

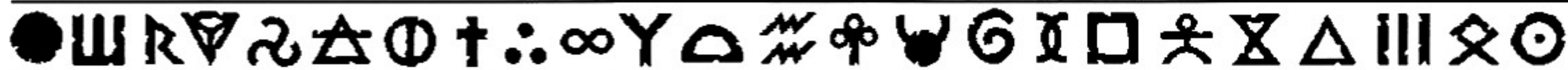
# Tales *of the* Reaching Moon

Issue 19

## Upland Marsh Special

Delecti the Necromancer  
Vampires, Zombies, and Undead Monsters!  
And a few Ducks too...





## Tales of the Reaching Moon

The Gloranthan Magazine - ISSN 0960-1228

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**Subscriptions UK:** Single issues: £3.50, including postage. Back issues (10-18) are available. Subscriptions are no longer accepted (issue #20 will be the last). Available from David Hall. Please make UK cheques or Postal Orders to "David Hall". NO CASH. Address: 21 Stephenson Court, Osborne Street, Slough, Berkshire, SL1 1TN.

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## Edict

### Hola! Compañeros de Glorantha!

This issue follows on from the Lismelder special issue and details the Upland Marsh and all of its horrible denizens. It's a great place to lose a few adventuring parties, and then bump into them again... as undead!

The next (and final) issue will continue the theme with two more scenarios and the Secrets of the Lismelder! We'll also have a whole load of other non-Lismelder stuff too. Not sure when it's out... but if we all wish very hard then maybe it will arrive before the new year.

Best of Tales is due to be published with Tales #20 (Rick was a bit premature in his coverage of it in the MIG 2... I'm sure I've seen that cover somewhere before...). It will be published as a limited edition.

### News from Issaries - Hero Wars is Out!

This is Issaries Inc.'s long-awaited Gloranthan story-telling RPG designed by Robin D. Laws. To quote the official press release: "Hero Wars isn't RuneQuest," says Greg Stafford, President of Issaries, Inc. "This is an entirely new system that Robin has made for Glorantha. To me, it is closer to the real Glorantha than previous game systems." The books are all in a trade paperback format (8.25" x 5.25"), with illustrations by Lee Moyer, Marc Moreno, and Simon Bray.

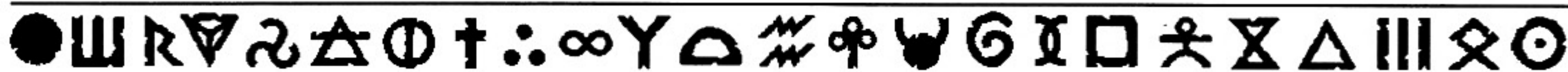
*Hero Wars, Roleplaying in Glorantha* is 256 pages and retails for £12.99 (\$19.95). This core rule book has all the basics you need to play.

*Narrator's Book, Game Mastering in the Hero Wars* is 176 pages and retails for \$14.95. These are narrator's rules, especially to oversee the larger scale of interactions, and explain the Otherworlds of the spirits, gods and of sorcery.

*Deluxe Hero Wars* is a complete boxed set which includes both the *Hero Wars* and the *Narrator's Book* (which are also available separately), as well as the 112 page *Visions of Glorantha* (fiction and mythology), and handouts, which include glossary, character sheets, sample starting characters, rules synopsis and some simple maps. It comes in a box and retails for \$44.95.

*Glorantha, Introduction to the Hero Wars* is 256 pages and retails for £12.99 (\$19.95). This provides an introduction to the cosmology, history (past and future), and major regions of Glorantha. It complements the Hero Wars game, but does not require knowledge of the rules.





*Anaxial's Rooster, Creatures of the Hero Wars* is 256 pages and retails for around £12.99 (\$19.95). This book contains over 150 entries describing more than 300 animals, monsters, and other creatures, including game statistics, origin myths, and other pertinent facts.

For more details see:

[www.glorantha.com](http://www.glorantha.com) or [www.Leisuregames.co.uk](http://www.Leisuregames.co.uk).

### King of Dragon Pass Computer Game

Is there a Tales reader who hasn't seen "King of Dragon Pass" yet? This is David Dunham's excellent Gloranthan computer game, where you play a small clan which attempts to first survive, then form a tribe, become tribal king, and finally unite the tribes into a kingdom. If you haven't seen it yet, visit the KoDP web page <http://a-sharp.com/kodp/> and see what all the fuss is about. Here you'll find downloads of a demo version, the latest updates, ordering info and links to KoDP fan pages, some with hints and cheats!

### Zine News

Tradetalk #6 should be out by the time to read this. It's a Kethaela/Ralios issue. This will be followed by issues covering the Non-human races, Pavis, Handra, and then Heortland.

Drastic Resolutions Volume Water is the next issue planned by Stephen Martin. However, it is being delayed while Steve is making a number of pitches to Issaries Inc. to do other (related) products professionally. You can get updates on this from his web pages at: [www.geocities.com/TimesSquare/Ring/1722](http://www.geocities.com/TimesSquare/Ring/1722) or [www.glorantha.com](http://www.glorantha.com) (note the spelling of Glorantha in the URL!). Alas, copies of his previous volumes are now out of print except in Australia.

Harald Smith tells me that, alas, there are no more issue of New Lolon Gospel planned due to a combination of work and kids! There's also no news of any third issue of Enclosure.

### IMPORTANT! Address Change!

Please note that the Tales and Megacorp address has changed to:

*11 Baron's Lodge  
110 Manchester Road  
London E14 3BL*

It might seem uncannily like Rick Meints'/Moon Design's old address. It is! However, the Megacorp has chucked Rick out and he lives somewhere else! (22 Foxglove Road, Romford, Essex, RM7 OYQ).

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### The Meints Index to Glorantha (MiG) 2

#### Reviewed by MOB

Gloranthaholic extraordinaire Rick Meints profiles just about *everything* from the entire Glorantha oeuvre in this, the second edition of his Index to Glorantha. This update even features miniatures, and starts with Chaosium's earliest works in the 70's (White Bear & Red Moon), through the glorious 80s (Runequest's "Pavis", "Big Rubble", "Borderlands" etc.) and on to the Avalon Hill RQ3 products of the 90's. It is an invaluable resource for Glorantha fans, featuring every product ever made about Greg Stafford's wonderful fantasy world.

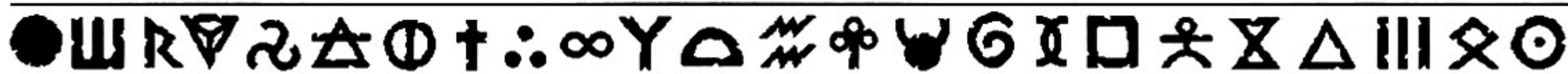
Rick also details the wide range of magazines that featured RuneQuest and Glorantha material (i.e. "Different Worlds", "White Dwarf", etc.), and the incredibly rich array of semi-professional and fan-based publications that have kept Greg Stafford's creation vibrant and alive over the decades ("Tales of the Reaching Moon").

Rick includes often witty and acerbic but always-comprehensive descriptions of each item, and a damn useful index at the end. The "What Never Was" boxes sprinkled throughout are interesting, describing a multitude of projects that were announced, but unfortunately never came to pass - no one seemed to miss 1981's putative "Ships and Sailing", but I think we all regret that "The X-rated Supplement" touted in 1979 (and said to only be available to "persons over 21") didn't ever appear.

The MiG2 will certainly come in handy for Glorantha fans, especially collectors: over 100 cover art illustrations will certainly help track down what you're after. Rick even includes a guide to prices you might expect to pay at a con auction - "Griffin Mountain" was originally priced at \$15.95, but expect to pay up to \$120 if you want it these days!

The MiG2 is a Megacorp product. Ordering information is available at [www.glorantha.co.uk](http://www.glorantha.co.uk), plus see the back page ad in this issue.





# Indrodar Greydog

## Hero Cult of Humakt

### Indrodar's Personal History

Indrodar was a son of Lornar Greydog, master brewer of the Malani. Indrodar killed his first man when he was five years old. By fourteen he was raised to the position of tribal champion and Sword of Humakt. His entire life was dedicated to walking Humakt's path. Devotion to his code of honour was absolute. As Sword and Champion of the Malani. He was loyal to Malan till the death of his cousin in a dishonourable fashion - slain by Malan's son, Erland Kinslayer.

His cousin, Frodhi, was killed in a perversion of Humakt's way by the Kinslayer. Seeking revenge Indrodar sought justice from his Humakti King thinking, long service as his champion and bodyguard, would ensure justice. However his oath of loyalty was based on a lie, and soon ceased to exist because Malan had no more justice in him than his kinslaying son.

It haunted Indrodar to the end of his days that he never slew Erland and worse, the unjust son replaced his unjust father as king, showing clearly the corruption of the Malani Humakti. Malani have been looked on with scorn by the Lismelder Humakti ever since.

Persuaded to follow his family, Indrodar became house-thane to Queen Lismelder when she too fell out with her father Mad-Blood Malan over the Kinslaying and formed the Lismelder tribe. He persuaded his father (the master brewer to Mad-Blood Malan) to join the Queen in her struggle for independence. After many adventures Lornar Greydog's followers settled in the Big Elm Valley, and founded the Greydog Inn.

During the wars against Delecti Indrodar led the Fyrd, even after his Queen was killed and became a zombie. Indrodar also went to the ducks and placed the whole Lismelder tribe under their protection, against much Lismelder opposition. For this he became a Duckfriend.

Indrodar then left his clan and his tribe and entered the Upland Marsh at the beginning of his seven year quest for Queen Lismelder's undead body. He felt honour bound as her last remaining house-thane to find her, or die in the attempt. It was during this time that he learned many secrets of Delecti and the zombies, often from the ducks. Finally he found Queen Lismelder's body and, using the knowledge he had gained, freed her soul from its torment and gave the body a proper burial. With their founder liberated and able to watch over them the Lismelder prospered.

Indrodar and his followers then settled in the Vale of the Sword River, and built the hillfort called Swordvale, nearby to Indrodar's Lookout - a hill of ancient standing stones. Here Indrodar also founded a temple to Humakt, as a sentinel against the Undead in the Marsh.

However, Indrodar soon fell out with Queen Tara and her sisters who ruled the tribe from Marshedge. They demanded that all follow the Old Earth Way, and civil war was threatened. Indrodar's solution cost him dear, he broke his geas of Total Celibacy to Humakt, and wooed and married Queen Tara, bringing her back into the ways of Orlanth and Ernalda.

Indrodar and Queen Tara ruled the tribe together until Tara's death in 1419. He then ruled for two years more, before he passed on the Kingship in Orlanth's way, by election. Then he retired and later died during an expedition into the Marsh.

Since his death Indrodar Greydog has been worshiped as a cult hero of Humakt, and as a source of power against Delecti. His hero-cult is small and provides a localised role, there are shrines to him at Duckpoint and Yellow Flower Island. Indrodar's Necklace is especially holy to him.

### The Temple of Indrodar

The Temple to Indrodar Greydog is part of the Swordvale Hillfort. It was finally finished with aid from Tarkalor Trollkiller in return for services rendered during the Phargentes Wars. The main building is death rune shaped and some fifteen feet high. It is made of stone of a uniform two feet of thickness with a slate roof. The roof has a watch tower atop it that stands a further twenty feet above the roof, providing a clear view of almost all the Tula and much of other tribal Tulas too. The tower is still called "Indrodar's Lookout" in reference to the original name of the hill. The temple is actually larger than the chief hall and dominates the fort. There are no windows but the roof is accessible from the watch tower and can serve as a defensive platform in case of attack. The temple is a bastion for the forts defenders in times of trouble but has never been tested by enemy assault.

The Temple is a central point of life in the fort, the Goodsword Clan who rules the fort and the tribe as a whole. The Tribal King has his hall in the fort and his weaponthanes usually barrack with him or in the Temple. The Temple is large enough to sleep a score of warriors under reasonable conditions. It has a small training ground and an altar to Indrodar Greydog himself. All of Indrodar's surviving artefacts are kept here including his helm that sees all lies, the dagger that screams when thrown at undead and dispels them on impact and Daughters Bane, an enchanted wooden shortsword used to end the life of many a pinioned vampire.

There is a smithy here, one of the few redsmiths of Gustbran for miles around. He excels at weaponsmithing and armouring. The Indrodari have a large armoury, built up over many years of strife.

The Temple has a large following, around 100 Indrodari exist though only half are among the Tribe at any one time. Many died in 1602 with the fall of Salinarg and the Household of Death. The Indrodari were well represented in the Household and died well. A wave of new initiates followed the attack of Delecti in support of the Lunars.

Currently, some 60-80 Indrodari are on tribal lands at any one time and they all attend the Temple on a regular basis. Not only is it their place of worship but also their home. Reports from the Marsh are collected there by Indrodari serving their time on temple duty - scouting and patrolling the marsh border. The Swords of the temple maintain a strict watch on the Marsh and prepare expeditions and crusades to hold it in check or push it back. The success of their schemes is measured by the survival of the Lismelder even in the face of such a dangerous foe.

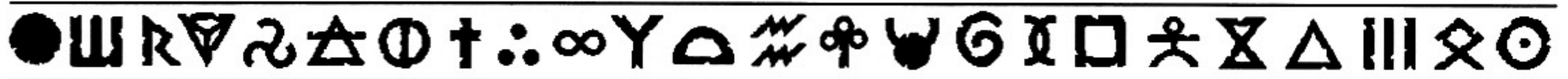
### The Indrodari and the tribe

With nearly a hundred Indrodari weaponthanes at his disposal the king of the Lismelder is reckoned one of the greatest war kings in Sartar. Yet this power has been rarely used for wars of tribal or even clan ambition. The Lismelder are rarely assailed as a tribe because of the Indrodari. Only the mightiest of foes would engage the Indrodari and the experienced, warlike Lismelder Fyrd in battle.

Even if they triumphed, the cost would be too high for most to accept. However the Lismelder Kings rarely march to war because they can call on the Indrodari for aid only if the Temple of Indrodar agrees that the cause is both honourable and breaks no Temple ruling. Indrodar himself laid down the first law of the Temple regarding its service to tribe and King:

*"No king shall hold power over our blades  
who is not honourable in his actions, iron in his oath  
and merciless to our foes."*





**The Indrodari determined the practical results of this rule over the years:**

*They will not leave tribal lands unprotected against the Marsh.*

*They will not obey a king who has no honour and will seek his removal.*

*They will not aid the king in wars of aggression against a foe who might weaken them in battle to the point of being unable to defend the tribe against the Marsh.*

There have been problems when King and Temple disagree on policy. This is further exacerbated by the tendency for many Indrodari to swear personal fealty to the King and serve as his weaponthanes. Often an Indrodari is torn between his need to follow the rules of the Temple and the constraints of his oath to his lord. In those situations, the oath to the King is binding unless the Indrodari enacts the Malan Ritual. This ritual was first used by Indrodar himself to separate himself from his oath of loyalty to Mad-Blood Malan, rogue king of the Malani. If the recipient of the oath acts against the spirit of the oath then the Indrodari may safely sever themselves from their king without seeking his permission.

This ability and the power of the temple effectively hog-ties the King of the Lismelder when attempting to create policy. The wishes of the Temple and their weaponthanes must be heard.

Attempts by some kings to increase the number of non-Indrodari in their hearthguard have been seriously disapproved of and resisted.

The Indrodari do serve as weaponthanes for the clan chiefs. This role and their recruitment by other groups outside the tribe for raid and war keeps the supported and the Temple rich. The contributions of so many great warriors for so long has allowed much wealth to be accumulated by the Temple. It is one of the richest and best equipped to Humakt or any of his heroes in Dragon Pass.

## **Indrodari Magics, Myths, Feats and Geases** **The True Death Touch Feat**

Indrodar saw that the Zombie horde could not be turned simply by the incarnated power of Humakt. Their numbers were too great and the power that each warrior could summon was too small. Only a powerful ritual could do this and that always took preparation. Knowing this Indrodar sought a way of bringing the power of Humakt to the unlife of a corpse that would free it with speed allowing one warrior to dispose of a larger number of undead than before. He enacted Humakt's Sojourn in Despair heroquest and saw his gods ways of dealing with the corpses of gods who came to slay him. Humakt (and a participating Indrodar) saw the zombie gods could be hacked to many pieces yet would keep coming.

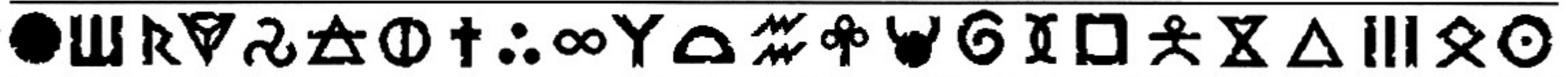
Their flesh was not the source of their motivation and Humakt was not severing it no matter how quick and potent his strokes. Seeing a way, Humakt recalled the thrust of Orlanth's spear and slid his blade into the ties that bound the undead to false life. Sending through his power of severance, Humakt cut those ties with a mere thrust. After that the zombie gods fell quickly.











legions. Before they could react, a new Blackthorn Grove would have sprung up and mighty rituals would have to be enacted to defeat this advance.

The Indrodari strategy is therefore one of observe and react. They watch and prepare for the coming of the Undead and the strike to ensure their defeat. Should a large invasion come then the full Muster will gather, usually at Indrodar's Necklace. Any tribesmen who wish to be temporary lay members of the cult for the battle are initiated. The simple ceremony involves swearing willingness to Death, fearlessness of Undeath and an oath of obedience for the duration of the crusade. In return for their pledged worship, the lay members receive limited access to Indrodari special magics and can participate in the rituals that empower and strengthen the mightiest magics of the Temple.

When the Temple decides that the time has come for to weaken or destroy any potential invasion from the Marsh, a Crusade is called. This is a massive undertaking, requiring up to a year in preparation. The Ritual follows the heroic path of the cults founder. Each warrior arms themselves like Indrodar, each gives the vow that Undeath shall feel Death before they return.

The Durulz are always essential for scouting and transportation. Rituals and training strengthen the Indrodari and many missions go into the Marsh to gather intelligence, weapons and their foes weaknesses. Often warriors from other tribes come and participate and Humatki from as far afield as Heortland and Saird have been known to take part. Inevitably such preparations do not go unnoticed and Delecti resists such punitive missions fiercely. There have been four full Crusades since the founding of the Lismelder yet not one has seen Delecti finally brought to Death.

## Perceptions of the Ordinary Folk

Indrodari and other Humakti are outsiders to the ordinary folk of Orlanth. Though part of the pantheon and culture, they are outsiders by choice, inclination and action. Even the heartiest Indrodari has a grimness in him that chills the honest Carl were he ever to speak of that fear. They are folk who look at Death and feel no fear, only the sureness such ending can bring. The willingness to live with death is so strange to the Orlanthe that they cannot comprehend the devotion and form of their former kinsman's worship. When the Orlanthe wage war they shout and yell, challenge and boast their battle fury to all to prove their courage in the face of severance. The Indrodari embrace such ending and look on it with silent acceptance. It is the acceptance of death and the resultant willingness to cause death that terrifies the ordinary people. But the most puzzling thing to an Orlanthe is the severance of kin that their worship requires and the life by the Sword that follows. Losing kin is *worse* than death to most Orlanthe, yet the Indrodari practice it willingly and live their lives by their former kinsmen but never part of them.

## The Cost of the Indrodari

The Lismelder are a strong tribe yet they carry a great burden, one that weakens them in many ways. As the Indrodari provide safety in the face of a deadly threat so to do they drain the very tribe they protect of wealth. There are barely a thousand fighting age men in the Lismelder yet nearly one hundred of them are Indrodari. One man in ten serves the Temple. Each man who does this is unproductive. Unlike most Orlanthe warriors, the Indrodari do not farm, they do not work with their kin for they have none but the Sword. They are entirely supported by the tribe and the contributions the tribe makes for their Temples daily existence.

They are a parasite on the wealth of the tribe, yet a beneficial one. Without them the Lismelder would surely have been destroyed but the cost of such survival is high. Each Indrodari takes the wealth equivalent to many cows per year to support. Each produces nothing. They are like soldiers in a civilised Empire yet no Empire maintains more than one in a hundred men as full time soldiers without rapid economic and social collapse.

### *Report on the Indrodari by Sage Sequitous Vance of the Imperial Provincial Survey for Provincial Headquarters Sartar 1619.*

Humakt, and the petty cult of Indrodar, serves a purpose that is well supplied with deities in barbarian society. Not only is there Orlanthe in his windy war aspects to worship but lesser combative deities abound. Vingkot, Heort, Hedkoranthe, Heler, Elmal, Vinga, Urox and a plethora of petty hero-cults clutter the mythic landscape and spoil the serenity of Imperial rule.

The answer to the question: "which war god and why?" is obvious to the educated but a "great mystery" to the barbarians. Having observed their tedious and overblown ceremonies it is clear to me that Orlanthe clans and tribes follow their tradition and it is forged from the social, economic, geographic and demographic pressures in their history. This principle was clearly laid down in the Imperial Treatise "On Defeating Barbarians" by Takenegi.

The Lismelder Tribe was formed with a great many Humakti already in it but this was not sufficient to ensure Humakt's place in the tribal ring. What secured this position was the lands the Lismelder occupied and the dangers they presented. Should the lands have been empty of the threat of Delecti and his undead hordes, there is little doubting the Indrodari would have numbered less within the tribe and wielded considerably less power. Therefore, it can be seen that the Indrodari serve a function that maintains their existence. Without the Marsh, the Indrodari would gradually weaken and fade or be forced to find another enemy to justify their existence. No tribe supports such a powerful force of specialist warriors without good reason and the only reason is Delecti.

Given this fact, it is simplicity itself to deduce the means to eradicate this potential threat. Delecti must be neutralised through diplomacy, policy or violence if need be. He has been an ally in the past but his presence is only counterproductive for long term Imperial policy. A full pacification and integration of the Lismelder lands can only be undertaken after Delecti's removal. In the meantime, dictates of circumstance warrant the maintenance of a threat from the Necromancer. His continued presence will force the Lismelder to look to higher authorities for aid. This we should supply, if in limited amounts, to create a feeling of gratitude and dependence. Should this policy be followed then an optimistic appraisal of Lismelder loyalty to the Provincial Government should be given to Fazzur.

Though the mere presence of the Lismelder keeps the Colymar and other tribes safe from the Marsh, they receive no aid from those tribes or tribute to help them maintain the Indrodari. The burden is theirs alone. A burden they bear while others prosper behind the Lismelder's ring of swords.

## Indrodari of Note:

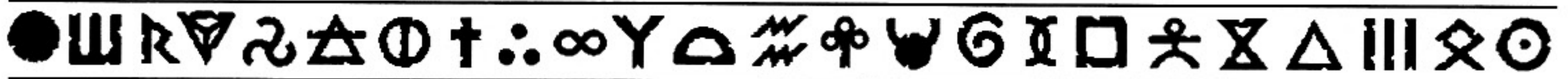
### Ottar the Stubborn

Originally from the Colymar, Ottar has served eight years with the Temple. Currently works as a Huscarl for the Poss Chief. Ottar is renowned for his stubbornness in battle and in all other walks of life. He is a master of Shield and Sword tactics and has taken the Geases of Never Retreat from Battle in return for Indrodar blessing him with his great weapon skills. Ottar is also stubbornly non-political but will obey the word of his chief exactly for this is how he follows his vow.

### Pelthos Blackhair

Pelthos was a blue-eyed blond child of the Greydog Clan from the Longbrewer household. Upon initiation all expected him to follow the





wyrd of his father and become a great Carl. Yet the initiation took him to the fighting pit where Humakt touched him for all to see. His blond hair was utterly black from that day forth.

Pelthos left his family with a mighty severing and many ill-spirits and never returns to Greydog lands unless ordered. He has dedicated himself to his god and to the Ways of Indrodar. He has slain two Dancers of Darkness and performed the Indrodar hero feat of fighting a Zombie Score. The next High Holy ceremony will likely see him made Sword and he prepares for that day with total dedication. Pelthos is found either in the Temple or in the Marsh, he only answers the King's summons and fights for no clan.

### Hrafn the Grim

One of the few Indrodari from the Goodweaver Clan. Hrafn is known for not speaking much more than his sword (which only speaks when it swings for a blow). Although an Indrodari for only a few years, his taciturnity has taken him far along the grim path of Humakt but for that very reason he is rarely employed by the Clans or anyone else and thus his poverty is considerable. He lives at the Temple eating gruel and praying while scourging his body of all weakness and honing his skills. Only when the call for battle echoes in the valley does animation come to him and then he is to be feared for few can stand before his dour strokes and stolid courage.

### Alfgar Grimblade

Chief of the Marshedge Clan and once tribal Champion, this aged but deadly warrior fights an endless battle with the Marsh he calls wryly, the

“Game of Death”. He is known as a Duck-friend and an expert in all things Marsh related. Some say in the Tribe that none since Indrodar have his marsh Lore or skills. Alfgar sees his primary responsibility as being the safekeeping of his Clan and the destruction of the Marsh. He argues constantly when he visits the Temple for a Grand Crusade to force back the Marsh and to free up more land for his people.

### Brithingar Ironvow

A very pious warrior. He follows the word of Indrodar exactly and has taken the Geas of Never Lie in return for learning the Feat of Truth Testing. He is also a master of the broadsword and is a Duck friend. Often Brithingar is seen in Duck lands where he recruits for the Temple, seeks knowledge of the Necromancer and protects the Ducks from the hostility of others. The Ducks call him Brithingar Ironbutt but they consider him a true friend for all their mirth at his ways. Indeed Brithingar is known to all as a man who would break an earned friendship if dead.

### Farangelder the Honest

A doughty Greydog warrior who saw Humakt at his initiation and followed the way of the Sword since. Farangelder is shown great respect for his fighting skills and his utter honesty. He has sworn by Humakt never to lie and though the truth of his words bites into the false and crafty, he is welcome among all honest and upright folk. He is always alert for trouble from the Marsh and seeks more warriors for the cause. He has a great ability in sensing those who would suit Indrodar's path and is used by the Temple hierarchy as a liaison with all the clans for this reason. Although among the highest of the Indrodari in skill and seniority, Farangelder is neither proud or arrogant. He sees the peril that the tribe faces as being too weighty to let hubris affect their survival.

Some of Farangelder's greatest feats of skill and courage include the destruction of Frang, the Giant Undead, surviving the sorceries of a trio of Daughters alone (while leaving none with their heads or hearts), and supposedly slicing off the hand of the armoured corpse of Delecti in hand to hand combat during the Crusade of 1607.

### Carrioncrow Kegad

Kegad loves to fight and kill. He worships with great piety in this manner. Though somewhat disliked by the cult and the tribe as a whole, Kegad is hired often. Wherever there is feud or battle he will be there and thus he is named for the Carrioncrow. It is the only creature that has been at as many scenes of carnage as Kegad. He is skilled but will likely never make Sword for he is tardy in his duties in the Upland Marsh, preferring to battle less important mortal foes. He is easily recognisable in battle - he fights with a broadsword in each hand.

### Thorarin Broadgirth

This portly warrior from the Lonendi Clan. He is fond of food, drink and the ways of the Kings Hall yet is strong in his hatred of the undead and his love of tribe. He serves as Huscarl to the King and is a great favourite of the long table. His gusty laughter cheers all around him and his endless stream of jokes and wit ends only when battle calls. Then he is as serious as any Indrodari and he fights with bear-like strength.

### Orosdan Farwalker

As a young Goodsword Clansman he followed his father into the ways of Indrodar but chose to leave the tribe on his initiation to see the world and to fight for Humakt. For twelve years he wandered, only to return to his homeland to fight his childhood undead foe. Orosdan is widely experienced and knows the tactics and stratagems of many distant lands. As a Kings Huscarl he advises on battle and ranks highly in the Temple.

### Valgard Nerelsbane

A noted warrior most famous for his ongoing feud with the Orlmarth Clan's Nerel bloodline. He has slain no less than nine of their men in various raids and personal challenges in the last four years. Currently he lives at the temple. No clan chief will hire him without good reason as he is rash and prone to causing feuds. Anyone wishing to raid the Colymar will find him cheap and more than eager to go along. He has seven feuds against him and weregelds outstanding totalling no less than one hundred and seven cows!

### Thorgeir Wrypoem

A famed warrior of the Poss clan. He is noted for his ever sharp blade, matched only by his even sharper tongue. Thorgeir is always swift to express his grim humour in the form of verse. So vigorous is he in the pursuit of the truth and the expression of it that he is considered a social pariah at the Kings table. Often he is only invited to insult someone the King or a clan chief wishes to be rid of when they seek to combat his words.

### Thord Sharpeye

This man is ever close to the king and usually serves as prime bodyguard. His skill in smelling out would-be foes and secret murderers is renowned. He is said to be able to look into a mans eye and tell whether his heart is true or false. He has served twenty years as guard to the King and is proud of his position and the power it brings. For a good gifting, Thord will help claimants see the King. If they displease him his tongue is poisonous if his sword is not.

**By Martin Laurie,  
with David Hall.**

**Indrodar, the greatest hero of the clan, saved the clan seven times:**

*The first was when he saved Queen Lismelder from the blades of the Mad-Dog's whelp.*

*The second was when he placed the tribe under the protection of the durulz.*

*The third was when he found Queen Lismelder, liberating her soul and the wyter.*

*The fourth was when he brought back the secret of Delecti.*

*The fifth was when he found Orlanth and brought him back to the tribe.*

*The sixth as when he saved the tribe from kinstrife.*

*The seventh is a secret known only to his followers.*

*As told by Farangelder the Honest.*



# The Anas Clan

by  
Martin Hawley,  
Duncan Rowlands  
& Simon Bray



## Overview

The Anas clan lives at the edge of the Upland Marsh, where the channels that sluggishly merged with the Upland Marsh finally reach the headwaters of the Creek-Stream-River. They dwell on and around a low-lying island known by local humans as Soggy Bottom. The Durulz have added to the island over the last few years, forming a pallisaded crannog, with myriad roundhouses and meagre farmsteads clustering together on adjacent dry ground. They have called the crannog and village Feather Island. The village itself is of the traditional Orlanthe pattern, though bedecked with elaborate wooden statues and carvings of swans and Durulz. In the centre of Feather Island stands the temple to Elsa Swan Mother, near the magical spring of healing water created by the touch of her beak. The site is surrounded with moss strewn creeper trees, reeds, cotton grass, bulrushes and twisted trees of willow, alder and elder.

The clan numbers some two hundred and seventy ducks. The males are glorious, with brilliantly coloured bills sometimes topped with a large knob. Females have no basal knob and predominantly have white facial marks. Their clothing is simple but ornately decorated. Ducks

and drakes wear skirts or breeches and jerkins of leather and woven wool, dyed blue or green. On ritual occasions, the ducks wear costumes of wood, rushes and imported cloth. They have a great tradition of poetry and lawspeaking as well as being renowned for their intricate face and bill painting. Unlike human Orlanthe they refuse to quote lineage, who can construe this as a breach of hospitality.

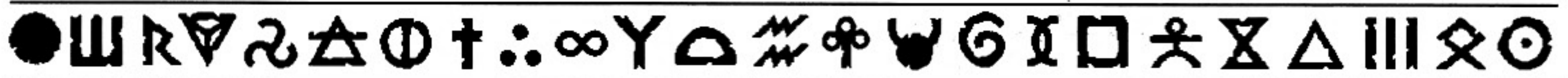
The Anas are regarded as Valorous, Proud, Just, and Energetic, although many humans will never forgive the alliance of the Durulz with the forces of Delecti in 1382/3. The Anas and the Lismelder Tribe have a friendly relationship. Ever since the Lismelder Tribe placed itself under the protection of the Durulz there has been a Duck representative who has taken a position in the tribal 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). All Lismelder know of the aggressive males who protect their ducklings to the death and of the Copper Chain warriors, who fought so valiantly in the Undead incursion battles. The closest relationship is with the Goodweaver clan. They are known for their weaving of common

flax grown around the Upland Marsh and the Duck flax from Yellowflower isle, and for the soft pillows they make from duck feathers.

Ducks are friendly with all of the other clans of the Lismelder apart from the Hillhaven - with whom historically they have had a very uneasy relationship. Though, after Starbrow's Rebellion the Poss joined in the duck hunts - along with the Hillhaven - and both gained the enmity of all ducks. The Anas therefore dislike the Hillhaven and Poss, although much of this attitude stems from Lismelder influence rather than direct experiences.

With exception to the Hiordings the Anas have a mutual mistrust of the Colymar, emanating from the failed landgrab of 1380. The relationship with the Hiordings is friendly, although tainted by the Ducks' envy of the Hiordings powers of flight. This stems from the abduction and subsequent siring of children by Hiord on Safeela. Many call the Hiordings the Swansons in remembrance of Safeela, and some families of the Hiordings like the Swanrobes and the Whitefeathers have names that recall their cygnate ancestry. Women of the Hiordings are occasionally born as Swan Maidens and they know





## The Copper Chain Warriors

These are a small band of dour durulz who are commonly believed to follow a form of Humakt worship emphasising the powers of severance and fanatical opposition to the evil of the Marsh. They are renown for their martial prowess and their steadfastness in defending the impossible last stand, when their eerie Swan Song sounds through the mists of the Marsh.

Whilst most Copper Chain Warriors have been drakes, occasionally a female (like the famous Christine of the Hind) has belonged to the order. They favour dark green clothing and all wear a short copper chain shackled to their right ankle. Because of this, other Anas jokingly refer to them as "the chain gang".

In reality, the Copper Chain Warriors do not worship Humakt. Instead, they venerate the broken god Hard Earth and hold secret rites at the Old Earth shrine of the village, where a large cube of copper lies hidden. The Warriors believe this to be a part of Hard Earth washed down the Creekstream River years before. The Warriors deliberately maintain the shrine's appearance of disuse to hide their dark rites of blood sacrifice, and worse, from becoming known by their neighbours. The Warriors follow the example of Hard Earth's sacrifice in overcoming Korang the Slayer and consider any sacrifice, including their own lives, as being worthwhile in defeating the great evils of the Marsh.

There are only ever ten Copper Chain Warriors at a time. Six are the Faces of Hard Earth, who are supported and assisted by the Four Corners of Hard Earth. When a Face dies his place is taken by a Corner and a new recruit is inducted as a Corner. Thus, the Corners are sometimes referred to as the Pretenders to a Face. All the Warriors have their enchanted copper ankle chains that connect them to the earth at all times while Faces wear enchanted copper breastplates and wield copper swords.

As Hard Earth is broken, he has little power to bestow upon his small following. All Warriors are able to traverse the bogs of the Marsh as if the surface was hard earth as long as their copper chains touch the surface. They cannot walk on water, although being Durulz swimming is not a problem, but very wet bog or even quicksand is passable. As long as a Warrior is in contact with the earth via his copper chain, all other Warriors are aware of his strong emotions. The order will know when a Warrior is in danger or dies.

All Faces can call on the power of Hard Earth to make a life sacrifice to overcome some great evil. This power greatly enhances their combat abilities and ensures the destruction or severe maiming of whatever evil they face. During the combat, the Face may draw on the magical and physical reserves of any other Faces who are in contact with the sacred copper cube at the shrine. The infallible death of the Face beyond all resurrection is the sacrifice required for this power. At some point in the combat the Face will have his sword broken, his armour rent and his body broken upon his enemy's shattered weapon. The durulz call upon this power by singing the Swan Song, which they sing throughout their final combat, the eerie lament carrying far across the Marsh.

the secrets of Swan magic to sprout wings and fly, such as when Intagarn and his warriors sacked Bagnot. The Anas are enemies of the Sambari, whose warriors sometimes quest to the Upland Marsh to avenge the ambush of Kurash Varn. The clan has good relations with the remnants of the Thunder Duck, Cabbage Duck and Rune Duck clans of the Sartar hills.

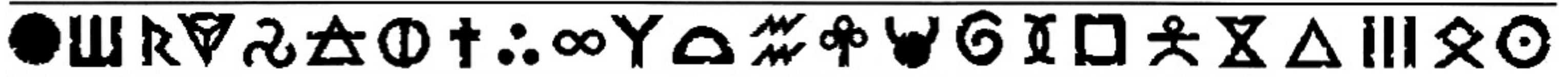
The Durulz of Soggy Bottom have a good relationship with the beastfolk of Beast Valley. They have joined forces on several occasions, most famously when they called on the Minotaur Threehorn Glower and his force of demi-humans. Relations with the Dragonewts are erratic at best, as the Anas are no more successful in understanding their dragonic peculiarities than humans are. Trolls are much hated by the Durulz, who feel it is best to run and hide than end up being served up in a pie! Elves are considered strange. The Anas sometimes meet the plant people of Yellowflower Island and the occasional elf from other plantings in the marshy backwaters.

## History

The Anas claim descent from the Marsh Ducks that have dwelt in the Upland Marsh since before the Dragonkill. The first contact with humans after this date came with a delegation from Queen Lismelder in 1359. They offered friendship with the Anas in exchange for an annual tribute of food. The Anas squawked at paying such demands and refused. When the Lismelder thanes came back in force, the Anas defended themselves valiantly and the humans had to settle for a minimal gift of the annual harvest. In 1380 the Lismelder, Nostali, Locaem, and the Colymar began to seize the farmlands of the Durulz of Duckpoint. This led to war with all Durulz and their allies the Beastmen of Beast Valley. Through treachery, the Durulz were defeated and they retreated swearing vengeance. It came in the form of the forces of Delecti, which emerged from the Marsh in 1382/3 to attack the human steads. When Indrodar Greydog came to the Anas in 1384 they accepted him a good and kindly human who was a true duck friend. The Anas taught him the secrets of the Marsh and the hidden depths of worshipping the death god. He then taught these Anas secrets to his human followers. Some Anas also know the secret of how Indrodar was killed in the Marsh.

In 1602, the Lunars invaded the Kingdom of Sartar and the Anas rallied to the vain defence of Quackford. The majority of the existing Anas clan are Durulz who fled from this defeat and the subsequent sacking of Duckpoint. Blind Tadorna, who had visions of a great wooden swan, led them. Some settled on Yellowflower Island, the rest on Soggy Bottom and mingled with the original animistic Durulz.





The clan suffered badly in the Duck Wars but have since prospered, even in the shadow of the Upland Marsh. In 1610, humans came from the Wintertop Rebel clans demanding tribute of half of the Anas's food. They declined and the humans left, returning in force threatening violence. The Anas defended themselves valiantly and the humans had to settle for a tribute of one quarter of the annual harvest.

In the years preceding Starbrow's Rebellion there was a major trade route down the Creek-Stream-River to Carse and then on to Nochet operated by various Durulz. Only the ducks, with their barges were able to safely navigate their way to the Mirrorsea Bay. As a result Duckpoint prospered and grew into a wealthy town. The Anas sided with the Sartarite rebels during Starbrow's rebellion of 1613. They fared poorly, although fighting bravely, and became the scapegoats of the failed uprising.

The Lunars declared a bounty on duckbills and many brave warriors were hunted down by the Lunar light cavalry or sold out by greedy humans to Lunar bounty hunters. Those that escaped the bounty hunters either fled to the relative safety of the Marsh, or were captured by the Lunars and their client clans, to be taken to a dismal life of imprisonment in the Lunar slave farm in the Nymie Valley.

When the Lunars tried to take over the barge trade many of their barges mysteriously sunk or overturned enroute. As a result the river route became uneconomic for them. (This eventually led to them seeking an alternative land route to the Mirrorsea Bay, by invading Heortland.) The Lunars suspected the Durulz of involvement in this and encouraged local client clans to renew the duck hunts.

Most durulz took refuge around Yellowflower island during the duck hunts, abandoning their duck valley settlements. Over time the Lunars have modified their views on the ducks, and have allowed many back into their old lands as long as they pay their taxes. Ducks hunts have been officially curtailed, and those that do go ahead are closely supervised and aimed at renegades in the Marsh or villages late in paying taxes! Alas, sometimes mistakes do continue to be made, such as the incident at the little settlement of Mai Quack.

Recent history has been relatively uneventful, with irregular human refugees and Durulz outlaws arriving seeking sanctuary. There have, as yet, been no cases of Red Feather plague among the Anas. Last year Godfrey led a successful expedition to Stone Nest Ruins, recovering Durulz treasures of the past including a sword known as Grambletark.

## Society, Family and Household

The Durulz are in-between people, not animal and not human. They are reputed to have power over water and land, giving them an advantage when surviving in the Upland Marsh. The Anas are no exception, being excellent hunters and fishers. Among Orlanthi they are seldom surpassed in their ability to produce tremendous harvests, even from the most infertile soils.

Most of the Tula consists of wetlands and drier fens with a fertile, if somewhat clay-rich and heavy, soil. This heavy soil and standing water make much of the Anas lands intractable to agriculture. The Upland Marsh, however, has excellent pasture on its margin. Most farmhouse-crofts cluster about the mainland marketplace with the poorer steads keeping to the marsh edges, while the richer families take the more fertile areas on drier ground. The clan is primarily agrarian, growing barley, oats, and rye. Fishing, fish farming, some hunting, and gathering supplement their diet. The Anas keep gaggles of geese and hunt wildfowl in the surrounding marshes. In addition, they rear small numbers of pigs on the limited grazing lands of their Tula. During the winter inundation, they keep them high and dry inside steads or on specially constructed floating platforms.

Wherever the land is suitable gardens are cultivated by sowing hardy plants. Gardens of tubers, medicinal plants and even the odd fruit tree cluster about the huts. Crops grown in these gardens include beans, leeks, potatoes, samphire, turnips, vetches and blue carrots. Fruit grown includes the wild apple and straggly berry bushes.

Clansducks are renowned for being excellent bogmen, well versed in Marsh Lore and the skills necessary to survive in the Upland Marsh.

Humans wishing to explore the Upland Marsh often seek out Anas to hire flat-bottomed barges or hire as guides, though the Anas are reluctant and rarely trust humans enough to comply. Floating trackways and magical swan headed barges that can not sink enhance their skill in traversing the Upland Marsh.

The clan trades the finest down and tail feathers in all of Sartar to their neighbours the Lismelder. Other goods include Upland Marsh amber, animal skins, patterned cloth and blankets, dried and fresh fish, herbs and dried produce. Rarer items include buckweed flowers, Dragon Lilies, EWF artefacts, and unusual mushrooms. They regularly travel to the seasonal markets of Mallard Town and Swordvale. The Durulz trade at these markets for ale and beers, bronze implements, thralls building materials, spices, dyes, linen, and wool.

