

The Chaos Society Magazine

Tradetalk

Glorantha • Hero Wars • HeroQuest • RuneQuest

#13



Outside Genertela The Islands

The Vadeli
Trowjang Amazons
Jruzela
Black Wave Channel
Monsters of Lorai
Korola

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Tradetalk

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Contributions - Contributions by fans of HeroQuest, RuneQuest, Glorantha, Cthulhu, Stormbringer, Pendragon, Hawkmoon, Corum and especially artwork, are welcome. Each author or artist will be rewarded with a free copy of this issue containing their contribution(s).



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Editorial

Hi Fellows

WELCOME TO our long awaited issue # 13. Some people say 13 is an unlucky number, and after compiling this issue I am well aware of that. This issue was planned as a "Mature Readers Only" issue, and should have included all the slippery and offensive parts of Glorantha, but unfortunately the reservations of some of our friends have caused us to cancel that issue. You will find some of the articles which were planned for that issue in future Chaos Society publications. The rest will vanish in the void forever.

This new issue #13 is an "Outside Genertela - The Islands" Issue. Outside of Genertela is a very broad description, and this was my intention, because I had to fill an all new issue very fast. Some of the articles in this issue are descriptive (Peter Metcalfe's Vadeli, James Fruzetta's Jrustela, and Trotsky's Loral), while others are in Homeland style (Simon Bray's Trowjang, and Nils Weinander's Korola Islands). The Trowjang article is accompanied by a short story by Sandy Petersen. The Jrustela article is accompanied by an episode.

This issue also features an all new Cthulhu article by Shannon Appelcline. It will be the last regular one. As you might have noticed we have changed the cover layout a little bit. Tradetalk will become a Glorantha magazine from now on. We might use a Stormbringer, Cthulhu or Pendragon article in future issues, but we don't feel us forced to do so in any issue.

Issaries News

HeroQuest was released on August 15th. It is so MUCH more than just a "Hero Wars - 2nd Edition", you will not believe it until you have read it by yourself. Fortunately this is easy: www.heroquest-rpg.com, the Issaries website has some chapters, as well as other support material online. This support material includes: different variations of character sheets, a demo scenario, conversion notes Hero Wars to HeroQuest, and... **HeroQuest Voices**, a 64 page PDF file with "What my Father told me" and "What the Priest told me" sections for the 10 cultures of the rulebook, plus 7 more! Downloadable for free!

Hero's Book has also seen print right on time (release date October 6th). It includes everything a player needs to know about the HeroQuest game system and the cultures of the Heortlings and the Lunars.

Dragon Pass - A Gazetteer of Kerofinela (formerly known as "Kerofinela - Land of Thunder"), a Gazetteer and map of Dragon Pass is also available (release date November 21st).

At the end of 2003 / beginning of 2004 **Masters of Luck and Death - Hero Bands for the Hero Wars**, 26 herobands out of Dragon Pass, will be published.

For a March release is planned either **Under the Red Moon: Imperial Lunar Handbook Volume 2** (more likely), or **Gathering Thunder: Sartar Rising Volume 3** (less likely), depending on which manuscript comes in first. The other one will be published next. Much more is in the pipeline.

Two Work in Progress books are still in the pipeline: **Heroquests and Heroquesting** and **The Lunar Army**.

The Chaos Society

Since Tradetalk # 12 we published **Ye Booke of Tentacles Vol. IV**, and **Ye Booke of Tentacles Vol. V**, both Scenario Specials with more than 100 pages each, and lots of Glorantha episodes and additional stuff for Stormbringer and Cthulhu.

Ian Thomson's **Shadows of Pavis**, the Pavis & Big Rubble Companion Vol. 4, was the final one, but we might publish another companion: **A Pavis County / Borderlands Companion**.

Penelope Love's novel **The Widow's Tale** also saw print: 244 pages, trade paperback size, full colour cover, including an Introduction to Glorantha by Peter Metcalfe. A very fine novel, written almost 10 years ago, and finally available though www.tradetalk.de and good gaming stores.

Path of the Damned # 3 is still on the way, but PotD # 1 is reprinted as we announce this. And more books are in the works.

The announcement of this "Outside Genertela" issue brought in so much

stuff, that we can publish the next issue right away: **Tradetalk # 14 - Outside Genertela - The Southern Continent** will contain articles about Umathela, Kumanku, Golden Kareeshtu and Loral, as well as the Marthino Sea and the Aldryami of the Errinoru Jungle.

Our plan to publish a two part **First Age Special** hasn't been cancelled, but will take longer than anybody expected. We shouldn't have had announced it so early anyway.

Parallel to the First Age Special, we will start to collect articles for the next two Issues of Tradetalk. Which one will see print first depends on the contributions we get: Tradetalk # ? - **The Uncivilized West** will be about Fronela outside of Loskalm, Ralios and Old Seshnela; depending on contributions. Tradetalk # ?? - **Heroes and Herobands** will contain unusual hero bands, as well as interesting narrator characters who dwell in Dragon Pass.

The Unspoken Word

Paper Wars - Dragon Pass At War, a CD ROM with paper miniatures in full colour ready for printout and use was released in March. Six full colour maps were published in June: **Heortland**, which shows us the lands of the Volsaxi and Hendreiki as well as the Esvulari; **Tarsh**, which was also on the back cover of "UW # 1 - Tarsh in Flames"; **Imther**, which will be on the back cover of the Imther booklet; **Dagori Inkarth**, which was also on the back cover of "Uz - The Trolls of Glorantha"; **Pavis County**, which shows Pavis's environs; and finally Esrolia, a rough map of that land.

There are more publications in the pipeline, please stay tuned - more information will be available in TT # 14.

Moon Design Publication

The fourth and final **Glorantha Classics Vol. IV - Borderlands and Others** will be published somewhen in 2004. It will contain Borderlands, as well as Plunder, and more.

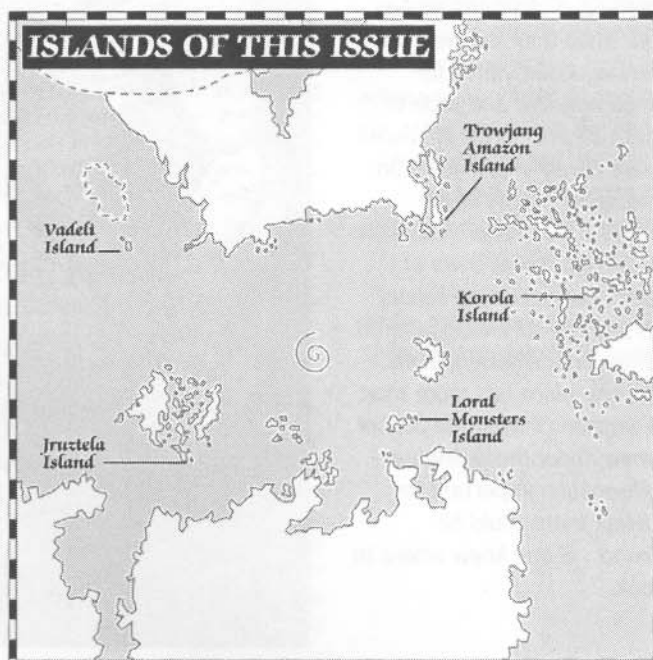
Kalikos

The Finnish Glorantha association, Kalikos, published its first English language magazine: **The Zin Letters # 1**. It contains a lot of articles about Teshnos, the Orlanthi of East Ralios and a little bit about unusual broos. At the moment it looks like they will publish one issue per year. Issue # 2 is in the works and should be a Kralorela Issue.

Please have a look at:
www.tradetalk.de

Have a good Sacred Time!

André & Ingo



Who knows about the Vadeli?

Every Malkioni knows a Vadeli atrocity story or two. All these stories are true regardless of whether the source was Zzabur's Blue Book or some drunk's ravings. But the pattern that lies behind these atrocities is largely unknown. Zzabur's Blue Book, while full of vivid detail, is uninterested in describing why. Zzabur surely knows but he has not been seen since the Closing. During the Imperial Age, a group of scholars and sorcerers established many universities under the banner of the New Viymorni School in what had been the Vadeli Empire of Chir. Conscious of the evil nature of the first Malkioni Empire in Pamaltela, they collected whatever lore they could about the Vadeli in order to avoid the same fate. Their acute fear of repeating the errors of the Vadeli blinded them to many other matters, including the errors that eventually destroyed them at the end of the Imperial Age. But while they still lived, the School disseminated its knowledge far and wide to warn others. Since the Vadeli were barely visible scum on the social fringes of the empire, the School's literature was regarded as trivia at best. But unlike the School, its writings survived scattered throughout Malkioni lands. No one place has more than a fraction of what the School knew about the Vadeli but information important to defeat them could be found...if one knew where to look.

The above passage sums up what most Malkioni care to know about the Vadeli. Although true, it omits many things that are crucial to understanding the Vadeli and ultimately thwarting them. These omissions can cost humanity its existence during the coming Hero Wars

The Vadeli

by Peter Metcalfe



Description

The Vadeli are a vile evil people that helped to destroy the Land of Logic. Originally Malkioni, they rejected everything that Malkion taught and devoted themselves instead to a life of blasphemous vice and obscene villainy. They attempted to take over the whole world and very nearly succeeded.

Originally there were three races of Vadeli, each with a different skin colour. At the end of the Age of Destruction, Zzabur drowned the sorcerous Blues with a great spell while the Brithini soldiers exterminated the murderous Reds in battle. The Browns alone survived to see the dawn of time and others permitted them to live as fishers, sailors and cheap merchants.

The Opening of the Oceans has changed everything. The Red Vadeli have returned, brutally repelling Lawful Folk from keeping the Browns under control. Everybody dreads the return of the Blues for when that happens, the World's End is surely at hand.

Culture

CIVIL VADELI

Hrestol taught Laws to the Vadeli, thereby doing what Zzabur could not. He was not able to teach them Virtue.

Whatever their flaws, most Vadeli behave civilly in public. Given their reputation, others deprecate the Vadeli as sly but still tolerate them. Yet when the Dawn had seared away the last vestiges of the Age of Destruction, the Vadeli were little more than feral beasts.

Hrestol earns the credit for the transformation. When he preached the Joy of the Heart and said that being close to God was more important than obeying the Laws, sorcerers demanded proof. Hrestol did all they requested and more when he performed the Seven Proofs of Joy, the fifth being the Taming of the Vadeli. As was well known then, the Vadeli would break every law (a philosophy that God Learners later identified as chaotic with minor success) and all thought Hrestol would fail.

But Hrestol did not. Rather than force the Vadeli to live according to the Laws, he promulgated the False Laws instead. The Vadeli, being compelled to break those laws, became Civil instead. But this miracle has an unhappy aftermath for the False Laws were used to condemn Hrestol for misrule at his trial at the City of Brass.

The False Laws only goes so far for they are only mortal laws, inferior to the Moral Laws that Civil Vadeli still must break. Hence the Civil Vadeli still commit incest, devour their children and other vile acts too numerous to recount. But, because of what Hrestol did for them, they do so politely.

VADELI GUILDS AND FAMILIES

The Vadeli use the same word for different things; thus "family" and "orgy" and also "guild" and "conspiracy".

Civil Vadeli work for both a guild and a family. Families are interested in perpetuating their wealth while guilds are ultimately interested in destroying the world. Such Vadeli have no conflicts between family and guild duties – a Vadeli is expected to embezzle from his guild to enrich his family and hoodwink his family connections into benefiting his guild. To avoid civil war, the Vadeli structure their crimes such that the ultimate cost of their misconduct falls upon non-Vadeli.

The Vadeli Families are so closely bonded by rampant incest that one family member could pass for another with little effort. Determining family status is the number of family members that a Vadeli debauches on a regular basis. Leading the family is a small group of elders that collectively debauches the rest either directly or indirectly. Each family has its own special vice that no other Vadeli practices: the Aggripi Family club baby Ouori to death for fun while the Vandaken family secretly inserts blasphemous passages into holy scriptures.

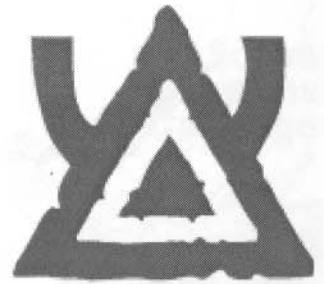
The Vadeli Guilds are defined by their conspiracy, a labyrinthine plan of the world's destruction. Each guild has a different conspiracy that it keeps secret from other guilds. Many of these conspiracies have common elements (such as the destruction of the Kingdom of Seshnela or the domination of the High Seas) and the Guilds often collaborate in order to bring about their realisation in order to further their separate conspiracies. Such collaboration results in the guilds being collectively known as an Axis. The Orange Axis reigns supreme in Jrustela while the Chirite Axis and the Luathan Axis share power in Umathela. Despite their different purposes, the Axes do not feud with each other.

Fulfilling the conspiracy requires much that the Guilds do not currently have. To obtain these things, the Guilds carry out much commercial work useful to other Malkioni, such as shipping cargo for profit. To assuage their member's natures, they trade only in immoral goods, such as slaves, blood diamonds, poisons, occult drugs, hallucinatory spices, forbidden desires, evil tomes and weapons of carnage.

SAVAGE VADELI

Many Vadeli reject Hrestol's Laws. They are a terror to all including other Vadeli.

The Civil Vadeli are torn daily between the need to behave according to the intent of the False Laws and the need to break Moral Laws. Sometimes the stress becomes too much causing a Civil Vadeli to repudiate the False Laws. Such Vadeli are Savages, spiritual heirs of the destroyers of the Land of Logic. While other Vadeli are meek, polite and peaceful, the Savage Vadeli are rude, arrogant and brutal. Where a



Vadeli Philosophy

Contrary to normal Malkioni philosophy, the destructive logists of the Vadeli distinguish between unlawful concepts and forbidden concepts. Unlawful concepts are those prohibited by the laws (or, as the Vadeli would say, Zzaburite legalism) while forbidden concepts are intrinsically prohibited (i.e. condemned by God). When Vadel crossed the borders of the Land of Logic to Pamaltela, he did so unlawfully because Zzabur had created that border. The action was not forbidden for it was not contrary to his nature nor did Malkion condemn him for doing so. Hrestol's popularity among the Vadeli stems from his advocacy of unlawful conduct. He had taken the same mental step that Vadel had and only his martyrdom prevented him from stepping into the forbidden. Unsurprisingly the Vadeli prefer the unlawfulness of the Malkioni to the sterile lawful Brithini.



Interlude Bribing a Vadeli

The Vadeli delight in being for sale. However they do not want money but immoral acts of corruption. Lies are acceptable so long as they cause harm to somebody else. Breaking a solemn oath, revealing a solemn secret, acts of treachery or offering a companion as a slave are all excellent choices. Sexual immorality is permissible but it should be stronger than mere unlawful acts – the dungeons of the Safety Patrol are full of sailors that thought romancing the cabin boy was sufficient. Offering oneself to the Vadeli for satisfaction is well thought off so long as one does not offer anything the Vadeli cannot do.

Civil Vadeli prefers to corrupt the Malkioni, the Savage revels in gore and atrocity. Since the Opening, many Savages have shed their Brown skins for Red.

Savages belong to neither guild nor family for those are civil institutions, products of the False Laws that they have rejected. They will act for the guilds and families but do so for the opportunity to commit acts of wanton brutality more than anything else.

The life of a Savage is not a happy one for repudiating the False Laws is the start of a long, slow, mental decline into primordial bestiality. After a century of decline, a Savage is both pitiful and terrifying at the same time – they wear no clothing, rage incomprehensibly yet are supernaturally invincible. When Savages start attacking other Vadeli, the Safety Patrol banishes them to nameless isles deep within the Three Seas. A few Vadeli magicians know how to open a magical path from those isles to allow Savage Hordes to enter the mortal world for a time.

Savages are common in Vadeli lands, sometimes close to a quarter of the population. Although contemptuous of Civil Vadeli, the Savages still recognize their common purpose and freely participate in their evil schemes to destroy the world. Among other nations, Savages can be found depending on how weak the authorities are.

RELATIONS WITH OTHER MALKIONI

Malkion commands us to admit fellow Logicals into our lands, whether they are Zzaburite, Waertagi or Vadeli. Because of their evil nature, we allow the Vadeli into our ports and no further.

Despite their deserved reputation as evildoers, the Vadeli are found in Malkioni ports. The reasons for this tolerance are twofold. Firstly the Malkioni are scripturally obliged to allow visiting Logicals into their realms. Because the Vadeli can prove they are Logical (and nobody has managed to disprove this), they are allowed entry.

Although the Vadeli are perverse Logicals, no criminal penalty (such as mutilation, banishment or execution) can be imposed on them without due process in a lawful court. Since this requires evidence of a crime, something that the Vadeli are adept in concealing, they are untouchable. Unlawful actions, such as lynch mobs or pogroms, are rejected outright as a solution for Malkioni authorities shun acts of Social Chaos. Besides failure to protect visiting Logicals is a badge of great shame to any civilisation that prides itself on descent from the Land of Logic.

More success has been had in containing the Vadeli. Originally the Vadeli were restricted to a few port cities. Such laws only incited the Vadeli to break those restrictions and with their exploration magics, the Vadeli soon turned those laws into a sick joke. The solution was found in emulating the False Laws: the authorities now forbid the Vadeli to set foot within the port cities, causing them to gather at those places and nowhere else.

Language

The Vadeli speak and write an evil language that suppresses virtue and promotes vice in all that use it. Outsiders that study it too much have gone mad, bad or missing.

Like other Malkioni, the Vadeli speak and write in the western manner. They are forbidden, via the False Laws, to use it to communicate to others for fear of corrupting them. The New Viymorni School analyzed the Vadeli language as having three parts.

The first part is the Lawful Form, which is similar to the speech and writings of other Malkioni. There is nothing inherently wrong about this portion of Vadeli speech but it lays the foundations for the evil that follows.

The second part is the Unlawful Form. This uses syntax and other cues in a manner contrary to normal Malkioni grammar. This is present in all writings and utterances as an aid to understanding the information conveyed by the Lawful Form. Cunningly the unlawful form is based upon the Malkioni words so that Malkioni can understand the Vadeli language without being aware that it is used.

The Forbidden Form is neither spoken nor written. Instead it arises within people's minds from the interplay of the Lawful and Unlawful Forms that have been used. A Vadeli can carry out an ordinary conversation about weather while inflicting a deep sense of despair in his listener. Vadeli grimoires appear as innocent tomes but the real teachings arise from the dark imagery that arises in the reader's mind.

Government

THE ADMIRALTY

The Vadeli obey their Admirals without hesitation for the Admirals are the most evil Vadeli alive.

First created during the Empire of Endernef, the Admirals rule the Vadeli. Although Zzabur drowned most of them, a hidden few still communicate from secret places in the Cosmos. Now they have returned in Jrustela and Pamaltela.

Despite never meeting each other, the Admirals were impossibly aware of what every other Admiral was doing. The New Viymorni School discovered that the Admirals could communicate with each other at great distance through the Forbidden Form.

Further researches identified several types of admirals. The Vice-Admirals, as their name indicates, are dedicated to performing or inciting a single vice. The Admiral of Murder either assassinated his foes outright or caused their death while the Admiral of Treachery corrupted his opponents into betraying their civilisation. The Rear Admirals were initially notorious for

attacking their enemy's rear – they later became feared for secretly operating within lawful civilisations to prepare some devastating revolt or disturbance. But above all others were the three Grand Admirals: the Brown, the Blue and the Red. These ruled their respective races and, more importantly, admirals of those races. Together they operated in diabolical harmony as the Axis of Destruction.

THE SAFETY PATROL

The Safety Patrol guards the Vadeli by allowing villains to go free while arresting Lawful Folk as wicked bandits.

Since the adoption of the False Laws, the Civil Vadeli have needed protection from their savage kin. They established the Safety Patrol to compel the Savages to behave with a modicum of civility. Since the Barbarians obey the False Laws to some extent, the Safety Patrol has become hostile to everybody that obeys the law. Hence over the centuries, they have extended their purpose from policing the Savages to persecuting lawful folk that visit Vadeli lands or even venture there accidentally.

Visitors are politely greeted then questioned to determine what laws they have broken. Smugglers, pirates, slavers, chaotics and other nefarious criminals are quickly identified and allowed to proceed with little trouble while virtuous visitors are clapped in chains and detained in squalid brigs. Captive savages make the visitor's stay unpleasant while the wardens indulge in refined tortures from time to time.

The Safety Patrol only releases a prisoner if they are convinced that the prisoner is no longer virtuous. The usual proofs required are a demonstration of gross depravity, a confession on oath to numerous atrocities (even if false, the perjury is sufficient) or blasphemous denunciation of one's faith. Bribery is also possible but the Patrol cannot be brought with money alone. Instead the bribe must have a high moral cost, such as betraying a close companion or one's country. The longer the prisoner is detained, the greater the level of villainy required.

Military

Very few Vadeli enjoy fighting – those few are still far too many.

Only Savages are fond of battle for their civil kin prefer subtle corruptions to coarse violence. Warfare is also associated with the Red Vadeli for the arts and requirements of that race make them terrifying foes. Since the Opening, the strongest Savages are also red-skinned although it is unclear whether they were born red during the Closing, had transformed themselves or were summoned from Hell.

Savages have no military discipline for its lawfulness is alien to their nature. Instead they fight as individuals, relying on decades of experience and twisted sorceries for protection. They prefer close combat, not out of a sense of valour but for the pleasure of watching their

dying victim's torment. They do use missiles but only for incapacitating their foes to prevent their escape.

Like the Mostali, the Vadeli have many arcane weapons that literally beyond the capability of mortals to duplicate. Unlike the Mostali, they are willing to sell these weapons to other humans but many wish they did not do so. These despicable inventions are commonly known as Weapons of Carnage for they cause their victims needless suffering. Malkioni kingdoms have prohibited their use yet Vadeli merchants can easily find an insecure prince to sell to.

Vadeli philosophy and magic

The nature of Vadeli Evil

Vadel, the father of the Vadeli, perverted the holy laws of Malkion to create Evil and Corruption. His children commit evil whenever possible to honour their father.

Vadel did set his children on their damnable path but he did so with devout intentions. The Vadeli practice evil because it is their holy duty. At first Vadel was one of the Vymorni, the exploring tribe of the ancient Malkioni. During the Age of Error, all Malkioni observed that the Cosmos was slowly dying. Seeking its cause, their seers identified a psychic event that they called the Great Error. In attempting to define it, the seers of most Malkioni nations saw the Great Error as being something which others did but their people wholly blameless. Only the Vadel, the leading explorer of the age, saw the true nature of the Great Error – God was intentionally destroying himself.

As a Malkioni explorer, Vadel's duty was to go wherever God was. If God chose to destroy himself, then Vadel had no choice but to emulate him. Since his destruction was an immoral act, Vadel annihilated his morality. Many of the Vymorni hesitated before taking such a drastic step. But since they had explored all that could be lawfully explored, the only unexplored path left was Vadel's.

During the Ages of Treason and Destruction, the Vadeli did their utmost to help God destroy himself. They were present at Malkion's destruction and knew (as nobody else present could) that he intended to bring the Cosmos to the bliss of oblivion. But Zzabur the Selfish had also seen what God intended and so stayed away. His absence weakened the spell critically so that God died but his corpse survived for ignorant mortals to fawn. Since the living world is something that God never intended, the solemn duty of the Vadeli is to destroy it.

Some Weapons of Carnage



The Acrid Cauldron, when heated, emitted a terrible brown smoke that ate away at the eyes, nose and throat of people caught within it.

The Darting Balls were round stones that came in a variety of sizes; some could be thrown by hand while others were used in catapults. When hurled, the Ball broke up into tiny darts that rained down upon the target, cutting leaves from trees and flesh from bone.

The Hidden Spikes were enchanted spears that were buried into the ground. Unfortunates that walked over the spike afterwards found themselves quickly impaled.

Vadeli ships

Although the Vadeli were major seafarers in the mythic ages, both the God Learners and the Waertagi banned the Vadeli from sailing anything larger than a fishing boat. But since the Opening, no kingdom has been strong enough to do so. As a result, the Vadeli have once again become a naval power with many mysterious ships plying the seas. Sailors that trade tales about the odd happenings around Vadeli ships would be much more alarmed if they knew that many of those events were described by the New Viymorni School when they catalogued the Vadeli Ships of the Age of Destruction. Sailors can always tell when they have crossed the path of the caravel Zedlav Noxxe from its trail of slick. Sometimes the slick is so bad that it rots ship hulls and kills fish. The crew blames the slick on a magical elixir that got lost in the bilge and that it should clear up soon. Once a small galley that once sailed with Dormal's Fleet, the Monstromos has apparently grown in size. The galley is now so large that its oars seem to be far too small to move its enormous bulk but nobody has seen the oarsmen. Nobody has reported seeing it on the high seas either which make some sailors think that it eats other ship

VADELI MAGIC
In the Age of Error,
the Viymorni explored the Lawful World,
In the Age of Treason,
the Vadeli explored the Unlawful World,
In the Age of Destruction,
the Vadeli explored the Forbidden.

Logical Cosmology recognises three types of laws – the Natural, the Moral and the Mortal. Sorcerers alter nature through their awareness of the natural laws while other Malkioni invoke the moral laws for divine aid. The Vadeli are unable to do either because of psychic wounds incurred from the Spell of Damnation and their repudiation of morality. At the same time, their fidelity to God precludes them from using illogical magics, such as ecstatic worship and sacrifices.

Vadel showed the third way – by logically violating the moral laws in a systematic manner, the Vadeli creates a cosmic breach that can be used to alter nature. Aeons of investigation have resulted in the formulation of a tripartite regimen of psychic practices that mirrors the passage of the Vadeli through the mythic ages.

First are the Lawful Arts, representing the Viymorni people as they explored the Lawful World. Each art is a vocation with well-defined proficiencies and duties. Most Explorations date from the Age of Error but the Dormali Exploration was created during the Opening. No magics are obtainable through these arts except for the rare necrophages that use somebody else's energy.

The Unlawful Arts are second, representing the stage when Vadel crossed the border of the Land of Logic to explore Pamaltela. These arts involve absorbing unlawful elements into the Vadeli's being, which is visible to outsiders as skin colour. Each skin confers innate magical abilities but their mastery is difficult and their requirements incompatible with each other.

The Forbidden Perversions are last, representing the time when Malkion immorally destroyed himself. Each perversion is a comprehensive violation of the Moral Laws, such as lying, incest or blasphemy.

Forbidden magic is easiest for the Vadeli to use and most practice whatever perversions they can.

LAWFUL EXPLORATIONS: THE VADELI OCCUPATIONS

Because the ancestors of the Vadeli were originally the Explorers of the Land of Logic, the Vadeli prefer occupations that involve discovery and movement. Thus the Vadeli are a nation of travelling merchants, pirates and sailors rather than writers or builders. Since the Vadeli are also interested in the Forbidden, several occupations are dedicated to the moral degradation of others. Below are some of the more unusual or noteworthy occupations.

