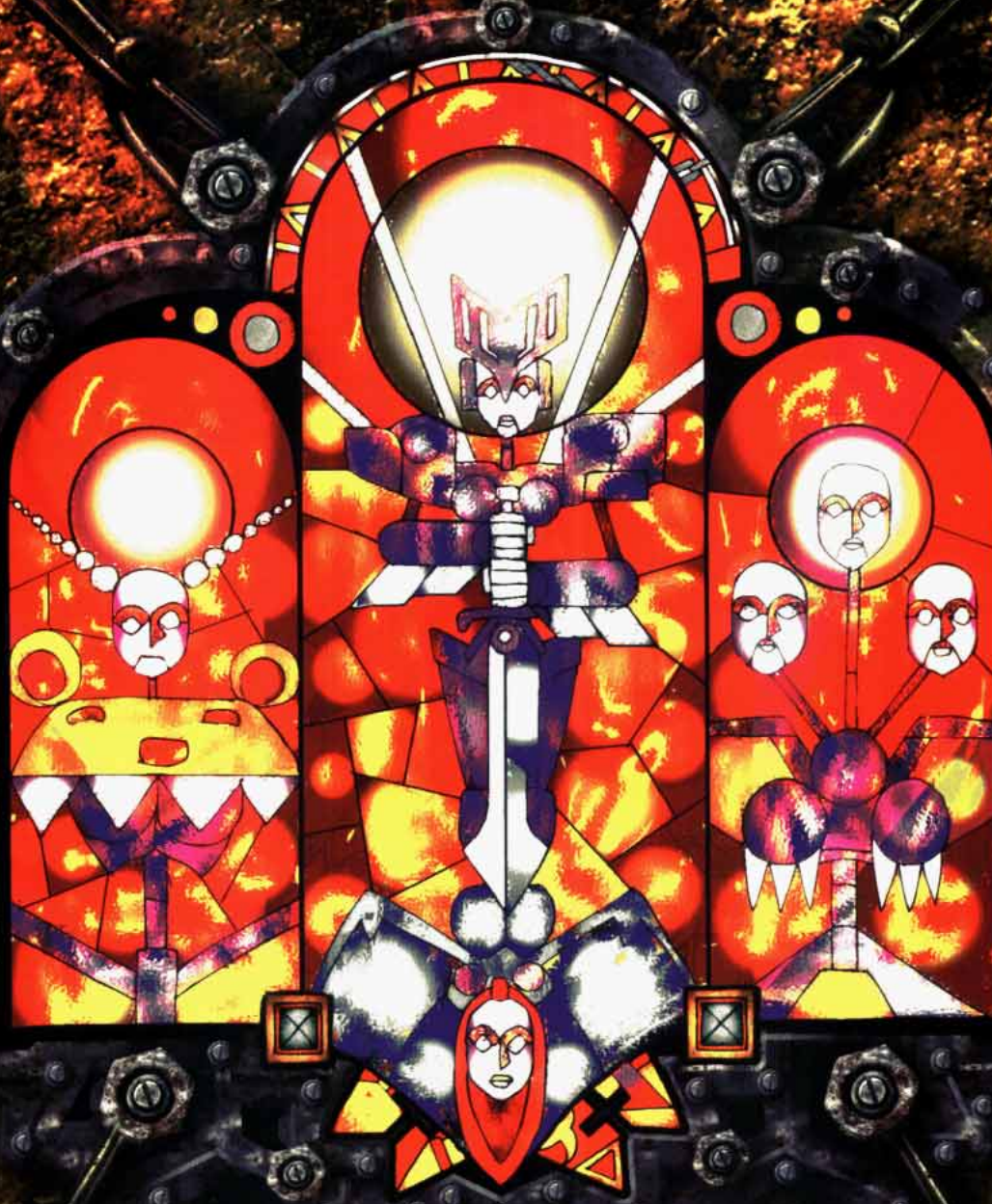


# Broken PACT



A Tribe  Cycle



Dream Pod 9



# A Tribe 8 Cycle

## Broken Pact

"Even as the Z'abri howled their hatred at us from their twisted existence in the H'l Kar, we watched the collapse of the Pact that had kept the peace for so long. Then came the schism.

"Joan led Her people against Her Sister, and with a blow of Joshua's mighty hammer, ended our way of life. The rain of blood began its fall as Prophecy had foretold, and I waited for the first crimson signs to show me the way forward."

- Jeky Maqua, Guide

Since the Liberation, Joan and Tera Sheba have stood together as guardians to the Seven Tribes. Now their trembling alliance has shattered, and the Player Characters are drawn into a Crusade that brings the world down around their ears.

Broken Pact is a complete cycle for Tribe 8. Its Quests and Acts chronicle the events behind a new set of Crusades which deal the fatal blow to the ancient and mysterious Pact of the Dome.

- A Prelude adventure, three complete Quests and many hooks for side plots

- Detailed information on the geography and inhabitants of the Ziggurat and the H'l Kar

- New NPCs and templates to be used with any Cycle

- New Z'abri monstrosities and creations

DP9-815

[www.dp9.com](http://www.dp9.com)

ISBN: 1-896776-79-5



9 781896 776798



Dream Pod 9

Printed in Canada



Conquest



Part Two



# Table of Contents

## Credits

### Writing

Jason P. Prince

### Copy Editing

Hilary Doda

Wunji Lau

### Editorial Direction

Hilary Doda, Line Editor

Marc-Alexandre Vézina, Silhouette System

Developer

### Silhouette Design

Gene Marcil, Stéphane I. Matis

### Cover and Interior Art

Ghislain Barbe, Marc Ouellette, John Wu

### Layout

Jean-François Fortier, Pierre Ouellette

### Art Direction

Pierre Ouellette

### Marketing and Administration

Robert Dubois

### Tribe 8 Created by

Stéphane Brochu, Joshua Mosquera Asheim,

Phillippe R. Boule

### Special Thanks

From Jason: To Tara Prince for the most important things. To Chris Gunning, Edwyn Kumar, and Jim Cotsios, for their helpful words, support, and work on the Tribe 8 Cycle books.

From Hilary: To Richard Morris, for support, laughter and endless evil ideas. To Jon Doda, for not destroying my computer. . . To the Usual Suspects, for giving me yet another excuse not to act my age. To the Underhill Moon Circle, for brunches in greasy-spoon diners, road trips and late-night phone calls.

<b>PRELUDE</b> .....	4
Beginning .....	4
Interim .....	5
Reminders .....	5
<b>CHAPTER ONE: Children's Crusade</b> ..	6
Pain of Life .....	7
Introduction to Broken Pact .....	7
The Truth Behind Broken Pact .....	8
Contents .....	8
Format .....	8
What Has Come Before .....	9
Themes and Atmosphere .....	10
Timeline .....	11
Tribal and Fallen Politics and Leaders .....	11
Hal Ninva / Kymber Reva .....	11
Kyrt the Free / Troy Fenys - Herite Leaders ..	12
Mek - Jacker Leader .....	12
Templar Shera Uhan'on - Crusade Leader ..	12
Nostra Guy'on - Joanite Old Guard Leader ..	12
Judge Sakai Dan'on .....	12
Captain Hesperrin, Agnite Favorite .....	13
Captain Megin, Agnite Bully and Favorite ..	13
Captain Puck, Agnite Favorite .....	13
Tomoe, Neonate Guide .....	13
Prelude Hook: Treasure Hunt .....	14
Scenes .....	14
Climax .....	15
Aftermath .....	15
Quest One: Children's Crusade .....	15
Quest Prelude .....	16
The Baron's Scheme .....	16
Spin Doctoring .....	16
Act One: Crusading Onward .....	17
Weaver's Synopsis .....	17
Involving the Players .....	17
Meeting Agnes .....	18
The Fireside Meeting .....	18
Heading North .....	18
Night's Rest .....	19
Into the Serf Lands .....	19
Lunch Time .....	20
Heading Back .....	20
Dahlian Party .....	21
Tips and Resources .....	21
Hook: Tunnels of Trouble .....	22
Scenes .....	22
Climax .....	22

Aftermath .....	22
Act Two: Assault on Abonom .....	23
Weaver's Synopsis .....	23
In Sight of Abonom .....	23
Fields of Flowers .....	23
Dark Skies .....	24
Fighting Rind .....	24
Seeking the Trident .....	24
Destroying the Trident and Count H'x .....	25
The Hunting Party .....	25
Tips and Resources .....	25
Act Three: Fall of Abonom .....	26
Weaver's Synopsis .....	26
Fall of Abonom .....	27
Joshua Speaks .....	27
Going Home .....	28
Tips and Resources .....	28
Between Quests .....	28
<b>CHAPTER TWO: Crusade of the Heart</b> ..	30
Quest Two: Crusade of the Heart .....	31
Quest Prelude .....	31
Baron's Plotting .....	31
Omens and Prophecy .....	32
Act One: Plan of Attack .....	33
Weaver's Synopsis .....	33
Heart's Desire .....	33
Involving the Players .....	33
Crusader Leaders and Politics .....	33
Tribal Allies .....	35
War Parties .....	35
Crusade Planning .....	41
Defense Planning .....	42
Elsewhere on Vimary .....	42
Preparing the Feint .....	42
Heading Out .....	42
Tips and Resources .....	42
New Aspect: Righteousness .....	43
Hook: The Ambassador's Gift .....	43
Scenes .....	43
Climax .....	44
Aftermath .....	44
Act Two: Lair of the Beast .....	44
Weaver's Synopsis .....	44
Removing the Watcher .....	44
Palace Assault Battle Plan .....	45
The Feint .....	46
Final Trumpet .....	46



