

Tales of the Reaching Moon

The RuneQuest™ Magazine

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Hero Quest Special!



❖ Hero Quests by Greg Stafford, Sandy Petersen, & Others ❖
❖ "How to Write Hero Quests" ❖ RQ News ❖ Stories ❖



Tales of The Reaching Moon

The RuneQuest™ Magazine

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Contributions

Contributions are gratefully received, especially artwork. All written contributions should be doubled spaced and typed. Contributions on floppy disc will be given preferential treatment! I can accept both IBM 3.5" and 5.25" discs, in ASCII and Wordperfect 5.0 format, and 3.5" discs in Word for Windows format. Please remember to give full credit to all of your sources. For artwork please don't send originals by normal post, good photocopies are preferred. As ever, the generous reward for publication is a FREE copy of the issue!

EDICT

Happy New Year!

1992 looks like being an exciting year for RuneQuest, and especially Glorantha. You only have to check out Ken Rolston's list of projects to see that things are finally moving. It's personally satisfying to see that the first on the list is Sun County, parts of which originally saw print in Tales. We hope that Tales will continue to be an outlet for new writers.

There are also a number of changes that will affect Tales in the coming months. Firstly, the price will be going up again, while at the same time Steve and MOB will be sharing a greater part of the financial burden of the zine. This is prompted by economic pressures on myself and by the possibility of a new distribution deal. The effects of this won't be seen much before issue eight, but for the moment please note that I've re-jigged the subscription rates in anticipation of it.

As further proof of our wonderful Chancellor's prediction that the economic recession is over, I've been made redundant (lost my job). It's not that much of a nightmare as I've been given enough money to allow me to go around the world for a few months. However, my absence may disrupt the zine somewhat. At the very least your letters will remain unanswered once I'm off at the beginning of February. Any Tales-related stuff should be sent to my co-conspirators: Steve Thomas at the Convulsion address; or MOB at the Australian contact address. Otherwise, my beloved sister, who is inhabiting my hovel while I'm away, may be able to answer simple queries. For those of you who are interested, my basic itinerary is Kuala Lumpur, Melbourne, Auckland, Honolulu, San Francisco and New York.

Convulsion '92, Leicester, 24th-26th July 1992

1992 is also the Year of the Convulsion. We can now announce that not only will Greg Stafford be attending, but also Sandy Petersen and Ken Rolston. The convention is now 60% full, so it is advisable to book soon, or miss the event of the decade! Note that the Gloranthan freeform registration form will soon be issued to members and only some 70 players can join in! For details contact:

Convulsion '92, 8 Birkbeck Road, Ealing, London W5 4ES, ENGLAND

France

After seven issues Quest has folded, apparently due to a new law which requires French magazines to have a proportion of their content made up of general topics and current affairs, or else lose various benefits, such as low cost postage.

Broos was also supposed to fold after seven issues, but now it looks like it may have a new, but limited, lease of life. They are planning a big unofficial "Cults of Sartar" issue with the French versions of many of the Orlanthe and Lightbringer cults and sub-cults, as well as a special Lunar Empire issue. The Broos team are also floating the idea of a Euro RQ Convention.

Germany

A new hardback German rules set has just been released. It's very nicely bound and presented, and again makes me wish that I wasn't such a dunce at languages. Also a German RQ Association has been formed, Deutsche RuneQuest Gesellschaft e.V. This is linked to the



release of the German rules translation and the fanzine Free INT. The association seeks to publicise the game in Germany. The committee are Lutz Reimers-Rawcliffe (President), Ingo Tschinke (Vice-President) and Bjorn Janssen (Secretary).

Chaos Feature Competition

The poor response to this means I may have to throw in an additional mystery prize for the winner. Though I'll need to get Greg Stafford's permission first...

Back Issues

There are now a number of opportunities for UK readers to pick up photocopies of early issues of Tales. Firstly, Jussi Hyvonen in Sweden (see p.2) is offering photocopies at £3.50 per issue, although this may vary a little due to recent postal cost increases. He may be able to provide a similar service to other European readers - so write to him to enquire about this if you are interested.

Secondly, Travelling Man (Tel: 0532 780417) may be able to make copies, although the quality of these is not yet certain. Finally, U.S. readers can get photocopies from David Gadbois.

Free Classifieds

FREE! Copies of Andrew Bell's RQ Digest to anyone who wants them. Send me three formatted IBM 3.5" discs and I'll fill them with the six volumes to date, as well as all the Discussion articles. Jamie O'Shaughnessy, 14 Landside, Leigh, Lancs, WN7 3JT.

FOR SALE: Newcastle Fairly Fast Play Ancients Rules and Newcastle Adequately Fantastic Fantasy Rules. Ideal wargame rules for roleplayers: require very few figures, work at any scale, good balance of speed to realism - one battle lasts c.80 mins. Fantasy supplement includes RQ-style magic system, rules for heroes, and rules for putting role play characters into battles. Send cheques to Nikolas Lloyd, 32 Ripon Gardens, Jesmond, Newcastle, NE2 1HN. £2.75 for the main rules, £4.25 both sets, inc. postage (UK).

DESPERATELY WANTED. Issues of the APA zine The Wild Hunt, through #46 (c.1978-1980); specific issues desired, but all considered on basis of contents. Trade possible. **FOR SALE:** One copy of Wyrms Footnotes #6. Contact Stephen Martin, PO Box 272914, Concord, CA 94527-2914, USA.

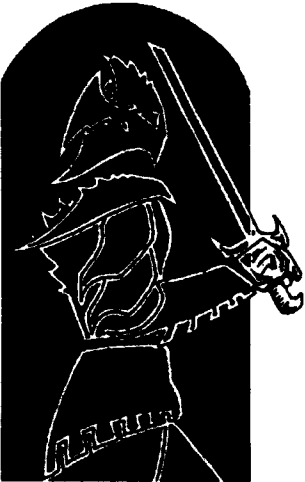
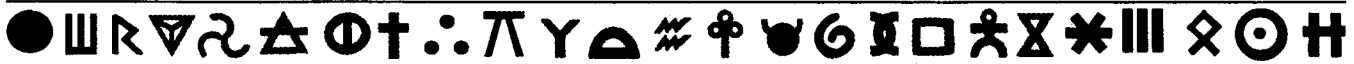
WANTED: Nomad Gods. good price paid. Contact: Jonathan White, 44 Downshire Gardens, Carrickfergus, Co Antrim, BT38 7LN.

PLAYERS NEEDED: needed for ongoing RQ campaign in the Northampton area. If you are interested in something more challenging than hack'n'slay, contact Alan on 0604-250-172.

PLAYTESTERS WANTED for Cthulhu and Stormbringer scenarios. Experienced players preferred. Contact Chris Young, 78 Trotsworth Court, Virginia Water, Surrey GU25 4AH. Phone 0344-843346

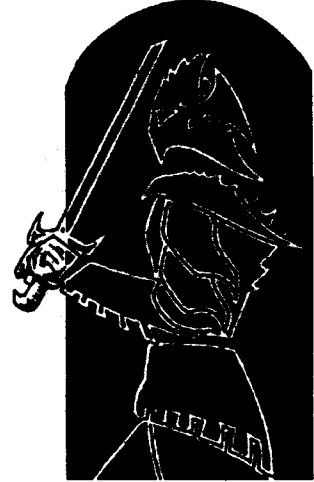
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Designing HeroQuests

by Steve Marsh



I find that there are two very good sources for sample heroquests. The first is rituals and the second is myths. Every ritual is a heroquest. The feast of the spear, celebrated by certain sylphs, recreates the story of Orlanth's spear. While the mundane ritual is simple, it reprises elements of the quest. Every ritual can thus be extrapolated out to form a quest with similar stages and elements. Myths are interrelated and woven into all rituals. The reverse is also true, every myth contains the seeds or patterns for a ritual. I assume, for play purposes, that every story that has made it into the fabric of myth has created its own echo on the hero plane. I then create a heroquest from the elements of the story or myth.

First, the Tale

The first step in creating a heroquest is to choose the story or tale that reflects the myth. There should be a simple form that is the common story. There should then be an intricate variation that is the version known by the illuminati or those with the gnosis. (In varying degrees of completeness, this version will be known from everyone from lay members to inner circle runemasters). Finally, there is the flip side of the story known to enemies. (Imagine the story of Jack the Giant Killer as told by a Giant).

Second, the Organisation

All quests are organized into generic parts:

The likeable (or admirable) hero

This tells us who the quest is for. In defining the hero we decide who can participate, who the quest is open to, and what the quest is.

The difficulty (or problem or goal)

This defines what the quest can accomplish. It also defines the danger level of the quest, the results of failure or success and the loss that can be expected regardless of outcome.

The beginning of the quest.

This is found from how the story begins and

it defines the preparations necessary for the questor, mundane activities associated with the quest, and how the characters will enter the mythic levels and begin to interact with the heroplane.

The journey/travel.

All quests have an element of travel in them. This part of the quest defines where the quest takes place, both physically and in mythic terms. (e.g. this quest takes place in Prax, the character spends most of her time in the normal world with some interaction with the creatures of the hero plane).

The initial confrontations.

These conflicts set up the major conflicts and give colour to the quest. They may be riddles, scavenger hunt items, combats or sight-seeing tours.

The major confrontation.

This is the major fight, gamble, trade, or other encounter. It is often broken up into three segments.

Aftermath.

This includes subsequent and miscellaneous encounters.

The story's end/the return home.

This gets the hero home. Often different ways of returning have different results. A hero may go home late, early, in the wrong shape or as a new person if they leave the quest in an alternate fashion. This also ties up loose ends.

Miscellaneous problems.

All quests have external influences distorting the pure form. It may be as simple as political considerations (Orlanth quests inside of the Lunar Empire are directly interfaced with for political reasons), general decay (a quest that used to take place in a city can be altered if the city falls into decay), and as complex as major mythic tangling (as occurred with quests touched by the God Learners).

Branches and related quests.

Most quests have the chance to branch into other quests or have related quests. A fight against the devil can become a fight against the Lunar goddess. Lightbringers can become a resurrection scenario. The creatures can become the birth of Gbaji.

Third, the rules

Different kinds of rules require special attention. For example, if you are using the Pendragon modifications that I use and prefer these days, you need to go through and note every time a trait contest can be worked into the plot.

The special factors of the rules you are using need to be worked into your quest at an early stage.

Fourth, the fine tuning

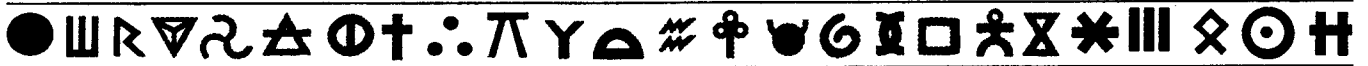
Once I have a story and I've broken it into its parts, I then decide on what power level to reflect in the encounters, the preparation and characters. It also affects the rewards that are proper. (Note that I allow the amount of preparation to greatly alter encounters and other things — as it should)

For example, some quests merely allow access to a specific spirit magic spell or an allied spirit. These quests, while rich in mythic images and scenery, should have relatively mild encounters and problems. They also have relatively mild rewards.

On the other hand, there are a number of quests for bringing a person back from the dead in a form more powerful than the person was before death. These quests are dangerous.

Danger and reward levels are easily tuned up in working out the minor encounters. When these are finished, the major encounters should be detailed and then the minor (or preliminary) encounters should be retuned and the exits worked out again.

I hope that this essay helps to illustrate the stages in designing a quest.



The Silver Fox Quest

by David Hall

The Myth

It is told that Odayla the Hunter, son of King Orlanth & The Lady of the Wild, was out hunting one day in Foxglove Vale near the mountains of his father. This day his prey was the Purple Stag of the Only Oak, a legendary beast, king amongst its kind, fleet of foot and as strong as a wild boar.

The Purple Stag led Odayla on a merry chase. With great leaps it would cross rivers and vales, always keeping one step ahead of its pursuer. Many times Odayla almost caught up with the stag, but each time he was given away, or his mother's gifts were found wanting. Eventually he dug the Unseen Pit and chased the deer into it, but more by luck than anything else.

Then Odayla made a fire and began to roast the deer, but such had his exertions been that he grew drowsy and fell asleep. However, Odayla was the perfect Hunter, and when he slept he always kept one ear awake so that he could never be surprised. So, later on, when his keen ear heard the sound of movement, he awoke, but pretended to still be sleeping. As the sound grew nearer he carefully opened one eye and espied the Silver Fox sneaking up to steal the roasting deer.

Before the fox could react Odayla had pounced on him. With one hand Odayla held the fox and down and with the other he plucked out the foxes bushy tail. Then he took up his mother's flint knife and prepared to skin the fox. The fox cried out for Odayla to spare him, claiming that he had needed the food for his cubs, but Odayla ignored his pleas and prepared to finish his gruesome task.

It was then that the fox told Odayla that if he spared his life he would teach him a skill known only to foxes. Odayla agreed and so the fox's life was spared. The skill the Silver

Fox showed Odayla was the secret of how Foxes move swiftly through the forest, how to move silently but swiftly. This was a hard skill to learn (and the fox a sarcastic teacher), but the trick was to start to run by putting one foot forward, then to bring the next foot forward before the first had touched the ground. When Odayla was able to do this continually he was able to run without putting either foot on the ground, and therefore did not make any noise while he ran. It took a long time for Odayla to learn this skill, but eventually he was able to run quite fast - though if he thought about it too much it wouldn't work!

Thus satisfied, Odayla let the fox go. However he kept the fox's tail and afterwards could always be seen wearing it on his belt. This is why the Silver Fox has no tail. But since the Silver fox's cubs (Red Fox, White Fox, Blue Fox and all the others) had already been born they do have tails.

The Quest

Preparation

Preparations for the quest are made at a shrine to Odayla. The quester or his priest must know the Silver Fox ritual. A priest and any other followers will stay behind on the mundane plane to guard the quester's body.

The quest is preceded by a hunt, the prey usually being of the size of a deer, boar or bear (something smaller would not bode well for the quest). This prey must be killed by the quester-to-be, and the Peaceful Cut successfully cast. The quester and his party feast on the prey at the shrine, and the quester eats the brains, liver and heart to fortify his mind, body and spirit. The priest examines the entrails of the beast for omens and guidance. Then the ritual commences.

The Foxglove Woods.

At the height of the ritual the quester falls into a deep sleep, and passes through the Gray zone guided by the spirit of the beast he has just vanquished. When he wakes from his sleep he finds himself deep inside the Foxglove Woods on the Godplane. These woods lie in the shadow of the Stormwalk Mountains nearby to the Marzeel river. The scenery is subtly different, more primaeval, and the quester's senses are heightened to the magical and spiritual auras emanating from all the living beings around him.

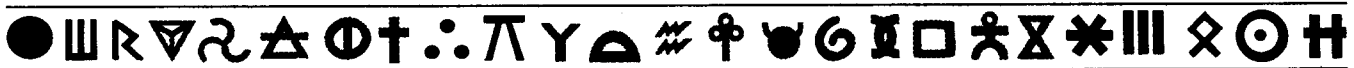
Sneak Swiftly Skill

This is an Agility skill not a Stealth skill. It can only be learned from the Silver Fox. Masters of the skill may teach it to those who have been on the quest, but not to anyone who hasn't been shown the skill by the fox.

Failure to roll under the skill means that the user was concentrating too much, and a fumble probably means the user ran into a tree or obstacle of some sort! A special success means that the user can do one additional action while sneaking swiftly, such as fire a bow or cast a spell without needing a concentration roll. A critical success means the user can do two additional actions.

Users can run at their current movement rate less one.

Note that sneaking swiftly does not mean that the user cannot be seen, a successful Hide roll must be made at the same time. Also GM's should note that since the user will be running quite quickly more than one Hide roll may be required or it may not be possible to hide.



The Hunt.

Soon after the quester arrives in the woods he will become aware of a large purple speckled deer, with magnificent golden antlers. This proud deer he must hunt and capture. It is up to the GM how he handles this, depending on the rules system used. The quester will have great difficulty catching up with the deer and he will probably have to use some ruse to catch it. Once he has his prey he should settle down and roast it.

Encountering the Silver Fox

As the quester roasts the deer he will begin to feel drowsy, to stay awake he must either make some sort of Luck roll or WILL roll, or a Temperate/Indulgent trait roll (depending on the rules system used). If he stays awake too obviously the Fox will not approach. If the quester falls asleep he must make a WILL x1 or POW x2 roll to awaken in time to catch the fox. If he fails to wake he must hunt another prey and go through the same procedure again.

To catch the Silver Fox the quester must make a DEX x 4 roll, with modifiers if he is awakes too obviously. Then he must make an opposed roll of his STR vs 15 to pin the fox down. If the fox escapes the quest ends in failure, as the Silver Fox can easily outwit any pursuer.

If the quester has pinned the Silver Fox down then the fox will plead for its life and say that its cubs are starving. The GM may wish a merciful character to roll against his Merciful/Cruel trait at this point. There is also the opportunity to pull off the Fox's tail, which is accomplished by an opposed roll of STR vs the fox's SIZ of 5.

Then the fox will offer to teach the character the Sneak Swiftly skill (you may want to make another trait roll at this point). If the character kills the fox then the quest ends. If he eats the fox any benefits, or costs, are up to the GM (there might be some larger mythical cost or just the antipathy of all foxes).

If the character agrees to spare the fox then it will teach him the skill. How well the character learns the skill is figured by him making Sneak and Luck rolls (POW x5). Total up the skill according to the results (see Box 1). At the end of this the fox will leave. However if the character decides, of his own volition, to donate some or all of the deer to the fox, or give the fox its tail back, then he will gain the friendship of foxes. It is extremely unlikely that an Odayla worshipper would give the tail back as it is their token of being on the quest, for all to see when they return to the mundane plane.

The friendship of foxes can manifest itself in many ways. Only on the heroplane will foxes be able to communicate with the quester. On the mundane plane the GM might use their appearance as omens, they might lead a character away from an ambush, or their cries might wake a character who is about to be attacked. In the unlikely event of the character giving both the tail and the deer to the Silver Fox then the Fox might become an ally on the Hero Plane. The Silver Fox is known for its wisdom and cunning.

Return

At the end of these events the quester returns to the mundane plane. Any divine magic that the quester used on the hero plane (unless used from a Truestone) is lost and must be sacrificed for again. (When cast, temporal magic lasts for as long as the character is on the Godplane. This is because Time has no meaning there, since it is "before" the birth of time.) If the quester gained the Silver Fox's tail in the quest it will be upon his person when he returns.

Box 1 - Learning Sneak Swiftly

Level of Success on sneak & luck	Sneak Swiftly Skill Received
Critical	+100%
Special	+40%
Success	+20%
Fail	+0%
Fumble	-50%

If the combined total is less than 0 then the character has failed to understand the skill and can never learn it.

e.g. A character with an Agility skill modifier of +4% succeeds in his Sneak Roll (+20%) but fumbles his Luck roll (-50%), the net result is -26% (+4+20-50) and so the character does not learn the skill.



What is Will ?

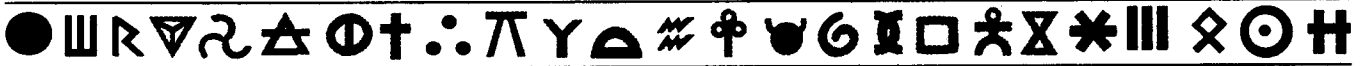
One result of the birth of Time, the Cosmic Compromise, was that the universe was divided into Free willed mortals and predestined immortals (the gods). Thus the mortal races are free to impose their own individuality on the world and thereby change it, while the gods remain stagnant and unable to change except through the actions of their worshippers. The heroquest attribute WILL is the mechanic which seeks to reflect and simulate this. It is something that either mortals have more of, or something they have exclusively.

There are a number of ways of calculating Will. Usually these begin with 3d6 roll modified by various things, such as the level the character has reached in his cult, the number of skills he has mastered, the amount of divine magic he has sacrificed for, the number of followers he has, and so on. However, there should also be other more subjective modifiers, such as how many of the followers are willing to die for him, and how much he has done for his god and his culture/society. Perhaps a measure similar to Pendragon Glory points is in order?

Steve Marsh uses a slightly different system where everyone starts with 18 points of Will. This is then modified positively by "Glory points" and the number of worshippers/followers, but reduced by each rune the character is tied to, each skill mastered, and each special power. If a character falls to zero Will he loses his free agency and becomes an NPC, which is an interesting way of explaining how Gods lose their free will. Though personally, I'd have skills as a positive modifier and the number of worshippers as a negative modifier (surely more worshippers limits your freedom of action?).

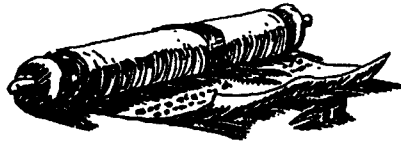
In Steve Maurer's rules there are a number of ways to use will. First it can be used a catch-all Willpower substitute for a Luck/Bravery/Stamina roll. For example he suggests a Will x 9 roll for not falling asleep when very tired to a Will x 1 roll for not screaming when tortured. Secondly you can use Will to make changes on the heroplane, with multipliers depending on the difficulty or magnitude of the change. Changes are also always made by invoking a rune, e.g. invoking the Death rune to kill a godplace creature rather than just cut it up and leave it to (literally) pull itself together again.

Will might also be used in a similar way as hero points in the James Bond 007 game.



Fragment

1645



by Greg Stafford

In Aggar lived the Great King Valarastans who had many sons, and fourth among them was Swenith, who had a son called Jothitorang, called Gnawbone, who had a son Ingkathor the Wealthy who married Eralasinna, the daughter of Borthjord the Poet. They had three children, and the oldest was Lokaymadon.

Lokaymadon was wading near the shores of Lake Carimbisor one day when he found a tiny fleet of ships drawn up upon the shore. He looked closer and saw two tiny armies drawn up for battle. Lokaymadon could see the great spirits of each army ranked among their worshippers, eager for battle. As he watched the armies charged, and with great cheering, rushed into battle.

Lokaymadon said a prayer to King Orlanth and to his brother, War, that the victor of this fight receive their favour, and watched. One of the armies was in the knife formation, which was unknown in the world until then. The other was in the Bison formation, which no one but the nomads of Prax knew until then. The Army of the Knife carried the day, but before the Army of the Bison was exterminated Lokaymadon reached down and plucked up three handfuls and placed them into his pouch. Then he used his cloak, and with his personal magic swept up most of the Army of the Knife and hid them in a carved wooden trunk. He carried several of the little ships in his pack, and gave them to the Lhankor Mhy temple for analysis. But he never told anyone about the little armies.

Lokaymadon gained his greatest fame when he debated with Arstor of Varstolar, the Goldentongue of Broilia. First they spoke with words, then with ideas and spirits, then with power. Arstor was knocked senseless for thirteen seasons.

In this way Lokaymadon gained chieftainship of all Orlanthi within the Golden

Empire of Osentalka.

Lokaymadon became a great heroquester of Orlanth, and he acquired magics which had not been seen among mortal humans until that time. Lokaymadon was the first Orlanthi to ever obtain the power of Three Lightnings, the Hidden Wind, and the Forbidden Wind of the Black Dog.

Lokaymadon used the Three Lightnings in two shameful acts. One was when the Toranski surrendered, and the other was when he gained his most famous wife, Eirilindia of Phandara.

Lokaymadon used the Hidden Wind in three shameful acts. The first was when he gained his most famous wife, Eirilindia of Phandara.

Lokaymadon used the Forbidden Wind of the Black Dog thirteen times, and each time shamefully. The fourth time was when he attacked Barntar's Sheaf.

Near the city of Barntar's Sheaf lived a man named Eringulf of Vanak Spear. His father was Brolarulf of the Great Leap, who was the son of Chieftain Rastalulf of the Vanak Spear, who was also called Rastalulf Harangson. He was the first person to gain the Vanak Spear, stealing it from a foe upon the Hill of Gold during the time of the Haradangan Battles. Chieftain Rastalulf was a close advisor to King Haradangan, but his family was driven to poverty by the feud over the dowry of Rastalulf's second daughter. At the fight between the housecarls of the king and the sons of Rastalulf was composed the "Dying Song of Brolarulf" which provided the clues for his son to gain the Vanak Spear again.

One day Eringulf of Vanak Spear visited Arifingor the Generous to seek a wife. The daughters of Arifingor were noted for their beauty and piety and dowries. Arifingor had no sons and his lands would be passed back

to the clan for redistribution, and since his daughters were caretakers of his fields and pastures they would probably get it, as was customary in the clan.

Arifingor always made tests for the suitors of his daughters' hands. He sat in his high seat, sharing the dragon-carved throne with his wife, Alysindra Yanktori's daughter, who was of the line of Vingolf. Their fifth daughter, Caranistrata the Red, had made her own test, though her father altered it slightly when he told the suitors what must be done.

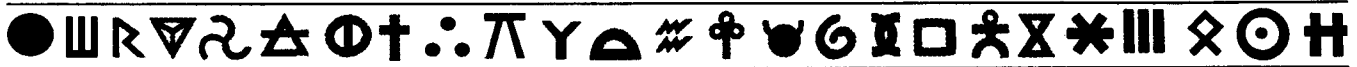
"In the Ginijji are the Monster Rocks, placed in a circle around a lightless pit. Inside the pit are seven tunnels, and down one of them lies the trail to The Dark Plenty. In the Dark Plenty is the Hut of Asrelia. Inside the Hut of Asrelia is the Dancing Jar. Inside the Dancing Jar are twelve Bountiful Treasures and Seven Deadly Guardians. Bring back three of the Bountiful Treasures and one of the Deadly Guardians, each alive and controlled, and you may join with my daughter Caranistrata, with my blessing and hers, in the Woman's Concubine Marriage."

Eringulf of Vanak Spear was not displeased with this. He had so little property that he would rightfully be flattered by a Woman's Concubine Marriage to be part of the house of Arifingor.

Caranistrata's Quest was one which had daunted many men. Ordinary people refused to enter the Ginijji, a thick and wild place where some things from the Chaos Wars still lurk. The Orlanth priests chanted their best prayers as Eringulf descended through the pit. At its base was a Pit of the Jaws and Eringulf of Vanak Spear searched his mind for knowledge, and he chose the right pit. In the Dark Plenty he got lost, as everyone always does, but had no troubles because he had Vanak Spear and the help of six allies. He met Maran Gor before he met Asrelia, and though the pig-dogs which guard her doorway removed his six allies they captured one of them, bound with iron rope, and returned with it.

In Asrelia's Hut Eringulf of Vanak Spear bet his left arm and the way he threw his javelins that he could catch the Dancing Jar, and he won. At the same time, beyond the formula, he made two more wagers. The first stakes were to wager the way that he could move through the forest against another reach into the jar. The second was to wager his hard-won ability to see in the dark against a second try. Asrelia selected his opponents, and as usual they gambled in silence.

After the usual ceremony Eringulf of Vanak Spear returned with the Blessing of Seeds



and the Happy Pigs and the Shield from Hailstones as marriage gifts, and he kept the Maker of Fine Horses for himself. He rewarded his six allies with gold after he returned.

When Eringulf returned to the stead of Arifingor all was being prepared for battle. The chief's wife hurriedly received the gifts and promised her daughter. Her husband said to Eringulf, "You can consider yourself married, and if the winged Sons of Gold can be driven off then you may celebrate it when you wish."

