eolim wished to emulate the works of the

ancient scholars of Thera. He established a monastery in the Twilight Peaks that drew magicians and scholars from all over Barsaive to study there. Eolim called the community that grew up around the monastery "The Order of the Silver Twilight" - a Name to echo the peaks themselves and the myriad paths of astral space.

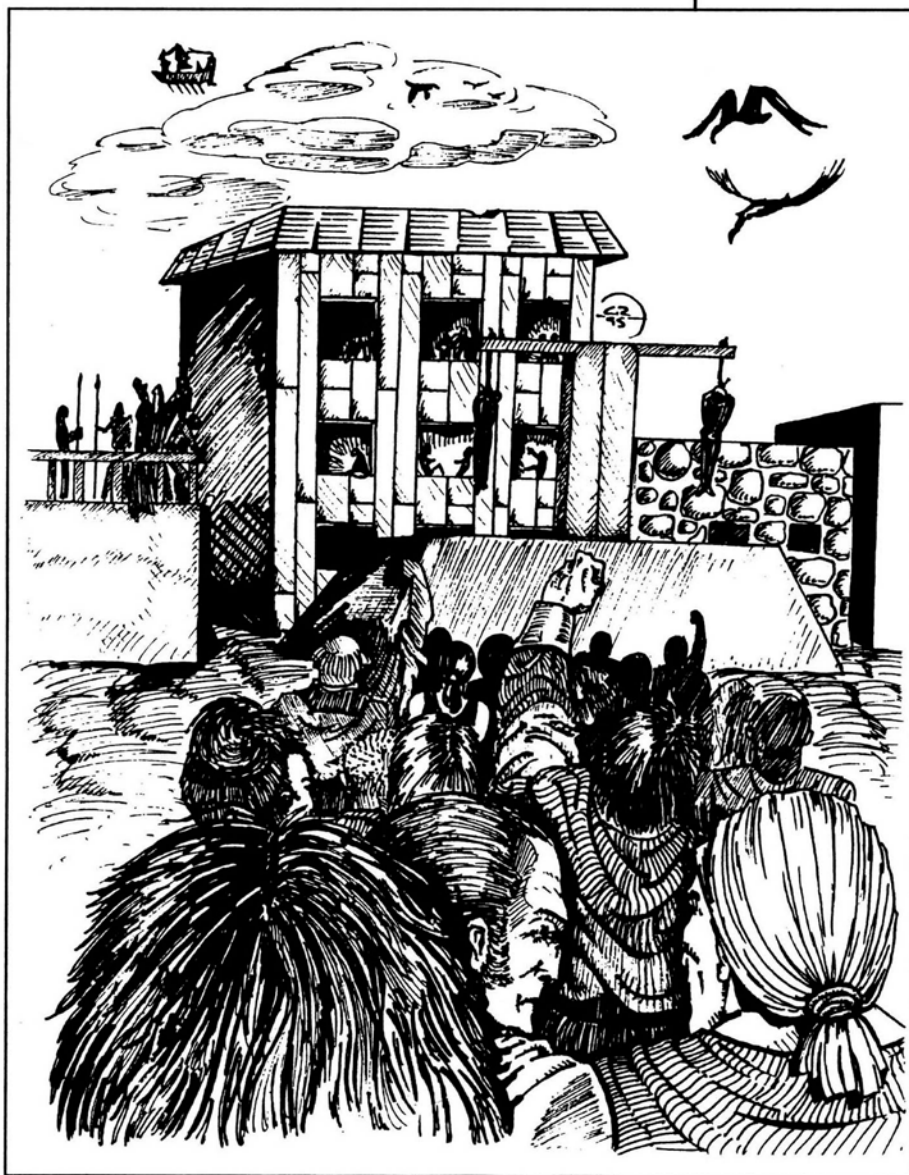
The study of the astral world and the deep secrets of the Netherworlds were the Order's greatest area of study. Under Eolim Belial's direction, the Order's scholars learned many secrets of the spirit worlds and wielded mighty magics. They also discovered a terrible truth that would govern the fate of the world: the coming of the Scourge.

When Eolim learned of the coming Horrors, the Order turned all of its efforts towards learning more about the Horrors; how to protect against them and perhaps even how to master them. Eolim Belial became especially obsessed with the study of Horrors and is said to have become a master of summoning and binding lesser Horrors in order to study them.