The clan is an endogamous, patrilineal and male oriented kin group. Names pass from the newly deceased to the newly born, and relations within generations are frequently valued over that of parent and child. Under their current circumstances, the Anas have adopted primogeniture. When a clan member marries an outsider, it usually includes the absorption of a refugee family. The rank order between families is often complicated as tightly cohesive groups of ducks support each other's activity. The clan ring adjudicates upon unresolved disputes. As a last resort, the ranking between two families of equal Orlanthi status is decided by 'shoulder battling', ceremonial fighting between household heads.

The majority of the Anas are freeducks, equivalent to Carls although many neighbouring humans see them as little better than Cottars. Even the Thanes and Weaponthanes are deemed lower than their human counterparts by some Orlanthi. Few surrounding clans would be willing to pay the full respect due, let alone wergild, to their Durulz counterparts. The Lismelder stand out as the prime exception to this and ever since the Undead incursions have put themselves under the protection of duckkind. Consequently, the Lismelder are the most friendly and easily influenced human tribe. Although the Anas have nominal independence some Lismelder think they have at least a degree of sway over the tribe.

### Notes from Nochet

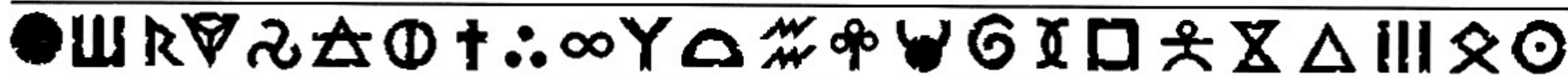
Contributors: MOB, Trevor Ackerly, David Hall, Marion Dhwyde, & Bernie MacHail

[XXIX.loznoch.1/intr] From the "Lonely Lozenge Guide to Nochet", by Beardless Beornie Oban (Rough Guide Scrolls, Mirin's Cross 7/48) The Hippodrome is, to perhaps even a greater degree than the Great Temple of the Earth, the focal point of Nochet society. It evolved from the contests of the Year Sons cult, in which males would strive among themselves to be selected as annual consort for the Harvest Queen, (much like the competitions which still take place in certain primitive Orlanth/Ernalda worshipping cultures today). Each competitor undertook a series of tests to prove their martial prowess and their physical potency.

What with the Pharaoh's debasement of the Corn King cult, these events are now almost completely secular in nature, much to the chagrin of the city's conservatives. Most of the tests have long since been forgotten, although the tremendously-endowed herm statue at the southern corner of the track is a reminder of the days when the males of the city strove vigorously to prove their virility before the Earth Queens. So too are the ludicrously priapic codpieces worn by chariot racers as make their grand entrance into the arena: souvenir replicas can be bought at many of the concession stands, and make an amusing gift to take home.

Although chariot racing is the only contest left, over the centuries it has evolved into the complex extravaganzas of the present. It has become a passion, for male and female alike, and a visit to the arena on one of the many race days is a highlight of one's stay in Nochet.





Many Orlanthe claim the Lismelder have even consented to allow a Durulz, Webbed-Foot Walt, to lead their tribal council as Orlanthe Warrior. The current tribal ring of the Durulz is a mixture of renegades and refugees, who meet irregularly in secret. The Anas have no representative on the council, although they do dispatch a trusted delegation to attend these surreptitious meetings.

Durulz use many non-human vocalisations in addition to speaking a rather squawking dialect of Sartarite. Raucous trilling is heard when ducklings squabble with each other, which persists until fledging. The high pitched 'lost piping' call is used by young ducklings when separated from their mothers. The low-pitched 'good taste' squawk emitted when ingesting favourite foods is seldom heard by outsiders. The lamentation call begins on a low frequency, rising rapidly to produce a loud moaning, and is used in times of mourning. The cackling pester call accompanied by sideward head shaking is used to applaud the actions of a brave or worthy individual. An adult Durulz that feels they have been abandoned by the rest of their kind sounds the distance squealing call. This attracts the attention of other ducks in the area, although it can lead to their own demise as it attracts attention from enemies too! The short rasping 'gog' and strident 'gig-gog', soft calling, and hissing are all alarm calls. The strangest and most rarely heard call of all is the Swan Song. Only the warriors of the Copper Chain are able to sound this pre-death, eerie clamour.

The Anas have numerous human and Durulz thralls who dwell in the ramshackle, damp huts on the edge of the island. These thralls perform the menial tasks the Anas prefer to avoid, such as clearing reeds from the channels surrounding the jetty, shovelling nest guano, and mucking out animals.

Households are a collection of small steads, each claiming a link to the original household, although many households consist of a single stead. Often several families live under one roof and work co-operatively. Within the clan the largest household is the Ruddy Shovelers, who have always been a powerful family. Back in Duckpoint, they occupied both the Issaries and Lhankor Mhy seats on the tribal council. They operate the swan-headed barges on behalf of the clan, taking produce to Nochet and bringing back luxuries to sell to their Durulz and human neighbours. The Bluebeak drakes have a reputation of becoming Copper Chain warriors and their martial prowess overshadows the Shovellers expertise in blue carrot cultivation. The Pinfeathers are known for their weaving of rushes while the Whitetail are renown for their fishing expertise. The Surefoot household is pious. The Earthduck traditionally came from this family back in Duckpoint and the Surefoots intend the same to be true in the clan's new locale.

Penelope is the first of this new line of earth priestesses. The Amberdrakes are the last full household of the original animistic Durulz. Their bloodline remains pure as they shy from any intermarriage that would dilute it. Other families see them as idiosyncratic, old fashioned, and touched by madness.

## Birth, Marriage and Death

Females breed when thirteen years old, but males may not do so until they are fifteen or sixteen. The 'nest' is within the stead; here females adorn their nestbed with feathers and gifts brought by doting father. Survival of chicks is best in middle sized families. All ducklings start to cheep as soon as they are born; developing high pitched piping noises with the same rhythm as their mother later. The chicks leave the stead soon after birthing, never facing a long waddle to the water.

Fosterage is common with one family taking on the care of the ducklings of the whole household. These carers lead their duckling charges in valuable swimming lessons in the Paddling Pool. The young are relatively independent as soon as they can swim. They love to dive, while adults are content to stay in boats or in the shallows. All young ducks have a pink-grey bill, grey legs, and white underparts. The carer minds the ducklings until they reach the age of Fledging Initiation.

At the age of twelve, the youngsters undergo the mixed group rites of Orlanthe initiation. In addition to the standard human recognised ceremony the Durulz perform special mythical acts known only to duckkind and the secretive rites of Elsa the Swan Mother. Once fledged, the young look pale and gawky, with little elegance of adult Durulz. They emerge from the Upland Marsh with their new feathers and painted beaks. They have much white on their faces and always lack any chest banding.

The females inspect several nests constructed by the bachelor drakes before deciding which male to court. Courtship can be a lengthy procedure, involving

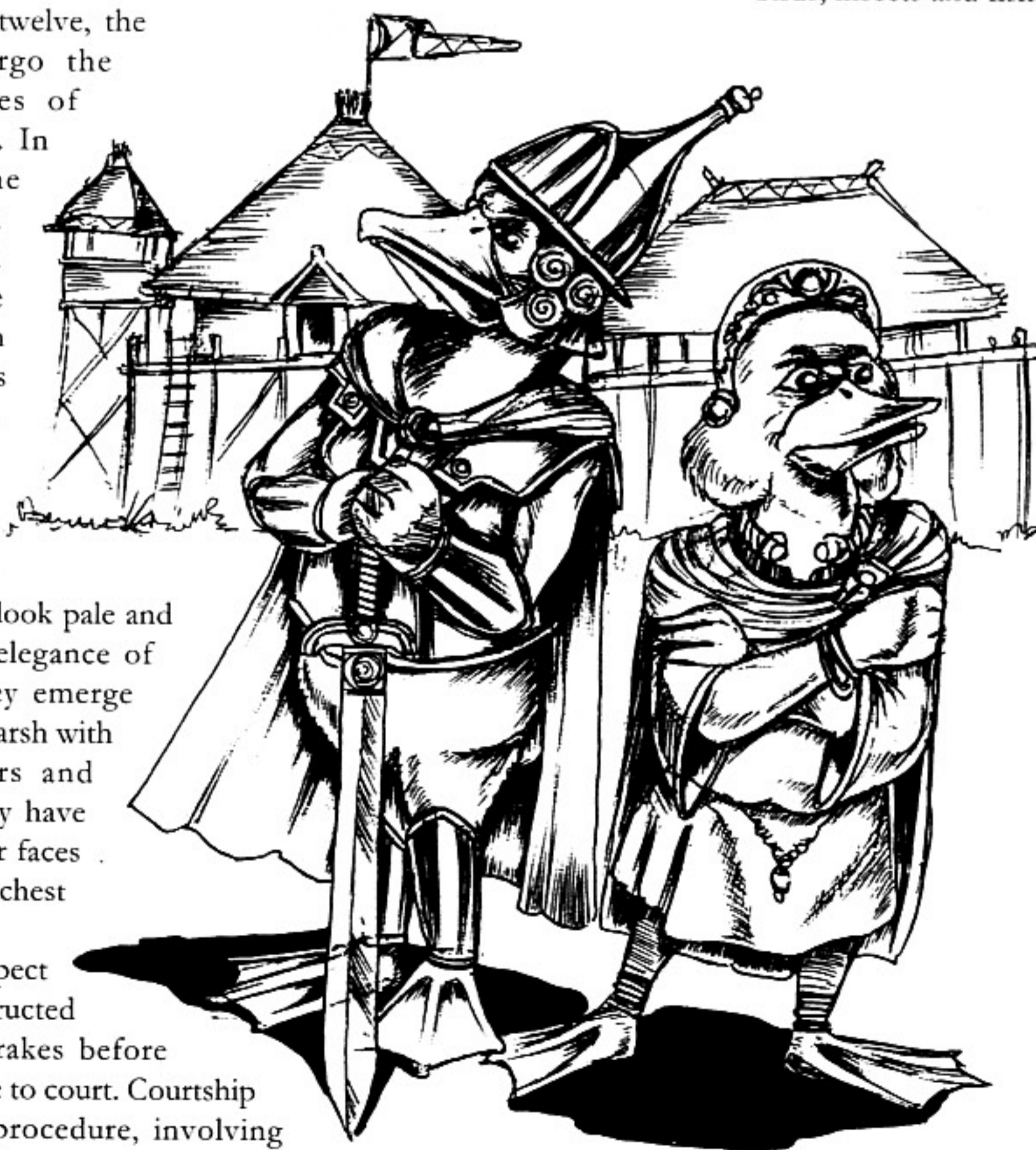
extensive mutual preening with elaborate dances and body shaking. Throughout the courtship, drakes collect gee-gaws and exotic items to present to their potential bride. The Anas observe the standard forms of Orlanthe marriage, yet the taking of an underhusband is a rare event indeed as these males have poorer plumage and fewer resources to offer a bride. Drakes call the taking a bed-wife 'shaking your tail feathers'. Marriage ceremonies include group dancing and squawking, culminating in the splashing frenzy of the water climax dance. Afterwards the female adds to the nest before birthing.

Dead ducks are sent out on burning barges for a swamp funeral, partly to avoid the bodies being used by Delecti as zombies or worse.

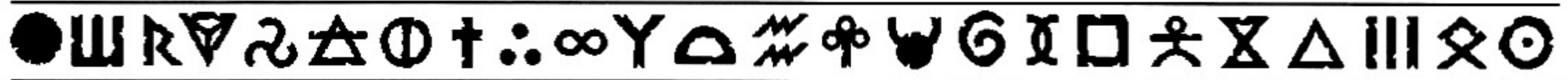
## Clan Landmarks

Most of the steadhouses are constructed from roughly hewn logs and thatched either with reeds or rushes. Poorer buildings and outhouses are built from cob walls and turf sod roofs. Few high status buildings exist, those that do are built from clay baked bricks and stones brought from the hills to the east. The crannog is encircled by a high-stake fence, while the village is raised on a low mound and enclosed by a marshy ditch and earth rampart.

**Backwaters:** A mass of willow, peat moss, marsh marigolds, bulrushes, reeds, waterlilies and duckweed. Life abounds with a multitude of birds, insects and fish.







**Chieftains Hall:** The largest building on the crannog, the hall is stone built and has an elaborate wooden roof adornment and carved gable end with swan motif. Inside Godfrey and his extended family live and important meetings, Lhankor Mhy courts and feasts are held. The main hall is furnished with low tables and seats, with a raised platform, where Godfrey his closest family members and clan ring sits during meetings.

**Damp Down Marketplace:** Named after the down traded here.

**Ghost Reeds:** Out past the edge of the village is a large stand of swaying reeds. Even on the stillest of days the reeds move and emit a low ghostly moaning noise. The Anas believe the reeds to be haunted, mothers warn their ducklings not to venture too close to the reeds even during daylight hours.

**Phantom Isle:** An isle that suddenly looms out of the dense mist and disappears to nowhere. Rumours abound about it's inhabitants including cockerel headed beavers, alligator-men and even the dreaded Walktapi.

**The Jetty:** A well-built jetty of sturdy wooden construction. The Anas tie their fishing boats up here and in the warmer months

youngsters delight in using it for diving practice. At the extreme end of the jetty stands a small-carved image of Ty Kora Tek. Here mourners say prayers as nearest and dearest begin their fiery voyage to the wings of Orlanth's swan servants.

**The Paddling Pool:** The young chicks of the Anas learn the rudimentary skills of swimming here and fish swim in the shallow pool supplementing the vegetable diet of the Durulz.

**The Shrine of Elsa:** Situated on the crannog. Here stands the wooden prison of Elsa, the palladium of the Anas.

## Religion and Mythology

The clan remains in awe of the Swan Mother, but are otherwise Orlanthi in their religious and worldviews. They maintain a small temple to the king of the Gods, including shrines to Scarf of Mist (Huraya) and Iphara. Ernalda has a small temple and her daughter Daucus is the provider of blue carrots. Small shrines to Diros, Issaries, Lhankor Mhy and the spirit of Meander compliment these. There is an overgrown shrine

to Hard Earth within the Tula, unused since the times of Queen Lismelder and the Old Earth (1356-1383). During the reign of Tara (1391-1392), the animistic Anas made blood sacrifices to Hard Earth and Elsa to protect themselves from the evils of the Marsh. Since that time the animistic Durulz have rarely used it, the new influx of refugees know nothing of the shrine and would be horrified to discover the gory past.

The sacred clan object is a wooden statue of Elsa Swan Mother, adorned with her garland of swan feathers. She is a half-red breasted swan, half woman figure, ancestress of all swan maidens. The staining comes from ancient blood sacrifices though almost forgotten today. It is taboo to eat the flesh of swans, or indeed to injure a swan, for they are the daughters of Elsa. On rare occasions a swan assumes human form and enters the life of Durulz and mankind as a Swan Maiden. She is blonde or even white haired, of great beauty in face and voice and always desired by men.

The statue of Elsa is a Godtime relic with her spiritual form trapped within the wooden prison. The Anas clan remembers serving her in times past when she was animate. Elsa threw herself on the mercy of the Gods when Hiord

### Safeela and Hiord

*as told by Penelope Surefoot*

Once there was a beautiful daughter of Elsa and her name was Safeela, or Long Necked One. She lived in the gentle hills of Dragon Pass, where the food was rich and plentiful, the nest sites were the best and the streams and pools were clear, cooling and placid, inviting. Safeela should have been content, but the Long Necked One had a flighty spirit and she yearned for more. She always looked for better food, softer nesting materials and more secluded pools for swimming.

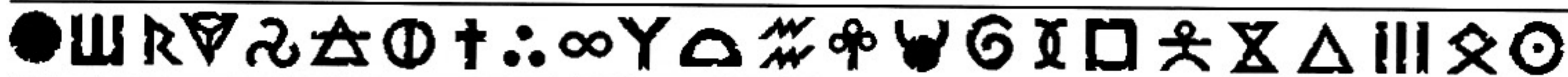
Their mother warned Safeela and her sisters that if they should want to bathe in their true form that they should do so in secret, away from the eyes of humankind. Safeela listened as did her sisters. When she wanted to bathe in her true form Safeela did so in the designated pools and at the secret springs of the hills. She should have been content, but the Long Necked One was free minded and ached for a new site to call her own. One time Safeela flew into the hills and she spied a secluded pool, not too deep, not too shallow, clear and placid. She landed and disrobed to plunge into the alluring waters, refreshing, invigorating. She bathed liked never before; alone, yes, but more than that; this was her pool, her own sacred bathsite.

Safeela did not, could not, know that Hiord was watching her. From his crouched hiding place in the surrounding trees, a mortal man gazed upon her. Hiord was his name, a brave and handsome man, a true Orlanthi in all respects. When he saw her, Hiord longed for Safeela. He watched her lithe and alluring form and Hiord wanted the beautiful woman for his bride. He spied her swan feathers lying on the bank and knew what she was. He knew that if he took her robe he would take her body and, in time, her heart. Hiord approached to take her robe. He did not sneak, but strode forward with valour and piety. Safeela saw him too late, she knew that this man had taken her being.

She emerged from the waters, her naked form glistening, unashamed in the shimmering sunlight. He took Safeela and he clothed her in rough leather and wool. She looked bedraggled and her wet hair fell loosely round her burnished shoulders. Hiord took Safeela back to his people. The women looked with admiration and jealousy upon her beauteous form. They brushed her locks and tied them with ribbons of orange and green. They removed the rough leather and wool and dressed her in a fine linen dress and embroidered bodice. Safeela looked a true Orlanthi bride, and she and Hiord were Ringbonded and then he took her, as all Orlanthi men do their new wives.

Safeela was unhappy, although Hiord was a good and handsome man this was not her true life and she was desperate to return to her cygnate sisters. Yet Hiord loved Safeela and he was blind to her longing. He only saw her beauty from without, not her true inner self. He kept her with his people for seven long years. Safeela's beauty did not wane, but Hiord grew to understand her longing to return to her own kind. One day he was touched by the Gods and saw for the first time Safeela as she truly was, bedraggled and unkempt, drained and gaunt. He knew that Safeela would die if he kept her away from her people for much longer, and so Hiord returned her swan robe and draped the attire over her shoulders. The wrap enveloped Safeela and her true white plumage returned. Safeela, now restored stretched her wings for the first time in seven years and, as she looked back over her shoulder with her long graceful neck, she took flight and returned to her sisters. Hiord had coupled with Safeela many times during the seven years and she had birthed seven children from these unions. These children became the heads of the households that came together to establish a new clan named Hiording in veneration of the founder.





captured her daughter, Safeela. Elsa was swept down the Swan River and through the choked channels of the marsh to her final resting-place in the mud at the head of the Creek-Stream-River estuary. Here the Anas found her and erected a temple. Where her beak touched the mud, a spring of pure, clear water appeared. The Anas imbibed her aqueous gift and discovered its healing properties.

Every seven years the Hiordings float a wooden swan down Swan River and into the Upland Marsh in respect of Safeela. The Anas have journeyed into the Marsh, attempting to recover all these and desperately try, in vain, to animate them. Seven such effigies are on show in the temple of Elsa.

Few outsiders know that Elsa was one of the attendants to the Ten who went to battle against Korang the Slayer at the city of slaves. Ambushed, Elsa had her wing pinions ripped from her body. She stalled and fell, her glorious white wings forever damaged. Elsa sought sanctuary in the secluded hills surrounding the source of what became Swan River. Here attacked again by the forces of chaos and trapped within her current rigid form.

Sometimes human questers come to the Tula seeking aid in the mythic re-enactment of Orlanth's battle against the chaos washed down by the River. As the blood of Engizi, the Sky

River Titan gushed down toward Durulz lands washing the chaos toward them; the Durulz fought valiantly with Orlanth and his brother Heler to cleanse the land of chaos.

The Anas believe that flying swans take their souls to Orlanth's hall. They believe that one day the swans will return, instead of flying over head as they do each Dark Season. This day will see the epiphany of Elsa and the wooden effigies will come alive and lead the clan up the sacred river to their rightful homeland. The heroes of the Anas sometimes pursue the River Heroquest. On Waterday of Harmony Week in Fire Season, the hero and their companions enact the journey of Elsa and the Ten to the city of slaves.

They assemble at the Jetty, before choosing a sluggish channel to traverse. The heroes follow the channel deep into the Marsh, where battle against a representative of Korang the Slayer ensues (for greater heroes this is the Dancers of Darkness). The supporters of the quest, both physically and magically, clear the channel of reeds, mud and other obstructions, allowing the waters of the river to flow freely. The greater quest involves swimming or boating up a tributary of the Swan River to recover a swan's wing feather, sacrifice at the headwater of the channel and thereby purify the waters. On the return, Elsa's garland gains another feather in a hopeful attempt to enhance her powers.

Many brave Anas have completed the Ancestor Pilgrimage to the lands of the Thunder Ducks and are marked with the Duck Star. Although, an attempt to recover the powers of flight is a Heroquest of momentous proportions. It involves travelling up the River to discover the body of Hard Earth and searching among the remains for the sacred wing pinions of Elsa. Very few Anas or other Durulz have ever achieved this life-altering quest. The progeny of a successful hero has never inherited the gift of flight. The awakening of Elsa's statue is a deed that only the greatest heroes could even attempt. As the Hero Wars progress perhaps a hero will arise, Durulz or human, to animate the Swan Mother.

## The Clan Ring

The ring is composed of representatives of the Durulz, who are appointed by the chieftain. They wield authority, borne in the sacred clan object (the statue of Elsa). The Chieftain, the Earth Durulz, the Champion, the Spirit-talker, the Warrior, the Boatman, and the Goodvoice make up the ring. The Goodvoice seat is currently vacant since the death of its incumbent, Starra Quicktongue, in 1615.

### *Godfrey 'of the soup' Ruddy Shoveler. Clan chief.*

Godfrey is the current Clan Chieftain. He is sagacious and full of guile, highly respected by most of the clan for his ability to evade the Lunars. He hates the Lunars but makes sure that there is no excuse for them to take bounty. The respect of his clan also stems from his culinary expertise. Godfrey has the secret of making blue carrot soup, which was passed down to him by his father. This soup reputedly cures breathlessness, night blindness and impotence. Godfrey cuts a dashing figure in his fine britches of whitest swan feathers and jerkin of rare trout fur. The chieftain's official tithe is two hundred and fifty bushels of grain per year, with a wergild equal to one hundred coins. He is phlegmatic in his use of the Rite of Justice that entitles him to arbitrate in disputes on behalf of the clan, although this is not as imposing or powerful as it could be among some human Orlanthi.

### *Penelope Surefoot, The EarthDurulz, Priestess of Ernalda All Mother and Elsa.*

Subtlety of colour and elegance of grace make Penelope one of the finest Durulz of the clan. She is highly gregarious and often heard reciting clan poetry in a whistling, yet rather grating, purr. Penelope has a distinctive pink nape and foreneck and an orange-brown crown. Penelope receives a tithe of thirty bushels and has a wergild of forty coins. Each year Penelope receives the first fruits of the harvest, with which she makes the Earth Meal as a sacrifice to Ernalda and her many

## Elsa, The Swan Mother

**Breadth of Manifestation:** Singular

**Depth of Magic:** Narrow

**Ultimate Secrets of Existence:** None

**Worship:** Sacrificial

**Number of Worshippers:** 225

**Empowerment:** Devoted and Collateral

**Requirements:** Three cult skills at 8, success at three out of five virtues.

**Skills:** Custom (Sartarite), Dancing, Hide, Limnology, Marsh Lore, Religion (Elsa), Ritual, Riverspeech, Swimming, Swim Quietly, World Lore.

**Virtues:** Generous, Just, Proud, Prudent, Valorous.

**Affinities:** Healing, Protection, Co-ordination, Food, Water (Breathe Water, Float, River Eye.)

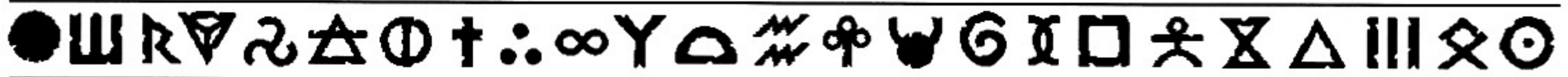
**Feats:** Swan Song (from Meander).

**Priestess:** Success at all five virtues, three cult skills at 1W, two cult skills at 18.









# Rumours

## Contributors:

Nick Davison,  
 Greg Fried,  
 David Gadbois,  
 Michael O'Brien,  
 Sandy Petersen,  
 Greg Stafford, 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 people formerly known as Luathelans have Purple Ships which house a weapon of mass destruction called "Purple Rain" **A**

Some East Islanders consider sea turtles to be a form of island, and therefore do not eat them. **T**

Godunya, Emperor of Kralorela, senses that something may shortly go wrong with his Civil Service's ability to calculate and forecast. He has charged the junior mandarin Why Too Kay with the responsibility of checking and adjusting every single abacus in the Empire. He must complete this seemingly impossible task by the end of the year or face the Emperor's Displeasure. **B**

The underwater capital Terthinus, which is reportedly inside a giant undine, is known as the South Sea Bubble. **R**

The ducks of the East Isles, known as keets, are worshiped and honoured by all East Islanders. **A**

The Howling Tower in the Upland Marsh houses an imprisoned alchemist who is either transmuting bone into bronze, or coating skeletons with bronze. **T**

## Zines Seen

### Reviews by David Hall

I picked up these three zines on a recent weekend break to Leeds. I happened to spot the Travelling Man shop in the Corn Exchange and decided to have a peruse. Given my diatribe against the shop in a past Edict (over a late payment) I kept a low profile, avoiding all eye contact with the staff and stooping low enough so as to appear of a similar age to the spotty kids in the comics section of the shop. I think I got away with it...

Anyway, what I found was an excellent RPG shop that took me misty-eyed back to the good 'ole days of gaming. It had a comprehensive selection of games (including, to my delight, a selection of Cheapass Games), an excellent second-hand section (though the *Borderlands* price was beyond my meagre pocket money), a bulletin/contacts board, and a great selection of magazines and zines. It is well worth a visit if you're ever in Leeds.

### The Whisperer #2

*Editor: Mike Mason*

*Spring 2000, A4, 36 pages, £3.50 (overseas £4.50)*

This is a nice looking Call of Cthulhu zine (with articles on Mythos as well). It includes news, reviews, competitions, NPC's, skills, The Mongolian Death Worm, a Delta Green scenario, and the second part of a scenario set in the 1900's. There's also an amusing (and informative) article on the UK Mental Health act and how investigators might find out about it at first hand. All in all it's well worth a look. Contact: Mike Mason at 18 Loughton Road, Bradwell Village, Milton Keynes, MK13 9AA. Or email [whisperer@starrywisdom.freemove.co.uk](mailto:whisperer@starrywisdom.freemove.co.uk)

### Games Gazette #112

*Editor: Chris Baylis*

*Jan - Feb 2000, A4, 36 pages, £9.00 for a subscription.*

I'm told that this has been going for years, though I've never seen it before. Hmm... issue #112... I wonder...

Anyway it's jam packed with all sorts of reviews, news and adverts for RPG's, boardgames, games conventions, collectible card games, and shop adverts. Rather useful and interesting - if only because it actually seems to come out at regular intervals and therefore has up to date news (unlike some zines I know). Contact: FC Baylis, 67 Mynchens, Lee Chapel North, Basildon, Essex, SS15 5EG.

Or email [grumpy@ukonline.co.uk](mailto:grumpy@ukonline.co.uk), or surf your way to <http://web.ukonline.co.uk/grumpy>

### Valkyrie #18

*Editor: Jay Forster*

*Jan 2000 (probably), A4, 64 pages, £3.50*

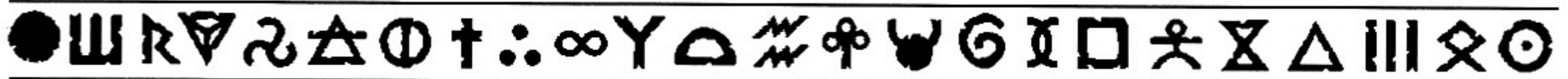
The UK's only professional RPG magazine (though after missing the Games Gazette above I may be wrong). This has now been going for a number of years on and off, and I had thought it had folded - though this might be partially down to a limited number of distribution outlets.

This issue includes news, game and book reviews, con reports, and feature articles for Mage, Vampire, Star Trek, SLA Industries, and a lot of other games I've never heard of because I eat, think, and breathe Glorantha. Overall, it's a professional magazine that deserves your support! I also understand that some Hero Wars articles are planned. You can find it in all good book and magazine stores! For subscriptions email Caliver books at [dave@caliverbooks.demon.co.uk](mailto:dave@caliverbooks.demon.co.uk)









## Delecti the Necromancer: Lord of the Upland Marsh

*This history of Delecti is based on excerpts from a series of interviews with Forang Farosh, "the speaker of all languages". The interviews were conducted during Sea Season of 1599 by an unknown scholar from the Jonstown Lankhor Mhy temple.*

What I remember of Delecti is limited to what most people would call popular rumor, not the unfounded rumors of today, but those from when the voices of Dragons echoed in everyone's ears and the skies were painted with different colors than now. Delecti was never a public figure and remained largely unknown even during that time. He must have resided in the corrupt and decadent city of Voss Varainu, now referred to as Remakerela, for it was common knowledge that he hated physical exertion, and travel in particular. Most people today have only heard of Remakerela because it was where the infamous Stitched Zoo housed its wondrously impossible creations, but the city was far more than that.

The numerous errands for my master often brought me there. The gleaming city crowded the right bank of the river with its bustling docks. The Zoo was near the southern gate and was constantly visited by all manner of custom, from curious locals to important dignitaries and officials from the empire. Its popularity was symbolic of the times. Most citizens of the Wyrms' Mind Collective had the belief that they could remake the world to better suit them and they naively saw no ill consequences to their experimental ways. In retrospect, the outcome seems inevitable, but not from the viewpoint of a person caught up in the contagious zeal of the time. True Dragons were in the process of being created. Those that were lucky enough to have heard the intoxicating music and joined the mesmerizing dance of the Waltzing and Hunting bands in the early days had already begun to fade from our reality as they entered their new lives in the immortal cosmos. The Zoo was where I saw him, and it is perhaps the most vivid memory I have from that age - immune from fading from the passing of the centuries.

The Zoo assaulted all of your senses at once, even while you were approaching it from a distance. The indescribable sounds and smells you first encountered would ring in your ears and cling to your clothes long after your visit, but they only added to its enticement. The large gates had a ponderous look to them. Their oft tested strength bore testament to the powerful and dangerous creatures that they barely contained. The large dent on the left door was the most remarkable. The three great puncture holes and the fatigue of the stretched metal bore the lasting evidence of the three tusked gorilla that had almost made good its escape.

As for me and my colleagues, we couldn't wait to take our lives into our own hands and enter the menagerie's confines. The sight of the constructed creatures, be they centaurs, or platypus, or minotaurs, or Grotarons harkened back to the golden age, when many such creatures had supposedly last walked in our world. I can still feel the bristly fur of a mammoth, or the taste of the hippo-bison they had roasting on a spit over a small bonfire.

It was after a full day's entertainment and amazement that we wandered into the lower caged dungeons where the more

unpredictable, exotic, and lethal creations were kept for selected dignitaries. Presenting my master's credentials had begrudgingly gained us an entry and with the setting sun at our backs we wound our way down the long spiral staircase into a world of the absurd and pathetic. Here, out of most people's sight, the partial failures were preserved. It was here that we saw Delecti explaining one of his creations to another keeper at the zoo.

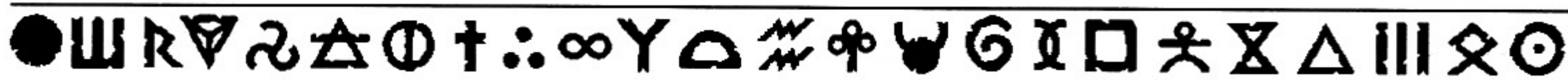
He was dressed in simple black robes that looked dusty and moldy. They contrasted greatly to his pale skin. His only remarkable feature were his eyes of piercing green, like two great emeralds set into palest silver. He spoke to his colleague without paying us any notice, so we listened intently without feeling we were causing any intrusion. His studies had progressed to far beyond the simple grafting of living beasts. He spoke of being able to reanimate creatures even if they had suffered the ravages of decay. With a bony finger he pointed at each of the two cages that were on his left, while his other hand removed the blood soaked cloth that covered the cart to his right. The stench of the decaying remains it contained was unmistakable; and the limbs that proceeded to dangle over its sides were of some great gray-skinned beast, possibly an elephant's.

He went swiftly to his work with surgical and thaumaturgical precision. The spring in his step and spirited nature of his speech were uncontested evidence of the love he had for his work. Both of the caged creatures fell into a sudden sleep as their cage doors were opened by another assistant. The severed tail of the scorpion man continued wriggling in his hands as Delecti chanted his incantations. The heart of the lion still beat as he held it above his head, oblivious to the thick drops of blood that slowly dripped upon him. He probably didn't even notice as we slipped out the side door and down another corridor of laboratories.

The only other time I heard about Delecti was while one of my master's boats was being loaded down at the floating docks. The passengers idly waiting for their barge to arrive were spending most of their time complaining about the new techniques for splitting tongues and gossiping about their vanity. While the Doblian wine was being inspected they spoke of the great three-armed gladiator that was the latest draw in the arena games. The speculation centered on how more of his scars were from his "improvements" than from the slices of his enemies' weapons. They envied the bottomless purse the warrior's master was willing to empty into Master Delecti's withered hands. The Gorilla's arm and the Giant's heart had given him an endless lethal aggression. They even joked that once the warrior had been fitted with a pig's stomach, his master could recover his expenses by saving on the food bill. I laughed at the pretension of the group although I, too, secretly envied the power that such transformations could bring. A forked tongue was the most popular, but I wanted to be able to see the cosmos through transplanted dragonewts eyes.

The Dragonkill ended such desires of mine. With the dying of those dreams, so is much of my memory of them. As for what became of Delecti, I do not know, nor do I have any wish to visit him and find out. Take an obsidian dagger as a gift if do you visit him.





# A Speculative History of the Upland Marsh

by Rick Meints

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## Overview

The Marsh, as it exists in 1620, occupies an area of roughly 160 square kilometers. It is the home of all manner of natural and unnatural life forms, most of which are under the indirect and sometimes whimsical control of Delecti the Necromancer, Lord of the Upland Marsh. It fills what was once a large portion of the upper river valley where the River joins the Creek and then the Stream to become the Creek Stream River. With mighty magics, the master magus manipulated several great powers and rituals to create and expand his deadly swamp over the passing centuries that followed the destruction of the Empire of the Wyrms Friends. His undead followers: the lowly zombies of his reanimated foes, a handful of powerful evil beings, and an assortment of bizarre creations, all tirelessly toil to preserve their realm from outsiders.

But the outsiders have never stayed away for long. The area has held the rapt attention of generations of treasure seekers and undead killers since the reopening of Dragon Pass in the 1300's. Those foolish enough to venture unprepared into its bogs and barrows soon meet an untimely end. Those that live around its slowly growing perimeter have found ways to cope with their enigmatic neighbor, but none of them have won lasting victories against the lurking menace.

## Before the Dragonkill

(pre 1042 S.T.)

### An Area of Great Cities

Prior to the human extinction of the devouring Dragonkill, the Creek Stream River geographically divided the area into the Leftside Community of the Wyrmfriends and the much more succinctly named Rightside. The few surviving ancient maps of the region show it as relatively swamp free and consisting mainly of rich river bottom land. It lies nestled between

the Tamlane Hills to the west and the Starfire Ridges to the east. At least four cities once thrived there during the time of the Empire of the Wyrms Friends.

South of the valley was Voss Varainu, a right bank city that was home to the infamous Stitched Zoo. It began as one of the great crossroads of the southern part of the EWF. The only thing still thriving there is the Shadey Tree, so named because replaces its leaves as fast as it sheds them. It is one of the last surviving remnants of the grafting experiments that grew in the great unnatural preserve within the zoo. Stones from the zoo's ruined walls were carried northward to help build the great Wild Temple not far from this site.

Next upstream was Olorost. It sat on the left bank of the fragmented Creek River where its many fingerlike channels reunited into the Stream. Its canals and islands bustled with the trade of the Empire. The rich bluish clay dug from its banks needed no glazing before it was fired and pots produced from it are still prized possessions in many an Orlanthi stead. The ancestors of the Elven community of Yellowflower Isle are said to have once tended the gardens that flourished there.

In roughly what is now the center of the Marsh was the great learning and trading center of Orin Jistil. It sat in the shadow of mother Kero Fin and was the southern terminus of the Maran Gor Trail on the left bank of the River. The trail used to run all the way to Salor, the gateway to the Lakes on the River. The city occupied a large forked peninsula formed by a sweeping bend in the River known as the Dragon's Tongue. Within Orin Jistil's walls shimmered the three-towered Ebony Library and the Alabaster Crypts. Renowned for its rainy and windy weather, Orin Jistil was commonly referred to as Wingkoland by the original pre-EWF inhabitants of the area.

Almost nothing is known of the fourth city that was on the River to the north of what is now the Upland Marsh. Called Salor, it sat on the Left bank just south of the Lakes.

## The Beginning of the End

The high water mark of the empire's domination came in 877, but a brief 200 years after its founding. In far flung Pavis on the farthest frontier of their expansive empire, the great dragonewt ambassador Mobius Diamond-of-Peace was blessing the re-founding of a small dragonewt shrine. It had been newly rebuilt from the rubble that Thog's Jolanti had left in their defeated wake. Great Jhoraz Kyrhee, the exhausted leader of the struggling city, thanked him for his blessings in prostrate reverence. He had begged him to stay and enjoy his splendid city, but Mobius succinctly declined.

The ancient dragonewt's enigmatic words are dutifully recorded in the records of the Pavis temple, for Mobius used his words as if they were of the rarest commodity. "I am called to the east, for twilight has just begun" he said as he turned to leave. It was growing late in the day and no one took his words at any more than face value at the time. They were far too engrossed with their own accomplishments.

The silver-clad armies of the Council had defeated one of its most exotic foes and achieved an epic victory. It consumed all of the optimistic passion of the moment. The Council's army headed back with Mobius, for they were weary of war. They had barely enough pylons in their stores to insure that even the first half of their journey home would be uneventful, but the omens were clear. Only the great water dragon priest, Labrygon and a few of his cryptic followers stayed behind to retire to a life of peace.

The land that the army returned to after a decade of campaign had already noticeably changed. It had transformed almost beyond

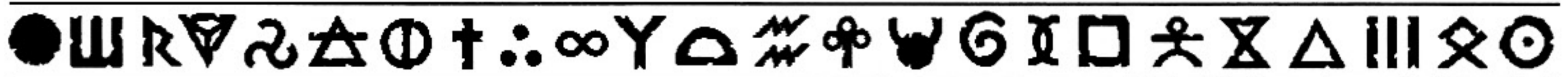












soul from their body. On his Heroquests Delecti had seen Humakt sever his ties to his kin often enough that he too could perform the deed, if the participant was willing. Each of the eager dragonewts felt a sensation unique to this last partial death. The faintest of echoes burned in their minds as a fragment of their existence slipped away and was bound into their egg. The joy the surgery brought them was followed by a swift and painless real death, so Delecti could then bind the remainder of their spirit to their corpse. Forty-eight times the ritual was done with the desired effects.

The last to be summoned was also the weakest of the group. Always swayed by the wishes of his betters, he had been swept into their plans without hardly giving it a thought. His reluctance finally empowered him as he lay down upon Delecti's table and faced his moment of faith. Without a word he realized what he had to do as the scalpel was about to pierce his flesh. In one fluid movement he grasped the clammy hand poised above him and plunged the knife into himself. The Utuma was precise and unstoppable. Undeath was replaced with simple death. In a blinding fit of rage from this betrayal, Delecti turned the corpse into a zombie and placed it under the control of Inward Spiral. The transformed dragonewts treated this lesser zombie as their plaything and servant thereafter. Over the passing decades he became known as Shamed by Death.

## The Inhuman Years

(1100 – 1330 S.T.)

### The Corpse is Plundered

The empty lands of the former Empire soon stank with the stench of uncountable corpses. Delecti turned as many of them as he could into zombies before time and fattened vultures did away with the rest. His new servants served their master well. Each night he sent them out to plunder all the riches left unguarded in the empty cities of the valley. The most dangerous of tasks he left to his dragonewts, who could still use their ancient roads, where the roads still functioned. His Keep soon filled with more wealth than any mortal could use within many lifetimes. He gained libraries of knowledge, enough weapons to supply an army, and more magical treasures than he could find time to experiment with.

Through the eyes of his followers, Delecti soon knew saw that he was not alone in the Valley. To the south his zombies were challenged and destroyed by the Beastfolk of Remakerela. They saw the hand of evil magic at work and feared the return of their keepers. In particular, the leader Ironhoof to a particular delight in swooping down with a band of his centaurs and

beheading the zombies for sport. It soon became far too risky to send out a slow small party of easily outclassed undead.

### New Threats and Elder Enemies

The vacuum left by the humans was also filled by the other Elder Races. From each direction threats would present themselves one by one.

From the north came the trolls, initially drawn by the feast of rotting remains. The fat Uz found Delecti's zombies a curiosity. They could easily follow them at night, which was the only time Delecti felt it safe to send them out. Raiding parties from Dagori Inkarth soon traced their origin to the Marsh and the trouble began. While he was magically powerful enough to defeat the smaller warbands, his small zombie army would be no match for the troll armies that were sure to follow. A series of losses to the trolls began to lead to desperation. Surprisingly, it was a captured troll that also provided him with the solution.

Delecti was taunted by the Zorak Zorani Death lord during his short captivity. The Uz dismissed his zombie foes as far inferior to his own god's creations and the truth hurt. The payment for such priceless unsolicited advice was to make a zombie of him after a scalpel finally silenced his mocking. Delecti quickly went back to his Heroquesting. He was reminded of a god's battle he fled from long ago. When he found it again he learned the ritual that became one of his most potent weapons against any enemy. He went to the Battle of the Walking Dead and raised an army of zombies as Zorak Zoran did. He raised the newly fallen dead from amongst his foes and turned them against them. Every foe he now killed would rise to fight for him.

The effect was devastating to the trolls and the other enemies that would follow, as history would prove again and again. It also earned Delecti the undying hatred of every Zorak Zorani. Ironically, the avenging berserker champions it spawned only swelled his army. Regardless, the deeds of Zorak Zoran proved invaluable in other ways as well.

