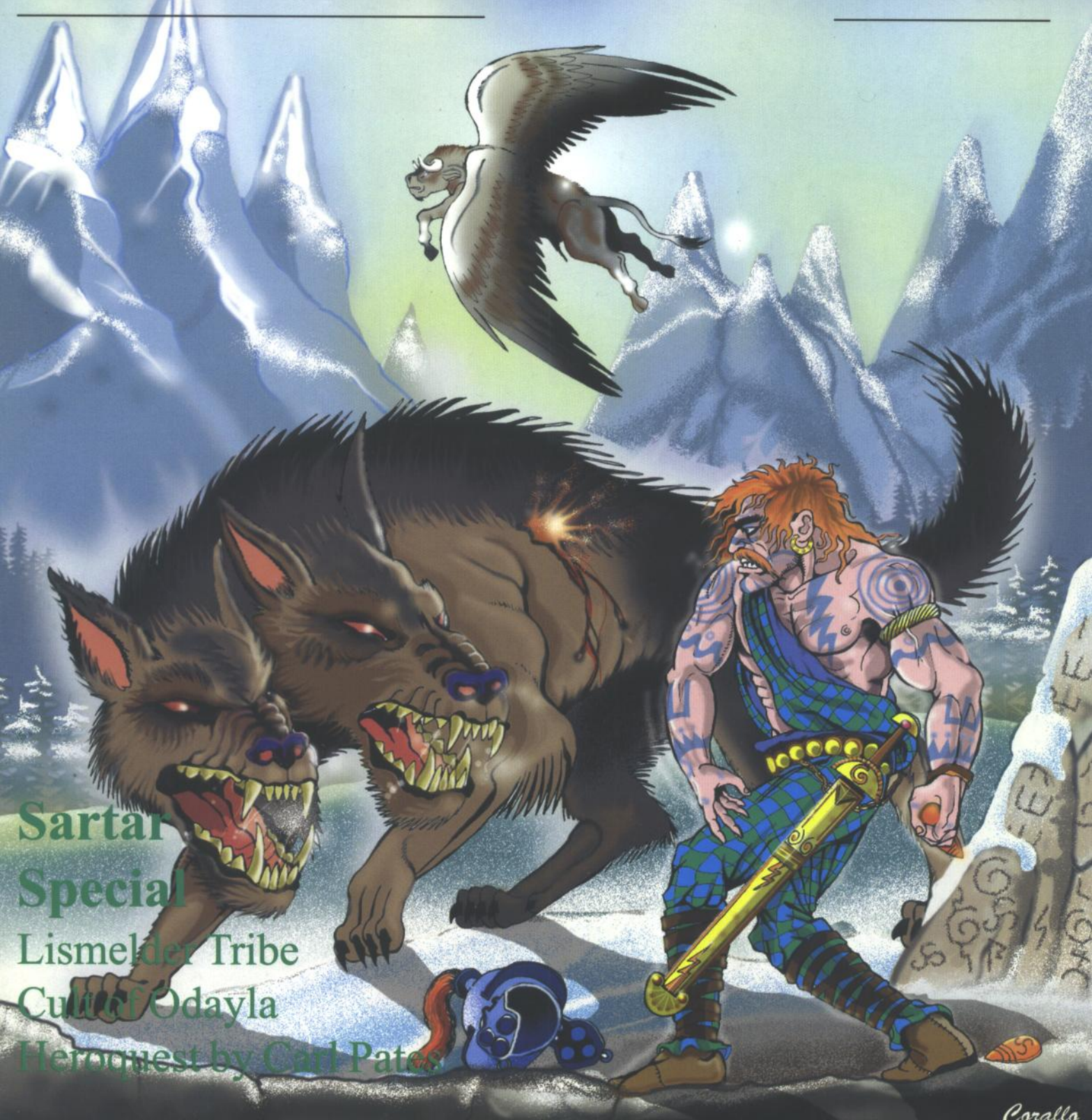


Tales *of the* Reaching Moon

Issue 18



Sartar
Special
Lismelder Tribe
Cult of Odayla
Heroquest by Carl Pates

Corallo



Tales of the Reaching Moon

The Gloranthan Magazine - ISSN 0960-1228

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Edict

Triock Sez Welcome!

It's taken a long time, but at last here is a complete issue dedicated to the Greydog clan and the Lismelder tribe. This has been the home of the Megacorp House Campaign for many years of fun role-playing and has often been mooted as a setting for a Gloranthan sourcebook. Finally, we've decided not to wait for the next Gloranthan RPG and instead print much of the campaign background in the pages of *Tales*.

I hope you enjoy it as much as we have!

All Good Things...

At Convulsion 4 in July 1998 I announced that the last edition of *Tales of the Reaching Moon* is issue #20. Unfortunately, over the last ten years the success of the zine has led to more and more work and increasing inroads into my spare time. It's now got to the stage where the work involved is no longer fun and so, alas, both the zine and the publication sales will be ceasing.

Luckily, I'm ceasing publication at a time when the new Gloranthan game, *Hero Wars*, is soon to be released, and when at least three other fan publications exist to pick up and carry the torch.

A lot of people have asked me what I intend to do once *Tales* finishes. Well, I don't rightly know yet. I do want to take a long holiday to catch up on "real life". But after this I hope to get involved with *Hero Wars* as a writer, and if I can get Issaries Inc. permission, perhaps put together a few independent publications (which someone else can sell!).

Future Megacorp Plans

In the immediate future we have two more issues to produce and the Best of *Tales* book. *Tales* #19 will be an Upland Marsh special that will link in closely with the material in this issue. Issue #20 will have a mix of articles as we try and cram in all of the best articles we have on file. Best of *Tales* will now include articles from issue #1 to #9 of *Tales*, as well as other specially commissioned articles.

Gloranthan News

Issaries, Inc. has announced the formation of The Glorantha Trading Association. This is a membership organisation of supporters and patrons dedicated to supporting the publication of more Gloranthan materials. Initial projects include expansion of the online web site, and publication of *Hero Wars*, the new Glorantha role-playing game.



The trading association has been formed in response to the inability of Issaries Inc. to issue shares widely due to legal difficulties. Instead the share scheme has been replaced by a donation scheme, where donations are non-refundable but do give specific and lasting benefits. There are four levels of membership: Observer (US\$0), Initiate (US\$100), Rune Master (US\$500), and Hero (US\$1,500). Benefits for charter members (i.e. those who apply before 31st March) include T-shirts, discounts, gift copies of books, party invites, and (for Heroes) a sixty minute phone call with Greg Stafford that can be taped!

For Issaries Inc. to launch their new Gloranthan RPG and the first five supporting books they need at least \$50,000. This is probably Glorantha's last chance to be developed professionally as a gameworld.

For further details check out <http://www.glorantha.com>. Any UK subscribers interested in donating should either email me or send me a stamped self-addressed envelope and I'll send you details (including a way to send money in UK £'s).

Zine News

Tradetalk #5 is now out (see the back page advert for ordering details). Issue #6 is planned to be a Catch-up issue with more Holy Country material, as well as Ralios articles, the Cult of Lanbril and an Elric scenario. Issue #7 is to be a Non-human special, and #8 a Pavis and Prax special.

Stephen Martin is taking a short break before the next volume of The Book of Drastic Resolutions (Volume Darkness is the most recent to be released). He is considering doing a Pamaltelan issue, instead of Volume Water or Volume Kralorela, though he says that ultimately what he does will be determined by submissions. Don't expect anything before January 2000.

Both Enclosure and New Lolon Gospel have no firm plans at present for future issues of their zines.

King of Dragon Pass

A Gloranthan computer game, licenced by Issaries Inc., is being designed a group called A#. They are adding a few more features to the computer game, called *King of Dragon Pass*, and it's taking a little longer to finish than they'd like. It will be out in 1999.

The game puts you in charge of a small clan which migrated from Heortland to the new land of Dragon Pass. You'll compete and cooperate with the other clans, found a tribe, and somehow find a way to unify all the tribes into a kingdom.

For more recent news, and a preview of the game, check out www.a-sharp.com

Hasbro buys Avalon Hill

Back in October of last year the US games and leisure conglomerate Hasbro bought out the owners of Avalon Hill and thus acquired the rights to the RuneQuest trademark, and also the fledgling RuneQuest:Slayers RPG. So far they've not ruled out entering the RPG market using the RuneQuest name. So we may see a non-Gloranthan RuneQuest RPG some time in the future.

Hmm... maybe Greg should sell the Hero Wars system to Hasbro...

Conventions

TENTACLES-Reanimated. The German Glorantha & Cthulhu Con. May 21st to 24th 1999 at the Castle "Stahleck" at Bacharach, which towers over the river Rhine. Greg Stafford is Tentacle of Honour. Highlights include the Gloranthan freeforms "Rise of Ralios" and "The Kings Funeral", a Gloranthan Lore auction, loads of seminars, Trollball (German style), and lots of beer.

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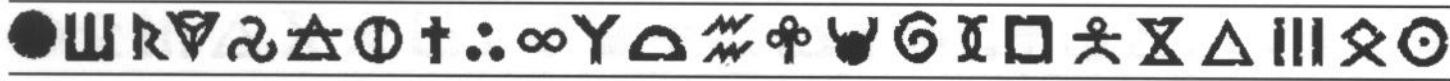
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The price for all four days is 140 DM (c.£47) which gets you good accommodation at a high spec youth hostel (the castle itself) and two filling meals per day. Contact: Tentacle over Bacharach, Postfach 10 23 02, 99423 Weimar, Germany. Email: fabian.kuechler@medien.uni-weimar.de

Errata

Last issue the article "A Selection of Some of the East Isles" should have included additional credits for Michael O'Brien and Greg Stafford. Also the Notes from Nochet authors were Trevor Ackerly, Eric Nolander, MOB, Duncan Rowlands, & David Hall. The illustrations by Alejandro Fernandez Giraldo and Gines Quinonero were incorrectly credited. Alejandro's illustration are on pages 49,57-58 and Gines' are on pages 45-48, & 60.



Shrines are the most common temples for this cult and may be situated in caves or in the burned out shell of a large tree (preferably a yew tree). In temples to Orlanth there may be a shrine to Odayla. The Greydog shrine is found in the Lonendi Woods near Tree Hill.

Odayla's holy days are on Wildday of Movement week of each season, with the day in Storm Season being the High Holy Day.

Initiate Membership (Hunter)

An initiate must be partially supported by hunting. If one of his parents was not an initiate, he must pass the usual test, demonstrating prowess in Missile Attack, Devise, Listen, Track, and Ceremony.

The initiation ceremony is described elsewhere in this issue. If the hunter succeeds in the initiation then the shadow cat that they meet will become their Yinkini hunting companion.

Initiates are bound to never waste animal life, and are forbidden to slay animals needlessly (hunger is regarded as sufficient need). They may never leave a slain animal to rot and must use the Peaceful Cut on any animal killed for food. They must also bring back one prey beast for the clan per season, preferably on a feast day. They must save at least one bone from the carcass of each of their kills to give to the master hunter. All initiates are taught the Peaceful Cut for free as part of their initiation.

Spirit Magic: Disrupt, Mobility, Slow, Speedart.
Special Cult Spirit Magic: Cat's Sight

Master Hunters

Master Hunters are the very best hunters, masters of their craft and able to bring in the most food animals, and the finest beasts. In time of war they act as the scouts for the fyrd.

During the Great Hunt new Master Hunters can be chosen. The hunter who brings in the most impressive beast (in the opinion of the other master hunters) can be ordained as a Master Hunter. Only one new master hunter can be created each year.

If a master hunter himself brings in the most impressive game animal, he is titled Great Hunter and rules the local cult that year. If there is no Great Hunter in a year, then last year's Great Hunter continues to serve. The Great Hunter in the clan must perform the Ritual of Rebirth each Sacred Time. This returns the spirits of the prey beasts back into the food chain.

A Master Hunter is also responsible for the breeding of shadow

Special Odayla & Yinkin Divine Magic

Draw Beast	1 point
<i>Ranged, temporal, stackable, reusable</i>	
This active spell only affects animals which are native to the mundane plane and also possess fixed INT. If its magic points are overcome, the animal must either move towards the caster at walking speed. The caster can halt this motion, stopping the beast in its tracks, and begin it again at will for the duration of the spell. For each point in the spell, one beast may be affected.	
Identify Scent	1 point
<i>Ranged, temporal, non-stackable, reusable</i>	
This enables the target to perfectly identify the nature of any scent he encounters while under the spell's influence. It does not give range or direction, just nature. If the scent is of a substance or entity that the target has never encountered or seen, the target will only know that an unknown scent has been encountered.	

cats in the clan. Master Hunters must donate 50% of their time and income to the clan and to the hunt. They must ensure that a worship service to their deity is held at least once per season.

Common Divine Magic: Command Cult Spirit, Divination, Excommunication, Heal Wound, Sanctify, Soul Sight, Spellteaching, Worship Odayla & Yinkin.

Special Divine Magic: Command Wild Cattle (including aurochs), Command Deer, Command Wild Goat, Command Wild Pigs, Command Wild Sheep (including mountain sheep), Command Waterfowl, Draw Beast, Identify Scent, Sureshot.

Subcults

Spirit of Reprisal

The spirit of reprisal is Yinkin himself. Any initiate betraying the cult or failing to uphold the values and promises of Odayla will find that all cats take an instant dislike to him. He will find that he is unable to move silently or hide his scent from his prey.

Hero Cults

Over time Great Hunters of the cult have explored and discovered many of the hidden mysteries of Odayla and Yinkin's primal nature. The skills, special magics, and perceptions that they have learnt can be gained by devout Master Hunters.

Yinkin's Mouth:

This is a cave sacred to Yinkin which can be found on Kero Fin. Its name comes from the jagged rocks that surround the opening. Any hunter who spends a night here and survives the test that Yinkin sets him may gain one special ability or spell.

The Leap of Faith:

This act of devotion is for only the bravest and most devout Yinkini. He must climb to the top of Kero Fin and then throw himself off the mountain. Those few who survive gain the special ability of **Nine Lives**.

The Silver Fox Quest and The Blueboar Quest:

See *Tales #7* and *Best of Tales*.

Special Odayla & Yinkin Spirit Magic

Peaceful Cut	1 point
<i>Ritual Ceremony</i>	
This is the special ritual which hunters perform to ensure that the soul of the slain beast returns to its mother, to be reborn properly. It includes a short prayer and ritual of thanksgiving. This spell must be performed in conjunction with the Craft skill of Butchery. The user makes a single skill roll, attempting to roll under both his Ceremony skill and his Craft/butchery skill.	
Cat's Sight	2 points
<i>Touch, Special, Passive</i>	
For the duration of a hunt, this allows the recipient to see at night as if it were day. However, if there is a complete absence of light, he cannot see; if light from a dim spark exists, he sees normally. Eyes under this spell reflect light as do a cat's.	



The Odaylan Ritual of Rebirth

by David Gordon

In the middle of every Sacred Time the Master Hunter of the clan fulfils his sacred obligation, made by Odayla to the Silver Stag, and enters The Sacred Cave to perform the Ritual of Rebirth, attended only by his faithful shadow cat. Here, countless hunters over the ages have painted the likeness of every creature they have hunted. Some creatures exist on the walls that are no longer seen on the material plane. For these creatures the ritual of rebirth has ceased to be performed and they have ceased to re-enter the cycle of life.

Guarded by Yinkin (who is embodied in the hunter's shadow cat), the hunter makes a sand drawing of the Odaylan *Shamanic Wheel of Life* (see diagram on page 63), with representations of the gods, animals and trees of the wild in different coloured sands. Then he builds *The Sacred Fire of Rebirth*, made from wood taken from each type of tree in the forest, in the centre of the wheel.

Before the ritual the hunter must have gathered the wood for the fire, the twigs to go with the bones, and the sand. Every animal is associated with a tree in the shamanic wheel which harks back to the time of the Old Way of the Orlanthi (their *hsunchen* roots). Usually wood is gathered from fallen trees to preserve the ones living. The combination of different trees in the centre of the fire represents the primal tree.

Using vines, the Hunter carefully binds one bone of each type of animal slain in the last year with a twig from the correct tree. These twig/bone combinations are then cast into the fire while he chants prayers to Odayla and the Lady of the Wild. As he does this he walks the year around the fire throwing the bones of the relevant animal and tree twig into the fire at the correct point on the wheel.

In this way the animal spirits are humbly persuaded to re-enter the cycle of life and will appear from the flames and run from the cave to the forest beyond. These spirits can now be reincarnated into new bodies.

The spirit forms of the animals are as real on the spirit plane as on the material plane. A bear will be as dangerous as one met in a forest. A boar as irritated by the hunter as it was when originally hunted. This is the most important point in the ritual and where Yinkin guards against evil spirits. An interruption of the summoning will curtail the rebirth ritual and the remaining animals prevented from re-entering the Cycle of Life and therefore affect the food supply.

One particular animal is special: the Stag. Should the bone of a stag be thrown into the fire then the Silver Stag may return in spirit to grace his presence at the ceremony then he will leave when the ceremony is finished, roaming the forest until the end of Sacred Time. He will not make another appearance until next Sacred Time.

Sadly this ritual is slowly dying out as the Old Way becomes less important and the clan favours other food sources such as cattle, sheep, and farming. Odayla initiates believe that it is only their devotion that keeps the forests healthy and populated with game.

Author's Note: Inspiration for this article, and in particular the Shamanic Wheel, comes from Kaledon Naddair's book *Keltic Folk and Fairie Tales* (Century Paperbacks, ISBN 0 7126 1679 9).

Associated Cults

Orlanth

Orlanth gifts his loyal half-brother and his son **Wind Words**.

The Lady of the Wild

Odayla's mother gifts him with **Understand Wild Beasts**.

Miscellaneous

The Great Hunt

During Storm season on Movement week, Wildday the Great Hunt takes place where the best hunters in the land go off armoured only in a leather jerkin, a bow, a knife and a spear. The hunter who brings back the most impressive beast for the Chieftain's table may be declared a Master Hunter. In this hunt the Odayla & Yinkin hunters usually excel since other hunters do not have cat abilities and perceptions.

The Staring Match

A favourite pastime of Orlanthi is the staring match when they try to out stare the gaze of a Yinkini hunter. A hunter will rarely outstare a clan member because to do so is considered a bad omen to the non-hunter, but sometimes the spirit of Odayla and Yinkin will prevent him from doing so. Consequently it is unwise to stare at a Yinkini unless you are looking for a sign from the gods.

Written by David Gordon and David Hall

Hero Cult Spells & Abilities

Divine Magic

Claws of Yinkin (Yinkin's Mouth)

2 points

Touch, temporal, non-stackable, reusable

Both of the target's hands become cat claws, which can attack with a chance to hit equal to the user's DEX x 6, doing 1D6 damage plus damage bonus. Both claws can attack on the same SR. The claws cannot hold human weapons.

Spirit Magic

Pounce (Yinkin's Mouth)

Variable

Touch, temporal, passive

This spell gives the target the ability to jump and land with the skill of a cat. Each point of this spell adds 5% to the target's Jump skill. Each point also adds one meter to the height that the character can jump.

Special Gift

Nine Lives (Leap of Faith)

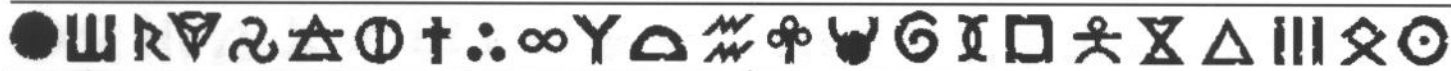
The recipient of this gift can survive up to eight fatal encounters by the skin of their teeth (gaining the gift uses up one life). This does not make them invincible since any wounds will still be incapacitating. However, somehow, they will eventually survive. The recipient may never call upon Divine Intervention.

Skill

Understand Wild Beasts

Perception (5%)

This perception skill allows a hunter to perceive and interpret warning signs, odours, and other movements made by the wild (prey) animals he is stalking. Speaking to the animals is not possible with this skill.



Odayla and Yinkin

One Man and his Cat

by David Gordon
& David Hall,
with Chris Gidlow



It was Orlanth's Day and Orlanth threw the biggest feast with plenty of Minlister's Ale. Those who had come of age drank the strongest ale, but the children could only drink the weak ale. Now, as it happened, Barntar and Voriof had just come of age and were given a flagon of strong ale each.

"Can I have some?" asked Odayla of his brothers.

"No. You're not old enough." Said Voriof. "When you are a cottar like me, then you can drink with us."

"You couldn't handle it anyway." Barntar mocked. "It's too strong for you. When you are a carl like me, then you can drink the strong ale."

"I can take it! I'm strong enough." Pleaded the young Odayla.

Now Urox the Storm Bull was sitting near and heard all this. He never hid his distaste for Odayla. "Ach, runt, you are barely a ween and a burden to us. What use are you? You are but a boy. You can barely drink the weak ale! Go to the little ones' table to sup milk with your sisters."

Odayla looked to his father for help, but Orlanth was in deep discussion with his brother, Humakt, and was unaware of his son's predicament.

"You can look to your father for help, but you'll find none. He hardly suffers to keep you." Said Urox.

Now the boy could just take the taunts of his brothers, but the scorn of Urox was like the foulest of winds. With tears welling in his eyes, he ran from the hall lest he burst out crying in front of his kin. How could he go on? He was nothing here. Not even his father loved him. He struck out into the forest alone.

It was a cold and blustery night and soon he became weary of the bone-biting wind. He was

hungry and he wished he'd eaten more at the feast.

"Well," Odayla thought, "Who needs sheep and cattle when I can find all I need in the forest? There are hares and birds a plenty."

Odayla set a trap, catching a couple of mice for his supper. With some leaves and two sticks he kindled a small fire in the shell of a yew tree. With this weak fire, he ate his meagre meal. Then, shivering in the howling wind, he covered himself with dry leaves within the yew and fell asleep.

He awoke to the barking of dogs. Sneaking close he saw three Bad Dogs baiting his uncle Yinkin the Great Alynx. With rage, Odayla picked up stones and pelted the dogs to frighten them away. As they ran, Yinkin scalped one with his sharp claws (to this day some dogs are still short-haired).

Now Yinkin could not walk so Odayla bade him rest while tended his cuts and bruises. "Lie here, uncle," he said, "while I catch us some breakfast." He made a bow, arrows and a spear, as well as a flint knife on a wooden handle. He felt certain he could catch something worthy for his Uncle Yinkin, but all he brought back was a mangy old hare. Yinkin laughed when he saw it, but he thanked his nephew.

After the meal, Yinkin snoozed by warmth of the fire, watched over by his nephew. As the day drew to a close, Odayla fell asleep.

Odayla woke in the night to feel his uncle's paws on his face. Yinkin's eyes glowed in the light of the dying embers. "Why are you asleep, little nephew?" asked Yinkin. "This is the best time to hunt."

"How can I hunt if I cannot see?" replied Odayla.

"Come, I will show you how to see and smell and breathe your prey."

Yinkin showed how the cat hunts in shadow. He showed him the runs where the hare feed by starlight and the hidden nests of the quail. The young boy took his

guidance well. Together they bagged fat hares and rabbits. Yinkin chased prey into the traps set by Odayla and Odayla used his spear and bow.

When they had feasted, Odayla thanked his uncle. "You have taught me the language of the Wild."

"No, nephew. I awakened it inside you, for you, like me, are a Son of the Wild."

They played together wrestling, Yinkin scratching his nephew and Odayla bruising his uncle.

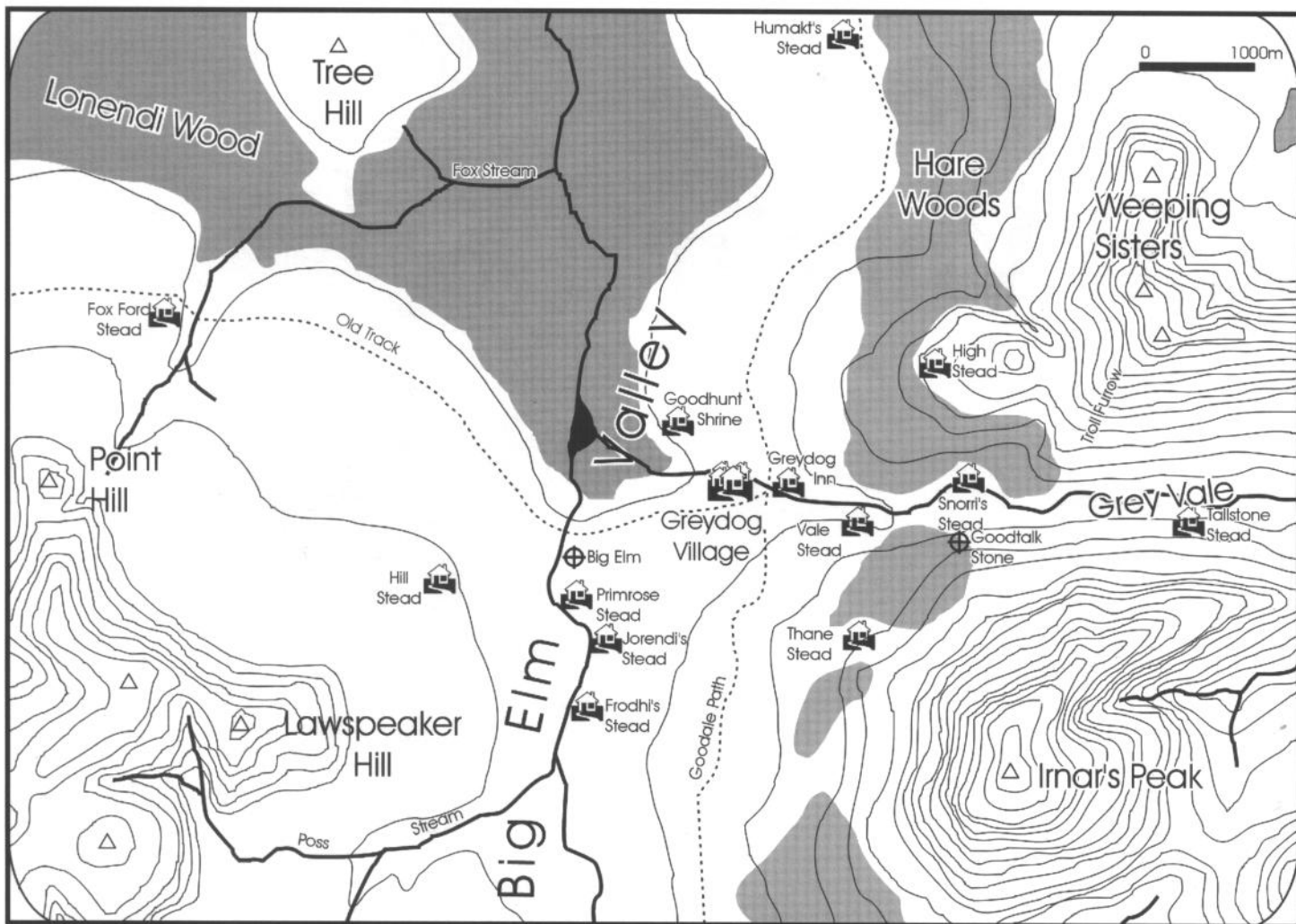
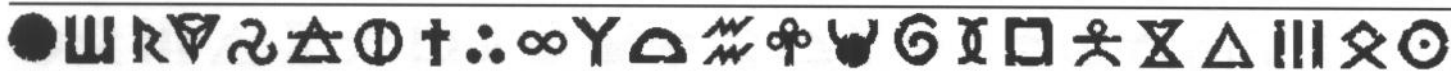
"You are stronger than you seem." Commented the Alynx, licking his bruises. "These are better bruises than the ones from Urox and from the Bad Dogs."

When Yinkin said that, it made Odayla think of home and of the taunts from Urox and his brothers.

"I cannot return home. There is no place for me now. Here in the wild I am of age, but at the hall of my father I am but a boy."

"Then you must show them that you are of age. Return with a great prize for your father to prove to everyone that you are as good as them. We shall catch the Silver Stag and then you can return to my brother's hall as a mighty hunter."

Now the Silver Stag came to the river every day to drink and Yinkin took Odayla to see him there. Odayla was transfixed - what a prize for Orlanth!



"I have come here many times and watched him." Said Yinkin. "I have always wanted to catch him."

"I will notch an arrow and shoot him." Said Odayla.

"Do not waste your time, nephew. Before you touch your arrows he will be gone. I have tried to hunt him many times, but he runs as fast as me. We must work together to catch this beast, for he is swift and clever. There is a pass among the hills, with sides too steep for the Stag to run up. You go and wait at the end of the pass and I will chase him to you."

Odayla did as his uncle bade and lay in ambush in the valley. When the stag bent to drink, Yinkin darted from the shadows.

"You again, shadow cat!" laughed the Silver Stag. "Have you not tired of this game?"

And quick as the wind he sprang into the forest. Yinkin chased him over hill, down dale, across stream, never once tiring. Where-ever the stag ran, he heard the alynx behind him. And so Yinkin herded the stag to where Odayla waited.

When the Stag saw Odayla crouched in front of him, drawing his bow for the kill, and heard Yinkin behind him, cutting off his escape, he knew it was too late. So he stood and fixed his

eyes on the young hunter, his hot breath snorting in the cold air.

"So the treacherous god of the cats needs your help, son of the wild. Is he truly so weak?"

"No," said Odayla. "It is he who aids me today."

"So be it, young Hunter. My life is forfeit, but before you claim your prize, you must promise me one thing. You must return my spirit to the forest to be reborn. Without this, there is no honour in killing me."

"I will do as you ask." Said Odayla, "For so my mother taught me," So with the stag's consent he claimed his prize, and performed the ritual as he promised.

Taking the Silver Stag, Odayla and Yinkin set off to Orlanth's Hall. "I will come later, for this must be your prize." Said Yinkin, "Take your place in my brother's hall." So Odayla walked proudly into the Hall and threw down the silver antlers before the feet of Orlanth. The Hall fell silent.

Odayla said, "Father, I present you this prize. All that I ask is that you do not neglect the champion's portion for my uncle Humakt."

"You have done well, my son. A fine prize."

"I am honoured with my portion," said the

god of Truth, "but tell me, did you catch this magnificent beast all by yourself?"

Odayla looked down at the floor. "I cannot take all the honour for this kill, for my uncle Yinkin shared in the hunt."

Humakt turned to Orlanth, "Then we are doubly honoured."

Orlanth, smiling, turned to the door. "Brother Yinkin, will you not share in the prize? Come, enter the Hall."

With flattened ears, Yinkin poked his head around the door. As Urox saw him, he bellowed "Get that mangy cat out of here, before I throw him out!"

"Be quiet brother or be gone!" Boomed Orlanth, "Yinkin is my brother and my friend."

With that, Urox sat down and called for the strongest ale. And on that day, Odayla sat at the high table and drank of Minlister's finest. Humakt received the champion's portion, and Orlanth raised the head of the Silver Stag on the wall of his longhouse. Nobody made fun of Odayla any more and Yinkin got to sleep peacefully by the fire whenever he wanted.

And so it is to this day, Odayla can be found roaming with Yinkin by his side, the honoured hunters of the Wild.



During the reign of Ordag (1464 - 1484) the Greydog Clan fought continually against the Orlmarth Clan for the possession of the three ridges between their respective lands. Ordag lead the tribal fyrd in support of the Greydog, and fought and defeated the Colymar four times. Of the land he conquered he gave one part to the Hillhaven and the rest to the Greydog. Later, in the reign of Thufir the Lecher, most of this land was lost.

Queen Yenesting is credited with bringing the Lismelder tribe into the Kingdom of Sartar, in 1497. She was also present when King Sartar went to the durulz in Duckpoint and made his promise to them. Elwina Alfgarsdöttir (a ancestor of the characters) was a housecarl of Queen Yenesting at this time.

Lunar Invasion

In 1602 the Lunars invaded the Kingdom of Sartar and the Lismelder fyrd rallied to King Salinarg. One third of the Lismelder fyrd was in Runegate Fort awaiting the main Lunar army's assault when it was attacked by zombies from the Upland Marsh. The Lismelder were to the fore, and expertly killed the undead. The next morning they fought off a Lunar infantry assault as well. However, that night they were unable to prevail when the Crimson Bat attacked the city. King Cullain Hammershand was killed fighting the Bat's priests, and less than two score Lismelder warriors escaped.

Such were their losses that the Lismelder were hardly involved in the fighting that followed, beyond some raids upon the Lunar garrison at Runegate. The final fall of Boldhome and the Death of Salinarg and his family was a great shock.

Since the Lunar occupation there has been little direct intervention in daily clan life. Lunar patrols are only rarely seen on the Good Ale Path, and then only in strength. Lunar taxes have been heavier, but not onerous, and these are collected by King Thanos and not by Lunar tax collectors. Lunar justice has yet to be put to the test, but if the Orlmarth/Greydog feud resurfaces it may yet be.

Clans of the Lismelder

The tribe is made up of eight clans, the Greydog, Goodsword, Marshedge, Poss, Lonendi, Bostrop, Goodweaver and Hillhaven. Most of the clans, or their descendants, settled the area with Queen Lismelder when she broke with her father's clan.

Within the Lismelder there are two loose rival clan groupings: the Marshedge/Goodsword/Greydog; and the Poss/Lonendi/Bostrop. With the exception of the Bostrop and Goodsword clans these groupings have existed ever since the tribe first

The Lismelder Tribal Council

The High Thirteen are:

- | | |
|-------------------------|--|
| 1. <i>Chief</i> | King Thanos, of Swordvale. |
| 2. <i>Humakt</i> | Holgir the Bold, Indrodar's Sword. |
| 3. <i>Urox</i> | Rulfgar the Berserk, Thane of the Goodsword clan. |
| 4. <i>Adventurous</i> | Webbed-Foot Walt, from Duckpoint.* |
| 5. <i>Thunderous</i> | Sturli Stormsbreath, Ex-Rainmaker of the Marshedge clan. |
| 6. <i>Issaries</i> | Bardour Bondsmith, Goldentongue of the Goodweaver Clan. |
| 7. <i>Lhankor Mhy</i> | Salokin Bluebeard, High Sage and Lawspeaker of the Goodsword Clan.** |
| 8. <i>Chalana Arroy</i> | Erin of the Healing Hands, High Healer and member of the Marshedge Clan. |
| 9. <i>Elmal</i> | Tarkeril Tenspear, Chieftain of the Lonendi clan. |
| 10. <i>Ernalda</i> | Casiandra Wisewoman, Earthwoman and wife to King Thanos. |
| 11. <i>Asrelia</i> | Tamera of the Hillhaven Clan, wife of Bofrost the Shaman. |
| 12. <i>Voria</i> | Salyn, daughter of Thanos. |
| 13. <i>Eurmal</i> | Brigpice the Fool, Trickster and Fool. |

Notes:

* Ever since the tribe placed itself under the protection of the durulz there has been a duck representative who has taken this position in the council. No one outside of the council really knows how much influence this duck has. Other tribes claim that he is the real leader of the council.

** Salokin is know as a noble and just man, it is said he models himself on Innar Lawspeaker. Some twenty years ago a hag cursed him and foretold that if ever he were to have a son then that son "would bring disgrace to his household, his clan and his tribe". Salokin has never married.

settled the Big Elm Valley with Queen Lismelder. The Hillhaven and Goodweaver clans prefer not to permanently side themselves with either grouping.

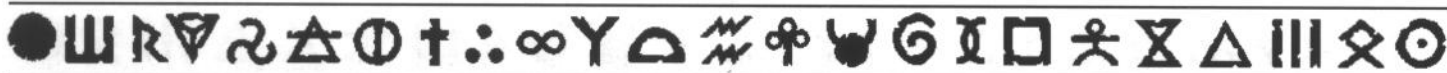
Since king Thanos has been the leader of the tribe the Marshedge/ Goodsword/Greydog have been in ascendance, and they enjoy the support of the neutral clans most of the time.

The Clans:

The Hillhaven Clan

The Hillhaven lived in their lands before Queen Lismelder led her tribe into the area. At first they fought with the new settlers, at increasing cost to themselves. Eventually they aligned themselves with the Lismelder when Kestin Greydog married the fair Aelfreda, daughter of the then chieftain of





the Hillhaven. The tragic death of that couple at the hands of Poss cattle raiders is the source of their hatred of the Poss.

To this day the Hillhaven deny the rights of the Lismelder king to ownership of their lands or their automatic support. So far, neither side has pushed their claim or needed to, but it does cause problems when pledges are required from their Clan Chieftain to a new Tribal King.

Bofrost is the current chieftain of the clan, he is a Breath Shaman of Umath. His age is unknown, although he looks about fifty. A lean, fit man, his skin is tanned, and he wears raven feathers in his hair. Bofrost is a quiet, confident man. He lives in no one place, but wanders the area, appearing in a given place with uncannily good timing. He is sometimes accompanied by an apprentice. Bofrost has no quarrels or rivalries; most people outside of the clan regard him as eccentric, and are uneasy around him.

Bofrost has spent all of his life at the foot of the Starfire Ridges, where he once protected a very important child. As a shaman he has befriended powerful local spirits, the spirit of Irnar Lawspeaker, and the Earth Twins who are minions of the Weeping Sisters.



The Bostrop Clan

Bostrop clan lands lie centred around Oldstream mill, south of Poss lands. Oldstream mill is a wood and bronze device built by Mostali, which grinds corn using water-power. Many locals are suspicious of it, saying that it was built without the consent of water spirits venerated in duck lands; the Goodweaver clan in particular have made a number of abortive attempts to burn it.