The Order became increasingly more remote and cloistered, closed off from the outside world and absorbed in their studies. The humble monastery became like a fortress as new defenses and fortifications were built. Master Eolim Belial was seen on several occasions speaking with Theran emissaries. Some say he was exchanging information while others speculate that Eolim came to distrust the Therans and refused to share his knowledge with them. It is known that he refused the Therans' Rite of Protection.

What the Order learned of the Horrors is unknown because the few communities that had commerce with them lost contact just before the Scourge when the members of the Order sealed themselves within their citadel with mighty magical wards. After the centuries-long Scourge had passed, the Order and their researches were all but forgotten by most.

Ten years ago, a party of explorers followed a map into the Twilight Peaks to find the lost citadel of the Order. When they returned, they claimed to have discovered the place, still sealed by strange and powerful wards. Unable to break the wards, and beset by the monsters that



inhabit the peaks, they were forced to abandon their search.

The Legacy of the Order

The Order of the Silver Twilight is not entirely forgotten in modern Barsaive. There exists a small organization based out of a town near the foothills of the Twilight Peaks. Known as the "Order of the Silver Dawning," the group is a kind of Living Legend Cult that claims to be the inheritors of the Silver Twilight's legacy of magic and wisdom. Their leader, an Ork nethermancer named Joachim Kole, claims to have been trained by a secret line of students instructed by Eolim Belial himself.

Kole claims that the Order's citadel in the Twilight Peaks was breached by a Horror during the Scourge, but that a small group of magicians were able to use the Order's great knowledge of the netherworld to send out their spirits into astral space even as their bodies perished. These spirits choose to secretly instruct certain name-givers with the secrets of the Order, so that their work could be carried on. Joachim says that he was trained by the spirits of the Order and founded the Order of the Silver Dawning to complete the work that the original Order began. He claims rights to the accumulated knowledge and magic gathered in the Order's citadel in the Twilight Peaks and is planning an expedition to recover it.

The Truth

Joachim Kole is a fraud, but his story is partially true. The Order's Citadel was breached during the Scourge by a Horror known as Thess'a'il. The horror destroyed most of the members of the Order, but Eolim Belial was not so easily defeated. He used a blood magic ritual to place himself in a "shadow state" between the realms of Life and Death, bound to the astral space within the citadel, then strengthened the place's wards with his own life force, pushing the horror out and denying Thess'a'il its prize of knowledge and magic.

The horror was not yet willing to surrender its prize, so it began seeking out nethermancers that it could corrupt, offering them training in exchange for the possibility of using them as tools to break the wards of the Citadel. Joachim Kole is the horror's current and most promising protegee. He has concocted his story about being the legitimate heir to the Order of the Silver Twilight to allow him to attract skilled adepts that might be able to penetrate the Citadel's many defenses and aid him in wresting free the secrets of the Order. He might well contact the player characters claiming to be the rightful heir and desiring their help in overcoming the ancient defenses of the citadel, only to turn on them once they have outlived their usefulness.

The Twilight Staff

Maximum Threads: 1

Spell Defense: 15

A six-foot long staff carved from an unknown type of wood, worn silvery-gray with age and use. The staff itself is smooth and featureless, bound and shod in dark

iron bands that have silver inlays of magical symbols upon them. The staff glows with a faint silvery radiance when bathed in moonlight.

The staff was created centuries ago, and has passed through the hands of many magicians, who have in turn passed it on to their students and successors. Eolim Belial was the last magician known to wield the Twilight Staff and it has been believed lost since shortly before the beginning of the Scourge.

Thread Ranks

Rank 1 Cost: 300

Key Knowledge: The character must know the Name of the staff.

Effect: The staff does Strength +4 steps of damage. It will also shed a silvery light equal to bright moonlight at the wielder's command (enough to see by, but not bright enough to use offensively).

Rank 2 Cost: 500

Key Knowledge: The character must learn the Names of all of the magicians who have wielded the staff and whose sigils are engraved upon it. The gamemaster may decide how many different magicians have wielded the staff and their names, but there should be at least six.

Effect: The damage of the staff increases to Strength +5 steps, Strength +6 steps against Horrors and Undead only.

Rank 3 Cost: 800

Key Knowledge: The character must learn the Name of the forest where the wood for the staff was cut.

Deed: The character must travel to the wood where the staff was cut and there, by the light of the full moon, carve his or her own sigil into the staff.

Effect: At the cost of 2 Strain, the wielder of the staff can make the astral aura of any subject in line-of-sight visible to normal sight for one minute by making a successful Spellcasting Test vs. the target's Spell Defense.