Events Outside .....	46	Magdalites .....	65
Defeating the Gate Keeper .....	47	Shebans .....	65
The Baron's Response .....	48	Yagans .....	66
Z'bri Retaliation on the Nation .....	48	Outside the Nation .....	66
Ziggurat Assault Battle Plan .....	48	Guides .....	66
Events in the Ziggurat .....	48	Joshuans .....	66
The Prince and Joan .....	49	Marians .....	66
The Baron's Trap .....	49	Z'bri .....	66
Tips and Resources .....	50	Key Developments .....	66
Act Three: Fleeing the Horror .....	50	War On The Horizon .....	67
Weaver's Synopsis .....	50	Joan/Tera Sheba Schism .....	67
Maze of Flesh .....	50	<b>CHAPTER FIVE: Weaver's Resources 68</b>	
Labyrinth of Desire .....	51	Roleplaying Fatimas .....	69
Escaping the Ziggurat .....	51	Agnes .....	69
The Hammer .....	52	Joan .....	69
Tips and Resources .....	52	Use of Fatimal Powers .....	69
Between Quests .....	53	Agnes .....	70
<b>CHAPTER THREE: Dark Heart ..... 54</b>		Joan .....	70
Quest Three: Dark Heart .....	55	Agnite Batons .....	70
Quest Prelude .....	55	Joshuan Spear .....	70
Act One: Seeking Justice .....	56	Aspect: Righteousness .....	71
Weaver's Synopsis .....	56	Lands of the Z'bri .....	71
Assembly .....	57	Living Buildings .....	71
Sheban Orders .....	58	Abonom .....	73
Sheban Tactics .....	58	Organ Fields and Serf Lands .....	73
Tribal Trouble .....	59	Hive Domes .....	73
Sunken City Events .....	59	Main Skkr Dome .....	73
Tips and Resources .....	60	The Great Trident .....	73
Act Two: Shattering the Pact .....	60	Melanis Towers .....	74
Weaver's Synopsis .....	60	Flemis War Machines .....	74
Old Pain .....	60	Rakh Hive War Machine "Rind" .....	74
End of Pact and Pillars .....	61	Sangis Palaces .....	75
Tips and Resources .....	61	Compound .....	75
<b>CHAPTER FOUR: Cycle Ramifications</b>		Serf's Quarters .....	75
<b>and Outcomes ..... 62</b>		Spire .....	75
Cycle Ramifications and Outcomes .....	63	Ziggurat .....	75
Counting the Dead .....	63	Ziggurat Layout .....	76
Fallen Perspectives .....	63	NPCs .....	78-87
Children of Lilith .....	63	NPC Templates .....	88-95
Doomsayers .....	64		
Herites .....	64		
Jackers .....	64		
Lightbringers .....	64		
Tribal Perspectives .....	64		
Agnites .....	64		
Dahlans .....	65		
Evans .....	65		
Joanites .....	65		

## Produced and Published by



Dream Pod 9  
5000 d'Iberville, Suite 332  
Montreal, QC  
Canada  
H2H 2S6

All art and designs ©1997-2000 Dream Pod 9, Inc.

The Dream Pod 9 logo, Tribe 8, Silhouette, the Seven Tribes, the Seven Fatimas, Fatima, Vimary, Z'bri, Lilith the Liberator and all distinctive logos and terms are trademarks of Dream Pod 9 Inc. ©1997-2000 Dream Pod 9, Inc. All rights reserved.

No part of this book may be reproduced without written permission from the publisher, except for short excerpts for review purposes.

Any similarities to characters, situations, institutions, corporations, etc. (without satirical intent) are strictly coincidental.

Warning! Tribe 8 is a work of fiction intended to be used in a game context only. It contains elements which may be deemed inappropriate for younger readers, Dream Pod 9 Inc. does not condone or encourage the use of violence or weapons. Parental discretion is advised.

The use of the female gender throughout should not indicate any form of gender bias. It is meant only to avoid pronouns like "him/her/it," making the text easier to read.

Dream Pod 9 can be reached through the Internet. Look for our page on the World Wide Web at [www.dp9.com](http://www.dp9.com). Also check out the [rec.games.frp.misc](mailto:rec.games.frp.misc) newsgroup for support and information about Tribe 8.

Stock # DP9-815

Legal Deposit: September 2000

Bibliothèque Nationale du Québec

National Library of Canada

ISBN 1-896776-79-5

First Printing

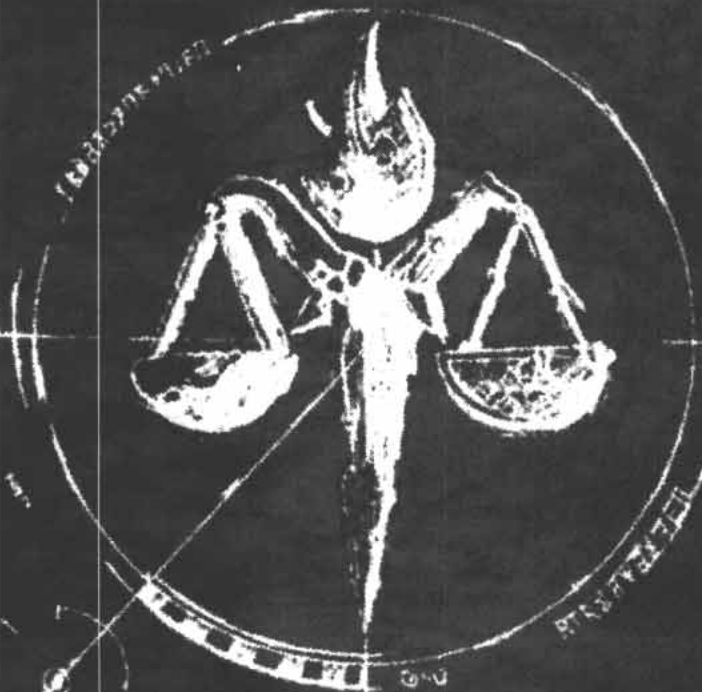
Printed in Canada



## Prelude

Now is the time of vengeance,  
for all the wrongs we have suffered  
for all those dear ones we have lost.  
The Child Agnes knows this,  
and soon the warrior Joan will be reminded  
that She must find Her heart, the one She  
put aside so long ago to keep the peace - The Pact.  
Once again the passion of slumbering Joshua  
will rise, and the land will yield to His might.

- Altara Ven





## Beginning

### From the secret journal of Captain Megin, Agnite Bully:

Agnes returned with Dahlia and Magdalen. We knew it was Her but She was taller and older in Her form and speech. Now there is talk of a great Crusade. We are all little warriors off to fight the Enemy. Some looked pretty scared when Agnes first told them, but then She showed us what else She had bought from under the Bazaar. Dozens of Wonder Monsters tramped into the crèche, beings of metal and debris looking fearsome in their forms of bears and more exotic fairytale animals. I asked Agnes Herself if I could have a sergeant at arms, and the next morning I found a huge metal bear with a big yellow "M" for "Megin" on it, waiting to serve me. We are off to war and I am a Captain, says Agnes.

For a long time now I have been in touch with the Watch, getting back naughty Children and dealing with problems. Now that we are all warriors, I realize that there is a lot we can learn from our Aunt Joan's people. Tomoe, the stranger who is also Agnes' close friend like me, has also been helpful. She joined us after Agnes came back, and although I am not sure if she is a good friend, she is fun and knows lots about fighting. I just wish that the Shebans would help, but even my friends there are only interested in my body. When we get back from the Crusade I will be famous and then I shall ask to see if I can join them. I've called my Wonder Monster Bear "Murray."

## Interim

### From the letters of Garret Kil'on, Joanite Templar:

Dear Mother - I am safe and little troubled by my old wound. I have only a few more weeks at the Seven Fingers before I will return briefly to the Watchtower. Word here from messengers and patrols is that the Crusade is coming soon. Shera must be drunk with joy.

My closest companion is new to the Templar ranks; once a Hermit Blade, Markiss Jacobi'on returned after Joan's great spiritual questing. Without Celeste or Shera here, I was drawn to this man. His charisma infects my fellows as well, and he makes sure that everyone feels at ease. I must introduce you to him on our return.

With Love, Garret.

## Reminders

### Verra Thaim'on - Missive to the Watch:

Watch Commander - It is still the will of The Wise One that order be maintained. The Outcasts are still a threat and even this recent alliance is no reason to change our orders regarding their treatment. Any Outcast found within the borders of the Sunken City or troubling the Nation's citizens *will* be taken into custody and brought before the Judges; remind your officers that they will be found derelict in their duty should they fail to follow these very clear orders.

Broken Pact is the second Cycle book in the Conquest Cycle for Tribe 8. While the format of this book is the same as the other Cycle books so far, the content is presented somewhat differently.

Instead of detailing the Player Characters' roles within the story, this book gives a grand overview of a world at a crossroads, one in which the PCs are free to forge their own destiny. The actions described herein are to be regarded as the 'default' actions for the groups and characters presented; what they do if the actions of the PCs do not directly impact them or their plans.

This is intended as an aid to the Weaver, so that she does not have to detail the actions of a thousand separate NPCs.

Broken Pact also has the distinction of being the first truly combat-heavy Cycle book, detailing the grand Crusades piercing deep into Abonom and the H'l Kar. Options are available for non-combat oriented groups, and plot hooks have been provided to bring the disparate groups together to experience this world-shattering series of events.

Chapter Five, the Weaver's Resources, contains both a large number of NPCs to be used in any cycle, and extensive details on the creatures and architecture of the lands of the northern Z'bri. All numbers should be changed to reflect the desires of the Weaver and the playing style of her group.



## Chapter One: Children's Crusade

Jaky,

The spirits have seen true; the time has come for war. You are best placed to witness and guide the Joanites in the battles ahead. Hold them back as long as you can, and we will try and steer as many as we can your way. Good dreams, my friend.

