

# WILDERLANDS OF HIGH ADVENTURE™ PLAYER'S GUIDE #1 THARBRIAN HORSE-LORDS™ OFFICIAL GAMING AID DESIGNED AND APPROVED FOR USE WITH CASTLES & CRUSADES® By JAMES MISHLER

Tharbrians are renown throughout Viridistan, the Roglaras, and beyond as atavistic and savage horse nomads. They roam the north-western plains of the Wilderlands with impunity, recognizing no lord or master. They have brought down empires and extirpated whole civilizations. Herein you shall discover the secrets and truths about Tharbrian history and society, and details on their abilities and culture.

## HISTORY

In ancient times a mix of Saxons, Gauls, Iberians, and Ligurians settled in the lands of the modern Roglaras and Viridistan. Their tribes and petty kingdoms were absorbed by the Founders Empire in ancient days, and when that realm was destroyed in the War of the Pious and Philosophers, the few survivors were reduced to stone-age savagery, and became known to history as the Wild Men.

The Wild Men ranged from the Starrcrag Mountains in the west to the Winedark Sea in the east, north of the Nereus Firth and south of the Plains of Lethe. Over the centuries that followed, scores of Altanian clans migrated into the lands of the Wild Men, until the regions known today as Roglaras and Viridistan became a patchwork of Wild Man, Altanian, and mixed tribes, clans, and bands.

When the Viridians invaded four millennia ago, most of the Wild Men clans were absorbed into the Empire;

their descendants are today the Common Viridians. Others, especially those of Altanian and mixed Wild Men/Altanian heritage, continued to fight, and after the **Battle of Freeman Fields** in 101 (known in Tharbrian lore as the **Anakhain Teer Dhukhaisz Khailldh** or “Disaster of the Lost Homeland”) were driven north of the Sharryn River and onto the Plains of Lethe. There they adapted a horse-based nomadic culture.

Since then, the Tharbrians have ranged far and wide, following the wind on generations-long migrations. From time to time, as populations merge and mingle and grow, and as leaders rise to the challenge of history, unions of several to scores of clans migrate into and raid, plunder, pillage, and even settle in the civilized lands of the south and east. In the lands of Viridistan and the Roglaras, there are four major Tharbrian raids of great historical import:

**1333 BCCC: The First Great Invasion of the Northern Horsemen**, known in Tharbrian legends as **Anakhain Agh'Bhendhegrodh** (“Disaster at Bendigroth”) ends in the **Battle of the Plain of Skulls**, as nomads unfamiliar with the terrain were caught between two Imperial Vasthosts.

**1759/60 BCCC: The Second Great Invasion**, known to Tharbrians as the **Feakhadh Mhor Ua'Ghannon**, extirpates Viridian and Dragon Empire settlements along the North Shore of the Roglaras. The Tharbrians are

defeated by the dwarves of the Majestic Fastness, and return west through the Silverwood Valley and across the Plateau of Bendigroth, the settlements of which are thoroughly looted if not exterminated.

**2097 BCCC:** The **Third Great Invasion**, known to Tharbrian bards as **Anakhain Agh'Shareenn** ("Disaster at the Sharryn") a huge horde of upwards of 60,000 Tharbrians, ravages the western lands of the Green Emperor, but is routed at the **Battle of Glint Valley** by three Imperial Vasthosts. The bulk of the survivors flee north, while several thousand flee south. The few survivors of the southern route settle in the northern dunes and oases of the Great Desert; these are the ancestors of the **Tharbarres**, today the peaceful allies of the Mycretians of the Holy Cities.

**2817 BCCC:** The **Fourth Great Invasion**, known to Tharbrians as the **Feakhadh Mhor Ua'Niall**, was the largest, dwarfing even the invasion of 2097. This host destroyed five Imperial Vasthosts at the **Battle of Havocia**, virtually extirpating Imperial power in the Roglaras and throughout much of Viridistan proper! The founding of the City State of the Invincible Overlord was a direct outgrowth of this invasion, as even five centuries later the Tharbrians still ran wild and roughshod over the lands of the Roglaras. Too, it permanently changed the make-up of the population of the Roglaras, as while many Tharbrians continued their nomadic ways, and either wandered the plains of the Roglaras with their herds or returned north and west, many remained, and adapted to the sedentary way of life. These took local women to wife; Altanians, Orichalans, and even Amazons, and eventually became a people apart from their nomad cousins, known as **Tharbriana** rather than Tharbrians.

While there have been other invasions since, including the infamous disaster that ended in the **Battle of Utscur Bog** (**Anakhain Agh'Uidskhood**, the "Disaster at the Utscur") most groups that pass through or raid in the southern lands are small, at best a dozen clans, usually only a handful.

But this simple history hardly takes into account the great, extensive clan histories known to Tharbrian bards and druids. Many clans trace their heritage back thousands of years, some even long before the Anakhain Teer Dhukhaisz Khailldh. While Tharbrian bragging about "the one that got away" can lead to great fish tales of lost fish larger than the lake they were supposedly caught in, most Tharbrian clan histories are accurate, at least as can be maintained through long generations of song.

## ENVIRONMENT/RANGE

The main body of Tharbrian clans range across steppes and plains from the sub-arctic through temperate lands. Tharbrian clans live upon the plains of the Elephas, Viridistan, the Roglaras, and the Desert Lands, with isolated clans wandering much further afield throughout the Wilderlands; the northern plains of the Infinite Desert and the Giant Lands.

## APPEARANCE

Tharbrians tend to be short and wiry with lean muscles, men averaging 5'7" and 160 lbs and women 5'5" and 130 lbs, with tawny brown, strawberry blonde, red, or raven black hair, and blue or green eyes. Skin is naturally pale or milky white, turned a ruddy tan at an early age due to life on the plains. As the Tharbrians take concubines from the settled peoples they raid, children of slaves may exhibit nearly any skin, hair, or eye color; once a concubine births a live child, she become a full (though usually junior) wife, and all her children are freemen.

## PERSONALITY

To outsiders, Tharbrians are taciturn, savage barbarians who take great joy in slaying, looting, raping, arson, and the razing of anything that smacks of urban or even rural "civilization," decadent or otherwise (for the Tharbrians consider all "civilization" to be decadent and depraved).

Among themselves, Tharbrians are a joyful people, who take great pride in their families and herds. They love to tell stories and sing and dance, they enjoy physical sports, and they master games of mental skill, such as chess. The same stoic warriors who slay farmers, ravish the farmers' wives, and enslave the farmers' children love their own wives and adore their own children, smile and laugh at jokes, weep at the tales of terrible tragedies told by the bards, and revere the gods.

Tharbrians tend to be honest among each other, and never bother to lie to others (except in tactical military situations, of course), as they'd just as soon slay an outsider as talk to him.

Tharbrians hate enclosed spaces, and most refuse to sleep within stone walls, even of ruins. Most Tharbrians, when given half a chance, raze any permanent structures they encounter, even simple chicken coops and shacks. Many loathe the very idea of going underground in a dungeon, as underground is where the Father of Demons, Donn, lives (of course, adventuring Tharbrians deal with this pretty well, usually).

Of course, most Tharbrians are not so simple as to fall within the above limitations. Some Tharbrians love to lie; others are horribly sadistic, especially to their

own clans folk; some have even adopted “civilized” ways wholeheartedly. Others, especially those in clans corrupted by Donn, are grim and hateful and evil event to other Tharbrians. As with all humans, every Tharbrian is an individual, selecting or rejecting Tharbrian traditions, beliefs, and ways on an individual basis.

## **ETHNIC/RACIAL AFFINITIES**

Tharbrians as a rule don’t like anyone who isn’t Tharbrian... this extends to other human cultures as well as demihumans and most especially, humanoids.

Of their human brethren, Tharbrians get along fairly well with Altanians and Tharbriana, when they are not raiding each other; Tharbrians prefer to take women from Altanian and Tharbriana as concubines. Dunael, Skandiks, and Valonar are respected for their warrior traditions, but are considered serious competition; their women are also considered worthy concubines. Shardans are considered decadent poseurs who once upon a time shared many of the same beliefs and ways, but are now merely stooges for the Viridians. Tharbrian clans with a strong Sword Woman/Warrior Woman tradition generally have good relations with Amazons.

Cavemen, Elphan, and Thygami are considered primitive sub-humans, classified by most Tharbrians as humanoids among orcs and goblins rather than true men. Aelphen and Chaelo are little more than peasants, suitable to be raided, but with women ugly and too weak to be considered for concubines. Alryans, Smyrians, and Tharbarres are despised for being weak city and town folk, while Antillians and Viridians are loathed for their decadent and depraved “civilized” ways. Antillian and Viridian women are taken as concubines only if they are very beautiful and have a decent stamina. Smyrian women are valued for their beauty, and because their sons and daughters adapt well to nomadic life.

Tharbrians know little about and care less for most demihumans. Dwarves are considered worthy warriors and better smiths, but their living underground is considered unnatural, and many associate them with Donn; numerous bad experiences with the Eagol dwarves have cemented this belief among western clans especially. Elves are considered flighty and weak, decadent though they may live in forests and glade. Elven women, however, are often beautiful and fey, and are the only non-humans ever taken as concubines; a very few Tharbrians, then, can claim half-elven ancestry. Gnomes and halflings are usually lumped in

with the dwarves; the nomads can’t be bothered to suss out the difference between the small, burrowing races, though they know that they can steal the best cheeses and pipeweed from the “beardless dwarves,” and the “big-nosed dwarves” usually command fearsome powers of illusion.

Humanoids are loathed with a passion usually reserved for Viridians and other decadent and depraved civilized peoples. While the Tharbrians can respect the martial prowess of orcs and especially hobgoblins, their cannibalism, demon- and devil-worship, and depraved societies earn them nothing but scorn from the Horse-Lords. Too, as many humanoid clans and tribes compete with the Tharbrians for loot and living space, even had they a less depraved culture, at best the humanoids would be viewed as worthy competition. As it stands, kobolds, goblins, orcs, hobgoblins, and bugbears are considered little more than rabid beasts, to be slaughtered and put down whenever opportunity permits.

