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Tradetalk

The Chaos Society Gloranthian Magazine

#17

Pavis & Prax Special



Raiding the Yelorna Temple • Don't Lose
Your Head • The Wasteland • The Ever
Burning Torches • Unicorn Quest
Vale of Flowers • Waves in the Wind

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Tradetalk

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



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Editorial

TRADETALK IS BACK on track! It's been less than a year since the last issue of Tradetalk was issued, and Tradetalk # 18 to 21 are being worked on in parallel as I write this.

How do you like this Tradetalk's additional 4 pages and the colour cover? ;-)

Let's see what has happened since Tradetalk # 16:

MOON DESIGN presented special preview editions of "HeroQuest 2nd Edition" as well as "Sartar – The Kingdom of Heroes" at TENTACLES Omega. Shortly afterwards the regular edition of "HeroQuest 2nd Edition" became available.

THE CHAOS SOCIETY began to sell Tradetalk (starting with issues 5 to 16) in PDF format through Drivethru. A good way to add long out-of-print issues to your collection.

Our Finnish friends at **KALIKOS** have published "The Zin Letters # 3 – Easter Far Place Special". With increased layout, gorgeous illustrations, colour cover, backcover AND free full colour map (!), "The Zin Letters" has become a major player in Gloranthan (fan-)publications.

DIOI GAMES published "Hearts in Glorantha # 2 – Creature Feature!" half a year ago as well as "Hearts in Glorantha # 3 – Undersea Adventures", which should be available at the same time as this Tradetalk.

RODERICK ROBERTSON kept his promise and published the first issue of "Rule One", a Gloranthan online magazine ([HYPERLINK "http://ruleonemagazine.com/](http://ruleonemagazine.com/)).

MONGOOSE PUBLISHING continued their RuneQuest line with many books.

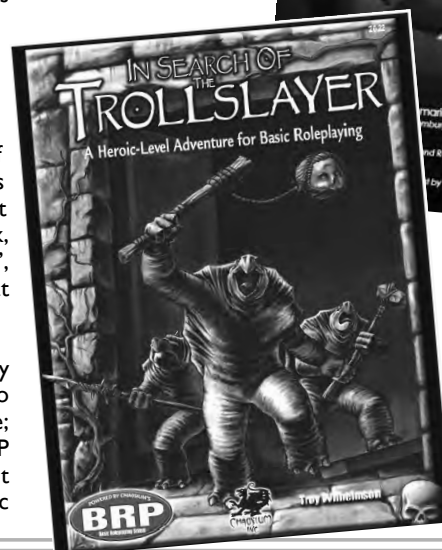
The generic rules line was supported by "RuneQuest Pocket Deluxe" and "Guilds, Factions & Cults". The historical settings line was supplemented with "The Price of Honour", a campaign for ancient Japan.

The Glorantha books were "Ruins of Glorantha", which gives dungeons and ruins explorations for Glorantha; "Ducks: A Guide to the Durulz", adding our lovely ducks to the sourcebook line about nonhuman races; "RuneQuest Empires" is a generic book about running empires, but stats are given not only for ancient Rome and Melniboné, but also the GodLearner Empire and the EWF; "Fronela" gives an overview what happens in the notheastern corner of Genertela during the Second Age; "Dwarfs: A Guide to the Mostali" continues the line of races books; and, finally, "Ralios" describes the non-Safelster areas that were missing in "Glorantha – The Second Age".

Other settings prospered too:

The "Eternal Champion" line was supported by "Cults of the Young Kingdoms", which adds background information, as well as more magic; "Hunters of Granbretan", an adventure that was originally included in the Granbretan hardcover sourcebook, but was cut in the softcover edition; and in "Dream Realms", Mongoose shows us how Elric's dream magic works, and what the Dream Realms look like.

CHAOSIUM INC.'s "Basic RolePlaying" is supported by many monographs, both Fantasy and other settings: "Ashes to Ashes" is a Dark Fantasy setting; "Berlin 61", classic espionage; "Outpost 19", SF; "Aces High", Weird Wild West; "BRP Adventures", scenarios; "Light Without Shadow, Blade Without Edge", a fantasy adventure; "In Search of the Trollslayer", heroic



fantasy adventure; and “Agents of the Crown”, Victorian Superhero, and “Val-du-Loup” a historic/fantasy setting and scenario in the Ardennes.

ALEPH TAR GAMES (aka our friend Paolo Guccione) published a historical setting book for Basic RolePlaying: “Rome – The Life and Death of the Republic”. Great stuff!

Let’s have a look at Gloranthan announcements:

MOON DESIGN plans to publish the regular edition of “Sartar – Kingdom of Heroes” this fall; after which are planned books about “Pavis”, “WhiteWall” and “The Guide to Glorantha”, which will be the updated Glorantha Third Age book. After that (in so specific order):

“Red Sun Rising”, a Sartarite campaign in six parts; “Caladraland”, a background book for that region; “FarPlace”, the border area in between Tarsh and Sartar; “The Coming Storm”, a Heortling campaign; “The Grand Argrath Campaign” will give us the full scale from 1620 to the end of the Hero Wars; “Heroes of Malkion - Lords of the West, Vol. 1”, the basic book for western knights and wizards; “Kingdom of the Flamesword – Lords of the West Vol. 2”, presents the one-of-a-kind western kingdom, Seshnela; “Elder Races: Elves”, the HeroQuest attempt at Aldryami; “Distant Shores”, the oceans campaign; and more...

Our Finnish friends from **KALIKOS** will also shortly publish the fourth issue of “The Zin Letters”, with a Prax and Agimori theme.

DI OI GAMES will publish the first issue of “Glorantha Adventures” this fall, an adventure book for Sartar!

MONGOOSE PUBLISHING will continue their high book output for RQ: “Kustria” starts detailing the region of Ralios; “Beastmen”, the beastmen or the hsunchen?; “Lairs of Glorantha” will continue where Ruins left off; “Telmori” will detail our most beloved hsunchen group; “Castle of Lead” describes the home of the Uz on the heroplane; and “Vithela” will present the eastern hemisphere of the Second Age.

More Eternal Champion books are planned as well, but no titles are given.

The generic/rules book line also has more (the titles tell all you need to know): “RuneQuest Monsters III”; “Spellbook II” and “Necromantic Arts” (tells us about zombie masters, and their kind).

With “Lankmar Unleashed”, there will be an updated book published for the Lankmar setting.

The Slaine setting might also get another book, “The Baileoisin Chronicles”, a full campaign.

And more to come...



Raiding the Yelorna Temple

By Ian Thomson

Expansion and adaptation notes for the classic RQ2 scenario from 'Pavis and the Big Rubble' (PP241-255 of the Moon Design reprint.)

Acknowledgments: Original scenario by **Michael Trout**
Jane Williams for reviewing *Morganeth*

Playtesters: **Andrew Bean, Barbara Braun, and Lachlan Conley**
Converting Ian's HeroWars adaptation to HeroQuest: **Jamie "Trotsky" Revell**
Artworks: **Juha Harju**



Explanation

I'm simply intrigued by the chance to revise the old scenarios according not only to the evolving HeroQuest way of looking at the world, but also to the newly revealed Pavic situations developed by Issaries Inc. for the Pavic religious, cultural and professional keywords. Adapting these old scenarios, whilst retaining the original spirit, is something of a challenge.

ROLLO EDWILE



Keywords: Pavic 18, Black Fang Practitioner 18, Assassin 16w.

Combat abilities: Dagger Fighting 3w2, Garrote 19w, Spear and Shield Fighting 16w, Throw Dagger 11w2.

Other significant abilities: Balancing 17w, Charming 3w, Climb 4w, Conceal Dagger 3w2, Feign Death 8w, Hide in Shadows 7w2, Listen 17w, Manside Geography 7w, Move Silently 18w, Read/Write Old Pavic 15, Rubble Survival 14w, Speak Trade 15.

Practice charms: Old Silent (Muffle Sounds 12w), Smoothtongue (Convincing Lie 9w), Twinkletoes (Flee the Scene 14w).

Fetishes: Spirit Hound (Bark before an Ambush 11w, Sniff Out Magic 9w); Get Well Soon (Heal Wounds 15w)

Equipment: Armouring Amulet and Shield +7, Daggers +1 (x5), Face Scarf (well secured when in use), Garrotting Wire, Spear +3, Smoke Bomb 5w (a thick clay flask - when smashed releases a large cloud of vapour that obscures vision), Thunder Lung Dust packets 12w (x2, clouds of dust spread over several square meters, and affect all creatures that breathe the air)

JONAS FERGISSON



Keywords: Pavic 2w, Black Fang Spiritist 17, Intelligence Operative 11w.

Combat Abilities: Dagger Fighting 15w, Garrotte 11w, Spear and Shield Fighting 9w, Throw Dagger 19w

Other Significant Abilities: Disguise 14w, Dodge 2w, Feign Death 3w, Hide in Shadows 19w, Manside Geography 12w, Move Silently 4w2, Read/Write Old Pavic 4w, Read/Write Pelorian 15, Rubble Survival 9w, Shadowing 6w3, Speak Pelorian 16, Speak Praxian 18, Speak Trade 16, Voice Mimicry 14w.

Practice Charms: Big Ears (Hear Across Distance 14w), Passerby (Innocent Bystander 10w), Spiderfoot (Run up any Surface 12w).

Equipment: Dagger +1 (x3), Face Scarf (well secured when in use), Garrotting Wire, Spear +3, Leather Armour and Shield +2, Lunar Pass 18w (a cunning forgery indicating that Jonas is one 'Harli Braccius' from Tarsh, a member of the Lunar Census Office), Stone Cloak 10w2 (a tough section of netting to which fragments of rock and vegetation have been entwined, allowing an augment to efforts at concealment in the Rubble).

Socio-Political Background

The Yelorna temple in Old Pavis is a fiercely independent operation, friendly only with the old school Old Pavics, and the Praxian Unicorn Women. They are strongly in favour of a free and independent Pavis. Prior to the Lunar occupation of Pavis they were associated with the Zebra Cavalry, but this organization has been disbanded. They are also culturally allied with the Sun Town Yelmalions (although they are regarded by the Yelmalions as somewhat heretical due their being an organization of women warriors), and with the troops at Zebra Fort, although only in the interests of defending this section of Manside. Cyrillus Harmonius, the Pavis Priest responsible for the Zebra Pens and Zebra Fort, leads a Lunar backed faction of the Pavis Cult that hopes to get rid of the Yelornans from Old Pavis. He hates them because they are popular amongst the Mansiders, because they defy his authority by refusing to put themselves under the control of Zebra Fort, and because they laugh at him. Due to his usefulness to Gimgim the Grim, Cyrillus is a dangerous enemy.

Background for the Narrator

Gimgim the Grim, the thoroughly ruthless (and some say 'chaotic') head of Lunar Intelligence in Pavis, also dislikes the Yelornans. They are not respectful of authority and are even minting their own silver coins, against the directives of the Treaty of Occupation. Due to the plans for the wedding of Pavis and the Red Goddess, Gimigim cannot act against these friends of Pavis directly (indeed, he rarely does anything directly), but he can orchestrate events and clandestine operations against them.

Few know that Morganeth is engaged in negotiations with the aldryami of the Garden and with some of the Pavis Priests to repair and reoccupy Angle Fort on Yelmalio Hill. Once the shrine is reactivated there and regular worship of a Fire Rune deity re-established, a further important mythical stepping stone has been crossed on the quest to revive Old Pavis and the great project. If Gimigim has learned about these negotiations, that is one good reason for his efforts to sabotage the Yelornans in any way possible.

Gimgim has just learned that a mission has drawn most of the Yelornans out of their temple, leaving only a small group in occupation. According to his intelligence, Morganeth, the High Priestess, is escorting the other Yelornans to Sun County and back, so they will be gone for several days. Unfortunately for his plans, Morganeth returns to the Temple only hours before the raid, passing quickly through Griffin Gate. By the time Gimigim learns of this it is too late to call the raid off.

Background for the Players

These characters are outlines only. Please add and/or increase abilities as you wish, in order to match them to the difficulty and style with which you wish to run this scenario.

"Today is something different, today you have the opportunity to experience how the other half lives. This time you get to experience the seedy underbelly of Pavis from the inside rather than at the end of your sword."

The Mission

Yesterday you were briefed and paid well to perform a raid on the Temple of Yelorna in the Zebra Ruins of Manside. You are not quite sure who your employer is, due to his mask and deeply hooded cloak, and the fact that he met you in a darkened back room. However, he has hired from amongst your colleagues before and is reliable. He explained to you that most of the Yelornans departed last night on some kind of urgent mission to Sun County, leaving only ten of them in the building for the next three days. Your duty is to retrieve from the Temple an ancient Pavic coin die that the Yelornans are using illegally to mint their own silver coins. The die is magical, so shouldn't be too hard to find. Your employer is relying on you to come up with a plan and execute it during tomorrow night at the absolute latest. Tactics, scouting and research are all to be undertaken at your own discretion. Should the temple be trashed, or any Yelornans severely injured during this 'simple robbery gone wrong', your reward for the mission would substantially increase. Of course the Yelornans must also have cash and magic goodies stashed in their temple somewhere, all of which you are welcome to help yourselves to. Your employer specifically mentioned a magical Healing Horn the Yelornans have. If you can get this, he has a buyer that won't ask any questions, and your employer only wants a cut of 50% on a guaranteed 12,000 Lunars!

Narrator Notes

You will need to improvise any and all activities and encounters around further preparations and reaching the scene. Hopefully the players will adopt the cunning of these experienced criminals and check out the Temple and its staff in detail before engaging in an assault. To prevent this being just another hack and slash event, alert the players that they are running professionals who will wish to survey the target and its personnel, gather specialist equipment, and form a variety of cunning stratagems. This preparation should form a fair proportion of game time. Working out how to bypass the boundary ward will be a challenge all

by itself. If they do simply attack the Temple then they will probably be quickly captured or killed, so you'd better have another scenario ready. There is no further contact available with their sponsor. In fact, if the bandits are caught, they are definitely on their own.

They are to report back to their employer in the same Riverside back room on the morning after the deadline he has given. Black Fang cultists are expected to perform independently, and so they won't be looked on well if they seek access to their cult's records for such a simple mission. The Hole Lords thief gang tactfully permits its members to work on missions with the Black Fang, but will not allow the assassin cultists, or operatives on missions with them, to access thief gang expertise in relation to any mission. (At least not without major financial incentive.) Feel free to expand the contents of the Temple as you wish, and other aspects of the scenario as required. Whilst the criminals are passing through the Rubble, watch out for an ideal opportunity to have them attacked by a group of broo who are scouting Manside looking to kidnap unfortunate humans.

Equipment Note: Once they know the mission, allow the players to choose other incidental items for their characters, but nothing cumbersome.

Raid Options

1) Stealth Operation - in and out undercover of night without anyone even knowing they are there. But then, when do Yelornans sleep? Do they stay up late and arise around noon, or are their nocturnal habits dependent on ritual necessity? The would-be thieves will need to find this out, and would miss out on their bonus for causing extra damage.

2) Stealth Operation by daylight - hiding out nearby until half of the Yelornans depart on their early morning patrol of Zebraside. Not without problems to balance its benefits, as the patrol takes only a little over an hour (unless they encounter a hazard and are delayed), and how will the thieves avoid pursuit?

3) Taking Hostages - This option could be reserved for a stealth operation that goes wrong, or a kidnapping might bring out the coin die as a ransom. Hostages can be badly injured prior to their return.

4) Frontal assault - The Narrator might allow the thieves to hire some Badside lowlifes to make up an armed force and storm the Temple. But remember that Zebra Fort is only 15 minutes ride away, and Lunar patrols also pass through this area. Despite the unease between the Yelornans and Hargran the Dirty, the Zebra Patrols are partially

KETIL WINGLEY



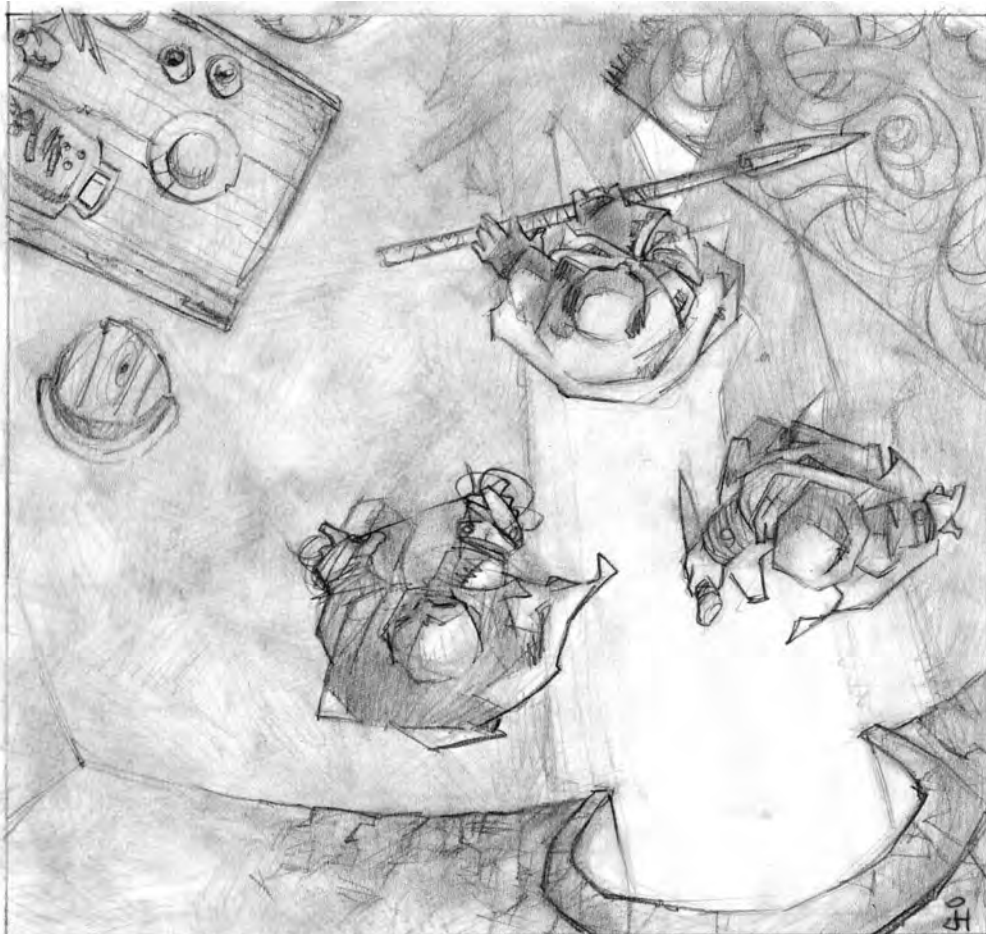
Keywords: Pavic 18, Thief (Second Story Operative) 13w, Initiate of Pavis 13, Initiate of the Hidden One 4w

Combat Abilities: Spear and Shield Fighting 9w.

Other Significant Abilities: Case Premises 5w2, Climb 18w, Foil Restraints 11w, Hide in Cover 8w2, Listen 19w, Manside Geography 8w, Move Silently 4w2, Pick Locks 3w2, Rubble Survival 5w, Speak Trade 14.

Affinities: City Harmony 2w, Concealment 12w

Equipment: Face Scarf (well secured when in use), Leather Armour and Shield +2, Lockpick Set, Spear +3, Thief's Helper (This handy little gadget appears to be an ordinary thick wooden staff, although the sturdy make is obvious at close inspection. It is 5ft long, but is made of telescoping sections, and can extend to 4m. It has a hook grip at one end, and pegs can also be attached swiftly to make it into a simple ladder).



SNORRI BOLGAR



Keywords: *Pavic 19, Thief (Strong Arm Man) 9w, Initiate of the Hidden One 18*

Combat Abilities: *Blunt Object Fighting 18w, Brawling 7w2, Dagger Fighting 15w, Spear and Shield Fighting 13w, Strike to Stun Attack 17w.*

Other Significant Abilities: *Heortling Customs 15, Intimidate 17w, Spot Easy Mark 13w, Strong 16.*

Affinities: *Concealment 7w*
Equipment: *Dagger +2, Face Scarf (well secured when in use), Spear +3, Truncheon +2, Leather Armour and Shield +2.*

staffed by loyal Pavisites, and their duties include protecting Manside from bandits.

5) Any combination of the above.

Adjustments to the Original Scenario

Note: changes that require only simple conversions on the spot have been ignored.

The Ward

A 10m radius outside the boundary wall of the temple and compound marks the edge of a long-lasting Starlight Ward that Morganeth has ceremonially created to ward away intruders and alert the defenders to any intrusion. This replaces the wyter that many temples of other religions have. In all Yelornan temples the wyter is traditionally housed inside a ceremonial labrys (great axe), and Morganeth (perhaps due to setting her sights so high as to desire to recover the labrys used by the original Pavic Yelorna temple) has so far failed to provide one. The current Starlight Ward offers only the following effects at this boundary: 'Alert for Intruders 14w2', 'Blast Darkness 4w2', and 'Rend Chaos 4w2'. Specifically, the ward will psychically alert all Yelorna Initiates within the area of effect when sentient beings, animals larger than cats, otherworld entities with an alliance to chaos or darkness, or any beings attached to the chaos or darkness runes in any way, cross the boundary. It can only give very general impressions of what these beings are.

Blast Darkness 4w2

Any beings tied to the Darkness Runes (including initiates of the Black Fang) who are detected by the ward whilst crossing this line must resist with Tough, Strong -5, or an appropriate magical ability.

COMPLETE/MAJOR/MINOR VICTORY - Intruder crosses without detection

MARGINAL VICTORY - Intruder sets off the alarm

ANY DEFEAT - Intruder sets off the alarm and takes the appropriate penalty as their flesh is blasted by bright light.

1) Paved Courtyard

Noticing the holes for the flags requires a Victory against Difficulty 18 (against 18w if it is dark) Failure to notice them leads to a further challenge of an agility related ability (or the default) against 15. Terram will hear intruders if his Listen beats Difficulty 16. Anyone sleeping in the Armoury must make a Listen roll against Difficulty 8w, and will wake if successful. (Make difficulty less if a lot of noise is occurring.)

2) Smithy

Terram will wake when someone enters the smithy if he rolls his Listen (at -6) against

their Sneak (or against Difficulty 14 if someone fails the sneak or does not attempt it). He may get multiple rolls.

To find the key hidden in Terram's clothing requires a Search of his person against Difficulty 13w. It will NOT be found unless a thief states that they are searching him and the player rolls a suitable ability Victory. The secret compartment in the chest is both hidden and trapped with a skill of 11w. When the chest is searched you may alert the successful thief to the presence of a false bottom. If someone automatically says they then try and open this (and expresses no caution) ask them to roll the same ability again as they used to search, but this time against Difficulty 19w. If the adventurer does express caution, they may choose their best ability, and the Difficulty remains 11w.

Finding and Opening the Compartment

(Agile -5, Alert -7, Nimblefingers, Pick Locks -3, See Hidden -7)

As explained in the scenario, the trap is based around flammable potions and is an impressive mechanical feat, presumably of dwarven design. (In any event that the trap is set off, this may set fire to the smithy - such an event should add significantly to the fun of the adventure.)

COMPLETE/MAJOR VICTORY - Compartment opened safely.

MINOR OR MARGINAL VICTORY - Searcher opens the compartment but sets off the trap, although managing to avoid being harmed.

TIE OR ANY DEFEAT - Searcher opens the compartment but sets off the trap and suffers the appropriate penalty from the flames.

COMPLETE DEFEAT - Searcher fails to open the compartment, sets off the trap, and is Injured by the flames.

The items under the platform are hidden in depressions and covered in dirt with a skill of 18w.

3) Stables

As well as the two war horses, Treungille's riding zebra might also be in here.

4) Yard

To Move Silently across the back is opposed by the unicorns' Spot Intruder 14w.

5) Hall

Heavy, bronze-bound door (Tough 18w).

Breaking open a door requires abilities such as Close Combat (-10 with axe or hammer, -20 with any less suitable weapon), Strong, Tough (-10) or appropriate magic.

1) Armoury (and initiates)

See notes for '2' (the smithy) for chances to awaken. Unless somehow

prevented from doing so, Cathea will take the Yelmalio Helm from her bag, and wear it.

Yelmalio Helm

Enchanted to give the wearer an all over additional +3 to their armour protection. Can cast the feat "Wall of Shining Light 4w2" at will, without preparation, so the wearer may continue with any other activities unhindered.

A roll is not required to find the door behind the tapestry - either someone lifts the tapestry to look or they do not. The door behind it is Tough 18w2. The chest in the small room is protected by a Complex Lock (17w), and is also Tough 18w2 if attacked with axes or the like. Brute force will set off the trap, except on a Complete Victory. Any Defeat at picking the lock will also set off the trap. (Once again, it is a complex, dwarf-crafted, alchemically-based trap.)

Chest Trap

(adjustments and additions to listed effects)

The explosion produces a Percussive Blast 2w2 adjacent to the chest, and 5w within the rest of the room. Smoke 5w fills the room, making everyone cough and splutter. The contents of the chest are destroyed, damaged, bent or blackened, depending on the Narrator's assessment of their toughness.

SARTARITE SCROLL (actually sorcerous Lhankor Mhy code) - 'Bless Sword with Sharpness'.

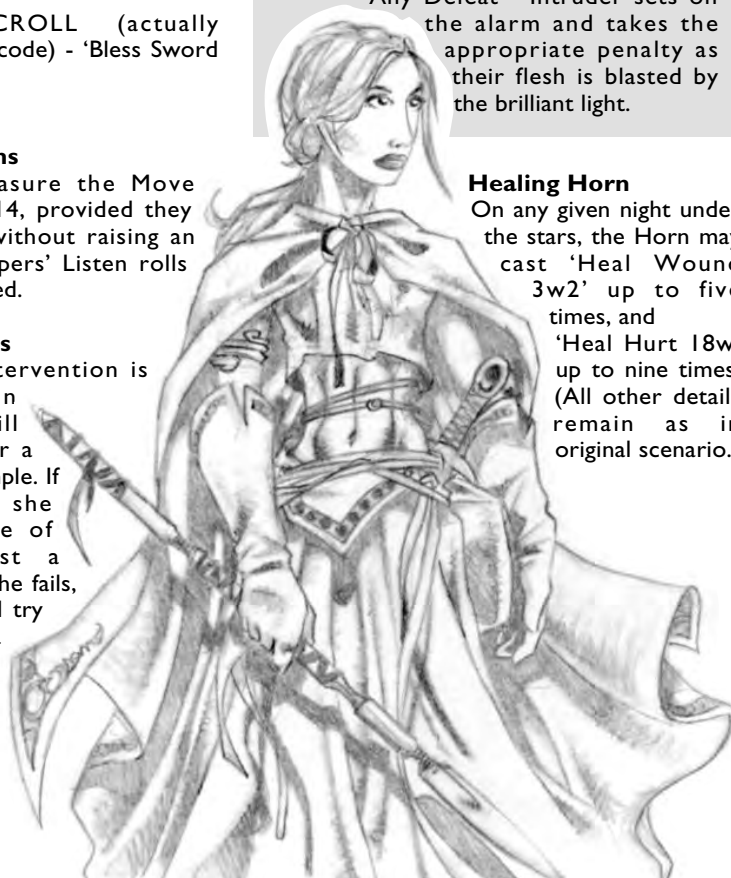
Blade Venom 15

12) Shield Maidens

Difficulty to measure the Move Silently against is only 14, provided they have reached this far without raising an alarm. Penalties to sleepers' Listen rolls are as previously described.

16) High Priestess

Whilst Divine Intervention is handled differently in HeroQuest, it is still possible, especially for a Priestess in her own Temple. If Morganeth is killed, she matches her 'Devotee of Yelorna 17w' against a Difficulty of only 5w. If she fails, High Wing the hawk will try his 'Devotee of Yelorna 18' on her behalf, against the same difficulty.



Complete or Major Victory - Morganeth is instantly restored to full health and vitality.

Minor Victory - After only a few rounds she is restored to full health and vitality.

Marginal Victory - After only a few rounds she is restored to life, but is still Injured and needs healing.

Marginal Defeat - After a few rounds she is restored to life, but only just, and urgently needs the attention of healers.

17) Temple Room

There is another Starlight Ward around the entirety of this room (except for a 1m band along the side and front walls (the back wall with the altar against has no such safe zone).

Starlight Ward

(All beings of Chaos suffer a penalty of -10. All beings tied to the Darkness Rune - including initiates of Black Fang - suffer a penalty of -5.)

Complete or Major Victory - Intruder defeats the ward and may cross without hindrance.

Minor Victory - Intruder is able to pass the ward, but is Hurt in the process.

Marginal Victory - Intruder sets off the alarm, and is Hurt, but is able to push through.

Any Defeat - Intruder sets off the alarm and takes the appropriate penalty as their flesh is blasted by the brilliant light.

Healing Horn

On any given night under the stars, the Horn may cast 'Heal Wound 3w2' up to five times, and 'Heal Hurt 18w' up to nine times. (All other details remain as in original scenario.)

EXPERIENCED BADSIDE TOUGH



Keywords: *Pavic 17, Hired Muscle 19*

Combat Abilities: *Brawling 10w, Knife Fighting 12w, Spear Attack 8w.*

Other Significant Abilities: *Climb 6w, Hide in Cover 4w, Listen 2w, Running 3w, Scan for Danger 8w.*

Common Magic: *Harden Skin 17, Sharpen Spear 17*
Equipment: Knife +1, Spear +3, Leather Armour +1.

Thunder Lung Dust

Resist with Tough -5, Strong -10, Resist Poison, Ignore Wounds -15, or the default.

MARGINAL DEFEAT - Victim takes only one Hurt from choking dust.
MARGINAL VICTORY - Victim takes four Hurts from choking dust, due to stinging eyes and painful lungs.

MINOR VICTORY - Victim takes seven Hurts from choking dust, and is coughing and partially incapacitated.

MAJOR VICTORY - Victim is Injured by the choking dust and is seriously incapacitated.

COMPLETE VICTORY - Victim is Injured by the dust and is totally incapacitated by choking and vomiting.

NOTE: *Use of additional thief cult alchemical devices, including sleep powders, is another way to boost your anti-heroes - for whom magical nasal plugs might also be an advantage.*

The Yelornans

Note: Treungille rides a zebra. The Yelornans have no use for the hated horse (not wishing to bring down the automatic hatred of any Praxians they meet). Only Cathea and Shalana have horses, having recently arrived from Sartar.

