

# The Earth JOURNAL

APRIL 22, 2002 ISSUE 14



# Table of Contents

Volume II, No. 3 Issue 14  
April 2002

A Scribe's Chronicle: As Celene Steadily Rises .....	2
Erelhei-Cinlu: The Drow "City of Pleasure" .....	3
by <i>Russell Bird</i>	
Introduction .....	3
Erelhei-Cinlu .....	4
Erelhei-Cinlu areas of note .....	6
Appendix A: Slave Tables .....	11
Appendix B: Encounter Tables .....	12
Appendix C: Drow Standard Equipment .....	15
Appendix D: Arachnid Champion (Ul-Lolauri) (Prestige Class) .....	15
The Paganhammer .....	18
by <i>Issak Haywood</i>	
The Valorous League of Blindness .....	21
by <i>Issak Haywood</i>	
The Organization .....	21
History .....	21
Today .....	22
Joining .....	23
Appendix A: Paragons of the Valorous League of Blindness .....	23
Tenets .....	23
Appendix B: Knights Valorous Prestige Class .....	25
An Interview with Robert J. Kuntz .....	27
by <i>Allan T. Grohe, Jr. <a href="mailto:rgrodog@pacbell.net">rgrodog@pacbell.net</a></i>	
Evil's Changing Face in the Vesve Forest .....	35
by <i>Andrew Seale &lt;<a href="mailto:aseale1999@mindspring.com">aseale1999@mindspring.com</a>&gt;</i>	
aka "Fallon the Wanderer, the Ranger/Sage of the Vesve Forest"	
Northeastern Vesve Forest .....	35
Goblinoid Lands .....	36
Central Eastern Vesve Forest .....	37
Southeastern Vesve Forest .....	39
The Future of the Vesve .....	40
Heroes and Villains .....	40
New Creatures .....	45
Credits .....	45

Oerth Journal Staff:  
Chris Anderson,  
Russell Bird (the manic midwife),  
Allan T Grohe Jr.,  
Issak "The Pale" Haywood,  
Andrew Seale  
Editor-in-chief:  
Marc Tizoc Gonzalez  
Web-Master: Vashnaar

Layout: Ron Carey  
Illustrations:  
Ron Carey  
Naomi Gonzalez  
Logos:  
Vashnaar  
Ron Carey

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, D&D, DUNGEON MASTER, and GREYHAWK are registered trademarks owned by Wizards of the Coast, Inc., a subsidiary of Hasbro, Inc. LIVING GREYHAWK and the dzo System logo are trademarks owned by Wizards of the Coast, Inc. All Wizards' characters, character names, and the distinctive likenesses thereof are trademarks owned by Wizards of the Coast, Inc.

*Maze of Zayene, Prisoners of the Maze, Dimensions of Flight, Tower Chaos, The Eight Kings, Hidden Realms of Zayene, Dark Druids, Dark Quest, and Codex Germania* are trademarks of Robert J. Kuntz and are used herein with permission. Robert J. Kuntz holds the copyright (2001) for *Prisoners of the Maze* and *Maze of Zayene*. *Prisoners of the Maze* and *Maze of Zayene* are exclusively published and distributed by Necromancer Games by specific license. Cover images of *Prisoners of the Maze* and *Maze of Zayene* are used with Permission of the publisher. *Dark Druids, Dark Quest, and Codex Germania* are exclusively published and distributed by Troll Lord Games by specific license.

Articles are fiction written by fans of the GREYHAWK setting. The use of the names of any trademarked, servicemarked, or copywritten properties should not be taken as a challenge to the recognized status of such works. Authors are not compensated monetarily for their articles and unless otherwise noted, all individual contributions are copyrighted by their respective authors.

The *Oerth Journal* is produced by an informal organization of volunteers – fans of the GREYHAWK setting. The *Oerth Journal* is produced seasonally and distributed free of charge. Please send inquiries to [oj@canonfire.com](mailto:oj@canonfire.com). Visit our website <<http://oerthjournal.hypermart.net/>>.

Please note that the *Oerth Journal* neither uses the Open Gaming concept sponsored by the Open Gaming Foundation nor the dzo license owned by Wizards of the Coast, Inc.

## A Scribe's Chronicle: As Celene Steadily Rises

Over a season has passed since the preview of this issue of the *Oerth Journal* was originally posted. In that short span of time, three *Oerth Journal* volunteers have gave birth to sons and watched the families have watched their newborns become infants. I inform readers of the births of Ron Carey's, Vashnaar's, and Andy Seale's children to invite you to reflect on the subject of time and to appreciate the change it brings. Beyond presenting one reason for the months it took to produce this issue of the *Oerth Journal*, as suggested by the title and my opening remarks, this editorial is about the ephemerality of life.

The *Oerth Journal* is almost seven years old, and as might be expected, the readers of the *Oerth Journal* today are different from those that read the first issues. I don't only mean that new people now read the *Oerth Journal*, for the passing years also have affected the original authors, staff, and readers of the *Oerth Journal*. Some people have left behind Greyhawk for a time while others now work for Wizards of the Coast®.

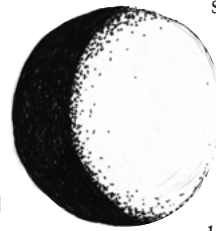
Not only has the readership of the *Oerth Journal* changed, the online Greyhawk community has evolved too. The **Canonfire!** website has almost 600 members and was recently cited in the *Living Greyhawk Journal* in *Dragon*®. Three issues of the *Living Greyhawk Journal* have already been published in *Dragon*®, one day the final separate issue will be printed and distributed. We live in a distinctive moment in the lifetime of the online community of Greyhawk enthusiasts!

I chose Celene as the emblem for this editorial because Greyhawk often seems perennial. The number of posts to listservs and on message boards waxes and wanes, and the type of posts also changes over time (I need not describe the changing fortunes of so-called "canon" Greyhawk publications.). Despite this flux, the World of Greyhawk continues to excite the imaginations of people throughout Earth. Rather than lament or distrust the current moment (and reminisce for times now past), I encourage Greyhawk fans everywhere to embrace the momentary phase and to "trust in Atroa."



We must remember that like Celene, Greyhawk only appears to change. The world setting itself remains always ready to inspire and renew the imaginations of people throughout Earth.

This issue of the *Oerth Journal* features five excellent articles and more than six pieces of original art. Russell Bird's article on Erelhei-Cinlu begins this issue of the *Oerth Journal*. Russell describes the city and its inhabitants in exciting detail, and his distinctive take on the city is amplified by the evocative illustrations of Ron Carey and cartography of the city itself, rendered by the sure hand of Morgan Olden. Issak Haywood provides two related pieces from his ongoing project to detail the Theocracy of the Pale. The first piece, a narrative vignette of an infamous leader of the Church Militant, is



supplemented with ready to use game statistics of the protagonist. The second article describes the leadership and politics of the Valorous League of Blindness and presents a new prestige class, the Knights Valorous. Allan T. Grohe, Jr. conducts an interview with the Green Dragon himself, but beyond

Lord Robilar, Allan provides information about Robert J. Kuntz, a man responsible for many aspects of the World of Greyhawk, and highlights some of Kuntz's latest projects and publications. Finally, Andy Seale bases his article on the works of Carl Sargent. Andy describes recent developments throughout the various regions of the Vesve Forest. Not only does the article detail new organizations, enemies and allies; it also records how Greyhawk has inspired one DM's vision.

I trust that these articles will help DMs across the Earth to dream new challenges for their PCs. The World of Greyhawk beckons. What hero can resist its call?

'Ware and were, friend,

*Marc Tjoe Gonzalez*

Editor-in-Chief

*Oerth Journal*

## Erelhei-Cinlu: The Drow “City of Pleasure”

A campaign setting for experienced play.

by Russell Bird

### INTRODUCTION

Based on material in “D3 Vault of the Drow” and GDQ1-7 *Queen of the Spiders* (by Gary Gygax); *Dead Gods* (by Monte Cook); ruminations by Roger E Moore; and “Arcane Lore, The Slime Wizard” (by Lloyd Brown III – *Dragon Annual 4*). This work is based on the 3rd edition *Dungeons and Dragons* rules, and references are based on material appearing in the *Players Handbook*, *Dungeon Masters Guide* and *Monster Manual* for that edition. Optional material is included that is based upon rules appearing in *Sword and Fist* and *Defenders of the Faith*.



My colleagues and I have been trapped in the city of Erelhei-Cinlu for two weeks now. We have not been able to escape, yet we have learned much about the city and the ways of the accursed drow. Should we ever make it back to the surface, I shall see to it that no one ever ventures here, for this place is a depraved and evil death-trap.

Erelhei-Cinlu stands within a large cavern, miles beneath the Hellfurnaces Mountains. The cavern is known as “The Vault”. The Vault is like something out of a fey dream (or perhaps a fey nightmare). The warm climate supports many fields of fungi and crystalline structures. Such sights are breathtaking, save for the constant presence of the evil drow and their slaves.

An amber mist permeates the Vault. This mist has a curious effect on the eyesight and distorts our view of color. The casting of a *Color Spray* spell here needs to be seen to be believed! The effect turns out a radiant spectrum of ambers, browns, mauves and silvers that is utterly dazzling!

Though it is beyond the ability of my eyesight to discern, some of the olves in the party say that the view of that mist is beautiful, for they behold a wondrous array of stars in the illusory night sky above. The best that I can make out are a number of multi-faceted crystalline structures in the roof of the cavern.

We have heard the mist termed “melkel’la”, and a few of the grey olves in our party have likened it to a phenomenon known as “shadowstuff”, though I confess to limited knowledge or interest in the subject. We have heard it whispered that the Vault was once the home of cavern dwelling dragonkind and my olven friends believe the dragons that once lived here could well have been shadow or obsidian in nature (a variation on the more common black dragon), the mists not being a coincidence. Knowing the power of the drow as I do, I suspect that any dragon that lived here would have met a swift death.

I would say that the drow are a significantly more powerful race than we thought when we first encountered them beneath Snurre’s halls. It is obvious that the drow encourage skill in clericy, spell craft and combat, yet we now believe that the drow are able to excel in any field of endeavour.

The proliferation of the fungi throughout the Vault and in the city would not be possible save for the existence of drow druids, and we have had the misfortune to assume that many a drow fighter would be helpless in combat if unarmed - a costly misassumption. The city is home to hundreds (possibly thousands) of skilled drow thieves, and the savagery with which the drow plot to undo their enemies is not unlike the creed of my ranger colleagues. The drow are a deadly enemy. Should they ever become an organised or disciplined force, I would fear greatly for the safety of the surface lands that I have come to miss so dearly.

The city of Erelhei-Cinlu is very old, judging by the stonework. Our covert investigations lead us to conclude that it sprung up around a fortified raiding camp many hundreds, maybe thousands, of years ago. No doubt the drow saw the amber mists as a blessing of their foul spider goddess, perhaps as a tangible manifestation of the darkness that they seem to love. The city walls are patrolled by able (if undisciplined) fighters and are warded against powerful magic (I have seen those walls withstand the assault of a fire elemental). There are many minor portals in the wall but each resists lock picking and doing so summons nightmarish demons- as we painfully discovered while searching for an exit.

Although the drow have some degree of freedom of movement within, the streets of the city are ruthlessly policed and the dwellings are painfully overcrowded. I have seen with my own eyes how the elite patrols in the city are on the lookout for drow of ‘promise’. Woe to any drow with a rebellious spirit, for they are dragged off to the great temple of the Spider Queen, where they are said to undergo a great trial. Even now I shudder at the thought of the consequences of failure. We know how the drow sacrifice each other to their Queen...

Coming swiftly to the point, Erelhei-Cinlu is a drow city. It was built by drow, for drow. We are unaware of exactly how old it is, and I doubt the age of the city is of import to the willful and brutal drow inhabitants. We have discovered that many other drow cities exist in the UnderOerth. Though I know of no other by name, my colleagues and I have become aware of conflict between the drow and a race known only as the aboleth, who reside in a citadel on the banks of a place known as the Sunless Sea. Drow war camps exist closer to that place, and serve as staging grounds of sorts (no doubt also against other races such as the deep dwarves, the nameless fish men, and the disgusting *Mind Flayers*).

For the wretched ‘lowlies’ of the city, they must fend for themselves (and against each other) unless they are under the protection of drow merchants or nobles. The drow nobles of the Vault enjoy the luxury of their own company and conduct their petty wars and feuds against each other away from the city, comfortable in the knowledge that the unworthy are contained. Indeed, I believe that the nobles would not even acknowledge the existence of the city save for the fact that they must periodically pass through it on business. For these journeys, they are protected by spider guards, and they travel through fortified pathways. Should any of the nobles seek the pleasures within the city, they would likely do so in disguise. The few nobles we have seen are richly-appointed, well-protected and exclusively female. If any male nobles exist, they are kept busy in service to their female masters.

All manner of people and monsters wander the streets – they are known as “seekers”. We have seen a variety of evils that have caused our stalwart

paladin to seethe in fury and demand that we slay them all – he is just one of many problems that we now face. I have recognised demons, mind flayers, trolls, ghouls and huge spiders - all of who walk openly, some as slaves! We have seen other horrors that we do not recognise and dare not move to challenge. Interestingly, we have seen fellow surface dwellers: merchants from the west, swaggering pirates that would seem at home on the Wild Coast and clerics that wear robes emblazoned with grinning skulls. All who are from elsewhere wear the lime robes from the entrance to the Vault, and they move about freely. Most seem to indulge in trade with the drow, and despite the poverty of the city, I have no doubt that those in power (the nobles) continue to prosper from the patronage of these visitors. The presence of such people here epitomises the contradictions of the drow: beautiful yet evil, graceful yet brutal, chaotic yet manipulative, proud yet greedy and so on.

The city contains many features of interest. A turreted wall surrounds it, and then there are fortified ways for the noble drow that cut a path through the centre of the city. In the south of the city (if my directional bearings are correct) is a small forest of fungi, known as ‘Sar-Sandarena’. This place grows much of the food for the city, and my covert investigations have revealed a secret that I am reluctant to share with the others: the drow are somehow able to use the fungi as a source of poison ... and pleasure. That may account for the presence of some of the other surface visitors. Near the forest park is the city prison, a dark place indeed. On the north side of the city are the areas reserved for nobles and noble business. The city is ruled from that region, and we have had little success in penetrating far in that direction. The further north one travels, the less squalor one faces it seems. Of course, the city temple complex is found in the north of the city, as well as a great gate that leads to the lands of the noble drow.

The majority of the city is a slum. It was not a planned city, like Chendl, and as the population grew, the city size has apparently remained stable. A large portion to the central-east of the city is a dumping ground for refuse that has grown up around several collapsed buildings. This may have been the site of a great battle, but the sickening stench has kept us well clear. We have learned only that it is known as Thes-slis. Poverty, disease, suffering and death are everywhere - a horrific sight in an already horrific city, it causes our heartbroken paladin to weep nightly as he prays and struggles to restrain his rage.

Many streets, alleys and pathways snake through the city, but there are two main strips. They have no name of which we are aware, but they are active at all times. The two strips travel the length of the city and are the sites of endless houses of ill-repute, dens of pleasure, bawdy drinking establishments and pits of slavery and torture. We have avoided these streets since coming here. We have learned that centres of magical learning may be found in side streets off the strips, yet we dare not venture there.

This is as best I can chronicle tonight. Should the opportunity allow (that is, if we should ever escape the city), I shall attempt a more detailed recording of the horrors of the city. I must seek rest now, for tomorrow we attempt to venture to the north to see if it is possible for us to escape through the gate that may be found there. I pray to Garl Glittergold to bless me with the stealth that we will so sorely need in the days ahead.

- From the unpublished journal of Keak Breedbate, gnome explorer and giant-slayer, dated approx 572 CY.

“Your majesty, it is true that we owe these intrepid giant-slayers a debt of gratitude. They have saved Sterich from the mysterious phenomenon which still defies explanation and they have returned alive for the most part. What is NOT true is their fabrication of the events. I remind you of their allegations – that the giants were nothing more than the pawns of a race of olves... EVIL olves mind you! They contend that these “drow” had black skin and worshipped a foul demon goddess! They also ask us to believe that these “drow” consort with spiders in a great cavern beneath the very Oerth! Does this make any sense? No! Your majesty, I must respectfully request that these adventurers be detained until I determine the truth of the matter. I ask that you trust me and not them. There are NO DARK OLVES! There are NO Drow! There is NO “City of Pleasure” hidden beneath the Hellfurnaces Mountains! Of this I am certain!”

- Lashton of Grayhill, agent of King Kimbertos Skotti, magical councillor and president of the Peoples Investigative Committee of Niole Dra, in his opening address, late 572 CY-

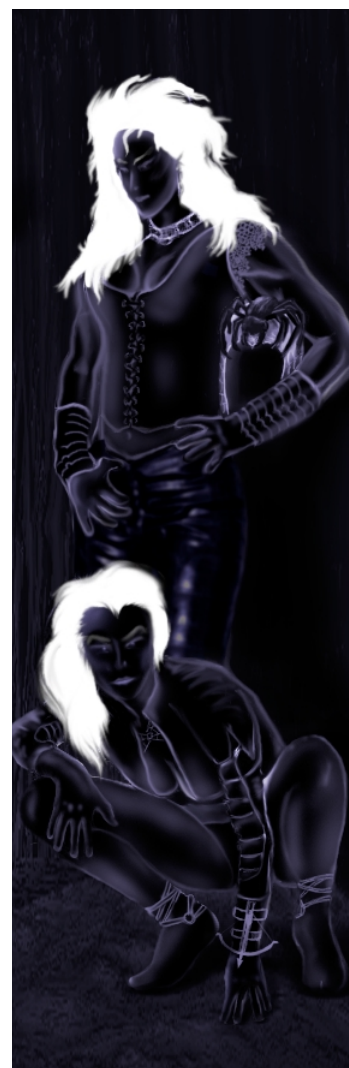
...

#### ERELHEI-CINLU

Small City; Non-standard; AL; NE-CE; GP Limit approx 100,000; Population 9000+ drow, 18,000 non-drow (more recent estimates place the total figure closer to 30,000)

“Erelhei-Cinlu: A noxious and crowded pit of hardened wickedness and depravity – filled with creatures both wretched and wondrous. It is a trading centre for arcane items of antiquity at outrageous prices. The harridan drow are tempestuous and shrewish in the extreme. I must return there to continue my research (though perhaps several visits are warranted...)”

- From the private journal of the Fiend-Sage of Rel Astra



Two citizens of Erelhei-Cinlu

Erelhei-Cinlu is a very old drow city, one of many in the UnderOerth. This particular city has achieved a sort of infamy and recognition for many reasons, not the least of which is the actions of some of the drow who have lived in or near the city. A group of giant slayers from the Sheldomar reportedly penetrated the Vault and the city at least a decade prior to the Greyhawk Wars, when the manipulations of a drow cleric



All who have been loyal to Lolth are both furious and sorrowful at their loss of power and opportunity, and work doubly hard to appease her (which pleases Lolth no end). (For more information on the Arachnid Champions, refer to Appendix D).

Therefore, the city is a cesspool filled to overcrowding with hopeless common drow, struggling to escape or just to survive. The nobles barely tolerate or recognise the presence of the drow in the city, and conduct periodic culls as they will with the blessings of Lolth. The Arachnid Champions conduct culls of their own, and select whoever displeases them in the moment. Nobles may still be encountered in the city, in the form of noble patrols, and in disguise whilst seeking entertainment on the pleasure strips. They live in opulent estates upon a plateau north of the city, separated by a dark river known as the Pitchy Flow (figuratively and literally, they “look down” on the city).

The climate is constantly warm to hot, being that the Vault exists beneath the Hellfurnaces Mountains. The heat fosters tension and disease, and it is certainly warmer in the city than it is elsewhere in the Vault (contributing to inhabitants wanting to escape and for nobles shunning the place unless absolutely necessary, though nobles often have serious difficulty distinguishing between needs and wants). While the heat is not damaging it is certainly distracting and may hamper the effectiveness of cold related spells. The mysterious mists and shadows in the cavern move and coalesce in such a way that they intensify and darken in much the same way as solar and lunar cycles occur on the surface of the Oerth. During a “night cycle” (normal rules for timekeeping would apply), low light vision and darkvision is reduced by half outside the city. Curiously, the starry night of the Vault Cavern is more sparkling and beautiful during a night cycle, and is visible above the city. The majority of the city settles during the night cycle, but the main strips remain active.

*“The secrets of the amber mists continue to frustrate the dedicated wizards of the city. I suspect the involvement of “shadow” dragons in the Vault walls and I would investigate further – but the Matriarch of the house would never allow me the freedom to do so.”*

**- A letter from Vrile of House Despana to a colleague, 530 CY, just before his unfortunate fatal accident.**

Erelhei-Cinlu is not without potential as an adventure site. It is the site of many schools of thievery and magic (with the support and patronage of magical outsiders and other monsters) and is of interest for the almost unique mix of inhabitants. Within the city, drow mix openly with monsters, undead and demons. The committed adventurer could find ways around the enforced guard on the city, using it as a base for exploration further into the UnderOerth. Furthermore, resourceful adventurers could come away with a wealth of unique knowledge and magical prizes, providing they have enough gold pieces, are careful to avoid thievery, and take precautions not to draw attention to themselves.

No matter how many drow the DM decides should inhabit the city, the female / male ratio is approximately 60 / 40, with non-noble females not accorded any special privileges (though that does not stop them from using their gender status to torment any male that they can).

The DM is referred to Appendix B for suggestions for encounters. Given the crowding of the city it is possible to have encounters as often as desired, but most inhabitants of the city are content to mind their own business (unless player characters seem ripe for a mugging).

### ERELHEI-CINLU AREAS OF NOTE

- (i) The great wall;
- (ii) The gate of entry;
- (iii) The noble gate;
- (iv) The tenements (“The Zaszor slums”);
- (v) The noble way;
- (vi) The merchant way;
- (vii) The Pleasure strips (“Vel-hishara” and “Vel-murlaksh”);
- (viii) Thes-slis, the dumping ground;
- (ix) The Grand Temple of Lolth / Spider farm;
- (x) The noble and council chambers;
- (xi) Sar-Sandarena: The great fungal park;
- (xii) City Sewers;
- (xiii) City Rooftops

**(i) The Great Wall:** The wall that protects Erelhei-Cinlu is guarded as part of a shared responsibility between drow nobles (by tradition dictated by the church of Lolth, much to the distaste of the uncaring nobles). The walls were constructed from dark, black stone that is uniformly 30 feet high and 10 feet thick. At irregular intervals, eleven stone towers interrupt the continuity of the wall that serve as barracks and weapon repositories. The walls are patrolled by trained drow warriors along the length, save for the north wall which flanks the Pitchy Flow. That length is guarded by female fighters exclusively.

**Male Wall Guard** (Between each tower: 2F2, each tower: 10F2 +2F3). See drow standard equipment (Appendix C);

**Female Wall Guard** (north gatehouse: 20F2, 10F3, 4F4, 2F5, 1F6 as well as two patrols of 4F2, 2F3, 1F4 on either side of the gatehouse). See drow standard equipment (Appendix C);

*“One wit, by name of Etnom, had this to say about the drow: “They are canny bashers, and that’s no dark.” Well, chant be known that Etnom made for a very tasty snack, and that’s definitely no dark!”*

**- From the private journal of the Fiend-Sage of Rel Astra**

The guards look inward as they do outward in their watch for trouble, searching for unauthorised escapees or incidents of unrest that they might put down with brutality. Typical events that might draw their attention or prompt an investigation include powerful

summoning or evocation magic, sources of bright light (normally stifled by the effects of the Vault mists, such phenomenon is more notable within the city where the mists are not so pervasive), any attack on a spider, reports of the defacement of an image of Lolth, and any attack or abuse directed toward a noble or caravan (hence, many dissident agitators 'disappear suddenly'). In this city, the appearance of a lich, the collapse of a building or even a brazen killing will not earn a second look from the guard contingent. Erelhei-Cinlu may just as well translate into "City of the unanswered cry for help." ("Alakstra Breheri Cinlu" – for the curious).