Rank 4 Cost: 1,300

Key Knowledge: The character must learn the fate of Eolim Belial, the last wielder of the staff.

Effect: The wielder can cast the Circle 6 Nethermancer spell Blessed Light. The casting test uses the wielder's Spellcasting Step.

Rank 5 Cost: 2,100

Deed: The wielder must seek out Eolim Belial's ghost and seek his blessing on the staff, permitting him to perform the ritual of passing it on to a worthy wielder.

Effect: The staff's magic can temporarily block a Horror's access to astral space. Upon striking a Horror, the wielder expends 4 Strain and makes a Spellcasting Test against the Horror's Spell Defense. If successful, the Horror is forced into the physical world and is unable to move into astral space for a number of Combat Turns equal to the wielder's Spellcasting Rank. The staff does Strength +8 Steps Damage to Horrors, Horror Constructs and Undead.

Thess'a'il

The horror Thess'a'il appears in the physical world in one of two forms. The first is a stick-thin humanoid figure draped in tattered, hooded robes of dark fabric. A pair of burning eyes glowing within the black depths of the figure's hood. When the horror enters combat, it generally assumes its other form, a huge, skeletal dragon with the same burning light in the black pits of its eye sockets.

Thess'a'il has been in the physical world for centuries, and it has become obsessed for some reason with the Order of the Silver Twilight. The horror hungers for the collection of magical knowledge and lore that the order protected for decades in its mountain fortress and which now lies behind the powerful wards held strong by Eolim Belial's final blood magic ritual. It will go to any lengths to devour that cache of accumulated knowledge and wisdom. Unable to breach the wards of the citadel by itself, the horror has cultivated acolytes over the years in hopes of finding a Name-Giver capable of breaking Belial's wards and giving the horror a way to reach its prize.

Most of these "students" have been nethermancers who have made foolish bargains with the Horror for power or knowledge. The followers of the horror have been unable to reach the Twilight Citadel and have been destroyed by adventuring adepts or by Thess'a'il itself for their failure. Over the centuries, Thess'a'il's power in the physical world has waned, but the horror remains terribly powerful and possessed of great astral influence. Joachim Kole is the horror's current and most promising student and it hopes that it will not be disappointed by another unfortunate failure.

Use the statistics for a Bloatform (*Earthdawn*, p.299) for Thess'a'il with the following changes.

Powers: Animate Dead 12, Corrupt Karma 12, Cursed Luck 10, Disrupt Magic 15, Horror Mark 12

Spellcasting: as a Circle 7 Nethermancer

The Bone Bell of Kaer Talloria

Aye, of course I've a tale for you, traveler, that is what we troubadours do, is it not? And since you are so interested in my music, I will tell you a story about a most strange musical instrument indeed.

Near the beginning of the Scourge, many name-givers throughout the land of Barsaive were retreating into their kaers and sealing them behind them to wait out the long centuries of the Scourge. Save for some of the Elves and the long-lived Obsidimen, those who entered the kaers knew that they would never see the outside world again. They could only hope that their great-grandchildren would be able to emerge safely from shelter into a world free of the horrors. This

brought many people to despair and the sealing of the kaers was a time of great loss for all of the name-givers.

One such kaer was Named Kaer Talloria, after the magician who helped to build it. Talloria worked unceasingly to excavate the shelter for her people and create the orichalcum runes and wards that would hold the horrors at bay for the centuries of the Scourge. She was tireless in her efforts, working long into the night only to be up the next morning before anyone else to begin work again. She was driven to protect her people.

As the first horrors infested the land, Talloria studied them carefully, gathering all of the information that she could about these creatures. She began to grow increasingly concerned as all of the reports of the



horrors indicated that they were terrible in strength and power and that the worst was yet to come, for the first horrors to appear were weak for their kind according to the Therans. Talloria began to fear that the defenses provided by the Therans would not be enough to protect the people.

She began researching the horrors, and carefully examining the remains of the horrors that could be recovered, to formulate another means of defense against them. She also delved deeply into the arts of

nethermancy, studying the ways of the netherworlds in hopes of learning more about the nature of the horrors and how they could be defeated and kept at bay from the feast of name-giver flesh and souls they desired. Talloria worked even harder than ever, locked away in her laboratory, consumed with a fierce passion to discover a way. Many people of the village grew concerned for her welfare but they respected their magician and feared the horrors, so they said nothing and waited.