The Vadeli have four different nautical traditions. The Heleri is the oldest type of sailor,

being present during the Tadeniti War. Nobody knows whether they were originally Helerites or whether the ancients were confused by their similar urological practices. The Heleri favour swift sailing boats while the Banthi handle large heavy galleys that first appeared during the Greater Waertagi War. The Corsairs are trained for combat on either ship but prefer the Heleri when seeking plunder.

The Dormali is a new tradition, created by the Opening. Although derived from Dormal's teachings, the Vadeli have adapted it for their own purposes and transmitted it to the Umathelans and Fonritans (the Masloi have abandoned the Vadeli practice for Haragalan prayers learned from their ports in Teleos). Rather than utter Dormal's Ritual to sidestep Zzabur's curse (which the Vadeli cannot do), the Dormali violates the Laws of the Sea creating a cosmic breach that allows the ship to evade the Closing. The Dormali practices include blood oaths against the creatures of the sea, ritual invocations of Tanian's Victory and hateful offerings to the Sea Gods (such offering Magasta fresh water or Triolina sentient sacrifices).

Anal Probers are special surgeons that heal all ills with their anal probes. They can cure many ailments that other medical practitioners cannot but few non-Vadeli would use their services for their treatments corrupt their patients.

Destructive Logists are the philosophers of the Vadeli. They specialise in taking known truths and destroying them to the essentials and then pointing out the individual absurdities. For obvious reasons, they favour attacking moral truths. Malkioni universities forbid the learning of their logic but the destructive logists make a living by defending the notoriously guilty.

Flesh Merchants sell slaves captured by fellow Vadeli to Malkioni. Although Malkioni Law condemns slavery, it permits Malkioni to purchase Malkioni slaves in order to free them although the freed slave would then owe his purchase price as a servitude to his manumitter. The Flesh Merchants dislike selling slaves to Umathelans and Fonritans for they have no problem with slavery.

Vadeli psychopomps help people die in damnation whether they want to or not. They are the worst sort of hired assassins in Malkioni lands for they trick their victims into committing a forbidden act before killing them. They also accept commissions as executioners but when asked to execute innocents, they prefer to corrupt them first. Lastly the psychopomps are as welcome as ravens to many battlefields.

The Usurers finds sport in discovering the price for which a Malkioni is willing to corrupt himself for. They lend money at modestly low rates but secretly mark some clients to have incidents that prevent them repaying the debt so they can be levied with outrageous penalties. The Usurer is always willing to wipe the debt in return for an immoral act of his choice.

UNLAWFUL SHIELDS: THE VADELI SKINS

The Vadeli have three races, each with a different skin colour. The Browns thrive as sailors and merchants while their kindred Reds are bloodthirsty pirates. When they lived, the sorcerous Blues ruled the Vadeli.

Originally the Vadeli looked no different than other Malkioni but their skin colour changed during the Age of Treason. During the conquest of Chir, the Vadeli came into direct contact with the previously unknown dark-skinned Agimori and blue-skinned Artmali. The colours of their skins astounded the Vadeli as no Malkioni had ever seen their like before. Even before Chir had been completely subjugated, the Vadeli established a university to investigate this new marvel.

By conquering Chir, the Vadeli had mocked Zzabur's pronouncements and turned him into an implacable enemy. He retaliated by sending potent curses against the Vadeli day and night. Seeking protection, the Vadeli drew upon the fruits of their researches into the skins. By incorporating unlawful elements of Chir into their skins, the Vadeli became invisible to Zzabur's sorceries. After extensive experimentation, Vadeli sorcerers isolated the brown, blue and red elements as ideal. The first skins were bulky and fleeting in effect but magical rituals could improve their effectiveness. Since that time, the skins and attendant rituals have been improved again and again. The Vadeli found potent replacements for the original elements while the rituals were altered so they could be performed without much difficulty. The New Vymorni School expended much effort in reconstructing the original skins but their researches were incomplete when the cosmos destroyed them.

Skins are crucial to the Vadeli for by enveloping themselves within the unlawful world they render themselves invisible by sorcerous

detections and scryings (although not from sorceries aimed using mortal senses). The Vadeli are thus able to perform their evil deeds safely for no magical evidence can be collected against them. Since priestly and shamanic divinations can still detect their villainies, the Vadeli do not bother in concealing their evil in Umathela and Fonrit.

The quality of the skins depends on how well the Vadeli looks after it. The skins of the Admirals literally glow with a sorcerous aura while the worst skins look like coloured grease had been ineptly smeared on them. Most Vadeli skins look like ordinary skins of the appropriate colour.

The Brown Skin was the first skin, the easiest to make and still the most common. The original element was the soil of Chir. During the Age of Destruction, Chir was blasted and the Vadeli were forced to substitute nightsoil instead. Most skins are made using human excrement although canine excrement can be acceptable.

Brown Vadeli must eat and bath in fresh excrement at regular intervals. They must abstain from normal intercourse and only have pleasure through buggery – the Anal Probers routinely adjust female Browns so they can still reproduce. For ablutions, they must clean themselves with their hands and then lick their fingers clean.

All browns can emit choking odours, cause bowel disturbances (known colloquially as "Vadeli Belly") and discern what a person did recently from his excrement. Skilled Brown magicians can fashion magical servants from their excrement, such as the mysterious faecal statues that drunks see from time to time.

The Red Skin originally required the blood of the animals of Chir. Later the tainted blood (such as the blood of the fallen or menstrual blood) was found to be an effective replacement. The skin became the choice of Vadeli soldiers but its costly requirements meant that pig's blood was often used.

Red Vadeli must bath regularly in blood and

The Fourth Skin: Green and Yellow Vadeli

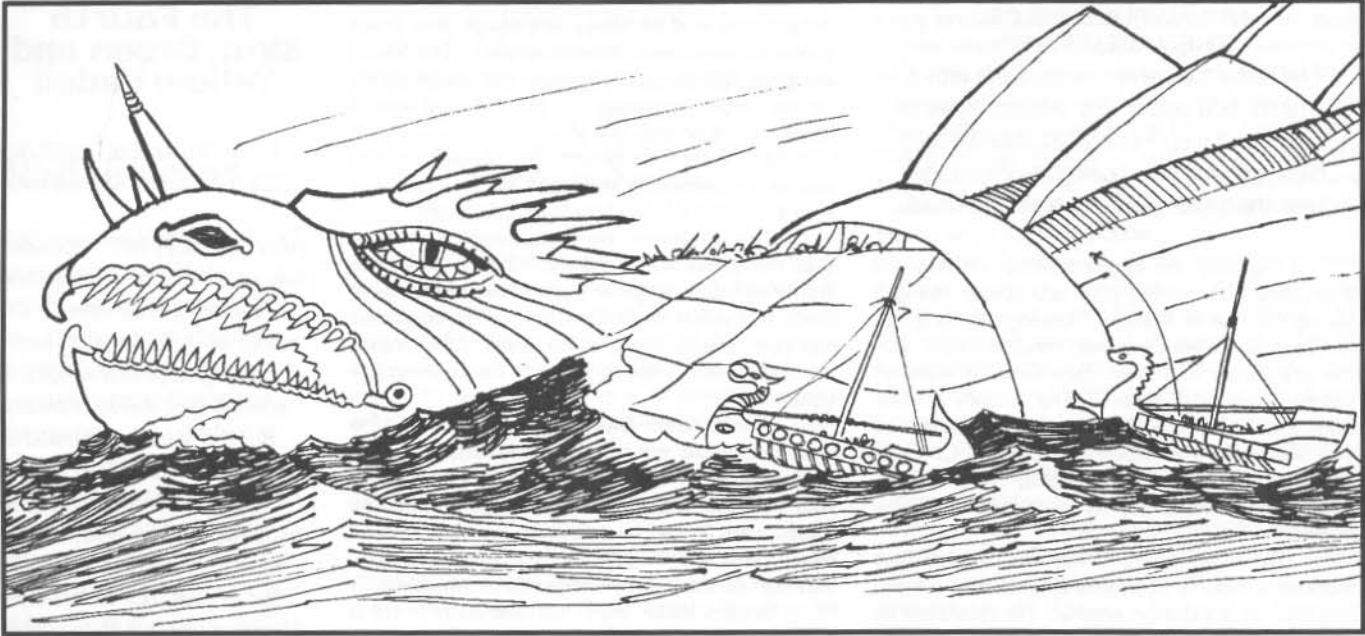
*THE VADELI RELIEVE THEMSELVES
OVER THEIR SLAVES AND CAPTIVES.*

After the Vadeli had discovered how to control the Agimori and Artmali of Poto through the colour of their skin, they easily developed similar magics to enslave their fellow Malkioni. But the slavers grumbled at having to learn three magics to control only one race. In response, the University of Chir studied every type of human skin in existence to identify a common element their control magics could use. But all the substances they found were too weak.

Undaunted, the Vadeli magicians decided to use a substance that could be quickly applied to the skin of any captive humanoid – their own urine. After centuries of refinement, Vadeli slavers now simply drink a magical potion (which tastes like a weak beer) before urinating over their captives to give them the fourth skin.

The fourth skin does not render the captive an unthinking slave – for example, they cannot be made to perform forbidden actions. Likewise the skin is fleeting in nature, rarely lasting for a week at the most. Despite the intended universal effect of this spell, there are two types of fourth skins – the Yellow and the Green. The Yellow Skin is used in hot climates and gives the captive's skin a moist sheen while the Green skin is intended for colder climates and is detectable by the stench when a captive sits too close to a source of heat. Both skins degrade rapidly if used in the wrong climate.





eat only the rawest of red meats. They may have sexual pleasure only during menstrual periods or through bleeding wounds – they apparently procreate through reverse caesarean sections. Every bodily secretion they make must be mixed with blood before it reaches the ground. For example, when Red Vadeli urinate, they stab their member with a needle. Some Reds demonstrate their hardness to pain by stabbing themselves in the abdomen to relieve their bladders before closing the wound magically.

All Reds can feel spilled blood from great distance, divine a person's flaws from the smell of his blood, and make people's blood either boil or run cold. Red Magicians are adept in warping the blood of their victims into potent elixirs, such as the bloodlust poison that deranges its victims. Through such bestial alchemy, Red Magicians have created horrors such as bloodbirds, simularcra and redcaps. Sometimes the Reds can drain their victims of their blood creating pallid zombies that slave for their maker.

The original Blue skin is so obscure that the New Viymorni School could only guess at what it might have been. But the refined skin developed during the Age of Destruction is known all too well. The Blue Vadeli were infamous then for their decayed skins in which maggots feasted. They could only eat rotten meat and have sexual pleasure with corpses or scavengers – every Blue was fathered by a corpse or born from one.

The Blues could command hordes of flies and other vermin, undoubtedly descended from the maggots that feasted on them. Many controlled Tinimits through this method, chief among them the invincible Myrmidons Guild. The myrmidon

servants of that extinct guild thrive in Jrustela now, patiently waiting for the return of their extinct masters. The Blues were also powerful foes of the Waertagi due to their Vilgars, flying reptilian scavengers that loved sea dragon flesh. A full-grown Vilgar was much bigger than a man was but the blues undoubtedly tamed it by feeding the smaller hatchlings some of their flesh. The Vilgars are no more for the Waertagi exterminated them before the Dawn.

THE FORBIDDEN PERVERSIONS

The Vadeli have acquired the reputation as accomplished liars through their mastery of the Perversion of Truth. This perversion allows them to craft lies with diabolical verisimilitude, such that their testimony is worthless in a Court of Law. Worse still, the Vadeli have the uncanny art of telling new lies that do not contradict whatever old Vadeli lies their victim has been told. The price of this knowledge is that the Vadeli must regularly deceive an outsider into performing a forbidden act.

When Malkion destroyed himself, he left behind the Demons of Matter and the Krjalki of Entropy. Seeing that the existence of these creatures was a mistake caused by Zzabur's rebellion, the Vadeli swore an oath of eternal alliance with them, which they called the Perversion of Cosmos. The alliance allows the Vadeli to communicate with most chaotic races and the ability to influence unthinking creatures of chaos to some extent. Since the Vadeli must protect a chaotic monster or coven from discovery from lawful authorities as the price of this knowledge, it is either not widely practiced as other perversions or a more horrible possibility exists.

The Vadeli recognize the Age of

Destruction as the time when God devoured his children. This discovery led to the Perversion of Parenthood in which the Vadeli eat their children to become close to God. This is the origin of their immortality and has little other practical effect. The price of this knowledge is that the Vadeli must devour their children.

Kinship was an important truth in which the Malkioni ordered their social cosmos. Applying their insights, the Vadeli derived the Perversion of Kinship. They draw all kinds of unholy strength from acts of incest and the price of this knowledge – that they may have sexual relations only with relatives – is trivial for the Vadeli to follow. Barbarous Vadeli practice a slightly different version of this truth, which causes their civil kindred to hire unrelated barbarians to protect them from barbarous relatives.

SECRETS OF THE ADMIRALTY

The spiritual goal of the Vadeli as they go about their daily atrocities is to cultivate a perfect contempt for the Moral Laws so that their very existence is a cosmic outrage. Attaining this goal is the mark of an Admiral, worthy of obedience by almost every Vadeli they meet. Admirals are neither civil nor savage but capable of leading corsair fleets or directing an axis with equal ease.

Most Admirals had a terrible mastery over their skin's element – during the Double Belligerent Assault, the Brown Admiral constipated the citizens of Haluwal until they burst. The Vice-Admirals could tap people's morals such that they compulsively performed a vice while the Rear Admirals could hide themselves in the Forbidden.

Vadeli History

Malkion created the ancestors of the Vadeli to explore the world.

Malkioni historians have extensively documented the crimes of the Vadeli and there is little need to repeat them here. The following is a summary of what is commonly known and what is not.

THE DISCOVERY OF THE MOSTALI

The ancestors of the Vadeli discovered the dwarves and also discovered they could be cheated.

The impact of the discovery of the Mostali of the Magnetic Mountain was profound for it revealed something outside the Land of Logic. Although Zzabur later found a place for the Mostali within the Lawful Cosmos, the shaken Viymorni were far less confident about the universality of the Laws.

THE FEUD WITH ZZABUR

When Zzabur revealed the observed laws of the Land of Logic, the ancestors of the Vadeli rebelled against his high-handed manners.

The feud between the ancestors of the Vadeli and Zzabur is the oldest Malkioni schisms, predating even the Great Schism between Malkion and Zzabur. The Viymorni were angered at Zzabur's declarations because it allowed them much less than it did for the Waertagi, the Kachasti and Zzabur's Enrovalini. At the end of the Age, the Viymorni were fading away while the others grew in strength and prestige.

Vadel was the Viymorni that first accused Zzabur of Manifest Error. Zzabur had fallen into such a state, Vadel alleged, because the Viymorni had rightfully questioned his judgement during the discovery of the Mostali. Eager for revenge, Zzabur now was rewarding his favourites and punishing the Viymorni with his declarations. Vadel's arguments were persuasive and under his influence, the Viymorni repudiated Zzabur's declarations and explored the seas, magic and the West Coast of Genertela. Despite vigorous protests, Malkion would not condemn the Viymorni.

THE EMPIRE OF CHIR

Vadel crossed the lawful borders of the Land of Logic into Pamaltela and established the Empire of Chir. His selfish actions unleashed Death upon the Malkioni.

Having remained so far within the Land of Logic, Vadel decided this was not enough as his divine purpose was to explore everything, not just the lawful parts. At the exact moment that he crossed the Lawful Border, the Age of Treason began.

Pamaltela was then the Land of Spirits. In the earliest of times, the Pamaltelans had discovered Death and made it part of themselves. When Vadel crossed the Border, he allowed Death to enter the Land of Logic. The Vadeli are unrepentant about their role in Death's arrival for all the other Logical Peoples brought disaster to the Land of Logic in their own way – the Waertagi caused the Flood and the Kachasti created the False Gods. Where the Vadeli differ is that they do not deny what they have caused.

The Vadeli did not worry about Death then as they reveled in the marvels of Chir. The other Malkioni were confounded by its illogical nature and the struggle to understand it ruined the best minds of the Age. Malkion was an early casualty – he first promulgated the Revelations of Now that proved that a sterile immortality was best and then denounced them. Confronted by Malkion's irrationality, Zzabur had him stripped of authority and confined to the Castle of Logic.

THE TADENITI WAR

The Tadeniti were the Writing People of the Land of Logic. Without any warning, because the Tadeniti did not understand the Omens, the Vadeli attacked and destroyed them. This was the first time that Malkioni had fought Malkioni.

The Tadeniti were devout practitioners of the Revelations of Now. To prove the falsity of those revelations to the Tadeniti, the Vadeli attacked them to show that Death was liberating. Rather than admitting the Vadeli truth, the Tadeniti resisted. The Tadeniti War gave rise to the Tadeniti debates in which the other Logical Peoples held extensive debates over whether the moral imperative to aid the Tadeniti was stronger than the prohibition against fighting fellow Logicals. The poignant debates were instrumental in the development of the Doctrine of the Lawful War.

THE LAND RISING

The Waertagi ended the Tadeniti War by flooding the borders between the Tadeniti and the Vadeli and patrolling the new seas with their ships. The Vadeli responded by inciting the Mostali to dry out those seas in the Land Rising.

As a result of the Tadeniti debates, the Waertagi intervened in the Tadeniti

War. They did more than just isolate the Vadeli and the Tadeniti; they also isolated the Vadeli from their Mostali allies and their Empire in Chir. By forbidding the Vadeli to build any ships, the Waertagi hoped to prevent the Vadeli from creating further disturbances.

The Vadeli were undeterred and built the Awesome Bridge from the Old Viymorni Lands to the Magnetic Mountain where the Mostali lived. There with souls stolen from the Tadeniti, they bribed the Mostali to make the Land Rising. This reunited the Vadeli territories and allowed them to resume the Tadeniti War.

THE KACHASTI WAR

Sickened by the Vadeli atrocities, Zzabur, the Kachasti and the Waertagi declared war against the Vadeli. Zzabur worked a great magic that wiped the Vadeli lands clear of all magic, the Waertagi washed the shores clear of Vadeli armies and then the Kachasti conquered the Vadeli.

After the final conquest of the Tadeniti, Zzabur and his allies declared a Lawful War to punish the Vadeli for their repeated errors. Zzabur's great magic was the Spell of Damnation. This severed the Vadeli connections to the Higher Worlds, preventing them from performing any magic. In response to criticisms from a captive Malkion, Zzabur justified the drastic curse on the grounds that the Vadeli had abused his gifts of sorcery.

The Vadeli surrendered to the Kachasti, who took many Vadeli as hostages to the good conduct of the others. One day the Vadeli hostages, complaining of mistreatment, slew themselves. The Kachasti resurrected the dead Vadeli in accordance with their oaths of safety. Suddenly the Mostali erupted a whole range of mountains in the Kachasti lands, destroying most of their cities. The resurrected Vadeli and the Mostali enslaved the rest of the Kachasti for a time before Zzabur and the Waertagi free them.

The suicide of the Vadeli hostages and their subsequent resurrection was essential to recover some of their lost magic. The Vadeli had secretly concluded a pact with the Mostali so that their souls would be sucked into Infernal Machines before the Kachasti could effect their resurrection. As planned, the souls were firmly grounded in the energies of the Underworld so that the resurrected hostages could draw on their unlawful magics to help the Mostali enslave the

Kachasti. The hostages then traveled to the Vadeli Lands to free their kin. But the Vadeli could no longer use lawful magics and their travails in the land of the dead had given the Vadeli had their first glimpse of the Forbidden.

The devastation of the Kachasti territories was one of many calamities that afflicted the Land of Logic at this time. Zzabur and his peers surveyed the wreckage and ordered the reorganization of the Land as the Republic of Zerendel. Only the Waertagi controlling the seas were powerful enough to remain outside it while Malkion was finally condemned for failing his people and exiled to Genertela.

THE WAERTAGI WAR

Now freed, the Vadeli warred against the Waertagi. At first the war went well with several cityships being captured and enslaved. All the omens pointed to one great naval battle but the Vadeli betrayed their allies and sued for peace.

Once having seen the Forbidden, the Vadeli transformed their lands into the Empire of Endernef to prepare for the coming age. When their preparations were complete, the Vadeli resumed their ancient war. Their first foes were the Waertagi that controlled the seas around Zerendel. With the aid of two nautical races, the destruction of the Waertagi loomed until the Vadeli received a desperate plea for peace from Malkion.

Malkion's plea was almost dismissed out of hand but Vadel overruled the Admiralty and accepted it when he realized what Malkion actually proposed. As a sign of goodwill, the Vadeli disbanded their own navy while their nautical allies were betrayed and slaughtered in the Senbanth straits between Endernef and Zerendel. But the Vadeli captured the souls of their betrayed allies and used them to fuel another Land Rising to dry out the Senbanth straits. Now the Vadeli had no need of a navy to invade Zerendel, which caused the Lords of the Republic much anxiety. But Malkion's Peace held firm.

THE DEATH OF MALKION

Malkion pledged to show his children the true meaning of the Fifth Action. At the height of the spell to reorganize the Cosmos for the Coming Age, he vanished along with his helpers.

The ranks of the disappeared included the greatest of the Vadeli, the Malkioni and the Mostali. Only Zzabur survived because he stayed away in protest at Vadel's presence. Afterwards many asked what had gone wrong. Zzabur stated that Malkion's death was an inevitable consequence of his

insanity while Malkion's followers gradually interpreted it as an act of self-sacrifice that saved the World. The Vadeli believe Malkion intended his death and that the Cosmos erred when it refused to die with its Creator.

The Cosmic Rejection created the Twin Hordes of Chaos: the Demons of Matter and the Krjalki of Entropy. Under the leadership of the Admiralty, the surviving Vadeli allied with these creatures to help the Cosmos die.

THE DOUBLE BELLIGERENT ASSAULT

The Vadeli, allied with the Mostali and other inhuman creatures, launched a final war to destroy the Republic of Zerendel. They overran Zerendel and captured the capital Talarwal.

Under Zzabur's guidance, the Republic of Zerendel survived the cataclysm with minor damage. Since Vadel had now vanished forever and Zzabur's magic could easily repel the Twin Hordes, the Admiralty sought new allies. Their explorers found one in Valind, the Frozen God of the North. Teaching him the magical weaknesses of the Republic, the Admiralty guided Valind into becoming the Great Glacier.

As predicted, the Republic collapsed under the assaults of the Vadeli from the South and the Glacier from the North. But as their armies swarmed over fallen metropolis of Talarwal, the Admiralty became concerned that they could not find Zzabur.

THE GREAT BLAST

Zzabur cast a terrible spell, which he called the Great Blast, against the Vadeli. The very Earth did shake and collapse, burying the Vadeli cities beneath mountains of rubble. Then a titanic wave washed over the land, drowning everyone.

Having seen Malkion's disappearance, Zzabur beheld the Power behind the Vadeli and comprehended what he opposed. Realizing that the sorceries he had perfected over the ages were no longer sufficient, Zzabur secreted himself in the secure refuge of Brithos to prepare the Great Spell to defend the Cosmos. He dare not stir from this task, not even when the Republic fell, until he was sure that his last spell would work. Then Zzabur effected Cosmic Change.

The Admiralty, all too well aware of what Zzabur could do, had prepared sanctuaries against any setback. But they were unprepared against the sheer scale of Zzabur's ruthlessness and could only flee as he destroyed the Land of Logic to save the Cosmos. Only Brithos and a few other

portions survived. Among those portions were the Vadeli Isles for Zzabur desired to preserve a reminder of what had been. But the inhabitants of those isles were driven insane from their overwhelming defeat, from which only Hrestol could release them.

Places of Interest

THE NELIOMI AXIS

The ancient Waertagi Cityships that rose from the Sea of the Dead to smite the coastal cities of the God Learners into gravel and pulp have been seen again in the fog-shrouded Sea of Brithos. Undoubtedly they are searching for Zzabur to exact revenge for the Closing.

The Neliomi Axis dominates the Vadeli Guilds on the Neliomi Sea. Unlike other axes, they conceal their existence to prevent the Malkioni of Loskalm and Seshnela from divining their plans. In their efforts to summon the Blues, Axis magicians reached the Sea of Corpses. Although they have not yet found any Blue Vadeli there, they have discovered several of the long-lost Waertagi Cityships now warped by their horrific journeys into Hellships.

Attempts to control the hell-crazed crews through the Fourth Skin failed, as they were far too strong to control. The Axis magicians have managed to secure a far weaker influence over the Hellships through passing water in their vicinity (although the effort caused an unprecedented scarcity of common alchemical ingredients shortly after the Opening). The magicians have filled the heads of the crew with thoughts of revenge against Zzabur, causing the Hellships to rise to the surface to seek Brithos.

Now the Neliomi Axis is currently studying how to incite the Hellships to attacking specific targets. They have chosen Old Trade as a practice target and hope to persuade the Waertagi to destroy the Isle in the near future. Once this has been done, the Axis intends to unleash the Hellships against the Ports of Western Genertela.

THE ORANGE GUILDS OF JRUSTELA

The Orange guilds dominate the human ports of drowned Jrustela and control trade with the local dwarves and elves. The Vadeli established these guilds after the Opening, naming them after the Orange Trees that grew here in mythical times. In a spirit of reconciliation, they have opened the guilds to ordinary humans and several such individuals have risen to High Office and fabulous riches.

Although the Vadeli now only make up a small minority of the Orange Guild membership, they are still in covert control. When asked why the Oranges are so important, the Vadeli explain that an Orange Tree marked the border between the Lawful and Unlawful Cosmos and that Vadel ate from it before he crossed the border into Pamaltela. The humble orange is thus a forbidden fruit whose consumption unleashed cosmic calamity.

Although plausible, the explanation is false. The Orange is actually a species of mushroom (*Amanita muscaria* var. *jrustelens*) that Vadel consumed to find the Doors of Perception that lay between the Lawful and Unlawful Cosmos. Since the Spell of Damnation destroyed their lawful senses, Orange has no effect on the Vadeli. What fuels their interest instead is the God Learner apocrypha that alleges Serozos took Orange to find the Godhead. If a non-Vadeli found the Doors of Perception, then he could be used to allow the Vadeli to cast lawful sorceries once again.

The non-Vadeli guild members of the Orange Guilds are subtly poisoned with minute quantities of Orange. If they react favorably, they are promoted within the guild and given larger doses. The aim of this regime is to find non-Vadeli that can reach the Doors of Perception. Such people are promoted to the guild leadership as Sublime Porters and rewarded with a bloated life of decadent excess. Red Magicians bleed the Porters regularly and transmute their blood into an Orange Elixir. Consuming this elixir gives the Vadeli a fleeting lawful aura with which they can cast their ancient sorceries. An infamous example was the Energy Conquest magics that could transform mortal souls into spell energies.

A new axis is emerging among the northern guilds, as the remnants of the Awesome Bridge are located. Working closely with the Blue Admiral, the guilds are planning to raise the Awesome Bridge with lawful magic and at its other end will be the Blue Vadeli Isles.