## **CULTURE**

Tharbrian culture is focused on the horse — the horse provides Tharbrians with the freedom to roam the great open plains and steppes. Without the horse, Tharbrians would be tied to the land, like any of the pitiful “civilized” races who must scratch at the dirt and bow before brazen idols to try to make a living.

Of course, “freedom” is relative — the warriors are free, and their wives and children have a great deal of freedom, even within Tharbrian traditions. Tharbrians are also free from most superstitions, and free from dominating hereditary lords and kings, priests and wizards. But then, of course, they also keep slaves and concubines, and the only freedom they offer their enemies is freedom from their lives and treasure! So the “freedoms” the Tharbrians believe in are their own...

## **CAMP LIFE**

A Tharbrian camp is a mobile hamlet or village. At the center, usually upon a hill, stands the largest yurt in the camp, the yurt of the clan chief. Around this yurt stand the yurts of the chief’s family and other nobles, then the bards, great warriors, warriors, and then lesser families. The yurts of the druids are usually at a slight distance from the main camp, near a prominent spring, tree, or other natural geographical location. The wagons circle the main camp like a wall, with only two major openings: one toward the herds, the other in the opposite and most open direction. Preferably at least one flank is protected

by a river or other natural barrier; rivers are preferred, as they make it easy to get water and fish.

The herds are usually kept in a nearby grassy valley, dale, or dingle, where they can be better protected from raiders and monsters. The camp effectively acts as a cork for this area; if there is another way in, a small camp of young warriors is placed there to guard the weak spot.

Striplings and maidens are usually sent to tend to the herds during the day; experienced warriors guard the herds by night. Most warriors are either hunting or on raids by day. Usually only a small guard, the clan smith, old men, and wounded warriors remain in camp. Womenfolk and children keep to the camp, the women preparing food, nursing babies, preserving food, weaving felt, tending the wounded and ill, managing the work of the slaves, or performing any one of hundreds of other needful things to keep the clan alive. Junior wives and maidens not sent to tend the herds are sent out to gather fruits, vegetables, nuts, roots, berries, greens, wild grains, eggs, and with their slings and lines, to bring down birds and fowl and hook fish.

In the morning the camp is a beehive of activity, as each of the clan folk goes their own ways. All is quiet during the day, as everyone eats trail foods while out and about on their duties; usually dried fruits and nuts, jerked beef, or whatever they can gather or hunt on the fly. In the late afternoon, the hunters, raiders, and gathers return to camp for the evening dinner, usually a stew with greens, perhaps with roasted fish or meat if the hunters and gatherers were lucky, washed down with spring water or watered wine. Dinner is followed by songs and stories told around the fires by the bards; in summer, many sleep where they lay outside, while in winter, dinner is usually served in the yurts, as is the entertainment that follows, with all snuggled deep in their blankets for warmth.

## WANDERING

Central to the Tharbrian lifestyle is the eternal migration each clan takes across the Wilderland and beyond. The clan follows the wind or their nose, rumors of good raids or green grasses, as the clan chief sees fit. A clan can be packed and ready to move with an hour's notice; all equipment and tools are designed for easy and quick stowing aboard the clan's huge wagons, and with horse-whispering bards and druids, it is easy to round up the horses and herds.

A clan follows its chosen path, moving every several days or weeks as is needful based on grass and game. A

clan on the move is literally a whole village or even town, travelling with everything they own in wagons, surrounded by warriors in the fore, aft, and to flanks, horses and cattle in a great milling mass between wagon and warriors, and defended at the center by stripling warriors and wives and daughters with bow and dirk.

Scouts are usually a day or three ahead of the column. When a hamlet is spotted, the scouts check it out, and several return to the main body to report. Pity the farmers of the lone hamlet or even village, when a clan of Tharbrians is on the move! Within a day of discovery, a poorly-guarded and even times a well-guarded settlement is usually turned to ash, its men slain or enslaved, its women forced into concubinage, and the children enslaved or adopted by savage nomads.

## RAIDS AND FEAKHADH

Even when settled for a time, Tharbrians are always thinking about raiding nearby settlements or other non-Tharbrian tribes. Simple raids are usually planned several days in advance, and generally only consist of a portion of the warriors of the clan, lest disaster strike and the clan camp be left defenseless. Raiders always carry minimal equipment with them; such as is needed is left with the baggage train at a distance from the target. The baggage train is guarded by striplings and lesser warriors, and in addition to pack horses includes a remuda of extra riding horses for the warriors on the raid in case of losses or tired steeds. These raids are usually less deadly serious than a migration raid; the objective is usually loot, especially cattle, horses, or other animals, and often grains and other harvested foods, rather than destruction of an obstacle. Still, it matters little to a victim of a raid if he is slain in deadly serious raid or a simple smash-and-grab!

The true, massive raids and migrations that make history are known as Feakhadh; this is the name of the group (the massing of hundreds of clans) and what it does (ravage, pillage, plunder, maim, and all that stuff). A Feakhadh camp covers tens to hundreds of square miles, and is effectively always on the move, as men and animals strip the land of everything edible and slaughter all resistance in their wake. Even Vasthosts of crack troops broke at the sight of a Feakhadh, knowing that even the women and children could fight as well as a trained soldier, and were likely better fed and better armed! Most Viridian soldiers that faced the advance of a Feakhadh died with arrows or lances in their backs, as they fled from the oncoming horde.

## LOOT AND PILLAGE

The general rule of the division of spoils among the Tharbrians is that you keep what you kill. A warrior gets to keep the personal goods of any man he personally slew. Goods found in homes, temples, castles, or on the bodies of dead who were slain by the arrows or blades of more than one man are collected in two equal piles; one is divided equally among the warriors and the widows of any warriors slain during the battle, and the other half is given at the discretion of the clan chief, for the support of widows and orphans, for the upkeep of the clan in general, and for giving as gifts to the most valiant warriors.

## MERCENARIES

Young Tharbrian warriors, especially those from clans with too many warriors and not enough women, horses, and/or cattle, often go into the wider world in groups to serve as mercenaries. This gives them combat experience and earns them coin and loot to take back to their clan, usually including a concubine or two to be his first wives. Tharbrian mercenaries generally have one rule: never serve Viridians or Antillians. Other than that they will take almost anyone's coin, and will even fight against Tharbrians in service to their employer. Tharbrians are very loyal mercenaries, provided they are treated with respect and honor and are paid on time; treat them poorly or fail to pay them, and they turn quickly.

Of course, most of these mercenaries are also advance scouts for eventual Tharbrian migration and raiding opportunities!

## BLOOD BROTHERS

Even with their dislike if not outright hatred for other peoples keeps them from making allies in general, on a one-to-one basis most Tharbrians judge others by their actions, rather than by their color or race. If encountered in combat, of course, generally the only way to impress a Tharbrian is to die with honor after a valiant struggle — in such cases he'll be sure to take your head! Under less violent circumstances, if treated honestly and honorably, a Tharbrian might even get to like a non-Tharbrian, or even befriend him after a time. If they fight side by side and share danger and adventure together, a Tharbrian will even offer the opportunity to make his friend a blood-brother (or sister), son of the same father and mothers, and a member of the clan.

Such a decision is not taken lightly, and only after months if not years of friendship, though great heroism and valiant actions might speed the process dramatically. A blood-brother is automatically accepted by the clan as a member of the clan, with all rights and privileges, as well as all the responsibilities and requirements, of any other clan member.

## CHIEFTAINS AND WARRIORS

A clan is ruled by a chief, but a clan chief is ruled by his clan, or so the saying goes. A chief leads only with the agreement of his warriors; if the chief makes poor decisions on a regular basis, takes on decadent or depraved hobbies, or fails at too many raids, he can be removed by a council of all the warriors of a clan, though it requires a two-thirds majority that includes the vote of either the heir or the most respected warrior of the clan. A chief is informed of the council by the heir or lead warrior taking to him an arrow dripping with stallion's blood, which is then broken in tow and cast at his feet. This summons him to the council, where he first hears the grievances of the warriors, then is given an opportunity to defend his actions. The vote is then taken; an overthrown chief usually leaves the clan to go into exile with his wives and closest followers. Sometimes the chief tries to fight against the vote; in such cases, he and his followers usually die, and any survivors are treated as traitors, stripped of their warrior status, and drawn and quartered.

But most chiefs are careful to never, ever let problems in the clan get to that point. Most chiefs are dedicated to their clan and its warriors, treats them and their wives and children with great respect and honor, and showers them with gifts of jewelry, weapons, armor, horses, and slaves.

## CLAN FEUDS

All Tharbrians are supposed to treat one another as brothers and sisters, all members of one big family. Of course, everyone knows that families do not always get along! And so, even though every day on the plains is a struggle to survive, even though there are enemies all around, at times Tharbrian clans feud with one another. Feuds must be announced publicly; usually, when discussions break down, one final dispatch is sent to the enemy chief, a blood-dripping arrow, as per noted in the ouster of a chief as above, broken in the same fashion and cast at the chief's feet. The feud begins at sunset three days thereafter.

Feuds are rarely serious battles; instead they consist of cattle raids, where one clan steals another clan's cattle. Horses are sacrosanct by Tharbrian law. Instead, from cattle, a feud increases in intensity to the slaying slaves or the stealing one another's women. Stolen women are always unmarried women, and the women are never raped, save in the case of corrupted clans. Instead, the stolen woman is made a servant of sorts, not a true slave (as Tharbrians never enslave one another), but not a free woman, either; she is usually given the worst duties and chores a junior-most wife or oldest

daughter might expect to perform. Again, by Tharbrian law, children are sacrosanct, and never kidnapped.

From there, things can get nasty, including actual blood spilling. Usually before it reaches that point, the clan bards and druids try to settle the clan differences, exchange the hostages, and work out an amicable settlement. Sometimes, though, it is the bards and druids that are egging on the warriors in the feud!

Unfortunately, such feuds are often self-correcting, as the weakened clans become less capable of fighting off attacks from monsters, humanoids, other non-Tharbrian nomads, and even civilized peoples. The feud either comes to an amicable (if perhaps, underneath, simmering) end or one or both clans are extirpated by outside forces.