- Halos



## PAIN OF LIFE

*I wondered why my Children became so boring as the seasons passed for them. Now I know why. It is suffering that makes us older and gives us different desires. I have suffered, and now some of the fun is gone. Baba Yaga says all things must go through the cycle of life to be part of it, and life involves dealing with pain. But as my Aunt Joan says, things that cause us hurt can be changed if one has the will.*

— The Musings of Agnes

## INTRODUCTION TO BROKEN PACT

**Broken Pact** is the second Cycle book for the second **Tribe 8** Story Cycle, entitled **Conquest**, and follows the events of **Warrior Unbound**. It is not necessary to have played the previous Cycle, **Children of Prophecy**, or the first book in this Cycle, **Warrior Unbound**, to enjoy **Broken Pact**. Some years and several major events have occurred since the setting detailed in the **T8 Rulebook**, and a brief summary is given here, so that the events of **Broken Pact** can be better understood.

If you intend on playing **Broken Pact**, or believe that your **Weaver** will use information contained in it for her Cycle, please stop reading now.

**Broken Pact** is the first sign of the return of the long-awaited time of Crusade. Joan's people and many of the Fallen have been waiting for a chance to strike back at the H'I Kar Z'bri, and now that time has come. This book is broken up into three

Quests; support information for them is in the *Weaver's Resources* which follows. In this final Chapter, places, people, and other details are described for use in **Broken Pact** and *Weaver's* campaigns in general. A good proportion of this resource section focuses on the Living Buildings of the Z'bri, and the minions who defend them, and should be of use for other Quests of the Weaver's devising.

In brief, **Broken Pact** covers three Crusades, along with several other side events. There is a great deal of combat in **Broken Pact**, and Player Characters or Cycles that are already focused on destroying the Z'bri will have a chance to really come into their element. A number of the events of the various Crusades may seem somewhat scripted; this is intended to ease the burden on the Weaver by providing default actions for the various groups involved. The Weaver is free to discard any and all of the listed events in favor of her own plans, with the caveat that her Cycle may then diverge from **Tribe 8** canon and events in future supplements. Options are available to take a less battle-oriented view of the events, however, for non-combative groups.

The first Crusade involves Agnes and Her Children, who seek to take their revenge on the Z'bri by attacking Abonom. The Baron is not complacent, and only the PCs' intervention and Joan's arrival save the day. The second Crusade involves the PCs joining Joan's people as they take their glorious Crusade into the H'I Kar to bring back an artifact dear to Joan. These events take the PCs into the heart of the ancient enemies' stronghold, from where few will return unscathed. The final quest takes place in the Sunken City, with the PCs caught up in a strange tale of revenge and justice which drives the final wedge between the Pillars and shatters the Pact of the Dome forever.





## THE TRUTH BEHIND BROKEN PACT

**Broken Pact** deals the fatal blow to the ancient Pact of the Dome, the agreement between the Baron's Z'bri in the the H'I Kar and the Fatimas.

Since the beginning, Joan and Tera Sheba have stood together as guardians to the Seven Tribes, and have been known as the Pillars of the Nation. They have been so ever since the liberation, the uprising against the Z'bri that freed the tribes, and left the great Z'bri leader Tibor and the Fatima Joshua both dead. Since that time, Joan and Tera Sheba have defended the tribes and brought order to the Nation.

The little-known truth behind the Pillars is that they also allied to uphold the secret Pact of the Dome, in which they and the H'I Kar Z'bri swore to leave each other in peace; a deal sealed by the trade of sacred talismans, the Hearts of the two fallen 'heroes,' Joshua and Tibor. It is this deal that has allowed the people of Vimary and the Baron's Z'bri to live so close to one another without further battles. Among the details of the Pact were requirements that neither side would allow their warriors to fight en masse against the other, although it was recognized that ongoing low-intensity fighting and guerrilla warfare could not be stopped. This is one of the reasons that calls for Crusade have always been discouraged.

The Pact of the Dome is only known to the Fatimas and the elders and lore keepers of the Seven Tribes. Tera Sheba and Joan saw to it in the early days that conditions of the Pact were incorporated into Tribal Law under different pretenses and duly enforced. Once the laws were in place, the Nation could not allow them to be changed for fear of affecting the status quo with the Z'bri. In the years since the Pact was made, those in the tribes that have challenged the security of the Nation by trying to remove or defy (knowingly or not) these particular laws have been outcast or executed for various manufactured reasons. Many of these outcasts have become Fallen, left to struggle in the shadow of the tribes on the isles of Horn and Haven or in the dangerous Outlands.

During **Broken Pact**, Agnes and Joan launch a series of Crusades that break the Pact of the Dome. By the end of the Quests in this book, the way is left open for the Z'bri to exact their revenge, unrestricted by any oaths.

## CONTENTS

This section gives a synopsis of the three Quests, then discusses the *Format* they take. Under *What Has Come Before*, the history of the **Tribe 8** world up until **Broken Pact** is given. Following that are details on the *Themes and Atmospheres* emphasized in **Broken Pact** and a *Timeline* of the Quests herein. In the *Tribal and Fallen Politics and Leaders*, the perspective of each of the major factions that are involved in **Broken Pact** is given to help the Weaver understand the current political situation. Lastly, a *Prelude Hook* is given, to allow the PCs to be involved in a great event in Agnes' growth.

*Chapter One: Children's Crusade* details Agnes' Crusade against the Z'bri and introduces the PCs to some of the Z'bri's most powerful weapons, the War Machines and the Great Trident. The PCs will experience the bizarre and hideous architecture of the Z'bri and must avoid the buildings' living defenses as they fight to change what has become a losing battle. Here the PCs will also see the machinations of the Baron at work, and the strength of Joan and Her Crusaders as they battle the Z'bri.

*Chapter Two: Crusade of the Heart* is the largest of the Quests, involving the PCs in the greatest fight with the Z'bri since the Liberation. During it, the Sangis palaces are attacked, and the great Ziggurat is stormed in a wild series of fights that ends with a race back to Vimary with the Baron's legions in pursuit. Here the PCs will have a chance to see what fate awaits them and their kin, should the Z'bri ever defeat the Tribes. It is also where the most intense and bloodiest fighting occurs, and where many on both sides are killed.

*Chapter Three: Dark Heart* involves the PCs in an attack on the Sunken City, where many of the Fallen seek revenge of the shebans for the injustices they have suffered. This final Quest ends with the shattering of the last remnants of the Pact, and brings to a close the allegiance that Joan has given to Her sister Tera Sheba for so long.

*Chapter Four: Cycle Ramifications and Outcomes* summarizes the fallout from the Crusades for the tribes, Fallen and Z'bri.

*Chapter Five: Weaver's Resources* contains the statistics and background for Abonom and the H'I Kar, details and rules for Living Buildings and other information to assist the Weaver.

## FORMAT

The Quests herein all have a similar format. Each Quest is preceded by a relevant narrative piece followed by a Weaver's overview. Following this is the Quest Prelude that updates the state of tribal, Fallen and Z'bri affairs. It also provides information on motivations for major NPCs and details events that happen behind the scenes.

Each Quest is then divided up into three sections called Acts, each containing a *Weaver's Synopsis*, several Scenes distinguished by appropriate titles, and *Tips and Resources* sections. The *Weaver's Synopsis* begins with a more detailed summary of the Act, and is usually followed by a section on how to involve PCs at this point in the Quest if they are not already involved. Some Scenes are strong in story, and describe what occurs and how the PCs can interact. Others Scenes detail what is going on but leaves the actual resolution more open, allowing the Weaver to involve the PCs in specific Character subplots not related to **Broken Pact**. This also allows the PCs more latitude in how to deal with the current situation before the story moves on.



*Tips and Resources* sections at the end of each Act provide rule-related assistance and advice on how to run each Act, giving further detail on NPC motivations and providing reference to other parts of this (such as the *Weaver's Resources* section) and other **Tribe 8** books where stats or further related information may be found. For those who do not have these books, an alternative set of statistics is suggested for NPCs and encounters.

## WHAT HAS COME BEFORE

The **Children of Prophecy** Cycle and the **Quest Warrior Unbound** cover events in the years preceding **Broken Pact**. What follows here summarizes and highlights the relevant events to provide context for the Crusades in **Broken Pact**. Most of the details here focus mainly on the Pact of the Dome and the important events involving the Tribals and Fallen during the Cycles thus far.

The **Children of Prophecy** Cycle began with the prelude **Quest, Enemy of my Enemy**, where the lost and secretive tribe of Joshua were revealed and some of the seeds for the next part of the Cycle were planted. **Children of Lilith** began as a ploy by Dahlia to change the status quo, which She saw as stifling to the future of the tribes; an action which was in direct conflict with the Pact and the work of the Pillars. Dahlia created a false Fatima called Lilith from the remains of Her lost brother Joshua. Lilith came to Hom claiming to be the Daughter of Joshua, intending to teach the Fallen an important lesson that they needed to find their own future and not fall behind another charismatic leader. This jest grew out of hand when Lilith displayed an independent soul, despite all of Dahlia's efforts. Soon She had a following of Fallen, known as the Children of Lilith, who (to Dahlia's further shock) exhibited new Joshuan Synthesis powers.

Lilith's presence brought conflict to the Fallen, with the Herites at one end of the political spectrum and the Children at the other. Seeing a threat to the Pact, the Pillars acted. They besieged Hom and had a confrontation with the Fallen and Lilith, which ended in a stalemate.

During Lilith's almost year-long reign, She performed various miracles, like the raising of the island of Haven from the depths of the Great River. These bold acts, including a series of attacks on the H'I Kar and Abonom Z'bri, saw the Pillars confronting Lilith once more. At this time, the Baron claimed the Fatimas were breaching the Pact, allowing Lilith, a child of the feared Joshua, to strike at the Z'bri in vengeance. With the confrontation between Lilith and the Pillars at a crisis point, Dahlia decided to end the jest by removing all Her power from Lilith. In this final showdown Lilith tried to strike down Tera Sheba with a huge spear made from Joshua's great hammer haft. Joan intervened and took the blow, and Tera Sheba struck Lilith down instead.

It was at this point that the first cracks between the Pillars appeared, as seen in Joan's defiance of Tera Sheba; disobeying order's, Joan took Lilith's remains to Her Watchtower to mourn over Her lost niece. Many, like the Children of Lilith, believe the jest was truly on Dahlia and that Joshua's Daughter truly did walk among them.