Morganeth

Keywords: Unicorn Rider 12w, Warrior 14w, Priestess 18, Devotee of Yelorna 17w, (Age 49 in 1620)

Combat abilities: Composite Bow 5w2, Javelin 3w2, Lance Attack 11w2, Spear and Shield Fighting 7w2.

Other significant abilities: Camouflage 18w, Climb 2w2, Hide in Cover 5w2, History of Pavis 14w, Listen 14w, Manside Geography 16w, Move Quietly 20w, Orate 19w, Pavic Customs 5w, Prax Lore 17w, Read/Write Old Pavic 14w, Recognize Clan 5w, Ride Unicorn 2w2, Scan Plains for Danger 17w, Speak Aldryami 18, Speak Praxian 4w, Speak Trade 14w, Swim 14w, Tough 2w2, Tracking 4w2, Treat Poison 12w, Vow of Celibacy 2w2.

Affinities: Starlight 9w2 (Enchant Silver ritual, Lighten Darkness, See in Darkness, Starbright Arrow, Starlight Reveals Tracks, Sense Silver, Starlight Beauty, Starlight Wards the Camp)

Secret: Meteor Bow 12w

Equipment: Superior Chain and Leather Armour with Shield +4, Enchanted Spear +5, Enchanted Lance +7, Unicorn, General Poison antidote 8w, Heal Wounds Potion 16w (x2).

Truestone: Contains single-use feats, all at 18w: Dismiss Elemental, Melt Clouds, Mind Link, Resist Harm, Reflect Sorcery, Sever Spirit x2, and Summon Fire Daimon.

Divine Companion: 'High Wing' the Vrok Hawk (Knows these feats, at 20w: Befuddle Foe, Sense Gold, Dispel Magic, Flaming Arrow, Light, and Repair) Also has 'Devotee of Yelorna 18'

Magical Crystals:

'Starsilver'; Contains the following feats, all at 8w: Blast Flesh, Dodge Blade, Heal Wound, Resist Theist Magic, and Sharpen Blade.

'Firestar'; contains the following feats, all at 10w: Detect Life, Sense Magic, Sense Spirits, and Sense Undead.

Heroquest geas: Challenge all



Zorak Zoran worshippers on sight within the confines of Old Pavis (to state their business and right to be in the city) Challenge all Lunar Devotees on sight - to a combat to the first blood, first fall, or yield - (such ceremonial challenges are the trademarks of many heroquesters, and are usually resolved by taking a combat stance and conducting a ritualized verbal exchange).

Auda

Keywords: Sable Rider 4w, Nomad 16, Devotee of Yelorna 6w

Combat abilities: Shortsword Fighting 7w +2, Spear and Shield Fighting 11w +4, Lance Attack 4w +5.

Other significant abilities: Orate 10w, Ride Unicorn 19w, Rubble Survival 5w, Scan for Danger 18w, Speak Trade 19.

Affinities: Starlight 5w (all feats)

Equipment: Leather Armour with Shield +2, Blade Venom Antidote 8w.

Divine Companion: 'Starry' in crystal 15w (Knows these feats, at 12w: Sharpen Blade, Demoralize Foe, Dispel Magic, and Heal Wound)

Adelsa, Ernyne and Hildian

Keywords: Unicorn Rider 12w, Nomad 18, Sun Daughter Spiritist 8w

Combat Abilities: Spear and Shield Fighting 12w +3, Lance Combat 8w +5, Self Bow 11w +3.

Other Significant Abilities: Climb 20, Ride Unicorn 16w, Rubble Survival 7w, Scan for Danger 14w, Speak Trade 15, Tracking 17w.

Spirit Charms (choose two for each, both at 10w): See in Darkness, Spear Bites Deep, Run Fast, Jump Far, Keen Sight, Strong.

Equipment: Leather Armour and Shield +2.

Adelsa only: Allied Spirit: Frightful the Hawk (Detect Gold 16w, Heal Wound 16w, Starlight Glow 16w)

Ernyne only: Truestone with 4 uses of 'Flaming Arrow 16w'.

Ambermast

Keywords: Elf of the Stinking Forest 6w, Warrior 18, Aldrya Practitioner 3w, Initiate of Yelorna 16.

Combat Abilities: Bow Attack 14w +3, Greatsword 12w +5.

Other Significant Abilities: Alert 3w, Dodge 15w, Elfsense 6w, Hide in Cover 12w, Listen 5w, Move Quietly 12w, Speak Trade 5w, Tracking 20.

Affinities: Starlight 18

Practice Charms: Heal Wounds 18w, Resist Theist Magic 8w, Swordmaster 16w.

Equipment: Elf Bow, Leather and Bark Armour with Shield +2.

Balomia Firewood

Keywords: Zebra Rider 8w, Nomad 5w, Initiate of Joraz Kyrem (Pavis) 5w, Initiate of Yelorna 17
Combat Abilities: Archery 3w +3, Lance Combat 18 +5, Sword and Shield Fighting 8w +3

Other Significant Abilities: Hide in Cover 9w, Read/Write Old Pavic 14, Rubble Survival 6w, Ruthless in Battle 8w, Scan Terrain 7w, Speak Old Pavic 8w, Speak Trade 20.

Affinities: City Harmony 2w, Warrior of the Sun 6w, Starlight 19

Equipment: Leather Armour and Shield +2.

Cathea and Harune

Keywords: Pavic 18, Warrior 19, Initiate of Pavis (City Founder) 18, Initiate of Yelorna 7w

Combat Abilities: Spear and Shield Fighting 10w +3, Throw Javelin 6w +3.

Other Significant Abilities: Climb 12w, Hide in Cover 11w, Listen 14, Read/Write Old Pavic 13, Ride Zebra 10w, Scan Terrain 4w, Speak Trade 20, Tracking 5w.

Affinities: City Harmony 7w, Starlight 3w

Equipment: Leather Armour and Shield +2.

Cathea only: An enchanted silver bootlace granting her the spells: 'Cat-Like Agility 12w' and 'Silent Steps 15w'; the Yelmalo Helm; a magic crystal with the feat Reinforce Magic 5w2; potion to heal toxins 18w

Harune only: Potion to heal toxins 16w; potion of strength 10w.

Shalana the Brown

Keywords: Heortling (Sartarite) 5w, Warrior 19, Initiate of Vinga Pathfinder 9w, Initiate of Yelorna 18

Combat Abilities: Sword and Shield Fighting 9w +3, Throw Javelin 12w +3.

Other Significant Abilities: Boast 19, Hide in Cover 6w, Jump 12w, Listen 9w, Ride 5w, Running 7w, See Hidden 4w, Speak Trade 18, Tracking 15w, Wilderness Survival 11w.

Affinities: Starlight 16, Combat 7w, Movement 5w, Pathfinder 9w

Equipment: Leather Armour and Shield +2.



Walyne

Keywords: Unicorn Rider 6w, Nomad 18, Sun Daughter Practitioner 12w.

Combat Abilities: Short Sword 8w +2, Spear and Shield Fighting 10w +5, Throw Javelin 17w +3

Other Significant Abilities: Listen 9w, Ride Unicorn 9w, Scan for Danger 15w, Speak Trade 6w, Tracking 19w.

Spirit Charms: Cause Fear 18w, Heroic Javelin Throw 16w, Shimmering Outline 4w2, Spear Bites Deep 2w2.

Secret: Incarnate Star Warrior 9w (Typical Star Warrior: Enduring 14w, Resist Offensive

Magic 16w, Spear and Shield Fighting 10w3, 'Starblaze Weapon' Feat 12w2, Strong 8w.)

Equipment: Enchanted lance +4, enchanted spear +5, Leather Armour and Shield +2.

Treungille Arannia

Treungille is a fugitive from Lunar justice, given refuge here under an assumed name because his father once saved the life of Morganeth's father. He assumes the persona of an honest young man, of good heart and with much concern to behave appropriately. All the worshippers here know only that Morganeth owes his father an unredeemable debt, and so he is accepted by all, and they are careful to give nothing away. Unbeknown to all others except Cathea (who is keeping silent on the matter), Treungille and Shalana are lovers. (Note Treungille's picture on p251 of 'P&BR'.)

Keywords: Heortling 18, Hunter 3w, Initiate of Ormalaya Adventurous 2w.

Combat Abilities: Bow 16w +3, Spear and Shield Fighting 10w +3.

Other Significant Abilities: Climb 6w, Dodge Attack 7w, Ride Zebra 14w, Running 8w, Speak Trade 17, Stalking 10w, Tracking 6w.

Affinities: Combat 6w, Movement 4w, Hunting 11w.

Equipment: Scale and Leather Armour and Shield +3.

Terram

Keywords: Pavic 18, Armourer 8w, Initiate of Flintnail (Pavis) 6w.

Combat Abilities: Hammer and Shield Fighting 6w +3.

Other Significant Abilities: Craft Armour 16w, Craft Shield 18w, Craft Weapon 17w, History of Pavis 2w, Ride Zebra 18, Strong 15.

Affinities: City Harmony 3w, City Builder 10w.

Equipment: Leather Apron and Shield +2.

Typical Yelornan Unicorn

Combat Abilities: Gore with Horn 14w +3.

Other Significant Abilities: Agile 8w, Hide in Cover 5w, Large 4w, Move Quietly 11w, Run Fast 15w, Spot Intruder 14w, Strong 6w.

Innate Magical Abilities: Detect Injury 7w, Detect Poison 14w, Resist Magic 8w.

Special Unicorn Magic 3w2: (Frighten Enemy, Heal Friendly Being, Heal Poison, Mighty Hoof Strike, Resist Damage, Run Fast)

Don't lose your head

by Tobias Deterding

Translated from German to English by Majlon Vrbicky
Revised and edited by Alison Place & André Jarosch

A BIG THANKS!



• This episode draws heavily on ideas originally published as 'The Dyskund Caverns' published in the Avalon Hill RQ book "Shadows on the Borderlands". The author wants to thank Ken Rolston for being such a great inspiration, that he almost forgot how much of this scenario simply got adapted from his ideas.



Introduction

This episode can be used as starting point of a longer campaign or it may be played as a stand-alone adventure. The search for a missing scholar leads the heroes onto the tracks of a dark cult in the Grantlands of Prax. The episode is usable for Orlanthi, Sundome Templars, nomads, River Voices and members of other cultures.

Letter no. 1

I greet you, brother.

I would like to begin by again expressing my regrets that your enforced exile has robbed our group of a constant supporter. We regret the loss of your wise advice. But rest assured, that the secret will be kept and that you do not have to completely abandon your work. We will keep in touch and share our insights and discoveries. Brother Orvinus is now confident that he can use the fragment with the verses, that we have had for such a long time, as the key to unravel some of the riddles of the snake. If the poet was an initiate, he would have used the key not in accordance with the contemporary conventions, but been inspired by the texts. I think this is a promising approach. In addition, I have encountered some old documents in which intimations are made about a missing chapter that our fragments do not contain. I still have some intensive research to do, but when I have evidence, I will of course report back in detail.

Your steadfast friend,
Arlim



Scene 1: Strangers in Pavis

The heroes have come to sell some scrolls and maps to Hurbi, or to see Hurbi's scrolls and maps. (Hurbi, often known as Treasure Trove Hurbi, is a well-known authority on the multifarious treasure maps circulating in Pavis. He is a good man to consult on whether a map location has been looted out. He's also reasonably cheap to deal with, as he usually sells his latest items, or will provide a consult, for a percentage cut of the eventual finds.) Hurbi tells them that there is a man who might pay high prices for items the heroes have to sell, but unfortunately he has gone missing. The missing person is named Narrilor. Narrilor had only lived in Pavis for a short time, but had heard that Hurbi was the man to whom to sell interesting old documents. Narrilor had offered various such items to Hurbi, and had given some hints that perhaps he might sell other items of his extensive collection. When Narrilor did not appear at Hurbi's three days ago, as he had promised, Hurbi decided to go looking for Narrilor at his home. He didn't find Narrilor, but did notice terrible disorder and unmistakable traces of burglary. Hurbi couldn't say whether the burglary happened before or after Narrilor's disappearance, as there were no signs of a fight.

Hurbi makes an offer to the heroes: if they can shed some light on the reasons for Narrilor's disappearance and, if possible,

Letter no. 4

Narrilor,

I am sure that you wonder why, instead of the expected letter from your friend Arlim, you receive a message from his wife. As you might have guessed when you opened the letter, the reason is not a happy one. I need to tell you something that will both grieve and frighten you: my husband is no more! Heavier than the grief, however, weighs the anger and the fear of the circumstances around his death. Arlim was barbarically murdered. Although there is no trace of the assassin, I have serious suspicions about his identity. In the weeks prior to the nefarious deed, my husband made the acquaintance of a merchant named Horacus, a stoop-shouldered, blond, bearded man, who expressed great interest in the research and especially in the secret collection of his newfound friend. He insisted on visiting our home almost every day. Arlim let it pass, as his guest seemed to possess much knowledge, and had a talent for stimulating conversation.

Horacus was gifted at subtle questioning of Arlim, and seemed to gather a lot of information about his sources and colleagues. Two days after we thought that he had left, I found the terribly mangled corpse of my beloved husband in his study chamber. Strangely, there were no missing valuables. However, some chests in which my husband had stored some of his precious documents were open. As you know, these took him many years of research to assemble. My fear is that the thieves have learned about you, perhaps through a simple conversation during the visits of that merchant, or from the letters stored with the documents that were stolen. I am afraid that whomever killed my dear Arlim may now try to find others from whom he can steal more precious knowledge.

Chiara

find Narrilor (and his valuable possessions), Hurbi will let them have items from his own supply for a small price or for free. This should be of interest to them, if they do not have much money. If they do not want to trade their time for Hurbi's goods, Hurbi may tell them that the missing Narrilor has exactly the documents they are looking for and some other, even more interesting ones.

Alternative hooks might be that a recent item or document that they have found can only be analyzed or interpreted by Narrilor. The narrator will need to prepare beforehand by salting the heroes' latest loot. Also, it is fairly likely that Narrilor is known to members of the Irippi Ontor and Lhankor Mhy temples. Perhaps he has a relative or a former student who belongs to the cult, and who might partially finance a rescue mission. Narrilor may also have deposited moneys at one of the Knowledge Temples or the Pavis Temple as a ransom. (This is a reasonably common precaution, if one feels at risk.) Parties wondering what financial incentive there might be in taking two to three weeks (minimum) to hunt down a probably-dead scholar will need this kind of built-in reward.

Narrilor has grey hair, is old but not frail, and of lean build. He also has a small, unobtrusive tattoo on his right forearm, three eyes forming an equilateral triangle. His servant and bodyguard, Brogas, a tall man with bold head and a long black beard, and runes of Death and Fire tattooed on his cheeks, is usually at his side.

Narrilor's apartment

If the heroes want to take a look at Narrilor's apartment, Hurbi can give them directions. It is located in the old town and is on the top floor of a two storey house. The upper apartments are served by an external staircase on the side, and separated by a hallway. The house is shabby and rundown. The right door in the hallway leads into a vacant apartment on the street-side, whose walls and roof are damaged and no longer weathertight. The two-room apartment located in the rear has a seemingly intact door. On closer examination (simple ability test) scratches on the lock can be seen. Inside, the heroes find plain furniture, shoved close together or overturned. The two beds were completely dismantled. Apart from some simple household items on the floor, no significant objects can be found. No documents or clothing are discovered.

However, if the heroes search the interior of the outside walls of the apartment a little more thoroughly, it is a simple contest against a resistance of 5W to discover a wall section with loose, easily removed bricks. Behind those is a niche that apparently was later walled up. In this hideout, the heroes discover a little bundle

of letters. If anyone in the group can read New Pelorian, give that player letters no. 1 and 4. The first three letters are in the same handwriting. Letters 2 and 3 are similar in their content to the first letter, and can be ignored. The second one is dated about a year ago, the third one last season. The fourth letter (in a different handwriting) is not dated.

While the narrator will know that the research to which letters refer is irrelevant to the scenario, the heroes do not. The narrator may need to use tact in discouraging the heroes from trying overhard to decipher what are obviously allusions to an obscure scholarly project. If, as is likely, they show the letters to Hurbi, he can expound scornfully on the various ridiculous or trivial research topics that scholars of his acquaintance have been willing to pursue.

Research

If the heroes inquire in the city after Narrilor at the right places (contest with appropriate skills against a resistance of 17), they soon learn that a group of strangers asked after a man of that name about two weeks ago.

The respondents did not know Narrilor, but can give a rough description of the strangers (looking rather unobtrusive in clothes worn by Lunar settlers). One of the respondents recalled that among that group was also a man who apparently lives in Pavis and calls himself Agred. After further inquiries (resistance 14) the heroes learn where this man lives and will receive, at a greater or complete victory, also the information that it Agred is an ex-soldier with a dubious reputation.

NOTES: As an alternative, encourage the party to consider how the strangers could have found Narrilor. A man from the Lunar Empire trying to find a Lunar scholar will be most likely to ask around various Lunar sites. As a scholar, Narrilor would automatically be known at the Temples of Knowledge. However, it might be risky for Horacus to ask for him there, as he intends to abduct and kill Narrilor.

Narrilor has been earning money as a scribe for many of the illiterate soldiers stationed in Pavis. So asking for scribes, and their descriptions, at taverns frequented by soldiers and Lunar adventurers is likely a good way to get a line on Narrilor.

The heroes may also wish to question people near Narrilor's apartment, e.g. a beggar whose usual hangout is near there, the ubiquitous urchins (though it's less likely they'd happen to see the party), or a local gossip who always finds out what's happening in her neighbourhood.

This will give the heroes a sensible way to discover that people have asked about

Narrilor. Then they can go put pressure on Agred.

Agred was once a Lunar hoplite, but was given an early dishonorable discharge because of various small offenses and repeated insubordination. He now ekes out a living in Pavis by theft, fraud, racketeering, and other minor crimes. Agred was chosen by Horacus as a local guide due to his obvious criminality, and his previous military service with one of the Thanatari, Morel.

Depending on how the heroes come to meet him, Agred will either deny ever having heard something of a Narrilor, or if he is confronted with violence, will threaten to call the Lunar authorities. If the heroes can imply that they blame Agred for the disappearance of Narrilor and his servant, he will deny it indignantly and tell them a portion of the truth. He will admit that he was asked by some men where Narrilor lived, and he told them.

To learn more, the heroes have to overcome his ability Lies 19:

Marginal Victory: Agred was hired by Horacus as a local guide to the seamier side of Pavis.

Minor Victory: Agred asked Horacus, who this Narrilor was and what Horacus wanted from him. Subsequently, he made his own inquiries.

Major Victory: ... and decided to break into Narrilor's house when it was empty and unguarded. He hoped to find valuable documents. In the apartment, he found nothing of value despite a thorough search.

Complete Victory: ... except some vases and other ceramics, which he sold to a huckster for a few pieces of silver. Agred will also not hesitate to report that he believes that he saw Narrilor, accompanied by several unknown men, riding out of town to a dock (one day before his burglary). He has not seen them since.

NARRATOR INFORMATION: Some of the Damned of Thanatar found Narrilor in Pavis. Then Horacus made friends with the scholar under the name of Chusaro. He said he was an explorer of old, occult writings, who was happy to speak with a like-minded man. Narrilor's suspicions were not aroused even though Horacus used a similar modus operandi as he did with Arlim, because Horacus has changed his appearance back to his normal looks; a broad shouldered, clean shaven man, with black hair. He managed to convince Narrilor to confide his fears, then subtly confirmed that Narrilor was probably right to be concerned. Horacus offered to provide Narrilor shelter at his country estate in the Grantlands. Narrilor, Brogas, and Horacus, accompanied by Thanatari

who pretended to be 'Chusaro's' servants, all headed south by boat.

Regardless of how the heroes further handle Agred, they should now have the crucial information required to follow the track. Asking questions of fishermen, newtlings or other people living on the river based only on descriptions of some or all of the travellers will initially prove unsuccessful. When he rented the barge, Horacus paid a premium to the Ingillis to keep his business quiet, and the Ingillis spread the word among the river folk not to talk to strangers. However, parties having good contacts with the Zola Fel river cult will find it fairly easy to discover that a party fitting the description did pay to be taken downriver to Ronegarth. Heroes lacking such contacts can still get the information desired by being referred to one of the Zola Fel priests. They would have to convince the priest that they can be vouched for by other respectable locals. They may try to persuade the priest that Narrilor is in the company of murderers. It probably won't matter much to the priest if Narrilor was stupid enough to be taken in, but it might get them a little bit more co-operation, and a good deal on a faster boat.

NOTE: If the narrator so chooses, the next events may take place in the southern Sundome lands. Agred and Morel would then be former Sundome Templars, and Heleric a member of the militia.

Scene 2: From Pavis to Ronegarth

The trip downriver takes about five to six days. In addition to normal events such as paying the obligatory duty while crossing into Sundome County, the narrator may invent other meetings and obstacles. Money-conscious heroes can defray the cost of their passage by signing on as guards or otherwise working their passage. In Ronegarth, the heroes will also need to ask around. The first few will not have seen Narrilor and his companions, but the seekers are unhesitatingly referred to other acquaintances who allegedly could give better information.

NOTE: They may come to the attention of Raus's guards, especially if the heroes start alleging that the people whom they seek are murderers, or if the heroes act belligerently or rudely themselves. The narrator should also be prepared for heroes who actually ask for help from Ronegarth authorities. This is Raus's land, and he holds the high and the low justice. If they kill on his land, they will have to answer to him. Far better to actually enlist his help. If they are potentially accusing some of Raus's settlers of murder, that is also likely to get Raus involved. Raus could also provide a guide (perhaps Heleric), give them a letter of passage, or perhaps arrange for riding animals if the party lacks them.

They will eventually meet Heleric Ranusson, a Devotee of Humakt. He reports that he has not only seen the described group, but also accompanied them for part of their way. Heleric was asked some while ago to look for a Chalana Arroy healer, newly arrived from Talastar, who had gone missing while on a trip to another farm about one day's march south. She was related to him. While enquiring after her, Heleric was told that another local, a Devotee of Irrippi Ontor, had disappeared a few weeks ago. This man was with a caravan of strangers on the way to Horngate in the west. His disappearance was ascribed by his relatives to a possible attack by nomads. (The Thanatari only attack those they believe to be strangers and travelers passing through. Twice they made a mistake.)

Still searching for the missing healer, Heleric accompanied 'Chusaro's' party southwesterly from Ronegarth. While with them, he noticed that only the ever-polite scholar seemed happy with his company. Some members of the group also seemed familiar to him. (Some cultists have come to Ronegarth at irregular intervals in order to buy food and other stuff with the money of their captured victims. They have been wise enough to avoid selling easily identifiable or valuable items that might be recognized.)

Heleric may describe the group to the heroes, but also questions the purpose of their search. Should he get the impression that the heroes suspect a planned abduction, he will want to join them and only desist if they reject him firmly. (Note: To have the campaign continue appropriately, the narrator should ensure that Heleric goes with them.)

The way Heleric described leads the heroes in a southerly direction through the valley and then in a slight bow towards the west. Soon they come into an area where rugged, finger-shaped foothills of the rocky plateau formed by long dried-out streams protrude into the Zola Fel valley. Heleric will tell them that this was as far as he went with the previous party. This is one of the places that travelers wishing to climb up to the plateau use, because the slope is less difficult to overcome. There are several places suitable for the ascent.

Part 3: Ambush

This region is the territory of a small group of broos. Their existence so far has remained undetected by the farmers, because the broos rarely and very cautiously raid the valley. Mostly they subsist on local hunting and gathering. They benefit, however, from the activities of the temple of Thanatar, by plundering and eating the corpses of their victims. The cultists make short work of the companions of their chosen victims, taking jewelry and weapons to trade. The rest (clothes, small utensils,

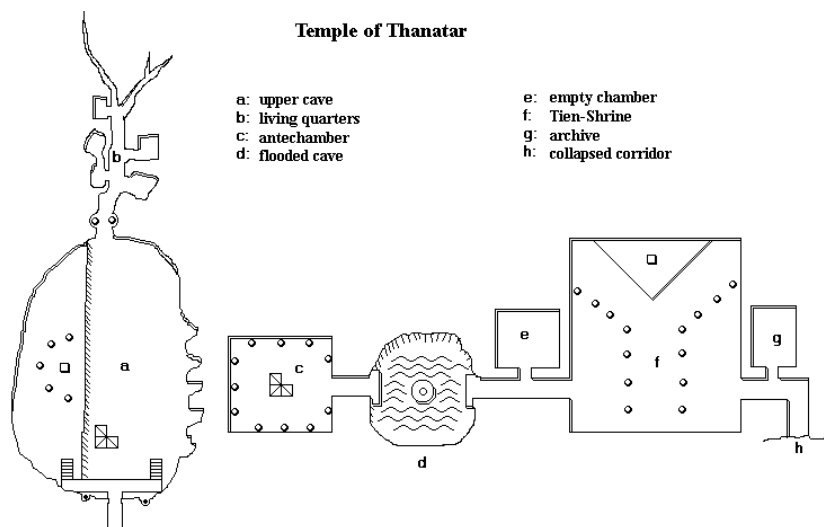


etc.) remain for the broos. The groups know each other and live in relatively peaceful coexistence, which may be partially due to the fact that a broo from Gratural's band has joined the cult of Thanatar. Recently, booty has been relatively meager for the broos.

The broos will spot the oncoming heroes first, from an observation post high on a rocky outcrop by one of the ascent paths. As the heroes travel through a small canyon, they discover a linen bundle lying right on the path. If they gather round to take a closer look, they are showered from both sides of the gorge with a hail of arrows, stones and other throwing weapons. The attackers are partially under cover and can take advantage of their high position (Bonus Distance Attack on the defense and protection of +2 for the broos). The attacked find almost no coverage at the walls of the gorge, because they are always visible from the opposite side. Escape to the front or back is difficult, because the attackers can easily keep pace. If the heroes do not want to fight from the bottom of the gorge, they can try to climb the relatively low cliffs (climbing against resistance 5W; perception skills can support this by discovering easier-to-climb sections). The number of broos should be adjusted to that of heroes. Once the broos believe themselves to be on the defensive, they take flight. Their hiding place, where they try to entrench themselves, is located nearby.

If the heroes look carefully at the broo corpses, they discover pieces of clothing or weapons, which could come from abductees. Heleric will definitely recognize some objects as having once belonged to the missing healer. They will also find a kidnap victim. The broos impregnated their captive, which is why he or she is still alive. This person can tell the party that the Thanatari are present. If the narrator feels that drama dictates (and doesn't wish the party distracted by running a mercy mission to the healers at Horngate), then the larva erupts just about then, and the captive dies. If the party has retreated, the captive could have just escaped, and the party finds him/her.

Subject to the discretion of the narrator the heroes may even find the partially mummified corpse of Brogas, who is recognizable by the runes on his cheeks, in their further search. About the time that it was likely that their victims would become suspicious (they had left behind the inhabited lands), they gave up their masquerade. They murdered Brogas and brought Narrilor to the temple.



Temple of Thanatar

- a: upper cave
- b: living quarters
- c: antechamber
- d: flooded cave
- e: empty chamber
- f: Tien-Shrine
- g: archive
- h: collapsed corridor

Part 4: The Secret Temple

The temple entrance

When the heroes come to the top of a high plateau, they will sooner or later discover a path which leads to a ridge difficult to see from far away. It winds down the slope to a protruding ledge. The ridge is too narrow for almost any riding animal and very dangerous for people not knowing its curves (contest of skill, climbing or other appropriate skills against 17, not to slip). (If the party is mounted on mules they can ride. Mules are amazingly surefooted. Roping everyone together is also a sensible precaution.) At a full defeat the hero plunges 20 meters down, but otherwise he can stop his descent after sliding down some distance. Bushes hide the cave entrance at the end of the narrow ridge (contest against 17 to find it), which is just wide enough for one person. Inside, the heroes find that they are in an artificially created tunnel carved slightly sloping down into the rock.

The upper cavern

Six meters along, there is an irregular cavity roughly 12 meters long and 10 meters wide and high. The tunnel enters the cave at a height of 5 meters on one of the narrow sides. There is a two meter wooden platform with a staircase leading downwards on both the left and right sides. On the far side of the cavern, a corridor leads away into the darkness. The cave is divided into two parts. On the cavern floor, a spiral staircase, carved into the rock, descends to a lower level. The left wooden stairway leads to a shelf in the center of which rises a massive altar block. A semicircle of five pillars of about one meter height surrounds the altar block. The block is completely decorated with reliefs of excellent workmanship, mostly showing horned skulls. Similar sculptures have also been chiseled into the wall behind the altar. The lower right section of the cave is without decoration. In the wall on this side

there are dark niches; in between burning torches are affixed in brackets. From the bottom section you can also reach the spiral staircase and the rear corridor (see map).

Both left and right of the entrance are three wall niches, with a skull in each niche. Spirits are bound into these skulls (1W up to 17W power, narrator decision), attacking everyone approaching one of the wooden stairs with spirit combat. Once a hero is possessed by a spirit, he will try to kill his companions. Should he succeed, he will then either throw himself on his weapon or off the footbridge. The spirits in the skulls can be destroyed forever, if the hero knows the ritual of Skull Shattering, taught by the cult of Lhankor Mhy. Such spirits are also bound to the skulls cemented into the five pillars around the altar. These skull spirits (four per column) will attack everyone who comes closer than two meters to a pillar or the altar.

There are seven people (plus Narrilor, who is chained in a niche, and not visible to the heroes) in the upper cave. There is a ceremony in progress. Behind the altar stands a tall person in a ceremonial robe. In front of the altar, on the cavern floor, six people gather in a semicircle; one is unmistakably a broo. The priest speaks in a tone of deep concentration words the heroes do not understand (Chaos language). If the invaders do not enter very quietly (10W), some of those present will notice them. In this case, the priest, after a brief moment of surprise, will turn with a smile to the observers: "I see we have guests. Welcome! Come closer, you've got nothing to fear from us."

If the heroes accept this invitation, they are attacked by the aforementioned skull spirits in the wall niches. The Thanatari will use this distraction to attack the heroes. They will first try to take as many prisoners as possible. Horacus will use magic for this purpose. His available magic is at the discretion of the narrator. Horacus has had enough time to learn or steal plenty of spells.