From the south the Yellowflower elves greatly expanded their woods every Sea Season, until it grew right up to the border of his Marsh. Finding himself becoming hemmed in, Delecti knew that this peaceful neighbor would not remain so once he began stealing their land to expand his realm. Attacking the root of his elvish problem would not be easy. The elves were lead by one of his old foes, Horalin the Dryad. She had never forgiven him for corrupting her ancient friend Rihalya against her. She had long prepared for the day when Delecti would come for her and her people. Great twisting vines entangled and tore apart any zombie that wandered into her garden. For over a decade she slowly grew her children to encircle more of his Marsh.

She also did not fear Delecti springing upon her in the form of Korang, for Rihalya had used the last bit of her free will to teach her the secrets of the Ritual of Slaying. To her horror though, she was not prepared for the form he did visit her in. When in strode Zorak Zoran, slayer of Flamal, singing his tree chopping song, she wilted in the face of terror. Her kin fell with each mighty swoop of his axe, and Delecti spared few of them in his zeal. Saving her for last, he made sure that she knew she would have the eternity of undeath to contemplate her foolishness in making an enemy of him. His zombies dragged her back to his crumbling keep and planted her in a plot of tainted earth. Her twisted branches became his favorite source of Blackthorn wood from which to carve his Spears of Slaying.

From the west came a singular threat. Every few years a dragonewt from the Dragonewt city near Feyghost Wood would lead an expedition into the Marsh. His first few solo attempts had only ended in his death and so he sought the aid of whatever allies he could find. Even the dumbest creatures of Spinosaurus Flats learned that the missions were pointless. Against him stood 48 mighty foes, the conspirators he had betrayed and left for dead. Shamed by Death amusingly occupied them from time to time, so Delecti felt little need to intervene. He knew that Shamed by Death would never find the place where Delecti had hidden their nest egg for them.

From the East came the greatest threat. The little wereducks, known as Durulz, would become his greatest problem. Decades before in the laboratories of Remakerela, Delecti and his colleagues had grown tired of trying to restore them with the power of flight. What had been lost in the Golden Age seemed fated to remain so. More importantly, he had totally forgotten them when it should have mattered most. While he chanted the protective curse of the Marsh, the permanent charm guaranteeing that the dead would rise to serve him, he did not realize the limitations of his words.

*Rise my minions, to serve your master with undying faith.*

*Drown every child of Zaramaka that swims in my Waters.*

*Pull from the shadows every child of Nakala that lurks in my Darkness.*

*Break every child of Ga that strides upon my Earth.*

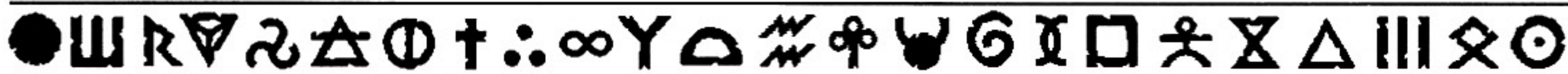
*Extinguish every child of Aether that flies in my Air.*

*Reap the Whirlwind upon every child of Umath that rides upon my Storm.*









numbers grew, friction and division was inevitable, as is the nature of the Orlanthi way. Humans were introduced to the Marsh and Delecti when the Lismelder split from the Malani.

Seeking a homeland to call their own, the Lismelder and some of their fellow Colymar found there was little to be had. The only lands that they found ripe for the taking were those of the little Durulz and their beastfolk friends to the south. At first, the Orlanthi seemed destined to win. They badly defeated the forces led by the old minotaur Threehorn Glower. This drove the ducks into the nearby Marsh, but they swore vengeance and plotted their return.

Delecti did not want his only neutral neighbors to be displaced, especially if it forced them into his realm. He offered to help them regain their lands, not through an alliance, but through a trade. He let his feathered friends know that he would invade the Orlanthi lands to the east, just north of the conquered Durulz lands. He knew the ducks would be ready when the Orlanthi chose to respond.

It was during the next Dark Season in 1383 that Delecti put his plan into operation. An army of corpses poured out of the Upland Marsh, led by the entrancing Daughters of Darkness. The undead army swept over the unprepared defenders. As they fell, most of them joined the army of corpses, swelling its numbers and strength. Even worse was the fate of the Lismelder lands that bordered the Marsh. The Daughters danced a powerful ritual that climaxed with the thrusting of a twisted four sided spear deep into the earth. The land broke up and the waters poured in, soon turning the area into a swamp.

A desperate expedition was mounted to deal with this new threat, but the Orlanthi met failure every step along the way. Their hero, Kurash Varn was first weakened by an undead attack before being soundly defeated by an ambush from the ducks. He was returned, armless, to deliver the dire message that surrender was the only avenue the Lismelder had left. They swiftly made peace with the ducks, and even went under their protection.

Once peace was made Delecti felt little reason to pursue a prolonged struggle with the Orlanthi. He knew that they wielded some powerful magics of their own and also had many potent Humakti undead killers amongst their numbers. He was content to return to his Heroquesting, convinced further preparations would be needed for the next time he would face the Orlanthi.

### **Undead Killers are Drawn In**

Soon after the resettlement of the Orlanthi began, their severed kin took an active interest in the Marsh. Sworn to eradicate all undead, their active hatred to everything it stood for resulted in frequent raids into its depths. Once the

knowledge that a ruined Humakti shrine existed on one of the Marsh's islands, it soon became the focus of most of their attention. While most expeditions and war parties never returned, those that did came back with amazing tales. Every ruin they encountered contained vast wealth or other enticing artifacts.

This swelled their ranks with adventurers who had far less pure motives. All manner of treasure hunter and fortune seeker was happy to join the Humakti parties as long as they were given their fair share of any spoils. Also, there were the Lankhor Mhy scholars who were drawn by the historical finds that were occasionally uncovered and brought back. It soon progressed to the point where there was more money to be made in selling information and maps than was usually extracted in riches from the Marsh, and without the great cost in human life.

Delecti encouraged such expeditions. While on the surface it appeared that he would only lose out through such invasions, his zombies almost always won in the end, and when they didn't it was often by choice, not weakness. Delecti is always in need of fresh replacement zombies due to the constant ravages of decay. While he had nearly perfected the arts of preservation, he could not make them last forever. Also, he needed the fittest and finest corpses for himself from time to time. If for no other reason, each re-enactment of the Ritual of Slaying required another body for himself. Now he had the pick of his victims from amongst the adventurers that eagerly entered his Marsh.

Only wise King Saronil forbid most of his subjects from entering Delecti's realm without specific royal permission. Although his decree was totally unenforceable, especially amongst his free-spirited Orlanthi subjects, it did curb the frequency of the incursions for a generation. Most of the other Kings of Sartar never had a recorded opinion on Delecti. Most had far more pressing problems than their enigmatic neighbor. Jarolar made his opinion known subtly. He reinforced all of the fortifications on the east side of the Marsh, especially those in Runegate and Ducktown.

### **Indrodar Greydog**

One foe stood out above all of the rest. He was Indrodar Greydog, the Humakti. Delecti first took notice of him when he invaded in search of his beloved Queen Lismelder. Their joint love of her drove them both to rashness. Delecti coveted her beauty and ambition, which he had corrupted and twisted to his desires while Indrodar faithfully sought her liberation with blind devotion. Their battle over her soul lasted for years. Indrodar the Heroquestor discovered and utilized several of Humakt's ancient deeds from Godtime which potently countered Delecti's powers. Delecti trembled when he first saw

Indrodar striding on the Hero Plane as one of Humakt's soldiers. Humakt is many things, but corruptible is not amongst them. Indrodar was the same. The challenge proved intoxicating for Delecti and he approached it with a vigor that had been absent for centuries.

The battle between them lasted for decades. The early years of the 1400's saw Indrodar and his followers wage a systematic series of successful raids into the Marsh with Blackthorn trees being their favorite target. They secured the tenuous safety of their lands with the blood of a generation. Most of the price was inevitably paid by their followers, who fell to protect their leaders, either out of zeal or mindless obedience.

The final fate of Indrodar is unknown. After years of bloodshed and sacrifice the great foe of Delecti managed to finally pierce the blackest heart of the undead realm and face Delecti in his most intimate chambers. Some say that Indrodar died during the assault and most of his men gave their lives to allow a pitiful few to carry his body out of the reach of Delecti's clutches. Others say that he never returned from the Hero Plane during a Heroquest while in the Marsh. Humakt called him into his Hall when the unwinnable battle was lost, sparing his faithful Indrodar from his mortal fate.

A heretical yet romantic few tell of something far different. They sadly sing of how Indrodar made the purest and oldest choice, the choice between the happiness of the one you love and yourself. He emptied his mostly hollow heart and placed it into Delecti's hands in exchange for the surety of freeing his beloved Lismelder from her eternal undead prison. The truth, assuredly, lives outside of the mortal realm unless Delecti chooses to reveal it.

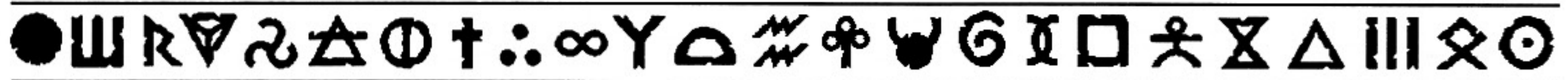
## **Recent Events (1500+)**

### **The Dragonewts Dream**

The year 1539 saw a flurry of dragonewt activity in Marsh. For the first time in over 400 years dragonewts, other than the 48 led by Inward Spiral, used the broken dragonewt roads that entered the Marsh. Inward Spiral's followers had no advance warning of the great processions of spectral dragonewts that traveled down their road one morning during early Sacred Time in 1539. The procession centered most of their attention on the long neglected observatory that the dragonewts once used in the Marsh. For three days they performed a lengthy ritual on the summit that housed the great crystal. Another group stood in a circle around the dragonewt shrine where Inward Spiral and his followers had made their nest, leaving a blue plinth as a token of their visit.

No real interaction took place between the specters and the zombies, and Delecti never questioned their motives. Inward Spiral offered





him no explanations either. The 48 chose to only watch in silence, solemnly remembering fragments of the lives that they had left behind centuries before. The only dragonewt visitor that the 48 expected, Shamed by Death, never participated in any of the visits.

When the Dream ended as suddenly as it had started two years later, Delecti was relieved to be rid of his visitors. The one wraith that he had sent to question them was eaten by one of the spectral priests before it had even made its ancient Draconic Greeting. The loss of this ancient friend from the days of the Empire was a price he was loathe to pay again.

### The Coming of the Lunars

Once most of the Orlanthi resettlement was complete, the reign of Sartar and his descendents brought about relative stability to the whole river valley. The expansion of the Marsh became very infrequent and the landscape changed little for several generations. The coming of the Lunars changed all of that almost overnight.

The Lunars sent Blue Moon emissaries to conduct secret negotiations with Delecti. They hoped that Delecti would remember that members of their ancient brotherhood had helped bring about the destruction of the EWF, and that it might help them negotiate from a position of fear and respect. While nothing has ever been recorded in official Lunar records, popular belief has it that they obviously met with success. It is also believed that only one of them returned. The truth is not far from that.

Delecti was no fool. He had seen the Lunar Heroquesters on several occasions while on the Hero Plane and usually ended up hiding from them. They were many and he was usually alone. Fortunately, they felt that buying his alliance was far more cost effective than the alternative of having to destroy him. His zombie troops were badly needed to help soften the defenses of Runegate Fort. The Lunar troops needed an easy job of it to insure they were strong enough to complete the campaign of the conquest of all of Sartar. The deal was simple, Delecti could have all of the corpses from the siege, with a guarantee that no prisoners would be spared, provided that his zombies led the attack. Feeling that he had little choice, Delecti wearily agreed.

The battle for Runegate Fort went according to Lunar plan. Delecti's zombies did their part in weakening the defenders and nearly exhausting their magicians and healers, not to mention the frightening effect they had on morale. The Lunar assault soon followed, making good use of the corpses as their assault ramps, but shortly before nightfall the troops pulled back when surrender seemed imminent. After Yelm had returned to the Underworld, a confused Delecti watched from afar as the whole outcome rapidly shifted far away from expected result. An unnatural glow

heralded the approach of Crimson Bat from the north before it landed and smothered the fort. It burst all the walls of the once impressive defenses and unhinged its jaws to begin its gruesome meal. In a few moments it was all over. Delecti knew there would be few corpses to recoup his loses. Even most of the specters he had sent failed to return, all absorbed by the bottomless appetite of the Lunar bound Chaos Demon. Such was the fate of the desperate bargain.

Since that day, Delecti has sent few of his undead minions on missions outside of the safe confines of his Marsh. Stories, begun as whispers have started to circulate that his forces are largely

spent and his power is waning. The increase in the number of ducks in the Marsh, forced there to escape the tax bounty on their heads, is proof that he is even too weak to deal with their presence, let alone affect the outside world by expanding his Marsh. No one knows what the coming of the Hero Wars will mean to Delecti, let alone what it will provoke him to do.



### Notes from Nochet continued...

[XXIX.loznoch.3/capa] The Hippodrome seats nearly 40,000, and, prior to the recent strife, there were even plans to increase the seating capacity by another 8,000. In the old Hippodrome there were clearly defined sections for male and female patrons, but when it was rebuilt the seating was largely desegregated. No male, however, has yet tried to seat himself in the Mistresses Tier, unless invited as a guest of a noblewoman.

[XXIX.loznoch.4/cust] Custom demands that only males be allowed to perform or compete on the Hippodrome floor, because of the ancient connections with the Year Sons cult, it would be considered irreligious (not to mention demeaning!) for a woman to even walk on it. Nevertheless, this law has been circumvented for some time, because this ruling technically applies only to females of the city. So, foreigner women have taken part in spectacles and performances here for decades, and only recently even some less-than-reputable women of Nochet proper have appeared on the Hippodrome floor.

[XXIX.loznoch.5/fact] There are five factions at the Hippodrome, which were originally named for each of the seasons. Each faction also corresponds to a specific Husband-Protector of Ernalda, although these connections are no longer considered relevant. Of the five factions, two - the Blues and the Greens - are predominant. The Reds and the Yellows are less so, and the White faction is almost defunct.

The factional ties to their traditional cults are fairly tenuous. For example, the Green faction is one of the strongest, yet is by custom connected to the god Flamal, a deity which is barely worshipped by the common citizen. Perhaps this is a secret to its strength: Greens have no theological axes to grind, as they see their relationship to Flamal as irrelevant. The Blues, who count Magasta as their patron deity include among their numbers plenty of the fisher-folk it is true, but then, so do the Greens, the Yellows and the Reds.



# Upland Marsh Encounters

by Rick Meints  
with Sandy Petersen



## Overview

This article is designed as a set of general guidelines for what intruders will encounter when they enter Delecti's domain. The Marsh is an ever-changing physical environment. Islands drift, ruins slowly sink, undead shamble around. Maps are notoriously unreliable. Misinformation is a fact of life.

The Upland Marsh is a mishmash of mucky islands and rocky outcroppings surrounded by a slow moving murky sludge. Technically, the Creek and the River both run through it, but their routes are a deadly series of small lakes connected by rivers of crud. Think of the Cypress swamps and bayous of Louisiana. Picture moss covered trees. You are there. Now try to leave.

## Traveling in the Marsh

Ground movement within the Marsh is half speed at best. Normal beasts of burden and all but the best trained mounts refuse to set even a single hoof into it. Riding such a mount is impossible, regardless. Only the Lismelder with their clodhopping, and ducks with their natural affinity to the terrain can move at close to normal speed.

Delecti's corrupted servant Rihalya protects her master with her perpetual cloak of mist. Thus, visibility is limited to roughly 30 meters or so during the day and perhaps as little as 1-5 meters at night. She rises to her thickest as part of the preparations for expanding the Marsh. She precedes the foul dance of the Daughters of Darkness whenever they choose to venture out of the Marsh as well. Troll

Darksense is basically useless, as are most forms of extended vision, unless magically enhanced.

The air is filled with all manner of spooky sounds and odd odors. At times, the stench of decay can be choking. Few beings that enter the Marsh ever forget its distinct smell. Most flying creatures also avoid the airspace over the Marsh, but trained flying mounts could be ridden. All but intelligent mounts would never dare to fly down into the mist let alone attempt to land in the Marsh unless forced.

## Notes on Delecti's Undead

Delecti's undead follow a largely automated defensive scheme, unless Delecti focuses on a specific battle and takes direct control of his forces. He occasionally prefers to have his undead capture powerful people by subduing them. Everyone else is lethally dealt with. Drowning is a favorite attack because it insures a much more intact corpse.

There are a number of powerful undead beings that rule over small regions of the Marsh. While they have sworn an oath of servitude to Delecti, they are given a relatively free hand to do what they want in their own little realms.

The undead minions of Delecti decay at a very slow rate, possibly over centuries. It has been observed that the zombies decay at an accelerated rate while outside of the Marsh. Most of the zombies that have rotted away have continued their unbroken record of service as skeletons.

In the end, no one other than Delecti is confidently sure what he is up to. Some outsiders believe that nothing escapes his eye inside his Marsh. Others believe he takes little interest in intruders unless they are extremely powerful and/or pose a threat directly to him or his realm. Attacking his Blackthorn trees, major Humakti assaults, or entering his ruin always get his undivided attention. The forces he can muster if needed are considerable.

## Turn Undead Spells

Most of Delecti's minor undead can be turned using the divine magic spell Turn Undead. His powerful singular creations are mostly the hybrid product of sorcery and surgery, and are thus immune to all but Indrodari undead effecting spells.

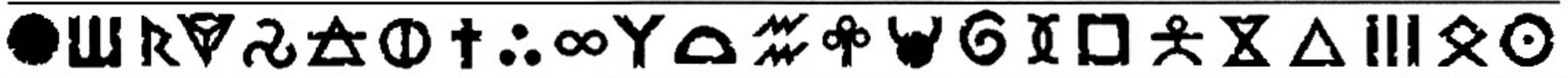
## Aerial Encounter Table

D10	Avian
01-02	D3+1 Wyverns
03-05	D6+3 Pterodactyls
06-07	D3+1 Griffins
08-09	D4+2 Harpies
10	Special Aerial Encounter









**Notes:** Smell Intruder 50%, Listen 50%. Seeker will charge airborne opponents and attempt to knock them to the ground. He can gore and use his bullwhip tail in the air as well. He cannot charge and gore in the same round, but can use his whip and gore in the same round against the same or different opponents. His horns have Hornsharp 4 and his hooves have Hoovesharp 4 cast on them. This can only be dispelled with the a Dispel Magic 10 or higher. Any living creature whipped by his tail must resist with their CON vs. a shock of 18 or be unconscious for D3+1 rounds. Those that successfully save suffer a -20% on all DEX related skills for D3+1 rounds.

**Magic Eyes:** Seeker's can see perfectly well in the dark. Three times per day he can emit green light from his eyes much like a searchlight. The range is up to 100 meters with an end radius of up to 10 meters. This light can cut through the fog of the Marsh with ease. Any living thing looking in his direction, night or day, must save with DEX x 3 or be blinded for D6+1 rounds.

## Aeon the Roc

Old Aeon has been with Delecti since his EWF days. Typically, such an undead creature would not be easy to hide from prying eyes, but this posed no problem for the great magus. Delecti keeps Roc in a simple iron cage in a sheltered part of the courtyard in his ruin. The magic perch in it was made with a ritual Delecti learned from Vrimak while Heroquesting. Any flying creature that lands upon the perch is shrunk to SIZ 3. Creatures thus shrunk return to their normal SIZ one round after they fly off of it. The perch has a Glue 10 matrix carved into the base.

**STR:** 100 **CON:** 40 **SIZ:** 100 **HP:** 70  
**INT:** 4 **DEX:** 20 **Move:** 2/12 flying  
**Hit Locations:** 25 points of Armor and 25 HP per location.  
**Peck:** 70% **SR:** 5 **Damage:** D6+12D6  
**Claw:** 60% **SR:** 8 **Damage:** D6+12D6  
**Stone:** 50% **SR:** 2 **Damage:** 11D6 + D6 per 3m drop

**Notes:** Search 60%, Scan 80%. Dropped stone % chance to hit is reduced by 5% per 3 meters dropped. Aeon can use his peck or claw as a sweep attack, adding 20% to his chance to hit and negating Dodge. The damage inflicted is reduced from 13D6 to a mere 10D6.

**Defensive Magic:** Delecti does not let one of his favorite pets go out unprotected. Depending on the predicted strength of his foes, he will usually cast Damage Resistance 5-10 points, Cast back 10-15, Haste 2-4, and/or Spell resistance 5-10. These are usually for one day in duration, unless the mission was predicted to last longer than that.

**Stitched Crossbowmen:** Stitched onto the back of Aeon are five upper torsos (feel free to add more in a pinch). Each is an excellent shot with a heavy crossbow. Each torso has an extra five arms attached so two additional heavy crossbows can be loaded and made ready. Anyone foolish enough to try and stand on the back of Aeon and attempt to fight a torso would easily find themselves simply pushed off. With a round or two of preparation each torso can fire all three heavy crossbows in the same round at the same time. They are supplied with hundreds of spare rounds.

**STR:** 20 **CON:** 18 **SIZ:** 8 **HP:** 13  
**INT:** 6 **DEX:** 15 **Move:** N/A  
**Hit Locations:** 4 points of Armor and 5 HP per location.  
**Heavy Crossbow:** 75% **SR:** 5 **Damage:** 2D6+2

## Creature Descriptions

The Upland Marsh supports a wide variety of natural and supernatural flora and fauna. While Delecti has a vigilant interest in ensuring that he is the master of his domain, he does not take an active role in overseeing the ordinary day to day happenings within his realm. Contrary to popular belief, not every creature in the Marsh is undead. However, almost all the dead ones are reanimated.

## Creatures of Chaos

Chaos is present throughout the whole of Glorantha and the Upland Marsh is no exception. Most of the intelligent chaos creatures have no interaction with or information about Delecti. These rogue monstrosities have wandered into the Marsh over the centuries and have chosen to stay. For the specific creature of chaos encountered roll D10.

### D10 Creature of Chaos

**01-04** D4+3 Broos (some indulge in necrophilia)  
**05-07** D3+1 Dragonsnails  
**08** D6 Gorp  
**09-10** D2 Walktapus

### Leader Broo

There is always a leader for every Broo party.

**STR:** 18 **CON:** 18 **SIZ:** 12  
**INT:** 11 **POW:** 14 **DEX:** 17 **APP:** 7  
**Move:** 9 **HP:** 18

R Leg (01-04) 5/3  
 L Leg (05-08) 4/8  
 Abdom (09-11) 5/6  
 Chest (12) 15/7  
 R Arm (13-15) 4/7  
 L Arm (16-18) 8/5  
 Head (19-20) 5/6

Weapon	SR	Attack	Damage	Parry	Pts
1H spear	5	85%	1D6+1+1D4	80%	15
Javelin	1	70%	1D10+1D4	-	-
Magic club*	6	90%	1D8+1D4+disease	75%	15
Head Burt	6	85%	1D6+1D4	-	-

**Spells:** Healing 6, Ignite, Befuddle, Invisibility.

**Rune Magic:** Feature of Chaos (one use only).

**Skills:** Climbing 60%, Hide Item 35%, Jumping 60%, Set Snare 45%, Camouflage 45%, Hide in Cover 65%, Move Quietly 45%, Listen 85%, Spot Hidden Item 50%, Spot Trap 65%, Tracking 70%.

**Magic Item:** \*The club is made of a secret, rare wood, normally known only to Broos of disease related cults. Any creature hit by it must make a CON x 5% roll. Failure indicates the victim is temporarily diseased by the heaves. The heaves renders a being unable to attack or defend for 1D3 rounds while the digestive track violently purges itself. This club may only be used by those immune to disease (i.e., the Broos).

### Broo One

**STR:** 9 **CON:** 16 **SIZ:** 14 **Move:** 9  
**INT:** 12 **POW:** 13 **DEX:** 7 **APP:** 8 **HP:** 17  
**Hit Locations:** 3 points of armor and 6 HP per location

Weapon	SR	Attack	Damage	Parry	Pts
Butt	10	60%	1D6	-	-
Club	9	40%	1D8	35%	15

**Notes:** Listen 60%, Tracking 55%, Spot Hidden Item 35%.  
**Chaotic Features:** Befuddles one opponent per melee round in addition to other attacks.

### Broo Two

**STR:** 15 **CON:** 16 **SIZ:** 8 **INT:** 14 **POW:** 14 **DEX:** 13  
**APP:** 6 **Move:** 9 **HP:** 15  
**Hit Locations:** 4 points of armor and 5 HP per location

Weapon	SR	Attack	Damage	Parry	Pts
Butt	8	60%	1D6	-	-
Club	7	40%	1D8	45%	15
Spear	5	40%	1D6+1	40%	15

**Notes:** Tracking 55%, Listen 60%.  
**Chaotic Features:** Appears invincible and does not appear to be wounded until dead. Can leap up to 10 mtrs.

### Broo Three

**STR:** 15 **CON:** 16 **SIZ:** 13 **INT:** 10 **POW:** 15 **DEX:** 14  
**APP:** 7 **Move:** 9 **HP:** 17  
**Hit Locations:** 3 points of armor and 6 HP per location

Weapon	SR	Attack	Damage	Parry	Pts
Butt	8	65%	1D6+1D4	-	-
Club	7	65%	1D8+1D4	55%	15

**Notes:** Tracking 65%, Spot Hidden Item 50%.  
**Chaotic Features:** Absorbs 1 and 2 point spells.

### Broo Four

**STR:** 9 **CON:** 18 **SIZ:** 16 **INT:** 15 **POW:** 8 **DEX:** 11  
**APP:** 9 **Move:** 9 **HP:** 19

R Leg (01-04) 10/7  
 L Leg (05-08) 10/7  
 Abdom (09-11) 10/7  
 Chest (12) 10/8  
 R Arm (13-15) 11/6  
 L Arm (16-18) 11/6  
 Head (19-20) 9/7

Weapon	SR	Attack	Damage	Parry	Pts
Butt	8	65%	1D6+1D4	-	-
Spear	5	60%	1D6+1+1D4	50%	15

**Notes:** Tracking 70%, Spot Hidden Item 40%.  
**Chaotic Features:** +6 point skin.

### Broo Five

**STR:** 14 **CON:** 28 **SIZ:** 15 **INT:** 6 **POW:** 10 **DEX:** 12  
**APP:** 7 **Move:** 9 **HP:** 29

R Leg (01-04) 3/10  
 L Leg (05-08) 3/10  
 Abdom (09-11) 2/10  
 Chest (12) 2/11  
 R Arm (13-15) 6/9  
 L Arm (16-18) 1/9  
 Head (19-20) 3/10

Weapon	SR	Attack	Damage	Parry	Pts
Butt	8	55%	1D6+1D4	-	-
Spear	5	50%	1D6+1+1D4	60%	15

**Notes:** Tracking 45%, Spot Hidden Item 35%.

### Broo Six

**STR:** 12 **CON:** 34 **SIZ:** 12 **INT:** 17 **POW:** 12 **DEX:** 14  
**APP:** 10 **Move:** 9 **HP:** 34

R Leg (01-04) 4/12  
 L Leg (05-08) 4/12  
 Abdom (09-11) 5/12  
 Chest (12) 5/13  
 R Arm (13-15) 5/11  
 L Arm (16-18) 5/11  
 Head (19-20) 3/12

Weapon	SR	Attack	Damage	Parry	Pts
Butt	8	50%	1D6	-	-
Spear	5	60%	1D6+1	40%	15

**Notes:** Tracking 45%, Spot Hidden Item 30%

### Dragonsnail (One-Headed)

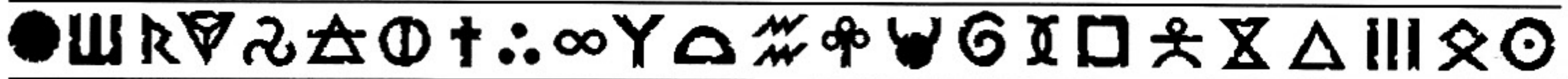
**STR:** 29 **CON:** 17 **SIZ:** 24 **HP:** 21  
**INT:** 2 **DEX:** 6 **Move:** 1

Shell 01-08 8/11  
 Body 09-14 4/9  
 Head 15-20 4/9

**Bite:** 40% **SR:** 7 **Damage:** 1D6+2D6

**Chaotic Features:** Can breathe 3D10 fire 2 times a day.





### Dragonsnail Two Headed

STR: 31 CON: 16 SIZ: 27 HP: 22  
INT: 2 DEX: 8 Move: 1

Shell 01-07 8/11  
Body 08-12 4/9  
Head 1 13-16 4/9  
Head 2 17-20 4/9

Bite: 40% SR: 7 Damage: 1D6+3D6

Notes: Both heads can bite the same or different targets simultaneously.

Chaotic Features: absorbs spells up to 4 points with no harm, confusing appearance causes -20% for opponents to hit.

### Gorp

Delecti doesn't like having Gorp geysers in his realm since they damage his zombies or ruins. His minions destroy them wherever they are found, but chaos has a persistent way of seeping in again and again.

#### Gorp One

CON: 8 SIZ: 31 POW: 12 Move: 5 HP: 20  
Envelop: 100% SR: 1 Damage: 8 points acid

Chaotic Feature: Befuddles one opponent per turn in addition to other attacks.

#### Gorp Two

CON: 12 SIZ: 21 POW: 15 Move: 5 HP: 17  
Envelop: 100% SR: 1 Damage: 8 points acid

#### Gorp Three

CON: 10 SIZ: 15 POW: 18 Move: 4 HP: 13  
Envelop: 100% SR: 1 Damage: 8 points acid

#### Gorp Four

CON: 16 SIZ: 29 POW: 17 Move: 1 HP: 23  
Envelop: 100% SR: 1 Damage: 8 points acid

#### Gorp Five

CON: 9 SIZ: 27 POW: 11 Move: 2 HP: 18  
Envelop: 100% SR: 1 Damage: 8 points acid

Chaotic Feature: Regenerates 1 hit point per melee round.

#### Gorp Six

CON: 10 SIZ: 21 POW: 14 Move: 5 HP: 8/16  
Envelop: 100% SR: 1 Damage: 8 points acid

Chaotic Feature: 8 point skin.

### Walktapus

STR: 27 CON: 17 SIZ: 27 POW: 12 DEX: 9  
Move: 7 HP: 22

R Leg (01-02) 4/7  
L Leg (03-04) 4/7  
Abdom (05) 4/7  
Chest (06) 4/8  
R Arm (07-08) 4/6  
L Arm (09-10) 4/6  
Tentacle 1 (11) 4/6  
Tentacle 2 (12) 4/6  
Tentacle 3 (13) 4/6  
Tentacle 4 (14) 4/6  
Tentacle 5 (15) 4/6  
Tentacle 6 (16) 4/6  
Tentacle 7 (17) 4/6  
Tentacle 8 (18) 4/6  
Head (19-20) 4/7

Weapon	SR	Attack	Damage	Parry	Pts
Tentacle	7	40%	2D6	-	-
Constrict	-	-	4D6	-	-

Notes: 3 meter diameter cloud of potency 16 systemic poison. Can use four tentacles at once. If two have struck the same target, they will constrict every round. Armor will protect only until its absorption rate is overcome, then it is broken. Regenerates 1 HP per turn. Can breathe underwater.

### Crocodiles

Some of the largest crocodiles in Glorantha exist in the Marsh. They leave the undead alone, but love to make a tasty meal out of adventurers. Roll D3 for number encountered. Their favorite tactic is to bite a target and drown them in water.

#### Large Crocodile

STR: 50 CON: 30 SIZ: 60 HP: 40  
INT: 3 POW: 10 DEX: 7 Move: 3

Hit Locations: 12 points of Armor and 13 HP per location.

Bite: 50% SR: 7 Damage: D10+5D6  
Tail: 30% SR: 7 Damage: 5D6 + knockback

Notes: Hide 60%, Sneak 70%, may bite or use tail to attack each round, but not both simultaneously. If in the water, a successful bite attack may be followed each round with an automatic chomp of 5D6. Armor does not protect from this damage. Successful Tail attack always counts as knockdown.

### Dinosaur Zombies

While living dinosaurs shun the place, Delecti has managed to make zombies out of any carcasses his minions sometimes retrieve from Spinosaurus Flats. At least one Brontosaurus and two Plesiosaurs have been sighted.

### Dragonewt Zombies

Randomly encountered individual Dragonewt zombies all originate from the same singular source; they are one of the many zombified former lives of Shamed by Death. Each time he comes back and gets killed means one more zombie for him to destroy. He usually fails.

#### Shamed by Death Zombie (Warrior Dragonewt)

STR: 28 CON: 24 SIZ: 19 HP: 22  
INT: 6 DEX: 8 Move: 1

Hit Locations: 6 points of Armor and 7 HP per location.

Klanth: 40% SR: 7 Damage: D10+1+2D6  
Utuma: 40% SR: 10 Damage: D6+1+2D6

Notes: Can attack with Klanth and Utuma in the same round.

### Ducks

Most ducks know better than to ever travel alone through the Marsh, lest they end up becoming a dead duck. Those that choose to live within the Marsh do so out of severe desperation. Most instead prefer to live around its edges, standing vigil with a keen eye on the lookout for undead forces about to leave its confines. Some work closely with the Lismelder clan to ensure that as much warning as possible is given when an incursion is imminent. Small bands of duck pirates and thieves operate light reed boats that can silently drift through the







Marsh. They make small forays into the adjoining Orlanthi lands to steal what they can before fading back into the mists. One reformed pirate, Cap'n Blackbeak, now plies his own craft on the River above the Marsh. He has provided invaluable information about the Marsh if the price is right. He is reputed to have a detailed map showing its navigable channels. Any ducks encountered will run if met with hostility. If greeted with honest friendship, most ducks will provide whatever appropriate information about the vicinity they have and warn adventurers of things to avoid. Ducks that are pursued into the Marsh are skilled at leading their pursuit into all manner of deadly traps.

## Elves

Most living elves, other than those on Yellowflower Island, steer far clear of the Marsh. Yellowflower elves usually avoid random hostile engagements, since they only leave their island when they have a specific mission or goal in mind. The Elves are friendly if they do not feel threatened. They can give a few general directions to nearby locations if asked. If they are threatened they will escape into the Marsh with amazing speed and skill.

## Ghouls

These creatures are the rarest form of undead encountered in the Marsh. Because their eating habits leave corpses that are unfit to be zombies, Delecti and his minions seek out and destroy any such creatures found. Nonetheless, the Marsh is such an inviting hiding place that his work is never done. Most ghouls know nothing of Delecti.

**STR:** 14 **CON:** 11 **SIZ:** 13 **HP:** 13  
**INT:** 11 **DEX:** 11 **Move:** 3 **MP:** 13  
**Hit Locations:** 0 points of Armor and 4 HP per location.  
**Claw:** 30% **SR:** 8 **Damage:** D6+D4  
**Bite:** 30% **SR:** 8 **Damage:** D6+D4 + venom

**Notes:** Howl causes effect equal to a Demoralize spell unless victim resists with INT vs. 13. Can attack with both claws and bite

simultaneously. Some ghouls wear looted armor. Venom of POT 11 vs. victim's CON. If victim wins, only 1D3 POT injected, otherwise full POT. When POT exceeds victim's CON the victim is paralyzed. Venom is purged at the rate of one POT/day. Victim also loses one point of CON per day. Antidote is only way to avoid death if POT exceeds CON.

## Ghosts

Ghosts are one of the greatest contributors to Delecti's zombie creation scheme. All of their victims in the Marsh are reanimated and join his minions. Since ghosts are tied to a specific locale, some of the more powerful ones near the Marsh edge have become known in song and legend. Typical Ghosts have 2D6+6 STR, 4D6 POW, and have a move rate equal to their POW. While most ghosts are insane, many will entice visitors with semi-accurate tales of the riches that abound within the Marsh. Ghosts can possess any type of magic. In the Marsh is a ghost of a shaman with a fetch.

### Typical Ghost

**INT:** 14 **POW:** 15 **Move:** equal to POW

**Notes:** Most have D8 points of spirit magic. Can turn visible/invisible at will. Ghosts attack by engaging in spirit combat. If they reduce their opponent to zero MP they will possess the victim and then kill them.

### Big Nasty Ghost

**INT:** 16 **POW:** 22 **Move:** equal to POW

**Notes:** Most have 2D6 points of spirit magic and D6 points of rune magic. Can turn visible/invisible at will. Ghosts attack by engaging in spirit combat. If they reduce their opponent to zero MP they will possess the victim and then kill them.

## Giant Swamp Toads

Some creatures will eat anything. Swamp Toads are one of those creatures. They prefer to swallow their prey whole.

**STR:** 30 **CON:** 15 **SIZ:** 30 **HP:** 23  
**INT:** 2 **POW:** 10 **DEX:** 11 **Move:** hop 12 m  
**Hit Locations:** 8 points of Armor and 9 HP per location.  
**Tongue:** 50% **SR:** 3 **Damage:** 3D6  
**Swallow:** 80% **SR:** 3 **Damage:** acid  
**Kick:** 30% **SR:** 6 **Damage:** 4D6

**Notes:** Hide 70%. Tongue has range of 6 meters. Can hop every 2 SR. Toads can attack once per round. They prefer to use their tongue, followed by their swallow attack the round after a successful tongue attack. A Toad can swallow anything less than or equal to its SIZ. They will kick the target if it is too big or dangerous to swallow. A successful swallow attack will pull the victim into the Toad's stomach. If the attack fails it can be tried again the next round. Once in the stomach, each hit location of the victim takes one point of acid damage. Armor dissolves first.

## Insect Swarm

One of Delecti's followers was a keen worshipper of Gorakiki. Over the centuries he has nurtured a number of insect hives throughout the Marsh. He also improved the breeds to be extra deadly and fierce. They ignore undead.

D6	Swarm	Venom	Stings
1-2	Yellowjackets	15	6D6/round
3	Hornets	10	3D6/round
4-6	Honeybees	10	7D6/round

**Notes:** The number of stings is per person. Keep track of the total number of stings per person. Most attacks last D3+1 rounds. If the nest is attacked add an additional 2D6 of stings. The stings are per person. Protective magic subtracts one from each die of stings for each 3 points of spell. Heavy clothing subtracts one from each die of stings. Armor subtracts one from each die of stings and can be cumulative with clothing. Once combat is over, take the total numbers of stings for each person and divide it by the insect's venom factor to determine the POT. 1D6 hours after the attack roll that POT as an attack against the victim's CON. If the victim fails, they take HP damage equal to the POT. If they succeed, they take 1/2 POT damage to their HP.

## Skeletons

Most skeletons are merely zombies with many years of seniority. One of Delecti's assistants, Ossa, specializes in combining the bones from a variety of partial skeletons into unique creations with odd capabilities. Many of the skeletons created by him have extra limbs or lethal appendages. Some of the skeletons have also been treated by Orichal, the mad alchemist who works in the Howling Tower. His skeletons are often coated with varying thicknesses of bronze, which gives them additional armor protection.

### Typical Skeleton

**STR:** 12 **SIZ:** 14 **DEX:** 12 **Move:** 3  
**Hit Locations:** 1 pt. of Armor and No Hit Points per location.  
**Attack:** 55% **Parry:** 55% **SR:** 7 **Damage:** D8+1+D4

**Notes:** Never Tires, Dodge 60%, No damage from thrusting or missile weapons unless critical or impale is rolled. Smaller skeletons will not have a damage bonus, large skeletons will have a damage bonus of +D6, and very large ones +2D6.

### Bronze Coated Skeleton

**STR:** 15 **SIZ:** 15 **DEX:** 15 **Move:** 3  
**Hit Locations:** 6 points of Armor and No HP per location.  
**Attack:** 75% **Parry:** 75% **SR:** 6 **Damage:** D8+1+D4

**Notes:** Never Tires, Dodge 75%, No damage from thrusting or missile weapons unless critical or impale is rolled. Smaller skeletons will not have a damage bonus, large skeletons will have a damage bonus of +D6, and very large ones +2D6.

## Snakes

Most of the snakes in the Marsh are at ease in the water as well as on land. The snakes encountered (which are the only ones that won't quickly slither away) are of one of the following types types:

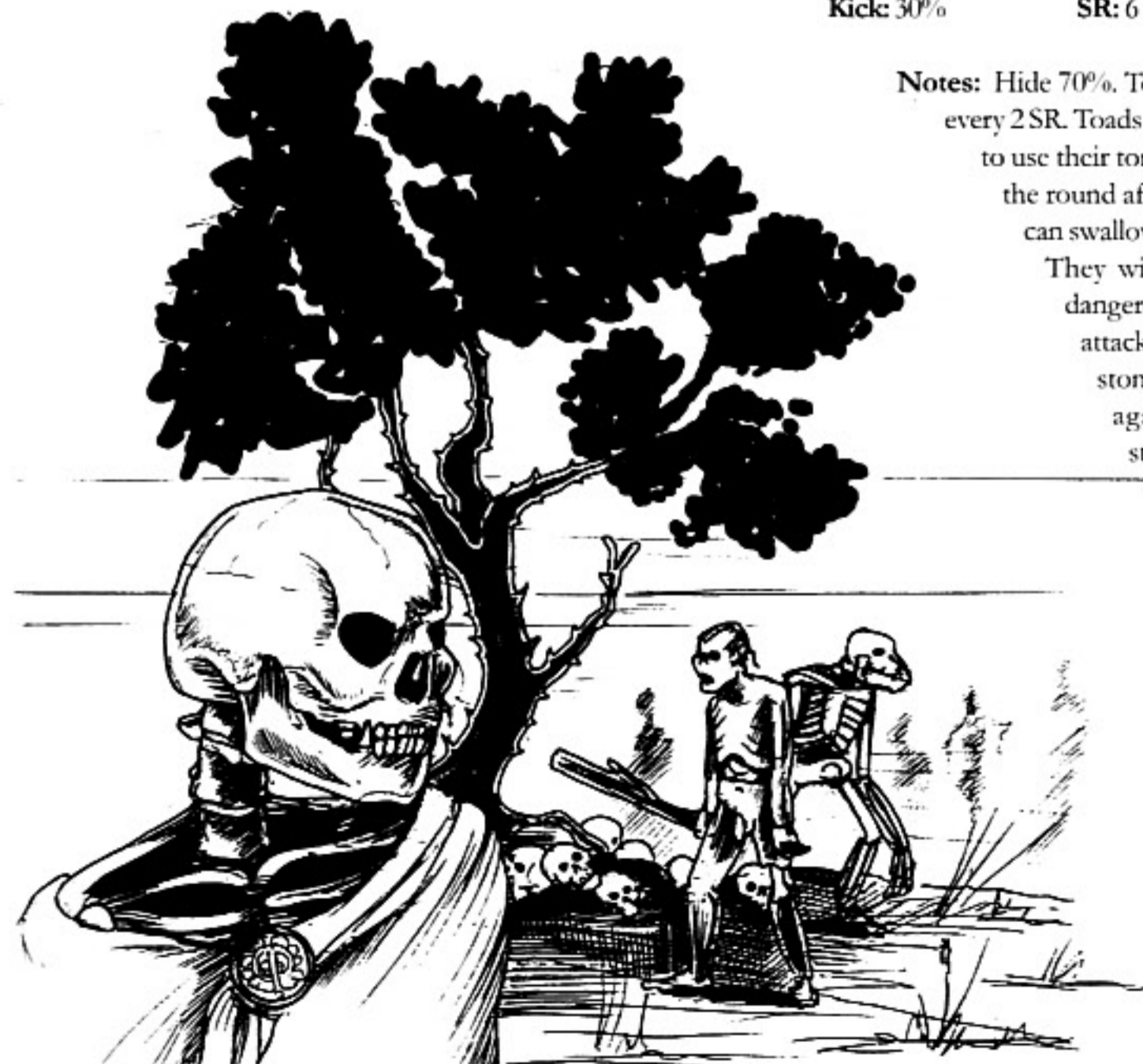
D6	Snake	D6	Snake
1-2	Weapon	3-4	Fang
5	Spit	6	Stake

### Any Snake

**STR:** 4 **CON:** 13 **SIZ:** 4 **HP:** 8  
**POW:** 10 **DEX:** 11 **Move:** 4 **MP:** 10  
**Hit Locations:** 2 points of Armor and 4 HP per location.  
**Claw:** 30% **SR:** 8 **Damage:** D6+D4  
**Bite:** 30% **SR:** 8 **Damage:** D6+D4 + venom

### Weapon Snakes

They have developed hard bone or horn tails shaped into curved broadswords or maces, which they extend towards a foe to fight and parry with.  
**Attack:** 30% **Parry:** 30% **SR:** 9 **Damage:** D6+1







### Fang Snakes

They look like normal snakes. However, they only have one sharp fang visible when they open their mouth. It does 1D4 damage and will also inject an ever-replenishable venom of D6 POT.