The mill is owned and run by the clan chief, Berga Bostrop, a plump, astute man, who grinds large quantities of corn in his strange machine, which he buys from local farmers and exports the flour to Sun County, Wilmskirk, and Tarsh. Berga's stone stead is the finest around, and resembles a Tarshite townhouse. Berga has married a woman from Tarsh, and through her is thought to have many connections with that land and the rebel stronghold of Wintertop. The Bostrop clan holds no position of King Thanos' clan council, and many suspect that it no longer owes allegiance to King Thanos, but to some city-bound authority.

Aside from Berga's house, the clan constitutes only five steads, although other buildings in the area house migrant workers who come from Tarsh or Sun County to work here. All of these buildings are located in Mill Village; Berga recently insisted that all the steads be moved together.

Berga administers all clan lands personally, and all clan members hold positions of responsibility relegated by him and receive payment determined by him.

The clan does not field any warriors but relies on mercenaries; usually recruited from Sun County.

A second mill is now under construction, and Berga's oldest son, Hegbert, is thought to be returning soon from school in Tarsh to administer the new area. Nobody knows what gods Berga follows; many think his ideas have been tainted by journeys to far off places (he sometimes mumbles about a place called Slon). One stead, the Chalkman stead, have rejected Berga as their chief, and align themselves with the Goodweavers.

Goodweaver Clan

This is the southern-most clan of the Lismelder tribe, and the largest. In some ways they are also the most insular. They are well placed on Sartar's Road and known for the quality of their weaving all over southern Sartar. Therefore, within the clan, industry is more valued than bravery or warrior ways, unlike the other Lismelder. This has led to some criticism in the past from the other clans, but since the Goodweavers are the market for most of the Lismelder wool this is often muted.

The current clan chief is Merglid Durulzpeaker, and he continues to foster the clan's close links with the Durulz. In the past this has proved to be very valuable in helping the Goodweavers in inter-clan and inter-tribal disputes.

The Goodweaver disputed the right of the Bostrop to build the mill at Bottom Stream, claiming that the Bostrop failed to consult the local water spirits and that the mill is a God Learner device. However the Goodweaver have had little success in their various attempts to burn the mill - a source of some hilarity amongst the warriors of the other clans.

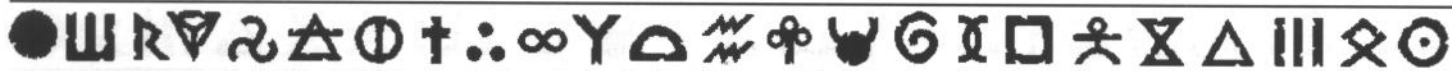
The Hodirsons have close links with the Goodweaver clan through Gorind Pangelsson's marriage to Leika, a daughter of Merglid Duck-Speaker.

Poss Clan

The Poss Clan has feuded with the Greydog for as long as anyone can remember. Each clan claims the feud started with a different event, but neither can really remember which came first (not that they would admit this). The Greydog clan claim that the feud began when the Poss stole Vortigen Greydog's first wife Ellena and married her to their chieftain. The Poss claim that it was Ellena's own choice to run away from her brutal husband.

The feud is not an all-out war between the clans. It is instead a series of small cattle raids on each other, usually without fatalities - surrender and ransom is preferable. Sometimes there is no activity for years (and even mutual, if suspicious, trade), at other times there can be almost continual raiding. In the latter case the Tribal King will usually attempt to intervene and prevent any escalation into all-out war.

Harvald the Hairy is the leader of the Poss, and in fact he can trace ancestry right back to Ellena Greydog. He has designs to be Tribal king, and is not averse to co-operating with the Lunars, if he thinks their aid will help him in his ambitions, or strengthen his clan.



The Poss are designed to be the villains of the peace, the bad-guys. The referee can use or abuse them as he sees fit. However, if they do link their fortunes with the Lunars their fortunes are likely to wax under the occupation, just as the Greydog's fortunes wane.

Lonendi Clan

The Lonendi are close supporters of the Poss, and have been since the time of Queen Lismelder. However, they are far more pious in their worship of Orlanth and far less at ease with the Lunar occupation than the Poss. Depending on how events unfold they might be persuaded to break their ancient and traditional ties with the Poss.

The Lonendi households are renowned for their woodworking throughout Sartar. The main village of the clan is known as Tenspear Village because many years ago, the clan founder Saronar Lonend won the right to build his stead on this land by wagering King Indrodar that he could craft 10 fine spears of Ironwood in a single day, and succeeding. He was known as Saronar Tenspear ever afterwards.

The Lonendi are lead by Tarkeril Tenspear, a wise and long-lived chieftain with a love of feasting and a girth to match. More details on the Lonendi clan are in **The Necromancer's Gift** scenario in the forthcoming Tales #19.

Marshedge Clan

The Marshedge are of the bloodline of Queen Lismelder's first Lawspeaker, Alvar the Humourless and his wife Callendra, the fifth daughter of Queen Lismelder. The clan suffered badly in the Duck Wars, but since then they have prospered, even in the shadow of the Marsh. The Marshedge are lead by an ex-tribal champion, Alfgar Grimblade.

Clansmen of the Marshedge are renowned for being excellent bogmen (whose special skill is **Clod-hopping**). They are well-versed in Marsh lore, and in the techniques necessary to survive in the Marsh. They have close links with the durulz of the Marsh.

Goodsword Clan

The Goodsword clan was founded by Indrodar Goodsword and his followers after the Duck Wars. Swordvale is the clan centre, it is an ancient hillfort. It is also the home of the Temple of Indrodar. Nearby is the holy place, Indrodar's Necklace.

The clan is ruled by King Thanos, who is also King of the Lismelder tribe. King Thanos holds his tribal councils at his own stead in Swordvale village. The village is also the main tribal market place.



Words from the Ploughman

by Neil Robinson

Triock...

tell me about being man?

Well boys, or should I say young men, so you think you know everything about being a man? It is easy, right? You make your name raiding the Poss and return to marry a comely lass from the Hillhaven clan. If that's what you think, you're in for a surprise.

The only true sign of a free man is ploughing your own hide of land. Land that you plough, harvest, and where your cattle graze. Without land you are almost a thrall, and may never take a wife. I reckon those huscarls have probably filled your heads about stories of warriors and heroes, but take it from me, women really like a man who ploughs the land, keeping them safe *and fed*.

All of you have worked the fields, tending the crops and weeding. But it is ploughing that I need to teach you before you can manage a stead. It is Barntar Orlanthsson who first taught us how to yoke the oxen, and the secret of the plough. Is it Barntar who convinced his mother Ernalda to let him break the earth with our bronze plough. He gave us the ploughing song that lets me work the entire day while Elmal crosses the sky. You seen a huscarl do *that!*?

So heed my warnings. Women may go off with warriors after a feast, but as a strong farmer with healthy cattle and fertile fields you are guaranteed of a warm bed through the bitterly cold winter. Think of that the next time you see the huscarls sleeping together in a pile in the chieftains stead.

Triock...

what does the Ploughman do?

Well, a great deal, of course. As the Greydog Ploughman, I will plough the fields for those who need more help or have no oxen of their own. I also advise Kornos on everything to do with the fields

and the farming so we always make the best use of the land and have a good harvest. Of course, Kerna and her Gyda also help with this, but sometimes they're just a bit too protective or stubborn. I also take the role of Barntar at our feasts and festivals, and organise the First Furrow and the Harvest Race.

Triock...

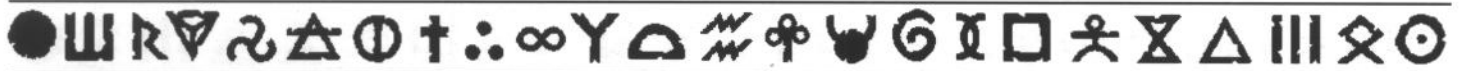
What do we do in winter?

Well, as the weather turns cold, we leave the fields and look forward to the long nights inside telling stories and waiting for spring. But there is one last thing we men must do. There is never enough fodder for our cattle, and foraging is harder once it started to snow. We must kill our excess cattle.

On a cloudy day we go outside pick the oldest and weakest cattle. Women cannot take part for Uralda is part of all of them, and she does not like what we must do. We tell the stories of Barntar's promise to Uralda about how he must kill her eldest so that the calves may live and be protected through the cold winter. We recite the lineage of each cow and sing the killing song before we kill it, ensuring that it will be remembered and its spirit lay to rest. The killing is as quick and painless as we can make it.

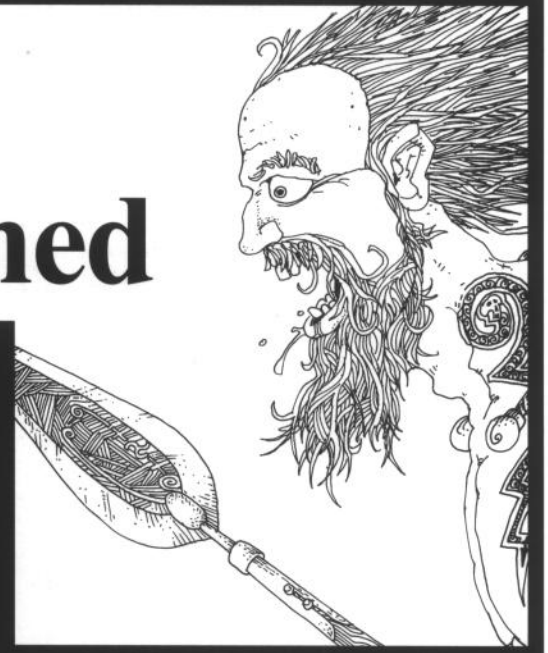
Each cow is carefully skinned, and the meat taken off. We cure the meat by smoking and salting, but after a good year there is too much meat to cure and we have to eat all we can. This is the best eating time of the year, not like that terrible spring stew we get before the winter wheat can be harvested.

Odayla Orlanthsson taught us how to hunt, and how to treat a skin afterwards with urine, salt, and smoke. The skins make the clothes you wear, your shoes, and we can always trade them for other goods. I always want to get some dyed cloth for my wife to make into a harvest dress. We keep the tendons and bones. The women also take some for their needs, but that is for them to tell you, and only if they want to.



How the Hill of Victory was Named

A Myth of Talastar by Stephen Martin



In the Golden Age the world was stagnant, and many people were oppressed. There were many rebels then, who had been sent to the edge of the world by the Emperor, so that they would not disturb the tyrant. But there was one rebel who could do more than just complain, and his name was Orlanth. Orlanth saw that the world would only get worse the longer the Emperor was allowed to rule, and so he led some of the rebels into the Imperial Palace, and slew the Evil Emperor. Thus he freed the world.

After this great victory, the world was much better. But many of the rebels went too far, and did things which were as bad as the things the Emperor had done. Gev and Farstankos travelled across the land, and wherever they went Gev ate all the food and Farstankos drank all the ale, and so the people were hungry and thirsty. Ygg Seastorm, Valind Winter Giant, and Gagarth Wild Wind blew across the world, destroying buildings and killing people just for the fun of being among the Vadrudi. Velet Dehori and Artia Nightdaughter moved across the sky and blocked out the light of the stars, and so the people were frightened and frozen. Orlanth saw that things needed to change again, and he recognised that he must be the one to do it. He decided that he must rule the world, as the Emperor had done. But Orlanth swore that he would not rule in the same way, because he did not wish to become another Evil Emperor.

Orlanth consulted with his thanes, Humakt Weaponthane, Arran Shieldthane, Mastakos Mover, and Lhankor Knowing, and they told him that he must go to the Imperial Palace and recover the Grand Order, so that he could rule the world as the Emperor had done. So Orlanth travelled to the centre of the world, for that is where the Throne of the Emperor sat, upon a tall hill.

When Orlanth arrived at the Imperial Palace, however, he saw that there were others there who had come to take the Grand Order. Orlanth saw them bickering and fighting, and knew that none of them was fit to rule the world with Justice and Honour.

He knew that he must fight each of them to prove that he was better suited to rule than they were, and so he stepped upon the hill without fear or boast.

When Orlanth entered the ancient throne room, the first to come against him was the Son of the Emperor, who claimed the right to his father's throne on the basis of blood. Orlanth admitted that the Son was of the blood of the Emperor, but denied that a fool should rule based upon the name of his father. Orlanth and the Son of the Emperor fought in single combat, and Orlanth defeated him, then took his weapons and armour as his prizes. "It takes more than noble blood to be a king," Orlanth told the Son of the Emperor, "though certainly one must be of the proper lineage. A king must also be strong and honourable." Orlanth then recited his ancestry to prove that he was eligible to rule the world. As proof of his honour gave his foe back his armour and weapons, though he kept the Lightning Spear as a reminder of his victory, for both of them. The defeated god returned to his proper realm, and never again seriously troubled Orlanth.

The next foe to come against Orlanth was the Bitter Queen. She claimed the throne by right of possession, for she had sat upon it while Orlanth was busy fighting the Son of the Emperor, and had summoned her kinsfolk to support her claim to being the Queen of the World. Orlanth called his companions and followers to support him as well, and they were so numerous that the Bitter Queen's kinsmen left one by one, like the snow melting before the Springtime Sun. At last the Bitter Queen was left alone, and in order to preserve her life and freedom she bowed down before Orlanth, and acknowledged him as her lord. Orlanth took her fealty, but exiled her to the top of the world, where he would be able to see her before she could come close enough to seriously trouble him again. He spoke to the Bitter Queen, saying "A person must do more than just sit on a throne to be a king. Indeed," Orlanth said to her, "A king does not need a throne at all."

And with that statement Orlanth cast down the ancient Throne of Judgement, so that no other upstart gods would come there to cause him trouble.

The last foe to come against Orlanth was the Bearer of Hateful Death, who had defeated the ten Sons of the Emperor. He claimed the throne by right of conquest, and was angry with Orlanth for having destroyed it. Orlanth admitted that the dark god was a mighty warrior, but denied that a brute should rule based upon the size of his weapons. The enraged god rushed at Orlanth, who stepped aside and let him fall among the scattered treasures. This enraged the god further, and it was an easy matter for Orlanth to turn his rage against him, and defeat him. Orlanth gave him a great wound, not because he was fearful that the dark god would continue to attack him, but because he was concerned for the safety of his followers.

Orlanth addressed the Bearer of Hateful Death: "It takes more than strength of arms and victory in battle to make a king, though certainly violence is always an option, and a king must be able to fight his enemies. A king must also be calm and clever, and wise." And as proof of his cleverness, Orlanth tricked the dark god into leaving the Palace, and locked him out where he could do little harm. The defeated god left in shame, but never forgave his defeat, and his followers trouble the followers of Orlanth still, though not seriously.

Then Orlanth proved his wisdom, for he knew that he must have good companions and advisers around him, so that he would not become another tyrant. He made his Ring upon that hill, and gathered his companions around him so that they could give him advice when he needed to remember to be honourable, noble, and wise. And ever since it has been called the Hill of Victory, for Orlanth proved his right to rule the world there.

(More Hill of Gold Myths can be found in *Enclosure 2* and *The Book of Drastic Resolutions, Volume Darkness*, both available now.)



The Greydog Campaign

(for GM's Only!)

by David Hall, with Jon Quaife

The Greydog campaign is designed to be a low(ish) level clan-based campaign. The purpose is to ground the players in a cultural setting, giving them a believable background, family, supporters, and ingrained biases and prejudices - before they head off on a world-spanning (and no doubt god-level) Hero Wars game!

Below are some ideas for a limited campaign arc. They are distillation of events from Jon Quaife's original campaign, and the long-running Megacorp house campaign. The article also draws on the Sartar and Dragon Pass events described in *King of Sartar*, *Different Worlds* #28 and various *Wyms Footnotes* issues.



Lismelder Chronology

Year: 1609

Events in Sartar & Dragon Pass

The Boar Hunt. The Tarshite Army, supported by clansmen from Sartar, invades the Stinking Forest in order to end tusk rider raids. Little success is achieved.

Clan and tribal Events

Initiation. The characters are initiated into the clan. See accompanying box.

The Righteous Wind. In late Earth Season Edruf Longnose, a leader in the Righteous Wind movement arrives in Greydog Village seeking Orlanthe support from the southern tribes against Harvar Ironfist and his Yelmalions. See the upcoming *Righteous Wind* scenario in *Tales* #20.

Year: 1610

Events in Sartar & Dragon Pass

The Lunar Governor General of Dragon Pass, Euglyptus the Fat, imposes harsh new laws and taxes on the clans and tribes of Sartar. Friendly tribes are spared.

The Lunar army invades Prax, defeats the Praxians at the Battle of Moonbroth, and captures the city of Pavis.

Clan and tribal Events

The Lismelder tribe is not considered a "friendly" tribe by the Lunar administration. King Thanos is forced to levy additional tribute from the clans causing much discontent amongst the Poss and Lonendi clans.

Goodweaver clan warriors make another attempt to burn down Bostrop mill, but are fought off by Yelmalion mercenaries (from Sun County) employed by Berga Bostrop.

Year: 1611

Events in Sartar & Dragon Pass

The Righteous Wind. In 1606 many Orlanthe priests in the Far Point region began agitating for the violent expulsion of Yelmalion worshippers. In Earth season of 1611 many tribal moots broke up in disorder. The Orlanthe supporters raised the Righteous Wind and take up arms. In Storm season, Harvar Ironfist, a noble of the Vantaros tribe, attacks the Orlanthe in Alda-Chur with his Gagarth worshipping housecarls and destroys his rivals inside the Orlanthe holy site. He makes himself Prince of the Alda-Churi, and declares the Far Point part of Lunar Tarsh.

Published Sources of Adventures

There are published sources of information and adventures which were designed for or adaptable to the Greydog Campaign.

Apple Lane. What self-respecting group hasn't wiped out Whiteye and his bandits, and gained 2 pt. skin from killing the Great Lizard Mother? In the Greydog campaign the PCs became initiates of the Newtling cult and visit the caves for strange newtling ceremonies...

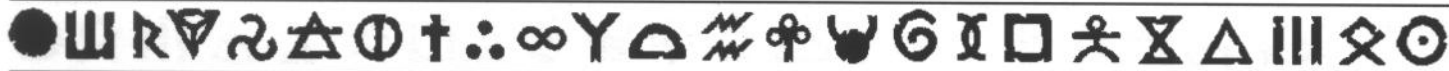
Elder Secrets. Most of the scenarios can be adapted for the Greydog campaign.

Vikings. The Avalon Hill Vikings supplement has plenty of ideas that can be used, especially the sections on the Hunt, Thing, and Raid.

Tales #7. The Grey Hare's Riddle scenario is set in Greydog lands. The events might take place at any time during the campaign. This scenario will be reprinted in *Best of Tales*.

Wyms Footprints. Includes details of Starbrow's Rebellion, the Temple of the Wooden Sword, and the Sartar High Council.

The forthcoming *Tales* #19 & #20 will include the Necromancer's Gift scenario (in the Upland Marsh) and the Righteous Wind scenario.



Clan Initiation

Introduction

Initiation into adulthood and initiation into the ways of Orlanth are one in the same. The worship of King Orlanth and his pantheon is the very fabric of Orlanthi society, and therefore the benefits of participating in society go hand-in-hand with his worship.

Initiation rites confer adulthood upon the children (not-adults) of the tribe. It is an important act and households gather to celebrate it every 2-3 years, when there are enough children of sufficient age and readiness to warrant the ceremony. Initiation usually occurs between the ages of 15 and 17. Refusal to be initiated is regarded as a serious and unnatural act. The child who refuses is regarded as a trouble-maker and has a stark choice, either to remain a child for the rest of their life, with no responsibility or respect, or leave the clan forever.

There are separate rites for men and women, and only after these basic rites have been followed can any alternative gender role be considered. The initiation rites of the Heortling males are taken from the myth of Heort and Second Son.

Among the Lismelder and the tribes local to them, the rites are similar. With adulthood comes the rights and responsibilities of that status, and the mystical knowledge and understanding preserved and passed on since Godtime.

The Test

Before the elders will confer adult status upon a child, they must be satisfied that it is prudent to do so. Maturity and responsibility go hand in hand, and an adult's actions will always affect the hearth and clan which he is at once supported by and supportive to.

In the Greydog campaign this readiness for initiation was tested through a short prequel scenario where the PCs were petulant children who became lost in the Hare Woods. They had to outwit the spirit Greyhare, avoid and escape a few Colymar hunters (led by young Blackmor the Rabid), and warn their clan elders.

Male Initiation

The best source for the Orlanthi initiation ceremony/HQ is Greg Stafford's excellent, but alas unpublished, *Harmast Saga*. Until this is printed here are a few ideas/events an initiation scenario might include:

Kidnapping

The kidnapping of the children (the initiands) at night by "enemies", accompanied by the wailing of the clan women for their lost children. In fact, the kidnapers are clansmen, who take them to a remote place.

Endurance Race

An endurance race, following Second Son. The winner of the race may win some magical benefit (as might the 7th placed, and 14th, etc.)

Humakt

A meeting with the god Humakt, who draws a line with his sword across which no child can pass. All who cross the line leave childhood behind.

Umath's Camp

Spend time at Umath's Camp on the heroplane. There the clansmen and priests explain the myths of Orlanth. Some of these might be re-enacted instead. At some point the PCs should be split up and have to face chaos alone in their own version of I Fought We Won (perhaps when the camp is attacked and destroyed by undead zombies). What they learn from this encounter may dictate their future occupation or might be an obtuse campaign secret planted by the GM.

Orlanth's Hall

The successful initiate may find himself in Orlanth's Hall (way towards the back, of course) being toasted by his dead relatives before he returns to the mundane plane. A very lucky initiate or future hero might be toasted by one of Orlanth's famous heroes, or even meet the momentary gaze of Orlanth himself.

Drunkeness

Return to the clan an adult, to get feted and very drunk!

Harvar orders the Far Point clans to purge themselves of all Orlanth worshippers. Many turn to the worship of Ernalda and thus escape persecution, but the ruling bloodlines have to submit, or be killed, enslaved, or forced to flee. A flood of refugees streams south.

Clan and tribal Events

Refugees from Far Point seek refuge in Lismelder lands. See the forthcoming *Righteous Wind* scenario in Tales #20.

Year: 1612

Events in Sartar & Dragon Pass

It is a quiet year across the whole of Dragon Pass.

Clan and tribal Events

Bofrost the Shaman, Chieftain of the Hillhaven clan, arrives in Greydog village. He invites the characters to join in a shamanic ceremony. The characters may meet their ancestors and question them (though they cannot contact Indrodar Greydog). One or more may see a vision of the events to come next year. This might be done through the vision of a chess or gaming board with the main leaders of the rebellion and their Lunar and North Sartar opponents as the pieces on the board (some pieces may be off the board or lying on their side). The pieces could be described but the real identities not named.

Year: 1613

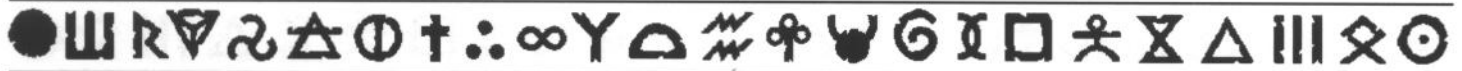
Events in Sartar & Dragon Pass

Starbrow's Rebellion. An attempt to defile the Hill of Orlanth Victorious provokes rebellion in Sartar and the Lunars are initially defeated and forced to retire to Alda-Chur. However, Fazzur Wideread takes command, besieges the Sartarite rebels in Jonstown, and forces them to make terms and return home. See *Wyrrms Footprints* and *King of Sartar* for details.

Clan and tribal Events

At first King Thanos holds back from sending warriors until the High Council calls for a full muster. However, the Greydog clan (and other clans) allow only volunteers to go. These volunteers take part in the Battle of Hofstaring's Flood. The full Lismelder muster arrives in time for the siege of Jonstown and helps to drive off the Lunar Full Moon assault.

After a treaty is made with Fazzur Wideread the fyrd returns to Lismelder lands, except for the leaders of the original volunteers who are exiled.



Year: 1614

Events in Sartar & Dragon Pass

After the Sartarite defeat the influence of the Lunar occupiers begins to be felt to a far greater extent than before. Lunar Dukes are appointed to be overseers of tribal lands, to whom all taxes are paid. Lunar troops are no longer confined to the main towns and major roads, but are garrisoned in the smaller settlements and seen on the lesser roads.

Those tribes that were involved in the rebellion are affected to the greatest extent, with private villas and manors being built on their best clan lands and occupied by Lunar settlers. Much of the labour for these manors is provided by enslaved Sartarites.

The Lunars blame the ducks for Starbrow's Rebellion and declare them outlaw. They announce that their new taxes can be reduced by bringing in duck heads. The ducks flee Sartar or take refuge around Yellowflower island. Duck hunts into the Upland Marsh become common.

Clan and tribal Events

The Goodweaver clan refuses to hunt ducks, as do the Marshedge and Lonendi clans. However, the Poss and Hillhaven join in the Duck Hunts. The tribal council is split by this issue.

General Lergius Cassius becomes the Duke of Duckmarch and he builds Crescent Manor on Bostrop and Goodweaver lands.



Year: 1615

Events in Sartar & Dragon Pass

The Lunar Army invades the Grazelands after years of Grazer raiding into Tarsh. Aided by Ironhoof and his beastmen followers, the Grazers manage to evade the Lunar Army.

Meantime, the Volsaxi use this opportunity to raid into southern Sartar. The Lunars have recruit and pay local tribal levies to stop these raids. This works, though at great expense.

In Colymar lands Blackmor the Peaceable, a convert to the Lunar Way, seizes the kingship of the tribe and purges it of his sister's followers.

Clan and tribal Events

A Lunar delegation arrives in Greydog village and seeks mercenaries to fight the Volsaxi who are raiding in the south. The players must decide whether to send any of the Greydog fyrd to help them. The Volsaxi are an older enemy of Sartar than the Lunars so most tribes send mercenaries (see Corwen's Saga in *Tales #6* and *Best of Tales*).

The Temple of the Wooden Sword attempts an assault on the Isle of the Dead in the Upland Marsh (see *Wyrms Footprints*). They do not consult the Indrodari or take any Lismelder bogmen or scouts and thus their attack fails dismally.

The Harvest Bride Race

The Harvest Bride is chosen by the Earth Mother, Kerna Highblossom and her acolytes at the secret women's ceremonies on Waterday, Fertility Week of Earth season. The candidate must be a young woman, initiated no more than seven years before, and unmarried. She personifies all of the best characteristics of a future Mother Ernalda. Newly initiated clanswomen are preferred. A secondary, but still important, consideration is bloodline. Where possible, the Harvest Bride is of a different bloodline each year.

Candidates for Harvest King

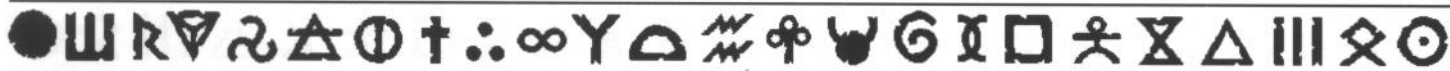
These must be young men, not initiated more than seven years before, of a different bloodline to the Harvest Queen. There is actually no requirement for the candidates to be of the same clan - anyone who can recite the Meeting Formula may be a candidate. Often clansmen from other friendly clans will seek to win the hand of the harvest bride in order to tie the fortunes of the clans together in friendship - and for the prestige gained from this. Rarely, enemy clans will send candidates to try and steal the harvest bride's

hand, and thereby curse the Greydog clan for a year, while increasing their own fortunes.

The Race

The race starts on Tree Hill with a sprint down to the Fox Stream. Then the runners either risk a fall by jumping the stream or carefully (and slowly) crossing it. Then comes the dash for the Old Track through the woods. At this point friends of rival clansmen may lie in wait to trip up or obstruct some of the likely winners. Then it is a long run down the Old Track to the small wooden bridge over the Elm Stream. Only one person can cross at a time, with the alternative being to wade through the stream. The runners must now run to the Big Elm and touch it before going on (there are observers who will shout if someone fails to do this). Lastly, there is the final leg into the village, with the winner being the first to steal a kiss from the Harvest Bride - so that sometimes the first one to arrive is not necessarily the winner if there is little time between them and their pursuers!

The harvest King and Queen are then married.



What Triock Says...

by David Hall
and Jon Quaife

Triock...

Who are the Greydog Clan?

We are the Greydog clan. Lornar Greydog came here a long time ago and lived in Big Elm Valley. He swore loyalty to Queen Lismelder and fought bravely for her, in return she gave him the Brave Swan Brooches which Kornos Longbrewer, the chief of our clan, wears and which are a token of our mutual loyalty. Much of the land that you see from here, the Greydog Inn, across the Big Elm Valley, supports our clans needs.

I am Triock Straightblade, the Clan Ploughman. My brother, Lonin the Bearded, is the head of our household and bloodline. Our bloodline, the Hodirsons, is quite big, but the biggest households in the clan are the Osgosi household and the Longbrewer household. The Osgosi are found all over our clan territory, but most of them live at the Two-Floors hearth; one of them is a weaponmaster in Apple Lane. The Longbrewers have run the Greydog Inn and lived in Greydog village for as long as we have been in these lands.

The Gorin household are clanmembers of long-standing, although their bloodline descends from one of Lornar's thanes, not his own kin.

Triock...

Tell me about other tribes?

The Colymar live to the east, across the Starfire Ridges. They are the biggest tribe in all of Sartar, and many fought bravely against the Lunars. However, often they have used their size to bully smaller tribes such as ours. The Orlmarth Colymar are the worst; they have stolen parts of the Starfire Ridges which we own. The Colymar leader is a warrior called Kallai Rockbuster.

The ducks live to the south. They hate Delecti and his undead zombies and are brave against them. They are a peaceful people, except in times of war, when they are ferocious. Some people think their leader is a shaman named Joseph Greenface.

You may have heard of the Telmori. These are not natives but invaders. They usually fight against us or just for themselves. These werewolves are under the influence of the Red Moon, and should never be trusted.

All the tribes north of the Dragon River used to be our allies, but this is no longer so. They do not share our language, and many of their leaders have given up Orlanth in favour of Lunar gods.

Year: 1616

Events in Sartar & Dragon Pass

This year the Volsaxi launched further raids on the tribes of the Wilmskirk Confederation. However, this year the Lunar Army was ready for them and launched their own raids into Volsaxi lands.

In Sambari lands outlaws from the Fireball clan ambushed a Lunar column, raised a minor rebellion, but were defeated when they foolishly gave battle.

Clan and tribal Events

Thanos, King of the Lismelder tribe, dies and must be replaced. The Lunars favour the chieftain of the Poss, Harvald the Hairy. He is supported by the Lonendi clan, and by the Bostrop & Goodweavers, who hope he will persuade the Lunars to abandon Crescent Manor. Unless the players can find an alternative, and persuade enough clans to support him or her, then Harvald will be elected at the tribal moot.

The Colymar Orlmarth clan uses the opportunity of Thanos' death to seek judgement from the Lunar authorities on the ownership of the parts of the Starfire Ridges that they dispute with the Greydog clan. The Greydog's must seek tribal support and defend their case.

Year: 1617

Events in Sartar & Dragon Pass

In Heortland the illness of the king leads to an attempt by his internal enemies to seize the throne. After a short period of civil unrest these enemies are defeated by loyal forces commanded by Sir Richard the Tiger-Hearted, a mercenary knight from the land of Seshnela.

Clan and tribal Events

This year, during the boy's initiation, there is an attack by zombies and other undead horrors that kills many of the boys before they can become adults. It is a horrific event that causes much grief and anger in the clan. This is a culmination of many years of increasingly dangerous attacks during the initiation rites. Is Delecti behind these attacks? Or are the Lunars using their heroquesting powers to subvert the Greydog and Lismelder initiation rites?

Year: 1618

Events in Sartar & Dragon Pass

The Dundealos tribe rebels against Lunar rule when a Lunar Tax collector rapes the daughter of the tribal king. The Lunar Army makes an example of the tribe, most of whom were either killed, enslaved or forced to flee to their kin in the Poljoni of Prax. Those that remain are forcibly

Clan Events and Scenario Hooks

On clan market day Finefriend Fozzlebeak, a duck Issaries Goldentongue from Duck Point visits and brings exotic goods imported all the way from Nochet in the Holy Country.

The players find a prize bull wandering in the Lonendi Woods. The Poss have recently had their prize bull stolen and blamed the Greydog clan.

Bestaf Longbrewer asks the players to go to Runegate Fort and return three barrels of spoiled Bulsters Brew sold to him by Baldric Beerswiller of the Weeping Swan Inn. He demands a refund.

Uroxi berserks employed Kornos Longbrewer take exception to Fergus Windbag's piping in the Greydog Inn and start to beat him up.

At the Clan Moot, Foria, daughter of Kuran and Greta says that she has been beaten by her husband, Idborg of the Longbrewer household (though there are no obvious bruises), and spurned for a thrall. She declares the marriage over but wants her bride price of four cows returned as recompense. Idborg claims that she neglected their cows and tried to poison him. The players must help broker an acceptable solution.

Farangelder the Honest, an Indrodari Sword, comes to the village to visit old friends and seek out warriors who will devote themselves to Humakt and the destruction of the Upland Marsh.

Flavius Ginnicus, the Lunar Imperial Tax collector for district 453, visits Greydog lands accompanied by Lunar bodyguards. He inspects the lands, and especially the Greydog Inn, and then leaves.

Brigpice the Fool steals the Brave Swan Brooches from Kornos Longbrewer's stead. The whole clan must find them and bring Brigpice to Kornos to be punished.

The Orlmarth clan of the Colymar tribe launches a raid across the Starfire Ridges and attacks the Tallstone Stead.

A band of renegade Gagarthi are hiding out in the Starfire Ridges and have already stolen sheep and badly beaten some young shepherds. There are rumours of evil and horrific ceremonies and almost everyone is afraid to go out at night lest they be taken by the Wild Hunt.



converted to the Lunar Way and joined by Lunar settlers from Tarsh and Aggar. A new tribe is formed called the Enstalos.

In Heortland the king finally dies without heir. After a brief period of civil war (including an attempt by Broyan of the Volsaxi to seize the throne), Sir Richard the Tiger-Hearted emerges as the new King of Heortland, supported by his western mercenaries and loyal lieutenants, Sir Gerard de Montanpein and Sir Mularik Ironeye. Devout priests from Seshnela set about converting the land from the Aeolian heresy and into the worship of Saint Rokar. Their efforts are peaceful at first, but later they turn to fire and the sword.

Clan and tribal Events

This year the harvest is bad and many in the clan suffer from hunger and starvation. Great prayers are made to Ernalda and her kin. Late in Earth season the players will find a dun cow wandering in the Starfire Ridges. The cow is full of milk, and however much they milk her there is always more available.

Harvald the Hairy hears of this miracle cow and sends his mother, a crone of Asrelia, to investigate (in the name of the King of the Lismelder tribe if he was elected). She brings one of the treasures of the Poss clan, a milk pale. If she is allowed to milk the dun cow then she will milk her dry since the pale is magical and bottomless. Otherwise the cow will sustain the Greydog clan through the winter.



Year: 1619

Events in Sartar & Dragon Pass

The Lunar Army invades Volsaxi lands, defeats King Broyan, and forces him to take refuge in Whitewall with his remaining forces. Half of the army moves on, captures Smithstone, and then port of Karse.

At Whitewall the Lunar commander uses the Crimson Bat against the defenders, but it is repulsed and runs amok amongst the Lunar forces. The Lunar commander is replaced by Tatius the Bright.

Sartarite levies join in the Lunar invasion of their old enemy's lands, though they are paid much lower mercenary rates than in 1615.

Clan and tribal Events

The Greydog clan must decide whether to send mercenaries to help the Lunars in their invasion of Volsaxiland. If they go they will be involved in one abortive assault on Whitewall, the storming and bloody sack of Smithstone, and the siege and capture of Karse.

If still alive, the dun cow becomes pregnant and bears a fine white bullock, but one that is impotent. The clan Lawspeaker sees this as a great omen for the future, and perhaps for the whole future of Sartar. What should the players do with the white bullock? Sacrifice it? Take it to Whitewall? Take it to Windtop? Or embark on a sacred Ulerian quest make it potent again? Their success or failure may be an allegory for the Lismelder tribe's fortunes, and the future of Sartar.

Year: 1620

Events in Sartar & Dragon Pass

This year the Lunar Army advances into Hendrikiland and defeats the foreigner-king Richard the Tiger-Hearted. The land breaks into its old tribal and religious segments. The Lunars occupy the Hendriki capital, while their Holy Country allies occupy the cities in the south. Much of the countryside remains free and rebellious.

Clan and tribal Events

Kornos Longbrewer, the Greydog clan chieftain, dies. His nephew, Kestin Longbrewer, is expected to succeed him unopposed, as is customary. However, surprisingly, another candidate is put forward by Snorri's Stead...

Stayed tuned for more Greydog information, both later on in this issue and also in the upcoming Tales #19, the Upland Marsh and Undead Special.

DH&JQ

More Triock Says...

Triock... What are Orlanthi?

We are the children of Orlanth and Ernalda and their brethren, free like the winds, and mighty. Ours are the six virtues: Courage, Wisdom, Generosity, Justice, Honour, and Piety.