THE OLD VADELI ISLES

At the Dawn, the inhabitants of the Old Vadeli Isles mourned their survival of the Age of Destruction. Hrestol then lived among them for many years, teaching them the laws and judging them for their evil deeds.

Although eclipsed in importance by the revival of other Vadeli nations, the Old Vadeli Isles are still important as the centre of Vadeli civilization for it is here that the False Laws are promulgated and

then broken. After Hrestol's departure, the Vadeli obeyed the False Laws but soon found them incomplete. Since no Vadeli could be trusted with the responsibility, the Assembly of the False Lawgivers was created instead.

The Assembly meets regularly at Abdelcar's House (the first Vadeli to befriend Hrestol) and consists of a motley crew of Brithini exiles, crazed holy men and princely fugitives. The Assembly debates legislation that appears to be the height of depravity until one realises that the intent is for the Vadeli to break them. The hope of these Lawgivers is to create legislation that will cause the Vadeli to obey the Moral Laws. But these hopes are cruelly dashed again and again, driving them to drink and

despair. The spectacle of it all provides endless entertainment for the local Vadeli, which is surely the primary reason they support the Lawgivers at their expense.

THE NEW VADELI ISLES

These isles mysteriously arose during the Closing. When Dormal found them, he discovered Brown Vadeli there. They claim to have always been where they are, produce stories and artefacts to prove their claims, but the surviving God Learner geographies make no mention of them.

When Zzabur sank the Vadeli lands, the Admiralty fled to the far reaches of the cosmos. Only within time have they cautiously ventured back into the mortal world. The New Vadeli Isles originally resided deep within the bowels of the Excremental Sea and rose to the surface of the Neliomi in the same year that the Luathans sank Seshnela. The Brown Admiral ordered the Isles to rise close to the largest existing population of Vadeli and when Dormal arrived, the inhabitants were disconcerted to find that dreaded Brithos was so close.

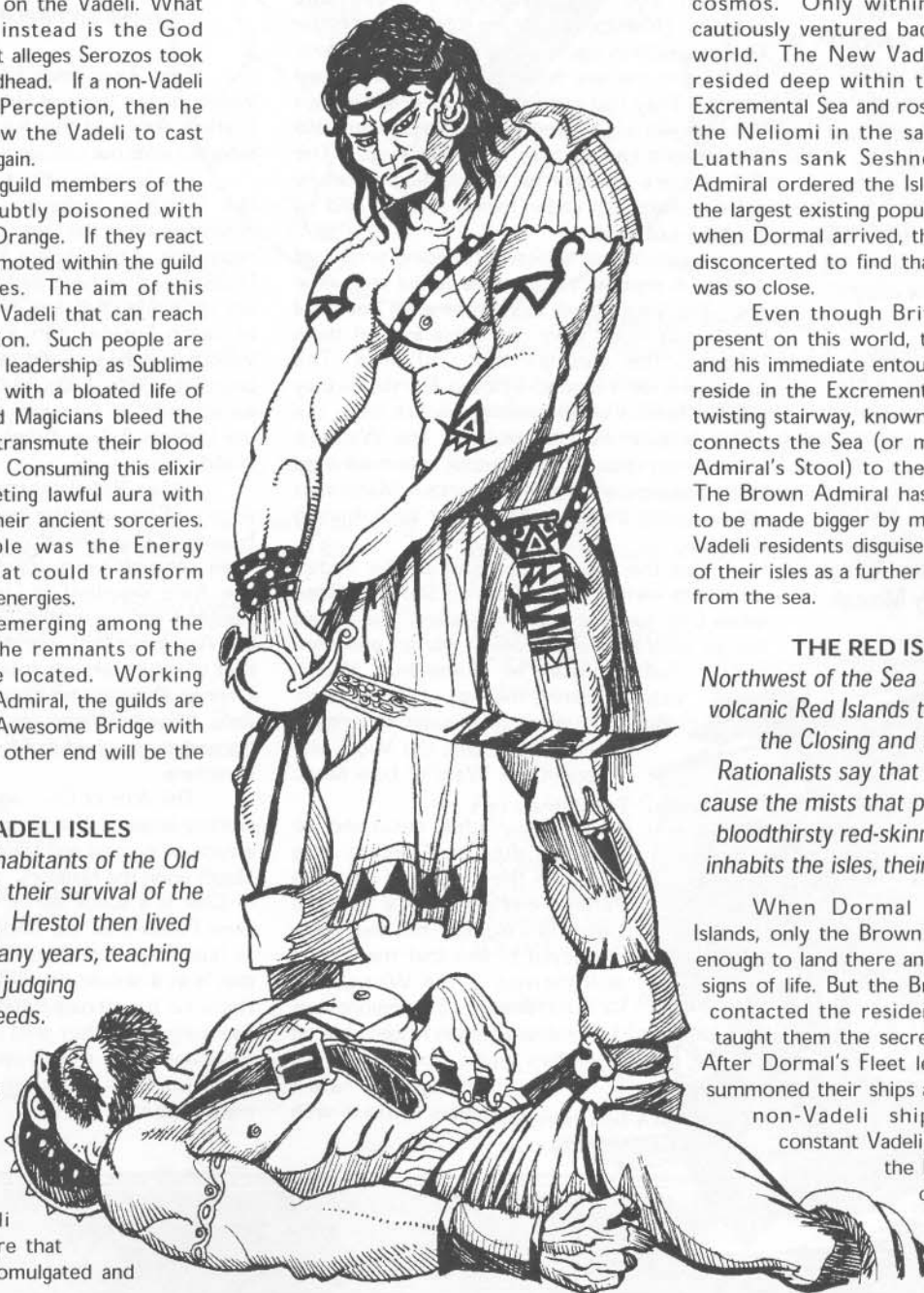
Even though Brithos is no longer present on this world, the Brown Admiral and his immediate entourage still cautiously reside in the Excremental Sea. A long and twisting stairway, known as the "Intestine", connects the Sea (or more precisely, the Admiral's Stool) to the New Vadeli Isles. The Brown Admiral has ordered the Isles to be made bigger by more risings and the Vadeli residents disguise the increasing size of their isles as a further reclamation of land from the sea.

THE RED ISLANDS

Northwest of the Sea of Brithos are the volcanic Red Islands that rose between the Closing and the Opening.

Rationalists say that these volcanoes cause the mists that plague the area. A bloodthirsty red-skinned race of men inhabits the isles, their origin unknown.

When Dormal sighted the Red Islands, only the Brown Vadeli were brave enough to land there and they reported no signs of life. But the Browns had secretly contacted the resident Red Vadeli and taught them the secrets of the Opening. After Dormal's Fleet left, the Red Vadeli summoned their ships and began attacking non-Vadeli shipping. Despite constant Vadeli traffic to and from the Islands, the Browns deny any knowledge of the Red Islands while the Reds



The Vadeli and their creations

Although the Vadeli have had a great influence on Pamaltela in mythical times, they are invisible in the minds and mythologies of their creations. The New Viymorni School never found any reference to the Vadeli in Lascerdan mythology while the Myrmidons of Irustela lack awareness of the return of their mythical masters. The New Viymorni School speculated that the Vadeli made their creations to ignore the existence of their makers while performing every Vadeli order as if it had arisen from within their own minds. Their motivations for doing so, the School alleged, could be found in the Land Rising case in which the Vadeli denied responsibility for the depredations of a "foreign race" that had acted in their interests. The School's theory was soundly ridiculed when scholars pointed out that the "foreign race" were actually Mostali.

simply do not talk to outsiders.

The Islands rose to the surface from the Bloody Sea when the God with Silver Feet died. The Red Admiral had ordered it to rise close to Brithos to catch that damnable land unawares but he was bitterly disappointed to find it gone. The Red Islands' volcanism is not lava but boiling blood while its white rocks contain large bone fragments. Because of this unusual geology, only the hardest plants can grow here.

THE PELMRE AXIS

The ancient Empire of Chir is no more for the land dried up and Slarges overran it.

When the Vadeli first conquered Chir, they discovered the last Pelmre, Pamalt's reptilian children, and recognized them as neotenic dragons. Malkioni had long contact with the Dragons, such as the land drakes that the Kachasti fought and the sea dragons that the Waertagi tamed. They had even found the dragonspawn but Malkioni logic soon transformed them into non-draconians such as the Newtlings. The Pelmre were different for their draconic nature did not disappear under logical scrutiny and so could be exploited.

Centuries of selective breeding produced numerous reptilian races, some useful and some not. The Vadeli bred Saurians as great beasts of burden but found them untamable and set them loose in the swamps south of Ston. The Lascerdans were bred to fight the Aldryami – they cleared forests by unleashing wildfire for the safety of their river sanctuaries. The Waertagi feared the flights of Vilgars that swarmed over their cityships while the mysterious Mandrakes either swam through the soil or took human form.

But the most successful of the Vadeli creations were the man-eating Slarges. Bred when Chir had become a wasteland, the vicious Slarges were adapted for desert warfare and were instrumental in numerous Vadeli victories during the Age of Destruction.

But they were all thought destroyed when Zzabur sank the Vadeli and brought the Wars of Low Magic to an end.

When the Vadeli returned to Pamaltela after the Opening, they found to their sadness that the Pelmre were no more and the Lascerdans extinct. But they were overjoyed to find that the Slarges still thrived in the Wongarissi Wastes. The Pelmre Axis is now based in Maggot Isle off the coast of Hornilio.

Although they have a monopoly of trade with

the Goblins under Queen Kargan Ilargor, their ulterior purpose is to control the Slarges. Already their machinations have caused the Slarges to begin a war of conquest of the Pamaltelan Veldt.

OLD CHIR AND THE RUINS OF THE NEW VADELI EMPIRE

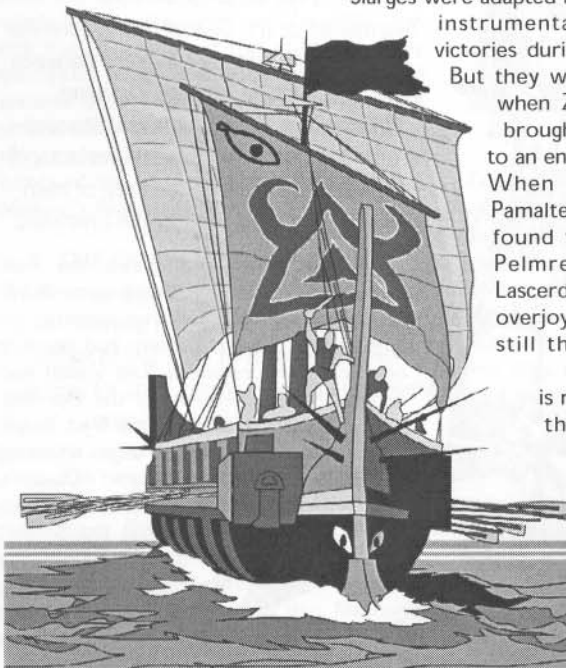
After the Opening, the Vadeli established an Empire over Umathela and Fonrit. They claimed that they were Gods and instituted taxes and worship. They might have succeeded if their greed was less. Resentment was so great against them that after the Masloi destroyed their fleet at Oenriko Rock, both Umathela and Fonrit revolted against the Vadeli and freed themselves.

Two Axes reign in Old Chir (which the Vadeli call the lands of Umathela and Fonrit): the Luathan Axis and the Axis of Chir. Both have separate aims but collude with each other.

The Luathan Axis is preparing the way for the Luathan Invasion. The Vadeli have determined that the Luathans visited Seshnela as a recreation of the Ancient Kachasti Speaking Tour. From this, they have deduced that the Luathans are repeating important Malkioni events in a bid to reach Solace. Since one such event was Vadel's journey to Chir, the Luathan Axis is busy preparing spells to corrupt the Luathans that will surely visit Old Chir into Vadeli allies. Together the Luathan Axis and their allies will destroy the world.

Other Vadeli thought that the aim of the Axis of Chir was the re-establishment of the Empire of Old Chir during the Age of Treason. Their thoughts were apparently confirmed when the Axis dominated Umathela, allied with Afadjann and conquered Golden Kareeshtu. But the Axis then threw it all away by letting their fleet of volunteers get slaughtered at the battle of Oenriko Rock, an act that astonished the Luathan Axis. Now the Vadeli are forbidden to set foot in Kareeshtu, despised in Afadjann and distrusted in Umathela.

The Axis of Chir was never interested in a worldly empire. Vadel's journey in Old Chir was a cycle of success and failure before he unleashed Death upon the Malkioni. The actions of the Axis of Chir is a subtle dance designed to unleash a New Power that will bring woe and suffering to all humanity. The Axis of Chir is weak now but that is as it should be. When the dance requires them to be strong again as they were at its beginning, then they shall be strong. Already the Axis has seen this New Power in action at Oenriko Rock and they prepare for its next manifestation.



Vadeli Keywords

Cultural Keywords

Civil Brown

PHYSICAL ABILITIES: Knife combat, Withstand choking odour

MENTAL ABILITIES: Vadeli Lore, Read Vadeli, Conceal wrongdoing, Persuade glibly

TYPICAL PERSONALITY: Polite, Immoral, Hate Sorcerers

TYPICAL RELATIONSHIPS TO:

Family, Guild

MAGIC: Brown Magic, Perversions

Savage Brown

PHYSICAL ABILITIES: Cutlass combat, Fight dirty, Withstand choking odour

MENTAL ABILITIES: Vadeli Lore, Ambush

TYPICAL PERSONALITY: Cruel, Violent, Immoral, Hate Sorcerers

TYPICAL RELATIONSHIP TO: Usually none

MAGIC: Brown Magic, Perversions

Savage Red

PHYSICAL ABILITIES: Cutlass combat, Inflict bleeding wound, Inflict painful wound

MENTAL ABILITIES: Vadeli Lore, Ambush, Prolong suffering

TYPICAL PERSONALITY: Cruel, Violent, Immoral, Hate Sorcerers

TYPICAL RELATIONSHIP TO: Usually none

MAGIC: Red Magic, Perversions

Occupational Keywords

(we don't provide details for this Occupational keywords, make them up by yourself)

Anal Prober

Banthe Seafarer

Corsair

Destructive Logist

Flesh Merchant

Heleri Sailor

Psychopomp

Safety Patrolman

Usurer

Magic Keyword

Unlawful Shields

The spells are innate to the Vadeli. Through study of their skin, a Vadeli could acquire additional magics such as create Faecal Statue or brew Elixir of Blood.



Brown Skin

REQUIREMENTS: regularly consume fresh excrement, either bugger or use excrement during intercourse, lick hands after ablutions.

SPELLS: Cause Vadeli belly, Create choking vapour, Excrement divination.

Red Skin

REQUIREMENTS: regularly consume fresh meat, must always mix body secretions with blood, must use blood during intercourse.

SPELLS: Locate spilled blood, Make blood boil, Make blood run cold, Smell fear through blood

Forbidden Perversions

The Vadeli Perversions are not taught through grimoires. Instead a spell or effect is obtained through performance of the perversion's requirement. Separate performances are required to gain additional magics from that perversion. A regularly repeated performance can add a permanent augment onto a chosen magic – the size of the augment is dependent on the act's nature and the length of the repeated performances.

Perversion of Truth

REQUIREMENT: Must deceive outsider into committing a forbidden act.

SPELLS: Lie persuasively, Hide wrongdoing, Leave no trace

Perversion of Cosmos

REQUIREMENT: Must protect chaotic monster from lawful discovery

SPELLS: Communicate peacefully with [Chaotic race], Command [insentient Chaotic monster], Persuade [Chaotic cultist]

Perversion of Parenthood

REQUIREMENT: Must regularly consume own children.

EFFECT: Prolongment of life

Perversion of Kinship

REQUIREMENT: Must have frequent intercourse with and only with close relatives.

EFFECT: Each relationship confers a permanent augment on a chosen ability.

Homeland: Trowjang

by Simon Bray

I am of the Marazi. A bride of Tolat, Amazon and mother, die in fear man!

THE NATIVES OF TROWJANG are all women, the Marazi or Amazons. They worship only one god, warlike Tolat, their father, husband and lover; all other deities and males are inferior and unacceptable. The Marazi live simple, primitive lives in their makeshift jungle villages and ancient temple complexes. They fish, hunt, farm by slash and burn, raising yams, pigs and children and raid passing ships in their log canoes. When fishing, raiding or hunting becomes poor the houses are abandoned and new ones found. The Marazi are rightfully feared as pirates, they strike such terror into their neighbours that both Kralorela and Teshnos have formed battalions of women to resist them. These raids are co-operative ventures, and any woman who does not want to take part is free to leave.

There are no ruler or need of ruler in Marazi society. There are no land disputes, because they don't own any, there simple lifestyles mean they want for nothing, they do not war over relationships, as they are all sisters and children of the same father. Anayekana or She Who Must Be Obeyed is believed to rule the land by outsiders. The name is just a title, worn by the worthiest candidate at certain ceremonies and she has no great influence over the Marazi. The centre Tolat's worship lies in the City-Temple of Uxorial Ecstasy, it is here and in every village in Trowjang during the annual 'At One with Tolat' ceremony that the women make their marriage vows to their god, who then beds down with every Marazi. No one has ever been displeased and the girl children born to the union bolster the nation. Most amazons are indigenous Marazi, but there are rights of adoption to make women from other lands part of the nation. Men who come to the island must die, become slaves or be demeaned with the visitors collar, though few ever gain such and honour.

The Marazi have learned that foolish men dominate the world. Their society is run through harmony, communication and co-operation, blended with a mutual hatred of the outside world and the love of the one god Tolat, Father of Life and Death.

Trowjang Homeland Keyword

Look and Feet: A simple, but fierce and unyielding matriarchal society, centred around the worship of the god Tolat. The Marazi are superficially of Kralori stock having yellow skins and dark hair, but many are blessed by Tolat to have red hair, eyes or even skin. The Marazi are always hostile to strangers, especially men to whom they rarely speak or even gaze upon.

Occupations Available: Entertainer (Singing, Drumming), Healer, Hunter, Sailor, Warrior

Native Abilities: Sword and Shield Fighting, Javelin, Trowjang Customs, Trowjang Geography, Myths of Tolat, Speak Trowjangi, Wilderness Survival.

Typical Personality Traits: Hate Men, Fear Dragons, Warlike, Insular, Xenophobic, Aggressive.

Typical Relationship: to Ancestors, to Family, to Village, to Tolat.

Magic: Common Magic, Tolat

Origins

The Marazi of Trowjang are descended from the sun and the stars. They walked before the dawn with gods and mortals, but mortal men failed them so they took the warlike planet god Tolat as husband. Many men have tried to attack them all have failed and died, Tolat not only loves them but gives them the vigour to fight.

Common Magic

The Wisdom of Women

The use of common magic is rare amongst the Marazi. Used mainly by the young who have not yet undergone the rituals of womanhood and initiation into the cult of Tolat. The main source of this common magic is the legacy of knowledge and tradition that exist within every Marazi community. The echoed voices of long dead ancestors can be heard at every rite and within every song.

Talents - Run to Safety, Leap Over Logs, Count Foes Quickly, Calm Child, Ease Cramps, Cool Fever, Inspire Participation, Help Sister, Please Mother, Tell Good Tales.

Feats - Turtle Lure, Snatch Fish, Attract Bird, Ignite Camp Fire, Work Together, Hollow Canoe, Hack Jungle, Burn Wet Leaves, See Men's Failings.

Specialised Religion - The Cult of Tolat

Tolat, Lord of Life and Death.

Tolat is the Blood Red Planet; the sword god, he is father, lover, and saviour. He has remained loyal to the Marazi when all others have failed. In heaven he marched with them fighting all who approached. Unlike so many other gods he did not degrade his wives and daughters, but saw the strength within them. He did not force them to sit before the fire watching his stew pot, but gave them swords. He showed them how to fight, to defend their homes and to take what they wanted from others.

Tolat was a great wanderer, travelling through heaven and through hell, and all across the lands and seas. He made Trowjang his jungle home, building at its centre a great stone palace. From here he could rule the world, but jealous foes fought against him. First the Stagnant Sky Lords came to steal the women, but under Tolat's guidance they fought them off. Tolat was proved strongest of heaven's gods. Then the Envious Dragon Lord came to trick the women with riddles. However Tolat is life and death, war and love and puzzled the dragon with his own riddle. The dragon was so perplexed by this riddle that he chewed upon his own tail in frustration and flew away. Then the Raging Seas tried to flood the palace. Tolat thrust his sword into the centre of the island and lifted it above the torrent until it weakened to only a trickle. He then made the first canoe and sailed above the waters to show his domination of them. The Rustling Jungle tried to choke the palace, but Tolat gave his wives and daughters fire to burn it away and turn it into fertile ashes. Finally the Dagger Eyed Sisters brought discord to the palace, arguing about who

should lie with Tolat first. They squabbled until blood was spilled on the floor of the sacred hall. Tolat understood that this was jealousy, so he made the Palace of Uxorial Ecstasy and showed the women the rite and song of love. Now all women who seek to lie with him need only sing his song and perform his rite, upon the sacred night and they experience the oneness of lying with a god. Jealousy was driven away from the island and harmony ensued. Tolat is worshipped in two major aspects, Tolat Father of Life and Tolat Lord of Death no other gods are known to the Marazi or needed.

Entry Requirements: Open only to Women of the Marazi People. They must agree to worship no other, to love no other and to lie with no other.

Hometown: Trowjang

Abilities: Sword Fighting, Devotee or Initiate of Tolat, Strong Willed, Hate Men, First Aid, Ambush Tactics, Mythology of Tolat, Soul Vision, Wilderness Survival, Canoeing.

Virtues: Love Tolat, Brave, Xenophobic, Warlike.

Affinities and Feats:

TOLAT (Ritual of Uxorial Ecstasy, Tolat's Presence, Ruddy Light, Stop Jealousy, Unite Marazi)
FATHER OF LIFE (Fertility Earth from Ashes, Close Wound, Comfort the Dying, Ease Pain, Communal Thought)

LORD OF DEATH (Deep Cutting Blade, Rage Against Foes, Fight on Water, Fight in Sky, Fight in Jungle, Cremate Corpse, Man Killing Blow, Terrify Man)

Secret: Tolat's Bride (Gives an automatic augment of _ the secret's rating to any of the Tolat Affinity Feats)

Sacrifices: War booty, jungle boars or cockerels are used for most common rituals. However for certain ceremonies including the Ritual of Uxorial Ecstasy only men will do.

Other Side: The Great Red Planet is Tolat's Otherside, loyal Marazi know that they go there after death to make love and war forever more. From here can be accessed the Sky World or the Underworld, depending on the location of the planet at the time.

Notes about Marazi Professions

Unlike many cultures the Marazi only have one point of worship, however each of the professions found in Marazi culture has developed separate feats within the worship of Tolat. These feats are guarded secrets passed on from mother to daughter and are not shared openly with others. In some cases these are not truly feats of Tolat, but stolen magical abilities. Daughters of Tolat guards these feats, heroic Amazons that now dwell with the god. The most recent of these heroes is Chanaya Sea-Conquering Daughter, who stole the secrets of Dormal to allow the Marazi to raid the open seas. Only initiates or higher of Tolat can gain access to these feats. Here are some sample Marazi Heroes, in addition to their feats many Daughters of Tolat provide special skills to their followers.

Entertainer – Mayninta Mamuyai the Beating Heart, who carries Tolat's drums that thunder in heaven.

Feats – War Drumming
Ability – Drum For Hours

Healer – Guama Cooling-Hands, who cools the fever and drives out disease.

Feat – Fight Infectious Disease
Ability – Find Fever Fight Roots

Hunter – Atlatl Jali, the far thrower and deer hunter
Feat – Jungle Dodging Javelin
Ability – Run through Jungle

Sailor – Chanaya Sea-Conquering Daughter, who stole the secrets of Dormal

Special – Open Seas Ritual
Ability – Canoe Sailing

Warrior – Na Quen the Guardian, who watches over the villages.

Feat – Sense Men Approaching
Ability – Stand Guard

Reasons to have left home

When Amazon's are not at home they are raiding their neighbours. It is rare for them to leave their homes otherwise. However this is the Hero Wars and anything can happen.



Sinful Amazon Practices

by Sandy Petersen



(Portions of a religious court transcript from Teshnos)

The accused - Joaz Ur-Ludd - I am Joaz Ur-Ludd. I was asked by My Great Noble Ptana to recount some of the wrongful customs of these Amazons that our records may be ever more complete showing the wisdom of our ancient ways. Yet I am accused of heresy in doing so. Now I am at trial before my foes. I say boldly that explaining the evils of the Amazons does not propagate them, but exposes and weakens them.

Court Instructor - Explain to our Lord Priest Judge-In-Wisdom the nature of your claims about the Amazons.

Joaz Ur-Ludd - I do not recount the tale of my betrayal into the hands of the Trowjang Amazons, nor of the burden of my slavery there. I do not recount the tale of my mutilation and the weeks of slow healing I have undergone to recover. This is the Amazon beliefs.

Court Instructor - Let the scribe enter the scrolls given me by Joaz Ur-Ludd into the court record, while Joaz Ur-Ludd reads them aloud.

Joaz Ur-Ludd - This is what the Amazons believe: The first people fell out of the sky and settled upon the face of the earth. They had been driven from heaven because they argued

with each other, and committed adultery. In heaven there were no other people like themselves, but on the surface world they met one other type of humans - the Askiani.

Lord Priest Judge-In-Wisdom - Who are the Askiani?

Joaz Ur-Ludd - My Lord Priest the Askiani are we of Teshnos.

Lord Priest Judge-In-Wisdom - Do they not know of the Animal-People? Or of the Dragon Empire? Or the Beast-Riders?

Joaz Ur-Ludd - My Lord, they do know of them, but they do not consider them to be true humans, but animals in disguise. They say the Animal People and Beast Riders are true beasts and so inferior to humans. They say the Dragon People are dragons, therefore ancestors of beasts and so inferior even to the Animal People and Beast Riders.

Lord Priest Judge-In-Wisdom - But they believe we are human?

Joaz Ur-Ludd - In part, my Lord. They believe that female Teshnans are human. They believe that male Teshnans are beasts thinly disguised.

Lord Priest Judge-In-Wisdom - Continue.

Joaz Ur-Ludd - This is what the Amazons believe: When the Original People came to the

surface, it was gray and desolate. They heard the sound of a great voice calling. Then a mysterious being appeared – the Great Golden One.

The Great Golden One spoke to the Original People. "We want people who look like the Gods. You have bodies of the right shape, but your teeth, feet, and claws are those of insects and crawling things. We will make new people who have extremities like ours. You are filthy and stink. Cleanse yourselves now." Then Great Golden One departed for a year. The Original People washed themselves and dried their skin with ground seeds. When Great Golden One returned, he carried the skin of Enemy Monster in one hand, and a spearpoint in the other hand. He laid the monster skin on the ground and wrapped the spearpoint in it. The people stood back and let the wind enter. The dry wind came from the west and the wet wind from the east.