**Bite:** 30% **SR:** 10 **Damage:** D4 + venom

### Spit Snakes

They eject a liquid from their throats. They look like Stake snakes, though their skin is not as hard. Their acid spit has a POT of D6. It has a range of 3 meters. It has a very strong smell that will stay with the victim for at least a week. They can spit a number of times equal to their SIZ.

**Spit:** 30% **SR:** 6 **Damage:** Acid POT D6  
**Bite:** 20% **SR:** 10 **Damage:** D4

### Stake Snakes

They have an incredibly hard pointed snout and a body that can coil and launch like a spring. This lets their head hit like an arrow from a bow, doing 1D6+1 damage, with a chance to impale and critical. They have a range of 3 meters. After each attack they will recoil and attack again the following round.

**Spring:** 30% **SR:** 6 **Damage:** D6+1

### Stoorworms

These large, chaotic, and limbless dragonkin slither through the Marsh with deadly ferocity. They are bred by one of Delecti's assistants and rumored to be kept as pets on his island. They breathe poison gas and can regenerate damage at an alarming rate.

**STR:** 45 **CON:** 25 **SIZ:** 45 **HP:** 35  
**INT:** 9 **POW:** 16 **DEX:** 8 **Move:** 3

**Hit Locations:** 10 point skin and 14 HP per location.

**Bite:** 60% **SR:** 7 **Damage:** D10+4D6  
**Breath:** 100% **SR:** 1 **Damage:** poison only

**Notes:** Can bite and breath its poison gas in the same round. It can use its breath weapon every 3 rounds. The cloud has a radius of 3 meters and a POT of 16. They regenerate 2 points of damage per round until killed.

### Wraiths

The wraiths inhabiting the Marsh ruins were usually created when a powerful intruder met a violent and frustrating fate. Many ancient wraiths were left by the Dragonkill. Delecti usually leaves them alone to do their vicious work. Wraiths as described in *Runequest* are quite frightening. Many of the wraiths in the Marsh are no worse than usual, but no better, and they are fairly common. Some follow packs of zombies or other monsters around, attempting to feed on victims incapacitated by the zombies' attack. There are so many wraiths in the Marsh that some of them - the most dangerous - travel in groups, in which they can work together to overcome their individual weaknesses. The wraith's particular type of attack helps explain their tactics.

D6	Wraith Type
1	anti-STR
2	ant-INT
3	anti-CON
4	anti-fatigue
5	anti-magic point
6	roll again, but wraith is ancient

**1 Anti-STR:** these wraiths attack humans or smaller creatures - beings that are not overly muscular.

**2 Anti-INT:** these wraiths are very effective vs. animals - such as horses or dogs.

**3 Anti-CON:** these wraiths are good against a wide variety of targets; a sort of general-purpose wraith. They often hang around with poisonous monsters, whose attacks lower their victims' CON.

**4 Anti-Fatigue:** these are the wraiths of folks who died of exhaustion in the Marsh. They are particularly dangerous to people who are wearing a lot of armour (and thus have low fatigue).

**5 Anti-Magic Point:** these wraiths were Tapped into perdition. As a fight goes on and players cast lots of spells, MP-attacking wraiths tend to get stronger and stronger ...

### Wraith Combat Notes and Stats

In combat, the anti-STR wraiths attack the sentient beings, while the anti-INT wraiths go after their beasts. If there are no beasts, they attempt to strike at the largest targets - not because they assume that big people are necessarily stupid, but because they are not hindered by large SIZ or CON, unlike other wraiths. The anti-CON wraiths go after anyone who seems to be left out of the fray by their companions. In a group attack, at least one wraith will sit back and cast Neutralise Magic spells at visible Fireblades or other anti-wraith spells.

Type	CON	INT	MP	HP	Move
Regular	35	13	15	35	13
Ancient	50	16	30	50	30

**Notes:** Can only be hit by magic. Weapons only do magical damage. Wraiths attack by matching their MPs against the statistic rolled. If it overcomes the target they take D6 of damage to a hit location. Armor and magical protection (other than spirit block or spirit screen) will not give any protection. All wraith attacks are at SR 1. If the target is unconscious, sleeping, incapacitated, or reduced to 0 MP, a successful attack will reduce the victim's current statistic by D6 points instead of doing HP damage. The wraith gains one MP for each statistic point it saps. See the RQ3 *Creatures* book (page 42) for complete details.

### Zombies

Every sentient creature (except Humakti) who dies within the Marsh's perimeter becomes a zombie within a few hours, because of the sinister effects of Delecti's long residence here. In addition, the Dancers & other minions of Delecti are constantly patrolling nearby the Marsh, and when they find a corpse (or create one...) they drag it into the Marsh so Delecti's magic can do its work. Of course, some local towns have burial customs designed to thwart this activity (cremation, burial at a crossroads, etc.), but still, a lot of carrion finds its way to the Marsh.

Zombies encountered in the Marsh usually work in small groups of 3 or more, unless Delecti has taken a strong dislike to the invading party. If that is the case, the party could face virtually an unlimited number of zombies. Groups of zombies sometimes consist of creatures with a common background, such as Lunar soldiers, Ducks, Trolls, or Orlanthi. In the end, Delecti works with whatever materials (creatures) he has available, so there is no typical zombie that can be encountered. GM's are encouraged to use their imaginations when detailing all of the wonderfully odd possibilities, especially stitched creations.

In theory, all the zombies created by Delecti are under his control. In practice, he cannot specifically control all the hundreds of zombies in the Marsh at once unless they are acting in concert. For instance, he could summon all the zombies to his Tower or command them all to build a stone wall around the swamp's perimeter, and they would obey. But most of the time, the swamp's zombies simply wander aimlessly, seeking to destroy living intruders. Of course, any zombie that Delecti is able to see or speak with will obey him implicitly.

Most of his zombies are equipped with farm tools, such as work mauls, pitchforks, axes, scythes, and so forth. These are easily stolen or purchased, and are quite suitable for the clumsy zombies. They rarely wear armour, which is far too expensive to be wasted on a mere zombie. Not all the zombies in the marsh are human, of course.

### Some Interesting Zombie Types

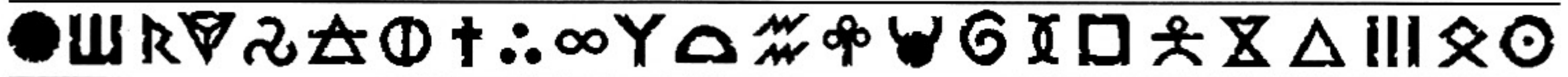
**Composite Corpses:** Delecti is nothing if not creative, and he and his followers have spent decades at a time stitching together various corpses to make new and exciting combinations. Some folks believe he created the Beast Men (centaurs, manticores, satyrs, etc.) in this fashion, though obviously not as undead. But this practice goes on, so that there are a number of composite corpses that can be encountered in the Marsh. Most of these were created for unexplainable experimental purposes, not combat efficacy, so they are not necessarily deadly, but ...

- Human with stingers in place of arms. There's no need to stop at two stingers - why not four, or six, or a dozen? The stingers might be grafted from scorpion men, manticores, or wyverns.
- Centipede-men: long rows of humans stitched together by attaching one person's abdomen & chest to the back of another, and doing this in a long series. They obviously have to walk in step. They have dozens of arms and legs. The front body can engage in combat normally while the hinder ones throw rocks. If the front bodies is destroyed, the creature just sheds that corpse (shoving it off with multiple hands ripping & tearing) and keeps on fighting. If a body in the creature's interior is wrecked, it splits into two beings, each about half as long as before.
- Skeleton upper bodies attached to the sides or back of a large zombie creature like cows, dinosaurs, or elephants. This is not a centaur - the main body still has a big zombie head. The upper bodies are skeletons, so they have a high DEX and can either carry shields to parry for the main body, or bows to shoot effective missiles at foes.
- Snakestars: one dozen to several dozen zombie snakes all connected at the tip of the tail forming a deadly coiling mass.

### Typical Human Zombie

**STR:** 17 **CON:** 17 **SIZ:** 13 **HP:** 15  
**INT:** 6 **DEX:** 8 **APP:** 3 **Move:** 2  
**Hit Locations:** 0-3 armor points and 5 hit points per location.  
**Weapon:** 40% **SR:** 7 **Damage:** D10+2+D4  
**Fist:** 40% **SR:** 9 **Damage:** D3+D4





## Upland Marsh & Lismelder Gazetteer

by David Hall, Martin Hawley, Rick Meints, and Michael O'Brien.

### Broken Fang

Little is known about this small mountain cloaked in mist. This fossilized dragon tooth predates the creation of the Marsh. It was once the site for an EWF Draconic temple that was built in the large cavity found near the jagged summit. Speculation has it that the tooth fell from the mouth of Aroka while he battled Orlanth in the heavens above. Wyverns, winged dragonets and other flying creatures have been sighted flying near its peak. Both Farang Farosh and Windwhistler might provide some information on its history if consulted and handsomely paid.

### Cremation Isle

This medium sized islet is one of the few original places holy to Humakt in the Dragon Pass region from before the Dragonkill War. The temple ruins are still one of the holiest places to the few Humakti sects that know of its history. High priests have, under desperate circumstances, used the islet for Heroquesting rituals. Indrodar Greydog is the last person known to have successfully completed the rituals and lived to return.

Rune level candidates have used the islet for proving their worth to their god; every generation sings the tales of the folly of such men. After lengthy preparatory rituals, the war party of the candidate attempt to seize control of the islet and remain there from Wildday of Harmony week until Fireday of Death week. Each night the skies are lit with the red glow of their cremation pyres as they release the undead from their eternal misery. The last several attempts by Humakti expeditions have all failed, but there is always talk of another mission being organised.

### Crescent Manor

This medium-sized Lunar manor was built in Lismelder territory after the defeat of Starbrow at the end of her rebellion. It was built by levies from all of the Lismelder clans, who each year must also provide a certain amount of labour to tend its fields (in addition to the many slaves who are permanently based there).

The manor is owned by a noble family from the Sylila, who employ an overseer to run it. The absentee landlord pays the occasional visit, but hasn't been seen for many seasons.

**Notes:** Never Tire. Zombies cannot die or be incapacitated, only hacked apart. A hit location is rendered useless once damage equals the HP of that location. Destroying the abdomen renders the legs useless and destroying the chest makes all limbs useless. Only destroying the head will deactivate the zombie. Impaling weapons do only half damage. An arrow or quarrel only does a maximum of one point of damage after penetrating armor, unless it impales, in which case it does a maximum of two points of damage after armor.

### Duck Zombies

There are probably more duck zombies here than any other race, including humans. Duck zombies are not particularly terrifying, but Delecti will take what he can get. Duck zombies do have one great edge over other zombies. Read on — many visitors to the Marsh choose to travel by boat or canoe. This has a lot of advantages. Few zombies and none of the skeletons can reach you, since they can't swim. On your approach to the Marsh, you are safe from vampires, who can't cross running water (of course inside the swamp the water is stagnant). And so forth. However, duck zombies are perfectly able to float and fight, though they tend to ride a bit lower in the water than a live duck, and thus they are one of the few daylight threats to an intruder travelling by water.

**STR:** 12 **CON:** 20 **SIZ:** 5 **HP:** 13  
**INT:** 6 **DEX:** 10 **APP:** 3 **Move:** 2  
**Hit Locations:** 0-3 armor points and 4 hit points per location.  
**Weapon:** 50% **Parry:** 25% **SR:** 7 **Damage:** D10+2+D4  
**Fist:** 40% **SR:** 9 **Damage:** D3+D4

### Typical Delecti's Tower human zombie

Most of the zombies in Delecti's Tower are human, because he likes the smell of decaying human flesh better than most other species' rotten meat. These zombies are the elite of the fleshy crop. He can afford to be picky about which zombies he admits to his personal service, and so they are invariably the most nimble (for a zombie), best-preserved (for a zombie) and strongest you'll typically find anywhere. For instance, all his tower's zombies have DEXs of 12, the highest normally possible.

**STR:** 22 **CON:** 22 **SIZ:** 13 **HP:** 18  
**INT:** 6 **DEX:** 12 **APP:** 3 **Move:** 2  
**Hit Locations:** 6-8 armor points and 6 hit points per location.  
**Weapon:** 60% **Parry:** 30% **SR:** 7 **Damage:** 2D6+D6  
**Fist:** 60% **SR:** 9 **Damage:** D3+D6

**Notes:** Never tire. They are equipped with good weapons, generally salvaged from failed adventuring parties. May include two-handed swords, great axes, halberds, etc. These weapons are usually not in great condition, though - subtract some armour points for wear and tear.

## Special Encounters

### The Bronze Skeleton

This creation is made of a "complete" collection of bronze bones, gathered together and wired into a human form. These bones still have their normal magic power (see *Plunder*), plus they are rather difficult to bust, unlike most skeletons. In fact, each hit location has about 30 armour points. That's armour points, not hit points.

The bronze skeleton wields pretty good weapons, often made of iron, and frequently enchanted. The exact weapons carried by this creation change from

season to season depending on Delecti's whims and whether he wants to give a particularly good weapon to a Dancer or an adventurer as a reward to encourage future expeditions. Since the skeleton's combat skill remains the same regardless of weapon (since it's based on DEX), this is easy enough to do.

The bronze skeleton can easily be considered one of Delecti's failures. After all, for the enormous amount of magic that went into it, Delecti ended up with only a single hard-to-destroy warrior. Perhaps he was hoping for something else. Nonetheless, if the bronze skeleton were ever defeated and broken up (gloating adventurers carrying off the bones), Delecti would be quite upset, and devote extreme effort to getting the bones back to re-form the bronze skeleton.

**STR:** 26 **SIZ:** 16 **DEX:** 17 **Move:** 3  
**Hit Locations:** 30 armor points and 0 hit points per location.  
**2 Swords:** 90% **Parry:** 85% **SR:** 5 **Damage:** D10+1+3D6

**Notes:** Dodge 90%. Can attack twice and parry twice per round.

### Dancers of Darkness

Delecti is served by a cult of vampire women named the Dancers of Darkness. They are the officers of his undead army, his roving eyes and ears, and his lovers. They are fanatical in their support for him and would never do anything to betray their master.

Dancers are all female, all young, all good-looking (those that are not naturally all that beautiful use spells to enhance their appearance), all very magically powerful, and all deadly vampires. Meeting a Dancer can be a very bad experience. While they may have to be patient and wait their chances outside the Marsh, inside the Marsh they can totally unleash their inhibitions. Nonetheless, combat is not really their main goal in life, and they will often retreat when faced by tough fighters. On the other hand, such a retreat is usually only a ploy to enable them to recruit zombies, other vampires, or similar Marsh horrors, and return with these reinforcements. During a typical fight, the Dancers hang around in the background, casting spells, rather than engaging in melee.

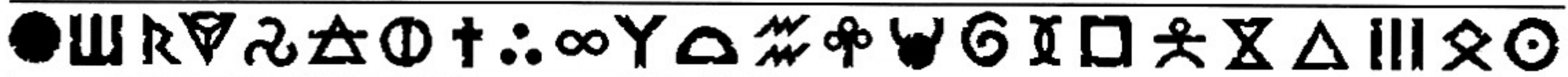
They are frequently encountered expanding the Marsh's boundaries. They do this by thrusting black rods into the ground a few feet away from the Marsh's current boundary. They then perform a midnight enchantment ritual (it only takes one Dancer to do this) and over the course of the next year, the swamp extends itself around of the Blackthorn Grove that is created from the rod. The Dancers often do this, and thus the swamp regularly grows in size. It used to be not much wider than Delecti's Ruins at the time of the Dragonkill.

### Typical Dancer of Darkness

**STR:** 18 **CON:** 23 **SIZ:** 11 **HP:** 17 **MP:** 40  
**INT:** 6 **DEX:** 21 **APP:** 17 **Move:** 4  
**Hit Locations:** 0-3 armor points and 6 hit points per location.  
**Bite:** 90% **SR:** 8 **Damage:** D4+D6+MP drain  
**Touch:** 90% **SR:** 8 **Damage:** D6+ fatigue drain

**Notes:** Most Dancers are adept at sorcery and maintain spells to enhance their CON, DEX, and APP (when necessary). Their spells are very capable of stripping away magic defenses.





## Happy Hadrosaur (The Bill)

This zombie is a clumsy killer. It was created during Cutter and Stitcher's "duck" obsession. After starting with the platypus, then moving up to ducks, this was their last and largest experiment before the genre's novelty faded. Its bill has been fitted with a set of razor sharp obsidian teeth (a bizarre contribution from the dragonewt Inward Spiral). It doesn't need to be fast since it usually slows most opponents to immobility before clumsily lumbering over and biting their heads off.

**STR:** 86 **CON:** 53 **SIZ:** 31 **HP:** 42  
**INT:** 3 **DEX:** 5 **APP:** 5 **Move:** 3/4 swim  
**Hit Locations:** 5 armor points and 14 hit points per location.  
**Bite:** 25% - **SR:** 8 **Damage:** 3D6+6D6  
**Tail:** 25% **Parry:** 75% **SR:** 9 **Damage:** D10+6D6

**Notes:** Gaze acts as a Slow 6 spell (20 MP strength). Roll INT x 4 to avoid it each round. Its teeth are virtually unbreakable. The can easily chomp through a wooden boat or armor plate. Its typical attack consists of putting immobile victims upper torsos into its mouth and biting down HARD. Immobile foes are attacked with a bite and tail skill of 100%.

## Mock Hydra

Cutter and Stitcher have made this their pride and joy in recent decades. They have had the good fortune to harvest a number of parts that have made this creation a deadly and horrid monstrosity. While not a true Hydra, this multi-headed terror does have limited regenerative powers. It usually does not wander far from Delecti's ruin unless the mission is very important. It's construction is based on a medium sized brontosaurus's body with various extra heads stitched on.



**STR:** 110 **CON:** 66 **SIZ:** 85 **HP:** 76  
**INT:** 3 **DEX:** 12 **APP:** 3 **Move:** 4/5 swim  
**Body Hit Locations:** 14 AP on and 25 HP per location  
 (see individual heads for each head's AP and HP)  
**Tail:** 60% **SR:** 7 **Damage:** 10D6  
**Trample:** 60% **SR:** 9 **Damage:** 16D6

**Brontosaur Head 1** (14 AP and 25 HP)  
**Bite:** 60% **SR:** 9 **Damage:** 6D6

**Water Wyrm Head 2** (8 AP and 14 HP)  
**Bite:** 60% **SR:** 9 **Damage:** D10+5D6

**Plesiosaur Head 3** (5 AP and 12 HP)  
**Bite:** 60% **SR:** 4 **Damage:** D8+2D6

**Sea Serpent Head 4** (15 AP and 21 HP)  
**Bite:** 60% **SR:** 9 **Damage:** 9D6

**Wyrm Head 4** (9 AP of scales and 15 HP)  
**Bite:** 60% **SR:** 8 **Damage:** 6D6

**Notes:** Can attack with all heads each round, plus either Tail lash or Trample once/round. It regenerates 2 HP per round until hacked apart. Each head can operate independently. A head ceases to function when it's HP are exceeded. Severed or burnt locations do not regenerate. It can swim.

## Petrified Gorilla

This is a simple, but effective, monster. A long time ago, Delecti dug up a petrified gorilla fossil. He immediately turned it into an undead horror, and it is a favourite of his. In appearance, it is immediately obvious that the gorilla is made of stone, not bone - it is, in fact, made of gritty red sandstone. The Petrified Gorilla uses normal Gorilla attacks, but with a greater damage bonus.

**STR:** 36 **SIZ:** 26 **DEX:** 14 **Move:** 3  
**Hit Locations:** 24 armor pts and 0 HP per location.  
**Bite:** 70% **SR:** 6 **Damage:** D10+3D6  
**Wallop:** 70% **SR:** 6 **Damage:** D10+3D6  
**Grapple:** 70% **SR:** 6 **Damage:** 6D6

**Notes:** Can attack twice per round. It can bite and wallop, wallop and grapple, or wallop twice. The attacks occur 3 SR apart. It may bite while grappling. If the HPs of a location are exceeded, the location breaks, just as with a normal skeleton. Then Delecti must do masonry or stone working to fix it - an easy enough project. It has been "destroyed" a number of times, and has always been repaired.

## Two-Headed Aurochs

This creation doesn't look much like an aurochs, but that is what Delecti was aiming for. They took a rhino body and added a few extra legs and two large bull heads to it. It has the unique ability of being able to run as fast backwards or forwards, without having to turn around.

**STR:** 51 **CON:** 23 **SIZ:** 40 **HP:** 32  
**INT:** 3 **DEX:** 12 **Move:** 3/4 swim  
**Hit Locations:** 5 armor points and 12 hit points per location.  
**Butt:** 60% **SR:** 8 **Damage:** D10+4D6  
**Bite:** 60% **SR:** 8 **Damage:** D10+4D6  
**Trample:** 75% **SR:** 9 **Damage:** 8D6

**Notes:** It can bite or head butt, plus trample in the same round. Its horns are coated with bronze and are quite sharp. Destroying one head will not stop the beast from functioning, as it would a single headed undead. If needed, there is no reason why it couldn't be fitted with a saddle and a couple of skeleton warriors or other undead.

## Cyclops Mountain

Whether the ancient Cyclops known only as "Trimmer" still lives there is hard to say. Supposedly he moved to the marsh because he found the taste of its undead to his liking. The small rocky outcropping is one of the last in the immediate area to have not sunk into the marsh. Trimmer's cave faces east and he has been known to be very reclusive. He is said to possess an oversized left arm capable of throwing amazingly large balls of hardened mud for an impressive distance. His reputation as a flesh eater has motivated most people to avoid the region.

## Darkwalk Peninsula

Legend tells of a troll, seeking revenge for Delecti turning his companions into zombies, performing an amazing feat some 150 years ago. The troll completed a tree-chopping heroquest before entering the Marsh and managed to hack through two consecutive Blackthorn trees before finally falling victim to the Marsh's defenders. The peninsula extending into the Marsh is now known as Darkwalk. Supposedly, the troll's ghost still protects it from Delecti's rituals. Every few years during Storm Season, a band of Zorak Zorani has been seen performing some type of grisly bloody bone ritual near the entrance onto the peninsula. While the mists of the Marsh are not present in the area, a strange cloud of darkness shrouds the place.

## Delecti's Isle

In EWF times this was the city-port of Orin Jistil, which was destroyed before the Dragonkill War. It was once famous as a great center of learning. All that remains now are the imposing ruins that are rumoured to be the sorcerer Delecti's stronghold. Many heroic parties have sought to explore these ruins, some have returned claiming that they are empty, while most have never returned. The more popular tales speak of: a vast thaumaturgical library filled with a thousand year's worth of knowledge and sorcerous research, an unspeakable lab where the vilest experiments are conducted, a twisted menagerie of stitched creations, endless vaults of treasure plundered from the Dragonkill, storehouses overflowing with the gear of failed adventuring parties, countless corridors patrolled by undead guardians of every conceivable nature, a small city of vampires in a cavernous underground crypt, and a draconic gate to the Hero Plane.

## Dragonewt Zombies

The Dragonewt zombies of the Marsh fall into two types, the colony of ancient deserters allied with Delecti and the randomly encountered individuals. Surprisingly, the latter all seem to look identical in appearance and status, the story behind the colony is far more speculative.



## Gazetteer continued...

It is believed that these zombies chose their fate during the time leading up to the destruction of the Empire of the Wyrms' Friends. They disagreed with the annihilation of so many innocents to cleanse the mistakes of their misguided leaders. Some say that they were also disenchanted with the perpetual cycle of rebirth and sought the only available alternative - undeath. The dragonewt roads that traversed through what is now the Marsh were severed centuries ago, but they still extend miles into the Marsh before terminating.

Shamans have retold the accounts of spirits who witnessed events near the ruined dragonewt outpost within the Marsh. They wail of dragonewts being greeted at the terminus pylon by their undead brothers, who feast on certain portions of their living visitor before welcoming him into their undead ranks.

During the Dragonewts Dream that started in 1550 the Marsh was visited by dozens of spectral dragonewt parties. Their purpose was unknown, but it is believed that they had dealings and performed rituals with their outcast zombie brothers on several occasions.

The last known sighting of undead dragonewt zombies emerging from the Marsh was when Boldhome fell to the Lunars in 1602. There are at least two other mostly undocumented and unexplored dragonewt ruins that lie within the Marsh. The only clues as to their whereabouts would be ancient maps showing the routes of the dragonewt roads that traversed the area. Surely, they must lie somewhere along them.

### Dry Spot

A squarish expanse of dry, hard-packed earth, Dry Spot floats in the midst of a murky lake, deep in the marsh. About the size of a tennis court, the island rocks perceptibly when high winds whip up the waves.

It may be a solid cube - legend speaks of it actually being a gigantic earth elemental, created by the Dwarf of Dwarf Run as payment for some long forgotten deal; certainly Delecti uses it as a tempting spot to lure unsuspecting visitors. Some speculate it is even under his control.

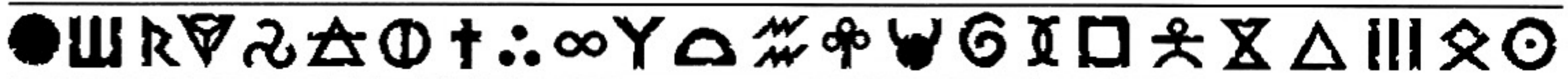
Nothing grows or lives on the island, and it appears to be a safe haven in the midst of Delecti's domain. Visitors over the ages have hacked or cut messages, runes and initials into the surface; for long-forgotten reasons one traveller even carved an enormous (12m long) Beast rune, and seems to have started on another, possibly a Magic rune. Curiously, these obvious markings are not always present or distinctly vary from those described by others, which suggests the island periodically flips onto another side. Woe betide anyone camping on the island when this happens!

### Duck Ferry

The ferry here has been operated by the same family of ducks for many generations. They always demand the same payment - one silver and a solemn promise







CARTOGRAPHY: PHIL ANDERSON

never to eat fowl. During the time of the Duck Hunts the family went into hiding and the ferry fell into disuse. The rotting docks are all that remain.

### Duckpoint

For many years before the coming of Sartar Peacemaker this was a small market town and off-loading point for the duck barges that ply the Creek Stream River. During his reign Sartar built walls around the town, declared it a city, and made his famous promise to the ducks of the region. The city rapidly grew and prospered once Tarkalor's Wilmskirk Road was finished in 1572, and it soon became a prosperous river port for trade to and from Sartar and Kethaela.

After Starbrow's Rebellion the city was deserted by all but its few human inhabitants and has only recovered slowly since unauthorised Duck Hunts were outlawed. Lunar attempts to take over the river trade all failed dismally, and a few duck barges have now begun to ply the route again (though under the weight of heavy Lunar taxes). Whether the city will ever recover from all of its setbacks is yet to be seen.

The city itself is a painful combination of duck's version of a gigantic nest and a human town.

### Ernalda's Undead Grotto

A Heroplace, an entrance to which can be found in the Marsh. Before the Marsh was created, this underground grotto was the idyllic home of the goddess of this region, a daughter of Ernalda. However, Delecti's foul rituals corrupted this place and its denizens. Some say that the goddess is now held here in chains, tormented by a myriad of undead horrors. Other says that she is the slavish and perverted lover of Delecti. There are four exits from this place, one leads to the Upland Marsh, two are heavily guarded, and the last needs no guard.

### Harvest Home

The only ramparted fort remaining in Duck Valley. It sits at the end of the Boldhome road. There is a small temple to Barntar here as well as a Lunar garrison. Newly arrived immigrant Lunar farmers seeking to reap the rewards of cultivating the fertile soils of the Duck Vale.

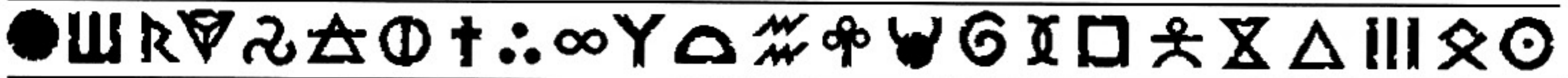
### Howling Tower

The Howling Tower is one of the easier Marsh locations to find due to the constant howls and wails that emanate from within its confines. Stories from insane and crippled adventurers abound about what inhabits the tower. Golden skeletons, wyverns, ghouls, and a mad alchemist are amongst the more popular ones. The bronze gargoyle that adorns the Tarshite embassy in Boldhome is believed to have been salvaged by the only known expedition to return after partially exploring the tower over 100 years ago. Advertisements for another another expedition are often found in the taverns and inns of Boldhome.

### Hump

Almost nothing grows on this small island in the south of the Marsh, which makes it a place of relative safety. However, it is often difficult to find, and many marsh-dwellers swear that its location has changed on a number of occasions. Others say that it is prone to small earth tremors.





## Gazeteer continued...

### Indrodar's Necklace

This ancient circle of standing stones was originally used by Indrodar Greydog as a mustering place against zombie attacks. Since his death it has become more important to the Cult of Indrodar and the Lismelder tribe.

This is the place where all tribal musters of warriors are held, where the Lismelder king usually invokes his *Command Worshipers* Divine Magic spell.

At the centre of circle stand the shrine to Indrodar. In time of war small stones can be found grouped around the shrine. These always add up to the number of tribal warriors who answer the summons to muster. Each warrior picks up a stone and before any battle he drops it, along with the other warriors, in a pile near the battlefield. After the battle each surviving warrior picks up a stone from this pile. When counted, the stones that are left show how many Lismelder have fallen on the battlefield.

### Lookout Isle

This hilltop is one of the best vistas from which, on the very rare days when visibility is good, you can see a few miles into the surrounding Marsh. The semi-intact hilltop fort and its tall towers used to serve as a river lookout post and observation platform. Down on the old riverbank is a small customs house complex where trade duties were collected from traffic heading up and down the river.

Many durulz live here, farming and fishing in the estuary. After Starbrow's Rebellion the fort's towers were often used to warn of approaching duck hunts.

### Mallard Town

A small market town where the Goodweaver clan traditionally trades with the durulz for flax and feathers. It was sacked and burnt in 1614 during a particularly vicious Duck Hunt.

### Monument

The remaining base of this large broken obelisk still juts upward some 20 meters out of the muck. Most of the images and runes are slowly being eaten away by the slimy moss that covers most of its surface. The broken top pieces have mostly sunk into the surrounding marsh, but the site still partially functions. Some of the runes will glow in unidentifiable patterns at odd times of the year, seemingly without pattern or predictability.

### Odd Tower

During Starbrow's rebellion a part of the Lunar army made a feint across the River at Two Sisters and constructed a number of towers by the Upland Marsh. This tower is the only one to have survived from that time. It is still used by the

## Undead Admiral and his Navy

The rivers that twist between the series of small lakes in the Marsh are patrolled by a being known as the Admiral. He commands a "fleet" of three longboats, plus his command ship. Delecti has seldom needed to deploy all his navy at once, but they are a potent weapon nonetheless. The admiral is a Waertagi sailor who wandered up the Creek-Stream River looking for something to do after the Closing drove the Dragonship he served on onto the beach near Karse. Whether he made a deal with Delecti or became one of his victims is unclear. Regardless, he serves his master unquestioningly, endlessly patrolling the waterways of the Marsh vigilantly. His indefatigable skeleton crews silently row to the steady beat of their oar-master. The small craft they use have a shallow draft that is well suited to navigating in the Marsh. The Admiral knows the quickest route to any location in Delecti's realm.

### Admiral's Longship

Similar to a medium sized Viking longship, the craft is covered in exotic hides and has no need for sails. Its superstructure is made from whalebone ribs and other sturdy bones. It can carry up to 40 skeleton warriors. It has a compliment of 5 officers who steer the ship and assist the Admiral. The headpiece at the front of the ship is a Dream Dragon skull. It can breath sleep gas 4 times a day (40 meter range, 10 meter radius) of POT 15. Save vs. CON or fall asleep for D6+2 rounds.

Hull Type: warship      Hull Quality: 12  
Sea Max: 15 Structure Points: 60  
Length: 15m      Beam: 4m      Capacity: 15 tons  
Freeboard: 1m      Draft: .75m      Crew: 12 rowers

## Marsh Wights

These solitary creatures can be very powerful foes if a party is unprepared. They can be found in various odd places throughout the Marsh. Please see Eric Sieurin's article *The Marsh-Wight* for complete details an scenario/cameo ideas.

## Vampires

Most of the Marsh's vampires have been created by the Dancers of Darkness. The Dancers obey Delecti, but most of the other vampires don't obey anybody. However, they do fear Delecti and his Dancers of Darkness, who are well-organised and have significant magic power. If a Dancer was to give a direct non-suicidal order to another vampire that resided within the Marsh, the latter would be powerfully motivated to obey. Such is the hierarchy of the Marsh's nobility of the undead. The non-Dancer vampires are not the least bit loyal to Delecti, but they serve his purposes by residing here.

The Marsh is a terrific place to survive as a vampire. Here, there is no running water fast enough to discommode a vampire. Much of the Marsh is shaded by thick trees and moss, permitting a vampire to operate even in the daylight.

## Beast Vampires

These terrifying creatures come from Beast Valley. They are rare, ancient and powerful, which is good, because they're among the worst denizens of the Marsh a party could have to face.

### Minotaur Vampire

STR: 45    CON: 31    SIZ: 23    HP: 27    MP: 20  
INT: 8    DEX: 11    APP: 13    Move: 5  
Hit Locations: 3 armor points and 7 hit points per location.  
Axe: 75%    Parry: 45%    SR: 7    Damage: 3D6+3D6  
Head Butt: 75%    SR: 9    Damage: D6+3D6

**Notes:** The minotaur will use its head butt attack instead of its weapon attack when it wants to drain D4 Magic Points. Minotaur vampires have colossal strength, of course. With their enormous hit points, they are formidable, piling only by comparison with other Marsh beast vampires. They are not particularly smart, and intelligence is important to vampires, so they often work closely with smarter vampire types, such as Dancers. Many minotaurs wield a large axe or club in each hand and attack twice, relying on vampiric regeneration (1HP per round) and resistance to damage to pull them through the fight, rather than parrying or dodging. I do not know if they still go berserk when wounded - best left up to the GM.

### Centaur Vampire

STR: 33    CON: 22    SIZ: 26    HP: 24    MP: 30  
INT: 13    DEX: 15    APP: 13    Move: 10  
Hit Locations: 0-3 armor points and 5 hit points per location.  
Weapon: 75%    SR: 7    Damage: D10+3D6  
Kick: 75%    SR: 9    Damage: D6+3D6+MP drain

**Notes:** Can use kick and weapon attack (sword, etc.) each round. Centaur vampires are especially deadly for their kick attack. Human vampires often duel with swords or clubs and so cannot always use their vampiric MP-draining touch. But the centaur vampire gets both a weapon (which, if you don't parry, smites you mightily), then delivers a sizeable kick to drain MPs. They typically have high MPs because they get to drain MPs so often (every round).

### Manticore Vampire

STR: 52    CON: 32    SIZ: 26    HP: 29    MP: 25  
INT: 7    DEX: 10    APP: 7    Move: 6  
Hit Locations: 4 armor points and 5 hit points per location.  
Claw: 60% SR: 7    Damage: D6+4D6+MP drain  
Sting: 60%    SR: 9    Damage: D6+4D6+MP drain+poison

**Notes:** Can use sting and 2 claw attacks each round. Both attacks drain MPs plus the sting is venomous. Manticore vampires are so unwholesome you may want to leave them out of the game, and just seed rumours of them to terrify players. The thought of a vampire that drains MPs twice a round (two hand-to-hand attacks) plus injects venom ...brrr.

### Duck Vampires

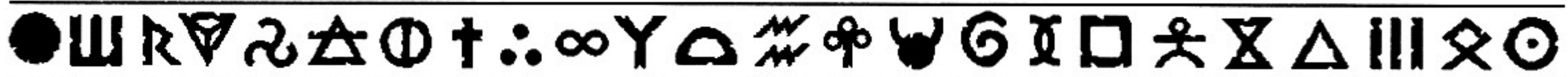
Probably the least-terrifying vampires, they nonetheless exist. Even as a vampire, ducks don't sprout fangs (yes, I know ducks have teeth - just not fangs), so they actually wear false fangs to enable them to drink blood. If you can steal a duck vampire's fangs (for instance, when they fall to the ground after he transforms into mist), you can haggle with him for goods, information, or other considerations. It is a major pain in the butt for a duck vampire to get a new set of fangs made, after all, plus they love haggling.

STR: 16    CON: 26    SIZ: 4    HP: 15    MP: 15  
INT: 13    DEX: 13    APP: 13    Move: 2  
Hit Locations: 0-3 armor points and 7 hit points per location.  
Shortsword: 75%    Parry: 75%    SR: 7    Damage: 3D6+3D6  
Bite: 75%    SR: 9    Damage: D6+3D6

### Elf Vampires

They are rare, but much to be feared. They are mentally even more twisted with hate than other vampires, because the blood of non-elves tastes foul to them. Still, they must drink this nasty





provender to survive. In addition, all feel the empty hole where Aldrya used to reside, and know they are less than whole.

Elf vampires have some horrifying differences from other vampires. First, they cannot transform into a bat or wolf or other non-human animal (they can fade into mist, however). They are able to meld with the trunk of a tree, and then can vampirically drain the MPs of anyone touching that tree. When an elf vampire is created, his or her elf bow becomes vampiric at the same time. Their bow is no longer subject to withering when touched by a non-elf. In fact, it drains MPs at a touch just like the vampire (which is how he normally restores his bow's MPs). One final terrifying note - when an arrow fired by a elf vampire's bow hits a target, it drains blood just like a normal vampire's bite, if it penetrates armour.

### Human Vampires

One big drawback to the Marsh from the vampiric point of view is that there are few victims here. (See elsewhere for how the Dancers deal with this problem for their own needs.) More plebeian vampires must tough it out, and so they are always extremely thirsty. They will often attack as a berserker, ignoring possible harm to themselves in their lust for precious blood.

These vampires generally sleep underwater, or lie buried under a thin sheet of mud or muck. This means that they can often carry weapons around with them (vampires who must depart their graves in a cloud of mist can't usually do this). They do not usually wear armour, though - if they are forced to dissolve into mist to regenerate damage, the armour gets left behind. Plus armour corrodes pretty fast in the Marsh.

### Infant Vampires

Though a vampire can become more youthful by drinking blood, it cannot become more mature. Thus, vampires who were children or babies when they Turned are still the size of children or babies. These creepy creatures generally act their age (though in a corrupt fashion). For instance, a small girl may cry for a playmate or toy, or an infant may seek to be cuddled. Of course, once held in a mortal's arms, they will strike. Because of their comparatively small strength, added to the fact that they don't need as much blood as larger vampires, they are much likelier to work in teams or groups than other vampires.

### Zombie Giant (12 meters tall)

The Giant at Sump has been known to wander for short periods of time and to also chase intruders who flee from his lair. He is known only as the Collector and is well on the way to rotting down to just a skeleton.

**STR:** 98 **CON:** 76 **SIZ:** 90 **HP:** 88  
**INT:** 6 **DEX:** 7 **APP:** 3 **Move:** 6  
**Hit Locations:** 12 armor pts (27 on legs) and 29 HP per location.  
**Maul:** 35% **Parry:** 35% **SR:** 4 **Damage:** 3D6+10D6  
**Bash:** 35% **Parry:** - **SR:** 6 **Damage:** D8+10D6

**Notes:** Magic only affects him 5% of the time. He wears thick wooden shin plates that have the equivalent of 15 armor points. Any large object can be used as an improvised weapon for combat purposes.

### Zombie Whale

Centuries ago, Delecti managed to get an entire baleen whale into the Marsh. He stitched four legs (cut from dead tyrannosaurs) onto it so it could slither around the marsh between bodies of water. He decided it should have teeth, so he imbedded huge tusks into its mouth, cut from walruses, sabretooth tigers, narwhals, dugongs, elephants, mammoths, and hippopotami. Hence, the Marsh holds, somewhere within, a colossal carnivorous monster with a SIZ of about 100 and a mouth big enough to crunch up a whole boat at once, with everyone in it. The zombie whale's existence is in fact well-known, and most of the people living near the Marsh know someone who knows someone who has seen it. My advice is to tell your players about the whale in a horribly gloating fashion, then to advise them not to think about it.