**Trial by Fire** concluded the **Children of Prophecy** Cycle with another year-long story. It began with the abduction of the Fatima Agnes by the Melanis, with the blame landing on the Fallen. In reality, the whole affair was orchestrated by the Fates - Baba Yaga, Eva and Magdalen - who wished to mature Agnes by subjecting Her to a trial of strength. The Fallen came under renewed siege by the Nation, which caused wide scale destruction on the Fallen isles, forcing the Fallen to evacuate and go into hiding. The Lilithian leader Ardatli Maque was killed defending Lilith's forge in Haven; her death broke the Children of Lilith's resolve.



## 1. Children's Crusade

In the late summer, a plea for mercy by the Fallen leaders ended in their being taken prisoner for their "crimes." A rescue mission led by Kara the Hunter succeeded, freeing all the captives except for Veruka the Wraith and Kara herself, who then stood trial. The ensuing trial led Marshal Bartholomew to rashly execute Kara, at which point the Joanites and others witnessed a remarkable sign – Kara's shadow and blood formed the symbol of the Joanite tribe. The Templars, led by Shera Uhan'on, saw this and took Kara's body away respectfully, as if she were once again one of their own.

Shortly later, Veruka was also placed on trial. Her proud declaration of Joshua's Prophecy incensed the Tribals, and Veruka was set upon a pyre and martyred for her heretical words. As she died, her final words slipped into the minds of all across the island, and the Fallen were given insight into how they could save Agnes and save their people. The Fallen quested to find Agnes and were joined by the Joanite Templars. They sought out and attacked a Melanis stronghold in H'I Kar and managed to free Agnes, an event that triggered later calls for Crusade, in recognition of the glory and honor shown by those who participated. Agnes returned safely, to be taken in by Joan. The Fallen's efforts were recognized by Joan, who saw that the salvation She sought lay in following Joshua's Prophecy and helping His people – the Fallen.

Agnes suffered and grew through Her ordeal, developing a desire to prove Her ability to take a more important and mature role in the Nation. Agnes was also annoyed with Tera Sheba for not sending the tribes to save Her when She was captured by the Melanis, and began to have rebellious thoughts about defying the wise one.

The other Fatimas had mixed thoughts on the "growth" of Agnes. Dahlia was happy at Agnes' new perspective, since it separated Agnes from the grip the Fates and Tera Sheba had on Her. The Fates themselves remained in dispute over the outcome of their efforts in *Trial by Fire*, Eva most of all because of the loss of Her hold over Agnes. Tera Sheba was quite concerned with Joan's growing distance, brought about by Agnes' problems, and feared a complete rift between the Pillars. Tera Sheba correctly suspected the Fates, and started an investigation, but could not see how to repair the growing rift between Herself and Joan.

The Pact of the Dome was technically breached by the Z'bri's actions in taking Agnes, although the Baron claimed it was the fault of a political rival with whom he had subsequently dealt. Fortunately, as far as both sides were concerned, this allowed the incursion into the H'I Kar by the Fallen and some Joanites to rescue Agnes to be overlooked as well, and the Pact was maintained.

**Warrior Unbound** began **Conquest**, the second story cycle. It took place over a relatively short period of time in the early summer of the year following *Trial by Fire*. In it, Joan opened Her tribe to the Fallen, and many of the Fallen joined after passing the tests the Joanites set for them. Other Fallen, and almost all the Herites, remained opposed to this union, pointing to past lessons (like Lilith) as reason enough to remain outside the tribes.

Joan's actions in taking in the Fallen were of grave concern to Tera Sheba, who called for a trial to eradicate this apparent breach of Tribal Law. Joan was forced to go on a quest into the River of Dream and thence to the Sea of the Lost, to find two lost Tribal souls. A group of Melanis Z'bri saw this as an opportunity to destroy the Fold that keeps the Z'bri from returning to their spiritual home. These Z'bri, known as the Blooded Blades, had no regard for the Pact of the Dome, and hoped to achieve their escape through an elaborate experimental process. They then attempted to kill Joan when She returned from Dream. They almost succeeded, even with the other Fatimas present, but were, in the end, destroyed.

In the aftermath, Joan now stands alone from Tera Sheba, free to follow Her own path. Joan still supports the Pact, even though the H'I Kar Z'bri appear to have broken it again, and has held back from Crusading once more. The Baron and his Z'bri, on the other hand, are very concerned. The Baron is preparing for the possibility that the Koleris will unleash their fury upon the tribes, and is also worried about the developing schemes (mostly led by Count H'x) to end his reign. With the coming of mid-summer, the story of **Broken Pact** begins.

## THEMES AND ATMOSPHERE

The main themes apparent in **Broken Pact** are *Crusade* (spiritual righteousness / destiny / glorious defeat of enemies), *Apocalypse* (horror / despair) and *Revenge* (hate / anger).

The call for a **Crusade** has been growing ever since the PCs have been alive. Questions as to why the Z'bri have not been wiped out and why they are allowed to live so close to the Nation are always asked by the young, to varied responses by elders. Lilith's reign saw the first true Crusade, when She led the Fallen against areas of Abonom and the H'I Kar. This taste of battle has reawakened the call for Crusade among the Joanites, especially the Templars. They have been secretly trying to get Joan to support this call, and have managed to make some strikes against Abonom without the notice of the rest of the Nation.

Agnes' experiences at the hands of the Z'bri, combined with Joan's influence, has sparked within Her the desire to finally wipe out the Z'bri. Having seen the Joanites preparing for a fight they hope will come and having then seen Joan's great courage in the River of Dream, Agnes has decided it is time for Her to act. The idea of a Crusade is magical to Her, a chance to experience for Herself the glorious days of the Liberation, and to see the Prophecy of Her dear dead Uncle Joshua fulfilled. This draws Her to lead Her people into Abonom in *Children's Crusade*.

After the success at Abonom, Joan is also caught up in this rush towards a Crusade, Her chance to set old wrongs right. Agnes' actions in *Children's Crusade* galvanize Joan to finally call for the long-awaited Crusade. Joan leads the holy quest into the heart of the Z'bri holdings, the Baron's Ziggurat, and then to the heart of tribal leadership, Tera Sheba's Halls of Justice.

The theme of Crusade is about spirituality and heroism, but it also encompasses the idea of spiritual direction: the influence of omens, the guidance of saint-like beings and martyrs (such as Ardatli, Kara and Veruka), and the Fatimas' own leadership. Crusade is about fighting the most feared evil, and is the truest test of heroism and valor that can be undertaken.

**Apocalypse** is about the absolute horror of humanity's fight for survival and the consequences of the risks that are being taken. The theme of Apocalypse initially encompasses visions and omens of impending doom, which later become real. It also helps to emphasize the hopelessness and loss once the fighting gets started, as the Crusade turns from glorious conquest to a struggle for survival as the forces of darkness rise. In the last Quest, *Dark Heart*, when Joan turns on Tera Sheba, it should be apparent that the tribes are about to schism.

The Apocalypse theme is strong in the Z'bri-controlled lands, where all that is familiar and reassuring is gone. The land itself is twisted beyond recognition, a foul and horrific place where the threat to one's sanity is as much to fear as the loss of one's life. The theme of apocalypse revolves around realization of the cost of war, the inhumanity of the enemy and, fundamentally, the doom that hangs over everything in the world of **Tribe 8**.

**Revenge** against both the Z'bri and the Shebans plays a large part in **Broken Pact**. Agnes' and Joan's Crusades are both colored by the Fatimas' (and their followers') desire for revenge. This is not the spiritual ideal of their jihad, which is covered by the idea of Crusade, but rather an expression of the need for vengeance for their loss and suffering. It leads the avengers to do cruel and atrocious things in an attempt to sate their anger and hatred. This theme is the counter to Crusade, and is what happens when the pure visions of temperance and mercy are forgotten in war. It is about bloodlust, cruelty and one's own loss of humanity. Sometimes it is hot, as in the heat of battle, when blows fall unnecessarily and mercy is forgotten. Sometimes it is cold, as when the tables are turned and the torturer becomes the tortured. Revenge quashes morality in order to achieve objectives and let passions run free.

## TIMELINE

The events in **Broken Pact** take place five or six weeks after the end of **Warrior Unbound**, which took place in mid-summer. Hom and Haven have managed to rebuild somewhat after all they have been through, their handful of newly fixed structures now more sturdy than before, although much more rebuilding still needs to be done. The fewer number of Fallen leaves the isles feeling like ghost towns in some areas, as many Fallen have kept away after the recent persecutions. A few Cells have even fled to live with the Keepers.

All the Quests in **Broken Pact** take place in this short summer period; only two weeks elapse between *Children's Crusade* and the attack on the Sunken City in *Dark Heart*. Weavers should feel free to alter the starting point of these adventures, although once started, they should run along this short course to help create a sense of rising tension.

## TRIBAL AND FALLEN POLITICS AND LEADERS

The events of the past few years have irrevocably changed the ways in which the members of the Nation and the Fallen see the world around them. While the basic precepts of the various groups have remained the same, the way in which the elders and leaders interact has shifted with the changing world.

## HAL NINVA / KYMBER REVA — THE LIGHTBRINGER LEADERS

Hal and Kymber, the leaders of the Lightbringers, (T8 Rulebook pp.101;105) rally behind the call for the Joanite Crusade, although they only do so actively after the likes of Altara Ven, Den-Hades and Halos point out the significance of the holy war to the Prophecy of Joshua. Hal and Kymber encourage sufficiently able-bodied individuals to join Joan in the days after Joan saves Agnes at Abonom. They are also politically astute enough to realize that after the problems the Herites have caused, time and again, the more moderate factions of the Fallen need to support Joan as much as possible to maintain good relations and guarantee Her protection.