One thing you should know also: we always fix what we have made wrong. We care for ourselves and the world, and we take responsibility for our errors. We can break and we can fix. We are powerful, and we are responsible.

Triock...

How do we dress?

Everybody has at least a set of working clothes made from leather or linen, and a set of special clothes.

Work clothes consist of a sleeved or sleeveless shirt, tied across with thongs, breeches held up by a cord, and perhaps a hooded cloak fastened with a clasp. We often braid our hair and colour our skin with tattoos of magic woad. Women sometimes wear breeches, but more often a long tunic with a cord belt.

Dress clothes are made of fine linen decorated with furs and coloured things. Lined clothes, exotic furs, and fancy stitching or dyed colours cost lots of money.

For jewellery we wear necklaces, brooches, bracelets, and finger rings. Men wear arm bands, women wear ear rings. Thanes and chieftains may wear a torc.

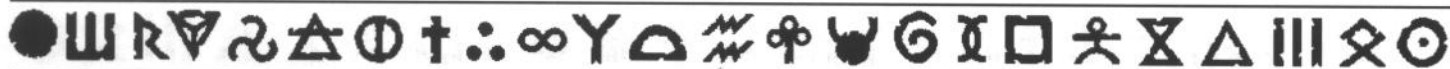
Triock...

What customs are important to us?

Understand that custom is a word invented by cloistered sages. What is important is law, given to us by Orlanth and overseen by Lhankor Mhy, god of Wisdom and Lawspeaking.

Local disputes are mostly dealt with by the clan jurors. When somebody is in dispute there must be witnesses to take oath in favour or against the plaintiff, and jurors to see that all is done according to the Law. Olaf is the juror in your stead. Any disputes that cannot be decided by jurors must be taken to our local meeting at Goodtalk Stone. All those who are old enough for weapontake judge the case.

Issues and celebrations out of our locality occur at various places. Matters of Law are overseen by the Clan Council, which consists of Chief Kornos, The Champion, The Ploughman, The Earth Woman, the Lawspeaker (who is Ornar Greyman from Tallstone Stead), the Goodvoice, and the Brewer.



The Crowning of a King of the Lismelder

by Martin Laurie



No King of the Lismelder is said to be fully crowned without passing the Swiftmess of Sword or the Silent Word rituals of Indrodar Greydog.

The Swiftmess of Sword

A Lismelder King must be a warrior and hold the respect of the Indrodari. No man who cannot fight can ever hold the following of such a warlike folk. Though the King is never Indrodari, he must be a leader and fighter of renown in his own right. The Swiftmess of Sword measures this.

The ritual is divided into three parts...

The first is the Slash. The applicant leads his warriors in a raid upon an enemy. The foe is usually a current one but any raid upon Delecti is considered a sign of would-be greatness in the applicant. If the raid succeeds then the Indrodari know that the applicant can lead the tribe to war. Note, as most surrounding tribes and potential foes usually know of this ritual from past experience, the opposition to this act is never light and the danger is always quite real.

The second is the Parry. After the Slash, the foe launches the inevitable counterattack. Here the applicant shows their ability by defeating the attack and saving the tribe from serious harm. As the counterattack is usually in response to the Slash, it is usually quite strong and so the applicant must be wily and brave indeed to defeat it.

Finally the Thrust shows the warlord in the applicant. He has led a raid and shown his skills in defence. Now he must defeat a major enemy force. Usually this is a response to the counterattack caused by the Slash part of the ritual. A battle of reasonable size must be fought and won by the applicant in which they must show their personal prowess. Challenging enemy champions or leaders and triumphing brings great blessings to the tribe in this part of the ritual and gives the tribe magical aid in any further conflicts with that foe.

Note: Because of the often repetitive nature of this whole ritual, a system of weregeld has grown between the Lismelder and the surrounding tribes to compensate them for loss. If the foe is not an Orlanthe tribe or is an

enemy tribe, this is ignored. In times of peace, and during the reign of the Sartar Kings and the Lunar governors, weregeld was normal for such tests. Eventually the Ritual was seen as a positive way to give warriors of both tribes practice while causing few long-term feuds.

The Silent Word

A king of the Lismelder who wishes the following of the Indrodari must pass their test of truth. He must show his worth and justice. He must be honest and forthright. This test shows all the tribe and the gathered Indrodari that he is a rightful king.

The ritual questions must be answered without pause or untruth in a loud and clear voice. Any lie will cause the applicant to suddenly lose their voice as if speech were severed from them. These questions all relate to the survival of the tribe and the role the Indrodari have in it. Examples would be:

“Will you stand as Indrodar did against the Marsh, should Delecti come again?”

“Indrodar made us a weapon against the horrors of undeath: will you keep it sharp?”

“If we stand by you in all matters of your rule, will you stand by us in all matters of honour and justice for the tribe?”

The ritual also binds the applicant. Should he be successful in his bid to become king and should the Indrodari concur, the answers bind them in oath. If he breaks his oath-answer to any of the questions asked, he will be struck by the Silent Word and will be unable to speak. The Indrodari would naturally know of such treachery soon after it happens. This has never occurred to any king who has passed the Silent Word test of the temple of Indrodar.



More Words from the Ploughman

by Neil Robinson

Triock... Tell me about First Furrow?

It's the wise farmer who prepares long before First Furrow. During the long winter nights you takes time to sharpen the bronze of the plough and work the leather harnesses so they are supple and strong. My plough has been in the stead since before my grandfather, and I plan to see my grandson using it one day. You must make sure that the two teams of oxen are healthy too, taking them out during the day to try and find extra forage beneath the snow. They cannot live by just what we have harvested. It takes four to pull a plough, but they can only work half a day before they must eat again. If both sets are too tired I'll have to hitch up a team of Uroxi!

In Sea Season we have First Furrow, the day we turn over the first clods of soil. This is one of the most sacred of days for Barntar, as we re-enact the stories of yoking the Bull, getting the blessing of Ernalda, and ploughing the first furrow of the year. Some you may get a chance to compete in the First Furrow Race to gain the blessing of Kerna, the Earthmother. Unmarried men try to be the first person to finish ploughing one of Chief Kornos' fields. I won it three times myself. This is about the same time that all the calves are born, and we thank Uralda that they are healthy and strong.

By Fire Season all the land must be ploughed and the crops sowed. Fire Season is a good time. It's a chance to travel to Runegate Fort for trading, or to another clan to try and find you unmarried men a wife. We must also get ready for the harvest, cleaning out the sheds and storage pits. And you cannot forget that our cattle need to be herded and watched. Boys can manage sheep, but we must always watch our cattle lest the Poss or Orlmarth try to steal them. Of course, we may end up trying to get some of their cattle ourselves.

Triock... What happens at Harvest time?

Harvest is a time of hard work and celebration. Everyone helps out - even those lazy huscarls lend a hand. Once the crops are brought in we have huge feast celebrating the bounty of Ernalda and thanking Barntar for grain we have collected. The women get to thresh the grain and keep it save. They always hide enough away in case the winter wheat is poor.

We also have the Harvest Race when unmarried young men, like yourselves, run from Tree Hill, to the Big Elm, and into the village to win the hand of the Harvest Bride. I won that race when I was a young man, and though I was only wed to her for a year, the harvest the next year was the best anyone can remember...

Notes from Nochet

by MOB (with Trevor Ackerly, Phil Anderson, Phil Green, David Hall & Tim Leask)

[XXIX.10-drome] Excerpts from *Lucky Phil's Guide to the Nochet Hippodrome: Tips and Tricks for the Prospective Punter*.

By ancient edict, women in Nochet are forbidden to gamble; ironically, also by ancient edict, the Asrelia cult controls almost all financial matters in the city, and gambling is in the crones' remit. As a consequence of this, those few male (eunuch) members of this cult have become immensely rich running the huge betting ring at the Hippodrome. Of course, just because they are forbidden doesn't mean women don't make wagers: they simply get a male companion or servant to lay the bet for them, as I have done many times.

Rumours

Contributors:

Simon Bray, Nick
Brooke, Nick
Davison, Greg Fried,
David Hall, Rick
Meints, Sandy
Petersen, Nils
Weinander



Rumour

Indicators:

- T True
- F False
- M So general as to be meaningless.
- R May or may not be true at the referee's option.
- B Generally true, but with a substantial false component.
- A Too awful to even think about.

The island Mokato is in fact the ruins of the palace of the Golden Emperor. The crystal spires earn it the name "The Jewelled Island". T

Curious Durulz or Keets peering round corners are known as Peeking Ducks A

No one knows this, but when Indrodar went into the Marsh to free Queen Lismelder, she was no zombie. In fact, she was an undead Daughter of Darkness and a lover of Delecti. T/A

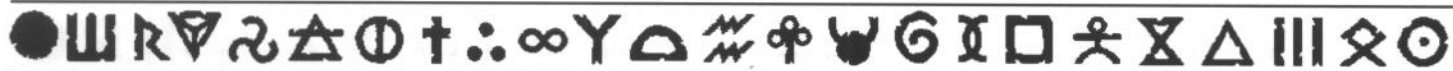
No living being may set foot on Vithela. B

A species of beings related to the Gold Wheel Dancers resides on Vithela, and occasionally ventures into the nearby seas. T

The favourite musical group amongst Orlanthi Storm Bull's is Uroxi Music. B

The leader of the Amazons of Trowjang is known as "She Who Must Be Obeyed". B

Some Dragonewts are willing to trade glass flasks of their favoured drink made from Mezcal. It is imbibed during their unfathomable rituals that include strange dances and an act known only as "swallowing the wyrm". A



How Gorangi Vak Became King

by Carl Pates



In the days before the Seas were Closed, when the Black Castle still cast its great shadow across the land, there came a time when the clans of Heort were restless and troubled, and fell to quarrelling among themselves. They were ruled by false kings who knew little of wisdom, fairness, or honour, and so the land was rent by suffering and the sword.

To the north ruled Hraglad the Angry, a fearless chieftain of Urox, who daily fought the foul chaos that seeped from the bottom of the Great Footprint. He was famous for the slaying of Urgsaat, a two-headed, three-armed demon, that had ate seven steeds in a single day. Hraglad smashed one head and burned the other, and dragged the blackened skull back as a grisly trophy to hang in his hall. He had little liking for the duties of a true king, so his lands became wild and unruly, but he claimed no man could tame the Bull and so he would never be tamed either, and there were none who dared oppose him.

Bad Lhoke was the king of the tribe who lived at the end of the Mountains of Storm. He killed his brother Bad Jhorok, who was king before him, but proved to be a worse ruler than his sibling, and soon there was no honour or justice anywhere. He held power by the strength of the evil men who formed his bodyguard and whose loyalty he bought with the spoils of his tyranny. It was said his court paid more tribute to Gagarth than to Orlanth and his false godi grew fat and greedy on the taxes extorted from his ill-treated subjects. He swore he would rip the heart from any who sought to challenge him, and cast their souls away to howl forever, lost among the cold mountain peaks.

Proud Stanolf Stanolfsson ruled those who lived in the valleys below the mountains, but he was soon known as Rash Stanolf after he impaled Old Malin Six-Words, a renowned Kolat godi, in a fit of temper. With his dying breath Old Malin used his Seventh Word to curse the king with the fury of Stone-Breaker, a Umbroli of great strength, and bound servant of the murdered priest. Every year, on the anniversary of Malin's death, the mighty sylph would sweep across the mountains hurling huge rocks down to smash and destroy the halls of the king and his friends. On one occasion three godi and half the king's household were crushed when they attempted to lift the curse, and Stanolf himself was sorely wounded and had to be carried back on the shields

of his men. After that he was called Flat Stanolf Stanolfsson and said he would follow anyone strong enough to stop the ravages of the angry Stone-Breaker.

Gorangi Vak, who was chieftain of the Vakarii, saw this great wrong and vowed to end it, thereby re-establishing the true law and rule of Orlanth. Following the teachings of the Dragonbreaker, who had brought the words of Orlanth Rex, he knew he must prove his right to rule by Crown Test, and show to all that he was worthy and favoured of the Gods. To this end he sought the wisdom of the Knowing God and asked how he may prevail, where upon he heard the tales of how Orlanth had become King of the Storm Gods and rightful heir of Umath by proving his superior might over that of his brothers. Gorangi swore he too would undertake these same deeds to save his folk.

First he chose to help Flat Stanolf, who no longer had a hall to call his own and hid in a cave where he could not be squashed. Gorangi journeyed deep into the embrace of Eralda, across to the Other Side and returned with the fabled Sack of Winds that everyone said had been lost since the Great Darkness. He then sought Stone-Breaker in the mountains and found it brooding in frustration on the slopes of the Loneliest Peak. Upon seeing Gorangi it threatened to cast him down and smash his body on the trees far below, but the crafty Orlanthi tricked the sylph, which blew itself unknowingly into the open Sack of Winds, trapping it inside and thereby breaking the curse.

Stanolf, grateful for his deliverance, saw Gorangi Vak's greatness and relinquished his kingship, after which he went at last to live in his hall, once again rebuilt from the ruins of his old ones.

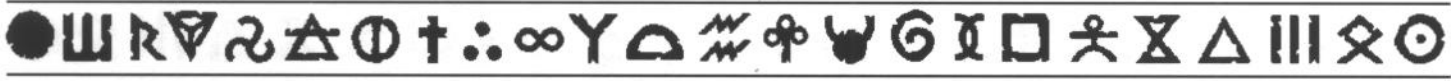
Gorangi next followed the hidden Law-Staff path to find true Justice. At the Jarani Stones Bad Lhoke and his False Ring turned up in the place of the Wild Hunter so everyone knew the rumours of his treachery

were true. Gorangi and the evil king fought long and hard, trading mighty blows and inflicting savage wounds. In the end Gorangi called on Stone-Breaker's power, and the captured sylph roared free from the Sack Of Winds to blow Bad Lhoke and his evil followers clean across the top of the mountains, and out into the Great Waste where they were never seen or heard from again. There was a great rejoicing among the people after that.

Finally Gorangi performed his greatest deed and forged a new path when he ascended The Spiral Mountain to face Baskelos, a giant who was a son of Urox himself. Armed with only a stick from his hall, a rope fashioned from the prayers of his kin, a sword, a spear and a shield he set off. Along the way he met Trickster, who tried to give him the Five Virtuous Wounds (but instead gave him the Five Virtuous Stones); he faced the Greatest Enemy and found the source of the Tears; and finally he entered the heart of the storm to cross the barrier between Here and There.

Once through he found himself in a deep valley guarded by a terrible four-headed monster that could steal a man's soul with it's howl and fire lightening from it's very eyes. Using his prize from the Trickster, Gorangi drove the beast away with the Five Righteous Blows, whereupon he saw Urox's great herd of Skybulls and decided that he would like one for himself. Armed with only his stick and his rope he rode and wrestled the mightiest bull in the herd, and bent it to his will, so it was forever after his faithful ally. When he had done so Baskelos himself appeared, roaring with outrage that someone would dare to steal from his herd, but Gorangi fought him too, and with the love and strength of his clan, cast his fearsome foe down.

On Gorangi's return Hraglad finally recognised his right to rule, and so he was crowned king of all the clans, and order and peace were restored to the land once more.



The Stormwalk Path

by Carl Pates

with
thanks to
Sandy
Petersen
&
Greg
Stafford



The Stormwalk Path is actually part of a much larger heroquest that is based around the Storm Age tales of Orlanth when he conquered his kin to prove that he had the right to be king of the Storm Gods. He defeated each of his brothers, Kolat, Vadrus and Urox in turn to prove himself worthy. Gorangi Vak did all this too, but then that's another story... (Cue Conan music...)

This renowned Orlanth Rex heroquest was first discovered in the Second Age by the hero Gorangi Vak, who ascended Stormwalk Mountain, conquered the son of Urox, and flew back to his people atop a tamed skybull to receive his crown.

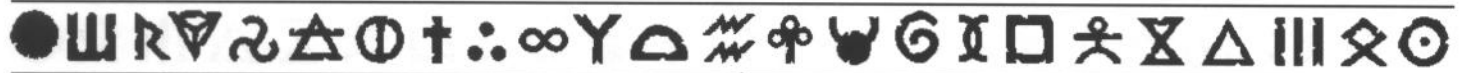
It is a prime example of how to use the elements of a myth and adapt them to a particular situation, forcing events to follow those in the myth. Gorangi used the methods from the story of Orlanth's taming of Urox to defeat some of the adversaries he encountered on his quest, thereby giving him an important mythic advantage over them.

Historically, this quest has primarily been attempted by Orlanth Rex candidates as a form of Crown Test for their kingship, but there are those who have braved its dangers merely to gain themselves fame and flying steeds too. Those who complete the heroquest to its full conclusion are able to gain enormous respect from warriors of the Storm Bull, who will acknowledge the successful quester as worthy to be their lord, which was Gorangi Vak's primary purpose when he completed it.

One other famous use of the path arose during the search for Prince Temertain in 1613,

when a band of Orlanthi used it a means of fast travel across the heroplane from Sartar to the Holy Country. This is the last time the quest is known to have been performed in recent history.

As this issue of Tales of the Reaching Moon is centred around the Greydog clan, the version of the Stormwalk Path heroquest presented here uses beginning locations and characters specific to them. However, the elements and events of the quest remain the same regardless of which clan or characters may attempt them, and should provide the gamemaster only a little effort to move them.



Violence Is Always An Option

It has been a difficult winter; Placella, Thorgier's wife, has died in childbirth, several young men have died after a bloody battle in the Marsh, and the chieftain, Kornos Longbrewer lies gravely ill in his bed. To add to this misfortune his mercenary bodyguards, two wild Uroxi, have become bored and restless and have decided to have some entertainment while their master is sick. They have invited many other followers of their wild god to share in their fun. Descending on the Greydog Inn night after night they have proceeded to abuse its hospitality, its patrons and its staff with their drunken revelry. After much brawling and vandalism the Inn has finally closed, Quentin

and his family having taken enough mistreatment at their hands. This large band of unruly thugs now seem intent on ruining the village too, and although no-one has died yet it is only a matter of time before swords are drawn in anger and much bloodshed follows.

There Is Always Another Way

A weapontake at Goodtalk Stone is called to find a solution to the problem. Many men, some with bruises and bandages aplenty make it plain they wish to drive out the Uroxi by force, while other, cooler heads point out that this would result in too many deaths, and there have been enough of these recently. As the debate continues Langrok

Stormcaller, the clan Storm-Voice, eventually takes the forum and tells the assembled clan that there is indeed another way, but one that is far more dangerous to those few involved. All fall silent as he speaks:

"Urox is kin to Orlanth. He is wild, he is dangerous, he is crazed; but he is no Gagarth – he is kin! They fought, yes! But Urox learned his place, and these Uroxi who trouble us now, they must learn their place too. We must teach them, as Orlanth did. We must follow His way."

"There was in ancient times, before our ancestors came to these lands, a great king, who later became a great hero. Gorangi Vak was his name, and when faced with a problem such as ours, he took Orlanth's example and made his own path to help his people. Orlanth tamed Urox. Gorangi tamed his son. We must do the same! We must tread the Stormwalk Path if we are to regain Peace without a bloodbath. The lives of our folk are too dear to waste in a senseless war with these drunken men. We have a better way! We must take to the Other Side for an answer!"

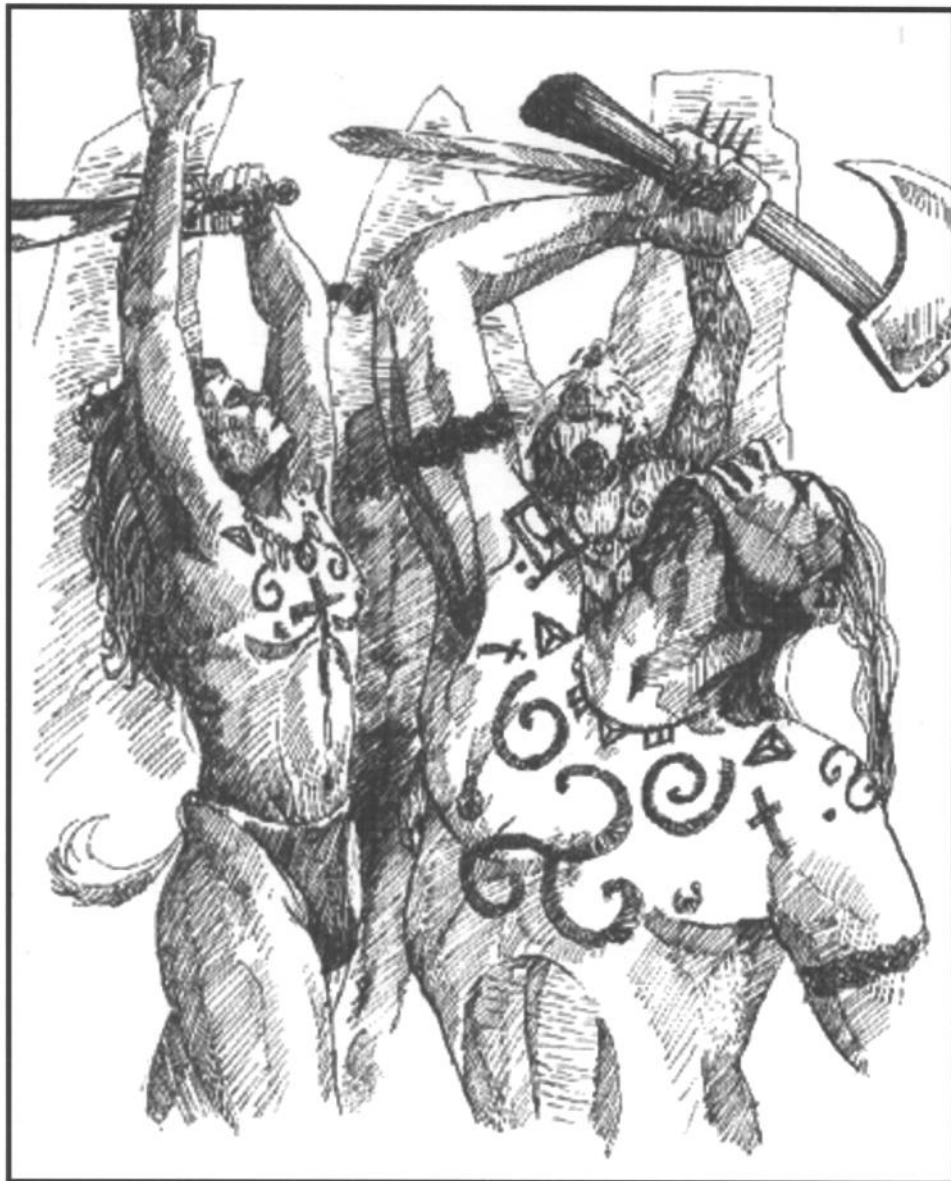
There is general agreement among the assembled crowd for the priest's suggestion, but more discussion breaks forth about who shall go, with many proffering excuses for their exclusion. If a player character does not volunteer, then a bold voice announces:

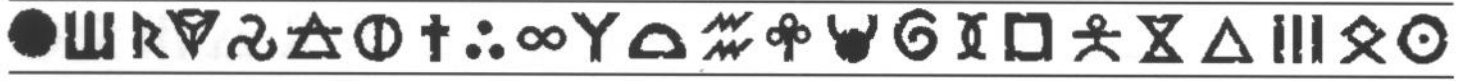
"I will set forth in the name of that quest! Who will follow me?"

It is Branduan, the clan's Shield Boy and its youngest ever Thane. His ambitions for kingship are well known, and he asks each of the PCs in turn to accompany him if they do not volunteer. Branduan is popular among the clan, and many support his courage, and that of any PCs who join him. With lighter hearts and renewed purpose, the meeting is dissolved and preparations for the quest are soon underway.

And So It Begins

Once the quest participants have been decided, they are called to a meeting with the clan God-Talkers who will advise them on the necessary preparations. Central to the success of the heroquest is the story of Gorangi Vak, and also the tale of how Orlanth Tamed Urox with only a stick and a rope. These two myths give valuable insight into the nature of the journey being undertaken, and should be related to the player-characters first. Other requirements are laid out below, in a sample question and answer format. Further details on the specifics of these requirements are provided for the gamemaster too.





“What do we need?”

“You must gain the favour of a Thane to send you on your quest. You must be Armed like Orlanth. You must make the Eternal Ring so we who watch for your return may aid you in your hour of Greatest Need, and for this a rope must be fashioned, with a part of all those who form the Ring. You must take a stick from your hall. You must ask Gorangi for his guidance, and for that you will need the words I teach you and the Gift of Blood which you always take within you. And you may also ask Ernalda for her blessing and her bounty, for gifts to sustain you in the trials ahead.”

As this is an Orlanth Rex heroquest, a clan Thane must perform the starting ritual, and if this is not one of the quest participants then one must be found who is willing to help. (Considering that successful completion of this quest may strengthen its leader both magically and politically, this may present its own problems as some chieftains may be unwilling to support a potential rival!).

When Orlanth left his people to rescue the Sun in the Darkness, he was first Armed by his loyal friend Heler, and such a ceremony should also be performed so the leader may gain its benefits while on the quest. (For more information on the Arming of Orlanth and the associated ceremony see *King of Sartar* p.79 and *Enclosure No 1* p.11). Next he formed the Eternal Ring so that he could call on the help of his supporters during the quest. Gorangi also did the same, but bound this power into the form of a rope that he later used in his fight with Baskelos. The rope was crafted by the women of his clan, with each of Gorangi’s supporters adding a strand of hair to the twine, and this is what the PCs must arrange too. As in Orlanth’s fight with Urox, the quester must also take a stick from his hall to help him defeat his foes; this could be anything, but is usually part of a broken chair or table such as Orlanth himself used.

The Stormwalk Path really begins at the Horned Rock, at the base of Stormwalk Mountain itself, and a small ritual is necessary there to fully begin the ascent. If the gamemaster wishes, the PCs may also petition the Ernalda cult for aid, such as gifts of Splendourbread and healing magic (probably in the form of enchanted items) to help them on their way. There are even special brews from Quentin’s beer cellar that may help, restoring hit points at the cost of a little DEX from the effects of such potent drinks.

“Where should we start?”

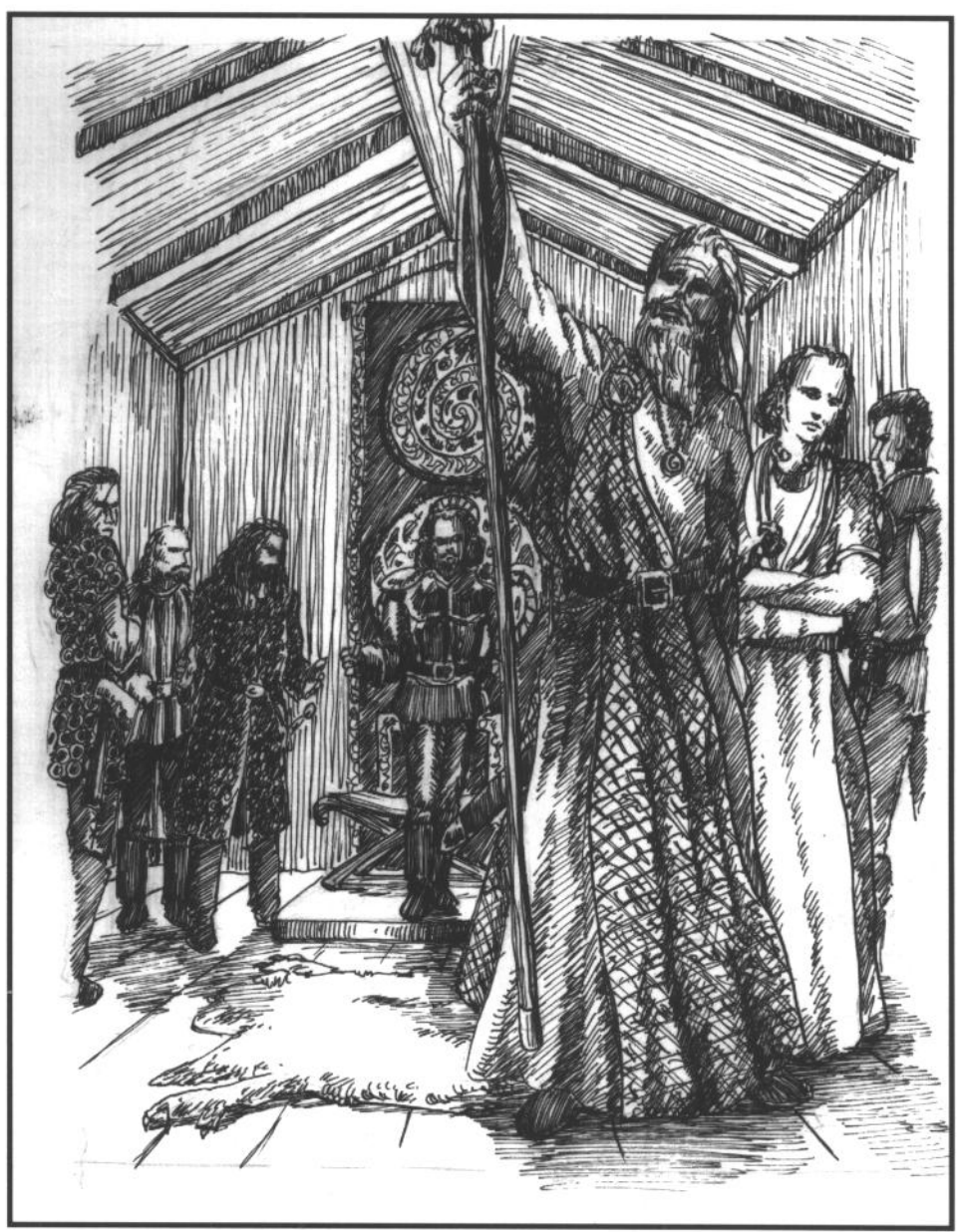
“Hills are sacred to us; they are special. They bring us nearer our gods, nearer to the heart of the Storm. They are filled with power. Irnar’s Peak is such a place, where Ornar sometimes goes to talk to his god. It is such a place that your path will start, as did Orlanth’s in the Godtime.”

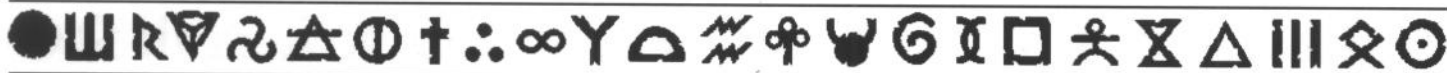
Many clans and tribes hold hills to be sacred places and have their own local one where they gather for special ceremonies and rituals, such as heroquests. The most famous hill in Sartar is probably the Hill of Orlanth Victorious where the storm god was said to have begun the Lightbringers Quest. The Stormwalk Path must begin at one of these special clan holy sites too.

“How do we get there?”

“The Turning Mountain lies many days south, across the valleys of the Sun and the forest of the Darkness Tribe. We can send you quicker. This land is rich in magic and power, and there are Hidden Ways to travel if you know the right words. The Traveller will open a Way for you at Irnar’s Peak. You must step through, step Beyond and onto the Magic Road.”

From the Lismelder lands travelling by a magic road is the quickest way to begin the heroquest and get to Stormwalk Mountain. This means of travel is essentially a ‘shortcut’ across the Mythic Plane to where the quest begins proper. Overland travel to the base of Stormwalk Mountain is also possible, depending on the





wishes of the gamemaster, but this would probably lead through much hostile territory and is not covered here.

“What is the Magic Road?”

“The Magic Road is part of the Other Side. Dreams live there. Nightmares live there. Heroes live there. Gods live there. The path stretches from this world to the Other and back again. Parts of it merge with ours at other great places of power, like Innar’s Peak. Beware these places, for you never know who, or what, you might meet. The Traveller will guide you to your destination, but you must always stay on the path!”

Although the Magic Road is mainly in the Heroplane, there are parts of it that intersect with the mundane world at various places where the walls between the two worlds is weaker. It is at these points that traps for the unwary may be set, and powerful entities are drawn. Examples of encounters such as these are given in **The Magic Road** below.

To help them find their way along the Road the party is also supplied with a small statue of Issaries, who holds out one hand in front. This hand glows when pointed in the direction the PCs must go.

“And when we get there?”

“Your Way will lead you to the Horned Rock, where Gorangi Vak first took his steps on the Stormwalk Path. When you are there you must ask for his blessing. You must cut your mark into the stone and seal it with your Gift. Speak the

words and then will you tread upon the Stormwalk Path and follow in the footsteps of heroes.”

As mentioned above the leader of the quest must make one final ritual to open the Stormwalk Path so that the mountain may be ascended in the correct way, leading finally to the valley of Baskelos and his herd. See **The Horned Rock** below for further details.

Departure

On the appointed day of departure the questers, their loved ones, and supporters assemble at the foot of Innar’s Peak, before a large unlit pyre. Dark storm clouds and fierce winds dance above the crest of the hill, summoned by Langrok for the ceremony. Drums are beaten, songs are sung, and ritual words are chanted as magic symbols and runes are drawn on the ground around the bonfire, marking out the magical territory. Accompanied by a deafening peal of thunder, a fork of lightning strikes the pyre, setting it alight in a sudden burst of flame.

With these initial preparations complete the Arming ceremony is performed, the crowd looking on expectantly as Heler completes his task. After this the quest leader must form the Eternal Ring, using Orlanth’s words:

“If you swear to support me, and to remember me, and respond in the right ways when it is time, then we will never be separate, and our destinies will be bound together whatever we do”

“We swear to support you. We swear to remember you. We will be here”, comes the answer from the gathered clan, after which seven nominated warriors take up their positions near the blazing pyre, to defend the site during the quest.

Ovostar prays to Issaries the Traveller to open the path, and as he intones the words of power all eyes are drawn upward to the summit of the hill, now crowned with a pale blue light. When the Goodvoice finally completes the rite, he gives the party a small statue of Issaries to help them find their way. Langrok then raises his arms and gives the PCs a last blessing, motioning for them to begin their quest.

***“Ernalda keep you Whole,
Issaries guide your Path,
Mastakos give you Speed,
Lhankor give you Wisdom,
Orlanth give you Strength!”***

The questers must now ascend the hill in a spiral ‘storm-wise’ fashion (i.e. following the same pattern as a Storm rune). As they get nearer the

peak, the wind howls louder, lashing them with its fury and strength, and a fine mist begins to form and coalesce, suffused with the light from above. As it becomes brighter, the view of the clansmen and the fire below is gradually obscured and it seems as though the PCs walk in the very clouds themselves. At some interminable point the glow fades, and the path no is no longer steep. The party are have crossed over and are now on the Magic Road.

The Magic Road

The Magic Road is a trip across the raw landscape of the Heroplane, where time and distance bear little relation to their counterparts in the normal world. Incidents and terrain along the Road follow no strongly defined mythic theme, making events there hard to predict and very dangerous; many travellers have lost both their purpose and souls in this place, dragged aside by chance encounters with rogue legends and traps. Things here have a dreamlike quality; colours are sharper, passions are stronger, and questers may notice a heightened awareness of their surroundings.

The only known points of navigation are several sites of great power and magical significance, which are used as a series of ‘stepping stones’; the relationships between them forming a loose kind of map. These places usually exist in both planes, weak points between the fabric of the worlds that form dangerous intersections, attracting other denizens and events as the magic seeps through.

The road from Innar’s Peak to the Horned Rock involves three such sites; The Old Elf Ruins, Esra’s Three Daughters, and The Shadowbone Claw. The gamemaster should feel free to add to or remove any of these encounters according to the starting point of the Road, as quests that begin from other locations may pass through different areas.

Note that it is important that the PCs keep to the path indicated by Issaries while travelling the Road. Random entry into other myths without clearly defined entry and exit points is A Very Dangerous Thing, and should be left to the likes of Arkat and other great heroes.

The Storm Age

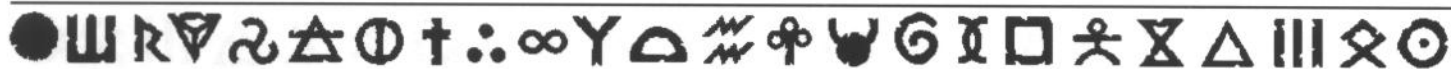
The predominant feeling when travelling the Road here is one of unrest and turbulence, for this is the Storm Age, when Umath and his sons fought and ruled across the world. The skies are overcast, covered by thick billowing clouds driven by the shrieking winds that race across the bleak terrain before them. The shadowy figures of gods can sometimes be seen, striding like giants across the heavens. They laugh and roar with voices of

Wyrd-Strike

This ability allows the wielder in inflict an automatic critical hit on a target when invoked. The weapon used must be a sword or dagger, and a small prayer to Death must be offered:

***“My life is the offering,
Your wyrd is my vow,
Sure is the blade’s kiss,
Death take you now!”***

However, every time this ability is used, the wielder is drawn closer to death. If they are an initiate or higher of Humakt they permanently lose 1 CON point when the power is invoked, otherwise 1D3 points are lost. These points cannot be replaced through magic, only training as per the normal rules can restore them.



thunder and fight with weapons of lightning, hurling bolts at their foes and each other. The spirits of the land cower and huddle together, waiting for the brief moments when the clouds part and the pale form of the Winter Sun provides a fleeting glimpse of the land before birth of the Storm.