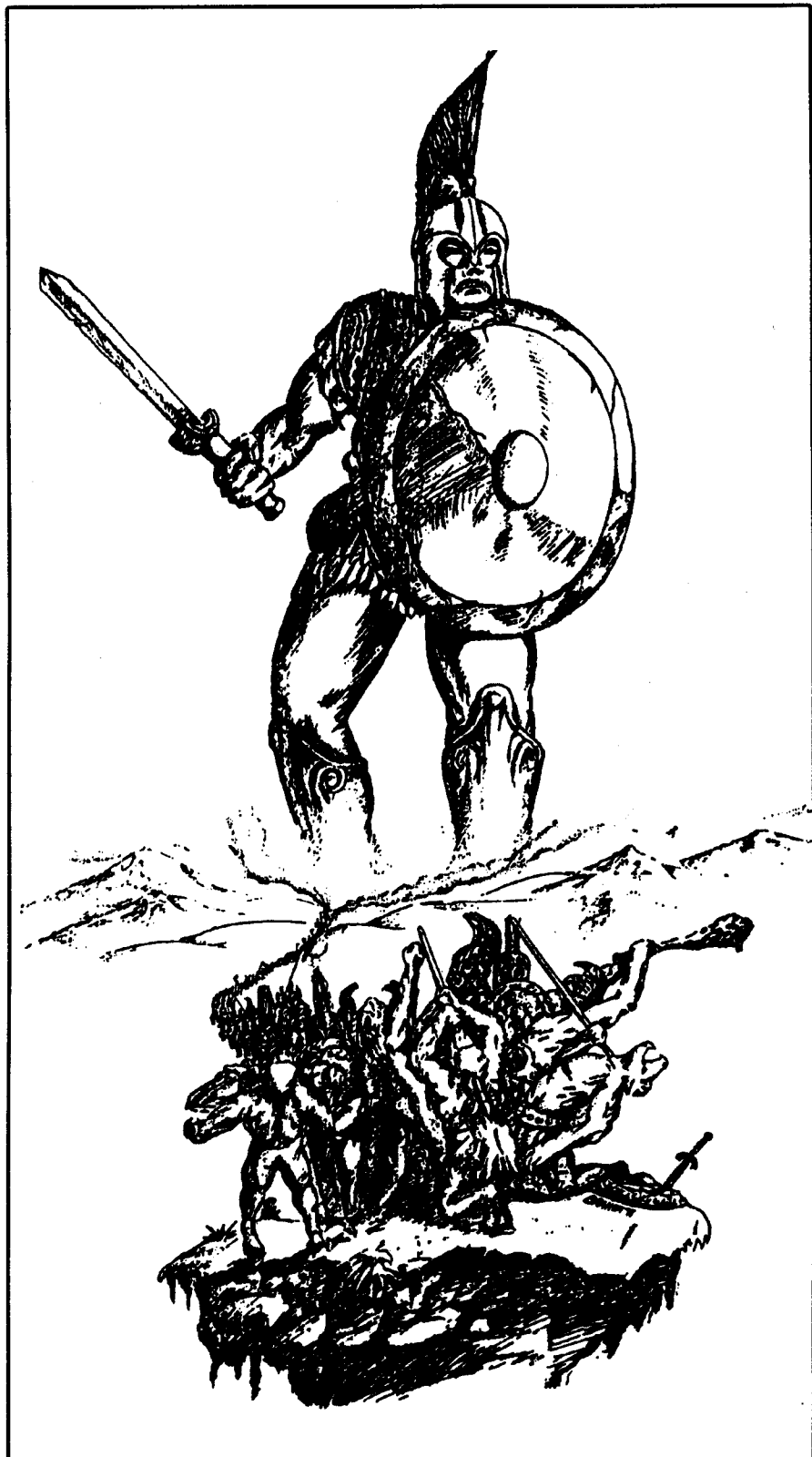
So Eringulf of Vanak Spear armed himself again and prepared for battle. His six allies stood around him and he went to a grove of oak trees where the Chief had stationed some of his men. All of them had bows, charmed and armed for this fight. A woman named Varanassi asked if his spears would be as useful in this fight.

"We must wait and see," said Eringulf of Vanak Spear.

The beautiful birds of the winged Sons of Gold were easy prey for the enchanted Vanak Spear. The riders were quickly despatched on the ground by groups of warriors. Although they tried to ignite the barns and long house only some small outbuildings were harmed as the women inside put the fires out with water and magic. No one expected a Firebird to come, but when it did come every housecarl of Arifingor hesitated and said a prayer for themselves and the clan. Eringulf of Vanak Spear was the first to act and cast the Vanak Spear to be the Ladder Spear, and climbed it across the sky to leap atop the fiery creature. With his sword Eringulf tore great holes into the bird so that red-hot pieces fell groundward as if the sun was weeping.

Arifingor the Generous met the Black Dog again here. This time it had red eyes, and was aided by a pack of trolls. When he saw the trolls coming the chieftain knew his doom was upon him. He cursed the witch who had betrayed him and sang his death song. Arifingor the Generous killed the Black Dog again here, but received two fatal wounds from the trolls, all of whom were also slain. Arifingor and all of his housecarls and allies were killed.

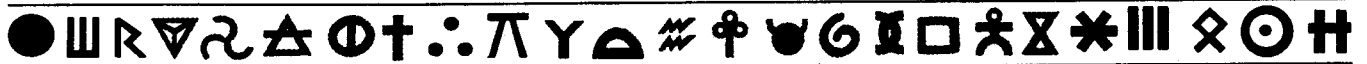
Eringulf of the Vanak Spear returned from his battle with the Firebird and saw the field occupied by proud lowland troops. They carried a tall banner with a golden gryphon shown. Heads of conquered foes hung from the banner. They had taken the valuables from the houses and were setting fire to the buildings. The livestock was already being led away. The fields were already burning.



Eringulf of Vanak Spear found his dying chieftain and received his last words. Afterwards, as was customary, Eringulf cut off the head of his lord and carried it away to the woods. Thus the conquerors were robbed of their favoured trophy, and the chieftain was preserved from a gruesome fate before his final death.

At this time Eringulf of Vanak Spear swore his enmity against the slayer of his father-in-law. Afterwards he found some of his kinsmen, including his beautiful wife, Caranistrata the Red, and went to live at Vanak Spear Farm on the edge of the Ginijji, where no one could find them for a while.

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The HeroQuest Quiz

Tales talks to
Greg Stafford



What is a Heroquest?

A heroquest is a story wherein a person interacts with the mythological world. It is a magical act wherein a person exercises his individuality to transform himself, his world, or his gods. He does this by interacting with the individual, social, and cosmic realms and altering it (or being altered by it) with his personality and desires.

Who can go on a Heroquest?

Anyone, as long as they have obtained the consciousness to do it. And once the consciousness has been obtained, it can never be changed.

What is a Hero?

A person who has attained integration of himself with the three worlds, and idealizes some aspiration of his society, and is widely acknowledged to do so, is a Hero.

What is a Superhero?

[A counter in the game of Dragon Pass...] In some of my old thinking, this was a very powerful hero (the infinity sign in that game is a game rule measure, and not a cosmic secret). In terms of my current Heroquest vision, this is a superfluous definition.

What is the Heroplane?

The Heroplane is the portion of the mythological realm in which the interactive realm is mostly human or superhuman, rather than the divine. That is, when in this

region a heroquester will encounter legendary human beings and their opponents, not the more powerful gods. The relative power of these immortals is considerably less than the gods, and so these regions seem relatively "easier" than others. In a sense this is the Invisible World of the mesocosm.

What is the Godplane?

The Godplane is the portion of the mythological realm in which the interactive realm is mostly the divine, rather than the human or superhuman. That is, when in this region a heroquester will encounter gods, not heroes, saints, and lesser spirits. In a sense, this is the Invisible World of the macrocosm.

What is the Spirit Plane?

The Spirit Plane is a realm of disembodied entities. It does not exist in the Heroquest realm, where all separations are united. In the human and mortal realm spirit and matter are separable, but not in the immortal. In a sense, this is the Invisible World of the microcosm.

What is WILL?

The opposite of WON'T. Okay, okay...At one time, this was a major component in the HQ plans. Something like it will exist later, but perhaps not Will specifically. Whatever it is called, it is the commodity of exchange in the mythological realm. It is the thing which mortals have and immortals do not have.

Types of Heroquesting?

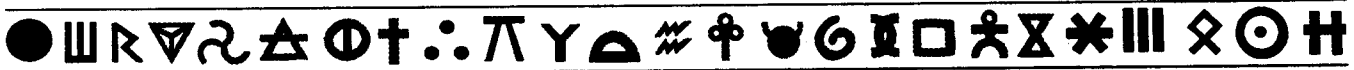
Passive

This is the most apparent as Worship. In worship the initiate participates in the primeval or ancient acts of creation which make the world what it is. To the non-initiated, who perceive only the mundane world, the worshippers perform a ceremonial re-enactment of a creation story whose gross contents are probably known to every child.

The ceremony is possibly dramatic in form, and includes rituals which use symbols to reveal some esoteric information which cannot be properly understood by the stranger, and hence introduces an element of mystery. But the initiated enter directly into the mythology and participate as living beings in the original acts which made the world. They do not deal with symbols, but with the actual reality of the thing, and so benefit from it directly. In general, these ceremonies follow prescribed script which may vary widely in some cultures (Orlanthi) or little in others (Dara Happan). They are expected to preserve the status quo of the world.

Active

Since the time of Arkat and Harmast it has been possible to actively participate in the mythological realm and change it intentionally. They were able to begin a normal ceremony, and then divert from it to their own ends. For Harmast Barefoot, an Orlanthen tribesman, this was easy since the starting myths he used were exploratory and adven-



turous by nature. By selecting certain segments of many myths carefully, he was able to reconstruct a Lightbringer's Quest in which he and his companions could be successful. Arkat, more solitary and bereft of social support, was also more independent of social expectations and so was able to forge a more innovative path. It was also much more difficult, occasionally marked with bits of lost would-be heroes who had gone before him. Like them, the attempt would have cost him everything, including his soul, if he had not had the assistance of Harmast and others like him who forged a new kind of organization to support the lone heroquester.

What is a Heroquest like?

A Heroquest has 5 stages:

1. Preparation
2. Invocation
3. Journey
4. Confrontation and Transformation
5. Return and Integration

Interested parties should read Joseph Campbell's *Hero with a Thousand Faces* to see an elaboration of the mythic quest sequence.

Example

I will attempt to illustrate these stages using the part of Fragment 1645 which shows the journey of Eringulf of the Vanak Spear into the Pits of Ginijji.

1. Preparation

Preparations are made beforehand. The narrative given here does not list them, but facts can be inferred from the compressed narrative style used here. First Eringulf is accompanied by his mysterious spear, which is itself the object of a heroquest. Also six allies accompany him, and priests prepare his way by "chanting their best prayers" as he descends into the pit. One part of the preparation is to state the essential story which is to take place. A narrator, usually the story-teller, does this. The start of the tale is included in Fragment 1645 as the challenge of the daughter: "In the Ginijji are the Monster Rocks, placed in a circle around a lightless pit. Inside the pit are seven tunnels, and down one of them lies the trail to The Dark Plenty. In the Dark Plenty is the Hut of Asrelia. Inside the Hut of Asrelia is the Dancing Jar. Inside the Dancing Jar are twelve Bountiful Treasures and Seven Deadly Guardians." Other stories, not contained here, tell us other things about Ginijji, Asrelia, and how the Dancing Jar gives up various rewards to other heroes. In fact, the daughter has asked for nothing less than a suitor who has descended into the underworld and returned.

2. Invocation

To start the ceremony, the powers to be used are invoked and/or evoked to the questor's presence. These might be spirits summoned from another world, living beings volunteering to be assistants, assignment of magic artifacts, and pledges from organizations to aid in some way appropriate to their station. Such an assemblage for the Orlanthi usually starts with an "Arming of Orlanth" scene, with the details differing for various stories. This activity might have been carried out at some Orlanthi temple or holy hill, after which they'd travel en masse to the ritual site. Alternatively, they may travel to Ginijji, then begin this invocation there.

3. Journey

The journey is the most variable section in length, nature of episodes, and so on. In this sequence it is a fairly simple journey to the underworld with some commonly encountered denizens and problems there.

Stage 1: Ginijji, a foreboding region which is better known as Snakepipe Hollow. The almost casual reference to this place is typical Orlanthi understatement, as Ginijji was then a seething chaos region.

Stage 2: Pit of Jaws. Here the priests "sing their best prayers." This shows us that it is the real site of the ceremony. There the priests close the final gap between worlds to allow Eringulf to go to the mythic landscape. Had they failed, Eringulf could only have been swallowed by the giant ant-lion at the bottom of the pit. As it was, he still had to choose which one of seven gates was the correct entry. His ability at this was probably his own skill, either knowing which one or perceiving the right one.

Stage 3: Dark Plenty. One of the names for the limitless darkness of the underworld, which sometimes has no dimensions at all. Eringulf's apparent easy passage is another understatement, even though accomplished by the Vanak Spear, which (we are told in another source) "points ever to the breast of the foe." The six allies mentioned here were probably empowered as the six directions, which was commonly enough combined with their fighting functions which occur later. Finally, Eringulf has a "hard won ability to see in the dark" which he later wagers.

Stage 4: Maran Gor. Among other things, Maran Gor is the fighting guardian of the underworld. The pig-dogs mentioned here do not normally appear with her, but do normally appear in the underworld. The combat here was obviously fierce, as Eringulf lost all six allies. However, he also gained one of the

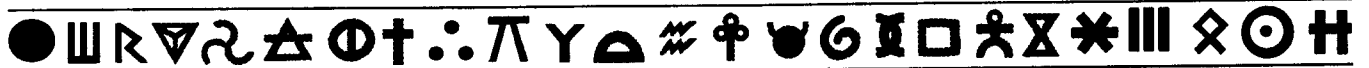
pig-dogs, "bound with iron rope, and returned with it." This creature, which was a dog shaped pig in the mundane world, was the Deadly Guardian required of the quest, and its capture saved Eringulf another reach into the Jar. Unstated, but assumed, is the deadly combat between Eringulf and Maran Gor which he must have won. Once past this guardian, Eringulf entered the Hut of Asrelia.

4. Confrontation/Transformation

"In Asrelia's Hut Eringulf of Vanak Spear bet his left arm and the way he threw his javelins that he could catch the Dancing Jar, and he won. At the same time, beyond the formula, he made two more wagers. The first stakes were to wager the way that he could move through the forest against another reach into the jar. The second was to wager his hard-won ability to see in the dark against a second try. Asrelia selected his opponents, and as usual they gambled in silence and after the usual ceremony." Here, in the climax of the ritual we have a strange gambling game and a strange power, the Dancing Jar. It is actually a contest of power in which Eringulf wagered portions of his own being against a reach into the great wealth which lies within the realm of Asrelia, the Mother of Treasure, the Keeper of Life. His contest is wagered against unspecified denizens of Asrelia's Hut, who would be various powers of the underworld. If they had won, they would have gained the benefits of his wager. The result of Eringulf's efforts are to acquire some benefits from the Jar. He has no choice on these. First he gets the Blessing of Seeds and the Happy Pigs, a fertility blessing which increases the numbers of both. The Shield from Hailstones is another blessing for crops, preserving them from this blight. The blessing of the Making Fine Horses is something which later allowed Eringulf to breed the finest horses around. All of these things are natural to the Hut of Asrelia.

5. Return and Integration

Eringulf's return to his world is somewhat abrupt. Note that two of the three gifts he gained are given away to his wife's family (which is then wiped out, wasting much of his generous effort). The third is kept for himself. The fate of the pig-dog is not given here. Normally, however, the results of Eringulf's voyage would bring a great wealth to the recipient clan. They would be stronger, and more likely and able to help Eringulf out some time later, maintaining the reciprocal relationship.



The Whole World in Your Hands

An inside perspective on new HeroQuest developments

by Mike Dawson

Introduction

Through complex but happy circumstances, I was in part responsible for renewing Greg Stafford's interest in HeroQuest. Based on my conversations and correspondence with him, my long presence in Greg Maples' RQ game, and a years-long attempt to do for Glorantha what Greg Maples is now doing for HeroQuest, I would like to share some ideas about what HeroQuest is currently becoming, and even part of the reason why it has taken so long to get this far.

False Starts

Like most RQ fanatics, I dug through every source I could for years, trying to figure out what HeroQuesting was. Luckier than most, I read some really obscure but info-laden stuff from A&E and The Wild Hunt from the early 80's. Most of this was written by Steve Marsh, but an article by Bill Keyes has recently reappeared (in Tales #5). Based on this info, members of the local gaming group experimented with HeroQuesting. (This was not your average gaming group. Les Brooks, Sam Shirley and Ann Merritt were part of it. All are now Chaosium employees. Dan Greenberg has major RPG publications to his credit, including one of the Watchmen modules, Ghostbusters, etc. Most of us have had something or another published.)

The general drift we got was that HeroQuesting was sort of "super RQ." As you moved onto higher and higher levels of the Hero/Spirit/God plane, rolls got harder and harder to make, and experience gains were more and more rewarding. If all your skills while HeroQuesting were divided by 10, then any experience gain resulting from a HQ was multiplied by 10. HeroQuesting Rune Lords found themselves with best skills of 10-11%. On return to the inner/

mundane world, their experience went through the roof, with an average 3% gain becoming 30%. It sort of worked, but many questions were unanswered, and so HeroQuesting was not exactly a common occurrence among most PCs. As a ref, I certainly didn't feel comfortable running all that stuff off the top of my head.

Cutting to the chase, we were very wrong. So was everyone else, apparently. Work at the Chaosium stopped, I think, because the "super RQ" model was the best they could come up with, and they (specifically Stafford) didn't like it.

Merging Paths

An abortive project for another company led Les Brooks and Greg Maples to develop a new level of game world detailing and integration. The intent was to create a single mechanic for dealing with the intents and actions of groups in a game world. The system was supposed to allow a ref to define a group, assign it goals and abilities, and let it use these to interact with other groups. Every group had common statistics, skills and motivations, much like a character. This level of detail allows a ref to understand the interconnectedness of his world very clearly — to hold the whole world in his hands. It lets the ref know exactly what kind of effect PCs have when they act upon the world. In effect, a ref could use the system to create the history (or even the cosmology!) of his world. Doesn't it sound useful to have a one page character sheet for the Lunar Empire? Or for Ernalda?

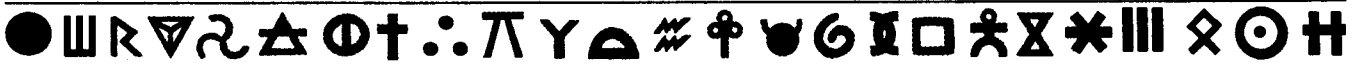
The original project died, and the system was never finished in a publishable form. Nevertheless, Greg Maples continued to use and refine it for his own unique RQ based fantasy world. Because of his interest in the Heroic Journey (it was a fantasy game, after all) and HeroQuesting, a natural coming-together occurred. In Greg Maples' world,

HeroQuesting became intimately linked with the groups or entities defined by the system he was using. The gods, cultures, peoples, religions and even philosophies were all defined by this mechanic, and of course they all wanted heroes of their own. So, for his own game, Maples defined Heroes and HeroQuesting based on concepts within his informal mechanic. With this system Greg was still fudging much more than he would if there was a finished mechanic running the interactions, but overall, the level of making-it-up-as-he-went-along was lower than any other game I can imagine anyone else ever having run.

From my own experience in Maples' game, it worked very well. Though radically different from Glorantha, the feel of heroic action was there. I could sense that it would work in just about any milieu. The knowledge (on a player level) that most of the world was worked out ahead of time, and that most everything happened for a reason (and not because the ref thought it up at the last minute) made a tremendous difference in the game's presentation. When player incompetence doomed a two year old campaign to an ignominious end, the players were able to take things philosophically and move on to another campaign. How else would you get that reaction when telling your players "Sorry, guys, but for no apparent reason, a meteor the size of a large building falls on the party and you are all dead. Let's start another game."?

The Call

Based on my understanding of some simple elements of Maples' system, and a copy of a draft of Sandy Petersen's 1984 HQ rules, I forged off on my own with an attempt at HQ rules. I didn't like Sandy Petersen's rules at all. They were very clunky and weird — missiles always hit, only crits were good for anything but "will points" could make any



hit a crit, lots of other strange things. Thirty-five pages later, I had what I thought was a working system. So, I sent a letter to Greg Stafford saying as much. I figured that HQ was way on a back burner, but when he got around to heating it up, I wanted to be there to push my idea.

Greg Stafford called me at home five days after I sent the letter. Greg started off by blowing my mind with this: "I think HQ is a computer game." Well, my brain went spinning for a moment. Then I started asking him about what kind of a computer game. No, it wasn't an arcade game. No it wasn't a text adventure. It wasn't really even a game—the computer was more an aid for the ref to figure out what effect PC actions had on the world. As he put it "the computer serves as a reactive version of Arachne Solara's Web of Myth." Greg Stafford was once more way ahead of everyone else.

It seems that the mechanic of HQ was never the problem to him. The problem was in understanding how the potential hero's actions in the realm of myth affected the world. This is the central problem of HeroQuest — without the interaction between the potential hero and the world, there is no way to judge the importance of the character's actions to the world of myth; thus there is no way to judge whether the character achieves heroic status. Greg Stafford wasn't sure that he wanted to see any thirty-five page system. He did want to know several things about the system though. Mostly, he wanted to know if my system addressed the problem mentioned above, what he called the link between the Macrocosm (the world) and the Mezzocosm (the hero). I was left knowing that what he really needed was to talk with Greg Maples, the man with the plan for how to do this.

That's what I told him, and that's what he has done. Greg Stafford has run HQ for Maples, to show him "how HQ would go if it

went right." All without rules, just off the top of his head.

The Quest

The results of this have allowed Greg Maples to come up with the following outline for an HQ manuscript. As related to me by Greg Maples, this is what Greg Stafford wants to see in HeroQuest. My information on them is sketchy in some spots, but I will try to make them understandable within that limitation.

Foremost, and most generally, the game must be "transformational and satisfying." Your guess is as good as mine on the first part of that. I think he means that the game must address the subject of the hero in the same sense that Joseph Campbell does. Heroes in HQ are meant to be more than "real tough guys," they must be heroes in the mythological sense. Greg Stafford wants the experience of playing such a character to drive home to the players what it means to be a hero.

"Satisfying" is much simpler to explain and links directly to his next stipulation. The game must play well, grab the player's imagination and not let go. At the same time, this criteria means that the more obtuse and ephemeral things about the heroic cycle may be left out. For example, I understand the heroic cycle as laid out in Campbell will be used for all kinds of heroes from all cultures. Even Non-human cultures, whose psychology, society and myths differ radically from humanity's will follow the same heroic myth structure. The reasoning is simple—how satisfying is it to play a dwarf heroquestor, whose quests are to build neat stuff? Mostali (or Brithini, or ephemeræ, etc.) mindset does not generally lend itself to satisfying HeroQuesting when examined closely. These differences will be glossed over in HQ, to

make everything "satisfying."

The game must not be limited to Glorantha. The session Stafford ran for Maples & co. was set in a primitive Scandinavian village. It must be useable as a meta-rules system in any other milieu or game system. Imagine HeroQuesting Call of Cthulhu players, or even D&Ders!

Aside from these general criteria, there are five major design points being worked out now. They are: Aggregate will versus personal will; Quantification of natural phenomena; Emotions and their impact; Quantification of interactions between conflicting traits; & the Self-Generating Flow Chart of Myth. Quite a mouthful. Let's look at them one at a time.

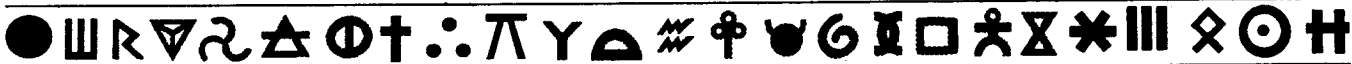
Aggregate will versus personal will. Quests and quest paths do not exist for the benefit of individuals. They are manifestations of the will of an "aggregate group," be it the cosmos, the world, a species, a race, a nation, a tribe, a town, or a clan. To risk overstatement, individuals do not create myths, they interact with them, or they become them. Heroes are the symbolic representative of their entire group, and the friends and foes they meet on a quest are symbolic "front men" for other groups. Thus, the relationship of the individual's will to the combined will of what he interacts with must be understandable and mechanized. In essence, its not who you are, but who you represent.

As questors become more important to their "aggregate group," their ability to affect things in the mythic realm increases. Conversely, the more important a quest the hero undertakes, the more important to the group he is. If Joe Hero heads into the Mythic realms to gain a point of INT, he had better be well prepared. But if he head off on the Sun's Path to gain Fire, then his whole culture must be ready to undertake such an important journey. At the same time, the wishes of these groups must be understood. A potential hero finds the going much easier when he is after something his group wants than when he wanders around aimlessly or in a manner contrary to the group's wishes. So, a method of relating the goals and motivations of groups must be part of HQ. What does the Janube River God want, anyway? Or how 'bout the Kingdom of Tarsh? The first design criteria demands a way of answering all these questions simply and mechanically.

Quantification of natural phenomena. This one is quite a bit more straightforward. If a hero can "whistle up a wind" or calm the seas or cause a rain of frogs, how does this happen mechanically? These things must be quantifiable.

Emotions and their impact. Some things can only be achieved by the pure of heart. Others rely on love, or courage, or whatever. HQ must quantify these things in relation to





the rest of the world. Look to Pendragon for the basis of this part of the system.

Quantification of interactions between conflicting traits. Part and parcel of the previous section, but more broadly aimed. What happens when one hero tries to use his Sneakyness (or his Animal Power, or whatever) to avoid another hero's All-Seeing Watchfulness?. Or if a hero uses his Anger to withstand possession? Again, these things must all be measurable.

The Self-Generating Flow Chart of Myth. I understand this one the least. Maples also feels this is the one that will take the most work. Basically, the mythic cycle will be laid out in diagram form, with all possible branches and twists. It will serve as the framework for all types of questing. This is the "Web of Arachne Solara" that Stafford started off thinking should be done as a computer game. With the addition of the "character sheets" for all the groups that affect myth, it defines the relationships and myths of the cosmos. The choice of what groups are plugged into what parts of the diagram define the specific quest and who it is important to.

The World Machine

Greg Stafford was loath to think that the nature of the World could be quantified. In fact, I don't think it ever occurred to him that it was even valuable to do so. There is a danger that in systematizing something, "the magic goes away." When everything is laid out and cut and dried, the mystery and sense of wonder can dry up too. I think this mindset is clearly shown in the way magic is dealt with in Pendragon. But to me, the difference between the two approaches is not so diametric. Consider this analogy. To a primitive, a wind up clock is a mysterious and magical thing. Awe is the main emotion he feels. He does not understand its inner workings in the least. To a clockmaker, the sense of understanding, aesthetic enjoyment and appreciation for a well made thing replaces the primitive's awe. Only unperceptive, uncaring folk exposed to clocks every day fail to appreciate the fine intricacies involved in such a creation. To me, the second portion of the analogy matches my preference for world design and running. I want to know the depths and breath of my world. To understand the intricate inner workings and mainsprings that drive it into the future.

At the moment, all of us are primitives, staring without comprehension at the marvellous mystical entity called Glorantha. But I predict that HQ will shed light where no light has been, and will give the keys of understanding to RPG refs everywhere. We will hold the whole world in our hands and understand its details and inner workings. Mostal was more right than he knew.

The HeroQuest Quiz

Tales talks to Sandy Petersen

What is a Heroquest?

Heroquesting is adventuring in the magical world of the immortals. In the Godtime, there was no heroquesting, because there was no separation between life and death, between man and God, between spirits and mortals. With the coming of Death and the Great Compromise, all that changed. A barrier was emplaced. Heroquesting is the technique which surpasses that barrier.

Who can go on a Heroquest?

During the course of a Gloranthan's life, he gradually accrues Will based on his deeds, lore, and skills. At some point in his life, he may have the opportunity to enter upon a Heroquest. Just before he enters, he is always given a choice: does he wish to connect with the Heroplane?

If he agrees, he loses 1 pt of Will, and forever after is vulnerable to Heroquesting. This means that he can be pulled upon a Heroquest unwillingly if someone else goes through the right rituals, or if he just goes to the wrong place at the right time. It also means that he can Heroquest.

If he refuses, he loses no Will, and does not Heroquest. He can choose to go on a Heroquest later, if he gets another opportunity.

There is one way to go on a heroquest without making the connection described above - if you are a follower of a Heroquester, you can go on certain Heroquests with him. For example, Elovare's Blue Moon Heroquest can have up to 33 participants. In theory, only one participant need be a formal Heroquester (though normally at least 11 are such).

What is a Hero?

Hero-hood is an objective state, not a sub-

jective one. A person is a hero if he:

- * Has achieved immortality.
- * has achieved the Hero Rune.
- * can provide something unique to potential followers.

A hero's status is immediately made plain - a new star appears in the heavens each time a new hero is made. In the case of troll or darkness-oriented heroes, the star may appear in the sky of the underworld, so may not be visible except to inhabitants of Hell.

Note that becoming a hero is incredibly difficult. As one approaches the verge of becoming a hero, hostile beings are drawn to you. Other beings attempting to become heroes on conflicting paths are forced to battle you and lay snares for you.