With Marshal Bartholomew's (**Vimary** p.96) loss of position for the murder of Kara the Hunter, Hal has lost his best connection with the Shebans. He still has some communication with Cylix' tool Davin Sull'on of the *Black Owls* (**Word of the Pillars**, p.60), but they are killers; Hal needs a political patron, and he doubts Cylix will honor such an arrangement. Hal decides he needs to reestablish a link with the Tribes so that, if need be, he can betray the Fallen to save his own skin. He contacts the Fisher King and secretly sends word to Judge Sakai Dan'on (**Vimary** p.97) in a gamble to find a patron among the Shebans. Hal meets the Fisher King but only establishes lines of official liaison. Sakai, on the other hand, is most intrigued and plays Hal for what it is worth, asking Hal to once more sacrifice some of the troublesome Herites to show his resolve.

Kymber is still struck by the loss of Veruka and the destruction of Hom and Haven. She makes close ties with the Joanites on the Fallen isles and may have found a lover to finally ease the loss of poor Petyr.



## KYRT THE FREE / TROY FENYS — HERITE LEADERS

At the other end of the Fallen political spectrum are the Herites, although there are at least four factions of them calling for varying degrees of action against the Nation. Kyr (Children of Lilith p.89) still heads the largest moderate faction. He calls for the Joanites on Hom and Haven to be left alone so that they can help rebuild and keep the Shebans away. He also clashes with Hal and Kymber over support for the Crusade in several heated debates. The Jackers and Children of Lilith constantly undermine his hopes that his outspoken but non-violent position might be respected by both political extremes. The more action-oriented factions remind everyone of the evil that must be destroyed, and Kyr finds that his fellow Herites cannot seem to resist taking advantage of the new Sheban-run Watch's lack of experience.

Troy (T8 Rulebook p.96) still leads some of the most extreme Herites, and she has decided to take the mysterious Shadow Watch (Trial by Fire p.99) and the Black Owls (Word of the Pillars pp.58-59) head on. She has heard rumors about a Cell of Herites called the Ravagers, but knows no such Cell exists. The Ravagers already have fame among the Fallen for their supposed rescues of condemned prisoners, so Troy has gathered a Cell of Herites and has spent the winter training them to become these Ravagers. The members are all particularly extremist Herites and are sworn to secrecy about their newly created affiliation. They have committed a few actions against the Shebans and left 'calling cards' bearing the symbol of a dagger piercing a lantern. Troy has set traps and constant watches around the Ravagers' lair, in the hopes of snaring Black Owls who might come looking for them. Troy is connected to the Lightbringers by her growing relationship with Evangel Black (Vimary p.102), who's helping Troy for as long as it looks like these efforts will help bring down Cylix. If PCs do not go on the Crusade Quests, Weavers are encouraged to include Troy's Ravagers, and their struggle against the Shebans, in events on Hom and Haven.

## MEK — JACKER LEADER

Mek (T8 Rulebook p.95) has not joined the Joanites but has led his Cell to pass all the Joanite tests, and is heavily involved in the training for the Crusade. He was intrigued to find that Ardatli's aunt, Jaky Maque, has returned to vimary as a Guide. He trusts her advice and has related many of the tales of Ardatli's outstanding efforts against the Z'bri. Mek truly thinks this Crusade will lead to the destruction of the Z'bri and almost all the Jackers here and in Hom plan to follow him when the Crusade comes. He is a good friend with the newly risen Children of Lilith leader, Kallisti the Fair.

## TEMPLAR SHERA UHAN'ON — CRUSADE LEADER

Shera (T8 Rulebook p.56) works tirelessly to ready her warriors for the Crusade which she is certain will soon be called. She has the Weaponshapers working all hours to prepare enough equipment to arm all the new Fallen arrivals who wish to be part of the tribe (or who at least want to go on the Crusade with them). Shera is assessing and picking out those Fallen she feels would make good war party leaders, and is bringing them into her confidence as she plans the best way to organize the Crusaders. Mek the warrior has shown himself to be one of these. In her heart, Shera still believes she can find her lost love Valerie, and this helps her keep going at an almost unreal pace.

Shera knows the Crusade is creating a rift in the Joanites, with Nostra Guy'on, leader of the Old Guard, loudly proclaiming that it is absolute foolishness. Shera's doubts have been dismissed by Guide Jaky Maque, a once-outcast Joanite who has returned to see the Prophecy of Joshua fulfilled. Shera does wonder, however, if the Joanites will disintegrate before Joan finally calls for the Crusade.

## NOSTRA GUY'ON — JOANITE OLD GUARD LEADER

Nostra Guy'on (Vimary, p.93) is incensed with Shera's Crusaders and the presence of so many Fallen among the Joanites. He wants nothing of the Crusade and is seeking support from his allies in the Shebans to end this stupidity that will see the Pact of the Dome shattered — and lead to all their deaths at the claws of the Z'bri. All those who once challenged his authority, whom he sent to the Watch, have returned, and the call for Crusade seems to be on the lips of every able-bodied Joanite.

Nostra has been dealing closely with the Fisher King and High Judge Cylix to try and work out how they can convince Joan of the error of Her ways. The Fisher King is happy with the status quo, unwilling to even consider anything underhanded. Cylix is all ears, promising Nostra control of the Watch and a renewed persecution of the Fallen if he follows Cylix' orders at the crucial moment. Nostra moves himself and his staff to the Sunken City after the Children's Crusade.

## JUDGE SAKAI DAN'ON — WOULD-BE SHEBAN LEADER

Sakai (Vimary p.97 and Weaver's Assistant p.24) is waiting and scheming in the shadows, watching as High Judge Cylix Seth'on struggles with the problem of Joan's break with Tera Sheba. Sakai sees himself as the new High Judge, and is prepared to do almost anything to see Cylix fall from grace — even assist the Fallen or the Joanites. To this end, he is planning to give information about Cylix' Black Owls to Hal Ninva to pass to the Herites, so that they might kill off the senior Owls and possibly allow Sakai to steal control away from Cylix.

## CAPTAIN HESPIRRIN, AGNITE FAVORITE

Hespirrin (*Vimary*, p.86) remains the chief among Agnes' Favorites. Her cadre of bullies and her ability to deflect recrimination has kept her on top for years, but with Agnes' odd change, the balanced power is starting to shift. After Agnes decides to go on the *Children's Crusade*, the likes of Megin and Puck suddenly receive more of Agnes' attention. Other older Agnites also hear word of Agnes' new desires and start to return from their homes in the Dahlian caravans. All of this irks Hespirrin, and worse yet, her old tricks of threats and blame are stymied by the presence of the Wonder Monsters and Agnes' new focus on the Crusade. Hespirrin realizes that her success has been due to her ability to distract a childish Agnes, a power she cannot wield over a maturing one. Now Megin delights Agnes with her military knowledge, and Puck seems more like a soul mate than Hespirrin herself. Finally there is the clever outsider Tomoe, who seems to see through all of Hespirrin's plans before they even begin. Hespirrin fears that Tomoe knows about her abductions of children from the other tribes. If that were to come out, Hespirrin fears she would be made a Barren or be cast out completely.

## CAPTAIN MEGIN, AGNITE BULLY AND FAVORITE

Megin (p.80) makes herself prominent in the *Children's Crusade* Quest with her swift and brutal disciplinary actions. Megin knows it is in her interest to bring as many Children on her side as possible and so she has gotten her own pack of bullies and Murray the Wonder Monster to help deter Hespirrin's group of supporters.

In the past, Megin has gotten some of the Joanites to help demonstrate weapon use, which has made Megin a big favorite among the Children for having 'real' warrior friends. Hespirrin's hold on the Children is still strong, so Megin has sought the friendships of Puck and Tomoe to help tilt the balance in her favor. After the disaster of the *Children's Crusade*, Megin contacts Judge Sakai Dan'on and starts to negotiate a secret pact to bring the Agnites under her control, and by extension, under his.



## CAPTAIN PUCK, AGNITE FAVORITE

Puck (*T8 Rulebook* p.40) spent two years stirring up the younger Agnites to follow him on dangerous adventures in the hope of all being banished together. Hespirrin was been more than willing to point this out to Agnes, but even though Puck grew more daring and heretical, Agnes made no move to throw him out. In fact, on Her return from captivity, Agnes seems to understand Puck's frustration and has become his friend. She has once again made him feel welcome and protected, and his little rebellion is turning into a group of supporters which Agnes has directed against the machinations of the other current Favorites. Puck is looking forward to the Crusade; he is eager to inflict some revenge on the Z'bri who have made Agnes suffer so much. He is particularly taken by Tomoe, who seems to understand him. The Guide teaches him things that no one else in the tribe knows, and Puck has developed a large crush on the young woman.

## TOMOE, NEONATE GUIDE

Tomoe (p.80) is here to guide Agnes with a subtle hand and help provide Her with the mature friendship She needs. Although Baba Yaga has provided Agnes much support, Tomoe senses that Agnes has secrets that She is keeping to Herself. Indeed, Veruka's dying prophecy would seem to support this. Tomoe knows that Hespirrin's days are numbered and senses that the more mature Puck would make a better chief Favorite and companion to Agnes. Tomoe has also sensed Puck's attraction to her, and while she takes everything with calm ease, this infatuation is proving to be a dilemma. Puck is still young, but to reject him may harm the future she sees for the Agnites. She is also not sure of her own feelings or the morality of indulging in a relationship with a member of the tribes.





## PRELUDE HOOK: TREASURE HUNT

In the month immediately proceeding Agnes' call for Crusade, a remarkable event takes place. Agnes' Aunts Dahlia and Magdalen come together in a brief alliance and build a new body for Agnes, to better reflect Her psychic and psychological growth. One late afternoon, the three Fatimas appear in Playground, and the two older Fatimas announce that all must gather this night for a great treasure hunt. Most of the Children are ecstatic at this unexpected event, and word goes out quickly to gather those not currently in Bazaar.