The region the PCs travel through is cold, and in many places ground is frozen, covered in ice and snow, the playground of demons and the children of Valind. They perch on high crags and slopes, watching and sometimes following the party for a short way before loosing interest. The more mischievous among them delight in freezing swords in scabbards, caps to flasks, and skin to metal. They disappear if attacked, blending into their frosty surroundings, to reappear elsewhere.

In other places thick banks of pallid mist roll across the ground to swirl around the questers and conceal them from the sight of others. The fog distorts sight and sound, confusing the senses with faint shadows and echoes, caressing the skin with a clammy touch. Snatches of eerie music and the scent of sweet perfume beckon the PCs (make a Chaste roll to resist). It is important that the party maintains physical contact with each other when this happens, for it is easy to become separated and stray off the path to be unknowingly transported to another part of the heroplane, lost forever in Iphara's cloak.

A Broken Sword

After what seems to be an age of endless walking the sky begins to brighten, the clouds and mist fading before the glare and warmth of a shining sun. The party find themselves standing before a grassy hill, crowned with the scorched remains of a once-great wooden keep. Nearby, a magnificent river winds its way past, a collection of beautiful nymphs and other water sprites playing merrily in the shallows near the edge. When they notice the PCs they slip away further out into the river and watch suspiciously from the safety of the water, refusing any contact with the party.

These are the Old Elf Ruins found on the banks of The Stream in southern Sartar. Once a splendid elven castle grew here, with walls and towers grown from living wood and great halls roofed with thick boughs and shiny emerald leaves. It was razed many centuries ago in some great battle with the Uz, and now all that remains are blackened, petrified remnants that testify to its former beauty. Rumours and legends abound of this place, and of the vengeful souls who are said to frequent it when the nights are at their darkest.

The questers have arrived at the first intersection on the magic road and must climb the hill in the same manner as they did Irnar's Peak, storm-wise

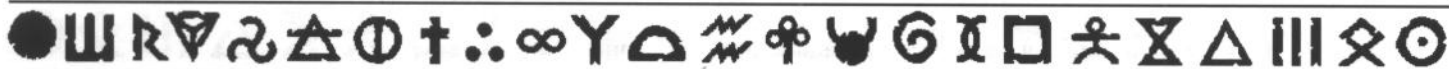
in the shape of the Air rune. At the top their path leads to the darkened doorway of the ruined keep, fashioned like the gnarled trunk of a great moss-covered tree. From within they hear the faint sound of moaning, and the scrape of metal on metal.

When the PCs enter they find themselves in a shadowy hall, it's roof still mostly intact. Across from them on the opposite side is a low archway formed by two long branches that cross and stretch down to the floor. Sinuous tendrils of mist play around its frame, inviting the party to enter, and the Issaries statue indicates that their way continues through it.

In the far corner they see the slumped figure of an old, wasted man, twisting and groaning faintly in agony at the sword impaled in his chest. Unlike the fine blade transfixing him, his armour is worn and corroded, the bronze cracked and green with age and rot. His sallow skin is stretched tight across his bones, death rune scars faintly visible on each of his cheeks. A blue rune of truth is tattooed on his brow. His sunken eyes open at the PCs entrance, white and sightless from cataracts, and he reaches out at the party begging for help in a feeble voice.

If the party try questioning him he can do little to answer, apart from repeat his plea and gesture





The hill next to the PCs is actually an ancient barrow, the burial site of an Earth priestess from many centuries ago. It is known locally as Esra's Three Daughters, after the priestess buried there and the three monoliths that rise from the summit, and was once revered as a holy place by the clans in this area. All this has changed since the arrival of the Legions however, who have defiled the site, smashed the stones and used the hill for their own purposes. Captured prisoners are crucified there in full sight of the city walls so that their suffering can be used to demoralise its defenders, as the thirty or so crosses attest to.

The PCs must reach the top of the hill in a storm-wise fashion, threading between the crucifixes on their way. It is an appalling sight, and many of the nailed bodies bear the grim marks of torture. Severed limbs, black eye sockets, and festering wounds all testify to the cruelty of their captors, and more than one victim has had their stomach slit open so their entrails spill to the ground for a more gruesome death. The air is laden with the bitter stench of rotting meat and carrion, attracting ravens and insects to gather and feast on the dead flesh. Even worse is the agonised moaning of the one prisoner who still lives, hovering on the brink of death, praying for release. His one remaining eye focuses on the PCs, and he begs them to kill him, so he may at last find rest in Orlanth's hall.

As the questers proceed up the hill they begin to hear faint voices echoing in their heads, getting stronger with each step. They whisper of betrayal and cowardice and accuse the PCs of deserting Orlanth in his hour of greatest need.

These voices belong to the lingering spirits and souls of those slain on this hill, trapped by the magical power bleeding out from the broken stones into the rift between the worlds. Driven insane from the method of their death they rage impotently and lust for vengeance.

"We asked you for help...You deserted us...Traitors...We needed you...Cowards!"

As their words echo around the adventurers, the corpses seem to animate, mouthing their anger silently, and stare accusingly with dead eyes. Images of slaughter, rape and other atrocities assault the PCs senses. Any character who has fought for or against the Volsaxi or in the siege of Whitewall, either on the side of the Lunars (as happened to some of the Greydogs), or on the side of the Orlanthi, must make a Proud roll to be able to justify their actions to themselves. If they fail their Proud trait is reduced by 1 point. In either case they are targeted by the angry ghosts who engage the unfortunate PCs in spirit combat attempting to possess their bodies so they can return to Whitewall to carry on the fight.

Thorolf

A Uroxi berserk, once famed for his collection of Lunar battle trophies (heads). INT 10, POW 13

Svoric

A Volsaxi carl who saw his family and clan destroyed by the Lunar forces. INT 12, POW 10

Hallvard

A Volsaxi Wind Lord betrayed to the lunars by a rival chieftain. INT 16, POW 15

Entropy Rising

When the PCs finally fend off their assailants and step into the circle formed by the stones, they feel a violent lurching sensation as though the ground has just moved sharply beneath their feet. Whitewall and its surroundings are gone, the rich, crimson sky replaced by a scene of pure destruction and carnage. Above a barren and rocky landscape, the PCs find themselves on the peak of a narrow ridge, where burning clouds swirl against the heavens, raining down drops of liquid fire to form smouldering pools. Bolts of terrible colour flash across the darkness and stars plummet screaming from the wounded skies, erupting in brilliant bursts of flame as they crash and die. Nightmare creatures stalk the valleys below, the hordes of the Chaos tribe oozing and swarming over gods and mortals alike as a great battle is fought. Violent bursts of thunder and brilliant spears of searing lightning strike the ground in a vain attempt to stop the slithering mass, but still it crawls forward, corrupting all it touches.

The questers have stumbled into the Greater Darkness, when Chaos swept across the world to destroy the Cosmic Mountain. Fortunately for the PCs their path leads away from the futile battle and down to a dark cave entrance at the bottom of the opposite valley. The descent is treacherous however, due to the raging storm and trembling earth, which convulses periodically in protest at the presence of chaos.

Each PC takes 2D6 damage (no armour protects) from the molten rain as runs beneath their armour burning flesh and igniting clothes. They must also make a DEX roll to climb down the ridge without falling when the ground quakes, otherwise they take 3D6 points of damage as they plunge to the bottom. Stray lightning is another problem, with 1D3 blasts scorching the earth nearby, hurling rocks and other debris into the air. Each PC takes 2D6 damage from each of these blasts.



The Coming of Shadows

Inside the cave the darkness seems to swallow the sound of the furious storm outside, and the PCs discover a tunnel that leads downwards into blackness. The walls here are damp and covered with slick and oily fungi. The air is stale, and reeks of mould and rot making breathing laborious and unpleasant.

After an hour of slow descent along the uneven and slippery floor, a cold breeze can be felt bringing with it the fresh smell of pine trees. The roof of the tunnel soon gives way to a clear, starlit night sky, and the PCs emerge into a large forest clearing occupied by a steep hill. The hill is ringed by a collection of severed heads and skulls mounted on sticks, some human, some animal, and some unknown. The top of the hill is surmounted by a single raised pillar, carved and chewed from a huge piece of bone to depict various troll deities and underworld demons. The questers have arrived at The Shadowbone Claw, a darkness holy site in the Troll Woods, and are now the victims of an ambush.

As soon as the PCs appear, drums begin to sound from deep within trees, followed by the grunts and shouts of a troll warband that emerges from beneath the black canopy of the forest. Several shades, patches of liquid darkness, detach themselves from the Claw and flow down the



insects that scuttle away from the light. Soft cobwebs hang from the ceiling, brushing faces and arms, and depositing their angry owners on trespassers when broken. Some way behind them the questers hear the fading sounds of pursuit and troll curses, which cease entirely when they experience a momentary loss of balance, and they are once again on the Road. After what seems hours of walking the passage starts to rise and the faint light ahead grows nearer and stronger, finally leading the adventurers out once more into the world, to stand at the foot of Stormwalk Mountain.

Stormwalk Mountain

Stormwalk Mountain, sometimes called the Turning or Spiral Mountain, rises some 4000 feet above the jagged peaks of its brothers, dominating the entire range. An almost symmetrical cone, its pale slopes reflect the sharp morning light and are crowned with a sparkling coat of snow. Old legends tell of how Storm Bull once savagely fought a mountain god who lived here, driving him deep into the ground and twisting off his head, thus forming the famous path that can be seen spiralling around the sides of the mountain up to the summit. A small river, nothing more than a shimmering silver thread at this distance, cascades down the mountain's west side to disappear between the sparse groups of trees that dot the lower slopes. The stream is known locally as Arlyn's Tears, after the goddess who was once the lover of the slain god, and who weeps for him still.

The Horned Rock

The Magic Road has brought the PCs to a small grove of trees, the centre of which is dominated by a huge standing stone over 10 feet tall, its weathered surface covered with patches of green moss that obscure many faint glyphs and pictures beneath. The top of the stone has been carved into the likeness of a huge bull skull, from which project a pair of sharp, ivory horns, now cracked and yellow with age. Closer inspection of the carvings reveals images of winged bulls, savage dogs and a horned giant, along with the names and marks of those who have previously attempted the quest.

This place is the true beginning of the Stormwalk Path, and the leader of the party must perform a small ceremony so that the mountain may be climbed in the right way. First they must find a space to carve their own name, and once finished must seal it with their blood while praying to

Gorangi and asking his blessing, using the words taught to them by Langrok. A Ritual roll is needed to complete the process, with the normal modifiers for time spent in preparation beforehand.

If successful, there is an awesome crack of thunder, as if in answer to the prayer. The sky



becomes overcast and dark as clouds begin to collect above the mountain's peak, harried along by icy winds.

The Test of Stones

A barely discernible trail, carpeted with fallen needles, leads away from the Horned Rock, and winds between the trees, taking the PCs up a gradual slope. Above them the storm continues to grow in intensity, sometimes lit by brief flashes of lightning.

After about an hour of hiking, the PCs begin hear the sound of someone snoring from behind a fallen trunk, a little way further along the path. Closer investigation reveals sleeping form of Brigpiece, the clan Trickster, snuggled tightly against a large rock. Waking Brigpiece is an effort, as shaking, nudging, kicking or shouting at him merely results in him clutching his rock tighter. However, if he is pulled away from the rock he awakes with a loud exclamation and stares around him with wide eyes, before casting a suspicious look on the PCs.

He is sullen and irritable, having no idea how he came to be there and very annoyed at being woken. He denies all knowledge of any Stones if asked and currently has a rather large headache from being drunk the night before and falling asleep by the village well, which is the last thing he remembers. He holds his

head and groans with each clap of thunder, blaming the PCs for causing it, and questions the wisdom of following a god whose quests are all involved with loud storms and cold winds. He begins to plead for food and wine, but his whinging suddenly stops when he puts his hand in his belt pouch and then a sly grin appears across his face.

He tells the questers that he has something special for them (but again he hasn't clue how he knows this and grows very peevish if interrogated about it), and pulls out five dark stones that he begins to juggle. These are the Five Stones of Virtue as mentioned in the tale of Gorangi Vak, and may be used to help defeat Baskelos' Dog that guards the skybulls.

To obtain a stone a PC must answer a riddle set by the trickster. Each of the riddles and stones are related to a Personality Trait. If the riddle is answered correctly the PC gets the stone; if not they immediately lose a point in that Trait, and cannot attempt to answer the riddle again (though another PC who has not yet attempted that particular riddle may do so).

Each riddle may only be attempted once by each PC. If the player doesn't guess the answer the test may be abstracted by rolling under the trait in question.

Stone of Vitality

*"That sparkle of my spirit
Keeps me champing at the bit
And my soul will not rest
For I am too full of zest"*

Answer: Vitality

Trait: Energetic

Stone of Giving

*"What token am I
That money can't buy
But can be handsome
Or princely when done"*

Answer: Generosity

Trait: Generous

Stone Of Justice

*"I balance a great weight
And decide upon your fate
What weight cannot be bought
But ends all battles fought"*

Answer: Justice

Trait: Just

Stone Of Pride

*"Chest puffed out with it
Some call it dignity
A haughty, foolish wit
Or purely vanity"*

Answer: Pride

Trait: Proud

Stone Of Courage

*"My mettle cannot be melt
By bottle cannot be broke,
And the lionhearted have felt
This marvel in lesser folk"*

Answer: Courage

Trait: Brave

Once the tests are finished Briggpiece bids the questers a haughty farewell and heads off back down the path, muttering to himself about quests, foolish thanes, and the lack of good ale, leaving the PCs to continue their quest.

The Spiral Path

Before long the trees give way to bare rock, and the questers find themselves on the steep, spiral path, climbing around the sides of the mountain, exposed to the full fury of the weather that worsens as if the gods are testing their mettle. The path itself varies in width, sometimes narrowing to a thin icy ledge rimed with frost, and in some places it runs beneath the silvery waterfalls formed by the stream that drops away to run into the woods far below. The view from this height is spectacular, looking south one can see the Mirrorsea Bay and the ocean beyond, while over in to east can be seen the Block, it's head hidden in a storm that mirrors the one gathering above.

During the climb there are many obstacles caused by the savage conditions. Some examples are given below, but the GM should feel free to add to them if so desired, or combine them.

Buffeting wind – The PCs are struck by a powerful gust of wind, threatening to carry them over the edge. Each PC should make a Strength roll to maintain their grip. If they fail, they stagger and sway under the savage assault, possibly near to the edge and fatal drop that awaits below (Make Dexterity and Luck rolls to avoid, or receive help from other PCs).

Freezing Rain – A burst of cold, freezing rain drenches the PCs, chilling them to the bone. Make a Constitution roll to avoid the effects of a severe cold and fever that imposes a -1 modifier on all skill rolls.

Hailstorm – A punishing sheer of hail strikes the party, the stones hard and sharp. Each PC takes 1D6 points of damage from the onslaught.

Lightning Strike – A single bolt of lightning strikes the mountain above the PCs, showering them with rocks and causing a minor landslide. A successful Dexterity roll is needed to remain standing.

Major Landslide – A loud ripple of thunder causes a landslide, with boulders and rocks hurtling done the side of the mountain threatening to crush the party. Each PC is hit by 1D6 rocks (Dexterity roll to avoid), that cause 4D6 damage. Check for possible knockdowns and watch out for the edge!

Broken Path – Due to the continuous effects of the cold and the thaw, the path has become cracked and

broken, and a large chunk has fallen away. The PCs must try to jump or climb across (Dexterity roll required, possibly modified if the conditions are icy or the missing section is long).

The Greatest Enemy

At some point along the path the party meets the Greatest Enemy. Basically this can be any foe of the quest leader who wishes to oppose his accession to rulership, and should be chosen from among any that have good reason to hate him. They have been magically pulled onto the heroquest specifically to fulfil this role. If there is no particular enemy then a generic one may be chosen. For example, if the quest leader is always picking on the Telmori, a group of Rune-level werewolves may be used. When the Greydogs attempted the quest, they were attacked by a host of undead sent by Delecti to stop them, and so forth. Make sure the strength of the foe is tailored to match that of the PCs.

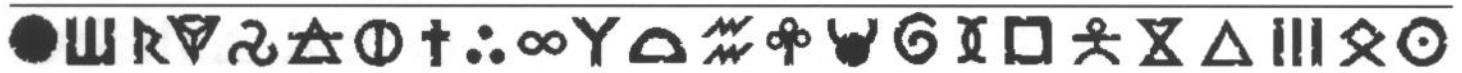
The encounter takes place behind one of the waterfalls, where the path leads into a large cave, hidden from outside by a curtain of rushing water, and continues on past it.

The adversaries that have been drawn here are waiting for the PCs to enter and know of their approach. The details of the attack are left up to the GM, and are dependent on the foes chosen, but should they need the opportunity to escape, they return to the mundane plane when they leave the cave, hence they may retreat into the waterfall or out one of the entrances. (Note that it is possible for PCs to be pulled into this part of the quest if a rival ever attempts this quest.)

If the PCs win have them make Awareness rolls. If successful they hear the sound of someone quietly weeping in the darkness at the back of the cave. If they investigate they see the tear-streaked face of a young women staring back at them, her sad, grey eyes red-rimmed from crying. She steps cautiously forward out into the light, and, seeking out the leader, addresses him in a soft voice,

*"Do you come to
destroy that which
lives Beyond?"*





If the PC tries to question her she only repeats herself more sternly. If he answers no, then crystal tears begin to flow down her cheeks, and her form fades into the cold rock of the cavern wall. If he answers yes, then she asks to see his shield, and, passing her hand over it, gives its surface the appearance of smooth stone. A small smile appears on her lips, "This will help protect you from the giant. Take it with my blessings and avenge my lord." And with that she disappears into the shadows to merge with the rock. The woman is the earthly form of Arlyn, the consort of the god Urox killed to form the mountain and she has enchanted the shield so it will absorb the full blow of any stone weapon, even nullifying Knockdown effects, unless it was a critical hit. This should prove to be very useful when facing Baskelos later.

The Crossing

As the PCs climb further up the mountain the temperature drops rapidly, and the path soon covered with sheets of ice and snow. As they near the top they are very close to the storm, feeling each clap of thunder reverberate in their bones, and smell of ozone is strong from the intense electrical activity. They hear a distant howling like that of a wolf, which grows louder with each weary step, and finally they reach the top of the mountain, where the path ends abruptly in a precipitous drop. Looking down the view is dizzying and unnerving, but to cross to the Other Side the PCs must step out into the space and trust in the magic of the quest to sustain them. Once they do so they feel a sudden, sharp falling sensation as they pass through the barrier (costing 1D6 magic points), leave behind the storm for the calmer weather of the Vale.

The Other Side

Storm Vale

Once through the barrier the player characters find themselves on the side of a wide, green valley, populated with tall trees on the opposite slope and neatly divided by a meandering stream than runs through the centre. Further down is Urox's magnificent herd of Skybulls, grazing peacefully on the grass, while others swoop and circle overhead.

Guarding them is a huge and ferocious two-headed hound, larger by far than all but the biggest of steeds. The beast, covered in a coat of shaggy grey fur, lifts one of its massive heads and sniffs at the air with a long, black snout. When it scents the questers it growls and rises to its feet, regarding them with two sets of blazing yellow eyes. With a vicious snarl it lopes towards them intent on rending them limb from limb and cracking the marrow from their bones.

The Hound of Baskelos

STR: 30 **CON:** 50 **SIZ:** 40
INT: 10 **POW:** 50 **DEX:** 20

Movement: 7 **Damage:** 11D6
Hit Points: 90 **Major Wound:** 50
Knockdown: 40 **Armour:** 20
Magic Points: 50

Combat Skills

Bark: Hits automatically
Howl: Hits automatically
Right Head Bite: 19
Left Head Bite: 15
Lightning: Hits automatically



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Crimes

The worst crimes are punishable by death by hanging; murder of an Orlanthi; consorting with chaos; or taking an unwilling woman. Others will cost you and your kin wealth. Killing a man may cost his werelord.

Death

When a man dies he should be burned on sacred logs; his children will shout his name, and a priest will summon the wind to take his soul to Orlanth. His eldest son will inherit his belongings.

You should know that whenever a man dies, even if he has been your worst foe, it is honourable to allow his family to take his body. If his family are nowhere to be found, then you should see that it is properly burned and a thane called to oversee this.

Hospitality

Our custom of greeting each other as dictated by Orlanth is worthy because it often finds you shelter. Use these greetings, when they are used they are sacred, like an oath. If the greetings have been properly used, then it is your right to ask hospitality of another Orlanthi, even if he is normally your worst enemy. The greetings bind you to the rules of hospitality; you must not harm your host, nor he you. As the guest your host will allow you to sleep under a roof so as to be protected from the wind. You must not steal from the host, and may not bear arms unless he invites you to do so. You must honour the host with words of thanks, and not insult him for the duration of your stay.

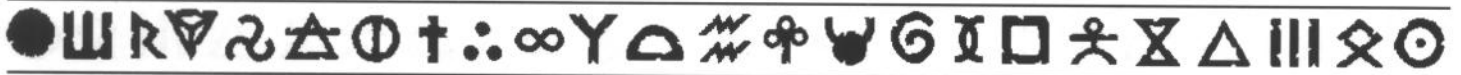
A host may present you with gifts, these are the Blanket Gift, the Meat or Bread Gift, Salt Gift, and Duty Gift. In marriage, we call the Duty Gift the Wife Gift. I will say the formulas for all of these gifts, though you do not have to offer, and may not be offered, any of them except the water.

The Blanket Gift offers a better place to sleep than the minimum, usually this is somewhere reached by the warmth of the hearthfire.

The Meat Gift is an offer of food. We always offer this to men of our clan, but to offer this to strangers accords them honour.

The Salt Gift is a token of honour, respect, and loyalty. This gift can be anything. It is called the Salt Gift because in harder times this would have been a gift of great value. It is customary to give a return gift to the host. This is usually a piece of rope; like the piece you use to hold up your trews.

The Duty Gift is a stern gift, and well named. Its acceptance means also that you perform a duty for the host. You may not know the duty before acceptance of it. There is always a duty gift before permission is given for a marriage.



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More Triock Says...

Property

Odal property is administered by Kornos generally, sometimes it is distributed in dispute at Goodtalk Rock, and sometimes it is the responsibility of the Clan Council.

What is your is yours, but always you should pay your tithes to your leaders. If you are allowed to keep something you have taken in raid or in war, then your foes may take it back if they dare. If you hold what you have taken for a year, a season, a week and a day, then it becomes yours.

When you kill an Orlanthi and his family are not to be seen, then you can take what you will before his body is properly burned. But never send a man to the afterlife weaponless and naked.

Social Positions

Thralls are classless people gained in war or through trade. There is no dishonour in this, and we respect and value them as much as any man or woman. Thralls have no rights or weregeld, but their value must be paid if they are killed. This usually amounts to 5 cattle. Law states that a thrall must be fed 15 bushels of grain every year, plus some onions, fat, lentils, and apples.

You are a Cottar, a Freeman. This means that you may speak and vote at Goodtalk Rock, and are a recognised adult with all associated rights. From our clan yield you have a right to 30 bushels of grain each year, as well as a share in other foods. Your weregeld is 10 cattle.

A Carl is a freeman who owns his own oxen team. His rightful share is 45 bushels each year, and his weregeld is 20 cattle. A household head is often a Carl, but his income and weregeld are usually higher than this.

Thanes are clanspeople who have positions of great responsibility, like Ornar Greyman who must know all the laws and judgements of the clan. They should be honoured and respected by you. Housecarls, like Marlan, are also thanes. They are brave warriors who practise all day long. Remember, this is not the way for humble farmers and shepherds like you.

A Thane's right is 59 bushels, plus a companion fee to support a Carl, a thrall, and a horse. This amounts to 105 bushels of grain each year. A Thanes weregeld often amounts to 80 cattle or more.

Kornos Longbrewer is Chieftain of the Greydog Clan. His right is 74 bushels, and a companion fee for two carls, two thralls, and two horses. This amounts to 284 bushels. His weregeld is 160 cattle, or more.

Combat Notes

Each round, the dog can bark, howl, or and shoot lightning from his eyes, and bite twice (once with each head). It only attacks questers who are threatening it physically or magically. It can feast on incapacitated PCs after the fight.

Bark of Terror: lowers the target's STR by 1D3 and costs the dog 1 MP. The effect wears off after the dog is defeated.

Howl of Pain: heals 1D6 points of damage to itself per magic point expended.

Right Bite: This bite ignores all magic defenses such as Shield or Protection, (including armor-like Chaotic Features) and even penetrates Earthshield. Mundane armour protects normally.

Left Bite: This bite ignores all mundane armour, but magical armour of any type (including spells and enchanted metals like iron) protect normally.

Lightning: This has the same effect as the spell of the same name. Each point of Lightning costs 1 MP, and the dog can use up to 5 points in a given round of combat. Note: the dog must overcome the target's MPs with his own, as per the normal spell.

If the Player Characters managed to win any of the Five Virtuous Stones from the Brigpiece the Trickster, they may use them against the dog to kill it or drive it away. If the Hound is hit by one of these stones (Make a Dexterity roll) the PC who threw it must roll under their Trait score associated with the Stone. If successful then the Hound takes points of damage equal to the PCs Trait, with no armour protecting.

If reduced to 20 or less hit points the Hound retreats, running out of the valley to nurse its wounds. If the Hound is killed, the PCs may dismember it and gain magical powers from eating or taking portions of its body. Only one ability or item should be allowed per PC.

The Right Heart: If this is eaten the PC gains The Bark of Terror. It costs 1D6 magic points to use and takes the same number of points of STR from the target if their magic points are overcome.

The Left Heart: If this heart is eaten the PC gains the Howl Of Pain. This ability lets the PC heal 2 points of damage for each magic point they use in the spell. Note that the magic points used must come direct from the PC, not from a stored source such as a crystal or enchanted item

The Eyes: If a PC eats a pair of eyes, their own eyes turn yellow like those of the Hound. They also get the ability to fire lightning (as per the divine spell) of 2D6 strength from them. They may use this ability once per week with no magic point cost.

The Right Canines: If a PC takes these and enchants a weapon using fragments or powder for the teeth, then that weapon may attempt to dispel any magical armour spell on the target when it hits. Treat as a 6-point Dispel magic for the purposes of working this out.

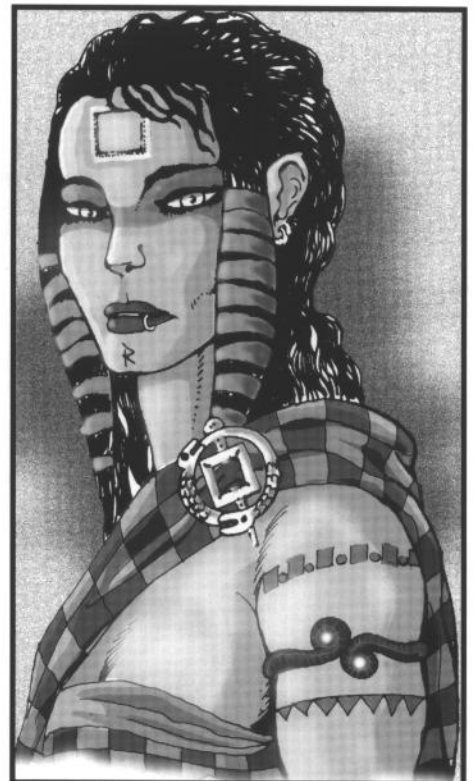
The Left Canines: If a PC takes these and enchants a weapon using fragments or powder for the teeth, then the weapon adds an additional 2D6 damage points when it hits.

The Skin: The skin may be fashioned into a cloak, armour or used as hide for a shield. If enchanted it gains 1D6 points of armour per point of POW expended in the ritual.

The Taming of the Bull

Once the hound has been defeated the PCs may then turn their attention to the skybulls, and attempt to get a steed. As they approach the herd, the largest and most fearsome bull trots out, and regards the quest leader with wary eyes for a few moments before spreading its wings and launching an attack on the challenger.

The bull concentrates its attention solely on the quest leader, and ignores the other members of the party. It's favourite tactics are to swoop down, skim along the ground and attempt to gore the target with its horns, or knock him over with its powerful wings. The quest leader, on the other hand, must somehow get up onto its





back and attempt to tame it, and the only weapons allowed here are a rope and a stick. Because these are the items that Orlanth used when he tamed Urox, the PC receives higher skill levels with them due to the innate mythic advantage. For the stick use the character's Sword skill with a +5 modifier. If the rope is used as a Lariat the character receives a skill of 10, or their existing skill with a +5 modifier, whichever is higher. If hit by the stick the bull does feel pain, but takes stun 'damage' instead of real damage, and suffers a cumulative -1 to all its skill rolls (down to a minimum skill level of 5).

Climbing onto the bull could be achieved in several ways, depending on the player's ingenuity. For example the PC could dodge the bull's charge and attempt to leap onto its back, or perhaps he could lasso it and climb along the rope as it takes to the air again (The bull has more than enough strength to lift a PC up with it!). The bull is not stupid however, and will try to shake off a PC any way possible. This could lead to some amusing scenes as it drags the would-be hero along the ground, through the river, through the trees and even into other members of the party. Strength and Dexterity rolls are needed here to cling to and climb the rope whilst taking such undignified abuse.

Once on it's back the Player character must make an opposed Riding roll against the bull's Fly skill to stay on, as it twists and turns in an attempt to throw him off. The Gamemaster should assess the consequences of a failed roll, depending on whether the PC has anything to hang onto, how high they are and so on. If the character can stay on for 5 consecutive rounds he begins to perceive new and strange thoughts in his head, images from the mind of the bull as it's intelligence begins to waken, giving him a chance to gain it as an ally. To do this he must impress it and prove his worth by making four out of the five Orlanth trait rolls (Energetic, Generous, Just, Proud and Valorous). If this is successful then he may sacrifice a point of POW to seal the pact, otherwise he must make another opposed riding roll and try again.

The Bull

SIZ: 44 **DEX:** 10 **POW:** 12
STR: 50 **CON:** 28
Movement: 8 (12 flying)
Damage: 10D6 **Heal Rate:** 8
Hit Points: 72 **Major Wound:** 28
Unconscious: 18 **Knockdown:** 44
Armour: 6

Combat Skills

Charge: 12 (while flying, 10 when running)
Stomp: 10 **Trample:** 18 (To a fallen foe)

Other Skills

Fly: 16 (Uncommon manoeuvres)
Awareness: 10

When Awakened

INT: 16
Lustful: 14 **Energetic:** 12
Vengeful: 15 **Reckless:** 14
Indulgent: 13 **Suspicious:** 15
Valorous: 17 **Loyalty (Ally):** 18

When the leader of the quest party has gained his ally the rest of the party may also try to acquire their own skybull steeds, but fortunately this is not so difficult now as the herd leader has already been tamed. The bulls allow the PCs to climb onto their backs, but then they launch into the air and try to dislodge their passengers, as if testing their worthiness to ride them. The Player characters must succeed in an opposed Riding roll against the bull's Fly skill, and if they manage to hang on, they must then make three out of the five Orlanth trait rolls. If they accomplish this then the skybull is tamed and may be used as a steed. They may only attempt to tame one skybull each.

Sample Skybull

SIZ: 40 **DEX:** 8 **POW:** 10
STR: 42 **CON:** 24
Movement: 8 (12 flying)

Damage: 8D6 **Heal Rate:** 7
Hit Points: 62 **Major Wound:** 24
Unconscious: 16 **Knockdown:** 40
Armour: 6

Combat Skills

Charge: 10 (while flying, 8 when running)
Stomp: 8
Trample: 15 (To a fallen foe)

Other Skills

Fly: 14 (Uncommon manoeuvres)
Awareness: 8

The Shepherd

From the opposite end of the valley comes a mighty roar, and a giant strides into view, his heavy brows drawn together in anger as he surveys his herd and sees the party. He is dressed in rough leathers and furs, and carries a huge wooden staff. A large, bulbous nose and small round eyes are set above a dirty black beard, and from underneath his lank and greasy hair protrudes two great horns. He reeks of stale beer and sweat.

This is Baskelos, a simple creature and usually drunk, but fearsome when roused, and he guards the skybulls for his father, Urox. Awakened by the howls of his hound he has left his cabin to

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More Triock Says...

Weapontaking

Whenever we meet at Goodtalk Rock, we have a weapontake. This is when all adults prove their right to participate. Us men must provide a shield, long knife, spear, sword or axe, and a strong hat. Women can bring a sewing kit, meat cleaver, cooking pot, spoon, or something similar.

We also have a weapontake for our duties in the Fyrd. This is when all us men, and any women who want to be warriors, get together to practise with our weapons for a day. This happens once or twice a year. We also weapontake before we go off to war.

Triock... What is a HeroQuest?

A HeroQuest is only for the most powerful of us, those who have reached a high place in the clan or tribe. Such a quest is a magical journey back into the places and legends of the time of the Gods. There miraculous powers can be gained but often at great cost and risk. Some questers have been destroyed so totally that no one remembers them, others have sold their very souls to gain questionable powers.

Sometimes, on holy days, you may be magically taken into the time of the Gods, like the time when I really saw Orlanth strike Yelm down. We are protected then by our priests and Orlanth himself.

You should not think about Heroquests, they are for your leaders and not for humble hard-working farmers and shepherds.

Triock... What is Sartar?

The Kingdom of Sartar is the land over which Sartar Peacemaker and his kin brought their law and peace to. It stretches from Snakepipe Hollow in the north to the Troll Woods in the south, and from the Pol Joni lands to the east to the Upland Marsh in the west. Sartar Peacemaker married the Feathered Horse Queen of the Grazelanders and some say that those lands are ours too. In his reign Prince Terasarin married the heiress to the Far Place and added Alda-Chur and Alone to the kingdom.

Sartar is made up of a score and three tribes, of which the Lismelder are just one of the smaller ones. Then there are the towns and cities that Sartar built, including Boldhome, Wilmskirk, Swenstown, Jonstown and Duckpoint; and those that we inherited, like Alda-Chur and Alone.

Triock... Who led Sartar?

Before Sartar Peacemaker we were only a ragtag group of tribes warring with each other and amongst ourselves. Then Sartar, a great nobleman from the Holy Country, came and showed us his special magic. He came to our



The Orlanthe priest is indeed right, and when the questers reach the inn they see a large group of the mercenaries surrounding it, and also a larger group of Greydog clansmen nearby ready to move in and fight. When the PCs arrive on their skybulls the Orlanthe cheer and the Uroxi begin to look a little less certain of themselves, but their leader starts to shout abuse and insults at them, specifically taunting the PC leader and goading him into a fight. If the quester accepts (and it's difficult not to with so many supporters) the Uroxi flies into a berserk rage and charges him!

Victory

The events of the next few moments depend on whether or not Baskelos was defeated. If he was then the PC leader has some power over the Uroxi. The most obvious effect of this is that he can bring a berserk out of his rage, just like a Chalana Arroy healer can, but no test is required. The most important fact is that the Urox warriors will recognise the quester as worthy to be their lord.

As the berserk warrior races forth he suddenly begins to slow and stop, his rage magically abating, and stands confused and uncertain, regarding the PC with wary eyes. His followers sense something too, and grow quiet and subdued. As the Uroxi approaches he nods his head respectfully,

"I, er, well, I guess there's been a mistake then. We'll just be, er, leaving now see?" he says, scratching his lice-ridden beard, a little nervously.

At this point the PCs can just let the Storm Bulls go, or they can ask for reparations from them in both labour and money, which the mercenaries agree to with little arguing. If he so wishes, the PC leader can also ask for a pledge of loyalty and friendship. The Uroxi leader will be happy to give this, and have such a worthy ally (and if the PC becomes a chieftain at some time in the future then the Uroxi will swear fealty to him too).

At this the Greydogs give a great cheer and rush forward to embrace the PCs, and carry them on their shoulders. They are given a hearty and joyous welcome, and are promised a banquet in their honour, and the crestfallen Storm Bulls look on, embarrassed and dispirited (though less so if allowed some beer). The questers names are soon on everyone's lips throughout the valley, spreading to the neighbouring clans and tribes, and attracting much interest, from minstrels who wish to hear and embellish their tales to rivals and challengers who wish to test their mettle against such warriors. They may even draw the interest of the Lunar authorities,

concerned at the possible consequences of this sudden heroquesting activity.

Each member of the heroquest party gains 500 status from their adventure, with the leader gaining an extra 500 if he vanquished Baskelos. Each of the quest participants also receives a Loyalty (Clan) check.

Defeat

If the questers failed to conquer Baskelos they face a full fight at the inn, their defeat encouraging the Uroxi to fight. Eventually the Greydogs win, but not without heavy casualties and several fatalities after the Storm Bulls withdraw to lick their wounds. The clan is much more subdued, glad to see the questers returned, but dismayed at the outcome, and begin to rebuild their village and the Inn with heavy hearts. Suggestions at any heroquesting in the future may meet with stiff opposition.

The ill luck doesn't end there either, as the consequences of the failed heroquest begin to manifest themselves, and the mercenaries continue to prey on the clan at random intervals, ending with several burnt-out steeds and more deaths throughout the year.

As a result of this each party member only gains 100 status each, though they still receive the Loyalty (Clan) check.

Acknowledgements

Thanx to Ruth Cooper-Brown for all of the Trickster's riddles!!

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brought that area into the Kingdom. He died trying to escape from a hungry dinosaur.