If he thinks that his side will lose, he will try to flee. If he succeeds, he will take the path from the temple to the Hanra farm, the residence of a family of ogres. If for some reason it is impossible for Horacus to escape, the narrator should ensure that Heleric strikes the decisive blow against him. The restless spirit of the priest will then attack the Humakti in an unobserved moment with spirit combat and take possession of his body. The possessed will be careful to hide the change from the heroes.

NOTE: If the narrator is not interested in continuing the campaign, let Horacus attack one of the heroes. The exorcism itself will be difficult far from civilization. If the takeover succeeds, the hero could also continue, if his colleagues have not noticed it. The spirit combat would have to be fought out secretly.

Chains are embedded in the niches on the right hand wall, and the floor there is stained by old excrement. In one of the niches Narrilor is chained, clothed in rags only. He shows clear signs of torture, but is still able to walk and speak. If the heroes can liberate him, he will tell them how the priest, who is known to him under the name "Chusaro", and the cultists lured him out of Pavis and brought him to the temple. Narrilor will also explain that he is a member of a society of scholars that collects and analyzes old documents. Due to a plot against him, he had to leave his home, but he wanted to continue his research in Pavis anyway. He will not offer more detailed information and, if questioned further, give evasive answers only. He could identify his tormentors as followers of Thanatar, who enslave people with their magic or deprive them of their knowledge. The Thanatari were mainly interested in his documents and information about his colleagues. As a reward for his rescue he can only offer the heroes documents from his collection not directly pertinent to his personal research, plus free help in translating any documents that the heroes own. If he did have any ransom money deposited in Pavis, he will happily pay up. His looted documents are now in the antechamber of the shrine of Tien.

Living quarters

The corridor at the other end of the cave leads to the living quarters of the cultists, small chambers at the end of narrow, irregular extensions of the cave. At the beginning of the corridor on both sides there is a column with bound spirits. The quarters contain straw beds as well as the personal belongings and valuables of the cultists.

Antechamber of the Shrine of Tien

The spiral staircase leads some ten meters into the depths. The lower chamber

is rimmed by stone pillars, between which large ceramic vases and wooden crates are stored. They contain scrolls with the stolen knowledge of the cult (including Narrilor's documents) and valuables of the victims (whatever the narrator wants). Among the scrolls are also specimens from the Second Era that Horacus only recently brought from the old archives of the Tien Shrine (see below). In this room, the heroes can hear the quiet trickle of water. The sound comes from the only passage leading from the chamber.

The Flooded Cave

This passage leads to a stone ledge at the edge of a natural, vaguely circular cavity of seven meters in diameter and five meters in height. The floor of the cave is flooded with water that reaches up to the hips of a person of average height. This is the only source of water in the temple. Water trickles constantly from the craggy ceiling. In the center of the pond is a rocky islet. A horrifying stone sculpture stares at the intruders from this island. It is a headless human-like creature bearing his decapitated, horned head under one arm, and perched on a pile of skulls.

On the opposite side, a further corridor leads out of the cave. If the heroes walk into the pond, countless nebulous figures escape from the eyes of the skulls after the first steps. Only some of these spirits bound in the stone skulls will attack the heroes in spirit combat. The rest will attack with magic (Magic and God's deeds of various cults and churches, with target numbers in the range 1W to 10W2). This massive attack with damage spells will make passage of the pond virtually impossible to the heroes. The narrator may adjust the number of spirits accordingly. The only salvation is to reach the ledge at the entrance and to escape through the corridor.

If one of the heroes indeed succeeds in entering the opposite corridor, he is confronted with a problem: the spirits will pursue him to the shrine of Tien, which is protected by many more. The cultists who rediscovered the Temple of Thanatar some years ago could never overcome this obstacle, because their amulets offered no protection against these particular spirits. Horacus remains the only "living" person granted access.

The Shrine

In the hallway leading to the chamber, a door on the right side leads into an empty room 4 meters square. The corridor ends in a hall that is 6 meters in height, 10 meters in length and 8 meters in width. A triangular shelf with an altar stone projects from the lefthand wall. Two rows of pillars that run floor to ceiling form a Y-shape as they sweep from the righthand wall, and then split to either side of the altar platform. Countless

spirits are bound into the pillars. A doorway is located directly opposite the entrance.

The Archive

The corridor on the far side turns right after 5 meters. Before the bend, a door located on the left side of the corridor leads into a 3 by 4 meter room into whose walls several niches are carved. Some of these niches contain ancient papyri in different languages (including Old Wyrnish).

Old Exit

The corridor has collapsed 5 meters past the bend. Originally, it led to the old entrance to the shrine. After the collapse, the cultists made a new entrance by driving a tunnel from the upper cave. The original entrance is no longer recognizable from the outside. It is now buried underneath 10 meters of stones and boulders.

Note: It is unlikely that the heroes ever enter this part of the temple. Horacus is the only one immune to the hordes of spirits. He uses it as a refuge and for safe storage of valuable documents.

Part 5:

On the tracks of the Ogres

A winding path leads southwards from the temple entrance across the wilderness. It has only recently been formed by the contacts of the Hanra family with the Thanatari. Sometimes the ogres feed on the victims of the cultists' rituals. It crosses two other trails. After half a day's walk the path joins another path leading to a farm about one kilometer away. This is the residence of the Hanra family, ogres, who have come with the first settlers from the Empire. They pretend to be originally from Carmania. They have kept their true identity secret from the other settlers. The existence of a site sacred to Cacodemon, located in a ravine behind the farm, is also unknown to anyone.

This shrine is led by Ravan Hanra. Ravan has made a mutual advantage pact with Horacus.

Prisoners that the Thanatari realized weren't worth sacrificing could be given to the ogres, while the ogres act as front men for the Thanatari.

NOTE: Unless the Thanatari do flee this way, and the party is in sufficiently good shape to follow in hot pursuit, the heroes are most likely to retrace their path back to Ronegarth. This should work out fine if the narrator wishes to continue the confrontation later. Also the path is very faint. The Thanatari and the ogres are both aware of the dangers of detection, and use the track as little as possible.

The Hanra farm

The farm is located at the end of a relatively wide valley and is surrounded on three sides by steep slopes. The fields are located in the valley below the farm, through which a road runs to the farm. In addition to the main building, slave barracks, a granary and a warehouse are located on the site. There are only nine members of the family present, including Ravan. Only if those present suspect that the heroes know their secret will they attack without hesitation.

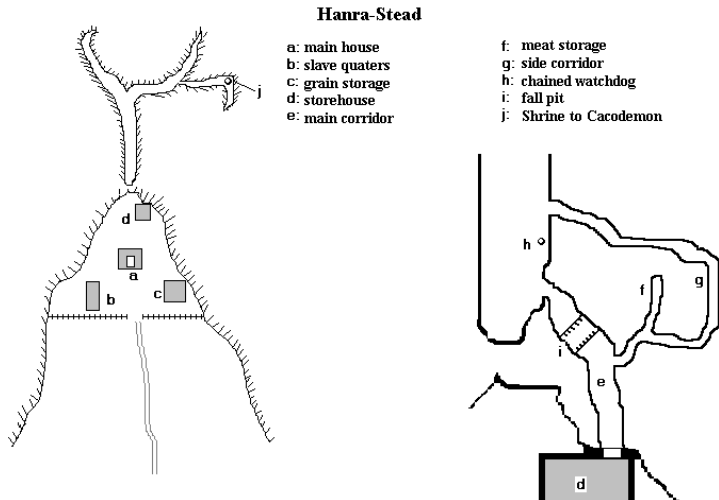
NOTE: This family (called Pola in 'The Dyskund Caverns' scenario) went to great efforts to avoid detection. They have invested a lot of time and effort in the farm, which will make them loath to attack. Besides which, it is much easier for them to play the ignorant settlers than try to take on an armed party. "You mean there's been Chaos that close to our children? It's a wonder we haven't been murdered in our beds! Thank goodness for our stout wall and good dogs!"

It is also very likely that if there is any chance that the adventurers are likely to succeed in killing the Thanatari, the Hanra clan will happily join in the slaughter to show how anti-Chaos they are. This would help their local reputation. They probably realize that Horacus can fend for himself, and doesn't care that much about his fellow Thanatari.

If the heroes don't know that they confront ogres, the family may try to lure them into an ambush, welcoming the travelers with friendship and awaiting the right moment to attack. One of their tactics will be to separate the heroes and then to silently assassinate them. (If there are any of the duke's people with the party, this will not be likely. Too easy to blow their cover and alarm Raus' men.) Should Horacus have managed to flee to this farm, he will have warned Ravan's family.

If the priest had a good enough headstart, and can assure them that the heroes are now easy pickings, the adults may already be lurking for their opponents somewhere on the path. Ravan might abandon his family and try to escape in the direction of Pavis County, or – most likely – join them in the fight, knowing that his fighting ability would be missed. The decision is up to the narrator.

If the ogres are surprised, Ravan will be in the ravine at the Cacodemon shrine. He is alerted by the barking of the dogs, will secretly watch the heroes and disappear at the first opportunity, taking advantage of his knowledge of the terrain. He does not want to be seen at the Chaos site, as this would certainly blow his cover as a good settler. If the Cacodemon shrine is found and recognized, the Hanra family would then have to decide whether to attack the heroes to preserve the secret. Horacus will be with



the ogres, and will support them with spells. In any case, the narrator should try to ensure that this time Horacus will find the "end" described above.

If Heleric is already possessed, he will first try to convince the heroes that the farm is a false lead and they should instead follow the path from the valley. If this does not succeed, he tries to secretly warn the ogres (e.g. mindspeak), without letting them know that he is now in Heleric's body. If there is a fight, Horacus waits in hiding until the end and later says that he had been hit on the head and fallen unconscious.

The slaves, who are primarily used as farm laborers, know nothing about the identity of their masters. They are treated well, do not have to work hard and are fed exceptionally well. Only the high turnover rate seems strange. A little more frequently than one might expect, slaves appear to be sold and be replaced by new ones. The ogres also try to fulfill their food preference through assaults on solitary strangers when safely possible, selling any valuables up in Pavis, far away from where their victims disappeared. In this way, they earn part of the money they need for new slaves (the emergency ration). But eating humans is not the only, or even the main, source of meat for ogres. As they are interested in staying undetected, it is unlikely that they eat too many, whether captives (very risky) or slaves. In addition to looting their victims, some of the men occasionally work as assassins in Pavis, a lucrative second source of income, and get paid pretty well, because they have some talents most full time assassins lack.

Of the buildings only the storehouse is of interest. It is built into the slope at the end of the valley and crammed full with various tools and food supplies. In the rear wall is a wooden door difficult to see (2V), which is always closed. It leads into a natural cave, probably formed by water. A wide corridor leads out into the open after some curves. Roughly in the middle of it a narrow corridor appears on the right side that forks after a few meters. The left fork leads to a dead end. Here the ogres keep their human flesh,

which hangs from the ceiling on hooks. The right one also leads out into the open after a long bend. Both side aisles are too narrow to allow two adults to walk side by side comfortably. A camouflaged pit has been dug in the floor of the wide main corridor just before the exit. If a passerby does not recognize the flat, loose stones on the ground (resistance 19), he falls three meters onto wooden stakes (contest with agility, speed, etc. against 7W; with a success he can catch himself on the edge of the pit, the degree of injury depends on the severity of the failure).

The Gorge

Both the wide corridor and the right side corridor lead into a narrow gorge that is separated from the valley by about 10 meters of rock. The canyon forks after 100 meters. Exactly in the middle between the two exits there is a guard dog on a 10 meter leash, tied to a stake. The dog will hear which exit they are using, will remain silent until the element of surprise is lost, and then will attack the first person coming out while giving warning. If the dog locks his jaws on an enemy, the others can easily run out of reach.

Watchdog

Notable Abilities: bite 19, quick run 18, smell 5W

The left side of the canyon ends after about 80 meters. The right side of the gorge is slightly longer and has a gap in the middle, through which one reaches another canyon. In this canyon the shrine of the Cacodemon is located under the open sky.

The End

Once Horacus's "end" has occurred and he apparently has no more allies, the heroes have no more reason to doubt their victory is complete. The narrator can decide what objects of value are owned by the Hanra family. Heleric soon takes his leave of the heroes and pretends to return to his relatives. Heleric (aka Horacus) will go to a

hiding place near Pavis, and meditate on what course he should now take.

Documents captured by the heroes can be sold to Hurbi in Pavis, or to one of the Knowledge Temples. Some of the ancient scrolls are maps and reports of now-forgotten fortifications and places of worship from the Second Era. The narrator can build other episodes on them. Some of the documents will play a role in the ongoing campaign.

Horacus no longer needs the cult of Thanatar. His only problem is that the heroes now possess certain documents with necessary information. Whether or not the group of adventurers tells the Lunar authorities about their discoveries is up to them. Hurbi will not.

Dramatis Personae

Horacus, enlightened Doom Lord

The man who currently travels under the name Horacus has been known under many other names over the centuries. Posing as a merchant named Chusaro, he gained the confidence of the frightened Narrilor.

Prior to his current body, the accursed knew him as the priest Jabroka in the temple of Thanatar in Tarsh. Jabroka was an old man who always stayed away from fights in the hierarchy, but who had held the rank of priest longer than anyone could remember. He always kept his past shrouded in silence. For this reason, no-one suspected that he had, wearing different bodies, led many Chaotic groups over the centuries throughout western Genertela. The host bodies were mostly human, but he also spread his mischief as a Broo and a Dark Troll. This talent of assuming the body of his latest murderer is a very rare Chaos Gift, on which he, luckily, could count on in the past. This Chaos Gift should be handled like normal spirit combat, but will take only a few seconds time, so that the attacked person will not be able to warn his buddies at all.

If his spirit assumes the body of his murderer, some of the personality and abilities of his new host are retained. Therefore, his behavior and his methods change a little after each death. A temporary weakening goes hand in hand with this change, while he familiarizes himself with his new body. Due to his great age, the number of times that he has been killed by very competent warriors, and his own wish to be able to defend himself when not wishing to trade bodies, Horacus is actually a very skilled fighter. Usually he chooses as a cover name anagrams of the names of gods of Chaos, an expression of his morbid humor.

A special role came to him in the Second Age, when he was the leader of a secret temple of Tien. The merging of the cults of Tien and Atyar into the new cult of Thanatar would have gone completely differently without his mediating role. At that

time he also undertook several trips to the East. In the centuries after the fall of the temple of Thanatar, Horacus wandered through much of western Genertela.

His current body is that of a Devotee of Yanafal Tarnil, who was a mercenary in a campaign against a shrine of the unmasked Thanatar in Tarsh. Horacus had the misfortune to strike the last and decisive blow against the rather harmless-looking Jabroka. The possessed escaped detection by his fellow attackers. After leaving the mercenaries, he fled with two other surviving cultists into the east. He intended to revisit the now long-forgotten first temple of Thanatar that had survived so many years largely intact and undetected.

Along the way he made the acquaintance of Ravan, a Claw of the Cacodemon. Ravan was traveling through the Empire, searching for items and spells that would enhance his power and help his family. Like most male ogres, indulging in temporary "romantic" liaisons that would bring new ogres into the world was another aim. When both realized that the other was Chaotic, and that both were traveling to the same remote area of Prax, they agreed to co-operate, within limits.

As a base, Horacus chose the first temple of Thanatar, which he re-established as a new cult center after long inactivity. Great was his surprise when he discovered that the temple had been found by other Thanatari. The cultists could not enter one portion of the temple, an ancient shrine of Tien, because it was defended by powerful spirits against which even the amulets of the cult offered no protection. Horacus was well respected by the new Thanatari, since he entered the previously inaccessible part of the temple, from which he brought old documents from the early days of the shrine. That he succeeded was because he was one of those who had built the magical defenses. With his new followers he drove the "research" of the cult forward, with many scholars as his victims.

Whenever he is forced to change bodies, he will generally leave the home area of his host body, and eschew all ties with any who knew him before and after the change. This happens for two reasons. The first is mere self-preservation, as the fewer who ever learn of his Chaotic ability, the better. The second is that he considers it appropriate, as a priest of Tien, the Severed One, to ritually sever ties with his old life when embarking upon a new one. He may well consider the downfall of his latest temple to be due to the fact that he brought surviving members of his old temple with him to Prax.

Appearance: a tall, athletic man with short black hair.

Abilities: Scimitar fighting 17W, unarmed combat 9W, strong 18, robust 17, most widely spoken languages, plus speak and

write Malkioni 10W, speak and write Kralori 19, rhetoric 10W, lie 3W2, chaos lore 10W2, Illumination (not recognizable as chaotic) 5W2, history 18W, mocking 10W, Priest of Thanatar 1W3 (Affinities: Murder, Undeath, Thanatar), Power 1W3, any spells the narrator decides he should have 1W3

Ravan Hanra, Claw of the Cacodemon

Ravan Hanra combines a fairly high standard of education with a high level of resourcefulness. He met Horacus while traveling in the Empire. He knows that Horacus is a Chaos priest of great experience, but does not know of the priest's body-changing abilities. He would happily double-cross Horacus if it seemed safe. Horacus has already made it plain that any attempt to kill him would bring retribution from beyond death. Ravan is well aware that this is possible, and has so far kept himself in check. In the meantime, he hopes to learn new magic and skills from Horacus.

Heleric Ranusson, Devotee of Humakt

Appearance: A muscular man of about 30 years with a weathered face and dark blond hair and beard.

Skills: All the skills of a character with the Keywords of Heortling, Warrior and Devotee of Humakt. In addition, Chaos Lore 13, Read Tracks 16 and Suspicion 14.

Gift / Geas: +4 against disease and poison / never use poison

Agred, corrupt ex-soldier

Appearance: A slightly stocky middle-aged man in plain clothes, with shoulder-length black hair, poorly-shaven.

Abilities: Lie 19, Corruption 1W, Pickpocket 18, Burglary 17. Other skills such as a soldier of the Empire / Hoplite (see the profession Keywords of Dara Happa)

Broos from Gratural's gang

Normal broo, as written.

The Thanatari

Melee (Scimitar or Garotte 1W, Initiate of Thanatar (Doom Seekers) 17 (Affinities: Murder, Undeath, Thanatar), Climb 18, Ambush 3W, Hide 17, Lie 19

The Ogres

The remaining members of the Hanra clan consist of five adults (2 men, 3 women) and four children (two boys and two girls, one still in infancy).

Adults have the skills Strong 5W, Attractive 17, Stealth 1W, Lie 10W, Melee (dagger, scimitar) 1W, Ambush 2W, Hide 20 and Initiate of Cacodemon 17 (Affinities: Chaos, Disorder and Death).

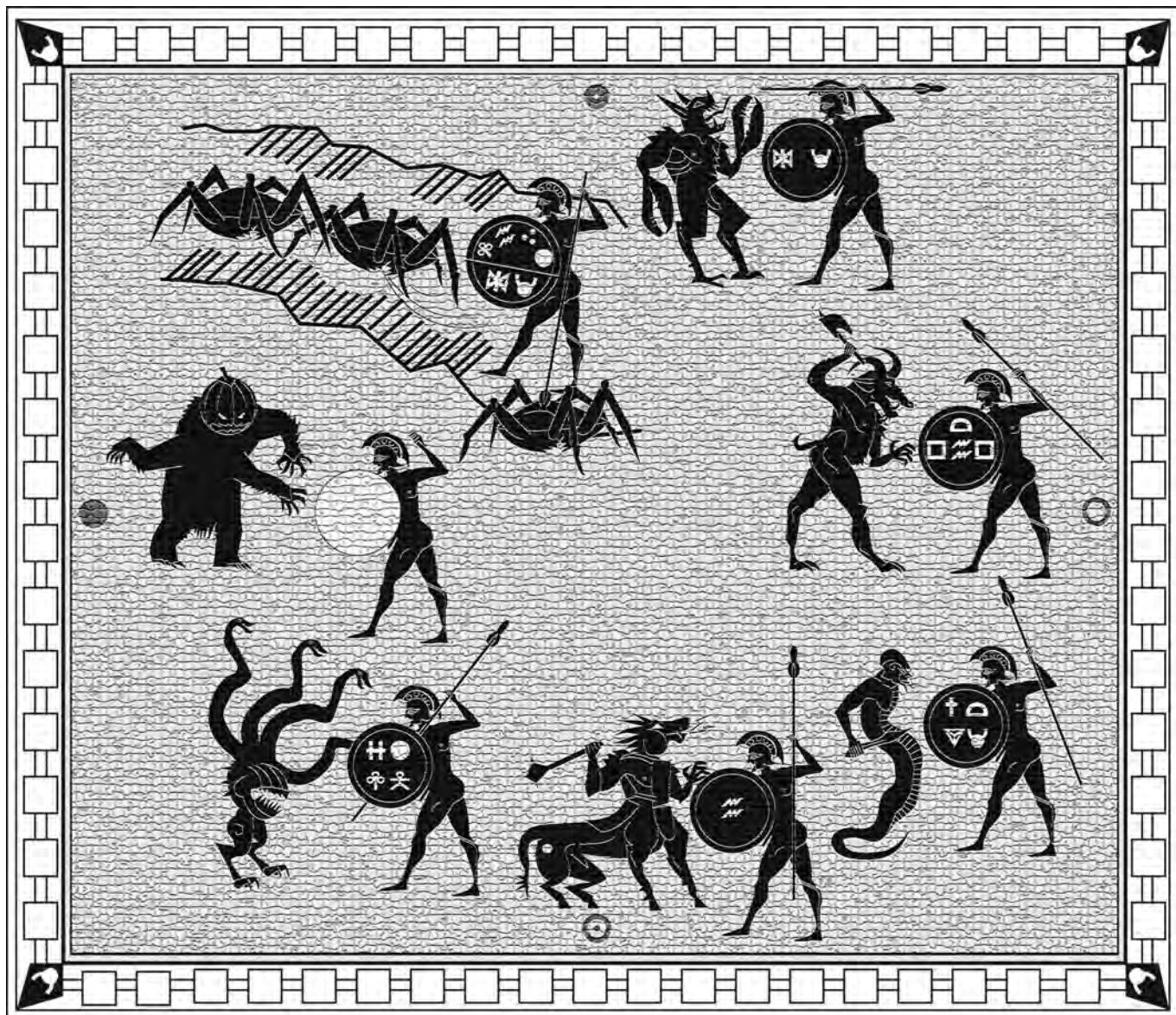
For children, these abilities are reduced 3-5 points.

THE WASTELAND

by **Tobias Deterding**

Translated from German to English by Christine Blum

Revised and edited by Alison Place & André Jarosch



*This is dead land • This is cactus land • Here the stone images
Are raised, here they receive • The supplication of a dead man's hand*

Under the twinkle of a fading star T.S.Eliot, The Hollow Men

Recap

The episode is the sequel to "Don't lose your head" and is directly linked to the plot there. It's not absolutely necessary, though, to have played the first episode. With a few small changes in the beginning, it's possible to play this episode

as an independent adventure. Like its predecessor, the plot of this adventure is relatively self-contained. On their hunt for an artifact, the heroes are caught in the conflict between two nomadic tribes, and must also contend with the malice of Krarsht.

Previous events

At the end of the first episode, Horacus, priest of Thanatar, secretly took possession of the body of a companion of the heroes, Heleric, devotee of Humakt. Hopefully, the heroes have put an end to the goings-on in the temple and thereby made a big haul. The whole party, including the rescued scholar, Narrilor, and the possessed Heleric, has returned to Pavis.

If the first episode hasn't been played, the documents should have otherwise found their way into the hands of the heroes. Either they took them from a defeated opponent who had stolen them from Horacus, or they bought them from a merchant (that is, a fence). If the heroes found the temple and fought there, but didn't take the opportunity to loot it, the freed Narrilor has assumed this task for them. He offers them the documents in gratitude for his liberation, with the hint that the papers will bring a big profit. Though a sage himself, he is only able to decipher a portion of the scrolls, and does not know enough local history to know which might lead the heroes to any valuable troves. He should be able to recognize spells, if they are in a language that he reads.

In one of his past lives Horacus was also a Krarshiti initiate. Now, being a Krarshiti apostate, he dares not (even Illuminated) risk entering Her temples. To obtain this amulet, he must find others to do the work for him – the hero group.

Scene 1: "Paper-warfare"

Heleric has to act quickly, before the heroes get their new loot analyzed by a different sage who might miss the items that Heleric wishes pointed out. Shortly after the heroes' arrival in Pavis, he will "accidentally" meet them again (maybe in one of the countless inns and taverns in Pavis). If the heroes don't know him already, he will introduce himself under some pretext and begin a conversation. If the heroes are Orlanthe, the narrator should have no problem arranging a little carousal. Otherwise Heleric could directly address the issue of the acquired objects. If the heroes were not at the temple, he knows about their having the documents through Narrilor.

After some small talk, he will tell the heroes that he knows a sage who could reveal something about the content and relevance of the ancient documents, even at no charge. The wise man, whom he will declare to be a Sage of Lhankor Mhy or a Priest of Irrippi Ontor (depending on the inclinations of the party), supposedly owes the warrior a favor.

As soon they know how much the documents are worth, the heroes could either use them for their own purposes or sell them dearly to a tradesman like Hurbi. Heleric claims that the sage is living in Old Pavis on a once-abandoned, fairly well-preserved estate and is having slight problems with the Lunar authorities at the moment. If the heroes agree, he could arrange a meeting there.

NARRATOR NOTES: *Taking all the scrolls into the Rubble means a) smuggling them in, or b) declaring them to the Lunars. Otherwise, they will be taxed on them when they take them out, unless they can also smuggle them out. There were several chests full of parchment/papyrus, so they're bulky. If the heroes choose to declare it all (a Lunar clerk will stamp everything as proof of declaration), they have good title. This also brings up the point of the time needed to assess the documents. This would actually take many days to do thoroughly, given the mass of material. If they trust the priest, on Heleric's say-so, it would be easy for the priest to just copy the relevant information needed, but Heleric actually wants the adventurers to be pointed to the relevant clues, so that they can do the work for him.*

This alleged sage, who is of course a follower of Horacus, has arranged an ambush at a certain point in the ruins, in agreement with his leader. For this purpose, a band of six robbers have been hired as reinforcement. They have been told that the heroes own some very old and valuable original maps of as-yet-unplundered treasure hoards. The house where the sage is living is situated in the main ruins of Manside, not too far from Zebra Bridge, and is in relatively good condition (for those who own 'Pavis & Big Rubble': ruin type b). In this area some humans are still living in the better-preserved ruins. The buildings adjacent to the house are not inhabited, though, as only parts of the walls are still standing (ruins type c). The sage is both Thanatari, and an actual sage. If the heroes ask around for background info on this man, they may find out that he is considered a genuine sage, but 'has trouble with the temple hierarchy', and works as an independent far more cheaply than Temple evaluators. He has actually been around for some years (Horacus can afford to think long-term, given his lifespan). Even Narrilor can recommend the man as known to him, at least by reputation. The sage will not know of Horacus's transmigration into the body of Heleric. Horacus has been able to commission his sage's help due to recognition signals. The sage considers Heleric to be an agent of Horacus.

The house selected for the ambush is not located on a main street, but on a small side alley, which can easily be blocked off. The river and the bridge are not far away, but difficult to reach. The labyrinth of alleys and lanes is supposed to provide a good escape route for the ambushers, whereas the heroes are trapped in the house, which has only one entrance. The house consists of two rooms, one looking onto the alley, the other behind it. The back door in the second room is blocked by rubble and debris, as well as the stairs to the collapsed former second floor. Three bandits are hiding in the ruins of the adjacent houses, three more are waiting in the back room. The alleged sage/merchant will be disguised as the type of sage the heroes are expecting. After Heleric's knock on the door, the sage/merchant will invite the heroes into the house. Upon entering, some of the heroes may notice that the room holds very little furniture and provisions for

- Some elements of "The Wastelands" are based upon ideas from the "Shadows on the Borderlands" scenario "A Tale to Tell" by Jon Quaife; especially it's chapter "The Route to Arrowsands". Many thanks for being a great inspiration, Jon.

- If the heroes have not been through 'Don't Lose your Head', then this favor is explained by saying that the Thanatari who had previously owned these papers had killed a healer of his former family, whom Heleric had been hired to find. He wishes to avenge her loss to Chaos. As his price, he would like the heroes to share with him any information about Chaos contained in the documents.

a permanently inhabited living space, and is still quite dirty (a perception ability against IW).

Oddly enough, right after introductions, Heleric leaves the house. The sage welcomes the party with downright exaggerated cordiality. He wishes to see all the documents, but closely examines only three of them. Then he tells the heroes some facts about the documents. It is up to the narrator whether he invents something or tells the truth (provided that he knows it).

For the three documents he studied best, he offers the heroes a small amount of money, claiming that they are only of use for his own temple of knowledge and that he is not able to pay more for them. The modest sum will probably upset the heroes. To conciliate them and coax them to accept the bargain, he will tell them that the other papers are highly valuable rarities. Should the heroes refuse the offer, the bandits will appear on the scene. They will try to attack from both sides simultaneously. The bandits have been told that they will receive magical support, but in fact Heleric has no such intention.

NOTE: The heroes must retain scrolls for the scenario to continue. There are two choices. a) If they refuse the sale, the bad guys force the attack, probably grabbing the goodies and making a getaway. (This would be an accidental victory as far as Heleric is concerned, because he actually wants the heroes to win.) The pursuing adventurers regain their property because a roving Lunar patrol is attracted to the commotion and helps out. As the party will have to claim that the papers are theirs, the Lunars will probably insist on the party accompanying them to the guardpost for proper settlement of this claim. It will be much easier for the party if they have actually registered their loot! .b) The heroes accept the sale, and the bandits attack everyone, double-crossing the sage and killing him in the process. In this version, the bandits are defeated by the party. Narrator adjusts plot depending on heroes' actions. If the heroes don't win the fight, then that's the end of the scenario, so this has to be rigged. Horacus's aim is to make sure that the adventurers put the clues together, so the sage concentrates overtly on the relevant documents, tries various deals to obtain them (perhaps with varying combinations of other documents). The bandit attack is a way to force the emotional commitment needed to find out what's special about these particular documents. Once they know on which documents to concentrate, then they take them to a trustworthy sage (see below).