The three Fatimas call the Children to attention at sunset and announce that the hunt is for Agnes Herself – and with that, Agnes vanishes to the sounds of astonished cries. Magdalen reassures them that they must search the Underlands, and the

ones who find Agnes will be greatly rewarded. At that, the race is on and the Children run screaming toward the entrances to the Underlands in Playground and Bazaar.

The PCs can become involved in this hunt in several ways. They could be invited to attend by a friendly Agnite; an ex-Agnite PC might receive a personal invitation from a senior Agnite to come and bring her friends. PCs could just be caught up in the hunt by being in the Bazaar and witnessing the beginning of the grand race. It is also possible that spiritual guidance could lead them to participate, with visions of this strange event guiding them to be in the Bazaar when the hunt begins. PCs with the Eminences of Fate, Wisdom or Recognition may sense that something very important is going to happen involving this treasure hunt and some may be drawn to participate to be witness to what that is occurring (roll PSY vs. a Threshold of 4 to resist the compulsion to join in).



## SCENES

The idea of the *Treasure Hunt* is to permit only the most tenacious and worthy to find Agnes' new form deep in the Underlands (see **T8 Rulebook** pp.97-98; **Vimary** pp.31, 33-34). Dahlia's Dream makes sure that the Underlands look new and intriguing, and mixed in with this is Agnes' own Dream in the form of magical monsters and traps. The hunt is very disorienting, even for experienced navigators, and Dahlia's Synthesis allows extraordinary things to happen.

Weavers should feel free to indulge themselves in this scene, creating bizarre and amazing events and circumstances. For example, the PCs may encounter huge ruined walls to be scaled, slimy slopes, pits full of huge balls, spiderweb mazes, rubber-covered Wonder Monsters to trick or defeat, shrinking potions, slippery poles over water and foam-filled holes, canoe races, rooms that allow no light to shine, feasts of drugged food, disoriented and annoyed Tribals, rooms filled with automatic skipping ropes, corridors over moving and rolling floor boards, trapdoors... the Weaver's imagination is the only limit here.

All throughout the hunt, the main Agnite NPCs will be competing with one another and happily using foul play to keep ahead of their competitors. The nature of the hunt means that it is almost impossible to get too far ahead without being stopped or caught. Along the way, the participants in the hunt may be lucky enough to find prizes left by the Fatimas. Many are mere toys, but some are weapons for the upcoming Crusade and Keeper devices made or repaired by Keeper Jonathan Abrams (**Vimary** p.45).

## CLIMAX

The climax comes only after some hours of competition. The PCs should be tired and battered from numerous falls, blows and scuffles by the time they reach the end of the hunt. The final test is to dive into a deep and cool pool of water in whose center a glowing form can be vaguely seen. PCs in armor and/or with many weapons may find swimming quite difficult; Weavers should force PCs to make Swimming rolls with penalties for such encumbering items.

The first of the Children (and possibly the PCs, if they perform well) who get to the glowing form lying deep underwater find themselves in Dream. Here, they drift powerless, able to breathe but captivated by the distant glowing form of Agnes. Suddenly, there is a blinding bright flash and the Dreamers find themselves struggling to gain breath as they fight their way back to the surface of the pool. All those that witnessed this light in Dream find that a blue tattoo of a dragonfly has appeared somewhere on their flesh (the Character receives +1 to their Dreaming Skill for the duration of their allegiance with Agnes).

## AFTERMATH

The Children gather around the pool and see more faintly glowing shapes gathering around and permeating the figure of

the growing Fatima. Then, near the center of the pool, the water begins to roil and bubble, and soon the new form of Agnes rises to the surface to the cheers of the Children. Agnes makes Her way out of the Underlands, followed by all Her Children and the dozens of enormous Wonder Monsters. Immediately after these events, Quest One begins.

## QUEST ONE: CHILDREN'S CRUSADE

**Broken Pact** begins by drawing the PCs into Agnes' Crusade against the Abonom Z'bri. Several options are given here to get the PCs involved, and some more are presented within the Acts themselves. In Act One, *Crusading Onward*, Agnes takes a large number of Children and Barren to the Seven Fingers, and then along the northern outskirts of the tribal lands. During this time, the PCs are witness to the worst of the Children's nature, and see the effects of the Z'bri atmosphere on the youngest members of the Nation. *Crusading Onward* climaxes with an attack on outlying Z'bri Serf lands.

Act Two, *Assault on Abonom*, begins with a strike against the main structures of the Rakh Hive in Abonom. The optimistic attitude is quickly shattered as the sky turns dark and huge Z'bri War Machines try to destroy the Children. The PCs are caught up in the battle against these huge Z'bri constructs and must drive the fight into the great Trident that both guides the War Machines and controls the weather. In a desperate fight, the PCs may succeed in stopping the Z'bri weapons, but they are caught up in a second Z'bri attack wave as the Baron springs his trap, sending a horde of Koleris against the Children.

Act Three, *Fall of Abonom*, begins as all seems lost for the Agnites. Fortunately, Joan and Her Crusaders arrive to drive off the Z'bri. The Baron escapes, although some of his Lords are not so lucky. Some Children have been taken but with their captors gone, it is decided to destroy as much as possible and so Abonom is attacked and put to the flame. It is at this time that the Prophecy of Joshua sounds out and inspires Joan to announce the Crusade.

The first step in running *Children's Crusade* is working out how to get the PCs involved. If the PCs are capable and willing fighters, and are likely to take any opportunity to fight the Z'bri, this and the following Quest should provide ample opportunity to get them involved. A hook might be to have a friend vanish near Abonom, turning the Quest into a personal rescue mission for the PCs. This may work well for less capable fighters as well, as they will then have the help and protection of the Children.

If the PCs were involved with the Prelude Hook *Treasure Hunt* then they should already have ties to the Children and knowledge of the Crusade. Alternatively they may believe they have seen signs of Joshua's Prophecy in Agnes' changes. The Prophecy angle can also work through dreams and omens sent to those who have not played through *Treasure Hunt*. PCs with the Eminences of Fate, Inspiration, Mystery, Recognition or Wisdom may sense that something (roll PSY vs. a Threshold of 3) immense is about to occur. If the PCs are connected to the Guides in a significant way, one of them may approach the characters and request their presence or assistance.



## 1. Children's Crusade

This Quest also works well for introducing PCs *in media res*. PCs could see the Child Crusaders heading off and be too curious to leave them alone. PCs may hear of the Children's journey and seek to catch up and join them. PCs may be involved in another Quest on the edge of the Z'bri lands of Abonom, and may end up saving or saved by the Children. The PCs may be among those who turn up with the Dahlians after the first day of attacks on the Z'bri. Finally, the PCs may be part of the end of the Quest, part of Joan's army of Crusaders. Whatever the chosen hook, it should be one likely to draw them in based upon their Cell's focus and their Characters' personal motivations.

### QUEST PRELUDE

Quest One, *Children's Crusade*, comes as a surprise to the Nation. Since Agnes' return from Her captivity She has been growing and seeking purpose. As mentioned under the *Crusade* section of *Themes and Atmosphere* (p.10), Agnes has decided it is time She and Her Children took their destiny into their own hands and gave something back to the Nation. After She receives Her new form from Her Aunts Magdalen and Dahlia, this compulsion becomes even more compelling and She quizzes Her friends and advisers for their opinions on what they might do. Tomoe subtly suggests She wait for a sign. When some of Agnes' Children are killed by the Z'bri flowers near Abonom (see below) Agnes interprets that as a sign to begin Her own Crusade. This is where Act One, *Crusading Onward*, begins.

Leaders of the Nation have been expecting Joan to be the one to turn Her people against the Z'bri, and Agnes' actions take most by surprise. Among the Joanites there is a strong call for Crusade, but even with all the preparations it seems Joan is not yet ready to lead the Nation to war. Some believe She is waiting for support from the Fates before venturing forth, but when the Z'bri strike out against the Agnites, Joan's wait is over.

### THE BARON'S SCHEME

The deadly flowers that trigger the *Children's Crusade* are the result of scheming on the part of the Baron of the H'l Kar. The Baron is desperate to be seen to be active against the Tribes, in order to redirect his rivals' schemes to replace him. Abonom is also a thorn in his side and he fears, correctly, that it is cooperating with his other rivals such as Count H'x. Although they are not the Baron's most serious concern, since the denizens of Abonom and the Rakh Flemis are defectors, the Baron decides that they must be finally punished for their treason. The Baron wishes to wipe out Abonom, kill his closest political rival Count H'x without leaving blood on his hands, sate some of the Koleris' thirst for war and weaken the tribes through combat and poison.

Count Nemerath of Capal has also questioned the Baron's lack of action against the Fatimas and their people. The Count's messenger – whom the Baron abused and killed for its impudence – gave the Baron the impression that the Count was going to back a rival who would make the tribes suffer. All these

pressures have stirred the Baron into undertaking this daring and rather desperate plan, but, in the end, it should maintain the Pact of the Dome and ensure his continued place on the throne made from Tibor's bones.

The Baron has had his servants plant the deadly Sangis Flowers around Abonom, so that they will seed and blow over the tribes, flowering again and poisoning the tribals, an action intended to invoke a tribal attack on Abonom in revenge. The truth is that the Baron's most pressing concern is to unleash some of the Koleris onto the tribes – something that the vile warriors have been begging for and which Count H'x has been using to garner support for a coup. The Baron's plan is to draw out Joan's fighters with the damage done by the deadly flower spores, and then allow the Koleris in sizable, but not overwhelming, numbers, to attempt to destroy Joan and Her people. He does not want the Koleris to necessarily win overwhelmingly, but since the battle would be on "his" lands, attacking the tribes will not be a breach of the Pact of the Dome, and will not set off the full-scale war he has been trying so desperately to avoid.

### SPIN DOCTORING

The first event that disrupts this plan is the premature involvement of Agnes' Children after some of Her explorers eat the Z'bri flowers, an action which kills a few and leaves others sick, the survivors reporting back to Agnes. Before the flowers can spread far enough to do any real damage to the island of Vimary, the Agnites strike out on a Crusade against Abonom.