The Zombie Whale has one redeeming feature. It is so enormous that the foul stench of its bulk actually drowns out the swamp's fetid aroma. Once you've smelled it, it can never catch you by surprise again. Even hiding underwater, bubbles of gas gangrene rise to the surface and burst, expressing the horror's stink everywhere. Of course, the first time you encounter it, you may not realise what the hideous smell signifies!

### Zorak Zorani Zombie Warband

During the tumultuous years of the domination of the Elder Races after the Dragonkill, most of the trolls who challenged Delecti were wiped out during their raids into his Marsh. One Zorak Zorani Death Lord, when brought before Delecti, chose a different route than simple annihilation. Korkos offered to help teach Delecti some of the ways of his god in exchange for the chance to be an undead lord over his men. He now leads his troll zombies as a unit. His unit is one of the few that seems to have some success in dealing with the Durulz that infest the Marsh. Most trolls that die in the Marsh and are zombified are usually transferred to his command in his unit.

General Korkos and his zombie warband live in a ruined Zorak Zorani minor temple in a location forgotten by the outside world. From their base they are often sent on intercept missions as requested by their master, Delecti. The warband, mostly made up of zombified Great and Dark Trolls, is truly fearsome. They especially delight in obliterating any chaos they encounter in the Marsh, too. Fortunately for Korkos and his band, undead trolls don't suffer the same double damage penalty from iron weapons that their living relatives do.

### General Korkos (Zorak Zoran Death Lord, Great Troll Lich)

**STR:** 44 **CON:** 28 **SIZ:** 27 **HP:** 28  
**INT:** 10 **POW:** 20 **DEX:** 15 **APP:** 5  
**Hit Locations:** 6 armor points and 10 hit points per location.  
**Maul:** 75% **Parry:** 75% **SR:** 4 **Damage:** 2D8+3D6  
**Bite:** 75% **Parry:** - **SR:** 6 **Damage:** D6+2D6

**Notes:** Search 75%, Track 75%. He wears light armor and has 3 point skin. His ghost possesses Troll corpses when needed. He can communicate with Delecti telepathically. Rapir 4 matrix.  
**Magic:** Bludgeon 4, Repair, Protection 2, Extinguish.  
**Rune Magic:** Sever Spirit x2, Create Zombie x3, Crush x2, Fear, Shield 3.

Lunars as an observation post. Some say that Delecti actively sought to destroy the towers after he was betrayed by the Lunars at the siege of Runegate Fort. Most of the other towers were reduced to mere rubble.

### One-Side Isle

One of the most unusual features of the marsh, head-on One-Side Isle appears to be just another of the long, low, non-descript patches of solid land that dot the region. But, approaching it from a different angle reveals the island exists in only two dimensions, and it in fact almost completely disappears from view if looked at from directly side-on!

The island is difficult to find and very easy to miss. Touching and interacting with it is possible (you can sail your boat right up against it!), though no one yet has found a way to walk on it without sliding down into the water. A small number of water fowl roost on the island, and a colony of hares nest in the thickets. These creatures too are wholly two dimensional, and would be extremely valuable as oddities if they could be caught and sold to noblemen or kings who value such things.

Could One-Side Island be a long-standing illusion, created by EWF as a form of war camouflage? Certainly duck bandits today have been known to hide behind it in ambushes.

### Spinosaurus Flats

The western edge of Upland Marsh melds imperceptibly into a strip of grassy moorland at the foot of the Tamlane Hills. This is the Spinosaurus Flats, home to several large herds of dinosaurs. Each group seems to want to outdo the others with fantastically arrayed frills, spikes, horns and crests. It is not clear whether these bizarre creatures are magisaurs (fallen dragonewts) or hadrosaurs (born of immature dragon eggs). Whatever the case, the males are fiercely territorial and usually hostile to strangers, including dragonewts.

Over the years, the spinosaurs appear to be getting even more lurid in appearance, but less intelligent and numerous. Lunar hunting parties from Tarsh have recently recognised these creatures as marvellous trophy animals, further threatening their future. The ducks are said to be keen to move into the region once the spinosaurs are gone.

### The Stitched Zoo

One of the most reviled examples of the vileness of Remakers was their unholy zoo. It became home to all of their failed creations; Frankenstein like creatures that were stitched together. A lasting reminder of their attempts to reconstruct, by whatever means necessary, various extinct Golden Age creatures. Partially destroyed by its gruesome inhabitants after their creators were wiped out by a ball of blue flame that fell from the heavens at the start of the Dragonkill War, all that remains are rusting cages and decaying habitats.



## Gazeteer concluded...

The only real evidence of what once occurred here comes from two main sources, the stories passed down through the generations of Beast Folk that are collected in the library near Wild Temple, and from a painting that was recovered from Kakstan's Art Museum in the Rubble of Old Pavis. The exact whereabouts of the painting have been unknown since the Lunar invasion.

## Sump

The slow currents that push the sludge and debris through the Marsh actually flow with a purpose. The area referred to as Sump is where the larger pieces of flotsam and jetsam are eventually deposited. The rotting carcasses of Delecti's failed experiments, hulks of battered fishing boats, bloated and mutilated corpses, and all manner of other things have all collected here via the slow but steady current of the sludge. The durulz of the Yellow Flower Isle occasionally scavenge for trade goods from amidst the wreckage, and there are also signs of trollkin rummagers. An ancient zombie giant is said to collect the more interesting (at least to a low INT creature) items. The ruined wharves of the harbour of Olorost can still be seen by a trained eye. In its heyday, the port was extensively expanded and deepened to handle the many vessels that used to line its banks.

## Swordvale

The clan centre for the Goodsword clan of the Lismelder tribe. The annual market in Earth Season is the biggest in the valley.

## Wintertop

This is the tallest peak of the Kerofin Mountains standing some 4,000 feet above the sea. It is sacred to the Orlanthe of the region. Numerous religious ceremonies are held here on Orlanthe Holy Days.

## Yellow Flower Isle

Lying at the southern edge of Delecti's realm, this small island is all that remains of a large Elf Garden that once flourished here during the inhuman occupation that began after the Dragonkill war. Many rare species of plants are rumoured to exist there. It is unknown whether any elves still make it their home.

Before Starbrow's Rebellion this island was inhabited by only the most adventurous, resilient, and animistic ducks. They made their living from harvesting the Marsh and from the Duck Flax that grows thereabouts.

After 1613 the island became the main place for duck refugees fleeing from the many Lunar-sponsored Duck Hunts to find safe haven. Deep in the Marsh, it was relatively safe. However, life there is especially hard.

## Average Dark Troll Zombie

Most of these zombies were created by Delecti over the years, but have been placed under Korkos' direct control. However, they could never be used against Delecti. They are kept in very good repair by their leader and do not look as rotten as they should be considering their great age.

STR: 26 CON: 16 SIZ: 27 HP: 22

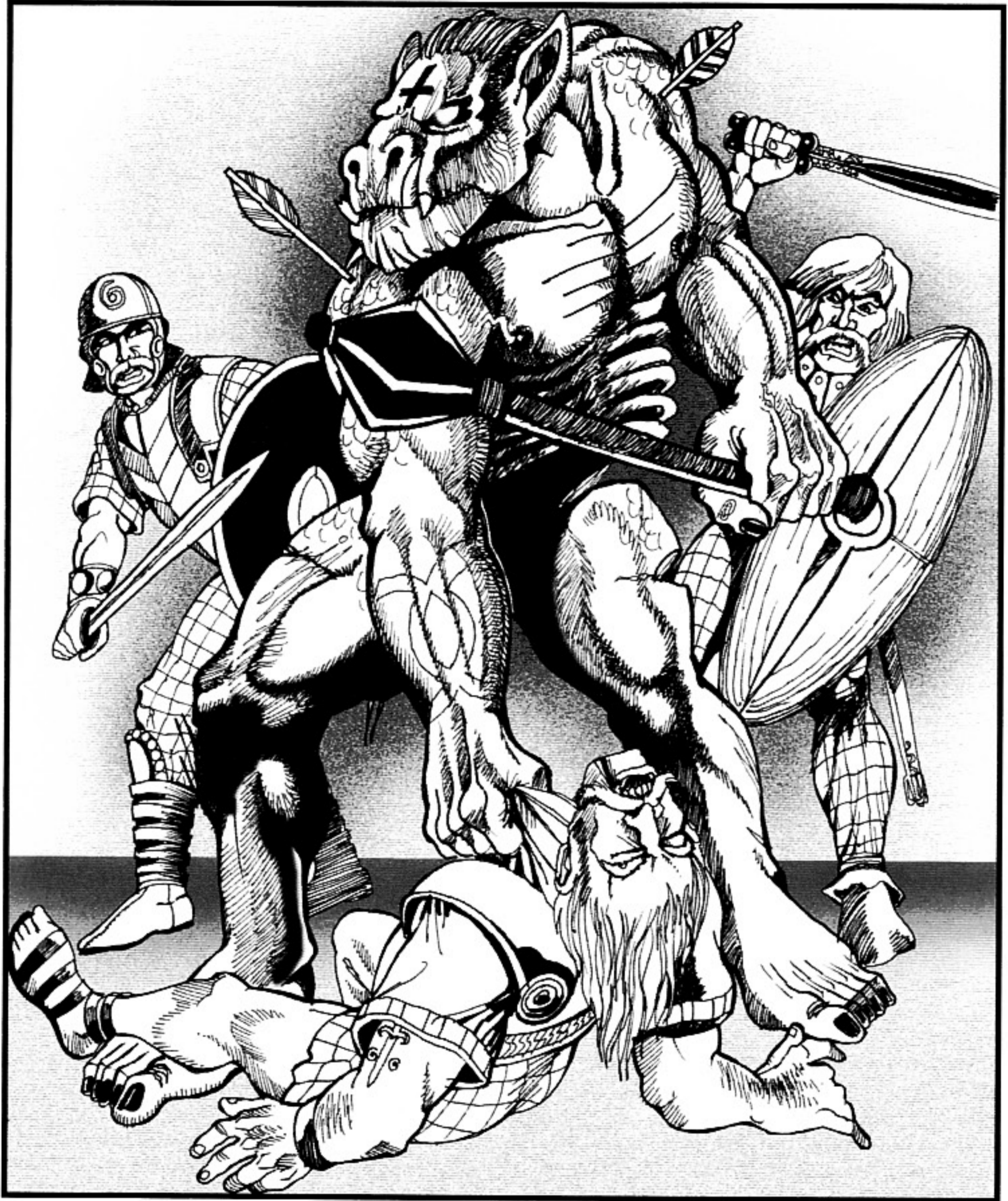
INT: 6 DEX: 10 APP: 5 Move: 2

Hit Locations: 4 armor points and 7 hit points per location.

Maul: 75% Parry: 75% SR: 4 Damage: 2D8+3D6

Bite: 75% Parry: - SR: 6 Damage: D6+2D6

Notes: They wear light armor and have 1 point skin. Because they are undead they are no longer affected by the double damage penalty from Iron weapons. They no longer have their darksense ability.



[XXIX.loznoch.6/whif] In contrast, the White faction, related to the air god Orlanthe, is barely active, and has not fielded a racing team in a decade. Unlike the others, the Whites were fanatically loyal to their traditional deity and this was the key to their downfall. A generation ago, the Whites were the predominant faction in the city, particularly amongst the male folk. Perceiving them as a threat to the social order, the Matriarch took offence at their presumptuous manner and began a campaign of active persecution. Its leaders were imprisoned for a variety of offences (many of them genuine) and its funds and assets seized. The resentment of the Whites boiled over, culminating in the terrible Machismo Riots of 1599, which

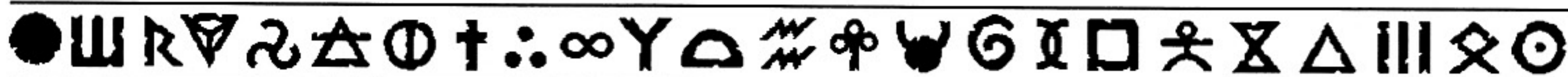
almost cost the Matriarch her reign and which were suppressed with considerable savagery by her loyal Axe Maidens.

After the excitement died down, many Whites prudently switched allegiance to some other faction: it was no longer safe to call oneself a White. The stigma has lessened somewhat over the years, and today there are old White stalwarts who talk about getting the faction going again. Ten years ago, everyone was truly surprised (and some were genuinely delighted) when a young stableboy decked his chariot and team in white, joined the other colours at the starting post, and, racing without the reins around his waist, came a creditable second. This boy was, of course, Suirasileb, and that day he earned the name "the White Prince".









her. Finally he came wearing the form of their father, and they sank to the ground, and worshipped him. The Necromancer took their worship, and then he took their souls. He saw the hunger in them, and he smiled, for their hunger and pain made his task simple. He took their souls and corrupted them, putting the Void into each one, so that hunger gnawed at them eternally. And then he gave them back.

He gave the brothers dominion over all the lands that had been theirs, and over all those, living or dead, who shared their blood. Then he raised up the children who had been slain, and set them to playing, and he raised up the cattle, and set them to grazing, for the Sorcerer loves order. The brothers grovelled to him, begging to him assuage their hunger, but he smiled again, and bid them seek out those of their kin who had survived. Then he left, for he still had much to do.

So Cael and Alastor went stealthily to the nearby Woodwise stead where their kinsfolk lived, to those who shared their blood. They came upon those who were not fighting, and had been left behind to mind the stead and the livestock - women, children and old men - and took the blood, power, and life which they needed. But as they took, so also they gave, and when finished, there were those who begged to serve them, in order to feel again the ecstasy of their touch. The brothers made these people their Thaners, and set them to watch over the others, giving them magic, and the spirits of their ancestors to watch over them, so that none might challenge them or reveal their secrets to outsiders. And in this way the cult of the Brothers was formed.

The cult continued down the years, changing only slightly, as people died and their children replaced them (although the dead were not freed

from their obligations, and were still compelled by the Brothers' will). Every Freenight they gathered for the blood feast at Twinstead, and the vampires accepted their fealty, and their blood, and were content to let them be.

But a few years ago, when the Lunar army entered Sartar, they brought with them all the paraphernalia of a conquering army - administrators, traders, missionaries, spies, and camp followers. Among these came Sarathana Coldeye, bound into the service of Lunar intelligence. She came because she was ordered, and because she had heard of Delecti the Necromancer, older than her by centuries, and knew that within his domain, she could be free of her Lunar masters. When her chance came she fled to the Marsh, taking with her a relic from before time, a statue carved from one of the fangs of Vivamort, the first Vampire, and came at last to Twinstead.

Cael and Alastor gave her shelter, bound by the laws of hospitality, and soon Sarathana had seduced Cael, the younger of the brothers, giving him the kind of ecstasy that he could give only to the clansfolk whom he had come to despise. Through long nights she whispered in his ear, offering him joy and power, and turning him against his brother, saying that he was unfit to rule, and that Cael should rule alone.

And so one night Cael seized his brother and, with Sarathana's help, held him down and drained the blood from his body, and the magic from his spirit, and the life from his soul. When they were finished, Alastor was a husk, left with nothing but his hunger and his pain, and they cast him out, far away from the lands of his ancestors, and they sent spirits to torment him, so that he could not return. Alastor was left to haunt the roads of Sartar, broken and betrayed. The scene was set.

## Trouble at the Greydog Inn

For some time, rumours have been spreading in the Greydog Inn about travellers along the Goodale path going missing. The Gamemaster should ideally introduce these rumours beforehand, but Triock (and most other people) dismiss them as being simply old wives' tales, along the lines of:

*"There's always been people going missing, and always will be. Still, I've never met em! Mostly traders who can't pay their debts, I'll be bound. Blame the Lunars I do. Weren't like this in my day..."*

Things come to a head, though, when a wagonload of Kings Ale and the cart driver go missing. This means that the Greydog Inn spends a full week dry of the precious brew, since they have had to send a replacement wagonload. The first thing the characters know about this is when they are settled down for the night in the corner

of the inn, and Branduan comes back from the bar looking grim.

*"Something terrible has happened."* he says. The characters may respond with questions such as: *"Was it a raid by the Poss?"*, *"Has the Odal herd caught the shakes?"*, or (more hopefully) *"Has Brigpiece run off?"* Branduan will say that it is much worse than that - The Greydog Inn has run out of beer! The only beer left is a keg of Auld Mutz which Kornos Longbrewer has reserved for the next holy day. There is uproar in the inn, with Triock saying that *"this hasn't happened since the battle of Dwarf Ford, when old Beal lost a son and refused to brew beer for a whole year!"*

Quentin the landlords' excuse is that he had to send a second wagonload of Kings Ale off to Runegate, because the first wagonload disappeared en route (complete with its driver, a lad from Runegate), and it will be a few days before the new batch of beer can be drunk, because it doesn't have Minlister's blessing yet. Quentin thinks that the driver sold it to someone else, and then moved on elsewhere. *"Nasty shifty little creature, that boy. Never liked the look of him."*

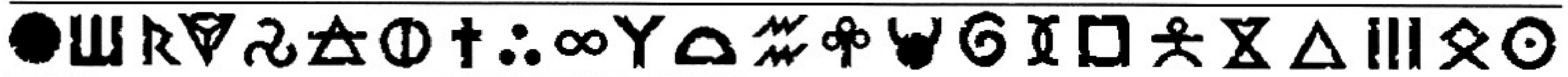
If the characters want to know why the clan is exporting so much of its beer that there's none for them to drink, Quentin explains that it is important to send regular supplies of beer, in order to prevent people from becoming addicted to cheap Lunar Gin, which is currently flooding the market - it's not called Seven Mothers Ruin for nothing. As if on cue, Flavius Ginnicus, the local Gin merchant, turns up with his servant, and a sample crate of his new bramble-flavoured Gin. Seeing the state of things, he wastes no time offering free Gin to everyone in the Inn *"As a goodwill gesture to my new friends"*, but Quentin will have none of it, and after a fierce argument (which the characters may get involved in) tries to drive him out with a stick! (see *Hop Wars* in *Tales #2*). Flavius attempts to muster his dignity, and leaves, muttering about the uncouth barbarians he has to deal with. He does leave the Gin behind, though.

If the characters ask around, they will discover that those disappearances that can be proved seem to have happened only to those foolish enough to be travelling at night, or rather, those too poor to stay at one of the numerous inns on the path. In all, there have been five, in the past few seasons (although two of them were known have had trouble at home...) All of the disappearances happened near the Two Stone bridge, a known haunt of trollkin. The general consensus of opinion is that all this points to trolls as being the culprits.

They will also discover that the local Issaries priest, Finefriend Fozzlebeak is offering a reward of five cows for the heads of those who have been involved in these attacks. He also requires proof that these are the ones responsible. Characters should know that they can ask Ornar Greymen to check this out using his magic, but unless the characters are on particularly good







terms with him (either by having performed some service for him, or gifting him with a sheep, or its equivalent), he is likely to be too busy. Finefriend will, if pressed, pay the reward in grain, oil, goods, or if necessary, cash (about 1000 Silver Pieces).

Even if the characters don't bother to ask around, Quentin asks them to accompany the next couple of deliveries, to make sure that they get there safely. They will then hear a lot of this information at any Inns near the Two Stone bridge, if they stop for the night, or they may simply be attacked by the vampire, if they camp in the open.

## Vampire Attack!

The Two Stone bridge is so called because it is made of two great slabs of stone, which date back to King Sartar's time. The stones are so perfectly fitted together that the crack where they join can only be seen when Yelm is at his height in fire season.

The obvious thing for the characters to do, is to investigate the area around the bridge, looking for signs of a struggle. Unfortunately, by the time the characters get to the area, it will be a couple of days after the last disappearance, and there will have been heavy rain in the interim. On a special tracking roll, a character will be able to make out the tracks of some four-footed creature, but will be unable to follow them anywhere. Otherwise, they may simply make camp near the bridge, and hope to be attacked. Either way, nothing will happen unless the party camps near the bridge overnight. In this case, Alastor the Old, the decrepit vampire who has been haunting this area will attack them.

Alastor would not normally attack a party of armed adventurers, but he is desperate to feed, and feels that he has no choice, since very few people now sleep outdoors in this area. He will approach the party seeking aid, pretending that he has been attacked by trolls. He is a gaunt old man in shabby peasant clothes, looking decidedly bedraggled. He will answer their questions, saying that he is a merchant from Esrolia, and was attacked a band of trollkin, led by a huge dark troll. He will offer to try and find the troll's hideout if pressed, but will feign reluctance. The party may notice that his clothes do not match his description of himself, or may see his garrotte concealed up his sleeve. If it looks as though his disguise has been blown, or they attack him, he will immediately try to flee.

As soon as the party relaxes, he will then try and flip his garrotte around the neck of a party member, catching them by surprise. If he succeeds, he will plead with the party to allow him to drink, promising that he won't kill the garrotted person if this is allowed.

If he is foiled, or when finished, Alastor will turn into a wolf and run back to his lair, a noisome cave some 2 km distant in the woods to the side

of the road. His transformation will leave his rags behind, and if a successful search roll is made, some small wooden ornaments will be found. If the characters manage to follow him back to his lair, which will require a successful tracking roll, they will find him lying in a cave, surrounded by bones and rags, soaking wet on a mound of earth. Unless he managed to drink from them, he will be almost comatose and unable to rise - so tired that he will barely defend himself. At the end, he will beg the characters to kill him.

If the characters slay him, (as they should!) he will survive just long enough after his final impalement, beheading, or whatever, to cast his deathcurse on Cael.

"I curse thee Cael, and thy traitor slut. May Kajabor take thy filthy soul, and may Ikadz torture thee for eternity. Through these, my vessels, may this come to pass, that at the last I may see thee, and laugh, as thou art rent eternally."

He will then say to the characters "*And this is my curse for you who share my blood: Seek out my brother and his mate. Slay them as you have slain me, for only then shall I grant you peace. Until then, I shall be with you, lest you forget my wordsss....*"

With these words, the past hundred years will finally catch up with him, and his body will, in classic Hammer Movie style, age, and decay, and finally turn to dust which blows away in the winds.

The trinkets, of which there are more in his cave, are polished black wooden charms, in the shape of creatures, animals and runes - mostly fertility, harmony, and the like. Any character examining these, and wondering where they came from must make an evaluate roll. On a successful roll the character will realise that these are Ironwood, only made in the lands of the Lonendi clan, a day's ride away.

## Alastor's Curse

The characters may well return to Greydog Village after this, either to seek advice, or because they believe that the incident is now over. They will be welcomed back as heroes for slaying a vampire, and will be bought many free drinks, and asked to recount their story several times. Only Briggiepie the Fool seems unimpressed, saying: "*What mighty heroes we have among us, slaying a vampire so weak he could barely stand up, and must steal beer from carts - and chickens from coops, I'll be bound...*" However, he is shouted down (as usual), and kicked a couple of times, so he shuts up.

That night, however, two of the PCs (they could be the two cottars descended from Egrost - see page 62 of *Tales #18*) who slew Alastor have a dream. They dream that Snorri's stead is beset by an army of chaos-warped zombies and other vampires, and that when they rush out to fight, or flee, the ground beneath their feet turns to soft filthy mud, sucking them down. As they struggle with the mud, they suddenly realise that

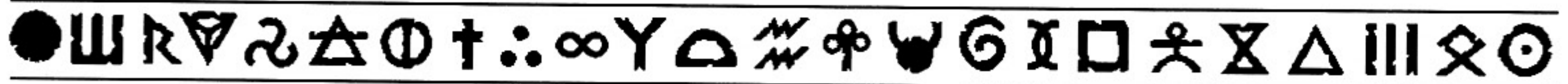


the zombies are their family and friends, who have died and rotted, who are beckoning them to join them. But as they reach for the zombies, the mud closes over their heads and they fall into a bottomless sea of filth, from which they awake, screaming and covered with sweat. Both of the characters have the same dream, and neither get any restful sleep that night.

The next night they have another dream, but this time they are attacked by their family, pulled to the ground and eaten alive. Their entrails are torn from them, their flesh is ripped from their bones, but they do not die until Lonin the Bearded comes and rips their eyes out, plunging them into darkness.

The dreams will continue every night, depriving the characters of sleep and sapping their stamina. This is Alastor's curse, that their dreams will be tormented by him until they destroy his brother, Cael, and he is revenged. He can cast his deathcurse on these two characters because they share some of his blood, and Delecti's gift applies even out here. In game terms this means that each of the characters loses 1D3 Points off their maximum Fatigue Point Total, for every night which they have these dreams, and since the dreams continue night after night, the affected characters are soon pale shadows of their former selves. Eventually the characters will slip into a coma when their Fatigue Total reaches 0, and will die a week later. At the referee's option, they may rise again from their graves on the following Freezenight as vampires who will hunt Cael in the marsh, and may eventually replace him...





If the characters mention their dreams to anyone, they will be advised to go and see Langrok Stormcaller, who may be able to help them. Even if they don't people will soon notice that the characters are looking increasingly tired, and will ask them why. Langrok will perform a divination ritual over the characters, and will tell them that they are cursed, and that it is beyond his power to remove. Langrok's divination will also tell him that the power of the curse comes from the Upland Marsh, but that he does not know where. He will warn them that the power of the marsh is at its height on Freezenight, and indeed, the dreams are worst on that night.

Langrok will suggest that they talk to Ornar Greyman (if they have not done so already). If he is told the wording of the vampires curse, Ornar will mutter about the vampires reference to "you of my blood", before going away to consult his books. In a few hours he will come up with the interesting fact that the two characters who have been afflicted with this curse are both distantly related to the Lonendi clan, through a woman that was captured in a clan raid against the Poss, who was originally from the Lonendi. He will suggest that perhaps the answer can be found with the Lonendi. Langrok will agree, especially if shown the Ironwood trinkets.

If they mention in the Greydog Inn that they are intending to go to visit the Lonendi, Quentin the landlord will ask them to talk to Old Madge about next seasons order of her Gooseberry and Dandelion wines. He wants 4 cases of each, and tells the characters to try and get a good price for them - he normally pays 12 silver pieces per case, though the characters can go up to 15 if necessary. He gives them a bag containing 120 silver pieces to pay for it, and tells them that they can keep whatever they manage not to pay to Old Madge.

## The Lonendi Clan

The Lonendi households are renowned for their woodworking throughout Sartar. Indeed, 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 Indrodar Greydog that he could craft 10 fine spears of Ironwood in a single day, and succeeding. He was known as Saronar Tenspear ever afterwards.

The main Tenspear village consists of a large wooden longhouse, with a main great hall, and four wings. Around this are scattered five sturdy wooden huts. There are four Tenspear family groups, and each has its own wing of the main longhouse. The groups are headed up by the chief, Tarkeril Tenspear, his estranged wife Molla the Lively, and his two adult sons, Eltan Strongvoice, and Tarralan Ratfinder. Other members of the clan live in the other huts. There are also two other steads making up the Tenspear household, the Woodwise stead to the west, and Madge's Stead to the east.

Each stead is built along the same lines, and the main business of all the steads is farming, although some people in the Woodwise stead make a business from woodcarvings, and Madge's Stead produces Old Madge's Gooseberry and Elderflower wines which are famous throughout the area. Each stead supports approximately 80 people, including women and children.

## The Cult of the Brothers

### History of the Cult

The story of how the cult of the brothers was set up is told in the introduction. For many years Cael and Alastor ruled it jointly, but now Cael is the sole ruler of the cult, with Sarathana at his side.

### The Cult in the World

The cult exists to satisfy Cael's hunger, and to satisfy Delecti's need for Stasis. Aside from the coercion, the cult offers contact with members dead relatives, who are 'of the blood', and controlled by Cael. Thus the Thralls may meet with their parents, brothers, etc. at the Blood Gift ceremonies, which provides some measure of comfort for some. Indeed, many of the thralls believe that if they please Cael sufficiently, he may

release the spirits of their parents, or whoever, into the afterlife. This is also a reason that the thralls have to dread Cael, for they know that even death is no release for them.

### Lay Membership (Thralls)

All blood relations of Cael and Alastor, living or dead are eligible. In fact, for them membership is basically required. Those that resisted did not live to pass their blood on to their relatives and their spirits are now Cael's to control. There are twenty-four living thralls at present. The only magic offered to Thralls is the Blood Gift ritual, which they are not at liberty to refuse, and binds them to the cult.

### Initiate Membership (Thanes)

There are only eight Thanes, four of whom still live with the clan, four of whom are presumed to be abroad or dead and live at Twinstead full-time. Cael allows each Thane to command one of their dead ancestors (usually someone that they did not like...). This acts as a Summon Ancestor spell for them, and is renewed at the worship ceremony every Freezenight of Death week. Commonly the thanes use this power to terrorise the thralls.

### In the Chief's Hall

Enquires about vampires will be met with incredulity within the Chiefs stead as Chief Tarkeril Tenspear knows nothing of the temple. He will not believe the characters if they claim that there are vampires in Tenspear, but will nevertheless praise them for destroying the Two Stone Vampire, since it has been damaging their trade.

He will also offer them the blanket gift, and the meat gift. This allows the characters to eat at his table that evening, and gives them a place to sleep by the great hearth fire. If they accept his gifts, he will ask the characters to take a good look around, and to be sure to point out any vampires that they see! He will then laugh uproariously and clap them on the backs, telling them to enjoy the food, and tell him again of their great deeds.

Unknown to Tarkeril, his son Eltan is one of Cael's Thanes. He tries to persuade his father (in a loud stage whisper) that these Greydogs are only here to cause trouble, citing past disagreements with the Greydog clan, although when his father tells him to be quiet, he will simmer down.

If the characters take offence and say, or do, anything which Eltan could possibly interpret as insulting, he will stand up, knocking beer and food to the floor, and storm out shouting that he refuses to eat with such people who do not even respect the laws of hospitality. Chief Tarkeril will shout at him, telling him to return and apologise to the guests, but Eltan will ignore him. It will be left to Molla to calm the uproar, and apologise to the characters for her son's behaviour:

### Ironwood

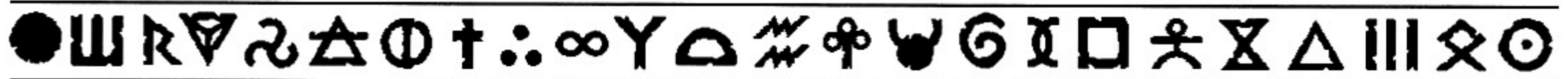
Formed from the heartwood of the few trees which resisted Delecti's influence, this is a black, heavy wood which can be polished to a lustrous sheen (with a lot of effort). Spears made from Ironwood have the same armour points as iron, and are highly prized, selling for 10 cows or more. It is rare to find a piece of Ironwood large enough to make into a weapon, but smaller fragments are made into ornaments by the Lonendi.

In the past, crafters such as Saronar knew a ritual which would persuade Ironwood weapons to be sharpened far beyond what is possible with metals, although the ritual is now lost. Such spears are so sharp that they do double damage, as well as having the increased Armour Points. There are only 2 of these spears known to still exist, and their owners (Cael and Tarkeril) would not sell them for any price.









order from Quentin), will tell Olayne to see them off the premises, saying that: *"There's folk here with work to do - real work - and I'll not have the likes of you hanging around bothering them!"*

If the characters mention Quentin, she softens up a bit and asks about him: *"How is young Quentin? He was a lovely lad. Swift as the wind, and lithe as an Alynx. Real stamina too... Met him at a combined Minlister worship ceremony, ob must be two score years ago. Lovely lad."*

The characters may realise that there is more to this than meets the eye, and there is: 25 years ago, Madge and Quentin had a brief but passionate affair, but were banned from seeing each other by Madge's mother, and by Kornos Longbrewer, both afraid that their secrets would be lost to the other clan. Quentin never speaks of it, but over the years Madge has come to think of him kindly, and gives him a good discount on her wines. She is less well disposed to the rest of his clan, however.

If the characters will need to bargain with her about next seasons prices, but if they pick up on her fondness for Quentin, she will give them a surprisingly good rate if they are successful. They will need to talk to her outside the stead, since she will under no circumstances allow them inside, where they might see the brewing equipment. Indeed if they try to enter, Olayne will bar the way with her Axe!

## The Woodwise Stead

There are few young people in this stead. Most of the people are middle-aged or older, and there is an atmosphere of quiet industry, as the 20 or so people who are not in the fields carve, plane, cut and polish wood for ornaments, furniture or tools in the yard in front of the main stead. The household head, Aldred the Windy, is a rather absent-minded Breath-Shaman, covered in tattoos and charms, who will welcome the characters to his stead. He then promptly forgets why they're there, and has to ask them all over again. However, he will be able to point out Caralana Finecut to them, if they ask for her.

In the yard, there is one woman who is not working, simply staring at the ground. She is dressed in Orlanthi mourning clothes. If they ask about her, they will be told that she is Iona Rarespeak, and that she and her husband, Lars the Gouger, are in mourning for their baby girl, who died only the day before. Iona, however will not talk to the characters, apparently lost in her grief. Aldred will tell the characters that it was beyond his powers to save the child (which is true, since she was poisoned by her father), and that it is a sad day for them all.

Caralana is middle aged, and homely, and will see the characters alone in her small workroom, surrounded by scented woods and polishes. She will deny any knowledge of vampires, and if asked

how a vampire came to have her carvings in his pocket, will simply claim that her carvings are traded far and wide (which is true), and that it isn't her fault if vampires have taste!

She is a cultist, however, and if the characters seem both powerful and sympathetic, or a successful oratory roll is made, trying to persuade her to talk to them, she will break down in tears, and tell them all. Through her sobs, the characters will discover that there is, indeed a temple locally. She says that it has been there for many years, and some members of the clan have always given blood to the Vampires, in order to save their kin from Delecti's torments. Recently, though, the vampires have become more demanding, and she is afraid for her life, and that of her son. She explains that her son, Caradan, was taken by the vampires over a season ago, and begs the party to save him. If they agree that they will, she will tell them the location of the temple, and try to help them. She describes her son as being seventeen years old, tall and good-looking, with distinctive motion rune tattoos on both cheeks.

### ***There are various thing which the characters may try to do at this stage:***

*If the characters attempt to tell Chief Tarkeril, Caralana will deny everything, and Eltan will again repeat his demands that the characters be asked to leave the Clan lands. Unless they can Fast Talk or Orate the Chief away from this course, he will indeed ask them to leave. Even if they succeed he will demand that the characters provide proof before repeating these baseless accusations.*

If characters go straight to the temple, simply run the temple as written. Caralana will guide them, but will not fight. They are likely to have a rough time of it though, since the two Runemasters are powerful and sensible, and the temple is always watchful.

*If the characters go to the temple and return with ghouls heads or similar - which the Chief would count as sufficient proof, he will put together a party of 20 clan warriors, (including Eltan), and go with the characters to destroy the temple. In this situation, Eltan will attempt to betray the party and kill the Chief, if he thinks he can get away with it. If they are successful, the Chief will insist that all the inhabitants are put to the sword, and that Twinstead and the temple are burned to the ground.*

If the characters attempt to persuade the other lay worshippers to rise up from under the vampires' control to aid them, they must persuade them that the characters are mighty heroes who will be able to destroy the vampires and their servants. Caralana will arrange a meeting with some of the other lay members, under the guise of a wine tasting for the guests. Half a dozen tired-looking men and women will come to listen - the others are busy keeping the Initiates

occupied. The characters must be both convincing and eloquent - a special Oratory roll is required by one or more characters. The oratory rolls should be modified by whatever factors the Gamemaster feels is suitable (e.g., if the characters are bedecked in iron and magic, give +50% to Oratory). If they were given the Champions Portion at the feast, their task will be much easier - raising the class of the Oratory by one place, thus a fail becomes a success, a success becomes special, etc.

*If the characters are successful, Caralana will suggest that they come in disguise to the next worship ceremony on the following Freezenight. They will then be able to lead the lay worshippers in destroying the hated vampires. Note that if the characters fumble this Oratory roll, she will suggest the same thing, but will hand the characters over to the vampires as soon as they enter the temple.*

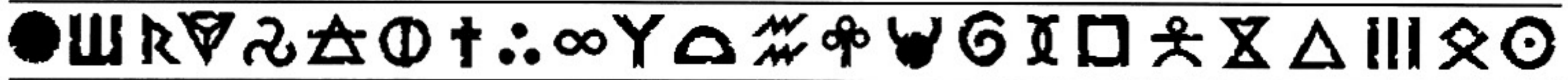
If they fumble their Oratory skills, Caralana will deny all knowledge of vampires, but will tell the characters that the marsh is where vampires are likely to be found (if there are any). For a few silvers she will offer to take them with her when she goes looking for Ironwood. She will then lead them deep into the marsh to a Blackthorn grove, where they will be ambushed by the occupants. See the Blackthorn Grove scenario, using Cael as the vampire. If the characters survive, Caralana will deny that they were ambushed, claiming that she warned them that the marsh was dangerous.

### ***There are some other possibilities which the characters may try:***

They may try to get the information out of Eltan (who is obviously a suspect). He will not be persuaded to admit anything through Oratory or Fast Talk, and will try to avoid being alone with the characters. There should, however be opportunities to catch him alone during the next day. If he is sufficiently intimidated or has it beaten out of him, he will confess that there are vampires, but will claim to be a lay member and "only obeying orders". He will lead the characters to the temple, if forced, but will attempt to betray them at the first possible opportunity. He will deny everything if the characters try to tell his father, and they will then be asked to leave the Clan lands.

*It may also occur to the characters to follow her or Eltan, and some of the other locals, on the next Freezenight, when the vampires hold their worship ceremonies. This will require that the characters make hide and track rolls in order to follow the cultists without being seen. In this case, the temple will be performing the main ceremony in the outer temple when the characters arrive. If the characters are seen by the worshippers, they will merely go off into the woods and perform what looks like some kind of fertility ritual. They will then return to their steads.*





It is entirely possible that the players will come up with something completely different to do. In this case, simply bear in mind that the cultists live in fear of both the vampires, and of Cael's Thanes, who are always ready to betray anyone to their masters. Many of them have family members who have been taken by the vampires, and they believe these people are still alive (very few actually are, though). All have relatives whose spirits are held in bondage by Cael. In addition, most are addicted to Sarathana's touch or to the Blood Gift ritual. Thus, they will not be easily persuaded to admit their secret, even if it seems that it would be much to their benefit. The Chief will do nothing without proof, and the characters should not overstay their welcome in the clan, unless they can show that there is substance to their accusations.

## A Trip to the Marsh

The Upland Marsh feels both dark and dead, as befits Delecti's home. There are rough clumps of pallid vegetation protruding between rivulets of filthy black water covered by an oily slick. Stagnant pools abound, occasionally covered by plants, and these make the going both awkward and treacherous. A damp mist covers the marsh (sometimes a light mist, occasionally a deep and disorientating fog) deadening most sound. The only noise is that which PC's make, with perhaps the occasional despairing moan from one of the marsh's denizens in the distance. The whole area is chill, and reeks of damp and decay. To reach Twinstead requires an hours trekking through the marsh. Characters will not find it if they simply wade into the marsh and head west, since the marsh is huge and misty and the shifting waters quickly wash away any tracks. They will need either to follow someone who knows the way, or be given precise instructions on how to get there. They may have some magic which may help them, of course.

Every few turns of travel through the marsh, check the clodhopping skill. Failure means a roll on the encounter table:

<b>D100</b>	<b>Encounter</b>
01-50	Treacherous bog
51-90	Various small marsh Flora and Fauna (see <i>Plants of the Upland Marsh</i> )
91-100	Special encounter

### Special Encounters

**Heads on posts** - The party enters a 30m diameter circular clearing formed from dry, flat ground. Gouged deep into the earth are the runes of Chaos, Hunger, and Madness (moon). In the centre of the clearing is a wooden post with half a dozen severed heads dangling by their hair from it. If any of the characters approach within 10m of the post, each party member is attacked by a Fear spell, and must resist against MP of

3D6+6. The spells are each boosted with 3 MP's. Demoralised characters will flee randomly into the marsh (and probably get lost...).

**The Zombie Turtle** (Marsh encounters article).

**Ducks On Patrol** - The first the characters know of the ducks presence is when a volley of small flaming arrows comes at them from behind a large clump of marsh grass some 30m away. The arrows are coated with pitch, and do an 1D6 + 1+ an extra 1D6 of burning damage if they hit. If one of the characters makes their scan roll, they will see that their attackers are a party of 8 ducks, wearing yellowflower flax jackets. If the characters call to them in Sartarite, they will stop attacking, and cautiously investigate. The ducks will explain that they weren't expecting to see humans in this part of the marsh and mistook them for zombies. They will be terribly apologetic once they realise their mistake, and may be able to direct the characters to Twinstead.

**Man on a Spike** - The characters hear agonised screaming. If they investigate, they find a man

impaled on a 2m long metal spike, screaming in agony. As soon as they draw near, he will attack in spirit combat with a POW of 17 - if the character is defeated, he becomes trapped in the body on the spike, while the ghost goes free in their body. The 'ghost' is a Righteous Wind rebel named Vrost Longarm who was fleeing the Lunars when he was trapped by the previous occupant of the spike.

**Blackthorn Grove** - see the Blackthorn tree description for details. Only use this if your characters are absurdly powerful, or you hate them.

If the characters are following the worshippers, or are with them, they will notice that as the cultists approach the ruined Twinstead, they are joined by shadowy figures from the marsh in one's and two's. By the time they reach the stead, 40 or 50 figures will have joined the group. The figures look like ordinary clan members - farmers, warriors, men, women and children, although anyone making a Scan roll will notice that they seem a bit indistinct around the edges. These are in fact some of the ancestral spirits who were given as thralls to Cael and Alastor by Delecti, and have been summoned for the worship ceremony. The spirits converse with the cultists in a dull, low monotone, hearing gossip and giving advice, but ignore the player characters completely.

## The Worship Ceremony

The worship ceremony, in which the cultists offer their blood and magic to the vampires takes place weekly in the great hall of the ruined Twinstead every Freezenight.

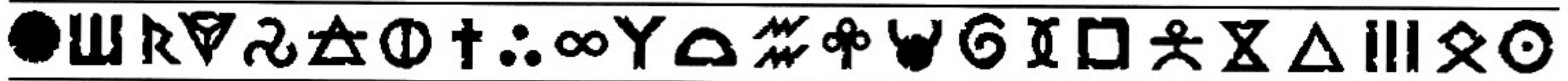
It is likely that the characters will get to see the ceremony in one of two ways: either by stealthily peering into the ruined stead through small gaps in the walls or doors, or by entering the stead with the worshippers, and hiding amongst the throng of people and spirits. If they stay outside, the vampires will be very unlikely to notice them, since their attention is focussed on the feast which is laid out before them. To keep the players worried, make sneak rolls for them, although they will only actually be noticed on a fumble.