When Great Golden One lifted the monster skin, the spearpoint was gone. A girl lay in its place. The spearpoint had become First Girl. The wind gave them life, and it is the wind from our mouths now which gives us life. When it ends blowing, we die.

Now Great Golden One had the Original People build an enclosure of brushwood. When it was finished, First Girl went inside. Great Golden One cried with a loud voice and Wagoner – Tolat – came down from the sky. Great Golden One told him, go into the enclosure, and live with First Girl as husband and wife.

At the end of one year, First Girl had birthed twin girls, who grew to adulthood in one year, and then built their own houses where they too lived with Tolat.

After five years, First Girl had birthed five pairs of twins, and all dwell in their individual houses with Tolat. And every year her children and grandchildren birthed twins, who grew to adulthood in a year, and became partners with Tolat. After the fifth twins were born, Great Golden One came again and took First Girl away to the north mountains. But her descendants filled the land with people.

The Original People split into two parts. One part was happy to see First Girl's people spread across the land. The other part were angry, and went to live with the Askiani – we of Teshnos. The Original People who were happy and stayed in Trowjang with First Girl's descendents eventually went deep into the forest and turned into spirits of blessing. The Amazons still pray to these spirits when they need help.

The Original People who were angry and went to live with the Askiani became males – imitations of human life who cannot give birth or suckle or make proper love to Tolat.

Court Instructor – Joaz Ur-Ludd your tales are merely the false beliefs of the Amazons. You seek to avoid condemnation for your

wicked deeds. Tell us now their behavior and acts, not merely their beliefs.

Joaz Ur-Ludd – My Lord I was asked to recount their beliefs. Now I am ready to speak of their practices.

This is what the Amazons do. They were born from a spearpoint so they believe, they must only survive by means of those practices which can be done with a spear. Thus, they can only fish for large creatures which can be harpooned, so it is a battle. They can hunt, but only animals big enough to kill with a spear, so it is like a battle. They may not farm. They may not gather berries, or dig roots, or keep orchards.

But we know they fish with nets and they farm and they have orchards and they hunt small animals and birds with bows and lime twigs. But the Amazons do not do this. They go to war and capture women from the Beast-People or the Dragon Empire and make them into slaves. They say it is right for a slave to do these things to bring them food.

They also capture men from any nation and make them slaves. However, they say that they cannot let a man stay on the island without disguise. If they do, then the spirits of the Original People will come out of the woods. They will know the man for one of the rebellious Original People – their ancient mates – and they will either try to mate with the man or kill him. If they mate with him, the offspring are terrible. I have seen creatures which the Amazons said were offspring of an unaltered man and an Original People spirit and it was terrible indeed.

So to keep a man on the island they must alter his extremities – the parts of his body which were not like the Great Golden One. So they cut off one of his fingers, one of his toes, and the end part of his penis.

Court Instructor – They did this to you?

Joaz Ur-Ludd – My Lord, they did indeed.

Without spell, potion, ceremony, or prayer. They said I was then fit to dwell with them and work as a slave. They put me to tend pigs until they discovered that I was a scribe. Then they put me to tending libraries.

Lord Priest Judge-In-Wisdom – How do they increase in numbers then, if their slaves have no children?

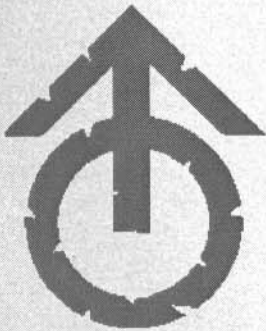
Joaz Ur-Ludd – My Lord, women from Teshnos who freely flee to Trowjang are not made slaves, but become one with the Amazons after one year of probation. Also, the Amazons themselves often have children. Also, if a slave woman from the Beast People or the Dragon Empire manages to have a child while on the island, they say that the woman has much of the true blood in her, and she is allowed to join the Amazons after one year of probation. Usually this only happens if she is already pregnant when she is captured or if enemies from other lands manage to rape her during a raid. Also, we know they preferably

«My Lord,
they do know
of them
but they do not
consider them
to be true
humans,
but animals
in disguise»

«They go to war
and capture
women from
the Beast-People
or the Dragon
Empire
and make them
into slaves»

«All Amazons have their own separate house to receive Tolat within»

«My Lord, the Amazons believe that her ghost remains behind and is one of the most horrendous and vile and vicious evil spirits known »



Tolat rune as drawn by the Marazi of Trowjang island

kidnap babies. Female babies are raised as Amazons. If the baby is not of Teshnos, they do a special Viewing Rite to see if the baby has enough of the "true human" blood in her and if she does, she is raised as an Amazon. Otherwise she is raised as a slave until or unless she gives birth. But I saw more than a hundred Viewing Rites and in all of them the baby was said to be truly human. I do not think they ever reject a female baby.

Male babies are drowned at sea, or mutilated to be slaves as are the males they capture.

Lord Priest Judge-In-Wisdom – Do they still pretend to live with Tolat?

Joaz Ur-Ludd – My Lord, they do not now live with Tolat. They say that sinfulness forced Tolat to retreat to the sky where we see him still wandering. But once a year, Tolat comes out of the sky and visits each of them in their own huts.

It is like this. Four weeks before the appointed day, all adult Amazons draw lots, each in their own social rank. One lot in four is the Yellow Mark – holders of the Yellow Mark may not go to their huts during Tolat's visit, but must patrol the island, and the shores, and the land, for enemy intruders, guarding against interruption. So three in four Amazons have the Red Mark, which gives them the right to cohabit with Tolat. But some of them do not. Any Amazon with a Red Mark is allowed to ignore it and be part of the Yellow Mark instead.

Lord Priest Judge-In-Wisdom – Why would they do such a thing?

Joaz Ur-Ludd – My Lord, an Amazon might change her Red into Yellow if she feared an especially large raid, so felt more warriors were needed. Or if she was on a distant boat or raid so she could not be home in time. Or for ritual mortification I suppose.

All Amazons have their own separate house to receive Tolat within. Of course they cannot all afford a true house of their own – but even the poorest Amazon has built herself a small shed or enclosure of brush for Tolat to visit.

On the night of the visit, all slaves are locked inside our barracks with guards outside. The windows are shut with animal hides so we cannot see. I poked a hole in a hide with a skewer so I could watch. All was black. From the sheds came soft sounds of pleasure. It is my belief that at this time the Amazons were masturbating to climax in prayer to summon Tolat. At midnight, I then heard them sing prayers. Now falling stars seemed to fall into most of the Amazon's homes and sheds. Then cries of adoration and ecstasy began to sound, and did not dwindle until the sun was almost above the horizon, when I saw shafts of light rise from the houses.

Lord Priest Judge-In-Wisdom – Do the Amazons engage in sexual abominations or self-defiling at other times?

Joaz Ur-Ludd – My Lord, except on the day of Tolat's coming, I never saw an Amazon

make a sexual move or remark, except for the most crude and offensive ones imaginable.

They seem to be completely uninterested in sex most of the year. I spoke with one about it, and she said that Tolat's glorious presence was exactly 295 times as good as orgasming with a normal male, and so the afterglow lasted the full year. [Note to reader: the Gloranthan year is 294 days long.] I do not know how she came at this number because she had never, to my knowledge, engaged in sexual congress with anyone but Tolat.

Lord Priest Judge-In-Wisdom – Do they become pregnant of this Tolat?

Joaz Ur-Ludd – My Lord, they do. They say that when Tolat comes, he asks them if they wish their intercourse to have fruit, and if they say yes, then they become pregnant. Thus, they may choose to become pregnant or not, just as they please. All the children fathered by Tolat are girls. Sometimes they are twins, who then get special treatment and privileges. However, women who are so old that their menses no longer flow cannot become pregnant, even by Tolat. They are still visited however. A fair number of the older women die of strokes or heart attacks after the visit, and the other Amazons say they are "Taken With Tolat" and claim to envy such a mode of death.

Lord Priest Judge-In-Wisdom – At what age are they introduced to this ritual sex with Tolat?

Joaz Ur-Ludd – My Lord, I regret to say that they believe a girl becomes a woman exactly one week after her first menstrual blood ceases to flow. From then on, they are permitted to build themselves an enclosure and sport with Tolat on his sacred day, regardless of age. Of course, a girl who is shy or fearful can always take a Yellow Mark on the appropriate day, and some do. They place no value upon virginity, however.

Lord Priest Judge-In-Wisdom – What if a girl dies after becoming a woman, but before laying with Tolat?

Joaz Ur-Ludd – My Lord, the Amazons believe that her ghost remains behind and is one of the most horrendous and vile and vicious evil spirits known. The girl's enclosure is sealed off with chants and spells and I once saw a whole village abandoned because three such girls died in one year and they feared the evil spirits left behind. They were killed in a raid.

Court Instructor – [Iasciviously] Does Tolat visit all the Amazons or only the most beautiful?

Joaz Ur-Ludd – My Lord, it seems to me that Tolat must have very indiscriminate tastes in women. Sometimes he visits one of the slave women, but only if that slave woman is off by herself so no one can see her. If the woman becomes pregnant as a result, as I said before, she is removed from being a slave after a year's probation.

Jrustela

The Shadowy Isles

by James Fruzetta



Description

The Shadowy Isles of Jrustela are one of the most exotic uz lands in Glorantha. Only a handful of non-uz have ever set foot on them, and even foreign uz rarely visit the islands. Despite this, the uz of Jrustela are infamous, for their black galleys have roved the seas since the Opening. Though their raids are mere pinpricks and their power pales next to that of the Waertagi or Vadelii, the sea-uz of Jrustela have their own dark agenda, and few coastal communities take solace at the signs of the uz night-ships.

The Shadowy Isles themselves are formed out of the uz-inhabited part of the archipelago of Jrustela, formed when that ancient land was destroyed by vengeful gods. They were led by Gargankot Brokentooh, and thought they were the only remnant of all the uz in the world, being cut off from other lands; they made their peace with the Elder Races they found on neighboring isles, and since then the Unity Peace of Jrustela has been an unusual instance of aldryami, mostali and uz living in (relatively) close proximity without undue bloodshed or strife. Each year, the three peoples come together to reenact the ritual of unity, and keep the islands safe from war between themselves.

Most of the uz of Jrustela live on the larger islands of Ekgestor and Malusoll, but there are many dozens of smaller islands, some home to only a small uz family or even a solitary uz hunter. Perhaps 10,000 uz dwell here all together, not counting their kin the uzelu, or sea-trolls.

Inhabitants

All the uzko clans of the islands are gathered together into the Tribe of Uz. Brokentooh forged one people from many, and the old divisions were forgotten when the uz came here. She shaped them instead into one new people, though she was not able to forge them into a single family; each family or clan has a story of their origin and a history before their flight in the Escape Tunnel. Unlike some uz lands where the Great Mother uses genealogy to come to power and enforce her will, the Great Mother of the Shadowy Isles draws her importance and power from wealth, personal powers and her position as uz representative in the annual Unity Ritual to makes peace with the other Elder Races here.

Since the Opening, enmity between clans has grown with the realization that the Tribe of Uz is not alone, and great mothers of the most

The Black Fleet

One possible Hero Wars plot for a campaign in which Jrustela plays a prominent part is the landing of Kogag's Black Fleet. When the uz fled Wonderhome, most of Kogag's Fleet was lost on the journey. The uz of Jrustela are setting forth as scouts and explorers, hoping to find paths that will lead them to the Fleet – and lead that fleet to Komor, when a thousand great galleys commanded by uzuz and crewed by demons of Hell will burst upon the seas, and onto the enemies of Jrustela!

Docking at Kogag Zask

Nochet Knowledge Document
KR311 16035

"Captain Alus having made agreement with an Argan Argar merchant of Jrustela the past year, and having purchased a Token of Docking, it was agreed that we should put the ship into the troll harbor of Kogag Zask despite our fears of piracy. There, the crew would repair the vessel and we would have an opportunity to trade.

"When we approached the troll isles, Alus broke the token in two and threw half in the water. That night, a small troll boat appeared and hailed us, then piloted the Seawing in through the channels. The crew were most unhappy, being unable to see danger, and even more unhappy that a troll clambered aboard to relay commands from its boat. It distained to talk other than give directions or warning, which it did in pidgin.

"We came upon Kogag Zask at midnight, a black bulk that stood darker than the night sky. The pilot directed us toward one of the great, open caves that hangs above the water. As we came, trolls swam out with lines which the crew attached to the ship. Then, gangs of slave on the shore pulled the Seawing in through the cave, to a distance of at least 100 paces.

The cave turned gently, and the crew talked much of how secure and safe such an anchorage would be in even

CONTINUE TO P.23

powerful clans plot to either seize control, or to forge their own independent tribes. Uz families from other lands have come to settle since the Opening, which further has complicated the relations between clans and the Great Mother of the Islands. Foreign uz always refer to the uz here as the Jrustelan Tribe.

Soon after coming to Jrustela the uzko clans discovered the presence of uzelu, who had settled here after the sinking of Jrustela to feast on the carrion and flesh of the drowned. The uzelu, mutated by chaos in the Age of Conquest into their present water-dwelling shape, were recognized as kin and treated as such, though rarely as equals. Many of the clans of Jrustela made pacts with family groups of or individual uzelu, profiting greatly from the experience. Many uzelu live in underwater caves or grottos near sites of uzko inhabitation; many others live more solitary lives, rarely interacting with their air-breathing kin.

Like all uz, Jrustelans are suspicious of outsiders, particularly those who have not proven themselves to be great uz-friends. But the cost of Dormal's Opening Ritual was that the islands open themselves to the rest of the world, and between that bargain, the spirit of the Unity Ritual and the provisions of the Argan Argar cult, it is possible for outsiders to visit the uz isles — even, strikingly, visitors from the other Elder Races. It is easiest to do so by making arrangements with an uz ship captain or merchant outside the islands, though they profit greatly from such deals. Much more hazardous is to approach the islands directly, risking that the uz will not immediately sink an intruding vessel at a whim.

People of Note Famous Uz of Jrustela

Though Jrustela is an isolated land, there are a few galley captains, merchants, pirates and heroes known to some outsiders.

Kalorf Watergulper

Uz are fine swimmers, and the Jrustelans particularly so. Even by such levels, Kalorf is exceptional, as skilled as any uzelu. He has never set foot on a ship's deck, but despite this has traveled to both Genertela and Pamattea. He is the finest of pilots, and may aid a foreign or non-uz vessel in traversing the uz isles.

He is known to sport with the monsters of Magasta, and to wreak his anger against those ships, uz or no, foolish enough to harm any of his favorites. He has dived down into the Black Depths, and is said to know terrifying ship-crushing spirits of the deep.

Shango and his Perch

Shango Threeship was a great uz pirate, who after the Opening ranged the seas far and wide. He once tricked a Vadeli ship into sinking itself, and once outraced one of Magasta's own children. His luck ran out one night, sadly, when

his galley ran aground and broke up, leaving him the only survivor. Left on a small, tiny island with terrible wounds, he eventually died as well.

Shango's spirit, however, was too mean to die, and his ghost came to haunt the island. When an incautious jungle-bird alighted on the island's only tree, Shango's spirit possessed it, and he flew off in search of an uz vessel. He seized one, eventually, by pure force of will, and turned its crew to the pirate trade once again. In his voyages he perches on the First Mate, and turns his considerable cruelty and magics against any who would dare question his present form. He has a particular taste for human liquors, and demands such from any human vessel that crosses his path.

Soex Chatag-tooth

This emaciated, wizened shaman of Korasting is the great magic-sculptor of Obsidian Mountain. Her grandmother began the project, her mother continued it, and she plans to finish it, preparing her considerable magic and resources to finish the Kygerlith soon.

Soex is always searching for components, spirits, sorceries or items that will aid her task, and her agents lurk in Kogag Zask. What she cannot buy, she has stolen, always a source of potential trouble. Despite this, few uz will willingly cross her since she is the greatest shaman the Jrustelans have ever known, and perhaps one of the greatest of any uz land. She is, on a personal level, considered to be greatly eccentric and disturbed. She only takes Gadblad smiths to mate, has never been touched by light, and has never suffered a non-uz to cross her path without biting and swallowing some piece of them.

Chaf Pierbreaker

This great, scarred uz is the personal enforcer of the Harbormaster of Kogag Zask. If his crew is perhaps not the most skilled sailors of Jrustela, they are a grim and ready band of warriors and few shipcaptains will thus risk disobeying the Harbormaster's regulations when it comes to shiphandling. Chaf particularly enjoys enforcing the laws of Kogag Zask that forbid other islands to build piers or docks above a certain size, smashing offending structures with the great, black ram that crowns his ship. The ram is useful as well for ensuring that foreign ships do not beach or anchor themselves off other islands than Kogag Zask without the Harbormaster's permission.

Kuk Turnigin

This uzko shipcaptain was not born in Jrustela, but joined a crew that had ventured to the Shadow Plateau. Proving to be an uz of great skill and with an unusual sensitivity to the magic of sea and ship, she speedily rose through the ranks and became one of the youngest captains of the black galleys.

Kuk's great interest is in charting the seas after the lifting of the Closing, and discovering both the isolated troll lands of Glorantha and the many curious and strange places where Magasta's waters lap ashore. She is a wanderer and an explorer, returning to Jrustela with a hold full of

exotic goods, strange foods, and stories of far-off lands.

Kuk is blind, having gambled her eyes away in the East Isles to a godlet. She misses them little, and instead places large, polished gems in the empty sockets. Her first mate is a Vaneekaran hero, and it is said that the two have taken husbands in each of the uz lands, leaving children behind to be raised in strange places — a source of great disapproval and gossip among the Mothers of Jruzuela.

Places of Interest

A few of the more noteworthy islands and other landmarks of the uz islands are listed here:

Ekgastor is dominated by a volcano that erupted here when the gods took their vengeance on the Middle Sea Empire. The volcano is now dead, and covered by a thick forest. This isle holds special importance as the place where Gargankot Broketooth led her people out from the Escape Tunnel, and there are many ritual events are conducted here. The most important is the preparations for the rituals of peace with the other Elder Races.

There are a few troll-places of note; the greatest is Obsidian Mountain itself, which the uz have carefully and slowly been re-shaping as a great Kygerlith over centuries. When the uz here thought they were the last of their kind, the Kygerlith was intended to re-knit the broken body of their race. Now, its purpose is shrouded in secret, and even the uz of the isles do not know what their elders plan. The site itself is important also as many hundreds of uz live in the warren of caves at the mountains base, including the Great Mother of the Isles. Other locations include Fishhead on the Eastern Shore, where the local clans harpoon vast monsters from the channel depths and haul them ashore, feasting upon the flesh and using the bones to form their dwelling-places; and Casting Beach, sacred to Vaneekara and the favored site of those fishing by line or harpoon.

Malusoll is the other great island, a low-lying isle of swamp, lagoons and jungle. Several fisher-uz clans dwell on the sandy shores, but the interior is home to the islands' only clans of Gorakiki worshippers. Other uz of Jruzuela rarely go here, fearing the great beetles, mosquitoes and leeches dwelling here. All the Gorakiki-worshipping uz who escaped here with Broketooth settled in the interior of this isle, and trade their wares through the coastal clans and the occasional open fair. The interior of the island is also a place where many unusual spices are found, which the uz of the islands prize greatly — and trade to other uz lands across the seas. There are no large communities of note on the island, only many small uz villages. These have a distinctive look, often using huge pieces of chitin to form their ramshackle homes.

Kogag Zask is sometimes called the third Great Island. Though no clan calls it home, it is

the personal property of the Great Mother of the Isles. The many underground caverns that run through the islands out to the sea serve as a great port, a shipbuilding center, and as center of the Kogag Cult. The isle is traditionally ruled by the Harbormaster, who is usually a close relative of the Great Mother of the Isles. The troll town simply known as Harbor is the largest single community of the isles, hosting some four or five thousand uz during market days, and perhaps two thousand otherwise. Great storehouses were chewed from the very rock, and bazaars operate even in the hours of daylight as the entire town is sacred to Argan Argar. Even outsiders are allowed to trade here, although the other Elder Races usually trade through uz intermediaries.

Ebonmisk was settled by Gankatmik, a granddaughter of Gargankot, who founded her clan here. She won two bets from Magasta, which made this island a paradise. The Blackwave Bet turned the waters lapping the isle black as jet, a great wonder. No one knows what Gankatmik's Other Bet was, though some suggest it is the many rare and strange black plants that grow here. The Black Wood preferred for galley construction is harvested here in great amounts, enriching the clan of the island.

The Tomisk chain, centered around Tomisk, are famed for the hermit-smiths who dwell here. Tomisk is one of the few good sources of metal in the troll isles, and the clans which mine it are wealthy. There is a dangerous trade, however, for they often find evil artifacts of the God-Learners, and they must force the tainted magic from such items to reclaim the metal. There are many strangely-regular formations on the island, which are either sacrificed to or avoided as the case may be.

Chafak is the treasure-island, where the material horde of the God-Learners was left in their downfall. The uz picked through this place long ago, taking such that pleased them. They left the rest, and there are many tales of the great wealth to be found here. The uz find this a blessing, for uz hunters lurk on the island, killing those non-uz who would come here and devouring them.

Puhmizh, the Pirate Isle, is a favored haunt of uz pirates. Long ago an uz clan discovered that the island is a dome, and the interior a great underground cavern. Discovering it was possible, if difficult, to bring entire ships into the island, the clan turned to piracy. It has ever since served as a pirate's lair, though an ill-fated one; every clan, captain or group that has called the island home has come to an untimely fate.

Skaf is one of the holy sites of Sapana the Robber, and lies near Sapana's Well. When the uzko and uzelu first came to agreement here, they acted together to enact the great ritual to bring and bind a powerful spirit-follower of Sapana. Any member of Sapana's cult who participates in her worship rituals will, at this site only, enjoy the benefit of her air- and water-breathing spirits, allowing uzko and uzelu to interact more easily.

CONTINUE FROM P.22

the fiercest storm. Kas, for once forgetting trade, spoke against the harbor for we could not see the night sky, and indeed it was dark and forbidding within the cave. In all the way there were but three torches, a great concession by the uz and one which they demanded much in terms of gifts and donatives.

"The pier itself was curious, for each piling was carved into an image of the troll's boat god, Kogag. I later heard trolls say this is lucky, for Kogag is the protector of ships and such docks will hold ships fast in storms, keep them from brushing the rock, and so on. Each piling was chewed from a single great tree-trunk, and all had a look of newness to them. Ropes hung from the ceiling, where the trolls had pierced great holes into the rock, and which were used to lift and leave cargo in ships docked here.

"We were given the freedom to keep our goods and selves on the dock, Alus having arranged for this to be a private area of our own. He performed the ritual of Three Warnings himself, and after this the trolls pledged not to come here without great need. I later heard that this was but one of dozens of docks of the island, and one usually intended for foreign uz or non-uz.

"Having docked, we passengers headed to the Harbor Market with a guard of three stout sailors and two hired troll guards, while Alus and his mates dickered with the uz for wood, rope, cloth and tar to repair the damage to the ship..."

Cameo Ideas of the Islands

Press Gang

Jruztelan captains vie in obtaining great trolls, prized as rowers. A player's or uzdo hero or follower is kidnapped by an unscrupulous shipcaptain. The heroes must pursue the ship that impressed him to free their fellow (or perhaps obtain suitable monetary compensation!). Heroes might also be hired to reclaim someone else's stolen uzdo slave, or to serve as a press gang obtaining uzdo by force!!

Kralk Gon

Captain Oggan of the galley Kanong recently purchased a mountain troll in the Tarmo Mountains. This unusually large and strong example seemed to be a galley captain's dream, pulling an oar by itself without tiring. Unfortunately, while in port Kralk Gon broke free of its shackles, ate the cabin enlo, ate the second mate, and wandered into town, gobbling up whatever (and whoever) it could find. The heroes might be called in to stop the beast, asked by Oggan to recapture it, or asked by a different captain to steal it! This is complicated by the fact that angry locals and every two-bit adventurer that can heft a melee weapon and want a reputation will try to kill it. Kralk Gon itself, after eating a suitable amount of food, will climb the tallest building in town, occupy the top layer, and try to take a nap — irritably flinging out any pests that intrude upon him.

Zargar is a low-lying, rocky island on the eastern edge of the archipelago. Here, treacherous currents, unseen reefs and lurking monsters of Magasta pose a constant threat to ships. Zargar is home to the Wrecker Clan, infamous for their impiety towards Kogag. They profit from the shipwrecks that fall upon their island, even going so far as to lure the unwary to their deaths upon the rocks. No member of the Wrecker Clan dares travel in a boat, for the spirit of the boat will kill them; instead, they are great swimmers, known to travel from island to island.

Sapana's Well. Lying roughly in the middle of the uz isles is this great black blot, where black water from the depths rises up to mix and dissipate on the surface. The spot is considered holy, and worshippers of the Robber hold their high holy day ceremonies here. The water here has many other uses, and uz come here at night to collect it before the impure races of the sun pollute it.

Greatsnap. This immense clam, one of Molakka's own children, lay on the sea shore since time immemorial. The God-Learners in their wickedness seized Greatsnap and brought it to their lands, the better to study it. When the waters rose over Jruztela, Greatsnap shattered the works of its captors and consumed them, then settled here. The uz of Jruztela regard it in awe, and the Molakka cult offers special rituals of appeasement and worship. There are terrifying rumors that the cult can actually direct it to do their bidding.

The Face Channel. This stretch of remarkably clear water lies in part of the boundary between the uz and Aldryami islands. The bottom of the channel is strewn with thousands of statuary faces, left here as warning, sign or joke of the gods that cast down the Jruztelans. The uz do not care overmuch to go here, fearing spirits.

Sleng, the Floating Island. This island is known to rest on the sea floor, but despite this moves about from place to place. Though it lies currently within the uz isles, it has at other times been part of the aldryami and mostali islands. No one has ever witnessed how the island moves, even the mer-races that dwell beside its bottom.

Makan. Shalg Claneater was an uz hunter of the Halrog clan, who settled Makan island in Brokentooh's time. Centuries ago, a clan war between the Halrog and Kavak clans degenerated into brutal fighting, until the Kavak came to Makan and killed the entire Halrog clan in one night. Only Shalg, hunting the shallows with net and spear, was spared. Over the next eight years Shalg hunted down, killed and devoured every member of the Kavak, until both clans were destroyed. Shalg's vengeful spirit remained on Makan after his death, and most uz shun the place as haunted

Obsidian Mountain. This great, jagged volcanic neck is slowly being transformed into a Kygerlith, and already the shape suggests her great figure. Teams of enlo labor on the mountain,

chewing, carrying stone down, carrying materials up, and supporting the uzko who work on the project. Each clan must tithe enlo slaves and magic to its construction, and all non-uz who see it fear its completion. If finished it would be the greatest Kygerlith ever construction. So far, only her feet, an arm and her face are completely finished.

Spirits of the Shaded Islands

When the uz found Jruztela, the spirits of the islands had been largely destroyed by the evil machinations of the God Learners, or destroyed when the Gods themselves moved to destroy the land. The few surviving spirits had often been driven insane, were bitterly hostile or simply indifferent and the uz accordingly avoided them wherever possible.