In time, Talloria began work on something in the central meeting area of the newly constructed kaer. Her work was concealed behind a misty curtain of elemental air, so none of the people knew what it was that she was building. But they all trusted Talloria and so they waited and watched until the time came for them to seal the kaer.

The horrors had grown too numerous on the surface for the people to remain there any longer. Word had come that even mighty Thera had sealed themselves behind their dome of True Air and Fire to wait out the long night of the Scourge. Attacks from ravaging horrors were coming almost daily and the people of the village retreated into their kaer and Talloria enacted the rituals to seal the portals of the shelter and activate the magical wards given to them by the Therans to keep out the horrors.

Not long after Kaer Talloria was sealed, the sorceress revealed to the people the artifact that she had so carefully constructed to keep the forces of the horrors at bay, should the protections of the kaer fail them. It was a great bell of bronze woven with True Earth and Air. The frame, structure and clapper of the great bell were carved from bone - the bones of the victims of the first horrors, bones that still resonated with the terror of the coming Scourge. At first the people of the kaer were wary of such a gift, touched as it was with the power of blood magic. Some feared that the bell might be tainted with the power of the horrors, but Talloria was steadfast in her insistence that the bell's enchantments would help to keep the horrors away.

It was only a short time after the sealing of the kaer that the bell was first used. Some kind of powerful

horror attacked that kaer, so mighty that it shook the whole of the mountain where Kaer Talloria was dug. It was as if the horror intended to uproot the entire kaer. While the people huddled in fear of what might be outside their shelter, Talloria rang the great bell she had created and it sent forth a peal that was like the crying of tortured souls, the screams of those victims of the horrors. The peal of the bell echoed all throughout the kaer. In a matter of moments, the terrible sounds of the creature outside stopped and all was still once again. The people hailed Talloria as a hero and gave many thanks to her for saving them with her creation.

Many years passed, and Talloria passed the guardianship of the Bone Bell down to her successors. The magics of the bell were carefully maintained, for

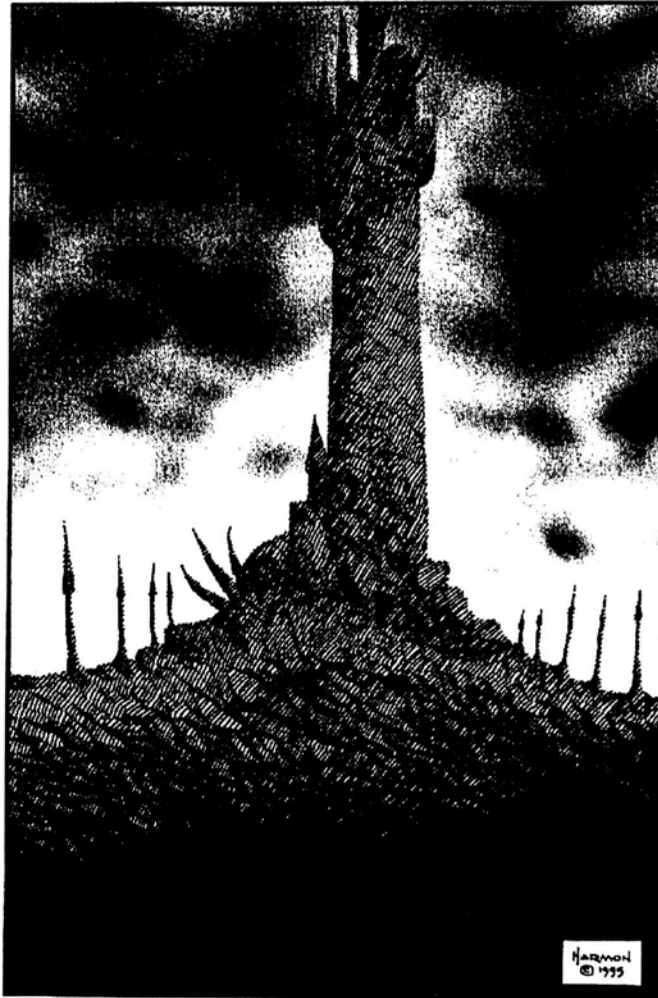
the people considered it their last line of defense against the horrors. The bones of many of their kaer's dead went into repairing, maintaining and strengthening the bell's enchantments to make it a lasting weapon against the horrors. The magicians who maintained the bell became an Order whom the people of the kaer knew and respected for their great power, but also feared for their dabblings in nethermancy and blood magic needed to maintain the artifact. The bell was used several times over the centuries to drive off horrors that threatened to breach the kaer and threaten its inhabitants.