The wall itself is especially enchanted in other ways, and is highly magic resistant (Spell Resistance is 20. Climb is DC 18. Attempts at either have a 60% chance of being noticed by the wall guards, and/or an encounter at street level; roll for both). There are many doors that permit entry / exit from the walls, but they are not intended for common use, being powerfully sealed (firstly with a complex series of locks at DC 30 and each attempt will automatic summon either (50% chance each) a Vrock or a Hezrou (*Monster Manual* p.45)). There are three such doors between each guard tower section of the wall. They lead to a passage through the thickness of the wall to another door to the outside (with a 50% chance of either being locked as above or unlocked and unprotected).

It is difficult but not impossible to enter the city from a route other than the gate, but hazardous to say the least. Entry via the sewer is one such possibility (and definitely hazardous!) Refer to (xii) below.

**(ii) The Gate of Entry:** The gate of entry is guarded by an elite group of male and female warriors (elite, but not resistant to corruption). Freedom of passage is allowed by the wearing of a nauseating lime coloured cloak issued at a guard citadel at the entrance to the Vault. The entrance structure is fashioned out of a large block of black stone (similar yet different to the stone used to construct the city walls – it is more blocklike and unfashioned). The block is warded with demonic and spider images, and furthermore is protected by two sets of portcullis and murder holes.

Non-drow are expected to wear the (non-enchanted) lime cloaks obtained from the Vault entrance or risk attack, whereas drow need to wear either a broach of service or the device of a noble house to allow passage in or out of the city. Any drow not so equipped who seeks passage would need a hefty bribe, a glib tongue, or a powerful charm that is proof against drow spell resistance. Those who pass through the city guard noble devices and broaches quite rigorously, but those who possess the funds might be able to find and buy a forgery. That still requires a convincing story and a non-distinguished face. Note that the guard contingent at this gate is nowhere near as efficient as the guard roster at the Noble Gate. The nominal commander of the gate of entry is Aloresque of House Kilsek, a male noble (F3 W6).

**Gate troops:** 4F2, 1F4 (male); 4F3, 1F5 (female) at all times. Inside: 12F2, 3F4 (male); 12F3, 3F5 (female). See Drow Equipment (Appendix C) with the following modifications: the two male fighters at the gate are equipped with a masterwork Military Fork each (non-enchanted, attacks as per trident). All other guards wield +2 drowic short swords and non-enchanted masterwork Hand Crossbows (darts coated with drow sleep poison).

To the east of the gate on the inside of the wall is the city gaol complex, which is heavily guarded. Most prisoners eventually are taken away for slavery or food in the spider farms, but the gaol serves as a holding area in the busy city south. Those that do linger in the prison can look forward to a lifetime of servitude as slaves upon release. The gaol has a prisoner capacity of 50: 30 single occupant cells and two larger cells. The prisoner mix is based on the Slave tables (see Appendix A).

Anyone who lingers for more than six hours in the gaol is at risk for contracting Filth Fever each time they visit here due to the vermin infestation (*Dungeon Masters Guide* p.75).

**Prison Guards:** 10F2, 3F3, 1F4 (all male) See Appendix C for notes on standard equipment; 5 Medium Spiders, 2 Large Spiders (*Monster Manual* p.210).

**THOSE IN THE PRISON CAN LOOK FORWARD TO A LIFETIME OF SERVITUDE AS SLAVES UPON RELEASE.**

**(iii) The Noble Gate:** The means of passage to the Noble Estates (north of the city) is guarded by the female elite warriors of the Vault (though none are Arachnid Champions). They savour the vicious fate that they may mete out to those who would seek entry to the noble lands without authorisation (that is, those who lack broach or device and story). The elite warriors are led by Jysiln (C10 F5; if the DM has *Sword and Fist*, she might alternately be a C8 F4 Lash3), a powerful fighter and spy for the high priestess of Lolth, Charinida (C14) who rarely comes to the city. The gate is shadowed by a huge statue of a spider with the face of a drow (the image of Lolth, the Spider Queen), with the legend carved immediately beneath: "Cahr Loltha Icidi"(In Lolth's Embrace). The statue may be animated on the command of Jysiln (treat as an animated object, huge – no bite attack. *Monster Manual* p.17). The area is also patrolled by 6 wolf spiders (Medium sized Spiders. *Monster Manual* p.210) that are fanatically loyal to the female guards and fight to the death. Selectively bred in the city spider farm, they are maximally endowed in all respects.

**Female Elite Guards:** See (i) Female Wall Guard. Jysiln is active at the foot of the gate most of the time, along with the two F4. See Appendix C for notes on standard equipment. In addition to the 6 medium wolf spiders, Jysiln is personally protected by two trained huge wolf spiders (*Monster Manual* p.210) as befits her rank.

**(iv) The tenements ("Zaszor slums"):** Comprising over 90% of the city, the tenements and slums are street after street and row



after row of housing for the residents of the city. For the most part, the buildings are between one and four stories tall and provide the most meagre of shelter but not comfort (city residents will typically seek comfort in the twin pleasure strips). Many of these buildings are connected by walkways and spider webbing, as well as other mysterious materials that look alive. Few people are brave enough to travel along these structures, as many large spiders claim this area for their own.

Tenement buildings are not subject to city-instituted maintenance, and the ancient buildings (many are hundreds to thousands of years old) continue to stand owing to the proceeds of theft by the residents. Often buildings have collapsed into piles, yet drow and others seek to claim the ruins for themselves, shelter being at a premium in the city. To claim an area of a building or ruin only requires one to be stronger than the current resident, and many drow have lost their life when they have had to confront a lurking demon, a human necromancer, or an illithid colony when they sought shelter. Add to this the prevalence of disease, the heat of the air, and relatively poor sanitation (refuse and sewer facilities are maintained by undead, but all are hardly efficient) and it is little surprise that the life expectancy of a drow in the city is little better than that of an adult human (female drow being only slightly hardier than male drow in this regard). It is worth mentioning that the quality of housing and construction increases and the population density decreases the further north one travels in the city (the existence of Sar-Sandarena, the fungal park, in the south of the city, is not an accident).

Once every six turns, a female drow patrol will be encountered, with a 25% chance of stopping any characters for questioning (that is reduced to 10% if characters are wearing lime cloaks). Stopping characters is very likely to lead to hostilities. Should players fight it out, the patrol is unlikely to receive reinforcements. News travels fast in the city via the silent language of the drow; subsequent patrol encounters are likely to be very hostile. Movement via stealth through the city, and not attracting attention to oneself is the greatest strategy for survival.

**Female Patrol:** 4F2, 2F3, 1F4 + two howlers (*Monster Manual* p.121). Note that these patrols are composed of members of an elite Female Fighters Society, and the rigorous discipline of this facility allows each member an extra fighter-pool feat per two levels (above normal game rule allowances). See Appendix C for notes on standard equipment.

A random encounter table is provided in Appendix B as a suggestion for the bizarre denizens that may be encountered in and

around the slums. It may be referred to as often as desired if adventurers are not wearing lime cloaks (at least every two turns). Note that the nature of the denizens that prowl the tenement streets at night is remarkably different to that of the day (another reason that the twin strips are always active – common drow flock there for safety).

**(v) The Noble Way:** The length of the noble way is a walled street. The walls are 25 feet tall and nine feet thick, making them slightly less impressive than the city walls, and without doors – just an arched entrance at both ends. The walls are constructed of sheer stone (DC 25 Climb) and are enchanted to negate levitation (SR18 for levitation magic only, other spells can affect the wall as per normal stone of this thickness).

The noble way allows favoured merchant caravans and noble groups to travel across the city without the distraction of beggars, thieves and other lowlies. Male fighters patrol it.

**Noble Way Patrol** (along street and atop wall): 10F2, 5F3, 2F4, 1F5 (male). See Appendix C for notes on standard equipment

**(vi) The Merchant Way:** The merchant way is a walled street as per the noble way but it is not patrolled, and the walls are not as smooth (DC 17 Climb, being perhaps 20 feet tall and 7 foot thick, non-enchanted). It runs parallel to the noble way. Observant adventurers may note that uncleared rubble can be found at the base of the outside of the wall. The merchant and the noble way were constructed during the civil war (under very heavy guard) forcing the displacement of residents of sections of the tenements—their homes were destroyed to make way for the construction. There is an empty section of the city between the two passageways of derelict buildings—investigating the area for inhabitants and treasure could be interesting for adventurers who can somehow access the area (access via the sewer is one possibility).

**Merchant Caravan:** F4W4 (male) 1-8, F2 2-12 (male), F4 1-3 (male), 4-16 bugbear bodyguards (*Monster Manual* p.27, each F1), 2-20 slaves (see Appendix A) and 1-6 pack lizards (*Monster Manual* p.198 – as Giant Lizard but Dex 19 and Innate Spider Climb as a spell-like ability 1/day cast as a 3rd level sorcerer). See Appendix C for notes on standard equipment

**(vii) The Pleasure Strips:**

*“Do you come seeking pleasure or employment? Decide swiftly, for my time is precious and either choice will cost you...”*

*- Falayus, half-fiend proprietor of “The Dark Revel” house of ill repute, Vel-murlaksh*

The twin pleasure strips snake through the city (“Vel-hishara” to the east and “Vel-murlaksh” to the west). Their length is a brazen



*Nedylene accompanied by one of her guards.*

display of lewd debauchery. Every vice imaginable is catered (and some unimaginable, as well). Along the twin pleasure strips may be found bordellos (in abundance), voyeur dens (often bordellos with a side business), drinking taverns, houses of pain, gambling stalls, drug saloons, spider dance halls, slave fighting pits and sale yards, and torture palaces just to name a few. Once again, the class of the establishment improves the further north one travels in the city. The length of each street is illuminated by all manner of effects that provide subtle lighting (bright for the eyes of the UnderOerth races) and they include dancing lights, phosphorescent murals, permanent illusions, caged fire beetles, lichen frescoes and similar effects. Indeed, while the rest of the city cycles between peak activity and slumber, the strips constantly bustle with movement.

A random encounter table is provided in Appendix B as a suggestion for the bizarre denizens that may be encountered along the strips. It may be referred to as often as desired if adventurers are not wearing lime cloaks (at least every two turns).

**Male Drow Patrols:** 5F3 and 2F4 (male) - encountered every three turns, 10% chance of stopping characters for questioning (regardless of whether or not they are wearing cloaks). Note that these patrols are composed of members of an elite Male Fighters Society, and the rigorous discipline of this facility allows each member an extra fighter-pool feat per two levels (above normal game rule allowances, but this stops at 6th level and then progresses as normal. The reason being that fighters of such calibre are no longer under tuition). See Appendix C for notes on standard equipment

The blocks around the twin strips are the sites of wondrous buildings, which are more often the destination of visitors to the city (though getting past the pleasure strips is hard enough for some). Often, seekers can (and do) find any non- (major) artifact magical item in the city if they pry hard enough (up to the GP limit for the city). Seekers are always welcomed, as they bring wealth, spells, secrets and supplies for the drow wars against UnderOerth races (it does not seem to bother the drow at all that they are obtaining supplies from their enemies for use against their enemies... and other drow). See Appendix B for some examples of the seekers who come to Erelhei-Cinlu for business and pleasure.

To be found are arcane libraries, halls of thievery tuition, impromptu (though competent) schools of magic and even temples to non-sanctioned deities (in the eyes of the nobles, only Lolth is sanctioned). Those who seek may find shrines to Iuz (the Lord of Pain who has more than a passing interest in the drow), Incabulos, Nerull, Vecna and Zugtmoy (as patron of "fungal" pleasures). Interestingly, there are those who offer token respects to neutral deities such as Boccob, Norebo and Kurell (though this is hardly common or widespread). Somewhere among the backstreets, a forgotten and hastily erected shrine to Pholtus may be found, said to have been left by one of the giant slayers many years ago. Those who know of it have said that it resists corruption. The Arachnid Champions are on a crusade to desecrate all such shrines based on a non-subtle omen from Lolth.

Also in the side streets are hidden halls of drow dissidents. As may be expected, dissidents are young and male for the most part. A notable hero for the cause was Nilonim, a passionate young male drow who was arrested and sacrificed to the spider queen. Many of the dissidents that he helped to nurture now carry on his teaching in spirit, including Terigin, a long time companion of Nilonim and a competent and brooding fighter (F9, or F5 Glad4 if the DM has *Sword and Fist*). Terigin has recently disappeared, and there are those who suspect that he has been arrested and sacrificed, as was Nilonim.

#### (viii) Thes-slis, the dumping ground:

*"Thes-slis – the largest burial ground in the city... except perhaps for the sewer, the fungal park, the Grand Temple, the wizard schools, the gaol..."*

#### - Warden-mayor Shirvala to a visiting Marilith

The great dumping ground of the city is little more than the decaying remnants of a particularly poor section of the city (comprising no less than three city blocks). Here, refuse was dumped after the buildings collapsed after a great magical battle and it remains as a place of great danger. Within the massive garbage mound may be found the remains of those who died in the city (of natural causes or otherwise) and their possessions. The truly desperate come here in search of food and shelter, but must fend off the creatures that shelter there. Even lingering nearby predisposes one to contracting a debilitating disease (any of table 3-14 *Dungeon Masters Guide* p.75 as the DM wills). The unwary may find that they will add to the mound of refuse that is the mausoleum of the city.

Refer to Appendix B for suggested random encounters in this area.

**(ix) The Grand Temple of Lolth / Spider Farm:** The largest building in the northern section of the city serves as the Great Temple to Lolth and the Spider Farm for the city. It appears as a large spider hive, with sections of stone just visible through the spun webbing. The temple has two sections: firstly, the common sanctuary (usable by drow, though under the constant supervision of the clerics of Lolth), and secondly the inner temple for the staff. The temple is under the "direction" of Edralve (C6 F6, or optionally C5 F4 Duel3 if using *Sword and Fist*). Formerly a slave lord of the Pomarj (as an atonement for a past indiscretion), she has returned to the city and is in favour with Lolth. As such she wields considerable prestige and freedom in the city (perhaps even more so than the warden-mayor). Note that she is not yet an Arachnid Champion, but is very likely to become one.

The spider farm is the larger part of the structure proper. Only drow nobles may enter the spider farm, and all manner of lethal spiders and crossbreeds lurk and seek to feed on arrested prisoners and lazy slaves before they are released into the city or selected for transport to the noble lands. It is home to approximately 100 small spiders, 75 medium spiders, 50 large spiders, 25 huge spiders and two gargantuan

spiders (*Monster Manual* p.210). The overseer of the hive is Melveve, a drow lich of indeterminate gender (*Nec11 Exp7*, lich template *Monster Manual* p.216-217). Melveve and his (her) staff have the absolute loyalty of all spiders in the farm, though that would not save him (her) if the Arachnid Champions came to subject him (her) to inquisition (given the loyalty of spiders to the Arachnid Champions). Melveve is not encountered outside the hive.

All drow who attain six levels of experience in any class are brought to the farm and transported to the planar domain of Lolth. All are returned from the trials that they face there. Those who are successful are retained by the drow nobles for any of a number of purposes (mostly involving servitude and absorption into noble houses). Those who have failed return as driders, and suffer a tortured existence by the drow nobles that visit before being released into the UnderOerth to fend for themselves. Save for the sewers, the hive is the only place in Erelhei-Cinlu where driders may be encountered. There would be 12 driders in the warrens of the farm at any given time.

As the DM wills, all manner of horrific cross-bred spiders may be found in the spider farms as part of the total numbers, including undead varieties, spiders with swords for mandibles, Phase Spiders (*Monster Manual* p.150), etc.

**Temple Staff:** 5 C1, 3 C2, 1 C3 (female) and two glabrezu advisors (*Monster Manual* p.42, 45-46)

**Spider Farm Staff:** 5 F4C5 (female) and 5 F3W4 (male – favouring enchantment and transmutation spells).

See Appendix C for notes on standard equipment.

**(x) The Noble and Council Chambers:** Near the northern noble gate (and under the protection of the guards there) are a set of connected and well-maintained buildings that serve as the council chambers for the nominal ruler of the city: Warden-mayor Shirvala (female noble house unknown, F8). She rules the city from the security of her fortified complex, which also serves as lodgings for nobles visiting the city on business (a group of support staff is constantly busy allocating quarters to nobles so that feuding nobles are not quartered near each other). It is worth noting that Shirvala is only charged with preventing the city from collapsing, and is little more than a figurehead. Furthermore, the buildings house a number of lesser but intelligent demons that serve Shirvala covertly as enforcers and trouble-shooters. That is to say, they eliminate problems rather than solving them, though they have yet to address the destructive problem of the Arachnid Champions (and are unlikely to do anything about the problem for a few decades or so).

**Advisory Council:** 3 C4 (female), 3 W3 (male) with 1 Nalfeshnee advisor (*Monster Manual* p.42), 4 succubus spies (*Monster Manual* p.41) and 2 Vrock enforcers (*Monster Manual* p.41)

See Appendix C for notes on standard equipment.

On the other side of the Noble Gate (to the right) is a series of warehouses and storage bays for merchant caravans, pack lizards and slaves for merchant caravans. These premises are patrolled by male drow patrols. Within the building is the city armoury (and repository for the guard towers). At work here can be found drow wizards, transmuters and druids with skills in alchemy, craft as well as Brew Potion feats (5 W6, 4 D5). They are constantly at work manufacturing the drow sleep poison that is used to coat drow weapons and bolts for the UnderOerth wars, at the behest of the nobles (it should be noted that they have an endless supply of disobedient slaves upon which to test the poison, as inflicted by hand crossbow bolt as is the tradition). They also create magical potions for profit and distil fungal juices to create drugs of pleasure...

**ALL MANNER OF HORRIFIC CROSS-BRED SPIDERS MAY BE FOUND IN THE SPIDER FARMS.**

**Male Armoury Patrol:** 4F2, 2F3, 1F4 + two howlers (*Monster Manual* p.121). Note that these patrols are composed of members of an elite Male Fighters Society, and the rigorous discipline of this facility allows each member an extra fighter-pool feat per two levels (above normal game rule allowances with a cap at 6th level). See Appendix C for notes on standard equipment.

**(xi) Sar-Sandarena: The great fungal park:**

*"The fungus grown here would be enough to feed everyone in the city, save for the rich incentives to grow more... shall we say, lucrative crops?"*  
(*The lesson of Crafus*).

The great fungal park is a crafted wonder. A large partitioned section of the southern wall to the west of the entrance gate, it provides for the food and the pleasure of the city (which does not automatically make it available to all the inhabitants of the city, thus accounting for cannibalistic tendencies among drow lowlies). In the park may be found all manner of fungi, toadstools, mushrooms and lichens (including fungal and plant-based monsters). All are grown under the close supervision of drow alchemists and druids as well as sentient fungi known as myconids (mushroom men) that have been enslaved by the drow. The overseer here is a very old drow by name of Crafus (D6 W5 Exp3 [drow male]).

Drow wizards are constantly busy creating and shaping crystalline terraces and sculptures to shape and support larger and faster-growing fungi. A small number of male drow staff here are secretly clerics that are devoted to Zuggtmoy (the demon queen of fungi). They bless the growth here (whilst pretending to be wizards, sorcerers and druids, thus avoiding undue attention), and they often solicit the transport of refuse from Thes-slis (area viii) to aid in the growth. The slaves who work the grounds of the park are divinely and arcanelly protected from intoxication and poisoning whilst harvesting the fungi here (from the expenditure of Delay Poison and Neutralise Poison spells). Porous fungal tunnels snake through the park and are open to the city residents, who can see the wonders of the park but lack direct access to them. Only

Crafus and his staff have the ability to open portals through the tunnels into the park at large.

**Sar-Sandarena Staff:** 10 W 4 (male), 10 D 5 (male) and 3 C4 (male)

See Appendix C for details of drow standard equipment.

See Appendix B for suggestions for encounters within the park.

**(xii) City Sewers:** The sewers are largely a network of tunnels beneath the city rather than a functional facility. They have lapsed into relative disuse due to blockage and poor maintenance. Theoretically PCs could access just about any area of the city via the sewer, including those with elite spider and demonic guards (with grates leading into streets and piping leading into buildings for sanitation and garbage disposal) should they choose to risk the many health hazards (PCs are subject to any imaginable disease whilst travelling through the sewer network, and a check should be made for each character at least once per day. See DMG p.75).

The active sewer tunnels drain into the Pitchy Flow via large grates (Characters of halfling or gnome size have a 35% chance of slipping through if unarmoured. Otherwise the grates are not enchanted and equivalent to locked iron portcullis DMG p.108, should PCs wish to try and break in or out). The sewer tunnels are home to all manner of unspeakable horrors, of which only a few are suggested. Noble drow are not found here (though it is possible that a fortified tunnel from gate to gate may exist that travels under the city for use by the nobles, if the DM desires).

There is a 15% chance per hour that a tunnel section may collapse, thus inflicting 2-40 damage on each character. This will not hinder character progress.

Theoretically, PCs could access any building or area of the city via the sewer (thus bypassing elite guards on locations such as the Noble and Council Chambers). To do so means that they would be entering buildings via sanitation piping and garbage disposal structures – thus each character is subject to a disease check at least once per day (see DMG p.75).

Refer to Appendix B for suggested random encounters in this area.

**(xiii) City Rooftops:** The rooftops of the many city buildings are not necessarily any safer than the city streets. Many things may be encountered on the roofs of buildings – from monsters hunting for food to drow lowlies... also hunting for food. For the most part, travel across the rooftops is discouraged by the great many spiders that nest and hunt there, and the lack of drow patrols. Many buildings are connected above street level (where they have been constructed at more than a storey in height) by bridges and connecting walkways, but so too are they connected by spider webbing and other materials, some of it looking very lifelike. Many who would seek to ‘disappear’ in the city come to the rooftops – few are those who do not receive their wish.

Refer to Appendix B for suggested random encounters in this area.

**APPENDIX A:**

**SLAVE TABLES**

*“There are interesting parallels between the supremacist beliefs of the drow and the Scarlet Brotherhood. I admire their mirror methodology for dealing with dissenting viewpoints (namely enforced slavery until the dissent ceases). It would be very interesting to watch a fight between a champion representative of each group in a combat arena, though I would imagine that such a battle would not last long. It would never occur to the Brotherhood to cheat...”*

*- From the private journal of the Fiend-Sage of Rel Astra*

Remember that slaves are brought and sold to meet just about any need that a drow master may have at the time. Most drow come to appreciate the value of a hardy slave (as a trading commodity if nothing else) and they are often pampered and well-fed (even if they have no idea what they are eating). It is not below a drow matriarch to pamper a highly-favoured slave and have him or her attended by her male consort, just to illustrate a point.

Slaves need not grow complacent however. Should they earn the disfavour of their cruel masters, they could easily be sent on a mission to assassinate an Arachnid Champion or desecrate an image of Lolth (and have their mission denied as “an unfortunate escape by a troublesome slave, unfit to fertilize the soil of the fungal park.”)

<b>Slave Tables (1-4 appearing, of any mix)</b>	
<i>Slaves will appear with a drow group – 3 C3 F3 (female) and 1 W2 F2 (male):</i>	
1.	Goblin (War1, Monster Manual p.107-108)
2.	Hobgoblin (War2, Monster Manual p.119-120)
3.	Bugbear (War3, Monster Manual p.27-28)
4.	Derro (War2 or Adep2, Monster Manual p.80)
5.	Human (F3 or Rog3)
6.	Drow male criminal (F1 or Rog1)
7.	Troll (Rog3, Monster Manual p.180)
8.	Troglodyte (F3 Adep1, Monster Manual p.179)
9.	Kuo-Toa (Rang2, Monster Manual p.125-126)
10.	Ghoul (Monster Manual p.97)
11.	High elf (F3 or Rog3)
12.	Grey elf (F4 or W2)
13.	Gnome (F3 or Rog3)
14.	Orc (War1, Monster Manual p.146-147)
15.	Gnoll (War2, Monster Manual p.105-106)
16.	(F3, Monster Manual p.107)
17.	Dwarf (F4)
18.	Human (F5)
19.	Half-Elf (F3 or Rog3)
20.	Half-Orc (F3 or Barb 3)

**APPENDIX B:**

**ENCOUNTER TABLES**

Note that the DM has considerable discretion in the use of these encounters, and may dismiss any that are not campaign-specific. In most cases, most encounters can be reused if they are rolled more than once, just using slight variations. The DM is also encouraged to make two rolls and begin a conflict between those two encounters that will threaten to engulf the PCs (especially useful if they are attempting to keep a low profile whilst in the city).