When the uz fled through the Escape Tunnel, however, some of their home spirits fled with them. Other hell spirits emerged from Sapana's Well at that time, and some of the spirits of destruction sent by the gods stayed in the Isles. The uz came to terms with many of these spirits, and the magical ecology of Jruztela is as intricate as any other uz-land — if very different from the Mostali and Aldryami-inhabited islands nearby.

A few of the notable spirits include:

Solhag

This great spirit of shadow covers much of the interior Malusoll, filtering out most of Yelm's harmful rays. The uz of Malusoll offer Solhag worship and honor, and carefully keep to old ritual agreements — fearing that otherwise, another island might well steal Solhag away from them. It is Solhag that gives Jruztela its common name as the Shadowy Isles; streamers from Solhag sometimes drift over other smaller islands, giving them blessed shade and occasions for great rejoicing.

Sapana the Robber

This darkness goddess, wife of Magasta and mother of Wachaza, is revered by the uzelu and by many uzko warriors and sailors. She possesses special magics to drown and entangle foes, to survive in and out of water, and to drive away chaos monsters. Most humans regard her cult with a mixture of fear and dislike claiming her worshippers are all pirates, though many peaceful uz worship her as well. Most uz of Jruztela claim that Sapana's Well is a gateway to her home on the Other Side, and that it is easier to manifest her here.

Talog

This great spirit of mist was one of the spirits of destruction the uz found in their new home. They made great pacts with Talog at Kogag Zask, and the spirit has ever-after roamed the uz isles, a vast rolling patch of dark mist and fog. The darksense of uz can see perfectly well through Talog, but others are blinded and easy prey. A few uz harness lesser powers of mist, greatly prized by trader-captains for defense and pirate-captains for ambush.

Xharn

This great Hellwolf was one of those that erupted from Hell in the time of the Exodus. It roved Komor, tearing the enemies of Darkness, until it was tamed in Halikiv by Xiola Umbar. It traveled with Charmilla Softspeak for a time, but fled the world when the Gbaji Wars raged. After the Jruztelans made the Unity Peace, Brokentoath was able to find Xharn once more, and the spirit manifested itself in Ebonmisk. It is said to remain as a voice of moderation and peace in the councils of Jruzuela, and that the cult of Xiola Umbar worships it.

Sib

This was once of the spirits of destruction the uz found here, and by great rituals and bargaining were able to beg leave of. Sib draws the attention of the unwary, leading them into disaster and misfortune. Its favorite trick is to appear as a dim light, leading ships onto reefs or shoals and destroying them. As part of the uz bargain, no uz can see or speak of Sib; though some uz certainly know of it, they will never pass this information on to visiting non-uz, for fear of incurring Sib's wrath themselves.

Secrets of the Islands

Like all uz-lands, Jruzuela has its own secrets, some unlike those of any other uz-land.

Sokazub's Survivors. When the uz fled to Jruzuela, other spirits and creatures of Darkness fled as well. When Brokentoath emerged from the Escape Tunnel, she found many species long thought to be lost, and old relationships among the Darkness were reformed. Few outsiders suspect that exotic creatures of Molakka, Borukug and Drellob exist in Jruzuela, or that some uz here discovered their descent from these great spirits and worship them.

The Uzelu Army. All the Elder Races long ago encountered the mer-races, and each has some degree of interaction with them. The uz of Jruzuela discovered their uzelu kin, and over time some clans developed close bonds. Many clans train uzelu as guards, scouts, assassins and hunters. The result has been a great increase in the population of uzelu in the Shadowy Isles, and even the other local mer-races do not realize the full extent of this population boom.

The Teethgnashers. When Brokentoath helped shape Peace with the other Elder Races, some uz sought revenge rather than peace. Such uz were never strong enough to break the peace, and were kept in check by the Unity Ritual. Some hatreds run deep, however, and a secret "cult" of xenophobes still hopes to shatter Unity and destroy the Aldryami and Mostali of the isles — a hope that has flourished since the Opening.

The Vaults of the God-Learners. The uz have delved deep into the islands to create caverns for their homes, in some cases even digging tunnels between different islands. They

have, in the process, discovered buried artifacts, even entire structures left by the Middle Sea Empire. The uz shunned these even before they knew who had left them, and there are stories of unwholesome monsters released through carelessness. As knowledge of Jruzuela grows, so do stories that some of the secrets of the God-Learners may be found in abandoned caves that even uz fear to travel...

Sapana's Well. The well is many things, but it is also a "thin" place where it is easier to get to the Other Side. The easiest path of all is to the Underworld, for a tiny rivulet of the River Styx emerges here and dilutes in the waters of Magasta. Local uz heroquesters sometimes use it, but jealously keep the secret from outsiders.

The Coral Cult. The uzelu have long worshipped Xorag, Great Spirit of Coral, in limited fashion. When the uzko settled Jruzuela, a few saw the worth of that spirit, and learned from the uzelu how to contact her. The result is a handful of uzko shamans of Xorag, supported by many more uzko and uzelu casual followers. These "coral shamans" have carefully encouraged and fostered reefs. Until the opening, this was chiefly a matter of harvesting the reef (a delicacy for uz). Now, shamans have shaped the reefs of the isles as defensive measures, to rip out the hulls of intruding ships.

Myths and Stories of the Islands

Three Stories of Sapana's Well

Long ago, when the gods of Wonderhome fled to the surface in the harsh light of Yelm, the spirit of Sapana fled as well. She found her way to the surface by cracks and rifts, and emerged into the watery world of Magasta.

She found this world to her liking at first, for the depths of Magasta kept the harsh surface world at bay, and protected her from the enemies of Darkness. But her great beauty and power drew Magasta's eye at last, until he sought her for his bride.

Sapana and Magasta fought; Sapana and Magasta maneuvered; and finally Sapana and Magasta mated, and her darkness mingled with his water, until the depths of the oceans grew dark and cool, and thus the oceans grew half-dark. Here, at the well, was where Sapana and Magasta enjoined, and it is here that darkness and the sea intermingle.

Long ago, in the Age of Conquest, Sapana the Robber and Magasta mated, and she bore him a son, Wachaza. Wachaza was the violent and unpredictable power of the deep oceans, the mix of his two parents.

The well was the place that Sapana gave birth to Wachaza, and here she dwelt afterwards as the young god grew in maturity and power. He

Cameo Ideas of the Islands

Salvage

A ship traveling through the Jruzuelan Isles suffered a mishap and sank, scattering its cargo across the sea. One of the items was valuable or magical enough to foster a search. The heroes must not only find the location of the wreck, but obtain sufficient help to retrieve the item. The problem is, it fell amidst one of the uzelu hunting grounds; worse, the nearest island is uz-inhabited, and will warn or aid the uzelu as possible.

Unity? What Unity?

When the Elder Races made their peace long ago, it did not necessarily extend to their kin below the waves. Uzelu and blue aldryami are not great enemies, but neither are well-loved by the other mer-races. Though peace reigns in Jruzuela, there is often fighting below the waves. This has been known to break the surface at times. Heroes coming to trade in Jruzuela may well encounter hostile mers of the other races, demanding tribute or that the heroes make no contact with troublesome trolls.

roamed the oceans of his father, and claimed his power whenever he found it. He returned from time to time to see his mother, who rarely roamed. Finally, he asked why she should stay in one place, and she told him how the nature of the Surface World pained her, and of her separation from Hell. Wachaza took up the stuff of reality in his hands, and carefully tore a rent between the worlds.

Ever after, darkness welled up from beyond, and Sapana basked in its cool, pleasurable darkness. And Wachaza, too, came to love the deep darkness, from where he could strike at his enemies without warning.

...

Long ago, when Komor was being formed, it was an even more imperfect place than it was today. The gods and spirits of creation sought to make it a good place, and to make it of equal parts. Thus part would be earth, part would be sea, and so on.

But Yelm Komosha, who was always a greedy god that cared nothing for others, wished to have more of this realm than was his due. And so he kept the Darkness from coming to Komor; and this was not a bad thing, for the Folk had no interest in leaving the cool perfection of Wonderhome until Komosha later forced them to.

But the Styx, who was always a gentle goddess, saw Yelm's work and knew it was bad. And so she stretched out her body,

and sent herself in a myriad of streams, rivulets and eddies. She reached forth to Komor, and here and there she found a path, and so her watery darkness came to the depths of Magasta's oceans. There was the first place that Darkness came to Komor to contest with Light.

Sapana's Well is one such place, where Styx reached forth and purified the waters with her darkness. Even today the rivulet spills forth into the water, bringing the pure darkness of Hell to Komor. This is a great solace to the uz, trapped in the cruel surface world.

New Jruztela Uz Keywords

Most uz keywords are available in Jruztela, although there are many more fishers than hunters here. Great trolls are relatively rare, purchased or captured as slaves in other uz lands. Uzdo are greatly prized in Jruztela as rowers and warriors for the black galleys, and command impressive prices. The following two keywords are common in Jruztela, rare to other uz coastal lands, and unknown elsewhere.



Uzko Sailor Keyword

The uz of Jruztela ply the oceans of Magasta in their black galleys, trading between the uz lands of Genertela and Pamaatea and occasionally with non-uz. Uz ships are rare, but sighted often after the Opening. Many sailors sail for a few years to provide for their clans, but others sail on clan-ships for their entire lives.

ABILITIES: Acute Darksense, Carry Heavy Load Without Tiring, Endure Daylight, Navigate, Ranged Combat (Sling), Row Without Tiring, Shiphandling, Speak (Language), Swim

TYPICAL PERSONALITY TRAITS: Stolid

TYPICAL RELATIONSHIPS: To captain, to fellow crew, to family back home

MAGIC: Argan Argar, Kogag, Korasting or Sapana.

LIVING STANDARD: Common.

EQUIPMENT: Tough clothing, floppy hat, slit sunglasses, exotic trinkets from elsewhere



Uzko Pirate Keyword

Most captains of Kogag are not amiss to a bit of raiding, but a few rely entirely on it. Such pirate-captains prefer to use trickery and their superb night-sailing skills to fall upon slumbering enemies; raids on coastal settlements and night-beached ships are especially favored. Their crews are often a tough but motley lot, using darkness magics to terrify and subdue their victims.

ABILITIES: Acute Darksense, Close Combat (Mace and Shield), Fight on Pitching Deck, Navigate, Ranged Combat (Sling), Row Without Tiring, Shiphandling, Surprise Foe, Swim

TYPICAL PERSONALITY TRAITS: Scary, Crazy, Cunning

TYPICAL RELATIONSHIPS: To captain, to crewmates, to booty

MAGIC: Karrg, Kogag, Korasting, Sapana, Vaneekara, Wachaza or Zorak Zoran. Some uz pirates are known to worship other gods

LIVING STANDARD: Common to prosperous, depending on success.

EQUIPMENT: Tough clothing, leather armor, weapons and tools, scarification and brands, exotic booty from past exploits.

The Black Galleys



UZ SHIPS ARE USUALLY GALLEYS, crewed by uzko and enlo. Uzdo, even romal, are greatly prized by Jruzuelan captains but are rare. The uz know that the first ship of any time was a galley, built by Kogag when he sailed the seas of the Styx.

When the uz came to Jruzuela, there were no shipbuilders among them, nor worshippers of Kogag. This did not matter at first, but as the uz reached out past Ebonmisk a need grew, and the shamans of the clans sought out Kogag in Wonderhome. His cult was born in Jruzuela, and soon small boats, rafts and canoes began to travel from island to island. Though a few craft of all sorts were built elsewhere, most — and certainly the finest — were at Kogag Zask, where Kogag's cult had been founded.

The galleys of Jruzuela were not built until living memory, when Dormal the Sailor Opened the seas. The uz were taught — the uncharitable said they stole — the ritual of the Opening, and craft capable of journeys from Jruzuela to other lands were constructed. As in all uz lands, the Jruzuelans built some to the "traditional" design that Kogag himself taught the uz: side-tiller craft, with primitive rigging and sails, but still sleek and fast. Curiously, however, the Jruzuelans experiment much more with their craft, and observers have noted adaptations of non-uz designs and techniques. Often, captured non-uz vessels are even pressed to use — although uz tend to favor galleys over designs that use sail alone. Often, pirate uz are prone to claim ship fittings as part of their prize, and no few vessels have been stranded as pirate uz decamp with their blocks and tackle, wheel and tiller, or other crucial item.

Though their black galleys possess sails, in fighting the uz prefer to rely on the strength of their oars. Their ships thus generally possess large crews, relying on the unique trollish digestive system to allow the maximum use of space. Crews gorge for weeks before setting out on a journey, cutting down the need for provisions, and are willing and able to drink sea-water on the way.

Most of the galleys of Jruzuela are built from the black woods harvested on the islands; the uz will, furthermore, stain or paint other items and fittings as well. Jruzuelan galleys thus are often

hard to see — particularly at night — as they lie low in the water, and their black sails are often hard to distinguish against the water. Uz pirates often use dark grey sails to further hide their presence. Most uz ships carry crews of some 30 to 40 uz and enlo, although pirates may carry a bit more.

One tradition shared by Jruzuelans is that a ship is either a "dark ship" or a "food ship," depending on the status of the rowers. Food ships are said to be more traditional; here, the highest status uz rowers are in the highest bank of oars. The name comes from the habit of passing out food from the highest bank downwards, with the top uz receiving the choicest pieces. With the advent of the Curse of Kin, this has degenerated into uzko on the top, superior and other good enlo in the middle, and the most wretched at the bottom. Often, the bottom bank may receive nothing but the feces and offal dropped from above them.

The "dark ships" rank their banks different; here, the choicest position is at the bottom, away from the harsh glare of the Enemy. Enlo and other weaklings are forced into the top bank, where they may be burned by the occasional ray of light that penetrates from above.

As it is usual for uz to sail only at night; "dark ships" tend to be the odd smuggler or pirate vessel. Many uz sailors say it is not good shiphandling, since the trollkin are the weakest rowers, and the top bank of oars the most important.

One family of uzko in Jruzuela are said to have a peculiar arrangement with the tribe of uzelu who live nearby. Every two years, the family builds a black galley, then removes the metal fittings and takes the wood apart. They meet with the uzelu, who take the wood and exchange it for a previous and identical one. This wood, when seasoned properly in the dark depths of Magasta, will take a superior quality, and the resulting ship will be much finer and lighter. Human sailors have attempted to bribe other local mer-tribes into stealing the secret of such wood, and even the local aldryami are said to be curious about the secret. There is always much bidding for these ships, and captains who own such are much envied.

Black Wave Channel

by James Frusetta

Who owns the ship, anyway?

The owner is left unspecified here, the easier to fit this adventure into a campaign. Some suggested owners might include...

- Konderorde Malkobal of Nolos, leader of a petty merchant's fleet of the Quinpolic League who feels the loss of even a single ship greatly.
- Master Akezor of the Blue Guild of Sog City, Lord of Ozur Bay, fighting a vicious battle to dominate trade with Fonrit.
- Halix Dom of the Imperial Seas Trade Association, seeking to open trade across the vast seas through the tiny port of Corflu.

- Jeren Darow, the Pirate Admiral, who uses middlemen to dupe trustworthy heroes into retrieving the lost sails of another.
- Charal Xat, the Black Admiral of the Shadow Plateau, whose black galleys slink through the night.



Narrator Information

Benchmark: This episode is intended for heroes with a best ability in the 15w range; sea-going heroes are particularly well-suited. It emphasizes negotiation rather than combat.

Premise: Heroes must recover a lost magical item. Unfortunately, not only is the item in the midst of the troll isles of Jrustela, it's underwater in the midst of an uzelu feeding ground and a host of angry spirits from the days of the God Learners...

The Set-Up

Last year, the sailing ship *Seakissed* attempted to cut through the troll islands of Jrustela, hoping to shelter from a storm in the lee of the islands. Unfortunately, the *Seakissed* stumbled into Black

Wave Channel, a remnant of the angry seas that overturned the God Learners. The ship was lost, and only one of the crew survived — rescued by local uz when he washed ashore, then eaten after he perished.

Not only was the cargo of great value, but the ship was fitted with Red Sails. These ancient sails were a gift of the Waertagi to land-dwelling allies long ago; they always are able to Catch a Fair Wind (10w4), even when the weather is calm. The great value of the sails means that the owner of the ship has hired the heroes (or sent them as followers) to retrieve the items.

Divination rituals were able to provide the following information:

- The ship disappeared roughly in the vicinity of Jrustela.
- The last survivor of the ship was eaten by uz.
- The ship was pushed down into the water, or pulled down, or capsized in some fashion.

The owner will provide transportation for the heroes, a crew that has stopped off at Kogag Zask in the past, various goods to trade to the uz of the isles, and the above information. The heroes will act as agents for the owner, charged with recovering the Red Sails, retrieving the bodies of the crew for proper burials, and recovering such of the original cargo as still exists.

Scene One: Island-Hopping

Key Points: Beginning with Kogag Zask, the heroes travel from island to island in Jruztela to find the crew-eating uz. The narrator might choose to spread the scene over several sessions, introducing 'sub-plots' such as trading with uz, exploring various islands and ancient ruins, and so on. Ultimately, the heroes find the appropriate island and clan of uz, and deal with them to find the fate of the ship.

Details and Hero Knowledge: The heroes, in stopping at Kogag Zask, should have the opportunity to meet with one of the Harbormaster's Mates and the various uz merchants willing to sell information. Clever heroes may well be able to find sufficient information to pinpoint the troll clan.

Setting: The uz isles of Jruztela. Dense fog covers the sea here; vast shadows slither over the islands, straining out the harsh sunlight. Other shadows move through the murky water, which ranges from a deep blue to an occasional midnight black. The isles are rocky and craggy, with occasional, dense expanses of jungle or forest. It is clearly a land, with all the alien nature of such uz homes.

Action: First, the players must Locate the Troll Clan 20w (Know Jruztela Geography -15, Know Troll Customs -20) in an extended contest. This is particularly difficult, since the players have relatively little information to go on; the contest accordingly may well last hours, if not days or weeks. However, in Kogag Zask and the other islands they have the chance to obtain additional information: each Find Clue 5w (Bargain, Fast Talk -10, Uz Lore, etc.) simple contest the heroes succeed in obtains another useful clue adding +5 to their ability in all subsequent Locate attempts. Failures mean that an incorrect clue is obtained (the greater the failure, the more off-base the clue).

Some possible clues:

- Recent trades in human clothing;
- Tales of the terrible Wrecker Clan, that delights in destroying ships;
- Trade in seasoned wood and ship fitting;
- Tales of the terrible currents near Zagar Island;
- Flocks of ravens gathered at about the time of the wreck.
- For a special success, the heroes find items they recognize from the Seakissed's cargo manifest.

Of course, the heroes will also hear many incorrect rumors and clues, too — if the narrator only relates the clues above, the story proceeds very easily!

The heroes should have three opportunities in Kogag Zask to obtain useful information, and one opportunity per uz clan on other islands; players should accordingly be able to locate the appropriate clan after some difficulty.

Aftermath: Success should indicate that the heroes have discovered that the Wrecker Clan ate the survivor. A trivial inquiry among uz of the islands will provide an appropriate landing site — as well as sordid rumors about the vile habits of the Wreckers as the narrator desires.

Scene Two: The Wrecker Clan

Key Points: The heroes must make their way to the isle of Zagar, not an easy task given the treacherous currents and hidden rocks — a clue in itself to the fate of the Seakissed. They must then somehow negotiate with the Wrecker Clan to learn the fate of the crew, the location of the wreck, and (as desired) the right to make camp and draw water on Zagar.

Details and Hero Knowledge: Given the evil reputation of the Wreckers, players should be apprehensive and cautious about approaching them. Worse, the isle of Zagar is known for destroying ships, and the crew of their ship refused to approach closely — but will let the heroes take the ship's boat.

Secret: The Wreckers actually had nothing to do with the wreck. It is far more fun to withhold this from the players, however. If the players try to attack or kidnap one of the Wreckers, it will likely go bad for them; careful negotiations will help much more.

Setting: The isle of Zagar. This jagged isle is unusual in possessing only a scanty tree cover; along the rocky beaches, however, ancient dead trees still poke branches out of the water, trying to escape the waters that drowned them. Though trolls will call Zagar the Island that Ate a Thousand Ships, few signs of shipwrecks can actually be seen — a shattered keel there, a few ribs of a hull there. Lights dance upon the water, spirits of Zagar that the Wreckers allied to lure ships into their doom. Waves crash upon the shore, sometimes suddenly rebounding straight out; currents change direction in seconds. Ships are tossed to and fro here, let alone a ship's boat. (Cruel narrators might want to test for Seasickness 3w).

Action: The heroes first must make it to the island! However, the group should notice as the contest begins that uz are swimming in the surf to either side of the boat. Horror! (Actually, the Wreckers typically do this, waiting to see if a visitor's boat will come apart. If it does, the Wreckers will invoke the Laws of Salvage.

The Trade Goods

For many of the contests here, the characters have a supply of "trade goods" 45 in all, which can be used in lots of 5 to add +1 to a simple contest or to add APs (1:1) in extended contests. However, these APs are lost permanently once "spent" — keep track, since this is of importance for the aftermath!

Bypassing Islands

As written, the intent is to provide heroes with an excuse to adventure over several of the isles of Jruztela. Narrators wishing a quicker scenario should simply reduce the difficulty of the Locate contest or make more opportunities available in Kogag Zask. A longer scenario, of course, offers the possibility of additional trade and adventures in the isles.

Adventure Hooks

Though the premise is that the heroes are hired to recover a lost cargo, other hooks might be used:

- Heroes might be pirates. Hearing of the hunt for the Red Sails, the heroes resolve to take them for their own.
- Heroes might be part of one of the great merchant corporation or guilds that have flourished since the Opening.
- A disciple of Dormal receives a distressing vision the Seakissed has disturbed ancient sea-spirits which may be loosed upon the seas, destroying ships. The heroes are sent to calm them.
- Heroes serving the Waertagi hope to find the Red Sails, for use in founding new alliances.
- Local uz are annoyed at the disturbance in their fishing grounds near Black Wave Channel, and connive visiting hoomans into doing something about it.

The Laws of Salvage

The Wrecker Clan live on the bounty of the sea — what the sea smashes, hurls or washes up on their barren shores. Since Zagar has little food, the Wreckers are thus dependent on the sea.

The Laws of Salvage are an old agreement with the other, Kogag-worshipping troll clans who once threatened to wipe out the Wreckers. By this, the Wreckers are forbidden to cause passing uz ships to wreck (though other uz say they do it anyway). But they are allowed to profit off of nature. The rules include the right that:

- Any item that falls off a ship and is washed ashore here belongs to the Wreckers.
 - Any ship that sinks here, whatever was on it belongs to the Wreckers.
 - Any body that washes ashore here, the Wreckers may eat, saving only the head to return to that troll's family.
 - Any uz that is cast ashore here, a Found-Payment must be made to the Wreckers.
- The Wreckers survive by living off what comes ashore here, for the strange currents of Jruztela mean they receive an unusual degree of flotsam and jetsam. However, when times are lean they are not above luring a passing ship to its death. Now that non-uz ships have begun to stop in at Jruztela, the Wreckers are beginning to realize that a potential bonanza awaits them. Though they did not sink the Seakissed, many in the clan would have if they had realized if it was near — which may nicely complicate truth-magics if the heroes possess such.

This is a simple contest, Row to Shore 5w (Boating, Know Sea, Rowing, etc.). Any success means that the heroes make it shore. Defeat is more serious; a marginal or minor defeat means the boat is damaged and will need simple repairs later. A major defeat means one of the heroes is tossed overboard, and a complete defeat means all of them are as the boat shatters! Any heroes in the water must try to Swim to Shore 15w, a daunting task. Levels of defeat here indicate drowning, although the watching uz will swim in and save heroes at the last minute.

Once ashore, the heroes will be immediately confronted by the Wrecker Clan: uz infamous as worse than pirates. Devotees of ship-cults will feel distinctly uneasy. Despite this, the Wreckers mean no harm — but they volunteer nothing, either. If the group explain what they seek (knowledge of the crew and the wreck), the Wreckers inform them that, as with all that washes ashore, the knowledge belongs to them — but they might sell it. Accordingly, the heroes may Bargain for Information as a (brief) extended contest, drawing on the trade goods to add additional APs as needed. The Wreckers are unaware of the value of the information — but their Argan Argar merchant, Havak Deepdive, is experienced and skilled (Bargain 20w2). Havak is a flamboyant bargainer, and will variously attempt to stuff the heroes back in their boat and push it back into the water, flagellate himself with jellyfish, throw rocks at the waves while bemoaning his fate, and so on — praising or

cursing the deeps for their bounty, and the obstinate stupidity and greed of humans. Here, if the players should definitely obtain the fate of the crew and the location of the wreck: the question is how many trade goods they'll use to supplement their APs!

Aftermath: The heroes now have the head of the unlucky crewman (the uz kindly saved it for them, in case they had burial rites) and the more-or-less exact place where the Seakissed went down — in one of the unruly channels near Zagar, known as Black Wave Channel.

Scene Three: Hunters of the Deep

Key Points: The heroes discover that Black Wave Channel is full of hungry uzelu, sea-trolls, and must find a way to get rid of the beasts.

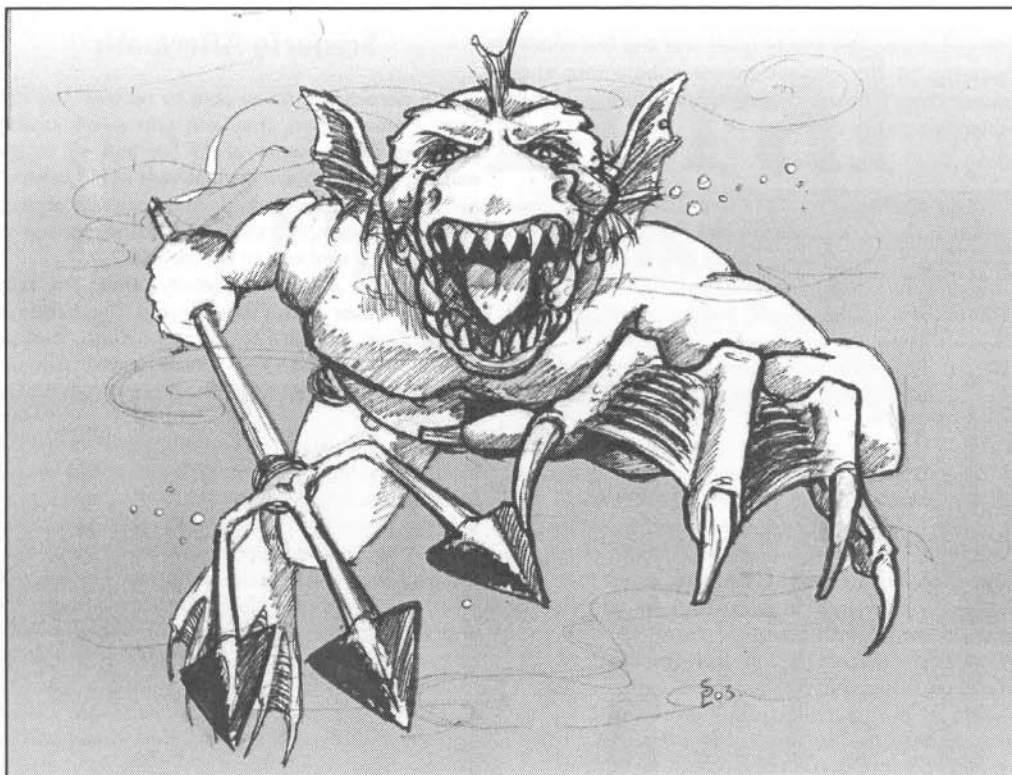
Details and Hero Knowledge: The heroes will likely know little of uzelu, save that they were mutated by chaos long ago into a mer-race. They are usually considered by sailors to be monsters of the deeps, fearful man-eaters.