After generations had passed, the end of the Scourge predicted by the scholars of Thera failed to come about. The sphere of true earth had stopped its descent towards the bowl of true water and had held steady there for years.

The people of the kaer were greatly concerned. Was the Scourge over? Was it safe for them to emerge into the sunlight once again?

The magicians of the Order of the Bone Bell thought not. It was a trick, they said, a foul deception of the horrors intended to make the people believe that they were safe while, in fact, the horrors lay in wait for them outside of the safety of their sheltering kaer. The magicians declared that the people would have to wait and be patient while they ferreted out the meaning of this omen.

More time passed and with each passing day, the people grew more and more restless. Dark rumors



circulated and resentment against the magicians grew. Many said that the magicians sought only to maintain their power over the people, that they knew that the Scourge was over and they had stopped the progress of the sphere of true earth themselves so that they could rule over the closed kaer forever. The time had come and surely the horrors were long since gone. Open talk of rebellion began and the ruling magicians were forced to take harsh measures with those who spoke treason against them, but this only stoked the fires of rebellion higher.

Eventually, the people of Kaer Talloria rose up against the Order of the Bone Bell and killed them all in the center courtyard of the kaer where the bell stood. They then threw open the gates of the kaer to emerge into the outside world. It was only then that they discovered that Talloria's artifact did not work quite as she had planned. The horrors that were supposed to have been driven away by the bell over the years were in fact a single horror trapped in astral space near the kaer by the power of the bell. With the doors of the kaer open and the magicians slain, the horror took its vengeance on the people of Talloria and left the kaer a haunted monument to their folly.

I heard the tale from one of the few survivors of the kaer and she told me that the Bone Bell of Talloria still remains in the ruins of their kaer. I'm sure the horrors would not want such an item to fall into the hands of other Name-Givers, but who knows if they were able to destroy it?

That is the tale, for such is the truth.

Adventure Ideas

The gamemaster can decide if the Bone Bell of Kaer Talloria still exists and, if so, whether or not it can still be found in the ruins of the ancient kaer. Perhaps the Bell was removed from the kaer by horrors (or their agents), robbers, or explorers such as the player characters. If so, it might have traveled the length and breadth of Barsaive to come to rest in some hidden lair or some scholar's collection of artifacts. If the Bell has remained hidden in the ruins of the kaer, it will no doubt be guarded, perhaps by traps laid by various horrors to keep name-givers away from the power of the bell or by a horror-cult devoted to protecting it from outsiders.

If the characters do discover the Bone Bell, they will need to decide what to do with the artifact and if its power is worth the high price that it carries with it. The Bone Bell is an item that would be of great interest to those involved in studying or hunting the horrors (such as followers of the Horror Stalker discipline and the Lightbearers).

The Bone Bell

Maximum Threads: 2

Spell Defense: 18

The Bone Bell of Talloria is a large bronze bell of about half a human's height, growing greenish with age. The outside of the bell is decorated with a complex web of delicately carved bones and the clapper on the inside is made up of many bones strung on a fine

copper chain. A heavy metal ring is attached to the top of the bell, allowing it to be hung from a support frame or the like. When sounded, the bell gives off a deep shrieking and moaning sound that echoes for a great distance.

Thread Ranks

Rank 1 **Cost:** 300

Key Knowledge: The character must know that this is the Bone Bell of Kaer Talloria.

Effect: The ringing of the bone bell provides +1 Spell Defense for all Name-Givers within hearing range against the powers of Horrors and Horror constructs.

Rank 2 **Cost:** 500

Key Knowledge: The character must learn who created the bell and what discipline she followed. Talloria was a human elemental who also practiced the arts of nethermancy.

Effect: The sound of the bell provides +2 Spell Defense against Horrors and Horror constructs.

Rank 3 **Cost:** 800

Key Knowledge: The character must learn the location of Kaer Talloria and the fate of its people.

Deed: The character must travel to the location of Kaer Talloria and ensure that all of its people are given a proper burial, after which the kaer must be sealed and the true fate of its people carved upon its entryway. If accomplished, this deed is worth 1,200 Legend Points.

Effect: All horrors and horror constructs within earshot of the bell are considered Harried for as long as it is rung. All name-givers within earshot gain +1 to their Social Defense against the attacks of Horrors and Horror constructs.

Rank 4 **Cost:** 1,300

Key Knowledge: The character must learn the names of those Name-Givers whose bones cover the bell.