Another important point: If PCs are adorned in the lime green cloaks that visitors and seekers wear, then they are mostly left alone unless they are specifically looking for trouble. This is not always true of reactions by drow patrols. In rolling for random encounters (do so often!), the DM is encouraged to consider: what is the reaction of this encounter to the PCs? Will they offer to join the group? Will they attack (especially if intoxicated)? Will they be leading them into a larger ambush? Are they seeking patrons for a business sponsor? Are they secretly trapped in the city and seeking escape? And so on.

**Wild Cards (all are 60% likely to attract a drow patrol and two random encounters to themselves, and thus to the characters):**

- (1) **Tarwuch**, keening prophet of doom. Insane male drow, C2 (Ralishaz, CE Aspect);
- (2) Drow youths (four), members of the gender cult (A group of male drow determined to seek acceptance among drow females via veneration and cross-dress, a practice ill-tolerated by most). Each NE, Comm1;
- (3) **Rubhar-Cid**, Ket gem merchant (Rog5, CE) and five gnoll slaves (F2, *Monster Manual* p.105-106). **Rubhar-Cid** will attempt to pick pocket a random PC;
- (4) **Naylun** and **Dancid**, two Wild Coast pirates (F6 Rog3, CE) in an intoxicated state and looking for a fight (and **Piper the hedonist**);

Encounter Tables for the Pleasure Strips (“day time”)	
Check once per turn:	
1.	Male Drow Patrol (see vii) (on top of normal encounter chance)
2.	1 Lesser Demon (Vrock / Hezrou) ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.41-46)
3-6.	Drow commoner (Com2 – courtesans, tavern workers, hedonists, student agitators, etc.)
7.	1 Succubus ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.41, 43-44)
8.	1-4 Ghosts (Ghoul) ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.97)
9.	3 Arachnid Champions (F3 C3 ArCh3) +4 Medium Spiders ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.210)
10.	Slaves (see Appendix A)
11.	1-4 Drow Thieves (Rog4)
12.	1-3 Wizards (drow or human, W6)
13.	3 Female Drow Nobles (in disguise – F4 C3 each. See Appendix C for equipment)
14.	1 Gray Slaad scholar ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.167)
15.	2 rugged Human females (F7, Werewolves! <i>Monster Manual</i> p.220)
16.	1 Rakshasa seeker ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.153)
17.	1 Diseased Beggar (drow male Comm1. Successful hit inflicts Mummy Rot equivalent – DMG p.74-75)
18.	2 Yuan-ti Pureblood researchers (Rang4 Sor5) ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.190)
19.	<b>Wild Card</b> (see below)
20.	<b>Drow notable</b> (see below)

Encounter Tables for the Pleasure Strips (“night time”)	
Check once per turn:	
1.	Male Drow Patrol (see vii) (on top of normal encounter chance)
2.	1 Greater Demon (Glabrezu / Nalfeshnee / Marilith) ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.42)
3-6.	Drow commoner (Com2 – courtesans, tavern workers, hedonists, student agitators etc)
7.	1 Drow noble (discrete) (female F3 C3)
8.	2 Drow nobles (less discrete) (male F2 W2)
9.	Slaves (see Appendix A)
10.	Piper, a somewhat legendary noble gray elf hedonist (W9 ShadDanc4, NE) and Grayson, her loyal human bodyguard (F10, LE. If DM has Sword and Fist, he is a F5 DevDef5)
11.	3 hungry Phase Spiders ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.150)
12.	2 Ogre Mage bullies ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.144)
13.	2 Planetouched Tiedfling students (W2 Brd5 NE) ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.151)
14.	Jo and Wrelack, 2 drunken humans (F5 Mon5 LE) (if DM has <i>Sword and Fist</i> , they are F3 M2 DrnkMst5)
15.	3 Arachnid Champions (2 F3 C3 ArCh2 and 1 C7 ArCh5) (and for devious effect, 5 male drow F4 Rog3 Ass3 ambush them suddenly)
16.	3 Mind Flayer inquisitors (W3 C4) ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.136)
17.	Drow Vampire (C7 F4 (female)) ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.222)
18.	1 Lich seeker (W17) ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.216-217)
19.	<b>Wild Card</b> (see below)
20.	<b>Drow Notable</b> (see below)

(5) Escaped dissident: **Nayloj** (Drow male, F2 W2, CN) frantically begging for help with concealment (80% likely to attract attention in this instance);

(6) **Ulsoth**, Human C7 ambassador of Iuz and five ogre bodyguards (F5, *Monster Manual* p.144). **Ulsoth** wears his grinning skull robes openly beneath his lime cloak, and his revolting manner is ill-tolerated by the denizens of the city. He is looking for **Piper the hedonist**;

(7) **Haer** and **Tralanth of House Darmen**, (human male and female, W9 Lor4 and W10 Exp3, LE), seekers of magical secrets who will be grateful for human company;

(8) **Melbur** (male drow, Rog1, NE), Simple-minded street urchin lacking skill who will sneak attack the best-armoured character (critical failure);

(9) Drow rakes (four – Rog4, CE), will attempt to coerce characters into an alleyway with the invitation of magical items to sell (using the lure of a non-magical sparkling amulet). The only magical items

that they will possess is a *bead of force* (*Dungeon Masters Guide* p. 210) each;

(10) Drow infant wailing for its missing parents, about to be attacked by two Shadows (*Monster Manual* p.161). If desired (highly encouraged!), the DM may elect for this infant to be an intelligent Tiefling (Rog5 Sor5, CE, *Monster Manual* p.151-152) or Half-Fiend

Encounter Tables for the Slums (“daytime”)	
Check once per turn:	
I-10.	Drow Lowly (Com1 – workers, survivors, lepers, beggars etc)
II-13.	Drow Thief (male Rog2)
14.	Drow Female Patrol (see iv)
15-16.	Slaves
17.	1 Medium Spider ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.210)
18.	2 Arachnid Champions (F4 C2 ArCh2) and 2 Medium Spiders ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.210)
19.	<b>Wild Card</b> (see below)
20.	<b>Drow Notable</b> (see below)

Sewer Encounters. Check every 2 hours:	
1.	1-6 Ghosts ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.97)
2.	1-2 Otyughs ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.147-148)
3.	1-4 Large Spiders ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.210)
4.	1 Glabrezu ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.42, 45-46)
5.	Tiefling and drow necromancer group (3 W9 [Tiefling] and 3 W5 [drow male])
6.	1 Black Dragon (juvenile) ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.63-64)
7.	Vampire sewer queen ( <b>Jonest</b> – drow hero) (Rog10 Blackguard5) and 2-5 Vargouille ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.221-222; 182-183)
8.	1-4 Troglydites ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p. 179)
9.	1 Beholder ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.24-25)
10.	1-4 Shadows ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.161)
11.	1-8 Escaped slaves (Appendix A – roll each one seperately)
12.	1-3 Aboleth (and 2-5 Skum if desired) ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.15; 166)
13.	1 Ghost (High elf Brd8 CN) ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.212-213)
14.	1 Black Pudding ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.145)
15.	1 Cloaker ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.37)
16.	3-5 Mind Flayers (Sor5, <i>Monster Manual</i> p.136) and 1-4 slaves (see Appendix A Slave tables)
17.	2 Minotaurs ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.137)
18.	1 Gibbering Mouter ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.104)
19.	1-4 Driders ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.78)
20.	Spirit Naga ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.138-139)

Encounter Tables for the Slums (“night time”)	
Check once per 3 turns:	
I-3	Drow Lowly (Com3 – survivors and foragers)
4.	Drow Female Patrol (see iv)
5.	3 hungry Medium Spiders ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.210)
6.	6 Medium-sized Zombies ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.192-193)
7.	2 Mohrg ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.137)
8.	2 Annis (Hag) ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.115)
9.	4 Troglydites (trapped hunters) (3 Ran3, 1 Ran4 C2)
10.	4 Kuo-Toa (trapped patrol. C2 Rog3. 1 is a C5) ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.125-126)
11.	3 Allip ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.16)
12.	4 Shadows ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.161)
13.	4 Dopplegangers (NE Rog4. One is also Ass4) ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.60)
14.	2 Spectres ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.169)
15.	2 Arachnid Champions (F5 ArCh2) and 4 Medium Spiders ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.210)
16.	2 Vampire Spawn ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.182)
17.	1 Medium-sized Bodak ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.27)
18.	Adventure group in hiding (NG group: Elf male W6, Human male F8, Dwarf female C10, or C7 WrPr3 if DM has <i>Defenders of the Faith</i> – Creation Domain)
19.	<b>Wild Card</b> (see below)
20.	<b>Drow Notable</b> (see below)

(Rog5 Sor5, CE, *Monster Manual* p.215-216) with a taste for fresh adventurer flesh.

**Drow Notables (see Appendix C for standard equipment):**

- (1) **Shirvala:** Warden-Mayor of Erelhi-Cinlu: Drow Female F8, CE. She will be accompanied by her two Vrock enforcers (*Monster Manual* p.41). She is bored and looking for an unmatched fight.
- (2) **Edralve:** High priestess of the City Temple of Lolth: Drow Female (CE C6 F6, or optionally C5 F4 Duel3 if using *Sword and Fist*). Always accompanied by 4 female drow (C4) and 2 medium-sized monstrous spiders (*Monster Manual* p.210). Perhaps she is looking for **Naylun** and **Dancid**, her lovers.
- (3) **Marleck:** Master thief: Drow male Rog9 Ass4, CE. Always shadowed by 5 drow males (Rog4). He is out looking for a rich mark (and look at the group he has just found!)
- (4) **Crafus:** Keeper of Sar-Sandarena. Drow male D6 W5 Exp3, NE (in service to Zuggtmoy). Always accompanied by **Sewyll** (when outside the park - Drow male W6 Exp6, CE). Looking for a drinking establishment that can accommodate his tolerances and credit line;
- (5) **Nedylene of House Despana:** Drow female noble C9, CE seeking pleasure in disguise (anyone or anything will do);
- (6) **Aloresque of House Kilsek:** Entry gate commander Drow male noble (F3 W6, CE) seeking pleasure (and not having much luck, either);
- (7) **Jysiln:** Gate Commander: Drow female noble (CE C10 F5. If the DM has *Sword and Fist*, she might alternately be a C8 F4 Lash3) and two huge spider bodyguards (*Monster Manual* p.210). Seeking **Piper the hedonist** – ostensibly for questioning;

(8) **Neekus:** Drow female (F7 ArCh3, CE) Bully and extortionist, covets her Belt of Giant Strength (Strength 17 +4) (*Dungeon Masters Guide* p.210). Seeking **Piper the hedonist** for inquisition;

(9) **Volhom** (“The Slime Wizard”): (Drow male W14, CN). An eccentric loner, fascinated by slimes, oozes and jellies. Has developed many singular spells of protection and conjuration. (DM note, Volhom is rarely seen and may be human);

(10) **Exelar:** Drow male (Rang5, NE). A mercenary commander looking for talent to raid a Kuo-Toan shrine to the south of the Vault. He has recruited non-drow in the past.

Sar-Sanderena Encounters. Check per 3 turns:	
1.	Ooze Mephits (2-4) ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.132-134)
2.	Medium-Size Spider (2-4) ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.210)
3.	Huge Assassin Vine (1) ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.20)
4-5.	Slave (see appendix- Slave Table)
6-7.	Drow Lowly (Com1, looking for food to steal)
8.	Carrion Crawler (1) ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.29)
9.	Umber Hulk (1) ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.180)
10.	Ogres (2) ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.144)
11	Cloaker (1) (adapted to appear as moss bed) ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.37)
12	Dire Rat (4) ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.56-58)
13	Shambling Mound (1) ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.162)
14-16.	Shrieker (1) ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.93)
17-18.	Violet Fungus ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.93)
19-20.	Ooze ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.145-146)

Thes-Slis Random Encounters. Check per 3 turns:	
1-9.	Drow lowly (beggar, forager, street thief, pickpocket, prophet of doom, etc. All Com1);
10.	3 Arachnid Champions (F2 C3 ArCh3. See Appendix D).
11.	1-4 Ghouls or 1-2 Ghosts ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.97);
12.	1-2 Otyughs ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.147);
13.	Ooze (Gray, Ochre or Gelatinous Cube) ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.145);
14.	1-10 Small Spiders ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.210);
15.	1-4 Wererats ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.220) or 1-4 Dire Rats ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.56-58);
16.	1 Basilisk ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.23);
17.	1 Huge Carrion Crawler ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.29);
18.	2 Night Hags ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.140);
19.	1 Flesh Golem ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.108-109);
20.	Violet Fungus ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.93-94)

Rooftop Encounters (per hour):	
1-5.	3 Large Spiders ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.210)
6-7.	3 Ettercaps ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.88)
8.	2 Harpies ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.117)
9-11.	Drow Lowly (Com1)
12.	2 Gargoyles ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.94)
13-15.	5 Drow Bandits (Rog5 x4, Rog7As4 x1)
16.	2 Aranea ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.19)
17.	Grey Ooze ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.145)
18.	8 Ghouls ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.97)
19.	1 Glabrezu ( <i>Monster Manual</i> p.42)
20.	3 Gnome Adventurers (Svirfneblin F6 [x 2], Ill3 Rog3 [x1], NG)

## APPENDIX C:

## DROW STANDARD EQUIPMENT

(Nobles or in Noble service) – See Also *Monster Manual* p.86:

Chainmail +1 (additional + every 3 levels to + 5 maximum)

Buckler (+1 at 5th level, additional + every three levels to +3 max)

Short sword +1 (increased enchantment as per chainmail) or Mace (if cleric, enchantment as above)

50% chance of either Hand crossbow (bolts coated with drow *sleep poison* per MM p.86) or Javelin

Drow patrols (but not wall guards) are drawn from graduates of an elite Female Fighters Society and a Male Fighters Society. Given the intensive schooling and discipline (even for the drow) of these places, fighters in drow patrols possess an extra fighter-pool feat per two levels up until 6th level (whereupon they no longer receive this benefit). Therefore a 6th level fighter will have received three more feats than a non-drow fighter. This applies only to the drow patrols that are encountered on the Pleasure Strips (vii), on the streets of the tenements (iv), and in the armoury of the Noble and Council Chambers (area x)

Drow on missions outside the city also come equipped with *Cloak and Boots of Elvenkind* (standard features in the UnderOerth). If exposed to sunlight, all enchantment is entirely lost within two weeks and is entirely irreversible. *Sleep poison* is completely corrupted on exposure to sunlight.

## APPENDIX D:

## ARACHNID CHAMPION (UL-LOLAURI) (PRESTIGE CLASS)

*“Would you die willingly for Lolth? I wasn't offering you a choice, fool!”*

- *Orthola-Olois, Premier Arachnid Champion*.

The Arachnid Champion is a special NPC prestige class available only to a few drow that may be encountered in Erelhei-Cinlu. The Arachnid Champion represents a group that has awarded special favor by Lolth. They first appeared when a recent civil war was put down. During that war, Lolth became angry that many drow had turned to false gods and had become lax in appeasing her. In retaliation, she blessed select champions with powers to ruthlessly enforce her will and to prominently maintain the spider presence in the Vault. Their status outranks even that of the ordained clergy of Lolth, which results in much treachery and jealousy (which pleases Lolth).

The mission of the Arachnid Champion is to enforce the will of Lolth and remind the drow that the Spider Queen is a constant and wrathful presence in their lives. They use their special powers to freely and publicly commit acts of brutality in the name of Lolth, and make examples of sacrifices so as to remind the drow of her pervasive

control. They do not recognise the authority of the nobles or the drow patrols, and are thus greatly feared. They have been known, for example, to disrupt public temple services to drag a cleric of Lolth away for sacrifice to the Queen of the Spiders (which especially pleases Lolth). Anyone faltering in such a service would likely become a part of the sacrifice.

The Arachnid Champion is a dangerous foe, for no one in the city (drow or non-drow) seeks to incur their wrath, lest they be chosen for sacrifice. Public proclamations of the mercy of Lolth, or generous donations to the Ul-Lolauri, are known ways to avoid their attention. In many ways the population of Erelhei-Cinlu is terrified of the Arachnid Champions, because they are unpredictable individuals and can declare any action or inaction an affront against the Spider Queen. Nobles and female patrols do not obstruct their passage, and sometimes assist in the brutality in the hopes of achieving favour with Lolth. The Arachnid Champions are living embodiments of the jealous, brutal and chaotic nature of Lolth. The presence of the Arachnid Champion disrupts the long-term plans of the drow and their war against all other races of the UnderOerth. Lolth sees it as a way to punish the drow for their lapse of faith, and plans to exert even more control over the drow race by sponsoring more Arachnid Champions. By 591 CY, there are approximately two dozen Arachnid Champions within the city (some having been killed by stealth).

Arachnid Champions are readily distinguished, as they proudly and prominently wear the symbol of an angered image of Lolth, reared back to strike. Often a rapidly parting crowd is the first and only warning that one gets. Woe to any seeker who mistakes them for a cleric of Lolth and assumes themselves safe from their wrath! All drow desire the status of an Arachnid Champion for the power and freedom that it allows, they desire it as much as they are fearful of this group. Arachnid Champions are definitely recognised for their dedication to Lolth. Some were commoners and some were once nobles. Most have a background as fighters or clerics (or both) but it is not impossible to encounter Arachnid Champions with



Jysiln in a rare moment without her spiders.



levels as Wizards, Sorcerers, or Rogues. Arachnid Champions with levels as clerics have abandoned the ordained church in the Vault, but retain their powers due to their favour with, and devotion to, the Spider Queen, and may gain additional levels as a cleric if they desire (see spells per day below).

**Hit Die:** d6

**Requirements:**

- Race: Drow (female), Chaotic Evil, Worshipper of Lolth
- Base Attack: +2
- Intimidate: 8 Ranks
- Sense Motive: 6 Ranks
- Knowledge (Religion): 4 Ranks
- Feats: Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Hand Crossbow, Whip)

**Class Skills:**

The Arachnid Champion's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Balance (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Concentration (Con), Diplomacy (Cha), Handle Animal (Cha), Hide (Dex), Innuendo (Wis), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Knowledge (Religion) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Ride (Dex), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Spellcraft (Int)

**Class Features:**

**Weapon and Armour Proficiency:** The Arachnid Champion is proficient in the use of all simple and martial weapons and all armour commonly used by the drow (mostly mace and short sword). She does not gain any additional feats. She does not gain any special benefits from casting arcane spells whilst in armour. Note that armour check penalties apply to the skills Balance, Hide, Jump, and Move Silently.

**Spells Per Day:** The Arachnid Champion gains no additional spell casting ability beyond any that she has gained in any other class. (She may elect to gain levels in a class with spellcasting ability if she chooses, though the preferred advancement path favours the Arachnid Champion class ahead of others).

**Constitution of the Spider:** If the Arachnid Champion qualifies for an attribute increase while gaining levels in the prestige class, she may only increase her constitution score (Lolth controls their fortitude but prevents them from developing any other attributes that might allow an Arachnid Champion to become ambitious or rebellious, thus straying from her cause).

**Spider Charisma:** All Arachnid Champions possess the ability to communicate telepathically with any spider or drider within 30

feet. All spiders and driders recognise the favoured status of the Arachnid Champion and obey without question (no matter how selfish the order) and will obey the will of a low-level Arachnid Champion over a high level-cleric of Lolth. No spider, drider, retriever, bebilith or similar spider-form can ever be arcanelly or divinely compelled to attack her. In the presence of an Arachnid Champion, all spiders attack at +1 to hit per prestige level. (This is not cumulative for the number of Arachnid Champions that may be present. If more than one is present, then use the bonus from the highest-level Arachnid Champion). Note that although no spider will ever attack an Arachnid Champion, they have no special immunity from spider poison that may be used to coat weapons (Lolth has not abandoned her clergy completely).

**Spider Freedom:** The Arachnid Champion is not affected by any spell or naturally-occurring effect that emulates the effect of a Web, and may move at normal speed though webbing. She is affected normally by effects that *Entangle*, *Slow*, *Paralyse* or *Hold*.

**Lesser Spider Emulation:** The Arachnid Champion may imbue herself or a target with a temporary spider-like power of movement or perception for as many times a day as she has prestige levels (though an unwilling target is entitled to a Fortitude save, at -1 per level of Arachnid Champion). Each effect will last for two rounds only. She may choose from any of the following:

- **Spider Grace:** She is allowed to move as if under the effect of *Spider Climb*, but may move at base speed and need not have bare hands or feet.
- **Spider Perception:** She is able to augment her ability to intuit imminent danger. This takes the effect of the Uncanny Dodge ability that is a class feature for both Barbarians and Rogues (as if she was a 5th level Barbarian or a 6th level Rogue). When under this enchantment, she has a dexterity bonus to AC even if flat-footed and may not be flanked (unless under attack by a Rogue or Barbarian of a higher level. See PH p.25 or 48).
- **Spider Strike:** She is able to move with the speed of a spider. Her base movement is increased by 10 for the duration of the effect and she gains an additional +2 to strike for any one attack during the duration.

**Lolth's Web:** The Arachnid Champion may cast an improved version of the *Web* spell as many times per day as she has prestige levels. It is identical to the *Web* spell in most respects, but the *Web* is resistant to all fire, and inflicts 1d4 damage per round from contact poison and shearing damage. The Arachnid Champion may move

Class Level	Base Attack	Fort	Ref	Will	Special
1	+1	+0	+2	+0	Constitution of the Spider, Spider Freedom, Lesser Spider Emulation
2	+2	+0	+3	+0	Lolth's Web
3	+3	+1	+3	+1	Enhance Spider
4	+4	+1	+3	+1	Greater Spider Emulation
5	+5	+1	+4	+2	Exalted Spider Form

freely in Lolth's Web and is immune to the poison and shearing damage.

**Enhance Spider:** The Arachnid Champion may specially enhance as many spiders as she has prestige levels. This effect is usable only once per day. Affected spiders are willingly and instantaneously transformed into a spider of the next size category and gains +1 to hit for the duration of the effect (2 rounds per prestige level). For example, a 3rd level Arachnid Champion could instantaneously transform three medium spiders into three large spiders for 6 rounds. At the end of the effect, any spider is returned to normal and is not healed of any damage. This effect requires spiders to be present, as the Arachnid Champion may not summon spiders unless she possesses prior divine or arcane ability to do so.

**Greater Spider Emulation:** The Arachnid Champion may imbue herself or a target with a temporary, superior spider-like power for as many times a day as she has prestige levels (though an unwilling target is entitled to a fortitude save at -1 per prestige level). Each effect will last for two rounds only. She may choose from any of the following:

- **Spider Mandible:** She may briefly transform her facial features into a spider-like form and make a venomous bite attack as a medium sized spider, but striking at +3 to hit. She may make attacks as normal with melee weapons but may not cast any spells for the duration. The bite counts as an additional attack at 1/round.
- **Spider Claw:** She may transform one hand into a venomous claw that may make 1 strike as an unarmed weapon per round. Each strike is at +5 base to hit (with damage as a venomous bite attack from a medium sized spider). One hand must be free to enable this effect, and no other attack is possible.
- **Improved Spider Strike:** She may increase her base speed by 20 for the duration of the effect and gains an additional +4 to base attack for any one strike for the duration.

Optionally, the Arachnid Champion may sacrifice a Greater Spider Emulation for a Lesser Spider Emulation of four rounds duration.

**Exalted Spider Form:** The Arachnid Champion may Shapechange herself into the form of a large monstrous spider (*Monster Manual* p.210). This lasts for five rounds and is castable once per day only. In this form, she retains any spell casting ability that she has. Furthermore, she is immune to all poison (or poison like attacks or spells) and has a damage reduction of 3 for the duration.

## The Paganhammer

by Issak Haywood



He trembled as he stood waiting for the heretic. What could make a citizen of the Pale become a heretic – especially one of this kind? The Church was his life. The Church gave him life. And he was not even native to the land.

Reifus knew that one way or another, Kanen was going to face his crimes, for today Reifus had command of twenty-one members of the Church Militant, and he was not going to let the criminal slip away so easily this time.

“You are hereby commanded to come forth and face the crimes you have committed against the Church of the One True Path!”