Secret: The uzelu here are a "tamed" group, in long contact with the Wrecker Clan. This means the Wreckers can easily deal with the uzelu — a point they do not volunteer.

Setting: Black Wave Channel is a black trench between Zagar and two islands to the west, an easy hour's walk from where the heroes originally landed. Here, waves boil to the surface, then seem later to retreat down in vortexes. The water is turbulent and difficult near the surface, but calms farther down. In one or two points, frenzied waves may suddenly lash out at the rocks, or spit out flotsam only to suddenly suck it back down. The water here is black and inky, with clear patches suddenly blossoming — only to suddenly cloud once more. Heroes with appropriate magics can sense spirits flicking in and out of the dark water, but can see few details. Shapes in the murky depths may be fish... or sharks... or something worse...?

Action: With the crew again fearful, the heroes must go to Black Wave Channel to scout out the location of the wreck. The water here is so terrible (Sink Boat 20w) that the local uz politely suggest the group try to spot the wreck from shore. If the heroes dare to venture into the channel in their boat, they must make a simple contest to continue every so often (as the narrator sees fit); marginal and minor defeats mean the boat is damaged, major defeats mean a character is washed overboard, and complete defeats mean the boat is smashed. Here, however, swimming is not so difficult (Swim to Shore 1w).

However, the heroes are sure to quickly spot the local sea-trolls (particularly if one falls overboard: yum!). As many as a dozen uzelu, a local family group, swim in the dark waters, occasionally surfacing in the pursuit of prey. Players who venture into the depths will facing



increasingly difficult Fight Off Uzelu contests, with -20 penalties to using melee skills underwater and -20w penalties to missile weapons. At first, the uzelu are easy to drive off (Fight Off Uzelu 15), but as the players approach the depths of the channel each attack increases in difficulty by +5: the uzelu react to the group's intrusion into their territory.

There are many ways the heroes could try to lure the uzelu off: dropping food in the water to lure them away, attempting to "net" them from shore, using undines to drive them away, etc. Easiest, perhaps, is to Bargain 10w with the Wrecker Clan (which is clearly having a good day), which can easily remove the uzelu for as long as the players like — in return for some trade goods, of course.

Aftermath: The heroes should arrange for the uzelu to be removed, one way or another. With this, the heroes should have a chance to investigate the underwater wreck.

Scene Four: An Angry Sea

Key Points: The Seakissed lies well-preserved on the bottom of the channel. However, the ship is surrounded by vengeful sea spirits from the time of the God Learners.

Details and Hero Knowledge: With the uzelu gone, the wreck is quickly found. However, there appears to be something strange about the scene...

Secret: The Seakissed avoided most of the currents around Zagar Island. In doing so, however, it stumbled into an old remnant of the

vengeance of the gods; water spirits sent here long ago to tear down offending structures of the God Learners. These particular spirits never were able to do so, since the building in question was buried beneath rock and earth, and have raged here ever since. They never bothered the Wrecker Clan (who sometimes swim through the channel), but reacted in fury when a boat (as a made-thing) came too close.

Action: Looking down from the surface, the heroes can catch occasional glimpses of the Seakissed; clearly damaged, but still largely whole. The Red Sails still seem to be intact, but are tangled in the wreckage of lines and masts. It will be many hours of work to retrieve them, and still more to retrieve any of the cargo.

As soon as the boat (or any swimmer) begins to approach the craft, however, they are violently pushed away by a surge of water. The group may see forms within the water, powerful water spirits that take form briefly, then fade away. Heroes with spirit sight will see a mass of spirits that surround the wreck. Any sentient creature that nears the wreck will be violently pushed away, with a sense of the violent fury the spirits have for "made" things — the spirits will rip away clothing, small tools, weapons and the like, to throw them down in the deeps.

Heroes who attempt to shamanically contact the spirits, sorcerously exorcise them or use a feat to deal with them (10w resistance) may learn that the spirits are driven by the need to destroy, utterly, a small and ancient ruin that lies nearby. The group should be able to find, easily, that a building did stand near here — worked masonry and such lies as rubble not far from shore. If the heroes begin to destroy the structure, they

Recovering the Sails

If the players worry about recovering the Red Sails from underwater and lack appropriate magics, a few alternatives are ready at hand.

The players may bargain at Kogag Zask (or Zagar) for underwater-breathing magics.

These are commonly available from Sapana the Robber, and the uz will provide them — for a price.

Hiring underwater-dwelling races is a second option.

Unfortunately, only the uzelu dwell in the area and are largely too unintelligent to secure the sails. But they are intelligent enough (with direction from the Wreckers — again, at a price) to bring up much of the submerged goods from the ship.

Finally, the Wreckers themselves could bring up the Red Sails, if hired by the heroes. However, they are likely to pilfer the remaining cargo, so this is the least profitable method by far.

should notice the spirits quiet and line the water nearby. (If the players throw rubble into the water, they'll notice the spirits quickly smash the offending pieces into bits).

The Ruins

The ruins are the remnants of an old God Learner observation site, roughly the size and shape of a gazebo. This stone structure was crushed in a landslide, and now lies about 10 meters from the sea — under several tons of rock. The pink stone fragments are sometimes hard to find in the rock and sand of the isle.

The structure is well buried, and to Dig It Out 10w2 is an extended contest of endurance! Of course, uzko or enlo could be hired to aid in the excavation and a wide variety of spirits and magic could come into play! Defeat indicates that the group simply isn't able to dig out the entire structure, running out of food, water, and endurance before finding each fragment of the original structure. They can return to attempt again — but each attempt is at the original resistance (the heroes have left pieces buried under the piles of dirt they excavated, etc.

Other Ways

Of course, the heroes might well do the unexpected! Some possibly ways to avoid the spirits entirely include:

- Using a chain or net to drag the wreck to shore;
- Get the Wrecker Clan to do it for them (Shamans? We got shamans!);
- Non-sentient creatures might be used to move the wreck to shore;
- Powerful magics might raise the wreck up; and so on. However, the spirits of the channel will remain unappeased in such cases, and the narrator might well have the spirits pursue the heroes in the future as a plot point. And of course, it may well cost more of those trade goods they brought along...

Aftermath: Once the last piece is smashed, tossed into the water or otherwise destroyed, the spirits will begin to drift off, pursuing another ancient piece of the God Learner Empire. The group should now be able to easily gain access to the wreck, and recover the Red Sails, bodies of the crew, and goods stored within.

Oh, Yes, the Cargo

Unless the players trade away the cargo of the Seakissed — which the Wreckers will cheerfully suggest in the various contests — they may attempt to bring it up as well. Here, the cargo has been scattered somewhat on the ocean floor, and retrieving it in addition the Red Sails is a big task. A Recover Cargo 15w simple contest for the group indicates success — with a complete success regaining the entire lot, major recovering three-quarters, minor about half, and marginal about a quarter.

Scenario Aftermath

The heroes should be able to recover the Red Sails; if they do so, they will gain a relationship with the ship's owner at 13 (or add +2 to the existing relationship, if any), as well as HP rewards (1 to 3 recommended for the contests above). Failure will simply result in another group of heroes being sent out to do the job.

If they are able to peacefully obtain the sails, they moreover gain a Relationship: Reputation at Kogag Zask; they are welcome in Kogag Zask as peaceful traders in the future, and if not uz-friends, are at least considered better than uz-enemies.

Finally, the narrator should use their judgment in terms of how much the players relied on the assorted trade goods! The more the players were able to preserve the stored trade goods, the greater the esteem the ship's owner will hold them in — in a very material fashion. For each full 15 points of "trade goods" the heroes have left after the contests, the owner provides enough cash, connections and endowments to give +1 to the Wealth rating of each hero in the group. The goods not spent on recovery are traded by the ship's crew for a great profit, and canny heroes able to make do without the crutch of money are respected as savvy traders indeed!

Like Sparring Humans in a Barrel

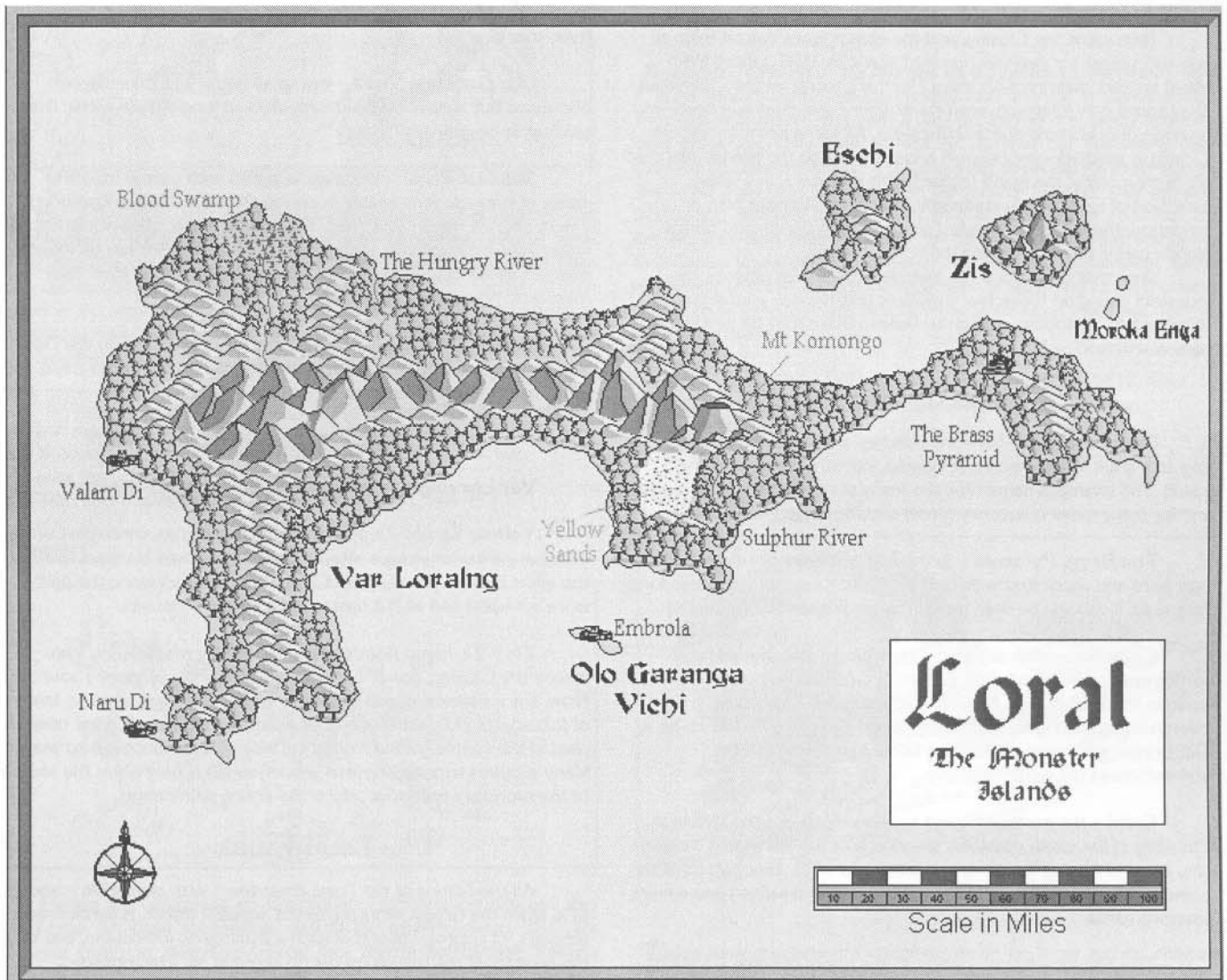
The intent of the simple contests is to show the heroes how hard it will be to fight the uzelu in the water. Of course, combat-oriented parties might well decide to just charge in. In this case, make it an extended contest, with 10 uzelu hunters fighting with Tooth and Claw 19, with 34 action points apiece: they have a big advantage on their home ground. Defeated heroes should probably be eaten, but narrators with a soft spot might have the Wreckers fish them out. Of course, the Wreckers are going to demand a big ransom for this...



Loral

The Monster Island

by Jamie "Ttrotsky" Revell



Description

The islands of Loral lie off the northeast coast of Pamaltela. The climate is tropical, with perpetually hot, damp, weather. During Dark and Storm Seasons, the island is repeatedly blasted by typhoons strong enough to wreck passing ships, while for the rest of the year it is enveloped in a muggy stillness that makes escape by sail all but impossible.

Sweltering tropical jungle covers almost the whole of the island, which consists of lowland plains interrupted by stretches of higher, rugged terrain. Inland travel is difficult, with thick creepers

and heavy undergrowth everywhere; it is said that even elves would find the forest here heavy going. Further in towards the interior, the land rises rapidly towards a forbidding mountain range whose peaks rise well above the tree line. Near the coast, however, things are far more pleasant. Much of the shoreline consists of long beaches of pure white sand and crystal clear tropical lagoons, interrupted by precipitous cliffs only where the more rugged land reaches the coast.

In many ways, Loral resembles a beautiful, unspoilt paradise, free of any sign of human habitation. Those who have been shipwrecked here, however, might have a different assessment. But then, very, very few of them are still alive to question.

History

At the Dawn, the Loral islands were uninhabited by mortal races. The first people to settle here were the Waertagi, who built a port at Embrola as a safe haven for their smaller ships. Colonists followed them in the third century from Maslo and western Pamaltela, who built cities here free from the elven domination along the continental coast to the south. These people lived in relative peace until the Second Age, when invaders from the Middle Sea Empire subjugated the islands. The cities were rebuilt along Jruستي lines, with only the grandest of the old buildings remaining. A large God Learner University was established at Embrola and was used as a base for a number of expeditions into the wild eastern interior of Pamaltela.

Then came the Closing, and the islands were cut off from all outside contact for over six hundred years. In 1598, sailors from Maslo arrived, bringing with them Dormal's secret of the Opening. They found only jungle-covered ruins where the cities had been, and no trace of continuing human habitation. At some point during the Closing, it seemed, every human and waertagi on the islands had died off. In their place, the island teemed with monsters, in a great profusion of types and in impossible numbers. Without plan or formation, the monsters savaged all those who dared land on the islands, eating them or driving them into the sea.

Since that time, Loral has been left to its own devices, the monsters dining on those few travellers unfortunate enough to be shipwrecked, or foolish enough to believe there may be anything here worth landing for.

Places of Interest

Blood Swamp – here the beaches and low-lying jungle give way to a great foetid mangrove swamp that stretches many miles inland. The swamp is named for the many giant leeches that live here and for many more unsavoury blood-sucking creatures besides.

The Brass Pyramid – in the first age, a mighty ziggurat was built here and decorated with brazen plates. Its original purpose long forgotten, it can still be seen glinting by passing sailors out at sea.

Embrola – originally a waertagi colony, and the oldest settlement on the islands, this became a God Learner university town in the Second Age. Now, like all the other local ruins, it is overgrown with jungle. Zotiran lives here, claimed by some to be a Gift Bringer dedicated to guarding some foul secret buried somewhere in the ruins.

Eschi – the northern island appears much like the mainland. On a bay in the south coast lies the wreck of the Haragalan treasure ship Jewel of Quang Yuang, driven ashore in 1615. Every attempt to plunder it has been thwarted by unusually warlike ludoch and a huge snapping turtle.

The Hungry River – while all the rivers of Loral are filled with aquatic and amphibious monsters that spell doom to anyone attempting to navigate them, this one also hosts vast shoals of piranhas and piranha-like animals that make it even more deadly than most.

Moroka Enga – rising from the sea in near vertical cliffs topped by dense jungle, these islands are home to many flying monsters that range across the whole eastern part of the chain.

The Mountains – even at the height of the islands' colonisation in the Second Age, the mountainous interior of Var Loralng was sparsely inhabited, if at all. From the sea, the green-coated lower slopes of the mountains can be seen rising above the jungles before rising to bare rocky peaks with a hint of snow in the

highest reaches. In the years since the Opening, no travellers have even reached the foothills of the mountains to learn what lies there now.

Mount Komongo – this high peak at the eastern end of the mountain chain was unremarkable before the Closing. Sailors now report, however, that its highest slopes appear to be missing, replaced with a great volcanic caldera from which steam can often be seen rising. Occasional eruptions have been noted, although it is difficult to judge their true extent.

Naru Di – this once proud city is now barely distinguishable from the jungle. Mysterious lights have been reported emanating from it by sailors, but no one has ever been close enough to see their true source.

Olo Goranga Vichi – this small island was once densely populated but is now covered with stunted jungle trees rarely over ten feet in height.

Sulphur River – this river is tinted with yellow mud and stinks of sulphur, presumably from the slopes of Mount Komongo, where ancient maps say it rises. Malign spirits are often noted to hover above its polluted waters, and doubtless more can be found beneath its surface. None of this seems to bother the local river monsters, however.

Valam Di – once the capitol of the islands, back in the Dawn Age. A tall, steep-sided pyramid stands in the centre of the ruins, and it has been reported that the monsters of Loral will never enter it or climb onto its slopes. They are, however, more than capable of surrounding it and cutting off all escape routes to the shore.

Var Loralng – the largest island of the Loral group.

Yellow Sands – a magical flight over the southern part of the island as part of an escape attempt by shipwrecked Malkioni spotted this great blasted plain south of Mount Komongo before the party were set upon and all but destroyed by flying monsters.

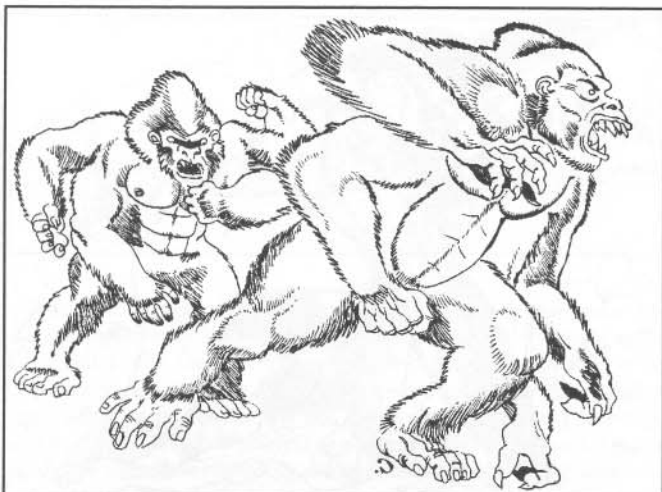
Zis – Zis Island does not appear on any maps dating from before the Closing, nor is it mentioned in any documentary sources. Now it is a sizable, rugged, landmass whose coastline consists solely of formidable cliffs without hint of a natural harbour. A great peak rises in the centre, visible from a considerable distance out to sea. Many scholars hypothesise that this mysterious new isle is the source of the monsters that now plague the entire archipelago.

Local Fauna

All the islands of the Loral chain teem with animal life – and all of it, from the largest monster to the smallest insect, is carnivorous. Scholars, of course, claim that such a situation is impossible, and that the ecology of the islands makes no sense at all. The monsters, however, do not care much for the scholar's opinions, and continue to survive in the face of logic. Many of the creatures found here are known elsewhere; in particular, a number of carnivorous dinosaurs inhabit the islands. Just as many, however, live nowhere else, and some of the bigger monsters are entirely unique, the only specimens of their kind anywhere on Glorantha. Despite this odd fact, very few of the monsters detect as chaotic by any of the usual means, nor do they generally possess any of the usual chaotic features.

Some of the more common or interesting monsters are described below. In most cases, very little is known of their natural habits, for so many of the monsters on the island show unremitting hostility to intruders that no prolonged observations have been possible. For instance, it is unknown how – or even if – any of the Loral monsters reproduce, since young are rarely, if ever, seen.

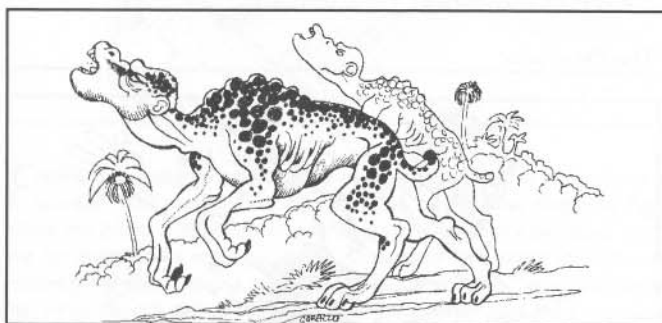
Yellow Apes



One of the most common monsters on the islands, these appear very similar to gorillas, save for their yellowish fur and two pairs of arms. They attack in small packs of up to eight or so individuals, which show unusual cooperation and cunning. On the island of Zis, the yellow apes seem to be organised into larger groups, and they have been known to man huge bolt-throwers there, which they fire at any passing ships that get too close to the shore.

Brachiate 15, Climb 2w, Crash Through Jungle 18, Cunning 5w, Hate Intruders 10w, Intimidate 2w, Large 15, Operate Bolt Thrower (Zis only) 5w, Pack Tactics 12, Punch & Bite 8w, Sense Intruders 18, Strong 5w
Teeth and Claws +1, Bolt Thrower +5, Thick Skin +1

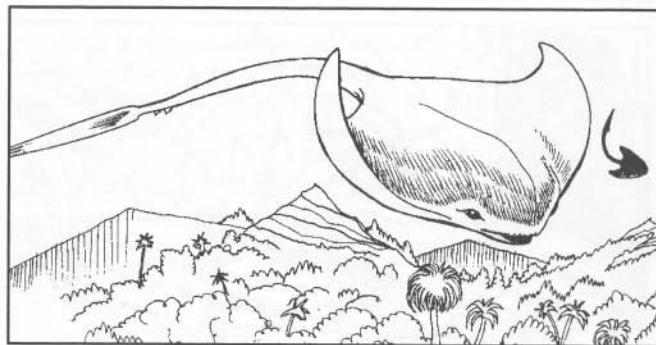
Howlers



Howlers are widespread on Var Loralng, Eschi and Zis, although they have not been observed on any of the smaller islands. They are bipedal creatures, standing around four feet in height, with hairless mottled brown hides and monkey-like faces. Their upper limbs bear long fingers ending in wicked claws, although they lack a thumb. Howlers seem to have an uncanny ability to sense the presence of intruders, even from a full mile away. When they do so, they inflate their entire chest cavity like a balloon and use it to create a terrifying series of howls and woops that echo for miles around. The other creatures of the islands have learnt to associate these sounds with the presence of hated intruders, and immediately begin to congregate on the origin, eager to begin their orgies of violence. Howlers seem to live in colonies of four to five individuals.

Alarm Howl 20w, Cunning 15, Hate Intruders 10w, Rake with Claws 18, Scent Intruders 12w2, Sense Odourless Intruders 8w, Terrifying Howl 2w
Claws +3, Rubbery Hide +1

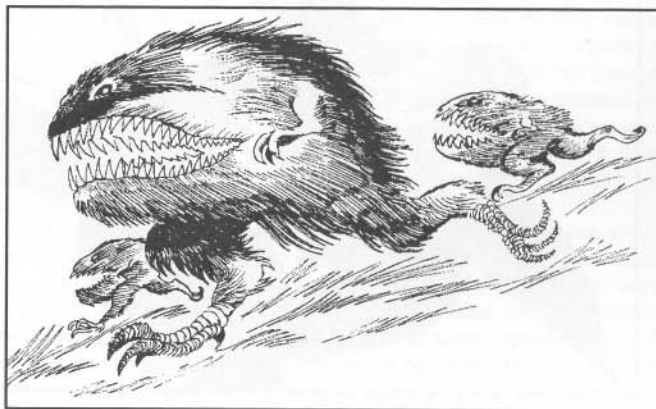
Flying Rays



Apparently roosting in the hills and on the Moroka Enga islands, flying rays venture across the surrounding land and sea in search of food. They resemble manta rays, with a long tail ending in a deadly sword-like bony projection. They glide on high air currents, but can swoop down suddenly on unsuspecting prey, often seeking to decapitate them with the first strike from their tails. Once on the ground, however, they are slow-moving and relatively vulnerable, for they possess no legs. To launch into the air, they tuck their muscular tail beneath their bodies and spring themselves upwards – an ungainly method that nonetheless seems surprisingly effective. Barring the misfortune of stumbling across a roosting colony, these creatures are generally encountered on their own, for they are solitary hunters.

Dodge Blow While Flying 15, Flop About on Ground 12, Hate Intruders 5w, Slash with Tail 2w, Spot Prey 10w, Sudden Swoop 18
Tail Spike +3

Tooth-Beasts



These hairy creatures are ubiquitous on all the larger islands. They are bipedal, with a globular, neckless, body about three feet in height. They are covered in a thick pelt of brownish fur and have small, almost vestigial arms. However, a large mouth filled with huge, elongated razor-sharp teeth occupies much of the front of their bodies. Two round, black, eyes glare with a hungry malevolence from above the mouth, but no nostrils or ears are visible through the pelt. Tooth-beasts attack en masse, with two or three dozen creatures to a pack. Compared with other pack animals, they do not seem to cooperate much, preferring to rely on sheer weight of numbers to bring down their prey and squabble over its corpse.

Bite 10w, Bite Through Anything 18, Hate Intruders 15w, Mass Charge 5w, Run Fast 18, Sense Intruders 18, Squabble 15, Swarm Through Jungle 2w
Huge Teeth +5, Hairy Body +1

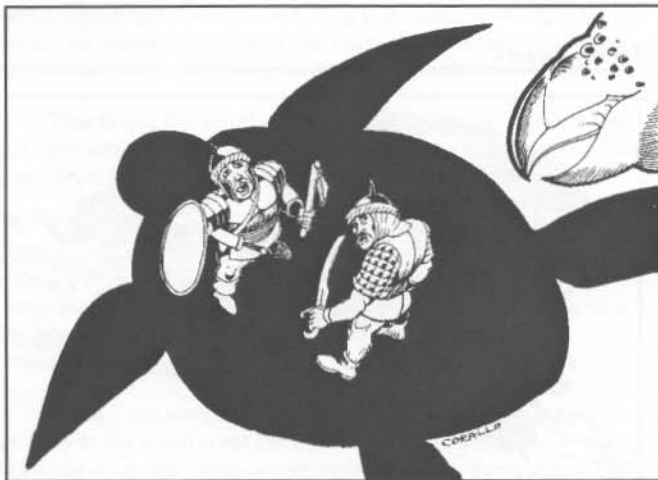
Pit Monsters



These strange creatures are found scattered about throughout the jungles, but few people have penetrated far into the interior, so the true extent distribution can only be guessed at. Pit monsters take the form of a large burrowing worm, with a circular mouth about two feet across, lined by triangular teeth. They live in burrows in the ground, and spend most of their time plugging the entrance to the hole with their open maw, waiting for food to drop in. Brush and other debris covers the entrance to the hole, which can therefore be difficult to see in the heavy undergrowth that dominates throughout most of Loral.