Terasarin left no heir so the throne passed to Salinarg, a son of Korlaman who was a son of Eonistaran the Sage, cursed son of Sartar. His coronation was full of bad omens which proved true two years later when the Lunars invaded and sacked Boldhome. It was at this time that your father and your two elder brothers were killed at Runegate Fort defending it against Delecti's zombies and the Crimson Bat.

Since then the Lunars have thought to rule us.

Triock... Who are the mightiest and most important amongst us?

King Thanos is the leader of our tribe. He was elected to that position after the last king, Cullain Hammershand, was killed at Runegate Fort. He is of the Goodsword clan and is a famous warrior. He has quested many times, and brought us rain when the terrible droughts blighted the land after the House of Sartar fell.

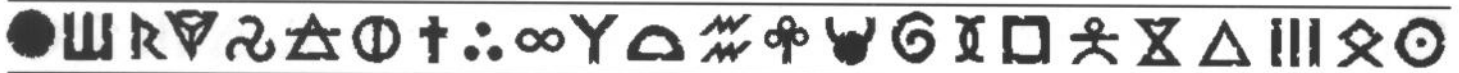
Kallai Rockbuster is the king of the Colymar, he fought at Runegate Fort with your father and was wounded. His wife Benava Chan is the High Priestess of Ermalda for all of Sartar. One son, Blackmor the Rabid, is a Storm Bull berserk and a niece, Leika, is studying in the Holy Country.

Tonaling Greathelm is leader of the Uroxi of Sartar. He is a crude and tactless man but a fierce warrior against Chaos. Like all Storm Bulls we don't like him, but we do respect him and accept him because he fights against chaos so well.

Kallyr Starbrow is a chieftain of the Kheldon tribe, and related to the Royal House of Sartar. She is a famous warrior who has quested to the stars in the sky and gained from them a magic crystal with great powers. She is expected to be the next ruler of her tribe.

Triock... Tell me about heroes?

Indrodar Greydog is our greatest hero for he saved our clan seven times. The fifth time he had to break unbreakable vows and pay an unpayable price. His followers guard us from Delecti's obscenities in the Marsh and know the rituals to keep the Marsh from spreading further. Indrodar was a thane to Queen Lismelder and a Sword of the Death god. His loyalty and bravery was so great that when the Queen was killed in the Marsh he did not rest until he had recovered her undead body and given it a proper funeral. This was the third time he saved the clan. It took him many years to do this, and in that time he learnt many of Delecti's secrets and even visited his ruins. His followers still use the knowledge he gained.



How Orlanth Tamed Storm Bull

by Carl Pates (with apologies to Scott Schneider)

One day Storm Bull went to Orlanth's stead to see his brother, but Orlanth was out, and there was only faithful Yinkin there, lying near the door.

"Where's my brother cat?" Roared the Bull with his mighty voice that stank of ale.

Yinkin, who had been asleep until the Bull's noisy (and smelly) arrival, stretched and replied, "My brother has gone to see *our* mother and will not be back for some time, so you'd better come back then." And with a great yawn he settled back down to sleep again.

"What?!", thundered Storm Bull, "I've come along way today and I'm thirsty too! I'll wait for him inside I think, and take some of that fine ale that he keeps for himself!" And with that he threw open the door and stepped inside.

It wasn't long before Storm Bull had found his brother's mead and he drank and drank until he was very drunk indeed and there was no more ale left in the barrels. "I want more ale!" shouted Storm Bull, and as always he began to smash things, lifting tables and breaking chairs to find another barrel.

Yinkin, who couldn't sleep with all the noise of Storm Bull's loud bellowing and breaking, went in himself to see what all the fuss was about. The stead was a mess, the tables were overturned, the plates were smashed and the only seat left was Orlanth's where the drunken Storm Bull slouched, belching into his empty cup.

"My brother will not be pleased when he gets home, O Smelly One" said Yinkin, wrinkling his nose, "He'll give you a good beating for this"

"Ha! No one gives me a beating you mangy cat, least of all my little brother. He if were a real warrior he make sure his house had more ale for a start, and roast scrawny little mongrels like you for dinner, instead for letting you warm yourself by the hearth!"

Yinkin, who'd had more than his fill of the loud-mouthed braggart by now, snarled and leapt onto the Bull, raking his sharp claws across the big nose, making it very sore and red. The enraged Storm Bull, holding his poor nose with one hand, grabbed Yinkin by his tail with the other and began whirling him around his head. Yinkin's tail hurt so much that he set up a dreadful yowling.

Storm Bull bellowed, "I'm going to smash you against every stone from here to my house you rotten little bag of fleas, and then I'm going to cook you on a big spit and crunch your worthless bones into dust!"

At that moment the door crashed open and in blew Orlanth, come to see what was making the terrible noise in his hall. He was very angry to see the how Storm Bull had treated his stead, and even angrier to see Yinkin treated so.

"Brother!" he called to the Bull, "You have invaded my home, ransacked my hall, stole my ale and mistreated my kin! I think it's time I taught you a lesson to curb your foolish ways and learn you some respect!"

"Try it then little one, and I'll give you a good thrashing to remind you how to talk to your elders!" retorted Storm Bull, and with that he let Yinkin go. The brave cat sailed across the hall and over the head of Orlanth, but he landed on his feet and slunk away to lick his wounds, the way that cats always do.

Storm Bull roared. Storm Bull charged. Storm Bull tried to stick Orlanth on the wicked tips of his horns, but clever Orlanth leapt aside, so the Bull cracked his head on the wall behind.

"Missed me, slow one!" Orlanth laughed, and he snatched a stick from the floor, and gave his dazed brother a good hit on the rump.

Seven times Storm Bull charged. Seven times Orlanth dodged. Seven times Storm Bull smashed his thick head, and seven strikes he got from Orlanth's stick.

By now Storm Bull was very dizzy, and staggered all over the hall trying to hit his brother. His rump was nearly as sore as his nose! But Orlanth knew that if this carried on he would have no hall left, so he picked up a rope, made a big loop, threw it over his brother and dragged him outside.

Calling on his great strength, he whirled Storm Bull about his head faster and faster, just like the Bull had done to Yinkin. When he finally let go the Bull soared high into the sky, disappearing over the eastern mountains where the sun rises, and where he has lived ever since, rarely visiting and always afraid to wreck his brother's house again!

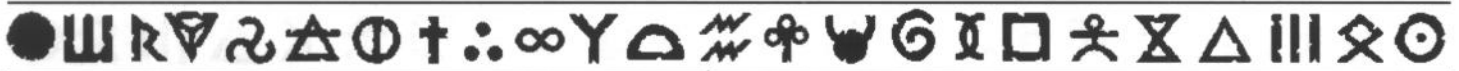
And that is how Orlanth tamed Storm Bull.

More Notes from Nochet

[XXIX.12-drome.I.13/3-4] Popular snacks at the Hippodrome include roasted pumpkin seeds and 'forcemeat-on-a-stik' (avoid sitting directly in front of eaters of either, lest you get rained on by spat out seed husks or bone splinters). On the terraces watch for the strolling vendors carrying conical tubes. These tubes are powerful Farsee matrixes which they rent at negotiable prices. Use them to see the finer points of the racing action!

[XXIX.12-drome.II.1/1] Clayton Stormont, the Hendreiki wind lord and prominent member of the Greens, is notable for his flamboyant behaviour on race days, including an ostentatious use of the Orlanthi *wind words* magic to discuss race tactics with his drivers without leaving his private box.

[XXIX.12-drome.II.1/2.a-b] Many racegoers will remember the day several seasons back, when Stormont fought a very unusual duel with old Vespar Anacles, a popular stalwart of the Gold faction. Vespar took exception to an epic poem Clayton gave in praise of horses, which claimed his team of grays ran better "when turgid Yelm is banish'd from sight, hid by proud air's cloud and slurry" (yes, I'm afraid he does write like that...) When the next raceday came, the elderly priest used his Dayzatar magic to destroy the prevailing cloud cover and bathe the 'drome in natural light. Rising to the bait, the wind lord used *his* magic to call back the clouds, and so the duel commenced, the furious rivals casting bigger and better spells until dusk (and a full moon) ended the contest in a draw.



collected water from the spring on Lawspeaker's Hill (Istena). The girls travel through the Greydog Tula and recover items of symbolic importance to Ernalda (honey, grain, milk, berries, clay, and water) and one item of the girl's choosing to demonstrate their particular calling of Womanhood.

Every girl is given a Hope Chest containing the utensils of Womanhood which her future husband can't provide, consisting of a spoon, comb, plate, mug, sewing needle, whetstone, a distaff and an Ernaldan ceremonial bowl. Copper is highly favoured as a material for these items, although wood is more common. Esrolian Greenware is used for the daughters of thanes and chieftains.

Local Marriage Rites

"Wear the juice of Pearlwort on your lips to attract a lover, but beware if he be Antorling Colymar, for although they make good lovers they are unfaithful"

The age of marriage is the age of womanhood. When a woman is ready to marry she completes the Quilting Ritual. The woman weaves extra items into her Quilt of Adulthood, all of which have a symbolic and often mythical significance. Invoked by the eldest women of the household, the whole female community participates. The ritual consists of the creation of a great wool-stuffed quilt to cover the marital bed. The quilting takes several days and requires components that cannot be found within the clan. The menfolk are sent away from the stead to collect the components from nearby friendly clans, thus announcing the girl's coming of marital age. Potential suitors take this opportunity to procure strange gifts to be woven into the quilt of their beloved. All gifts are gladly accepted and the more gifts placed into the quilt the greater the blessing. The women weave symbolic items into the quilt to promote fertility and harmony. Each stead has its own special items, for example the Snorri family places thistle down, a lamb's tooth and a small coin into their quilts.

Ernalda invented the seven forms of marriage, upon her arms she wore the seven bands of the seven forms of marriage. In reverence to her all wives wear their bands with pride upon their upper arms.

The sacred act of marriage is known as "Ring Bonding" or "Hand Fasting" among the Greydogs, named after the exchange of the traditional Ernaldan wedding armbands and the two grip of flirting in reverence to Ernalda. The bands are often simply the braided hair of her husband or carved wood, while Thane marriages use more expensive materials. As marriage is exogamous, wives come from the Goodsword and Marshedge clans to be the brides of the fine men of the Greydog clan. The Greydog women in turn are wooed by the men of the Marshedge and Goodsword clans. Marriages with the folk of the Goodweaver and Hillhaven clans are sought to align these clans to the triarchy. (The herders at Snorri's Stead have a large proportion of Hillhaven brides). In the past the Blue Foot Tovtaros women have also been brides of the clan. Women never marry the Poss, Lonendi or Bostrop. Marriages to those from other clans is extremely rare.

The Seven Types of Marriage

All Greydog women know there are seven types of monogamous marriage. The commonest is Husband and Wife, where both are considered equals in the sight of clan, chief and deities (if they are truly blessed by Ernalda then this can be a love marriage too). Both bring equal property and gifts to the union and receive equal portions if they should divorce.

Being an Underwife is both a blessing and a burden. It brings honour to a woman's family and the clan, and is thus a blessing (better yet if he loves her). However, such a marriage is also a burden, as she strives to live up to the demands of her new husband and clan as well as the expectations of her blood family and clan. Taking an Underhusband is truly an act of love as he often must leave his home; little is gained from such a union, although it may be demanded if her family cannot pay weregeld.

The taking of a Year Husband is very popular among Greydog women, often in Dark Season after an elaborate summer of courting. If he proves himself during the cold winter then a woman may well choose to extend the contract, or make it permanent during the Flower Day festivities.

The visitations of a Bed Husband may be the only way that a woman not blessed by beauty can have children. This is also popular with Thralls, as neither will have much, if any, property to exchange.

Secret Love marriages and romantic liaisons do occur among Greydog youths, although cases of eloping are few.

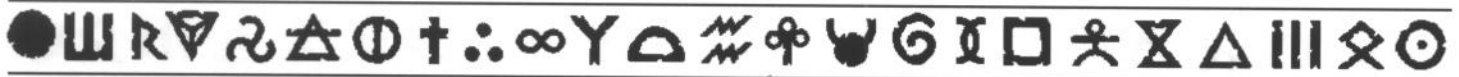
The Marriage Ceremony

The groom brings the woman the new flints to light the hearth fire, the mirror of love so that she can maintain her beauty for him, and an alynx kitten to chase rats from her grain store. She gives to him the most important thing any woman can give a man, her love. She brings the woven wedding quilt, which they will lie upon to consummate their love, after which the groom will wear it as a cloak to show his pride. The bride gifts the groom with cob bread and strong beer to sustain his energy and finally she provides a "home" for him to dwell in. She makes her man loyal and obedient with these gifts, providing warmth, food and shelter. In return he provides protection, recognition and, in time, children.

The bride wears the traditional costume of a rich green underskirt with a crisp, embroidered linen overskirt. Her jewellery is of copper, amber and malachite. Her head is covered with a white,

blue or brown cloth beneath a wreath of myrtle, rosemary, lily or hazel. The groom wears a pair of greaves, a fine linen shirt, a hare fur





jerkin, a sheathed sword on his belt and the bride's ribbon in his hair. Grooms often replace the sword with a spear and the helmet with a hard leather hat.

The families of both the bride and groom gather to prepare for the ritual, which is overseen by Chief Kornos Longbrewer on sacred ground. Orlanth Goodvoice presides in the form of Ovostar the Travelled. The Lawspeaker, Ornar Greyman, explains the responsibilities and benefits of marriage, enacting the Wife Gift ritual and then blesses the union. Brigpice the Fool blesses the union by getting drunk or worse. Kornos then calls to Orlanth to watch and protect marriage.

***“Stand together always, two are better than one.
Life is short, time is long, life flees before us.
Take what you hold, make use of it.
This is what makes you better than Gods.”***

Kerna completes the ritual with a whispered fertility chant, a hand placed upon each of the sword of the groom and the stomach of the bride. The women then cast grain over the couple to ensure their fertility. The couple are proclaimed married by the menfolk with great boasting and hilarity, and carried to the wedding feast upon the warriors' shoulders. On arrival at the feast hall the couple gift those present for their parts and are in turn gifted by all. Traditional gifts include barley cakes, raspberry leaf tea, wild blue carrots and Pearlwort sprigs, although greater



and more precious gifts are known. The traditional Thane's wedding feast is of Gigot (pork roast), sausages, Stirabout (porridge), cheese, barley bread and barley beer. The chieftain may serve great delicacies such as bison, bear or pony at his feast accompanied by wheat beer. Cottar and Thrall wedding feasts are simple affairs of potatoes, cabbage soup, ewes' milk, bread and weak beer.

At the end of the feast the father or eldest relative of the bride calls upon the stead spirits to bless the union, and toasts them with beer. The couple then stand upon the table as the families perform the Seven Weddings of Ernalda, a somewhat bawdy dance and song about the goddess that is accompanied with much laughter, whooping and cup banging. The parents or priest then give the couple a heated stone from the hearth 'to warm the bed' which, by tradition, is cast aside with the retort '*Ernalda's bounty is greater tonight than that of blessed Mahome, but sweet we may need her warmth on the morrow*'.

The couple are finally placed upon the Wedding Quilt and carried by the congregation to their bed. If the couple are especially honoured then Brigpice the Fool may have blessed the bed for them.

The Ritual Earth Calendar

Sea Season

Purification Ceremony

This celebration of lambing and the lactation of ewes has a ritual focus on motherhood and the shearing of sheep. It is known as "Nelat's Relief," and associated with the protection of infants and lambs. Lambing is especially important for the Hodirsons. The flocks are washed and sheared, and the lambs weaned. The Blessing of the Stead Ritual is renewed for the year ahead.

The Walking of the Boundaries

Kerna Highblossom repaints the field stones and replants them with trinkets and prayers whilst carved birch staffs mark the edges of the Greydog Tula. Kerna alone sings the Welcoming of Ernalda chant, while the song to the Lady of the Wild is hardly ever sung anymore, being invoked only after a particularly harsh winter or disaster. Girls tie ribbons and rags to the Tula staffs to flutter in the gentle spring winds, aspen whips are peeled to expose the new wood and decorated with flowers in reverence to Voria. Kerna and the Gyda visit the shrine to Voria on Tree Hill and converse with Lonriya. Kerna then brings the blessing of the new spring to the clan, who congregate at the sacred grove of Voria in the Gramsden clearing to give thanks to the Earth Queen and her servant spirits. The Mother Stones which Ernalda has given birth to during the winter are dug up and placed in her shrine.

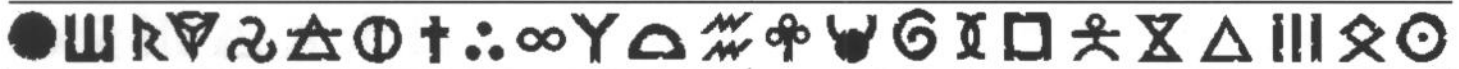
Water Day Harmony Week

“Flower Day”, “Sheering Day”.

Voria's Holy day. Voriaravand.

The Festival of the Spring Queen and The Flower Dance.

A Spring Queen is chosen from among the girls of the clan by the eldest women to take the role of Voria in the Flower festival. All girls from age seven to sixteen are eligible, with the caveat that they are an unmarried virgin. The green-robed Voria, bedecked in a garland of wood anemones, primroses and bluebells, emerges from the New Year Blanket as she is unwrapped by girl dancers. Kerna, representing Ernalda, dances with her newly reborn daughter. Porridge and cakes rich in eggs and butter are eaten. Primroses are collected and placed in steads to ensure the fertility of the geese. The first girl on this day to bring a Hawthorn bloom to Kerna is awarded a bowl of the best cream and the title of Milk Maid. She is obviously blessed by Uralda Cow Mother, and is taught her path by Heledd Osgosi.



Sowing Ritual

This is the ritual opening of the earth for crops. The seed is carried to the fields by Kerna in the sacred ash pail, and the field is ploughed under the direction of the Ploughman, Triock Straightblade. When the field is ready to be sown, Kerna chants the sowing song and gives the grain to the gathered women, who share it with the men. All then sow it with their hair unbound to ensure luxuriant growth. On completion Kerna gives thanks to Ernalda and asks her to help her sister grow. Afterwards the sowers indulge in acts of lust to confirm the fertility of the Earth.

The young seedlings are tended by the women and protected from the birds of the Sky and the insects of Darkness by magical incantations. Langrok the Rainmaker uses his wind-caller and magic to ask Orlanth to cavort with his wife.

Lustration ritual

The women of the clan descend to the streams to ritually bathe. They enter the water fully clothed until fully submerged, then sit upon the banks to dry their clothes while singing for the spirits of the water to come and dance. The youngest girls descend naked into the icy water bearing goose feathers and fat as sacrifices whilst their mothers and elders sit and remember. The ceremony ends with gentle songs and dandelion wine.

Some women don't follow the way of Voria. Sometimes the Babeesti go to the woods carrying stillborn lambs to dance their bloody sabbats. This is rare in times of peace, but Nanny Gorin remembers them.

Fire Season

Marking of the Boundary Stones

Kerna decides how much extra land the Greydog clan will need this coming year, only then will she paint the stones with red ochre and cows milk. She alone knows the secrets of Ernalda's powers of domestication.

At the start of summer the livestock are moved to higher pastures while some women remain at the stead to cook for working men, the sick and elderly. Women make the traditional First Ewes Milk cheese. This is the end of the traditional marriage season and malign spirits stalk the land stealing children. Girls go out in the early dawn and wash their faces in the dew to secure good luck and looks. Flax seedlings are transplanted to chosen fields.

A brand is taken from each stead's fire and stood in its flax fields to promote growth. Juniper resin is burnt on the Mahome Fire, with the ashes being sprinkled in the fields and houses. Sick cattle are driven through the flames of Aralnala to cure their ills.

A Summer Feast is held with food of butter, curds, milk and cheeses. When the soft Summer winds move the fields of grain, it is said to be Orlanth caressing Esrola.

Meeting of Women in the Women's House

The women meet to discuss Ernalda's fertility. The Greydog women decide what their men should build this year, whether houses, barns, or pigsties. During the meeting the women spin wool and eat Spindle Cakes, of which no man knows the secret of their preparation.

Clay Day Fertility Week

"Spindle Day", "Fire Celebration". Mahome's Holy Day. Mahomravand. Dance of the Red Breasted swan

The Earth Woman fans the fire of Mahome with the wings of the clan's swan costume whilst wearing a garland of larkspur and vervain flowers as a symbol of summer peace. Women light fire brands with Need Fire kindled from two rubbed sticks and distribute the sacred fire around the steads. The height of the flames indicates the height of the flax in the year ahead.

Earth Season

Warden poles are adorned with partridge feathers and fir cones and the harvesting of crops begins. Kerna cuts sheaves of grain and digs up potatoes and blue carrots for the Meal of the Earth.

The first sheaf is cut with her sacred copper knife and taken to the shrine of Ernalda where Kerna gives thanks to Frona and Esrola. The girls are sent into the hills and pastures to gather mushrooms. The elders inspect the fungi on their return and take the best for themselves, giving the magical ones to the Earth Woman. Only women are allowed to cut the grain, for which they use knives. The sheaves are bound and stacked at the field edges to be collected by the men. Part of one chosen field is left uncut, to house Esrola and Frona until the harvest is over.

A hilltop assembly occurs on Inrar's Peak giving thanks to Orlanth, after which the pony races take place. Sheep are separated from the lambs and are again sheared. The bee hives are moved back into the village for the coming winter.

Selection of Harvest Queen

The clan chooses a Harvest Queen, who personifies the fertility of the Earth and is an epitome of the virtues of Ernalda. This honour is open to all unmarried Orlanthi women of the clan, guests and strangers. In the contest for the Queen the sexual competitiveness of women is important. They are tested for the virtues of Ernalda (Energetic, Generous, Just, Prudent, Lustful) and the skills of Womanhood. The winner of the contest becomes the Year Wife of the Harvest King. If the same woman who, as a girl, was the Spring Queen wins great fortune for the clan is indicated, with good crops, fertile mothers and bountiful times ahead.

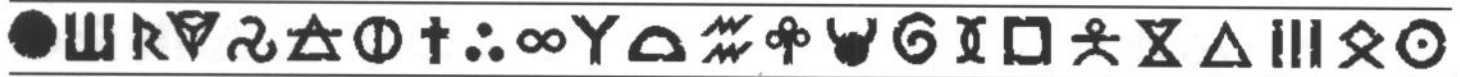
Day 1: Stewardship - The judges visit each stead, view its garden and test the quality of the woman's produce, the barn and house for cleanliness and the store to assess the level and range of goods.

Day 2: Hospitality - Contestants must respond correctly to all the different types of stead guest. The women bring forth their best dish for the judges to taste and their finest brews for them to drink.

Day 3: Singing - Each takes turns singing or playing instruments. Traditional Greydog ballads are preferred, as is the music of the drum, rattle and horn.

Day 4: Dancing - The women perform the traditional Ernalda dances of the Jovial Jig, Rollicking Reel and the Capering Cavort.





Day 5: Oration - Each Woman recites a poem or folktale. Stories about raids on the Poss are popular as are songs about the glory of Indrodar.

Day 6: Beauty - The contestants show themselves in their most beautiful clothes. The quality of the weave and the needlework are both judged, as is the appearance of the woman.

Day 7: Judgement - The women are tested with a matter of justice, whether concerning the ownership of goods, inheritance of children or marital disputes.

The votes for all categories are totalled and the winner is crowned the Harvest Queen with magical flowers. When chosen she is blindfolded and given an elm twig. She then recites the rhyme:

*Elm twig elm twig in my hand,
the first I touch will be my man.
Elm twig elm twig in my glove,
the first I touch will be my love.
Elm twig elm twig in my breasts,
the first I touch will win the tests.*

She steps out and blindly touches one of the competitors for the Harvest King, a crown of flowers appears on his brow. The chosen man is considered to be her favourite in the coming contest to become Harvest Husband and Champion of the Earth.

After the contest for the Harvest King, the Queen stands with the winner and becomes the Harvest Bride. If he is an outsider then Kerna uses the Foreigner's Wedding to marry him into the clan. The Bride spends the rest of the Festival parading around the village with the King and spends that night with him as well; the consummation of their marriage is accompanied by great rejoicing.



Clay Day Movement Week. Esrola's Holy day. Start of Autumn. Esrolaravand. Flax Dance.

Kerna and the women take the harvested flax and perform the Flax Dance. They squat small and then rise slowly, extending their arms like the new growth of spring. Then they dip and sway like the stalks in the gentle winds of summer and finally reach with out-stretched arms, twirling their unbound hair in symbolism of the bounty of the Harvest. The joy of Skovari fills the hearts and minds of the people. The women take the flax and use its fibres for weaving cloth.

Goose Dance.

All of the clan perform this sacred dance guided by Kerna. She sings the song to ease the people, and while they dance with ribbons and bells, Kerna takes the chosen geese and kills them with her Copper knife. She then distributes the birds to the clan and the geese are butchered and used for many things. The wing feathers make fine quills for Ornar Greyman, body feathers are used to adorn costumes, the beaks are used as spirit guards, while the legs and breasts make excellent eating. The livers are eaten as the Champion's portion or made into paté, and the feet are given to the cats to keep them out of the larder. Tallow candles are made from the fat and burnt in the Sacred Time rituals.

Sacrifice Dance.

The Harvest Queen is wrapped in the dried sheaves left in the fields by the gleaners. She is bound with leather straps and paraded through the village as Angdartha. Kerna dances a reel around the giant barley-dolly followed by the clan. She then cuts the straps with her sacred copper knife and dances with the Harvest Queen, until all the grain sheaves have fallen away to reveal her as Esrola-Frona.

When the fields are finally cleared, all give thanks with shouting and songs to Esrola and prayers to Frona. Afterwards the bounty of future harvests is ensured with sacrifices to Esrola of barley and mead, and oats steeped in cider to Frona. Ernalda is worshipped and Kerna sacrifices her gifts of bullocks to the Earth Mother. These are then butchered and the meat distributed to the most worthy.

Threshing ritual.

After the crop has been threshed a scapegoat is constructed out of the last grain sheaves. The men attack this effigy with knives and swords while the women collect the ears of grain that fall. Kerna is the one who cuts the last piece away, the so-called "Goat's Neck". On occasion a live goat has been used, its head pickled and skin burnt by the fire of Naranala. This ritual shows that the fight against chaos is fought with weapons of war and peace.

The last barley threshed is fed to the Barley-Sow of Kerna, while the last oats are ceremonially burnt in reverence to Frona. Harvest fires are built to burn the dead remains of the grain, diseased wood, or deserted houses. Prayers are said to Naranala and profaned items are purified. Dead crows are hung from stead poles as a warning to the coming Darkness. Girls gather berries and fruits from the bushes and trees, with the blackthorn berries collected being used to make Widebrew and the hazelnuts to make Priestesses' Bread. Apples are collected to make the fine cider, while hops are gathered to add to Bestaf's brews. The clan gives thanks to Green Hallertau, the Hop Maiden. Girls weave hop petals in their tresses and Harvest knots are tied into the grain stalks and worn to symbolise their fertility.

All the people travel to the Lismelder Thing at Swordvale in the shadow of Indrodar's Necklace, where a meeting of the Earth Women from the Lismelder clans is held to ensure the fertility of the region under the direction of Casianda Wisewoman. Men come from the Hillhaven, Marshedge and Goodweaver clans to Swordvale seeking Greydog brides. Games, feasting and trading abound, and disputes are brought before Salokin Bluebeard for resolution.



Dark Season

The men are sent to hunt boars in Lonendi Woods while women spread manure across the fields for the autumn ploughing. This is the only time that snaring is allowed in Hare Woods. Hawthorn is cut to make lightning protectors that are hung from stead doorways.

Great feasts of wild boar are held while the domestic pigs are allowed to scavenge freely and are taken into the woods by children to forage for Asrelia's Gifts (truffles) and acorns. Kerna and the more important clan women meet at the Gramsden Clearing shrine and pray to Ernalda Sow-Mother.

Freeze Day Illusion Week "Start of Winter"

"Shroud Holy Day" LoomDay. *Tekravand. Dance of Mourning.*

Kerna, with whitened face and a head-dress of bones, dances with the women as they cover their heads and faces in mourning. She is wrapped in the Year Blanket and carried out into the fields to commune alone with the Earth spirits and Ernalda.

The livestock are brought down from the Starfire Ridges, some cows are kept in milk, others are slaughtered and the meat preserved and stored separately from the grain. The Kakaz taint is kept away with sacrifices to Arnna.

Women begin to weave the New Year Blanket and the magical yew amulets are brought forth for the protection of fertility during winter. The cattle graze on winter grass and stubble remnants.

Storm Season

Wind Day Movement Week. Ernalda's Holy Day.

Ernaldaravandi.

The men are gifted with blankets and ceremonial windsocks are added to the Chieftain's stead pole. A great feast of bread, meat, water, and beer is provided by the women, and the Chieftain is ritually questioned. The women receive pledges of protection and honour and the "How Peace was Made" story is told. Splendour bread is made from acorns for the Sacred Time rituals.

Clay Day Truth Week "Propitiating the Dark Hag"

(Lady of the Wild)

The Dark Hag emerges from the realm of the Lady of the Wild to test the virtues of the people and the women feed the Old Greydog. The New Year Blanket is completed for the Sacred Time rituals.

Sacred Time

All the people drink bacon-broth to see the Winds. The Questers eat Splendorbread and drink black Widebrew before repeating the ritual of the Dawn Quest. On the last day of Sacred Time each household gathers for the New Year's feast.

Local Earth Spirits of the Greydog Lands

Since the birth of time the lands around Greydog village have been inhabited by many different types of Earth spirit. Some were destroyed with the coming of humans, but during the closing of Dragon Pass the survivors flourished. These have since been joined by other spirits and all dwell today in and on the topographical features of the clan lands. Dryads still dwell in the wind-twisted trees of Lonendi Woods, while Oreads live on the Starfire Ridges and other hills nearby. All are servants of The Lady of the Wild.

Nuanni, "The Grey Lady"

Auloniad (Valley Nymph) of Grey Vale.

Nestled between the hills of Inmar's Peak and the Weeping Sisters is the Grey Vale. Mist often forms in the vale, and during the seasons of Earth and Dark this mist may linger all through the day whilst at other times the mist lingers in the morning and reforms in early evening. The Grey Vale is the locale of the Grey Lady, who appears out of the mist before startled shepherd boys. The Hodirson's of Tallstone Stead regularly leave gifts of food and Bilberry wine to her. The Grey Lady is an insubstantial Nymph who

More Notes from Nochet

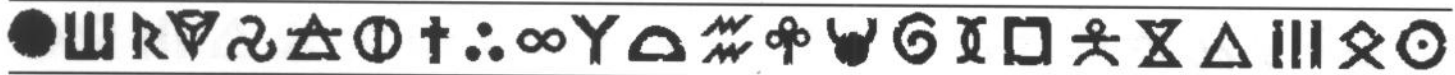
[XXIX.12-drome.II.1/3.a-c] Back in the days before the Lunars assumed control, the Reds' most famous driver, Blaargo Bullman, suffered a spectacular crash, yet went on to win a string of victories, mainly by inflicting crippling damage on his opposition, yet absorbing immense amounts of damage himself. Blaargo's minders always ensured their hero entered the arena cloaked and masked; "To create an aura of mystique" they said. Who can forget his last race, when the mysterious charioteer's helmet fell off revealing to the crowd that he was in fact now a zombie! In the ensuing riot the furious mob blew undead Blaargo apart by magic and his remains were scattered throughout the city. Even today you might be offered keepsake relics of old Blaargo by unscrupulous souvenir sellers. Be warned that most of this will simply be off-cuts from the forcemeat factories, tanned or dyed to give an appearance of age. Following the Blaargo Bullman scandal, the Red faction were banned from competing for a season. Some time after this the Reds audaciously tried to run a team of undead horses and were banned for a whole year.

[XXIX.12-drome.V/1-2] A group of Pentish barbarians specially imported by the Reds recently staged a game of "Chadash", their national sport, between the races. The spectacle received a mixed response from the crowd. Rather than a stuffed skin, the game was played out using a sack of silver Imperials! The Master of the Reds has offered such a sack as prize to the other factions, if they can form Chadash teams of their own and beat his treasured Reds.

[XXIX.12-drome.III/1-3] A few years back several racing syndicates imported Yelmalio drivers from the Sun Dome country in distant Prax, and these have become

very fashionable. Their god gifts the pious with abilities which can help them become superb charioteers; for example, the ability to actually speak with horses! Drivers with this gift need not tie their reins around their waists (some without the gift are said to do this anyway, in the hope of luring sponsors). It is said that the Count of the Sun Dome lands, concerned that his best and brightest are being lured away by the promise of a charioteering career in the fleshpots of Nochet, has interceded with his god to stop it. For every gift a Yelmalio is given, his cult bestows a geas, and some a driver may acquire will ruin a promising career: "Use no whip", "Use no non-cult weapons" and even "Never permit a horse to suffer needlessly" have disastrous effects. The irony of the Yelmalios, their veneration of horses, and their horse-related divine gifts and geases, is that horses have been extinct in the Sun Dome lands for centuries, and it is said that though the Count there has a fine ceremonial chariot, it is in fact pulled along by *human slaves!*

[XXIX.12-drome.IV/1.a-d] Humakti charioteers are now extremely uncommon, although they once gravitated to the now-defunct White faction. The last Humakti driver of note, aside from Suirasileb, was the flamboyant Sir Felix Mortifer who raced in the late 80's and early 90's. It is claimed that he successfully prayed to his god to improve the armour on his chariot! This gifted vehicle now rests in the forecourt of the Demarch of the Greens' mansion; although "Flash Felix" raced with the Whites, he was compelled to sell his treasured vehicle to the rival faction when he fell into debt. Mortifer's career had many notable victories before finally succumbing to drink. Most fondly remembered is the time he used a Turn Undead ritual in the arena to expose the zombie racing team the Red faction sneaked in.



has great difficulty in maintaining her physical form, and instead she hovers above the ground flickering in and out of her form. Her behaviour can be startling to outsiders, yet the Grey Lady is benign.

Hylissa “Tall Sister”, Donilla “Middle Sister” and Mitcha “Old Sister”

Oreads of the Weeping Sisters Hills.

To the east of Greydog village lie these three foreboding peaks. The Weeping Sisters are Oreads that haunt the peaks of the hills. During Sacred Time they manifest and leave their abodes to haunt the homes of man. Troll Furrow scars a path up Old Sister Hill, and this is where Snorri Hodorsson bested the Troll Ghost (See *Tales #7 & Best of Tales*). The Greydog tend towards avoiding the peaks, especially in Dark Season, for at this time its rumoured that White-Eye’s trollkin roam among the hillocks looking for virgin girls to apprehend and use in their dark rituals to reclaim the land and prevent the return of spring. Bofrost the Shaman-Chief of the Hillhaven has befriended the minions of the Weeping Sisters, the Earth Twins.



The Household Deities

Arnna	Stead Warden, Keeper of Gifts.
Berlintha	Loom Tender, Maker of clothes, Weaver and Spinner.
Besanga & Beseta	Porters of goods. Mare princesses.
Istena	Watercarrier, Storer of the brews of Minlinster.
Jera	The gentle carer, healer, tender of sick husbands, children, and old people.
Kesta	Storer of Food, sister of Harst. Granary Goddess.
Mahome	Hearth Goddess.
Aralnala	Healer of sick livestock.
Faladan	Carrier of the smoke of sacrifice.
Gustbran	Bonesmith, God of the forge.
Naranala	Purifier of profaned items.
Pananala	Maker of pottery, deity of the kiln.
Torabran	Burner of the dead.
Tylendar	Tester of the words of men and women.

Lonriya “Lithebough”

Dryad of Tree Hill.

Out past the Goodhunt Shrine stand the Lonendi woods. Travelling up the course of the Elm Stream and then through the woods past Fox Stream leads up to Tree Hill. The hill is visible from the village but getting to the top always seems to take longer than it should. High up on the hill stands the old apple tree after which the hill is named. This ancient twisted tree has been here as far back as anyone can remember; Langrok Stormcaller says it’s been here since the Dawning, and this must be true as the tree has been struck by Lightning Boy many times. Lonriya dwells within the hollow heart of her tree who never seems gets any older to the eyes of men for she is as beautiful and graceful today as in the times of Lornar Greydog. Her tree grows fine Storm Apples, which she will allow to be taken if she is gifted with magic.

Foghara-Muime. “Domesticated”

Limonaïd of Greydog Tula

This Limonaïd has been in the clan lands since the Dawn. Initially weak, she grew and prospered with time. During the time of Queen Lismelder, her daughter Elwina-Gor first came across the being who would become known as Foghara-Muime. This is not her real name (that is known only to Kerna and her predecessors as EarthWoman). At first the spirit was selfish and the women of the clan had to ask her whenever they wanted to do anything in her lands. In turn Foghara-Muime grew in power, which suited Elwina-Gor and her sister Tara, who urged the Greydog to follow the Old Earth ways. However, under the guidance of Indrodar, Tara was brought back to the true way of Ernalda and conversed with Foghara-Muime in the new ways. Foghara-Muime did not mind, she still gained the sacrifices and gifts of the people.