Reifus knew that this was just a formality, as Kanen would never voluntarily leave his sanctuary. The old farmhouse had been converted over to a shrine of evil, dedicated to Vecna, the once human Emperor-Mage of awesome power that terrorized his own people some millennia ago.

The other members of the Church waited with ease. Kanen was not their first capture, nor was it likely to be their last, and probably not

the worst. Some watched with passing interest, as they knew that Reifus’ statement was nothing more than regulation and thus fidgeted as they waited. Janus, on the other hand, watched Reifus’ every move. Janus had sponsored this raid, and any mistake would come back to him. Prior to accepting Reifus’ request for this raid, Janus and the other members researched Kanen and his alleged injustices against the Church of the One True Path. Kanen was more than a common sorcerous heretic<sup>2</sup>, he was a priest to an evil deity, and (the sheer thought of such heresy made Janus and the other members of the Church Militant livid with righteous indignation) Kanen was devoted to no lesser of an evil than the Whispered One himself – Vecna! Thus the raid was not only approved but also given the highest priority.

The members of the Church Militant had already cleared the livestock from the nearby barn and placed many traps in the surrounding area, making secret paths to the doorways and closed windows. Reifus directed the other members to station themselves

around both the farmhouse and barn, with himself and Janus facing the front door. With the traps and Church Militant surrounding the house, Reifus knew that Kanen had no chance of escape other than what his dark god would grant. Reifus stepped closer to the door and heard emanating chants of dark magic from within. He stopped and listened intently. He could almost understand the intonations. As he listened, Reifus imagined something dark erupting from the oerth. *The creature would endanger the lives of his associates. Kanen might escape!*

“I heard chanting,” Reifus informed his compatriots. “He is summoning an oerth elemental, if I understand the words correctly.”

Janus understood what this meant and shouted back to the others, “Careful in the fields, something will be coming out of the ground!” The cries of his fellows told him that his warning was too late. “Damn. This waiting game has got to stop. We don’t know what power he has amassed and is saving, just waiting for us to become exhausted. Reifus, this is your capture, call the order. Have Den stay behind to cover, and Theane to draw the elemental away from the wounded.”



*Erupting from the pastures, the Oerth elemental creates a huge distraction for Reifus’ men.*

“Call to order!” yelled Reifus, having to be heard over the crushing sounds of oerth being trampled beneath the huge rock and stone elemental behind the house. The Templars and Legates<sup>3</sup> were fighting valiantly with their swords and maces but were on the losing end of the battle. “Den! Theane! Draw that thing away from the others, and keep it busy for awhile.” Reifus knew that with Den and Theane out, both veteran Templars, things were going to be tough, especially with the groans and death throes of his fellows

lying on the ground. “Minly, you must retrieve the injured before that treacherous monster causes any more havoc.”

*This was not the way Janus said it should go, thought Reifus. I'll get that demon-spawn bastard if it is the last thing I do.* He looked to his left, signaled ready and was thankful to see the signal returned. He knew that the beleaguered group on the right might not be ready, yet he requested it nonetheless. Confirmation came gingerly, as it appeared that Templar Lenard was unable to fully raise his hand, having come forth from fighting the deadly oerthen force.

At the top of his lungs, Reifus yelled, “In Sashia’s name, I smite thee!”<sup>4</sup>

All knew this was his personal battle cry and charged their respective entry points at his order. Janus looked on and forced a smile. With himself not participating (due to both his age and his desire to see Reifus maintain control of the operation), both Den and Theane fighting the ungodly beast, and Minly healing their four injured companions, it was not going to be an easy capture, yet everyone capable of moving towards the farmhouse did so. He hoped that Reifus would make his capture and a name for himself. This was his time. He would be one to contend with later in life.<sup>5</sup> Janus was proud of his protégé.

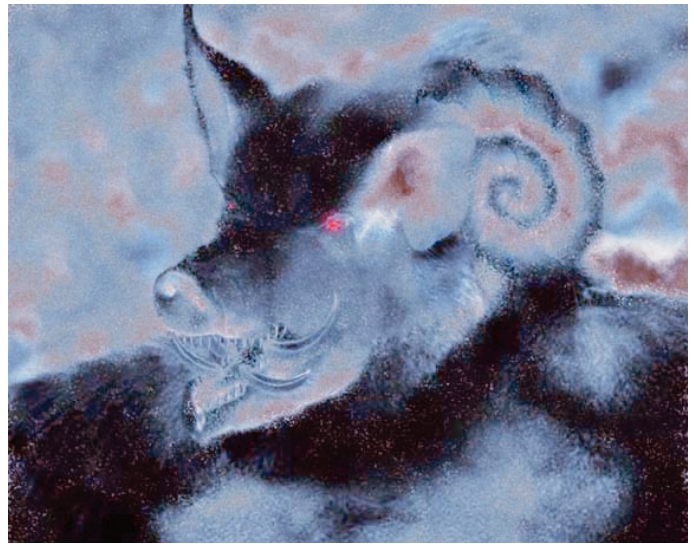
The Legates readied spells, and the Templars raised swords, axes and mauls towards the building as they rushed forward. Reifus was certain of the outcome. He knew Pholtus was on his side. He knew Pholtus had given him this test. He was Nyrondeese after all, and needed to prove his faith to the Path.

The house exploded. Flames cascaded up the ancient wooden building as if it were tinder on a bonfire. Guinin, a Legate of some renown, was hit full force in the face by flaming splinters and fell to the ground, writhing in pain. Running forward and leaping over his compatriot and through the flames, Reifus’ trousers caught fire. *No matter*, Reifus thought, *I’m protected by the Light of Pholtus.*

In front of him stood a twelve-foot tall demonic looking creature. Looking past the fearsome monstrosity and directly at Kanen, Reifus yelled, “You heathen are in violation of the doctrine as prescribed in the Pietistical!<sup>6</sup> Place aside your weapons and send this demon back to the Abyss. You hereby face the Question of Pholtus!”

“**Ahh you mortal fool!**” boomed the voice of the demon. “Your faith in your puny god is nothing compared to the power that I hold. I’ll torture you and your sister’s soul.”

Reifus knew this demon was goading him, trying to seduce him from the Path, but how did it know of his dear sister? For no more than that mere second did he waiver, as his fellows came forth, crashing through the burning walls and windows. With mauls and maces swinging, they attacked the foul-smelling demon. Reifus had



*Perhaps not the most pleasant final vision before an eternity of torture.*

been distracted by the fiend for long enough; he was here to capture Kanen. *Let the Templars and Legates deal with this foul beast*, he thought.

His flesh burned. He had forgotten the flames, and now they advanced up his back. The smell of burning flesh was strong in the air, and Reifus did not know if the odor was emanating from himself, those under his charge or as part of Kanen’s deadly sacrifice. He saw Kanen standing in the center of a Symbol of Summoning. The Eye of Vecna on the infernalist’s black robes began to glow as he concentrated on his summoned demon. Ignoring the pain and flames licking at his long hair, Reifus swung his hammer at Kanen.

Reifus watched his swing go wide; everything stopped, except the pain. “Ahhhhh!” his lips let loose. It was not the wild swing that distracted Kanen. The pain evident in the scream from the Pholtan zealot caused a gleeful smile to crack his lips.

The momentary slip in concentration and confusion instigated by the scream provided the wicked Nalfeshnee<sup>7</sup> the moment it needed. Turning from its dead and dying assailants, the demon pointed one of its huge talons at Kanen, and in its deafening voice, it bellowed, “You! Now you will pay the ultimate price for distracting me from the war of Azzagrat in Demonholme.<sup>8</sup> Pain. Suffering. Torture. Those will be your rewards for summoning me to this shadow-wretched place.”

Reifus had to act fast. His friends were down or still outside battling the elemental and the blaze engulfing the house. Little did he believe that this demon was making light or idle threats. Correcting his balance, Reifus’ hammer again swung towards Kanen. Like the True Path that Reifus followed, the blow struck true and shattered his nemesis’ leg. Kanen crumpled to the ground.

### **The Demon Leapt Forward.**

1. Older members of the Church Militant are required to sponsor their apprentices during raids, especially during their first few captures.
2. Average citizens of the Pale believe that all wizards and sorcerers are heretics, and many people accuse them of starting the world spanning Greyhawk Wars.
3. The Church Militant is formed of two groups. The Templars and the Legates. The latter are priests of the Church of the One True Path that have shown both knowledge and dedication to the Church and Pholtus. Templars are usually fighters and paladins (but other classes are represented) that are used when militant force is required or as bodyguards for ranking priests and temples with precious relics.
4. When Reifus was fourteen his Nyronese family was reduced to a squalid living near the Gamboge Forest. Due to the lack of support, which his family received from the community, his younger and favorite sister, Sashia contracted fever, and as a result of their unhealthy lifestyle, she passed away. From the day that Reifus offered himself fully to Pholtus, he swore to keep her spirit alive, and bellows this whenever entering a battle.
5. This story takes place around CY 573, many years prior to Reifus' assuming command of the Church Militant.
8. The Pietistical is the Holy Book of Pholtus, containing the books: Book of the Sun, Book of the Moon, Book of the Law, Book of the Good, Book of Knowledge, and the Book of Deeds.
7. **Nalfeshnee:** Huge Outsider; HD 11d8+44; HP 93; Init +1; Spd 30; AC 28 (-2 size, +1 Dex, +19 natural); Atks +15 bite (2d4+6) melee, +13 2 claws (1d4+3) melee; Face/Reach 10 ft. by 10 ft / 15 ft; SA spell-like abilities, smite, summon tanar'ri; AL CE; SV Fort +11, Ref +8, Will +13; Str 23, Dex 13, Con 19, Int 22, Wis 22, Cha 16.  
  
**Skills & Feats:** Bluff +17, Concentration +18, Diplomacy +17, Hide +7, Knowledge (arcane) +16, Listen +26, Move Silently +15, Scry +19, Search +20, Sense Motive +19, Spellcraft +20, Spot +26; Cleave, Multi-attack, Power Attack.

For further information see the 3e *Monster Manual*, pgs. 42-46

8. The Abyss is known as Demonholme to both its residents and many of its "visitors." Azzagrat occupies the 45th, 46th and 47th layers of the Abyss, and is home to Graz'zt. This particular Nalfeshnee demon resides on the 46th layer, which is illuminated from the ground, creating shadows that form in the sky like columns. More information can be found on pages 99-103 of the 3e *Manual of the Planes*.

**Reifus' stats during the story (CY 573):**

**Reifus**, Templar of the Church Militant, male human (Oeridian)  
Ftr2/Clr1; CR 3; Medium Humanoid (6'0" tall, 18 years old) HD: 1d8 +3; HP 31; Init +2 (Dex), Spd 30 ft.; AC: 16 (Chain shirt, Dex);

Atks +4 melee (Warhammer 1d8 crit 20 x3); AL LN, SV Fort +6, Ref +2, Will +3.

Str 14, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 12

**Skills:** Diplomacy +4, Knowledge (Religion) +4, Intimidate +6

**Feats:** Blind Fighting, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Intimidate), Sunder, Weapon Focus (Warhammer).

**Domains:** Knowledge, Sun

Equipment: Chain shirt, Warhammer.

**Reifus' stats today (CY 591):**

**Reifus**, Cardinal-Commander of the Church Militant of the Church of the One True Path, "The Paganhammer", male human (Oeridian)

Ftr6/Clr9; CR15; Medium Humanoid (6'0" tall, 38 years old); HD 1d8 +3; HP 130; Init +6 (Dex, Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 20; Atks +20 / +15 / +10 melee (Warhammer 1d8 +1d6 crit 20 x3); AL LN; SV Fort +13, Ref +9, Will +10.

Str 16, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 12, Wis 15, Cha 14

**Skills:** Diplomacy +17, Sense Motive +17, Concentration +12, Intimidate +20, Knowledge (Religion) +9, Language (Common), Language (Flan).

**Feats:** Blind Fighting, Combat Reflexes, Lightning Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Intimidate), Weapon Focus (Warhammer), Weapon Specialization (Warhammer), Power Attack, Sunder, and Scribe Spell.

**Domains:** Knowledge, Sun

**Equipment:** Ring of X-Ray Vision, Cloak of Etherealness, Ring of Protection +2, Amulet of Health +4, Warhammer +4 (Flaming), Chainmail +3 (Mithral), Scroll: Strength, Endurance, Plane Shift, Neutralize Poison, Spiritual Hammer, Cure Light Wounds (x6), and Righteous Might.

# The Valorous League of Blindness

by Issak Haywood

## THE ORGANIZATION



Following the beliefs and practices of the Church of the One True Path, the League promotes the Pietistical primarily within the borders of Nyronnd; however, allied congeries can be found throughout the Flanaess. These devoted followers of Pholtus promote his faith through conversion, quite often by force. Financial and political support for the League has largely been through Prelates and other

church officials from within the Pale; the Palish ambassador in Rel Mord, the capital of Nyronnd has always been the most ardent endorser of the League and its tenets, harking back to the League's very foundation.

Grishken of Midmeadow, a maniacal zealot of the Church of the One True Path, is currently the ranking leader of the League. He is stern and strong in his faith in Pholtus and believes that anyone that does not agree with him has strayed from the True Path as set forth in the Book of the Path. Thus they must be a fiend worshipper!

Grishken's second in command and most ardent foe is Carindrell of Arndulanth, who has gained many supporters to the League's cause, as most of the townsfolk of Arndulanth have converted to the Pholtan way of life. Although he is not the locally appointed mayor, he is so popular that none oppose him. He is also credited with bringing back the corpse of a Nalfeshnee demon a few years back and exerts this accomplishment both for recruitment and conversion. With such acts, Carindrell shows Pholtus's glory to the faithful. He is also the local leader of the Knights Valorous, the elite military force of the League.

The "Slayers" are a small cult-like following in the Knights Valorous and led by none other than Zylinchin the Fiendfinder. They tour much of the northern lands of Nyronnd. Being one of the most outspoken and visible members of the League, Zylinchin has done outrageous things, including the infamous "cleansing" of a shrine to Incabulos in Midmeadow. These acts have garnered a large number of converts, and many frightened nobles and peasants suspect that he is the one behind the "Midnight Raids" along the northern border.

The League supports two elite forces within its ranks. The Knights Valorous is based in and acts within Nyronnd; its fraternal group operates within the Pale. Carindrell maintains leadership of the Nyronndese Knights while Avern manages those of the Pale. As originally planned by Hytan and Sister Buil, all three leaders must work together to accomplish the many goals of the League. It is currently well known that animosity exists between Grishken and Carindrell, and this situation has often allowed Avern to assume command when he otherwise might not. The difference of opinion between Grishken and Carindrell as well as the many tactics advocated by the League in its recruitment of personnel (Zylinchin has been known to conscript potential converts) has led to

widespread speculation outside of the organization as to the final tally of membership within the League.

## HISTORY

In CY 443, Toth, the newly elected Theocrat of the Pale, added the Book of the Path to the Pietistical, which changed the state-sponsored benevolent Church of the Blinding Light to the doctrine prescribed by the authoritarian Church of the One True Path. During the latter years of "the Occupation of the Pale," the often stern and heavy-handed Theocrat sent her cousin and counselor, Sister Buil, to Rel Mord to negotiate for more autonomy in Palish domestic affairs. The charismatic ambassador was instrumental in convincing King Dunstan I to grant the Pale, among other nations, emancipation in CY 450.

With the help of other dedicated followers of the Church of the One True Path, Sister Buil and Theocrat Toth completed the restoration of the true faith in Pholtus by forming the Church Militant in CY 452. The Church Militant, formed to ferret out and expunge heretics, heathens, and others not dedicated to the newly instituted Church of the One True Path, created an inquisition within the Pale. In CY 460, the Prelates of the newly freed Theocracy of the Pale felt that it was time to take their inquisition to the heathens of the south (Nyronnd).

The faithful and obstinate captain of the Rel Mord City Watch, and husband of Sister Buil, Hytan founded the Valorous League of Blindness in CY 460. With open support from the ranking Prelates within the Church, the League set out to convert those of other faiths, defend the faithful of Pholtus, and protect the Church's interests within Nyronnd.

With the strong support continuously offered by the Church Militant, the League did its best to propagate and reinforce the relationship. In CY 520, Prelates Tionon, Zakeria and Marshal directed their Church Militant forces to eradicate a group of priests and monks that had berated the Church for preaching that communion with Pholtus is gained only through the Church. A quick sortie by the League ended the apostasy as it entered Nyronnd's border. The action saved the Pale from seeming to act as an aggressive force against Nyronnd and further cemented the Pale's support for the League.

Throughout the years, the Palish ambassador, following Sister Buil's footsteps, has been the biggest Pale supporter of the League and its actions. Ambassador Ivanic Temzien, the Grand Templar (considered a fanatic even among his Church Militant companions) has taken this support further and in CY 580 published his Lesser Nyronnd Doctrine.

This doctrine prescribed the idea that northern Nyronnd should secede to the Pale, thus allowing Nyronnd the ability to handle its true border enemies such as the Great Kingdom, Iuz and the Bandit Kingdoms. In typical fanatical fashion, the League has not only sponsored this doctrine but has taken it as one of its tenets. This doctrine and unimpeded support for the League by Ivanic has been

labeled as one of the major factors in King Archbold's eventual downfall.

Today The Lesser Nyronde Doctrine is one of the League's strongest ideals and is often stated as:

*"There is now only one hope of salvation, Pholtus of the Blinding Light. Only those blinded to iniquity and its lures can hope to prevail in these terrible times. Look at how the rich live while you travail to pay their taxes; is this right? But this is how Nyronde is. Hence, Nyronde must be changed, and we're the men to do it, just as we are the men to root out the evil within these lands which matches the evils of Iuz and Aerdy outside."*

Prior to the Flanaess-spanning Greyhawk Wars, the League was seen by many Nyronde nobles as little more than religious rabble. However, when Aerdy struck the first blow at Nyronde, the League was one of the kingdom's first defenders. The soldiers and nobles on the borderlands noticed the importance of the League, and attitudes shifted from avoidance to acceptance. On the Almorian borderlands near Castle Blazebane, a group of junior Nyronde military officers, fighting alongside a squad of League members, renounced the directions and orders of their untalented and poorly skilled commanders and generals. These junior officers considered themselves to suffer unjustly from a corrupt government that promoted inbred relatives who lost battles that better prepared or knowledgeable leaders would have won. Colonel Zylinchin, one such overruled officer, joined the League during an orcish advance at Kurast's Tower. After what should have been easily won battles became muddled due to inept leadership, Zylinchin turned inward and found a great faith in Pholtus. No longer would he follow the incompetence of his "superiors."

With the addition of Colonel Zylinchin, the League had numerous successes on the battlefield and freed many of the peasants from subjugation by the cruel forces of both Iuz and the Overking. The Colonel and his lieutenants became known as the "Fiend Slayers," and took command from General Younard at the Battle of Arat in the Almorian Border Lands. After the battle was won, the League gained a newfound respect from the soldiers and peasants of the area, but the official Nyronde position towards the League was further distanced. (The officials hated the league. The local citizens loved the league.) Eight months after Arat, at the Crest of Arike, near Womtham, Zylinchin once again became known and influential. His "Fiend Slayers" slew a demon directing an attacking goblin horde. With fame and infamy throughout the northern kingdom and

generous donations to the poor and oppressed peasants, conversions to the faith of Pholtus came quickly, despite the rigidity required by the League.

Although Zylinchin made many converts and allies near the end of the wars, Cunal Huldane, a "bandit" that robbed from his father and raided the Pale, became one of the League's biggest antagonists. The two often clashed when dealing with Count Blackmar Huldane, Cunal's father, who ruled with cruel laws and enforced the edicts made by a frantic King Archbold. Cunal, based in Barren Keep, often hid in the Phostwood, and was protected many local farmers.



**TODAY**

The League still encourages secession to the Pale, and a few nobles in the northern lands have either joined or now openly support the League (though usually out of fear of a peasant uprising). Yet other nobles from both the north and south of the kingdom dislike the League intensely. Many nobles, officers, and merchants disagree that Nyronde cannot protect itself from its enemies. In the south, Farenne, a paladin of the Church of the Blinding Light believes that the Pale is a land of heresy, much like the Theocracy of Dimre, twisting Pholtus's will and light. She argues strongly against any alliance with the Pale, and condemns any talk of secession as treason. Duke Korenfluss of Oldred has gone so far as to place a price on Zylinchin's head, as did Field General Myariken. In turn, Myariken is hated within the Pale and by the League for his raids on Hawkburgh and other neighboring Palish townships. (Myariken's troops use the Phostwood as a staging area.)

The League recognizes its detractors and fights against them by granting aid and protection to the peasants while supporting the lawful rule of faithful nobles. This aid and the growing rumors of demons, devils and corrupt nobles, keep the newly converted or easily swayed in line. Following the practice of Midnight Raids, made famous in the Pale by the Church Militant, the League has been able to rid the northern lands of Nyronde of numerous fiends, demons, devils and those who consort with such malevolence. Along the Pale-Nyronde border, many men and women accused of heresy are quickly hunted down, and days after such a raid, the remains of burned or impaled victims can be seen to show others what becomes of those who consort with the foulest of the foul.

As the newly ascended king, Lynwerd I, reorganizes and attempts to heal his lands, the Lesser Nyronde Doctrine remains a common belief, even among Nyronde officials. However, many of the more extravagant and outlandish tenets of the League are losing support.

Thus the League has begun to withdraw and to curtail some of its members' actions. Also, the League has doubled its fund raising and charity efforts. Recently Avern, the Commander of the Knights Valorous within the Pale, met with Carindrell and Grishken. Numerous members of the Church and League hierarchy were led to believe that this was merely a polite visit. However, those in the know report that the few progressive Prelates of the Council of Nine are disgusted by the continued excesses of Zylinchin and the feud between Grishken and Carindrell. Due to his position within the Pale-sponsored League, Avern's words carry great weight, as evidenced by Grishken having recently asked Zylinchin to forestall further Midnight Raids. Although still considered extreme and one of the more hard-line interpretations of the Book of the Path, several members continue the practice of literally wearing blinders or the even more bizarre and fanatically holy act of putting out their left eye, showing that Pholtus's wisdom and teachings are more than enough to show his Path to those truly faithful. This and other personal, yet ardent, tenets of the League have seen a recent decline among recruits.

### JOINING

A person of absolute faith and devotion to the Church of the One True Path is recognizable to the clergy and will be approached by members of the League. Once a person has accepted the request to join, the initiate must demonstrate a strong resolve towards Pholtus. A League Sacerdotalist indoctrinates all new members and enforces memorization of the Pietistical and a strict adherence to the "Faithful and Righteous Path" of the Church of the One True Path.

Upon indoctrination, the Sacerdotalist presents each new member with a "Tabard of Perfect Knowledge." Emblazoned on this bright yellow and blue tabard is the League's heraldry, which incorporates the holy symbol of Pholtus. The tabard also displays a Knight's rank in the League. Just above the rank marking, Knights display an additional marking to designate whether they operate within the Pale (f) or in Nyronde (o).

## APPENDIX A

### PARAGONS OF THE VALOROUS LEAGUE OF BLINDNESS

#### Bishop Grishken of Midmeadow, Cleric of Pholtus in service to the Church of the One True Path, Leader of the Valorous League of Blindness

Grishken, a 66-year-old zealot of the Church of the One True Path, resides within Midmeadow. He is the leader of the Valorous League of Blindness, and although his views are considered harsher than most (he believes that anybody that does not agree with him is an active fiend worshiper), Grishken has yet to blind himself. He stands 6'2" with gray hair and blue eyes and peers down upon his subjects with arrogance. His disrespectful attitude is most evident and directed towards Carindrell, his second in command. For several

years Grishken has not only lived within Midmeadow but has also supported open rebellion by the populace of the city; he plans on declaring it a free theocratic city with the coming collapse of Nyronde.

**Grishken:** Male Human (Nyronde) Clr 14; CR 14; Medium-size humanoid; HD 14d8; hp: 68; Init: +5; Spd: 30 ft.; AC 19 (Chain +3); Atk +14/+9 Melee (1d10 +3 [crit:19-20/x2], +3 heavy flail (does x2 dam to chaotic creatures); SA Turn undead; AL LN; SV Fort: +9, Ref +5, Will +11; Str 12, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 13, Wis 16, Cha 17.