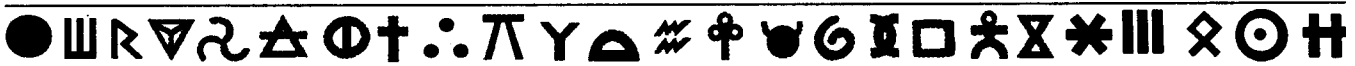
The Hero Wars are unique because there are so many heroes battling at once. There may be as many as 40-50 heroes in Glorantha during the height of the Hero wars. Of course, this means that there is an excellent chance that all Glorantha will be destroyed. Several prophecies testify to this.

What is a Superhero?

Superhero-hood, like Hero-hood, is objective. A person is a Superhero if he has achieved the Superhero Rune.

This sounds simple but is, of course, complex. The number of Superheroes in Glorantha is so small that they can be counted on your fingers. Tada, Androgeus, Arkat, Harrek and Jar-Eel are the only ones, I, Sandy Petersen, can think of. Hon-Eel might have been one, and I could be forgetting one or two others.

Not counting Androgeus, there appear to have been no superheroes at all during the Second Age, and only one during the First Age (Arkat). The Hero Wars boast two.



It is interesting to note that (except, arguably, Androgeus) all Superheroes are humans. Only three appear to have been created since the beginning of Time, and two of those inhabit the Hero Wars.

What is the Heroplane?

Any land outside the normal ken of man, yet present in the physical world of Glorantha. In a sense, the Heroplane together with the mundane world are Glorantha's body, her physical form. Some parts are secret and inner (like Hell or the Inner Earth Paradise), but are still physical.

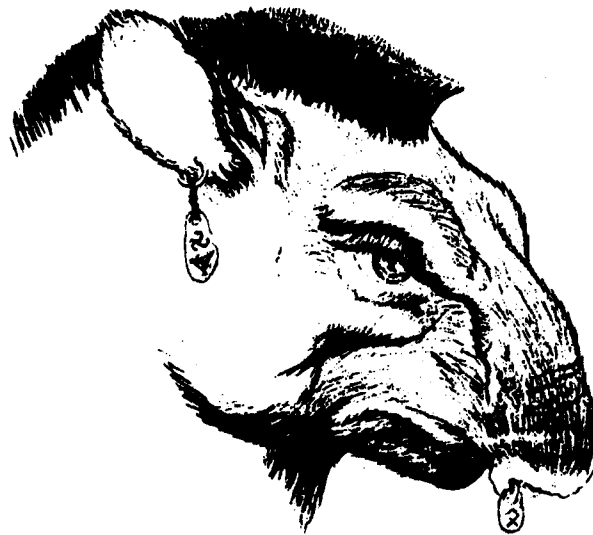
This includes Hell, Heaven, and the edges of the world (Luathela, Vithela, etc.). The main feature of the Heroplane that distinguishes it from the Godplane or Spirit Plane is that (in theory!) you could reach it by simply travelling. If you could fly long enough and high enough, you'd get to the Sky. If you march straight north, you find the glaciers of the Altinae. If you sail west far enough you find the lands of the Luatha. If you jump into Hellcrack, you'll land in the Underworld.

What is the God Plane?

If the Heroplane is Glorantha's body, the Godplane is Glorantha's mind. The Godplane comes in two parts: the Godtime itself, and the Land of the Gods. The godtime is simply the six ages that Glorantha passed through before Time began. The Land of the Gods is a very peculiar place with little relationship to the "real" world. It has a geometry, and entities dwell there that represent everything. This is the place where runes exist as objects.

To get to the Godplane, you must always first travel through the Heroplane. This can be very difficult, as you must find a connection.

For example, let's say you want to see the Green Age. One way to do this is to go to Hell (via the Whirlpool, the Tarpit, the Hellcrack, what-have-you). Then, travel through Hell until you get to the ruins of the Spike (which is there, like all dead things). Find your way into the Spike while performing the correct ritual, and when you leave, you will be on the Godtime Spike. From here, find the Forest of the White Elves and when you leave it, perform yet another ritual. You will then be in the Green Age. You had to go through the Heroplane, then two different stages of the Godplane to get there. That's probably the quickest route, but none too safe.



What is the Spirit Plane?

This is the spirit of Glorantha. It permeates everywhere, and shamans can see onto it. Spirits normally live here. It is not really a place for Heroquesting, but questers must often pass through it or use it.

What is WILL?

It is the ability to make free choices, do new things.

Non-Heroquesters generate WILL through their everyday lives, but have no access to it. They have no way to use it to better themselves. A heroquester has access to his WILL, but no longer generates it anew. This is why wise men advise against entering a Heroquest before you are "ready". If you are a stripling, you will not have accrued much WILL, and will be at a great disadvantage in the quest. But an old, experienced priest may have plenty of WILL, and now be ready to risk it.

The gods have very little WILL remaining, which is why they must do the same things over and over again. Orlanth does not punish his foes by launching an earthquake, because that would take a huge expenditure of WILL. But he can form a storm or no WILL cost, because that is part of his being, part of what he represents. One of the reasons that the Red Goddess was able to make her place in the world was that the Red Goddess was able to make her place in the world was that she had a great deal of WILL, being new and fresh. She used it to continually pull surprises on the Old Gods, and to gain new abilities. Now, her WILL is in short supply as well, though she probably has more than any Old God even now. That is why mortals make the difference, not the gods.

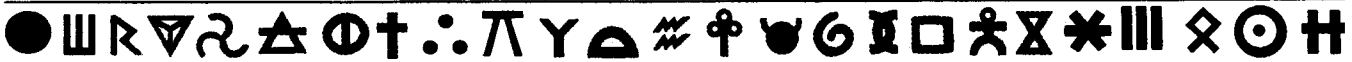
Types of Heroquesting

One type of heroquesting is the Cult Heroquest. These are actually a sort of advance worship ceremony. You attempt to emulate your god (or aid him in his actions) and as a result you become more like your deity, and better understand him and his religion. The Berserker gang heroquest is a good example of this type. All cults have and promulgate these. All published Heroquests are samples of these. The Lightbringers' Quest is among the greatest of all this type of Heroquest, and has (I believe) only been accomplished in its fullness twice since the beginning of time, both times by Harmast Barefoot, however many thousands of Lightbringer cultists have gone on portions, sometimes quite large portions, of the Lightbringers' Quest.

The other type is Extrapolative Heroquesting, as invented by Arkat. In this, the quester sets out across the Heroplane, ignoring the marked paths. In this manner, he can gain new abilities, previously unknown in his cult. This can be abused, however, and is how the God Learners and the Red Moon achieved their worst crimes.

What is a Heroquest like?

Naturally, it depends on the gamemaster. As a general rule, it should feel more like myth, less like sword-and-sorcery. Remember that "losing" is not the same in Heroquesting. If you are going on a cult heroquest that your god "lost", you may want to lose too, or else you won't get the correct experience, nor learn what your deity learned. If you are victorious over all your foes in the Hill of Gold heroquest, you don't gain the power of immortality, for instance - because you haven't learned what Yelmaliu learned; how to survive in the face of the worst. If you won your battles, you haven't experienced "the worst".



Mundane activity

The questers will return to the spot they left from in one full day and night. The spot must be kept sacred and clear of intruders, or the questers will have to pass through the Grey Zone ² to return.

The Quest

1. THE DEPARTURE: After the ritual has been completed successfully a whirlwind descends on the party. When it lifts the party can be seen no more. The wind carries the party through the Grey Zone to the Threshold. No trouble will be encountered in the Grey Zone unless there is a shaman present, in which case a random spirit enemy may attack him (roll 1d100 - if the result is less than his Fetch's POW he is attacked).

2. HUMAKT'S THRESHOLD: The heroes are carried to the top of a huge pillar, rising from a vast, bottomless canyon full of mists (the Grey Zone). Here on this pillar, stands a warrior of the Death God. He must fight someone to the Death - a life must be expended to cross to the Other Side ³. If multiple questers attack him, each must check their Honourable trait.

3. TO THE BRIDGE OF PASSAGE: On the other side of the pillar, a long rope-and-plank bridge extends into the mist. When the party members cross it each must check to see how he fares. The bridge creaks audibly under the weight of any character with Death Fame of 30 ⁴ or more. If the character has 29 or less Death Fame, he crosses the bridge soundlessly.

4. THE GUARDIAN OF THE GATE: At the other end of the bridge is the Guardian, behind whom is a huge door. Anyone bearing arms under whom the bridge creaked impresses the guardian, and he is free to pass through the door and into Kargan Tor's court. If a hero does not bear arms then the Guardian announces, "This court is for warriors. You may not pass." To those who did not make the bridge creak, he states, "Your weapons are a sham. You shall not mock my master's court with them. Only the mighty enter here." Anyone may battle the Guardian to the first wounding. The bridge here is narrow so that only a single character may fight at a time. They must win or lose alone.

If the Guardian wins, he takes 1d6 Death Fame from his victim. If the victim retains at least 30 Death Fame he can still enter the court. If the victim has 29 or less Death Fame, the Guardian flings him off the Bridge. If the Guardian loses, he admits the

victor who receives 1d6 Death Fame. A quester may try to completely defeat the guardian, rather than just wound him. If the character succeeds in reducing the guardian to 0 hit points, and keep him there two consecutive rounds, he can take something from the guardian. This may be either the usual spoils or his Sigil. The Sigil can be used to open Kargan Tor's gate without the Guardians co-operation, plus it can be used to open any of the inner gates within the Court. Stealing the Sigil from its rightful owner gives one a Dishonest check. Returning the Sigil to the Guardian gives one an Honest check plus 1d6 Death Fame, even if the Hero returning the Sigil stole it in the first place.

5. THE COURT OF KARGAN TOR: A large courtyard filled with warriors practising their arms. Humakt greets his visitors from a large simple wooden throne at the court's centre. The questers must state their desires, whereupon one of the god's minions escorts them to the Storm Bull's Gate.

6. THE LORD OF THE TABLE: Beyond the Storm Bull's Gate is a great feast hall. Many berserks carouse and fight. Dogs and cattle wander the floor, and naked slave women rush about with food and drink. At the head of the table squats a colossal drunken warrior, the son of the Storm Bull and Lord of the Table. He is horned, wears sword and axe, and his shoulders are at least 4 yards above the straw-strewn floor. (Note: his POW is 89.)

Each quester must gain the Lord's attention by reciting deeds of past boldness loudly and repeatedly. The quester must overcome a difficulty of 40 with his Pride ⁶. A success with Sing or Orate reduces the Difficulty to 20. If the quester fails in his attempt, a mass of berserkers converges and throws him out, giving him a Humility check. If he succeeds he receives a Pride check.

Once the Lord of the Table's attention is obtained, he peers wickedly at the questers and sweeps aside some of the berserks thronging at his feet, inviting the questers to sit down by him. He snaps his fingers with the sound of a thunderclap and a team of women come in staggering under the weight of a huge mug of foaming liquid for each quester, plus one for the Lord. The Lord then asks the questers to drink with him.

To succeed in imbibing this vast quantity of drink, each hero must overcome a difficulty of 40 with his Indulgence. Any hero who manages to down his mug awakes and invokes the Storm Bull from within - the Berserkergang. The hero invokes this by succeeding in a Valorous check while engaged in battle. It doubles his attack per-

centage in battle and renders him temporary immunity to all mind and emotion-affecting spells and powers. However his opponent always hits on a successful attack roll, even if the result is lower than the berserk's die roll. The berserker may not cast any spells while berserk. After combat, the berserk collapses at -100 Fatigue. The berserker remains berserk for a number of melee rounds equal to his CON, after which he may either continue or stop, at his option. If he chooses to continue fighting, his after-combat Fatigue is doubled to -200 Fatigue. After another CON rounds of battle he can again make this choice, bringing Fatigue loss to -300 and so forth, increasing at each increment. If a hero fails to down his mug, he collapses unconscious under the table and awakens intact back at the mundane starting point, having lost 1d6 WILL. All those who succeed also gain +1d6 Death Fame and +1 Disorder fame.

Once a berserk manages to drink the magic mead, he can do so in future without necessitating another Indulgence roll. However no more magic abilities are available through doing so, though the mead is extremely heady.

The Lord of the Table claps a successful drinker on the back in a congratulatory manner, and invites him to remain at the table. The berserk may either remain at the table, leaving the way he came (returning through Kargan Tor's Court), or go through the enormous brass-bound door to the back.

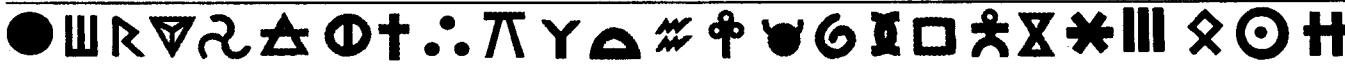
7. THE STORM BULL'S SECRET ALE: Instead of the magic mead (or in addition to it), a hero can ask the Lord of the Table for one of the Bulls secret ales - Ambrosia (yellow), Ironground (green), Stormbeck (brown), or Deepmain (blue). Storm Khans will previously have informed their berserks that Ironground, the green brew, is the best. The hero must overcome a difficulty of 60

SAMPLE GUARDIAN

STR	21	Move:	3
CON	22	Fatigue:	43
SIZ	20	Damage bonus:	2D6
INT	18		
POW	14	Magic Points:	14
DEX	27	Armour Points:	30
APP	14	Hit points:	26

weapon atk³ damage parry
Greatsword 17 4d8+2d6 21

Note: Regenerates 26 hit points per round



3d6 Death Fame, must leave Kargan Tor's Court, and may chose to return to the starting point for 1d6 Will.

If the quester defeats the Bull of Terror, he should immediately skin it. Soon thereafter a burly horned warrior comes, puts on the Bull's skin, and congratulates the quester. This is the Storm Bull himself, who scoops up a double handful of the Bull of Terror's blood and offers it to the quester to drink. If the quester drinks, his Cowardly trait is halved (round down), and his Valorous is correspondingly increased. If the caster did not skin the Bull of Terror, the Storm Bull offers him no blood to drink.

9. THE PARTS OF THE BULL: The Storm Bull proceeds to build a fire and cook the Bull. As the slayer, the hero may take as his share any one organ of the Bull he desires. For each point of Will spent he can take one additional organ. The organ is received in the form of a small stone amulet shaped like the organ.

Each organ of the Bull of Terror provides its devourer with a slave spirit who knows a single spell. The spirit casts its spell on command, even while its master is berserk. Most of these spirits have an INT of 3d6 and a POW of 4d6. These spirits can be used by the hero, or held in reserve until he chooses to give them to a chosen Storm Bull follower. Once one of these spirits is invoked it remains with its user, continuing to assist him for one full season, then it returns to the Godplane.

Once a hero has gained the use of one or more of these spirits, he can regain that spirit for another season by travelling back to the Spike, visiting the Lord of the Table, showing him the amulet(s), and spending 1 Will whereupon the Lord re-invests all his amulets with the appropriate spirit.

10. HUMAKT'S TESTING: Anyone who has drunk the magic mead of the Lord of the Table, wears a horned helmet, and carries a weapon can leave Storm Bull's Gate and go before Humakt, demanding the right to the secret Battle Rage. Humakt's Herald stands forth, and commands the Hero to prove himself by withstanding five mighty blows without flinching. A warrior stands forth and strikes each of the hero's limbs in turn, then his head. The hero must attempt a Valorous roll before each blow. If he ever tries to parry or dodge the oncoming blow, the test ends, and he has failed. Each blow does 3d6 points of critical damage. He can attempt to Heal between blows. If he passes the test, he always succeeds to the best degree possible whenever any CON roll needs to be made while berserk. For each Valorous roll failed, the ability costs 1 Will (cumulative) each time it is invoked. If the hero is not inca-

pacitated, unconscious or killed during the test, his hit points are doubled whenever he is berserk.

11. DEPARTURE: After the tests, the quester may either leave the way he came, or he may continue, entering other quests. If he takes the second option, the enchantment of holy ground is no longer able to benefit him (i.e. he can no longer return by expending 1d6 Will).

12. LEAVING KARGAN TOR'S COURT: On the way back across the Bridge of Passage, an enemy is encountered. Pick a suitable opponent from among the hero's foes or use a typical Storm Bull quester.

a Morocanth is born with the following fame:

Elemental: Dark 6, Sea 3 Earth 3, Sky 3, Storm 3.
Form: Beast 6
Power: Change 3, Stasis 3 Harmony 3, Disorder 3, Life 3, Death 3, Truth 3, Illusion 3.

If a Morokanth became a Storm Khan, he would add +6 to his Death fame, +6 to his Beast fame, and +6 to his Storm fame. His total Fame would then be:

Elemental: Dark 6, Sea 3 Earth 3, Sky 3, Storm 9.
Form: Beast 12
Power: Change 3, Stasis 3 Harmony 3, Disorder 3, Life 3, Death 9, Truth 3, Illusion 3.

(5) When on a heroquest, all your skills are divided by 10. Other rules changes also apply, too complex to go into here. Suffice to say that a skill of 17 is very good indeed (representing a mundane skill of 170%).

(6) Personality traits are part of heroquesting, since you are trying to match your god's personality. To be a great Storm Khan, it is more important that you have a good Courage, Pride, and Indulgence than that you have a skill 90% at Broadsword. Personalities are on a 1d100 scale. To beat this test, you must roll 41 or higher on a 1d100, and yet roll lower than your pride. If your Pride is 72, you must roll between 41 & 72 to succeed.

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Footnotes:

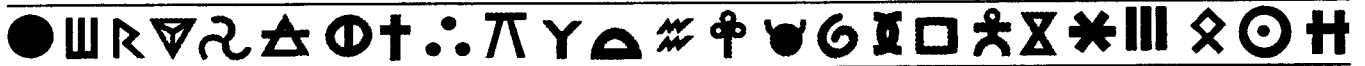
(1) Between crisis points, you can normally return to the mundane world without having to suffer more. This is the "escape clause".

(2) Gray Zone = boundary between life and death = Spirit Plane.

(3) To enter the Godplane, which this particular Heroquest leads to. Note that the life expended here can be the Humakti's! There is such a guardian every time you enter the Godplane.

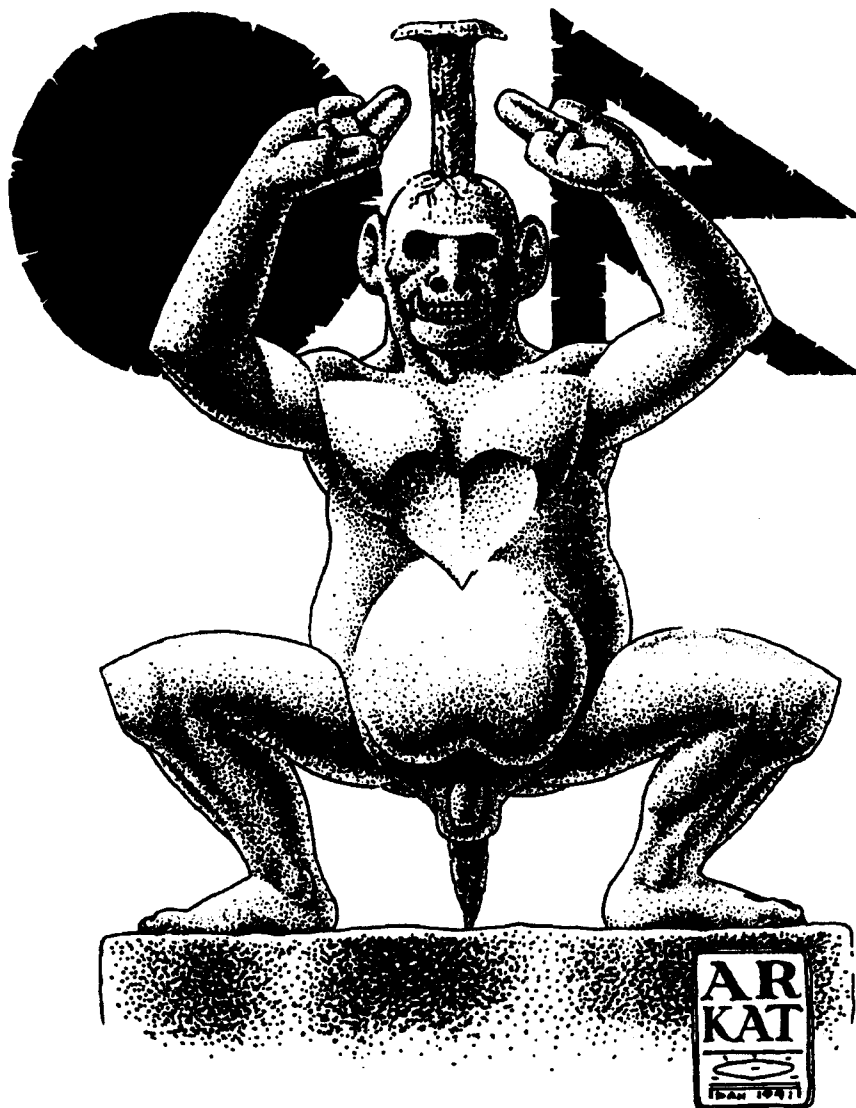
(4) Every Rune has its own amount of Fame, which is accrued independantly. For example,

Please note that entries concerning "old Orlanthe oaths" or that old chestnut about the double-headed Salilgori coin are no longer to be considered worthy of gaining free entry to the Library Reading room. By Order, Theo. Pandarus, Temple Collator. (XXIX.13-35) Herd-man can be served in a variety of ways, most of which can be found on Anchoritenu's list of morally objectionable foods. Yet it is considered highly indecorous if the presentation of the dish gives the eater even the slightest suspicion he is eating herd- human. Even when the cook's intention is not to deceive, and the guests are fully aware herd- man is on the menu, in civilised company no one will refer to the dish without a euphemism. In Pavis, the butchers peddle it as "mock pork", in the holy country it is known as "forcemeat". With a candour which is often revolting, Malhawi Habatat describes a feast of almost obscene novelty in which forcemeat was served, at the court of the great Demivierge of Rhigos. "The naked brutes were paraded before us, glazen-eyed and stupid, yet our lady had personally selected them for their classical proportions and they had been well-oiled and depilated of all body hair. Following the lead of our mistress, each guest selected a herd- human of their choice, which was brought to their couch and made to go through a series of poses. That certain guests used the beasts for sexual purposes before they went in the pot I will for our lady's honour not answer. Later that evening, each guest was served a dish of "forcemeat" cooked to their whim, and although hands, feet, and, inevitably, genitals graced the plates as garnishments , everyone of course pretended not to notice. "Old Glaucon (the head cook) always complained that our mistress liked her herd-man far too lean for the best eating, but it was she who had them imported from Prax at tremendous expense. He later found himself trussed up and sold to the morokanth, after our lady discovered that he had been substituting human actors in the posing, and putting the plumper herd-men in the pot. She always did enjoy making the punishment fit the crime." (XXIX. 13-36) ...among these states, the custom is to identify the



HeroQuesting Basics

by Steve Marsh



Introduction

Heroquests are one of many rituals whereby mortals partake of immortal natures. A Catholic Mass, the pledge of allegiance, all of these are similar in part to the basic patterns of the heroquest. All of these are part of the great structure that pulls the world together.

Heroquests are trans-mundane. They occur whenever a mortal reaches out past the finite and rational world and takes part in the infinite and suprarational world.

In a RQIII type campaign this occurs through the formalized pattern of Heroquesting. Especially in Greg Stafford's Glorantha, a relatively energetic and young world (recorded history in Glorantha is less than 10,000 years old), the heroquest is the supreme focus of supernatural endeavour.

Physical Locale

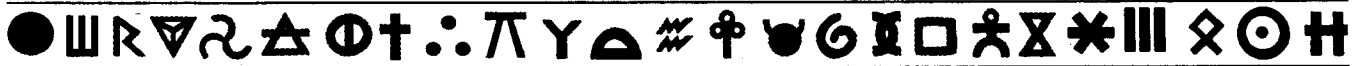
Heroquests can take place on any of four levels of reality.

The four levels are:

- (a) The Physical or mundane (the "real" world), including RQIII's areas covered under the Magical Terrain Encounter Table;
- (b) The Gray Zone (the threshold of the mythic world), often thought of as the spirit world. In RQIII this is the area covered by the Spirit Plane, including the Frontier Region, the Outer Region and the Inner Region encounter tables;
- (c) The Hero Plane (the shadow/echo of the God Plane). This area is not covered in RQIII's basic rules set;
- (d) The God Time (the real incarnate myths). The area also has no RQIII encounter tables.

Each of these levels has its advantages and disadvantages in terms of the heroquest. The Mundane level is easily reached, mythic elements are strictly limited, and the bridge from god to mortal is direct. On the Mundane level the timeless reaches to time, the immortal to mortal, the infinite to the finite. This set of dichotomies is a potent combination and the easiest area for the gods to directly contact their worshippers for participation. Time directly controls the physical world.

Partially leaving time, one comes to the Gray Zone, an area where it is easy to become lost and where the guiding force is spirit rather than matter. The Gray Zone is the interface between the material world and the spirit and mystical realms. The newly slain dwell here, the terrain is bleak and shifting, and the level is distant from the



gods. It has two advantages. First, it is a mythic level (albeit the least organized). Second, it is the weakest mythic level. The Gray Zone is the safest (in terms of physical danger) of the realms of myth.

Next is the Hero Plane. The Hero Plane is the shadow cast by the incarnate myths into the realms of spirit. The myths and the world create the cosmos, casting the heroplane as a shadow of that creation and existence. By following mythic paths (outside of the mundane world and the shifting Gray zone, time is a matter of location, not causality), one may participate and be changed by the great mythic acts by walking in their shadows.

After the shadows or echos of the Hero Plane, the God Time is the real thing. Any change on the God Time changes reality, and effecting any such change is as hard as changing mundane reality. Such changes are just as real. When the rune of the Lesser Kraken was unmade and was destroyed, that destruction changed history, time and the material world (to the extent that its name was lost, its worshippers became worshippers to other gods and its shrines and governed skills all ceased).

Superhero Quests

The big difference between heroes and superheroes is that superheroes have access to the infinity rune to boost effective POW, magic points, etc. and to lower the cost of rune use.

Most superheroes will have between 10 and 100 linked followers with the concomitant limit on hit points, magic points, etc. Except for special circumstances, all linked followers must be of rune level or

shaman's with fetch or sorcerers with familiar.

The infinity rune does not give one infinite ability or power — instead it allows the superhero to transfer damage or adverse results to his linked rune level followers. A superhero thus becomes the focus for the power and lives of his followers. Gods can also transfer damage but only to specially linked supernatural followers. The hrythgar or cohort of a god has the same function as the linked followers of a superhero.

Dragons are the left-handed path equivalent of superheroes. Their increased body mass substitutes for followers. Dragons are very, very large.

There are supernatural equivalents or substitutes for followers in terms of creating glory, generating will, providing power/magic points and absorbing damage transfers. Dragons are the most effective substitutes, those by chaotic means the least effective.

Basic HeroQuest Types

Many encounters that depend on roleplaying and an occasional opposed trait roll — modified by WILL if applicable — are great beginning heroplane type conflicts. Not everything is saving the world, fighting off terrible odds, etc. The following section goes over the basic types of heroquests.

A. Mundane Gaining a minor temporary special benefit is the heart of many mundane heroquests. By definition, this is the kind of benefit that has play aid but that does not

cost WILL and to which WILL cannot be added to determine results. The yearly holy season ceremonies come to mind as a good example as would the typical attempt to gain a military ally during a war (see the Dragon Pass game for some examples)

The other kind of mundane quest centres about gaining a minor benefit (that is available through mundane means) by mythic means. A character may go on a quest that gains a Divine magic spell or improves a requisite or skill just as training would. These quests are good practice and do not cost WILL (unless WILL vs WILL struggles are used to obtain the benefit).

B. Simple The basic "simple" quest where one spends WILL to gain a permanent benefit not usually available. (Good examples include a normal human becoming one of the "men and a half," the walk on Wind Mountain where a man can earn the ability to take a sylph's form, raising the dead, the visit to hell <e.g. the lowest level Lightbringer's quest>, etc.). (doing a quest at a low level reduces difficulty at the higher level).

C. Heroic The kind of quest that is a mark of a true hero. Gaining a fetch or a true allied spirit, finding a best friend, changing a mythic event, or gaining a special/left handed power are all heroic quest levels. Note that while some parts of the true heroquest may start at relatively low levels of power (e.g. gaining an allied spirit or fetch) all parts of the heroic quest are necessary to the identity and power of a hero.