## **LAWS AND TRADITIONS**

All crimes are judged by the clan chief; if a crime is between clans, the clan chiefs must decide on guilt or innocence together, and must agree on the punishment. If the crime is cross-clan between clans travelling together, the whole council decides.

The heir, clan bards, and druids are always consulted by the clan chief, and in a way serve as both jury and litigation tricksters, for they are steeped in the knowledge of clan laws and precedents. Though their determinations carry weight, more or less depending on the will and faith of the clan chief, the chief's word is final.

### **GUILT AND INNOCENCE**

Guilt and innocence is generally determined by adding together the relative social values of the accused, the victim, witnesses, jurists, and the clan chief or chiefs, in the case of a trial determined by a council of chiefs.

The SL of the accused is always used as the base value for innocence; multiply it as per witnesses, below. Similarly, too, the SL of the victim is determined by her SL, as per witnesses below, and is used as the base toward guilt. If the clan was the victim, such as through endangerment or treason, the clan chief counts as the victim, with his SL multiplied by 50!

Witnesses may be called; these must be actual witnesses of the crime, and are not character witnesses. Each has relative value according to their SL and Social Caste. General caste witnesses count as per their SL, Military caste witnesses count triple their SL, Gentry caste witnesses count five times their SL, and Noble caste witnesses count as 10 times their SL.

To this is added the judgment of the bards and druids attending the chief; these each count as 10 times their SL, rather than the regular five times, as is accorded to Gentry. Similarly, the view of the heir is valued at 20 times his SL (i.e., usually SL Noble 9, thus worth 180 points toward guilt or innocence). If a bard or druid must exclude himself from the deliberations of the chief's legal council because he is a witness, his SL is merely valued at five times normal, as a witness.

Finally, to the total for guilt or innocence is added the opinion of the clan chief, at 50 times his SL (Noble 10 or better). If the trial is being determined by a council of chiefs, the high chief's value is 100 times his SL, the others count merely for 50 times his SL.

After all these values are added together, halve the value that is wrong, and double the value that is right; i.e., if the accused is truly guilty, double the guilt value, and halve the innocence value, and the reverse in the case where the accused is innocent. The higher value prevails, true or no, and so the accused will be judged by the chief.

Punishments usually consist of fines (paid in coin or more usually, over time in kind), temporary banishment, permanent banishment, or death.

Fines are usually 1 gp per SL for General caste, 5 gp per SL for Military caste, and 10 GP per SL for Gentry and Noble caste. This is in addition to any recompense for actual loss and punitive fines as a multiplier of the loss. Unlike in civilized lands, where the fines usually go to the local lord, the entire amount of a fine goes to the victim.

Banishment is often as good as death, as a man or woman alone on the plains is monster bait. The banished can take any of their personal equipment and goods; even their family and friends may join them, but then they, too, are banished. To return during the period of banishment is to invite death by any warrior who sees the outlaw; while tradition dictates that no one is to specifically go and hunt the banished, sometimes it happens.

Death is beheading for a warrior, live burial or burning in a wicker man for a noble, bard, or druid, and drawing and quartering for anyone else. Punishment is carried out immediately. In the case of the death of a warrior, his personal goods, including his horses, yurt, weapons, armor, equipment, treasure, slaves, and concubines, are forfeit to the victim, or to the chief if the clan was the victim. His wives and children are sent back to their father or brothers; in the case of wives who were concubines

and their children, the chief “sells” the woman and her children to the highest bidder among the warriors of the clan who wish to take her as a wife and adopt her children; the treasure gained thereby also goes to the victim.

**Assault:** Fighting other clansmen outside of ritual duels is considered a crime, as is beating a woman or a child. The fines are usually commensurate with the level of the attack and the station of the criminal (richer and more powerful must pay greater fines).

**Blasphemy:** Blasphemy is not considered a crime; it is merely considered stupid to insult the gods. Blaspheme enough and the clan druids are entitled to withhold their healing and other assistance as they wish; even the clan chief cannot gainsay them this, though he might complain to the high druid. Of course, “blaspheming” in a corrupted clan might get one sacrificed to Donn...

**Endangerment:** This can vary greatly, depending on the nature of the act. Examples include:

- Setting fires outside of fire pits, especially during dry season, is considered the equal of treason, as all might die in a grass fire.
- Wasting food, even when it is your own, might earn fines or banishment, or even death if it was all the clans’ food! Same goes for wasting water.
- Fleeing during combat might be worthy of a fine, banishment, or death; the punishment is worse the weaker the threat and the more experienced the coward.
- Revealing clan secrets, especially to “civilized” folk, is worth at least banishment in the best of cases; doing so during a raid is considered treason.
- Disobeying the clan chief or raid leader during a raid is worthy of a fine at least, banishment if disobedience caused problems, death if death of a fellow clansman resulted.

**Flight:** Any accused criminal that flees before the chief has a chance to judge him is considered guilty by default, and to have taken upon him self the punishment of permanent banishment. If he returns, he can be slain out of hand, even if the original charge was the smallest crime.

**Fraud:** Cheating is considered as per theft, see below. Added to this is a punishment for lying, as it is considered beneath a Tharbrian to lie to a fellow clansman, as such is the way of the decadent civilized folk.

**Homosexuality:** Male homosexuality is considered a horrible crime among the Tharbrians; those proven of it are banished, wearing only rags, after having their sword-hand thumb cut off, as they are not considered worthy of wielding a weapon. A man forcing himself on another man or boy is considered rape, even if the victim is a slave. As is usual with such things, there is a double standard when it comes to lesbianism. Such is considered normal between a Sword Woman and her wives, and among unmarried women; it is considered in poor taste between a married woman and any other, unless her husband approves. In such cases, the husband is entitled to divorce his wife and send her back to her father or brothers at the worst, though most husbands who dislike the practice usually punish their wife with additional chores and isolation. A woman who forces herself on another woman, even a slave, is considered a rapist.

**Murder:** Murder is defined as the intentional slaying of a clansman, woman, or child outside ritual combat; as no woman (other than a Sword Woman, see below) or child can be challenged to ritual combat, any slaying of such is considered murder. Slaying another’s slave is not considered murder; it is considered theft, though in the case of a favored concubine, the slayer might be challenged to a duel as well.

**Rape:** Rape is usually considered a crime by Tharbrians only when committed against a Tharbrian clanswoman, even of another Tharbrian clan (including enemy clans). Rape of non-clanswomen taken as slaves in raids is a common thing. Rape of a clanswoman by a clan member is considered one of the highest crimes, and results in death for the rapist; no official stigma is ever placed on the victim, though many may consider her weak for not slaying her assailant before he could rape her (usually these folk decide to teach her how to better defend herself).

**Slander:** Slander against a warrior or his family is usually answered by a challenge to a ritual duel. In the case where the slander victim is inexperienced and his cause is just, a more skillful member of his family, friends, or even the clan in general usually offers to take his place.

**Theft:** Theft is a crime only when it is perpetrated against another Tharbrian; stealing from non-Tharbrians is not considered theft, it is merely what the fools deserve! Raiding civilized folk and other non-Tharbrian nomads (and in some cases, even enemy Tharbrian clans) is simply a way of life.

Stealing from an allied non-Tharbrian, such as a merchant who regularly trades with a clan, is considered foolish at least; such is usually punishable with return of the goods or

recompense, extra work, and fines, perhaps even temporary banishment, if the chief is angry enough.

Stealing from other Tharbrians is punishable by fines; return of the goods or recompense, plus a fine equal to five to 20 times value of the original item (more for nobles and warriors, as they should set an example for the clan). If the fine cannot be paid, banishment, permanent or temporary, is assigned, depending on the severity of the theft. Fines can be paid over time, but slacking in payment or inability to complete payment results in banishment.

**Treason:** Treason is purposefully taking any action that weakens or grossly endangers the clan, and is punishable by death.

### RITUAL DUEL

Any warrior accused or convicted of a crime may call for a ritual duel. This is performed before the warriors, bards, and druids of the clan. Combat begins on horseback within an area 160 feet by 80 feet, marked off by poles with flags, with warriors posted to watch if either combatant leaves the field. If a combatant leaves the marked area, he is considered to have yielded and lost.

Prior to the duel, the clan druids perform a ritual calling upon the gods to witness the duel and guarantee a just result. If the accused/convicted is actually innocent, he gains a bonus to hit, to damage, and to AC equal to the difference in level between him and his opponent, if he is of a lower level; if he is of a higher level than his opponent, he gains a bonus equal to half the level of his opponent, rounded down. If he is truly guilty, he loses his entire class-based BtH, his Specialization bonus (if any), any miscellaneous weapon bonuses he may possess, and any Strength and Dexterity bonuses he may possess; also, his weapons deal only minimal damage.

The ritual also ensures that no magic can affect the combat; no magic cast into the area to affect the duel functions, and any such magic already in effect on either combatant before they enter the area goes dormant until the end of the duel. Magic weapons that enter the area have their magical properties subdued while in the area (though they retain any expert or master-work bonuses they possess).

While this does not absolutely guarantee a just result, it certainly tips the balance in its favor...

Ritual duels are to the death, or until one of the duelists yield. To attack a duelist who has yielded is considered great blasphemy at least, and the clan druids withhold their services until the blasphemer atones; if the duelist kills the man who yielded, it is considered murder.

If the accused loses, he is convicted by his loss; if he wins, he is considered innocent. Most accused and convicted warriors do not ask for a ritual duel unless they are to be banished or put to death for their crimes.

Ritual duels may also be fought over points of honor; all the above applies, with the winner being adjudged to be in the right, and the lower either dishonorable or a liar.

## RELIGION

Tharbrians revere an eclectic mix of the Celtic gods, especially **Belenus** (N, Sun and Wind, Horse-Father), **Epona** (N, Earth and Grass, Horse-Mother), **Goibhniu** (N, Metal and Smith Craft), **Lugh** (N, Excellence and Skill), **Morrighan** (N, War and Battle), and **Donn** (CE, Demons and Death). They rarely turn from this circle, and almost never from the general gods of the Celtic pantheon; the propensity for their settled and splintered cousins to do so (save the Tharbriana) is one of many points of contention between the disparate tribes. Most priests of the Tharbrians are druids, though a few are clerics (and must operate in the druidic clan traditions if they wish to remain with their clan). Bards feature prominently in Tharbrian religion, as it is they who primarily maintain the oral traditions and histories of the clans and their ancient heroes.