**Skills and Feats:** Concentration (5) +9, Diplomacy (4) +6, Heal (4) +6, Intimidate (3) +6, Knowledge (history) (2) +3, Knowledge (the planes) (6) +7, Knowledge (religion) (9) +10, Ride (2) +3, Sense Motive (2) +4, Spell Craft (3) +5; Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Leadership, Martial Weapon: Flail, heavy, Scribe Scroll.

**Spells Prepared:** 0: 6+1 / I: 6+1 / II: 6+1 / III: 5+1 / IV: 4+1 / V: 3+1 / VI: 3+1 / VII: 2+1

0- cure minor wounds (2), light (3), read magic (1)

I- bless (1), cure light wounds (2), detect chaos (2), doom (1) + protection from chaos

II- cure moderate wounds (2), zone of truth (2), consecrate (1), enthrall (1) + heat metal

III - cure serious wounds (1), daylight (2), prayer (1), searing light (1) + magic circle against chaos

IV - cure critical wounds (1), divine power (1), sending (1), discern lies (1) + order's wrath

V - atonement (1), raise dead (1), dispel chaos (1) + flame strike

## TENETS

Display a "Perfect Knowledge of the Laws of Pholtus."



Uphold the teachings of the Church of the One True Path, for it is the Way to follow Pholtus into the Blinding Light.



Teach the children.



Neither tolerate disrespect to the Church nor allow any harm to come to its flock.



Defend the clergy of Pholtus.



Allow no person, beast or property to go without when you have plenty.



Convert unbelievers to the tenets of the Church of the One True Path.

Dispatch those that resist conversion, for they are not worthy of the Blinding Light of Pholtus, nor capable of following his strict True Path.



Allow no person to proclaim the teachings of Chaos, Evil or false cults.

Use force of arms when required to exile fiends, demons, devils or those that preach such teachings.



VI– banishment (1), blade barrier (1), word of recall (1) + hold monster

VII – dictum (1), resurrection (1) + sunbeam.

**Domains:** Law (cast law spells at +1 caster level), Sun (perform a greater turning 1/day).

**Possessions:** *chain mail armor* +3; *heavy footman's flail* +3, "the Blinder;" (does x2 damage to chaotic creatures); *ring of mind shielding*; *wand of size alteration*; *brooch of shielding*.

**Avern of the Pale, Paladin in the service of Pholtus and the Church of the One True Path, Commander of the Palish Knights Valorous of the Valorous League of Blindness**

Avern, a cold, devoted and hale man of the One True Path, is the Commander of the Knights Valorous of the Pale. While standing out in a crowd due both to his tall, straight stature (6'3") and the deep scar crossing his unusable left eye, he is most often remembered for the weapon he carries, "White Tail," a dire flail. At 42, Avern has led the Knights Valorous for seven years, and he was instrumental in the battle of Atherstone during the War of Tenh. Lately, Avern has noticed his power within the Valorous League increase because of Grishken and Carindrell disagreeing on many matters. He has used his influence to apply pressure to those members of the League that espouse some of the teaching that are supported by the Ebongleam, as well as to reduce the number of Midnight Raids held along the Pale-Nyrond border.

**Avern:** Male Human (Palish) Pal 8 / Knight Valorous 4; CR 12; Medium-sized humanoid; HD 12d10+12; hp 88; Int +0; Spd: 30 ft.; AC 16 (breast plate +1); Atk +19/+14/+9 Melee (1d8+6/1d8+6 x2), +3 dire flail; SA detect evil, divine grace, lay on hands, divine health, aura of courage, smite evil, remove disease 2/week, turn undead, special mount, Detect Heathen x2/day, Faith Shield, Valorous Mount, Faithful Arms, Demon Knowledge, Smite Heathen; AL LG; SV Fort: +9, Ref +4, Will +8; Str 16, Dex 10, Con 10, Int 13, Wis 15, Cha 17.

**Skills and Feats:** Diplomacy (5) +9, Handle Animal (3) +7, Heal (5) +7, Knowledge (the planes) (9) +10, Knowledge (religion) (6) +7, Listen (2) +4, Profession (soldier) (3) +5, Ride (8) +8, Spot (2) +4; Exotic Weapon Proficiency: Flail, Dire, Leadership, Mounted Combat, Power Attack, Weapon Focus: Flail, Dire, Shield Expert.

**Spells Prepared:** I: 2 - cure light wounds (1), divine favor (1)

**Possessions:** *breast plate* +1; *rod of flailing and dire flail* +3, "White Tail;" special mount: "Blue" – heavy warhorse, HD 8; SD scent; Listen 7 / Spot 7 – *horseshoes of a zephyr*.

**Carindrell of Arndulanth, Fighter in service to the Holy Lands of the Pale, Cleric of Pholtus in service to the Church of the One True Path, Commander of the Knights Valorous of the Valorous League of Blindness**

The leader of the Knights Valorous is a fanatic of the One True Path and demonstrates his faith with the weighty Pietistical that he

carries upon his person at all times. His knowledge of the faith has served him well, and the influence he has gained by it helped him secure the complete obedience of the town of Arndulanth. After the Great Wars of Greyhawk, he and his loyal group of Knights Valorous and other members of the League not only dispatched a Nalfeshnee demon but also brought back its corpse. Having always felt that King Archbold was a weak ruler, Carindrell ardently supports the Lesser Nyrond Pact and continues to do so even with the rise of Prince Lynwerd.

**Carindrell:** Male Human (Nyrondese) Ftr 5 / Clr 6 / Knight Valorous 5; CR 16; Medium-sized humanoid; HD 5d10+5, 6d8+6, 5d10+5; hp 110; Int +6; Spd: 30 ft.; AC 17 (chain mail +2); Atk +20/+15/+10 Melee (1d10 +6 [crit:19-20/x2], +3 bastard sword (detects evil 3/day); SA turn undead; AL LN; SV Fort: +13, Ref +5, Will +10; Str 16, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 16.

**Skills and Feats:** Concentration (2) +3, Diplomacy (2) +4, Handle Animal (3) +5, Heal (4) +6, Intimidate (3) +6, Intuit Direction (1) +3, Knowledge (arcana) (2) +3, Knowledge (the planes) (9) +10, Knowledge (religion) (8) +9, Listen (2) +4, Ride (11) +13, Sense Motive (1) +3, Spell Craft (2) +3, Spot (2) +4, Use Rope (1) +3, Wilderness Lore (1) +3; Combat Casting, Exotic Weapon Proficiency: Sword, Bastard, Improved Initiative, Leadership, Mounted Combat, Power Attack, Scribe Scroll, Shield Expert, Weapon Focus: Sword, Bastard.

**Spells Prepared:** 0: 5 / I: 3+1 / II: 3+1 / III: 2+1

0 – cure moderate wounds (3), light (2)

I: cure light wounds (2), doom (1) + protection from chaos

II: cure moderate wounds (2), zone of truth (1) + heat metal

III: cure serious wounds (1), searing light (1) + magic circle from chaos.

**Domains:** Law (cast law spells at +1 caster level), Sun (perform a greater turning 1/day).

**Possessions:** *chain mail* +2; *sword, bastard* +3 (detects evil 3/day); *ring of shocking grasp*; *bag of holding*.

**Zylinchin the Fiendfinder-General, General of the Nyrondese Northern Army Knight Valorous of the Valorous League of Blindness**

Zylinchin is without a doubt the most respected and feared member of the League. His personal troops, those members of the League loyal to him, "The Slayers," are well known throughout northern Nyrond. His most famous Fiend Finding was at Midmeadow, right under the nose of Grishken, in which he found and destroyed a shrine to Incubulos. Signs of his passing can often be found in the countryside. He has handed alms to many poor peasants, and they have responded by showing great faith in and dedication to Pholtus. Also, the heads of heathens are often found on pikes. These grisly signs show non-believers what a lack of faith can lead to. Those most openly faithful support Zylinchin; as a result, local leaders are forced to support and offer aid to the League or face

rebellion. Others, however, despise both the man and the message and have openly placed rewards for his head.

**Zylinchin:** Male Human (Nyrondese) Ftr 6 / Knight Valorous 9; CR 15; Medium-sized humanoid; HD 15d10+15; hp 124; Int +4; Spd: 30 ft.; AC 16 (chain mail +2); Atk +20/+15/+10 Melee (1d8 +6 [crit:15-20/x2], +2 longsword, +4 vs. extraplanar creatures; SA Detect Heathen x3/day, Faith Shield, Valorous Mount, Faithful Arms, Demon Knowledge, Smite Heathen x2/day, Aura of Faith; AL LN; SV Fort: +11, Ref +5, Will +8; Str 14, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 15.

**Skills and Feats:** Diplomacy (4) +6, Gather Information (2) +4, Handle Animal (2) +4, Heal (4) +6, Intimidate (4) +6, Intuit Direction (1) +3, Knowledge (arcana) (1) +4, Knowledge (religion) (9) +12, Knowledge (the planes) (11) +14, Knowledge (geography) (3) +6, Knowledge (local history) (1) +4, Listen (3) +5, Ride (16) +16, Sense Motive (2) +4, Spot (3) +5, Use Rope (2) +2, Wilderness Lore (2) +4; Expertise, Improved Critical, Improved Initiative, Leadership, Mounted Combat, Power Attack, Shield Expert, Spirited Charge, Trample, Weapon Focus: Longsword, Weapon Specialization: Longsword.

**Possessions:** *chain mail* +2; +2 *longsword*, “Daemon Slayer,” (+4 vs. extra planar creatures); *ring of free action*; *ring of sustenance*; *wand of enemy detection*; *wand of illumination*.

## APPENDIX B

### KNIGHTS VALOROUS PRESTIGE CLASS

These dedicated members of the Valorous League of Blindness have shown their faith and devotion to the Church of the One True Path and have proven themselves capable of defeating heretics and protecting the faithful.

Many members of the Knights Valorous are paladins, fighters or clerics of Pholtus. A few monks and rangers have become members of the Knights Valorous as well. Wizards, sorcerers, bards and rogues (due to their inherent wickedness) and barbarians (their chaotic ways) are barred from joining the League and thus from becoming a Knight Valorous.

Grishken is the leader of the Valorous League of Blindness. Avern of the Pale and Carindrell of Arndulanth are the leaders of the Knights Valorous (with the latter representing the Nyrondese faction of the Knights). They are all disciples of the Church of the One True Path, and thus follow the teachings of the Pietistical as promoted by the Church.

**Hit Dice:** d10

**Requirements:** To qualify to become a member of the Knights Valorous, a character must fulfill the following criteria:

Race: Human, Half-Elf

Alignment: Lawful Good, Lawful Neutral, Lawful Evil(2)

Base Attack Bonus: +5

**Religion:** A member of the Church of the One True Path

Ride: 8 ranks

Knowledge (religion): 4 ranks

Knowledge (planes): 3 ranks

Feats: Armor Proficiency (heavy), Power Attack, Mounted Combat, Skill Focus (ride).

**Special:** To become a member of the Knights Valorous, officials from the Church of the One True Path and the Valorous League of Blindness must find the applicant of staunch faith in the One True Path and devoted to the cause.

### Class Skills

The Knights Valorous class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are: Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Handle Animal (Cha), Heal (Wis), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (geography) (Int), Knowledge (the planes) (Int), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Ride (Dex), Sense Motive (Wis), Speak Language (Int). See Chapter 4: Skills in the Player's Handbook for skill descriptions.

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

### Class Features

The following are class features of the Knights Valorous:

**Weapon and Armor Proficiency:** Knights Valorous are proficient with all simple and martial weapons, with all types of armor (heavy, medium, and light), and with shields.

**Code of Conduct:** A Knight Valorous must first attempt to convert his enemies to the faith of Pholtus, usually in the form of a challenge to repent the nefarious their ways. If the conversion fails (as determined by role-playing), then the Knight is free to dispense his force of arms as prescribed by the tenets of the League. Failure to act accordingly is failure to follow the One True Path. Knights that stray must seek atonement for their failure from a Priest of the One True Path (see the *atonement* spell description, page 176 of the *Player's Handbook*).

**“Demon” Knowledge (Ex):** As a Knight converts heathens and defeats the minions of demons, devils and others unfaithful to the Path, his knowledge of such deviance increases out of need and necessity; thus at 1<sup>st</sup> level he gains a +3 to his Knowledge (planes) skill. Questions regarding demons specifically gain a +4 bonus.

**Heretical Lore (Ex):** After a Knight has undergone his indoctrination by a Sacerdotalist, he is extremely insightful of Pietistical Doctrine from the Church of the One True Path and can easily discern the originating Pietistical Book as well as the false doctrines from the Church of Pholtus and the Church of the Ebongleam. This religious cognizance extends to religions of a similar nature, such as those of Pelor, St. Cuthbert, and others with domains in Law, Good, Knowledge, and Sun. On such Knowledge (religion) checks, the Knight adds his class level to the check.

**Faith Shield (Sp):** A Knight of 2nd level can project his faith on others to protect them from harm. This is as per the *Shield Other* spell (page 251 of the *Player's Handbook*).

**Valorous Mount (Ex):** As a Knight travels the heathenlands of

the Flanaess, he becomes so attuned with the various mounts he rides that often words and motions are no longer required to communicate effectively. At 2<sup>nd</sup> level a mounted Knight gains a +4 to all Ride-related checks and suffers no penalties in combat. The Knight also gains the Ride-By Attack as a feat like ability with any mount with which he has previously entered into combat or has had to make a Ride check at DC 15 or higher.

**Detect Heathen (Su):** At 3<sup>rd</sup> level, a Knight can determine once per day if an individual, creature, supernatural entity or other sentient being is a believer in the faith of Pholtus, i.e. this power affects any creature with Intelligence of 3 or greater. This free action is at will. This ability may be used two times a day at 5<sup>th</sup> level, three times at 7<sup>th</sup> level, and four times at 9<sup>th</sup> level.

**Faithful Arms (Ex):** Many Knights travel in devotional solidarity, routing out evil, chaos, and demons. Such close companionship provides any two Knights with an increased ability to combat their opponents. At 3<sup>rd</sup> level, each Knight receives a +1 to all attack and damage rolls against a shared enemy in melee. This bonus increases to +2 at 6<sup>th</sup> level and +3 at 9<sup>th</sup> level. This bonus is in addition to any flanking or other bonuses that may apply.

**Smite Heathen (Su):** Beginning at 4<sup>th</sup> level, a Knight can smite those mortals, aberrations and outsiders unfaithful to the One True Path with one normal melee attack. (This ability can affect any creature with an Intelligence of 3 or greater.) A Knight adds his Charisma modifier (if positive) to his attack roll and inflicts 1 extra point of damage per class level. If the Knight were to accidentally smite a follower of his own faith, the smite attack has no effect but is still considered used for the day. If the Knight has the ability to smite evil, i.e. has levels in paladin, and is fighting an evil unbeliever (very much a possibility), then add the character's Knight and paladin levels together to determine the bonus damage.

**Valorous Shout (Su):** At 5<sup>th</sup> level and as a standard action, a Knight Valorous can proclaim his faith with such force as to cause heathens to become stunned with awe. Victims within a 15' radius must make a Will save at DC 13 + the Knight's Charisma modifier or be stunned for one round. (The radius increases + 5' every 2 class levels. Thus it is 20' at 7<sup>th</sup> level and 25' at 9<sup>th</sup> level.) Those who fail the save must flee in terror for 3 rounds at which time another Willpower save may be attempted. Failure indicates that the

character continues to flee until a successful check is made. Checks are made each round at the fleeing character's initiative. This ability is useable once per day, or a number of times equal to the character's Constitution positive modifier, whichever is greater.

**Aura of Faith (Ex):** As a Knight travels the heathenlands of the Flanaess, his fame or infamy grows. His greatness, demeanor, stance, and overall power exude from his being in a permanent 3' radius. This power manifests itself when the Knight reaches 8<sup>th</sup> level. The faithful and unfaithful alike can sense his strong magnetism, which grants the Knight an adjustment of 3 (either positive or negative), as the Knight chooses, on all opposed checks (*Players Handbook* Table 4-3). An opponent wishing to overcome the Knight's presence must make a Willpower save vs. DC 7 + the Knight's charisma bonus + Knight's character level. One attempt per day may be made, and once the Knight's influence has been resisted, then no further attempts are necessary. If the save fails, then the aura's effect lasts for 24 hours. For example: a Knight sitting astride his steed is quite visible to the group of bandits hiding among the bushes. They would make a "morale" check to determine if they would attack, as they have heard of the "terrible things" this Knight does to unbelievers. Likewise, in a horserace the Knight would add this bonus to his Ride check to win, with his fame causing the other contestants to second-guess themselves and thus to lose the race.

**Multiclass Note:** A paladin who joins the League and its Knights Valorous may continue to advance as a paladin.

Footnote 1 - Nyronnd occupied the Pale from CY 359 – 450.

Footnote 2 – The Church of the Ebongleam follows the "inserted" Fourth Book of the Ebongleam, which requires one to walk in Pholtus's darkness before seeing his true light. Those that follow his dark-light path are permitted to join the League, so long as they follow the League's tenets.

Level Title	Class Level	Base Attack	Fort	Ref	Will	Special
Armiger of Light	1	+1	+2	+0	+2	"Demon" Knowledge, Heretic Lore
	2	+2	+3	+0	+3	Faith Shield, Valorous Mount
	3	+3	+3	+1	+3	Detect Heathen, Faithful Arms
Resolute Knight	4	+4	+4	+2	+4	Smite Heathen
	5	+5	+4	+2	+4	Detect Heathen 2x/day, Valorous Shout
	6	+6	+5	+2	+5	Faithful Arms 2x/day
	7	+7	+5	+2	+5	Detect Heathen 3x/day, Smite Heathen 2x/day
Knight Cotier	8	+8	+5	+2	+5	Aura of Faith
	9	+9	+6	+3	+6+	Detect Heathen 4x/day, Faithful Arms 3x/day
Knight of Perfection	10	+10	+7	+3	+7	Smite Heathen 3x/day

## An Interview with Robert J. Kuntz

by Allan T. Grohe, Jr. [grodog@pacbell.net](mailto:grodog@pacbell.net)  
(c) 2002 Allan T. Grohe, Jr. and Robert J. Kuntz

### INTRODUCTION

Robert J. Kuntz is best known to *Oerth Journal* readers as the creator and player of Lord Robilar, one of the original explorers of Castle Greyhawk, and later as co-DM of the Greyhawk campaign. Born September 23rd, 1955, Rob was raised in Wisconsin in a very old family of dairy farmers, and graduated from UW-Whitewater with his BA in English. In addition to decades of game design experience, Rob has extensive business experience, including owning/operating, sales management, marketing, and business consultation.

For an annotated, comprehensive listing of adventures Rob has written, see the bibliography of his Greyhawk works on <http://www.canonfire.com/html/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=125> Canonfire! Several of the questions in the interview sprang directly from those notes. Rob has also penned three previous articles for the *Oerth Journal*: "Robilar Remembers: Era's Cousin" (OJ 1.5), "Robilar Remembers: Journey to the City of the Gods" (OJ 1.6), and "Robilar Remembered: Lord Robilar & Co." (OJ 1.7). Rob's long-time friend Douglas J. Behringer co-wrote the articles in OJ 1.5 and OJ 1.7.

Rob's most recent publishing projects include an updating of his *Maze of Zayene* series with Necromancer Games (originally published by his company Creations Unlimited in 1987); the first adventure, *Prisoners of the Maze*, has been published, and its sequel, *Dimensions of Flight*, should be released in January 2002. Rob has also written two projects for Troll Lord Games: *Codex Germania* (a sourcebook on Germanic gods and myths), and *Dark Druids* (an old Greyhawk scenario updated to D&D 3e); both should also appear in January 2002.

Allan would like to thank Russell Bird, Scott Casper, Marc Tizoc Gonzalez, Scott Gregg, and Gary Welsh for contributing questions and ideas for questions to this interview.

**OJ:** One of the signatures of your published adventures has always been their strange and unusual settings. Those that spring immediately to mind include realms filled with bizarre jungle/foilage (*S3 Expedition to the Barrier Peaks* and *The Garden of the Plant Master*), mechanized/sci-fi settings (*S3* again, as well as your Machine level in *Castle Greyhawk*), and extra-planar locations (*To the City of Brass*, *The Eight Kings*, *The Shadow Realms*). What draws you to these bizarre settings? How do you create them? Have any been so odd or strange that they didn't turn out to be good adventuring locales?

**RJK:** I could write a separate book on this subject and will be publishing several articles in a multi-part series entitled "Creative

Adventure Crafting: DM Alternatives to Mundane Settings," but I'll summarize some salient extractions from the main notes here.

To begin with, let's expand on the above-mentioned modules just a bit, while noting that it was EGG who crafted the *S3* location/setting; my work with that module was primarily on the ship adventures and new tech. I'll compare two already published module settings, *Maze of Zayene* and *Garden of the Plant Master*.

*Maze of Zayene:* You're stuck in a dungeon with no adventuring supplies, a carpet which absorbs all matter keeps the party moving, strange encounters with new magic and monsters that keep PCs off balance, unsure. The overriding issue is to survive while figuring out what must be accomplished to escape. The setting quickly expands on these trials by using semi-elemental pockets controlled by the wizard, how the PCs must then deal with differing climes and those creatures indigenous to these, all while within a truncated time period. Overall, very deadly as well as demanding.

*Garden of the Plantmaster:* No immediate way out; hostiles everywhere, food and water of dubious or magical quality; nighttime encounters increase due to active light sources, spells do not function in many instances, no sure sense of what is safe, whether that is current location, chosen direction, or interaction upon encountering an inhabitant; again, new magic and monsters keep PCs at odds to successfully challenge situations.

By comparing each module's "elements," you will note a similarity, which I summarize as "Ultra-Challenging." The key purpose in



both is to strip away those comfort zones which PCs are familiar with, creating a big area of doubt. New situations, monsters, magic—anything out of the ordinary (i.e., outside of the Core Rulebooks)—tends to keep the adventure fresh as well, forcing the PCs to deal on equal (i.e., uninformed) terms with such presentations. Extending backwards a bit, fantasy is enchantment, and that enchantment can be lost when everything becomes memorized or “familiar.” This freshness, unsureness and newness, keeps even the most bookish adventurer involved, and in turn requires a new level of involvement from the DM.

Therein lies the main reason why I design strange/fantastic settings. Not only do I find them more interesting than “earthly” settings, but I find that they present avenues of newness for me which must be addressed, thus these adventures challenge me in designing them. Hopefully that extra bit of time I spend in creating the strange and different will keep the player and DM at the height of their form in the game. So far I’ve had nothing but good feedback on such scenarios.

**OJ: Since D&D 3e has brought many gamers back into the fold, so to speak, what is your advice to folks who are returning to D&D for the first time in years, or for those who have never played earlier editions of the game?**

RJK: There’s a broad question! Returning folks have their interests piqued for various reasons; whether the market sustains their interest or degrades it afterwards is for them to speak about, not me. Same for new folks. I guess that I’d say this: keep searching. Our industry is a wide and inclusive one and oftentimes what we see on the surface is not always representative of its many parts.

**OJ: Do you find that you react more now to the prescriptiveness of the rules in D&D 3e than you did to those in earlier editions of the game? How much do you overrule the rules and create new ones in your games vs. adhering to the letter of the law?**

RJK: In writing adventures I tend to stick to the rules, but use them sparingly. In adventuring, I use whatever it takes to get the job done in such a way that doesn’t interfere with the pace of the adventure. Pacing, IMO, is paramount in both instances.

When you sacrifice pace, you make players wait. If they wait too long and too often the game becomes turgid, like waiting in a dentist’s office, for example. People who are gamers still have part kid in them, whether they’d admit to it or not. They need to be involved, and not just in rolling dice or quoting rules ad infinitum. Involving them with an even pace which expands on the adventure’s story is necessary to get them and keep them interested, thus keenly involved and motivated. I discard anything which gets in the way of that goal.

Overruling rules is quite an hilarious concept, really! Rules are extensions of people, not the opposite. I can discard, amend, augment, rules all day long without recourse to a tribunal to ascertain correctness in doing so. The DM is the rule; he or she decides what rules to adopt and under what circumstances. This simple fact seems to have escaped many DMs who let players hound them about rules. If I don’t like a rule, you might as well complain to the moon for all that it’s worth. It’s getting no play.