D. Superheroic The quest to gain the infinity rune, the true visit to hell (necessary for the ability to routinely return from the dead unless sundered into grisly portions), bonding the best friend and similar steps are all superheroic. Note that the path to becoming a superhero is a often a separate path than that of ascending to being a lesser god. The gods do not necessarily use the infinity rune, need best friends or need a back door out of hell.

Example Quests

Quests include the trip to hell, following the path of the god, seeking direct inspiration, and passing the portals. The following will discuss all of these.

The trip to hell. Hell actually has three different definitions. First, hell is the place of the dead/judgment. Second, hell is the entropic dumping ground/mythic sewer where chaos slime sinks, renegade gods lurk and the fabric of myth is distorted and warped. Third, hell is also defined as the realm of the enemy gods. A trip to hell can be to any of these.

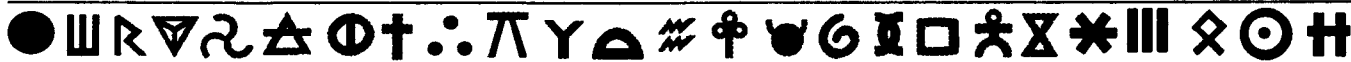
The first kind of trip to hell is one of

The Visit of Yelm's Son to Stormhome

One day Orlanth's long-hearing ears overheard the son of Yelm say to his brother, Yelmalio, that there was no challenge left in the world for him except the Devil. Yelmalio agreed, and Orlanth thought he would take opportunity to rid himself of these troublemakers. He has his friend, Eurmial, steal the Spell of Light from Yelm's son, and then let it be known that he was holding it.

When Yelm's son came to reclaim it Orlanth greeted him with hospitable words, and he quickly offered him three gifts to make his friendly intentions known. Then he offered the Light Spell back to Yelm's Son as the Duty Gift, but the god was rightfully mistrusting, even though he was obliged to take back the magic. He insisted on knowing before hand what the duty would be, but Orlanth refused to give the whole answer, saying instead only that the god would act upon Truth. All the Gods of Light act upon Truth, and when this one agreed to do as his nature inclined him anyway he received back his magic. Then Orlanth informed the god that the truth to act upon was a certain conversation, and though dismayed, that god went against the Devil as his truth required. That is why his name is not known in this legend (the Devil killed him and wiped out all memory of his name and secret power).

- Greg Stafford



the first quests any heroquester takes. The classic example of this in Greg Stafford's Glorantha is the Lightbringers Quest. Every god's myths includes such a trip.

The reason one makes the first kind of trip to hell is that the benefit of this visit is the gaining of a back door to death. In addition, such a quest usually allows one to meet the god when the god was readily accessible and was giving gifts. (Most gods visited hell a long time ago)

One who has been to hell and returned, may, upon being killed, proceed to the realm of the dead/judgment and then follow the same path out into the mortal world as they did on the quest. Being able to come back from the dead is an important trick for a hero.

The Lightbringers Quest is a good example of this kind of quest because of the vast number of runic associations who may find a place on the quest. In addition, most of the quest may be safely run on the mundane plane (acquiring glory and fame during the quest) until the actual decent to hell.

Trips to hell often also have the usual side effect of allowing the party to raise someone from the dead with the trip (in Lightbringers, one may raise anyone tied to the Fire rune from the dead — that person taking the place of Yelm on the return).

The Harrowing of Hell is a classic example of the second kind of hell and its related quest. In this kind of quest, one descends into the nether regions and raids, looking for power, fame and glory. If your god did it, you can follow that path. Otherwise it is a great way to experience risk, blaze new paths and find strange and bizarre (even useless) powers and rewards. Many a character has met the devil or other powerful chaos entity on such a quest.

Harrowing hell is the closest to exploring new worlds, escaping the usual, and dungeon crawling hack and slash that one can find in a heroquest setting.

Raiding the Realms, is exciting, diverting and dangerous, even more so that harrowing hell. Many try this, few succeed. Enemy gods are as dangerous to raid as is your own and the runic associations of their realms may well be very hostile to your own.

Following the path of the god. This is the second major kind of quest. This is beyond following your god's path through hell (the usual way to find a back door is to use your god's — if he has one), and in the proper sense, is truly following the god. This quest also involves the gaining of one of the major powers of the god by following in the god's footsteps and duplicating the god's acquisition of the power.

For an Orlanthis, this would include the quest to obtain Orlanth's spear. For a Humakti, the quest for the death sword. For a Storm Bull, gaining the berserker gang.

These are the straight forward questing for power that most think of when they think of heroquests. Many would be heroes go on these quests first — even before finding a back door. (Note that Orlanth cleverly fits his worshippers into a pattern that leads them to the back door in the context of the cult's major quest pattern).

Seeking direct inspiration. This encompasses the visit to the god (via the heroquest rather than through the use of a major temple and/or the sacred time) (used to become a sainted hero) and other quests seeking direct access to a rune.

Meeting the god allows a number of direct benefits, including possible direct contact with the rune. It always involves gift giving and challenges. For the inner members of a religion, the steps and elements of this quest should be well known.

The alternative to visiting a god, the quest for direct access to a rune without a god, always allows direct contact with the rune, even if it does not result in gift giving and challenges from a god.

Once a hero has direct access to a rune, the hero may express factors and spend will related to that rune by returning to the site of the direct access rather than engaging in derivative quests. This is often (though not necessarily) safer, more flexible and more direct. It is a source of immense flexibility and benefit to a hero. A hero who intends to progress quickly beyond the hero stage needs direct access to a rune.

Direct contact with a rune allows a hero to reformulate the way factors are expressed in a manner different from the patterns a quest might allow (e.g. all death swords gained via the lion god/berserk have

the disadvantage of inducing the berserk rage whenever one is in combat. Death swords gained/alterd/shifted by direct access to the rune do not require that limit). This grants the hero a great deal of flexibility and creativity in finding a new expression of the rune and in building the hero's own path and powers.

There is a downside of sorts. Direct contact always shifts traits toward the direction favoured by the rune. (Most runes have between one and five personality traits that they affect).

For example, the Fertility/Life rune would push Chaste/Lustful towards Lustful, Forgiving/Vengeful towards Forgiving, Generous/Selfish towards Generous, and Merciful/Cruel towards Merciful.

A goddess with the Life/Fertility rune (e.g. Chalana Arroy) would have the same trait pairs as the rune, in addition to one or more pairs that the goddess had developed as important to her own worship.

Direct contact with runes can shift personality traits to the 20/0 limit or beyond, severing the opposing trait. Direct contact also consumes real time. While most heroquests are only tenuously related to real time, and while many can avoid consuming any real time, during periods of direct contact, real time passes. Generally, run at least one week per point of Will expended.

Passing the Portals. This is the final form of quest where one passes into the secret ways, gains access to the hidden powers, and touches the infinity rune. It is a part of the Superhero Quest or transfiguration. the "portals" are the entry to the unknown beyond, figuratively referred to here.



Runes

This is an area I know little about. In most rules sets the character becomes tied, to a greater or lesser extent, to certain runes depending on their race or culture. Other runes can be tied through action on the hero plane or through joining more cults. Some of these runes are mutually exclusive (e.g. Death/Life) and can act like Pendragon trait pairs. It is therefore possible to cut oneself off entirely from one rune. However in the case of a Humakti cutting himself off from the Life rune this might lead to a single-minded devotion to death and therefore a loss of his own free will.

It has been said that runes are the operands of the universe (the embodiments of the physical laws of the universe). Therefore by invoking runes, changes can be made to the universe, and rune powers can be distilled and wielded. The ability to invoke the powers of a rune will depend on how closely tied the character is to the rune. A more closely tied character may find it easier to invoke the rune, or might find that he can invoke greater powers.

I hope to have more information on runes in the next issue.



Caladra & Aurelion

The Volcano Twins

Mythos and History

When Lodril, brother of the Sun, came to battle Chaos, his spear-form plunged deep into the Earth. There he knew Gata, embraced her and loved her in his own violent fashion. At last, Lodril erupted forth in consuming flame, leading Ash, Earthshaker and others in Gata's defense. But though his violent power was great, there were those mightier still -- after receiving a grave wound from Storm Bull, he was conquered, enslaved, and imprisoned by Argan Argar, son of Night.

But Gata bore Lodril's children within her. She feared greatly for their safety in the World Above. Many gods had already fallen to the power of Death, and Gata would not let these, her last children, dare his awful touch. Therefore, she cast them into a deep sleep, and they passed through the Gods War and the lesser Darkness far from the tumult and destruction.

Fiery Caladra, who had inherited her father's element, was tended by the Mostali, who used the fires of Lodril in their craft, while Aurelion was watched over by his half-sister, Asrelia, who whispered the lore of the wealth within the Earth into his dreaming mind. Though deep was the Twins' slumber, no part of the world could fail to notice when the Spike exploded.

Aurelion awoke first, reveling in his strength. Sensing the agony of Earth under the attack of Chaos, he rose to the surface to find great areas of land being drowned beneath the Chaos-tormented Sea. Enraged, he hurled up the massive bulwark of cliffs called Aurelion's Breakwater, behind which the peoples of Jrustela found refuge. Mortals gathered and gratefully accepted the young god's leadership against the horrors of Chaos.

Caladra woke aware of her brother's battle. Emulating her father, she erupted from the Earth in fire and wrath, destroying a massed Chaos army in a torrent of molten rock flowing from Caladra's Vent in Maniria. But unlike her father, she was not deeply tainted with violence. Seeing the destruction all around her, she took pity on the mortals who cowered and feared her power. She overcame their terror and offered them protection. Despite the vast distance between them, the Twins were aware of one another and the call of kinship could not be denied.

Each set out on the epic Search (which gives form to so much of their worship.) After great travail, they found each other beneath Meetinghall Mountain in Slontos. So great was their joy that the Twins resolved to share ever after their elemental natures -- Fire Within Earth. And so they fought and labored together, until Time began and beyond. Their labors were many and difficult -- with Yelm dead, Yelmalio wounded and Lodril bound, there were few left to fend off the dark and cold. With Ernalda and all her children in mourning for Flamal, even fewer Earth gods were abroad to tend the world.

Some of the Twins' efforts were failures -- as when they climbed the pillar of ash and smoke to beseech the aid of lofty Dayzatar (who rebuffed them), and when their fires failed to pierce

the glooms of the Underworld in an effort to find Flamal for their sister, Ernalda. And not even their combined power could free Lodril from the obsidian palace of Argan Argar.

But even their failures won some prizes which enabled their worshipers to survive. From the Sky deities, they learned secrets of purification, which they used to help humans reclaim areas devastated by Lodril. The things of Chaos feared to tread the volcano-blasted lands, but Caladra and Aurelion made them fertile and productive. In the quest for Flamal, they discovered the power locked in the fused and blackened remnants of the Green Age, firebone and earthblood. And when they poured forth their own power on the lifeless carbon, they created Diamond, hardest and most brilliant of all minerals. And though they could not free Lodril, they established a Harmonious accord with Argan Argar which allowed their worshipers to live in peace in Caladraland.

After Time began, the cult spread widely wherever volcanoes existed and humans sought to claim these potentially rich lands for their own. It was particularly powerful in the lands adjoining the three great holy places -- Jrustela, around Aurelion's Breakwater; Slontos, around Meetinghall Mountain; and Caladraland in Kethaela, around Caladra's Vent. Heroes of the cult fought alongside Arkat in his final clash with the forces of Gbaji (see Subcults: Tessele).

When the Middle Sea Empire of Jrustela arose, the cult prospered, and priests of the Twins followed the ships of the God Learners throughout Glorantha. But even as the cult shared in the might of the Jrustelan Empire, it also fell prey to the corruption of the God Learners. Had reformers from within the cult not perceived what was happening, and fought fiercely to purify it, it might have perished utterly along with all the others associated with the hated Empire (see Subcults: Moray and Telerio).

But even though the reformers led the forces of Caladra and Aurelion to aid in the overthrow of the God Learners, the cult nonetheless suffered for its association with the Empire. Though the Breakwater survived the smashing of Jrustela, most of the temple's lands and peoples were drowned. In Slontos, Meetinghall Mountain itself was submerged, with only its peak remaining as one of the Manirian Islands. Only in Caladraland did the cult lands and people survive relatively unscathed. A few other isolated temples survived as well, but were long cut off from the leadership of the main temples.

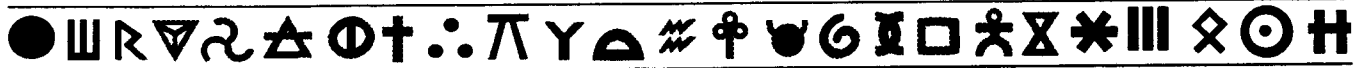
Though the cult today is powerful in Caladraland and has reseeded itself in other areas, it has never wholly recovered. Regions where it has sought to expand often reacted with fear rather than welcome at the thought of reawakening old volcanic fires. But despite its up-and-down fortunes, the worshipers of Caladra and Aurelion persevere in colonizing old volcanic wastes, purifying and reclaiming Chaos-blasted lands, and even attempting to restore some of the Sea-drowned strongholds.

Life After Death

Aurelion and Caladra promise that the souls of the faithful will be drawn beneath the Earth to the Pools of Liquid Light. If an individual's goals in life are unrealized, the soul will be purified by Fire, strengthened by Earth and "erupted" back into the world for another cycle of birth and death. Those who have found their Soul-Sibling and achieved sufficient development will be received into the Diamond Halls to dwell in Harmony with the Twins and work toward the final triumph of Sky and Earth.

It is generally believed that a pair of Twin Priests who advance the cause of the cult will be reincarnated as twin brother and sister, and will continue to so (unless they backslide) until they achieve the Diamond Halls. It is also known that on occasion a cultist will be sent back as an Allied Spirit to aid a Companion of Tessele.

Resurrection is tacitly allowed. Though it doesn't fit directly into the cult's scheme of things, success in resurrection is considered



sign enough of the gods' approval. Initiates are generally buried in rock, or if that is not possible, cremated. Acolytes, Companions of Tessele and Twin Priests will always arrange for their bodies to be taken to a temple with an active lava pool, so that their souls may be more directly conveyed to the Gods.

Caladra and Aurelion share the runes of Heat and Earth, from their parents, Lodril and Gata. They acquired the Fertility Rune from their restoration of lands which Lodril burnt and smothered, and the Harmony Rune from their Sacred Reunion.

Cult Ecology

So long as the deep fires of the Earth surge forth, the Twin Priests have a convincing argument for the importance of the cult. It provides a way for its worshipers to grow on the rich fertility and mineral wealth of volcanic lands beyond the cruder propitiatory aspects of the cult of Lodril. It also provides service in restoring fertility and life-giving potential to Earth blighted by Chaos or poisoned by the Sea.

The cult also provides a powerful symbol of unity in the cosmos. The Volcano is a vertical unity, with Fire reaching to the very roots of the Earth, and Earth hurled upward to the very gates of the Sky: the Cosmic Pillar, with knowledge of both Fire and Earth brought to the service of the Faithful. There is, too, the cult's emphasis on Harmony and the sibling-bond, which gives order to the horizontal unity of society. Though the cult teaches that each being has one unique kindred soul somewhere, it also teaches that this unique harmony cannot be realized unless one strives for harmony within the broader brother-and-sisterhood of society.

The cult is influential wherever the Gods' presence is manifest. Only in Caladraland, however, do the Twin Priests have any ruling function, where they have done so since Time began (though under the overlordship of the Only Old One and the Pharaoh, during their respective reigns.) Away from the ancient temples, the cult's presence is usually small and pioneering, and its influence depends on the personal reputations of its Priests and other members locally.

The double elemental focus of the Twins is strongly influen-

tial in its relations with other cults. The Twin Priests are, naturally, friendly to nearly all of their fellow Fire or Earth cultists. Nearly all areas where Caladra and Aurelion are worshiped will also support a number of Sun Dome cultists, and one or more of the other Earth cults, such as Ernaldia. In particular, the cult of the Twins is one of the few which maintains a relatively cordial relationship with the dwarves, especially the dwarves of Gemborg in Caladraland and those of Curustus in Jrustela near the Breakwater.

Dwarves trade readily for firebone and earthblood, which they use in their forges and crafts, and for Diamond (which the Twin Priests only trade for very high return, indeed). It is said by the Twin Priests that Caladra was among Mostal's lovers and gave him the key to the volcanic fires used in some dwarven strongholds.

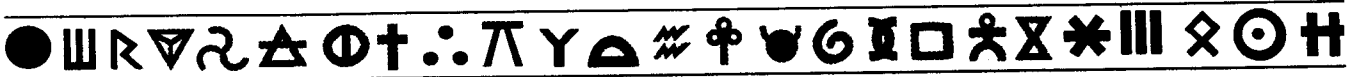
The opposite relationship holds with the elves. Though the Twin Priests claim no animosity toward the Aldryami, the elves do not forget how easily forests have been destroyed by volcanoes, and consider the use of firebone and earthblood to be desecration of their dead. Neither their relations with the dwarves, nor the slash-and-burn agriculture practiced in Caladraland, endear the Twins' worshipers to the Children of Aldrya.

Relations with Trolls and the Darkness cults have frequently been bad through the centuries, but the Twins' pact with Argan Argar allows for some mutually beneficial contact between the groups. All Twin Priests, especially in the Holy Country, know the ritual song of respect and traditional exchange of gifts on meeting representatives of Argan Argar.

Many of the Air cults are distrusted, due to their traditional role in dividing Sky and Earth. The Volcano is a constant challenge to the Lords of the Middle Air. Storm Bull's wounding of Lodril leads to some antipathy, but the Bull's valor against Chaos is admired. While the Lightbringers are respected, Orlanth's claim to supremacy over Yelm is never openly acknowledged. Since the terrors at the end of the Second Age, there has been enmity with the Sea cults for their overzealousness in destroying the God Learners, which caused so much damage to the lands of the Twins.

Chaos is, of course, a traditional enemy which must be opposed, and the Lunar Empire is regarded with grave suspicion. Rumor has it that the Lunar priesthood seeks to incorporate Aurelion





into the Lunar pantheon as one of the Red Goddess' many subordinate lovers. Twin Priests are ever on guard against Disorder cultists, remembering that Disorder was the downfall of Lodril and opposes the Harmony of the Twins.

Holy days are celebrated on Clayday through Fireday of Fertility week of each season. The intervening Windsday is devoted to ceremonies of mourning for those members who have died since the last holy day, and in tribute to the sufferings of Lodril and Gata in the Godtime. Especially elaborate rites are held at the Breakwater on Clayday in Fire season and at the Vent on Fireday in Earth season, these being the days of emergence from the Earth of Aurelion and Caladra respectively. The High Holy Day is celebrated on Godsdlay, Harmony week, Storm season, commemorating the Twins' triumph over adversity and the Sacred Reunion.

The Cult in the World

Any site where the Fire within Earth still seethes is holy to the Twins and a likely site for a shrine. Locations where firebone and earthblood are found are also considered holy, though less so. There are also various sites connected with the battles and quests of the Godtime, several of which have, over the years, fallen to conquerors lusting after diamonds. To such desecrated temples only the most daring will go. The three main temples and holy places are: The Breakwater, a towering cliff on Curustus in the Jrusteli Isles; Meetinghall Mountain, now the highest surviving peak in the Manirian Isles; and Caladra's Vent, one of the Three Dragon Mountains of Maniria, and the mightiest volcano in Glorantha. At these three sites, the old volcanic fires are constantly active, though usually calm unless summoned by the Priests.

Once, the Chief Priests of Meetinghall were the supreme authorities in the cult. However, the Meetinghall temple was the one most corrupted in the years preceding the end of the Second Age, and so was nearly submerged when most of Siontos was toppled into the sea. During the long period of the Closing of the Seas, local autonomy was forced on the temples, and now the three main temples have nominally equal authority. In practice, however, the Chief Priests at the Vent are clearly first among equals, as the Vent serves by far the largest number of initiates.

Each lesser temple reports to one of the three Great Temples, but Priest Pairs generally rely on their own judgment and discretion in interpreting the will of the Twins. Each temple has a Pair of priests acting as Chief Priest and Priestess. There may or may not be subsidiary Pairs depending on the size and age of the community. The Chief Pair informally divides responsibilities between themselves (eg. one supervises the health of the crops, the other mining and related activity). Both will be present at all official ceremonies and consultations with other cults. If the community is large enough to support them, the Chief Pair (and occasionally some junior Pairs) will have an Acolyte assigned to their personal service. At the three Great Temples, the Chief Priests are nearly always natural twins.

Initiates

Would-be initiates must pass the standard tests, pay a sum of twenty lunars to the temple and sacrifice a point of POW to the Twins. Suitable skills include Mineral Lore, Spear or Axe Attack, Climb, Sing or Play Instrument, or any Craft skill. For twins applying together, requirements are nearly always waived. Initiates must disavow any unfriendly cults and tithes 10% of their income and one week per season to the service of the temple.

In addition to the usual benefits, initiates may receive training in Firespeech and Earthtongue, as well as beginning their training in Diamondtongue, the musical ritual language of the cult (see Miscellaneous Notes: Diamondtongue). Initiates are expected to improve in their mastery of Diamondtongue by at least 05% per year up to 80%.

Not to do so is considered evidence of inattention at Holy Day ceremonies.

Spirit Spells: Detect Gems, Detect Gold, Fireblade, Harmonize, Heal, Ignite, Mindspeech. Also available are the cult special spells: Detect Firebone, Detect Earthblood, and Detect Diamond. Detect

Special Divine Spells for Caladra & Aurelion

Diamondedge 2 Points
touch, temporal, non-stackable, reusable

Essentially a Bladesharp 8 when cast on stone-cutting tools, this spell serves for stonecarving and excavating. In battle, it acts as a Bladesharp 8 when cast on obsidian axes or other stone weapons. If a fumble occurs, the weapon is sure to shatter.

Earthwarm 1 point
ranged, duration 12 hours, stackable, reusable

Causes an area of soil or rock 50 meters by 50 meters square to increase in temperature by 5 degrees C. Each additional point either increases the area by another 50x50 square or raises the temperature by 5 more degrees. This spell is normally used to protect fields and orchards against frosts, but can also be used to protect travelers in frigid climes when no other heat is available.

Fertilize 1 point
ritual (Ceremony), non-stackable, reusable

This spell restores to soil the necessary mineral and organic vitality to support plant life. Use of the spell will increase the cropbearing potential of an area, and neutralize the effects of ash or other poisons of the soil. The area must be sprinkled (by hand or natural forces) with volcanic ash, at least 1 kg. per 100 square meters. Actual yields depend on the original fertility of the soil, the skill of those who tend it, and the influence of the relevant Grain Goddess.

Firedwell 2 points
touch, temporal, non-stackable, reusable

This spell alters the metabolism of the recipient to enable survival among volcanic heat. For the duration of the spell, no non-magical heat or flame can harm the recipient. Additionally, the recipient can see clearly through smoke or fumes, and can withstand any natural noxious vapor. On the other hand, the recipient will take double damage from Cold attacks, feel uncomfortably chilled at normal room temperatures, be at -3 DEX at 0 degrees C, -6 DEX at -10 C, and -12 DEX at -20 C, with death occurring in CON minutes. Each time the spell is used there is a cumulative 01% chance of permanent effect. Only successful Divine Intervention by the Twins or another Heat cult can undo this effect.

Mindlink of the Twins 3 points + special
ritual (Ceremony), permanent, non-stackable, reusable

This spell is cast by Chief Priests at the ordination ceremony for new Priest Pairs. It can only be cast on Holy Days, and though it may be used on as many Pair candidates as are present at one time, there must be at least 300 initiates present for each Pair ordained. For further details, see the section on Twin Priests.



Associated Cult Divine Spells for Caladra & Aurelion

Heatblast (Lodril) 3 points
ranged, instant, stackable, reusable

This spell can only be used on earth which is at a minimum of 40 degrees C, either naturally, or through the Divine spell Earthwarm (note: normal earth temperature is +15 degrees C; near an active volcano it is 40 degrees C). Within the range of vision of the caster, it causes a single target to be hit with a blast of heat doing 3D6 damage. Only the target's thinnest armor will protect against this damage. Each additional point of the spell adds an additional target.

Summon Lodril (Lodril) 1 point
ritual (Summon), stackable, reusable

This spell must be cast on the lip of an active volcano. Each point in the spell gives a cumulative 01% chance of starting an eruption. Several priests can all add their spells together to increase the total chances for success, though all must also succeed in their Summon ritual. The actual explosion is usually delayed for several hours after rumblings begin, so most Summoning groups have time to escape the volcano's fury.

Diamond is as other detect spells, but costs 3 points and ignores intervening rock and metal.

Acolytes

Acolytes of Caladra and Aurelion occupy a special niche in the cult. Full Priesthood in the cult demands that two priests join together in imitation of the sibling bond of the Twins. But finding a suitable partner for lifelong mindlink is often very difficult. There are those who are eminently qualified to be Priests, but whose partner is not yet revealed. The need of the cult for such servants is too great to ignore. Therefore in the cult of the Twins, Acolytes are common, so that neither the individual nor the common good will lose out due to mischance.

The would-be Acolyte must be an initiate of at least two years standing, meet the standard requirements for Priesthood, and pass examination by a Pair of Chief Priests. In addition, the candidate must know Ignite, Detect Diamond, Detect Earthblood, Detect Firebone and Harmonize, as well as Mineral Lore at 90% and Diamondtongue at 80%, with some musical skill, usually Play Harp, to at least 50%. An Acolyte must devote 20% of his or her time and 50% of his or her income to the temple, and defer to the wishes of any Priest Pair. Beyond the restrictions on Initiates, Acolytes may take spouses of any friendly cult, except for other Acolytes and Priests of the Twins. Acolytes receive the standard priestly benefits and have access to one and two point reusable Divine spells.

Even though there are some de facto permanent Acolytes, this status is considered a stepping-stone by the cult. Therefore each year on High Holy Day, each Acolyte is expected to appear before a Chief Priest Pair for re-examination. The Acolyte must have testimony from two or more Priests or Companions of Tessele of his or her faithful execution of the duties of office. If so, Divination will be performed to determine whether the Twins favor the Acolyte by causing a potential Soul-Sibling to be present at the ceremony. Depending on the Divination results, the Acolyte will be raised to the full Priesthood with the new partner, or reinstated as an Acolyte for

another year. If the Acolyte's performance has been below standard, the rank of Acolyte will be removed, and the former Acolyte will not be allowed to reapply for status for two years.

Companions of Tessele

The cult of Fire Within Earth is not primarily a warrior's cult. However, in a violent world, it has a role for defenders and fearless pioneers. The Companions of Tessele, named for the great warrior Hero of the First Age, fill this need. Each temple will generally have one Companion who is charged with overseeing the defense of the temple and surrounding lands. If the temple is sufficiently large and well-established, there may be several dividing the duties. Frequently, the Companion will have various mercenaries of friendly cults under his or her command.

The other responsibility of the Companion of Tessele is to be the pioneer and pathfinder of the cult. After the disasters of the Second Age, there are many lands where worship of the Twins has been forgotten, or tainted and blasted regions where it had never penetrated. The Companion of Tessele serves as both scout and ambassador for the power of Caladra and Aurelion.

Candidates must have been initiates for two or more years. They must have a POW of 15 or greater and know the spirit magic spells, Harmonize, Ignite and the cult special Detect Spells. They must also know Diamondtongue at 25% or better and have 90% or greater in: Mineral Lore, Craft: Farming, and an Axe or Spear skill, with two or more of the following: Orate, World Lore, a Bow skill or another Axe or Spear skill.

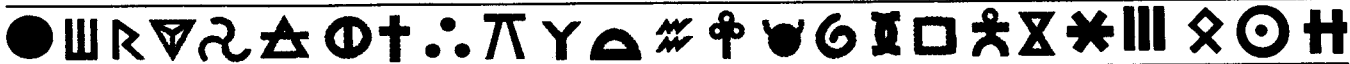
No Companion of Tessele shall travel by sea except to comply with the orders of his or her Chief Priests or other compelling cult duty. Any Chaos force which is despoiling the Earth must be sought out and destroyed if possible. Any request for aid from other Earth or Fire cults must be honored (though the Twins temple may ask for a favor in return in some cases.) Members of other cults are to be treated with hospitality, so long as they display no open hostility. In the Holy Country, however, Lunar cultists are regarded suspiciously and usually encouraged to move along as quickly as possible. A proper ritual request for aid from an Argan Argar cultist must be honored according to the ancient forms.