Bandits: Hide 18, Run 15, Jump 16, Tough 18, Dagger 17^1, Club 16^2

Either way, once the heroes regain their parchments, they should turn their attention to the three documents and visit a real sage to decipher them. The sage will need time to find the three passages that refer to Krarsht. If told that this is Thanatari treasure trove, and that a Thanatari sage wanted these back very badly, it is likely that the heroes could bargain with either the Irippi Ontor or Lhankor Mhy temples to analyze these for a very nominal cost (e.g. originals for the temple, free copies and analysis provided). Both of these cults are sworn enemies of Thanatar.

Fragment No. 1

(relatively new, but written in Old Wyrnish)

One of the parchments contains a fragment of a report about an Orlanthe campaign against Chaos, in which apparently some Nomad warriors were involved. The author of the diary-like parchment was obviously one of the warring Orlanthe, maybe a priest of Issaries or Lhankor Mhy. The warriors had found and ravaged a temple of Krarsht situated in Pavis County. Oddly enough, the text is written in modern times, but was written in the Old Wyrnish language (the tongue of the EWF). It seems as if the author wanted to make sure that no unauthorized individual could make much sense of it.

«All of us wished to leave this accursed place as soon as possible. The unendurable stench released by one of the slaughtered Krarshti exploding drove us out. Its disgusting odor plagued us for days, though we stripped and scoured ourselves. Only Mwanga the Red Lion had the endurance of breath to re-enter the temple and count coup. He detached a large piece of ivory attached to a bas-relief decorating the whole northern wall of the altar room. This ivory panel had been the shield of a warrior, adorned with runes, which was part of the depiction of an enormous battle between similar warriors and countless misshapen beasts. Mwanga said he wanted the trophy to be a heirloom of his family, in memory of his glory. In the shade of the large, round boulder we rested and tended to our wounds. Then we sealed the entrance to the subterranean place with all the rubble and waning magic available, lest it provide a home to the monstrous many-limbed creatures again. After that we bid each other farewell. I headed for Bullfont, which was only two miles to the east, with Aski and Brolos.

Mwanga went south, towards the Eirithia Hills, for the Men-and-a-Half had set up camp east of them. The Bison Riders set off north.»

Fragment No. 2

The second fragment is written in Old Pavic and seems to stem from the early Third Age. It gives an account of the conversation between two followers of Lhankor Mhy, one of whom is apparently a priest and the other a devotee.

«I asked him why the assassin had not been questioned further, even though the people were already shouting for his execution. He answered: Everything he could possibly tell us about his employers, he has told us already. Not even torture could pry out of him that which he does not know. Our magic is strong, and we have realized that he has revealed everything to which he was privy. Thereby he has violated the precepts of his cult. The death we give him will be merciful compared to what would have awaited him from the hands of his brethren. They are clever enough to send only those who are not yet initiated into the deeper secrets of the cult and cannot give away significant things. Nonetheless, even so we could broaden our knowledge about the depraved cult of Krarsht, also known as the Waiting Mouth. There is an important trait of this cult which might be useful in the fight against it one day. In some of the temples, the prisoner said, other places of worship of this sinister goddess are depicted, which cover the land like a spider-web. To prevent intruders from recognizing the locations thereof, they are encoded and embedded in mythic illustrations in the temples, like mosaics or stonemasonry. Only the Jaws of Krarsht, the priests of the cult, know all the hidden meanings of these works of art.»

Fragment No. 3

The third fragment is written in Old Pelorian and is obviously a page of a book (actually it stems from a version of "The Book of Drastic Resolutions", the 'Grand Grimoire' of Chaos, but who is going to find that out?). The beginning is somewhat abrupt.

«... come to the conclusion that a lie can only be successful if it is clad in truth. So I was ready to listen to the words of the Veiled One, albeit anxious to see through the plan he had prepared for me. "None of the Unworthy", he said, "have ever set eyes on the Eight-Armed Amulet, none have ever touched it. It is one of Her holiest relics, for it bears a power which is without equal on this world. It is at once sword and shield." he spoke. "It is able to tear apart nets and webs, it is able to destroy the Web of Webs, and at the same time strengthen our own, by hiding us from the eyes of the Unworthy. It is part of the Waiting Mouth and at the same time it bears a likeness to the Mouth itself. Our work among the mortals cannot last if we cannot carry it to the Immortals. The Unworthy travel to their gods and heroes to obtain greater power. The Eight-Armed Amulet can corrupt this power. As in this world, even there our work is invisible to the unsuspecting among the Unworthy.»

These documents should give the heroes a clue as to what their opponents are up to. Firstly, they will probably want to find the temple described in the first paper.

Horacus already knows from his long years of gathering info that this second temple contains, or at least has contained, the amulet. He gives the heroes the needed link by including a scrap of parchment in these papers with a comment to the effect that "The sister temple to Bullford houses a golden amulet."

Narrator note: If the narrator thinks that this kind of overwhelmingly powerful artifact is over-the-top, then alter the amulet to one that could only help conceal the user from detection of any kind (originally made by Lanbril the Thief cult). This would be equally valuable to Horacus, who must migrate from body to body, and

must deeply fear his luck running out. Merely letting it be known that this amulet is solid gold with jeweled eyes should be quite sufficient for the average avaricious adventurer. The narrator could also add an itemized list of the regalia and treasures of the Bullford sister temple, to help focus the neutral greedy adventurer to know that 1000's of lunars' worth of loot are just a couple of weeks away.

The heroes have two obvious paths to take next. They need to find Mwanga, and they will need to re-enter the old Krarshti Temple. They may choose to find Mwanga first, as he might guide them to the entrance faster than if they try finding it on their own. In that case, just reverse the scenes.

Scene 2: "Come to the shade of the Round Rock"

The description should make it easy for the heroes to find the temple two miles to the west of Bullford. Here the landscape is dotted with countless rather low boulders, protruding from the ground and cut by the wind into bizarre shapes. Between and on these rocks are living some representatives of the local fauna. It is up to the narrator to stage a small encounter here, maybe with a hungry cliff toad or a rock lizard, or to give the heroes the opportunity to hunt. Among the birds sitting or nesting on the boulders, the heroes will hardly notice the single crow which is watching them from near the entrance. The narrator should not mention it, unless one of the heroes specifically asks to have everything in the region described. Even then she should not describe it too conspicuously. The bird is spying for Horacus, who has bound a servant spirit into the animal. The spirit is in continuous contact with its master.

One of the largest boulders looks almost like an orb sunken into the ground. A cursory search will reveal a depression filled with loose earth in the shadow of the boulder, and near it a small mound. If the heroes excavate the entrance, they will find a round tunnel which reminds them of mole or rabbit burrows, only much bigger, so large that a human can stand upright. The tunnel, which is quite steep, leads several meters straight on to a spacious round chamber. By now, the heroes will have noticed the repugnant smell, a mixture of decay, excrement and indefinable animal odors. Apart from the entrance way, four more tunnels branch off from this chamber, one of them nearly vertically downwards. This shaft seems to go on infinitely. No rope the heroes could possibly bring along will reach its end. Should they try to carve notches or drive crampons into the side, they will be busy for days (!). At some point they will run out of fancy or courage.

One of the three remaining relatively horizontal passages is a dead end. Shortly before its end, the heroes come across the hollow exoskeleton of a huge, asymmetrically formed creature, which reminds of a kind of spider, particularly because of its many thin legs. The tunnel here is covered in sticky webs. Someone who has had some experience with chaos monsters can identify the creature with a dice roll as a Krarshtkid. These beings are a breed of the goddess Krarsht that burrow tunnels into the earth and are able to spit sticky web strands onto their victims. The cadaver is blocking the tunnel almost completely; it is not possible to get around it without touching it. Other than that, the tunnel holds nothing of interest.

The second passage leads to another round chamber, where only two more tunnels branch off. One of them is collapsed completely. The other one leads to a round chamber without further exits, where four more of the spider-like cadavers are lying. The only way left is the third horizontal tunnel in the chamber with the shaft. This tunnel leads to a room of approx. 10 meters in length and 6 meters in height. Here the heroes will find a kind of altar at the top of the room, and at the wall behind it, a wooden door, another endless vertical shaft and a bizarre mosaic. The wooden door leads to a room of 5x5 m, the floor of which is covered with smashed wooden furniture, potsherds, and similar worthless rubble. In one corner lies a human skeleton, partly covered in rotting cloth. Somewhere beneath the rubble lies also an oxidized dagger.

The mosaic in the altar room shows a wild battle between human warriors and various grotesque monsters. It is damaged in one spot, where it showed a warrior with spear and shield (1). The shield is not in place any more, but based on the other warriors, who are done in the same style, its former existence can be assumed. The only difference between the depicted warriors lies in the runes on their shields. It can also be noticed that no two of the warriors are on a level with each other. The missing piece belongs to the second-lowest (and second-to-last) warrior.

The heroes should copy the runes on the shields. Furthermore, the spears behind each shield are all held differently, so that each points in particular direction. On the first (highest) shield are shown the runes of Hunger and Chaos. These are the symbols of the goddess Krarsht. Obviously they symbolize this temple. The spear behind this shield points exactly to the right, which is east. The next lower shield depicts the rune for Earth on the left and right. In between is the rune for Water and above it the rune for Stability. The spear points to the left and upwards, that is Northwest. The next shield shows the runes for Death, Stability, Beast and Chaos. The spear points north-

northwest (11 o'clock). The next shield shows only the rune for Water. The spear points north. On the following shield are the runes for Trade, Darkness, Plant and Man. The spear points northeast. The following shield is the one which has been removed, and the warrior behind the shield is not armed. On the last shield are the runes for Plant, Water, Illusion and Darkness; below them, somewhat apart from the first group, are once more the runes for Chaos and Hunger, which symbolize Krarsht. The last spear is grounded in a krarshtkid, as in "You've arrived."

NARRATOR NOTE: *This trip does not follow the straightest route possible, because each stage of this journey is a stage on a mystic journey. The novice meditates on the wall before embarking on the ritual but physical trip to the sister temple. On arrival, if successful, the traveler has proved worthy to use the amulet, if it's still there. If it's not, then the Krarshti has still gained skills or insights that will further him in the cult. Because the heroes are duplicating this route, they, too, could also have encounters that echo the original meaning of the path. The narrator is free to expand the scenario by introducing such encounters, based on whatever myths he cares to invent.*
If the heroes concentrate on the shields and spears and don't let themselves be distracted by the other details of the mosaic, they should soon recognize that it is some kind of map of a travel route. Unfortunately, the chain of hints is interrupted at a crucial point. As it is, the heroes have to trace the Agimori, Mwanga, or his descendants. The information from document 1 should somewhat narrow down the potential area.

Scene 3: Nightmare eyes

The most direct way to the area east of the Eiritha hills leads through a region known as The Long Dry. This is a relatively barren, desolate part of the Plains of Prax, where no water sources are known. If the heroes don't want to go a long way round (e.g. down the Zola Fel), they have to carry huge amounts of water. On the way, the narrator can freely stage an encounter with predatory animals or raiding horse nomads. One mysterious fact, however, will soon catch their attention. Time and again, they will spot a figure in the north, almost at the limit of sight. They will see little more than a black dot, which will always be at the same relative angle to the party. From time to time they can also discern a black bird in the

northern sky. Should the heroes decide to wait, for example to stage an ambush, the pursuer will not come closer. Sight magic (e.g. of Yelmadio) will provide only a blurry humanoid shape through the sand, dust and heat haze. He, on the other hand, is using his bird's sight, which is much sharper, as well as closer to the party. Should the heroes try to approach the pursuer, he/she seems to disappear without trace. Not even horses are fast enough to catch him/her.

The Oases: To find the Agimori without help is nearly impossible. The easiest way is to go to an oasis in the region, e.g. Horn Gate, and to ask the inhabitants (the Oasis Folk) or travelers about them. It would be most effective to ask the Men-and-a-Half themselves (so the Agimori are called by outsiders).

The steppes between the Zola Fel Valley and the Eiritha Hills are for the main part the tribal homeland of the Agimori and the Morocanth, one of the five big tribes of Prax. The Morocanth are not human, but intelligent tapir-like beings, who keep unintelligent humans as "livestock", and are also well-known as slavers. They can also magically create these "herdmen" from normal humans. It would be a fairly unpleasant encounter to run across a clan of Morocanth in need of new herdmen or slaves. In this case, the heroes would face significantly superior numbers.



Typical Morocanth hunter: Good Sense of Smell 18, Big 15, Darkvision 1W, Perfidious 12, Strong 15, Lay Ambush 1W, Melee Combat 18, Dodge 12, Local Knowledge 17, Move Silently 12, Praxian Customs 13, Tracking 5W
Weapons and Armor: Claw, Spear, Thick Hide

The narrator should let the heroes wander around for a time looking for informants before giving them real information as to where to find the Agimori. The clan was seen not far from Horn Gate. On finding them, a big disappointment awaits the heroes: the Agimori have recently been attacked by Zebra nomads. The raiders didn't just kill the greater part of the group, but also took their most valuable possessions, among them the shield. Of course the heroes will only learn that if they can make the Agimori talk to them. Because of the grievous losses they experienced, these are not only very wary, but also offended in their honor as warriors. Additionally, they are troubled because a dark omen has appeared of late. The heroes should be careful to show them all due respect. If they bring some barter goods with them, all the better.

Agimori warrior: Honorable 17, Proud 13, Wary 15, Vengeful 15, Courageous 17, Tall 18, Melee Combat 5W, Survive Without Water 5W, Tracking 3W, Run 5W, Stealth 17, Praxian Customs 13, Agimori History 13
Weapons and Armor: Spear, Thick Hide, Shield

The current head of the family is Mokele, son of Mwanga. He inherited the ivory panel from his father. It was stolen in the raid by the Zebra Riders, together with other valuables. The raiding party fled to the north. The heroes can try to gain the trust of the Agimori by offering them to join them in their revenge against the Zebra Riders. Mokele doesn't know what runes on the shield are, because his father kept it hidden in a layer of animal hide, and gave it to him, when he died, with the instruction to open it only to give it to his grandson as a wedding gift... but the boy is not yet of age.

NARRATOR NOTE: *What mounts are the heroes using? If horses, then any nomad, even the Agimori, will be offended, as this is against the laws of Waha.*

If indeed an agreement is reached, Mokele will also tell them about the dreams that are tormenting him

lately and are warnings from the great hunter spirit, Foundchild. In these dreams, he is haunted by various threatening figures out of the dark. There is, for example, a muscled warrior with horns on his helmet and with a horribly scarred, twisted face. Another figure is a very old, bald man in a loose black robe. There is also a Broo in exceptionally splendid, sumptuous garments, and one more warrior, this one clad in black with a dark beard and a sword on his side. The most disturbing thing is, however, that all these figures seem to be one and the same person. For the gaze of their cold eyes never changes and seems to pierce Mokele through. In fact this is a vision of the priest Horacus in his various guises. The last of them actually resembles Heleric. At this point the heroes cannot guess the meaning of the dreams, as they don't know yet the nature of their opponent. This should be nothing more than a first vague hint.

Scene 4: Idea and Reality

Whatever the result of the negotiations with the Agimori, they should have a new aim by now. The trail of the Zebra Riders leads to the north, practically back where the heroes came from. The raid happened in the last few days, so a good tracker should be able to follow the tracks of a group of heavy-laden zebras, especially as there is evidence of an overnight camp from time to time. Of course the heroes have a far greater chance of success if they are reinforced by the Agimori. Again, the elusive pursuer and the crow can be seen on this journey. After a few hard, daylong marches, the heroes reach the border of a seemingly endless, bone-dry plain in the north which seems even more uninhabitable than the Long Dry. There they spot the camp of the Zebra Riders. On the first glance they can tell that the nomads by far outnumber the adventurers. Thus, a direct attack is out of the question. Should Agimori accompany the party, it would be better if they stay hidden from the nomads. (It will be a challenge for the heroes to appease their vengefulness (15).) Once more the heroes have to negotiate, this time with the Zebra Riders.

Warriors of the Zebra

tribe: Melee combat 17, Formation Riding 17, Fire arrow volley 17, Detect Danger 17, Herd Zebras 13, Knowledge Prax 13, Zebra Tribe Customs 13, Zebra Tribe History 13, Disciplined 17, Proud 13
Weapons and Armor: Lance, Sword, Bow, Shield, Leather Armor

Kharom Jaryr (Clan Chieftain):

Melee Combat 5W, Ranged combat (bow) 17, Ride Zebra 1W, Bark Orders 17, Mounted Combat Tactics 1W, Inspect/Survey Soldiers 19, Knowledge Prax 16, Zebra Tribe Customs 18, Zebra Tribe History 15, Stern 17, Proud 15
Weapons and Armor: Sword, Lance, Bow, Chain shirt and helmet

Chieftain Kharom hasn't the slightest interest in any offer the heroes can make. At the moment, the clan is well supplied with loot. If the heroes directly address the matter of the ivory shield, he will even be offended, as in his eyes it is an honorable booty and symbolizes the superiority of the Zebra Riders against the Agimori. The only choice the heroes have is to appeal to the pride of the Riders and to question their prowess. In this case the quality Proud counts as a disadvantage for the nomads. The narrator should first stage a verbal sparring match as an extended contest. There the heroes can contribute their mental abilities and personality traits. If the heroes are defeated, the nomads could get angry at them, and the situation could end in a fight. If the heroes are acting cleverly, Kharom will suggest a competition. He points to the barren desert in the west and tells them that this place is called "the Dead Place". During the Great Darkness, Storm Bull fought here against the Devil and fell to the ground, close to death. His spouse Eiritha, hidden in the earth, then stripped

the ground of all its life force and sent it to Storm Bull, so that he could fight on. The ground, however, never recovered from this deprivation, so nothing except the hardiest grasses can grow here. Every kind of magic cast here is sucked up by the earth and lost forever. Therefore all the nomadic tribes shun the place and are careful not to use magic if they ever have to cross it.

NARRATOR NOTE: In fact the heroes don't need the object, just a drawing of the object to fill in their coded directions. All the heroes should need to do is ask to see the prize that the mighty chieftain wrested from the Agimor. Give the nomad's Pride rating, this should be an easy task. If the heroes don't act appropriately impressed, the chief's ire will be roused. He will only agree to let the heroes try to win what they want by challenging them to a rigged contest.

Kharom will promise the heroes the pieces of loot they desire, but only if they advance into the barren plain together with his riders. From there the heroes must ride to the other side of the Dead Place. Kharom will give them a head start until they are out of sight. Then the riders will hunt them. As soon as the heroes reach the border with their loot, they have won the chase.

The ride through the barren plain takes several hours, until the sun has long passed the zenith. The ground here is very dusty, completely dry and salt-crustured.

Thirst comes much sooner than in the other steppes. The terrain consists of flat, sun-parched rock terraces, partly broken apart by erosion. To make progress here is extremely draining. Kharom will hand the heroes a stand-in for their preferred piece of loot, and lets them head off east for the border of the plain. They can exchange it for the real one, if they win.

In the following chase the narrator should describe the difficult terrain, which makes it very hard to move fast, but provides many occasions for hiding places and ambushes. This is made use of by the few inhabitants of the area, who are for the most part outlaws seeking refuge here, or bands of broo. The narrator could include an encounter with a band of humans or broo as an additional obstacle. The abilities of the broo are shown in the HQ rulebook, the humans could have the same abilities as the bandits in Pavis mentioned above.

Helpful for the heroes would be abilities like Run, Jump, Climb or Hide. The pursuers, however, will not make it easy for them. Horacus will be tailing the heroes, and may help them without their knowledge.



War Zebras: Big 20, Tough 18, Combat Training 16

NARRATOR NOTE: *This is not a contest that the heroes can win unless they come prepared to cheat, or are nomads themselves. The nomads know the terrain, know the tricks to get their mounts to go faster, etc. There is the option that the Zebra riders and the heroes may combine their strength to fight the broo. If the heroes have fought well, the Zebra riders might be willing to LET the heroes win.*

In case the nomads are outdone, they will stick to their bargain and let the heroes go.

Scene 4: Waymarks

As soon as the heroes hold the shield in hand, they have all the information they need to find the second temple of Krarsht. The ivory panel shows the runes for Air, Stone and Hunger.

The heroes have to assume that the journey starts at the first temple. They must trace back their route through Prax (with a crow on the horizon behind them). In the direction indicated on the first shield, after a couple of hours the heroes come across a river which is crossed by the Pavis Road nearby.

The runes on the second shield (Earth to the left and right, Water and Stability between them) obviously symbolize the bridge. Now they have to travel northwest for days, always close from the river. Finally the travelers reach the foothills of Tada's High Tumulus, a Praxian holy place.

Allegedly it is the burial mound of the ancient hero Tada from the time before the Dawn. The wind-carved foothills are called "Hills of the Sleeping City". As the name hints, here the remains of the civilization of Tada can be found. Many legends are told about these hills.

The third shield shows the runes for Death, Stasis, Beast and Chaos. Someone with some knowledge of Praxian geography should know that on the flank of the foothill the heroes are currently heading for stands an ancient ruin. Its entrance is surmounted by a huge stone sculpture of a ram's head. This place is said to be desecrated and to serve the broo as a cult site. Apparently this is the next waymark. If none of the heroes knows Prax well enough, they will stumble onto this site without any knowledge what it is.

If the heroes approach the ruin, they will hear from inside the babbling and moaning of a single, apparently human, voice. Should they risk stepping inside, they will find a man crouched against a wall between battered human corpses. He is (or was) wearing Lunar clothing. He is delirious and babbles incoherently. Someone appropriately skilled can tell that the man is suffering from a contagious disease. If the

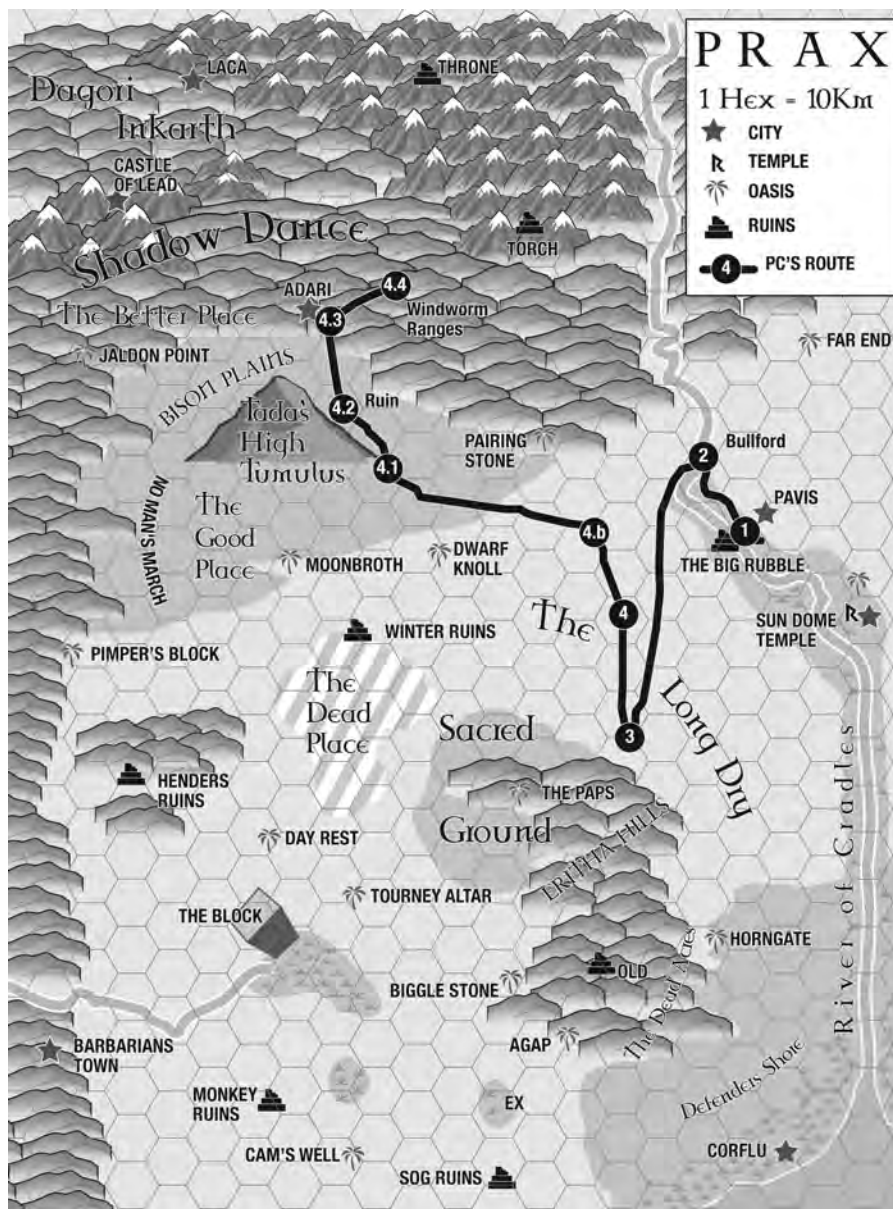
heroes come too near, they will risk contracting brain fever. What the heroes cannot possibly detect, but may suspect: the broo who attacked this group of Lunars have planted a larva into the body of the only surviving member. If the heroes take the sick man with them, after two days his abdomen will burst open and the newborn will emerge. The fever has already progressed too far, there's no way coaxing anything sensible from the man. To heal him, a ritual in a temple is necessary, and there's no chance to reach one in time. If they contract the disease themselves, the nearest likely help is in the town of Adari (which is the next station anyway). The arrow on the shield points north-northwest.

In this direction the heroes soon come across another river, which is symbolized on the next shield by the water

rune. Now they have to go straight north. This region is called the "Bison Plains", because many of these animals can be found here, as well as members of the nomadic tribe which herds them. Possible encounters here include:

- A clan of Bison Riders, either on a raid or on peaceful trading expedition. The narrator can take the Zebra Rider abilities and just replace "zebra" with "bison".
- A band of trolls from the Indigo Mountains, maybe on their way to Sartar or looking for food in the plains
- An Orlanthi merchant caravan from Adari, lead by a priest of Issaries.

From any peaceful contacts, the heroes will gather that the city of Adari is a meeting place for (mostly) peaceful trade by



trolls, humans and elves. A large Issaries temple exists there, which is apparently represented by the rune for Trade on the next shield.

Adari: This ancient city is home to a rich diversity of people. Over the ages it has been conquered, destroyed and rebuilt several times, and looks at first glance dirty and neglected. Here one can see not only beggars and cutthroats, but even trolls barbecuing captured elves in the street. The city is more or less ruled by anarchy, as the respective warlord who is in charge at any given moment usually cannot hold his or her position for long. There can be found shrines of almost every religion here, though. Horacus will recruit new followers here – not through lengthy negotiations, but in ordering a bound chaos spirit to take possession of the leader of a street gang. The leader will then tell his followers that there's a cave full of treasure not far from the city, ready to be plundered.

The inhabitants of Adari can tell the heroes that the range of hills some miles northeast of the city is known as the "Windworm Ranges". They match almost perfectly the direction indicated by the spear and the runes shown on the ivory shield. Obviously, they are the next station. The last shield shows the runes for Plant/Tree, Water, Illusion and Darkness, and below them the runes of Krarsht. On closer inspection the hills bear their name with good reason. The desolate heights have been ground into deeply bizarre shapes by the wind. The constant, biting wind tears at their clothes. There are almost no trees, so the small wood on one flank of a hill is really eye-catching. As soon as the heroes have climbed up part of the hill, they notice a small stream between the trees. It seems to have its source above a rock face nearby. Here the water gushes over the rock face as a small waterfall. Directly behind the waterfall is a narrow ledge, which can only be seen by someone pressing against the rock. If someone moves along the ledge behind the curtain of water, they will detect there a nearly round hole measuring 1.5 meters across. Stepping inside, they will find a round tunnel definitively not carved by water.

Scene 5: The Hidden Place

The tunnel is horizontal and rather short. At its end is a cave, with more tunnels departing from it. One tunnel leads down and westward at first, then bends southwest and leads straight back to Adari. Cultists use it for safe, secret travel. After a long time lots of side corridors branch off. At their ends could be lairs of krarshtkids. The narrator should improvise the exact course of the tunnels here. But in the long run, it's not healthy for the heroes to roam

here. A second tunnel leads from the entrance cave straight on into the hill, a third one leads east. The eastern tunnel ends in a cave with three very much alive Krarshtkids.

Krarshtkids: Quick 18, Lay Ambush 18, Burrow 8W, Climb 2W, Knowledge of the Tunnel System 2W, Sense Life 8W, Spit Pratzim 2W
 Weapons and Armor: Acid Tongue 2w^0, Bite 18^4, Chitin Shell^5, Claws 15^2
Pratzim is a sticky substance the Krarshtkids can spit at a range of 20 meters. On a successful strike, this substance can paralyze an opponent. The bite of a Krarshtkid is poisonous (Potency 18, Duration of Effect 5-15 h, weakening and paralyzing)

The tunnel in the middle runs for a few meters before being interrupted by a narrow, vertical shaft in the floor, into which careless adventurers could fall. If this happens, the only life-saving tactic is to press one's limbs and body against the walls of the shaft (roll Climb or Strong against 17), and use friction to stop. This will hurt! An appropriate rescue plan will then be needed to get the adventurer out, unless he/she is strong enough to slowly climb up.

Past the shaft, the tunnel leads on and opens into a tunnel running in a right angle to it. To the right is a small anteroom with a locked door in the opposite wall. In this room another Krarshtkid is hiding. To the left is a wide hall of 7 meters width and 15 meters length, the walls thereof are carved into bizarre bas-reliefs. At the upper end of the hall is a stone sacrificial altar. Along the walls are placed several chairs with chests near them. In this hall are five humans who will attack the heroes on sight:

Cultists of Krarsht: Quick 17, Stealthy 1W, Lay Ambush 1W, Hide 19, Disguise 2W, Melee Combat 17, Ranged Combat (throwing dagger) 17, Knowledge of the tunnel system 15, Move in Darkness 17, Lie 3W, Merciless 17, Power-Hungry 17
 Weapons and Armor: Dagger^1, Net^3, Cloak^1
 Magic: Devotee of Krarsht 17 (Force Net, Poisonous Bite, Strong Jaw, Sweat Acid)

The chests hold incriminating loot and the religious regalia and clothing of the cultists, but no personal belongings or really valuable items.