When the Baron's spies report spotting Agnes, not Joan, venturing into Abonom, he acts quickly to make the best of the situation. The Baron decides to use even fewer Koleris, allowing only the most powerful Horde the pleasure of fighting against the rebel Koleris and the Agnite Crusaders. These Z'bri preparations might be seen by the PCs, or word might get to them that the Koleris are up to something unusual during the first day of the Agnite Crusade. The Baron's plan is still not to win the fight against the tribes, but to badly hurt the fighters, kill Count H'x and plenty of Koleris, and to destroy or badly damage the Rakh Flemis – especially the giant Trident.

The Baron's new plans also include a personal dive into the battle to steal some of the tempting young flesh away. He also wants to ensure that H'x does not survive, so he plans to be nearby should H'x manage to flee the trap laid for him. It is hardly prudent to come so close to the fighting, given that he is sure that Joan and other Fatimas may appear, but he and his Lords cannot let this opportunity go.

## ACT ONE: CRUSADING ONWARD INVOLVING THE PLAYERS

*My friends, I have decided that we are to go on Crusade against the Z'bri and their poisonous flowers. Those nasty creatures need to be taught a lesson. We will also show the other tribes that we no longer need looking after. After we return, they will greet us as heroes and we will have a huge feast. So get ready, for tonight we leave and soon we will be showing those monsters that their time has come. I am sure Joan and Her people will be very proud of us, and after this we will join with them and kill all the rest of the Z'bri across the river æ every last one of them.*

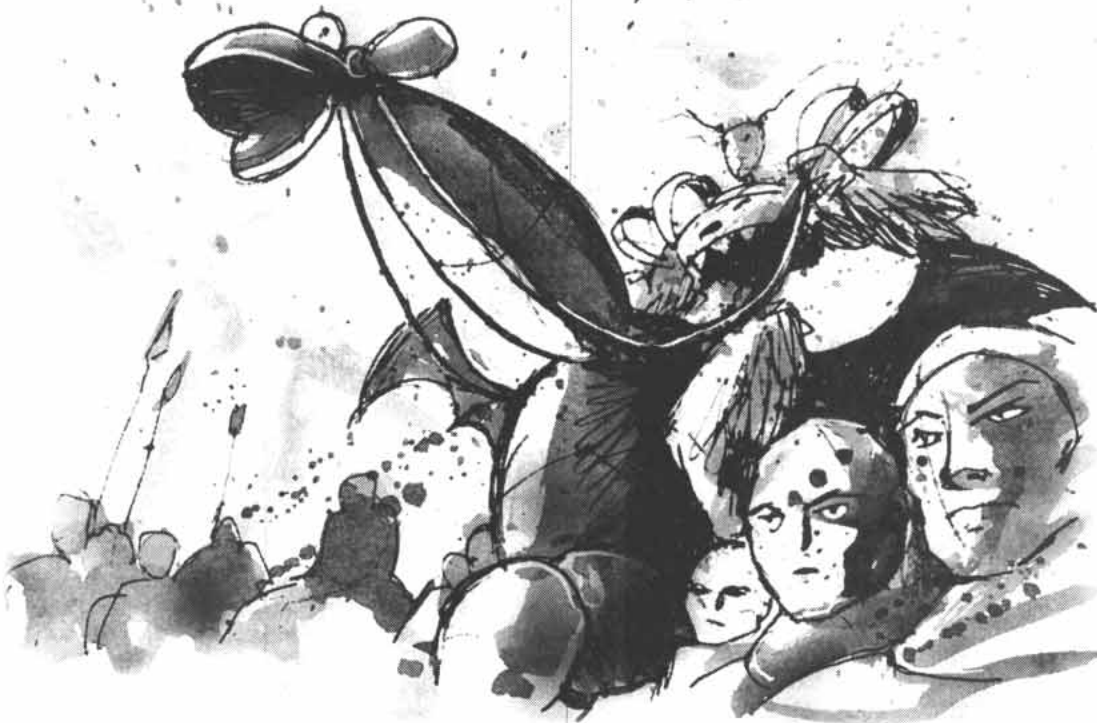
**Agnes – Words to the Children**

### WEAVER'S SYNOPSIS

Agnes gathers the Children together in the late afternoon the day after She gets Her new form in *Treasure Hunt*. She directs the Children to gather things for the journey and then, that night, the little army heads out of Vimary toward the Seven Fingers. Unbeknownst to them, Dahlia shields them from notice by the other Tribals or Fatimas, to prevent them from being stopped. The trip goes quickly (due once again to Dahlia's influence, detectable by any Dahlians or ex-Dahlians at PER vs. Threshold 6) and the next day they sweep into the Z'bri Serf lands to wreak havoc. At dusk they return to camp, meeting a Dahlian caravan and celebrating late into the night.

As mentioned in the introduction to this Quest (p.15), there are several ways to get the PCs involved. PCs could have recent connections with the Agnites that provide a reasonable motivation for them to join the Quest. Involvement in *Treasure Hunt* or temptation by omens and signs of the Prophecy of Joshua are two more ways to get them involved. PCs could have even been affected by the *Sangis Flowers* (p.95). There is also the coincidence option, where the PCs just happen to be at the right (or wrong) place at the right time. PCs could just find themselves caught up in the Agnite march north and either choose to join or be compelled to do so. Some of these suggestions are further detailed in the sections that follow.

A very subtle option (but one in much the nature of the Agnites) that provides another way to get the PCs involved in the Crusade is to have Agnes and Her Children force them. A chance encounter with the Children on the march brings them to Agnes' attention, and for several possible reasons She decides She wants them to come with Her. It may be they can provide Agnes with answers to questions about the Fallen or something the PCs were previously involved in, like events in previous Quests. She may also want them to come and show their fighting abilities to Her Children to help them in the coming fight. If words and threats fail to make the PCs join, Inspiration (**T8 Rulebook**, p.166) can force them to accompany Her as captives, much like some of Agnes' other court friends like the captive Keeper Jonathan Abrams (*Vimary* p.45).



## MEETING AGNES

However the PCs encounter Agnes, Her motivation for Crusade is likely to be one of the first things they hear about. Agnes has decided to take revenge on the Z'bri. She sees the nasty Z'bri flowers that have killed a few of the Children near Abonom as a threat to the tribes as a whole, and She plans to save everyone and take Her revenge on the Z'bri. She is happy to have any Fallen or Joanites along on the trip.

Whenever the PCs encounter Agnes they should be fairly quick to notice that there is a definite bunch of senior Agnites and a couple of other Tribals who form what She calls Her "War Council." The War Council represents the most senior Agnites, although there are also others of note present. The Keeper Jonathan Abrams is always close by, tinkering with things and mostly looking a bit haggard. The Agnites are always bringing him things to fix or asking him for toys, and he is keen for any outside adult conversation. Abrams is absolutely overwhelmed by the Wonder Monsters that come with Agnes and the Children when She rises in Her new form in *Treasure Hunt*. Abrams quickly overcomes the Wonder Monsters' refusal to take orders from anyone but an Agnite, and soon can be seen riding a Wonder Monster Elephant.

## THE FIRESIDE MEETING

The timing of this get-together does not have to be placed the day directly after *Treasure Hunt*, but it should occur quite soon after Agnes receives Her new body. At this time, some Agnites return to tell Agnes of the poisonous flowers. This Act begins late one afternoon when Agnes gathers the Children together in the Playground. She has runners go off to gather the Children who are in the Bazaar and other nearby places.

Once the sun has set and fires and torches have been lit, Agnes settles down and says that She has a very important announcement. Starting tonight, She and the Children are going on a Crusade. They are going to destroy all the nasty flowers that are near the edge of Tribal lands, near the Seven Fingers. She has made some new toys to help serve, carry, protect and fight for the Children on the Crusade, the Wonder Monsters. Now She says, She needs to choose Captains to lead this Crusade.

Agnes calls out names of Her Favorites as well as some of those who made it into Dream at the end of *Treasure Hunt*. Each Captain receives a baton from Agnes (*Agnite Batons* p.70). She then states that others can become Captains by winning a foot race; the first three to complete three laps and cross the finish line will be made Captains. Agnes then sends Wonder Monsters to mark a course that runs through and around Playground. The Barren, Breeders and smaller Children settle down to watch the race. Agnes is happy to welcome any Fallen who are here to join, and the Weaver can encourage this by having Favorites or bullies taunt the PCs into competing.

The race is fast and furious, with plenty of pushing, cheating, and audience participation. PCs could conceivably win, and it is also possible that Dahlia may secretly assist them, the motiva-

tion for this connecting to personal subplots or the group's own cycle. PCs who participate will need to make Acrobatics, Athletics and Fitness checks, and also must succeed in Hand-to-Hand fights against other competitors to win.

After the winners have been made Captains and given their batons, Agnes says they have an hour until they will leave. Many of the youngest Children (any younger than 5), Barrens and Breeders will be staying behind. Some of the Barrens will be going along to attend to the Children, cook for them and protect them. At this announcement, the Children rush off to collect their things, find makeshift weapons and generally race around in excitement.

## HEADING NORTH

When the Agnites finally form up they are a band about five hundred strong. As well as the Children, there are also some fifty or so Wonder Monsters, half obviously built for offense and half for carrying smaller Children and other equipment. The Children themselves are armed with makeshift weapons, many of them spears of fire-hardened wood or rusted metal. PCs witnessing this will have to avoid becoming subject to the Agnites' wild, immoral schoolyard humor, which respects only brute strength and cleverness. The PCs must also contend with Children who want to borrow their "toys" (anything they own). Minor theft may tempt PCs to act harshly, but that would be very bad with Agnes there, as She is very protective of Her Children.

Agnes issues all Her commands for the Children in pseudo-military ways, mimicking the Joanites She has seen in practice. This flows through to Her Children, who take up these same mannerisms.