A Companion of Tessele must donate 90% of his or her time and income to the temple, though this tithe may be applied to the founding of a new colony if the Companion is on a pioneering mission. Companions may marry among any friendly cult, except for Priests and Priestesses of Caladra and Aurelion. Companions receive a gift of land from the temple to which they are assigned to provide income for the Companion's family. Income from the gift lands is not subject to the tithe, but the Companion must make arrangements to tend the land in his absence (which is, of course, at least 90% of the time.)

Thanks to the good relations between the Volcano Twins and the dwarves, it is relatively easy for Companions to acquire iron weapons and armor, but if the Companion's home temple is young, small or far from a dwarf hold, he or she may have to seek out one of the main temples or a dwarf trading post and perform some service for them to complete his or her armament. Companions of Tessele roll 1D10 for Divine Intervention instead of 1D100, may receive an Allied Spirit and may sacrifice for one-use Divine magic spells.

Twin Priests

The Twin Priests are the center of the cult, directing, harnessing and symbolizing the two-in-one essence of Aurelion and Caladra. The full Priesthood is always bestowed on pairs, never singly. The pairs are nearly always male and female, in imitation of the Gods, though there are historic exceptions. The pairs are usually of the same race, though there is no cult prohibition against a mixed Pair. The Twin



Priests, like the Volcano Twins themselves, are not spouses -- the bond between them is deeper, more complex and more profound than those of common marriage.

Each candidate for the Priesthood must be an initiate. Usually at least one of them has served as an Acolyte, but this is not a requirement. Each must also meet the standard requirements for Priesthood. They are then examined by the High Priests to determine their compatibility and fitness for the lifetime bond of the Priest Pair. If the applying pair are natural twins, the examination is waived -- twinship is considered a sign of divine favor. Between them, the pair must know the cult special Detect spells, Harmonize, Ignite and Mindspeech. They each must know Mineral Lore, Diamondtongue and some musical skill to 90%, Read/Write Own Language and either Firespeech or Earthtongue to at least 50% and the ritual magic skills to a total of at least 50%.

By the nature of their office, a Priest Pair must agree on all major decisions. In ordinary circumstances, the pair always travels together, if travel is necessary. The most unusual restriction upon Pair Priests is that while they may take spouses of any friendly cult, they may not wed Companions, Acolytes or Priests of the Twins. This injunction dates from the end of the Second Age, and was imposed by the Heroes, Telerio and Moray (see Subcults: Moray and Telerio for details). It is observed most strictly today. This rule preserves the proper equality of the sibling bond. It should be noted that a Priest Pair and their respective spouses, due to the Mindlink, share a degree of intimacy that few brothers and sisters do. The privacy of the Priests and their spouses is never questioned.

Twin Priests receive the normal benefits of Priesthood, save for an Allied Spirit. This is in part due to the diminished strength of the cult in the Third Age, but primarily because the Mindlink between the Twin Priests takes the place of the Allied Spirit. (Note: Companions of Tessele who become Priests may retain their Allied Spirit.) The Mindlink is the unique and supreme benefit of the Twins to their Priest Pairs. It is created in the ritual of acceptance into the Priesthood and can only be performed on Holy Days, when the Gods bestow a portion of the sacrificed power to accomplish the link. (This follows the same rules as Temple Defenses. Since the Mindlink of the Twins is equivalent to a 3 point Divine Spell, 300 initiates must be present at the Holy Day ceremonies to perform the ritual for a single Pair of candidates.)

At the culmination of the ordination, the presiding High Priests enact the ritual of Reunion, in the roles of Caladra and Aurelion, with the expectant Priest Pair(s) following their lead. At the proper moment, each pair enters into Mindspeech with one

another, each casts Harmonize upon one another, and as the High Priests lead the assembled in the Diamondtongue song of Triumph, a permanent Mindlink is forged between each new Pair. The new Twin Priests then proceed into the subterranean inner chambers of the Temple to complete the Reunion Ritual's secret aspects while the High Priests continue the public ceremony. The feelings of unity and harmony among those in attendance are described as remarkable even by non-initiates. The atmosphere is particularly conducive to sensing the presence of a kindred soul. Initiates and others who aspire to the Priesthood will flock to ordination ceremonies even though the Holy Day itself might be celebrated more conveniently at a nearer temple.

The sibling bond acts as the standard Divine spell, Mindlink, except as follows:

1. It is permanent. No physical attack can break it and only the most awesome magical attacks can do so -- usually ones which would be powerful enough to slay both Priests anyway. The range of the link is unlimited.

2. Morale-affecting spells cast on one member do attack the other as well. But unless it affects both, the unaffected Priest can prevent the other from fleeing, surrendering, etc. Each round, the unaffected partner concentrates on it, the other gets an additional resistance roll to throw off the spell.

3. If one member of a Pair is subjected to torture, the chances of withstanding the torture are improved by the other member's POW%. Pair Priests are therefore hard to break. But should the captive break, the partner must then roll POW or less each day, or breakdown as well, entering a state of helpless depression. If one partner is subject to the special Thanatari spell Create Minor Head, the other has a 25% chance of going insane. Similarly, Create Major Head causes a 50% chance, while Consume Mind has a 90% chance.

4. If one partner is afflicted with Soul Waste, the other may, by mutual consent, donate points of POW to sustain the diseased Priest. These points are lost permanently.

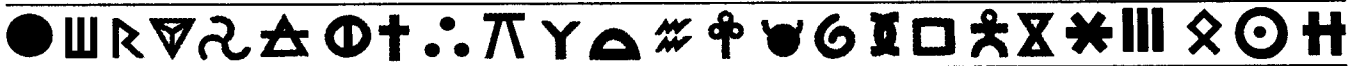
5. If one partner is killed, the other will take 2D6 points of damage. The Mindlink will hold the departed spirit near the mortal plane for three days. During this period, the dead partner will resist Resurrection with only half his or her normal magic points. If no means of resurrection is possible, and the cause is sufficient, the Gods may permit (by Divination) the surviving partner to ally the departed spirit. If nothing is successful, at the end of seven days, the dead spirit will draw its partner out of his/her body and both spirits will go to the reward of the Twins.

6. If one partner is utterly destroyed by Soul Waste, spirit combat or the like the other takes 3D6 damage against CON, but since the Mindlink is now broken, no further chance of death ensues. It is not uncommon for the survivor to take his/her own life in sorrow, hoping to ease the pain in the next life. Though this is not recommended, there are prescribed rituals in the cult for it. If the survivor decides to live, he or she must consult with the nearest Chief Priests. Among the options available are retirement to the life of an initiate, or total release from cult vows to join another friendly cult. The bereaved Priest may also seek to become a Companion of Tessele, and may, if very courageous and determined, follow the Hero Path of Tessele.

Common Divine Spells: All

Special Divine Spells: Command Gnome, Command Salamander, Diamondedge, Earthwarm, Fertilize, Firedwell, Mindlink of the Twins

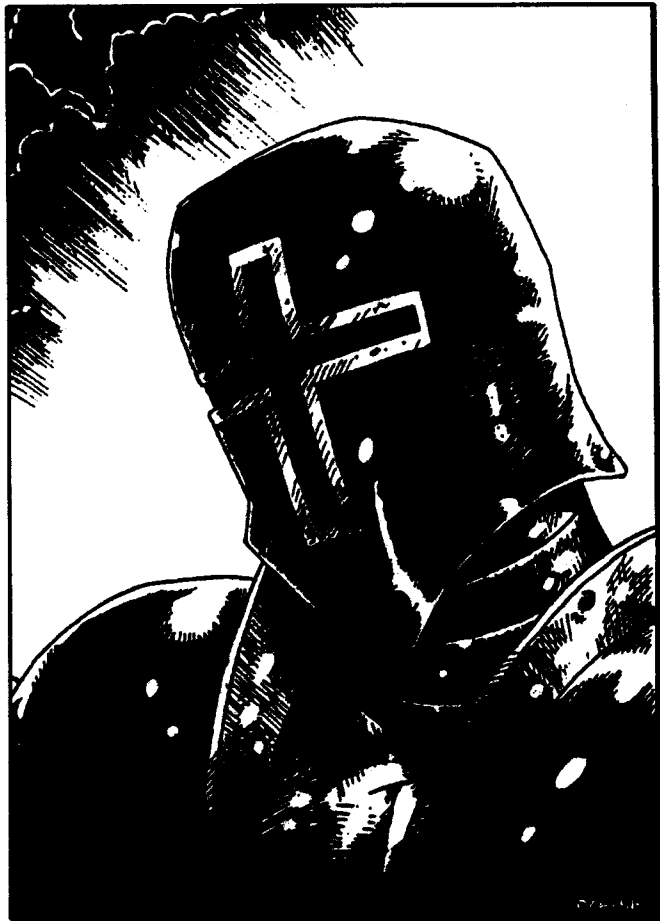




role offered by the cult. Women identify with Caladra and men with Aurelion, but either sex can identify with the Hot (purifying, warrior) or Earthy (fertile, nurturing) aspects of the Twins. The ultimate goal of the worshipper of either sex is to master both in Harmony. (Note: in conventional artistic representation, Caladra is depicted as a beautiful, orange-skinned woman with fiery hair, while Aurelion is a handsome, black-skinned man.)

Diamond: As mentioned in earlier sections, the Twins have a link to the combustible gifts of the Earth, earthblood and firebone (called petroleum and coal by some). However, the most valued material gift of the Twins to the world is the carbon which has been touched and transformed by the power of the Twins themselves, Diamond. Diamond is considered sacred by cultists, and is only traded to good allies at a high price. When diamonds are found in other hands, large sums are likely to be offered in trade by Twins cultists. If dickering will not work, violent conflict has been known to ensue.

Diamondtongue: This is the musical "inner" language of the cult. It has its origins in the divine song of Triumph sung by Caladra and Aurelion at their Reunion. On the simplest level, it is a musical code, with notes and chords substituting for the letters or phonemes of the mundane written or spoken language. Those who are more advanced in Diamondtongue can convey many subtle connotations and shades of meaning through rhythm, timing, emphasis and so on. The language is as complex as any used by mortals. Many of the sacred hymns of the cult have many levels of meaning, from the words sung by the lay members, to the complex harmonies and counterpoints fully grasped only by the most learned High Priests. Diamondtongue is used in communication via Unisonance.



from the Vent to the heavens to plead for aid from Dayzatar. Along the way, they are attacked by Gagarth, but the Twins blind him with fire and choke him with rock, driving the Wild Hunter off. Arriving in the Firmament, they are set upon by Star Captains. In the ensuing battle, the Twins wield their Earth powers, hurling chunks of rock at the foe. Some of these hurtle through the heavens on into Time, coming back to Earth now and again as meteors.

The Twins win the right to plead their case before Polaris, who is initially unimpressed by the lowly children of Lodril. However, his spouse, the Goddess of the Dance, has heard them singing to one another and is moved by their Harmony. She, Polaris and the Twins join in dance, and Polaris agrees to sponsor them before Ourania, Queen of Heaven. Ourania does not admit them to the presence of Dayzatar, but informs them that the Sky Lord finds their miscegenation of elements offensive. Caladra and Aurelion, rebuffed, present Polaris with the seven diamonds they had brought as gifts for Dayzatar, and he in turn gives them the Harp which he invented. This is a major quest for cultists seeking powers related to Harmony or Sky, and one where interaction with Air cults is likely.

3. Quest for Flamal: Though the Twins did their best to feed the starving mortals who came to them for aid, they needed aid from the greater powers of Earth. But Ernalda and most of her kin had withdrawn from the world at the death of Flamal. So Aurelion and Caladra went deep into the Earth to find a passage to the Underworld and dead Flamal. Their quest went astray, however, when they stumbled into the bewildering mazes of Krarsht, and found themselves led inexorably not to the lands of the Dead, but to the Maw of Krarsht itself. But the Twins filled the tunnel with searing magma, and poured molten rock into the gaping jaws until the Mouth of Chaos was forced to retreat in agony.

Victorious but frustrated, they begin to seek their way back to

Heroquests of the Twins

Caladra & Aurelion

All Quests of the Twins must properly be carried out by two questers, though some fragmentary portions can be accomplished by individuals.

1. Reunion: This is the fundamental event of the Volcano Twins existence, reenacted every time new Priest Pairs are consecrated. Caladra, original bearer of the Heat rune, ascends from the Vent to the Upper World, while Aurelion, of Earth, descends into the Lower World. They re-enter the Inner World of Glorantha at Meetinghall Mountain where they celebrate their kinship, unite their Elements and sing the song of Reunion in Diamondtongue. The Reunion quest is not for those seeking after power, but its ways are used (besides Priestly initiation) by those seeking the skills necessary to survive journeys to the Outer Planes, or by those seeking lost kinfolk.

2. Sky Quest: Caladra and Aurelion climb the Pillar of Ash



the surface, and discover not Flamal, but the buried remnants of the Green Age, compressed and blackened, but still holding the light and heat of the Golden Age. They pour out Power onto the carbon, attempting to restore life, but instead producing Diamond. They take up the gems and first find Asrelia, who shows them how to Detect Diamond, and trades them hoarded secrets of Fertility. They then go to the Mostali, who devise ways of cutting the stones and give hints to the Diamondedge spell, in return for earthblood, firebone and diamond. But back on the surface, they must do battle with Aldryami to retain the new substances against those who hate the "desecration" of the Green Age remnants. This quest is relevant to those seeking Earth or Fertility powers, or other favors from Asrelia's hoard or from the dwarves.

4. Quest for Lodril: The Twins sought to free their father from the captivity of Argan Argar's Obsidian Palace. But neither their volcanic fury nor their Diamond-edged weapons could overcome a foe who had defeated the greater rage of Lodril himself. Dismayed, the Twins on their retreat encounter Eurmial the Trickster, who suggests that subtlety might succeed where force failed. Caladra and Aurelion paint themselves in coal dust and oil, and go before Argan Argar, acknowledging his power and offering to sing for him. They sing and play their harps, a mighty song of their origins and Reunion. Argan Argar is pleased, and a compromise is struck (which allowed the volcano priests to rule Caladraland under the overlordship of the Only Old One in the Shadowlands.)

But unbeknownst to Argan Argar, the powerful music of the Twins shattered a tiny crack in the volcanic glass of the palace, through which Eurmial would slip in to Lodril. And the Harmony of the song calmed the rage and Disorder of Lodril (by which Argan Argar had defeated him) enough that Eurmial can persuade Lodril to release the Lowfires. And so Caladra and Aurelion contribute to their father's freedom and the gaining of the Lowfires for mortals, if only indirectly. This quest is related to dealing with Darkness or Troll-kind, or seeking the Trickster, and is often used by those who seek powers to overcome opposition without violence.

Tessele

Tessele the True was a mortal child of Aurelion, and one of the first Twin Priests. Her Soul-Sibling, Vortem, complemented her well -- where she had mastered the Elemental powers of the cult, he was skilled in Fertility and Harmony. Where Tessele had cleared new lands of enemies of the people, Vortem would follow and make them productive.

Wielder of the awesome Blazing Axe, Tessele was already on her way to carving a warrior's Hero Path when Vortem was captured by a Broo raiding party and carried to sacrifice by the Priests of Thed. Off on quest, Tessele sensed her partner's fate in excruciating detail through the Mindlink, but could not reach him in time to save him. He had already been cast into the Void to be replaced by an ogre of surpassing evil. With inhuman will power, Tessele resisted the madness and despair which would have overthrown a lesser mind. She would not merely survive, merely avenge Vortem on the Chaospawn. She would dare the impossible to bring him back.

Tessele quested as few before her had dared, seeking the psychopomps of each pantheon for aid in rescuing a soul from Chaos. She sacrificed to Daka Fal, petitioned gentle Chalana Arroy, performed heroic service for Yelm, traded and wagered with Ty Kora Tek, and wrestled with Magasta for the spells and secrets she needed, inscribing each one on her Truestone Shield. Finally, hurled by Magasta into the depths of the Underworld, Tessele confronted Subere. Neither entreaty, nor offer of service, nor bribes of coal and diamonds, nor threats of force would move the implacable goddess of Hell Darkness. Finally, the Heroine invoked the aid of Uleria

herself, and seeing some manifestation which even Tessele could not describe, Subere silently relented, giving spell aid, and leading Tessele to the Nether Gate of Hell, leading to the Chaos Void.

Having traced a path "backward", from Daka Fal, to Air/Lightbringers, to Sky to Earth to Water to Darkness to Chaos, Tessele had the key for undoing the "inside out" Chaos of Thed. Clinging to the Mindlink, she plunges into the Void, finds Vortem's soul, reassembles it, and emerges back into Glorantha through a Void of Thed. In the process, the Truestone Shield turns the Chaos maw itself inside out, and where a pit of Chaos had been, emerged a manifestation of the Spike of Law itself. Tessele slays the priests of Thed left and right, finally impaling the ogre who had been spawned from Vortem's sacrifice on the Spike itself, causing it to vanish, and Vortem's body to reappear. Tessele carries Vortem through the ritual of Reunion, and restores his shattered body, mind and spirit. This is a particularly awesome Heroquest, with few elements that can be used except by the very mighty and very desperate who dare to attempt the full path, but it is one of the very few Hero Paths which can rescue a soul destroyed by Chaos.

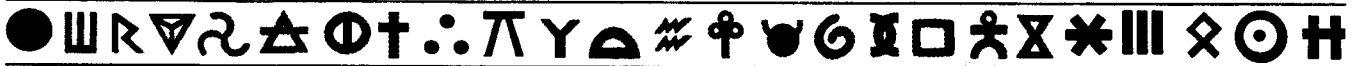
Moray & Telerio

The Heroquest of Moray and Telerio is one of the deepest secrets of initiation of the cult of Caladra and Aurelion, and its true nature is utterly unknown outside the Twins temples.

Moray and Telerio were originally God Learner theomancers, twin brother and sister. Like so many of the practioners of the *RuneQuest Sight*, they did not scruple at experimenting with the gods themselves to test their theories. They discovered two obscure cults, Aurelion, a minor Earth god of Jrustela, and Caladra, a subcult of Lodril located in Kethaela. They sought to see if they could create a stronger religion by fusing two weak ones. Out of conceit, they chose to make it a cult of Twins in their own honor. Telerio and Moray carried out the necessary fusion and reworking of myth, adding civilizing and socializing elements to the original barbarian myths to strengthen the cult and establish it as a successor to Lodril in areas where volcanic lands were being settled.

They were remarkably successful as God Learner experiments went -- in large part because they used divine elements synergistically to strengthen one another, rather than stealing and perverting their force. But more importantly, Moray and Telerio came to make what most of their colleagues considered a capital error against objective research: they came to love and care for the peoples among whom Caladra and Aurelion were worshiped. Perhaps by recreating the cult so much in their own likeness, they were drawn into the relationship between worshipers and gods more than any of their fellow experimenters. They were among the few who paid heed to the warnings of Valastos with Seven Pens, and were first distressed, then horrified, by the effects of the Goddess Switch.

Moray and Telerio therefore began to search the Six Planes for signs, and came to the conclusion that the God Learner Empire was hopelessly corrupt and its days were numbered. They knew that Caladra and Aurelion and all their worshipers would be dragged under as well. So they undertook an unimaginable HeroQuest -- first, to ensure that the Twins were on firm mythic footing, properly rooted in the divine ecology of Glorantha, and, second, to root out any trace of God Learner influence in the cult, whether in the mortal hierarchy of the cult, or on the other planes. In effect, they retraced their earlier paths through the worlds, covering their own tracks behind them, and successively renouncing God Learner ways and taking up those of Heroes of the Twins. They devoted themselves to the goals for which they are publicly remembered -- aiding in the destruction of the God Learners, and purifying the cult of the Twins of the corrupt priestly dynasties, restoring it to Harmony with the other cults and peoples who were its natural allies.



Their best (publicly) known HeroQuest is their final one before departing the mortal plane. In that quest, they detected from afar the coming of the Closing and the imminent revenge of the seas on the Jrusteli Empire. They constructed the colossal Foamstone Barge of enchanted pumice, in which they carried many innocents from doomed Jrustela to the Pamaltelan coast. Attempting to return across the sea to Caladraland, the Closing blocked their way, and though it could not sink the Foamstone Barge, it drove them away from the coast, inexorably into Magasta's Pool. There the Barge split, and the pair were separated in the Underworld. They found their ways back to the surface, Moray at the Breakwater, and Telerio at the Vent, but by then the smashing of Jrustela and Slontos was complete.

They instructed the survivors at the two temples in the ways

of pure and true worship which would be required to survive in the new Age dawning, and teaching the priests at each site the secret of Unisonance to communicate, they left their enchanted harps and departed. Reenacting the Quest of Reunion, they passed through the Outer Planes to meet at Meetinghall Mountain, there to depart history and assume their role as the Hero guardians of right conduct for Caladra and Aurelion.

The quests of Moray and Telerio are largely hidden and forbidden paths. But with a new world convulsion in the offing as the Hero Wars begin, desperate Heroes of Caladra and Aurelion may have to retrace their paths to ensure survival in the New Age to come.

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The Rune Czar Speaks...

about Upcoming RuneQuest Supplements.

Here is the current speculation on RQ Glorantha supplements in the near future:

Sun County

RuneQuest Adventures in the Lands of the Sun,
by Michael O'Brien, Greg Stafford, et al.
(February maybe?)

Featuring:

- * Four scenarios ready for immediate play
- * Schemes for expanding your campaign
- * Extensive historical notes on Sun County and its culture
- * Profiles of important persons and peoples of the region
- * New Yelmalio cult description
- * Extensive Encounter Tables and Entries
- * Personal notes and observations of Jaxarte Whyded, Commissioner of Imperial Census, on his travels.
- * Sundry useful and ornamental details of interest to the inveterate Gloranthan scholar

First drafts of some of this material has appeared in *Tales*, notably the Garhound Contest and the Jaxarte Whyded stuff. The manuscript I got is just fine, and I am polishing it energetically.

River of Cradles

A Compleat Prax Campaign Reference.
(Uh... April, maybe?)

This hardbound reference supplement details the history, geography, and culture of the lands lying along the great river, collecting, revising and expanding on the background material from the classic and lamentably long-out-of-print Gloranthan campaign supplements *Borderlands*, *Pavis*, *Big Rubble*, and *Cults of Prax*. Without this, folks new to RQ III (ie, folks who don't have all the old RQ II supplements) can't really begin to

run a Gloranthan campaign.

Dorastor

Forever Free and Fertile, by Sandy Petersen.
(July, I hope.)

Dorastor - the heart of Chaos - where the dead walk freely upon the earth, the trees scream and bleed when cut, and the very air is moist and green with poison. Accompany the annual Lunar trade expedition and view this land at first hand. Or gain your grossest RuneQuest character an honourable end on crusade against the spawn of Chaos. Includes revised and updated cults, mysteries, and secrets from the lamentably long-out-of-print *Cults of Terror*.

Strangers in Prax

Outlanders and Outland Cults.
(Uh... Real Soon.)

By Various Talented Veterans and Tyros. An anthology of cults, settings, and scenarios featuring the role of outlanders in Prax, and provides a transitional link for characters seeking adventure in neighbouring lands. Includes many previously-unpublished cult descriptions by Sandy Petersen and Greg Stafford. (Here is what I will be looking for freelance submissions — as soon as I work up writer guidelines and project concept briefings.)

And Then?

I have a Long and Casually Irresponsible List of other projects, about which I can say more when I have had time to organize them.

The Blue Boar Heroquest



by David Dunham

Background

The Blue Boar was a famous beast who lived in Dragon Pass before the Darkness. His exact ancestry is unknown, but few believe the Tuak Riders' claim to kinship. He terrorized many farmers of the era, smashing fences and freeing pig herds. If the pigs were recovered, the sows were pregnant with piglets that grew up to become intractable boars. The boar would also sometimes show up and alert a wild pig just as a hunter was approaching. Blue Boar was the goal of many a hunt, but no one could catch him until one day a young hunter named Izen Swiftrunner succeeded.

Izen decided that to catch the boar, he had to become like the boar. He cast aside most of the trappings of humanity - he wore no clothing, and carried only a boar spear he'd laboriously carved from an ironwood tree. For several weeks he followed Blue Boar's trail, getting ever closer. Several times he came close, but the boar always seemed to know he was there, and could outrun him. Finally, Izen realised that he could never hope to be a better beast than an owner of the Beast rune. He would have to use the Man rune's reasoning ability. He found some truffles and lured Blue Boar to where he lay in wait, then snuck up while the boar was eating the delicacy. They struggled, but Izen won, and offered the Peaceful Cut so Blue Boar's spirit would be at ease.

Izen returned home with his prize, but he had also taken on some of the boar's nature.

Starting the quest

The Hunt for the Blue Boar is a heroquest which anyone can attempt voluntarily, but only once. It can be performed during any season on Wildday of Disorder week. The ritual must take place at Izen's Shrine, which is about half a km from the Blue Boar Fort. Any priest of a hunter god who's familiar with Izen can explain the ritual, which requires a successful Ceremony roll to work. The heroquester, who must be alone, strips and applies body paint in various designs. The quest is performed in no clothing other than the paint, although any sort of weapons can be carried, as well as jewellery and a belt. Protective magic (including Orlanthi woad) may be used.

Stations

This simple quest consists of a number of stations, each recreating an event from Izen's original Hunt for the Blue Boar. The trap and predator may be encountered at any time but usually near the beginning of the quest, the others in sequence. No statistics are given, so that the quest can be played out with any set of rules. GMs should make each station challenging, remembering that Blue Boar had roamed for decades, and that the predator dared attack him.

Additional stations can be added. A suggestion is basic survival in the wild (World Lore to avoid getting caught in a thunderstorm, Plant Lore to find food, Devise to

snare small game). Or perhaps you (the quester) catch glimpses of the Blue Boar - but he always gets away having more points of Mobility than you.

The Reward

After killing Blue Boar, you find yourself back on the mundane plane. If you successfully used Peaceful Cut, the boar itself is your reward.

The meat should be used to hold a great feast, or to feed your clan. It will go bad if you attempt to use it all yourself. Portions of the boar (liver, heart, etc.) may give temporary benefits, at the GM's discretion.

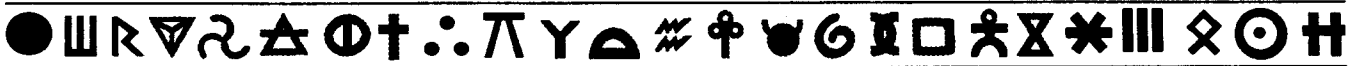
You can grind the tusks into a potion which gives a permanent +1 to STR and CON, up to species maximum, with no other limit.

You get to wear the skin, which is a distinctive blue-black. Under RQ2 rules, this would raise CHA.

You also gain the ability to impregnate a sow; the results of this union will be a healthy litter of piglets of superior attributes.

The Fort

The Blue Boar Fort can be found on the map in Trollpak (and the map in Tales #6), about 1km to the west of the King's Road between Herongreen and Dangerford on the Donalf Flats. It's on a minor road which leads to the



Dragon's Eye, in the lands of the Dinacoli Tribe.

Travellers are more likely to stay at Wark's Hotel, on the King's Road about 1 km to the south.

The fort is a typical Theyalan hillfort. The hill itself was built by magics from Earth cultists. Although it's only about 5 metres high, it gives a commanding view of the Donalf Flats. The earthwork walls are another three metres in height, and enclose 50 hectares. Within are the Orlanth shrine, which also includes a stone sacred to the Rain Blossom clan, the Orlanth Acolyte's quarters, and several poorly-maintained longhouses. The rest of the space is used if clan lands are attacked; they will take their chattel wealth and drive their herds into the fort for protection.

The fort's single wooden gate and door are carved with scenes portraying Izen's Hunt for the Blue Boar.

Inspiration & Acknowledgements

I originally came up with this quest when a party of adventurers stopped at Blue Boar Fort. I figured the name had to be significant, so I had a hunter ask them if they too were planning on going on the heroquest. They decided they weren't skilled enough hunters, which spared me having to come up with the details on the spot.

Steve Marsh's essay on Heroquesting (and indirect help in digging up my original notes) was instrumental in fleshing out the quest.