Tharbrian religion is simple, especially by the decadent and depraved "civilized" standards of the Viridians. There are no major, weekly rituals to attend, nor regular sacrifices to make. The power of the druids in the clan is based not on fear of their power or of their ability to intercede with the gods, but on mutual benefit. Tharbrians do not fear magic as superstitious village peasants do; they recognize it as a danger, but believe it is surmountable as any other challenge. And as for the gods, well, Tharbrians believe that the relation between a man or woman and the gods is a personal thing; druids are there merely to provide advice, not to direct, and have no power over Tharbrian souls.

As a result, druids must work to earn their keep just like every other warrior and woman of the clans. Most get by with spell-casting services, but some, especially younger and less-experience druids, join in on raids with the warriors, and are counted as such by their comrades in arms. Similarly, bards must hunt and raid like any warrior. Wealthy warriors and noble families often assist both bards and druids, but in return they gain favor with song-meisters and spell-casters.



Among traditional Tharbrian clans, human sacrifice is forbidden; some who have fallen from the old ways, or been corrupted by Donn, however, participate in human sacrifice.

Sacrifices of white bulls are provided to Belenus in the spring and black bulls to Epona in autumn, in thanks for providing sun and wind, earth and grass. These sacrifices are provided by the clan chief.

Goibhniu and Lugh require no sacrifices other than the performance of excellence in smith-craft and other skills; smiths dedicate their labors to Goibhniu, while leather workers and other craftsmen dedicate their work to Lugh. Often this takes the form of decorating an expert or master-work item with swords or stars, and if the craftsman can write, runes or letters for G and L.

Morrighan requires the heads of enemies; this is why Tharbrians have earned a reputation as “head-hunters,” as most warriors take the heads of enemies to offer to the Queen of Crows. These are piled as offerings, and so it is not unusual to see piles of heads and skulls in Tharbrian territories. Warriors often keep the heads of valiant and puissant enemies; the druids of the clan enchant these, using the “native magic” of the slain to further the goals of the victorious warrior and his clan. The yurts of the druids are often surrounded by heads, especially while on raid, hanging from the side or upon stakes or in piles around the yurt. Warriors often wear crow’s feathers, that “Morrighan’s sons” recognize them as one of their own and not seek to slay them.

As for Donn, he is not so much revered as placated. Once upon a time he was far less inimical to mortals, and better revered; but then he was corrupted, and is less an ally. Though he is the Shadow, and considered Father of Demons, this is because it is he who takes the souls of the dishonorable dead and feeds them to demons; he is also the gatekeeper of the Shadowlands. Most clans merely perform the requisite rituals to summon him and bind him to take the soul of the honorable dead on to the Otherworld as is his duty. If these rituals are not performed, the soul might be lost, or even taken by Donn and done with as he pleases, fed to demons or made a slave in his manor in the Shadowlands (to which every civilized depravity is accorded by the druids).

Clans and druids corrupted by Donn offer him human sacrifices. These take many forms, the most common being live burial, burning in a wicker man, and death by torture. Corrupted druids are also often sorcerers, using the blood and life force of their victims to summon and control demons.

### **Common blessings:**

“May Lord and Lady, Sun and Wind, Earth and Grass be with you!”

“May the fires of Goibhniu’s Forge warm your heart and soul!”

“May Goibhniu’s Stone sharpen your steel!”

“May Lugh smile upon you!”

“May Lugh’s Stars light your way!”

“May the Sons of Morrighan wend away from you this day!”

“May the Shadow darken your bier another day!”

### **Common curses:**

“Sun and Wind!”

“By the Balls of Belenus!”

“May the sky fall upon your head!”

“Earth and Grass!”

“By the Transcendent Teats of Epona!”

“May the Earth swallow you whole!”

“May the Grass wither at your feet, and the Wind die in your face!”

“May the Mallet of Goibhniu fall upon your toes!”

“May Lugh’s laugh follow you all your days!”

“Queen of Crows!”

“May Morrighan’s Sons smile upon you!”

“May Morrighan’s Sons pluck your eyes!”

“May you drown in Morrighan’s Milk!”

“May Donn’s Doom fall upon you!”

“Shadow take you, and to the bellies of demons with you!”

“Father of Demons!”

“May your mares birth monsters and your stallions’ balls fall off!”

### **DRUID BENEFITS**

A Tharbrian druid who selects one of the above deities as his patron gains the following benefits.

**Epona or Belenus:** the druid may choose to take the

form of a horse (a large creature) as her totem shape at 6th level. At 12<sup>th</sup> level, when the druid uses her “large” form and chooses to take the shape of a horse, she instead takes the form of a pegasus (among the Altanians and Tharbriana, if a druidess is of Neutral Good alignment and a virgin, she can instead take on the form of a unicorn, however, as among the clans, druids are expected to have families and many children, no known Tharbrian druidesses can take on this form).

**Goibhniu:** the druid may use *beat metal* (though not the reverse) as a 1<sup>st</sup> level spell, and may instantly swap out any memorized 2<sup>nd</sup> level spell for *beat metal* (again, not the reverse).

**Lugh:** the druid may use *charm person or animal* as a 1<sup>st</sup> level spell, and may instantly swap out any memorized 2<sup>nd</sup> level spell for *charm person or animal*.

**Morrighan:** the druid may use *summon swarm (crows)* as a 1<sup>st</sup> level spell, and may instantly swap out any memorized 2<sup>nd</sup> level spell for *summon swarm (crows)*.

**Note:** Any Tharbrian druid may use *summon swarm* to summon crows specifically, but only a druid dedicated to Morrighan gains the extra benefits.

**Donn:** the druid may use the 2<sup>nd</sup> level clerical spell *speak with dead* as a 2<sup>nd</sup> level druid spell. The heads and skulls of enemies kept by the druids are sufficient for the material needs of this spell.

**Donn (Corrupted):** the druid may perform human sacrifices to summon and control demons. The druid can perform a 10 minute ritual to summon a demon, as per the 8<sup>th</sup> level *summon planar ally* spell. Each HD of demon summoned requires the druid have “banked” 10 levels of human sacrifices (0-level humans count as ½ level); the druid instinctively knows how many levels he has banked. The demon requires a final human sacrifice, above and beyond those needed for summoning, during the summoning ritual; if this specific sacrifice is of a virgin woman, the demon manifests with maximum hit points. Note that this ability is in addition to any other benefits the druid might gain from also being a sorcerer!

## DEATH

Once upon a time, the Tharbrians all interred their dead in barrows; today most clans burn their dead upon a pyre, as barrows have gained an unfortunate association with Donn and his demons.

Old barrows can still be found throughout the lands

crossed by the Tharbrian clans. These are often haunted by the dead, as skeletons, zombies, or worse, or are now converted into shrines for corrupted Tharbrian clans who follow Donn. The dead were buried with grave goods, including weapons, armor, and various treasures won through raid and trade. Unlike other, more savage barbarians, Tharbrians did not generally send slaves to the Shadowlands with their masters, though the corrupted clans that follow Donn today make up for this ancient lack, with scores if not hundreds of slaves and captives slain during funeral ceremonies of great chiefs, bards, and druids.

The typical Tharbrian funeral, however, is quite simple. While bards sing songs of the warrior’s valiant deeds, or general clan songs in the case of a woman or child, the body of the deceased is washed, then wrapped in linens and furs and placed upon a stone bier piled high with wood and drenched in oil. The deceased’s warrior sons (or father and brothers, if he has no warrior sons) then touch burning brands to the bier, and the body is burned while the druids intone prayers. The flesh of a bull, cow, yearling, or calf as appropriate to warrior, mother, youth, or child, is also burnt at the same time by the druids. Finally, the ashes of the deceased are spread to the four winds.

The prayers of the druids are to call Donn to guide the soul of the deceased through the Shadowlands to the Otherworld, where the gods live upon infinite plains under an eternal sun, cooled by sweet winds that stir the tall, ever-green grasses. There the deceased continues on much as in life, though every hunt is bountiful, and there is no need to go on raids, unless the warrior seeks action and adventure.

The burned flesh of cattle is used as an offering to propitiate Donn and his demons, so that they consume the spirit of the flesh rather than the soul of the deceased. Of course, if the deceased is not welcome by the gods, there is nothing any offering of the druids can do, and the soul is consumed by the Shadow’s demons, or otherwise used and abused by Donn.

## TADHLUM

Any Tharbrian druid can create a tadhlum, or “brain ball,” from the brain of an enemy. This requires one month per level of the enemy (though the druid need not concentrate on the process, he may still only have one tadhlum developing at once; mostly the brain is soaking in lime, and must be tended to once per month during the New Moon (Luna)). The druid knows when the process is complete; in the end, the brain is shrunken to a hard stone the size of a sling stone. Against any blood relation of the

enemy whose brain formed the *tadhlum*, the stone has magical bonus to hit equal to the level of the deceased, and deals a number of d6 in damage equal to the level of the deceased. Against any other foe it is simply a +1 magical sling stone. Hit or miss, once used, the magic is lost, and cannot be regained.

### FEY AND ELEMENTALS

Fey and elementals are considered minor gods and goddesses of their respective areas of control, and are accorded appropriate honors and sacrifices as determined by the bards, druids, and tradition (as well as by the power and whims of the fey and elementals, of course).

### MENHIRS, MONOLITHS, AND STANDING STONES

Tharbrian druids as a rule do not build standing stones, though they know often how to use those found in the local area, or at least know enough about them to stay away from the dangerous ones.

### WIZARDS AND ILLUSIONISTS

Wizards and illusionists are not unknown to Tharbrians, but they almost never arise from among the clans, and the few who do quickly leave the nomadic life to join their civilized brethren. Wizardry is not considered evil, as such, but as most wizards and illusionists are from civilized lands, they are considered suspect at least until they prove otherwise.