Little by little Foghara-Muime softened, the people were fair and the Priestesses just, even if they did have the annoying habit of looking different every so often. Foghara-Muime slowly became domesticated by successive Earthwomen, her demands grew less and her bounty remained; it being an easier existence with the Greydog people than before the Dragonkill, when she was only rarely gifted. Kerna still gifts her with ashes, dung and power during the sacred rituals of the year, in turn this daughter of Ernalda ensures the continuing fertility of the Earth. Few have ever seen Foghara-Muime, only the EarthWomen ever sees her on a regular basis. The Limonaïd is beautiful and has the look of yearning for the wild. Even if she does yearn for a return to the ways of the Lady of the Wild, Foghara-Muime is too set in her ways of ease and contentment to return, and is afraid of what might happen if her people left her.

The Old Dog

This spirit turns up during the dead of winter, appearing as an ancient grey deerhound that hangs around the stead begging for scraps. If allowed into the stead to rest before the hearth it will settle there for the whole winter, demanding food (and driving away all of the stead’s cats). It tests the family’s hospitality to the limit, but in return grants the family a boon (survival of a child that might have otherwise died or the birth of a boy child). If the Old Dog is rejected the family will suffer: rodents get into the stored food, a cow goes lame or cannot produce milk.

The Alder Man

Spirit of the Alder Tree

A Tomte (male tree spirit), this impish fellow offers a boon and a bane. He is grown to beat ill-tempered and bad mannered children, but in turn teaches them responsibility, maturity and aids their development. He is summoned with a tune from a whistle of his wood.



The Ghosts of the Vostangi

On dark nights the ghostly forms of the Vostang clan still wander about the high peaks of the Upper Starfire Ridges. A terrifying sight of disease-ridden bodies, these troubled souls still carry the taint of Mallia and few Greydog would want to meet them. Rumours suggest that the Orlmarth have found a way to control them and will soon be sending the ghosts down into the Greydog Tula. A bracelet from the Shivering Tree (aspens) is the best form of protection.

The Household

The secrets of womanhood (Hard work, Kindness, Compromise, Compassion, Stewardship, Love and Peace) make the home a happy place and a woman's stead productive.

The Hearth Maiden is kept happy with gifts of food and beer. If the stead is visited by a Grugagh Gnome (Hearth Brownie), it should be gifted with a shared meal. Well spirits should be gifted with wine, Crimpy (honey mead) or beer, and sometimes a magical trinket. The Dust Rats are kept away by airing, brushing, and gee-gaws. Hanging Wind Chimes of metal or wood on stead doorways scares the Wind Hag away.

Butter, often flavoured with herbs, is made in pats and used as a medicine and food. Preserved in salt and packed into bowls for storage, it is kept fresh by a gold coin in the bowl and washed clean before eating. Final churning is a delicate process always done by hand using an ash spoon whilst singing the Butter Song; "*Churn butter churn, come butter come. Husband stands at the door waiting for a butter cake. Churn butter churn, come butter come.*" Snowdrops are never brought into the stead as these cause cow's milk to be thin and useless for butter. There is nothing finer for a woman than to colour her butter with marigold flowers, as a gift for her husband.

Rowan twigs tied above the doorway bound with orange ribbon protect against winter spirits. Rowan wood in the barn stops spirits from stealing milk, which is why pails are made of it. Elder wood is never burnt on stead fires as the smoke attracts evil spirits.



Phases of a Woman's life

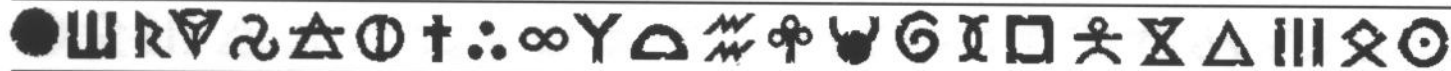
1. Infant/Child (Birth-12)
2. Youth (12-20)
3. Early Womanhood,
time of marriages (16-30)
4. Womanhood (30-50)
5. Maturity (50-70)
6. Old Age/Death (70 +)

Roles of the Woman

- A. The Child (1, 2 & 3)
- B. The Lover (2, 3 & 4)
- C. The Caregiver (3, 4 & 5)
- D. The Elder (6)

Gifts of Womanhood

- a. Inspiration (1)
- b. Reception of Wisdom (2)
- c. Expression (3)
- d. Recollection (4)



Important Women of the Greydog Clan

The Earth Woman, Kerna Highblossom

Priestess of Ernalda. Earth Woman, Noble, Thane. The Earth Woman is the most senior female member of the clan. Kerna Highblossom is the Greydog Earth Woman and the wife of the chieftain Kornos Longbrewer. She is a greatly respected member of the community. Her knowledge of the Tula, her relations with the Earth, and her choices of Spring Queens and Harvest Brides have brought the clan much prosperity in recent years. Kerna knows the secrets of all the forms of Ernalda and those of her sisters, sons and daughters and Frona the Oat Queen.

SIZE: 13 **DEX:** 13 **STR:** 13
CON: 15 **POW:** 20* **APP:** 19

Hit Points: 28 **Damage:** 4D6 **Move:** 3

Max. Spirit POW: 9*

Notable Traits: Energetic 15, Generous 15, Just 16, Prudent 18, Pious 16, Lustful 12.

Notable Skills: Animal Lore 17, Plant lore 15, Mineral Lore 13, Sartar Custom 17, Religion (Ernalda) 18, Ritual 17.

Combat Skills: none.

Combat Tactics: Dodge.

Passions: Loyalty (Lismelder) 16, Loyalty (Greydog) 17, Love (Kornos) 15, Love (Family) 16.

Spirit Magic: Heal, Ignite, Peaceful Cut, Repair, Second Sight, Shimmer, Strength, Vigour, Visibility.

Divine Magic: Bless Crops, Bless Stead, Bless Animals (Cows, Pigs, Geese), Bless Home, Command Animals (Cows, Pigs, Geese), Command Earth Pig (Gnome), Command Earth Spirit, Command Snake, Earth Power, Enchant Copper, Heal Body, Invigorate, Regrow Limb, Restore (CON, STR), Speak with Animals, Summon Earth Pig (Gnome).

Items: Copper brewing cauldron, two sets of fine robes, a set of bone and copper needles and a cooking knife.

The Snake Stone: Globular grey stone full of holes, with a circular hole through centre, worn on a copper chain. Made when a serpent spumed onto the ground. Acts as a Command Snake Matrix.

The Barley Sow: Her allied spirit is bound within its huge mottled body. INT: 14, POW: 18. **Divine Magic:** Absorption, Hide Wealth, Reflection, Reproduce.

The Sacred Copper Knife: A beautifully decorated, stone handled knife. Enchanted with matrices for Peaceful Cut and Food Song. Kerna uses the knife in all the most important rituals of the year.

Notes: * Woman's gift: Magically talented, +2 POW, extra 2 spells. Kerna also knows the songs to ease hunger and fear and in Spring she sings away the ice. Kerna receives a tithing and weregild second only to Kornos. She receives three bullocks from the clan each Earth season to be sacrificed to Ernalda and butchered during Harvest Week. Kerna has Gyda (acolytes), supported by each household in the clan. There is one Gyda per household, each following a different aspect of Ernalda or her sisters.

Kerna provides for the welfare of the clanspeople and blesses them and their crops with all her available magic and that of her Gyda. She ensures the fertility of the Earth and clan using the six ways of Ernalda (Cow Mother, King's Wife, Spring Mother, Summer's Wife, Winter Mother and All Mother) as the Sources of Bounty, The Givers, The Tenders, and The Sustainers.

A third of the clan's fields are left fallow each year. A field is planted with oats one year, barley or fodder in the second, and left fallow the third. The best fields are often those closest to the stead, for they are readily supplied with manure. One fallow field houses the local land spirit daughter of Ernalda. The spirit is offered sacrifices of ash from the Mahome Fire and the dung of the cows and the sacred sow of Kerna.

Yrsa "The Ruddy" Osgosi

Juror, Carl. Wife of Cornard Lifefinder and sister of Bardour Bonesmith, the Tribal Goldentongue. Yrsa is a Gyda of Enita and knows the secrets of how to prepare Tansy flowers to cure infertility, Enita's Gift roots to make a douche and Periwinkle for flow times. Her brother has gifted her with wheat seed and she hopes to persuade Kerna to supplement the barley crop. It was Yrsa's strong support of her husband that helped him to become the head of the Osgosi household.

Yrsa is a matronly woman, red faced and white haired. She has given birth to eleven daughters and one son, Korlmar, upon whom she dotes. The daughters have been married throughout the local clans, but return home each week to support their ageing mother in her household duties. Never has a tyrant had such loyal subjects.

Carissa Longbrewer

Wife of Hralf Brightblade and sister of Branduan. Gyda of Ernalda All Mother. Mother of twin daughters conceived whilst the Harvest Bride of 1607. Carissa is known for her good looks and happy demeanour and famed for her cooking,

especially her Blueberry pie. Carissa is often seen walking through the fields hand in hand with her daughters. Her love of herbalism and knowledge of household spirits, taught to her by the Three Widows who fostered her, are called upon often by the clanswomen. She is seen as eccentric, and is never without the dress and coronet of the Harvest Queen.

Penemhwe "Honey" Hodirson

Wife of Lonin Hodirson. Gyda of Queen Honey Bee. Renowned for her magical honey, locals say that the honey of her bees is blessed by the Buttercup Maidens of the Big Elm Valley. Penemhwe supplies the honey to the landlord of the Greydog Inn, Bestaf Longbrewer who then makes the best mead for miles around. She is tall and thin, and doesn't appeal to many men. Her rag like hair is always loose and she has the disturbing habit of talking to her bees as if they were human. Her wit is best described as barbed, and her temper is flighty.

Heledd Osgosi

Wife of Masta the Farmer, she was captured as a child from the Orlmarch clan during the raid of 1595. Gyda of Ernalda Cowmother. She publicly resents her captivity and constantly reminds her husband of this, but secretly she is as loyal to the Greydog as any woman. Her complexion is fair, but often marred by bruises about her face and neck. Many fear that Masta beats her but she always blames the marks upon over friendly cows. Heledd's only child is Angus, a small and weak boy who clings to his mother's overskirts. Heledd is secretly in love with a member of the Hillhaven clan, the wild and tempestuous Heathmoor. Their meetings upon the wild hills have not been discovered.

Hetty 'Nanny' Gorin

The oldest member of the Greydog clan, she dominates the Gorin stead from her small house on the edge of the stead lands. She harbours a strong hatred of the Hodirson clan, claiming that they once locked her in the woodshed with a wild boar. Nanny Gorin is still phobic of pigs and woodsheds, and her family have a traditional saying during bad times of "There something piggy in the woodshed". Nanny claims to be the original inventor of dandelion wine, and says that Old Madge of the Lonendi clan stole the recipe. Each season Nanny Gorin descends to Thane stead in an old cart and attends one of the clan festivals. This is done with great ceremony and even Kornos Longbrewer bows to her.



Hedkoranth the Adventurer

by Martin Laurie,
Robin Laws
& Greg Stafford

When all the Gods were seated around the fire, Orlanth ordered Dishthane to bring out six mighty gifts. He said "Each of these is a treasure beyond our understanding. They were all taken in raids from great gods. I have determined by reading runes that they shall serve as gifts for my first ring." Hedkoranth the Adventurer, the leader of the Thunder Brothers, received Great Weighty which had laid waste to a race of giants which were now just a mountain range. The thunder stone rumbled whenever enemies approached, and it would leap into its owner's hand for combat.

Hedkoranth the Adventurer is the biggest and toughest of the Thunder Brothers: the group of tempestuous gods who fought at Orlanth's side and helped him win the God's War. When Orlanth made his tribe, he made Hedkoranth one of the members of his first clan council. Orlanth then gave Hedkoranth the Thundering Stone, which rumbled when foes approached and could be hurled with the force of a hurricane behind it. Hedkoranth defeated many enemies of the Storm Tribe, including Terugk, the troll woman who made love hurt everyone, Ontorda the Earth-Fire Worm, and the Doorway Makers, who seemed to be retreating when they were really attacking.

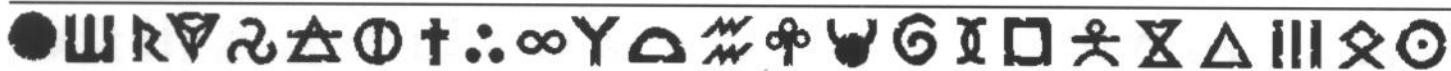
Hedkoranth also serves as the Speaker of War for the army of Orlanth. The Great Thunder he sends forth from the crashing of his stone terrifies Orlanth's foes and sends the weaker ones cowering to the earth from the shock of its cacophony. Hedkoranth wandered the world looking for adventure and battle. He, like all storm deities, loved raiding and pillaging and he fought wherever he could find it. During one foray, he was spurned and turned back by the perfection of the Sky and so ended their smugness with a blast that cracked part of the sky dome and shattered the entire Palace of Crystal Clarity around the ears of the Epicurean Cerebrals.

In Sartar, Hedkoranth is said by his followers to have created the Sambari Pass with a cast of the Great Weighty when angered by a Mountain God during the Storm Age. Other feats include the breaking of the Mirror of Theen which turned the souls who looked upon it inside out and the defeat of the Logic folk by smashing their city of Sharp Thought. With other Thunder Brothers, Hedkoranth led his people against Chaos and taught them special stone powers to break even that which could not be broken. The rituals for creating his Smash-Slime stones are rare and only known by the most learned Hedkoranthi.

Many Orlanthi have heard Hedkoranth's name, but clans who know all of his secrets and stories are rare. Their ancestors followed Hedkoranth into battle. Some clan leaders who follow this cult can trace their lineage back to Hedkoranth himself. A clan worshipping blustering Hedkoranth will often have him as their main male god – Orlanth is acknowledged as King of the Gods, but Hedkoranth is their deity.

Housecarls of Hedkoranth fight hard to defend their clan and to remind others of Hedkoranth's glory. When their swords clash against the shields of their foes, the echoes of Hedkoranth's thunderstone ring across the countryside.





Cornard Deathdealer, Champion of the Greydog

by Martin Laurie

The Warrior

This great warrior of Hedkoranth the Adventurer is Champion of his Clan. Cornard is a powerful man of medium height, dark hair and 38 years. He is etched with the many tattoos of his deity, each depicting a victory over a mythic foe and a triumph against the Darkness. Cornard is a famed sword master and noted Champion among the warlike folk of the Lismelder and their neighbours. His battle-boasts are the talk of every gathering, for they are great in scope and solid in fact.

His sword is named Ethramel, meaning "Swift strength" in the old tongue. The spirit that lives within it fights for its wielder. It aids him in battle and keeps him from harm, while making all his blows mighty and fleet beyond sight. Cornard won the blade when a young man in a feat of heroism still talked of today:

Cornard wins Ethramel

When the Orlmarth raided far in the days of his youth, Cornard's father, Jostharl, lost a younger

son, a score of cows and two thralls to that violent Colymar clan in 1598. Jostharl was old and infirm but he knew the laws as laid down by Heort and demanded just weregeld.

The Orlmarth came to trial. One of the High King's Eorls came to mediate and settle the dispute. But the warrior who had led the raid, Maniski the Bull, was a berserker of ferocious skills. He had avoided many similar weregelds by slaying all who attempted to enforce them.

The Colymar King, Jarstakos Hendsson, ordered him to pay, as did the Eorl, but Maniski spoke as Umath, saying "No-one can make me do anything." With those words he consigned the case to feud. No-one was happy with this, for Maniski was redoubtable, and had many friends, and the whole Orlmarth clan backed him. Against him was Jostharl, a weak old man with no sons older than Cornard, who was 15 at the time. It seemed likely that first families, then bloodlines, then clans, then tribes would clash over the issue, but Cornard won his name that day.

Though barely a man, he spoke the words of challenge to Maniski the Bull and demanded his right to combat. Maniski laughed when he heard this: "I've killed one of Jostharl's whelps, why not another?"

Cornard came to the fighting circle by the Blood Tree, where a hundred hundred other similar battles had been fought. In one hand he carried a sword. It was a poor blade compared to Ethramel that Maniski bore. Cornard was armoured only in leather while Maniski wore a hauberk of fine Tarshite chain. The young man came without shield while Maniski bore one taken from a Volsaxi chieftain, made of laminated woods, edged in bronze and bossed in iron. All Cornard carried in his free hand was a rock which he weighed as if ready to throw.

Maniski squared up to the boy and towered over him. He was huge of girth and massive of shoulder. He was a warrior in his prime. Victor of a score of man-to-man contests, and survivor of a hundred battles and raids. He laughed at the sight of the unsteady sword and the big rock in his foe's hands. "What are you going to do with that, boy?" His great barrel chest bellowed out his mirth. "Why, you might dent my helm or scratch my shield!" The warriors of his warband laughed with him.

"No," said Cornard. "With this and the will of Hedkoranth do I deal Death." And he threw the rock as if it carried the weight of mountains. And it did. It struck Maniski upon that fine shield and it blasted him apart with the power of the Hurricane, the strength of the Great Weighty, for it was a Thunderstone: a gift of Hedkoranth on the initiation of a favoured follower. So mighty was the Hammer of Hedkoranth that the only things found of Maniski were his boots, his sword, and a piece of his hair. Those present were deafened for a week. All agreed that such a Thunderstone had not been seen for many years, and must show the high favour Hedkoranth had for Cornard. He was known as the Deathdealer ever afterward, and his thunderstones are feared for their power.

The Cult of Hedkoranth

Followers of this deity are often renowned warriors. They excel in combat, archery, leadership and horsemanship. Though their deity is relatively obscure, he is well supported in clans that acknowledge him. Hedkoranthi tend to be loud, thundering and boastful when discussing their god, which they do as often as possible.

The greatest followers of the God have been known to hurl thunderstones so mighty as to level hills and smash cities. The power of the Great Weighty is shattering and the followers of

Hedkoranth are gifted in creating the many types of explosive rocks of its manifestation.

The Hedkoranthi are always quick to support the other Thunder Brothers who stood with their God during the Great Darkness. They support the old ways of Umath – violence and choice – more than most other Orlanthi do, but they also emphasise fellowship and brotherhood. All Hedkoranthi are violent, yet cheerfully garrulous. This combination puzzles most who meet them and do not know their ways.



Cornard bore Ethramel after that and fought in many raids, battles and campaigns. He was still inexperienced when the Lismelder were crushed at Runegate Fort but he fought well in the war of raiding that followed. When a peace of sorts came he was sensible enough to bide his time. He has fought for the Empire as a mercenary against Praxians and Grazers, Heortlanders, Volsaxi and trolls. Though he dislikes the redcloaks, he likes their money and the great wealth to be earned in such fighting. He is well liked in the tribe for his sense of justice, even among clans with a grudge against the Greydogs.

He remembers the injustice his father suffered, and does not forget the duty he owes others and the ways of Heort. For his services, and because of the respect all in his clan give him, Cornard was made Champion of the Greydogs in 1609. Cornard hates the followers of Shepelkirt for their use of the undead against the Lismelder. But he reserves his greatest hatred for the Orlmarth clan, and seeks any opportunity to provoke others against them or hurt them directly.

As a devotee of Hedkoranth, Cornard speaks of his god and the battles he has fought. He is a master of his cult's oral traditions, and knows every foe Hedkoranth defeated. A fair number of the Lismelder now follow Hedkoranth thanks to his deeds and stories. Listening to his tales of Hedkoranth is one way to gain his favour.

Daily Life

Cornard spends his days training for war and enacting his Champion's duties. Cornard is a wealthy man in his own right. He wears only the finest clothing, bears beautiful arms and

armour, and cultivates a dangerous appearance, wearing black and sporting heavy tattoos. His armbands are gold and his horse is a fine mount from Heortland where they grow larger than any hill pony.

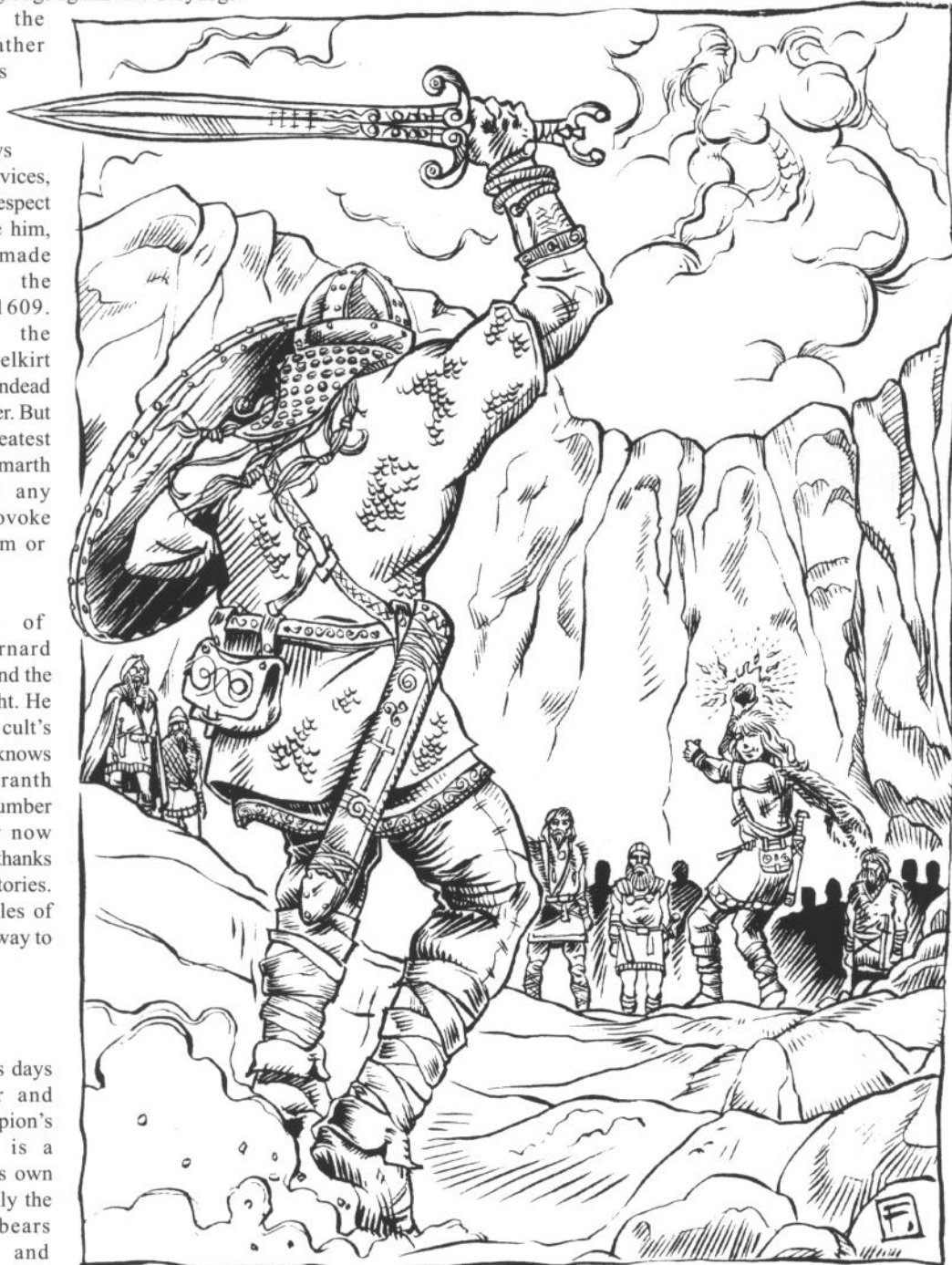
To the clan folk he is courteous, if mindful of his position. He will joke with the youngsters, having a soft spot for all children. Should any harm a child in his presence without good reason, then his temper is fierce.

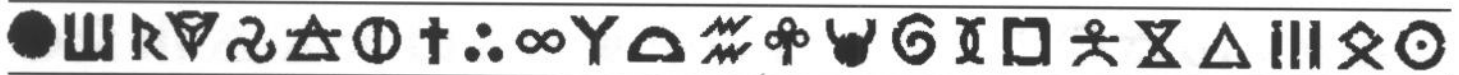
He teaches the ways of battle to the younger warriors, and even the older, should they prove willing to learn. He knows of the fighting ways of many different peoples, and is respected for that knowledge. He is patient, but regards those who will not listen as fools, and will ignore them from the first moment he is treated with such discourtesy.

To the tribal chief, he is respectful, but advises him when the words of a hero must be heard. Cornard sees himself as a hero in the mould of

his god. He believes that one day his name will stand among the great adventurers of Hedkoranth, and should he prove himself then the Great Weighty will be his to call upon. For now he counsels caution.

P l a y e r
Characters should find him approachable, if intimidating. He is open to requests for training, but knows the value of his time. He will expect a great gift in return for his knowledge. A chance to take part in a heroic adventure is another way to gain his favour, but Cornard is no fool, and will not risk his life without good cause and the chance of great reward. He will be a staunch ally, however, to any clansman who is wronged by the laws of Heort, and will doubly stand by anyone who has grievance with the Orlmarth clan, joining or encouraging any raid against them.





Mistflower Meadow

By Martin
Hawley,

with
additional
suggestions
by

David Hall



The Plot

The player characters are out on the slopes of the Lower Starfire Ridges, in the meadows and overgrown woodlands, when they meet Meadowsweet, a Limoniad (Meadow Oread), and discover an ancient shrine in the glade. Meadowsweet tells them little of her distress: she simply begs them to stay with her. If the adventurers wait with Meadowsweet until nightfall then Thistleface, a dark Hag, arrives with her undead diggers in the glade. Thistleface, the twisted spiritual form of the dead girl Yani, is desperately trying to discover and recover the bones of her lover, Jonar, from the earth below the Mistflower Meadow. The consequence of this action will be to weaken and unbalance the spiritual home of Meadowsweet for the rest of the year and affect the fertility of the Greydog and Hillhaven lands. The main tools in Thistleface's plans are a group of shambling zombies, which she has raised from their makeshift graves at the site of a skirmish

between Greydog Fyrd men and Hillhaven Tribesmen. The beauty of the glade may leave the adventurers off guard but the dark night and terrifying zombies will soon focus their attention! They must discover a way to appease the hag or defeat her and the zombies, perhaps seeking aid to track down them and resolve the tricky spiritual dilemma, sacrificing themselves if need be. The fertility of the clan Tula, their spiritual development, and maybe their very lives could depend upon it!

Meadowglade

The adventurers are out on the slopes of the Lower Starfire Ridges. If they are cottars they are collecting firewood from the scraggy woodland. If they are carls then they are hunting or gathering spring flowers for the Festival of the Spring Queen. Here they discover a meadow glade.

In early morning the glade is covered up to a height of two men in a swirling cloud of sweetly scented mist that slowly disperses as the sun rises. This mist emanates from the Mistflowers in the glade. Other flowers (primroses, orchids and bellflowers) unusual for this time in Sea Season sit contentedly in a carpet of fresh spring grasses. It would be peaceful and beautiful in the meadow, but this is marred by the pitiful sounds of sobbing coming from the heart of the floating mist.

Upon further investigation the adventurers will find a beautiful kneeling girl, of much the same age as themselves, eerily dressed in shimmering diaphanous green silk and grasping withered and trampled hairflowers in both hands. Tears stream down her rosy cheeks. This "girl" is Meadowsweet, a Limoniad.



Meadowsweet's Melancholy

If the adventurers approach her in a friendly manner Meadowsweet will explain through tears why she is so distraught. (They will realise she is a creature of the spirit world when she speaks in her musical voice). For several nights, foul creatures have been entering her meadow and digging up areas of the glade, causing her flowers to die. Meadowsweet will plead with the adventurers to remain with her until nightfall and help her to prevent these attacks on nature.

One Enchanted Evening

If they accept her request, Meadowsweet will become almost joyous with glee. Smiling, she uses the powers of the Earth to produce a delicious vegetarian meal for her deliverers. She skips and dances around her glade in gay abandon. As dusk approaches and the dark draws in, the shadows of the surrounding oaks lengthen across the glade. Meadowsweet becomes increasingly worried and skittish, her material form flickering in and out of view.

Mist belches forth from the Mistflowers and evening insects flit through it in the diminishing sunlight, their dances beginning gently and then becoming more predatory as night descends. Night falls and a group of geese flap into an overhanging branch to roost for the night. The crackle of twigs startles a squirrel that leaps chattering from branch to branch. The glade becomes dark, misty and slightly humid. Fireflies dance in a display of coloured lights. Bats come to feed on the insects and pollinate the Mistflowers. The Red Moon peers through scudding clouds to illuminate the mist, producing what would be a beautiful, if strange glowing sight – that is, if the thick mist were not almost suffocating and disorientating, and if the moon was not casting unnerving shadows among the trees.

Three hours after nightfall rustling sounds can be heard in the surrounding undergrowth at the edge of the meadow. Dull thudding footsteps crash out

of the bushes as a group of shambling zombies enters the glade, their rotting feet leaving blackened and dead footprints in the grasses. The zombies proceed to dig the earth, seemingly at random, with decrepit hands and rusty spades. Meadowsweet dissolves into the mist with a shriek of fear.

If the adventurers take no action, the zombies will ignore them and will continue to dig for the rest of the night in various locations throughout the glade, before returning to the woods. If the zombies are attacked, they will respond, counter-attacking until their assailants are driven off. Any adventurer with a light source, Second Sight, or who succeeds in a special Scan roll, will see a dark hovering figure in the tree line. When the zombies break off their work, they trudge slowly back into the cover of the trees. Following the zombies at night is a simple, if dangerous, task.

The adventurers could wait until morning and report the sighting to Kerna Highblossom or one of the Greydog Gyda. If they do so, they will gain the aid of a small number of the Greydog Fyrd. Upon reporting the sighting to Kerna, they will hear that Old Nanny Gorin claims to know about hags. If the adventurers ask her, her rantings will confirm their darkest fears: hags can turn men into maggots, so beware!

Twisted Hornbeam

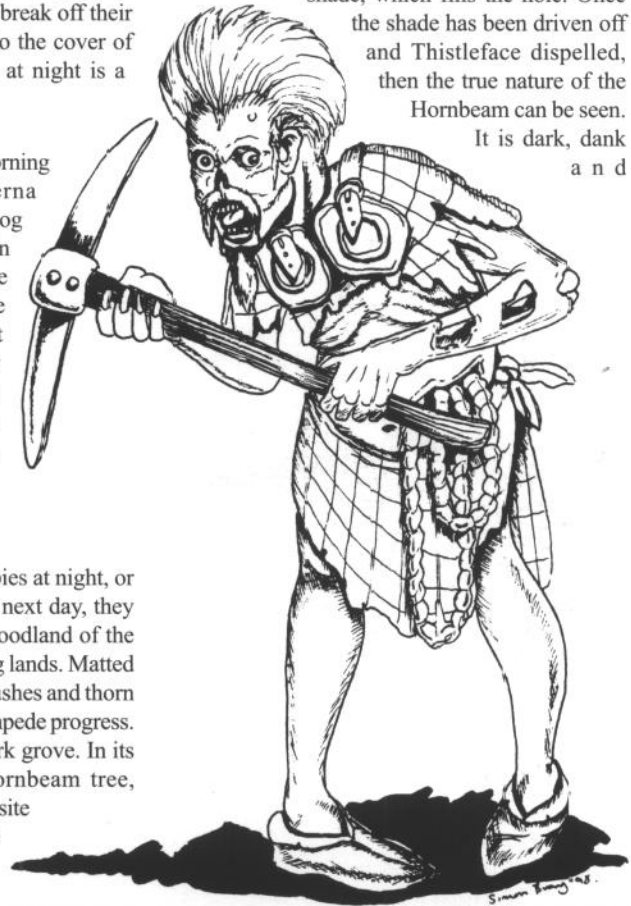
If the adventurers pursue the zombies at night, or track them with the Fyrd men the next day, they will be led through the scraggy woodland of the slopes to the very limits of Greydog lands. Matted undergrowth, thorny blackberry bushes and thorn trees tear at their clothes and will impede progress. Finally they will emerge into a dark grove. In its centre is an ancient twisted Hornbeam tree, shrouded in Perrin's Ivy. This is the site of the ancient skirmish between the Greydog and Hillhaven.

A hole in the base of the tree forms a home for Thistleface. Once secure inside her lair she instructs the zombies to return to their resting place. During the day, only mounds of leaves and dirt can be seen: if these are disturbed, the zombies will rise to fight. At night Thistleface hovers in the exposed roots of her tree, in the day she dwells deep within the ground.

Roots of Evil

If the adventurers are able to defeat the zombies, with or without the aid of men, they are free to enter the lair of Thistleface. The first to lower themselves into the hole will be confronted by a shade, which fills the hole. Once the shade has been driven off and Thistleface dispelled, then the true nature of the Hornbeam can be seen.

It is dark, dank
and

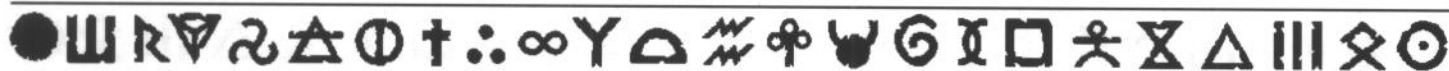


The Story of Yani and Jonar

Back in the times of Indrodar and Tara lived Yani, a Cottar's daughter from the Hillhaven clan. Yani was a beautiful girl, with a fine figure and long golden hair. She was truly blessed by Ernalda and was destined to be a fine wife to some Carl, or even to a Thane of the tribe. However, Yani loved Jonar, a member of the Hillhaven Fyrd. He was a young Carl with ambitions to become a Thane. He was brave, full of energy, blessed by Orlanth, yet a little reckless.

At this time the Hillhaven were not a part of the Lismelder tribe and sought to remain independent. However, the Chieftain of the Greydog clan, Hodir, was a grasping man who coveted their lands and their women. He and his warriors mercilessly raided the Hillhaven and caused much misery until kin slew kin and he died. During that evil time Jonar was gravely injured in a raid on Greydog lands, yet he still managed to struggle back to the

site of what would become Mistflower Meadow. Here Yani was collecting flowers for her hair, for on the return of her lover she wished him to ask her to become his bride. Jonar fell into the clearing and into the arms of Yani, where he died. In her grief Yani ran into the woods and came upon the bloody site of the skirmish between the Hillhaven and the Greydog. In a state of despair she killed herself.



filled with fouled stale air. The roots of the Hornbeam break through the soil like twisted, contorted fangs. Impaled on the roots is the fragile skeleton of a young woman, still with her golden tresses of hair and clad in a rotting blue dress. Thistleface keeps her possessions in her yellowing rib cage.

The Resolution

If the adventurers do nothing, allowing the dark acts of the Hag to continue, then the Greydog Tula's fertility is affected. Sown seeds will mostly fail to germinate, and those that do will be weak and feeble. Birds and rats will eat the grain, and insects will be rife. The sheep and cows will be dry and infertile, and many will die despite the fires of Aralnala. These events affect both the Greydog and Hillhaven, and arguments start up between the two clans over who is to blame for these troubles, bringing out almost-forgotten scores to be settled and possibly escalating into a clan war.

Thistleface is determined to remove the bones of her lover from the glade. Dispelling her (by "killing" her) gives respite to Meadowsweet for just a couple of days, until the hag's form regenerates. Destroying the zombies will prevent

her from full-scale digging: instead, she sends rats to scratch and dead dogs to dig, until she can discover more bodies to raise and complete the recovery from the glade.

Meadowsweet requests that nobody disturbs the ground of her glade. If prompted by what the adventurers found in the Hornbeam, she will remember that many years ago an injured man stumbled into her glade to die in the arms of a weeping golden-haired girl. Meadowsweet can be persuaded to call and use an Earth Snake (a gnome) to bring up the body of Jonar, though she does not want to. This may, however, be the only way for her to stop the attacks on her glade.

If Jonar's body is brought up from the glade, by the Earth Snake or the zombie diggers, Thistleface will attempt to raise him to unlife. This act cannot succeed, and the hag will become enraged, flying into a swirling dark cloud of anger. She has sought vengeance upon the world of the living for many years, and now she has failed to recover her lover. Thistleface will never love again on this earth, she is enraged and irrational (especially towards Hodirson men!).

Bofrost Umath's Breath, chieftain of the Hillhaven clan, might become embroiled in any attempts to quell Thistleface. Kerna may plead with Kornos to request the aid of the Spirit-Talker shaman. He could intercede with Thistleface, or call directly to the spirit of Jonar to resolve the issue. Or he and Kornos may confer and decide that the only way to resolve the attacks of Thistleface is by a minor Heroquest, which would of course include both Hillhaven men and the adventurers (notably the sons of Hefta, Olaf or Argermyr and any other Hodirsons).

If Yani's bones are recovered from the hornbeam and properly buried in Meadowsweet's glade (using the Old Earth rites of Ty Kora Tek rites, which Old Nanny Gorin can "reluctantly" perform), then the spirit, Thistleface, enters a state of peaceful rest with her former lover. The dark and forlorn forest trees will return to normal growth. The Greydog and Hillhaven clans may well re-establish the shrine to Meadowsweet, and she would become part of their local mythology. (Whether Thistleface could ever become part of the same is at the GM's and players' discretion).

Meadowsweet, Gentle Limoniad of Mistflower Meadow.

SIZ: 12 **Damage:** 4D6
DEX: 15 **Move:** 3
STR: 11 **Hit Points:** 30
CON: 18 **Max. Spirit:** 7
POW: 21 **APP:** 19

Traits: Forgiving 14, Suspicious 15, Cowardly 13, Merciful 18

Passions: Love (Animals) 16, Love (Plants) 18

Skills: Stealth 19, Orate 15, First Aid 30, Plant Lore 24, Chirurgery 18

Combat: No effective physical attack

Combat Tactics: Dodge

Spells: Heal, Befuddle, Protection, Mindspeech, Mobility, Second Sight.