If, on the other hand, the characters actually enter the hall, Cael will notice them immediately, since he knows his flock intimately, and they are not of his blood. He will not unmask them, though, until the cup has been passed, and he has filled himself with blood and power and will be at his strongest. Until then, he will continue with the ritual as normal. Unless the characters interfere the 'ceremony' will proceed as follows:

The worshippers will enter the hall, along with the ancestral spirits which have joined them. At







the far end of the hall, on throne-like chairs at the high table, Cael and Sarathana await, with Rabban capering at their feet and giggling maliciously. Cael's thanes, including Eltan will already be present, sitting at the high table with their masters. Each worshipper takes their place at one of the tables. In all there are some 70 or 80 people, embodied or otherwise, present in the hall. On the tables are piles of mouldering food and soured ale, and in the shadows zombie thralls move jerkily around the tables. A smokey fire provides the only illumination, and the air is rank and foul.



Cael then stands and welcomes the worshippers to the feast, saying:

*"Greetings to you, my thralls. I am Cael, lord of this place, and I offer you hospitality, here in my house, and promise my protection to you and yours for all time. I offer you blood to quench your thirst."*

The assembled worshippers reply:  
*"We accept this with gratitude. We will not rob you, or bear arms, and will be ever mindful of your generosity"*

Cael continues:  
*"Then you are welcome, and I offer you more: I offer you fellowship; your fathers and grandfathers, your mothers and sisters, given to me in bondage. For this one night I free them to walk amongst you and to take what comfort they may at my table."*

The worshippers reply:  
*"We accept this with gratitude. We will be ever mindful of your generosity."*

Cael says:  
*"Then you are welcome, and I offer you one more thing: duty, which is offered only to those who would sit close to me, in my family."*

The worshippers reply, for the final time:  
*"We accept this with gratitude. We pledge to serve you, body and soul, in all that you require, and will be ever mindful of your generosity."*

Cael then sits down, having completed the greeting (which is, of course a corruption of the normal greeting ritual). He says: *"I will now bear the petitions of my thralls, and if I find them pleasing, they shall be granted. Speak now, that we may pass the goblet of fellowship."*

### Offering the Child

The only petitioners that night are a couple whom the characters may recognise as the people from the Woodwise stead whose baby

had died. They are carrying a cloth-wrapped bundle between them as they leave their seats and go to stand before the high table. Rabban waddles around to stand behind them, and Cael motions them to speak.

Lars unwraps the bundle, and holds up the still form of a new-born child to Cael. *"Lord, I present my child to you..."*

Cael interrupts him carelessly, saying *"I have no need of dead flesh, Lars. I have enough of that, and more."* He gestures at the shuffling serving-zombies.

*"No lord, see, she but sleeps. It is a draught which I gave her. Please, I offer her to you again."*

Cael smells the air, and then looks at the child with more interest. *"You are right. She sleeps deeply, though. And why do you offer her to me, without my asking?"*

*"My lord, I offer her to you that I may be closer to you, and sit at your table. She is yours to do as you will, in fulfilment of the gift of duty. Take her, she will not be missed - they believe she is dead, my lord..."*

As he whines on, he starts to pass the baby over to Cael, but suddenly his wife, Iona, begins screaming at him and tries to grab the baby. Her words are hard to make out, but she is clearly trying to wrest the baby from her husband to prevent him giving her to Cael. They tussle for a moment, then Lars strikes her around the face, knocking her, sobbing, to the ground. Lars hands his child over to Cael, who sniffs her appreciatively, before passing her to Eltan, who takes her away through a door at the back of the hall.

He says *"Thank you, Lars. I will treat her as one of my own. Come, sit with me as one of my thanes. You are welcome at my table."*

Sarathana then goes over to Iona, as though to comfort her, and leads her back to her place. Before she sits down, Sarathana takes Iona's face in her two hands, and kisses her brow in a sisterly way. Characters making their Scan rolls will see the lines and grey hairs appearing on her face as they watch.

### Passing the Cup

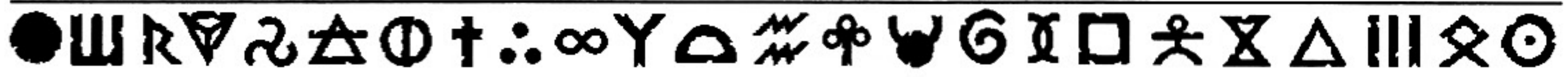
After this incident, Rabban begins to caper around, grinning in anticipation. *"Time to pass the goblet, Lord Cael. Time for the goblet. Shall I begin?"* The worshippers begin chanting words in an unknown tongue (Darktongue actually, though few of the cultists understand that what they are saying are prayers of worship to Delecti). Cael nods his assent and Rabban picks up a huge silver goblet and a silver dagger from the high table, before waddling over to the nearest table. He goes to each person at the table, human or spirit, and appears to cut their arm with the dagger, catching the blood in the goblet. When bled sufficiently (taking perhaps a round), he takes their hand and licks the wound, before moving on to the next person. After he licks them, the wounds stop bleeding immediately, and heal up, leaving no trace.

### New Skill: Clodhopping

(Manipulation: 05%)

This is a Manipulation skill which enables people to traverse the Upland Marsh in (relative) safety. It encompasses two main areas: the ability to 'hop' from one bit of safe ground to the next, and the ability to recognise which bits of ground are in fact safe. A character failing his clodhopping skill may simply slip off their clump of marsh-grass into the oily swamp around it, or may jump onto a piece of ground which is already occupied by another of the denizens of the marsh (flora or fauna). In extreme cases the character may blunder into a blackthorn grove or an army of zombies due to their inexperience. This skill is unique to the Upland Marsh and is known only by those who live in or around the Marsh. The Durulz are particularly expert, and many of the Lismelder tribe have learned the skill from them - as a result, 'Clodhopper' is a common term of abuse for the Lismelder folk.





Rabban repeats this until the goblet is full, and then returns with it to Cael, who drains it dry, and then hands it back, ready for Rabban to continue. After all the worshippers have been bled, and Cael has drunk his fill, he takes up the dagger himself, and gouges a deep cut in his arm, filling the goblet with his own blood. As he does this, the tension in the hall becomes almost palpable - people all around the hall gaze hungrily at the goblet. The chanting stops. No-one speaks.

For a long moment, Cael stares at his flock, with the goblet in his hands, and then he says: "*Now, my thralls, as I promised, I offer you the Blood Gift.*"

Cael then hands the cup to his Thanes on the high table, and each one takes a long gulp of the blood, before passing it to Rabban who takes it to the next table. The effect of the blood on the drinkers is electrifying, transporting them into the most exquisite sensual joy. Some moan with pleasure, some shudder or cry out in ecstasy. No-one is unaffected. As the goblet moves down the tables, each drinker takes less - only the Thanes drink deeply - but the effect is the same.

At the lowest table, the cup runs out, and a woman tries to grab it from Rabban, begging to lick it out. Rabban catches her hand as she reaches for the goblet, and with a snap of his beak, bites off three of her fingers. No-one else even notices as she screams. Sarathana and Livia begin to walk among the ecstatic worshippers, bestowing their favours to all and sundry. Some people imitate her, and begin to copulate in a corner. Cael merely sits and smiles as his flock degrade themselves.

In half an hour or so people begin to come to their senses, and start to leave, shamefaced, in small groups. Soon the vampires retire to their rooms, and the hall is empty, aside from the shuffling zombies. The ceremony is over.

## Being Noticed by the Vampires

If they *have* been noticed, however, Cael waits until he has had a gobletful of blood, and then exposes them, saying "*My thralls, there are foreigners here, not of our blood. Seize them now, and bring them before me!*"

At this point, the characters may either fight, run, or try to persuade the assembled cultists to rise up against the vampires. Unless they have already arranged this with them, the characters will need a special Oratory roll to convince them. No modifiers apply to this roll, because the worshippers are standing in the temple of their masters, so the characters will have to be *very* convincing. The ancestral spirits will not fight, in any case, even if commanded by Cael.

If things go badly for the vampires, they and their thanes will retreat through the back door of the hall into their sanctum. They will bar the door, giving them a few rounds in which to head for the temple, where they will make a last stand.

## Twinstead and the New Temple

Twinstead is located in the Upland Marsh, about an hours travel to the West of the Woodwise stead and unless the party has an exact map or description of the area, the characters will be very unlikely to find it (and very likely to simply get lost in the Marsh). It was once a fine stead with a wooden palisade fence, standing in the midst of a small village. Nowadays, all that remains of the village are the burned-out and muck-encrusted shells of the huts. The ground around Twinstead is muddy, but more solid than the surrounding marshland, and the old stead still looks imposing. The wooden palisade around the stead also stands, although it is seriously dilapidated by years of rot and neglect.

### 1. Entrance and Courtyard

Roll D10:

- 1-2 The courtyard is empty
- 3-5 1d3 ghouls gnawing on some bones in the courtyard
- 6-10 1d3 ghouls in the courtyard plus 1 initiate at the gate

**First glance** - Only one of the gates to the ruined stockade still remains, and this hangs immobile from its hinges. In the muddy courtyard, several huts still stand, dwarfed by the main stead.

A tracking roll will show many clawed footprints in the dirt. If there are already ghouls present at the gate then the other ghouls will arrive after 5 rounds at a rate of 2 per round. Any ghouls present will immediately begin howling. The initiate if present, will cast spells until the ghouls look like losing and will then flee to raise the alarm. If the temple has been previously alerted then all 8 ghouls and at least one initiate will be present to guard the entrance.

### 2. Ghouls' Lair

The ghouls have made their lair in one of the large wooden huts in the courtyard. Any ghouls not met in at the gate (1) will be found in here. The hut is filled with a disgusting sickly-sweet smell of decay, and gnawed human limbs, torsos and bones are piled high in varying states of decomposition. Filth, mould and dried bloodstains coat the floor and here and there can be glimpsed weapons, twisted pieces of armour and even coins.

**Closer looks** - it will take 1 hour to search this place properly and will turn up 242 silver pieces, a worthless gem, 2 bastard swords and a large shield with a parry 2 matrix. It will also require that the searchers make a CON x3 roll to avoid throwing up. Those who do search will be exposed to the creeping chills.

### 3. Great Hall

The hall still stands, even after all these years, although it is in an advanced state of disrepair, with gaping holes in the roof, beams missing from the walls, and the entrance doors hanging open. There is a curtain of black hide nailed over the doorway, which must be pushed aside to enter the hall. Inside it is built in the standard Sartarite style, with a great firepit in the centre of the hall, and tables and benches around the walls. The gaps in the walls are mostly covered with rotting tapestries, and rusting weapons and trophies decorate the hall. The hall smells of dust and age, and the atmosphere is stale, despite the air entering the hall through the holes in the walls and roof.

At the far end of the hall the high table is raised up on a 0.5 m high dais covered with a black hide mat decorated with the runes of chaos, stasis and hunger. Behind the table are two huge throne-like chairs made from polished Ironwood, as well as several smaller chairs.

**Closer looks** - First aid or general knowledge rolls will show that the black mats are made of human flesh, tanned and dyed (it is also worth a good deal to any vampire...).

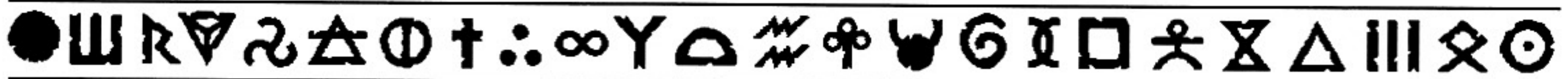
### 4. Vampires Sanctum

Roll D100:

- |       |                     |
|-------|---------------------|
| 01-50 | Empty               |
| 51-75 | 1d3 lesser vampires |
| 76-00 | Sarathana or Rabban |







In this room are several pairs of large hooks about 18 inches apart hung on the walls. On two of the hooks are hung people with the hooks going through their shoulders and protruding through at the front. They are about 1 metre off the ground and both are hanging limply but twitching occasionally. There is also a table and a few chairs and against the west wall a small bookcase holds some books written in the Lunar tongue.

**Closer looks** - reveal that both prisoners have had their tongues and larynxes removed so they cannot make any noise, and that they have been healed where the hooks penetrated. A spot hidden will also find a note written in Lunar from Cael to Sarathana suggesting that "I shall take my revenge on Alastor today. I have waited long for this, and I shall not be denied. After the ceremony Tonight. Cael" The letter is hidden in the book cover and will take 20 minutes to find.

The two hung up on the wall are prospective traitors found by the vampires, who will provide blood and power for the vampires until their deaths. After death if they are in good enough shape, they will be raised as ghouls - or used as ghoulish food if not. They are tribesmen from the Tenspear Clan who will recover, in time, if released. They will also be eternally, though silently, grateful.

The table is fixed to the floor and both doors are locked.

## 5. The Initiates' Quarters

### Roll D100:

01-25	two initiates, sleeping soundly
26-50	two initiates, playing dice
51-00	1D6 initiates playing dice, 2 initiates trying to sleep

This large room is obviously a dormitory of some kind. There are 20 wooden beds with sturdy wooden chests at the foot of each. There are a few tables and chairs at the centre of the room and on one rests a set of carved bone dice. The room gives an impression of functional austerity except for the dice. The ceiling is high and vaulted. The room is cold, but each bed has a thick fur covering.

**Closer looks** - show that only 6 of the beds seem to have been slept in and that only the chests beneath these beds are locked. The others are empty, but each of the locked chests contains spare clothes and a few possessions worth 1D100 Lunars. The keys to these chests are on the initiates. Each chest would take 50 points of damage to break open.

## 5a. The Initiates' Kitchen

This room looks like a kitchen, but unusually, there appears to be no method of heating food up - no fire or cooking utensils. Along the west wall are a number of cupboards and boxes. There

is a large square table in the centre of the room with 20 chairs around it. And in the south east corner is a large tub of murky looking water. The most noticeable feature of the room is the naked woman chained in the north east corner by her throat and wrists. She looks to have been attractive, but is now bruised and battered.

**Closer looks** - the cupboards contain wooden bowls and eating utensils and the boxes contain provisions for 7 people for a week (including water but no beer, wine or other alcoholic drinks). The tub of water contains several bowls and utensils waiting to be washed up. There is a total of 40 bowls and 20 sets of knives and spoons. There is also a key hung up on the north wall. This is the key to the slave's chains.

The woman is called Valerian Bladefire and is a Yanafal Tarnils initiate who is the only survivor of a Lunar expedition to find, and destroy, the deserter Sarathana. The expedition was, to say the least, unsuccessful. All the other members were caught and killed by the vampires but she, being attractive, was kept on as the initiates' slave. She will happily work as a bodyguard for her rescuer for one year without pay, in gratitude for her release. She knows about areas 1, 2, 4, 6, 7 and 8. The shield in area 2 is not hers.

## 5b. The Initiates' Latrine

This contains a chair with a hole in, and a bucket beneath, a stone bath, some soap, and a barrel of water. It is obviously a bathroom although it smells somewhat. The bucket is empty, the water is a bit stale, and the soap does not seem to have been used for a while. An animal lore roll will reveal that the soap has been made from rendered down human fat.

## 6. The Training Area

### Roll D100:

01-40	the area is empty
41-85	1D4 initiates training
86-00	1D4 initiates plus 1D2 lesser vampires training

This area is obviously a training ground, with (dead) humans impaled on spikes in fighting poses used as practice dummies. Others are suspended above the ground from gibbet-like wooden structures, and these sway gently, with a soft creaking of ropes. Against the wall of the stockade is a small hut which is in a good state of repair.

In the hut are practice weapons strewn about - mainly spears, but there are also 2 bastard swords and a scimitar. There are also 7 suits of practice padding in various sizes on hangers on the wall.

**Closer looks** - show that one of the suits of padding is made for a duck, all the others for humans. All the 'dummies' have been drained of blood.

## 7. Cael's Chamber

This room is large and is comfortably furnished, but has not been cleaned for many years, as can be seen by the dust on the floor and the cobwebs. The floor is carpeted but looks mildewed in places. There are several comfortable but dusty chairs arranged carelessly around along with several low tables. At the far end is a large carved bed covered with plush animal furs - wolf, bear, Alynx and the like. There is a chest at the end of the bed. There are also a few pictures of 'Great Men of history' - Heort, the kings of Tanisor, and the like - decorating the walls.

Any living creature entering will be attacked by the Malevolent Ghost that Cael has commanded to guard this place.

**Malevolent Ghost** - INT 12, POW 22 - Appears as a 7' tall burly man with a red beard, dressed in archaic Sartarite fashion. Both his eyes have been ripped out and replaced with stones; blood still oozes from the sockets.

## 8a-d. The Vampires' Rooms

These are the rooms set aside for the lesser vampires whom has Cael raised up. The rooms are austere, containing only a trestle and a coffin with some earth in it. There are also a few personal trinkets.

## 9. Sarathana's Room

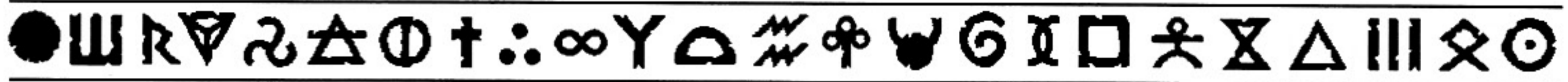
This room is plushly decorated with silken hangings on the walls, with a wardrobe of carved wood. There is also a dresser and a comfortable couch. The wardrobe contains clothing for a SIZ 12 female; all of it silky and diaphanous. It does, however, have a sickly smell of old incense and decay, although it is not itself decayed and is worth very little as a result - this smell is very difficult to remove. There are also a few silver ornaments, a hairbrush, comb etc.

**Closer looks** - The dresser is locked (Sarathana has the key), but the lock may be picked or easily smashed open. Inside are some writing implements and paper, a Lunar centurions' crescent-go medallion, and a defaced statue of Uleria.

## 10. Rabban's Room

This room contains only a small bed, a silver statue of Rabban, upon which are hung ritual robes, and a cabinet containing a small library of alchemical text books written in Sartarite. Most are uninteresting, but one is a dog-eared scroll which explains the ritual for making a Basilisk. This ritual requires a human sacrifice to invoke the blessing of Vivamort, the first vampire, so it is unlikely that the characters will be able (or will wish) to use it. The scroll also describes the sorcerous Dominate Basilisk ritual. The creation





process occurring in the laboratory follows the instructions in this scroll. The statue is silver plated, but the book would be worth 1000 guilders to a knowledge temple.

## 11. Rabban's Laboratory

### Roll D100:

- |       |  |
|-------|--|
| 01-75 | The lab is empty                               |
| 76-00 | Rabban is conducting an experiment in the lab. |

There are shelves extending all around the walls of this room, and each is cluttered with all manner of alchemical equipment - retorts, alembics, glass tubes, dishes, jars and bottles are all present in profusion. However, the most noticeable object in the room is the slab of stone in the centre, upon which a large septagram (seven pointed star), enclosed in a circle and decorated with runes, is painted. In the centre of the septagram sits a crude stone bowl, about 1m across, filled to the brim with grey mud, which bubbles as though it is being heated. The top of a greenish-grey leathery egg protrudes from the muck in the bowl. The mud stinks of carrion and ordure, and the smell fills the room.

Here is everything required to fully outfit an alchemy lab, and the equipment could be sold for a great deal of money if the party could find a way of removing the chaos stink from it (Divine Intervention would do it), and could find a buyer (not an easy thing to do in Sartar!)

**Closer looks** - An animal lore or first aid will reveal that the septagram is drawn in draw in dried blood. A detect magic or a lengthy search through the bottles will reveal a flask with two doses of acid, potency 15, labelled in Sartarite.

The egg is a Rooster's Egg and if left undisturbed will hatch into a Basilisk next Sacred Time. It will be uncontrolled and will require control spells to subdue. The mud is chaos ooze, and acts as an acid of potency 15. If the enchantment is broken, the mud stops bubbling, and the egg caves inwards with a squelching sound, revealing the half-formed blind fetus of a small reptilian creature, which dissolves slowly onto the ooze.

## 12. Zombie Guard Room

The room smells of decay, and there are odd pieces of clothing, smashed weapons, and shattered pieces of armour scattered around. Standing in the north-east corner is a group of 7 men who are muttering quietly to each other. They are each leaning on farming implements - scythes, pruning hooks etc - and wear tattered leather clothing. These 'men' are zombies who will attack immediately, mumbling all the time. A listen roll will reveal that they are discussing farming and methods of rearing livestock.

**Closer looks** - A few of the rags still have limbs in them, and the floor is bloodstained in the area around them. If the remains are searched 42 Lunars and a small crystal vial (surprisingly unsmashed) will be found. This will detect strongly as magic and appears once to have contained a black liquid, but most of this has apparently evaporated leaving a black crystalline encrustation on the sides of the vial with only a couple of drops at the bottom. This is a vial of Styx water and on any material, except the crystal of which the vial is made, will act as an acid of potency 10. It will also utterly destroy any vampire whose flesh it contacts. There is enough for one throw or two anointings to helpless or immobile beings. The secret door to the south is well hidden (-20% scan), but if found it opens easily to reveal a stairway leading down into the earth.

The bodies are of the captured Yanafal Tarnils party who were sent in unarmed and unarmored to fight the zombies, after being almost completely drained of blood and magic. This provided food for the zombies and entertainment for the vampires. Their swords and armour were then smashed and thrown in as a mark of contempt.

If the characters defeat the zombies, a shadowy armoured figure will manifest, and beg the characters to bury the remains honourably. If Valerian is with the party, she will recognise the ghost as the leader of the Yanafal Tarnils party slain here. If the party ignore this request, then the ghost will appear and reproach them at every sacred time until the bones are buried.

## 13. The Guardian's Room

Deep in the earth, the walls and ceiling of this chamber are made of roughly hewn grey stone. The floor is carpeted in the same black hide as found in (4). The most noticeable feature of the room are the two huge doors in the south wall, made of solid ironwood carved into a representation of Vivamort and Mallia exchanging gifts. There is a large silver ring set into the centre of each door.

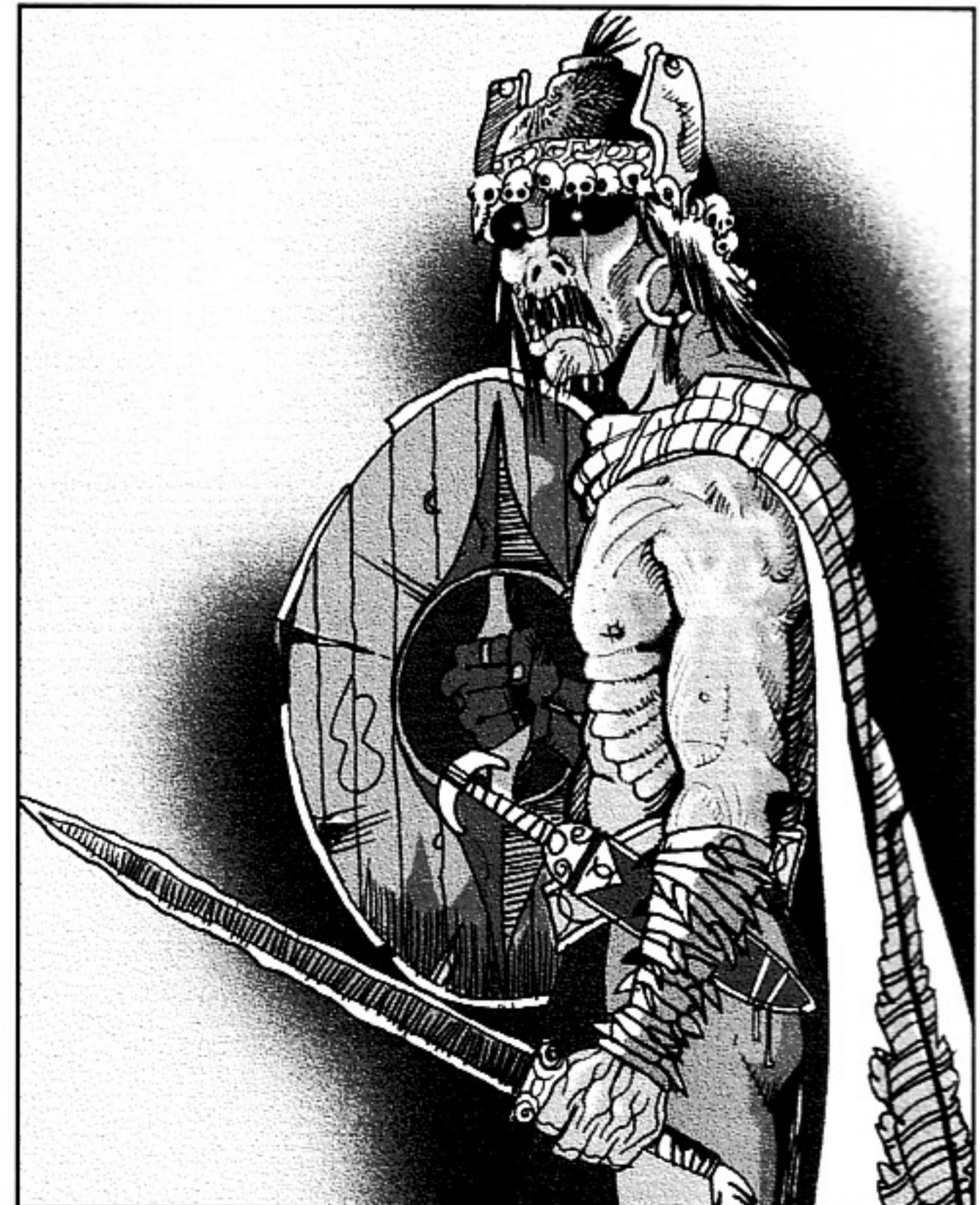
The only occupant is the Guardian. This monster was created by Rabban long ago, and stands guard at the bottom of the stairs. It will mindlessly attack any living being attempting to enter the chamber.

## 14. The Vampires' Temple

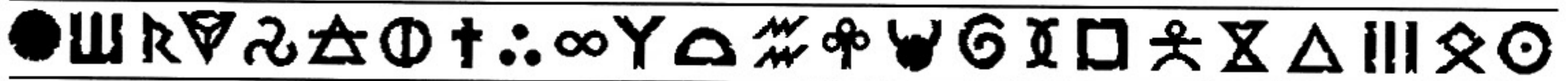
In here will be found all the vampires not otherwise accounted for in the rest of the stead. The two huge portals swing noiselessly inwards to reveal a large ornately decorated temple, with a raised dais at the south end. Upon the dais is a three metre tall statue of Vivamort crushing the head of a prostrate human hero contemptuously beneath his foot. The statue is apparently made of ivory, and around it are six sets of shackles set into the stone of the dais. The shackles are of lead, and one holds a male captive. He appears to be unconscious.

The temple is cut from rough grey stone, but the walls and ceiling are covered with ironwood panelling, which have been carved into grotesque murals depicting vampires and chaos warped Krjalki corrupting and destroying cowering groups of human 'cattle'. Vivamort's runes are also much in evidence. All of the carvings are cut centimetres deep into the wood and are highly polished. The floor is tiled with a complex mosaic showing Vivamort and several unrecognisable demonic allies torturing a young healer (Arroin).

Positioned round the walls are 14 lead statues of gaunt, starved humans, each crouching down and holding up a bowl of burning incense. In front of the dais are four large comfortably padded and exquisitely carved benches made from a highly polished black wood. Actually on the dais are two chairs of a similar style, one on each side of the statue.







**Closer looks** - The secret door at the back of the temple can be detected by the slight draft which comes from behind the altar .

**Notes** - If the vampires have been previously alerted then they will have prepared themselves as follows: The lesser vampires will have cast their Enhance STR spells and the Runemasters will have their attack spells prepared. The captive will have had all his POW drained by the vampires to provide for these spells. He is a local mason who had been helping to convert the temple to Sarathana's specification. If Cael is present, his Find Life spell will have warned him when any living creatures came down the stairway.

The statue is used to sacrifice power direct to Delecti and any creature touching it will be drained of 1d6 MP per touch. The vampires also receive spells from Delecti in this way but he will not grant these to living beings. The Styx water found in the upper temple will cause this statue to crumble to dust. It is otherwise beyond the characters power to destroy, having been carved long ago from one of Vivamort's fangs.

## 14a. Sarathana's Tunnel

This tunnel is an escape route for Sarathana, and provides ventilation for the temple. It travels for about 20 metres before ending in a pile of rubble which completely blocks the passage. It is, of course, passable in incense form...

## Aftermath

If the characters manage to find out about the cult, and destroy it, it is likely that there will have been loss of life among the clansfolk, unless the characters did it all themselves. Additionally, many of the clan members (some 10 in all) who were believed to have been kept alive by the vampires, will have been revealed to be dead. The chief will probably be forced to execute his eldest son, unless his son has slain him first. Several people may have been revealed as worshippers of chaos, and will be summarily executed by their own family. Note that the Orlanthi use hanging as a means of execution, cutting the condemned person off from the winds.

All of this means that the tribe will be in mourning for many seasons, and the final meal the characters eat with the clan will be a gloomy affair. Few people will be speaking, and the food will be oatmeal porridge, sheep's cheese, and acorn bread. There will be no beer or other alcoholic drinks. The Gamemaster should emphasize the contrast between this and the characters first meal. The Chief will make a short speech praising the characters for this great victory, and will then lapse into silence. If he is dead, this role will be taken by Tarralan Ratcatcher, his son.

As the characters are leaving the village, Caralana will come up to the character who killed

her son (or the party leader, if he was killed by clansfolk), and spit in his face. She will curse the day that they were born, and say that she would be better off dead. She then breaks down and has to be led away, sobbing. The Chief will invite the characters back to visit, in better times, but will make it plain that this will not be for some time.

As the characters leave, they will hear the sobbing of the women, and the wailing of the men, as they mourn the loss of their sons and brothers. The scent of the of the funeral pyres will be with them for many kilometres.

## Loose Ends

On a brighter note, if they tell Finefriend Fozzlebeak that they have slain Rabban, they will be called duckfriends henceforth, since he has betrayed many groups of ducks into Delecti's clutches, and the ducks will feel that a great evil has been expunged. The characters may call upon the ducks for assistance if they ever need to cross the Upland Marsh, and it will be happily given.

Finefriend will happily pay the characters their five cows (even though the disappearances weren't caused by trolls after all), and in a seasons time they will receive a personal message of thanks from the Sartar High Council, signed by Minaryth Purple himself!

If Valerian has joined the characters as bodyguard, she must report back to the Lunar authorities within a couple of seasons. If she does not, a Yanafal Tarnils Sword will come to try and retrieve her. Once he understands the situation, he will offer to duel the character for her services. It is possible in this case that the character will make him duel with Valerian! This is perfectly acceptable, although somewhat ironic. The character must make his own bargain with the Sword on this matter.

## A Note about the Temple

There are many quite valuable wooden carvings, benches, and suchlike around the temple. No values have been given for these artifacts, since any self-respecting Sartarite will simply burn these, having been tainted by Chaos. If the characters are more tolerant - Lunars perhaps - they will be able to sell the recovered wooden artifacts for a combined value of 30 cows.

## A Note about Vampires

Sartarites call any sentient undead creature coming from the marsh as a vampire. They do not need to be vampires in the traditional *RuneQuest* style. Nor do they have to worship Vivamort - in this scenario only Sarathana is a devotee. Most of the inhabitants of the marsh worship Delecti. Whether Delecti himself worships Vivamort is

not known, except perhaps by the likes of Ralzakark, King of the Broos, or other survivors of the second age.

## Sarathana Coldhand

Over a century ago, Sarathana was a priestess of Uleria in northern Peloria. As a result of a pact between the Lunar Empire and the neighboring Vampire kingdom, her village was handed over to the vampires. Her family and friends were slaughtered to provide food for their new masters, and rather than suffer the same fate, Sarathana became a vampire, swearing to use the powers she gained to avenge her family. However, as a vampire, her loyalties shifted, and her revenge was never accomplished. She drifted into Lunar service a few years ago, but recently absconded from the Vampire Legion after finding the discipline intolerable.

She has a sensuous nature, and often saves victims to satisfy her carnal lusts. She is impulsive, self willed and vain. She intends to build up her contacts in the area through Rabban and, if possible, be introduced to Delecti, since she would love to learn some of His dark secrets. She lusts after Cael, and his dark powers, but secretly despises him as an uncultured barbarian. She will try to escape if the going gets rough.

**STR** 32   **CON** 22   **SIZ** 12   **INT** 16   **DEX** 20  
**APP** 24 (18)   **Move** 4   **HP** 31   **MP** 17

01-04	R Leg	5/11
05-08	L Leg	5/11
09-11	Abd	9/11
12	Chest	9/14
13-15	R Arm	5/9
16-18	L Arm	5/9
19-20	Head	9/11

Weapon	SR	Attk	Damage(+2d6)	Parr	Pts
Touch	6	88	1D4+Life Drain	-	-
Scimitar	5	72	1D6+1	30	20
Dagger	6	66	1D4+2	55	20
Enthrall	1	Auto	Enthrall		

**Sorcery:** (Free INT 16, Intensity 102%, Duration 90%) Enhance APP 82%, Sense Life 102%, Dominate Human 99%, Drain 70%, Neutralise Magic 67%, Mystic Vision 90%

**Rituals:** (Ceremony 98%, Enchant 77%) Ecstatic Communion, Worship Vivamort, Armour & Strengthening Enchantments.

**Skills:** Sneak 104%, Hide 97%, Listen 75%, Scan 77%, Human Lore 80%, Seduce 130%, Dodge 75%

**Chaotic Features:** Sarathana's touch does not drain magic points directly. Instead, it drains the life from the victim, ageing him by 1D4 years per touch (or caress...). Sarathana gains an equivalent number of magic or fatigue points, at her discretion. This allows her to return to the same victim, night after night, slowly leeching away his life (she only hunts men). She does not drink blood.

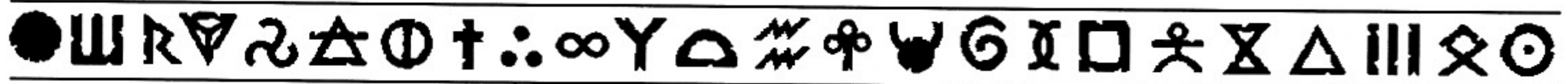
**Magic & Items:** Sarathana always has the spells Enhance APP 8 and Mystic Vision 8 cast on herself. Her body is strengthened and armoured. Her ornate Scimitar and Dagger are of strengthened silver.

**Notes:** Sarathana's Enchantment spells are special versions which enable her to cast them without sacrificing POW. Instead, for each pt. of POW in the Enchantment she must sacrifice a sentient life to Vivamort, ripping power from the victim in the process. She wears nothing but diaphanous silks, and has long dark hair, pale skin and deep green eyes - few are able to resist her when she enters their rooms to drain their life. Sarathana is able to turn to Incense on her DEX strike rank.









## Lesser Vampires

These creatures have been created by Cael in order to increase his personal power. The ritual he used deprives them of free will, and binds them as slaves to their creator. Thus, they are all fanatically loyal to Cael, and will defend him to the death(?). He in turn will happily use them as cannon fodder. They were originally tribesfolk but no longer even remember their names. All are young, good looking and almost naked. There are 2 males and 2 females. One has distinctive blue tattoos on his cheeks - he is Caradan, Caralana's missing son. Use the Stats below:

**STR** 24 **CON** 24 **SIZ** 12 **INT** 6 **DEX** 14 **APP** 16  
**Move** 4 **HP** 18 **MP** 14 **Fatigue** 48

01-04	L.Leg	0/6
05-08	R.Leg	0/6
09-11	Abdom	0/6
12	Chest	0/8
13-15	R arm	0/5
16-18	L arm	0/5
19-20	Head	0/6

Weapon	SR	Attk	Damage
Touch	8	66	1D4+1D6(+6)+MP drain
Bite	8	50	1D6+FT drain
Enthrall	3	Auto	Enthrall

**Spells:** These creatures know no spells.

**Skills:** Hide 45%, Sneak 55%, Listen 36%

**Notes:** If the vampires have had time to prepare, Cael will have cast Damage Boost 6 on each vampire's claw. Note that the MP drain occurs whether or not the touch penetrated armour.

## The Zombies

These were created by Alastor many years ago. Their armor is composed of various layers of hard and soft leather, and they have only the 'weapons' which they were used to wielding before their deaths.

**STR** 21 **CON** 21 **SIZ** 14 **INT** 6 **POW** 12 **DEX** 9  
**APP** 3 **Move** 2 **MP** 12 **HP** n/a **Fatigue** n/a

01-04	R.Leg	2/4
05-08	L.Leg	2/4
09-11	Abdom	8/4
12	Chest	8/5
13-15	R arm	2/3
16-18	L arm	2/3
19-20	Head	5/4

Weapon	SR	Attk	Damage	Parr	Pts
Scythe	8	45	1D6+1+1D6	22	8
Fist	9	45	1D4+1D6	-	-

**Skills:** Farming 12%, Jump 7%, Animal Lore 11%

**Notes:** They are armed with a variety of farming implements: scythes, flails, bill-hooks etc. They have characteristic POW because the ritual used in their creation involved binding their spirits back into their bodies. As a consequence, they retain some of their former skills, and mutter to themselves constantly about 'bringing in the crops', and 'breeding that old bull of bill's' and the like. Their mouths were once sewn up, but have been torn open by their ceaseless mumbling.

## Chief Tarkeril Tenspear

Tarkeril is approaching 50 and has been chieftain of the Lonendi clan for over 20 years. He is a large ruddy-cheeked man whose love of feasting is only too apparent in his girth! He is loud,

cheerful, and passionate, and in his youth was a fine farmer and craftsman. He is devoted to his family, and will not hear a bad thing about either of his sons. He still does not understand why his wife has divorced him.

**STR** 16 **CON** 14 **SIZ** 17 **INT** 14 **POW** 16 **DEX** 12  
**APP** 13 **Move** 3 **HP** 16 **MP** 16 **Fatigue** 30 - 20 = 10

01-04	R.Leg	8/6
05-08	L.Leg	8/6
09-11	Abdom	8/6
12	Chest	8/8
13-15	R arm	5/5
16-18	L arm	5/5
19-20	Head	8/6

Weapon	SR	Attk	Damage	Parr	Pts
2H Spear	5	96	2D8+2+1D6	79	24
Brd.swd & Shld	6	57	1D8+1+1D6	60	12

**Spells:** (Spirit Magic 60%) Bladesharp 4, Demoralise, Mindspeech 2, Mobility 2, Heal 4

**Rune Spells:** Shield 4, Thunderbolt, Heal Wound, (One-Use) Bless Crops, Charisma

**Skills:** Orate 77%, Recite Epic Poetry 86%, Farming 80%, Animal Husbandry 70%, Lawspeaking 50%, Speak Sartarite 86%, Jump 45%, Craft: Woodcarving 66%.

**Magic Items:** Tarkeril is proud of his whittling-knife, which adds 30% to the Craft: Wood skill of the user (using this, even a dunce can produce reasonable carvings!). He also owns a spear that is so sharp that it does double normal damage. This is the last of the fabled Ten Spears of Saranor, from which the tribe takes its name - the others were lost fighting the Lunars.

**Notes:** Tarkeril's Rune Spells are reusable, unless noted otherwise. This is as result of his chieftainship, and his Orlanth Rex initiation.

## Ewan Strongvoice

Ewan at 27 years old is the chief's eldest, and favourite, son. He is also a secret Initiate of Vivamort. As a child he was always favoured and spoiled by his father, and he grew to be a tall, handsome man with the belief that it was his destiny to command the loyalty of those around him. Other people never agreed, and he grew increasingly bitter, although he concealed it well. He particularly resented his father and brother for their position in the clan, and when Cael approached him a few years ago, he knew that his destiny was calling, and embraced Delecti's way enthusiastically.

He is greatly feared by many of the unfortunate lay members, and he likes this just fine. He once summoned an ancestor whose magic reduced a 'thrall' who argued with him to SIZ 3, and played kick-the ball with her! He looks forward to the day when he can control the whole clan through his vampire allies, and fears and resents the characters interference.

**STR** 14 **CON** 12 **SIZ** 15 **INT** 17 **POW** 16 **DEX** 14  
**APP** 17 **Move** 3 **HP** 14 **MP** 14 **Fatigue** 29 - 12 = 18

01-04	R.Leg	5/5
05-08	L.Leg	5/5
09-11	Abdom	7/5
12	Chest	7/6
13-15	R arm	5/4
16-18	L arm	5/4
19-20	Head	7/5

Weapon	SR	Attk	Damage	Parr	Pts
Spear & Shield	7	88	1D8+1+1D4	75	10
Garrotte	9	77	1D6+1+1D4	-	-

**Sorcery:** (Free INT 10, Intensity 80%) Damage Boost 77%, Dominate Human 40%

**Spirit Spells:** (Spirit Magic 68%) Heal 2, Demoralise

**Vampiric Magic:** (95%) Summon Ancestor

**Skills:** Orate 65%, Sneak 80%, Hide 77%, Lawspeak 47%, Sing 85%, Speak Sartarite 67%, Speak Darktongue 40%, Search 60%, Conceal 67%, Fast talk 67%

**Magic Items:** As the senior initiate of the temple, Ewan has been gifted with a small (2m) shade. This is bound into a black wooden charm decorated with the chaos and undeath runes, which he keeps concealed in a bag around his neck.

**Notes:** Ewan has a particularly melodious voice (which does not account for his epithet), and is prone to shouting a lot (which does). When dressed for war, he wears cuirboilli armour, and a Ringmail hauberk and helm.

## Typical Vivamort Initiate

There are 4 initiates active within the clan, and another 4 permanently on guard at the temple. This initiate is addicted to the ecstasy of the vampires kiss, and devoted to his masters, but will not sacrifice his life unless there is no other choice. He knows that he will be hanged by the clan if his allegiance is discovered, so he makes sure that the laity fear him enough to remain in line.