## SOCIAL STRUCTURE

A Tharbrian clan is led by a **Treethadh** (“Chief,” SL Noble 10), who rules through the respect of the other warriors of the clan. While he makes decisions, these are usually carried out by his chosen successor, the **Taanaiszdh** (“Heir,” SL Noble 9), a blooded warrior chosen from among his brothers, nephews, or cousins (never from among his sons). A clan chief is usually a 9th to 12th level Barbarian, Fighter, Knight, or Ranger; the heir is usually 1 to 3 levels below the chief. Both chief and heir must be approved by a council of all the warriors through simple majority; though most prefer to have a wider approval, lest disgruntled warriors take their families to other clans (this is one way that septs are formed).

The chief decides where the clan sets up camp, how long they remain, and where they go when they break camp. He also decides when and where to raid, when to ally with another clan, when to pursue a feud with another clan, metes out justice within the clan, and all other details of rule.

When several clans travel together, the clan chiefs form a council to decide what the clans will do as a group. All clan chiefs have an equal vote, though the chairman of the council, the **Ardh-Treethadh** (“High Chief,” SL Noble 12 to 15, depending on the size of the gathering) manages the council meetings and breaks any ties. Any clan chief is free to leave with his clan at any time before a decision is made, but those who remain after a decision of the council must follow the decision, or they and their clan lose honor in the sight of the other clans.

The leader of a Feakhadh is known as the **Khapell Teeearnah**, or “Lord of Horses” (SL Noble 15 to 18), while the leader of a Feakhadh Mhor is a **Khapell Ardh-Teeearnah**, or “High Lord of Horses” (SL Noble 18 to 20). Tharbrians never, ever use the term **Rhi**, which means “King,” as the Tharbrians have no kings.

The clan chief’s family is considered noble, as are a handful of other families who in recent generations had warriors serve honorably as chieftains. The clan chief’s brothers and blooded nephews are considered the equal of SL Noble 8, while his blooded sons, cousins, and more distant male relations are considered SL Noble 7. His chief wife is considered SL Noble 7, and his other wives are SL Noble 6. Other junior brothers, nephews, sons, and cousins are considered SL Noble 5. Family elders of other noble lines, especially sept elders, are considered equal to SL Noble 7, while other blooded males and chief wives of elders are considered SL Noble 6; others of these families are considered SL Noble 5.

Official clan bards and druids are considered Gentry; any bard and druid classed Tharbrians that are not considered part of the official clan bard and clan druid traditions are warriors or otherwise. The highest-SL clan bard in a clan is the **Ardh-Bardh Na’Klann** (“High Bard of the Clan”), the highest-SL clan druid in a clan is the **Ardh-Druidh Na’Klann** (“High Druid of the Clan”). They begin as SL Gentry 4 at 1st level. Whenever they gain a class level, they may challenge a higher-SL bard or druid; bards to a challenge of songs and tales, druids to a challenge of magic. If the challenging bard gains the greatest applause from the clan, he rises an SL and the loser drops an SL; otherwise, the challenger cannot challenge again until he gains another class level. The druid challenge is won when one competitor falls unconscious or gives up; the results are similar. The only limitations to the challenge are that a son may never challenge his father, as no son may ever follow directly in his father’s footsteps, and the High Bard and High Druid of the clan must be male.

Family members of a clan bard and clan druid are considered under their normal SL based on their other status; in general, these gain a minor point of precedence against equals, due to their association with the clan bards or clan druids.

High Bards and High Druids of a clan are usually 5<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> level, and of commensurate SL. Each has one to six assistants and apprentices of 1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> level.

Theoretically, the lowest rank for a bard or druid is SL Gentry 1; the upper limit to SL for a bard or druid among the clans is SL Gentry 20. One of each exists, the **Bardh Mhor Na'Tharbrians** ("Great Bard of the Tharbrians") and **Druidh Mhor Na'Tharbrians** (Great Druid of the Tharbrians). Each travels with a number of followers equal to clan, each effectively chief of their own clan, though their "clan" does not count as a clan.

A stripling (untested warrior) is equal to SL Military 2, and is 1<sup>st</sup> level. A blooded warrior is equal to SL Military 5, and is usually 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> level. A warrior who has led at least one raid is equal to SL Military 7, and is usually at least 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> level. A warrior who has been chosen by the clan chief to lead at least three raids is equal to SL Military 10, and is usually 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> level. The chief warrior of the clan other than the clan chief and heir is equal to SL Military 12, and can be anywhere from 5<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> level (the clan chief and heir are not always the highest-level warriors of the clan).

Adult male Tharbrians, who, from cowardice or physical impediment do not become a blooded warrior, are usually driven from the clan. If, however, they have a useful craft or other skill, they are allowed to remain, but are equal to SL General 3. Though there is no law against their marrying, few clanswomen would even consider marrying a coward, and usually they have to buy a slave or find a wife outside the clans.

The clan chief's wife's council members, if not Noble, are equal to SL General 6, while her personal assistant is SL General 7. Other non-Noble mothers of the clan are considered SL General 5. Unmarried females who have attained puberty are considered SL General 3, while married women who have not yet had a child are SL General 4. Most women are 1<sup>st</sup> level Barbarians, Bards, Fighters, or Rangers.

Sword Women are counted as per warriors in all ways.

Children are considered SL General 2. Slaves are considered SL General 1, except for concubines, which

are SL General 2 until they birth a child (and are then SL General 5). Most slaves are 0-level humans, as Tharbrians sell off recalcitrant slaves (i.e., those with levels enough to be trouble).

## ORGANIZATION

Clans usually number 30 to 300 warriors, though very few clans can claim more than 200 warriors. A clan also includes a number of free women or concubines equal to 190 to 210% of the warriors, and children equal to 100 to 150% of the warriors. There will also be 10 to 80 slaves (mostly men, but also ugly or shrewish women unclaimed as concubines). The clan has a number of horses equal to 400 to 700% of the number of warriors, including mares and young; double that number of cattle, plus 10 to 100 goats, llamas, camels, sheep, and other miscellaneous animals. Tharbrians do not keep chickens or pigs, as they do not travel well.

There will also be a total of one wain per warrior, though some wains are shared by two or more warriors, and some warriors have two or more wains. These great wagons are huge, the largest dwarfing Conestoga wagons, veritable houses upon 10-foot tall wheels, with large canvas awnings. The nomads do not live in the wagons; they are used only for transport, and are usually stacked to the rafters with loot, equipment, yurts, wallets of food, carpets, barrels of water, weapons, pipes of wine, women, children, and slaves. The wagons are drawn by oxen, as Tharbrians would never waste a horse on such drudgery; the extra horses make up a reserve for the warriors to ride.

It is only when the clans gather for a great raid (as has happened all too often in the history of the Wilderlands), that more than three to five clans gather in one place. This large gathering of clans is never referred to as a *tribe* by Tharbrians; it is instead a **Feakhadh**, or *host*, gathered for a specific journey and time. Most hosts consist of perhaps a dozen or several score clans; the age when hundreds of clans gathered for a Feakhadh Mhor is long since passed.

**Septs** are sub-clan bloodlines across clan lines where ties have been maintained between otherwise disparate families. The MakInnisz sept of Clan Ua'Ghannon, for example, is related to Clan MakInnisz but rides with Clan Ua'Ghannon. Most clans have one to three septs riding with them (80% chance per 100 warriors). A sept consists of 1d6 warriors and their attendant wives, children, slaves, wains, and animals.

## GENDER AND FAMILY RELATIONS

Though to the outside world the Tharbrians may seem to be a male-dominated society, this is far from the truth! Women effectively rule inside the camp; the chief's wife (**Madhair Na'Klann**, the "Mother of the Clan") and her council of wives make all decisions about food distribution, camp organization, and deployment of the labor of the clan's common slaves.

When the men are out raiding, tending to the cattle, or hunting, the women defend the camp, and Tharbrian women are taught well in the ways of defense! All Tharbrian women carry at least one dirk and usually several knives, and each has her own bow and at least a full quiver of arrows. Many have their own armor, and some their own scimitar and saber. And unlike most civilized societies, most clanswomen have at least one level in Barbarian, Bard, Fighter, or Ranger!

Tharbrians are polygamous; many warriors have two or more wives. Often this is a result of the death of a friend when no other worthy warriors are available to marry the widow; sometimes this is the result of the taking or purchase of a concubine, who becomes a wife upon the birth of her first child. Other times a warrior simply takes a second wife from among the clanswomen. Most warriors try to avoid taking more wives than they can afford to care for; hungry and complaining wives is a sign of a poor warrior.

The first wife is always the most senior wife, though a later wife who bears more sons often gains favor. The worst jobs and chores that cannot be assigned to a child are usually assigned to the junior-most wife or concubines, though no wife is allowed to be lazy! Children usually are raised *en masse*, with all the wives and concubines looking after them as though they were their own, as to favor any of your husband's children, even your own, over another is considered an insult to your husband.

Still, some clanswomen find polygamy, the restriction of inheritance, the chieftaincy, the clan bard, and the clan druid to males to be restrictive, and so decide to declare themselves a **Bhean Kleeomh**, a "Sword Woman," the equal of a man. One who has declared such is not a true Bhean Kleeomh until she slays her first warrior in a raid (never in defense of the clan, as all women do that!) Until then she is a provisionary warrior, equal to a stripling, and can back out without any stain on her honor. Once she has slain an enemy warrior on a raid, she is a true Sword Woman, and has all the rights of

a warrior. She is counted as among her mother's sons, rather than her daughters, and so can inherit and even rise to the position of chief, clan bard, or clan druid.

Sword Women take wives, not necessarily as lovers (though this is not frowned upon), but rather, as helpers to keep her yurt, tend to her children, and manager her slaves. A Sword Woman can bear children herself (though almost never by a warrior of her own clan); the Sword Woman's primary wife is considered to be their mother, and the Sword Woman their father and they inherit accordingly. A Sword Woman's wives can also bear the children of various non-clan males, with the permission of their husband, though more often they adopt children taken in raids.

**Note:** The Sword Woman tradition grew out of assimilation of Amazon clans during the long centuries of migration across the Roglaras and beyond. Some clans do not recognize the tradition, and find it unnatural. Other clans embrace it wholly; these often use the old Amazon term for their Sword Women, **Gheenaikha Polemistuhs**, or "Warrior Woman." In these clans, the Warrior Women are common, and often attain chieftaincy, where they are known as the **Prigkipiszah Polemistuhs**, or "Warrior Princess" and a female heir is known as a **Taanaiszdhissah**, or "Heiress."