Details on the hillfort are based on Greg Stafford's notes.

Izen Swiftrunner

A shrine to Izen Swiftrunner can be found in some Odayla temples, especially in Dragon Pass. Izen teaches the Smell skill, but it's difficult for humans to learn, and instruction is treated as research. He also teaches the Mobility spell.

Izen also receives worship from farmers, who sometimes leave offerings when they want their sows to become pregnant, or if wild pigs are giving their domestic herds problems.



The Stations on the Blue Boar HeroQuest

Quest Station

1. At some point during the quest, you must make a Scan roll, or else walk into some sort of trap (a deep pit, a deadfall, etc.).
2. You must make a Listen roll. If you succeed, you become aware of a large predator before it pounces. If you fail, you'll be attacked without warning.
3. The predator must be driven off or killed. It is typically a simlodon or some other now-extinct carnivore. On occasion, it's a troll worshipper of Zong.
4. Make a Track roll to find a trace of the Blue Boar.
5. Make an Animal Lore roll and either a Search or Smell roll to find some truffles.
6. Make a Sneak roll. If you fail, you'll have to go back to step 4, and find some fresh truffles (as they only keep a short while).
7. Blue Boar will engage in spirit combat. On a round in which you succeed, Blue Boar lets you attempt a Peaceful Cut (again, note that Peaceful Cut is not available to animals). If you succeed, the quest is accomplished. If you fail, Blue Boar will attack in physical combat as well as spirit combat. If you end up killing him in a fight, the boar's meat will be tough and his tusks have no special powers. His pelt will probably be ruined too.

Mythic Significance

Blue Boar eluded every trap devised.

No predator could surprise Blue Boar.

Blue Boar fought off many predators and hunters.

Blue boar was hard to find.

No one succeeded in hunting the Blue Boar, until Izen lured him into the open with some truffles he was especially fond of.

Izen snuck closely to Blue Boar.

Izen struggled with Blue Boar, but in the end Blue Boar gave himself up willingly, and Izen let him die at ease.

**A trickster performing the heroquest used an illusion to make himself smell like a wild sow, thus using himself as bait. One way or another, you'll have to come up with a plan to outwit or trick the Blue Boar. You can't best the boar at being a wild animal.*



Glorantha: The Game

A Speculation by David Hall

This is what I remember of what Greg Stafford told us late one night about his ideas for the Heroquest boardgame/RPG. It may be inaccurate due to my bad memory, inebriation, the late hour, or more recent thinking by Greg.

The Character Sheet

The character sheet splits into two main areas: the spiritual life and the secular life. Both of these are powered from the core self. Starting character points are allocated into the various boxes on the character sheet. Not show on the character sheet are the character's personality traits and passions (from Pendragon) which are to be placed at the bottom of the sheet. Each cult would have maybe 4-6 significant deviations from the balanced values, for example, the Six Virtues of the Orlanthi (see Tales #6 for a possible list of traits for Gloranthan religions).

At the top of the secular part of the character sheet are the positive social aspects of the character, those of "life". This area reflects how importantly the character values his intimate friendships, family and kin groupings. Intimate friends are those who might call on Divine Intervention for the character. Such friends and kin are the character's supporters, who provide spiritual aide on the Hero Plane, and they may be affected by the character's successes and failures on the Hero Plane.

The lower box concerns more negative or Death aspects of the Secular Life. As an example, a Humakti would allocate more points to this area, which would convert into an army of soldiers who might die for him, but not for the same reasons that an intimate friend would. This sort of person would be a colder and less sociable type.

The Spiritual life is similarly divided into two aspects, Inner and Outer. These convert into the character becoming tied to certain runes (some mutually exclusive).

The far right hand Divine Qualities box is for "special power" cards gained from various heroquests. These are played and then probably lost. For example, during a quest a quester might have a hurricane card played against him against which he would have to play a weather control card gained from an Orlanthi quest. If he lost the combat (and survived the hurricane) Greg said he might return to find the houses of his supporters also attacked by a hurricane!

All the spiritual and secular life attributes provide power for the Hero's journeys onto the Hero and God Plane. The "special power" cards are the results of those trips, and provide further support on future trips.

Heroes and Superheroes

Heroes are mini-versions of their god, and they are often worshipped as if they were the god. Superheroes differ from Heroes partially in terms of sheer scale, and secondly because they are deities incarnate on Glorantha. Their supporters worship them as they would any other god. The superhero himself is probably not tied to any other god and is more than likely illuminated. A superhero must also have the Infinity rune, which gives him access to the infinite and therefore to his ability to exist as a god.

HeroQuests

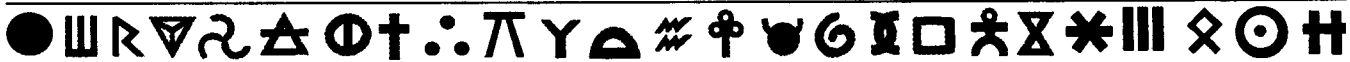
The HeroQuest system can be used to simulate any form of myth creation.

To illustrate his ideas Greg used the example of the Hill of Gold Heroquest, wherein Yelmaliio was wounded and lost his fire powers to Zorak Zoran. A Yelmalian re-enacting this would go through a number of stages to enact the quest, perhaps five. All Yelmalian questers might go from stage one to two. However, then depending on the local temple's interpretation of the myth, stage three might be different in its direction and consequences; but it would still lead on to the same stage four for all temples, and

then on to stage five. The lesson here is that different temples of the same god (even in the same region) have different versions of their god's myths. Re-enactment of their god's actions in Godtime, and therefore re-assertion of that mythical reality, is what priests and runelords do for much of the 90% of the time they have to devote to their god. Normally about 90-99% of all Yelmalian will accept losing their fire powers, and get beaten by a Zorak Zoran worshipper each time they re-enact the Hill of Gold. However exceptional individuals may not accept this and they may try and retain the fire powers.

According to Greg, the first time a Yelmalian tried to do this he would come up against a Zorak Zoran cultist of the same level (i.e. both would be initiates, priests or runelords), and not surprisingly the Zorak Zoran worshipper would have a major built-in advantage of some sort as he is on the winning side of the current mythical reality. Presumably our exceptional Yelmalian would have quested for an extra card/power to use to win the combat and therefore negate and overcome the Zorak Zoran worshipper's superiority. If he did win, he alone would retain the fire powers, and only this Zorak Zoran worshipper would lose them. The rest of the worshippers in both cults would be unaffected. However, from that point on the same Zorak Zoran worshipper would be the Yelmalian's foe in all future re-enactments of this HeroQuest (or perhaps all those involving Zorak Zoran meeting Yelmaliio, it wasn't made clear), irregardless of the relative level of each cultist (so the Zorak Zoran worshipper might rise to be a runelord while the Yelmalian was still an initiate). The next time the Yelmalian reasserted his regaining of the fire powers the same Zorak Zoran worshipper would be back, but this time he might have more cards/powers of his own to use to regain the fire powers. He might, for instance, have a "Gore and Gash" card so that those heroes would fight for him and gang up on the Yelmalian. Presumably he would win back the fire powers.

To beat the Zorak Zoran worshipper next time the Yelmalian might go on an Orlanthi quest in which Orlanth scares Gore (though there would be great difficulties involved with going on other cults' quests). So next time the Yelmalian could win by playing the scare Gore card. At this point this Yelmalian's heroquest path to regain the fire powers would now incorporate an additional sub-section (or sub-routine in computer jargon) where he would leave the Yelmalian quest, go off on an Orlanthi quest, and then return back onto the Yelmalian quest. Soon the Yelmalian could start teaching this path to other cultists and it would become "reality" for more of the cult (one reason



why different temples have different versions of myths). Eventually if the Yelmalian was able set up his own sub-cult of Yelmalio to teach this path, then it could become true for all of the Yelmalian cult. Yelmalio would not lose his fire powers, Zorak Zoran would not gain them. Myth and history would have been changed.

In the past myth and history were also changed by the God Learners as a result of their experiments and "academic research". Their ability to change myth through the RuneQuest Sight was made more destructive because they were able to suck out certain portions of HeroQuests (because they thought they knew the network of myth better and it was neater or more logical to change it in a certain way - only usually they didn't know the whole and they caused major mythological problems - see Glorantha: Genertela). As a result one might find the next stage of a Heroquest where one was supposed to be ferried over a river by a beaver was destroyed by the beaver having been killed directly or indirectly by the God Learners. In fact this would change history so everyone afterwards would forget that the beaver had ever been there (unless it was written down somewhere).

The result of all this is the revelation that Third Age myth and history can be different to the First Age myth and history. That is why people like Forang Farosh and Ralzakark are so important - they remember the First Age! The Blue Book of Zzabur is also very important because of its extensive knowledge of the Hero plane at a certain point in time. With such knowledge one can go back and try and "correct" paths back to their original form, or otherwise. This may explain a part of the Red Goddess's own unique powers on Glorantha.

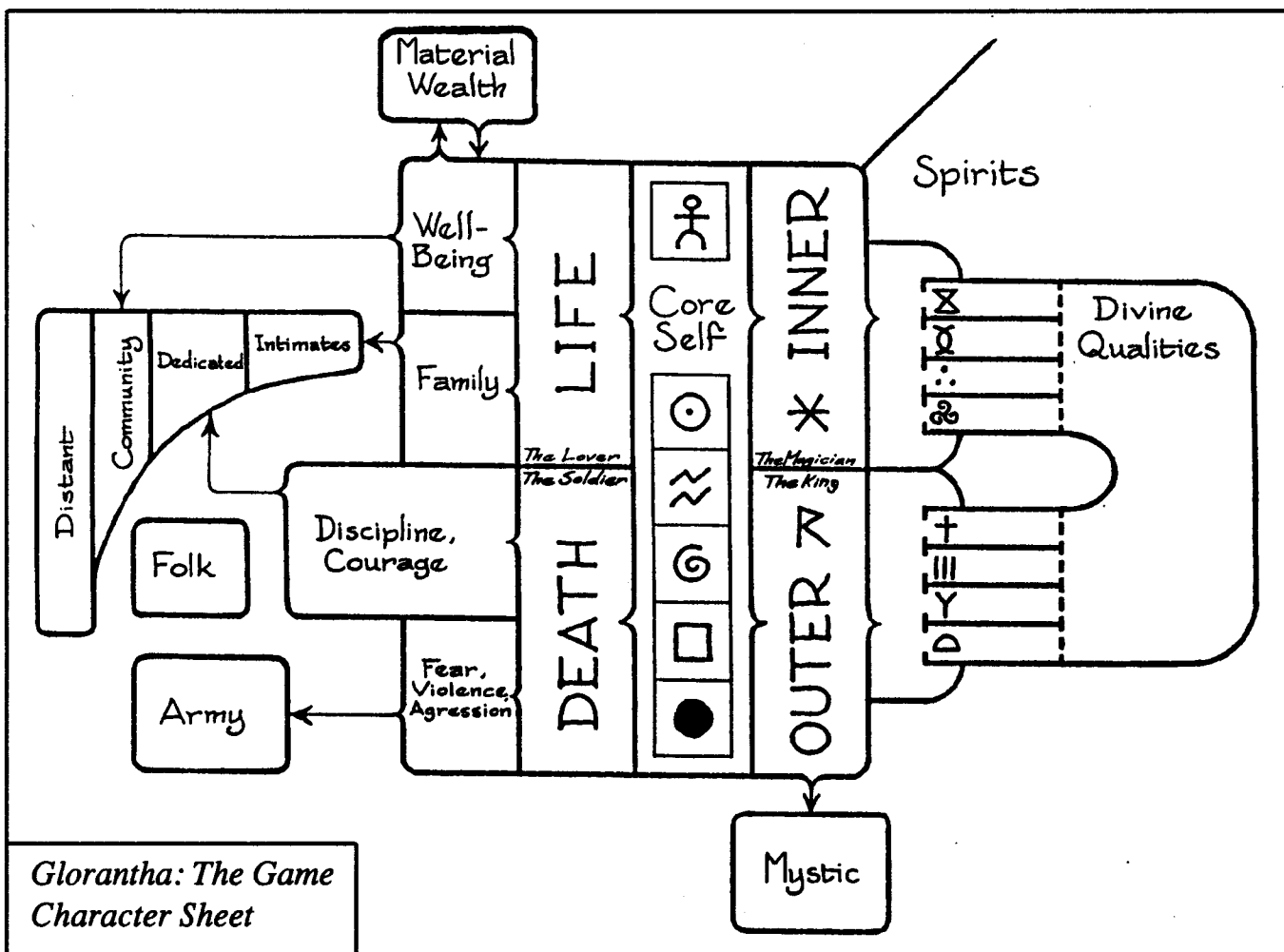
Another revelation was that the weird alien beings in the "Nights of Horror" Battle were heroquesters from the future trying to change history!! (Maybe they succeeded!) Though if 100 questers went back to attempt to change history then the laws of the Hero Plane mean that they will be opposed by another 100 questers seeking to keep the status quo - the final result depending on the powers/cards the individual questers had accumulated. This is the way the compromise balances out efforts to change things.

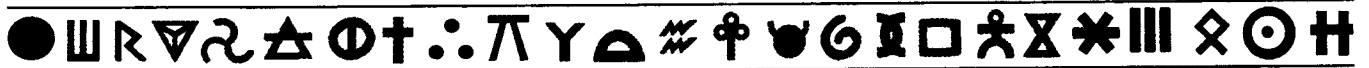
Arkati was good at HeroQuesting because he had betrayed so many cults. For example while on a Kyger Litor quest he might arrive on the scene of an earlier Humakti quest.

Instead of going on in the direction specified in the Kyger Litor quest he could instead head off on the Humakti path, so blazing a new path. In this way he gained a working knowledge of the Hero Plane, and presumably became more inquisitive of other cults' paths. His actions also show the dangers of meeting yourself on the Hero Plane - he met himself four times! However, Arkati eventually realised the dangers of exploring other paths, and therefore one of Arkati's followers stands guard at many of the places where paths cross. They cannot be seen until a quester takes the "wrong" path, and they will first of all tell the quester why it is wrong to go that way. If the quester persists they will fight him. If the quester beats the Arkati, then he will be able to continue and the Arkati will never stand in that quester's way again on that path. Of course all the Arkati are of hero status...

Arachne Solara performs the function of overseeing and policing this web of myths and quests. In fact to see it a web will help, with HeroQuests leading to new strands being made, and old strands broken or joined to new ones.

This conversation took place at Conjunction 1990 at 0030 hrs on the 30th July.





A Book Review:

THE HERO WITH A THOUSAND FACES

by Joseph Campbell

*Reviewed by
David R. Dunham*

Is there any connection between mythology and role-playing games? I think not. Already I can hear shouts of protest. Sure, my fantasy role-playing campaign has mythological creatures like dragons and unicorns, too. It has no connection with mythology, either. They are just fantasy creatures, devoid of meaning. A myth, by contrast, does contain meaning. The Hero with a Thousand Faces seeks to explain the hero myth and the symbols that appear in it.

According to Joseph Campbell, the tales of all heroes boil down to a single story, which he calls the "monomyth". In a nutshell this consists of the phases of separation, initiation, and return. An example of these phases is Moses climbing the mountain, receiving the law, and returning with it to the Israelites.

There are of course some variations. Campbell examines the path of the hero in detail, with examples including King Arthur, Buddha, the Frog King from the Brothers Grimm, Gilgamesh, the Sumerian goddess Inanna, the Eskimo trickster Raven, and Rip Van Winkle. To summarize (see figure 1), the hero is lured, carried away, or voluntarily proceeds from his mundane surroundings to the threshold of adventure. There he defeats a guardian and proceeds alive, or, if slain, descends in death. The hero then journeys through a dream landscape "where he must survive a succession of trials. This is a favourite phase of the myth-adventure." Not everyone or everything he meets is

necessarily an enemy: he may also receive magical aid. He eventually arrives at the crux of the adventure, undergoes a supreme ordeal, and gains his reward. This may be sexual union with the World-Goddess, atonement with the Creator-God, or his own divinization. In some cases the hero has to steal his reward (bride, fire, etc.). He then sets about returning to the normal world (perhaps having to flee pursuers and pass more obstacles). Back at the threshold, with external help or on his own, the hero is reborn into the world, and brings it his restoring boon.

The pattern of the hero myth, repeated over and over in the legends of different cultures,

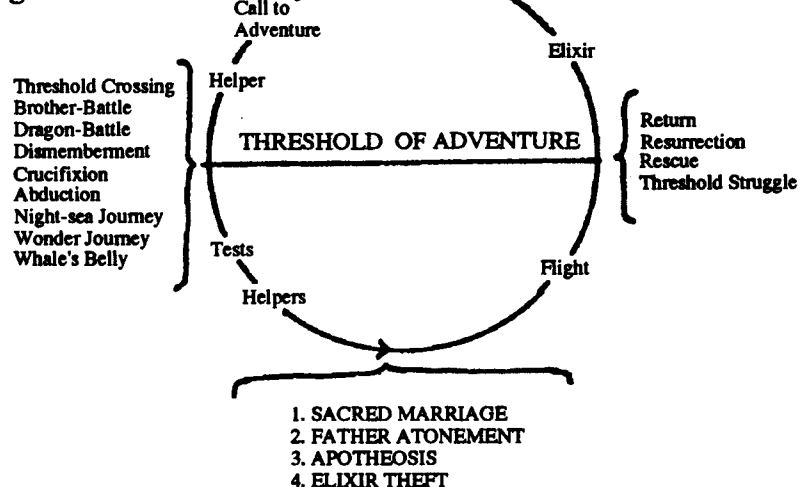
doesn't bear much resemblance to many of the role-playing situations I have seen. While not every scenario must result in the world being restored, there are still lots of possibilities for grounding a role-playing adventure in the foundations of the hero myth.

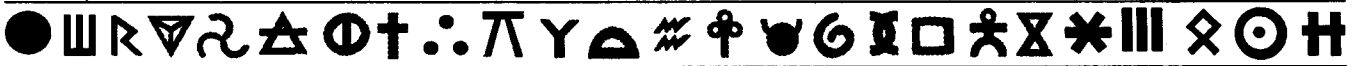
The hero's cycle is the basis for the Rune-Quest heroquests (see example "Waha's Quest" by Greg Stafford in Different Worlds 4). Generally the would-be heroquester follows a path previously laid out by a legendary hero. He still faces a possibly dangerous separation, initiation, and return, but has an advantage over the original hero in that he knows more or less what to expect. Of course, the rewards aren't as big the second time around. While the hero myth revolves around a single person, rather than the group of characters usually found in a roleplaying game, the group could quite easily act as the helpers the hero meets during the test phase of the adventure.

Even if you don't want such a direct connection with mythology, the elements of the monomyth are relevant to just about any kind of adventure. There's an obvious similarity to the plot elements of literature (motivation, rising action, climax), except that the monomyth is specifically the distillation of adventure literature. Try putting the same elements in your scenarios to add a touch of the heroic. (For a more general discussion of how to do this, see Ken Rolston's "Adventure By Design" column in Different Worlds Magazine #30.)

The latter part of the book deals with the cycles of the cosmos. It begins in a blissful condition, degrades to the current state, and eventually improves again (see Figure 2). The author connects this to our own dreaming: consciousness must be refreshed by passing into deep sleep and back; likewise, the cosmos must be renewed. The job of the

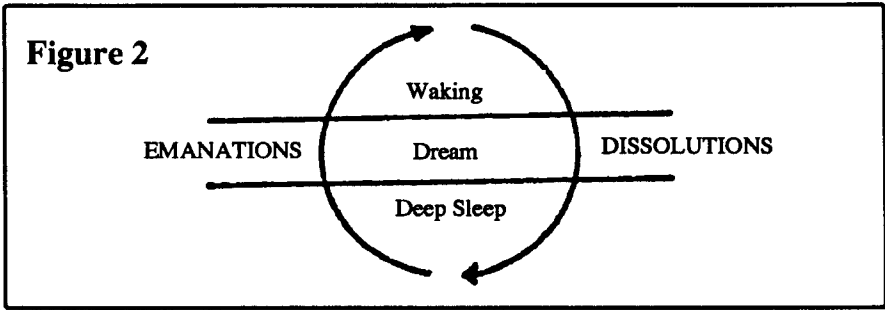
Figure 1





hero is to make sure that the cycle is not held up. This often means dealing with a dragon or tyrant who represents the status quo. This section is not as useful for the scenario designer, but will help anyone designing a complete campaign background.

Is there any use for mythology today? Campbell says that myth is killed by being interpreted as biography, history, or science. But he also points out the connection between mythology, dreams, and psychology. Both dreams and myths are symbolic "of the dynamics of the psyche." Dreams are our private mythology, while the psychologist is the "modern master of the mythological realm." "Mythology is psychology misread as biography." Campbell certainly seems to be a follower of Jung and Freud. In any case, he says that the intent of myth is to transmit traditional wisdom (which is not always rational knowledge).



The Hero with a Thousand Faces is not an easy book to read. While it isn't overly dry, it isn't exactly entertaining, either. It took me three starts to get through it. This may be due to the fact that I don't usually read scholarly books for entertainment. But I think it was worth it, not only because I have a better understanding of how a mythology should be designed. There were

lots of other insights, too. Perhaps now I can write an acceptable RuneQuest cult...

THE HERO WITH A THOUSAND FACES
by Joseph Campbell
(Princeton University Press, \$7.95)

This article originally appeared in Different Worlds Magazine.



Skills and Conflict Resolution

This is probably the most crucial area of the rules to most players and gamesmasters. How to resolve conflicts and the use of skills in the Otherworld.

The ideal system must cope with the demi-gods, deities and gross monsters found in the Otherworld and their high skills and attributes (assuming you want to tangle with them head-on). RuneQuest breaks down at higher skill levels and so some way must be found around this within the RuneQuest rules, or another set of rules must be used which are ideally portable to and from RuneQuest.

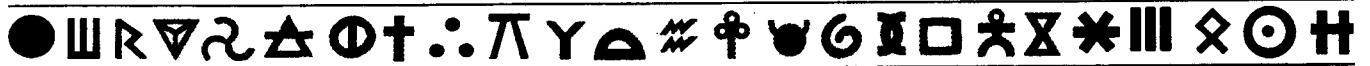
The most common method of coping with gross monsters using the existing RQ rules is to reduce the PC's characteristics on the heroplane by some factor. For example, in the early Chaosium rules all skills were divided by 10 (though spirit and rune magic was fully effective, i.e. Bladesharp 4 still added 20% to the, now reduced, skill level). This also reflected the increased difficulty of surviving on the heroplane, as monsters would rarely be found below 50% and gods and demi-gods often at far higher skill levels. It has also been suggested that the godplane and the heroplane should have different factors; say, dividing by 10 for the heroplane and 20 for the Godplane. The Chaosium rules also used the Pendragon style of rolling opposed skill resolutions, as outlined in the RuneDragon rules in Tales #6 (both combatants roll under their skills, and the one with the highest roll wins the combat and gets to do damage to his opponent).

Another option is to completely convert to the Pendragon combat system. However this also poses similar problems when converting RuneQuest characters to the D20-based Pendragon skills. Does one divide each skill by 5, 6, 10, 15 or even 20? The problem is compounded by the fact that at skill levels over 39 the Pendragon combat system breaks down. But do you really want a monster with over 780% attack?

Steve Maurer's combat rules (and a similar set by Jean-Louis Bernard in France) keep the character's original skill level but allows for higher levels of success over and above a critical. A Supercritical hit is a roll of under one percent of the characters skill, a Hypercritical under 0.25% of the skill, and so on. Each success category is allocated a Success Level, e.g. a fumble is -1, a Miss is 0, a Hypercritical is 5. The Success levels of both combatants are compared and the relative difference between the two decides the level of damage done. Thus a +5 differential (one combatant fumbles, and the other hypercrits) leads to a gross amount of damage. In addition different attacking weapons have different side-effects. E.g. a crushing weapon tends to do "Smashing" damage while a thrusting weapon impales.

Another suggestion (by Timothy Bateson & Lewis Jardine) has been to use the Ki skill rules in the land of Ninja alternate Earth supplement. Ki skill might only be taught on the Hero plane, or only able to be learnt by rune masters.

Lastly, you might consider some sort of Brownie point system (like Hero points in the James Bond 007 game). These points could allow a character to change the success of a skill roll by one level per point, ie expend one point to change a fail to a success. They might be able to use them on their own skill rolls, or the skill rolls of others (including opponents). Or other effects might be gained at the gamesmasters option. Such points might be awarded as a result of good role-play or when a critical was rolled against a skill, trait or passion. However, such a system does overlap to an extent with the concept of WILL points.



The Old Hare's Riddle

A HeroQuest

Written by Jon Quaife

Introduction

This is a short scenario set in Greydog village, the home of our Sartar house campaign. This is no "high level" affair; it is simply an illustration of a community living in awe of, and interacting with, the spiritual realm. It also serves to explore the relationship between mystical reality and belief, and to show this as a gradual evolutionary inter-change.

The Sartar House Campaign

Some information on Greydog village was presented in *Tales #5* and in the article *Corwen's Saga* in *Tales #6*. The Greydog clan is the basis of the Sartar House campaign designed by David Hall and Jon Quaife drawing on previous work by other authors, most notably that of Greg Stafford. Its objective is to achieve a campaign in which character motivation, loyalty and reward can all be drawn from within the focus of the campaign - the clan. Character participation begins at initiation, and as greater maturity and experience is attained, influence in the clan and tribe grows. The campaign commences prior to Starbrow's Rebellion.

Some Features of the Lands of the Greydog Clan

Goodale Path

A popular route to travel from Runegate to Clearwine, Sun County, or Duck Point; so named due to the favourable taverns along it.

Imar's Peak

A hill named after a close adviser to Sartar.

Trolls Furrow

A winding path ascending Old Sister Hill haunted by a troll ghost which only rarely appears. When the ghost manifests it is said to be pushing a huge rock up Old Sister Hill and thus creating the furrow.

Weeping Sister Peaks

Three hillocks known locally as Old Sister, Tall Sister, and Middle Sister. A folk tale alludes to a tragedy concerning their three lovers.

Goodtalk Stone

A place where it is said that Issaries once put his foot as he paused to admire the Big Elm Valley. The Greydogs hold their market days here.

The Old Hare's Riddle is written as a component of our house campaign and is designed to be run just after Starbrow's Rebellion; seeming 'contradictions' with what has been published before are for this reason. The clan at this time numbers some six hundred souls divided into four major families (households) spread among a dozen steads. They mainly grow wheat and barley, rear cattle and sheep, and brew the famed Kings Ale which is exported far and wide. The current chief is Kornos Longbrewer of the Longbrewer Household. A local map contemporary with the beginning of this scenario is provided below.

The Plot

Every year the Hare Spirit has visited Greydog village in the guise of trickster and spoken riddles. This ritual defines the relationship between the spirit and the Greydog clan. This year Hare changes one of the riddles; the priest determines that the answer to the new riddle can be found by re-enacting the meeting of the ancestor of the Hodirson household, Snorri Hodirsson, with the ghost of Troll Furrow.

In practice the relationship between the spirit and the clan is constantly changing. The name by which Snorri came to know the Hare Spirit has been forgotten by the clan and consequently also by the Hare Spirit himself. This change is symptomatic of his diminishing influence.

In his human guise as trickster he seeks to reassert himself through a common recognition of his human name. If this is not achieved the spirit's importance to the clan will continue to diminish and his woodland realm will be further encroached upon for timber and grazing land.

By HeroQuesting to find the answer to Hare's new riddle (his new name), the Greydog clan imposes upon the mythical realm its redefined perception of, and relationship with, the deity.

The Hare's Ritual

Hare Woods, not far from Greydog village, is the home to Hare Spirit. The locals superstitiously observe certain tenets to honour him; hares may not be hunted or snared in Hare Woods (except during the weeks in which Voriof's star rises above Lawspeaker hill, in Winter). Everybody knows that cattle often get lost in there.

Around the same time each year, in late Sea season, Briggice the trickster stumbles into Greydog village. People's reactions to Briggice are always wary. Sometimes he is welcome, at other times he can scarcely set foot in the Greydog Inn before Bestaf runs him out of the village. But always, at this particular time of year, Briggice is not his usual self. Not even stopping at the inn he makes straight for chief Kornos Longbrewer's stead.