**OJ: Who were the most imaginative and successful players in the games you ran?**

RJK: Gary Gygax, Eric Shook (in his later adventures), James Goodfellow, James Ward, Ernie Gygax, Mike Mornard, to name a few.

**OJ: How did they influence your DMing, in terms of the adventures you built, and the style of game you ran?**

RJK: Two examples: EGG demanded some extra planning on most every occasion, as he was very thorough in the campaign setting I ran for him (versus straight adventure setting). The same, to a lesser degree, for James Ward. Both, at different times, were very active (at first, daily for EGG, even if this meant updates, Q&A by phone) and longish (24 hour marathons) with Ward. This required a quick, on-your-feet, thinking process and because of the forward momentum, a lot got accomplished. I appreciate players like this, as the challenge is to take imagination and thus the momentum created by this to levels never before reached or experienced by players and DMs. The aforementioned folks were representative of that “class” of player.

**OJ: You’re making a distinction between campaign play and “straight adventure” play: would you please elaborate on that some more? Is this the distinction between your own campaign setting, Kalibruhn, and Greyhawk, or just between campaign vs. one-off sessions, or something else entirely?**

RJK: A campaign-oriented campaign, in my mind, takes hold when players settle their strongholds, rule over their land, and otherwise act outside of the adventuring milieu in this manner. In both Greyhawk and Kalibruhn this entailed an inclusive way of orienting such matters, as in taking monthly orders from the players, adjudicating research projects, hiring spurts, training of men, patrol times/organization, etc, and in crafting DM-generated rumors and events particular to each area in question. With so many players, this oftentimes led to assessing more immediate and detailed orders when the PC and DM could get together, though more often such matters were settled by phone or prior to the adventure in private meetings. We often set time limits on those meetings so as not to forestall the adventure at hand.

EGG played at a higher level and commanded an army, so this required organizing such information and DMing his inputs on

intended accomplishments. This was a layered part; adventuring being the other part. But both were fun and challenging for the player and DM. Therein laid a lot of the real role-playing in the game, in fact. Dealing with merchants, stone cutters, sages, new hirelings, instructing your chamberlain, assessing and assigning tasks for your commanders, and integrating followers who had an active role in the management of your estate in so many ways. That required planning and forethought and many of our players were very much up for the challenge. These campaign particles also often led to very singular adventures and trials for the participating PC, thus the DM had to constantly be on his toes in monitoring incoming orders and presenting timely feedback when necessary. This component was considered less a background dressing than another serious and holistic part of the game. I sometimes wonder if many DMs address this most interesting facet of D&D.

**OJ: You are, perhaps, most famous as co-DM of the Greyhawk Campaign, but have also run your own campaign, set in the World of Kalibruhn. Tell us more about Kalibruhn, and how it differs from Greyhawk.**

RJK: Kalibruhn has, like any fantasy world, gone through its development process. I guess the real sad truth here is that while I have so much written on its geography, social structure, races, gods, magic, pre-history, and so forth, I will never feel good about releasing it as a product. Why? It's just too close to me as its creator; and as such, what I see as interesting and stupendous will be overlooked or criticized as unimportant or dry by consumers, and with good reason.

I did not design Kalibruhn as a publishable world to be played in; there is just too much information there to make putting it into print feasible, and I would demand that everything in it be printed, as it is a fully realized world. Now I can still adventure folks in it by extracting those parts for such purposes, but I am more interested, perhaps as Tolkien was, in basing novels and other fiction off of it.

I am not interested as a player or DM in seeing fully detailed campaign worlds. My reasons are just: I have my own. Do I need further examples? At this point, nope. Tolkien's example is by far the best fictionalized example of how far one can take his or her own fantasy world. I strive for that purity and expanse in my own, and thus it may never be finished, although over 3,000 pages of material and 100+ maps are now extant.

I cannot compare it to the World of Greyhawk as WoG has gone through so many alterations/permutations. If I did so, I'd have to do it with EGG's original without all the many non-canon (I consider EGG's interpretation of his original world as the only canon, BTW) additions. As he was never able to fully realize this world as it grew, that would be an unbalanced comparison.

For game worlds, WoG is still one the best in terms of framework. The skeleton is there and you can flesh it out. However, just like Kalibruhn, there was a lot more destined for Greyhawk (product, world development) than ever got finished. To some this is good, as

they have worked within the skeleton since then and made it their own distinct world; for others, it is not, as they wanted to see what creative depths and enchantment levels would have been reached by its original creator. I fall into the latter category, and view it as the tip of the ice-berg. If WoG in its original folio release was tempting, imagine how much more original canon material was forthcoming to enchant its fans?

**OJ: How much of your 3000+ pages of material is Kalibruhn and Greyhawk stuff? How much of your vault was mentioned in the bibliography?**

RJK: WoG material makes up less than 300 pages of the whole.

**OJ: Did your DM style change while running an adventure set in Kalibruhn vs. in Greyhawk?**

RJK: Not really. The only difference in style was perhaps a bit more background presentation and concentration in areas I really like in the game, such as political or other intrigues. Intrigue is fascinating to me, and I create and maintain elaborate mysteries at the drop of a hat, much to my players' chagrin. Greyhawk was much more straightforward, as it had to be.

We were DMing at a point where the game was finding its creative boundaries; it was not like today where people have all the pre-made tools and books to work with.

**OJ: So, the mysteries of the eight-triangle star and cryptic references to the Lost City of the Elders (from WG5 *Mordenkainen's Fantastic Adventure*), and Zayene's machinations behind the throne (which began in WG8 *Fate of Istus* and continue in the MoZ series), and what-not are your idea of "straightforward" mysteries? Just what do you consider a more involved, intrigue-laden mystery?**

RJK: I am referring to playing adventures as opposed to writing them. Greyhawk had many intrigues, but the majority of examples weigh heavily in favor of straightforward play. That is not to say that it wasn't inspired play, quite the opposite. Our best ideas and sessions were oftentimes gleaned for adventures which were intended for publication, as in WG5's case. WG5 was also heavily rewritten and expanded. The notation style which Gary and I adopted to keep the campaign moving along had to be expanded upon as we moved to publish such works. That allowed us to



experiment with many ideas without committing to any one of these before they reached some point during playtest where we saw each as a real winner, something we just had to flesh out and publish.

Examples of intrigue of course abounded within both of our worlds. City Greyhawk was a breeding pool for such mysteries, given its size, political makeup, and proximity to the castle. I actually prefer a game with a proper mix of both elements, but tend to involve players at the onset of an adventuring session with a climactic entrance, such as when a party enters a local bar, one of its members gets punched in the face, or an arrow lodges in a post next to the door, or a wild horseman threatens to trample its members or nearby citizens.

I like to begin games with action, drawing the players into a wondrous mode immediately and making them think within the context of the setting, its various apparent backdrops, thus involving them quickly in the plot, of which many of these aforementioned 'hooks' can and will most often lead to. This usually works to excite the players and gets them firmly rooted in their surroundings. This is at once a straightforward approach which I also interlace with the foreshadowing of intrigue. The guy who punched the party member, they soon discover, has been waiting for two days while binging and seems to have lost his patience for some reason. The arrow was actually meant for him, not the players, and the unknown horseman was a lure/distraction for the assassination attempt, which failed at the moment that the PCs entered and the drunk target went wild. Later he'll be found dead. Why? There's the mystery, yet another hook, and the adventure; and it only took me moments to create, but yet I now have a rapt audience. Take out the cloak and dagger and you probably have three drunken brawlers terrorizing a town. Which hook do I prefer? The former one, of course. Intrigue is adventure at one of its highest forms. Everyone loves a mystery.

**OJ:** In conjunction with several web sites, you have recently published a listing of the Greyhawk-related adventures you

ran over the years. Which of them are your top three favorites, and why?

RJK: I've actually found more material to add to that list. Favorites were by far my own castle El Raja Key and Castle Greyhawk. Why? They were a hell of a lot of fun to play in! EGG has a great style, so playing in his adventures was great; the same compliment has been paid to me and my adventures. It's a game, we thought, so let's have fun. Pretty simple.

**OJ:** What characters did you play in Greyhawk, other than Robilar? What did they do, and who did they adventure with? What were their fates?

RJK: I also played Nedlog (a first level golden dragon), but had to retire him to DM and write. Bummer.

**OJ:** According to some internet sources, Robilar was trying to get the good crown of might, or magic. It was being held by an evil spellcaster. Tenser found out and beat him to it. This was the event that caused Tenser to become good, and Robilar to become evil. Is this story true?

RJK: Not factual. We were looking for class-oriented artifacts when Tenser found the magic-user's crown. Being a fighter, I was looking for the fighter counterparts of these, but ended up finding the orb of clerics, instead.

**OJ:** What did you do with the orb of clerics, having found it but being unable to use it?

RJK: I took it overseas looking for an evil temple to the east (in Lynn), and that is where Robilar's history becomes lost and murky.

**OJ:** Jim Ward's 'Monty Haul' stories from The Dragon's heyday featured characters wielding artifacts and relics as a commonplace. What published artifacts and relics were present and active in the GH campaign that you and Gary ran?



RJK: Tenser and Robilar had the only two known artifacts (as mentioned above). There were others, but EGG made it very difficult to obtain these. The Invulnerable Coat of Arn was actually stolen by Skip William's PC as he made to escape from the *Dark Druids* module, but a Vrock killed him before he could get away with it.

**OJ: Heh. What happened to the Coat afterward?**

RJK: The Vrock informed its superiors of the artifact's location as it was afraid to touch it, and it was brought back into the temple area. Alternately I made Skip believe that it was not so invulnerable and was in fact shattered by the fall (the Vrock had TK'd him high into the air and then let him fall to his death). That way, his story about the coat was always skewed.

**OJ: Also, what can you say about the roles of good and evil PCs in Kalibruhn and in Greyhawk?**

RJK: Just typical good vs. bad in Greyhawk. Within the limits of the game the two roles didn't differ much--both alignments adventured, etc. I deal with alignment differently in Kalibruhn, where everyone is considered neutral until proven otherwise. Notoriety tends to push affairs in either direction, making or breaking one's 'public' alignment. In keeping with this, there was no such thing as a *Know Alignment* spell, which I considered absurd. Examples abound as to why I adopt this mode with alignment, best of which is the fact that in the real world we can as real people talk with a mass murderer and come away with a 'good feeling' about him or her.

**OJ: It sounds like many players portrayed evil characters, which was strongly discouraged in AD&D (vs. OD&D?).**

RJK: That's a concoction at best to assume that D&D in any of its phases (except with 2nd Edition, which removed the assassin) curtailed alignment choice by discouraging it. Any such reference was probably added for the moral majority's eyes and was not taken too seriously by players or DMs.

**OJ: In addition, many of the classic NPCs were strongly neutral, and would lend evil a hand, from time to time. How did such characters and their actions impact individual game sessions in general, and the campaigns as a whole?**

RJK: The same as they would and do today, no doubt. There's a chaotic interlude, suspicions bandied about, and the goody-two-shoes gang up on the hapless thief or assassin which has done no wrong to them and as a lynch mob, kill them. That was attempted many times in Greyhawk and in my game. The idea of PCs playing any alignment in both settings was never flinched at. For those who wanted the color of a grandly evil PC, they got it, with all the limitations and benefits that incurred; and vice-versa.

**OJ: Would you say that Greyhawk is more 'grey' because of their activities? Was Kalibruhn different in that regard, perhaps being more (or less) polarized toward good/evil or neutrality?**

RJK: Alignment to me is not what the game prescribes. Taking the aggregate alignment and thus calling it black, white or grey limits the idea of alignment. There's good, bad and indifference in all people. For example, take this far-out situation. A town with no ability to detect alignment is half filled with evil and the other half good. The evil are lawful evil merchants who depend upon the money derived from the good portion in order to fund black markets abroad. The good population in turn receives goods from these unbeknownst operations which they need to survive and with which to mine the nearby hills for gold. Who's evil, neutral, or good at this point?

**OJ: Did your adventures, in general, tend to reset (as EGG has described with *Tomb of Horrors*, for example, running it as is for you, Ernie, and others at conventions), or were they generally dynamic with respect to PC interaction (as you and EGG have talked about with *Castle Greyhawk*)?**

RJK: ToH was such a resetting adventure because it was meant as a solo adventure which EGG was playtesting on the many players. This is the exception to the rule, especially if the adventure was completed.

**OJ: Were there always adventures available that were such "set pieces" so to speak?**

RJK: The castles would be restocked on a timely basis by Zagig and El Raja Key, making it playable for parties again. Great demand had us creating new adventures and restocking the castles faster than shoe salesmen on dollar day.

**OJ: Did players compete to research, discover, and then loot new adventure locations before others found them, or were they generally more cooperative?**

RJK: Both. Oftentimes it was first come first serve; other times we announced what the challenge would be. Other times people just wandered around until we made something up or until they came upon the specific adventure area. There was no one set pattern.

**OJ: You wrote one of the first short stories published for D&D *Quest for the Vermilion Volume* in *The Strategic Review*. Have you published any other fiction?**

RJK: No. But I did write three additional short stories and a novel involving Drystaff's character. I'll finish this cycle some day.



**OJ: Is Drystaff a figure from Kalibruhn, or is he independent of that setting? How many stories do you envision in his cycle?**

RJK: He is independent. Three more novels are outlined, and one short story. Beware the 'Magicians Purplex!' One other novel in the cycle has 100 pages finished, but casts another mage in Drystaff's place as a supporting figure to an on-the-run thief. That's *Culinary Delights*.

**OJ: You have mentioned in past interviews that your favorite authors include J. R. R. Tolkien, Clark Ashton Smith, and H. P. Lovecraft. What are your favorite works by each author, and why?**

RJK: JRRT-- *Lord of the Rings*. The penultimate fantasy. It's vividness and sheer magnitude are enthralling.

HPL-- *At the Mountains of Madness*; "The Color Out of Space." He captures a blend of horrific/strange moods in these stories like no other author can.

CAS--So many of his stories are great. *The Seven Geases* is perhaps my best choice among the weird and fantastic tales he's penned, but many others are just as close by comparison. I love his black, trenchant humor and the evocative tight-knit prose.

**OJ: Are you looking forward to the LotR movie?**

RJK: Sure. I'm real critical of how they're portraying Gandalf in the previews and commercials and what's with Arwen? You'd think they'd just stick to the book! Grrr! Call me a purest, but if Arwen is gallivanting about Middle Earth, then Tolkien will be doing back flips in the mound!

**OJ: Have you ever played MERP (Middle Earth Role Playing, by ICE) or Call of Cthulhu (by Chaosium)? If so, what did you think of them?**

RJK: Played CoC. Too slow. Felt like I was in a dentist's office! (smiles). Could have been the GM.

**OJ: How about CAS' and Tolkien's poetry? Have you enjoyed that as well?**

RJK: Yes, like Clark Ashton Smith's *The Hashish Eater*. He was feverish while writing this and boy does it show. What can I say about JRRT? All of his stuff is superb for one basic fact alone: it fits with everything else.

**OJ: It's interesting that your favorite authors tend to polarize between epic-length fictions (Tolkien) and predominately short fiction (HPL and CAS), while all three wrote poetry to varying degrees. What's your preferred form for writing**

**fiction (epic vs. short fiction), and how do you think that influences your game writing?**

RJK: I'm sure there's some crossover here and there but I just haven't thought about it. I have been accused of having a very image-driven mind anyway, so I suppose descriptive parts tend towards that end in both cases.

**OJ: What are your upcoming publishing plans, with Necromancer Games and Troll Lord Games? Any others?**

RJK: I am fulfilling my contract for four products through NG and also taking some great ideas to TLG--especially the Dark Quest series of adventures--besides pursuing other projects through TLG, which might include novelizations of certain adventures we deem worthy of such. I am also very excited that Eric Shook and I are working up a series of sourcebook/adventures to produce through the most interested publisher, though this may not be either NG or TLG. That will depend on the finished product and timing, etc. That project is perhaps the best realized setting I have had a part in creating as yet, outside of the City of Brass series. I am also examining PDF releases of some products, but that remains a big question mark. I am wondering about what the market reaction to PDF is, especially if products are of high quality content.

**OJ: So you'll have additional books in this Dark Quest series? What can you tell us about those beyond Dark Druids?**

RJK: I'll let Stephen Chenault at TLG announce the titles and what he deems appropriate to be snipped from them for accomplishing that. The cover art is being created up front for all of the six envisioned products in the series. They all tie together and again make use of the many design elements I have previously mentioned. There will also be a page at TLG devoted to the series from design to completion, a place where fans can make input and in turn be updated on the series with free downloads and articles, projected art, and other news about it. This will allow us to not only showcase Dark Quest but will provide timely articles and freebies, pencil sketches and interviews, etc. TLG's board discussions on the project and personal/company email addresses will be available. I tend to think of this series as a send up to the D series by EGG, though they are in no way related by content or theme. The feel will definitely be there, with dark brooding underground settings ala Clark Ashton Smith and strange unfamiliar denizens lurking around each corner. Read *The Seven Geases* by Clark Ashton Smith to get the general mood I'm creating, infuse it with several strange settings, and you have a start. Players beware!

**OJ: Who were the players who adventured in the Maze of Zayene series from the Greyhawk campaign, how'd they do?**

RJK: Eric Shook, many folks from my days in Whitewater, WI (some who I can't remember by name), Joe Chrislaw, and others. Given the length of the quest, we did well getting them through the

major portions of the second part, whereupon college let out and the adventure ended.

**OJ: Who played the *Dark Druids* adventure?**

RJK: Lots more time was spent by the campaigners in this, as Jim Ward and Skip Williams, Joe and James Goodfellow, and others took a stab at it. It's been changed considerably from the original, but many of the themes are still apparent.

**OJ: With you and EGG working independently for both Troll Lord Games and Necromancer Games, what is the likelihood that the two of you will co-author a project for one of these publishers (dare I suggest *Castle Greyhawk*)?**

RJK: This seems to be an ongoing question, heh? WotC controls the "Greyhawk" tradenames, etc, as we are all aware of, so that complicates the process somewhat. Add to that that they do not (often) work with outside designers and you add a minus to the pro/con category of ever seeing such. Would I look forward to it given the proper inputs making a celestial alignment? Of course. Outside of that, there is always the possibility of us collaborating at any time. It would have to be the right project, and we just haven't discussed that.

**OJ: Some of your early, unpublished campaign work is heavily Lovecraftian. Were there ever plans to try and publish modules more obviously Lovecraftian than *WG5*?**

RJK: No. There were no plans to publish strictly Lovecraftian material. My interest in Lovecraft stems from EGG recommending I read his works when I was 13 years old. Thus the flavor. Fomalhaut was a "house" adventure I crafted for excursionary purposes, as we did have HPL's gods represented in the campaign at various points and places.



**OJ: How does your Kalibruhn god Tharzduun differ from EGG's Tharizdun?**

RJK: I have never expanded on Tharzduun since his placement as Tharizdun. I have created an alternate form of him which will be detailed in the Dark Quest series through TLG, with *Dark Druids* being Part 1 of that series.

**OJ: Will Tharzduun's replacement figure in all of TLG's Dark Quest adventures, as a unifying foe/theme/element?**

RJK: Very good! He is in fact the main catalyst, so to speak.

**OJ: Are these adventures one big campaign, are they loosely related (like *S4 The Lost Caverns of Tsojcanth* and *WG4 The Forgotten Temple of Tharizdun*), or not related at all?**

RJK: They are very related along different lines and in different ways, as there are two opposing plots which weave throughout them.

**OJ: Any other lost/forgotten gods hiding around the corner, like Dalt from *WG5*?**

RJK: Always. Where else do unknown gods lurk than around corners and out of sight! It's when they come into human focus that my pen is moving. And there had best be a good reason for summoning them other than to attach to them a name and some abilities! Gods are not commonplace and in my world/works they operate in the background--that is not the same as working through intermediaries (organized religion). Their concerns are not only with the "earthly"; but that is when folks most often see them and experience their presence. I like fiddling with gods and what they are doing behind the scenes, otherwise I suppose that they'd become stock characters with no dimension, something quite the opposite of what a god is supposed to be. *Codex Germania* from TLG will best represent my views on gods. That mythology parallels my Kalibruhn deities in that they are very elemental forces and are not immortal.

**OJ: Does *Codex Germania* talk more about your philosophy of how to use gods in games? What else can you tell us about that book?**

RJK: Yes, my introduction and special preface outlines and captions the chapters and indeed addresses within it the idea of how to view, integrate and use deities.

**OJ: Did gods motivate a lot of PC action in Kalibruhn or Greyhawk?**

RJK: Not so much in Greyhawk. Kalibruhn is interesting for its 'Nexus Points' which my elemental gods tend to want to be near, thus the establishment of temples in what are 'power areas' of the globe. That accounts for their spread to a larger extent. As far as influencing PC actions (got away from your Q), not so much, no. The gods were always there but by PC interpretation somewhat muted. They moved in other ways not as recognizable, however. Intrigue again.

**OJ: You describe an idea that sounds very like Leiber or CAS's interpretations of the gods--as alien, strange forces that manipulate the world for mysterious ends. Can you give a**

**good example of such divine manipulation from a game, and how it played out?**

RJK: The battle for the Temple of Reh-Pog the earth god. This came about due to his final indifference in the matter of the 'Nexus Points'. (He is the god of indifference, as well). I do not have the energy to describe the many months playing this out, but by the time my best PCs figured out what was happening, it was too late and the temple fell.

They interpreted it as an assault, even though the temple was originally abandoned (indifference again). The gods saw it as a poker chip. The remaining priests from all about the globe saw it, at first, as an outrage, then joined their god and walked away from the matter. I gave the PCs lots of hints about the indifference, but they spent hours and days and weeks trying to make something out of nothing. This would have actually played out behind the scenes if left alone, but my PCs just wouldn't do that. In the end, they felt the same void as the worshippers of Reh-Pog and walked away.

**OJ: As in Norse myth, have gods been killed in your games, either through old age, in conflicts with each other, or with PCs?**

RJK: No. As elemental gods they were dependant upon another for sources they could not produce on their own. However, the "Twelve in Waiting" are alien gods who are foretold to arrive one at a time and integrate with the elements of Kalibruhn. That's where the real power struggle takes place as the original gods either (literally) join together to defeat this threat or are cannibalized.

**OJ: We know Roger Moore drinks Mountain Dew to inspire his creativity. What beverage(s) help you make deadlines?**

RJK: Coffee. Hot. Black. Strong.

**OJ: Thanks for taking the time from your hectic schedule to talk to us! It's been a pleasure to pick your brain about projects past, present, and future.**

RJK: You asked some good questions; I'm impressed! (Laughs). When's it my turn to tighten the thumbscrews?

Cover images from *Prisoners of the Maze* and *Maze of Zayene: Dimensions of Flight* are (c) 2001, 2002 Necromancer Games, Inc., and are used here by permission.

## Evil's Changing Face in the Vesve Forest

by Andrew Seale <aseale1999@mindspring.com>  
aka "Fallon the Wanderer, the Ranger/Sage of the Vesve Forest"



ince the Great Crusade undertaken by the Forces of Good commanded by King Belvor, the region of the Vesve Forest has under gone several changes. Hopefully, many of the denizens of the Vesve and its surrounding regions take advantage of the knowledge that I have accumulated.

After the Great Crusade, Iuz's hold on the Vesve Forest loosened. The Orcish forces in the service of Iuz also decreased in numbers and have not been able to recover yet. Also, the defeats that Iuz suffered in the south have had a ripple effect to those forces based in the Vesve.

After the Crusades various humanoid tribes that were in the service of Iuz broke his control and moved into a "free" region of the Vesve Forest or left it altogether. The areas under the sway of Iuz have also become smaller in size. The regions in the Vesve that were once considered skirmish zones have moved to the east by five to ten miles.

Panshazek, the Lesser Boneheart commander of the region still rules from Izlen. He was one of the few commanders that did not suffer a serious defeat and is still in favor with Iuz. He has actually received a promotion to become the commander of the western march.

Creatures	Numbers
Jebli Orcs	1000
Celbit Orcs	2500
Hobgoblin	3000
Goblin	2500
Gnolls	1000
Ogres	350
Trolls	50
Hill Giants	75

The above forces are tribal groups that are independent of Iuz's command.