**STR** 14 **CON** 12 **SIZ** 14 **INT** 14 **POW** 15 **DEX** 12  
**APP** 9

**Move** 3 **HP** 13 **MP** 15 **Fatigue** 26 - 13 = 13

01-04	R.Leg	5/5
05-08	L.Leg	5/5
09-11	Abdom	5/5
12	Chest	5/6
13-15	R arm	5/4
16-18	L arm	5/4
19-20	Head	5/5

Weapon	SR	Attk	Damage	Parr	Pts
Spear & Shield	7	49	1D8+1+1D4	47	10
Club	8	69	1D6+3+1D4	65	12

**Sorcery:** (Free INT 9, Intensity 50%) Damage Boost 55%, Venom 50%

**Spells:** (Spirit Magic 62%) Heal 2, Mobility

**Skills:** Sneak 80%, Hide 77%, Dodge 67%, Speak Darktongue 40%, Conceal 35%, Craft: Farming 20%, Craft: Woodworking 42%, Fast Talk 38%

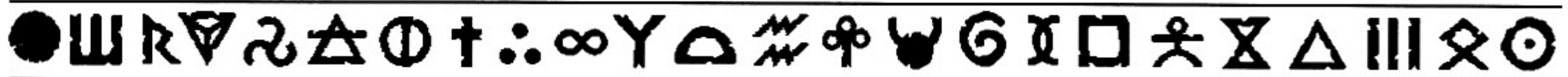
**Notes:** Wears black cuirboilli armour and face-mask, and wields his sword-biter, when in the service of the vampires. The sword-biter has had an Intensity 3 Damage Boosting cast upon it by the vampires.

## Olayne Thunderbrow

Olayne is the clan champion, and a Rune Mistress of Vinga. She is the daughter of Old Madge and a fierce believer in the superiority of the female sex. She is generally quite charming, but has a powerful temper when crossed. She is great friends with the chiefs ex-wife Molla, and the two of them are seeking a way to oust Tarkeril. As a result, they will try to make political capital out of the incidents in this adventure, portraying the chief as weak and indecisive. If the characters can find proof of the temple in the marsh, Olayne will staunchly support them if they ask for help.

**STR** 17 **CON** 17 **SIZ** 15 **INT** 15 **POW** 16 **DEX** 18  
**APP** 12 **Move** 3 **HP** 16 **MP** 15 + 22 = 37





01-04	R Leg	5/4
05-08	L Leg	5/4
09-11	Abdom	8/4
12	Chest	8/5
13-15	R arm	5/3
16-18	L arm	5/3
19-20	Head	10/4

Weapon	SR	Attk	Damage(+1d6)	Parr	Pts
Great Axe	6	145	2D6+2	137	20
Spear	5	94	1D8+1	-	-
Broadsword	6	107	1D6+1	-	-
Target Shield	-	-	-	98	18

**Spirit Spells:** (53%) Heal 6, Strength 3 (gives a + 2d6 damage bonus, plus skill increases), Demoralise, Detect Enemies. (Bloodlady 110%) Bladesharp 6.

**Rune Spells:** (95%) Shield 5, Lightning 3. (Bloodlady 95%) Slash 4, Heal Body, Spirit Block 2

**Skills:** Jump 102%, Sneak 77%, Hide 67%, Climb 99%, Swim 50%, Listen 80%, Scan 117%, Craft: Brewing 49%, Clodhopping 72%, Orate 77%

**Magic Items:** Olayne owns one magic item, a copper great axe which is sacred to the earth goddess Babeester Gor. Olayne retrieved this from a desecrated shrine to the goddess in the marsh some years ago, and the temple spirit bound into the axe became her ally. The axe has been magically strengthened, and the handle is bound with the genital hair of her victims. Whenever Olayne kills a man, their hair is added to the handle...

**Allied Spirit:** Bloodlady, bound into the sacred axe. INT 10, POW 22. Bloodlady will attack and attempt to possess any man touching the axe.

**Possessions:** Aside from her weapons and armour, Olayne carries only small pouch containing 4 gold wheels and a silver comb, tied around the neck.

### Typical Clan Warrior

These are the warriors whom Chief Tarkeril will use to assault the temple, if necessary. They are not primarily fighters, since the Tenspear clan is not a warlike clan, and would far rather be at home carving wood, ploughing the fields, running about and shouting. They will fight bravely, however, as long as their leaders are encouraging them to do so.

STR 13	CON 11	SIZ 13	INT 12	POW 13	DEX 12
APP 12	Move 3	HP 12	MP 13	Fatigue 25 - 12 = 18	

01-04	R Leg	2/4
05-08	L Leg	2/4
09-11	Abdom	5/4
12	Chest	5/5
13-15	R arm	2/3
16-18	L arm	2/3
19-20	Head	5/4

Weapon	SR	Attk	Damage(+1d4)	Parr	Pts
Spear	7	64	1D8+1	-	-
Broadsword	9	47	1D6+1	-	-
Shield	-	-	-	58	12

**Spells:** (Spirit Magic 53%) Heal 3, Strength 3 (gives a + 1d6 damage bonus, plus other skill increases), Bladesharp 3

**Skills:** Jump 45%, Sneak 47%, Hide 37%, Climb 62%, Swim 50%, Listen 40%, Scan 45%, Sing 37%, Craft: Farming 49%, Craft: Woodworking 48%

**Possessions:** Owns a few carved charms and 24 pennies in a leather bag tied around the neck.

**Notes:** most of the clan warriors are male, although there is a scattering of women who have followed Olayne and taken the warriors path of Vinga. They wear stiff leather armour, with a hard hat and cuirboilli breastplate.

### Typical Cultists Lay Member

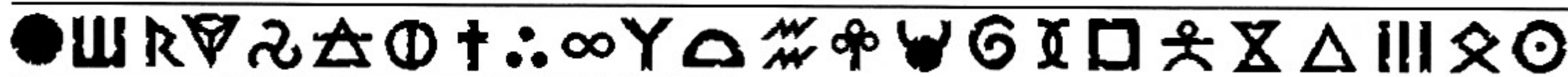
These people are the typical oppressed cult thralls. None of them truly wish to worship Cael, but all are afraid that far worse could happen, both to them and to their relatives if they told the rest of the clan; all are addicted to the Blood Gift Ritual, and some are simply terrified of the vampires and their initiates. Use the typical clan warrior stats, but reduce all fighting skills by 20% and POW by 3.

### Tarralan Ratcatcher

Tarralan is the Chief's second son, at 24, and has always lived in the shadow of his elder brother. Aside of the usual farming duties, he is the keeper of the clan's grain stores. His epithet was given to him as an insult by Ewan when they were children, but has stuck due to Tarralan's skill at storing grain - the grain store has never been affected by pests since the day that Tarralan took charge of the storehouse! He is a cautious man, with little sense of humour. He is almost the opposite of Ewan, short where he is tall, dark where he is fair, quiet and reserved, where Ewan







is forceful and charismatic. He is an initiate of the grain goddess, and has a one-use Heal Wound spell. He otherwise has standard Clan Warrior statistics.

### **Molla the Lively**

Molla was the Chief's wife for nearly 30 years, but has recently divorced him. When they met, Molla was quiet and subservient, as she thought befitted a chief's wife, but after most of the clan's menfolk were killed at Runegate Fort in 1610, the role of directing the clan fell largely to the women, and Molla found herself increasingly controlling, not only her own destiny, but also that of others. During this time, her reticence vanished, and she became talkative and forceful. She was the 'power behind the throne' for several years, but has now decided not to waste any more time propping up Tarkeril whom she firmly regards as a 'useless drunken sot'.

Use the standard Clan Warrior statistics for her, with the addition of 2 one-use Heal Wound spells, and a 3 point Thunderstone.

If the characters return to Lonendi lands some time after the events of this scenario, she will be the Clan Chieftain.

### **Old Madge**

As far back as anyone can remember, there has been an Old Madge as head of the eastern stead, and the name has now become an honorific. The latest incumbent is an eccentric matriarch who, although rather deaf, rules the stead with a (literal) rod of iron. Children in this stead are quiet and well-behaved, and there is very little of the running and shouting so prevalent elsewhere in Orlanthe society. If characters are impertinent to Old Madge, they may very well receive a rap across the knuckles from her iron rod! All the wine made in the stead must be personally approved by Old Madge, and this accounts for its commercial success.

### **Aldred the Windy**

This aged Breath-Shaman is the head of the Woodwise stead. The best that can be said for Aldred is that he is a nice old man whose best days are behind him. As he gets older, more of his time is spent gazing into the spirit world, and he tends to completely lose track of what he's talking about on the mundane plane. He knows many spells and spirits, and is tattooed from head to foot in designs of blue woad.

If the characters wish to try and learn spells from him, he will tend to tell them kindly that the tracks of the heron are not yet formed and that they should follow the old curved path, before moving off onto another topic. He is unlikely to be of much help to the characters. He does have a very large fetch though (POW 32) which the characters will meet if they attack him. He is not a cultist.

## **Review: King of Dragon Pass**

**by Peter Erickson**

The long-awaited Glorantha computer game finally arrived last November, and I suspect many Tales readers have already worn out their CD drives playing this addictive, absorbing game (the last computer game that had the same affect on me was "Civilisation", and that was *some time ago*!) In fact, I wonder if in this review, I am simply preaching to the converted, because "King of Dragon Pass" is quite literally the best thing to happen to Glorantha in ages (after *Tales*, of course!). If you're a Glorantha fan - or you know someone you'd *like* to become a Glorantha fan - KoDP should be at the top of your shopping list!

In a nutshell, "King of Dragon Pass" is a turn-based strategy game, where you play a tribal clan over a period of about 100 years in 1300s, when Orlanthe from Heortland resettled Dragon Pass. The aim of the game is first of all survive (by no means easy - Dragon Pass is a dangerous place, and there's all manner of foes out to get you, starting with malcontents in your own clan, through to wandering dragons, raiding Horse Spawn and even lousy weather). Once you've got your clan on a good footing, it's time to form a tribe, get elected king and start working on the ultimate aim of the game: unifying all the tribes and becoming King (or Queen) of Dragon Pass!

The game is the best model yet of how Orlanthe society operates and how a clan is run. As each year progresses, you have to decide which crops you'll plant, which gods you'll honour, whether to fight or trade with your neighbours, and so on. Problems also arise: a clan member wants a divorce, your cattle are mysteriously ill, a portentous rainbow appears, mysterious visitors arrive at your clan boundary, etc.; in fact, there are over 400 such situations, and the resolutions you choose will invariably have consequences further down the track. Fortunately, you have seven members on your clan ring to advise you, each one offering answers defined by their own experiences and way of life. Needless to say, the Humakti warleader on the ring ("kill them all!") is likely to give you different advice to the Chalana Arroy plant specialist ("the gods will favour us if we show mercy").

To win the game, you really have to start thinking like an Orlanthe - and you're going to have to HeroQuest, re-enacting the exploits of your clan's gods. These are a lot of fun, if occasionally infuriatingly difficult, and offer plenty of insight on how to run a Heroquest in regular roleplaying gaming. In fact, because your clan's exploits are saved as a year-by-year saga, print this story off, and you have an instant 80 year old RPG campaign!

Although the game interface is more-or-less static, "King of Dragon Pass" is nevertheless beautifully illustrated. Once you've got the hang of it, the years roll by smoothly, and you'll be too worried where you're going to get enough cows for your next sacrifice to care about the lack of 3D polygonoid broospawn or slick-moving Uroxi avatars. For non-Gloranths, there might be a bit of a steep learning curve to begin with, but the manual and handy reference card are both very easy to follow. (I sat down to help my non-gamer partner for the first couple of turns, and then lost my computer for the next 8 hours!)

"King of Dragon Pass" is produced and self-marketed by the small software development company A. Sharp. The principal authors were David Dunham, Greg Stafford and Robin Laws, with a lot of the coding by Elise Bowditch (if you've ever met these folk, you might be able to pick them out among the illustrations of clan personages!) KoDP is excellent value at US\$37.50. If you can't get it at your local games store, you can order it directly from A. Sharp <<http://a-sharp.com/kodp/>>. This site also features demos, the latest updates of the game, KoDP hints and links to fan pages.

In all my years of writing Glorantha reviews for Tales, this is the best product to land on my desk. I cannot recommend the game more highly, and look forward to whatever else A. Sharp might produce. Life of Moonson, The Computer Game? I'd like to see that...





## The Death Clan Ritual

by Martin Laurie

### Mythology

Every Sacred Time, Orlanthi Clans enact the rebirth of the world from the Darkness, and choose a path to follow. Most clans follow the normal ways of Orlanth, receiving his blessings of fertility while maintaining his strength of arms.

When the world is peaceful (though all know how rare this is) then a clan can choose to be a Peace Clan. Here the fertility of all is increased through the blessings of Barntar, Ernalda or Kero Fin, yet their magic for making war and raid is reduced in part. Only those very sure of their neighbours can partake of the bounty of peace. Sometimes, though, a clan will see great trouble

ahead, or have need of the Arming of Orlanth. Then they will choose to be a War Clan. As a War Clan their fertility is weak, for they have sworn their folk to combat, but their weapon magics are strong and their strength in battle is aided by Orlanth's thunderous breath.

### The Ritual

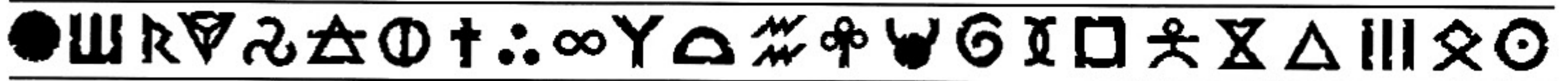
The Lismelder have seen the nightmare of Undeath assail them from the Marsh many times. During that dread first assault in the time of Queen Lismelder and Champion Indrodar, the Tribe was nearly annihilated. Indrodar only saved the pitiful remnants by creating the Death Clan

Ritual, a modification of the War Clan ritual but drawing on the power of Humakt instead of Orlanth, to empower them against undeath.

During the Sacred Time, the clan swears to Humakt and his follower Indrodar for the powers they need against the Marsh. In return for the commitment of their Wyter to Ending, the clan receives the skills and magics of Severance.

Under exceptional circumstances a clan may undergo the Death Clan Ritual on Windsday of Death Week in any season, but the costs are even greater. All who participate in such a ritual are fated to die by the sword and will seek such a death with an utter compulsion. Life will have no joy to such folk, and all will be grim around them.





## Benefits

All the members of a Death Clan count as lay followers of Indrodar without the need for the usual POW sacrifice. They may sacrifice for all Divine magics from Indrodar normally available to initiates. All Death Clan members can be affected by the Morale spell if cast on the clan. E.g. if a Sword casts Morale 10, then *all* members of the Clan will be at +50% when fighting for the duration of the spell. All Death Clan members will be affected as if by a *Stand Against Undeath* spell (see Indrodar speciality spells) for the duration of any combats against the Undead.

## Costs

The Death Clan is even worse than a war clan for fertility. Instead of their yearly productivity being halved as in a war clan, it is quartered for the Death Clan. This usually means they won't survive the winter unless they are aided by others or already had significant stocks of food.

Worse still, the clan as a whole must undergo the Kin-Severance of Humakt to receive his powers. For the duration of the Death Clan, the clan is not part of the Tribal Wyter, nor can it command the loyalty of the King. This loyalty may be given freely or bound by word but it is not required of him by Heort's laws.

All entering the Clan lands who are not of the Clan will feel the gloom and chill of the place and its people. Even when they laugh, it will sound hollow, and when they sing it will be flat.

All who die while part of the Death Clan go to Humakt's cold halls rather than Orlanth's divine stead though they will be feted for their courage.

Perhaps the greatest tragedy of all is that no births to the clan will live, animal or human. They will all be stillborn.

## History

The Ritual has only been used three times. The first was when Indrodar defeated the great attack on his people after the fall of Lismelder. Only aid from other tribes allowed them to survive the year, and the Lismelder gave gifts for years after in return.

The second time was in 1582, at the battle of Grizzly Peak. Many warriors of the Lismelder fought for Tarkalor in his wars against Phargentes King-Slayer. Their select fyrd came from all the clans and fought so often that they formed the Roving Sword Clan, which was strange because it had no Tula except the breadth of their camp and no bloodlines except those

belonging to other Lismelder Clans. Even its numbers varied, depending on and the numbers of warriors who journeyed back and forth to Lismelder lands. This type of warband/clan was common in the days of the kings of Sartar, when tribal musters were rare and wars ranged far beyond the kingdom's borders. When the Empire added its strength to Tarsh, the final battle with



the Exiles and Tarkalor saw the ruin of the latter and the end of the Roving Sword Clan.

Tarkalor set up camp upon Grizzly Peak and awaited the coming of the Exile army. He summoned the Roving Sword Clan and told them to defend the routes to Sartar in the Bush Range.

When the Tarsh army arrived they numbered many Imperial troops among them. Worse, they came with magics of the Moon and her allies. The Earth Magics of the Exiles were tempered, their priestesses struck down or blinded by the light of the Moon, and their army broke before the victorious Lunar cavalry charge

That day the Storm could not rise, as the sky was too blue and Yelm shone undiminished. At first Tarkalor was undismayed for he held a strong position and he knew that the rest of his army marched from Sartar and that the Exiles might well rally behind the Lunar main body. However, as the day lengthened and after repulsing many attacks and the assault of evil spirits, Tarkalor grew desperate. He could see no sign of the Tarsh assault on his shield wall slacking, or the return of his shattered allies. He sent wind words to the Roving Sword Clan, and to all the arriving Fyrds and warbands he could, to help him break out of the encircling Lunar forces. The Roving Sword, led by Tarkalor's foster-brother, Gunnar Greydog, saw the host arrayed against them and knew that their death was the only reward likely for attempting their king's relief. Yet they were bound by their oaths to obey, even unto death itself.

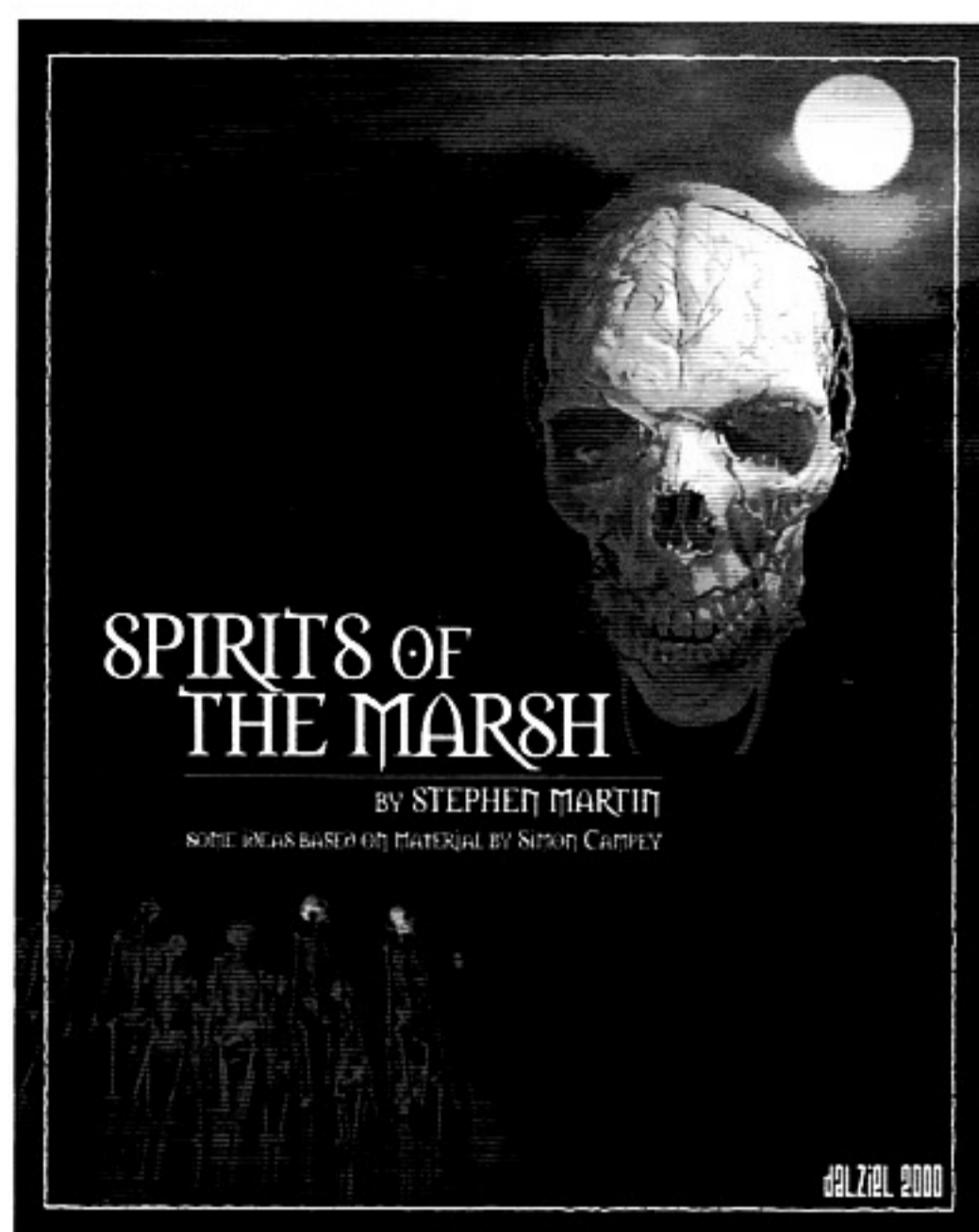
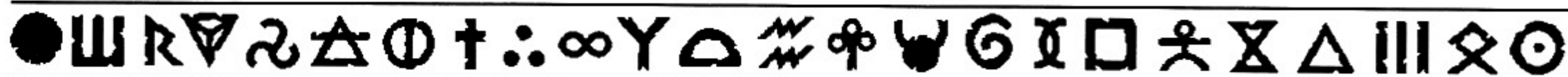
Summoning the spirit of Indrodar, they gave themselves to Humakt. Empowered and unafraid they marched to their doom. Like the slicing blade they cut through the legions of Tarsh around Grizzly Peak and found the king amid his household, lying dead next to his Queen. Both had fought to hold the assault of the Feathered Axe soldiers. They fell as they had lived – together.

Surrounded and set upon by magics both evil and potent, the Roving Sword roved no more. They stood and died, true to their word. Each fell in their places like a stone. Each sent a hand or more of their foes ahead of them to the Halls of the Dead. When the Tarshites finally reached where the king had fallen, there was no sign of his body.

Runegate Fort was the third use of the ritual, and the second creation of the Roving Sword Clan. The Lismelder remembered their stand at Grizzly Peak and emulated it with the defence of Runegate. The warriors of Tarsh and the Empire laughed after their victory, but their pride is tinged with pain. Of all their assault regiments, scarcely one in five men was standing by the end of that butchery.

However, only a score of Lismelder survived to return to their clans, and they live their lives waiting for the death they know is coming: a death their luck and skill in battle has merely postponed, which awaits them with the implacable surety of severance.





*It is common knowledge that the Upland Marsh is a haunt of zombies and other undead entities. Since the reopening of Kerofinela after the Dragonkill, the once peaceful and beautiful confluence of the Creek, Stream, and River has been a festering swamp that constantly endangers the surrounding lands and peoples. Rumours and theories about Delecti and his minions abound, but no one living knows the truth of his nature, his history, or the methods he used to corrupt the land.*

*When Delecti created the Upland Marsh at the end of the Second Age, he had already lived for over a hundred years. During that time he had captured or corrupted several powerful spirits and demigods.*

*Over the years, several other entities have been captured or corrupted by Delecti, and extend his reign of terror into the surrounding lands. However, several heroes have risen through the years to defend mortals from his unholy minions, and to halt his terrible plans.*

## Delecti's Minions

### Rihalya

One of the immortals used was Rihalya, a mist spirit who was the daughter of Engizi, god of The River. When the dragons came, Delecti used his powers to save himself and his followers. In part, this was accomplished by his mastery and corruption of Rihalya, for through her he gained some measure of control over the rivers of the land, and was able to bend them to his will. She is now the source of the thick, foul mist that constantly covers the Marsh, and often spills into the surrounding lands.

Though at first she fought Delecti, throughout the centuries of the Inhuman Occupation Rihalya's struggles became weaker and weaker. Eventually, most of her free will was gone, and she became a willing slave of her undead master. This process has continued to the current day, so that Rihalya now is more of a vampiric spirit than a nymph. She gladly assists Delecti when he seeks to expand the Marsh, and sends her vapours out ahead of the Dancers of Darkness whenever they perform their rituals. She has fallen so far into evil that she would not welcome any form of release, and would fight against any that sought to free her. Nor would the rivers of the land be willing to accept her back into their family; truly, she is beyond redemption.

### Kalesia, Delecti's Handmaiden

Called Mother of Darkness, she is Delecti's premier "courtesan." She is also a vampire, but this somehow does not prevent her from mating with Delecti and producing children. These children are always daughters, regardless of the body Delecti inhabits at the time, who are personally turned into vampires by Kalesia when they reach adulthood. These vampires are the infamous Dancers of Darkness, who assist their mother and father in extending the boundaries of the Marsh whenever a blackthorn splice is available. They also terrorise the surrounding communities, though over the

centuries they have learned to be wary of the Humakt magics of the durulz.

Kalesia's origins are unknown, though it is clear that she was originally human. Although Delecti's bodies are sometimes taken by him directly, more often Kalesia is sent to seduce a victim for him. As a result, over the centuries here "taste" in men has become apparent, explaining why Delecti's different bodies often appear very similar to each other. (GMs are free to decide what type of man Kalesia prefers.)

### Slenia & Sleringa, The Remakers

Called Cutter and Stitcher, these two creatures assist Delecti in creating the horrors of the Marsh. It is unknown whether each was originally a god or a mortal, but it is impossible now to determine whether they are even alive or undead. Both appear much like humans, although the male, Slenia, has eight arms, each of which ends in a different type of cutting tool, and Sleringa, the female, has no eyes (indeed, not even a place for eyes) but seems able to "see" despite this handicap.

Slenia and Sleringa do not create zombies. Instead, they experiment with living creatures, cutting them into pieces and then sewing the pieces together to create new creatures. They are believed to have been important figures in the EWF before its destruction, being the creators of the famed Stitched Zoo of Remakerela. They continue their ancient work to this day. Since the loss of their freedom to Delecti, they have lost some of their skill, so that the creation of beings like the centaurs seems to be impossible for them.

They have created several singular monsters, of which only three are known to remain: the Chimera (a lion to which have been stitched living goat and snake heads), Delecti's Hound (a wolf to which have been stitched three alynx heads), and the Cyclops (a giant to which has been stitched a Tusker head with a single central eye). The platypuses of the Marsh have been their only true "success" of the last few centuries, though it proved useless to their master.

Several other creations were technical successes in that they lived past creation, but died soon after. Many of these were turned into zombies by Delecti, and so several unusual zombies can be found in the Marsh: the zombie mermaids, the zombie killer whale with octopus tentacles, and the zombie humans with animal heads.

### Horalin, the Blackthorn Dryad

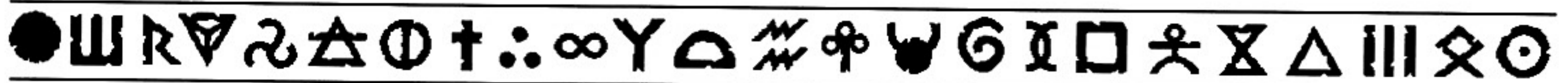
Horalin was originally the dryad of an ancient oak tree that sat near the confluence of the River, the Stream, and the Creek. She was the oldest dryad in Kerofinela, and remembered being awakened at the Dawn by Fwalfla Oakheart, who once was a member of the Unity Council. Horalin even served on the Council for a short time after Ferletha Thorn's death, but gave up the Seat of Earth when the Council moved to Dorastor in 200 S.T.

When the dragons came at the end of the Second Age, Horalin was loathe to see all of the humans die, for she had been friends with them for centuries. Delecti took advantage of her friendship, and convinced her to help hide him and his followers. Horalin had great friendship with the waters of the land. She helped to call them for Delecti, convinced of his worthiness by his apparent friendship with the water nymph Rihalya. She was unprepared for his treachery, however, and when the waters came she was betrayed and slain. Rather than finding release, however, Delecti turned her into the first of his zombies, binding her into her own tree.

Horalin's once-proud tree mutated into the hideous Blackthorn, which "grows" near Delecti's Ruin. It has degenerated over the centuries, so that it is no longer recognisable as the great oak it once was. Worse, Delecti's experiments continued, and he has taken several cuttings from Horalin to enchant into special magical stakes.

These Rods of Power are planted by the Dancers of Darkness, and allow Delecti to focus his twisted magics and extend the boundaries of the Marsh, using Horalin's ancient friendship to





call the waters to saturate new ground. Over the years, Delecti has also used his control of Horalin to spread other corrupted plant-life throughout the Marsh, such as the Sticky Whips, Darkdart Bushes, and Wailing Trees.

## Ulmagryn, The Houndmaster

Ulmagryn is a petty deity in Heortling mythology, a son of Narangros the Hell Hound. He commands a pack of spirit hounds called Barguests, which travel the skies on dark and terrifying nights. The barguests are large black dogs with disproportionately large jaws and huge blue eyes that glow with demonic fire. Their howls frighten humans and animals, but are especially terrifying to alynxes, who are especially hated by these creatures. Although not harmed by light, it drives them away.

Ulmagryn himself appears as a skeletal human with a hound's head. He rides an especially large barguest called Kalima. He and his pack have been sighted far outside of the Marsh, though only on dark, cloudy nights. He can command the hounds with a word or even a thought, and can look through their eyes when he wills. Watchers have described he and his pack as a dark wind howling through the night, which takes on physical form as it descends towards the earth.

## Barguest

Most barguests roam free, terrorising anyone they encounter. Some are bound as spirits to an object or place, where they serve as a guardian and attack all intruders.

Barguests have double normal HP in each location. Thus, a barguest with 18 HPs would have 14 HPs each in its hindquarters and forequarters and 12 HPs in its head. A barguest can be dispelled and forced to return to the Spirit Plane. To dispel a barguest, its physical body must be completely destroyed. In game terms, this means that its head, forequarters, or hindquarters must be reduced to 0 HPs. A barguest that has not been bound can voluntarily return to the Spirit Plane, but if it does so it may not rematerialise for a full week.

<b>STR</b>	3d6+6	16-17	<b>Move</b> 3/9 Flying
<b>CON</b>	3d6+6	16-17	<b>Hit Points</b> 18-19
<b>SIZ</b>	4d6+6	20	<b>Fatigue</b> 33
<b>INT</b>	2d6	7	<b>Armour:</b> 3 point skin
<b>POW</b>	2d6+12	19	<b>DEX</b> 3d6 10-11

Weapon	SR	Attk%	Damage
Bite:	3	50+4	1d8+1d4
Stare:	1		Demoralises if MPs overcome

**Combat Notes:** Double normal hit points in each hit location.

Regardless of the damage taken in any location, a barguest never becomes incapacitated or loses use of a limb.

**Notes:** A barguest can either bite a foe or attempt to demoralise them. An unintelligent creature is automatically demoralised by this stare unless a 96-00 is rolled, and an intelligent target is demoralised if its MPs are overcome by those of the barguest. A barguest cannot attack with either bite or stare unless it is completely on the ground.

**Skills:** Sneak 75, Track by Scent 100.

**Special Abilities:** If a barguest is struck by any physical weapon, the attacker must resist its MPs with his own. If he fails, he takes 1d8 points of damage to his General Hit Points. The barguest takes the rolled damage normally.

## Werand Brassforge

Werand is an apostate dwarf who is believed to have originally served Isidilian, the Dwarf of Dwarf

Run. His existence is not known to anyone outside of Delecti's inner circle, for he has only served the Dark Lord for a decade or so. The reason for his leaving Dwarf Run is unknown, nor is it known whether he serves Delecti willingly or not.

However, his creations seem to be firmly under Delecti's control. In the last several years, strange skeletons have been sighted in the western portion of the Marsh. Rather than being made of bone, these skeletons are forged out of brass. Although the number of skeletons observed to date is small, they seem to be nearly indestructible. Those who have encountered them and lived fear that Delecti will send his other minions to obtain more brass so that he can have additional skeletons made.

## Brangbane

The King of Ghouls has been known in Kerofinela since Sartar cursed the king for his evil deeds. Although Brangbane is not known to serve Delecti, he and his ghouls seem able to travel through the Marsh at will. Although no co-ordinated actions have been observed, many who have seen his ghouls near the Marsh fear that he and Delecti have formed or will soon form an alliance, which can only bode ill for those living near the swamp.

## Foes Of The Marsh

### Derek Swampfeather

Derek Swampfeather is a local hero of the Durulz, considered by some to be a sub-cult of Orlanth Adventurous. He is remembered as the leader who taught ducks how to survive in the Marsh without being attacked by Delecti's minions. He teaches his worshipers a Feat that allows the user to be ignored by zombies as long as he hides from them. If the user of the Feat runs, attacks, or otherwise draws attention to himself, the protection is lost.

### Kilgorn Brightspear

Kilgorn Brightspear is a hero who has recently travelled among the Durulz from the nearby Sun Dome Temple. He is a Light Captain of Yelmadio, and he has received visions from his god that it is his destiny to cleanse the Upland Marsh of all undead. He is seeking followers from among the Durulz, and has been initiating them into his cult, an unusual practice since the Durulz have historically shunned (and been shunned by) solar cults. Kilgorn believes that the only way to achieve his destiny is to heal the rift between the sky gods and the Durulz (who, as avians, clearly have their origins in the sky world). Once he has a large band of dedicated followers, Kilgorn plans to perform heroquests to re-enact all of Yelmadio's battles against unlife. Once he and his most powerful followers have mastered these powers, they plan to challenge Delecti by destroying the fortress on the Isle of the Dead. Eventually, even Delecti will fall, and then the Earth, bride of the Sun, can be cleansed once and for all.

### Shamed By Death

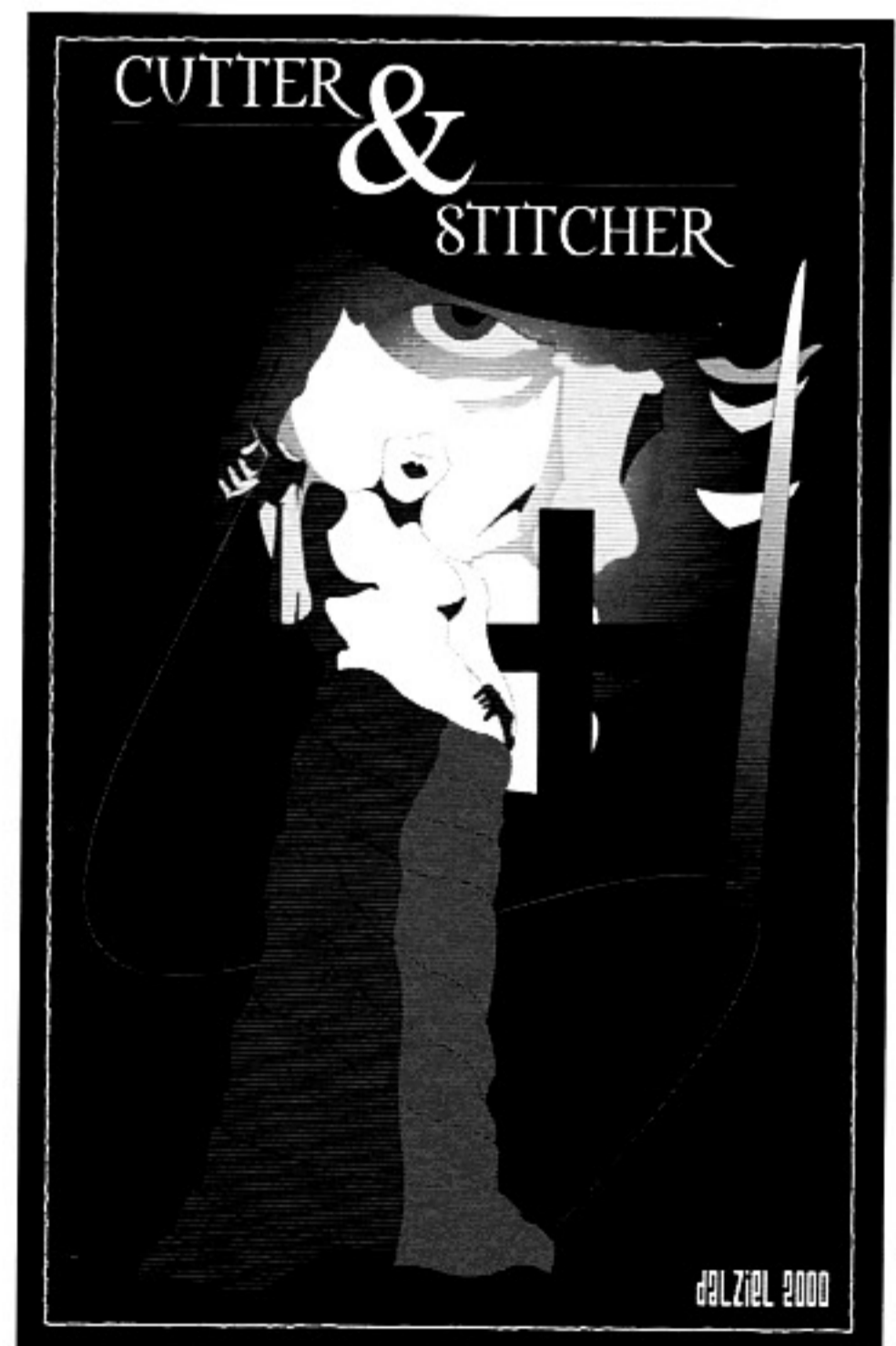
Shamed by Death is a Beaked Dragonewt whose original name is unknown to humans. He was killed in the Upland Marsh shortly after it was first formed, and Delecti was able to reanimate his body as a zombie. When he was reborn he returned to the

Marsh to destroy his body so he could continue to evolve, was again slain and his body zombified. Since then, Shamed by Death has been slain many times. Each time he is reborn he spends longer preparing himself, and then he enters the Marsh and travels to the Nest to destroy his bodies. Each time he does so, he is slain by his former bodies.

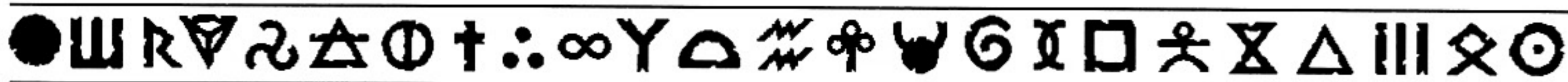
In the last decade, Shamed by Death has not returned to the Marsh. He feels an almost irresistible urge to do so, for he can never progress to the next stage of his life while his bodies remain corrupted. However, he recognises that he will have to entangle himself within the world, and gain allies, or else the cycle of death and corruption will continue forever. He is often seen near the Marsh, studying its ways and seeking allies to help him in his assault on the Nest. He has recently stepped up his preparations, for he knows that he will have to attempt to destroy his former bodies soon; although he would not tell this to a human, the last time he was slain he recognised that the zombies were creating a Dragonewt nest in the Marsh, and he fears what this might mean for the other Dragonewts of the land.

### Zolkath Windspeech

Zolkath Windspeech is a kolating, a shaman who normally lives in the wilds away from civilisation. During the last decade, however, he has been seen several times in central Sartar, always near the Upland Marsh. Zolkath has heard the voices of the spirits, and they have moved him to give aid to those who oppose Delecti and fear the swamp. The first time he appeared his words of warning were not heeded, and a large party of warriors were lost to the Marsh, never to return. Since then, the local human and durulz have listened to him and given him aid. The last time he was seen, Zolkath said that he was being guided by the spirits of the River, Stream, and Creek, who directed him to seek those who could release their daughter from the bondage of life.







# The Marsh-Wight

by Erik Sieurin

*As told by a grim Sword of Indrodar to his younger blade-brothers.*

"Aye lads, the Marsh is an evil place, and many terrible creatures are found there. Most common are the Undead, abominations in the eyes of Indrodar. I have told you of many of them - the Restless Ones with empty eyes, the Pale Daughters thirsty for blood, the horrible Glaring Sows that can split a man in twain. But one horror of which you have not yet heard is the Marsh-Wight, a creature that searches for the living to steal their breath and rob their souls.

The Marsh-Wight strikes the lone traveller as he sinks slowly into the marsh. It takes his spirit as he slowly drowns. Oh, such a shameful death, filled with pain, and void of honour! But there is worse to come, the body of the unfortunate is kept half-alive and half-dead. Like a bleak corpse, swollen and white he seems, and his eyes burn with a weak marsh-light, like rotting wood.

Marsh-Wights have several ways to steal the breath of the living, but all require the victim to die the slow death of suffocation. Only then can the Wight devour the soul of the dying man or woman.

First, if unwary travellers come close to its murky lair at night, it will rise out of the waters to drag them down. As they slowly drown, it will eat their soul. As long as a Marsh-Wight has any part of its body below the surface of the swamp, it is stronger than any man, and only a hero can break its grip.

If no traveller ever comes near its lair, it will use its evil magic to lure people into the marsh at night, to devour them. It can create false images, and sounds like voices or music. Cries like those of a lost child may be heard by a woman, so that she will brave the swamp to save it. Or a beautiful woman might appear and beckon a man into the swamp, as if she wished to bed him. Each wight has its own foul tricks, and they are canny enough to try another should the first fail.

Once you are hooked by these falsehoods, only those with an iron will can turn away. Just like a man who steps into a bog will be dragged down slowly, so it becomes harder and harder to ignore these falsehoods. In this way the Marsh-Wight will fool weak men and women into wandering into the swamp and into his evil grasp.

Sometimes, and it's a rare occasion, the wight will venture out of its lair. It doesn't like to, but it may be forced to if it needs to feed. It will not



venture far, for it does have weaknesses! Never fear, I'll tell you them later...

A hungry Wight might sneak up to a camp near the Marsh, or even to a lonely stead, and slowly strangle the inhabitants. Some have been known to use their evil Glamour to deceive people into thinking they are one of the living. They care not for the holy laws of Hospitality, and will claim to be a lost or lonely traveller in need of hospitality, sometimes taking on the visage and voice of a traveller they have killed. Then, as their hosts sleep, they will kill them and drag their bodies back into the marsh.

However, there are some strange wights who are not completely without fear of the protectors of the hearth, and these will not slay their hosts unless they find fault with their Hospitality. At the slightest mistreatment of the Wight, it will devour its host, but if treated with scrupulous regard for the sacred laws, the Wight will slip out when all are asleep, furious but unable to harm its host. Sometimes it will be so furious that it runs away screaming, cursing its hosts for being so perfect that it dare not touch them. Such a Wight will not enter a camp or stead unless given permission to enter as a guest.