The locked room (Lock Complexity 17, Door Thickness 2W). In this room are locked chests (see door) which hold the cult objects of the temple. The lids of the chests are coated in a fast-acting contact poison of Strength 15, which can be

avoided only by wearing gloves. The effect depends on the degree of the defeat of the heroes (Marginal: dazed; Minor: injured; Major: wounded; Complete: dying).

Among the cult objects are robes, enchanted daggers and nets, vials with pratzim or poisons of varying strengths, as well as the Eight-Armed Amulet. This is a golden miniature replica of a Krarshtkid. To touch the object, it is necessary to overcome any aversion against Chaos. Magic will reveal that this object is strongly magical, though the nature of this magic remains obscure.

Scene 6: Mind over Matter

Horacus isn't inclined in the least to follow the heroes into the tunnel. He lies in wait together with six bandits between the trees near the waterfall. The bandits will jump out from behind the trees and engage the heroes in a fight. Horacus/Heleric is standing slightly higher uphill on a ledge and cannot be detected on first glance. He will unhesitatingly use the stolen Orlanthi spell, Fly, on the amulet. The defender has to overcome with his ability the ability rating of the spell, which is 1W3 – a relatively hopeless endeavor. With help of another stolen spell (See Magic), Horacus can see the object even if it is in a bag; in this case he will cast the Fly spell on the whole bag. As soon as the object of his desire is in his hands, he will climb upwards to the hilltop, where he has two horses hidden and ready. The narrator should take care that the heroes are not able to catch up with the priest (although she could consider staging some pursuit). The bandits, again, have the abilities mentioned above. Should it occur to the heroes to throw the amulet in the shaft (there is only one here!), this will present an insurmountable obstacle for Horacus. He then uses the ambush of the bandits only as an escape and will later venture forth into the labyrinth.

Epilogue

The heroes have failed in their original aim (to obtain the amulet). On the other hand, they are in possession of some other important cult objects of Krarsht. The devotees they encountered in the temple were not its only members by far. This could result in a future fight between the heroes and the cultists. The heroes could also try to invade the tunnels even deeper with reinforcements, or to uncover the identity of the cultists of Krarsht. The narrator can plan her own episode. The hunt for Horacus (or the mysterious opponent, depending on what the heroes know already) will probably keep the heroes busy further on.

The Ever-Burning Torches

A mini-scenario by Craig Pays & Ian Thomson
Converted to HeroQuest by Jamie "Trotsky" Revell

● *Wardings* As noted later there were none in the original scenario version, and I inserted one only around the torches themselves. Probably having one around the main building is more realistic than a huge (diameter) one here at the walls, but that's up to you.

● When this ran in my RQ campaign the 2 adventurers used Spiderclimb sorcery to scale the tower stealthily to the top, and I ad-libbed a few troll encounters on the way down inside, but it was mostly empty and boarded up tower rooms (too close to the sun). They did have one fight with watch trolls close to the top (too far from the other trolls for the noises to be heard).



Introduction

Barran may come to Pavis himself, and seek experienced adventurers in person, or he may send Amur An Zed upriver in his place. More than likely he will approach some intelligent local source for information, and find out who is the most trustworthy and skillful thief/adventurer he can pay to help him. If you want to divert their search for help to your raggamuffin adventurer bunch, I suggest that they bump into Barran (or Amur), who then tells them he is looking to hire people for a trip into the Rubble. (Make the reward as high as realistically possible, so that the adventurers will expend some serious effort posing themselves as such dashing and credible Rubble-wise warriors if they are not actually of that status). They could meet Barran/Amur when he is attacked by thugs in the street, or when he is threatened by local yokels at an Inn as he makes enquiries. Or perhaps he tries to force his way past the queue at River Gate as the adventurers patiently wait. They might take pity on him when the Lunar guards throw his sorry backside down the hill, especially if he calls after them (in broken Trade) "Wassa all dis, I hava big monies for honest adventurers to do me master a lil task. Has you no respect?"

Whichever way, they will speak with Barran or Amur, who will explain that they are in need of some magical artifacts known as the Ever-Burning Torches (details in Strangers in Prax pp41- 42). He knows for sure that they are here in the city of Robcradle (that is the Big Rubble, noted as Robcradle on the old seacharts - next to an arrow pointing inland from the river mouth). Their first step is to discover where they are, which will involve consulting the Knowledge Temple.

From this they will eventually discover that the torches have been in the possession of the Cult of Zorak Zoran for many generations, and are currently in the custody of the Zorak Zoran Death Lord 'Kruuzig Ogg'.

The Plan

It is up to the Narrator whether to use Amur as a player run adventurer or supporting character, and whether he comes on the adventure or not. Think about this carefully, as he may be killed. Barran will never, under any circumstances, accompany an adventure expedition into the Rubble.

The adventurers will have to figure out a way to steal the torches. They will certainly hear (perhaps when doing the initial research, or perhaps from a troll contact whom they question about Kruuzig Ogg) that in only a few weeks there is a Zorak Zoran Holy Day whereupon the Torches are proudly displayed in Kruuzig Ogg's Hall. On all other occasions they are sealed in a secure dungeon, heavily guarded and it would be suicide to try and get them. It will also be casually mentioned by any

troll they talk to that the Zorak Zorani have ordered huge quantities of alcohol from the Xara gang (who run the Thunderbreath Restaurant,) and they are all likely to be extremely drunk by the end of the celebrations. (If they do not talk to trolls, this information will need to be discovered some other way.)

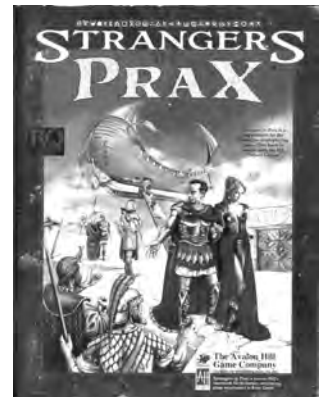
So, all the adventurers have to do is to get into the main hall after the celebrations are over, and steal the Torches whilst the trolls are sleeping off the effects of their carousing. There are many ways to get in.

When I ran this scenario it was a stealth expedition. Griselda led Amur across the Rubble, beating up some Broo and a Dragonsnail on the way. They first visited a troll who was friendly to her (one of the Jarvis Clan), and it was mentioned in passing that some of his clan's Zorak Zorani were preparing to depart for a Holy Day celebration. Griselda concocted a cover story to explain these questions, and they later tracked those trolls to the Tower of Kruuzig Ogg. Other ways might be if one of the adventurers knows a troll who could pose as a merchant with a wagonload of goods, seeking rest for a day or two. The adventurers could hide in amongst the goods, which would need to be sufficiently odorous to mask their scent. The goods could then be left conveniently near the Tower, and when the party dies down, the adventurers sneak into the hall past the sleeping trolls. Perhaps something unfortunate happens, such as one of the boxes/sacks that an adventurer is in, is stolen by a pesky trollkin? Maybe somebody has a Sylph, or a Flight spell? In the scenario as I ran it, both Griselda and Amur had the Sorcery spell 'Spiderclimb'. (Griselda has it as a plundered matrix useful to a thief, whereas Amur had it under a different name as a Dormal spell useful for staying aloft on a ship.)

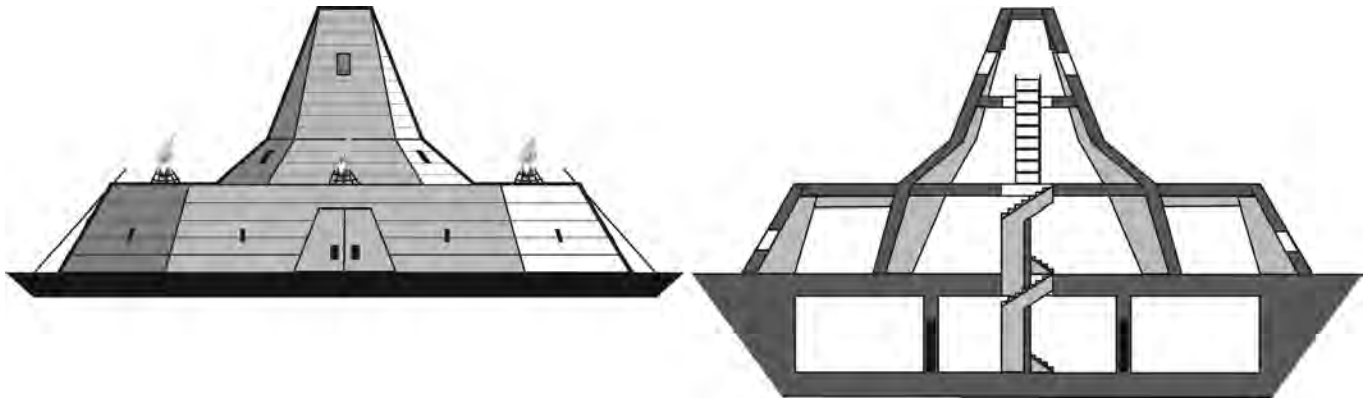
The Fort

Fort Kruuzig Ogg is an ancient Dwarf-built site, constructed early in the Second Age, then abandoned towards the end of that period. It was one of the Aerial Defence Towers, similar to the Arm of Pavis (described in the 'Strangers in Prax' scenario Arlaten the Magus) only larger. When the trolls overran this part of the Rubble, a small clan took the place as their home. When their leader, a famous Zorak Zoran Death Lord, established a popular shrine there, he was awarded the safekeeping of the three Ever-Burning Torches. These Torches have been handed down through the generations, into the hands of each of the ruling High Death Lords.

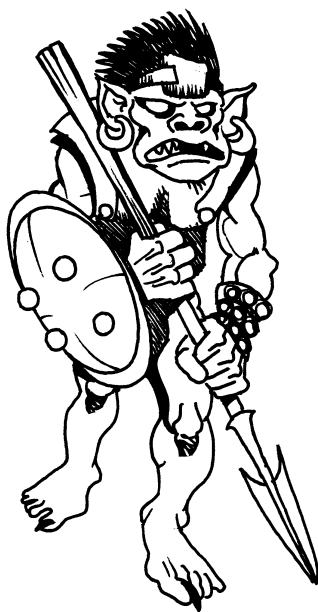
Above ground is a modest fort, with a



● The scenario 'Barran the Monster Killer', from the excellent booklet *Strangers in Prax*, has a number of further adventure suggestions to expand the Barran episode. One of these is to have the adventurers collect some magical artifacts known as the Ever-Burning Torches, which Barran needs to attack the great sea-beast the 'Vomiter'. This is a fairly simple Rubble bash that originally I wasn't going to run. But then I realised that although the Big Rubble is well-known to me, none of my Players had ever run characters there. Another problem was that the principal adventurers were not in a position, as part of the story, to go stealing from anyone. I solved this by running the scenario one night when only two players could turn up. One ran Amur An Zed (a Rune Lord of Dormal, and Barran's henchman) as an adventurer, and the other player ran Griselda (who in my game is a Rune Lord of Lanbril), whom Amur hired as a guide and 'Rubble expert'. It played very well, and I rolled up a few random encounters on the way, which gave them a flavour of the Rubble. It also allowed me to portray it realistically using two very powerful adventurers, rather than a bunch of gung-ho inexperienced adventurers, who would more than likely fail.



● In an addition to the original version of this Scenario, when I ran it I decided that even Zorak Zorani wouldn't be so stupid as to have no Wardings up, after all, it is their Holy Day Celebration! So I put a Warding around the Torches. Since the temporary adventurers that were used included a Lanbril Rune Lord, hired for the expertise, a Silence Sphere sorcery matrix concealed the Warding's noise alarm. However, this was cast upon the frightening form of sleeping Kruuzig in an effort to keep him snoozing - the Players never actually thought about a Warding! The character was brutally injured by the Warding and had to crawl bleeding back through the trolls, to be healed by her companion who was waiting at the stairs.



strong outer wall and a central building inside the bailey. The building consists of a main ground floor, with a two-storey tower emerging from the centre. Of classical Dwarf design the main building, tower and bailey are all octagonal, with four long and four short sides. Below ground the dwarves constructed two sublevels, one as accommodation for the few dwarves that lived there on extended duty, and the other as access to four tunnels that extend to the bailey walls.

Hell Night

Trolls have been arriving every night for the last week. Only a few of the most trusted visitors are allowed in the tower building itself, the rest must sleep in heavy canvas tents pitched in the open grounds. During the day all is quiet, as most of the trolls are asleep, with some of them (and many of the trollkin) on watch. Each night they awake, some of them wander off into the Rubble (though not far), others practice their weapon skills, and the rest sit talking with friends they may not have seen for nearly a year. Kruuzig has forbidden the lighting of any fires in the week leading up to Hell Night, this includes all Fire magic.

Each dawn the main gates in the outer compound walls are closed then re-opened again at dusk. The dawn before Hell Night these doors are closed for the last time until after the celebrations are over. As dusk approaches on Hell Night, the trolls awake early and assemble around the tower building. As Yelm the Enemy sinks to the horizon the main doors of the tower swing open and the large figure of Lord Kruuzig Ogg emerges, carrying one of the great torches. Four trollkin light their ordinary torches from the torch that Kruuzig carries, then walk around to each of the four corners of the building and climb a ladder onto the flat roof, where stand four great bronze braziers stacked with wood. The rest of the trolls stand silently, watching Yelm sink below the horizon. As the last touch of light vanishes the four trollkin plunge their torches into the woodstacked braziers, which burst into flame. The screams

and shouts of the trolls echo across the plains, fiery missiles are shot into the sky and flaming weapons are waved about as the trolls then move en-masse into the building. A few minutes later the heavy doors of the tower building close, and all is quiet.

Over the Wall

The trolls don't bother keeping a watch on the top of the outer wall, so the adventurers can approach there without danger of being seen.

At the main gate there are 20 trollkin and 6 Average Trolls (see Supporting Characters). No trollkin (except some of the top Values) are allowed in the main hall, so they're kept here out of the way. This is hated punishment duty for any troll who has done anything wrong during the last year, they only get to worship ZZ at the end of the night when much of the celebrating is over. So there is little danger of them falling asleep, while trying to keep all those annoying trollkin under control.

If the adventurers get within 20m of the main gate (on the outside), make Perception rolls (against the lead adventurer's Sneak) for all the trolls and about 5 or 6 of the trollkin. As no one has ever been crazy enough to attack the Fort during a Hell Night celebration, none of the trolls are that enthusiastic, so reduce their abilities by half.

Even if a trollkin notices something, it will be difficult for them to persuade even a couple of the trolls to investigate. The trolls are forbidden to open the main gate on pain of death, so they will climb onto the wall if they decide to have a look around.

The concrete dwarven walls were built to last and though they are starting to show the signs of age, they still have a Difficulty of 15w to be scaled unaided. A grapple and rope (Throw against 8w) would reduce this to a 5w.

If the adventurers are stupid enough to come within 20m of the main gate after coming over the wall, the trolls and 5 or 6 of the trollkin get to make Darksense rolls against every adventurer's Sneak. Again the

trolls have a half penalty to their abilities, and the trollkin still would have great difficulty to persuade even a couple of the trolls to investigate, presuming that any noise is just another runaway trollkin.

The trollkin, as busy as ever, are always trying to run off and explore. So the adventurers are Fated to meet a band of 4 or 5 of them, some time after coming over the wall. These brave little things will try to imitate their god by attacking the adventurers, but will run away when half their numbers are taken down. Nobody in the main building will hear the fighting, but the Trolls and trollkin at the main gate might (see above). If any of the trollkin get back to the main gate they still have to make a great effort to be taken seriously by a troll.

Inside the Fort

Once the adventurers are over the wall, approaching the main building is relatively easy. There are supposed to be four trollkin on watch on the top level of the tower, but one of them managed to swipe a barrel of Powzie and they're all now snoozing peacefully.

The main building looks impenetrable, as it is made from the same smooth rock as the outer walls. The ancient arrow slits on the ground and first floors have since been blocked up. A marginal success in an appropriate ability against a resistance of 16 reveals more [] openings on the tower's 2nd floor, though Major Success will reveal that these are unblocked and wider than the arrow slits, perhaps large enough to climb through. To get to the tower openings, the adventurers could use the ladders left by the trollkin to get onto the ground floor roof, where the braziers still burn, and re-use them to get up to the 2nd floor tower windows.

A hero could then quietly jump (resistance 3w) and grab the window ledge then climb (resistance 6w). Two of the snoozing trollkin have recovered enough from the Powzie to be allowed a Darksense roll at -5 to hear any noises the heroes make (unless they do something particularly noisy, such as throwing a grapple onto the ledge, in which case you can ignore the penalty).

Into the Tower

The first thing the adventurers meet when they enter the tower are the four snoozing trollkin. If they were lucky/skillful enough then the trollkin are still sleeping and can be easily dealt with (if they are tied up they'll be too scared to make any noise for a while, though a gag could be easily chewed through in a couple of rounds). From this level a trapdoor can be opened revealing a ladder down to the first floor. Each adventurer can make a Listen roll to hear the distant snoring of many trolls.

The first floor is mainly used by the trolls as storage space, because even though the windows are blocked they don't like sleeping here as it's above ground and the small steps on the carved stone stairwell leading up to here from the main hall are ill suited for trollish feet. As the adventurers clamber down the ladder into this room, the sounds of snoring trolls can now be clearly heard coming from below where the stairwell leads.

For the celebrations Kruuzig managed to get a cut-price deal on a job lot of food and drink from the Thunderbreath Gobbleguts franchise here in the Rubble. This included trollkin burgers, Ham Beetles and some very cheap Powzie (which the restaurant had over ordered and they were trying to shift before Mr. G found out).

Powzie is a frothy yellow drink, lively enough to give off hissing sounds. It is warm to the touch, and smells of cinnamon and garlic. Trolls drink Powzie for its kick. Each mug drunk by the troll reduces the troll's hit points by one, recoverable by one point per hour. This is not real damage but numbness; upon reaching zero hit points, the troll merely goes unconscious.

Any adventurer Sneaking down the stairs notes the following...

The deep rumbling of what sounds like an army of snoring trolls seems to vibrate through your entire body as you sneak slowly down the stairs. Maybe this wasn't such a good idea? Down the final flight of steps and you enter a large octagonal room dimly lit by a flickering light to your right. Surrounding you are dozens of trolls, all fully armored and sleeping quite happily.

Looking across the room you can see the source of the light. Against the bark wall is a great stone throne and seated upon that throne is one of the largest trolls you've ever seen, dressed in fancy black chain mail and plate. Slumped over onto his right side he's snoring louder than any of the others. Stood in the back of that throne are what look like three large lead maces, except that each has a small wrought basket at the end which flickers with aflame so bright at its centre, that it hurts your eyes. Even just between you and the throne are the sleeping bodies of a more than a dozen trolls.

Any adventurer that is stupid enough to go charging down the stairs will awake half the sleeping trolls, the others are (luckily) too stupefied by the Powzie to be awoken by anything for a while. The adventurer would have a free round in which to act before the trolls do, and would then have to defeat all the trolls to get the torches, or retreat.

An adventurer can Sneak across the floor in three turns, stepping in between the trolls - this requires three successful defeats of Difficulty 8w. On a Minor Defeat the nearest

● *This sudden discovery of the theft is of course an atmospheric plot device. When I ran this scenario the adventurers Silence Sphere was set to last 20 minutes, and when that gave out, the Warding Alarm woke the trolls. That was when pursuit began, so it's up to you to judge the suitability.*

● *When I ran this for RQ, I rolled for random encounters. They were fleeing in daylight across troll lands, using Mobility Matrices to speed them up. First off they met a group of ogres posing as adventurers, and by this time the trolls were close behind. Whilst the ogres pretended to be friendly, the adventurers were wary and basically just wanted to keep going, manoeuvring around them to get the ogres in between them and the trolls. This tactic worked as the trolls appeared a few hundred yards away, distracting the ogres and the adventurers fled. Behind them battle was engaged. Nearer troll break they met a Lunar Patrol, with similar results. Now desperate to avoid the chasing trolls they used sorcery to climb the Rubble wall and ran back along the worn and fractured walkway, all the way to Griffin Gate. On the way they met some dragonewts who surprisingly turned out (1-4 on D20) to be friendly! Thus they attacked the few tenacious trolls who were still chasing, leaving the adventurers to arrive exhausted at Griffin Gate.*

Here they gave Windwhistler one of the three torches in return for flying them back into Pavis that evening under cover of darkness. (A Torch being the only thing of sufficient value to persuade him to do this.)

Trolls

KRUUZIG OGG

General Abilities: Darksense 12w, Dislike Light 19, Eat Anything 8w, Hide 3w, Hungry 5w, Large 7w, Move Silently 18, Recognize Foe 10w, Resist Poison 9w, Run on Broken Terrain 7w, Strong 9w, Rubble Geography 11w, Sneak 2w, Tough 6w.

Combat Abilities: Close Combat 9w2 (Bite & Brawl, Mace & Shield, Maul), Ranged Combat 20w (Sling).

Affinities:

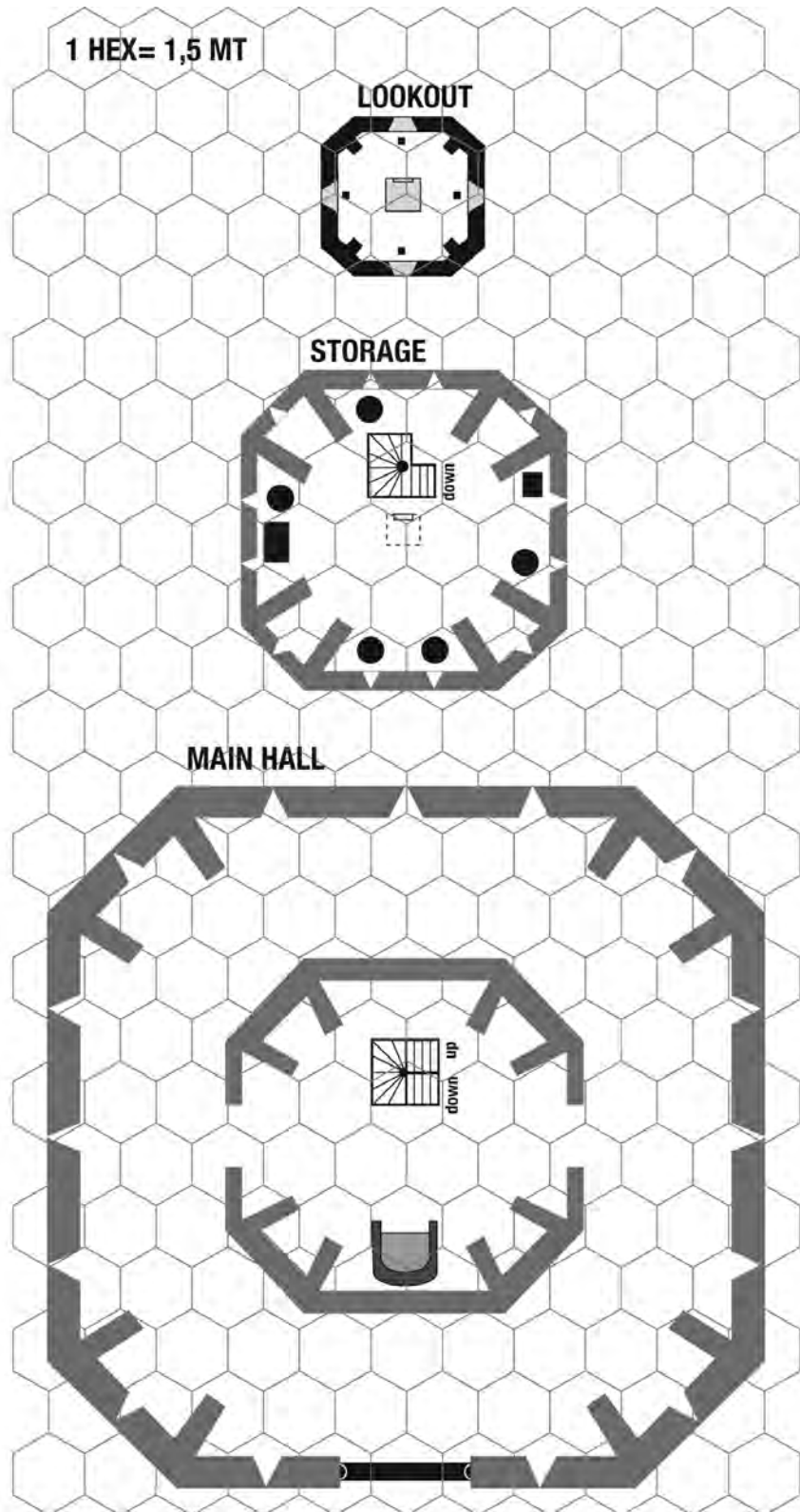
Berserker 18w (Break through Shield Wall, Break Weapon, Crushing Blow, Fight to the Death, Hate Blades) Darkness 15w (Command Living Shadow, Command Scorpion, Enchant Lead ritual, Hate Light, Stygian Armor, Terrifying Aura) Hatred 17w (Blood Vengeance, Command Ghost, Command Zombie, Hate You, Make Ghost ritual, Make Zombie ritual, Rage of Hatred)

Magic spirit #1: Resist Damage 17w, Heal Wounds 12w

Magic spirit #2: Deflect Magic 14w, Resist Spirits 10w

Notes: Proud, arrogant and competitive. Kruuzig has reached his pinnacle of power through a strict adherence to the

Zorak Zorani cult strictures and ideals. His position at the shrine of the three Ever-Burning Torches was granted to him in return for his devotion to the cult and his self-confidence is apparent in his naming of the Fort after himself.



1-3 trolls attempt Perception ability rolls against a new roll of the adventurer's Stealth ability. On Major Defeat the adventurer has touched or knocked one of the trolls, who can attempt a standard perception roll against a new roll of the adventurer's Agility/Stealth in order to wake up.

At the throne the adventurer must

make an Agility roll (against Difficulty 9w) to reach up and grab each torch, with a Sneak roll (against Difficulty 12w) to avoid waking Kruuzig. If successful the adventurer can return to the stairwell, using the same method as above. Each torch is approximately the size of a Maul but is significantly heavier.

Hero Wars Warding: Crushing Pressure 2w2

A troll that awakens can only be quickly and quietly killed (or knocked unconscious) if done so with a single strike AND if a successful Sneak roll is made against the troll's best attempt at an Agility ability (with a half penalty for being groggy). If the Sneak roll is failed then another 1-3 trolls may awaken (Half Perception rolls against 18). Any troll awake and conscious at the end of a round will start shouting in alarm. The adventurer then has one free round to make a dash for the stairwell by making three successful Agility rolls (against 3w) to run and leap across the waking bodies of the trolls.

Flying spells will avoid the need for any rolls while moving between the stairwell and the throne, though the other rolls are still required to remove the torches from the throne (and Flying does not avoid the Warding - in fact Flying magic must resist the Warding or else be dispelled).

Getting Out

If the adventurers manage to steal the torches without waking the trolls then they can make their way out of the tower and back to the main wall. As they reach the main wall have each adventurer make a Listen roll (against Difficulty 19), to hear a faint rumbling noise from the hall. Kruuzig has awoken to find the torches gone and is now bellowing in rage as he heads towards the main doors. Two rounds later the rumble suddenly turns into a piercing wail from the tower and with a keen eyed Scan (against Difficulty 8w) (or Darkness vision success against 18) an adventurer will notice a number of trolls emerging from the entrance of the tower and appear to be fanning out to search.

Three rounds later, one of the trolls will shout out and point in the direction of the fleeing adventurers. They must get over the wall and escape across the Rubble before the trolls can catch them. The adventurers now have one final turn to get over the wall or they will have to turn and fight. In the next round, and every round after that, various recently awoken troll warriors arrive, until the numbers equal that of the conscious main hall trolls (see Supporting Characters below) plus the 6 Average Trolls from the main gate.

The adventurers can probably escape if they can get to their mounts. However, the trolls will keep tracking them, so they must keep moving. If they stop and camp anywhere in the Rubble, the trolls will eventually find them and launch an almost suicidal surprise attack to recapture the torches. Anywhere the adventurers stay in the Rubble, before they offload the torches or leave for good, will then be visited by the trolls, who may well butcher everyone there to try and get information about the adventurers.

Getting the Torches Back to Pavis

Getting the torches through one of the Rubble gates will be nearly impossible. The torches cannot be hidden very well, as they tend to burn anything they touch. Such obviously magical items would be confiscated on sight, unless a huge bribe of at least 500 lunars could be paid to each of the 3 or 4 officials on the gate. This information would somehow eventually leak out and the adventurers would all be brought in by squads of Lunar soldiers 2 or 3 days later. The Rubble walls are notoriously difficult to climb over. The Pavis walls would be impossible to climb over unnoticed during the day. At night the walls are routinely patrolled. Also, regular patrols walk the streets enforcing the curfew. Again, flying spells can be used to get over the walls but the adventurers will still have to avoid the watch, and surely the Lunars will have at least some minor spirits on alert for such activities.

The adventurers could always find somewhere in the Rubble to keep the torches, but the trolls still tracking them may discover them. The adventurers could bribe a boat owner, for about 500 Lunars, to use his boat to smuggle the torches into Pavis. Again, this information will probably leak out within a day or two. Finally, one or two of the adventurers could just meet up with Amur back at the Fish Legs Inn and arrange for him to pick the torches up from within the Rubble. He will then load them onto a hired boat and pay the adventurers; who will then get taxed on it when they leave the Rubble (10% pearl tax!). If they think of this, Amur will offer to have the pearls dropped in Pavis for the adventurers, if they trust him.

Aftermath

If the adventurers manage to steal any of the torches (especially all three), Kruuzig will become their sworn enemy. He has never been favoured by the Rubble troll community due to his bullying and intimidation. He now regrets this, as he fails to get any help tracking down the culprits. After two seasons spent unsuccessfully waiting for news of the adventurers to reach him, he packs his belongings and leaves the fort with his two best mates (a Good Dark Troll and an Average Great Troll) and several trollkin (2-6 at any time). He moves to Pavis under an alias, in order to find the adventurers himself and end his shame.