Creatures	Numbers
Jebli Orcs	19000
Celbit Orcs	13000
Kazgund Orcs	3100
Night Killer Orcs	2000
Hobgoblin	1000
Goblin	3000
Gnolls	300
Ogres	300
Trolls	50
Hill Giants	50
Losels	400
Minor undead	6000
Human troops	4000

The above is the actual breakdown of forces in the Vesve commanded by Panshazek.

(Some of these groups are organized into various tribes that will be explained later.)

## NORTHEASTERN VESVE FOREST

In the Northeastern areas of the Vesve there is one area that is of particular interest, the Velvet Empire. Ophioverdaurare, a very old green dragon, rules this region. The area she controls is the Vesve Forest that is north of the Deepstyl River and the Sepia Foothills that border the forest. Before the Greyhawk Wars she was content to occasionally raid some gnomish enclaves in the hills and snack upon those who ventured close to her lair.

Ophioverdaurare lairs in the remains of an ancient Flan shell keep on the edge of the Vesve Forest. The old keep was built upon a small mine that used to extract copper, and here in the dank main gallery of the mine Ophioverdaurare resides. The keep has since been rebuilt and garrisoned by her forces.

During the ensuing chaos after the Greyhawk Wars, Ophioverdaurare raided several of Iuz's warbands returning with booty from Grabford and Crockport. She recovered two magical items of interest along with a fair share of booty.

The first is Malach's Ring of Metamorphisms. This allows the user to assume any shape or size from a mouse to a dragon and keep all of its abilities. If scanned with true seeing the only form that will be seen is that of the present form not the original. The ring has several drawbacks, which will be explained. One drawback is that this form is only good for 7 days, and then the wearer returns to the original form for 1 day to allow the ring to regenerate. Also the ring causes the wearer to drift in alignment to the neutral side after a month of continual use. Thus if a Lawful Evil character wore it, he would drift towards Lawful Neutral with evil tendencies. If a Lawful Good character wore it, he would drift towards Lawful Neutral with good tendencies. The other drawback is that long-term usage causes the wearer to eventually become the creature that it is portraying itself to be. This occurs after 3 months of continually wearing the ring. The ring was designed as an espionage device but fell into disfavor after the rings faults came to light over time. The only way to reverse the effects is to use a wish.

The other item she acquired was Zagy's Ring of Magical Enhancing. This item allows magic users the ability to cast and memorize spells two 3rd level spells and one 4th level above and beyond their current ability as long as they can use magic. The drawback is that the wearer loses 5 hp permanently when they don the ring; after that there are no ill effects even if the ring is taken on and off multiple times.

Once she realized what these rings could do (minus side effects) she decided to use them to expand her power base and wealth. Ophioverdaurare adopted the form of a human woman and the title "Velvet Queen." In her new form she posed as a beautiful and stunning six-foot tall woman with pale skin and dark green hair. She managed to convince several independent tribes that following the "Queen" might benefit them. If they weren't impressed with her magical ability, then she returned as a dragon to push them along. Over the last five years the Velvet Empire has grown and absorbed more humanoid forces.

Several years ago, Ophioverdaurare's body succumbed to the malign effect of Malach's Ring. She is currently trapped in a human female's body. She has been able to retain several of her Dragon abilities though. She still can use her breath weapon, magic use and resistance, and fear/awe aura. She cannot fly for obvious reasons and cannot use biting and claw attacks. While at first dismayed with her changes, she has adapted readily to human form.

The kingdom also has about 300 humans and 500 gnomes living in various communities scattered around the kingdom.

Ophioverdaurare has a few specialist troops under her control also. The first is a Baklunish invoker named Ahmred (wizard level 5). The next is a trio of gnomish renegades (Snit, Talit, and Erzan)

who are illusionist/thieves (4/4 in ability). The commander of her forces is an ex-mercenary commander from Perrenland named Izak Scharzen (fighter level 9, LN). Ophioverdaurare captured him in 586 CY when she raided a merchant caravan. She was going to ransom or eat him, but he intrigued her, so she decided to keep him around to help her feel more human. Izak was enthralled by the image of the "Velvet Queen," and captivated by her nature that he willingly offered his service to her. The two became lovers after Ophioverdaurare realized that she was permanently contained in human form. Izak has become her confidant, friend and lover; he would willingly sacrifice everything to protect her.

The Velvet Empire effectively controls the Vesve woodlands that are north of the Deepstil River. Ophioverdaurare has created a buffer state between the Howling Hills and the Elves and Gnomes of the Northern Vesve. She has opened a dialogue with the Gnomish Elders of Gildenhand and offered to protect them provided that they pay tribute to her. While they are not thrilled with the situation, she has kept her word, and attacks by Orcish war bands have been reduced to nothing. She has also incorporated several smaller gnomish mining operations and human communities on the fringes of the hills into her territory; these groups also pay tribute to her. She has been completely honest in her dealings with the gnomes and humans reflecting her lawful nature. The Wild Elf tribes in the north have rebuffed her offers of protection but make no move against her. She has honored their refusal and not bothered them. While the humanoid groups under her command may not be as scrupulous as she, they fear her enough to obey her commands. She does allow them to raid Iuz's lands and the Sepia Highlands/Wolf Nomads when they do get the urge to pillage. Twice in the last year she attacked two bands from Iuz's territory and crushed both, resulting in the loss of 250 Orc and associated auxiliaries. One of the auxiliaries lost was Iuz's deputy commander, Baron Ragan Martyn, of the region! The greatest blow to Iuz's forces was her raid on Waterwall and the destruction of its entrance to the surface. She personally led her forces against the

troops there and with her dragon breath inflicted horrible losses upon them. Then she sealed up the cavern and declared the land hers. It can still be accessed from the Underdark, but it has not seen much traffic.

Iuz's forces in the North are not as strong as the forces available to the Central region.

These groups are two sub tribes of the main groups; the Jebli tribe is represented by The Tuskers. Jagged Eye represents the Celbit group. Both tribes have recently suffered severe defeats at the hands of the Velvet Empire and are not keen on repeating the past. Right now they are happy raiding the Wood Elf and Goblinoid lands. The Tuskers are currently led by an Orog named Kosh who is a 6th level fighter. The Jagged Eye is led by a half-orc fighter/priest (Iuz) 6/4 named Karn Soth. Iuz's commander for this area is a CE thief named Tilvan Faltan (level 8). He resides with the Jebli in their encampment, which is located in the center of the northern region. Both these groups have their lairs in a series of underground caverns. Both groups also have a gaggle of structures above their lairs to protect them from outside intrusion. Each tribe employs about 250 goblins that are used as porter/slaves. Both these tribes keep slaves (Human 60%, Gnome 20%, hobgoblin 10%, Gnoll 5%, other 5%) about 100+/-.)

Karn isn't a particularly aggressive leader and is more interested in grabbing a couple of elves for sport. He maintains a small harem of captured elvish females, which he is always on the prowl to enlarge. Karn realizes that he doesn't have the forces necessary to challenge the Elves outright and protect his flank from the Velvet Empire. To ask for help would be a sign of weakness and would open him to being replaced by a more capable leader. Thus he is happy to maintain the status quo and occasionally raid the Elves and the few remaining woodsmen. He has yet to report the several defeats at the hands of the Velvet Empire.

**GOBLINOID LANDS**

The Goblinoid Lands have some rather colorful inhabitants that are particular to the area. The main force in the region is a huge tribe of Hobgoblins (1800), which goes by the name "The Iron Horde". This tribe is extremely well equipped and organized; they tend to favor Bakluni dress and attitude, which is peculiar for hobgoblins. The horde is also extremely Lawful in their outlook. They seem to worship the typical Hobgoblin Gods but with one extra one included. They have a god of war that is referred to as the Blood Khan. The worship of this god seems to mimic some of the rituals of Hextor!

Creatures	Numbers
Jebli Orcs	400
Celbit Orcs	400
Ogres	25
Goblins	900
Hobgoblin	700
Men at Arms	50

*The above are Ophioverdaurare's forces.*

Creatures	Numbers
Jebli Orcs	3000
Celbit Orcs	2000
Goblins	500

*There are just two tribal groups under Iuz's control in the area.*

Their area of control is focused around the ruins of Delvenbrass. The original builders of Delvenbrass had created a series of watchtowers and fortified moat houses that are positioned eight miles to the North, South, East, and West of the fortress. The hobgoblins regard the fortress as sacred and fanatically resist all attempts by anyone to approach it. They regard the fortress, as the residence of the "Iron Khan" who one day will return to lead them to glory and riches. As far as anyone can discern, the "Iron Horde" came to this region as mercenaries in the service of some Bakluni Lord, but information is hard to come by.

Every five years, the horde embarks upon a war of ritual cleansing and attacks all non-horde creatures. The attacks are fanatical, and the horde never checks morale. The last Jihad was in 587cy, which was a shock for Iuz's commanders and some of the local gnoll tribes. The hobgoblins slew well over 800 Orcs in Iuz's service and a few hundred indigenous gnolls. Since then Iuz's forces have given them a wide berth. Luckily for them the horde is rather insular, so they normally don't travel outside their lands.

The ruler of the Iron Horde is a monstrous hobgoblin known as the Tar-Khan Ahroun. There are lesser leaders spread throughout this land and they are called Il-Khan's. Also there have been persistent rumors about an ex-Aerdi priest of Hextor that has taken up service with the Tar-Khan.

Also in the Goblinoid region there are several tribes of gnolls and goblins. There two main tribes of Gnolls of note in the region. The Howlers have about 210 members and are led by flinds. The other tribe is the Black Fangs and possesses about 280 members. The Black Fangs are interesting because they have some shaman in the tribe that can actually command minor undead creatures.

The goblins in the region number barely 1000 and they are scattered about in 25 family groups. They are very timid and try to avoid confrontations when possible. When caught they are typically impressed into service or have worse subjected to them. If approached by an amicable party they might be willing to parlay and swap information for food.

Several family groups of ogres and trolls inhabit this region also. They typically prey upon the goblins and gnolls, but once in a while they snack upon orcs, humans or elves. These family groups are small (2-8 members) and nomadic in nature. They do not cooperate with each other and will fight to defend their hunting grounds.

### CENTRAL EASTERN VESVE FOREST

The central eastern Vesve forest region is completely under the sway of Iuzian forces except for a section to the Northwest that borders the Elvish Lands and Goblinoid Lands. The whole region is extremely dangerous to enter because of the high volume of Orcs that travel throughout it and the various outposts within its borders.

The "Flaming Eyes of Gruumsh" tribe controls the Northwest region; it is a group of xenophobic Celbit Orcs lead by Grekdenn Celrurk, the Torch of Gruumsh. They are extremely hostile to all interlopers to their region whether they be orc or not.

Early in the Greyhawk Wars, Grekdenn found an abandoned Orcish temple deep in the Vesve Forest. There he discovered his mighty weapon, the Torch of Gruumsh. Since his discovery of the temple and the weapon, Grekdenn has come to believe that he is a favorite of Gruumsh and that One-Eye is also guiding his actions towards great glory.

Grekdenn had considerable success in enlarging his forces throughout the Greyhawk Wars and the Great Crusade. Originally he was the chieftain of a small tribe of Celbit orcs (200), but through force of personality and religious fervor, he has managed to enlarge his forces to around 1500.

Many of his recruits are disaffected members of war bands formerly in the service of Iuz. Others are Celbits who feel that their own gods were supplanted by Iuz and are now rediscovering their true roots. Whatever their motivations may be, they are true religious zealots.

The abandoned temple that Grekdenn found has now become the center of the tribe. The temple has been restored to its former glory and even expanded. Numerous cave complexes were discovered around the temple and cleared of their inhabitants. These now serve as the tribe's new home. Several of the caverns go quite deep, and there are rumors that the Celbit have made contact with the Drow in the Underdark. The orcs are also known to take slaves since Gruumsh demands sacrifices; in particular, elves don't last long, since they tend to end up on the altar. But at any time, the tribe has around 50 (+/- 10) slaves. The breakdown is 50% goblin, 20% human, 10% Gnoll, 10% Hobgoblin, and 5% Elf.

The tribe has basically declared that a state of war exists between itself and all its neighbors. The Goblinoid Lands see the brunt of this action since they are the weakest of all the neighbors. The Elves and the foresters of the Vesve try not to tangle with "The Flaming Eyes" since Orcs do a better job of keeping out Iuz's forces than they do. Why should they shed blood when orcs are willing to do the job for them?

Orcish forces under the command of Iuz are loath to attack them also. Certain Celbit tribal groups have gone on record saying that they will not shed blood with them. This has caused Panshazek to exchange several groups of Celbits with Jebli in order to keep discipline within the ranks.

Panshazek is the principal commander of the Central Eastern region. Since the beginnings of the Greyhawk Wars, he has been charged with overcoming the forces of good within the Vesve Forest. While he hasn't had much success, his command has not suffered the disastrous losses that other members of the Boneheart (greater and lesser) have to the south, north and east.

Panshazek's forces are scattered throughout the central region. Warbands of 50-200 orcs constantly prowl the borders looking for battle, loot and slaves. Several fortified camps have been established around the area. Izlen is the major camp and is also where Panshazek holds his council.

Two other camps were established to help Iuz solidify his hold on the region. The first post is called Darkleaf, which is located 100 miles west of Izlen. It was named for the great oaks around the post and their extremely dark colored leaves. The fort is built upon the ruins of an old Flan settlement. The camp has a double wooden wall and several buildings of stone. It is home to about 2000 orcs (Jebli/Celbit mix), 300 goblins and a hundred hobgoblins.

Several tunnels were constructed beneath the fort to house some of the troops, and five ancient Flannish tombs were discovered. Several magic items were discovered and quickly seized by the leaders of the garrison. Rumors mention several axes, and a magic staff was recovered, but more detailed information is sketchy.

The current commander of this garrison is Tayln Elsireeve, a renegade drow. Tayln is a 7/9 fighter/mage of excellent ability. He never discusses how he came into Iuz's service or from what clan he is from. The entire garrison is terrified of him since he tore an Orog's arm out of its socket and beat him to death with it for not showing him proper respect. He keeps an eye on the "Iron Horde" and the "Flaming Eyes" and hopes they challenge him to a fight.

The other garrison is referred to as Stonehold, and it is located 100 miles to the southwest of Izlen. It is an old Oeridian fortress that has been repaired from the ruin that it once was. The outer walls are completely fixed and the inner buildings are almost complete.

The fortress is completely obscured by the surrounding forest, so it is entirely possible to approach it and not even realize that it is there. The fortress is currently being used as a springboard for actions against the sylvan elves in the central region.

The garrison of the fortress consists of 3000 orcs (Jebli/Celbit Mix), 200 hobgoblins, 200 goblins, 100 losel, 20 ogres, and 5 hill giants. A fairly large tunnel system was developed by expanding the dungeons under the castle. About 20% of the garrison is out on patrol at any given time.

This castle has an extremely secure dungeon, and it contains a few prisoners of note. There are around 30 prisoners being held. The majority of them are woodsmen, elves, and an occasional

Creatures	Numbers
Jebli Orcs	9,000
Celbit Orcs	6,000
Kazgund Orcs	2000
Goblins	1000
Hobgoblin	600
Ogres	150
Hill Giants	25
Trolls	20
Losel	400
Gnolls	300
Human Troops (Various Abilities and Levels)	900

*Panshazek's troops currently in the central region of the Vesve.*

Furyondian. These numbers tend to fluctuate because prisoners tend not to last very long in the dungeons. Currently three prisoners of note are being held here.

The first one is Sir Galen Kendrick, a Velunese Knight of the Hart. He has been a prisoner for about seven years now. He was originally leading a scouting party through the Yatils to spy upon Ketites. His band fell to a large Orcish war band and was captured. There were several attempts to ransom him, but they were rebuffed by his family since they did not believe that he was being held in the Vesve.

Galen is a broken man; years of torture and malnutrition have taken a toll of him. Even the orcs have forgotten about him. Eventually some minor priest of Iuz will find him and send him off to Dorakka and finish the deed. If rescued, his family would indeed reward the party, and the Knights of the Harts (Veluna) would take notice of the party too.

Another prisoner of note is Caelbrock Garnetgotter, a gnome who hails from Gildenhand. He was traveling with a small merchant caravan of gnomes heading to Verbeeg Hill when they were attacked. Most of the group was either killed or captured in the raid. Caelbrock is the only survivor left alive at this time. He was spared since he revealed that he is actually one of the sons of the Laird of the Garnetgotter Clan. The orcs are now trying to ransom him for a small fortune in gems and other concessions. If rescued, the party would indeed receive a small fortune in garnets and the friendship of the Garnetgotter Clan. Caelbrock, however, has the wanderlust in him and would love to join a party as a NPC or a henchman. Caelbrock is a 4/2 fighter/thief and is a decent scout when he feels so inclined.

The final prisoner of note has a sad tale. Her name is Lady Airanna Silverfox, and she hails from the City of Greyhawk. Before she was captured she was a conjurer of some ability (wizard level 5). She had joined a small party about five years ago to investigate the ruins of Castle Greyhawk. After being roughly handled by a series of encounters, they used a teleportation spell found on a scroll to escape some golem-like creatures. The spell worked, but it botched the destination at which they were to arrive. It sent them to central Vesve Forest rather than the Garden Quarter of Greyhawk City. They wandered lost for several days until Groll mercenaries in the pay of Iuz attacked them. The party was quickly slain except for Airanna who was taken to Stonehold. She was about to be assaulted by the orc garrison when the fortress commander stepped in and saved her.

Commander Archael decided that the fair Airanna would be his pleasure alone. So for the last five years, she has been the Archael's concubine. While he has not been physically to her, she is constantly reminded that if she does not perform her duties with zeal and joy that the orcs always need entertainment. Airanna would have escaped years ago except for the fact that she gave birth to a daughter four years ago named Mistral. Archael also uses Mistral as leverage and threatens to take her away.

Airanna is desperate to escape Stonehold with Mistral. She believes that her daughter will eventually be taken away and brought up in the service of Iuz like her father. She would rather fling herself and Mistral from the ramparts than see that happen. If anybody attempts to rescue Airanna, they will also have to rescue Mistral. Airanna will even call out for help from the guards in order to thwart an attempt to remove her without Mistral. The mother is located in Archael's chambers while Mistral is kept in another section of the castle. If rescued, the Silverfox family of Greyhawk will reward the party with multiple gifts and praise. The heroes will also win the patronage of one of Greyhawk's most distinguished families.

Commander Archael is actually of Tenha descent. As a youth, he was sold by slavers from Stonehold to Iuzian priests in 580 CY. He proved to be an intelligent slave and won his freedom by slaying an assassin trying to slay his owner. Archael didn't show much aptitude for or interest in magic or religion but showed promise as a warrior. He managed to win several promotions and was attached to the Black Legion for a couple of years. When a need for a loyal commander became available, the high priestess Althea pushed his name forward. Althea needed a competent warrior to be her eyes and ears and to report to her the happenings in the region. This was a smart move, for it gave her the ability to move against potential rivals if needed. Panshazek was never one of were favorites, and she wanted to keep tabs on him in case he became too successful.

Lerrek's Towers are also within the region. Panshazek has given orders that his forces are to patrol the borders but not to penetrate the actual grounds of the Towers. Several parties were lost doing so, and the casualties do not justify whatever might be learned. Strange creatures and a particularly loathsome band of ogres make this region hazardous. Occasionally they make forays out of the area, but they don't cause too much damage so they are ignored.

### SOUTHEASTERN VESVE FOREST

This area is one of the most dangerous parts of the forest. The region borders the Defiled Glades to the west, and to the south Furyondian forces are constantly waging low intensity warfare. Also, this area has a high number of elves and foresters seeking to do battle with Iuz's minions. Iuz has a large number of Orcish forces stationed here along with large reserves of undead (mostly mindless). His focus right now is not on Furyondy to the south but exploring and harnessing the potential of the Defiled Glades.

The commander of this region is the former commander of Grabford, Maskaleyne, the Vampire-Mage. He has set up a fortress on the outskirts of the glades and has begun to conduct research into the area. In order to keep the post secure from prying eyes and to keep the forces of good off balance, he has managed to recruit Night Killer Orcs into his ranks.

Night Killer Orcs are a unique breed of Orcs being that their tribal religion is of Shargas, the Night Lord. These orcs are superb assassins and covert warriors. The Night Killer orcs are considered

cowardly by most orcs, since they fight using subterfuge and guile and not massed attacks. They don't do well in sunlight at all, but in deep forest settings with little light they are quite deadly. It is unusual for such a large force to assemble since they tend to move in small tribal groups, but Maskaleyne made various agreements with them including settling them on old Jebli tribal lands in the southern Vesve once it was recovered. To have their own tribal lands is something that this tribe has desired for many generations, so they have eagerly taken service with the undead lord.

Currently there are three main posts in this region. The first being Maskaleyne's stronghold called Night's Point. It was built upon the ruins of an old shell keep that has been restored. Extensive dungeons have been dug and built, and it now houses a fairly large garrison. The garrison is made up of 1500 Night Killers, 1000 Jebli, 200 human troops and 1000 Celbit orcs. The garrison also has in residence about 100 goblins, 500 zombie and 300 skeletons.

Creatures	Numbers
Jebli Orcs	7000
Celbit Orcs	5000
Kazgund Orcs	800
Night Killer Orcs	2000
Hobgoblin	500
Goblins	500
Gnolls	100
Human Troops	800
Skeletons	1500
Zombies	1000
Misc. Undead	500

*Maskaleyne has a fairly large force at his disposal.*

In order to further his research of the Defiled Glades, Maskaleyne has taken on two other researchers. The first is Corus Hazland, a priest of Incubulos, who once hailed from the Hool Marsh region many years ago. The other is a Schnai renegade named Thilan Cold-Heart, a priest of Nerull. Both these individuals were drawn to the raw power of the Glades in the hopes of harnessing it. Once they reached the outskirts, both came to realize that they would not survive if they entered. Maskaleyne, who had been watching them for some time, offered an alliance of sorts if they would combine their abilities to reveal the secrets of the area. They agreed in principle and warned each other of dire consequences if anyone reneged on the agreement. The two priests are carefully watched by members of Iuz's clergy for any signs of treachery. Both priests have a small retinue of guards and assistants to aid in their research.

This unholy tripartite has had some success in finding out what the secrets of the glades are. They have been able to raise undead that are stronger than the normal variety. These undead have one more hit die per creature. They other thing that they have learned is something that scares even their blackened souls.

In one part of the old battlefield, a hillside was blasted by various magicks until a hole appeared. Further scrying into the area around the hole revealed a stone structure with a swirling pattern design carved on it that has not been seen in a millennium, the symbol of Tharizdun. It seems that some type of structure was buried under the hillside, and the fighting revealed its presence. It is not known whether it is a tomb or a temple. All attempts to investigate further,



both magical and physical, have failed. Whatever is contained in the structure has been disturbed and seems to be awakening. Whatever it is, it seems to be feeding the malign magical effects of the Glades.

Iuz has been made aware of the situation and is pondering what he will do. He is seriously considering assembling a force of his Greater Boneheart to search the ruins and take charge of what lies within. Whatever is contained within the ruins is undoubtedly quite powerful and most likely deadly to the forces of good. It might also be quite deadly to Iuz's forces.

Another focal point of the region is Gerrenkzerung, which was more of a trading post than a fort. But in the last few years it has grown to be a fortified town with a permanent garrison. It houses about 1500 Celbit Orcs, 1500 Jebli Orcs, 500 Kazgund Orcs, 200 human troops and 100 hobgoblins. This post has become a way point for forces headed to the border with Furyondy. Because of its proximity to the Whyestil Lake, a small naval facility has been built to house some of Iuz's lake fleet. At the present moment one coaster, two galleys and several barges are based out of here. They are crewed by the Kazgund orcs and have several Rhennee advisors on each vessel.

**ALONG THE BORDER WITH FURYONDY, A SMALL SERIES OF FORTIFICATIONS HAVE BEEN BUILT...**

Along the border with Furyondy, a small series of fortifications have been built to provide a better sense of where the true borders lie. About every ten miles a small tower with an attached blockhouse has been constructed. This even extends into the Vesve for about 30 miles. Each of these posts, house about 100 orcs, a few humans, and a score of undead of various types. These provide Iuz with good intelligence on what is going on across the border and constantly remind Belvor that the Old One is watching. Most of these structures have been connected to the Bone Road and actually bear a slight resemblance to the structures along the road.