Children are considered the great treasure of the Tharbrians. They are a guard against old age and infirmity, their deeds can bring great honor to father and mother, and they carry on the traditions of the clan. The surest way to insult a Tharbrian is to insult his children, or his ability to bear children; the surest way to bring down the wrath of a clan is to threaten even a single child of the clan.

That said, childhood among the Tharbrian clans is not easy; almost from the moment they can crawl, they are taught to work in the camp, and boys and girls are taught the use of the sling and bow from the moment they can walk. Tharbrian children are often scrawny, to the point of emaciation; this is not so much from starvation (though during a bad season it can be), but from the fact that fat nomad children are too slow to run from plain and steppe predators! Tharbrian children, though lean, are often stronger and deadlier than the average village peasant!

## ANIMALS

As has been mentioned, Tharbrian life revolves around their horses, followed closely by their herds of cattle. Every warrior has at least one horse, usually two; wealthy warriors, especially nobles, often own a half-dozen or more. Through

the bards and druids, who can speak with the horses, the Tharbrians are better able to match horse and warrior than any other nomad peoples, even the Horse-Born Karakhans. Thus, most warriors and their horses act as a single unit, able to almost read each other's minds. This provides Tharbrians a tremendous advantage in mounted combat.

The horse herd governs itself while in camp, with the bards, druids, and their kin being the primary tenders of the herd. All warriors, however, learn to tend to their horse properly, as do most women, as in a pinch even the wives and daughters of warriors must ride to war.

Tharbrian horses are light warhorses; all their horses are trained to war, some are even born on battlefields. Tharbrian horses all have at least half maximum hit points; anything weaker would have been taken by a predator on the plains long before it reaches maturity. Each clan herd is ruled by a Stallion King, the most intelligent and physically powerful horse, usually (though not always) the steed of the clan chief. The Stallion King can often be seen wandering through the clan camp, en route to speak with the bards or druids on some matter of import to the herd.

The Tharbrian's herds of cattle are almost as important as their horses, and vastly more troublesome, for there are no "bull whisperers" among the clans, though more powerful druids can talk with cattle at need. Unfortunately, speaking with the cattle gains the druid little, as they are stupid creatures in general, and no more prone to guidance when they can be understood than when they cannot.

Cattle are rarely slaughtered to be eaten; instead they provide milk, blood, and hair on a daily basis. Oxen are also used to pull the great wains of the nomads. Weak cattle are slain for the stewpot before they become yearlings; thus, all Tharbrian cattle have at least half maximum hit points. Cattle are owned by the clan as a whole; the disposition of milk, blood, and meat from the herd is at the discretion of the mother of the clan.

Other animals generally kept by the Tharbrians include goats, llamas, camels, and sheep. These are individually owned and cared for by the warriors and their families; they are also responsible for any trouble these animals may cause. Most such animals are loot taken from farms or found along the trail; only goats as a rule are kept and bred. Sheep are slaughtered rather than bred, as they are competition for the green grasses favored by cattle. Camels and llamas are used as pack animals if trainable, or eaten otherwise.

Dogs and hawks are the only other domesticated animals

kept by the Tharbrians. Dogs are bred for speed and scenting abilities; they are often kept as guards around the camp perimeter. Hawks are used for hunting and sport, but are fairly rare, kept only by bards and noble families. Rumors of Tharbrian clans who keep tigers or great saber-toothed cats are just that, rumors, though Tharbrian-related clans of the Plain of Beasts do maintain such creatures as allies.

## DIET

Tharbrians subsist on hunting and gathering, supplemented by their herds of cattle and other animals, as well as by raiding for grains and preserved foods. The typical Tharbrian meal consists of a stew of game and gathered roots and vegetables, flavored with local herbs and spices, or with spices looted or bought from lands further afield.

Spices tend to be bland, savory rather than hot, as the northern climes preferred by Tharbrians do not generally produce hot spices. Southerly-adventuring Tharbrians believe chilies to be the chosen spice of Donn, as after consuming such their guts roil and they are usually cursed with savage diarrhea such that they believe they will die. Only Tharbrians with Smyrian blood seem to like chilies and consume them without harm.

Though Tharbrians eat plenty of meat, or drink plenty of blood harvested from their cattle, they remain a short and wiry people, as larger bodied warriors do not fight well on the light steppe horses of the Tharbrians. When raiding, Tharbrians often eat roasted beef, pork, chicken, mutton, or whatever other animals may be taken from local farms; when hunting, venison, wild buffalo, snake, lizard, and water fowl are more often on the menu. Any leftover meat is smoked, salted, or jerked for later consumption as is applicable and as opportunity permits.

Fish also make up a good portion of the Tharbrian diet, as even children know how to catch fish with net or line. Fish are usually broiled on hot stones or roasted over a fire, less often sliced into the stew.

Vegetables, roots, and grains all vary greatly, depending on the local agriculture and the prevalence of local farms. Grains are almost never baked into bread; the best Tharbrians manage is to make a sort of tortilla with maize or pita with wheat. Rice and maize are more often mixed in the stewpot, while wheat, barley, and oats are eaten as porridge with cow or goat milk or cow blood.

Eggs are a rare treat, as the Tharbrians do not keep chickens. They are usually found in nests while gathering, or during raids in farmer's chicken coops. Eggs are eaten raw or boiled, or more rarely cooked into the stew or fried with wild rice.

Fruits are rarely eaten, save for apples, cherries, and other such berries and fruits that grow in northern climes. Far-ranging Tharbrians in the south find lemons, limes, oranges, and other citrus fruits not to their taste, though they do enjoy grapes.

Tharbrians do not produce any grain or fruit-based alcohol of their own; their nomadic life pretty well precludes the ability to brew or distill liquor. Many clans do not allow the consumption of beer or un-watered wine, considering drunkenness to be a “civilized” decadence. Watered wine is more acceptable, as the alcohol helps to sweeten the water, and is often safer and more invigorating than water found along the trail.

## TECHNOLOGY

Though the Viridians and Alryans consider Tharbrians little more than backward savages, the clans actually possess an advanced level of technology. Tharbrian smiths are capable of making intricate and very strong mail armor, surpassed only by the armors of the dwarves and elves. The few Tharbrian smiths who settle in cities and towns and turn their hands to making heavier metal armors are also well-renown for their skills

Tharbrian smiths are also excellent weapon smiths, making many fine scimitars, sabers, daggers, dirks, knives, spear and arrow heads, as well as spurs and other common tools needful of nomads. While they are capable of smelting their own iron and making their own steel, they see no need for it, as long as there are plenty of weak civilized peoples from which to steal the raw materials!

As for the manufacture of bows and arrows, they are the equal of any elf when it comes to making short bows and unsurpassed in manufacture of the short composite bow.

Tharbrian leather-workers work with their smiths to manufacture the best lightweight leather-and-metal armors available. Tharbrian felt, leather, and hide clothing is also of the best, lightest, warmest, and most-waterproof construction possible. Their felt yurts are lightweight and easy to use, yet sturdy and with little effort, cool in summer and warm in the harshest winters. Only the Horse-Born Karakhans make better saddles, and then only on a technical level; while the Karakhans excel at making decorative horse blankets, Tharbrian saddles are veritable works of art.

Tharbrians use to good advantage all materials available in the wilds, supplementing what they do not need with raw materials pillaged during raids and trade goods gained during barter sessions with civilized merchants. For all that the Tharbrians do not seem to possess an advanced

technology, civilized merchants are eager to buy (or just as often, steal) Tharbrian-manufactured armor, weapons, saddles and tack, and clothing.

## CLOTHING

Tharbrian clothing is usually made of felt, leather, and whatever other cloth can be bought or stolen, preferably silks from Viridistan, but cottons are also used, as are linens.

In camp during high summer, and usually in their home yurt year-round, men and women usually wear little more than a breechcloth, sandals, and such belts and baldrics as are needed to carry weapons. Tharbrians do not have nudity taboos, so the only peoples who might be shocked would be “civilized” slaves.

In warm months, clothing for men consists of long pants, preferably of a light material, with leather chaps when riding, soft socks, and high hard boots. Shirts are billowy if armor is not worn; if a light shirt is not available, a felt vest is usually worn instead. Women’s clothing for riding is essentially the same, with a brassiere in addition as needed (rarely, as Tharbrian women are relatively light in the breast, even when nursing). A wide-brimmed wicker hat is worn by both sexes to keep the sun out of the eyes.

In winter in northern climes, a heavy fur hauberk that covers from the chin to the ankles is worn over the normal dress and armor; several additional layers of shirts are also usually worn. A great conical fur cap is worn, large enough to wear over even the Skandik helm favored by nobles.

## ARMOR

Silk shirt\*, padded, leather coat, leather armor, ring mail, hide, studded leather, laminar leather, mail shirt, mail hauberk; leather coif, pot helm, Skandik (Norman) helm, chain mail coif; buckler, plus small and medium wooden shield.

\* A silk shirt may be worn under any other form of armor. It provides no bonus to AC, but reduces damage dealt by arrow attacks by 1 point of damage (minimum 1 point of damage). Silk shirts generally must be imported or stolen from Viridistan, and usually cost 5d10 gp.

Armor is usually the best the warrior can afford, and if of Tharbrian manufacture, is decorated with stars and swords, sometimes with runic G and L. Feathers are worn upon the helm and shield, usually crow feathers, sometimes more colorful feathers when available; wealthy chiefs are known to wear ostrich feathers upon their helm.

## WEAPONS

Atlatl, bolas, short bow, short composite bow, club, dagger, dart, dirk, knife, lariat, light lance, poniard, saber\* scimitar, sling, spear, long spear, wolf spear, staff, and short sword.

\* A saber is one-handed heavy scimitar: 1d8 points of damage, weight 6 lbs., EV 3, costs 20 gp.

Weapons are the best the warrior can afford; an old and plain expert-quality blade is preferred to a bejeweled common blade.