Trolls

SUPERIOR Z. ZORANI

(To convert these Great Trolls to Dark Trolls: remove 'Large'/reduce 'Strong')
 General Abilities:
 Darksense 6w, Dislike Light 1w, Eat Anything 4w, Hide 19, Hungry 2w, Large 5w, Move Silently 16, Recognize Foe 6w, Resist Poison 4w, Run on Broken Terrain 3w, Strong 7w, Sneak 20. Tough 2w.
 Combat Abilities: Close Combat 16w (Bite & Brawl, Mace & Shield, Maul), Ranged Combat 7w (Sling).
 Magic: Berserker 10w, Darkness 8w, Hatred 11w

AVERAGE Z. ZORANI

General Abilities:
 Darksense 18, Dislike Light 16, Eat Anything 18, Hide 15, Hungry 15, Large 18, Move Silently 12, Recognize Foe 18, Resist Poison 19, Run on Broken Terrain 1w, Strong 18, Rubble Geography 1w, Sneak 14.
 Combat Abilities: Close Combat 5w (Bite & Brawl, Mace & Shield, Maul), Ranged Combat 20 (Sling).
 Magic: Berserker 20, Darkness 19, Hatred 16

WARRIOR TROLLKIN

General Abilities:
 Darksense 14, Dislike Light 20, Eat Anything 16, Hide 19, Hungry 18, Move Silently 19, Nimble 15, Resist Poison 14, Sniff Out Food 16.
 Combat Abilities: Close Combat 20 (Bite & Brawl, Mace & Shield, Maul), Ranged Combat 2w (Sling).

If the adventurers are clumsy enough to wake up all the trolls inside the main hall then they will be up against 17 Average warriors, 8 Superior Warriors and 10+ trollkin (though many of these are partially incapacitated due to Powzie). This is only about half the actual number of trolls in the main hall but the rest are completely unconscious from the Powzie.

Unicorn Quest

by Simon Phipp



THIS QUEST is generally performed by Yelornan cultists in order to gain a unicorn mount. The Quest is usually only successfully performed once by any person as the unicorn thus allied will stay for life and will be resurrected even if killed. Of course, if a Yelornan Unicorn Rider loses her virginity and is ritually purified then she may perform the Quest again in order to gain a new unicorn.

Unlike many Quests, this is rarely performed for any reason apart from gaining a Unicorn. Some Yelornans will use the Quest to gain another intelligent mount who is not a unicorn, but some of the stages do not work in the same way so this makes such a Quest more difficult. The Quest is usually performed as a Practice Run Quest as there is no reason to perform it any other way. Unicorns gained when the Quest is performed on the Hero Plane will be substantially more powerful than normal. It is rumoured that Jar-Eel is planning such a Quest but as many people know, she is no virgin and is unlikely to be purified, being excellent breeding stock.

Mythos

Yelorna Starbringer was born while Yelm was Emperor and married to Ernalda. When her mother was stolen away from Yelm her children became out of favour. Despite their protestations, Yelm would not recognise them as his children. Once, Yelm approached Yelorna and told her that he was giving her in marriage to one of his Angels and that this would give her the legitimacy she desired. Yelorna was appalled by this and refused, pledging herself to be a maiden until she met the one that she could love.

Once Yelm had died, Yelorna tried to help the people who called out in fear. She spoke to her intended husband and his friends, calling for them to help the people below. Many listened to her and appeared to the people as Stars in the sky. Many of these Angels even followed Yelorna's lead and fell to the Earth giving immediate aid to the people.

Many of Yelorna's relatives were involved in the struggles of the Darkness and fought the forces of Darkness, Storm and Chaos. Yelorna decided to join them and fight these horrors. To do this she needed a sturdy mount. Her brother Yamsur rode the Hippogriff, her brother Yelmario rode the Ostrich first then the Horse, her father rode the Griffin. Yelorna determined to find a mount at least their equal. She visited all the Beast Fathers and looked to them for a companion.

Many spurned her, some were willing but she was not. Finally, she saw the Unicorn Father in the Dark Sky. Seeing his pure form and mighty horn, Yelorna was overcome by lust and desired intercourse with the beautiful beast. She approached him and made her offer but was refused by the haughty beast. Enraged she jumped on his back saying that if he would not ride her then she would ride him. As the Unicorn bucked and struggled between her legs, Yelorna felt the strongest pleasure she had ever experienced and swore to herself that she could ride no other beast. They struggled for a long time until both were exhausted.

The Unicorn Father reluctantly agreed to allow Yelorna to ride him, but said that should she lose her maidenhood then he would no longer serve her. From that day on, Yelorna remained pure and rode the Unicorn Father.

The Quest

Summary

The Quest allows a virgin Yelornan to find and persuade a unicorn to be her mount. It creates a bond between them that is only broken by one of their deaths or the Yelornan losing her virginity.

Preparation

A member of the Yelorna cult wishing to perform this Quest must satisfy the conditions to become a Unicorn Rider, namely she must be female, a virgin, be a master of Ride Unicorn [1]: 1W (RQ 90%), and must be pledged to celibacy.

Those Questors who are not members of the cult of Yelorna must be virgin females. They must be skilled riders otherwise the Unicorn will not respond to them. They must also be human or Aldryami, although the Quest has been performed by Angels in the past.

The Questor must ritually purify herself with pure waters and must bathe naked under Starlight at a sacred spring [2]. She dries herself using the Starlight and dresses in silver and grey clothing. She takes up her bow and spear and shouts a greeting to the Stars as she sets off on the Quest.

All travelling on the Quest is done by night. During the day the Questor must seek shelter and sleep.

The Journey

The Questor must walk to where unicorns are known to roam. Normally when the Quest is performed in Prax the Questor will know the best places for this. This stage of the Quest may take several nights, depending on where the Quest began.

Usually, the Questor will have companions helping and guarding her as this journey is perilous.

The Questor must make Scout Plains, Map Making or similar skills in order to find the best place to begin searching for the Unicorn. At some stage on the journey she will be met by foes determined to prevent her from gaining the Unicorn. These foes may be Praxian Nomads, usually Storm Bull cultists, Orlanthi adventurers, Broos, Lunars or ogres. They will try and make the Questor turn back, normally through combat. If they defeat the Questor they will try not to kill her but to dishonour her and take her virginity. Thus, she will have to walk back to her temple, naked and shamed.

One of these encounters will take place during the day when the Questors are resting.

These could be run as extended contests between the Questor and her opponents, or as simple contests. The result of a failure by the Questor is usually the loss of virginity and the end of the Quest.

RuneQuest

During these encounters, the Questor may use the spells of Shooting Star and Shield heroically, that is if the spell is known reusably then it costs Magic Points to cast, otherwise it costs POW to be used again and again.

Defeating Night

The Questor is always confronted by Xentha's minions on this Quest. These may be trolls, morokanth, followers of Raven or members of the cults of Zorak Zoran or Argan Argar. They will try to kill the Questor as they are opposing Yelorna rather than the gaining of the Unicorn.

These could be run as extended contests between the Questor and her opponents, or as simple contests. The result of a failure by the Questor is usually death of defeat and the end of the Quest.

RuneQuest

The Questor may use the spells of Shooting Star, Shield, Summon/Command Salamander and Light heroically during this encounter.

The Hunt

Once the Questor has reached the area where Unicorns are known to frequent, she must try to find a unicorn. This involves using all her hunting skills. As Yelorna is a hunting cult [3], members have an advantage on this Quest.

The Questor must make a roll against a relevant skill, often her luck or piety, but sometimes Hunting, Find Prey, Tracking or some similar skill. A Complete Victory means she finds the unicorn in 1 day, a Major Victory in 2 days, a Minor Victory in 3 days, a Marginal Victory in 4 days and a success means she must roll again, but add 4 days to the result. If she fails more than once then the Quest has failed, for she cannot find the unicorns.

The Questor must make a Hide or similar skill roll and must sneak up to the unicorn. If she fails or if the unicorn sees her then it will move away, adding an extra day to the Quest's duration.

RuneQuest

Questors may use the spells of Catseye and Silver Track heroically on this Stage of the Quest.

The Questor must find a unicorn. Normally, she makes a Luck Roll to find a unicorn's tracks then uses Silver Track to make tracking easier. She follows the tracks until she finds the unicorn itself. This may take a long time - make a Luck Roll, it takes a number of nights equal to the POW modifier rolled to find the unicorn, so if POWx1 is rolled then the search takes 1 night, if POWx5 is rolled the search takes 5 nights. Once the Unicorn is seen, the Questor must sneak up to it and face it herself. If the unicorn sees her (only if she fails her Hide/Sneak) then it will run away leaving her to continue to follow it, taking another night's travel.

NOTES

[1] Ride Unicorn is equivalent to Ride Horse and is learnt as Ride Horse until a Unicorn is gained. Once the user rides a unicorn she learns the techniques to ride a unicorn rather than a horse and at that point the skill diverges. The Unicorn Rider may use her skill at _ of her Ride Unicorn when riding a horse unless her skill was higher when she first rode a unicorn.

[2] This Quest has decidedly erotic overtones. The fact that Yelorna is a virginal cult, combined with the fact that Unicorns may only be ridden by maidens and that some women take sexual pleasure (so I am told) from riding horses gave me the idea for this take on the Quest. If this offends anyone then I apologise. Also, I am sorry if I have not captured the full eroticism of this Quest which I can visualise but not accurately portray. The Quest itself came from a dream I had about a Star Maiden gaining her unicorn.

[3] Even though Yelorna is not normally thought of as a hunting one, their spells and skills are perfect for hunting. The Unicorn Tribe has Yelorna as their prime Huntress deity.

[4] As most Yelornans have a very low Lust trait they sometimes try to enhance this on the Quest, sometimes by using traded spells, sometimes by using potions or plants. A particular favourite is Arroin's Joy which increases the Lust trait considerably for a short period of time. There are dangers in using this as the Questor may be tempted to lose her virginity on the Quest rather than to complete the Quest.

NOTES

[5] Unicorns will be forced to mate here with exotic magics only. They will mate even if they have mated already in the year, contrary to their normal mating habits. All unicorns hate doing this and will be enemies of the Questor from that day on. Questors who mate with a Unicorn will never be able to perform the Quest successfully again - all unicorns will know that she is nearby and will flee even if she has been repurified.

[6] This is one way the Quest may be used to gain a mount other than a unicorn. In this sense, the mount is not gained to be ridden as normal but is used to mate with the Questor. If the mount is not a unicorn but is intelligent then it must make a Lust roll. If it succeeds or if it wishes to, the beast will mate with the Questor. If it fails the roll then it will run off in disgust. This is sometimes used by Grazelanders in order to gain magical foals from the Goldeneye horses. It may also be used to gain a child from a Beast Hero or Deity. Such foals are unusual and often intelligent. Children fathered by a unicorn will be the same species as the mother, those fathered by non-unicorns will be of the same species as the father and will be worth around ten times the value of normal beasts.

[7] When the Unicorn has sensed Yelorna's Joy he stops because he knows that he has satisfied her sexually without undergoing the messy deed itself. This is because the Unicorn is the ultimate in eroticism.

Meeting the Unicorn

As the Questor approaches the unicorn, she becomes enamoured of it. She is overcome by lust, strips off her clothes and runs towards it unicorn begging him for his attentions. The Unicorn always resists her request unless she has special magics to force him to mate with her [5]. If the unicorn decides to mate with her then he will do so, deflowering her and fathering a foal [6]. If the foal is male then it will be born as a small unicorn, if female then it will be born as the same race as the Questor but an especially delicate and fine woman, blessed with beauty and purity. The Quest, of course, will have failed here.

Assuming the Unicorn decides not to mate with the Questor it will try to move away. The Questor must leap onto its back and ride it.

The Questor must succeed in a Lustful, or similar, roll against a target number of 12. If she succeeds she will run to the unicorn and try to seduce it. If she fails she knows that this is not the Unicorn she wants and moves on to find another.

The Questor must try to seduce the unicorn, using whatever skills she has at her disposal, but this is not easy for the normally chaste Yelornans. The unicorn will resist with its Chaste or similar skill and will normally have a number of bumps here as unicorns are naturally non-sexual.

RuneQuest

To fall in love with the unicorn, the Questor must roll against her Lust + the unicorn's APPx5 [4]. (For instance, if the Questor has a Lust of 10 and meets a Unicorn of APP 12 then she must roll against 70.) If she fails the roll then she knows that this is not the Unicorn she wants and moves on to find another.

The Ride

The unicorn runs as fast as it can, trying to shake the Questor off. It will use all its wiles to try and throw her, short of attacking her with its horn. If she falls off, it will run away and the Quest will have failed. If she stays on then she will eventually experience Yelorna's Joy which is the pleasure that a woman may achieve through riding. Once this has occurred, the Unicorn will sense this and will slow to a halt. [7]

This can be played as an extended contest between unicorn and rider or as a simple contest. It can even be played as a HeroQuest Challenge. Failure means the rider falls off and the Quest is over. At some point, the Questor must make a roll to experience Yelorna's Joy. The exact roll to be made depends on the situation but normally involves Lust or Ride.

RuneQuest

The ride may be abstracted as a single roll or it may be a number of events with riding rolls made at penalty. In any case, if the Rider is not a master rider then she will fall off and fail. At some point, the Questor must roll her Lust + Ride in order to experience Yelorna's Joy.

The Return

Once the Questor has experienced Yelorna's Joy, a bond is made between the Unicorn and the Rider. This bond lasts until the Unicorn or Rider is dead and cannot be brought back or until the rider loses her virginity.

In such an event, the surviving member is distraught and cannot function for a time, amongst unicorns this varies from a week to a season, amongst Riders it varies from a year to a lifetime. Only once this mourning period is over can the survivor take part in another Quest to gain a new Rider/Unicorn.

The Rider returns to the Temple on unicorn back. Normally she will return to her companions first and retrieve her clothes, although some merely return naked in order to fully appreciate Yelorna's Joy. Those who complete the Quest and return with a Unicorn may join the Unicorn Riders even if they are not members of the Yelorna Cult. This normally applies to those members of the Unicorn Tribe, but most of them will decline this offer and return to their Tribe.

The Rider gains a Relationship to Unicorn. The unicorn and rider are in direct mental contact and the unicorn can heal the rider using its horn without being in contact with her.

If the Questor gains any type of Failure result in the overall Quest, the unicorn will not join with her and she does not gain the benefits of having a unicorn mount. If she gains a Marginal Success, the unicorn will stay for a year only. If she gains a Minor success it will stay until she is killed, whether she is resurrected or not. On a Major Success it will stay even if she has been killed and has been resurrected. On a Complete Success it will attempt to bring her back to life itself. In any case, the unicorn will leave if the Rider loses her virginity.

Non-members of the cult gain a Relationship of Unicorn Rider at 12. Members gain it at 18. This relationship allows the rider to interact with the Yelorna cult on a friendly basis.

RuneQuest

The Questor must sacrifice 1 POW in order to make the bond concrete and permanent. This bond takes the form of a Mindlink between Unicorn and Rider which can never be broken until either the rider of unicorn has died and remains dead for 7 days, or the rider loses her virginity.



The Vale of Flowers

The Rockwood Forests, Part I

by Shannon Appelcline



The Vale of Flowers is one of three major Aldryami forests in the area just south of the Rockwood Mountains. However, the denizens of the Vale of Flowers feel that they are the only true followers of Aldrya among the three: they believe that the Aldryami of the Stinking Forest have been corrupted by the forces of Oblivion worshiped at the Ivory Plinth, while the Aldryami of the Redwood Forest find their own doom in their unnatural adulation of the Torch. Of course, the strange ways in which the Aldryami of the Vale of Flowers differ from their other brethren across Glorantha are little spoken of.

Sample Plants

ELFBOON

A unique flower found only in the Vale of Flowers, the elfboons are a short 1m tall, but grow miraculous blooms that are all the colors of the rainbow. A clipping of elfboon can be prepared as a corsage to make its wearer beautiful to elves.

PALE PINK ROSES

The rare pale pink roses of the Vale of Flowers have a faint yet pleasing smell, and thus can provide smells nice to their imbibers.

PARTS OF HALAMALAO

Each of the three Halamalao flowers has a special effect. The Sunflowers give their imbibers spiritual insight, the daisies provide warmth against cold, and the lupines offer proof against poison.

SAPRIA

These parasitic plants lie near the Sunflower Altar and are a constant nuisance that the elves would like to get rid of. They smell like rotting meat and also offer the rather questionable benefit of smells like rotting meat.

TITAN ARUM

These 3m tall giants are remarkably not giant flowers like the rest of the plants in the Vale. Instead they grow to exactly their normal size. However, unlike titan arums found elsewhere in Glorantha (typically in rainforests), these ones when prepared properly can give their imbibers the tall trait, allowing them to grow large. They also have an aphrodisiac side effect; the imbibers will be especially attracted to members of the opposite sex for a day after taking the preparation. Any social tests (such as Bargain and Persuade) that are made against the imbibers by a member of the opposite sex have a +10 modifier.

Geography

There are two major parts to the Vale of Flowers, the Vale proper and the Flower Woods.

Outsiders only attach any importance to the Vale proper. It's a diamond-shaped area of land filled with giant flowers. It's clearly bounded by the Perilous Hills to the southeast and the Ridge of Thieves to the northeast. To the southwest the flowers are kept at bay by the rigorous clippings of the First Enlo Gardener Battalion, while to the northwest the Vale of Flowers slowly merges into a coniferous forest.

The Aldryami who live in the Vale of Flowers consider these Flower Woods to be almost as important as the Vale itself. It is the true home of the Aldryami who inhabit and garden the area. To the southeast the Flower Woods slowly fills with its namesake flowers, while to the west it meets the Black Dragon Mountains and to the North it shrivels away before the Scorched Valley.

History

The Aldryami tell the history of the Vale of Flowers thus:

"In the Green Age we did a bad thing and cracked the Sky Dome. Halamalao, who had been rooted at the center of the sky for all of time, slowly began to spiral down the dome. As he fell, he began going faster and faster, until he lit all parts of the sky at once. Then he flew off the sky dome and fell to Earth. The center of the Vale of Flowers is where he was welcomed into Gata's embrace."

"The flowers of the Vale are Halamalao's gift to us. They are grown from his body and nurtured by his blood. They were the first flowers in all of Glorantha. Though their seeds have spread far since the Red Age, these are still the greatest. All other flowers are but poor reflections of the first flowers that Halamalao grew."

The giants of the nearby Rockwood Mountains tell the history of the Vale of Flowers thus:

"Sometimes we giants sloppy. Very messy. Drop juggling rocks on ground and suddenly river flows differently! Drop pieces of annoying small people all over and get blood everywhere! Sometimes we just not pay attention."

"Near Ginijji giant drop many seeds. Suddenly huge field of flowers crop up! Small people all very awed because they not usually see giant flowers, just little people flowers. Little plant people start worshipping our flowers. Very silly."

"We giants just annoyed. Path to Ginijji now very overgrown. We no good gardeners, can't make flowers go away. And little people get upset anyway when we try."

"But, Ginijji now overgrown too. Chaos all over, not nice any more. We don't go to Ginijji anymore. Don't care about walk. Let little people have our flowers. No flesh off our bones."

The Uz of Dagori Inkarth tell the history of

the Vale of Flowers thus:

"When Gore and Gash comes to Dagori Inkarth, flowers already overgrows one Vale. We builds Castle of Lead anyway, and then builds huge Ridge to keep thieving elves out of our Castle."

"Sometimes we go into Vale to collect flowers for momma Kigor. She says they very tasty, like elves, but not as grainy. We thinks they just bitter and taste too much like sunshine and happiness."

The Uz of Skyfall Lake tell the history of the Vale of Flowers thus:

"In ancient times—after Cragspider had emerged into Komor, but before she had settled here—there was a battle in this place. It was between Korang the Destroyer and three great gods—Engizi the Titan, The Hard Earth, and the Unnamed One. They were each killed in their battle against Korang, but each also left their mark upon the land."

"Look upward and you can see Engizi's blood flowing from the sky; he is the source of our Skyfall Lake."

"Look downward and you can see Hard Earth's body at our feet; he is our sturdy foundation."

"And, if you look eastward you can see the scant remains of the one who is no longer named. The remnants of his body fell there, in the Vale of Flowers. A million droplets of his blood spread like seeds, and flowers grew from them."

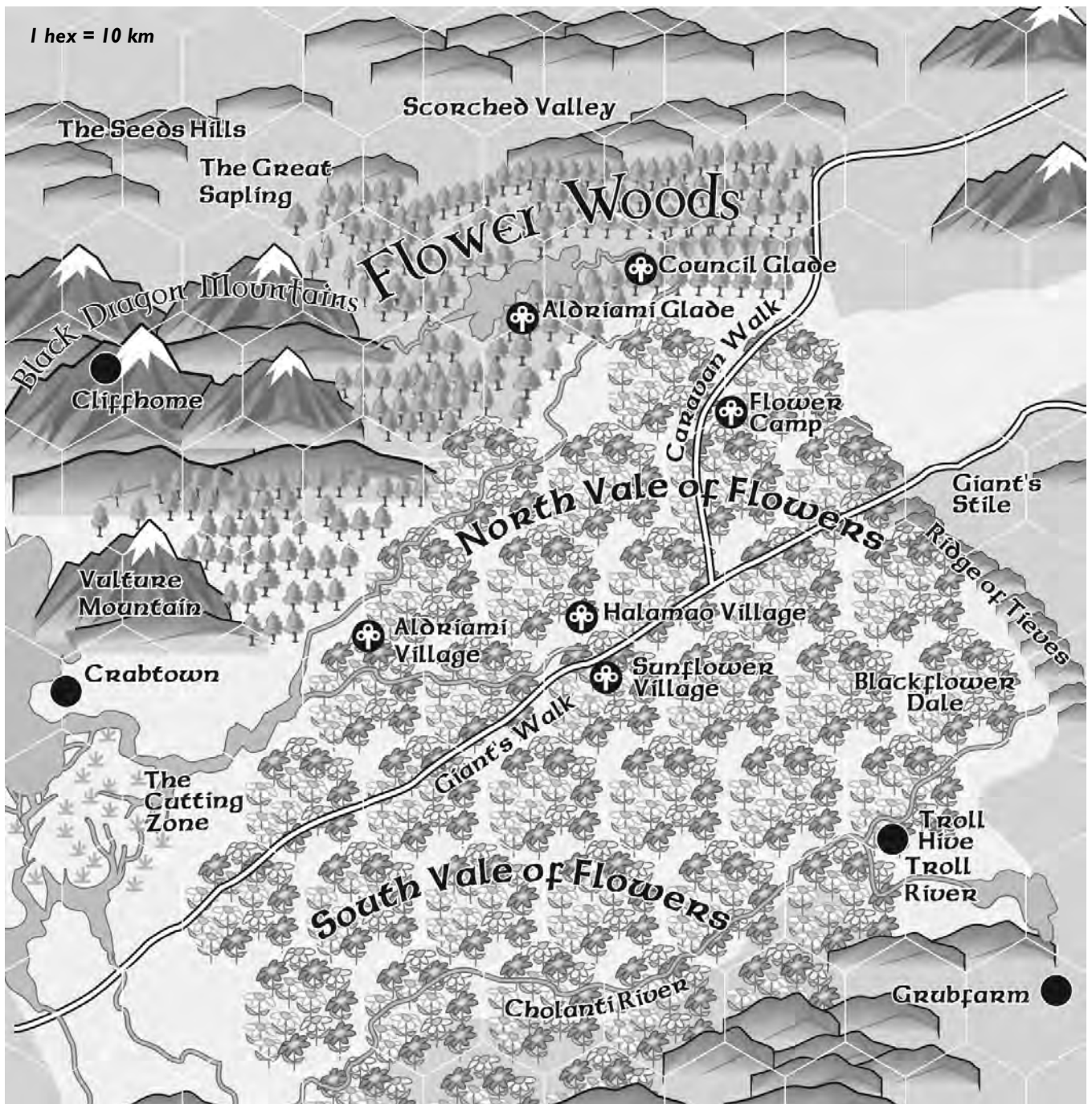
"The elves of the Vale claim it was the sun god who fell there. Perhaps it was a god of light, we cannot say. All we know is that Korang burned away the essence of the Unnamed One, leaving behind but a shell, and all that we have to still remember him by is that Vale, and the flowers that grow within."

The Vale of Flowers

The Vale of Flowers is a large area utterly overgrown by giant flowers. It runs up into hills to the northwest, northeast, and southeast—which seem to have formed natural boundaries to the flowers' growth—but to the southwest the valley runs all the way down to Skyfall Lake and its attendant rivers. The flowers trail off in this area (The Cutting Zone), but this is only due to the hard work of the First Enlo Gardener Battalion.

Technically, there are two vales in the Vale of Flowers. The North Vale of Flowers centers on the Flower Rivers running out of Skyfall Lake while the South Vale of Flowers centers on the Cholanti River. Between these two Vales is a hilly area extending southwest from the Ridge of Thieves, but it has long been overgrown by the flowers of the Vale.

Through the Vale is patrolled by approximately 100 Vronkali Gardeners at any time, they do not strive to keep outsiders out of the Vale. However, they will respond harshly to any wanton destruction.



The Flowers

The flowers of the Vale span the entire ecology of flowers grown within Glorantha, from tropical flowers like orchids and heliconia, to hardy flowers like geraniums and heather. This is because the Vale is a miracle of microclimates. The outer edges of the Vale are home to sturdy plants common to colder regions. Moving inward, one finds the temperature constantly rising, until one arrives at the center of the Vale of Flowers, which is almost always hot and humid. Another miracle of the Vale of Flowers is that at any time approximately two-thirds of the flowers are in bloom, whether they be perennials, biennials, or annuals.

Though the Vale contains a huge variety of flowers, three are particularly common: the sunflower, which nearly takes over the Vale near the Sunflower Altar; the yellow daisy; and the red lupine. The Aldryami of the Vale claim that the sunflowers represent Halamao's spirit, the daisies his body, and the lupines his blood. They are fiercely protective of all three blooms.

Within the Vale the flowers grow between 1 and 4 meters tall with no real order or reason as to why one flower may grow larger than another. The only exceptions are the sunflowers, which can grow up to 10 meters tall near the altar. The ground of the Vale is usually clear of

other covering. In most places a full-grown man can thus easily walk between the stems of the plants. Seeds taken outside the Vale seem to either not grow at all, to grow into normal-sized flowers, or to grow into monstrous degenerations which can infect nearby foliage if left to germinate. For this reason Joh Myth (see the Caravan Walk) refuses to trade in Vale flower seeds, as do the nearby residents of Crabtown.

However, some of the cuttings of the flowers of the Vale have proven beneficial, and the locals will trade in these items, though the Aldryami of the area look down upon this type of thievery. Following are the effect of some of the more notable clippings that can be taken. They can be used one

time for the noted benefit, or an alchemist could brew them into a potion with a more permanent effect (allowing a hero to cement the benefit).

Contest: Make a Potion (or Other Permanent Item) from a Vale Clipping
 Appropriate Abilities: Alchemy, Botany (-5), Brew Potion, Wilderness Survival (-20)
 Resistance: 18w

Victory: The hero may cement the benefit.

Tie, Marginal, Minor, or Major Defeat: The hero may use the benefit for the next adventure, but may not cement it unless he gets more clippings.

Complete Defeat: The hero wastes the clipping, and may become sick at the narrator's preference.

The Inhabitants

The Vale of Flowers forms a unique ecosystem that is relatively self-sufficient and differentiated from the rest of Dagori Inkarth and the Spiderlands. The flowers are, of course, at the heart of this ecosystem. Closely associated with them are numerous flower spirits, normally only visible to shamans and to sprites—which are plant entities that are closely associated with flowers just as elves are closely associated with trees. Despite the giant size of the flowers, the sprites remain diminutive, as they do throughout Glorantha.

Two types of Aldryami, who jointly call themselves The Gardeners, make it their lives' work to tend the Vale of Flowers. The green elves reside in the nearby Flower Woods, but work within the Vale over week-long shifts where they care for and nurture the flowers. The flower elves are little seen by outsiders, and in fact are the great secret of the Aldryami of the Flower Woods. These creatures are very clearly elves, not sprites, but are descended from giant flowers rather than trees, and are thought to be the only ones of their kind anywhere in Glorantha.

Trolls are surprisingly common in the Vale. The Bee Tribe is actually centered at the Troll Hive, just southeast of the Vale, but they have small settlements throughout the southern Vale. They have reached an age-old, and stable, relationship with the Aldryami, because their bees are required to pollinate the flowers of the area, and thus are allowed into the Vale. There are also some Gorakiki Tribes who live nearby, but who are not particularly welcome in the vale due to the damage that their caterpillars wreak.

Giant insects are the other main inhabitants of the Vale of Flowers. The dominant species of giant insects mysteriously fluctuate year by year and



season by season. For example, the giant grasshoppers, a fierce and warlike tribe, have not been seen since the summer of 1603, while the giant ants have recurred every year since 1582. The only true constants are the giant bees, the giant caterpillars, and the giant butterflies. The bees mostly come from the Troll Hive, but sometimes travel all the way from Grubfarm. They are well-respected because of their role in fertilizing flowers. The giant butterflies are raised by Gorakiki Uz, and are likewise respected for their role in pollinating flowers. Unfortunately their larval form, the giant caterpillar eats everything. There is a bit of a schism among the Gardeners about whether to kill caterpillars or just drive them out of the Vale until they turn into butterflies.

The black elves, or Voralans, do not live in the Vale proper, but they do occasionally visit from the Sporewood, to the east, one of the mightiest black elf encampments in all of Glorantha. Despite their names, they are not actually Aldryami, but instead fungoid-based life forms.

ANT, GIANT

Typical Abilities: Act in Unison 10w, Bite with Mandibles 2w, Chitter 2w, Climb 18, Dig 18, Large 5w, Smell Foe 5w, Sting 18

Weapons and Armor: giant mandibles +2, painful sting +3, hard exoskeleton +3

Tactics: *Giant ants are not particularly intelligent. However, the more of them that are encountered together, the more intelligent they seem to be. A solitary ant will most likely blithely ignore any other creatures it encounters unless attacked. However, groups of a half-dozen or more can be more dangerous, guarding territory, attacking weak parties, etc., while a group of a dozen or more can be quite devious, driving opponents into a trap, tricking foes into attacking each other, or otherwise engaging in trickery usually associated with true sentience. The most intelligent ants sometimes form symbiotic relationships with giant butterflies, attacking prey that has been stunned by the butterflies' wings.*

BEE, GIANT

Typical Abilities: Bite with Mandibles 18, Fly 10w, Sense Intruder 18, Spot Giant Flower 2w, Stamina 10w, Sting with Poisonous Stinger 18w*

Weapons and Armor: mandibles +1, stinger +3

Tactics: *Giant bees will not attack unless provoked, either by an attack upon a giant bee or the harming of a pollen-bearing flower. Typically giant bees will swarm, with up to 4 bees able to attack a man-sized target without cover. They will usually bite for a couple of attacks, and then begin stinging if their opponents have not fled. The bee hives at Grubfarm and Trollhive are relatively small by the standards of their smaller cousins, with 100-300 bees being the typical size of the hive. When guarding their homes, these bees will typically begin stinging at once.*

* A giant bee's stinger can be torn out of the bee's body when it hits a target; after each hit, make a Stamina test for the bee against a 20w resistance. If it fails, the bee cannot sting again and dies at the end of the contest.