**THE FUTURE OF THE VESVE**

The Vesve Forest will remain a hotly contested region for the foreseeable future. Iuz cannot afford to send the troops needed to achieve victory because to do so would weaken the rest of the empire. Furyondy cannot send troops since they are also too weak from the Great Northern Crusade to mount another major offensive. It will take about eight to ten years before either side can make a major offensive. Althea is working towards this goal, but it has yet to leave the seeds of planning.

The Velvet Empire may yet gain the airs of legitimacy, but it will have to survive the ire of Iuz. It will continue to grow if it is left alone but may butt heads with Iuz if it expands much further. If it gains Gildenhand as a vassal state, then it might be able to survive since it will have a source of tradable commodities. Only time will tell if Ovid can suppress her beastly desires and become a successful ruler of such disparate people.

Other forces, such as the Iron Horde and the Flaming Eyes of Gruumsh, could throw the Vesve back into war, but that would take a certain sequence of events that is unlikely to occur. The one thing that is likely to happen is the unexpected, which is the way of Vesve Forest.

**HEROES AND VILLAINS**

**Ahmred**

Human Invoker (Level 5) hp 14 Al Neutral Age 32 (int 16, wis 7, cha 17)

Ahmred is a Tusmite renegade who was looking for a place to hide and found it with Ophioverdaurare. He once was a mage in the service of a minor pasha, but was caught with several of the pasha's harem in rather compromising positions. He fled for his life, one step ahead of the pasha's guards. He's traveled through Ket, Bissel, Perrenland and finally ended up in the Vesve. He heard of a queen looking for powerful wizards to employ and decided to take a chance. Ahmred talks a good game, but he does not have the ability that he leads everyone to think.

Ophioverdaurare is well of aware of Ahmred's limitations and keeps him around because he amuses her. He is definitely a lover and not a fighter, but he can hold his own if needed. He's rather vain and loves to "entertain" women of all types. He tried once with Ophioverdaurare, and she responded that, "You better become a conjurer and summon something more impressive!" with a smile. Ahmred has not tried anything since then. He does possess the following magical items: +1 ring of protection, +1 staff and a potion of gaseous form.

**Althea, Ruler of Molag**

Human Priestess of Iuz (Level 18) Hp 80 Al Chaotic Evil (STR 16, DEX 16, CON 15, WIS 18)

Althea is one of Iuz's most trusted servants. She is 42 years old, 5'6", black haired and green eyed. She is a cold calculating woman who treats her juniors with contempt. She has not succeeded in controlling the Horned Lands as well as she desired. So she has cast her eyes to the west in the hopes of resurrecting a campaign there, and supplanting Halga's authority. She is gambling on the fact that if this could be done, then she will finally surpass Halga and become the High Priest of Iuz. She is in the initial stage of researching it to see if it can be won. That is why she has begun to put her own people in positions of authority.

Althea owns these items: +4 platemail, cloak of displacement, boots of springing and striding, and a +3 Blackstaff. She also has a boneward, rings of free action and spell storing (bonechain, cause critical wounds, harm and screaming skull), and a phylactery of faithfulness.

**Caelbrock Garnetgotter**

Gnome Fighter/Thief (Level 4/2) Hp 15 Al Neutral (STR 15, DEX 17)

Caelbrock can be summed up in one word - curious. One of the sons of the Clan Laird, Caelbrock has had the opportunity to explore all the lands of around Gildenhand. He was learning how to be a gem merchant when the caravan was attacked. Most were captured but later perished due to poor treatment. Caelbrock is now trying to be ransomed, but the orcs have had little success in agreeing upon a fair sum.

If he is rescued, Caelbrock will be eternally grateful and impress upon the party his desire to repay them by joining them. His family will send a reward of Garnets to repay the party also.

### Commander Archael Yandnen

Human Fighter (Level 9) Hp 81 Al Neutral Evil Age 28 (Str 17, con 17)

Archael is one of those people that are truly a product of their environment. Yandnen's parents were shepherds that were killed in a Stonefist raid fifteen years ago. Archael was taken captive and kept as a slave for a few years. He learned that brutality was the only way to survive, and he was a good student. Around 581CY, Archael was sold to a priest of Iuz named Krag. Krag was the adjutant to Iuz's High Priest Patch and was in the Hold collecting slaves for Patch to sacrifice to the mighty Iuz. On the way back, bandits ambushed the caravan, and Archael saved Krag by blocking an assassin's blade. Upon their return to Dorakaa, Krag made Archael a member of his personal guard. By the time the Greyhawk Wars ended, both Krag and his patron were dead. Without allies, Yandnen offered his services to Althea who accepted him after testing all of his abilities. She had him posted to the Legion where he learned the art of diplomacy and demonology. He was her favorite for several years, but like all favorites his time ended. But for being such a devoted man, she had him posted to the Vesve to keep her interests in mind.

Upon arriving at Stonehold, Archael flung himself into rebuilding the fortress and launching a series of attacks upon the elves. One of these bands brought back a captive for entertainment, Airanna of Greyhawk. But before the Orcs could despoil her, something stirred in his soul, a longing for beauty and companionship. He stopped the Orcs from claiming their prize and took Airanna for his own. In his twisted mind he came to believe that he was her savior. Several years later a child was produced from this union, and Archael was overjoyed at the birth. Airanna pleaded that they be released in order to raise the child somewhere safe. He ignored her pleas and threatened to give Airanna to the Orcs and have the child pledged to the service of Iuz. That stopped Airanna's complaining for the moment. Archael is indeed a doting father and keeps the child in a secure nursery protected by his personal guards. The only people allowed to be alone with the child are her nanny and he. The nanny is a half-orc matron who has been heavily charmed and

geased to prevent her from ever harming the child. The nanny does indeed love the child and would go to any lengths to protect her.

Archael possess the following magical items: +3 platemail, +3 Frost Brand Longsword, ring of free action, and boots of springing and striding

### Corus Hazland

Human Priest of Incabulos (Level 7) Hp 42 Al Lawful Evil (Wis 18)

Corus is a disgusting individual whose whole life revolves around disease and death. He was originally based in the Hool Marsh. Many of his experiments infected the young of a local Lizard Man tribe, so eventually he had to flee for his life. He had a vision to travel to a land destroyed by war and surrounded by woods. He began to follow this vision, which seemed to get stronger as journeyed in the right direction. Along the way, he spread several plagues that were blamed on a variety of villains. Eventually he ended up in the Vesve Forest and entered the Defiled Glades several times, but the hazards of the area drove him out. Eventually contact was made with Maskaleyne, and an agreement was worked out for mutual cooperation in finding out the secrets of the area.

Corus owns several magical items, including a +2 suit of scale mail and a staff of withering.

### Grekdenn Celrurk

Orc Fighter (Level 10) Hp 103 (str 18/96, cha 18 [Orcs only ñ for others Cha 5])

Grekdenn is a Celbit xenophobe of the worst form. He is extremely proud of his achievements and brags of his prowess. He hopes of establishing a great Orc Kingdom with he being the first king. Grekdenn is ruthless in destroying any challenges to his rule since he believes he is the chosen of Gruumsh because of the Torch. The Torch of Gruumsh has the following powers: cast stinking cloud, stone skin and death fog once a day.

Grekdenn also owns the following items: a +2 two-handed battle-axe/+3 vs humans/+5 vs elves and half-elves, and a suit of +3 suit of platemail.

### Izak Scharzen

Human Fighter (Level 8) Hp 68 Al Lawful Neutral Age 30 (STR 17, CON 16, INT 16, CHA 15)

Izak joined one of Perrenland's mercenary companies at the age of eighteen. He saw extensive service in Ket, Veluna and Bissel, working for various lords. When the Greyhawk Wars broke out, he had obtained the rank of Captain and was leading a company of Bissel's famed Border Companies. They fought well against the Kettite invasion but were overcome by numbers. They eventually retired to Veluna where they were hired to train various local

militias. Once the war ended, their contracts were voided, and they were dispersed. While traveling back to Perrenland, the caravan Izak guarded was ambushed by a group of Hobgoblins led by a green dragon. Most of those who resisted were quickly killed, and the rest were taken prisoner. They were taken to a newly restored shell keep and told they were to meet the "Velvet Queen." A stunningly beautiful woman with dark green hair told them that they were her guests until suitable payments were made.

Izak was immediately captivated by her beauty and charm and sought an audience with her. After several requests, he was allowed to meet the Queen. They engaged in an all night discussion about Izak's knowledge of the Greyhawk Wars. In the wee hours of the morning, she dismissed him and said they would meet again. They met every night for a week, discussing a multitude of topics. By the end of the week, Izak could not resist his captor any longer and offered to t serve her. The queen smiled and said that his service would be needed, for she needed a man wise in the world to advisor her. She also said that their next discussion would not be so cerebral, with a smile.

Izak is a typical Perrenlander - of mixed heritage. He is heavily tanned with light brown hair and hazel eyes. He stands 6'4" and weighs about 235lbs. He is a strong leader of men and leads by example. He is utterly fearless and fanatical in his devotion to Ophioverdaurare. He is aware of her true nature and also knows that she is permanently trapped in human form. Being highly lawful, his role as her advisor has allowed him to soften many of her commands that would have been deemed harsh by her subjects. He believes in justice metered by loyalty. His role in the Velvet Kingdom may be seen as applying humanity to its rule. In time he may be able to steer the kingdom toward a legitimate standing in the region.

He possesses the following magical items: +3 plate mail, +3 longsword, ring of free action and a girdle of stone giant strength.

### **Karn Soth**

Half-Orc Fighter/Priest of Iuz (Level 6/4) Hp 39 Al Chaotic Evil

Karn is the by-product of the union of an Orc Chief and a captive human female woodsman. He never knew his mother, for she disappeared soon after he was born. As a young child, he showed enough promise that he was sent to Dorakaa to become a priest. When he returned, he usurped power from his older brothers and became chief. He ruthlessly eliminates all potential rivals and seeks to create his own lineage. Karn has taken several orcs and captive human females as consorts and hopes to produce many heirs.

Karn owns a +1 suit of platemail and a +1 two-handed sword

### **Kosh**

Orog Fighter (Level 6) Hp 47 Al Lawful Evil (STR 18)

Kosh is a typical Orog - brash, obnoxious, and none too bright. He is an effective leader of the Tuskers since he leads by example. He

particularly hates the Velvet Queen because her troops humiliated him in battle a few years ago. He fought a losing battle against a Green Dragon in the employ of the Velvet Queen. He has been on the lookout for magical items that may be effective against Green Dragons and would be willing to trade or buy items of that nature. He owns a flying rug (2 person) and a net of entrapment that he may be willing to exchange.

Kosh also own the following magical items: +2 Banded Armor, +1 Shield and a +3 Battleaxe.

### **Lady Airanna Silverfox**

Human Conjurer (Level 5) Hp 14 Al Neutral Good Age 29 (Con 16, Int 17, Cha 17)

Airanna is the youngest daughter of Dame Silverfox, the current matriarch of the Silverfox clan in the City of Greyhawk. After being tutored in the ways of magic, she decided to increase her knowledge by joining a small party and exploring the ruins of Castle Greyhawk. She and her companions were naive enough to believe that they were capable of handling the challenges within. The ensuing events left her party dead and Airanna a prisoner in the Vesve Forest.

She is desperate to escape Stonehold with Mistral, her daughter (age 3) and product of her enslavement. She was once a spoiled and callous child, but five years of imprisonment have changed her dramatically. She now lives only for her child and would do anything to escape Stonehold.

Airanna is a very beautiful woman, 5'7", 120lbs, with long blond hair. Her beauty has changed from the vain fashions of Greyhawk's elite to that of a loving and devoted mother.

### **Maskaleyne, Commander of Night's Point**

Vampire Mage (Level 12) hp 55 Al Chaotic Evil

Maskaleyne is almost 330 years old, an exile from the Great Kingdom. He hungers to see Iuz's empire grow and works toward this end. He does not have the overriding ambition that many of his compatriots have. He is content to work towards Iuz's goals and takes pleasure in achieving them. He has seen those with more ambition destroy themselves in time, and being a vampire, he doesn't worry about time.

He has two female vampire/mages as courtesans, both 7th level. He prefers the company of the undead to the living and likes the challenge of the Defiled Glades. The thought that the source of power is Tharizdun is something that terrorizes even him. But he too has had visions calling him to the site.

Maskaleyne owns these magical items: a +4 ring of protection, an amulet of fire resistance, wands of frost and fire and a crystal ball.

## Ophioverdaurare

Very Old Green Dragon (Human) Hp 131 Al Lawful Neutral  
w/Evil tendencies

(STR 18, CON 18, DEX 17, INT 17, WIS 17, CHA 19)

AC ñ5, Breath attack 2x18d6+9, fear aura 25 yards Magic Resistance 25%

Spell ability: All spells are cast at 11th level

Innate Spell Abilities (once a day): water breathing, suggestion, warp wood, plant growth, entangle

Spells: I (4), II (2), III (2), IV (1)

Ophioverdaurare, or the Velvet Queen, began from very meager beginnings. As a wyrmling, she left the Vast Swamp to seek her own fortunes. This was a decade before the founding of the Great Kingdom. She traveled extensively through the lands of what was to become Almor, Nyron, Urnst, The Bandit Kingdoms, Horned Society, Furyondy and finally the Vesve Forest. She reached the Vesve Forest about 100 years ago; there she established a lair in the ruins of an ancient Flan fort.

She was active for about twenty-five years and then rested for another fifty years to enjoy the luxury of resting upon her spoils. About twenty-five years ago she was awoken by the movement of troops and refugees in the Vesve forest. She began to exit her lair and hunt again. Food and booty were plentiful because of the multitude of travelers in the region.

During this time various, bands of orcs and other humanoids were beginning to migrate to and from the area either to participate in or to escape the fighting that was occurring in the region. Also, the Wolf Nomads made several forays in the area to retrieve the remains of ancestors long buried there.

Towards the end of the Greyhawk Wars, she raided several bands that were returning to the Lands of Iuz. She recovered a couple of unique magical items (detailed earlier). With experimentation, Ophioverdaurare learned the powers of these rings and began to use them to extend her power. She began to force the local tribes to do her bidding and to pay tribute. She then struck upon the idea to assume human form and portray herself as a queen and assume the airs of rulership. The idea worked, and soon she began to exert more control over the northern Vesve. The queen would rule, and the dragon would enforce her will.

This worked well until Ophioverdaurare got trapped in the human body. At first she raged at this problem, and then she sullenly resigned herself to the situation. It was at this time that she began to spend time with Izak. He stirred something inside her that had been dormant for very long - a need for companionship. He proved to be an able consort and advisor, and in time much more.

Ovid is an extremely complex creature; she has many habits that carry over from being a dragon, yet shows some interesting human traits too. She still has the desire to dominate those around her and provide for her well-being. But she has adopted the persona of a fair

and wise ruler. This she has Izak to thank for. If roused, she can be a terrible foe, but she is interested in diplomacy rather than naked aggression. In time she may become a capable leader of a small kingdom.

Her appearance is that of a human female that is just shy of 6'. Her hair is dark green in color and her eyes are light green. Her skin is luminous, like the purest alabaster. If she could be summed up in one word, it would be captivating. Ovid dresses in silver and green gowns that would be the envy of any queen.

Many of her garments were obtained by trade with the many elf clans along the border of her kingdom. She used gnome intermediaries to conduct the trade so not to offend the elves with her own people. The transactions were agreeable to both sides, and it is hoped that this trade can be.

Her demeanor is polite and aloof, and her voice is strong. Her presence gives off an aura of fear and wonder - a carry over from her dragon nature. If attacked, she will use her spells and breath attack if needed. She is also quite skilled in many weapons and may use one if needed. Most weapons would be of a small hand-to-hand variety (dagger, rod, short sword). It would not become a queen to take a battle-axe off the wall and start swinging it! It might mess up her hair and dress.

She has the respect of her humanoid troops, and they would follow her willingly to their deaths. Her other troops are extremely loyal and carry out their tasks with great enthusiasm. Even those human and gnomish troops she has incorporated into her kingdom respect her for her strength and ability.

## Panshazek, Commander of the Western Forces

Human Priest of Iuz (Level 14) Hp 77 Al Chaotic Evil (dex 18, wis 16)

Panshazek is 44 years old, 6' tall, slim build and very wiry. He is the commander of the Vesve forces and was a spy in the Horned Society before the Greyhawk Wars. His information was of such great value that Iuz promoted him to the Lesser Boneheart for his efforts. Panshazek hates elves with a passion since when he was younger he had an extremely bad encounter with some. Now all elves that are captured are tortured appallingly.

Panshazek owns the following magical items: rings of free action and regeneration, +4 chain mail, +2 cloak of protection, and a +3 BlackStaff. He also has acquired a new staff of lightning and thunder (39) and a Greater Thassaloss as a bodyguard.

## Sir Galen Kendrick

Human Cavalier (Level 8) Hp 2 (current ñ Hp 69 when fully healed) Al Lawful Good Age 45

Weakened Condition (STR 4, CON 4, DEX 6, INT 7, WIS 5, CHA 8)

Healed and Healthy (STR 17, CON 16, DEX 15, INT 15, WIS 16, CHA 17)

Galen was a fairly respected Knight of the Hart up until seven years ago when Orcish forces captured him. He was repeatedly tortured until he eventually talked, telling his jailers about the order. Galen had traveled extensively through Bissel as a liaison with the Knights of the Watch. This information was given to Ket for its own use. Once all the information that was desired was extracted, Galen was sent to the dungeons to await sacrifice. The priest in charge of the dungeon was called away and died in the Greyhawk Wars, and Galen, forgotten, has sat in the dungeons since then.

He has prayed to Rao that he will be one day be delivered from his misery, but so far he has not. Galen has not yet slipped into madness, but he is on the verge. If rescued he would need considerable help to move due to his weakened condition. A Heal spell, along with a Remove Fear and several weeks of rest would return him to full strength. His family would reward his rescuers. The Knights of the Hart would reward his rescuers as well for returning their brother.

### Snit, Talit, and Erzan

Gnome Illusionist/Thief (Level 4/4) Hp 18, 17, 16 Al Chaotic Neutral Age 117, 115, 118

These three gnomes are cousins and renegades from the Flinty Hills. They embarked upon a career of petty thievery and general annoyance five years ago and haven't looked back. They delight in practical jokes upon larger creatures and tend to be kleptomaniacs. They are wanted in Nyrond, Urnst (both the County and Duchy) and the Domain of Greyhawk.

They joined Ophioverdaurare's forces after they ran afoul of some orcs in Izlen. She allows them some "fun" in the Sepia Highlands, and in return they provide valuable intelligence on the region. They are terrified of Ophioverdaurare and know better than to cross her, for the gnomes are aware of what she really is and know the source of her secret. While they themselves are completely unreliable, they honor their obligation to her.

These gnomes have the following magical items. Snit has a +1 shortsword. Talit owns +1 leather armor, and Erzan has a +1 ring of protection.

### Tar-Khan Ahroun

Hobgoblin Chieftain Hp 56 HD 7 Al Lawful Evil

This sly creature has been the ruler of the Iron Horde for 10 years. Since he assumed the role of Tar-Khan, the tribe has grown stronger since he is an able tactician. He wisely accepted the offer of a priest of Hextor to become his personal advisor. Since then the horde has been able to learn new tactics and expand their lands. His word is his bond, but he is not trusting of outsiders. Most interlopers to his domain are killed, but a few are spared to provide news of the

outside world. He is a true believer in the Iron Sheik Prophecy and adamantly awaits his return.

He possesses +2 chain mail, a +2 scimitar of wounding, and a ring of regeneration.

### Tayln Elsireeve

Drow Fighter/Mage (Level 7/7) Hp 41 Al Neutral Evil

Elsireeve is not his real name, and he has been extremely quiet about his origins. He came into Iuz's service five years ago when he appeared at the Underdark entrance to Waterwall. He was bloodied from fighting but still full of battle. After slaying several ogre guards, the garrison commander offered him a position. Within a year, he was the commander of the post. He then spent several years in Dorakaa doing various jobs for Iuz. There he came into contact with the "The Snake," Iuz's personal diviner. It seems that they are related somehow, but neither will talk about it. When a "reliable" commander for Darkleaf was needed, Tayln's name was pushed ahead of the pack so he was promoted.

Tayln is about average size for a Drow male, being about 5'5" and weighing about 115lbs. He is a little sensitive about his height, and when an orog made a joke about it, he beat him to death with his own arm.

He possesses +2 elfin chain mail, a +2 longsword, a girdle of cloud giant strength, and boots of speed.

### Thilan Cold-Heart

Human Priest of Nerull Level (Level 8) Hp 53 Al Lawful Evil (STR 17, WIS 18)

Thilan is a renegade from the Frost Barbarians. He forsook his clan in order to pursue Nerull on a quest for power. He spent several years in the Bone March ruling over several small tribes of Orcs and pillaging into northern Aerdy. He soon began to get visions calling him to the Vesve. He packed up, and with a small retinue headed west towards the forest. He reached the Defiled Glades and tried to penetrate its center. He lost his entire retinue, and he just barely escaped. Contact was made with Maskaleyne, and Thilan agreed to join with the Vampire Lord in order to explore the area further.

Thilan owns a couple of magical items +2 chain mail and a +2 Scythe of Life Stealing.

### Tilvan Faltan

Human Thief (Level 8) Hp 38 Al Chaotic Evil (DEX 17, INT 16)

Tilvan originally hails from the Rookroost region of the Bandit Kingdoms. When Iuz's forces took over that area, Tilvan decided to join the Shadowclaw and become an informant. He did this with so much relish that he had to leave the area before he was killed. He

went to Dorakraa for several years and worked for the Shadowclaw there. He eventually wormed his way into the favor of enough important leaders that he got a posting for a command position. Unfortunately it was not a posting to a civilized region; instead he got posted to the Northern Vesve Forest. Tilvan can't stand being here and is a lousy leader of troops. He has managed through reports and bribery to convince his superior that the situation is fine. Currently he is planning to implicate the Orcish leaders as the reason for the recent reversals in the region. That way he can plead that it was his troops and not his leadership that caused the defeats. To keep himself amused in the backwoods, he has taken to the procurement of elvish females for his entertainment. The Bandit Kingdoms were distinctly lacking in elves, so they are a treat for him. As long as he can maintain the status quo in the region and keep himself amused, Tilvan will be happy. If the opportunity presents itself for him to get transferred out of this woodland hellhole he would leap at it.

Tilvan possesses the following magical items: +2 cloak of protection, +1 leather armor, ring of human influence and a +1 short sword

## NEW CREATURES

### Night Killer Orcs

Night Killer Orcs are not as numerous as other Orc tribes. They are generally considered cowards and despised by others of their kind. However, their presence also scares and worries other orcs. They are followers of Shargas, The Night Lord. They operate in darkness and those places where they can't easily be seen. They are assassins and thieves and ply their skill very well. They tend to be neutral evil in alignment and thus very self-serving in nature. They will hire themselves out as spies and assassins but refrain from massed battle. They are not cowards but choose their battles carefully. Since they follow a different path than most orcs, they have skills that others of their kind do not possess.

All Night Killers have the following thieves' skills:

- Move Silently 30%
- Hide in Shadows 30%
- Open Locks 15%
- Find/Remove/Set Traps 15%

All sub chiefs/guards add 10% to these skills while all Chiefs add 20% to the skills. Also sub chiefs can assassinate at 2nd Level Assassins ability while a chief works at 3rd. Orog and ogrillon are not allowed to live in Night Killer Tribes. Half-orcs are allowed to hold many different positions within the tribe. All Night Killers suffer a ñ2 penalty when in bright sunlight.

## CREDITS

I would like to thank and credit the following sources:

Carl Sargent and his publications Iuz the Evil, The Marklands and From the Ashes

Eric L. Boyd and his article "Wyrms of the Flanaess: Copperhead" from the *Oerth Journal* (volume I, issue 5) for giving me the idea for Ophioverdaurare as the "Velvet Queen."

Laura Seale, my wife, for reading the article for me and checking my grammar even though she has no idea what I am writing about.

Also WotC/TSR for allowing me to use the material they produce to create this article.