Bite 2w, Burrow Through Ground 18, Conceal Hole 5w, Hate Intruders 5w, Sense Approaching Prey 18, Swallow Prey 10w
Teeth +4

Kelrod



Kelrod looks like a perfectly normal hawkbill turtle, apart from the minor detail that he is over twice the size of an elephant. Despite lacking any wings, he is able to fly, seemingly by paddling with his flippers just as normal turtles swim through the sea. By paddling slowly, he can hover in a stationary position but whenever he stops, he slowly sinks to the ground. However, he apparently has no need to sleep or rest, and so spends almost all of his life in the air. Most of the time, he attacks enemies with his great beak, but against more persistent or deadly foes, he can emit a mighty blast of air so cold that it freezes everything it touches. The blast is about ten feet by sixty feet in size, and will also render any metallic objects (including armour) too cold to touch.

Acute Hearing 5w, Bite 20w2, Cunning 15, Freezing Breath 15w, Hate Intruders 10w, Hover in Place 5w, Large 8w3, Paddle Through Air 10w, Resist Magic 8w, See Long Distance 10w, Spot Intruders 10w, Strong 10w3, Tough 5w3, Track Prey 5w
Beak +7, Shell +14

Queen Kweng



Queen Kweng is an immense chimpanzee, about eighty feet in height. Unlike normal chimps, she is carnivorous, and will readily eat other large creatures that fail to get out of her way quickly enough. She has been spotted all across the main island, and may make her home in the central mountains. She appears to be able to summon other monsters to her assistance, with only Mojira and the Amazing Wallabong seeming to be immune to her call. Of all the monsters on the island, only Mojira is feared more.

Agile 18, Call Monsters 10w, Climb 5w2, Command Monsters 10w, Deafening Screech 20w, Grab Flying Creature 12w, Hate Intruders 10w, Know Loral Geography 15w, Large 5w3, Punch and Bite 5w3, Spot Intruders 5w, Resist Magic 8w2, Stomp 20w3, Strong 10w4, Throw Tantrum 15, Tough 20w2
Punch +10, Stomp +10, Thick Skin +10

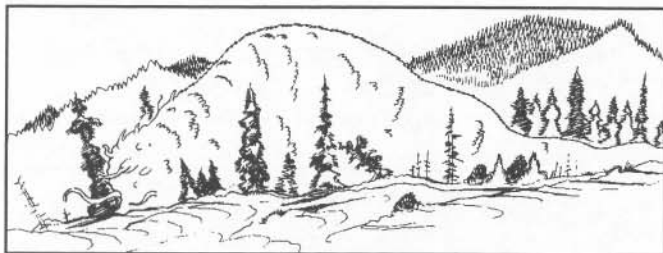
The Devourer



Wandering the western side of the island is a giant invisible creature known simply as the Devourer. Nobody has ever seen its true form, but when it attacks, it hoists its victims into the air and rapidly dismembers them in a shower of blood before they disappear, presumably eaten. It has been reported to attack up to six people simultaneously, so presumably it possesses a considerable number of limbs, and perhaps many eyes or other sensory organs to direct its attacks. When moving across soft ground, such as the sand of the beaches, it leaves great circular footprints in a peculiar pattern suggesting an odd number of limbs.

Dismember 5w2, Cunning 18, Hate Intruders 18w, Invisible 15w2, Large 2w2, Move Quietly 20, Resist Magic 18w, Sense Prey 18, Strong 10w2, Tough 18w
Unknown Natural Weapons +5, Glutinous Hide +7

Zotiran



Zotiran is a huge slug-like creature, heavier than a brontosaur and covered in shiny black segmented armour. He slithers slowly across the island of Olo Goranga Vichi, consuming any organic matter in his path. In combat, he emits clouds of yellowish gas from vents along the lower edges of his flanks. The gas clouds spread for thirty feet from Zotiran's body, and can paralyse anything that breathes them. Once a victim has been immobilised by his gas, Zotiran slithers over them and gulps them up with a huge rasping tongue. Zotiran is always accompanied by a swarm of giant hunting spiders (see HQ p.217) which live on its back and venture forth to capture prey. They will respond aggressively if their host is attacked.

Hate Intruders 10w, Large 5w3, Lumber Slowly 15, Paralyzing Gas Cloud 10w2, Rasp and Gulp 8w2, Resist Magic 5w, Scent Food 12w, Strong 18w2, Tough 15w2
Rasping Radula +6, Chitinous Armour +14

Fritillra



Fritillra is a butterfly whose softly glowing golden-yellow wings have a span of 100 meters. She spends most of her time fluttering high above the island, coming down only to drink water every few days, since she apparently does not need to eat. Although at first glance she appears relatively harmless, having no obvious natural weapons, when she beats her wings rapidly she can summon powerful winds that blast intruders away from her and drown out all other sounds.

She is one of the few Loral monsters known to reproduce, albeit parthenogenetically, for she frequently lays eggs in various locations across the island. These eggs hatch into fully-grown butterflies, rather than into caterpillars. The so-called Daughters of Fritillra come in a bewildering variety of forms, ranging from normal-sized butterflies, hundreds of which can burst from a single 'egg', to large forms up to the size of an adult human. All possess dangerous powers of some kind, such as harbouring disease spirits, a poisonous touch, or the ability to affect those who see them with emotion-affecting spells that render normal action impossible. A few are vampiric, draining physical or magical energy from anyone whose bare skin they can land upon.

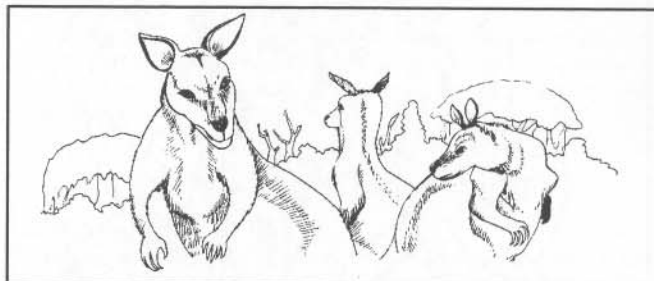
Aerial Agility 10w, Cunning 12, Fly Fast 10w, Fly High 12w,
Hate Intruders 15, Large 15w3, Resist Magic 2w2, Strong 8w3,
Wind Blast 12w2
Thick Velvety Chitin +7

Daughters of Fritillra

Fast 15, Hate Intruders 8w, Look Harmless 8w, Small up to 5w2

Any one of the following at 1w to 20w: Confuse Intruder, Drain Magical Energy, Drain Physical Energy, Drive Intruder Mad, Hypnotic Fluttering, Pestilent Touch, Poisonous Touch, Send to Sleep.

The Amazing Wallabong



Unusual even by the standards of Loral monsters, the Amazing Wallabong may be related in some way to Boggles, although the details are naturally unclear. It takes the appearance of one or more red-faced wallabies – a species not otherwise known on Glorantha. It has been reported to have up to ten bodies at a time, all of which act in a perfectly coordinated manner, presumably controlled by a single mind that is able to split its attention between multiple viewpoints. The bodies vary in size, although the more it has, the smaller each body's maximum size appears to be.

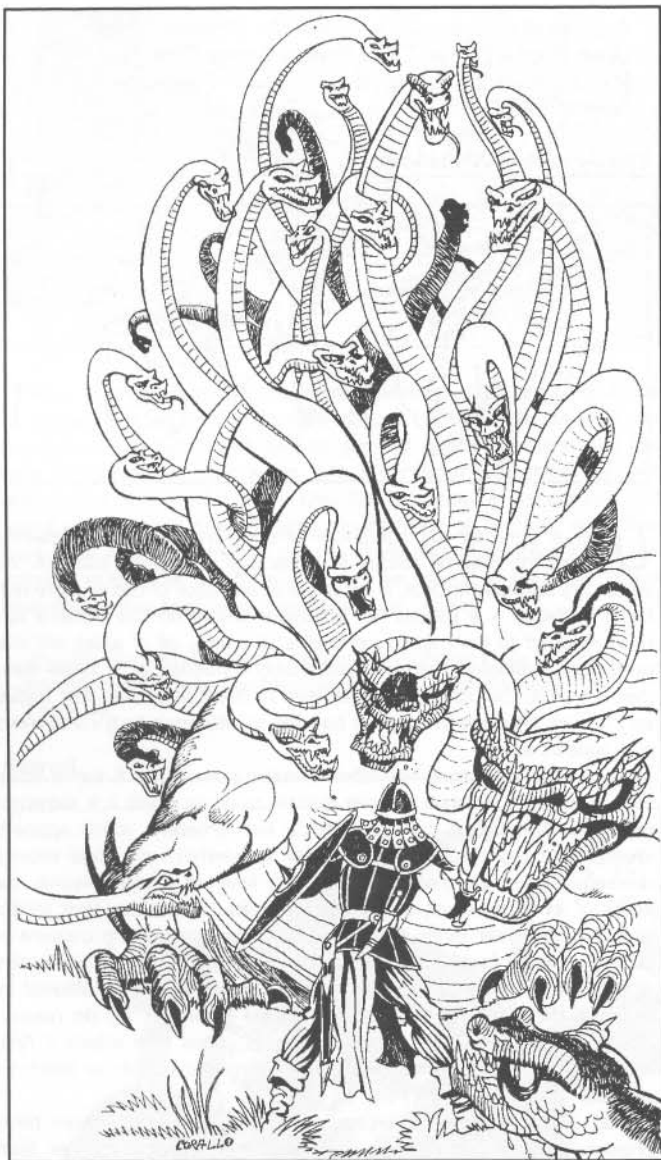
The Amazing Wallabong has other amazing powers too. It seems to be able to teleport, although it rarely chooses to do so unless it is somehow captured. Although it can be killed, a new creature, which appears identical to the original, will appear somewhere on Loral shortly thereafter. The new creature appears to bear no grudge towards the killers of its predecessor, but shows an ability to allow for their tactics should it encounter them again. It is clearly a very cunning creature in combat or when faced with a puzzle blocking access to food, but displays little of that intelligence in its everyday life. It seems more motivated by mischief than malice, but may still attack strangers for no reason, although it is unlikely to actually kill them unless they attack it first, instead preferring to embarrass and inconvenience them as much as possible.

It may also have other amazing abilities, or not, at any given time; presumably these come and go in a more or less random manner. Such powers often include spells, feats or charms usually associated with Tricksters, but those of virtually any magical tradition may be exhibited occasionally. For example, it has been known to cause opponents' armour to turn into a gooey liquid and dribble off, to cause other creatures to permanently change gender or race, to prevent the use of certain magic types by its opponents and to attack the soul directly as if it were a disincorporate spirit. However, it rarely possesses more than one of these powers at a time.

As a single body, varies from Small 10 to Large 5w2. For each additional body, the maximum Large is reduced by five. Thus, with four bodies, the size of each may vary from Small 10 to Large (5w2-15)= 10w. When occupying ten bodies, all must be Small 10, but otherwise there is no requirement that all the bodies be the same size. Each body also has a Strong rating equal to its Large rating, if any.

Agile Bouncing 20w, Amazingly Cunning 15w, Be Amazing 5w2, Bounce Amazingly High 10w2, Good Hearing 10w, Hide Things 20, Ignore Magic 15w2, Kick 20w, Mischievous 20w, Observant 15w, Resilient 18w, Stealthy 5w2, Wreak Havoc 10w2, One Other Amazing Power 5w2
Kick +1, Fur +1

Mojira



Also known as the Great Green Pyrohydra, Mojira is one of the small number of true, or greater, hydrae on Glorantha. As such, it is one of the few definitely chaotic creatures on Loral, and it spawns similarly chaotic lesser hydrae, which may be encountered anywhere on the main island. Mojira is a colossal serpent with lurid green scales and four stubby legs that only barely have the strength to lift its bulk from the jungle floor. Seventy-two long-necked heads sprout from its forward end and from along its back. Just as with lesser hydrae, each head is considered a separate foe, with spells affecting only one head each, and Mojira able to gain multiple attacker bonuses if several heads attack the same target. Instead of acid, each head drools a sticky, flammable, petroleum like substance and is also able to breathe fire. Presumably Mojira's lair must be surrounded by a great swathe of burnt ground where the jungle has been destroyed, but it lies far enough inland that nobody has yet discovered it. In general, however, the jungle is moist enough that fires do not spread far. The lesser hydrae that it spawns are entirely typical members of their kind (AR p.179).

Bite 10w4, Breathe Fire 5w3, Destroy Cities 10w3, Drool Petroleum 15w2, Hate Intruders 10w, Large 8w4, Resist Magic 15w4, Strong 5w4, Tough 2w4
Bite +7, Armoured Hide +9

This article first appeared in an ancient glorantha digest. It might be out of date, but we have almost non informations on slarges - except this one - anyway.

SLARGES have a rather peculiar life-cycle. Lesser Slarges (so-called by humans; no one knows what they term themselves) are smallish reptile beings that give live birth. They seem to have two sexes. The children of the Lesser Slarges grow up into Giant Slarges.

Giant Slarges are hermaphroditic and never mate. Instead, they parthenogenetically spawn large clusters of eggs, which hatch into Lesser Slarges. Thus the cycle repeats again. Of course, the cycles are all mixed up by now, so that the slarge population is a mixture of Giant and Lesser individuals. Most slarges encountered are Lesser, which may have a higher survival rate than Giants. Or perhaps it's just that Lesser Slarges are more aggressive and go in packs, so they're simply more likely to encounter humans than their solitary sires.

Lesser Slarges are highly social and invariably found in groups. They are quite hostile to humans -- at least as hostile as are most trolls. Lesser slarges have been seen to fight one another, but always one-on-one, with the others watching. Perhaps these are dominance fights, or something else. The loser is rarely killed, so it would appear that slarges are more cooperative within their own species than are humans. Lesser slarges do not make towns or cities, but are nomadic, like broos or certain humans. They do not ostracize the giant slarges, but not uncommonly have one or more of these individuals with them.

Lesser Slarges are not workers. They do not make weapons or armor, or produce anything but the most trifling artifacts. They appear to have little or no artistic impetus, but are entirely given over to the arts of fighting, hunting, and working. Their skills are generally wholly practical in nature, as are the spells they learn.

Lesser Slarges are perfectly able to become shamans, but they are not particularly great at this -- perhaps because of their lack of creativity. Lesser slarges DO appear to be the "leaders" of the Slarge species, at least insofar as they provide the drive and ambition to spread across the plains, thrusting aside the humans as they advance.

Giant Slarges are solitary, and are known to build structures in which to house themselves. These creatures are not as hostile as lesser slarges (which is not saying much -- they can still be very dangerous), and a few have been known to interact with humans on at least a neutral basis; trading food for magic, stuff like that.

Giant slarges are highly creative and curious beings, each spending its life in some particular labor (perhaps this is their sublimated sex drive kicking in?). There is some overlap between Giant Slarge "hobbies", and even some evidence of collusion -- for instance, at least one Giant Slarge metalworker is found in each large section of territory, but rarely more than one. Some human theorists reason that the giant slarge hobbies are chosen by the lesser slarges, either by the giant's parents while raising the whelp, or after adulthood, by a committee of lesser slarges. Another, less-popular theory is that there is a single particular giant slarge who travels around the Wonggarisi, telling the other slarges what to do, as his hobby.

The Giant Slarge output is mostly consumed and used by the lesser slarges. Giants that specialize in training dinosaurs, say, are taken by the lesser slarges to help herd dinosaurs in attacks on human or goblin areas. Giants that specialize in making magic

SLARGES

by Sandy Petersen

items are heavily "patronized" by the lesser slarges. Many giants seem slipshod about caring for themselves, and often a small team of lesser slarges will take upon themselves the task of feeding a particular giant.

GOVERNMENT

The lesser slarges are manifestly in charge. The giants are artists and philosophers, who sit back and are enormously self-centered, concerned with their species only intellectually. The lesser slarges have the drive and ambition to rule the slarge race, and do so. They do not appear to have a central government, and when a lesser slarge sees something that needs to be done, he gets his gang to do it. It is believed that the instances of "dominance battles" amongst lesser slarges are NOT to determine leadership, but are violent differences of opinion as to what course of action the group is going to take next.

Lesser slarges obey giant slarges inasmuch as they want the giant slarges to keep producing. Hence, if a giant slarge wants ore to make more swords, the lesser slarges may act as a group to mine the ore, so that the giant slarge can devote himself entirely to hammering out the swords.



MAGIC

Slarges have unusual magic. Perhaps they are trying to displace human spirits as well as the human species? They have a number of otherwise-unknown spirit spells, such as "Padding" and "Anti-Healing".

SOME SLARGE SPELLS

Padding (variable)

Each point adds 1d6 false hit points to each hit location of the slarge. Roll once, and add the same amount to each location. For instance, if a 4-point Padding were cast, and a 14 were rolled on the dice, the Slarge would add 14 points to each hit location. These extra hit points are "outside" any armor or other defensive spells, and are eaten up first, before any damage is done to the slarge.

Anti-Healing (variable)

An attack spell. If successful, the target loses 1 hit pt per pt in the Anti-Heal in a single location chosen by the attacker.

The dreaded Cycle

This is not a spirit spell, but Something Else. It is hard for the Slarges to do, and presumably it costs them permanent POW or something, for it is rare, and usually aimed only at a human leader. This spell is hated and feared, as its effects are permanent and little-understood. In effect, it changes all the targets' characteristics as follows: his STR becomes his CON, his CON becomes his SIZ, his SIZ becomes his INT, and so forth, clear-round, until his APP becomes his new STR. Of course seven applications of Cycle will bring you round full-circle back to where you started.

Some researchers believe that certain Giant Slarges have used the Cycle spell to give themselves enormous INT or POW (by using their great SIZ).

Slarges are sometimes believed to know sorcery or divine magic, and maybe they do, but it is also possible that they are learning mysterious extra magic of their own that is not spirit magic, but Something Else. Mysticism? Draconic magic? Who knows?

SLARGE METAL

The slarges produce their own particular type of metal which, for lack of a better name, is called "Slarge Metal". It is the only metal known to most inhabitants of Tarien, anyway. Slarge Metal is nasty stuff. It is irritating to the touch (for a human, not a slarge), and prolonged contact with it causes a skin rash and eventually ulceration. Presumably it was created specifically as an anti-human weapon, for it does not have this same effect on reptiles, especially slarges.

A location injured by slarge metal is harder to heal -- one additional point must be healed in order to cure the wound, even for first aid. If a single attempt at healing does not completely repair the location, second (and third) attempts must also heal an extra point. For instance, if your thigh took 6 points of damage from a slarge metal speartip, and you applied First Aid, rolling a 3 for pts healed, only 2 pts would actually be cured, leaving you with 4. If you then cast a Heal 4, only 3 points would go away, leaving you with 1 still. And that 1 would require at least a Heal 2 to cure.

Homeland: Korola Islands

by Nils Weinander

Welcome to Korola, newcomer. Our islands are as one, I hope you can visit all.

KOROLA IS A GROUP OF FIVE ISLANDS in the southern part of the East Isles. The islands of Korola and are very different from each other, as are their people, but a powerful heroquest performed by four heroes, one from each of the major islands, has given them a new sense of unity.

Tamoro

Tamoro is the northernmost of the islands. It is the largest and the highest of the four. It is dominated by the great mountain Tamoronga which is over 4000 meters high. The entire island is mountainous, but the lower slopes are covered with forest. There is one large valley with cultivated land. The Tamoroans are stocky, with dark skin and black hair (all Korolans are of the Kralori race). They make their living as farmers and hunters. The Tamoroans are often hesitant to leave their home island and are considered as cautious and taciturn by the other Korolans.

Luvata

Luvata is the southernmost of the islands. It is the smallest in area above sea. It is very low and has a beautiful atoll on the north side creating a sheltered bay. The entire island is forested except for the centre where there is a large marsh. The whole island is surrounded by sharp reefs. The single passage through the reefs into the lagoon is known only by the Luvatan Arinta Clan. The Luvatans are short and slim, with ivory skin and black hair. They are fishermen, ship builders and sailors. The other Korolans often see them as calm and fatalistic.

Mingai

Mingai is situated farthest to the east. It is the second smallest of the islands. The island's centre is a high volcanic mountain and the rest is mostly arid hill slopes. Mingai has the least vegetation of the Korolan Isles, partly because of the poor soil, partly because of the many goats which graze on the mountainsides. On the south coast a partially submerged secondary crater forms a formidable harbour. The Mingaians are of medium height and build, with mahogany skin and brown or red hair. They herd goats and are skilled craftsmen. The other Korolans find the Mingaians violent and quick to anger, but also quick to forgive.

Sereneto

Sereneto, the westernmost island is long and narrow with a high mountain crest. The mountains have very steep sides, so there is room for a strip of lowland on both sides. The northern lowland is forested but the southern side is cultivated. The Serenetoans are tall and light-skinned, with brown or fair hair. They are farmers and craftsmen, fishermen and merchants, often changing occupations. The Serenetoans are often considered to be flighty and frivolous by the other Korolans.

Sitoto

The fifth island, Sitoto, is situated in the centre of the archipelago. Sitoto has never had any permanent human settlements. Its jungle used to be haunted by carnivorous giant rats and a ferocious species of semi-intelligent man-eating lizards, the varanids. Today Sitoto is a peaceful holy site.

Korola Islands Homeland Keyword

Occupations Available:

Tamoro: Farmer, Healer, Hunter, Foot Soldier (Regular)
Luvata: Fisherman, Healer, Sailor, Foot Soldier (Marine)
Mingai: Craftsman, Healer, Herder, Foot Soldier (Archer, Regular)
Sereneto: Craftsman, Entertainer, Healer, Merchant, Foot Soldier (Regular), Thief
Native Abilities: Korolan Customs, Korolan Geography, Athletics (Running, Boat Paddling, Coconut Picking, Wrestling, Swimming), Cooperation.

Typical Personality Traits:

Tamoro: Conservative, Cautious
Luvata: Calm, Fatalistic
Mingai: Hot-tempered, Forgiving
Sereneto: Curious, Impatient

Typical Relationships: to family or clan, to home island, to Korolan unity.

Magic: Common Magic, Vithelan Pantheon (mostly theism).

Origin

In the Gods Cycle, Korola was a great mountain in the land of Duravan. When Duravan fell, Korola became an island. In the Demigods Cycle, its god Korola fought against the antigods in the Herespur War. Korola was broken into four islands and the fifth island fell from the sky. The god Tamorongo who had lived in the peak of Korola became the god of Tamoro. Irvata, goddess of a waterfall in Korola's great river came to live in a fresh water fountain on Luvata. Mingemelor, a son of the volcano god, became god of Mingai. Aoea, who roamed the winds around the mountain peak became goddess of Sereneto.

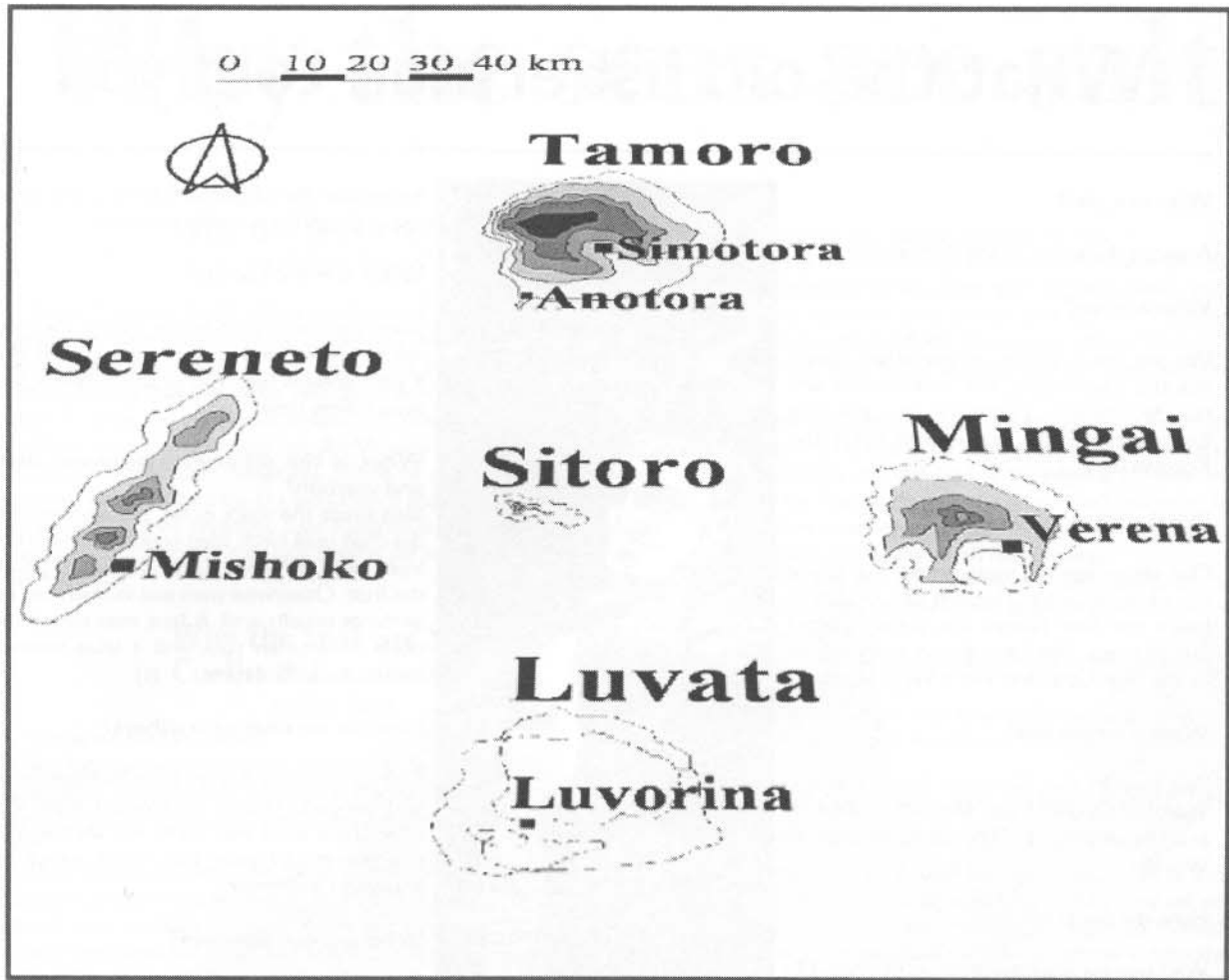
The islands were bitter enemies for a long time. When the empire of Golden Mokato ruled the East Isles there was an uneasy peace, but when the empire withdrew, hostilities were soon resumed. The conflict had escalated to a war when four people, one from each island, were shipwrecked on Sitoto. Hard pressed to survive in the hostile environment, they launched a desperate heroquest to find the long-lost unity of Korola. They succeeded and brought back peace to Korola. Today, the rivalry of the islands is channeled in a yearly athletic contest, held on the beaches of Sitoto.