### NOTE ON ARMOR AND WEAPONS

These are the armor and weapon types with which a starting character of this race or ethnicity might be proficient; this is a **maximum**, regardless of class, and some classes might limit this choice even further. A 1<sup>st</sup> level fighter can add a number of additional types of armor and weapons with which he is familiar equal to his Strength bonus, and may choose an additional armor or weapon with which he gains proficiency every level thereafter. This rule is optional, at the Judge's discretion; it provides a more realistic scope of the weapons that a character might encounter in youth and training, based on his or her culture.

## COMBAT

The typical Tharbrian warrior rides a light war horse; the horse has no barding, but wears a fine saddle, saddle blanket, and very efficient bit and bridle. Other than the warrior and his arms and armor, the Tharbrian war horse carries no equipment; the Tharbrian's food, loot, and other gear, other than maybe some jerked meat under the saddle, are back with the baggage train.

The typical warrior wears leather armor, or perhaps ring mail, with a pot helm, while a noble warrior wears a silk shirt, over which he wears fine Tharbrian mail, usually a full hauberk with a coif or Skandik helm. Both carry a lance, short composite bow, two quivers of 20 arrows each, a saber or scimitar, and a dirk in their belt and likely a knife or two in their boots. At his side, hanging from a hook on his saddle, is a shield of wood and hide.

A Tharbrian raiding party usually consists of scores, if not hundreds, of such warriors.

The preferred form of attack is the storm of arrows, in which all the warriors of the group fire their bows in unison against massed enemies. If the survivors charge on foot or on slow, heavily-laden steeds, the Tharbrians retreat upon their swift, lightly- or non-encumbered steeds, turn, and repeat. With luck, the enemy will never even get in sword range.

Otherwise, if the enemy is also mounted on swift steeds, or if the terrain is against them, the Tharbrians meet the enemy charge with their lances, and try to break through to where they can regain terrain advantage and again pepper the enemy with arrows. If their charge is broken, they stop and fight with scimitars and sabers, ever looking for a chance to break and regroup to better use their speed.

If they meet an enemy they cannot slaughter with arrows, and cannot break with their charge, and cannot defeat sword to saber, they then break and flee if possible, to fight another day. If escape is impossible they fight on, grimly, to the death, hoping to send as many enemies to the Scarlett Hells as possible before they fall.

## TREASURE

Tharbrians rarely view treasure as an end in and of itself; one cannot eat gold, and though you might break an arm off a statue and beat someone with it, it makes a poor weapon. Most "treasure" is viewed simply as a means to an end — it can be used to buy that which one needs that cannot be stolen or taken in a raid. Such is considered the value of coins, gems, and "civilized baubles," such as crystal vases, silver snuff boxes, and ivory pipes. More useful items, such as horns, and harps, are valued and treasured. Jewelry is preferred, as a warrior or his wives can wear their wealth in style, and it can always be sold or traded for more important goods.

Expert weapons and armor, of course, are valued for their own intrinsic values, and rarely if ever traded or sold away, unless the weapon is of esoteric type or the armor is heavier than typical Tharbrian armors. Magical weapons and armor, of course, are considered future heirlooms; theft of such an item from a clan can and has caused wars!

Miscellaneous magic items are of less interest, unless it is something the bards or druids might find useful; these will either be traded off or, more likely *destroyed*, if it is something that the Tharbrians would not themselves use but might prove dangerous in the hands of an enemy (i.e., wizard wands, staffs, and rods). It is this tendency for Tharbrians (and many other barbarian peoples) to destroy rather than use these kinds of items that have earned all "barbarians" a reputation for hating all magic.

Warriors on raid rarely carry any treasure they have not gained through pillage and plunder; they may carry a handful of coins to spend while scouting a village, as trade often settles the suspicions of the locals. Most treasure that isn't used or worn by the warrior or his wives is kept in a chest



in the warrior's yurt; these rarely have locks, as 'Tharbrians trust each other not to steal from fellow clansmen.

## LANGUAGE

Tharbrians speak Tharbrian, a tongue descended primarily from Altanian. It is closely related to Tharbriana, the tongue of many rural folk of the northern Pazidan, and the two are mutually intelligible. Tharbarres is, however, far removed from its origins, and not mutually intelligible with Tharbrian. It has no written form, but can easily be written using the Alryan or Tharbriana alphabets, less readily but still mostly legibly with the Viridian alphabet.

**NAMES, MALE:** Adhair, Aherne, Alasdhair, Aonghus, Artur, Bhain, Bhaird, Bharan, Bharrah, Bharnard, Brann, Brendhan, Dharbee, Dhasz, Dharsz, Dheree, Dhevin, Dhomnull, Dhoolee, Dhuffee, Dhughan, Dhufee, Dhunkhan, Eakhan, Eladhakh, Eoghan, Faghan, Fearghall, Fearghus, Fionn, Flann, Flinn, Frangh, Ghabhan, Ghair, Ghaelan, Ghall, Ghaelbhann, Ghannon, Ghilroi, Ghirvin, Ghordain, Ghorman, Ghuthree, Glenn, Gradee, Hoghann, Hurlee, Ianh, Ibher, Innisz, Khail, Khaill, Khaillen, Khambeul, Khamron, Kharlin, Kharraig, Kheallagh, Khearn, Kheef, Kheeghan, Khein, Khellee, Khelvin, Khendrikh, Khenedhee, Kheneeon, Khermidh, Kherree, Kherwin, Khevin, Khierhan, Kholin, Kholm, Khonn, Khonnan, Khonroi, Khormak, Khowan, Khuinn, Khull, Khullan, Kwiglee, Kwinluhn, Kwinn, Lakhlann, Leeahm, Lennuhn, Lennukhs, Loghann, Lonn, Malkhom, Malonee, Malveen, Mannoos, Markhus, Martainn, Martuhn, Maioo, Morfinn, Morvahn, Munghan, Munroh, Murkhadh, Murrah, Nabh, Neveen, Niall, Nuall, Orruhn, Pdraigh, Parthaluhn, Pheluhn, Pouhl, Rhaffertee, Rhabhratakh, Rhaghallagh, Rhaghnall, Rhai, Rhaian, Rhaiberdh, Rhailee, Recorbhardhan, Rooanaidh, Roonee, Rhoi, Rhooree, Shaemus, Skhellee, Sleevuhn, Slooaghan, Taidhikh, Tearlakh, Tormodh, Torransz, Tullee, Uilleam, and Uisdhean.

Names of other cultures are rarely used for males, save for Altanian and Tharbriana names, as tradition dictates that Tharbrian males use Tharbrian names.

**NAMES, FEMALE:** Aeghnisz, Ailisz, Alannah, Ambhur, Anabel, Arinh, Ariuhn, Bheinn, Bheitriz, Brai, Breandha, Bree, Briarth, Brighidh, Dhierdhra, Dhommiah, Dhoreen, Eebhleen, Eedhain, Eelidh, Eelionairh, Fionngwalah, Frangakh, Ghleenah, Ghiorsahl, Glenneisz, Grainn, Gwenn, Khaissee, Khaidhlinn, Kharlin, Khasidee, Kheallakh, Khearra, Kheenah, Khellee, Kherriann, Khiardha, Khonanna, Khonna, Kwenn, Kweenee, Laiodhakh, Leelee, Leosaidh, Lehszlee, Leteisz, Lohree, Maebhe, Mairghriadh, Mairhee,

Marsallee, Mildreadh, Moibheal, Mooadhanaidh, Moorhealh, Morh, Narah, Noallah, Odharnaidh, Onarah, Oonah, Peigh, Rhaionaidh, Rhee, Rhoesz, Shaeana, Shaonaidh, Shaobhann, Siuszann, Szarha, Taidhlikh, and Tarah.

Names of other cultures are sometimes used for females, especially when the girl's mother is from another culture, as the naming tradition requiring Tharbrian names for women is not as strong as that of the tradition for naming men.

**NAMES, FAMILY, SEPT, AND CLAN:** The name of a family, sept, and often clan is usually a patronymic, based on the name of the founder. "Mak" in Tharbrian means "child of," and so both sons and daughters bear the name of their father as a family name. Sept and clan names derive from powerful families, as lesser families are "adopted" into the line of the founding family. The prefix "Ua" applies in Tharbrian only to clan lines that claim descent from a "royal" clan, a clan descended from a leader (or from which arose a leader) who led a famous and successful Feakhadh or Feakhadh Mhor.

Many **clan** names, however, are derived otherwise, and do not fit the patronymic tradition.

**Ancient and honored clan names are marked with an asterisk:**

Adholl, Adhumsh\*, Aherne, Aidhkhen, Anszdrudh, Bhaill\*, Bhainn, Bhairdh\*, Bhardonn, Bharklai, Bhoglee, Bhirnee, Bhoil, Bhurkh, Brann\*, Brodee, Broosz, Dharrokh, Dhoigh, Dhooghall\*, Dhooghan, Dhooglasz, Dhosz, Dhunbhar, Dhunkhan, Fhindlee, Fhokhlukhan\*, Fhuirmidh, Flemmingh, Fraszier\*, Ghael, Ghafruhn, Ghalbraidh, Ghibsuhn, Ghoo, Ghunn, Hai, Haigh, Hendree, Innesz, Khaeszer, Khaill, Khairdh, Khambuhl\*, Khamruhn, Khanaidh\*, Khardoo, Khargeel, Khellee\*, Khenedee, Khermodh, Kherree, Khilleen, Khoinnakh, Khokrain, Khurwen, Klarkh\*, Klee, Kraigh, Kraituhn, Krawfuhd, Lehszlee, Liall, Lindszee\*, Loghann, Loidh, Lokhor, Maar, Malisz, Malkhom, Mallokh, Menziesz, Mooeer, Moor, Mundee, Munroh, Murfee\*, Murkhee, Naighusz, Nairn, Nansz, Ollam, Reedh, Rhaillee, Rhamszee, Rheeagh, Rhiakh, Rhoss, Rhosz\*, Roonee, Simpszuhn, Sinkhlair, Skhodh, Strakhan, Uigh\*, Uinn, and Uisghee.

**Ancient and honored patronymic clans:**

MakArtur, MakBhain, MakBrann, MakDheree, MakDhufee, MakFionn, MakGhall, MakGhannon, MakGhuthree, MakInnisz, Makhein [sic], Makhendrikh [sic], MakMurrah, MakNabh, MakNiall, MakPouhl, MakRhaian, MakRoonee, MakRhoi, MakSleevuhn, Ua'Ghannon, and Ua'Niall.