BUTTERFLY, GIANT

Typical Abilities: Confuse with Colorful Wings 10w, Fly 18w, Sense with Antennae 10w, Spot Giant Flower 2w, Stab with Proboscis 18, Stamina 10w

Weapons and Armor: proboscis +1

Tactics: *Giant Butterflies are in no way fighters. If cornered or trapped they might try to stab an aggressor with their giant proboscis, but this is solely an act of desperation. Their best defense is usually pure defense. A butterfly might be able to camouflage itself with its wings or else confuse an attacker due to the placement of false eyespots or blinding patterns.*

If a hero sees a giant butterfly, he should be more worried about what is nearby. Most of the giant butterflies in the Vale of Flowers are tended by Gorakiki Uz, who are usually much more quarrelsome than their charges. Of the giant butterflies who are instead free spirits, many have formed symbiotic relationships with giant ants. These ants protect the butterflies and sometimes attack prey that have been stung by the butterfly's wings.

CATERPILLAR, GIANT

Typical Abilities: Communicate via Vibrations 18, Confuse with Coloration 18, Detect Tasty Vegetation 18, Deploy Silk Line 2w, Eat Insects 18, Eat Vegetation 10w, Hungry 10w, Swam 5w
Weapons and Armor: hairy bristles +1, mandible +1

Tactics: Giant caterpillars have only one interest: eating. They prefer vegetation (which unfortunately include Aldryami), but some devour other insects as well. They may sometimes work together, swarming over a tasty morsel, but such cooperation is almost accidental. Like giant butterflies, giant caterpillars are sometimes found working with giant ants.

ELF, BLACK (VORALAN)

Typical Abilities: Brew Fungus Potions 15, Farm Fungus 2w, Fungus Sense 18, Hesh Fighting 15, Hide 2w, Know Fungus 18w, Passively Resist 18, See in the Dark 18, Sling Fighting 15, Speak to Outsider 5
Weapons and Armor: hesh (imbued with various fungus potion effects) +0, sling +1

Tactics: Voralans typically do not fight. They're more likely to passively resist, waiting for their foes to flee. However, if backed into a corner (or if they must protect their crops), Voralans are likely to use their fungus potions to devastating effects. They can dip their heshes into potions, or alternatively sling potions in grenade-like bombs. These potions can have a variety of effects including damage, hallucinations, poison, and more.

ELF, FLOWER (HALANI)

Typical Abilities: Acute Hearing 2w, Agile 5w, Commune with Flowers 2w, Elfsense 15, Entrance with Beauty 18, Heal Flowers 2w, Know Exactly Where Sun is 2w, Know Flowers 8w, Know Vale 10w, Make Friends 18
Weapons and Armor: None

Tactics: Flower elves are pure innocents, utterly unsuited for the more violent arts. If faced with combat they may try and make friends or entrance their foes, but they are just as likely to flee. However, if any flower elves are threatened, green elves are likely to descend upon the people foolish enough to do so very quickly.

ELF, GREEN (VRONKALI)

Typical Abilities: Acute Hearing 18, Agile 2w, Bow Fighting 2w, Elfsense 1w, Hard Bark 5w, Heal Plants 2w, Know Plants 10w, Know Vale 5w, Military Mind 18, Plant Lore 18, Spear Fighting 18, Walk Silently in Vale 2w
Weapons and Armor: bark armor +2, spear +2, elf bow +3

Tactics: Green elves will usually be alerted to the presence of outsiders in the Vale by their elfsense. A military unit will then typically be sent to investigate. Intruders will have the opportunity to explain themselves, and anyone who does not seem intent on hurting the Vale will be allowed to stay. However, if intruders fail to give good enough reasons for their presence—and if they fail to leave if asked—then the elves will not hesitate to attack. They will attack will military organization and efficiency, striking from distance with bows and using plants to trip and trick their opponents whenever possible.

SPRITE

Typical Abilities: Aerobatics 12, Elfsense 12, Fly Fast 18, Know Flowers 10w, Mischievous 15, Sling Foes 12, Set Traps 15, Small 20
Weapons and Armor: sling +1
Magic: Invisibility 5w*

Tactics: Sprites only fight if they are forced to. Their preference is to fly away when faced with "big 'uns". If the flowers of the Vale seem to be in danger, sprites will fly to the nearest Flower Aldryami for assistance rather than trying to resolve the issue themselves. These elves will then typically look for help from the Vronkali.

* Sprites do not face the normal D+60 penalty for using this inherently difficult magic.

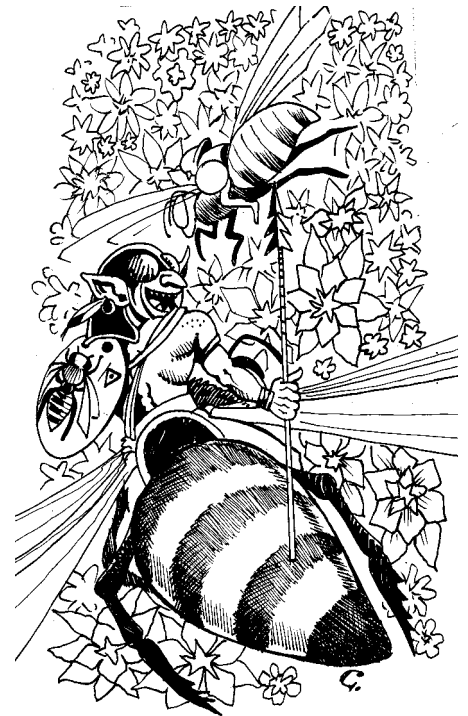
TROLL, GENERAL

Full stats on trolls can be found in the HeroQuest rules (pg. 218). Dark trolls and trollkins are both common. The most unusual trolls found in the Vale of Flowers are the giant bee-riding enlo of the Troll Hive.

TROLL, GIANT BEE-RIDING ENLO

Typical Abilities: Digest Anything 1w, Dodge 2w, Fear Sunlight 18, Hungry 2w, Nimble 14, Rapier and Small Shield Combat 2w, Resist Poison 10, Ride Giant Bee 2w, Scan from Sky 18
Weapons and Armor: Rapier and Small Shield +3

Tactics: The bee-riding enlo of the Troll Hive act as a unit, swarming down on a single enemy, encouraging their giant bees to bite while they swashbuckle against their foes.



Points and Places

The majority of the Vale of Flowers is a forest of giant flowers. Various species of flowers cluster together in specific areas, though these locations vary from year to year. Hundreds of paths twist and turn through the stems, which support beautiful blossoms overhead. However, there are a handful of permanent locales within the Vale.

Contest: Find One's Way Through the Vale

Appropriate Abilities: Know Vale (+20), Scouting, Track (-5), Wilderness Survival (-10)

Resistance: 18

Complete Victory: The hero may navigate Vale without confusion for the rest of the season.

Major or Minor Victory: The hero arrives at his destination within a reasonable amount of time.

Marginal Victory or Tie: The hero takes two times as long as expected to arrive at his destination.

Marginal, Minor, or Major Defeat: The hero wanders around the Vale for a day before stumbling out.

Complete Defeat: The hero arrives at a random place in the Vale.

Aldryami Village

Unlike their green elf kin, the flower elves cluster in a small village located within the Vale of Flowers. The village is built amid and amongst the flowers in this region, which are mostly daisies, intermixed with a few rogue red lupines. At any time there

are about 40 small huts in this area, which are dwellings for the Halani, as well as a half-dozen communal storage areas for tools, weapons, seeds, and food.

The structures are all made out of fallen vegetation. The wood comes from the nearby Flower Woods. Sturdy giant flower petals are stretched over the wooden frames to form walls and a roof; because of the temperate nature of the area, some Aldryami do not even bother with walls, only keeping a roof overhead to protect themselves from rain. Additional fallen flower petals are used throughout the village for decoration; they have been collected from across the Vale and thus provide a colorful assembly.

The flower elves live by the cycles of the day, and so the village awakes every morning promptly at dawn and retires promptly at dusk; the elves are able to sense the movements of the sun, and so are not thrown off their cycle by the crawling shadows of Dagori Inkarth. Approximately 150 flower elves live in the village, though only 25-50 are here at any time. Their leader is Naf Yellow Daisy.

Naf Yellow Daisy

Naf is a flower Aldryami related to the giant common daisies of the Vale, as her name suggests. They are among the shorter of the giant flowers of the Vale, as is Naf, who is just over 1 meter tall herself.

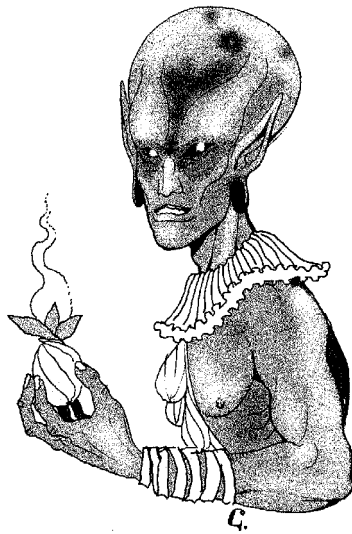
As with most Aldryami, Naf's "leadership" is primarily a façade for the outer world. Though she sits upon the Council of the Flower Woods, she makes most decisions in communion with all the flower elves. At the Aldryami Village, Naf treats with any non-Aldryami who would speak with the flower elves, though these visits are quite infrequent, as the Vronkali of the Vale do all they can to keep the flower elves secret. Naf herself disagrees with this policy, and would prefer to show the world the more open and friendly face of her people in the hope of changing the reputation of Aldryami as grim warriors.

Keywords: Diplomat 5w, Initiate of Aldrya 2w

Significant Abilities: Commune with Flowers 12w, Diplomacy 10w, Elfsense 5w, Entrance with Beauty 10w, Know Vale 18w, Learn What Others Feel 5w, Learn What Others Know 10w, Make Friends 18w

Traits: Friendly 5w, Honest 18

Blackflower Dale



This corner of the Vale of Flowers is one of the chillier local climates, tending to have temperatures no warmer than nearby Dagori Inkarth. It is thus home to a number of rugged flowers including: the mist flower, a bright-blue tightly clumped plant; the false indigo, a purple lupine-like flower; and flax, a blue wide-petaled bloom.

The overwhelming blue and purple coloration of these plants almost hides their innate corruption. Most of the flowers are mottled with black fungus, particularly on their eastward faces. This is the result of spores drifting from the fungoid Sporewood some 25 kilometers to the east. The flowers are not just infected by the fungoid spores; they have actually been thoroughly hybridized and are neither fully Aldryami or Voralan.

Although the elves of the Vale of Flowers initially tried to destroy these hybrid growths, followers of She Who is Two in One, the Aldryami goddesses of the dawn, have convinced the Council to let these growths live on as a new joining of the Grower and the Taker. However, the edges of the Blackflower Dale are clearly marked; red-dyed vines tied around trees mark a clear perimeter, and any fungus growths beyond these boundaries are ruthlessly exterminated by the Aldryami Gardeners. Purposefully bringing fungus deeper into the Vale can be punishable by death.

Black elves from the Sporewood also occasionally visit the Blackflower Dale, though their own reasons for this interest are unknown, as they are not of the Grower. Humans often mistake these Voralans for elves, but in actuality these fungus men are creatures of darkness which came up from Hell with the trolls. They do not recognize any of the Elf gods, and instead practice dark rituals to Voralan, their goddess of darkness. They are strange, inscrutable, and almost always appear in groups of three or more.

Caravan Walk

This path begins at the Giant's Walk and runs from there north through the Vale of Flowers, past Flower Camp, then up toward the Rockwood Mountains, where it eventually worms its way to Balazar in the general vicinity of Dykene.

The walk within the Vale of Flowers has clearly been created and supported by powerful magic. No flowers grow in a space exactly 3 meters wide, though they do slowly arch overhead, forming a beautiful tunnel through which caravan carts can easily be pushed.

The walk is said to have been created by Joh Mith using the magic of Issaries, supported by the Flower Elves. It is indeed Joh who uses the path, traveling every Fire and Earth season from Balazar to Dragon Pass and back, via this route.

Joh Mith

Mith is an overweight, jovial priest of Issaries, the Orlanthei god of trade. A born leader, Mith is very charismatic, able to exhort his followers to do almost anything. He greatly enjoys traveling and meeting new people. He may offer trades of goods simply for stories he's never heard or tales of lands that he has not yet seen.

Keywords: : Devotee of Issaries 10w2, Merchant 18w

Significant Abilities: Appreciate Good Food 10w, Draw Laughter from an Uncomfortable Situation 12w, Enjoy Life 3w2, Know Balazar 18w, Know Dragon Pass 5w, Know Vale of Flowers 10w, Notice Details 12w, Orate to Followers 15w, Staff Fighting 8w, Trade 5w2

Traits: Curious 15w2, Jovial 10w2

Weapons and Armor: staff +2

Magical Abilities: Communication affinity 3w2, Merchant affinity 8w2, Travel affinity 5w2 from the subcult of Gultha the Wanderer. See Storm Tribe pp.109-122 for full information on Issaries.

The Caravan. Mith's caravan typically consists of about a dozen mules carrying goods. Heading southward they carry furs, and spices of Balazaran manufacture, plus dwarven weapons and other metal goods and rare seeds to give to the Aldryami. Heading north they carry scrolls, weapons, and civilized goods. As noted below, Mith often picks up Aldryami goods at Flower Camp.

Mith typically leads the caravan. He is accompanied by his wife, Zix Porub, his troll bodyguard Xigxag, additional merchants, and a half-dozen guards.

The Cutting Zone

To the southwest of the Vale of Flowers, the valley ever so slowly drifts downward until it finally reaches some of the small rivers that run into Skyfall Lack from the Sheep of Luck Hills. This area is a generally barren and desolate wasteland. Giant flowers, and in fact anything green, is ruthlessly cut down by the trollkin of the First Enlo Gardener Battalion.

This army of trollkin, entirely run by trollkin with no full troll supervisors, is usually about 50 members strong. Their current leader, Gor Daisydeath, is determined to “kill green foes”—as his orders have been repeatedly stated. (One year he fought a running battle with Joh Mith who had mistakenly purchased a wagon that was painted dark green.) As might be expected, almost all of the trollkins’ cutting is done at night.

The northeastern edge of the Cutting Zone is marked by an irregular, occasional line of spears with trollkin skulls upon them. The Aldryami of the Vale of Flowers have agreed to the existence of the First Enlo Gardener Battalion at the urgings of Cragspider herself, but when the trollkins accidentally wander across the designated line, they are dealt with quickly, harshly, and without question.

Gor Daisydeath

Gor was trained to hate and fear the color green from a young age. He’ll destroy it whenever he can, bringing the full strength of the First Enlo Gardener Battalion to the task. The sad thing is that Gor isn’t as stupid as his obsession would suggest. He knows that he’s been conditioned to hate the color green (though he certainly wouldn’t use the word “conditioned”). He’d love to get rid of the compulsion, and if any hero were to suggest they could help, it might be the exact wedge necessary to turn him and his Battalion against Cragspider. (Not that she’d notice.)

Keywords: Warrior 18

Significant Abilities: Destroy Green 5w, Dodge 2w, Sword and Shield Fighting 3w

Traits: Fear Cragspider 10w, Fear Sunlight 2w, Hate Green 18w, Hate Hatred of Green 8w

The other 50 members of the First Enlo Gardener Battalion use the stats for Typical Warrior Trollkin (HeroQuest p. 218).

Flower Camp

The Flower Camp is a true rarity in Glorantha: it’s a village grown by elves for use by trolls and humans. The camp was built by the green elves of the Flower Woods in much the same style as the Aldryami Village; it is likely that the green elves learned the architectural style from their flower brethren. Flower petals are stretched over wood frames, producing a colorful spectacle. There are approximately 10 huts here, plus a small stable.

Members of the Bee Tribe from Troll Hive make up most of the inhabitants of the Flower Camp. This includes many dark troll workers and their trollkin helpers. These workers are called “stemmers” because they strip the leaves and petals off of flowers, make various potions, poultices, and soups from them, then float the huge stems down the nearby river, to Skyfall Lake (as part of a regular trade agreement between the Bee Tribe and Cragspider).

The elves work carefully with the trolls to identify which plants need pruning, though sometimes rogue trolls cut plants that have not been so identified—causing tension. The number of trolls in Flower Camp swells during Dark Season, when they stem numerous flowers that are killed by the cold or storms.

Flower Camp is located on the Caravan Walk, above the Giant’s Walk. Thus, its population swells one other time a year, when Joh Mith’s caravan stops in the Camp on its way to Dragon Pass. This occurs in late Fire Season or early Earth Season; golden eagles bring advance word of Joh’s coming.

In advance of Joh’s arrival, dozens of Vronkali from the Flower Woods begin to camp among the flowers that surround the Camp. When Joh arrives, his horses are stabled, then the trolls of the Camp give way to green elf leaders, who offer a ritual of greeting; in return Joh gives gifts to both the elves and the trolls, as thanks for the safe travel that he receives through the Vale. Joh Mith usually tries to find rare seeds to offer to the elves in this ritual.

Afterward, Joh Mith always opens his caravan for trading in the hours between the end of the ritual and dusk (usually a couple of hours total). Trolls are now given first priority for trading, then the elves may step up again to bargain. Following the trading with the Vronkali of the Flower Woods, outsiders are allowed to trade as well. These outsiders usually include green elves from the Redwood, trolls and black elves from the rest of Dagori Inkarth, and even the occasional beast rider from Prax. Traders do not usually come from Skyfall Lake or lands west because Joh Mith’s caravan route naturally carries him in this direction.

Contest: Trade Joh Mith for a Unique Item

Appropriate Abilities: Bargain, Intimidate (-20), Negotiate (-10), Trade

Resistance: 18w

Complete Victory: The hero acquires the unique item he sought.

Major or Minor Victory: The hero acquires the unique item, but only at great cost.

Marginal Victory or Tie: The hero is offered the unique item if he takes on a notable quest.

Marginal, Minor, or Major Defeat: Joh Mith is unwilling to trade the unique item.

Complete Defeat: The hero and his party are asked to leave Flower Camp.

Though Joh does not trade with the Aldryami on his return trip, toward the middle of Earth Season, he does camp in the Flower Camp for the evening and takes part in an Aldryami ritual of thanks and goodbye. The trolls pretty much ignore this one.

Giant’s Walk

This walk cuts across the Vale like a scar. Almost perfectly straight, it runs from the Ridge of Thieves in the northeast to the Cutting Zone in the southwest. For most of its length it runs along the southeastern edge of the North Vale. The Walk is a full five meters across and the ground has been compacted tightly, so that movement across the Walk is easy and rapid. Everyone around the Vale agrees that the Giant’s Walk was originally made by giants, traveling down from the Rockwoods to visit Dragon Pass. Many legends talk about how these fierce creatures were once the bane of this area, spreading destruction and sorrow out of negligence and amorality rather than malice. Fortunately, giants now walk this path only rarely and seem more intent on traveling to their destination than harassing the Vale.

No flowers grow upon this path, nor do any overhang it. The giants explain this thus: “We no drop seeds here. No flowers grow.” The Aldryami say: “The giants are sprouts of the Taker and long ago turned the earth into stone. Nothing could grow upon such sterility, except the biting machines of the earth-people, and we do not allow such here.” Uz say: “Giants’ feets stinks. Flowers dies away.”

The Caravan Walk ends in the Giant’s Walk. Every year Joh Mith’s caravan travels along the Caravan Walk then the Giant’s Walk on its way to Dragon Pass, and every year it returns via the same path.

The Giant’s Walk is also, quite literally, the frequent stomping ground of Zorgur Belk, the troll Gardener (and also, most oddly, a consulting investigator). If met, he will be even more adamant about caution for the vegetation

of the Vale than the average elf.

See Caravan Walk and Flower Camp for more information on Joh Mith. See "The Remarkable Zorgur Belk, Uzq." In Tradetalk #16 for more information on Zorgur.

Grubfarm (Troll Garden)

This troll farm, located approximately 10 kilometers east of the Vale of Flowers, is primarily notable here because it is another source of the Giant Bees. The owner, Protosome Blackbite, also raises many beetles for use as guards, warriors, and dinner.

The Grubfarm is an occasional source of tension: when the trolls of the Troll Hive begin to overreach, isolationists among the Aldryami point out that Grubfarm might be another source of the giant pollination that the Vale requires.

(They might be a little more reluctant to speak up for Grubfarm if they knew that Protosome had been holding Halalo Leaftop, an Aldryami from the Redwood Forest, captive for many years to help raise valuable produce.)

Protosome Blackbite. Blackbite, the ruler of Grubfarm, is a Dark Troll initiate of Kygor Litor. He has many trollkin warriors and workers. They all can be generated from HeroQuest, pages 218-219 if needed.

Halamalao Village

This is an area of ritual significance for those Vronkali who garden within the Vale on their week-long tours. Unlike the Aldryami Village or even the Flower Camp, this is not a true village, but rather a meeting place. The Vronkali tend to sleep and live among the flowers when they work here.

As a result the Village consists mainly of an area cleared of flowers (though they still loom over it, forming a natural dome of bright foliage). The area within is set with tables grown up from the ground that are used during weekly Aldryami celebrations.

Every Fireday, as they end their week of service to the Vale, Vronkali Gardeners come together here for a celebration of Halmalao. Afterward they travel to the Sunflower Altar, just a few miles away. There they wait for the dawn and once they see that Halmalao has successfully returned to the sky, they disperse. Their week of service to the Vale is done; there will already be replacements from the Woods on their way.

Due to the itinerant nature of the Vronkali in the Vale, there is no regular priest to lead these ceremonies. Instead they are a true community effort. The only exception is in Harmony week of Fire Season, when the Lightson of the Woods' Council comes to especially bless the ceremony.

The Ridge of Thieves (The Garden Wall)

To the northeast the Vale ends in a long ridge of granite. Its top is at times as sharp as a knife. The Ridge is one of the primary divisions between Uz land and Aldryami land and is thus a point of contention. There is not even any agreement on what the ridge is called. The Aldryami call it The Garden Wall, while to the Uz it is the Ridge of Thieves, over which they say the Aldryami come to steal their best bugs and fungus.

There are similarly disagreements over how it came to be. Some Uz say, "We builds wall to keep out thieving elves who like all our stuff they shouldn't and try to steal it away." Others state, "It wall built by wind lovers when they steal Uz shoes!" The Aldryami claim, "The Wall was made for us by Ga, who raised up the earth to hold us within and protect us in her embrace." If anyone asked them, the giants would say, "Oops! Me trip!"

The southwestern side of the ridge is guarded by elite Vronkali units. Their main task is to keep dark trolls and trollkins from the less trusted Uz tribes out. Humans and black elves are allowed to pass if the Vronkali believe they are not working for Dagori Inkarth interests. Similarly the northeastern side of the ridge is guarded by dark trolls. They are more belligerent than the Aldryami, but also a lot more careless in their guarding.

The Vronkali stats above can be used for the elite elf guards, though they should be given +10 in most abilities. The dark troll hunter stats from HeroQuest pg. 218 may be used for the Uz warriors, again with an across-the-board +10.

Sprite Settlements

Scattered throughout the Vale are at least four different Sprite settlements; there may be more. These are entirely aerial villages, usually built about three meters off the ground, not far beneath the topmost blossoms of the flowers of the area. Vines strung from flower to flower form the foundations of these village; flower petals are tied across these to form walkways, plazas, and the floors of dwellings. The dwellings themselves are largely open air; the overhead flowers provide much of the protection from the elements.

Each settlement houses between one and five hundred sprites. The villages are almost entirely communal, with sleeping dwellings, eating areas, and storage all entirely shared. Sprites may exchange dwellings with each other entirely on a whim.

One of the few times Sprites will fight is if they need to protect their villages. In this case, dozens or hundreds of tiny but painful sling bullets can quite suddenly begin raining down upon the heads of unfortunate heroes. The Sprites are suspicious, though not innately hostile, to non-plant visitors that come to their settlements, but this will quickly move to

aggression if they are given any reason for such.

Sprites do occasionally trade with outsiders, and have even been known to accompany outsiders while upon special quests.

Sunflower Altar

The center of divinity within the Vale of Flowers is also located at almost exactly the center of the Vale itself. It is at one of the highest points in the valley, sitting atop the ridge that divides the Vale in two. It overlooks the Giant's Walk, which runs beneath the ridge, and is just a few miles from the Halamalao Village, which lies nearby in the North Vale.

The Altar itself is a raised circle of hard-packed earth, approximately 10 meters across, which is said (by the elves) to be the shield that Ga raised up when she took the fallen Halamalao into her embrace. It is surrounded by the greatest sunflowers in the Vale (and thus the greatest flowers in the Vale). One of these sunflowers is the home to the seemingly immortal Sunflower Dryad, who often hovers near the shrine itself. This plain, natural shrine might not be of much interest to outsiders, but to the Aldryami it is deeply meaningful.

Remarkably, the Altar is no more guarded than the rest of the Vale. However, if any damage were done to it, the spirit in the Altar would immediately communicate with all the Vronkali patrols in the Vale, soon bringing many defenders.

There are two events of note that occur at the Altar.

First a strange pulse of light (not fire) occasionally shoots forth from the Torch in the Redwood, meanders through the sky of the Eastern Rockwoods and finally, inevitably comes down at the Altar. This occurs on average once a season, except in Fire Season, when it occurs three or four times. It occurs on Fireday about a quarter of the time. Those present at the Altar when a pulse comes to earth have been known to acquire magical light powers.

Contest: Determine When the Next Pulse Will Land at the Altar

Appropriate Abilities: Elfsense, Mythology of (Light God) -20, Worship (Light God) -20

Resistance: 10w2

Complete Victory: The hero knows exactly when the pulse will next land.

Major or Minor Victory: The hero knows when the next pulse will land within a week.

Marginal Victory or Tie: The hero knows when the next pulse will land within five weeks.

Marginal, Minor, or Major Defeat: The hero cannot ascertain when the pulse will next land.

Complete Defeat: The hero determines a wrong date, accurate within a week.

Contest: Acquire a Light Power from

the Pulse

Appropriate Abilities: Elfsense, Concentration -30, Worship (Light God) -10

Resistance: 18w

Complete Victory: The hero acquires a light feat of his choice.

Major or Minor Victory: The hero acquires a light feat of the narrator's choice.

Marginal Victory or Tie: The hero acquires a light feat of the narrator's choice that cannot be cemented; it is usable only during this story.

Marginal, Minor, or Major Defeat: The hero does not acquire a light power.

Complete Defeat: The hero is cast out by his impertinence. He may never again try to acquire powers from the pulse and may be soon set upon by lumes (light elementals) or other light spirits, at the narrator's preference.

Second, each week on Fireday the Vronkali gardeners visit the Altar as part of a ritual, staying here through the night to see the dawn. Some groups of Vronkali visit the Altar at other times if they have sensed that a pulse is coming, but these visits are more sporadic and more poorly attended.

A guardian known as Small Sun inhabits the Altar. The elves claim it is the remnant of Halamalao that could not go beneath the earth, while most others would see it as a small light spirit. Aldryami within the Vale may use Small Sun's functions, to a maximum of their Elfsense value, as if it were a Great Tree. The Small Sun does not take on members that are not Aldryami, except in extraordinary circumstances.

Altar Guardian "Small Sun"

✦ Awareness—See in Dark 15w.

♁ Blessing—Maintain Blossoms in Winter 18w.

♠ Defense—Blind Those Who Would Harm Us 10w.

Sunflower Dryad

The Sunflower Dryad is tied to the tallest and strongest sunflower in the Vale of Flowers. It looms over the Sunflower Altar, though it is planted almost fifteen yards away and has been the sole witness to every pulse that has landed on the Altar, ever.

The Sunflower Dryad's first memory is, indeed, of the pulse. She remembers it falling to the earth, against a gray sky, and just as it seeped down into the ground, suddenly there was a new light in the far east, a ruby red glow which replaced the embers of the pulse. It was the first Dawn after the Darkness.

Neither the Sunflower Dryad nor her sunflower has shown the least sign of age since that time. She is still as young and vigorous as ever, and some elves whisper that she alone escaped the power

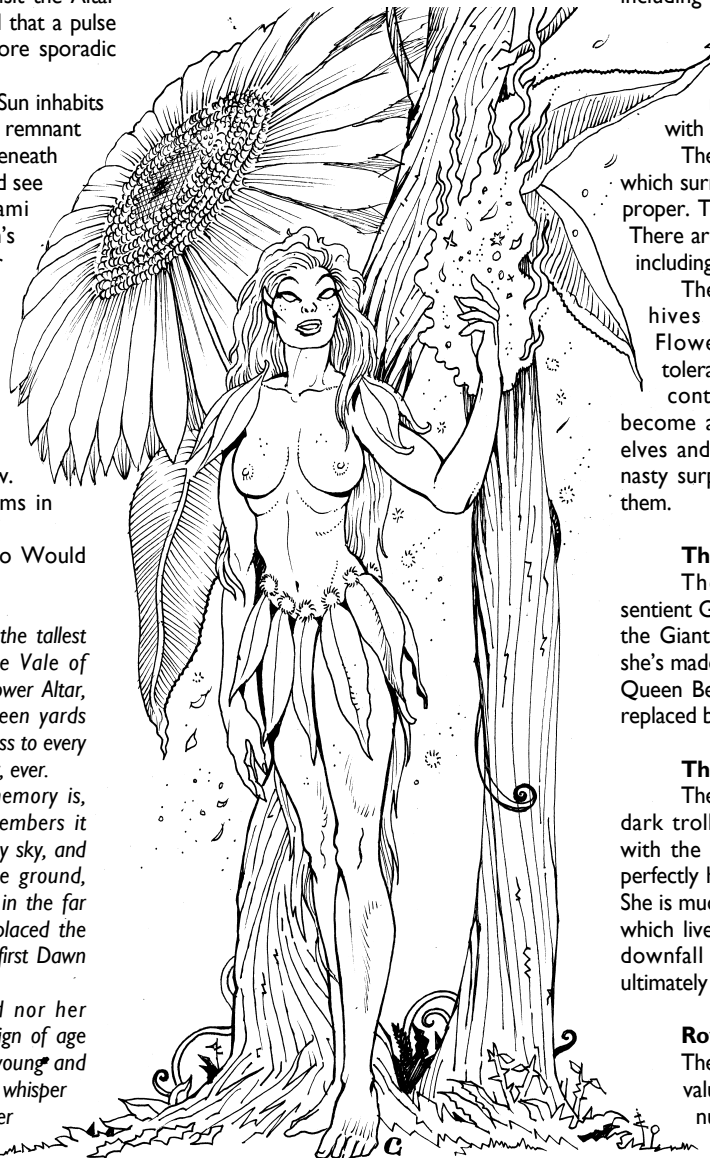
of Ferotha, because she was born at the exact moment of the Compromise of the four twins.