Divine Spells: Summon (Earth Snake), Command (Earth Snake).

Meadowsweet is a beautiful Limoniad of the glade. She avoids any type of physical combat that may harm any living creature.

She can create by her touch edible vegetable food (as permanently having the Vorian divine magic of *Flowers*). She can also focus the healing energies of her glade to cause *Meadow*

Harmony (as *City Harmony*): this works only on permanently embodied creatures.

Thistleface, Dark Hag, The Twisted Spiritual Form of Yani.

SIZ: 19 **Damage:** 4D6
DEX: 13 **Move Rate:** 3
STR: 8 **Hit Points:** 35
CON: 16 **Max. Spirit:** 11
POW: 32 **APP:** 4

Traits: Vengeful 18, Cruel 16, Deceitful 14, Selfish 17

Skills: Stealth 13, Orate 9, Devise 19

Passions: Hate (Living Beings) 13 (+6 vs. Greydogs)

Combat Skills: Grapple 13, Dagger 13

Combat Tactics: Flurry, Dodge

Spells: Disruption, Demoralise, Dullblade, Shimmer, Spirit Screen, Extinguish, Detect Humans, Ironhand, Darkwall

Sorcery Skills: Sorcery 12, Duration 4, Intensity 15, Range 5, Multispell 9

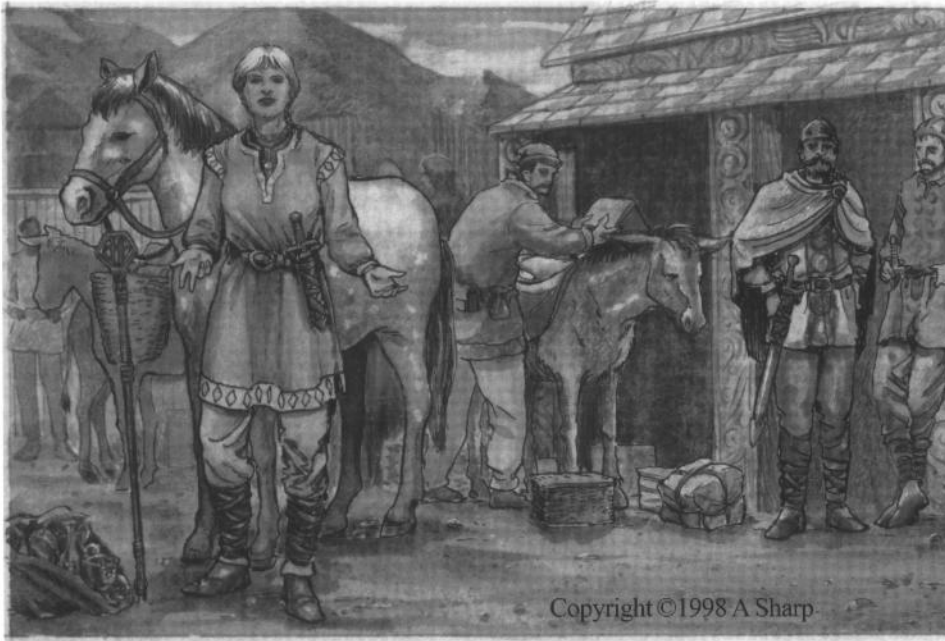
Sorcery Spells: Diminish APP, Tap POW, Smother, Summon (Wraith).

Items: Two doses of poison (increases damage by 7), a jet and silver brooch, a set of battered eating implements, a cherrywood

box, rusty dagger with ornate pommel (her suicide weapon).

In life, Yani was a sweet girl who witnessed the death of her lover Jonar two hundred years ago. In terror and despair, she fled into the woods and killed herself in a final act of despair at the foot of a sapling hornbeam amidst the skirmish site. The tree grew fat and bloated on her disturbed essence until on the night its first full set of leaves were shed, Thistleface rose from the roots of the tree, a tormented spirit twisted in the shadows of the Hornbeam and trapped in this dark, malignant form.

Over the years the hag has forgotten most of her mortal life, yet she still remembers her dead lover and wishes to discover his body so that his tortured soul can be released. She has recently been able to recall her flight through the woods, and as a result summoned her zombies to go searching for her lover. Thistleface mistakenly believes that she can raise Jonar from the dead to become a wraith, and join her in her undead existence. Thistleface hates Greydog clanspeople for the death of Jonar, and especially singles out members of the Hodirson household for her venom.



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The Goodvoice

by David Dunham

There are two ways of looking at the Goodvoice role: as a lesser version of Issaries, and as the herald aspect of Issaries.

Clans that cannot support an Issaries shrine or trader still have need of some of the Talking God's abilities. The Orlanth Goodvoice subcult provides some of the most important abilities, though because it is less specialised, it cannot provide all of them. In particular, the subcult provides magic such as Eloquence, which makes the speaker's words resound with clarity and inspiration.

Goodvoice is said to be a son of Issaries, and is the subcult for heralds, diplomats, and negotiators. Orlanth Goodvoice also focuses on these aspects. Orlanth Goodvoice is also said to be the originator of epic poetry and oratory.

Ovostar

Ovostar the Travelled is a member of the Orlanth Goodvoice subcult, and sits on the Greydog clan ring as the representative of Issaries the Translator.

Although he can dicker with the best of them, he takes no great pleasure in it, and for this

reason he never joined the cult of Issaries. In addition, many people say he is too generous with his wealth to ever be a true merchant.

Ovostar is however a fine poet, and his clever kennings are often repeated by the members of the clan, as well as other Lismelder clans. He is in even greater demand for his storytelling.

Ovostar also prides himself on his memory, and claims he can recite genealogies faster and more accurately than Ornar Greyman can look them up in his scrolls.

Although he is quite attached to his clan lands, every few years Ovostar doesn't feel at ease there, and makes a trip to some place he's never visited before. When pressed for a reason, he says he hears a call, but this is one time his eloquence fails him. Although the chief Kornos misses his advice, he condones Ovostar's absences, since he always returns with exotic goods or important information from far-off places such as Boldhome or Furthest.

Ovostar has learned Tradetalk, and has managed to pick up some Tarshite in his travels to that land. He has an uncanny ability to mimic the accents of neighbouring tribes.

Goodvoice

in the Greydog Clan

The Greydog clan does not support an Issaries temple (though of course it has a market, which can be treated as a shrine on market days). The Goodvoice acts as Issaries not only in the clan ring, but also in daily affairs. He blesses the market, though the actual running is usually left to a Garzeen representative.

The Goodvoice is responsible for blessing the site of a marriage ceremony.

The Goodvoice is in charge of negotiating ransoms. This is often a ticklish business, since he has to balance the captive's honour and ability to pay, while at the same time making sure the bargaining doesn't go on so long that the captors simply kill their prisoner before he escapes. It gets worse if formal feuds are involved.

He is frequently called on to bring the clan's complaints to another clan chief, or to the king, and negotiate on behalf of the chief. He also advises the chief when strangers and foreigners come to Greydog village

When an event needs to be commemorated, the Goodvoice composes a poem. Lampooning the clan's enemies is not an official role, though many Goodvoices will do this. Ovostar prefers not to, since he relies on good relations with clans he travels to.

Sora Goodseller

Once per year the Greydog clan receives a visit from Sora Goodseller, whose caravans run from Esrolia and Heortland to as far north as Balazar. Sora prefers hiring Greydogs as guards because of their loyalty, and because they are especially effective against the smilodons found north of Dragon Pass.

Sora Goodseller is an adventurous priestess of Issaries. She is tall and attractive, with blonde hair. Born in Hendrikiland, Sora became a wandering merchant, leading caravans to distant lands such as Balazar and Pavis. She now considers Sartar her home ground. Her skill with weapons is unusual for a trader, and her willingness to use them has often almost got her killed. Besides being a shrewd trader, she is also an accomplished cook. Sora was killed by a smilodon while in the wilds of Balazar, but resurrected by a Chalana Arroy Healer. Sora will not deal in slaves. Although she has no personal grudges against the Lunars, her sympathies lie solidly with the Orlanthi. Sora rides a white horse named Snowflower.

Ovostar knows of Sora's fondness for pure white horses, and tries to have one available, since she always pays generously for them. It has been gossiped that the two share a bed when she visits, and that Sora uses her beauty to bewitch Ovostar into making trade concessions.



LAW AND THE ORLANTHI

by Jeff Richard

Lacking statutes and “common law” jurisprudence, Sartarite law is quite unlike our own. Seemingly lawless, the Orlantheni are sophisticated litigators and their legal disputes occupy a central role in their culture and in their sagas.¹ Every Orlantheni carl is an amateur lawyer, capable of aggressively asserting his rights and that of his kin.

Sartarite court procedure has already been described in “King of Sartar,”² and it is well worth the read to get a feel for its complexity. However, it is my goal to provide a cursory overview of how Orlantheni law works within Orlantheni society - and hopefully, within your Gloranthen campaign. At the core, Orlantheni justice rests upon the interaction of three social institutions: the Blood Feud, the Oral Legal Tradition, and the Community Enforcement of Agreements.

The Blood Feud

Orlantheni society is a “revenge society” - a society in which its members keep greed and violence within acceptable bounds without a “state security apparatus” such as police or jails.³ Instead, the essential restraint on greed and violence is the threat of violence by potential victims of aggression - the threat of blood feud. To be a credible deterrent, the threat of blood feud requires that the victim have allies; “otherwise there would be no deterring murder.”⁴ This is the function of the Orlantheni blood-line: if one person injures another, the victim’s kinsmen have a duty to him which they can discharge only by killing or injuring the injurer or one of his kinsmen. Simply put, aggression against one Orlantheni is an attack on his or her entire blood-line.

Skapti Flatfoot is a cottar of the Osgosi bloodline of the Greydogs. In Sea Season, while grazing sheep near Point Hill, he was attacked and wounded by Goralf Blackbrow of the Poss. Cornard Lifefinder, the head of the Osgosi bloodline, swore to avenge Skapti along with the rest of the Osgosi house. Later that Fire Season, Cornard and his companions saw Irminrig Wheelfoot, a known kinsman of Goralf Blackbrow, traveling with

several people. Identifying himself and shouting a challenge, Cornard cut Irminrig down with two strokes of his blade. Irminrig’s companions ran off to Poss lands.

As this story illustrates, kinship has a double significance in the Orlantheni revenge system. It expands the numbers of the potential revengers while expanding the number of targets for revenge. A large bloodline is thus more dangerous to attack. At the same time, by holding the entire bloodline responsible for an individual, it provides a strong incentive for members of a bloodline to police their kin lest a kinsman’s misbehavior leads to retaliation against them rather than against him. An Orlantheni who steps out of line is likely to be put in place by his own kinsmen.

Honor plays an extremely important function in deterring violence against members of one’s bloodline. A man with the reputation of viciously retaliating against the slightest affront protects his kin by that reputation - potential aggressors know that to attack his kin will result in a violent counter-raid.

Upon hearing of Irminrig’s death at the hands of Cornard, Goralf Blackbrow swore vengeance. However, he feared to attack



any member of the Osgosi house, since "if Cornard would kill Irminrig simply because I wounded his kinsman, I shudder to think of his fury if I killed one of his kinsmen!"

Failure to avenge an affront against oneself or one's kin is a grave dishonor for the Orlanthean. Worse yet, it endangers one's life and that of his kin - if a man doesn't retaliate he has proven to be easy game and the system of revenge will fail to keep the peace. If this happens, the most endangered members of the bloodline are the women and children. It is for this reason that Orlanthean women insist that their men always take proper vengeance and never forgive an outstanding affront. It is common for Orlanthean women to hold that it is their duty to see that "the clear-headed thinking of the women influences the emotional reactions of the men." A man who does not take vengeance will be shamed, ridiculed and humiliated by the women of his blood-line.⁵

When Hindara, Goralf's wife, learned that her husband refused to attack the Osgosi in order to avenge his kinsman she refused to sleep with him. When the chief of the Poss visited Goralf's stead to feast, she refused to prepare food for her husband. When Goralf reminded her that she was his wife, she spat in his face and said in front of the chieftain that she had no obligations to an impotent coward. Furious, Goralf declared that he would attack the Osgosi regardless of the risk and offered the chief his loyalty and five marks of silver if the chief would assist him.

The difficulty with the Orlanthean revenge system is that it can spiral out of control. Each act of wrongdoing requires some retaliation, which

is perceived by the original aggressor or by his kin as an act of aggression requiring retaliation against the aggressor-retaliator. This vicious circle can grow out of the control of a single bloodline and bring an entire clan into a blood-feud.

Goralf, accompanied by the chief of the Poss and his spear-thanes, traveled to the nearest Osgosi stead, that of the carl Orkensor and his family. Attacking at night, they blocked the exits of the hall and set fire to the thatch roof. When Orkensor and his family fled the burning hall, Goralf and the Poss warriors cut them down. Leaving one boy alive to bear witness to the event, the Poss took all of Orkensor's animals and returned to Poss lands.

The Oral Legal Tradition

The Sartarites have an ancient oral legal tradition with the most important laws being ascribed to Orlanthean, Vingkot, Heort and Sartar. Although most carls are acquainted with elements of this legal tradition, it is the role of the lawspeaker to remember not only the laws (either by committing them to memory or by writing them down in great law scrolls), but the set of local traditions for interpreting these laws.

The formal law represents an alternative method to resolving disputes besides resorting to blood feud. Hoping, perhaps to avoid the consequences of blood feud or to end a feud, an individual could turn to the formal legal system with its complex and intricately prescribed rules for summoning, pleading, announcing, and so on. Unlike a blood-feud, which calls upon members the

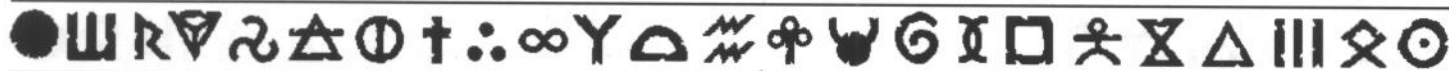
aggrieved blood-line for enforcement, a legal judgment is enforced by the judge (who is often the tribal king), his kin, all of the jurors (the leading members of the clans involved in the dispute) and all of their kin. Few Orlantheans are powerful enough to ignore or defy a legal judgment.

When news of the burning of Orkensor's Hall reached Cornard Lifefinder, he observed, "this feud has gotten out of hand, for I do not have the power to take vengeance against the entire Poss clan." He told his family that he would ask Ornar Greyman for advice on how best to get justice. After giving Ornar generous gifts of friendship, Cornard told him of his claim against the Poss. Ornar carefully listened and after much thought, he pledged his honor and soul to uphold Justice and asked Orlanthean, Lhankor Mhy, Heort and Sartar to guide him as a juror. He then made his judgment, saying that the law clearly required the Poss to compensate for the killing of Orkensor and his family. In addition, the Poss clearly must compensate for Skapti's wounds. Furthermore, because the Poss burnt a hall and killed six people, all of the participants should be punished with greater outlawry. However, Cornard must compensate for the killing of Irminrig. In all he judged, the Poss must pay 44 cows - 20 for the killing of Orkensor; 40 for the killing of his 5 cottars, and 4 for Skapti's wounds, minus 20 for the killing of Irminrig.

The procedures required in order to make a claim can be an adventure in and of itself. The juror and the plaintiff must find a juror with authority over the defendant. In the case of most disputes, this means a juror from another clan - not necessarily an easy thing if there is a blood-feud with that clan! Finally, the plaintiff, the jurors and the defendant must then meet at the next meeting where a court of judgment has jurisdiction or authority over the parties. At the court, a judge will preside - most commonly the tribal king himself! The judge's role is to find as much justice for all involved parties as can be found. To accomplish this, he will rely upon the laws and the legal precedents as propounded by the lawspeakers.

Cornard brought his case before King Thanos at the quarterly tribal moot. Hendanorl Truetalker, the Poss juror selected by Ornar and Cornard, stated the case and his judgment that the Poss should have to pay no cows. Cornard then told his story, followed by Goralf Blackbrow. King Thanos asked Ornar Greyman for his advice and Ornar recited the laws and precedents that clearly held that the Poss should pay Cornard 44 cows and that the Poss burners must suffer greater outlawry. King Thanos asked Hendanorl Truetalker for his advice, and Hendanorl recited several obscure precedents suggesting that the Poss owed no compensation and that Cornard must be declared a lesser outlaw because he killed Irminrig. King Thanos then asked his own lawspeaker who largely agreed with Ornar Greyman although they disagreed on the level of outlawry and who must be outlawed.

Orlanthean law provides two types of remedies - fines and outlawry. Outlawry is typically reserved for actions that start or escalate a feud. Typically outlawry is categorized as "lesser" or "greater".



DH&JQ

More Triock Says...

Triock... Tell me about heroes?

Geo was Sartar Peacemaker's cook and ale-brewer from the Holy Country. He married into the Sanchali tribe which was made homeless by the Telmori Wars. Instead of finding them new tribal lands Geo settled the survivors of the tribe in his inns all around the Kingdom. He was made immortal with Sartar and you can worship him at these inns.

The nearest Geos to us is at Runegate Fort, and if you ever go there then make sure to join up. You can always be find friends in Geo's, and even trust them as you do the clan. They serve good beer too, often Kings Ale, and they guarantee you a bowl of porridge to fill you up.

If you ever meet Geo's Bouncer don't be frightened, unless you have done something wrong of course! If he shares his drink with you accept it, or offer him some of yours. Anything else would be bad manners and shame the Greydgos.

Irnar Lawspeaker was Sartar Peacemaker's first lawspeaker and close friend, he was from the Holy Country but took a wife from the Colymar tribe. His judgement and advice was always fair and he never showed any favours even to his kin. He could be forgetful though, like the time when he forgot to include a tribe in a peace treaty.

When Sartar became an immortal Irnar followed him. He is important to the sages cult and they worship him in Boldhome. He can also be contacted sometimes on Irnar's Peak, where he retired for many years before he followed his King. Bofrost says he watches over us.

Hofstaring Tree-Leaper is king of the Culbrea tribe and a great hero of Orlanth. He is over 100 years old. He fought at Boldhome before it fell, and many of his tribe were killed there. He has heroquested and gained the ability to make great jumps, which saved his life in Boldhome. He has also got a magic spear which Farangelder says he can tell to fight on its own.

Triock... Where can I find...

... a horse?

If you must know, the nearest horsemaster is in Runegate Fort, though since Kornos Longbrewer was sold a mangy one we don't go to him. Farangelder goes to Lipiccus in Apple Lane.

But you shouldn't think about horses, they use up too much good cattle grazing and are of little use even in war! They are far too expensive to buy and to keep, and they need a lot of care else they die of the mange.

Lesser outlawry is temporary, bringing a sentence of 3 years exile from the tribal lands. Greater outlawry is permanent and is tantamount to a death sentence.

The Community Enforcement of Agreements

Orlanthi legal judgments are not self-executing and if the convicted defendant ignored the judgment, the judge, the jurors and their kin must be rallied to enforce it. If the judgment is widely perceived as unjust, it will be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to enforce. As a result, most judgments tend to be rather fair compromises that are firmly grounded in the tribe's laws and precedents. Grounding the judgment in the law not only provides suasive force to enable the judge to rally his allies but also to make it easier for the defendant's allies to beg off, isolating the defendant and thus making it easier to enforce the judgment.

Traditionally, a judge will strive for community consensus in his judgment. However, this quest for a consensual resolution extends to the jurors as well. In many cases, the six jurors will broker an arbitration between the parties that restores the status quo ante bellum and present the result to the judge to better enforce the agreement. On more than a few occasions, the result of the arbitration is little more than a symbolic mutual compensation.

After consulting with the lawspeakers, King Thanos pronounced his judgment. The Poss should pay the Osgosi 40 cattle in compensation - no payment was due for Skapti's wounds since Goralf presented evidence that Skapti was on the Poss tula when he received his wounds. Goralf was to be declared a greater outlaw for organized the burning of Orkensor's stead and Cornard was to be declared a lesser outlaw for killing Irminrig. The outlawry was to begin at the end of Storm Season and they were forbidden from taken part in the Sacred Time ceremonies. King Thanos then told the jurors that they were obliged to spread the word on the judgment and remembering it.

- 1 See Rastalulf's Saga, in *Enclosure II*, detailing Rastalulf's famous legal quarrels with King Haradangian of the Heortlings and with Lokamayadon, the High Speaker.
- 2 See "King of Sartar," pages 257-260.
- 3 See Richard Posner, "Overcoming Law," pgs.312-325 (Harvard University Press 1995); Richard Posner, "The Economics of Justice," pgs. 119-227 (Harvard University Press 1995); and Jesse Byock, "Medieval Iceland: Societies, Sagas and Power (University of California Press 1988). I have borrowed **very** heavily from Judge Posner's economic theory of primitive law for the material on blood feud.
- 4 Posner, "Overcoming Law," at 320.
- 5 See Pam Carlson's short piece "Ermaldans at War," in *Enclosure I*, pg. 29. Or better yet, check out almost any Icelandic saga. In nearly all of the major sagas, women frequently escalated or prolonged feuds by inciting, goading or shaming their kinsmen into action.

Errata for Seapolis

Unfortunately, those goddam nilmergs were at it again last issue and we left some important Seapolis information out!

Seapolis Timeline

1227 - The Pelaskans and Talari fight over claims to Ironfort. The Talari seize the stronghold.

1620 - The Islanders open a new temple on their tideward side, many say with Lunar funding. The Islanders send peoples and creatures to invade and capture Iron fort from the Talari. Early encounters between strange long ships around Slontos fall in the favour of the Choralinthan fleets. The Pirates of Alatan are found to be aiding the foreign vessels. Temertain lately of Seapolis is murdered.

Oolanate the Merchief is a female Ludoch.

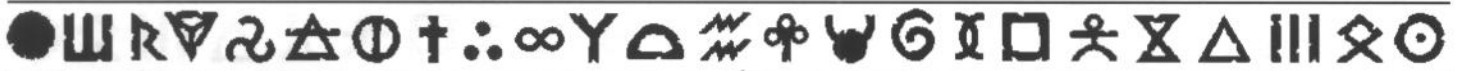
The Great Temple of Diros and Dormal.

In the courtyard there is also the noted statue "Diros inspires Dormal".

The Lunar Imperial Red Navy and Etyries Cult

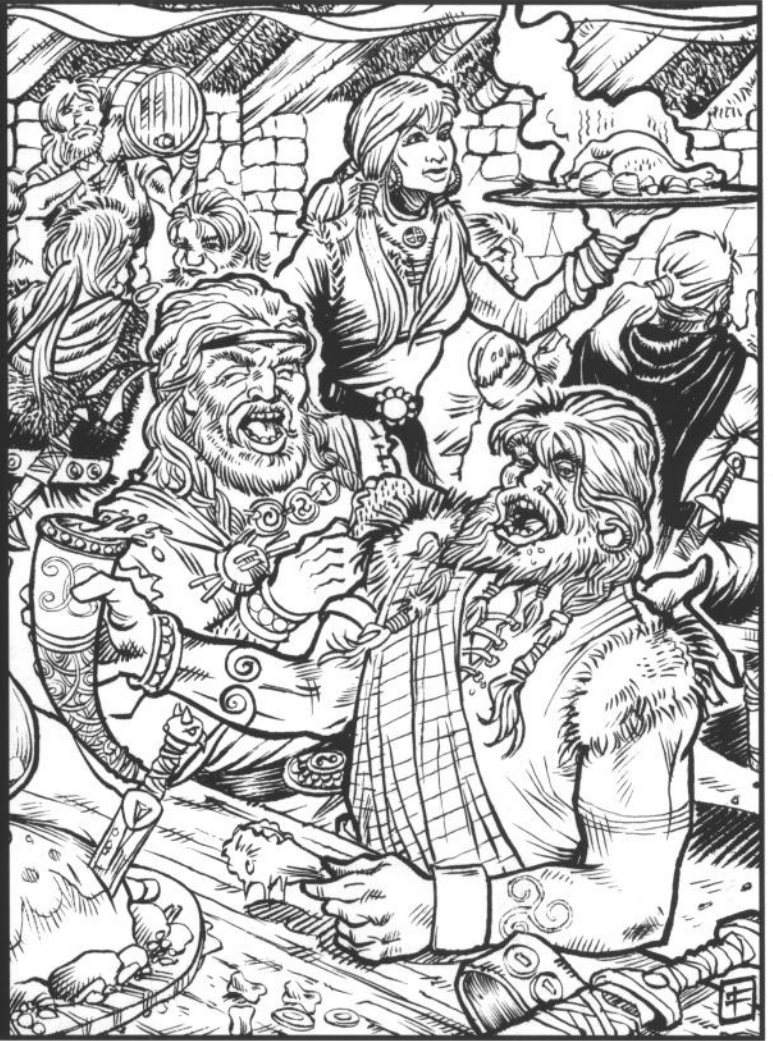
The position of the Lunar Empire is unclear. It is definitely known that the Admiral loaned his help to the Empire during their invasion of Karse, and the absence of the Navy during the magical assault upon the City of Wonders was highly suspicious. The Seapolites have recently built a large temple to Annilla, Mistress of the Tides and her Sisters in the city. This temple, on the site of the old shrine, was built with Lunar funding and the red robes of temple guards contrast strongly with blue garments of the shaman-priests.

The Imperial Navy has been visiting Seapolis since they first took command of the Praxian port of Corflu. This activity has increased dramatically since the invasion of Karse and Malkonwal. Missionaries have been sent to establish relationships between the two nations, and Etyries merchants such as Dangar Endelkar have established homes within the community. The Empire has sponsored the expansion and construction of the Temple of the Mistress of Tides and her Sisters. Elements of the Red Navy have been moored off the Chiton Harbour many times of late.



The Greydog Clan

by
**David Hall
& Jon Quaipe**



History

The Greydog clan originated with Lornar Greydog and his sons who followed Queen Lismelder when she rebelled against her father Mad-Dog Malan in 1371. He swore loyalty to the Queen and fought bravely for her, in return she gave him the Iron Cauldron of Plenty and the Brave Swan Brooches (which Kornos Longbrewer, the current chieftain, now wears, and which are a token of the clan's loyalty).

Lornar Greydog was Mad-Dog Malan's master brewer, and when he settled his family and followers in the Big Elm Valley he built the Greydog Inn and continued to brew his ales. These days there are four households, but only the Longbrewers continue the tradition of brewing.

The Households

In the Greydog clan each household (bloodline) is usually split across a number of steads (or farms), but with each stead still claiming

links to the original household. In other clans a single stead may constitute a whole household.

The duties and obligations of an individual are inextricably linked to the fate of his household. It is possible to forswear all family ties and drift alone in the world, but such an action is drastic and the source of many sorrowful and tragic poems. The consequences may not be readily apparent, but will tell. No one will avenge the forsworn, or help him in a legal or military suit, or tell tales of him, or give him free healing or food in time of need. If religious outlawry were imposed then the individual would even be stripped of all the benefits of his native gods.

The exact nature of a household can vary widely, depending upon the personality of the leader. In most important decisions the adult members of the household will have an equal say. Food is the first priority of any household; once the necessary tasks for growing and harvesting crops and raising cattle and sheep are complete,

Jurors

Jurors are not a part of the clan council, but are associated with the procedures of law and justice. Jurors are respected or learned members of the clan nominated by each household and agreed to by the clan council. They act as arbiters, witnesses and lawspeakers.

Requirements to become a juror

A juror must be nominated by a household head and then approved by the clan council or moot. A juror should have Lawspeaking and Sartar Custom skill of at least 40%. Jurors are usually drawn from the more senior members of a household.

Rights of a juror

This position entails to additional tithe or weregeld beyond that of the jurors current social position. However jurors are usually Carls. Jurors gain one-use divine magic from Orlanth Lawspeaker and Orlanth Goodvoice at the appropriate ceremonies. These benefits are lost when they resign or stand down.



DH&JQ

More Triock Says...

Triock... Where can I find...

... a weaponmaster?

Marlan and I can teach you what you need to know for your duties in the fyrd. If Farangelder visits he may show you some more tricks, if you are respectful to him.

Hmm... others? Your enthusiasm is good, but remember not to neglect your fields and sheep, they are the most important things.

Well, if you show great promise, Cornard Deathdealer may teach you, though it would be as well to gift him for it.

... a smith/armourer/weaponsmith?

You should find your sheep leather tunic and trews sufficient for most events, they're warm and comfortable to wear. I can show you how to make a strong shield from wood and hides. Malinus the thrall carves and glues together the bows we have and knows where to find the best arrow bushes.

If you really want harder armour then you can use cow hide like your hat. I found it much too clumsy and hot to wear. Two or three fleeces will get you enough unless Melissa has some spare. You can also boil a leather shirt or trews to make it harder, Melissa knows a recipe for this. I don't know the ingredients though.

Tarrim lives in the village and is our clan smith. Two harvests ago Trondi Goodaxe got him to fix bits of bronze to her boiled leather. Silly really, it only adds to the weight. I reckon that would cost you at least a cow as well, unless you can bring your own bronze. Tarrim also makes all our spear, arrow and axe heads, and swords. Don't tell anyone I said this, but his swords are not very good and can break easily. I don't think he sings the right song.

You can get better swords from the smith in Runegate Fort or Alem Bonesmith, the master smith to king Thanos. If you ever have many cows to spare then the market in Runegate Fort sometimes has expensive and very heavy all-metal armour, like Farangelder and Marlan have. It also has many different sorts of weapons.

In Apple Lane there lives a man called Piku who is a follower of Third Eye Blue, a smithing cult from far to the west. He is a master smith too and can make all-metal armour. He even knows how to smith iron.

There's also Gringle's Pawn Shop in way over in Apple Lane. Marlan says if Gringle hasn't got what you want he always has something similar.

then time is often used to further whatever manufacturing or other industry (weaving, brewing, smithing, and so on) that provides supplementary income for the household. Well established households on good land can often divert considerable manpower to other tasks and so can become famous for their wood-carving, mortar-making, tool-making, etc.

The Greydog clan households:

The Longbrewers are the direct descendants of Lornar Greydog and his eldest son, Bestaf Greydog. They are known across Sartar for their ability to brew fine mead, beer and cider. They own and operate the famous Greydog Inn on behalf of the clan. For as long as anyone can remember the clan chieftain is always been chosen from the Longbrewer household. Kornos Longbrewer, the clan chieftain, leads the household.

The Osgosi household is the largest in the clan. They are descended from Lornar's youngest son, Frodhi. Their steads occupy much of the best farming land along the Big Elm Valley and adjacent to the Elm Stream. As such they provide the vast majority of the grain needed by the clan, and their herd of cows is second only to Kornos'. Their expertise in leather-ware is renowned in Lismelder lands.

The Gorin household occupies only one stead and the household is not descended from any relative of Lornar Greydog, but from one of his loyal Thanes. They farm and herd though without notable success. Their various attempts at industry have also been unremarkable. Their household head is Yanbaum Braveblade (though many say he is ruled by Nanny Gorin).

The Hodirsons are described later.

The Clan Council

The clan council is a body made up of representatives of the people, the household heads, and functionaries who assist the chief in his many responsibilities and ritual functions. The council is appointed by the chieftain from within the clan. To be appointed to the council is an honour and privilege which few would refuse.

The Clan Council has two parts. The Outer Ring is large and, except when it meets, vague about membership. It might be, at one time, all the thanes of the clan; at another, all the household heads.

The Inner Ring are chosen from among the Outer Ring to be the decision-making body of the clan. They wield authority, borne in the sacred clan object (a silver cauldron of plenty given by Queen Lismelder to Lornar Greydog). They lead in peace and war, act as Judges in judgement, and perform any political functions needed.

In the Greydog Clan the Inner Ring is made up of the clan Chieftain, Champion, Earth Woman, Lawspeaker, Goodvoice, Ploughman, and Brewer.

The Inner Ring

This is made up of the following positions:

1. **Orlanth the Chief**
Kornos Longbrewer
2. **Ernalda the Stead Mother**
Kerna Highblossum
3. **Issaries the Godi/Translator**
Ovostar the Travelled
4. **Lhankor Mhy the Lawspeaker**
Ornar Greyman
5. **Hedkoranth Adventurer (Champion)**
Cornard Deathdealer
6. **Barntar the Ploughman**
Triock Straightblade
7. **Minlister the Brewer**
Bestaf Longbrewer

Kornos Longbrewer is the current Clan Chieftain. The latest in a long line of Longbrewer Chieftains, Kornos is respected by most of the clan for his ability to compromise and move with the times. He dislikes the Lunars, but makes sure that there is no excuse for them to intervene in clan lands or politics. In his middle forties, he is beginning to look for a fitting successor from his own household. Hralf Brightblade is tipped by some.

The Household Head

The head of the household is elected by all adults in the household, often by tacit consent rather than by formal election. On the last day of Sacred Time each household gathers for a New Year's meal at which there is a toast to the household head for the coming year, and to the previous head of the household if there is one, or to the previous household head's immediate family if he or she was lost during the year.

Responsibilities of the household head:

In addition to his responsibilities as a thane, the household head must lead all the religious ceremonies of the household. He is also responsible for leading the household fyrd whenever it is called to battle by the Clan Chieftain, or he must send a sworn representative in his place.

He is responsible for bringing the opinions of his household to the attention of the clan chieftain, as well as any matters of law that involve members of his household. In practice this means he must be present at the clan council meetings held each season.

Rights of the Household Head:

The household head has all of the rights of an Orlanthe thane and sits on the clan council (usually on the outer ring).



The Hodirson Household

The Hodirson household was founded by Snorri Hodirsson in 1444. His first action was to ally and appease the Hare spirit of Hare Woods (which is described in the poem Snorri's Quest) and the partnership established is celebrated in the Riddling Day ritual (see *Tales #7 & Best of Tales*). By doing this he was able to build what is now called Snorri's Stead, on the lower slopes of Grey Vale. From there he and his small group of close friends and followers were able to eke out a living farming, fishing, but most of all raising sheep.

Snorri's true motives for beginning anew, and settling away from his relatives in the village, are less clear now, but the story goes that it was the result of the pledge he gave to his mother, upon her deathbed, to vindicate and prove his father's blood.

The household prospered, largely due to the weaving skills that Snorri's thrall-bride brought with her from the north, and taught to others in the stead. As a result, increasingly the sheep herds of the clan were concentrated on the slopes of Grey Vale and herded there by Snorri's descendants.

In 1526 the Vale Stead of the Hodirsons was established by Elwina Hardhaft, after she retired from her adventures in the service of King Sartar (reputedly, it was so that she had less far to walk for a flagon of King's Ale). Later, in 1538 Tallstone Stead was established high up on the Vale to provide closer protection of the flocks, and in 1552 High Stead on the slopes of the Weeping Sister Hills. Now most of the sheep of the clan are herded on the hillsides around these last two steads.

Since the time of Elwina Hardhaft the Vale Stead has monopolised the position of Household Head. This is not irreversible, but it has become an almost natural act for the other steads to accept whatever household head is suggested by the elders of Vale Stead. Vale stead

Triock Says.... Fosterage

...Erik's real father is a Chieftain of the Tovtaros tribe, but he is still your brother. He is now one of your kin, and this is good as it will make our friendship with the Tovtaros all the stronger. If you are his kin, then when he returns to his clan, his kin will be your kin. He now understands our ways, and he knows how treacherous and no-good the Ormarth and Poss are. One day he will command many warriors.

Fostering is quite common amongst our people, and it strengthens us. King Thanos's son, Alwen, is fostered with the Goodweaver clan and this strengthens their ties to the tribe. King Sartar even fostered his son with the Balmryr tribe.

So, go now, and tell Erik you are sorry, and that he is your brother...

has close links with the Longbrewer Household in of Greydog Village, and in many ways they are closer to the Longbrewers than they are to the other household steads.

Important People in the Hodirson Household

Lonin the Bearded has been the Household Head for the last five years. His father, the previous Head, was killed at the battle of Runegate Fort. Lonin is a conscientious Household Head, but sometimes lacks confidence in his own abilities. He relies a great deal on his brother Triock's opinion.

Triock Straightblade is the clan Ploughman and sits on the Inner Ring of the clan council. Triock is a dour and humourless character, but well regarded for his common sense, and his knowledge of farming and herding. He is the player character's teacher in how they should behave as typical adults (farmers) and what is expected of them. The boxes and sidebars throughout the magazine are pearls of his down to earth wisdom to quote to (or at) the players.

Farangelder was from the Tallstone Stead. He died and was burned. Now, Farangelder the Honest, a Thane of Indrodar, and an iron-clad worshipper of the Death god often visits that stead and is made welcome. He is an object of great respect, pride, and awe to the household, even for a stranger. On his rare visits he is always on the lookout for potential devotee's of the Death god.

Onar Greyman is a member of the Vale Stead and holds the position of Clan Lawspeaker, he therefore commands considerable respect. See the Clan Council section.

Snorri's Stead

Snorri's stead is a typical Greydog stead. There are around forty people in the stead including thralls. All either farm the surrounding lands, herd sheep and cows, or are involved with the spinning, dying and weaving of wool. The stead is informally lead by Olaf Iron-axe, a carl, a juror, and a noted warrior. Lonin the Bearded visits the stead about once per week.