Effect: The ringing of the bell can ward off horrors. The ringer can make a Willpower or Willforce test while ringing the bell. This becomes the difficulty for a Willpower test required by the horror to come within sound of the bell. This effect lasts for as long as the bell is rung.

At this rank and higher, the sound of the bell also affects name-givers who hear it like the Arcane Mutterings talent (Earthdown, p.97) at Step 15. This effect occurs automatically when any of the bell's powers above Rank 3 are used, despite the wishes of the bell ringer. All characters within hearing range are affected.

Rank 5 **Cost:** 2,100

Key Knowledge: The character must learn the Name of the Horror that destroyed Kaer Talloria.

Effect: At the cost of 3 points of Strain, the character sounding the bell can force any horror that can hear the ringing of the bell into astral space by making a successful opposed Willforce test against the Horror's Willpower or Willforce. If the character is successful,

the horror is forced back into astral space for a number of days equal to the level of success.

Rank 6 **Cost:** 3,200

Deed: The character must learn the fate and whereabouts of the horror that slew Kaer Talloria. This deed is worth 4,000 Legend Points.

Effect: At the cost of 6 points of permanent damage and a successful Willforce test against the horror's Spell Defense, the bell-ringer can trap a horror in the vicinity of the bell. The horror is trapped in its present form (physical or astral) and cannot leave earshot of the bell for a year and a day. The character who sacrificed the blood magic may then renew it at the end of that time to continue the effect. The horror can escape only by the death of the sustaining character or the destruction of the bell. The horror's powers are not reduced or limited in any way.

The Thief Who Stole from Death

Hmmm, a tale, you say. We nethermancers are not as prone to tale-telling as other adepts and Name-Givers, we prefer the value of silence. However, I do have a tale that I believe will interest and enlighten you. It was given to me by a spirit I spoke with some time ago. As you might expect, it is a tale about death, but more importantly it is about an adept—a thief—that followed the path of her discipline into the depths of Death's Domain.

Once, long ago, before the Scourge, there lived a thief adept named Josara, who lived in the human kingdom of Landis with her people. Josara was a hero who performed many daring deeds and who advanced far in the ways of her discipline. She was a thief to her very core, and it was said that she could steal the sun

and the moon from out of the sky if she chose to.

Of all of the many treasures that she stole in her long career, the one that Josara always said she was the proudest of was when she stole the heart of her husband, the air sailor Orlan Windrunner, himself a figure of daring and adventure. The couple loved each other deeply and they traveled the land of Barsaive in search of excitement and adventure.

And what adventures they had! Plundering the ice caves of the gray ogres in the Tylon Mountains, unraveling the riddle of the tomb of the troll wizard Golthek'Nor and capturing a ransom in orichalcum in a daring raid on a Theran vessel during the Orichalcum Wars. Tales of the adventurous couple spread across the land and their names became part of legend.

The legends seemed to be at an end when Josara and Orlan undertook their most daring adventure: an exploration of the Spider Dens of the Liaj Jungle, wherein spiders the size of ponies spun their webs in the eternal darkness of the jungle overgrowth, forming a vast cave-like network of silken tunnels where many unwary travelers and would-be adventurers. Stories told of many years of lost and accumulated treasures within the dens of the jungle spiders and Josara and Orlan sought to discover the truth of those tales and come away with a handsome collection of trophies for the effort.

But the dangers of those silken halls proved too great for even skilled adepts such as they. Orlan was bitten and fatally poisoned by a shadow spider, one of the deadliest spiders of the lair. He and Josara managed to escape from the dens, but the master air sailor died



from the deadly poison not long after, for there was no cure for the shadow spider's venom. Josara used the bulk of the treasures that she and Orlan had earned throughout their career to commission for her husband a fantastic tomb that floated high above the mountains and could only be reached by air ship or through the cooperation of a bound wind spirit that protected the tomb from would-be looters.

Gathering what few possessions she had, Josara set off on a quest that led her far and wide across the land of Barsaive. She spoke with many sages and scholar and magicians and always her questions were the same. The thief adept seemed to have become obsessed about Death and she sought to learn all that she could about that mysterious force of the universe. She even sought out some of the most vile and corrupt of individuals, like the legendary Keys of Death, those who proclaim to be Death's Questors, to learn from them or wrest their secrets from their dying hands.