The powers of Marsh-Wights makes them opponents to be feared, even by sword-skilled and valourous men and women. Their bodies are like wet-soaked leather, and their slimy arms stronger than any man. Little do they worry about a spear stuck into their belly or a strike which crushes bones. Only a slashing blade will have any chance

of doing any real harm. Any pieces cut off move on their own accord, quickly growing together again as long as any part of them is touching the wet ground of the marsh. So, lads, listen well, if stopped they are to be with weapons, the only thing which will do the job is to strike off their head.

But also beware of their guile in a fight, should it lose a limb to a sword-stroke, most Wights will howl in fear and sink into the swamp. They are not dead or gone, they have merely retreated into the muck to let the lopped-off limb and their body grow together again. Soon they will return, rising from the bog to drag you down.

They move through the marsh with unnatural speed and ease. Where a man might wade or sink, they will walk or run like on dry and even ground. If it wishes to flee, a Marsh-Wight can sink into any wet earth like a stone sinks into clear water, and disappear. They swim through thick marsh-muck as fast and sure as a salmon through clear water.

Never forget that they are truly of the Undead. Neither poison, nor illness, nor old age, affects them and they never tire. The only nourishment they need is the breath and souls of the living. They have no true spirit left either, so no magic that affects a man's moods, like striking them with fear or uncertainty, will have the slightest effect.

Some Marsh-Wights are in league with Delecti, Curse-His-Name, and have been given foul Chaos magic. Many have power over the Marsh Mist or the insects in the swamp. Others make the bodies of those they have killed into Wight-Thralls, like weak copies of themselves without wit or magic. A



few Wights worship foul Mallia, another of the Chaos Tribe. These Wights can inflict horrible swamp fevers on steeds near the Marsh.

Some weak and foolish men and Durulz have tried to appease a Marsh-Wight, sacrificing people to it by drowning them in the bog. In return they believe that the undead will refrain from attacking them, but this never holds true for long. Watch out for this vile practice for King Thanos has decreed that such actions are punishable by death.

Yet the Marsh-Wights are weak, for they are without bravery or honour. They have been cursed by the elements for their sins and lose many of their powers in their presence. If a wight's whole body is held in the air, placed on dry earth, below running water, or if any part of his body is touched by the rays of the Sun, he can no longer heal every wound, nor use his evil magics. His grip becomes the same as the man he once was. The touch of the Sun's rays, running water, sacred dry ground - including any ploughed field - or the winds of a thunderstorm is to them like a hot searing flame would be to me. Thus they are loathe to venture far from the Marsh.

Like all the walking dead they fear Death. Thus, they fear our Rune, and will not go near it. If any man or woman of Honour puts it before them, it will cut them to their black hearts as if by a sword-

stroke. If their head is cut off, they will be unable to pull themselves together again. If one is so slain, its foul body should still be burnt on logs carved with death-runes, and the curse-galders I have taught you should be sung over the pyre."

## Secrets for the GM

The stats below are for RQ3, with Traits and Passions as for Pendragon, and the example is a human Marsh-Wight. Durulz enter the Marsh more often, but they rarely drown, and they have swamp-savvy enough to avoid the ploys used by Marsh-Wights to drown people.

Characteristics:	D6	Avg.
STR	3D6*2	21*
SIZ	2D6+6*1.5	19-20
DEX	3D6*0.5	5-6
INT	2D6+6	13
Magic Points:	2D6+6	13

Fatigue Points: n/a  
 Hit Points: n/a\*\*  
 Move: 3/6 (swimming)  
 Armour: 5 pts tough hide on all hit locations\*\*\*

Attack:	%	Damage
Grapple	90%	1D6+Special*
Clawed hand	75%	1D6+db

\*Unless it is being held in the air or below water, standing completely on dry ground, or is touched by the rays of the sun, a Marsh-Wight automatically succeeds in any STR-test. The trick when wrestling it is to try to lift it, matching your STR against its SIZ.

\*\*A Marsh-Wight lacks total Hit Points and is immune against anything that expressly affects total Hit Points - the GM might rule differently when it comes to things like large fires etc, prorating the damage towards its limbs instead. Its total Hit Points per hit location is calculated as if it had a total Hit Points score equal to its SIZ\*2. If a hit location other than the head is reduced to 0 HP, the Marsh-Wight will sink below the marsh if possible to rejoin lost limbs and regenerate its wounds. Otherwise it will fight on. Any lopped off limbs will continue to fight on their own, whilst trying to reach the body to rejoin it. If the head of a Marsh-Wight is reduced to 0 HP, it has been destroyed, and so has the Marsh-Wight.

\*\*\*In addition, damage from impaling weapons can never be higher than 1, after subtraction for armour, and damage from crushing weapons can never be higher than the weapon's minimum damage, after subtraction for armour.

**Significant Traits and Passions:** Selfish 19, Deceitful 19, Cowardly 15, Hate: the living 13+, Fear: Humakt 16+, Honour and Hospitality 0. Most have Love: Vivamort 14+ and Loyalty: Delecti 10+; some have Hospitality 15+ and Love: Mallia 12+

**Skills:** As when alive, except for Swim, Grapple and Stealth skills, which all double. Skills include Swim (Quietly) 100%, Fast Talk 50%, Listen 90%, Scan 50%, Search 50%, Hide 100%, Sneak 75%.

**Magic:** Usually knows sorcery taught by the Vivamort Cult, in addition to its innate magical abilities. This usually include the spells Animate Fog 75%, Animate Mud 75%, Dominate Insects 75%, Drain 90% and Create Wight-Thrall 75% and the skills Intensity 75% and Duration 50%. Some also follow Mallia and knows the Dominate and Summon (Disease Spirit) spells and the Summoning skill to 75%.

**Special Powers:** Can regenerate SIZ/3 HP per MR in all locations, unless it is being held in the air or below water, standing completely on dry ground, or is touched by the rays of the sun. It cannot really regrow lost body parts, but it can re-attach them by pressing the limb towards where it is supposed to be. Smart opponents might devise some way of keeping a cut-off limb away from its body, preventing it from growing back.

Marsh-Wights are undead and soul-less, lacking both CON and POW, and have all expected immunities as a result. They have no Fatigue Points and never tire.

Marsh-Wights have the ability to create images and sounds in the minds of someone by spending 1 MP per victim and overcoming their MP with its MP. These can be things that will tempt people to move into the marsh, or simply be a disguise that makes the Wight appear to be a living human. Anyone who has been tempted by an illusion gets a new chance to resist each time he gets a strong reason to do it (like he realises that he is entering a dangerous part of the marsh, or the disguised wight forgets to breathe and he notices it), but each such test has a cumulative -25% penalty.

For each sentient being which is suffocated, strangled or drowned as a direct result of a Marsh-Wights actions, and within sight of the Marsh-Wight, the Wight can attack the victim as it is dying and try to steal its soul. If the Wight can overcome the victim's POW with its MP, it gain MP equal to the victim's POW. If it fails, it loses 1D3 MP, though it cannot be reduced to less than 1 MP this way.

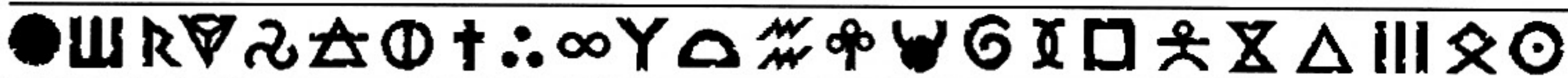
A Marsh-Wight must spend 1 MP each day to keep its dead body together. If its MP sinks below 6, it will fight as if Fanatic in order obtain a victim to devour.

A Marsh-Wight must make an Idea Roll (or fail a Fear: Humakt roll, if Passions are used) to approach a Death Rune closer than 25m or so. If someone who is honourable strongly presents a Death Rune (an upside-down sword or dagger suffices) towards a Marsh-Wight, and overcomes it's MP with his or her MP (Honour or Love: Humakt, if Passions are used), it takes 1D6 damage to the head and cannot approach the Rune-wielder as long as this person continues to hold the Rune.

If a Marsh-Wight is exposed to sunlight, running water or the winds of a thunderstorm, or touches dry ground sanctified to any Earth deity (this includes any plowed land, due to Bless Crops rituals and such), each exposed limb takes 1D6 damage each MR and it cannot regenerate or use any magic. It must make a successful Idea Roll (or Valorous roll, if Personality Traits are used) to enter into such a situation by its own free will.







## Wight-Thralls

These beings are created by the spell Create Wight-Thrall, which requires the Marsh-Wight to drown a victim, steal their soul, and pay it's POW in MP, instead of gaining them. They have the statistics of Marsh-Wights, but lack the ability to devour their victims' souls, to create hallucinations or use any kind of magic. They have only fixed INT equal to half their original INT. Unlike Marsh-Wights, they cannot speak or reason, and mindlessly obey the orders of their creator.

## Scenarios

Marsh-Wights are much more fearsome opponents when not fought in actual combat. As in any good ghost story, the less seen of the monster, the scarier it is. Let a Wight kill an NPC at the PCs' stead or camp each night, using tricks to lure away any guards. A Wight might suddenly rise from the muck and drag down a screaming NPC into the swamp - preferably the Reliable Guide, thus making the PCs lost in the Marsh. And so on.

## Story Idea One

A Marsh-Wight of the kind which respects hospitality visits the PCs' stead and asks for a place for the night. If they refuse, she drops her illusion and screams that such inhospitable knaves she has never met. Then she flees out into the swamp. It now becomes her pet project to kill and devour everyone in the stead.

If allowed to enter but not treated with courtesy, she will strangle and devour one or some of her hosts, but will leave the PCs' alive. As she leaves she gleefully tells them that it is all their fault that their kin are dead in such a horrible way.

If treated with scrupulous Hospitality, she will grow more and more frustrated. She will try to get her hosts to break the rules of Hospitality, maybe creating the illusion that she is carrying valuables, thus trying to tempt the PCs into robbing her. If the PCs resist all attempts to make them into bad hosts, she will leave the house right before dawn, screaming her rage at her bad luck to have met such honourable people! She will never again bother their stead.

## Story Idea Two

A Marsh-Wight starts plaguing the stead or village of the characters. It might strangle all the cattle at a stead or lure them into the Marsh. It cannot derive any nourishment from the process but likes it anyway. Or perhaps Delecti needs undamaged bull corpses for some critter of his, and has promised his lackeys a favour for bringing them in. The PC's might be able to track him into the swamp, but his lair is in a sunken stead deep in the murky waters, and if pursued he immediately retreats there. If he has killed enough people, he is probably well-fed enough to wait a few days before emerging again.

'Besieging' him, constantly guarding his lair, will be risky due to the other dangers in the Marsh, not to mention that the guards might be sorely needed back at the stead/village. The only real solution is to confront him in his lair, but this needs suitable magic or aquatic allies. To gain such the PCs might have to make a costly or embarrassing bargain with someone who can provide it - a Kolating, a band of Durulz outlaws, or perhaps a Lunar sorcerer!

## Scary Scene One

The characters are fighting a Marsh-Wight and the fight goes badly. Hope seems lost, when a person

the characters thought dead, drowned by the Wight, appears, and starts fighting alongside the characters. The foul Wight is defeated, but before the characters have time to cheer, their former relative turns his gaze towards them, glowing with a green marsh-light... Then he stretches out his slimy undead arms and prepares to slay and devour the characters...

He was drowned by the Marsh-Wight, who felt his strong will (high POW) and decided against trying to eat his soul. However, the same strong will allowed the dead relative to return as a Marsh-Wight filled with hatred for their murderer. However, while it is still possible for the Undead to hate, they might no longer truly love, and the only feelings he has for the PCs is an intense jealousy of the warmth in their blood and the breath in their lungs...

## Scary Scene Two

The characters have entered the Upland Marsh for some reason, and it is the umpteenth attack by what they believe to be zombies. At this point, while still scary, zombies are not that truly horrifying. However, in fact it is Wight-Thralls that the characters are fighting, and when one of them loses an arm, it calmly grabs it, presses it against its arm stump, and presto, it grows back again!

The Thralls fight with great skill and determination, being monitored by their master, a true Marsh-Wight which lies hidden in a nearby stand of rushes, almost completely submerged, studying the characters for weaknesses. If its minions are defeated, it will wait a few minutes to let the characters drop their guard - and then he rises from the marsh, grabs one of them and tries to drag him or her down...

## Notes from Nochet concluded...

[XXIX.loznoch.7/redf] The Red faction was recently taken over by foreign interests, in fact merchants from Peloria who set aside the faction's Darkness origins, claiming the colour instead for our glorious Red Goddess! While this regrettably caused a few defections, the Reds are gaining a growing number of new supporters, lured by the superior charioteers and horses Lunar money has been able to buy. Some of these drivers and teams have come all the way from distant Pent and the Redlands, by way of Tarsh! While some disgruntled Zorak Zoran aficionados are said to be talking about establishing a new faction, the Blacks, now that their Red faction has seemingly "sold out" to the Lunars, we urge any visitor from the Empire to "cheer on the Reds" when they visit the Hippodrome (avoid sitting in Bays 11 - 14 and especially Bay 13, where most of the malcontented ex-Reds congregate).

[XXIX.loznoch.8/slav] Most of the charioteers at the Hippodrome are slaves, owned by individual members of the various factions, or by racing syndicates (that sometimes spread across the factions). A charioteer may earn his freedom over time, and many charioteers are freedmen or free citizens. Males of noble rank are forbidden to compete, except on certain prescribed race days.

The best charioteers are the idols of the crowd, even though the most famous among them are often slaves. Statues are erected depicting them, songs and poems are composed in their honour and children are often named after them. Naturally, the more conservative of the matriarchs consider the idea of otherwise decent women swooning over such men disgusting. Despite this, the stands at the Hippodrome reserved for the Earth Priestesses are always full to capacity on race days, and among their number are the sport's most vociferous supporters.

[XXIX.loznoch.9/slav] Quoted by a follower of Tomas the Seer, 1611: "First comes the year of the lion, then the year of the wolf, but it is the year of the bat that will bring the Lady to her knees. Then seek out the son of a White King."

[Unfiled Fragment RP 18-015] Each type of the chaotic dark denizens that haunt the upland marsh all bear a striking resemblance to each other. There have only been two-headed Dragonsnails, all which have the same shell markings. Every Jack O'Bear has a larger left arm, and each Walktapus has the same number of tentacles and hunched forward walk. It is as if they were all cast from the mold...



# Upland Marsh Plants

translated by Eric Rowe

[Rodin's fragments and editorial inserted by Thorgal the Far Traveller, ex-apprentice to Rodin]

One of the more surprising botanical research areas missed by Rodin Greenbeak in his noted journals has been Delecti's Marsh. It is known that Rodin did venture into the swamp more than once as ducks are known to do, but he published nothing officially in his journals. During the investigation into his disappearance some notes were recovered pertaining to this though. I have included appropriate sections from it in the following article. Incomplete though they are, I think they may shed some light into his experiences in the marsh and possibly even his mysterious vanishing.



## Blackthorn Trees

(*Ater-Sentis Mortuus*)

**Appearance:** Blackthorn trees have a slight similarity to oak trees but tend to be larger. What is most striking about them is the jet black colour of their bark and the strange twisting gyrations many of their limbs seem to have made. Even the leaves share the dark shade of the bark. Closer examination of the bark reveals many minute thorns easily capable of puncturing skin.

**What the PC's know:** Players will know that in some way Blackthorn trees are responsible for the spreading of the marsh. Locals will know that the Lismelder tribe, especially the Indrodar cultists, try to remove one tree each year, but have been too busy lately due to the Lunar presence. The players may also know that Blackthorn trees are often guarded by other foul vegetation, or possibly even some of Delecti's zombies.

**GM's Background:** In 1383(though possible earlier as well) the pale skinned Dancers of Darkness spread out from the marsh planting rods of power into the earth. From these water flowed and extended the borders of the marsh. Each of these evil rods eventually took root and grew into what are now known as Blackthorn trees. Each tree was at one time protected by many of Delecti's zombies as well as other dangers. Over time this protection has been reduced, but any attempt to remove a rod/tree would likely be met with heavy resistance. Only lately has the Indrodar cult built up enough strength to challenge the current marsh boundaries. If a tree is destroyed the area around it will eventually dry out and be reclaimed from the marsh.

Ducks taught local Humakti the ritual to destroy the trees safely, but they are still required to participate if the destruction of the tree is to last. No one knows quite why at this point. If used properly the ritual pacifies the animating spirit inside the tree, and severs the dead roots that attach to the original living ones still growing underground. Delecti's defences must be dealt with in the traditional fashion.

**Powers and statistics:** If for some reason a person manages to get close to a Blackthorn tree they will find it very hostile to life. The bark is covered with small thorns which ooze a POT 10 poison and the leaves are covered with acid. Anything shaking the tree, like an axe, will cause 3d6 worth of acid to drip from the leaves. Almost every tree is constantly guarded by a small force of 1d10 + 10 of Delecti's zombies. They are always hostile.

Additionally, each tree has a malignant, tortured dryad trapped inside, who can manifest to protect her home. She is a combination shade/dryad, with all the abilities of both, but usually uses evil sorcery rather than other magic. She also has a special ability to bind recently dead spirits noted below.

If anything dies near a Blackthorn Tree (including those foolishly climbing up) the tree will attempt to use its 5d6 POW to capture the spirit and bind it. Each tree will have 1d10 spirits currently bound into it. Friendly spirits will attempt to dissuade people from approaching anywhere near the tree, including warning them about dangerous plants nearby and the approach of Delecti's forces. Neutral spirits will not leave the tree unless it is directly threatened and then they will become hostile. Hostile spirits will attempt to possess persons approaching within 150 meters of the tree. If successful they will climb the tree, killing the possessed host.

[From Rodin's notes: The taste of death. That's what it was: nothing but the taste of death. All that terrible bother fighting Zombies and other horrible blasphemies alongside the Death Lords and for what? The Blackthorn tree has no sap, no tender shoots to nibble, nothing but a bitter blackened bark and rotted softwood core. Both were lacking all flavours, all sense of the delightful play of sweets and salts and bitters on the palate. Only the residue of ash and the stench of death, wafting from to the nostrils as you break your teeth chewing the crusty bark. Yuck!]

<b>Ghost Attitude:</b>	<b>Ghost POW</b>
01-15: Friendly	01-10: 1D6
16-40: Neutral	11-30: 2D6
41-00: Hostile	31-80: 3D6
	81-00: 4D6

## Darkdart Bushes

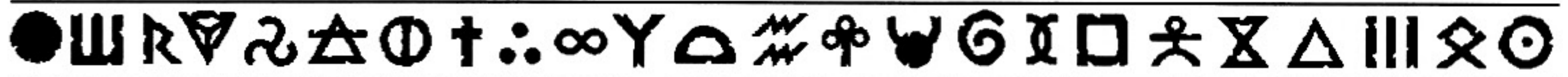
(*Pullus Telum*)

**Appearance:** Darkdart bushes look like one meter high porcupines. The spines are a dull black colour and end in a wicked point. Sickly, pale roots crawl haphazardly along the surface in all directions for up to ten meters from the base of the bush.

**What the PC's know:** Knowledge of Darkdart bushes is rare, but a few survivors have managed to describe its danger. Basically, they can learn that if they have to pass near one they should throw out something in their path to set off the plant's spines safely. Once shot the area is safe to cross.

**GM's Background:** A native mutation to the marsh, Darkdart bushes have thrived in the area. Commonly, they will grow at the top of a rise of earth from the marsh. Their sensitive roots will often cover the entire mound. Anything touching them causes a cluster of





spines to shoot in the direction where the roots were touched. Those same roots will then absorb the nutrients of the slain prey. Once an area has been shot at it is safe until the spines regrow.

**Powers and statistics:** The spines of the Darkdart bush have a range of ten meters. The plant fires 2D8 spines when its roots are touched. Each spine has a 20% chance of hitting for 1D6 damage each. They can impale. The spines take 3 weeks to regrow.

*[From Rodin's notes: A botanist not as clever as myself might not have found the hidden treasure that is the Darkdart bush. Despite their terrible reputation in some circles they are both easy to deal with and quite tasty. After tossing stones to remove the inedible spines you dig carefully into the root cluster beneath the plant. Dig very carefully, because there is a taproot that connects to a large bulb that is not immediately obvious to the inexperienced botanist. The bulb contains an intensely sweet rich sap that provides the nutrients for the rapid growth of the dangerous spines. I believe it provides benefits to one's general health as well. [ed. - Further analysis has proven only that drinking too much of this sap causes stomach distress]]*

## Gas Mushrooms

*(Boletus Toxicum)*

**Appearance:** These large aquatic fungi are coloured a brackish brown-green, to blend into the marsh bottom, and its short stem is a pale, ghostly white. The stem can measure up to 40 centimetres across. This thickness is needed to support the broad hood which can often reach a meter's width. As they rise only 15-20 centimeters off the marsh floor they are often unnoticed until it is too late. The only obvious evidence of their dangerous presence is the occasional bubble surfacing with a quiet 'pop'.

**What the PC's know:** Information on Gas Mushrooms can be obtained from any Ducks living

in the Upland Marsh. They consider the fungus a great delicacy and often actively seek its telltale sign of bubbles. Ducks know how to gather them with long poles that usually enable them to release the fungus' deadly toxins safely. One Gas Mushroom typically serves up to five hungry Ducks.

**GM's background:** Gas Mushrooms continually collect toxic gases from the brackish water for storage in their hoods. When the mushroom is full of gas it will occasionally release the excess as a foul smelling bubble. When physically disturbed (like being stepped on or kicked) the mushroom releases its whole payload of poison gas. All within 5m of where the bubble bursts from the surface will be affected by the gas unless they make a POWx5 roll to hold their breath in time. As with many of the dangerous types of foliage in the marsh there can often be found small items or valuables at its base.

**Powers and statistics:** Each mushroom has a different type of toxin from the following table:

- |                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| <b>1: Hallucinogen</b> | 1d4 Hours of fun, unless something nasty wanders by  |
| <b>2: Acidic</b>       | 1d10 Potency Acid.                                   |
| <b>3: Poison</b>       | 1d10 Potency.  |
| <b>4: Poison 2</b>     | Causes vomiting. Incapacitates for 20-CON hours.     |
| <b>5: Disease</b>      | Random Type.   |
| <b>6: Poison 3</b>     | Causes unconsciousness. Deadly unless others present |
| <b>7: Fear</b>         | Paranoia for 1d4 hours.                              |
| <b>8: Weakness</b>     | -1D6 STR & CON for 1 day.                            |

*[Rodin's notes: I was back home visiting my mother when a few of my old school chums talked me into a mushroom hunt in the swamp. While quite dangerous, they knew my expertise would both keep them safe and doubtless end in a significant assortment of delectable fungi. [ed. - A little research by myself did in fact imply that Rodin was indeed excellent about collecting marsh mushrooms. However, the local duck the leaps in fear at even the slightest sight of the colour purple may imply his safety record is not what he would have you believe.]]*

## Zombie Reeds

*(Mortuus Calamus)*

**Appearance:** They have the appearance of any other clump of grass that has managed to grab a small bit of earth above the waterline on which to grow. Only very close examination will reveal the thousands of deadly tiny tentacles residing amidst the blades.

**What the PC's know:** There are rumours among marsh travellers that hint that all plants in the area have been warped by the area. It is plants like the Zombie Reed that give this impression. While happily clod-hopping through the marsh creatures are occasionally swallowed and destroyed by harmless looking vegetation. Without specific plant lore study players will know nothing of Zombie Reeds themselves, but the wise ones will be cautious near

anything growing in the marsh.

**GM's Background:** Not a native plant to the region, it is possible Delecti himself arranged the import of the first of these horrid marsh grasses for defensive purposes. Whatever the cause of their origin, they are now spread throughout the marsh, though fortunately still very rare.

**Powers and statistics:** Hidden amidst the actual grass are thousands of tiny tentacles used to grasp anything foolish enough to wander onto the plant. Once captured the victim loses 1d4 INT per round until they reach zero. The only escape is to resist versus the strength of the Zombie Reeds, which can vary from 10 to 50, depending upon the size of the plant. The trapped victim can be aided by friends in trying to break free. Hacking at the plant will work eventually, but long after it would be useful to anyone trapped by it. If the plant is recognised in advance it is best dealt with from afar and with fire.

If a victim is freed (or frees herself) from the Zombie Reeds their INT will return at a point a day, though spells lost will not be recovered. If the unfortunate victim reaches a zero INT they effectively become zombies. All they can do is wander about very near the plant until they expire and provide food for it. This also has the side effect of attracting other beings to the plant for additional nutritional benefit.

*[Rodin's notes: A great find in the marsh! While quite dangerous to obtain, these delicious and delightfully wiggly little tubers make a great appetiser. Sweet and moist on the palate, they release a burst of tangy oils upon biting through them. They can be eaten raw or lightly boiled. If raw I recommend a light cream sauce or salad dressing as a dip to help blend the strength of the multiple tastes.]]*

## Yellow Flower or Duck Flax

*(Aureus Flos)*

**Appearance:** Yellow Flower is a tall, broad-leaved reed noted for its large five-petalled flower. Typical fields of reeds reach a height of six meters and are often planted packed tightly together to help the large single stem support the flower at the tip. As is obvious by the name, the flower is a brilliant yellow colour, but it changes to a darker golden shade when the reeds are ready to harvest.

**What the PC's know:** This reed variant is harvested in great quantities by Ducks and is noted for the bright yellow flower that clashes so with the general dimness of the marsh. What makes Duck Flax so useful is its easily managed and harvested fibre. While not making a fabric noted for its beauty, it provides a necessity in the marsh. The soft absorbent fibres repel water while collecting the brackish oils that cover so much of the marsh. This is very useful to the Ducks that have to go about in the marsh because without them the oils and slime of the water seep into their feathers and require constant cleaning. A Duck Flax jacket is easily cleaned and worn again. Only rarely will you see a Duck in the actual marsh not wearing one of their light flaxen jackets.





**GM's Background:** Duck Flax jackets are quite easy to make and can easily be obtained from Ducks if you are on friendly terms with them. Larger than medium sizes must be specially ordered.

**Powers and statistics:** Ducks wandering the marsh without jackets will slowly muck up their feathers. In game terms they will suffer a 5% penalty to their swim skill for every 66 hours they spend unprotected in the marsh. A jacket will protect from marsh slime for up to two days of constant use in the marsh. Five minutes with a rock and a pail of water is all that is required to clean them when they are soiled. The jackets are fairly heavy as they are generally made with several layers. They can be worn over other non-metal armour and their protection value is one point. They have the encumbrance of soft leather. Their multiple layers give them an additional point of armour protection against missile weapons.

*[From Rodin's notes: I was enraged at the new tailor in town. He reversed the runes on my new flax jacket! Alas, I had to be off into the swamp right away or I would have insisted upon them immediately being fixed. Instead I had to guide my friends about without a new jacket. [ed. - As I have repeatedly tried to point out, Rodin's vanity has more than once gotten him and other into dangerous situations.]]*

## Wailing Trees (Ploratis Monitus)

**Appearance:** Wailing trees are twisted, misshapen and lifeless. Their knobbly branches bear neither leaves nor fruit, but often parasitic vines will make their home in the half-dead, half-alive wood giving some vague appearance of life. Withered shrubs and weeds often cluster about the base of these trees as well.

**What the PC's know:** Some of the trees in the marsh make horrible wailing noises. Rumours include the possibility that they are some poor trapped soul or perhaps just another strange product of the marsh.

**GM's Background:** These trees are indeed part of the very warped nature of the marsh. They are neither alive nor dead. One is created when someone dies near a recently dead tree. The marsh takes hold of the fleeing soul and forces it into the tree to try to give it life again. Needless to say, it is not pleasant for the tree or the soul. When a living being passes nearby and the tree notices it is reminded of its only vaguely live state and wails out its sorrow. Delecti learned of these and takes advantage of them as part of his elaborate warning system.

**Powers and statistics:** The tree can detect life up to 150 meters away. When it does it will wail horribly for up to five minutes. Only the complete destruction of the tree will stop the noise (Though you are probably doing it a favour).

*[From Rodin's notes: I felt my father today. In the eerie wailing of the marsh while hunting tasty mushrooms my bones felt him. Deep down I felt him, making my feathers all stand on*

*end. Unfortunately, at that moment a patrol of Zombies drove us from the area and I was unable to locate the source of my feeling. But, I will be back. [ed. - Rodin's father was lost in the marsh when Rodin was a mere fledgling.]]*

## Sticky-whips (Tenax Vitas)

**Appearance:** Sticky-whips have the typical appearance of the hanging vines that drape from many of the marsh trees. They look from afar to be sturdy enough to use as rope or as support in getting through the marsh waters. Only close examination reveals the sticky secretions covering the tips of the vines.



**What the PC's know:** Nothing is safe in the marsh. Rumours that vines in the marsh strangle anything passing below them may be only slightly exaggerated.

**GM's Background:** Sticky-whips are yet another warped version of a common vine from the marsh. This mutation is capable of movement of the vines and capable of capturing prey with its sticky tips. When prey gets within range one or more vines whip out towards it and attempt to glue it. If the prey cannot escape immediately the secretions from the vine will quickly paralyse it for subsequent digestion.

**Powers and statistics:** When a person or animal comes within 10 meters of a cluster of vines 1d3 vines will snap out to try to capture it. Each vine has a 50% chance of hitting. If one hits it will stick

to the target with a glue strength of 10. The target can resist with their own strength, but they will lose 5 STR per round until they are paralysed. Others coming to aid the victim are also subject to attack by 1d3 vines. If a person is freed of vines or is not successfully attacked it is a simple matter to hack through the vines to free others.

*[From Rodin's notes: Not worth the bother I say. Tedious to obtain and not collected without considerable risk to life and limb, sticky-whips are not even salvage-worthy for glue. You get their tingly goo all in your feathers and there seems to be no easy way to prepare them in such a way to remove it. I wouldn't recommend bothering with this species at all. Even if you're willing to gum-up your mouth for a few hours you'll chew nothing but bitter, fibrous goo.]*

## Trees of Life (Vita Tutela)

**Appearance:** An obvious abnormality amid the generally foul flora of the marsh the Trees of Life appear as healthy, well foliated trees. Broad, dark green leaves drape over into the water creating a dome of leaves around the trunk. From afar it appears as a giant green ball.

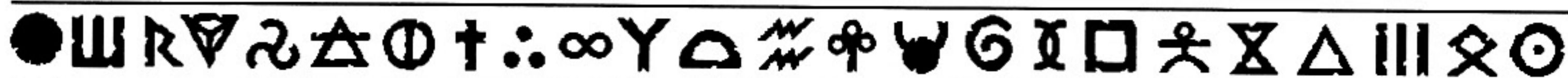
**What the PC's know:** Not all within the swamp is twisted and evil. There are ducks who have lived long within the swamp that know of trees which will protect the passing traveller. Perhaps a kind old duck will tell you of their locations.

**GM's Background:** These very rare trees are in fact native to the swamp. As part of its perverse nature, Trees of Life counteract in some small way the death associations of the marsh. Within the shelter of these trees adventurers and marsh dwellers can find safety and security. It is known that Delecti and his Zombies are somehow blind to the presence of these trees, which is fortunate for he would surely destroy them. As is, it allows the only truly safe place to hide from his zombies and the other foul things of the marsh.

**Powers and statistics:** Trees of Life are completely severed from the Death Rune and are undetectable by those with a strong death association. This includes Rune Levels of Humakt or other death cults. Within the shelter of one of these trees the water is pure, the air is clean, and there are usually a few tasty berries for the hungry traveller. Even the mists that usually cover the marsh lift above the trees, so that Yelm may be visible overhead through the leaves. While hidden by the drapery of leaves persons within are undetectable by Delecti or any of his minions.

*[From Rodin's notes: Searching my memory gave me what I needed. The location to the Tree of Life my father had once pointed out in this part of the swamp. There I was able to rest and recover my strength as Delecti's vampires combed the area for me. I'm still not sure what I said that so offended him, but I'll lose my tail-feathers to a Lunar before I'll try and visit him again. The nerve of some things!]*





White out.  
Thick heavy damp fog,  
The moon casting its eerie red glow somewhere  
deep in the fog.  
An evil night.  
A killer's moon.

The swamp gurgled and moaned.  
Things unknown and unseen crawled and  
slithered deep in the swamp.  
Each step requiring effort, as though the swamp  
refused to release its hold on the troopers  
Each trooper afraid to stop.  
Stopping meant death.  
If a man stopped he was lost:  
March or Die.

Delecti's swamp was an evil and ominous place in  
daylight.  
At night it took on a whole different perspective,  
as the nightly fogs rolled in off the low lying  
lands,  
The night became a living thing.  
Odd calls,  
strange sounds:  
at night the dead came out.

So far so good, they had travelled deep into the  
swamp,  
their guide leading them.  
Initially the stench of the Guide had been bad,  
but as they ventured deeper and deeper into the  
swamp,  
the smell of the guide disappeared, replaced by a  
fetid heavy stink of rotting that seemed to  
pervade the entire swamp.

Their guide showed no fear.  
In fact he knew no fear,  
for dead men know nothing, just like dead men  
tell no tales.  
This one especially would have problems: the  
Guide's mouth had long been sewn up.

"Keep moving, and stay alert"  
The captain whispered as they came closer to  
their destination.

The Legionaries, all veterans of numerous  
campaigns,  
all now showed the first signs of the nagging  
hysteria that Delecti's swamp could produce.

The Captain checked his men as they walked by:  
a word here, a gesture there.  
Bringing up the rear was the sergeant.  
A long look of understanding went between  
them:  
they knew.  
They had been sold out, they were sure.  
They had upset somebody and they had drawn  
this duty.

# WHITE OUT

by Colin  
Phillips

If either of them made it back the other would  
seek vengeance for both.

"Keep them together and keep them alert," the  
captain spoke.  
Both of them realised the command wasn't  
necessary;  
both of them were glad to hear it.  
"Don't worry, they are good lads" replied the  
sergeant.

The Captain nodded and moved further up along  
the line.

The zombie stopped on what seemed to be a  
firmer piece of land. A small island,  
a paragon of virtue in the seething chaos of the  
swamp.

The captain ventured forth, seeing the outline of  
some sort of building,  
deep in the fog on the opposite side of the island.  
They were here.  
Time to get this over and done with.

Brief instructions were given.  
The two squads formed.  
The captain's went left and the sergeant's right.  
"Classic pincer movement," the captain mumbled  
to himself.  
Inside this building was somebody who had upset  
the Generals,  
which one he was neither knew nor cared.  
It could have been Fazzur himself, it meant  
nothing to him.

Whoever it was had a lot of clout, especially  
getting Delecti to give them a guide.

How they had contacted him and what the cost  
of that Guide was made him shudder.  
Delecti only wanted one thing:  
Replacements.

The teams headed closer to the building.  
No guards?  
Strange!  
The outline of building could be now made out.  
A small wooden lean to.  
A light was burning in the window

They closed the distance,  
and stopped.  
The Captain did one last check and then nodded.  
The sergeant stood.  
Getting his whole team's attention,  
raised his arm and as it fell, ten men raced  
forward into the building,  
the yelling and screaming breaking the gully  
silence of the bog.

The captain held his team in reserve.  
After a few minutes, the sergeant stepped out of  
the building, and gestured for him and his men to  
follow. Slowly and carefully they made their way  
to the building.  
The Sergeant's men were milling about, emptying  
cupboards and chests.  
Empty.  
Everything was empty.  
The Captain walked about the room checking for  
himself.  
Nothing here.

He threw a puzzled look at the sergeant.  
"Nobody!" he was supposed to be here, this place  
looks like it hasn't even been lived in for weeks,  
so who lit the lamp?"  
The lamp.

It hit him like a physical blow.  
They weren't some General's petty vengeance.  
They were Delecti's payment.  
The Xaroni, as a penal regiment was ever at the  
mercy of blood thirsty Generals, but could one  
stoop so low? Every trooper in the empire had  
heard rumours about the Bat, but giving his men  
to Delecti...

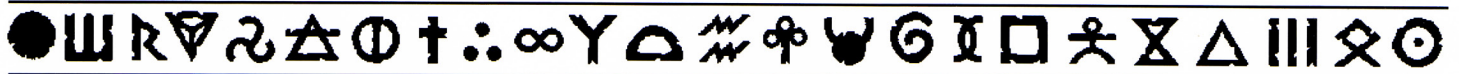
He turned to speak to the sergeant, who was  
standing by the door, giving troopers orders.  
Delecti was out there and his team was stuck in  
the swamp.  
Their protection gone.  
Their guide gone.

They were payment in full from one greedy  
General to the Necromancer.  
At the door he could see them materialise from  
the fog:  
the dead had come to claim their prize.









*He walked down the alleyway  
The predator showed himself for the first time.*

*"Have you brought the Hazia"  
the Adjutant whispered  
"No, my friends have"*

*The Adjutant turned quickly looking  
for the new threat.*

*Seeing nothing he began to laugh:  
"What is this boy,  
are you making me jump at shadows now?"  
The predator said nothing  
"I have seen you somewhere before boy, where"*

*"On the parade ground"  
as he said this they appeared,  
all twenty of them.*

*"What..."  
A look of complete bewilderment  
and then comprehension.  
His shoulder sagged as he recognised these  
spirits.*

*The shock began.  
The predator struck.  
A tiny blade,  
hidden in the palm of his hand  
Scratching a wound in the armoured man's arm.*

*The Adjutant turned  
quickly drawing his sword,  
it cleared the scabbard before dropping from  
nerveless fingers.  
"What... happening... to... me?"*

*"Nerve poison.  
It will take you weeks to die and it won't be  
pleasant, and when you do they  
will all be waiting for you,  
Xaroni never forget their bond,  
never forget that they only have each other".  
The armoured man tottered and fell to the floor*

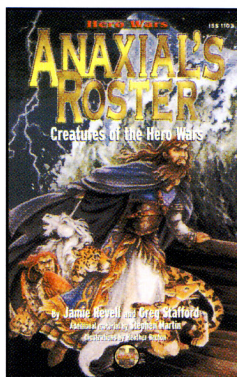
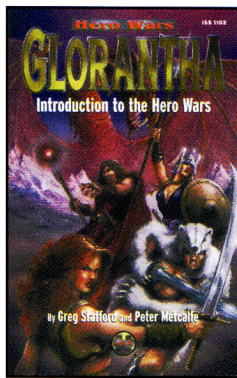
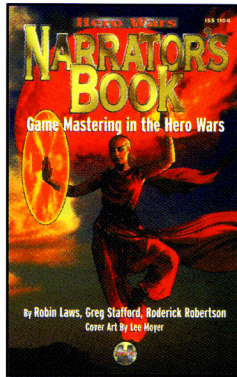
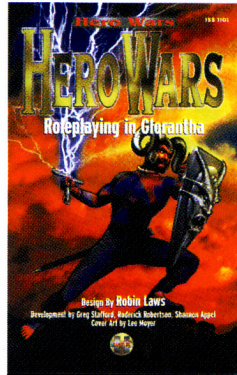
*The predator walked away,  
for the first time in five years he could not feel  
them*

*They had other things to do now.  
He was free of them,  
his brothers who had died,  
so he might live.  
He remembered that day when they drew straws.  
He had won.  
That day in the swamp.*

*Tears rolled down his cheeks as his disappeared  
into the dark.  
Feeling the great weight of a soul alone.  
A soul who could now grieve*

*Once the street was empty,  
the Talking Man uncurled himself from his  
hiding place.*

*He had been there just in case.  
Somebody had to look after Dirk,  
even if only from himself.*



The Hero Wars are nearly here. Across Glorantha heroes prepare for the greatest cataclysm that the world has ever seen. Hero Wars, Role playing in Glorantha brings the players into the action at any level of experience: from clan warrior to hero or even demigod. Take part in mythic quests on the hero plane, invoke the power of the gods, control spirits, or force the very laws of nature to obey your command. **This is the Hero Wars.** Hero Wars is a role playing game where players create imaginary characters who will struggle with gods and demons in the fabulous world of Glorantha. A Narrator provides the plot, animates the population of the world, and provides the challenges for heroes to overcome. This book is a complete game including everything (except the dice) that a player needs to create a colorful magical character and join in the epic struggle. We suggest that game masters will greatly enhance their game with a copy of Narrator's Book.

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*"A world of adventure awaits you; are you brave enough to face the gods to remake the world?"  
battle cry for the Hero Wars*



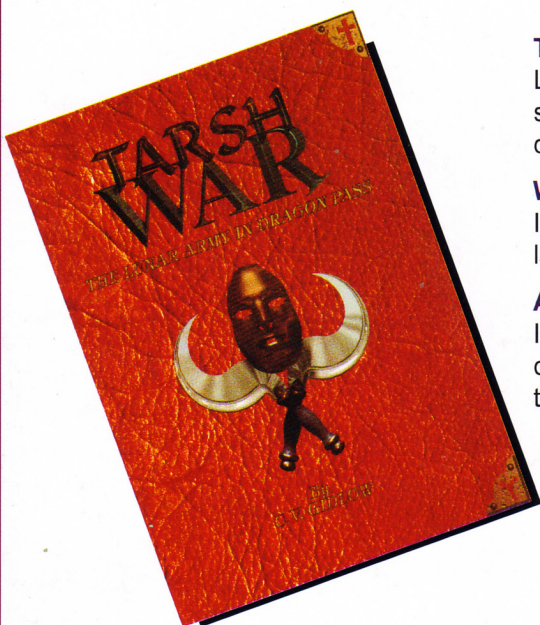
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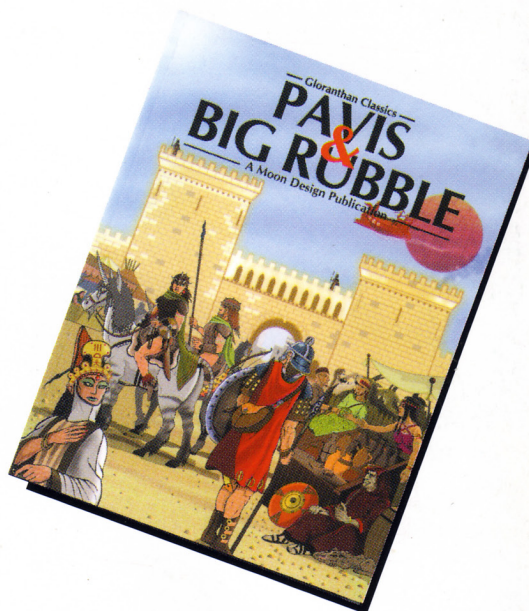
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