Some people call this event the "riddling day", others say it's the "time for Old Hare's joke". The Hodirsons often call it "Grayhare's day", and Rungar the hunter just describes it as "the hare's ritual". Despite such uncertainties, however, everybody agrees that on this day Trickster is actually the local Hare spirit in disguise, and so is accorded the respect due to an old and trusted friend who helps feed the hungry bellies of the clan throughout the hardships of winter.

Fire season is a good time for the Hare spirit; the fresh spring grass is nourishing and he is full of the joy of the coming summer and the vigour of romping leverets on cool spring mornings. As chief of all the hares he visits the village to meet the chief of all the humans, and so in his human guise heads straight to the relevant stead and asks three riddles of the chief. He often acts just like trickster always does when he gets drunk, and never stints on the quantity of King's Ale proffered, but his riddles are special because each year they are different but the three answers are always the same.

Such a seemingly simple ritual is important for the Greydogs because it reaffirms their relationship with Old Hare; when Snorri Hodirsson first left the valley to set up his stead in the woods he answered the Hare's three riddles to gain his friendship.

Riddling Day

This year, the same as always, the disguised Hare spirit enters the village saying his usual greetings and helping himself to cakes or loaves freshly taken from the ovens. Word soon gets around that he has arrived and people begin to meander down to chief Kornos' stead in anticipation of a couple of kegs of ale and a good deal of merry-making at the chief's expense. As the characters stroll down the hill Old Hare is singing his three riddles to the chief standing by a fire around which most people are gathered.

*Bee to Flower, Hare to Buck,
Seed drops to Mother Earth,
Hunter to Hunted,
Life to Death, and Death to Life.
In all these I am found.*

A murmur passes among the gathered clanspeople; everybody knows the answers are the same each year, although Hare is a cunning spirit and his innovative riddles are always a source of great entertainment and appreciation. Rising to the challenge, chief Kornos clears his throat and says: Friend of Hare Woods, this is a fine riddle indeed and the answer to it is Harmony." Hare continues:

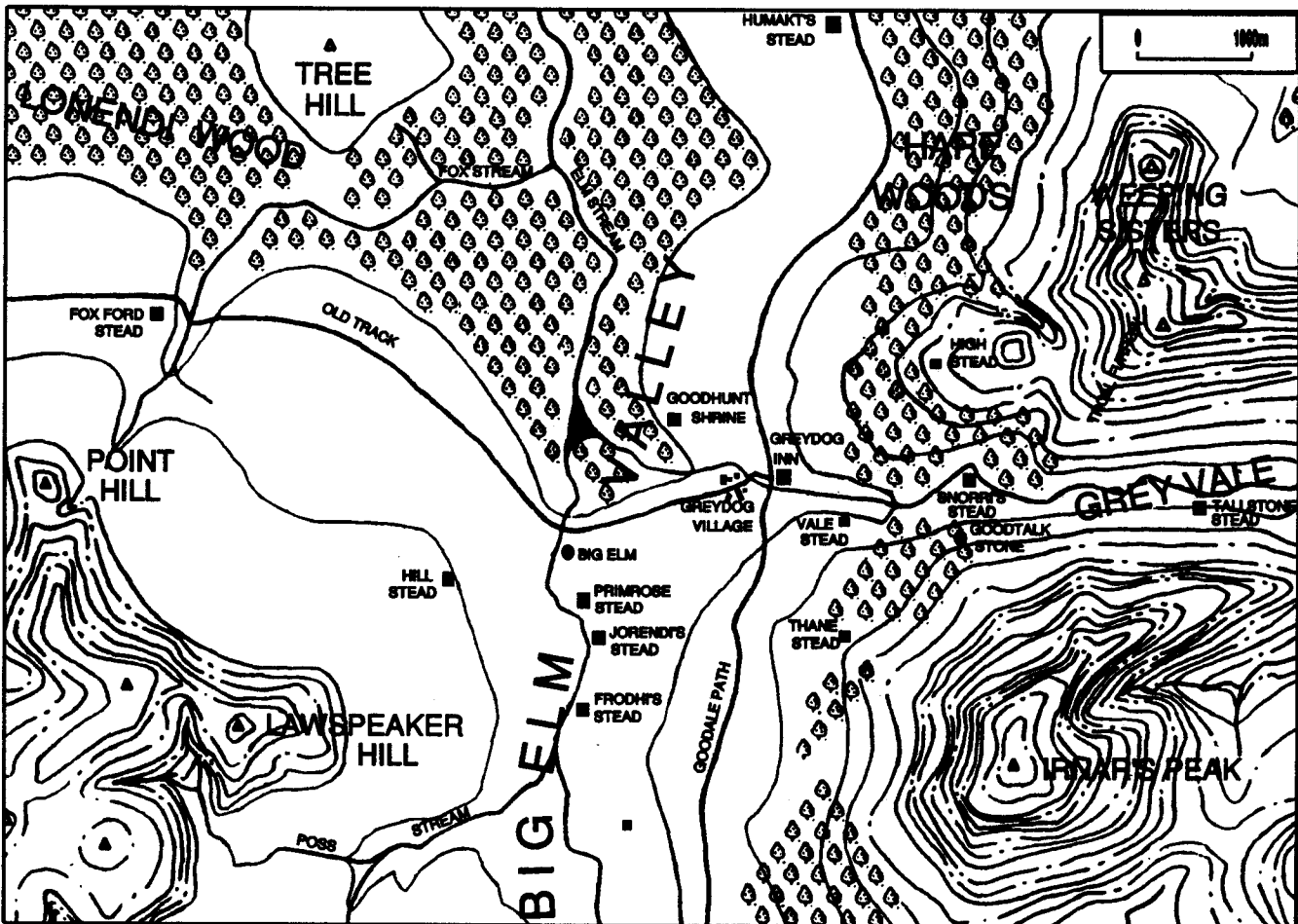
*Nectar turns to golden honey,
Fat young play in lush grass,
Sapling grows to mighty oak,
Cattle flourish in valley yonder,
King's Fine Ale is fine indeed,
Harvest Queen bears bounteous daughter.
Harmony is my mother.*

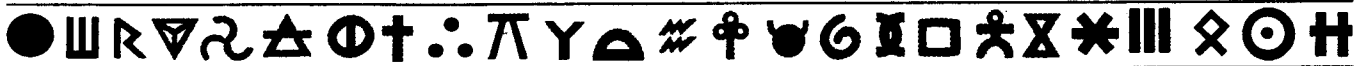
There is some consternation at this; a surprisingly obvious riddle for the Greyhare. Chief Kornos replies without hesitation:

"As Drogarsi guides my tongue, Prosperity is the blessing of which you speak!"

The Third Riddle

Old Hare laughs and rolls his eyes, but then Trickster's face changes abruptly and betrays a humourless seriousness when he speaks again. Everything seems to go quiet - even the crackling of the fire and the dusk birdsong.





HeroQuests

Magic is a nebulous thing. When considering all of the elements which compose a quest it is helpful to understand the reality in which these events will occur and how that reality may be influenced by and influences the mundane world of the questor.

Magic and Belief

Godtime composed timeless events; events without sequence. The races which have grown and matured since time have imposed sequence upon myth in order to understand their cosmos. Some theologians speculate that within time myths themselves have changed: Orlanth has not always been the victor on the Hill of Gold. Perhaps mythology is a manifestation of popular belief. Hence the nature of a cult or god can vary from race to race, nation to nation, or even temple to temple. Magic is the most common and accessible manifestation of popular belief, even more inconsistent in nature than myth.

Mythical and Mundane Reality

Even so, myth is still a real, personalised and active force. Orlanth is still Orlanth, the Red Goddess is just as manifest as ever before. A gradual evolution in culture will also produce a gradual evolution in theology; the deity evolves with his or her worshippers, and vice versa. Worship reaffirms the nature and reality of the deity, and as worship and belief changes, so does the deity. Certain deities may resist such changes, while other deities may encourage, or deliberately institute a change to suit themselves or their worshippers. (An example might be Orlanth's dealings with the Inner Dragon of Arangor during the time of the Empire of the Wyrm's Friends).

Instituting a mythological change (either consciously or indirectly) inevitably affects the area of mundane reality which looks to the altered portion of mythology as its basis.

Microcosm and Macrocosm

Since mythology is thus defined first by the individual, then the culture, and finally the whole, so too are those three elements influenced by the deity and the deity's mythology. This is called the microcosm and macrocosm; every event in the one realm affects the other, and vice versa. A single event in the mundane culture affects the mythical reality of the cultural deity over-such-a-tiny-bit; an event which changes a whole culture will result in more significant mythological changes. A Quest which creates or changes a deity has enormous implications for the culture. Such changes need not be subtle. A society may choose to reject a deity overnight, and the god's nature for that culture might change from benevolence to evil just as quickly. Meanwhile the neighbouring lands may still perceive the old god as benevolent. The result might be war on the mundane plane between the two nations, and a natural animosity in the mythical reality between the old god and the adopted god.

HeroQuesting

A HeroQuest changes the mythological reality of the world. The *Jrusteli* Runequest practice was a vast matrix charting mythological interactions — by making certain changes the *Jrusteli* believed they could predict the chain reactions which they had set in motion in the Otherworld. In practice things got out of control. All HeroQuests have this same effect; even cult quests and worship rituals which reinforce mythical reality still change it to some degree, in this way imposing their theological evolution on their deity and mythology. Heroes and Superheroes naturally lend themselves to this task; the struggles in which they are embroiled are those of nations, empires, gods and men, each trying to superimpose their reality upon their foes to ultimately change or weaken them.

"Then answer me my final riddle, chief of humans, and I will be on my way, thanking you for your fine ale and kind hospitality:"

*Standalone Oak not forgot,
Hralf's paths alone remembered,
Cattle guided home along leafy paths,
Dutiful gifts, ancient pact honoured.*

This riddle is greeted with a few nervous laughs; there is a poignant sense of purpose to Hare's words. Chief Kornos certainly recognises this, and hesitantly swallows hard before he mutters the usual answer; "You." Once again Greyhare's tone is intense and serious:

"Alas human chief, but this is no longer the answer to my riddle. And now, as I promised, I will be on my way."

Nobody moves or says a word as Hare strolls away from the silent assembly pausing only to pinch the bottom of one of the chief's daughters. A child questions a parent and then bursts into tears; somebody too drunk to fully comprehend the situation utters a nervous laugh, only to be silenced by another clansperson close by.

Chief Kornos stands bemused until his wife Kerna gives him a comforting embrace. People's reactions are confused. The characters may observe that Langrok Stormcaller, the clan priest, and Ornar Greyman, the Lawspeaker, are discussing something. Kornos asks everybody to leave, stating that there will be moot at Goodtalk Stone in the morning. People leave the scene, but there is talk of the riddle well into the night

The Moot At Goodtalk Stone

Life begins in the village early, and before the moot begins rumour is rife. Jonat Fleececuter says he saw Brigpice capering around the Hollow Oak soon after he left chief Longbrewer's stead, and Marda Greenteeth has been very vocal in asking why Yanbaum Braveblade, the Gorin household head, wasn't at Kornos' house to receive the guest.

The Moot Commences

Much of the clan turns out for the moot; clearly last night's events are regarded as very significant. As always the gathering begins with a recitation of past chiefs by Ornar Greyman, and a solemn acknowledgement by chief Kornos of his duties to the clan.

Chief Kornos then begins the moot by relaying the events of the previous evening and declares that all present who have a right to speak under the laws of Orlanth may do so. This right extends to player-character clan members who should be encouraged to participate.

Triock Straightblade, a dour Hodirson, suggests that the Hare's behaviour is a bad omen, and that the hunting will be bad all winter. Indeed, the farming next year will probably be bad too, and probably many of the gathered clanspeople will not live to see the next summer.

Rungar the Carl, a hunter from the Gorin household, says that if this is true then the Hodirson family is to blame. After all, they felled five trees around Snorri's's stead this summer and no doubt their sheep have been wandering into Hare Woods again.

Orstella, a caltar of the Osgosi household says that cattle of High Stead have also been allowed to roam freely in the woods, and if you want evidence just look and see what those animals have done to the tree bark over by the oak where Gilfich was buried.

The Lawspeaker, Ornar Greyman, says that the reason may be far more important than this. Perhaps the Hare is angry at Orlanth for striking the Standalone Oak with Lightning this year and nothing to do with the Hodirsons at all.

Fergus Windbag, the bagpiper, chips in with the comment that the Standalone Oak was Hralf's favourite oak; he often used to rest there on a hot summer's day and practice his pipes. Hralf often used to talk



Snorri Hodirsson's Magical Journey (Ornar's Song)

*Have you heard the tale of Troll's Furrow?
A place of toil and a place of sorrow.
If you go there on a certain night,
A ghost there toils without respite.
For the furrow is made by a magic rock,
With which the ghost labours to the top.
It's a trollish ghost,
More frustrated than most.
Each night he tries he'll always fail,
Rising sun sears and rock tumbles into vale.*

*Snorri Boldwarrior, Son of Hodir Blackmood,
Whose father was ancestor Lornar Greydog,
Once walked in forest realms,
And met the Hare who through them bounds.
Challenged with three riddles was he,
Trade answers for a place where his steed would be.
With shaman's gift as his guide,
Snorri found a way to the Other Side,
To find the answers to riddles three,
For a place for his steed to be.*

*So he came upon Troll's Furrow,
That place of toil and place of sorrow.
"Ho troll! Cunning Troll!
To answer Hares Riddle, these parts I stroll!"
Troll just grunts and groans,
And strains and then speaking moans,
"I have no time to swap riddles with strangers,
Before sun-up I must conclude my labours,
Then rid of burden I will be,
To roam again to darker realms, free."*

*"Oh troll" says Snorri, "your voice is such a rasp,
Betwixt your words you wheeze and gasp,
Perhaps for a time I can relieve this burden,
This task so clearly to your dudgeon.
"Old troll and cunning troll,
Knew damn well there'd be a toll,
"What price to pay to be relieved?"*

*As another length uphill he heaved.
"Just answers to Hare's riddles three,
Thy load for a while I'll assist with thee."*

*So old troll he thinks a bit,
As his rock he grumbles and lifts.
And eventually he condescends,
That Snorri's offer meets his ends.
"OK, lets go, lend me a hand
Ere sunrise I may return to darker lands."
So Snorri says "Your burden I need not touch,
Try it now, with my gift it'll not weigh much!"
So troll he tries and lo it's true,
The rock with lightness is imbued.*

*Off he sets nearing the top,
And panting turns to Snorri and stops,
"Flatface, liar, bowlegged pinkie!
Trying well to deceive me!
The first two riddles I only will answer,
So then keep your word and bear the boulder!
Harmony is the three branched tree,
Goddess' bounty is Prosperity."*

*Snorri scoffed and chided,
"My word I have provided,
Your burden has indeed been shorn;
Now the weight of your dishonour must be borne!
"And troll he screamed and cried and pleaded,
"Your help it is that's needed,
Please remove this terrible curse,
Before dawnlight over horizon bursts!
"You" is the final answer you seek,
Pity me and allow me the hill's crown to reach!"*

*But Snorri was a man honoured and fair,
And he left the troll to wallow there,
Sometimes the old troll's to be seen still,
Hauling his rock up Old Sister Hill.*

about Old Hare. It was a sad day when such a promising piper fell to the rebellion, he adds.

Rungar the hunter reasserts that the Hodirsons are to blame, and Branduan, a Hodirson carl, quips that Fergus' musicianship is the source of the hare's consternation. Fergus, normally a man to roll with the punches, doesn't take kindly to this comment at all, and eventually chief Kornos calms everybody down and asks the priest Langrok Stormcaller to speak.

The Priest's Words

A considered man, Langrok speaks clearly and concisely:
"Whether it be a good omen or a bad, Old Greyhare's riddle remains unanswered. Perhaps it is the Hodirsons who are to blame; perhaps not, but it was their ancestor Snorri, grandson of Lornar Greydog himself, who first found the Hare spirit. Snorri asked Old Hare for a blessing on his new steed. The riddles were a game which Greyhare played with him as a token of friendship.

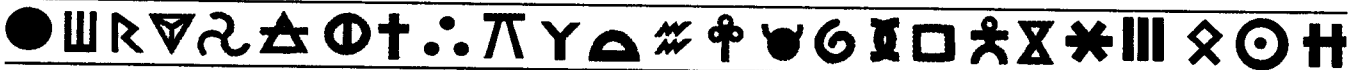
Snorri had the gift from the Shaman of Six Winds which allowed him to speak with the Ghost of Troll's Furrow in the Dawn Time: the spirit told him the answers to the Hare's riddles and Hare has been a friend of the clan since then. We still know the way to tread Snorri's path, though none have done so since that day."

Everybody agrees that somehow following in Snorri's footsteps could provide an answer, but a surprising number have excellent reasons for not doing so.

Triock Straightblade says that such stuff is for warriors, not simple farmers. Rungar says that it's a job for Hodirsons to undertake, and Langrok volunteers that those who are sent should be young, as anciently was Snorri.

Fergus Windbag is, of course, far too old, and Jonat Fleececuter volunteers his son only he's just about as pure-blooded Osgosi as ever there has been... However Branduan, the young Hodirson carl, is keen to volunteer his services and that of your characters, if appropriate.

Once the clan has elected those who will undertake this task,



Any shreds of light usually cast from the steeds in the valley are absent, and the shadow of woodland spreads across what is usually common grazing land cleared for Greydog cattle. In fact the valley has little or no evidence of human habitation, and the shapes of the hills look vaguely different to normal.

The Giant and the Dwarf

As they descend towards Lonin's stream the characters may hear a small squeaky voice some distance away scream for help. Something timid-sounding, the plea is a subdued and rather hesitant "Help! Help!"

The response is quite the reverse; gruff and deafeningly loud it echoes throughout the vale: "Shurrup' you! Ain't nobody 'round 'ere anyways."

The characters will have no prior knowledge of this encounter, and may respond to the plea, or ignore it. If the characters show bravery they will be following the footsteps of Snorri.

Tracing the noise the characters will emerge in a clearing on Lonin's stream. The stream is shallow and a few meters wide. On the opposite bank is a small camp-fire, a giant, and a dwarf tied to a stake impaled in the ground. The giant is loudly consuming portions of a huge carcass; dressed in ragged furs he has red skin and bright red hair, a huge nose, sharp teeth and big ears. The dwarf looks decidedly

miserable, wears a green outfit and an eye-patch. The outfit includes a cap which sports a clump of jaunty feathers.

When the PC's view the clearing the giant sniffs the air and mutters "Oi, it's 'oomans, mmm", before looking straight at them. The fight is on.

If the characters flee, he will pursue saying something to the effect of; "Oi! Come back, I won't hurt 'ya! Come on you lot, I only wanna' shows ya' mi' big club! Please comes back!"

If the characters are split up or lose the fight consult the section on straying from the quest.

The Dwarf's Gift

Hopefully the characters will win the battle and rescue the dwarf. In practice the dwarf is an Earth Spirit named Oberon, but for all intents and purposes he looks like a dwarf and your PC's need never know any different. He knows of Hare Spirit if asked, but doesn't know the answers to any riddles. He does know of the troll, and says that he used to be a friend of Hare's. He is more interested in thanking the characters rather than anything else, and in doing so will bow, doff his hat, and offer a red feather to a PC. As he does so, have him catch the eye of the PC and say;

*There was a young dwarf from Newalfar,
Whose feather was red as this other,
If you rubbed it just right,
It would make things seem light,
And so he was named Rockigofatha!*

With that he winks at a character, says "Speak the poem when you use it", and disappears. Needless to say the feather is a magic item which should help the PC's on the next stage of their quest.

Ogblad the Red

Four Meter Giant

STR	48	Move:	4
CON	27	Hit Points:	30
SIZ	32	Fatigue:	75 - 20 = 55
INT	10	Magic Points:	12
POW	12	DEX SR:	3
DEX	13		
APP	1		

location	missile	melee	points
right leg	01-04	01-03	10/10
left leg	05-08	04-06	10/10
abdomen	09-11	07-10	10/10
chest	12	11-15	10/12
right arm	13-15	16-17	10/8
left arm	16-18	18-19	10/8
head	19-20	20	10/10

weapon	sr	attack%	damage	parry%	points
rh club	4	68%	2d6+4d6*	40%	16
lh fist ⁺	6(7)	45%	1d6+4d6	—	—
rh fist	6	60%	1d6+4d6	—	—

* plus STR drain.

+ Ogblad attacks first by swinging his huge club, and then smashes the same target with his fist 3 SR's later.

Skills: Smell Human 100%.

Notes: Ogblad is naturally resistant to emotion affecting spells which never have a greater chance of success than 5%. He regenerates 1d3 Hit Points per melee round, wears ragged furs, and carries a magic club made of dinosaur bone. The club drains 1d3 STR from a foe each time it hits and draws blood; it only works when wielded by a creature tainted by Disorder or associated with a Disorder deity. Lost STR may be regained through the normal means such as Restore Health spells.

Meeting the Troll

Soon the characters should emerge climbing up Old Sister Hill from Hare Woods, although Fergerbad's groans and curses should be audible to the them long before then. You should make this encounter somewhat humorous; attempt to give it some of the flavour of Ornar's recital of Snorri's Quest.

Speaking With Fergerbad

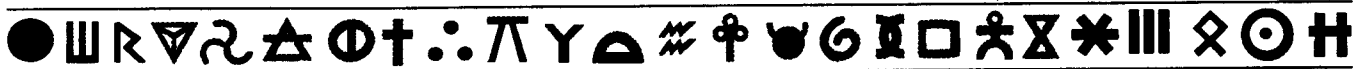
In this encounter the player characters adopt the role of their ancestor Snorri; for all intents and purposes they are Snorri. As such their objective is to learn from the troll the answer to Hare's third riddle:

*Standalone Oak not forgot;
Hralf's paths alone remembered;
Cattle guided home along leafy paths;
Dutiful gifts, ancient pact honoured.*

Fergerbad's concern is to get the Unchanging Stone to the top of the hill before dawn. He may be able to do this with the assistance of the player-characters.

When the characters emerge from the woodland onto the slopes of Old Sister Hill Fergerbad will have reached an obstacle; a sharp rise which the troll has encountered as he manoeuvres the boulder around the side of the hill. Fergerbad is an exceptionally ugly, warty troll, with huge tusks and a clump of hair not shaved in the usual troll manner.

Fergerbad's conversation will not be flamboyant although he does seem to speak Sartarite; just as the story was told. Your players might begin by quoting from the rhyme told them by you. Fergerbad's initial intention is to assure the player-characters that he can help them, and then trick them into bearing the boulder for him. A suggested conversation might go something like this:



The Troll Ghost

A forgotten myth concerns the Old Troll of Troll Hollow. Fergerbad was a child of the Troll God who roamed the world in the darkness. Like many of his warband he was displeased with the talk of the return of the Light-god and so kidnapped the Lady of Spring and tied her to the Unchanging Stone in order to prevent it. Fortunately the Dawn Charioteer passed by, rescued the maiden and pursued Fergerbad.

As Fergerbad fled the Charioteer he came upon Trickster standing at the top of a hill by the Unchanging Stone. Trickster told Fergerbad to throw the Stone at the Dawn Charioteer to end his pursuit. Fergerbad threw the Stone and missed, so trickster showed him a rabbit warren to hide in but left one of the troll's feet unconcealed so the Dawn Charioteer found him.

Fergerbad was forced to yield to the Charioteer, and as penance agreed to return the Unchanging Stone to its rightful place on Old Sister Hill.

PC: Ho troll! Cunning Troll! To answer Hares Riddle, these parts I stroll!

Fergerbad: [wheeze ..] So.

PC: Well err.. the Hare I seek, You know where him I'll reach.

Fergerbad: [Gasp] Cantcha' give us a hand here?

PC: Oh, yeah .. how is it... err... Perhaps for a time I can relieve this burden, This task so clearly to your dudgeon.

Fergerbad: If you have the strength Flatface, Just rest your hands here...

PC: No, I mean for a price!!

Fergerbad: [Shocked gasp, loses a step only to regain balance at last minute...] What? Hare's not here, You can't find him 'till I get this rock to the top of the hill.

PC2: We need the answer to Hare's riddle, if we help get the rock to the top, will you tell us the answer?

Fergerbad: Sure, now just put your hands here...

Moving Fergerbad's Burden

Fergerbad has two objectives in this scenario, although he need only fulfill one of them. If neither are fulfilled and the PC's gain the answers to the riddles the myth remains intact. Fergerbad's objectives are either to get the Unchanging Stone to the brow of the hill, or to transfer the curse to somebody else.

The mechanics for moving Fergerbad's burden are quite simple; to reach the top of the hill the combined STR of the bearers should be matched successively against STR totals of 60, 70, 90 and 100 respectively in order to achieve the hill's brow. Fergerbad's STR total is 50. If a roll is failed, another attempt should be made to prevent the boulder rolling back down the hill; if this is failed one more roll may be attempted against the previous total x2. If this third roll is failed the rock is probably out of control and will roll some way down the hill again. Fergerbad has time for seven rolls before the sun rises (irrespective of how much talking is done in between).

For Fergerbad to transfer the curse to somebody else he must first relieve himself of the burden of the stone, and also break free of the curse.

For Fergerbad to relieve himself of the burden of the rock he needs to fake participation in a group effort to move it, but in fact leave his volunteers to do all the work. In this case do not add Fergerbad's STR total to the combined total for the relevant resistance roll. If the roll is a success the rock moves and leaves Fergerbad standing; if not then he will most likely step in order to prevent the rock moving down hill — always keep in mind that only seven rolls are available before sun up.

Escape from the curse is harder and costs POW equal to fifty minus the combined STR of the participants in the last resistance roll. Escape is only possible in an instant in which the rock travels up hill. Thus for an instant in which Fergerbad wishes to escape the curse the POW cost will be equal to fifty minus the combined total of bearers' STR's, not counting Fergerbad's STR 50. Fergerbad has 35 POW to spare when it comes to escaping the curse, so if a PC of STR 15 decides to aid him he has some chance of getting free.

The Red Feather

If the characters' gained the red feather from the dwarf it should be no surprise to them that this is the time to use it. If the feather is rubbed against an object and the dwarf's poem recited, the effective resistive STR of the object rubbed is reduced for the purpose of one resistance roll by a total equal to 2xPOW of the individual who recites the poem and holds the feather. This effect is not cumulative, although the feather may be employed on more than one occasion on an object. The feather may only be used 1d3+1 times owing to a slight deterioration in its condition each time it is employed. The character's should not be fully aware of this last criteria, but they should have some idea that the feather won't last for ever.

The Four Resistance Rolls

In order for Fergerbad to succeed he must overcome the four STR totals (60,70, 90, and 100) in only seven percentile rolls. If a roll is failed the STR rolls to maintain his position or to stop the boulder rolling back down the hill are deducted from the total of seven available rolls.

From the author's point of view it is impossible to plot any certain outcome in this situation. It is certain that Fergerbad will attempt to talk a character into physically pushing the rock and thereby gain an opportunity to escape the curse. In Snorri's case, however, we can relate the events of the myth in terms of these four resistance rolls. Keep in mind that Snorri sought the answers to three riddles where your players seek only the answer to one.

The First Roll

At this stage Fergerbad still has his eye on the coming dawn, and really feels that concentrating on the task at hand is the main issue and so continues working at it as he negotiates with Snorri:

*Old troll and cunning troll,
Knew damn well there'd be a toll,
"What price to pay to be relieved?"
As another length uphill he heaved...*

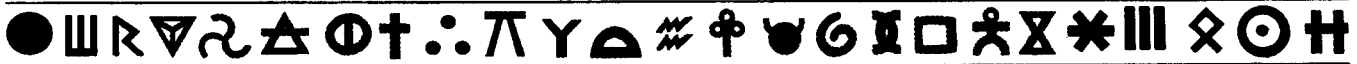
The Second and Third Rolls

It is likely that these two rolls were both made with the assistance of the magic from Snorri's red feather. Although the poem gives no indication of it, it would seem reasonable to assume that Snorri gained an answer to one riddle either before or after each one of these two obstacles.

*So Snorri says "Your burden I need not touch,
Try it now, with my gift it'll not weigh much!"
So troll he tries and lo it's true,
The rock with lightness is imbued!*

The Fourth Roll

Probably Snorri discovered that his feather's magic had expired by now, and the troll in frustration attempted to cheat him at this stage? Perhaps Snorri decided to keep the last of his magic for use in later adventures, or maybe Fergerbad had no confidence in the foreigner's magic so decided to cheat him anyway. The actuality will never be known, if there is such.