Rumors grew that Josara was mad with grief at the loss of her beloved, that she had become obsessed with revenge and that her studies followed some dark and unknown purpose that threatened danger to others, but that was not so. Josara did not desire revenge against unthinking creatures following the dictates of their natures, nor did she want knowledge for the sake of power. Josara was a wise woman and like the nethermancers she began to see Death like a clear pane of crystal - not a barrier - but a window into another side, another phase of existence. She saw Death as a force that hoarded lives like a miser hordes gold, and as a master thief Josara knew nothing so well as how to relieve a collector of their valuable baubles. During her studies Josara decided that she would take the ultimate challenge: she would steal Orlan back from Death.

After gathering a vast and diverse store of knowledge, Josara made her way to the shores of the Death's Sea, where she prepared a special ritual magic. Her human versatility served her well as she made use of the many arcane secrets she had unearthed in her travels. For nine days and nights she worked and prepared in the rocky badlands along the shores of the fiery sea.

Finally she was ready and by the darkling light of the new moon, Josara drank a vial of a special poison concocted from some of the most toxic creatures and plants of Barsaive, including some of the venom of the shadow spider that killed Orlan. She lay upon a blanket embroidered with magical runes and symbols as she felt a terrible cold overtake her limbs despite the fierce heat of the Death's Sea. A lethargy crept over her, but Josara fought to keep control of her wits, for she would need them in her journey if she was to be successful.

Josara passed into the realm of Death. She felt herself pulled below the raging fires of the Death's Sea into an endless maze of underground passages, tunnels and caves. They were all lit by the flickering reddish light of the burning sea of lava above and, most amazingly, were filled with all manner of treasures and valuables, scattered all about as far as the eye could see. There was gold and silver, gems and fine weapons, even orichalcum coins and valuables enough to ransom a kingdom. Josara's thief nature quivered at the sight

of such wealth, she could feel the fingers of greed brush across her soul.

But her will held fast. She had not come into the realm of Death to seek treasures, only the life of her beloved Orlan. Josara moved through the dim tunnels like a silent shadow, looking for her love, but she saw no one. There was no living thing, not a Name-giver, nor even the smallest mouse or insect in those tunnels and they stretched on and on like they might go forever. Josara began to despair in her heart that she would never find Orlan and that she might be trapped forever in those forlorn tunnels with untold wealth as her only companion.

"Passions!" she cried out in frustration, "I would give all of this wealth, all the wealth in the world, if only to be with Orlan once again."

Just then a man appeared before Josara in the tunnel. He was a human, broad and fat and dressed in the clothing of a wealthy merchant. He wore all manner of expensive jewelry and the purse at his belt bulged with coin. He was well-groomed and everything about his appearance and manner said that this was a man of great wealth, just the kind of person who cried out to Josara to be given the gift of theft.

"Would you indeed, Josara?" The man said and reached into the folds of his rich cloak. He withdrew a ruby the size of a child's fist, the deep color of blood, which gleamed seductively in the dim light of the tunnel. Josara felt her heart leap, for she had never seen so fine a gem. "Would you surrender all of this wealth that could be yours?"

Josara's thief magic called out to her, she knew that she could take all that this merchant had and much of the wealth all around her, she could be the richest thief in all of the world and live in luxury for the rest of her life. She grappled with the way of her discipline in her heart, her eyes fixed on the beauty of the gem before her. But Josara's love for her husband was greater than her faith in her path. She turned to the strange man and said, "Yes, I would give up any wealth for my love." The merchant nodded and smiled and in an instant Josara found herself on the shores of the Death's Sea with Orlan in her arms, reunited once again.

Because she had rejected the way of her discipline, Josara was no longer a Thief. She believed that the stranger she encountered in Death's domain was Death himself, who bargained her magic for Orlan's life, which Josara considered a fair trade. In the later years of her life Josara was content with a quiet home life with her beloved and she became a Questor of Garlen, still stealing from Death at every opportunity she had.

Adventure Ideas

The following elements of the legend of Josara and Orlan could be used by gamemasters in their Earthdawn campaigns. As always, gamemasters should feel free to tailor the details of these adventure hooks to suit their own campaigns.

Josara's Ritual

The magical ritual Josara used to enter the realm of death might be something that player characters could go in quest of in order to follow a fallen comrade there



and attempt to rescue them. The ritual would be known only to a few wise sages or nethermancers (and perhaps a Horror or two) and there would of course be no guarantee that the characters would be able to return to the land of the living after using it.