Common Religions

The Parondpara

The Parondpara, the Small Gods are the manifold gods, spirits and essences of the East Isles. The Parondpara are local to their own islands. Thus all magic from the Korolan gods has a -10 penalty outside Korola, -20 outside the East Isles.

Tamorongo Feats: Fertile Ground, Move through Jungle, Great Strength.



Irvata Feats: Purify Water, Stay Afloat, Swim Fast.

Mingemelor Feats: Resist Fire, Great Endurance, Move Among Rocks.

Aoea Feats: Lifting Whirlwind, Avoid Trouble, Swift Fingers.

The common religion of Korola's Parondpara can be concentrated. Concentrated worshippers who are qualified learn the secret of Korolan Unity. This allows the worshipper to learn the feats of all four Korolan gods.

Magical Societies

There are smaller magical societies on all the islands, providing specialized magic.

Rock Eater's Foes (Tamoro): Mighty Axe Charm, Strength of Family Talent.

Arinta Navigators (Luvata): Find Way Through Reefs Talent, Muroa Clan, Ing Ta (Mingai): Melt Metal Spell, Shape Bronze Spell, Work Iron Spell.

Windwalkers (Sereneto): Great Leap Charm, Windwalking Charm.

Dream Magic

Many Korolans worship Thella, the Dream Goddess and perform Dream Magic. Dream Magic is still undefined in HeroQuest game terms.

Specialized Religions

Vithelan Pantheon

Many gods and spirits are worshipped in theist and animist fashion in the East Isles. There is also Wizardry, even though there are few western-style monotheists. Popular deities and their affinities are

Karkal, god of fire and strength (Fire, War, Friend of Man)

Veldru the defending wind (Wind, Defense)

Mairnaili, the goddess of healing and compassion (Healing, Compassion)

Prosandara, the goddess of animals (Animal Friendship, Fertility)

Enevar, god of victory (Victory, Patience)

Mysticism

The East Isles is the home of mysticism. There is a mystic monastery on Sereneto. Mysticism is still undefined in HeroQuest game terms.

Reasons to Have Left Home

There are ten thousand other islands out there to explore, each one a different wonder. A time of great change is coming, dreams are troubled, seers speak obscure prophecies.

What the old fisherman told you

Who are you?

Arennan the sailor, of the Arinta clan.

Who are we?

We are the Luvatans, in the other islands live the Tamoroans, the Serenetoans and the Mingaians. Together we are the Korolans because our islands form the Korolan Isles.

What makes us great?

Our sailors are the most skilled, our young the most beautiful. Through the Dream of Unity our four islands are united against our enemies. We have always been faithful to the High Gods and Vith's World Order.

Where do we live?

We live in the Korolan Isles: Luvata, Tamoro, Sereneto and Mingai. Around us are the other Ten Thousand Islands of Wonder.

How do we live?

We Luvatans are fishermen and sailors. On Tamoro they grow fruits and till the earth. The Mingaians have herds of goat and sheep and the Serenetoans do all these things to live.

What is important in my life?

It is important to live well, take care of your family and expand your soul. Always guard your virtue and your dreams will keep pure. We of the Arinta clan are the keepers of the secrets of the passage through the coral reef around the lagoon. You must never tell those secrets to an outsider, but you should use your knowledge to help others.

Who rules us?

Queen Tamerana rules Luvata, but the Senate on Sitoro has the final say in all matters that are of importance to all four islands. In your daily doings you must heed your clan chief Itos Arinta Keen Eye.

What makes a man or woman great?

A man should be loyal, courageous and skilled in his profession. The same goes for women. To be truly great, you have to wise and spiritually pure.

What is evil?

The Antigods who will not heed the World Order are evil.



Avanapdur the Nightmare Lord is the most evil of them. False mystics are evil.

What is my lot in life?

Since you were born in the Arinta clan you will be a sailor and navigator if you wish. But if your dreams turn you to other deeds, you must follow them.

What is the difference between men and women?

Men kindle the spark of life, but women bear the child until birth. Men build boats, and fish from them. Women build houses and gather the fruit. Otherwise men and women can do all things equally well. A true man knows the skills of women too, and a true woman knows the skill of men.

How do we deal with others?

Everyone who is not an agent of nightmares and antigods should be treated well. We offer them food and drink and shelter. But the secrets of your clan must never be known to a stranger.

Who are our enemies?

The Andins and the Nightmares are our enemies. The evil forest people who try to spread their snake-infested jungle to our islands are never to be trusted. The pirates of Haragala used to prey on our ships, but now that we are members of their Commonwealth they protect us from other pirates.

Who are my gods?

Greatest are the Avanparloth, the High Gods. Greatest among them Vith, the Lord of the Worlds. But they are too great and too far away to be worshipped by us mortals. Then there are the Parloth, the Gods. They do not live on any one island, but are worshipped all over Vithela. Closest and most important are the Parondpara, the Little Gods. They live near us people and care for our islands.

Irvata of the Sweet Water is the goddess of our island. The Tamoroans worship their mountain Tamorongo. On Sereneto they worship the whirlwind Aoea. The Mingaians worship Mingemelor the volcano. I worship Thella, the Dream Queen since I had Dream of Power when I was young.

What is there to do around here?

When the work of the day is done we exercise our athletic skills so we remain the greatest athletes in the world. Those who feel the urge to travel can sail out to explore the rest of the wondrous islands.

Why the seas are salty?

Why the Seas are Salty

by Philippe Sigaud

"In the Beginning, the First Drop was Pure and Fresh. But during the Drowning of Chaos, so many good watery gods were slain, their blood and tears mingled with Ocean and Ocean was full of the blue and divine blood. Did you already taste your blood, little finned one? It is salty, and so is the whole Sea now, and the Oceans beyond that. That's the sorrow and the pain the Great Wars provoked, little one. But Magesta is Lord of Death and Life, and from this death came vengeance and life for us. Now, our seas are so salty that creatures from the Dry can't drink it and die if they dare. That is the vengeance of the Ancestors. Even if their souls have disappeared into the great beyond, their blood, their blue blood is still all around us. We are swimming in it."

Why the Seas are Salty (a Corflu fisherman's myth)

by Pete Nash

Why is the sea salty father?

Son, long ago before the great darkness all the seas and rivers were fresh clean water. Men could sail across great Magesta and never carry casks with them, for the sea god's body provided the sweetest drink that they could ever wish.

Then the gods of storm really buggered things up. Orlanth Hot Wind killed the great sun god because he couldn't bare being second best, and caused chaos to invade the world. All the gods than banded together to defend themselves, but Wakboth the devil pissed on the base of Yelm's palace. The perfect celestial spike was destroyed.

The father of Waters was enraged at such an action and rose to confront Wakboth. 'Twas a terrible battle. Magesta grew so tall to wrestle with the devil that the bottom of the ocean was laid bare and all the rivers wondered where their water had gone! Back and forth they struggled and entire lands were submerged by the tsunami that was the Father of Waters.

No other god had managed to fight the devil to a standstill. Wakboth desperate to break free of the ocean which engulfed him, picked up a long shard of the spike and rammed it through Magesta's body so hard that it passed completely through the earth and ended up in the underworld! Magesta, mortally wounded, died and he passed through the newly created hole to journey into hell.

Now son, what happens when something dies and is left out for a few days eh?

It rots father, and icky moldy stuff grows over it.

Well son, that's exactly what happened to Magesta's sweet body. The once crystal clear sea grew cloudy, and great mats of algae and scum covered the surface. All to soon the ocean looked so much like a plain of green grass that bison would walk out on it and drown! Fish started dying and the other sea creatures wailed in fear as Magesta slowly rotted around them.

Oh no father! What happened then?

Well son. What do we do with our fish to stop them from rotting, um?

We cover them with salt father.

Exactly! The rivers of the world were troubled at Magesta decomposing. They could no longer explore the land since they didn't dare to take their water from his body. So, Zola Fel, our lord of our river came up with a masterful idea. He told all of the other rivers to find all the salt on the land and carry it back down to ocean. Then perhaps they could preserve Magesta's body and stop him from rotting anymore.

In those days son there were great hills of salt which Mostal had used to create pretty crystal hills. The rivers eagerly carried off the salt and moved it all to save Magesta. Even today the rivers still flow down towards the sea

carrying the last few gains of salt they can find.

The great work succeeded and the carpet of scum was destroyed by the pure whiteness of the salt. Once again fish could breath and see the stars, though the water was never so clear as it was before the darkness.

So now the sea is salt and we can never drink it again.

But father. Why doesn't Magesta take all the salt and return it to the land?

Because son, although Magesta lives again after the compromise, he must still spend half his time in the lands of the dead. Just like great Yelm. His body is half alive and half dead. At the edges of his realm where the sweet water of the Zola Fel dilutes the preserving salt, Magesta's body rots once more. Green algae covers him and the smell of his putrefaction annoys our noses. That is why we live in this nasty swamp.

<sigh> If only the river could find and pass through another source of beautiful, purifying salt then Corflu would be a pleasant place to live like it was in the god time.

Father? If the salt is preserving Magesta then why aren't the fish we catch already preserved for us?

Son. Shutup and get back to work! By the Father of Waters, you'll turn into a Lunar sorcerer if you keep on asking questions like that...

Why the Seas are Salty (a merfolk myth)

by Oliver D. Bernuetz

The following is an Esrolian tale that masquerades as a merfolk (probably triolini) myth. It attempts to explain why the seas are salt when rivers and lakes aren't. It may or may not be what the merfolk themselves believe (though why they would care one way or another is beyond me).

Why are the seas so salt, O noble finned father? Listen well, O little finned one, and learn.

Long ago the seas and all the lesser waters were fresh and all could drink of them. Then came a time when the creatures and gods of the land and air betrayed the waters. Magesta forgave and forebore but betrayal followed betrayal. Then some weak land thing found Death and Magesta wanted it for Himself. Through horrific magics and unimaginable sacrifices Magesta changed His very nature and made of His very body a weapon against the land and the air.

Thus do we creatures of the deep water drink safely of the sea while the poor pathetic land and air creatures die when they do so. The Father of Waters has never changed His nature so water is not naturally salt but mighty Magesta changes all liquid that enters His body into salt water. The poor pathetic waters that cross the land are too weak and forgiving to poison the land so their water is not poison to the land and the air.

Why the Sea is Salty

by Bo Rosén

Ah, I heard another story. This is what a fisherwoman in Esrolia told me, but I'm not sure everyone believes it there. Long ago when it was dark everywhere and most of the Goddesses slept, chaos came slithering and jumping, crawling and running to the great Spike which stood in the center of the world. Now, the spike couldn't bear the touch of chaos on it's sides and with an BANG that could be heard everywhere it flew apart. Where that great mountain had reached for the sky and beyond, there was left the biggest hole you could imagine. And it reached all the way down into the darkest underworld, even further than the Uz live. When everyone that was still awake saw it they cried out in fear but only Magesta, the lord of the oceans did something about it. He called his children and their children and they all came rushing back to him to help him fill the hole. And everytime they pass through the hole, the blood from the wounded Earth mixes with them, and that is why the seas are salty.

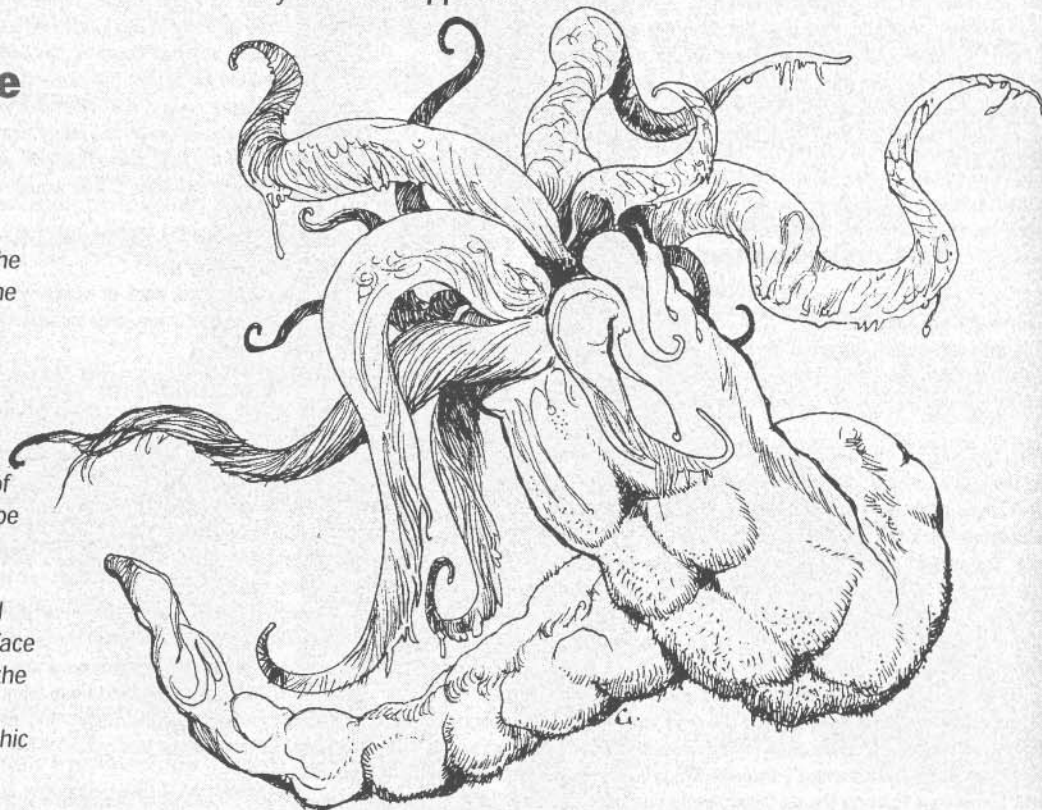
The Burrowers Beneath

by Shannon Appelcline

Cthonian Adventure Seeds/1

Return to G'harne

Following clues from the G'harne Fragments, the Pnakotic Manuscripts, and other ancient mythos tomes, the investigators find the location of ancient G'harne, in the west of Africa. Here they will be faced with an archaeological dig of almost unprecedented interest. Near the surface investigators will find the ruins of towering ramparts and monolithic sculptures which once rose into the sunlight. But, below, that they will find the caves and passages that made up the underground city, under which the Cthonians still burrow. What traps might long-lost magics might be in G'harne? And, what other monstrosities might dwell there? Finally, what will the investigators do when a second expedition arrives, out of Egypt, whom they learn has much more nefarious goals?



The following is a study of the children of Shudde-M'ell, often called the Cthonians. These underground dwellers are some of the most fearsome creatures that actually roam freely upon - or below - the Earth.

History

Shudde-M'ell and his children are believed to have originated on a planet far from Earth. It circles that star that is the eye of the constellation Hydra, called Urakhu by the Egyptians and Haddoth by the Arabs. Exactly why Shudde-M'ell's Cthonians travelled to Earth is unknown, though it has been suggested that they might have followed the Xothians - Cthulhu and his brethren - some 350 million years ago. And, though Shudde-M'ell and many of his young did travel to Earth, many of his brethren also stayed upon their homeworld

- crimson, desert-covered Haddoth - and burrowed deep into the planet.

Upon the Earth the Cthonians created the fabled underground city of G'harne, somewhere in what is now the northwest of Africa; one source places G'harne in the modern country of Mali. At the time the land masses of the Earth formed one vast supercontinent, Pangaea, and thus the Cthonians were able to travel the entire world.

Shortly after the Cthonians arrival upon Earth, approximately 300 million years ago, there was a great cataclysm, and many of the Great Old Ones were imprisoned. Among them was Shudde-M'ell, who was

trapped with his children beneath his ruined city of G'harne.

At that point, the children of Shudde-M'ell leave the pages of history.

They do not return until approximately 15,500 BC, when the corrupt country of Stygia arises upon the continent of Africa. The Stygians brought back the worship of Shuddam-El the Great Devourer. They built many temples to him in their land, but the greatest was the Temple of the Sixth Pylon, built on the banks of the now-gone river Stix. This fane to Shuddam-El, carved from an outcropping of living stone, has survived to the modern day. Despite their thousands of worshippers in ancient Stygia, the Cthonians remain imprisoned beneath G'harne.

After the fall of Stygia in 9600 BC the Cthonians once again fade from history until 1650 BC - the time of the Hyksos invasion of Egypt and the subsequent formation of the fifteenth dynasty of that country. Apop, the first Hyksos pharaoh, brought back the worship of Shuddem-El, but also sent an expedition to G'harne, and recovered three Cthonian eggs. One was hatched in the Temple of the Sixth Pylon, giving birth to Shai-urt-ab, the destiny that stills the heart. Once more a Cthonian was free upon this planet.

The keepers of the Sixth Pylon believed that it was Shai-urt-ab's destiny to remove the seals imprisoning the Cthonians in G'harne. Sometime between AD 37 and AD 122 he is believed to have succeeded. The Cthonians, reborn into the modern world, however, found that their world had grown smaller. The continents had drifted apart, and the fear they felt for the waters of Earth now denied them most the world.

Cthonians in the Modern World

The primary infestation of Cthonians lies in Europe, Asia, and Africa. They have also been known to travel to the island of Britain, as far back as 122 AD, though this land, so small, and entirely surrounded by water, appears to be too small and confining for them to remain at for long.

The Cthonians are believed to dwell primarily beneath the ruined city of G'harne, though they are slowly creating nests all across the world, and waiting for their young to begin hatching. In 1933 the Cthonians were angered when the explorer Amery Wendy Smith located the ancient city of G'harne, and stole from their several Cthonian eggs. The activities and movements of Shudde-M'ell and his kin have seemed to increased since them.

In more recent times the Cthonians attempted an invasion of the United States

of America, using hypnotised slaves to transport eggs over the water. The incursion was foiled by certain government agencies, but it opens the question of whether the Cthonians might have gained access to Australia, Antarctica, or the rest of the Americas through similar methods.

All that is known of the Cthonians goals are this: they wish to continue their reproduction until their numbers are great enough to devour the world; and they wish to waken the Great Old One Cthulhu from his eternal slumber.

Biology

The Cthonians are huge, burrowing creatures, evolved to withstand the rigors of the underground world. Not only are they possibly immortal, living at the least for millions of years, but they are nearly invulnerable as well. They can not be harmed by pressure or by blasts. They are known to have only two vulnerabilities: radiation and water. The Cthonian's vulnerability to Earthly water is no doubt a result of their alien heritage, and is a grave vulnerability indeed. Exposed to water, Cthonians literally melt.

Not only are the Cthonians blessed with great physical strength, but great mental strength as well. They are able to communicate with each other across great distances, and may even locate each other via this means. They are also able to use their mental powers to confuse and confound lesser intellects - such as humans. They are able to manipulate dreams, listen to thoughts, and fog minds. When concentrating en masse they may even be able to control humans entirely.

The Cthonians are known to be vampiric, though this does not mean the simple draining of blood. Rather, Cthonians are able to suck up the essence of a sentient being; thoughts, memories, emotions, everything. Some might say they could eat a man's soul.

Cthonians' primary physical sustenance, however, comes from other means. They can eat the rock and earth they burrow through, gaining nutrition, but they prefer the warm flesh of animals. Indeed, it has been known to drive them into a blood lust.

The Cthonian's plans to dominate the world through sheer numbers make their reproduction of particular interest. Indeed, it could be that the Cthonian's slow reproduction is the only reason that they have not yet gained a greater foothold upon this planet. Only one in eight Cthonians are actually female, and they are only able to lay two or three eggs every decade. The entire cycle is said to be "long and complicated",

Cthonian Adventure Seeds/2

The Twenty-One Pylons

The temple of the Sixth Pylon still stands in Egypt, a fane to Shuddam-el. What few know, however, is that it was one of twenty-one such temples that ran along the river Stix, each a temple to a different god - some still known upon the Earth, some still imprisoned here, some long forgotten. Following a ritual upon an ancient scroll investigators are drawn into a dream quest which allows them to walk the path of the ancient Stix, visiting the ancient temples, now all gone but one. There is much knowledge to be won in this dream realm - and many secrets to be discover - but there is also great danger, for the ancient gods and the shades of the ancient Stygians will not think well of the investigators invading their land. Perhaps this ancient Stygian land is upon the edges of H.P. Lovecraft's Dreamlands, and the investigators may face other inhabitants of that land as well.

Cthonian Adventure Seeds/3

Ancient Worshipers

At least four peoples are known to have worshipped the Cthonians upon Earth. In ancient times first the Stygians did, and later the Egyptians of the fifteenth dynasty. In more recent times, since the release of the Cthonians upon the Earth, Romans and British Druids alike have turned to the worship of the dark Burrowers Beneath. In modern Britain there is a cult of such worshipers still meeting. They are members of an ancient peoples, now gone - Stygians, Egyptians, Druids, or Romans as the keeper prefers. At first investigators who encounter these peoples and their evil deeds will thing them nothing more than strange remnants, but as they close in they will release that these people are under the sway of the Cthonians, and may call upon their powerful masters. How will the investigators foil these cultists, who are under the control of the Cthonians, and thus not entirely responsible for their own actions?

so that only a few Cthonian young are born every millenium. A long period of incubation is required before Cthonian eggs hatch.

Although the term Cthonian is herein used to refer to the Children of Shudde-M'ell, there is actually a wider class of creatures that live beneath the Earth to which this phrase may apply. One source suggests there may be another variety of Cthonian which lives in the deep waters of our planet - probably a reference to the yuggya who serve Ythogtha and Zoth-Ommog. Another briefly references a mighty "Spawn of Ubbo-Sathla". A third source refers to an entity named Yog-Sapha, said to be kin to Shudde-M'ell and a creature of darkness.

Technology

The technology of the Cthonians is almost non-existent, perhaps a result of the great physical and mental strength that they possess. They have been known to create animate protoplasm, and preserve the minds of human beings within these husks, but this is probably a result of their awesome psychic powers and not any physical technology.

Society

Cthonians gather into nests - both physical locations and familial groups centered around a matron. (In fact, as a result of this apparent matriarchal grouping, some have suggested that Shuded-M'ell is actually a female, if such labels mean anything to a Great Old One.) Such nests are usually located far beneath the ground, in locations ideal for the incubation of Cthonian young.

Cthonians are known to be fiercely loyal to their nest and have tracked humans who have stolen away their eggs across half the Earth. They have even placed themselves in mortal danger in order to rescue their kin.

Such species or clan loyalty is otherwise almost unknown among the creatures of the Mythos.

Cults

Some suggest that the Cthonians worship only the powers of death, entropy, and chaos. Many worshipers of Shudde-M'ell claim that it is his goal to free "other, even worse abominations." Prime among those that Shudde-M'ell seeks to free is the Great Old One Cthulhu, but there is no evidence that the Cthonians actually worship Cthulhu or any of the other Great Old Ones.

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This is the seventh in a series of short articles detailing the races of H.P. Lovecraft's Cthulhu Mythos. The others may be found as follows:

- Yithians - *Starry Wisdom* #2
- Serpent People - *Starry Wisdom* #3
- Ghouls - *Ye Booke of Tentacles* #1
- Deep Ones - *Trade Talk* #7
- Elder Things - *Ye Booke of Tentacles* #3
- Insects from Shaggai - *Tradetalk* #11



HEROQUEST

HeroQuest, Roleplaying in Glorantha, is the culmination of twenty-seven years of creation and vision. Written by noted game designers Robin D. Laws and Greg Stafford, *HeroQuest* is a game of dramatic play and rich interaction with the world and myths of Glorantha. It contains Everything You Need to Know to begin adventuring in Glorantha, including rules for resolving contests, four magic systems (including the Common Magic most people use), advice for players and narrators, an introduction to Glorantha, three sample hero bands, four adventures for new heroes. The rules are illustrated with a colorful narrative and a wealth of new information about the world and peoples of Glorantha, from the mysterious Puma People to the magic secrets of Lanbril the Thief, from the cult of Argar Argan, the Man Who Talks to Trolls, to the mighty demon Umbarong, who exists only for destruction.

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Foreigners surge into your homeland. Monsters roam the landscape. Empires rise and fall, and life itself hangs in the balance. **How will you deal with the end of the world?**

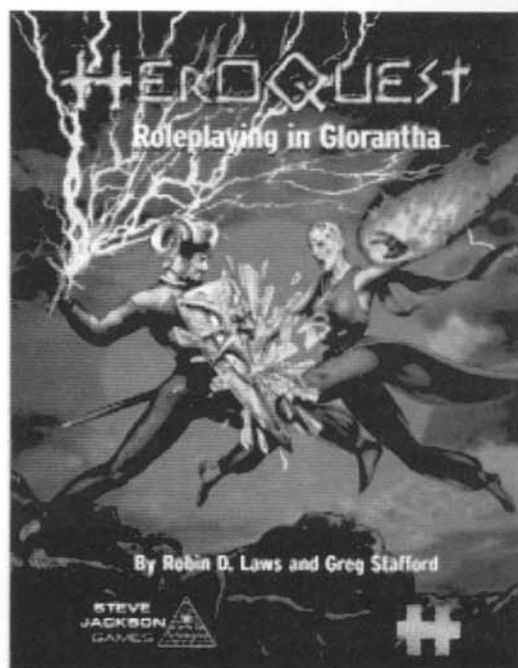
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The old ways no longer work, and you must find the new ways that will. When demons shatter their bonds, when the oceans rise, when the sky falls, what will you do to make a difference? **Where will you be when the Hero Wars start?**

*These are heroic times,
and heroic times call for desperate measures.*



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Glorantha Fiction

THE WIDOW'S TALE

BY PENELOPE LOVE



When the Lunar army advanced into the Storm Mountains, bringing their Chaos-friends with them, the Orlanthe attacked because Orlanthe hates Chaos. But the Lunars won. They killed the King and subjugated all Sartar. All except one high, lonely vale that guards the last pass to besieged Whitewall.

Darlath-Lar, father of Wyvern-Child, Rune Lord of Yanafal Tarnils, is just a soldier who cares for his troops and loves the Empire. Talloran Snake-Eyes, Orlanthe Wind Lord, has fought in more losing battles than any man has a right to, and must not lose this one. The two men will meet in the mountains. Only one will survive.

**LIFE IS HARD
DEATH IS CERTAIN
JOY AND SORROW COME TO US ALL**

• • •

THE WIDOW'S TALE is set in Greg Stafford's world of Glorantha. It describes a desperate battle at the beginning of the Hero Wars, the epic struggle that will change the face of Glorantha forever