Like the household and the clan, the stead is still recovering from the events of the Lunar invasion six years before. The losses to the stead in this battle were high: the twins Hefta and Henga, housecarls to King Cullain Hammershand; their brother Argermyr, and his son Norim; Elise, wife of Pangel (who was himself killed at Grizzly Peak with his father, Gunnar) and her son Bardin. Only Onar and Pedau survived the assault, and Onar has never quite recovered from an affliction of the mind he suffered afterwards.

However, now the hopes and aspirations of the clan are turning to the new generation of adults - including the player characters.

DH&JQ

More Triock Says...

Triock... Where can I find...

... a healer?

Bofrost the Breath-Shaman and leader of the Hillhaven clan can heal many of the ailments you may get. He can bring you back to life too if Orlanth wills it, like he did Hepsin at the ritual fight last year. If you get cut harvesting or shearing then Marlan knows some healing as does Lonin the Bearded. Down in Greydog village Kerna Highblossom knows the most healing.

If you have a serious hurt then the best place to go is Runegate Fort where there is a White Lady called Siobhan who tends a shrine there. She may be able to help or might send you to the 3 Emeralds temple or Jonstown where there are more White Ladies.

... a sorcerer?

What?!

... a shaman?

Oh! You mean shaman. I misheard you, I thought you said sorcerer. Sorcerers are evil, luckily there are none around here. The nearest shaman is Bofrost of course! Some say Kareena in Apple Lane is also a shaman.

Where can I find a temple to...

Orlanth?

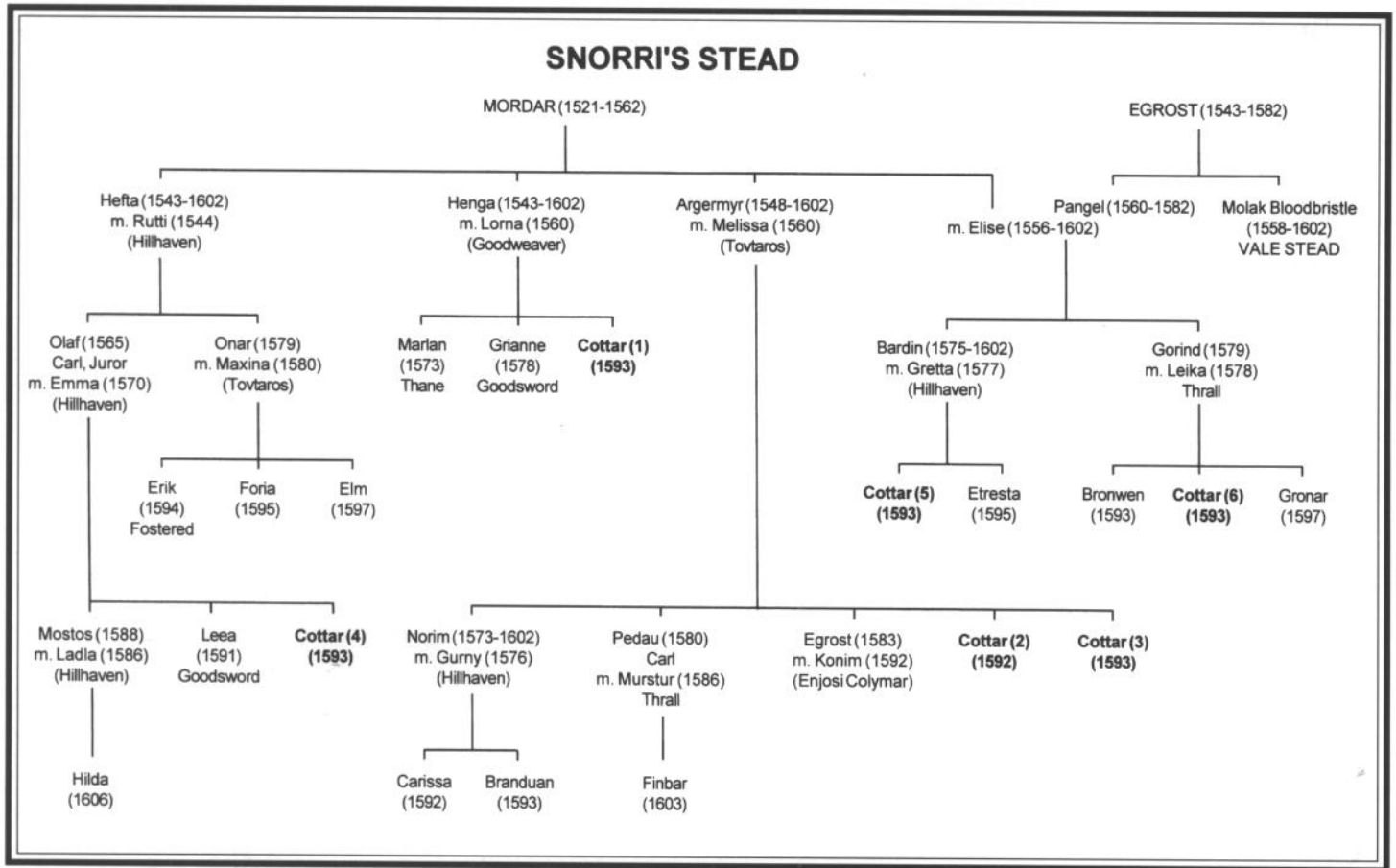
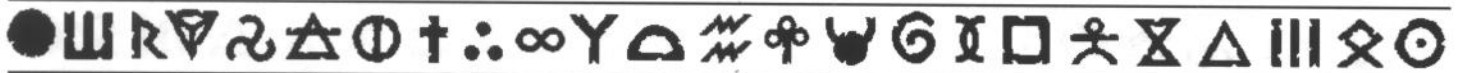
We have our own shrine to Orlanth at Goodtalk Stone, which Langrok Stormcaller looks after. There are small temples at Runegate Fort, Clearwine and on Orlanth's Ring. Every High Holy Day we gather at Indrodar's Necklace, a circle of standing stones in Goodsword clan territory, for our celebrations.

There is a great temple to Orlanth in the Stormwalk Mountains called Old Wind, it is a magical castle of wind. Another big temple is in Boldhome, it is still popular even though the Lunars have set up temples to their false Goddess and discourage worship of the Wind.

the Earth goddesses?

The temple to Ernalda is in Greydog village and it is tended by Kerna Highblossom. There are shrines there to her sons Barntar and Voriof, and her daughters Frona and Esrola. However, I think there is another holy place out in the woods that they don't tell us menfolk about. There is a holy place to Voria on Tree Hill and at the beginning of each year we gather there to give thanks to her.

Over there is Kero Fin, that massive mountain you can see across from the Marsh rising into the clouds, she is Orlanth's mother. Nearby there is a great temple to the Earth Shaker who shook down the armies of the Devil nearby. She is the sister to Ernalda, but while Ernalda is kind and bountiful, she is cruel and barren. Even so, the Earth priestesses often go there to visit the many Earth temples.



The Children of Mordar

Mordar was great great grandson of Snorri Hodirson. His three sons, Hefta, Henga and Argermyr were the founders of the main three family groups of Snorri's Stead. Mordar's fourth child, Elise, married Pangel, son of Egrost, who founded High Stead. Pangel and Elise are founders of the fourth family group composing the stead.

The Families of Hefta & Henga

Hefta Iron-axe and Henga Quicksword were twins and housecarls to the clan chieftain Jarsten Longbrewer. They were renowned as loyal warriors of their chieftain, and they died with him in the Battle of Runegate Fort in 1602.

The Family of Henga

Henga married Lorna of the Goodweaver clan, daughter of, Haggast, who was then Lawspeaker of the clan. She is the first of the Three Widows. She has three children.

The first is Marlan Windsblade. Marlan is a housecarl (weaponsthane) of Kornos Longbrewer. Among the Greydogs he is a well travelled man, having visited Boldhome and Alda-Chur. During the Lunar invasion of 1602, he fought at Caroman Pass alongside the Volsaxi in a relief army, and barely escaped with his life when they were

defeated. He has a great hatred for Lunars, but knows that he and the clan must be patient for the time being. Marlan should lead the PC's on their beginning adventures when they will need a powerful warrior to keep them alive, and out of trouble. The second child is Grianne, who married Borf the Drummer of the Hillhaven clan. She now lives in Greenhill Stead in Hillhaven lands. The third child is Cottar #1, a player character.

The Family of Hefta

Hefta married Rutti of the Tallstone Stead, daughter of Finbar the Shepherd. She is the second of the Three Widows. She had two sons, Olaf and Onar.

Olaf's Family

Olaf Iron-Axe married Emma of the Hillhaven clan, a cousin of the present Chieftain Bofrost Umathsbreath. Olaf is the chosen spokesperson for Snorri's Stead, in part due the great respect he commands from his position as Carl and Juror. He is also noted as a fine warrior, and as a young tribesman he fought at, and escaped, the Battle of Grizzly Peak. In 1602 he was prominent in leading attacks on the Lunars around Runegate Fort. However, now as he enters his

Elder years, he has hung up his Iron Greataxe and diligently executes his duties as Spokesman and foreman. Olaf and Emma have three children.

Mostos is their first son, a noted farmer, and he married Ladla a Bearer of the Goodsword Clan. They have a small daughter Hilda. Leea married, Brublar the Stout, a famous thane of the Swordvale Clan. She has two daughters and lives in Swordvale. The third child is Cottar #4, a player character.

Onar's Family

Onar is married to Maxina of the Blue Foot Tovtaros. She is the sister of Einar Threetrees, a clan chieftain. She has been known to join the household fyrd in their yearly training. Maxina and Onar have three children.

Erik Longshanks is the oldest. He is a foster-son whose real father is Maxina's brother Einar. He visits his real father and mother each Storm Season. His good looks and boyish manner have led to many admirers amongst the women of the household. Foria and Elm are the two daughters of Maxina and Onar. Foria's inclinations lean towards Ernalda and Mahome, while red-headed Elm spends her time fighting and swimming with the boys of the household.



The Family of Argermyr

Argermyr was the third son of Mordar and brother of Hefta and Henga. When the Lunars invaded he was a juror and stead spokesman. He died with his brothers at Runegate Fort. His wife Melissa is the sister of Freda, who is the mother of Esta Spearsister. She is the third of the Three Widows. Melissa and Argermyr had five sons.

The first son was Norim, who died with his father at Runegate Fort. His wife Gurny was a tribeswoman of the Dinacoli tribe, she gave up her children and returned to her tribe after his death. Norim and Gurny had two children, who were subsequently brought up by the Three Widows. Carrissa was her first child and she married Hralf Brightblade of the Longbrewer household. They have twin daughters.

Branduan is the second child. He is a keen listener to sagas of war and glory. Branduan is possibly fated to become an important member of the clan, and he should be a constant companion of the player characters.

The second son is Pedau Blackbrow. Pedau married Murstar, a Thrall captured from the Tarshites. They have a young son named Finbar. Since the invasion in 1602 Pedau has changed from a happy and carefree character to a solemn and purposeful one. He dotes on his small son Finbar and has even started teaching him how to use sword and bow. Pedau is seen as the next leader of the stead.

Egrost is the third son, a craftsman and a farmer; he and his wife Konim are the principal weavers of the stead. Konim is from the Enjosi Colymar and is the daughter of a tanner in that clan. She is currently with child. The fourth and fifth sons are cottars #2 and #3, player characters.

The family of Elise and Pangel

Pangel died in 1582 with the Roving Sword Clan at the Battle of Grizzly Peak. Elise was slain by Storm Bull uncouths from the Orlmarth clan of the Colymar tribe in the troubled times that followed the fall of Boldhome in 1602. They had two sons, Bardin and Gorind.

Bardin's Family

Bardin died during raids on the Lunar forces around Runegate Fort in 1602. Gretta his wife is a half-sister of the tribal king, Thanos Truespeaker. She is sometimes called the "fourth widow". Gretta's two children are Cottar #5, a player character, and Etresta who is still a child.

Gorind's Family

Gorind survived the battle around Runegate Fort. His wife Leika is a thrall, who he captured from raids upon the Volsaxi. Their two children, a son Gronar, and a daughter Bronwen, have yet to reach maturity.

The Three Widows

The Three Widows (Rutti, wife of Hefta Ironaxe, Lorna, wife of Henga Quicksword, and Melissa, who married Argemyr the Just) all lost their husbands during the Fall of Sartar in 1602. Sometimes Gretta, the wife of Bardin Longarrow, is counted as the "fourth" widow. Together they constitute a strong lobby against strife and warfare so characteristic of the Orlanthi Male within the Hodirson Household.

Tricksters in Orlanthi Society

Most Orlanthi recognise that Eurmali play an important role in their culture, but they can't understand exactly why he is important. All they know for sure is that often Eurmali just happens - he just shows up - and that his presence is necessary for change to occur, for things to happen "right." Several of the rituals important to Orlanth, Chalana Arroy, Issaries, and Lhankor Mhy (those that are portions of the Lightbringer's Quest) at best don't work, and at worst are disasters, if there is no trickster present. (For instance, an Eurmali is part of the ritual of teaching a Healer how to resurrect someone from the dead.) The God Learner sage Erasmus claimed that the Sunstop was the result of the "successful" completion of a Lightbringer's Quest without a Trickster.

In fact Eurmali's importance is related to the roles he plays in Orlanthi myth. He is an imp and a scapegoat, a demonstration of how people who trick or abuse others always end up being tricked or abused themselves. He is a fool, showing people that humour can dissolve tensions and that physical violence is not the only option. He is an outlaw, a reminder to Orlanthi that dangers can come from within their community as well as from without. And he is also a necessary part of the Lightbringer's Ring: part of what the Lightbringer's Quest provides is an awareness that everyone has flaws, and that to live one must accept the flaws and limitations of yourself and others. Eurmali the Lightbringer is also a reminder that even the worst person can be of use, and that people can change. Perhaps most importantly, Eurmali is the living embodiment of the "first rule", the basis, of Orlanthi society - "No one can make you do anything!" - taken to the extreme.

DH&JQ

More Triock Says...

Where can I find a temple to... Voriof?

We have a holy place to the god of shepherds at Hollow Oak, and Kerna Highblossom prays there when one of our flock is lost. There are other holy places to Voriof at 3 Emeralds and Orlanth's Ring.

Odayla & Yinkin?

Odayla & Uncle Yinkin are not as important to us now as in the past but we still gather at the Goodhunt Shrine to start the Great Hunt.

Humakt?

In time of war we gather at Indrodar's Necklace. This is a place holy to Indrodar & Humakt, as well as Orlanth. The Marshedge clan have another shrine to Indrodar closer to the Marsh. We also gather here on Indrodar's High Holy Day, when we remember our pledge to him and to our clan. The Temple of Indrodar is nearby in Swordvale.

There are other temples at Runegate Fort and at Duckpoint. Also there are much larger ones at Jonstown and Boldhome, but they do not worship Indrodar.

Issaries?

Goodtalk Stone is a place where Issaries once put his foot as he paused to admire the Big Elm Valley. It is the place where we hold our regular market days. If we haggle here we are not so likely to be taken in by the dickering of an Issaries Goldentongue. More impromptu dickering is done in the Greydog Inn over a mug of ale. The inn was blessed by an Issaries priest many years ago. The nearest permanent Issaries market is at Runegate Fort.

Lhankor Mhy?

Lawspeaker Hill and Imar's Peak are important to Lhankor Mhy. Sometimes sages have been known to go to Imar's Peak to ask for advice.

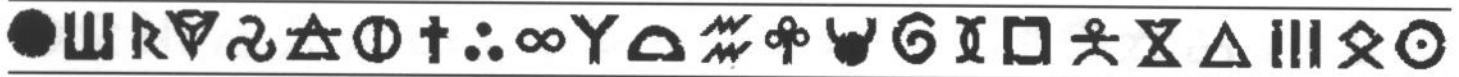
Apart from this, there is a shrine in Clearwine and large Libraries in Jonstown and Boldhome.

Storm Bull?

There is a holy place on the Starfire Ridges called the Bull's Hill. Many Storm Bulls who are hunted by the Lunars hide there. The shrine in Runegate Fort is not well attended these days because of the Lunar soldiers there; Korin tells me that the Lunar soldiers often bait worshippers to kill them.

Eurmali?

Why do you want to know that? Where Brigpice goes I do not know, nor do I care! You can ask him, but don't expect a straight answer!



The Hare Woods

by
Peter Michaels

The Hare Woods run along the Starfire Ridges down to the Goodale Path in Big Elm Valley, north-east of Greydog Village. The Hare spirit shares a special connection with the Greydog clan, who regularly appease him. Snorri Hodirson performed the first friendship ritual with Hare, and his descendants now live in the woods up on the Starfire Ridges. Every Fire Season this spirit visits Greydog Village, where he plays a ritual riddling game to reaffirm his connection with the Greydog clan. Hare does not physically manifest when visiting Greydog Village; instead, he possesses the clan trickster and speaks through him.

All the locals know the Hare Woods is home to this spirit, whom they also call Greyhare or Old Hare. Greydog clansfolk all observe certain tenets to honour and appease him. These include always burying the left hind foot of any hare killed or found dead, and not hunting or snaring hares in Hare Woods (except during the winter weeks when Voriof's Star rises above Lawspeaker Hill).

Everybody knows the Hare Woods are a strange place, where cattle and people often get lost. Most people have never seen Hare, but many people who have been lost in Hare Woods have heard rustling in the underbrush, seen twinkling eyes staring at them from the shadows, or heard someone sniggering at them as they tried to find their way home. Those few who have seen Hare have only caught a glimpse of his tail. From this glimpse he is usually estimated as being the size of a large dog, but nobody knows for sure.

A secret known only to the Hodirson household is how to (quickly) find their way out of Hare Woods if they get lost there. They know that Hare will help anyone who takes off all of their clothes and puts them back on inside out.

Whenever Hare finds a trickster lost in his woods, he will appear to him and challenge him to a riddle contest. When appearing to a trickster he



can be anywhere from mouse-sized to house-sized (and he usually changes size at least once during the contest). If the trickster wins, Hare will teach him the spirit spell *Get Lost* (but the trickster will still have to find his own way out of the woods!). If Hare wins, the trickster will be given a geas. The nature of the geas varies, but could include such things as "*Never Eat Hare Or Rabbit*," "*Never Cut Your Hair Or Shave*," "*Never Let A Hare Or Rabbit Suffer Needlessly*," "*Eat A Root Vegetable Every Day*," "*Have Sex At Least Once Every Fertility Week*," "*Never Flee From Or Surrender To Any Duck*," and "*Always Hop Using Both Feet When On A Paved Road*."

Breaking this geas hardly ever results in death. Most often, breaking a Hare geas results in the transformation of some part or all of the trickster's anatomy from human to hare-like. This transformation can range from relatively minor (such as gaining buck-teeth or a hare tail, or all body hair turning grey) to major (gaining hare ears, a hare's foot, a hare nose with whiskers, or being covered with grey fur) to total and complete.

Brigpice the Fool

The current trickster of the Greydog clan is Brigpice Badstink. He originally came from the "no-good" Gorin household, but even they have now disowned him. Brigpice earned this moniker five years ago, after he refused to participate with the rest of the clan in the cleansing ritual on Voria's Day. Since then he has refused to wash, and most people believe (correctly) that he has gained a geas against bathing. However, he does make some attempts to stay clean. In the spring and summer he will often be found walking in the rain or wading through one of the local creeks or streams. In the fall and winter he will sometimes undress himself, smear fat all over his body, and let the clan dogs lick him clean.

Another strange thing about Brigpice is that for the past year he has always worn some sort of cap or hat, never uncovering his head. Half-hearted attempts to snatch his cap off have shown he is willing to use magic to keep his head covered. Most people assume (incorrectly) that he has simply gained another geas. If Brigpice's cap is ever taken off by force, or he is caught without his head covered, it will be quickly apparent why he was wearing the cap: he has two large hare ears instead of human ears.



If you go down to the Woods today...

by David
Gordon

Sacred Time

It is the second week of Sacred Time, and the beginning of Spring. Langrok Stormcaller has called the clan together to participate in the spring rites. All are present except the clan hunter, Athrwn Pawface, who is away performing the Odaylan ritual of rebirth (though he is usually back by now). As Langrok utters prayers to Orlanth, Awareness rolls from the PCs will alert them to the presence of a strange thing at the periphery of their vision. When they take a closer look they will see a skeletal animal (a rabbit). When this is brought to the clan's attention pandemonium strikes and there is talk of terrible omens and consequences. Langrok continues the ceremony but is visibly shocked.

During the rest of the day more skeletal animals are seen, including various types of bird, wild boar, and rodents. That night, any Odayla initiate amongst the PCs (preferably the clan hunter's apprentice) will be visited by Yinkin in his dreams. He sees, from the point of Athrwn's shadow cat, Athrwn with a pained expression on his face, throwing things into a large fire in a dark cave. He also has an extremely strong feeling of foreboding and will remember a strong smell of rotting vegetation in the cave. When the PC awakens they will start to behave strangely, becoming more and more like a cat.

It is up to the GM to brief the hunter PC secretly that he must role-play the part a cat since Yinkin himself has possessed him. Just think of what domestic cats do and get up to! If the PC plays his role well then he should be rewarded with up to +5 to all Odayla/Yinkin skill rolls.



To the Rescue

If the PC tells anyone about his dream then Langrok Stormcaller will call the whole clan together and tell them of a little known myth where Yinkin returned alone one day from hunting with his companion Odayla. Odayla was in trouble having been set upon by a pack of Bad Dogs. Orlanth gathered his Thunder Brothers and together with Yinkin they set off and rescued Odayla.

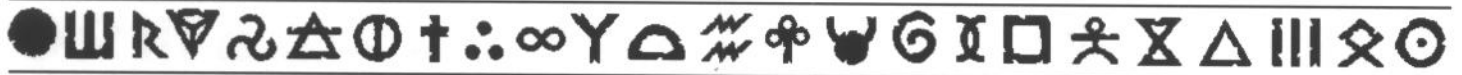
The clan must decide who will play the part of Orlanth (if no one volunteers then Branduan will fulfil this role), while the other PC's can take on the roles of the Thunder Brothers. The part of Yinkin is played by the possessed character. Langrok will discourage any Humakti from going on this quest since Odayla's task this Sacred Time is rebirth and not death. Uroxi will be forbidden because of the antagonism Urox has with Odayla and Yinkin in their myths.

Entering the Spirit Plane

After brief preparations are made, Langrok takes the questers into the woods around Tree Hill. He then calls upon Orlanth and Odayla to protect them, as well as asking for the Lady of the Wild's mercy. Then he sends them into the woods and across to the Otherside. The PCs will find that they are standing in a mist enshrouded forest on the Otherside. The Yinkini will immediately pick up a scent to follow through the mist.

As the players make their way through the forest they will see other skeletal animals, some of which obviously seem to be in distress. At one point they will be attacked by a pack of Zombie wolves, one of which has a wolf's head attached to a stag's body using stitches (obviously a creation of Delecti). They must defeat these to continue.

The Yinkini then leads the party to a cave. As the first of them tries to go inside they will be



DH&JQ

More Triock Says...

*Who are our enemies?
Who leads them
and who do they worship?*

Our nearest enemies are the Poss. They often raid our cattle and you must always keep a good lookout for them. Our feud with them started back when they stole Vortinen Greydog's wife and wouldn't give her back. They are lead by an evil man called Harvald the Hairy. They claim to worship Orlanth, though from the way Harvald is always scratching himself I don't think he's very pious!

The Lunar Empire is our next enemy. They think to rule us, and we do pay their taxes, but one day soon we will rise under the kin of Sartar Peacemaker and throw them out. Their leader in Sartar is a man called Euglytus the Fat, he enjoys his food and Boldhome so much that he hardly ever leaves there.

The Lunars worship their Goddess of the Red Moon and her spawn, they have a shrine to her in Runegate Fort. You can see her in the sky over there, on Wildday she is at her most powerful and glows red all day and night, but on Waterday she is black and puny. That is the best time to kill Lunars. They say that in the Empire she always glows red.

If you ever see any Lunars then leave them alone and go tell a thane. If you have to speak to them be polite but do not help them.

Chaos is our greatest enemy. This slime threatens our existence wherever it appears. Whenever you find it you must destroy it, or get help to do so.

The Lunars think to use this slime which makes them even more dangerous, and stupid!

attacked by a skeletal black bear which is seeking to leave the cave. Make a note of whether they destroy this skeletal form or not.

The Sacred Cave

Deep in the cave they come to a small cavern with torches spluttering in natural wall brackets that illuminate beautiful cave paintings of various animals. Ahead they can hear chanting. Suddenly, another skeletal creature comes bounding out of the cave (a brown deer). Again it only wishes to escape. Make a note if the player's destroy it.

The inner sanctum of this cave complex is a large cavern. In the centre is the Master Hunter standing near a large fire burning with multicoloured flames. On the floor is an intricate sand drawing of the Odaylan Shamanic Wheel. It has runes for the appropriate gods and stylised line pictures of

animals and trees. In places it has been scuffed. The hunter is frothing at the mouth as he chants and around his feet are strewn tree twigs and bones. In one corner is his shadow cat, cowering in fear, staring wide eyed at the shadows in the back of the cave.

The clan hunter throws a bone into the fire and a boar skeleton appears suddenly from the flames and runs towards the exit. Any Odaylans will realise that this is wrong. Complete animals are supposed to be released by this ritual, not skeletal ones.

The PC's must now overcome the hunter, either by knocking him unconscious or holding him down and carrying him out of the cave. He will ignore them except when they touch him - when he will seek to throw them aside with great strength and continue with his ritual.

An Odayla cultist must perform the ritual correctly. The GM can abstract this through a Religion roll or let the player work it out from the Shamanic Wheel diagram. If he is successful, then when he throws a bone/twig into the fire an animal will magically appear from the fire and run out of the cave. If he fails then some of the combinations will produce animal spirits while others will produce skeletal animals.

If any of the bones are not matched to twigs then that animal will not return to Greydog lands next year. This may be so for any skeletal animals that the PCs destroyed - unless they remember to gather up their bones.

The Daughter of Darkness

Once the player starts doing the ritual correctly, then a Daughter of Darkness (sent by Delecti - an implacable enemy of the Lismelder) waiting in bat form at the back of the cave (and the cause of the abject terror in the shadow cat) tries to enthrall him. However, the shadowcat is now less afraid because of the presence of Yinkin in the Odayla PC and will give a warning to him of the impending danger just before the vampire strikes (by hissing, spitting, and yowling). If the vampire succeeds then Athrwn will be freed from the Daughter's power and alert the PCs to the danger (assuming they haven't knocked him senseless!). In any case, the enthralled PC will now start throwing bones without twigs into the fire, producing even more skeletal animals!

It is now up to the remaining players to stop the enthralled PC destroying the ritual, as well as defeat the vampire. Her tactics are to attack them with a small shade, and then turn into gas and reform as a wolf in different parts of the cave. Play up the wolf's red glowing eyes and huge fangs. If she is hard-pressed she will cast Creeping Chills. She will not appear in her real form (except when she is killed when the questers will see a pale and beautiful woman). If defeat becomes inevitable then she will try and escape.

Aftermath & Rewards

If the ritual is performed correctly (or even partially correctly) then the skeletal animals will vanish when Sacred Time ends. However, even with perfect success the wood pigeon will never be seen in Lismelder lands again. If the ritual was only partially successful then other animals will not appear in Lismelder lands again (at least not for many years).

By way of a reward the Master Hunter will teach all the questers the Peaceful Cut. The quester who played Orlanth will also be gifted with a shadow cat kitten specially bred by Athrwn. The Yinkini will gain a new Yinkini ability.

Protagonists

The Daughter of Darkness

Vivamort Heroquester and minion of Delecti

SIZ: 16 **Move:** 5
DEX: 20 **Damage:** 7d6
STR: 25 **HP:** 40
CON: 24 **Armour:**
APP: 16 **Magic Points:** 35

Attacks:
Touch: 12 **Bite:** 10

Spirit Magic:

Divine Magic: Cause Creeping Chills, Create Ghost, Create Skeleton, Summon Medium Shade (use RQ equivalent), Ecstatic Communion
Sorcery: Intensity 12, Damage Resistance 14, Spell Resistance 16, Spirit Resistance 13.

Modifier to Valorous:

Significant Trait: Cowardly
Significant Passions: Hate Lismelder

Skills: Turn into mist, bat or wolf. In mist form she can regenerate 3 hit point per round, which she can do at will and especially when her hit points are reduced to zero.

Wolf form:

As Pendragon rulebook, except with the Vampires HPs, 6 armour points hide, 8d6 damage and skills and spells of the vampire.
Glorify to Kill: 200.

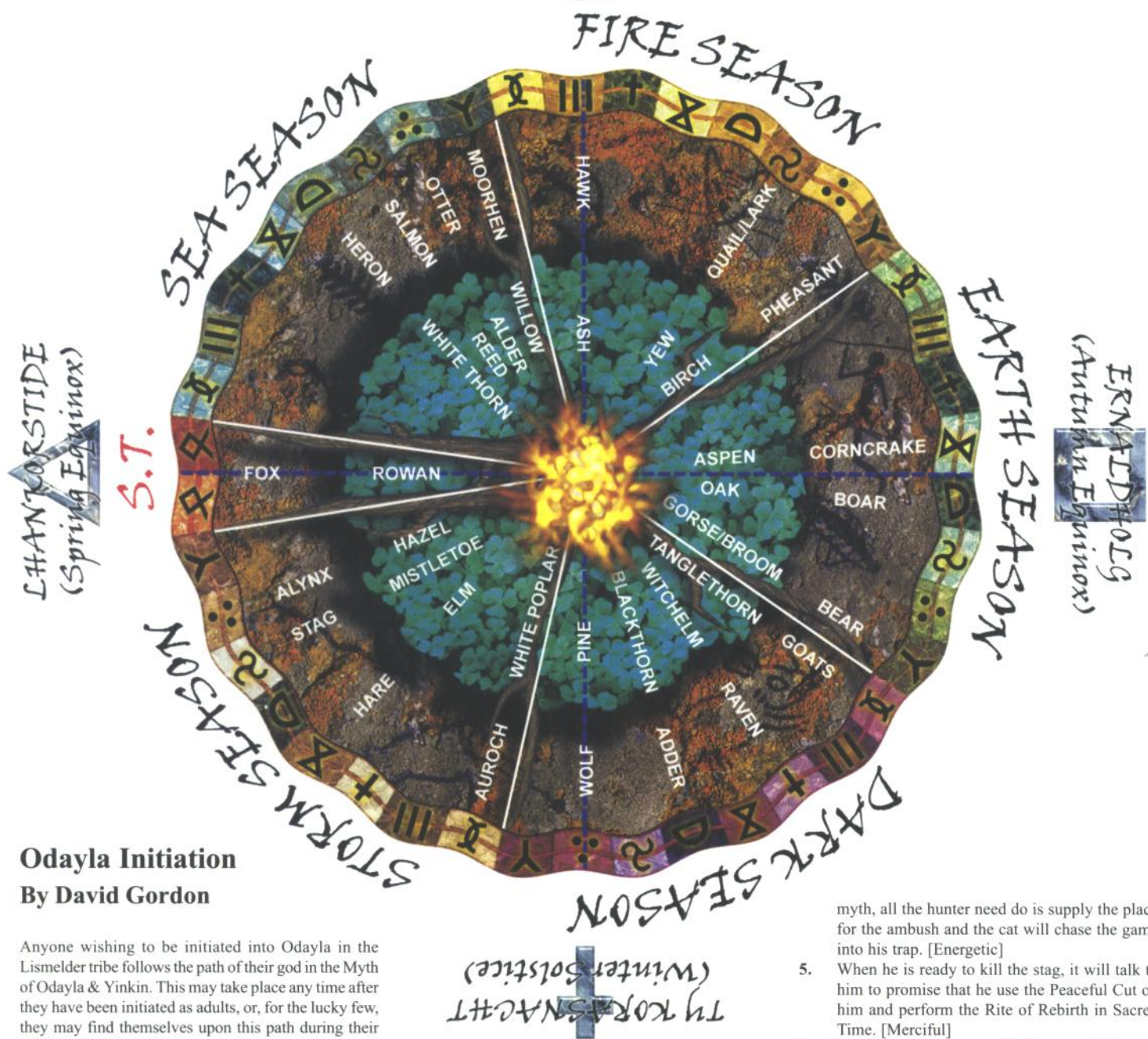
Zombie Wolves

Use Pendragon wolves, with deer stats used for the stag/wolf hybrid. They will behave as ordinary animals, except Major Wounds will only cause damage to their hit points and nothing more.
Glorify to Kill: 50.

Skeletal Boar and Bear

As Pendragon rules, but half the hit points, and half the damage caused by blade weapons, spears and bows. A Major Wound or Knock Down will shatter the skeletons. **Glorify to Kill:** 10.

ELMGATHA
(Summer Solstice)



Odayla Initiation
By David Gordon

Anyone wishing to be initiated into Odayla in the Lismelder tribe follows the path of their god in the Myth of Odayla & Yinkin. This may take place any time after they have been initiated as adults, or, for the lucky few, they may find themselves upon this path during their initiation into adulthood.

At each step of the initiation the Odaylan traits (Proud, Brave, Generous, Energetic, Merciful) are tested. Appropriate hunting skills can also be used in most of the steps. The GM is encouraged to use these tests and the myth as the basis of an initiation scenario.

1. On High Holy Day the feasting begins early at the clan chiefs the adults are given ale while the initiand will be given weak ale or milk. He will be mocked by his brothers and Uroxi. Turning away in shame the young hunter must go out into the wilderness to make his way. It is here that he must spend a night in a hollowed Yew tree. [Proud]
2. The hunter will awaken to the barking of dogs. All around the forest has an eyrie other worldly mist. Sneaking closer to the barking the hunter

will find three dogs harassing Yinkin. The cat is giving as good as he gets. The dogs are fierce and the hunter must find the courage to throw stones at the to scare them away. If successful – the cat will be his companion for life if he finishes the initiation satisfactorily. [Brave]

3. Yinkin is badly bruised and his wounds must be tended. Using a fire he must cook the food he hunted and offer raw meat for the Alynx. Yinkin will sleep to recuperate. The hunter should make a spear, bow or flint knife at this point. [Generous]
4. During the night the Yinkin will lead the hunter into the forest to show him how to hunt. He and the cat must hunt for a stag to hunt, or any other animal will do, but a stag will be most propitious. If he rolls under his Odayla Religion he will be aided by his cat in the way Yinkin did in the

myth, all the hunter need do is supply the place for the ambush and the cat will chase the game into his trap. [Energetic]

5. When he is ready to kill the stag, it will talk to him to promise that he use the Peaceful Cut on him and perform the Rite of Rebirth in Sacred Time. [Merciful]
6. The hunter must return with the game and present it to the chief. It is here that the hunter has the chance to include the shadow cat in the glory of the kill [gain a check in Honour]. The Uroxi will jeer at the cat and hunter must admonish them and protect Uncle Yinkin. [gain a check in Justice]

Sometime during the quest if the initiate should have a play fight with Yinkin and he may be scratched on the face. This is Yinkin's Mark and is a sign of his favour. Anyone with this mark will find that cats are always friendly towards them (they will also discover that all dogs are hostile to them).

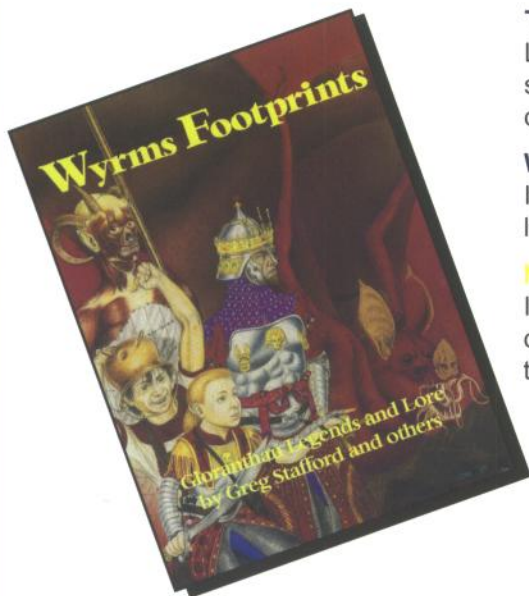
The initiand who proves himself in three of the five virtues is successful. He keeps the shadow cat he found during the quest as his hunting companion. He also receives the Yinkini innate ability of *Catvision*.

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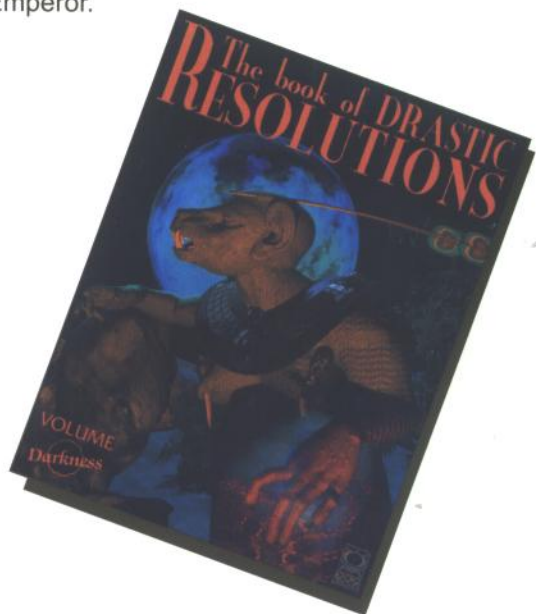
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