Josara's Healing Balm

In her later years as a healer, Josara developed a healing ointment of special herbs and other secret ingredients. This balm had the effects of a healing potion (Earthdawn, p.258) with the additional effect of eliminating diseases and poisons in the system, but the formula for it was lost many years ago. Perhaps the player characters might discover the recipe again among some of Josara's lost papers or journal or perhaps they might set off to find the lost formula in order to use it to cure some malady.

The Spider Dens

The mysterious Spider Dens of the Liaj Jungle still exist and their silk shrouded tunnels hold many treasures and secrets that brave adventurers might go in search of. The tunnels are inhabited by numerous dangerous arachnids, including the mysterious shadow spider. Rumors also say that a spider-like horror may well have taken up residence in the dens since the Scourge and may have transformed many of the spiders living there into dangerous constructs such as Jehuthra (Earthdawn, p.305).

Orlan's Empty Tomb

Josara and Orlan lived a simple life following their return to the land of the living and Orlan's floating tomb over the mountains was all but forgotten. The tomb still holds many treasures that Orlan won during his career as a daring air pirate, including a wealth of plundered orichalcum and one or more magical treasures. The location of the floating tomb is lost and

characters might discover some clue to it among ancient legends or documents telling the tale of Orlan and Josara. The tomb is guarded by a bound air spirit of great power that attempts to keep all potential tomb robbers away. It is also possible that the tomb might have been breached during the Scourge and become the lair of a Horror or even the base of skyraiders, air pirates or aerial monsters.

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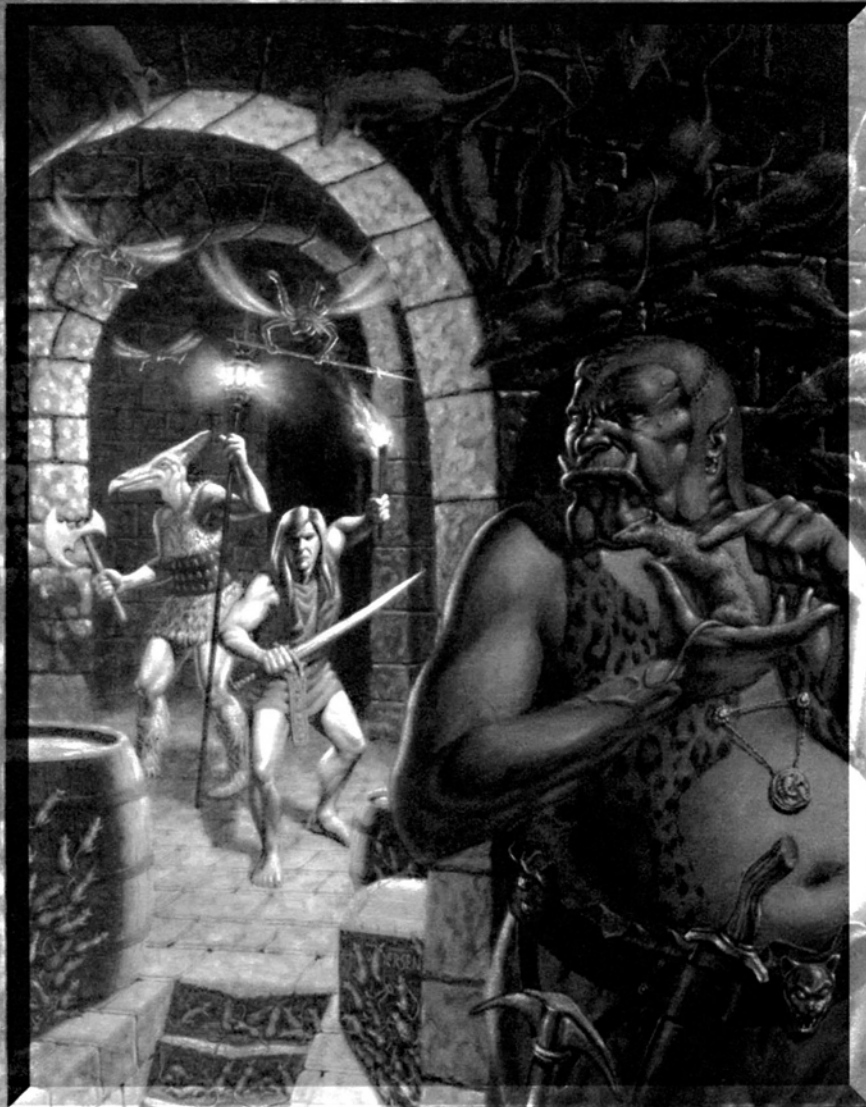


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