# RACIAL TRAITS AND ABILITIES

**ANIMAL HANDLING (Wisdom):** Tharbrians are born and raised alongside their horse brothers, and so know the secrets to handling horses better than any other peoples, save perhaps centaurs and Horse-Born Karakhans. This ability can be used to calm a frightened horse, safely push a horse in a forced march, tend to the daily needs and requirements of a horse (feed, exercise, care, etc.), bind and tend to a horse's wounds, and so forth. This skill can be used to determine the current and maximum hit points and general health of a horse (requires one minute of study in a non-combat situation). Long-term use of this ability enables a Tharbrian to tend and improve his herds through selective breeding and proper care.

**ATTRIBUTE MODIFICATION:** Tharbrians only have two Primary Attributes rather than the normal three for humans. Instead of a third Primary they may choose one Secondary Attribute for which they gain a +2 bonus to all attribute checks. This choice is made at character creation and cannot be changed.

**DIE HARD (Constitution):** This ability is used only when the Tharbrian is about to fall unconscious or die. When reduced to less than zero hit points, and the Tharbrian has not yet made her attack in that round due to initiative, and she has a melee weapon in hand *and* is engaged in melee with an enemy, the Tharbrian can attempt to make one last attack. She must make a Constitution check against a CL equal to the number of hit points she is below zero (i.e., -5 hit points equals CL 5); if successful, she can make one last attack before she falls unconscious or dies. The attack occurs immediately after the attack that reduced her to less than zero hit points.

**HORSE WARRIOR:** Tharbrians are skilled in use of their tribal weapons while on horseback. They suffer only a -1 penalty to hit with melee attacks and a -2 penalty to hit with ranged attacks rather than the usual -2 and -4 penalties with these weapons.

**HORSE WHISPERER (Bards, Druids, and Knights Only):** Tharbrian bards and druids possess the ability to *speak with horses* at 1st level, as per the 2nd level *speak with animals* spell; knights gain this ability at 2nd level. This ability can only be used to speak with natural, normal horses (including wild, feral, and domestic asses, donkeys, mules, and even zebras), but never part-horse

monsters or monstrous humanoids, such as centaurs. The ability can be used at will.

**WEAPON PROFICIENCY:** All Tharbrians, regardless of class, are proficient in the use of the short bow and short composite bow. All Tharbrians who, due to their class, are proficient in the use of a scimitar are also proficient in the use of a saber.

**WILDERNESS CONCEAL (Dexterity):** Tharbrians can conceal themselves extremely well in wilderness areas. With a successful Dexterity check, Tharbrians can camouflage themselves so well as to be unnoticeable by most passers-by. Tharbrians cannot conceal themselves and use Wilderness Stealth at the same time until they reach 5<sup>th</sup> level. At this level and beyond, a Tharbrian can attempt both but must make a successful Wilderness Conceal and Wilderness Stealth check at -5. In this case, movement is reduced to one quarter the normal movement rate.

Tharbrians cannot conceal themselves if being observed, even casually, before the conceal check is attempted. If the observer is momentarily distracted, the Tharbrian can attempt to use this ability. While the observer averts its attention, the character can attempt to get to a hiding place of some kind. The attribute check, however, is at a -10 penalty because the character has to move quickly to the hiding place.

This ability cannot be used if armors other than those native to Tharbrian culture are worn.

Tharbrians add only half their level, rounded down, to use of this ability in non-plains/steppe environments.

**WILDERNESS STEALTH (Dexterity):** This ability allows a Tharbrian to move silently in wilderness areas. The Tharbrian can move up to one-half normal speed at no penalty. At more than one-half, and up to the character's full speed, the character suffers a -5 penalty to the check. It's practically impossible (-20 penalty) to move silently while running or charging.

This ability cannot be used if armors other than those native to Tharbrian culture are worn.

Tharbrians add only half their level, rounded down, to use of this ability in non-plains/steppe environments.

**WILDERNESS SURVIVAL (Wisdom):** In wilderness environments, Tharbrians can provide shelter for themselves and others, and can provide decent food and water for several people, all without the need for an attribute check

unless it is a large number of people. The Tharbrian can forage and hunt for food and water. The Tharbrian must spend eight hours hunting and gathering to produce enough food and water to feed 2-8 people for a day. If the Tharbrian wishes to feed or shelter a larger group of people than the die indicate, a successful Wisdom check is necessary. If successful, the Tharbrian must spend an additional eight hours gathering food to feed and water an additional 2-8 people. This additional effort allows the Tharbrian to gather food and water for up to 4-16 creatures. The Tharbrian can only hunt and forage for food twice per day.

In addition to the ability to provide food and shelter in the wilds, a Tharbrian can automatically determine where true north lies in relation to the character in normal wilderness environments.

Tharbrians add only half their level, rounded down, to use of this ability in non-plains/steppe environments.

**LANGUAGES:** Tharbrian

**BONUS LANGUAGES:** Aelphen, Alryan, Altanian, Smyrian, Viridian

**SIZE:** Medium

**MOVEMENT:** 30 feet

**TYPICAL CLASSES:** Ranger, Barbarian, Knight, Fighter, Rogue, Bard, Druid

**BARBARIAN [ALTERNATE] MODIFIERS:** +2 Animal Handling, +2 Wilderness Conceal, +2 Wilderness Stealth, +2 Wilderness Survival (as per chosen Tribal Abilities)

**BARD MODIFIER:** +2 Exalt when singing a clan song for clan members

**KNIGHT MODIFIERS:** +2 Horsemanship. Note that the Knightly Virtues only apply generally to other Tharbrians and “worthy” opponents, and few Tharbrians know anything of Humility, even knights; among Tharbrians, however, most Tharbrian Knights uphold the Knightly Virtues better than most “civilized” knights!

**RANGER MODIFIERS:** +2 Conceal, +2 Move Silently, +2 Survival

**ROGUE AND ASSASSIN MODIFIERS:** +2 Hide, +2 Move Silently

## GLOSSARY

**Anakhain:** “Disaster”

**Anakhain Agh’Bhendhegrodh:** The “Disaster at Bendigroth,” the First Great Invasion of the Northern Horsemen, which culminated in the Tharbrian defeat at the Battle of the Plain of Skulls in 1333 BCCC.

**Anakhain Agh’Shareenn:** The “Disaster at the Sharryn,” the Third Great Invasion of the Northern Horsemen, which culminated in the Tharbrian defeat at the Battle of Glint Valley in 2097 BCCC.

**Anakhain Agh’Uidskhoor:** The “Disaster at the Utscur,” a battle where a Feakhadh, working in cooperation with the rebel Overlord of the East, was defeated by the Viridians in the southern reaches of the Empire.

**Ardh-Bardh Na’Klann:** “High Bard of the Clan,” the highest SL bard in the clan.

**Ardh-Druidh Na’Klann:** “High Druid of the Clan,” the highest SL druid of the clan.

**Ardh-Treeadh:** “High Chief,” a chieftain of two or more united (albeit temporarily) clans.

**Bardh Mhor Na’Tharbrians:** “Great Bard of the Tharbrians,” the highest SL bard of the whole Tharbrian nation.

**Bhean Kleeomh:** “Sword Woman,” a woman of the

clans who has taken up saber and bow and lives like a warrior, rather than a woman.

**Blood Brother/Blood Sister:** A non-Tharbrian adopted into a clan by a warrior; blood brothers and sisters are considered Tharbrians thereafter.

**Concubine:** A non-Tharbrian slave woman taken as a mate by a Tharbrian warrior; she becomes the warrior’s full wife and is considered a Tharbrian after she gives birth to her first child.

**Druidh Mhor Na’Tharbrians:** “Great Druid of the Tharbrians,” the highest SL druid of the whole Tharbrian nation.

**Feakhadh:** “Host” and “Raid.”

**Feakhadh Mhor:** “Great Host” and “Great Raid.”

**Feakhadh Mhor Ua’Ghannon:** “Great Raid/Great Host of Ua’Ghannon,” the Second Great Invasion of the Northern Horsemen, a two-year raid which culminated in the razing of most settlements and the extirpation of civilization along the North Shore of the Roglaras, 1759 to 1760 BCCC. Led by Ghannon MakBhain, the founder of Clan Ua’Ghannon.

**Feakhadh Mhor Ua’Niall:** “Great Raid/Great Host of Ua’Niall,” the Fourth Great Invasion of the Northern Horsemen, which culminated in Viridian defeat and virtual Imperial collapse at the Battle of Havocia in 2817 BCCC.

Led by Niall MakInnisz, the founder of Clan Ua’Niall.

**Gheenaikha Polemistuhs:** “Warrior Woman,” term used for “Sword Woman” by clans heavily influenced by Amazons.

**Khapell Ardh-Teearnah:** “High Lord of Horses,” the leader of a Feakhadh consisting of hundreds of clans.

**Khapell Teearnah:** “Lord of Horses,” the leader of a Feakhadh consisting of scores of clans.

**Prigkhipiszh Polemistuhs:** “Warrior Princess,” term applied to a Sword Woman/Warrior Woman chieftain among the clans heavily influenced by Amazons.

**Saber:** The long, slightly curved sword wielded by Tharbrian warriors.

**Taanaiszdh:** “Heir,” the heir to the chieftaincy and second-in-command in the tribe.

**Taanaiszdhissah:** “Heiress,” used only in clans with strong Amazon influence.

**Tadhlum:** A special magical weapon made from the brain of an enemy.

**Tharbrian:** “People.” The origins of the word are long lost to history.

**Tharbriana:** A settled, rural people related to the Tharbrians; descended from Tharbrians who settled in the Roglaras following the Feakhadh Mhor Ua’Niall.

**Treadh:** “Clan Chief”

# WILDERLANDS OF HIGH ADVENTURE™ PLAYER'S GUIDE #1 THARBRIAN HORSE-LORDS™ OFFICIAL GAMING AID DESIGNED AND APPROVED FOR USE WITH CASTLES & CRUSADES® Developed by James Mishler Graphic Design by Peter Bradley

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