Either way, it didn't work out for Fergerbad; the nature of Snorri's curse is even less certain. Perhaps Snorri had the power to blight the troll all along or perhaps he found it in an encounter since lost to our heroes. In any case Fergerbad's dilemma was in some way intensified (perhaps by adding to his necessary POW expenditure to escape the curse, or by adjusting unfavourably the difficulty of the STR rolls to achieve the hill's brow).

*"Flatface, liar, bowlegged pinkie!
Trying well to deceive me!
The first two riddles I only will answer,
So then keep your word and bear the boulder..."*

[Snorri speaks]

*"My word I have provided,
Your burden has indeed been shorn;
Now the weight of your dishonour must be borne!"
And troll he screamed and cried and pleaded,
"Your help it is that's needed,
Please remove this terrible curse, Before dawn light over
horizon bursts!
"You" is the final answer you seek,
Pity me and allow me the hill's crown to reach!"*

The Riddle's Answer

Just how this encounter is resolved is quite impossible to predict. Most likely is that the characters manage to string Fergerbad along to the last obstacle at which time he capitulates and spills the beans. If the characters do manage to convince the troll to tell them the answer

to Hare's third riddle remember that it has changed from "YOU" to "SPRING HARE".

The Heroes' Return

Whatever happens, the scenario can progress no further when the dawn sun rises and the troll's labours are complete or his seven rolls expended; when Yelm ascends, his dazzling brightness oppresses the troll, who allows the Unchanging stone to tumble back into Hare Woods. Whether they have succeeded or failed, turning away from Old Sister Hill each character will spy Spring Hare frolicking in the dewy grass below. Spring Hare will continue to do so until the characters follow him; eventually the hare will lead them to Goodtalk Stone.

When they reach the stone the adventure will be over and Langrok awaits in the new dawn to greet the questers. In the village a luxurious breakfast will be prepared in chief Kornos' stead and the characters are expected to relate their stories to those present, including the chief, Langrok, Brigpice, and Ornar Greyman.

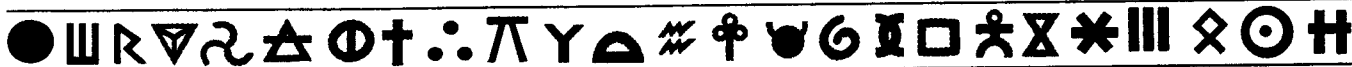
Possible Scenario Resolutions

There are many consequences and conclusions to this scenario. These are a few predicted outcomes. In dealing with mythical reality directly the characters will have imposed some change on it, and so on the clan's environment. The purpose of this scenario is to illustrate the benefits and consequences of HeroQuesting in this respect.

Solving Spring Hare's Riddle

Solving the riddle is the primary objective of the quest, although





the consequences of doing so will not become immediately apparent. In the short term people will begin to address the spirit previously known under a plethora of vague titles as "Spring Hare", and the name will soon catch on.

When hunting season arrives the finest prey will be sighted and killed in Spring Hare Woods. Once a year has passed Spring Hare will return to the village and with his riddle answered correctly, sheep or cattle set to graze in the woods will always return safely to their steads. Healing herbs will become more profuse in Spring Hare Woods than before. Fewer trees if any will be cut down there (Triock Straightblade will be at pains to point out that the timber south of Irmar's Peak was always better stuff anyway) and where a tree is taken an appropriate offer will be made to Spring Hare and his kindred spirits. In addition the questers who return with the answer to the riddle will never find themselves lost in Spring Hare Woods again.

If the character's fail to solve the riddle or get it wrong things will continue much the same as before. Within the year more encroachments will be made upon Hare Woods, and the Hollow Oak will be eaten by trollkin. Once a year has passed Hare will not show up as he usually does; perhaps the village will attempt the quest again — although if Fergerbad has been released this will no longer be possible, and if the same questers go perhaps they will find only a dead giant and no captive dwarf. If the quest succeeds, the situation might be rectified as above, if not Old Gray Hare might gradually be forgotten about and what were his woods might succumb to the Barntar's plow.

Releasing Fergerbad Voluntarily

It may be that the characters gain the opportunity to have Fergerbad restore the Unchanging Stone to the ridge's top. In doing so they should gain the answer to the riddle, but may not.

If Fergerbad is freed of the curse he is free to roam in the Otherworld. Perhaps one day a troll's ancestral spirit will speak favourably of a player-character to its mistress, but in any case Greydog village will not be troubled by trolls for a long time to come. Once the winter is through the path that was Troll's Furrow will become overgrown and disappear, and sightings of the troll ghost will cease.

Falling Victim to Fergerbad's Curse

Of course there is always the possibility that Fergerbad dupes one or more PC's into carrying his burden and escapes the curse. Langrok points out the dangers of this in "Preparation For the Adventure", and it is unlikely to occur if the characters received the dwarf's gift. If all the characters are trapped their quest will fail since none will return to the village; in this case the Lismelder are unlikely to attempt a rescue. If a portion of the characters return to the village reporting what has occurred then it may be that a rescue mission may be planned, although breaking the curse would be difficult and a task left to Langrok and perhaps some thanes from the court of the

Lismelder king.

Either way the clan is likely to experience troll problems for some time to come; perhaps an old troll foe returns to trouble steads in the Starfire Ridges, or a pestilence of black flies afflicts the cattle next summer thanks to a Gorakiki shrine established somewhere nearby. Troll's Furrow will eventually disappear too, as will the ghost sightings.

Straying From the Path

There are a few points which the player-characters might lose their way in this adventure. They might be split up fleeing from the giant, might finish up overpowered and captured by him, or maybe try something alien to Snorri's tale such as attacking Fergerbad or shooting Spring Hare. If this occurs try to bring the characters back into the plot, but don't be too pushy. If they are insistent let them do their own thing and then impress the consequences on them when they return to the village.

Captivity in the hands of Ogblad might result in them being sold into slavery under a foul demon and wind up serving in the slave pits of hell for eternity, or perhaps in their rescue by a contemporary hero such as Kallyr Starbrow undertaking a mystical journey from Old Wind to Wintertop. In these circumstances their quest becomes an inevitable failure. A split party may be re-united by a friendly bird guiding them together, or might bifurcate; one group continuing the quest, the other finding a new adventure perhaps chasing after a magical prey. Such new paths are dangerous, however. One might forever be entrapped in the Otherworld never to find a way back to the mundane realm, and the territory of gods and ancestors is a place where even the mighty tread with fear and caution.

Stupid decisions such as those to attack Fergerbad or the Spring Hare can be dealt with in the context of the scenario resolutions listed above.

Conclusion

This scenario is designed to emphasise the importance of religion and mythological interaction in terms of the society; the basis for all these things. The benefits of the quest are bestowed primarily on the social unit, not the individual (as indeed are the detrimental repercussions should they occur) and happen as a direct consequence of this interaction between the mundane and the mythical.

Almost all Gloranthans perceive with and interact with their mythology in their annual ceremonies of worship; these too are HeroQuests, more regimented and less flexible in form and sequence, and subtler in consequence. Subtler still are the minute reverberations which pass from realm to realm as a consequence of the simplest mundane or mythical action but which nonetheless travel through the web which connects and creates microcosm and macrocosm.

This Scenario was written and conceived by Jon Quaipe, with some modifications by David Hall & Steve Thomas. Triock Straightblade's dialogue was provided courtesy of Divad Llah.

sects of Malkion through the use of totem symbols. The Borists are represented by a white eagle, the Brithini by a crowned silver law rune black, the followers of Rokar use a multitude of gold law runes on blue, the mark of the cursed Galvosti is the green leopard, and the fanatic Hrestoli have placed Law over Harmony in varying colours. The troll sorcerers and their ilk have a thousand signs, but a magic sign with an orb of black is common. All peasant folk in Ralios, regardless of sect or creed, patiently await the return of the snake kings... [Ciconia's Ralian Journal, 1589 ST] (XXIX. 13-37) There is in the forecourt of knowledge in Rhigos, deplorable city, a statue of Lhankor Mhy standing on a book. Foolish people think he read with is feet. (XXIX. 13-38) *Introductory note, by a Grey Sage of Jonstown.* This information is from Likstrandos, an early God-Learner who betrayed many Orlanthe secrets to his friends. He is famous for some other writing, notably the Second Gloss to Harmast's Heroquest. In fact, these notes are from the Gloss, or perhaps an early draft of it. "Before the time of Harmast Barefoot, there were ten tribes of the Heortlings: Penentelli, Vestantes and Infithelli of Aggar; Berenneth of Saird; Forosivuli of Holay, and Liornvuli of Tarsh, both remnants of the elder Lastralgors; Stravuli of Dinaros; Koroltes of Doriziland; Orgovaltes of Orgovalland; and Gansavuli of Gansaland." The first four tribes were overcome in



LETTERS

Greg Stafford Oakland, California

One Vision. Nice piece, and very much my own vision of Glorantha. The legalise of the RuneQuest rules interferes with the atmosphere, but is required by our literate society. *sigh* So, I had hoped the First Person bits (Biturian Varosh in Cults of Prax, etc.) would give the real flavor. I am glad to see Brian elucidate upon this.

The Broken Earth. I had mixed feelings about this, for several different reasons, which I will separate into editorial, background and cult.

EDITORIAL. In general, the introduction suffers because it goes back and forth between Gloranthan (deities) and Terrestrial (Yin/Yang, Saxons, Celts) terms. Are the Anglo-Saxon laws liberal (para 2) or not (para 10). Very confusing. Where, exactly, is this place? I think, from the description, that it is Jarst and Garsting areas. Why not say so?

BACKGROUND. First, I am not clear what Steve is trying to do here. I think it is to establish a place where earth deities dominate. However, unclear concepts confuse me, such as the Yin and Yang comparisons - it is the nature of Yin to retreat, so why is this a factor? Using "feminism" does not clarify (though I have to confess to using the term myself). Second, why does an earth culture have to be feminine anyway? Good old Earth Dad (Lodril) is no second rate power here...Third, what does it take to make a culture "feminine?" I think Steve is wrong here for two reasons: 1. He doesn't have enough facts about Esrolia; and 2. He doesn't understand real social dynamics, or I failed to illustrate troll society properly in Troll Pak.

Concerning #1: There is no helping this, since limited material has been published. I think Steve's read the article on "The Holy Country" from RuneQuest Companion (which doesn't have much). In fact, he is partially right. Esrolian culture is derived from Heortling culture, having separated during the Silver Age before the Dawn. After

King Rastagar and so many others were killed in the disastrously heroic "Sword and Helm Saga", the Esrolian Grandmothers threw out the Vingkotling (ie-Orlanthi) inheritance system in favor of a purely matrilinear one, and asserted the ancient Women's Council instead of Orlanth's Ring to rule families, clans and tribes.

Concerning #2: Steve seems to think that the Uz females are inferior because "the males were dominant as expeditors and entrepreneurs." I think he means that the male trolls get to go outside of the nest, and to deal with hostile species. Somehow, Steve seems to equate this with superiority. I believe that Troll Pak shows that all of Uzdorm belongs to the females, except those parts which are expendable. Males, sent out by the leaders to fetch food in a dangerous world, are expendable. The male trolls know this, which is partly why they act the way they do.

Perhaps Steve is confused because foreigners entering the Sazdorf tribe meet rank after rank of hunters, warriors, and officers before even knowing there are breeding females present. This makes the women into inferior subjects? They are rings of defenders, keeping great secrets!

THE CULT. A few comments which it provoked from me:

*On the statement: "Ernalda was able to chide Orlanth...etc.": I use comments like this in my histories all the time. In the published versions of various histories retrospective analyses often credit a deity with doing something. I just want to point out that, in historical fact, the change usually originates with the worshippers, who then

use the deity's backing to implement the change in their society. Success at this instigates a retroactive change in the deity, or more likely, in the local manifestation of the deity. Specifically, the social movement is embodied in a living individual (most likely) or a special spirit (usually summoned for the purpose), which becomes a Hero Cult, and thus the active interface for that local deity. Thus the people of Garsting say they worship Ernalda, and they do. But their local rites are probably interfaced by the Earth Sisters. God Learners would probably call their cult Ernalda, since it follows those archetypes.

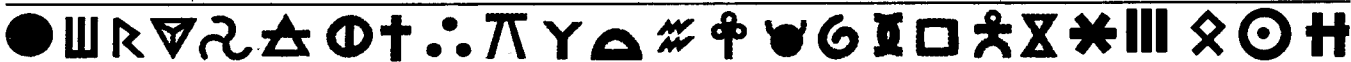
*On the section "Why do we die?": This is pretty bleak. Who will find comfort in this? Well, other cults are very pessimistic, too. But my real objection here is that the earth thinks death "spoils" everything. Well, in my experiences and studies, death is always integrated within the Earth Vision.

*Nyanka A whole range of spirit cults could be listed to fulfil various female tasks. In general, I wouldn't transfer strictly Pamaltelan deities so far north - the Nyanka connection to water, for instance, is a critical part of the Agimori creation myth, but not the Orlanthi one. I am also very leery about making it possible to transfer a fetus to another body, or at least so cheaply. No physical changes necessary in addition? But it's your cult. Why not call the spell now labelled as Menstruate as Abortion instead? As it's written, I can make an underage female menstruate with this - does it make her fertile, too?

*Other associated cults: What happened to Flamal?

Next Issue: A Chaos Feature!

**Cult of the Crimson Bat, Broo Society,
More Chaos gods, Jaxarte Whyded,
Scenarios, and more!!**



really enjoyed "PenDragon Pass" and "RuneDragon." Some of this is very much like parts of the current version of Heroquest (Hey, it's all in my head, don't ask...) I especially liked the comment on p.24 about different local versions of the deity.

As for the cult of the Black Sun, I wrote up some material about the cult in general, modelling it somewhat on an Aztec model of the universe which totally reverses the meaning of shamanic inner initiation to be a death cult. But Sandy Petersen wrote up the cult. Sandy is a great fan of grade-Z horror films. I can only conclude your research is correct.

Sandy Petersen **Baltimore, Maryland**

With regard to your baseless accusation that I have seen any of the films of Mr. Lewis. My official response is that mythic roots are best determined by the reader, not the writer. My unofficial response is that if you are indeed a bad film fan, I recommend Lewis' movies most highly, particularly "The Wizard of Gore", which is not only an elschlocko exploitation film, but manages to be pretentious at the same time! Lewis deserves more fame than he possesses - he is the originator of the slasher movie, which has gone on to such success, and also originated many of the genre's cliches (such as killing women who have or want to have sex). Some of his movies have such interesting bits that they verge on being good; "Two Thousand Maniacs" being a case in point.

Greg's comment (concerning the Aztec model) means simply this - in many shamanic initiations (including some Gloranthan ones), at some point a spirit being (the Bad Man or the Horned God) tears the shaman to pieces. The shaman then puts himself back together. This symbolizes

his rebirth as a new man. Also, an extra bit is often found amongst his pieces - an extra bone, or a section of quartz intestines, things like that. This extra bit can be thought of as a "fetch organ". The Black Sun worshippers materialistically saw death in this act, not transformation or rebirth.

Steve Gilham **Haslingfield, Cambridge**

One Vision - my reaction is "Yes, but...". I have seen excellent GM's come to grief when trying to build in detailed ritual observances in their games. It is something that only good GM's try, and the first time they can usually describe the events in a way to hold the players attention. The second time is ho hum, and by the third, the response is "We know what's happening, let's move along until something interesting/useful/significant happens." When the ritual becomes a habit, it becomes about as exciting as playing out the PC's bodily functions. Gaming is unfortunately a different medium from theatre or cinema, though it does share some qualities. If you want this sort of ritual, you're probably better off trying one of the Iron John warrior weekends that have become so popular in the States (dancing and chanting around the camp-fire, and ritual bottom-sniffing, all supposedly intended to promote male bonding by awakening the wild warrior male within) and doing it for real.

Stephen Martin **Concord, California**

Sartar tribes map. Unless I misunderstood the caption, someone's missing. It says 24 tribes + 3 from the Volsaxi, but only 26 names are on the map. Is it the Poss tribe

mentioned in Corwen's Saga, or something else?

Well spotted. The missing tribe is from the 24 Sartar tribes, but I've no idea which one it is! It could be the Sanchali, the Maboder, the Wind Children, or the Sartar Royal House, among others. The Poss are actually a clan of the Lismelder tribe located to the north-west of the Greydog Inn. The Lunar Centurion mistakenly refers to them as a tribe due to ignorance of the language or, perhaps, Sartarite custom, or maybe it's an attempt at a jibe?

Oliver Dickinson **Haxby, York**

Not the *Droit de seigneur* again! Once I read that M.R. James or Frazer or one of those old scholars investigated and proved it was a right to a money payment, not to sleep with the bride (I think there was some evidence of the sex interpretation somewhere in benighted Europe), which makes much better sense to me though I haven't followed it up. Them old nobles were always interested in improving their cash flow. No doubt the payment was expressing the view that the serf or whatnot was technically the master's property. I don't think it would ever have been applied to free vassals or tenants, of whom there were a lot knocking around in medieval times. I cannot imagine sturdy Heortlanders putting up with any such nonsense, anyway. Mark you, there is a story of one of the Hebridean islands, that its king was not allowed to be married but could sleep with anyone else's wife; but I'm not sure you can take it seriously, though others have done. It might be a misunderstanding, like Bede's comments on the Picts' system of royal succession.

the First and Second Theyalan Wars. The next four were conquered in 379 at the Battle of Night and Day, when the darkmen summoned the Black Eater but were crushed by the light of Nysalor. The last two surrendered after the Battle of Vanntar in 397, when dragonewts were destroyed by dwarf magic. So many people fled to the Stormwalk Mountains that a new tribe, the Hendriki, was formed from their refugees. When the Dorastan Empire enforced their rule upon the tribesmen, they forced all to accept the worship of Lokamayadon instead of Orlanth. The people who protested departed the valleys, and lived the Old Way in the hills, without fields or plows. Harmast was born amid those peoples, in the lands of the Stravuli, around 393 or so." (XXIX. 13-39) To conceive, the shamaness told the hapless girl to first... (there is a damage to the manuscript here, which no spell or process can seem to restore) ...then, swallow this seed whole... ..do not mar it with your teeth, for it is a human soul... (XXIX. 13-40) On a paving stone in the blasted ruins of the City of Miracles it was allegedly written, "...during the God Time, Rashoran, the last god of Law and first god of Chaos illuminated Humakt and Uleria..." (XXIX. 13-41) This is a tale of Ralios, translated by me, Gordal the Unstoned, from Delelac's "Mythic AEtiology", a Safelsteran work published in the last century: In the Golden Age Yelm's favourite bird was Vulture. Vulture was the most beautiful of all the birds, his plumage was pure gold, his crest filled with long and slender feathers which were all the colours of the rainbow. Yelm gifted his favourite with the choicest portions of any food available, and he allowed Vulture above all birds to soar closest to his own divine radiance. When Yelm was slain by Orlanth and forced into the Underworld, he asked his beloved Vulture to follow him, but Vulture refused, saying that the Underworld did not befit such a noble and beautiful creature as himself. This displeased Yelm, and at the beginning of Time when the Lightbringers returned him to the heavens so he could follow his daily path across the firmament, Yelm took vengeance on his faithless servant. Yelm plucked the crest of many colours from Vulture's head. He withdrew the golden hue from Vulture's feathers. He ordered "That never again shall such a bird so vain be allowed to eat the first meat: instead you must wait in hunger for the last pickings. You can fly high in the sky, but must hang your head in shame from my flames." *This Delelac claims to be a Greylord, yet is a willing, even enthusiastic, participant in the erroneous Stygian Heresy (a diabolic mixture of Western atheism and true veneration). This, and the fact that our own mythology of course identifies Vrimak as Yelm's favourite bird, enables me to dismiss this tale as fanciful Western rubbish.*



The Hero Bit

by Oliver Dickinson



Now of course, as everyone knows, in Pavis there are many adventurers, both young and old, and always these are meeting each other in temples and eating-houses and dives and such, and when you have guys and dolls meeting each other all the time, you are apt to have cases of love breaking out. If you are a sentimental kind of person you may feel that all the hand-holding and loving looks and kissing that ensue are most touching to behold, while if you are not the chances are you will find them quite revolting. But many persons display an interest in such matters, and I for one do not mind the odd case of love happening around me, and will even lend a sympathetic ear to persons who wish to tell me of their undying love for other persons, so long as they keep the drinks coming and I am not expected to do anything about it. Indeed, dough is often laid on the possibility of a case of love developing and how long it will last and so forth, but I wish to state that I want no part of such action. For the way I see it, anything involving the emotions of guys and dolls is a most uncertain proposition, indeed, and not worth a serious betting guy's attention.

But I will concede that there is one sure thing in matters of love, which is that Griselda will not be one of those involved, for Griselda seems to have no interest at all in matters of love. I tell you before of how Sweet-Talking Shamus falls for her but she remains unmoved, although Shamus is a guy whose attentions will be welcomed by many dolls, and there are other cases of guys doing some serious pitching to Griselda who have plenty going for them, such as youth, and good looks, and dough in their pouches. But Griselda freezes them all off, just like she does to any enterprising doll who attempts to find out if she is interested in her own sex, and finally it is acknowledged throughout Pavis and all around that although Griselda will act friendly when she is in the mood she can never be persuaded to go further, and while many consider this strange behaviour in such a looking doll it is accepted as one of the many unexplained mysteries of life.

Now one day when there is quite a crowd in Loud Lilina's, and Griselda is among those present, though she has her back to the wall and is looking half-asleep, Old Gil comes in looking all excited and says like this, "Say, who do you think is coming to Pavis? Batulco the Great, no less." At this Griselda sits bolt upright and says sharply, "Do you say Batulco the Great?" and many others stop talking and turn round to hear, and such reactions are not surprising, for Batulco the Great is renowned as one of the most famous adventurer hero types ever. Old Gil looks all pleased up at the attention he is getting, and says, "The man himself. He is already at Bullford, and word comes ahead of him. I guess he aims to take on the Puzzle Canal or find Balastor's Axe or something."

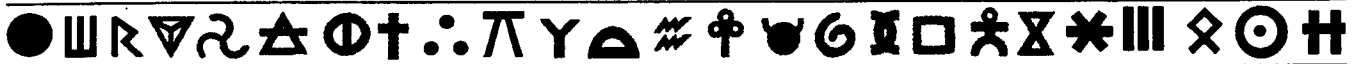
"Why, I am hearing about him when I am just a little kid," says Griselda. "Can he really be active still?"

"No reason why not," says Old Gil. "The way I hear it, he becomes famous when he is still quite young. Why, I hear of him getting in and out of the Machine Ruins all of fifteen years ago. Personally, I rate that as his best performance ever."

"How about his stealing the Demon Crown, from deep in Dorastor?" says Sweet-Talking Shamus, and Hanufa puts in, "I think it is his recovering the Sky Goblet from a dragon's hoard," while Topknot claims that Batulco once finds a Darkness Box and gets proclaimed a troll-friend for ever because he turns it in to the Castle of Lead. As they are mentioning these items, Griselda is turning from one to the other with her face as full of interest, as if she is still a little kid. When she gets a chance to speak she says, "Once I glimpse him in my home town of Alone, maybe ten years ago, and he is always kind of a hero of mine. To think of him coming here!" and she seems to go off into a dream while the discussion continues. This is such strange behaviour for her that it will make anyone speculate, and I commence to wonder if he is the great lost love of her life, but I dast not ask her for fear she will turn right back into the old Griselda, who can freeze a salamander with a glance if she is feeling displeased.

Personally, I have very little interest in these adventurer hero types, as none of them can be bothered with guys like me, and I am willing to bet that only half of what is said about him is true, if that, and doubt whether he will live up to his advance billing. But it is just as well that I lay no bet of this nature, for I will certainly be very scared for my dough when Batulco the Great shows up, because he looks everything they say of him; in fact, he looks as if he steps straight out of one of the old stories. He is a big tall guy, with shoulders like a bull and ripply muscles all over, as everyone can see because he is not wearing much of anything above the waist, and he has hair the colour of ripe corn down to his shoulders, and sky-blue eyes, and when he smiles you can see fine white teeth, and many a doll sighs deeply when she gazes upon him. There is a raft of other guys with him, some of whom are clearly servants and donkey-drivers and such, but others look like guys of much experience, to judge from their gear and way of handling themselves; but none of these are anything much to look at, in fact most are downright hard on the eyes, and nobody gives them a second glance.

Well, Batulco and his mob settle into some place in Oldtown that they can get cheap, because it seems they do not have any too much dough, and for the same reason they do their serious drinking in cheap joints like Loud Lilina's after they give the high-class watering-holes a complimentary play. This is fine for the ordinary guys and dolls who wish to see something of Batulco and maybe even talk to him, and it will certainly make things a lot easier for Griselda if she wishes to meet up with him, for she favours the cheap joints also, because, as she once tells me, the atmosphere is apt to be less chilly in them. She is right there when Batulco first drops by



Lilina's, but though she is well placed among his circle of admirers he does not give her much of a tumble. Anyone can see that she is somewhat disappointed by such treatment, and when it happens again she leaves with an expression on her face that I recognise, for it is the look she has when she means business.

Now it may be that, as some are heard to suggest, Loud Lilina offers Batulco special rates because of all the extra business he brings in, but he and his guys take to visiting steadily, and after a night or two Griselda shows up again, and she really makes quite an entrance. Up to this time she is dressing the way she usually does, which is in a pretty plain tunic with well-worn leathers on top and not much jewellery or anything, and though she is clean and tidy she will not catch your eye at a glance. But now she is wearing a dress that reveals a quite remarkable amount of her shape, in fact if it is not for some necklaces very little of her chest will be covered at all, and she has on earrings, and bracelets, and armlets, and I do not know what all else, and her hair is all done up in a fancy way with big jewelled pins stuck through it, and the only reminder of her usual style is that she still packs her little sword, although she is holding it loose, having nowhere to hang it without spoiling the effect. It is obvious to anyone who is not blind that she intends to make an impression upon Batulco, but to show you how smart she is, she does not join those around him, but gives me a big hello and comes over to where I am sitting. This is some distance away, as I reckon I hear all the stuff about Batulco that I want to hear, and furthermore most of his guys are scarcely what you may call fastidious about keeping clean, and their combined effect is more powerful than I care for, personally.

Griselda makes such a production of this that many turn our way, which makes me most uncomfortable as I do not care to be the centre of attention, but her ploy works, for it is not long before one of Batulco's guys comes over and states that Batulco wishes to buy her a drink. So she graciously condescends to join them and seems to hit it off at once, and there can be no doubt that Batulco is most

interested in her, and when they leave she goes with them. She is often seen in their company thereafter, and it seems clear that she and Batulco are developing a severe case of love for each other, and everyone starts going around saying how about this, and you never can tell, and offering and taking bets on the likely progress of this affair. But the smart betters notice that they are never together without at least one of Batulco's guys along, and some speculate that these do not wish this attachment to develop, which is strange when you consider what an asset Griselda's talents will be to their band and how she seems to get along with them O.K.

Well, things go on like this for a while, and then all of a sudden Batulco and his guys are nowhere around, and neither is Griselda. Reliable word comes out of the Rubble that they are seen in there, but Griselda is not with them, and yet she continues absent from all her usual haunts, and it is all a great mystery. Now I smell a good story in this, and after I do some thinking I decide to look up my cousin Wiglaf, who has a tiny dive on the edge of Riverside, for once before when she is not to be found I come across her there. When I approach I see the door is closed, but I figure this boosts the chances that I am right, for Wiglaf certainly cannot afford to turn away any customers, so I knock and call out to him, and after a while he opens up.

Sure enough, there is Griselda at a table, all slumped over a big mug of booze, and I never see her look so bad. Her hair is all over the place, and her eyes look like they have big dark circles round them, and she has wine stains all round her mouth. But when she eyes me I feel like I am being nailed to the door, so I can see that it is still the old Griselda in there.

"So, you want the story?" she says, just like that. "Well, come on over, and Wiglaf, you get him a mug and then fan yourself out of here, because no one else must hear what I am about to relate. If I find you listening," and here she does a quick flick of her hand and a dagger appears in it, for I omit to mention that she is back in her old gear. Wiglaf goes kind of green and vanishes, and then Griselda nails