Though untouched by physical age, the Sunflower Dryad is very old in spirit. Sometimes she seems overly weighed by everything she has known and everything she has seen. To her, it is a curse to never be welcomed back into the Cycle, but one that she suffers gladly, for she feels like she is the spirit of the entire Rockwoods.

The Sunflower Dryad is willing to speak with outsiders, though the Aldryami often try and keep others from her. She is always seeking to hear of new things, but in 1500 years, she has heard and known almost everything. This has left her somewhat jaded.

Keywords: Devotee of Aldrya 10w2, Philosopher 5w2

Significant Abilities: Acute Hearing 15w2, Elfsense 6w3, Give Air of Authority 6w2, Guess at Others' Desires 12w2, Have Seen it Before 18w, Move Silently



18w2, Persuasive 7w2, Remember Things More than 100 Years Old 10w, Think About Others 3w3
Traits: Calm 8w2, Jaded 10w, Protective 17w2

The Sun Seekers: This Hero Band of sun worshipers is destined to visit the Sunflower Altar during the Hero Wars. As they watch the pulse drop down into the earth, they will gain a clue as to what might have happened to the white elves when Halamalao dropped down into the ground. For more information on them, see Tradetalk #16.

Troll Hive

The Troll Hive lies slightly beyond the Vale of Flowers proper, at the intersection of the Troll and Cholanti Rivers. This enormous structure was once a huge, jutting rock shelf made of a porous stone, but has over the centuries been converted into a huge bee hive, with walls lined with beeswax.

Upper levels are used to store food, including pollen and honey. Lower levels are used to store brood, including eggs and larvae. The workers live below that, and at the lowest level of the nest dwells the Queen Bee, along with her stores of royal jelly.

The Uz of the Bee Tribe live in caverns which surround and interconnect with the nest proper. They are ruled by the Bee Queen Uz. There are many dark trolls and trollkins alike, including the feared giant-bee riding ento.

There are three or four much smaller hives located in the Southern Vale of Flowers, which the elves have been tolerant of thus far. However, if their sizes continue to increase, they will quickly become a point of contention between the elves and trolls. The smaller hives can be a nasty surprise for heroes who stumble upon them.

The Queen Bee

The Queen of the Giant Bees is a sentient Giant Bee. She has great plans for how the Giant Bees will take over Genertela, but she's made little progress in them because each Queen Bee dies every ten years or so, to be replaced by one of her children.

The Bee Queen

The ruler of the Uz of the Troll Hive is a dark troll. She maintains excellent relations with the elves of the Flower Woods, and is perfectly happy with the status of things there. She is much less happy with the Gorakiki tribes which live nearby and has been plotting their downfall for some time. The Bee Queen's ultimately goal is to become the Insect Queen.

Royal Jelly

The royal jelly of the Troll Hive is very valuable. This is firstly because it's very nutritious: a single spoonful is as filling

as an entire meal. It's also very tasty. Nobles in the Lunar Empire have lately been sending patrols to try and acquire royal jelly from the smaller hives in the Vale, to very limited success.

The Flower Woods

The Flower Woods are a small but typical green elf wood. The trees are entirely coniferous. White firs and a number of species of pines grow 25 to 30 meters tall, covering the entire forest with dense shade. Junipers and other small shrubs cover the ground, though the Aldryami clear much of it away. On the southeastern side of the Woods, hardy giant heathers struggle in from the Vale before slowly fading away further into the Woods.

The Flower Woods have natural boundaries on all sides. To the southeast it runs into the Vale as trees become slowly less common and flowers more so. To the west are the Black Dragon Mountains, which the Aldryami purposefully avoid for fear of bringing down Cragspider's wrath, though their Seed Hills lie perilously close to the lands that Cragspider claims. To the north is the Scorched Valley where everything is burnt and ashen.

The Aldryami of the Woods are usually very unfriendly to outsiders who "invade" their forest. A clearly marked path leads to the Council Glade, and no one other than elves is allowed beyond that Glade except by special invitation. Except in the area around the Seed Hills, the Aldryami will usually give intruders the opportunity to leave peacefully before attacking.

Points and Places

Because the Vronkali of the Vale of Flowers live among the Flower Woods, there are numerous Aldryami settlements, storage areas, and planting projects scattered throughout the area. The following points and places are simply the most notable ones.

The Aldryami Glade

Located just a short distance from the Council Glade, the Aldryami Glade is an infrequently used meeting place for the major Aldryami tribes of the Eastern Rockwoods. The entire glade is surrounded by tall red pines, but the central area, roughly triangular in shape, is free of trees and thus open to the sky. For reasons known only to them the Aldryami do not bother to keep this area clear of foliage. Vines, roots, and small shrubs still snake throughout the glade, forcing a very careful trek for any not familiar with the song of the woods.

In the center of the glade, apparently growing up from the ground, is an irregularly shaped living table of wood. Fallen logs form seats along the sides of the table. Because of the infrequent nature of meetings here, a blanket of pine needles usually covers the table.

Currently the following leaders are invited to meetings held at the Aldryami Glade: Naf Yellow Daisy of the Halani of the Vale of Flowers; Pintak Sharpneedle of the Vronkali of the Flower Woods; Kipale Redheart of the Redwood Forest to the east; Brown King Elf of the Newbloom Aldryami in the Stinking Forest; Lestus Creeping Ivy of the Tallseed Aldryami in the Stinking Forest; and Lamelata Seedmother of the New Seeds, a

large Hero Band centered in Dragon Pass. In past times a black elf representative of the Sporewood and a representative of the small and wild Sticky Aldryami tribe of the Stinking Forest were also welcome, but Pintak Sharpneedle, the current leader of this Glade, now denies them access because they are removed from Aldrya's song.

The Council Glade

The Council Glade lies just a few miles into the Flower Woods—far enough in to clearly be a part of the Aldryami domain, but far enough out so that outsiders aren't welcomed very far into the wood. A clear path runs to the Glade. It winds and turns about trees and rocks, but still its runs much straighter than most things found in nature. It remains clear of needles and other debris thanks to the constant work of runners and sprites.

The Council Glade itself is a pale reflection of the more secretive Aldryami Glade that lies nearby. A mottled group of firs and pines surrounds it, enjoying none of the homogeneity of the Aldryami Glade. There is likewise a wooden table here surrounded by logs, but it's all dead wood.

The table has been cut into an approximately round form. There are three long benches surrounded it on three sides, with a huge stump on the fourth side. The leader of the forest, currently Pintak Sharpneedle, sits atop the stump, while the other six council members sit on the two adjacent benches. Any one making requests to the Council may either sit upon or stand behind the third bench. (There is room for three or four people on the bench, depending on their size.)



The Council Glade. From left: Gurt, Naf Flower Daisy, Tarith Sharpneedle, Ratati Leatherbark, and Lamelata Seedmother.

There are currently seven members of the Council, forming a relatively traditional grouping other than the Flower Friend, who is always a representative of the Flower Aldryami. They are: Ratati Leatherbark (Vronkali Great Tree and Devotee of Falamal); Aribeth Sweetfruit (Dryad Elder Sister and Devotee of Aldrya); Tarith Sharpneedle (Vronkali High King Elf and Initiate of Aldrya and various Hero Cults); Gurt (Sentient Earth Elemental and Mother Earth of the Council); Somasti Highpraise (Vronkali Lightson and Devotee of Halamalao); Naf Flower Daisy (Flower Elf Flower Friend and Initiate of Aldrya); and Pintak Sharpneedle (Vronkali Gardener and Devotee of Aldrya). There is no seat for He We Name Not: that role is taken by those who attend the Council.

Full stats on Naf Flower Daisy appear in the Aldryami Village of the Vale of Flowers. Of the other members of the Council, it is Pintak with whom heroes are most likely to interact, for he takes command of most Councils and interacts with the outsiders.

Pintak Sharpneedle

It is a rare forest where the Gardeners are ascendant, but that is the case in the Flower Woods, partially due to the forest's unique charge, but partially also due to Pintak's surprisingly independent and confident personality.

Pintak believes that the prime goal of the Woods—and the Aldryami in general—is the nurturing and growth of the vegetative lifeforms of Glorantha. His prime goals toward that means are: the growth of The Great Sapling, the growth of the Flower Aldryami tribe, and the hybridization of many secret species of mosses found only in the deepest, darkest parts of the Flower Woods, where no human would ever tread.

When interacting with others, Pintak's prime goal will be to see how he might continue to grow the Woods, the Vale, and the many species of plants in the world. If a party has to way to offer this, Pintak will come on board. In such a case, Pintak's sapline kin Tarith takes up the matter if it has to do with the military while the Flower Aldryami Naf Flower Daisy becomes the lead otherwise.



Aribeth Sweetfruit, Somasti Highpraise, Pintak Sharpneedle

Keywords: Devotee of Aldrya 18w, Gardener 10w2

Significant Abilities: Elfsense 18w, Hard Bark 4w2, Heal Plants 18w2, Keen Senses 5w2, Know Local Area 10w2, Know Plants 16w2, Prune Plants to Make Them Stronger 15w2, Put the Good of the Forest First 3w2, Recognize Growth Opportunities 14w2, Walk Silently in Forest 18w, Wilderness Survival 5w2

Traits: Stubborn 15w2, Unrelenting 12w2

Contest: Seek a Boon from the Council

Appropriate Abilities: Bargain (-20), Intimidate (-40), Negotiate, Trade (-20)

Resistance: 18w to 18w4 depending on cost to Aldryami.

Typical Modifiers: +0 to +40 if the hero brings rare seeds or clippings.

Complete Victory: The hero receives the boon he requested.

Major or Minor Victory: The hero receives the boon, but is in debt to the Aldryami.

Marginal Victory or Tie: The hero is refused the boon unless he can first prove he is a friend of the Aldryami.

Marginal, Minor, or Major Defeat: The Aldryami reject the boon and escort the hero and friends out of the Woods.

Complete Defeat: The hero and his party are escorted out of the Woods and told never to return.

The Great Sapling

Located at the southeastern-most edge of the Seed Hill sits the Great Sapling. This hybrid pine is not named for its size, for it is currently only 7 meters tall, but rather for its potential.

The seed for the Great Sapling was recovered upon a heroquest just a dozen years ago. Although it has not been the subject of any grafting, branches from many different pine trees grow upon the Great Sapling, including the native red and white pines and many pines from much warmer-weather climates.

Pintak Sharpneedle believes that he is growing a new Great Tree that will truly unify the voices of the Aldryami of both the Vale and the nearby Stinking Forest. He is incorrect, and as more varied branches grow upon the Great Sapling, including deciduous branches and even branches from lost plants, he will realize that the answer is much stranger, more dangerous, and perhaps more beautiful.

The entire population of the Flower Woods would fight to defend the Great Sapling with their lives.

A HeroQuest Story Seed

The Great Sapling marks a magical connection to the Hero Planes. Though the Aldryami myths are usually hard to access on the Other Side—because of their rare connections with other myths and the more “abstract” nature of the gods—that is not true here. In fact, any one trying to cross over into Aldryami myths from the site of the Great Sapling gains a +20 modifier for

Story Seeds

♣ Bug Hunt

A Lhankor Mhy scholar hires the heroes to study the giant insects of the Vale of Flowers. Studying their lifestyles would be hard enough, but he also wants some larvae from the various species and even some royal jelly taken from the Troll Hive itself.

Fortunately, he knows of some elves that might be willing to guide the heroes in this task if they're allowed some time for mischief of their own—for these young Vronkali don't appreciate the old agreements made with the children of the Taker.

♣ Mith Directions

Joh Mith lost much of his caravan upon reaching Dragon Pass this year (for reasons that could perhaps lead to another story seed).

He hires the players to escort him back to Balazar. This can offer a fun introduction to the Vale of Flowers, as players fight off giant bees, meet Flower Aldryami, get tormented by sprites, and finally engage in an Aldryami ritual at Flower Camp.

Story Seeds

☞ Pruning a Graft

Strange things are afoot in Pavis, as old, lost plants begin to grow in the Garden. This return to the past is not under the control of the Aldryami, but the Pavis woodlord Rohir Oaklimb believes he has found a ritual that will allow him to manage the ancient magic. However, he must have a limb of a tree not yet regrown in the Garden. He has learned of the Great Sapling and believes it will serve his purpose. Thus (through several intermediaries), he has hired the heroes to sneak into the Seed Hills and prune a single limb from the tree; the intermediaries are adamant that the tree must not be otherwise harmed. Unfortunately, the elves of the Vale of Flowers will be very unhappy about this intrusion, and the heroes could find themselves in a struggle between two angry tribes of elves.

☞ Rare Bloom

An otherwise unknown flower has sprouted in the Cutting Zone. The elves wish to save this blossom without directly betraying their ancient understanding with Cragspider. Thus the heroes are hired to first ward off the First Enlo Gardener Battalion and then to directly treat with Cragspider to preserve the flower.

☞ Troll Fights

Some Aldryami in disguise hire the heroes to protect the Garden Wall during Darkness season. Little do the heroes know that the trolls always stage a ritualistic assault on the Vale during the season and that the elves are trying to teach the trolls a lesson without getting their own hands dirty.

accessing Aldryami lands.

This may provide heroes with ample reasons to brave this extremely dangerous area of the Flower Woods, as interacting with the myths of the Aldryami could allow them to bring back rewards very different than that available elsewhere on the Other Side.

Scorched Valley

A barren place where nothing grows. Dark charcoal and soot still covers the Valley. Most of it is just a fine covering, but in some of the depths of the Valley, the ash lies deep enough that one could drown in it.

The elves say, "When Halamalao fell, he burned this land," and thus many visit here once a year, at the end of Fire Season, to remember how even their gods return to the Cycle.

The trolls say, "We burns some chaos there. Then we eats it." Sometimes small parties of trolls trek to the area to collect ash which they then use to line their ovens. They claim it imbues food with a rich, smoky taste.

The giants say, "Our big fire pit. You small things stay out."

The Seed Hills

These hills are full of hundreds of different types of seeds which the Aldryami have collected, traded for, or been given by Joh Mith. Each one represents a different species. Despite the great seeding, not a single plant grows here, other than the Great Sapling to the southeast.

If asked, the Aldryami would simply say these hills are "for the future", but asking this question is unlikely, because the Aldryami kill any intruders to this area on sight.

For More Information

Glorantha is a large place and much has been written of it over the last 30 years. For additional information on some of the places and people located here, you may wish to consult the following references. Most of these are older RuneQuest sources.

Balazar. This large area of Glorantha, and also the home of Joh Mith and his caravan, was originally featured in *Griffin Mountain*, which has recently been reprinted as *Glorantha Classics Volume II*.

Dagori Inkarth. On occasion, Dagori Inkarth has been said to include the Vale of Flowers (and even Skyfall Lake), but this is in incorrect designation. Dagori Inkarth ends as it runs into the Vale of Flowers from the east. The prime source of information on Dagori Inkarth is *Trollpak*. There's also a 10-page description of Grubfarm in *Into the Troll Realms*. *The Book of Drastic Resolutions: Darkness* contains some nice additional detail on Dagori Inkarth, including notes on some of the areas described herein.

Dragon Pass. At least two Aldryami Hero Bands are centered in the Pass. The Unbalanced, a group of Aldryami cut off from

Aldrya, are outlined in *The Unspoken Word #2: The Thieves Arm*, while the New Seeds will appear in my upcoming *HeroQuest Elf Book*.

Redwood Forest. The elves of this region have been mentioned briefly in a few other sources. *Trollpak* contains the earliest description of the elves of the Redwood Forest and their strange veneration for the Torch. *Tradetalk #8* includes my "Legends of Pavis," where one of the myths describes the exodus of some elves from the Redwood Forest to Pavis. There's also a short description of the Redwood in my upcoming *HeroQuest Elf Book*, where it appears as one of the Rockwood Forests.

Skyfall Lake. The other troll land bordering the Vale of Flowers is detailed in *Into the Troll Realms*, with additional details appears in *The Book of Drastic Resolutions: Darkness*.

Sporewood. This black elf enclave was first mentioned in *Trollpak*. The maps in the different editions of *Trollpak* disagree as to where the wood is. I choose to believe that it covered both sides of the northwestern Indigo mountains in the second age, but has now retreated to just the area south of the Castle of Lead, which is probably a story all in its own. I wrote a Second Age description of the wood in *Mongoose Publishing's Signs & Portents #53*.

The Stinking Forest. This forest has probably been the most widely described of all lands in the Rockwoods. Greg Stafford wrote about the nearby Ivory Plinth way back in *Wyrms' Footnotes #3* (reprinted in *The RuneQuest Companion*), while the Bloody Tusk side of the forest was further described in *Elder Secrets*.

John Castellucci provided the first look at the forest proper in *RQA #6*, including a description of the three Aldryami tribes there—the Newblooms, the Tallseed, and the Sticky. I followed this up in *Tradetalk #7*, which describes the history of the land in "Legends of the Westwood" and in my upcoming *HeroQuest Elf Book* which provides a description of the forest as part of the Rockwood Forests.

Finally, for any second age players, there's a full description of the forest in *Elfs: A Guide to the Aldryami*, with a supplemental article on one of its second age heroes in *Signs & Portents #49*.

The Vale. The Vale of Flowers has been mentioned mostly in passing before in sources like *Glorantha* and *Trollpak*. The most detailed previous descriptions appeared in *The Book of Drastic Resolutions: Darkness*. This article builds on that material.

Stats for a few critters in this article were based on *Anaxial's Roster*, with appropriate updating to *HeroQuest* and modification for the Vale done. Look for the *HeroQuest Elf Book* for the Forest description of the Vale of Flowers, to be used if you want to create Aldryami adventurers from the area.



Waves in the Wind

a Praxian Sablerider

by Andreas Pittelkow · Translated by Debora Jarosch · Converted to HeroQuest by Jamie "Trotsky" Revell

Description

Waves is a tall, sinewy warrior whose most obvious attributes are his facial clan-tattoos. Everyone in his clan who slays a chaos creature gets those. Most Praxians know or practise this custom and hence greet Waves with certain respect. Some warriors, especially the young ones, will still challenge him to test his mettle. Most of the time he wears his long, straight hair braided with some condor feathers. He wears leather armour strengthened with bones, and carries a composite bow, a tomahawk and a javelin. None of his weapons are metal, though not because he can't afford them. He follows the way of Waha and uses only what Waha offers to him.

Waves in the Wind is a warrior. He knows the secrets of death, as given by Waha, almost perfectly. He respects no-one lacking skills in riding, fighting and desert survival. He is strong, and a natural leader. He can survive in the desert with virtually nothing for supply. He views the denizens of Pavis, and the Lunars, as lesser creatures, even less human than the Morocanth. His arrogance is justified. No Praxian nomad accepts a weak leader. However, Waves has spent much time in Pavis and with the Lunars. He knows the customs and languages of his enemies. He has the potential to be a very unpleasant opponent of the empire.

History

Waves in the Wind was born over thirty summers ago in the tribe of the Sable riders. He is the third son of the Sable chieftain, Strong Breath. In 1608 S.T., when he was already a sturdy warrior with a wife and five children, the Lunars invaded Prax. His clan fought against the army of the Red Goddess and was nearly wiped out. After that, Waves trekked alone through the steppes as a hunter and scout.

In 1610, the Red Plague came to Prax again. This time, his clan campaigned alongside the Lunars. Waves fought against them and against his own family, instead fighting alongside a gang of Stormbulls. Miraculously, he survived. He fled into the desert, as many Praxians did. Against all odds, he survived alone for two years before he joined some raiding Impala riders.

After a profitable season, he dared to enter Pavis. In this city it was not hard to be hired as a scout, most of the time by the Lunar occupying forces. He avoided entering the old city, called the Rubble, within the old city walls. Mostly, he escorted caravans travelling through the Zola Fel Valley. During this time he learned a lot about the Lunar culture, and eventually found permanent employment with Duke Raus of Rone. He was most impressed by the Duke's daughter, whom he himself freed after some Tuskrider captured her. He learned the Lunar language and customs. He also went to the Devil's Bog and killed a chaos creature, which made him a lot of friends among the local Stormbulls.



Waves in the Wind is Praxian to the core. He considers everyone who does not follow the path of Waha to be a wimp. He despises people who are content to be quiet and unnoticeable. During his travels across the Praxian plains, he alienated some people but also made a lot of friends.

Keywords: Praxian 5W, Nomad 18W, Practitioner of Waha 5W

Significant Abilities: Archery 6W2, Arrogant 3W, Facial Tattoos 17, Know Lunar Tactics 15W, Lead Others 8W, Locate Good Hideout 5W2, Ride Antelope 5W2, Scan Terrain 18W, Set Ambush 8W, Speak New Pelorian 17, Strong 19, Throw Javelin 6W2, Tomahawk Combat 2W2, Tracking 15W, Understand Lunar Ways 5W, Wastelands Survival 15W2, Wrestling 12W

Relationships: Duke Raus 16, Enemy of the Sable Riders 16, Follower (War Sable Antelope) 19, Impala Tribe 13, Storm Bull Allies 2W2

Fetish: Mean and Meaner Spirit (Ignore Pain 3W, Tomahawk Strike 17)

Waha Practice Charms: Trail Seeker Spirit (Find Trail 3W, Sleep Safely 19), Bull Helper Spirit (Hurt Chaos 4W, Stand Against Chaos 6W)

Common Magic Charms: Heal Hurt 17, Seek Out Foe 3W, Sow Confusion 5W

Plot ideas

1.) Waves in the Wind knows many clanless and adventurous nomad warriors. The Praxian "virtues" of robbing and plundering are to be cultivated. With the aid of some Impala Riders and Stormbulls, he could become a huge problem for any mercenary troop that travels through the Zola Fel Valley. It could be a lifelong task to chase and trap him. He knows every hideout, survives where everyone else would die of thirst, and knows every trick of the deserts.

2.) Waves has a powerful shaman at his side. They could try to summon Jaldon Toothmaker and initiate an invasion of Sartar. The Sartari would have to try to prevent the ritual summoning of the Praxian Hero. The summoning itself has dismal prospects of success, though the Sartari may not know this.

3.) He could lead a rebellion against the Lunars. He knows the Lunars, especially those at Fort Raus, as no other nomad does. Depending on which side the players are, they could participate or try to prevent the rebellion. He would be a classic traitor, abducting the Duke's daughter. A truly interesting complication would be if either or both fell in love with the other. (Don't dismiss the idea too quickly as nonsense; think MGF!).

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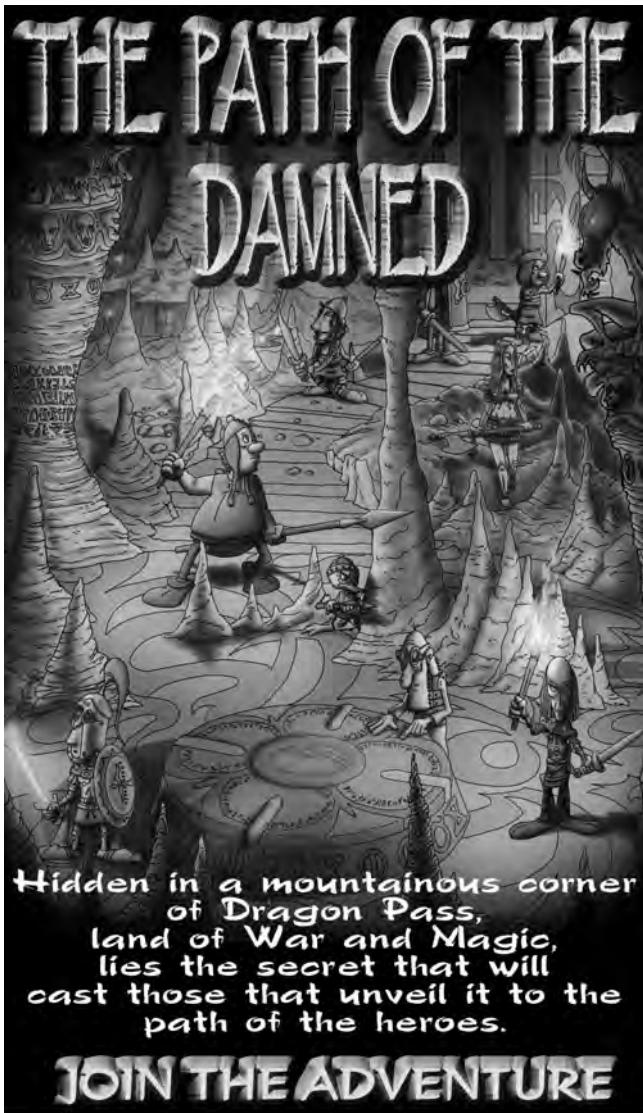
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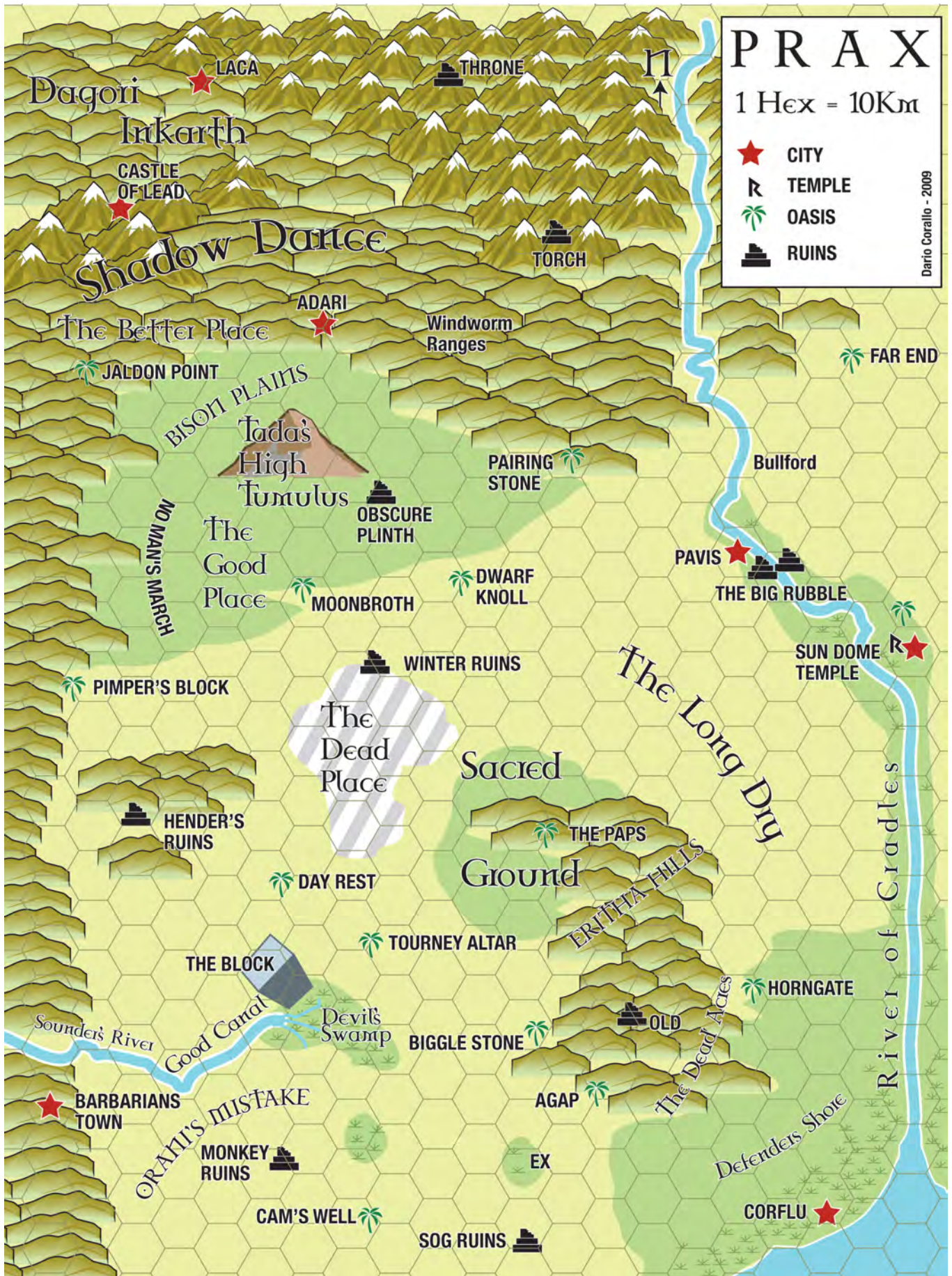
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P R A X

1 Hex = 10Km

- ★ CITY
- R TEMPLE
- 🌴 OASIS
- ▩ RUINS

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Geographic Features:

- Mountains:** Dagori, Inkarth, Shadow Dance, Windworm Ranges, Eritha Hills, The Dead Ales.
- Rivers:** Sounder's River, Good Canal, River of Cradles.
- Plains:** The Better Place, The Good Place, Bison Plains.
- Other Landmarks:** Tada's High Tumulus, The Dead Place, Sacred Ground, The Long Dry, Defenders Shore.

Key Locations:

- Cities (★):** LACA, ADARI, PAVIS, CORFLU.
- Temples (R):** SUN DOME TEMPLE.
- Oases (🌴):** JALDON POINT, MOONBROTH, PAIRING STONE, DWARF KNOLL, THE PAPS, BIGGLE STONE, AGAP, EX, CAM'S WELL.
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