The Agnite forces set off by torchlight in a long uneven column. They head to the Blacktop that runs northeast of the center of the tribal lands, and make their way toward the Seven Pillars. This night there is a strange mist and sounds are noticeably distorted. The Children are in very good spirits and troop along at a good pace, banging things and each other with their weapons as they go.

During the journey, Agnes will want to talk to any who approach Her, make trouble or are Fallen. Agnes asks for them to tell Her who they are and what they do – and She also wants entertaining stories or else She will pout. PCs who are poor storytellers will be tricked by Synthesis into doing embarrassing things by Agnes and the Children. PCs who are good storytellers, or at least entertaining, will receive commissions of rank for their efforts, which take the form of shiny badges they wear over their left breast. The more badges, the higher the rank. If a PC is particularly entertaining, Agnes will make her a Captain. Captains who anger Her or hurt Her Children will lose their commission and Agnite Baton.

Any PC with ill will toward Agnes, such as a Herite, should feel rather intimidated by Her presence. To speak out or act against Her, is to bring about swift playground gang justice in the form of fights and brutal teasing. A PC who manages to attack Agnes is in for something unusual. Her mimicking of Joan will result in the PC(s) concerned being quickly subdued but not killed, and



then treated to a "military tribunal" where they will be asked to explain themselves. Captain Megin will hold the inquiry. If the PC(s) cannot appease Megin, she will see them stripped of any rank previously given. They will then be put in chains and bought along as prisoners of war, chained behind a Wonder Monster Donkey until somehow freed or when the fighting at Abonom begins in earnest.

On the way to the Seven Pillars, few other Tribals will be seen, and the mist will obscure most landmarks. This is the work of Dahlia. Any encounter with the Children on the road at night by PCs will feel almost dream-like. If the Children run across PCs or have some in their midst who cross them, they will not be above using the aspect of Naiveté (**T8 Rulebook**, p.170) to make the PC(s) act foolishly for the entertainment of the Crusaders. PCs who insist on leaving the war band will become lost and find themselves encountering the band again sometime later. The trip is also very quick, only taking a few hours, and soon the group crosses underneath a part of the Seven Pillars and finally stops to have a late supper and sleep.

## NIGHT'S REST

After passing under the Seven Fingers, the band heads east a little and then settles down for a meal. Soon they are all around roaring fires near the eastern side of the Seven Fingers, toasting various foods and drinking red cordial while they talk and play. Food is prepared and given to Children by the Barrens in attendance, and PCs may notice that several of the larger Wonder Monsters are laden with supplies – gifts from Magdalen and Dahlia. The Wonder Monsters form a protective half-ring around the band, and soon most of the Children are sleeping while some of the older ones keep watch.

Spirits are high and Agnes' presence means those close by Her do not feel fatigue and thus do not need to sleep this night. Agnes talks until dawn to whomever is nearby, discussing military tactics and objectives. She is most keen to see the flowers found and destroyed, and so organizes a series of scout parties to go off with those who first spotted the flowers. She will listen to Her Captains' ideas for the fight to come, and declares that all Captains will be responsible for between ten to forty Children each. Agnes tells the Captains in secret that She can see anything the Wonder Monsters can, so they are all to have one beside them to take orders and to communicate concerns. The Captains are also to stop the Children from going off too far into Z'bri territory.

## INTO THE SERF LANDS

Next morning, the little army is off again. This morning and for the rest of the time until they run into the War Machines in Act Two, the presence of Agnes has some strange effects. The weather always seems nice and warm, filled with the smell of flowers or baking cookies, the roads and trails always seem level, or even slightly sloped downward, making the marching easier, and cakes, sweets, cordial and fruit always seem to be available to any who want them; their source seems a little vague, however (Agnes' Dream at work). Agnes is enjoying the Crusade so far, and those close to Her will feel happy and

motivated. Some of the more bitter and cruel Agnites will appear strangely carefree when near Agnes. All these little details should be noticeable to PCs.

This day sees the little army traveling north through the Abonom Z'bri Serf lands. Some small scout parties head east in the early morning as well, but with orders to look and not fight. The band of Agnites soon discovers the ruins of several Z'bri Serf villages destroyed by Joanite Crusaders in the past.

The little army soon comes across a large, intact *Rakh Hive Organ Farm*. With cries on their lips the Children descend on the Z'bri and their Serfs. The Children and their Wonder Monsters have a great time chasing down Z'bri Serfs and beasts amid fields of bones and bloody organs. During the morning they go on to destroy three Z'bri flesh farms and hamlets as they sweep across the land, leaving some three hundred Z'bri Serfs dead in their wake. They also lose some of their own numbers to exploding *Rakh Flemis Hive Iv'chet* and their minions.

One event that can take place at this time is for the PCs to clash with an Agnite bully like Megin or Hesperrin. Whether the conflict begins over rations, suspected theft, or too much attention from Agnes, one of Agnes' Favorites will take an opportunity to challenge the PCs to a contest to see who can hunt down the most Serfs in an hour. Refusal to compete will be met with disapproval and disdain from the Children, but participating in the slaughter will force the PCs to live with their murderous actions.

Early in the afternoon, three bands of seventy or so break off from Agnes' entourage and go off to 'play.' They attack a Koleris trophy tower and two Melanis towers that are close to the main army. With Agnes looking on and assisting in suppressing the Z'bri Sundering, the Children break in and beat the Z'bri to death – all in good fun, of course. The taint of the Z'bri Atmosphere on the Child Crusaders is now disgustingly apparent, and the Agnites are noticeably more wild and sadistic than usual. PCs who join them will also be affected, but Agnes suppresses most of the Z'bri Sundering powers in the fight. The Koleris have a couple of Bile Cannons that will need to be carefully eliminated (**Horrors of the Z'bri**, p.119 and *Tips and Resources* section).

At this time, the gang of the Children led by Captain Hesperrin catch a Sangis and spend several hours torturing it. This is actually a Z'bri the Baron has enthralled, and through it, the Baron enjoys the "punishment" the Children deliver. Many of the Children participating are tainted by the potent Sangis Atmosphere. One of Hesperrin's bullies (or a PC) who caught the beast takes its spear, which is actually a Joshuan artifact (see *Joshuan Spear* p.70). This artifact will attempt to compel the bully (or PC) to slay Count H'x in the next Act. The artifact may, alternatively, fall into a PC's hands and be recognized for what it is and/or what it is 'programmed' to do.

During this time, patches of the poisonous flowers are found, but they are small and do not match the sick Agnites' accounts of huge fields. The fields are, however, going to seed, their flowers changing into clusters of seeds that will be taken up by the wind – which is blowing south-westerly toward tribal lands. Agnes orders the fields put to flame.

## LUNCH TIME

In the middle of the afternoon, the Children are called back for lunch. Agnes constructs a large table from the Wonder Monsters and has a tea party. From several large bags a feast of cakes, bread, fruit, cordial, watered-down wine and cold meats is produced. The Children, still filthy and covered in mud from fighting in the organ fields, begin to gorge themselves.

Just after lunch has begun, the sky toward Abonom is filled with fleshy polyps (*Rakh Hive Floaters* p.94) of varying size, which float swiftly toward the resting Agnites. Some of the Children are attacked by them, and quickly succumb to the floaters' contact poison and digestive juices. Agnes stands and stamps Her foot in annoyance. She works Her powerful Synthesis, and many of the closer polyps start to burn and then explode. With several waves of Her hand, as though trying to knock away a bothersome fly, the rest of the hundreds of polyps are driven by an unfelt wind toward the river and the distant H'l Kar, exploding as they go.

At lunch, a captured Melanis Iv'chet is forced to sit in terror next to Agnes. She suppresses his Melanis Atmosphere and Sundering powers, and then uses Synthesis to ridicule him, as well as offering him a chance to earn his freedom if he tells Her lots of secrets. This takes some time during the meal, and many of the Children head off to play games. Tomoe looks on, and when the Z'bri is finally ordered beheaded (a difficult operation given his physiognomy), Tomoe attends. After he is killed, she

surprisingly hunts for and takes the Z'bri's Heartstone to add to her collection. This is something that PCs might witness, but Tomoe will not explain what she has found if they do not already know.

Also at the lunch, trophies are brought back for Agnes to admire. The Children play disgusting jokes with Z'bri body parts and dare each other to do outrageous things with the pieces at the lunch table. Away from the table, a few Koleris suffer hideously over fires in punishment for what their kin did to Agnes' children. The Z'bri Atmosphere is not completely suppressed by Agnes, and the Children howl with pleasure as they get worked up into a frenzy and finally kill the wounded beast. The Koleris Atmosphere also infects some of the Agnites at the lunch table, and vicious little fights and cruel jokes are played upon those still eating.

## HEADING BACK

With the afternoon passing, Tomoe spends some time convincing Agnes that a friend of Hers plans to meet Her at the place where they camped last night. She also points out that the Z'bri will attack this night and it would be easier to camp near one of Her Aunt Joan's towers. Agnes agrees and soon all the Children are rounded up and return to the site of last night's camp. Food is laid out and wounds tended to. Spoils of war (some rather macabre) are shown off. Some of the Agnites are still caught up in the Atmosphere of the Koleris Z'bri, and some jokes and bullying become quite dangerous.



The day sees about three dozen Children killed, and the older Agnites make sure that the Wonder Monsters carry their bodies back and bury them near the Seven Fingers. A Yagan Flesher and assistant turn up unexpectedly to conduct funeral rites. When questioned, they say that fate told them that Tribals would die here, and they have come, guided by the "Raven," to save the Agnite souls.

Around dusk, one group of scouting Agnites finds the main flower fields on the eastern side of the Z'bri structure, near where the ground becomes the Rust Wastes. They also get a good look at the Great Trident and the biggest Z'bri Living Building of the lot. They eagerly talk about this structure being the place where they will find the 'king' - whom they will then torture and kill. Agnes is impressed.

## DAHLIAN PARTY

Just after sunset, Children on guard duty report the approach of something from the south, perhaps a column of Joanites. It is actually a Dahlian Caravan, traveling with some Fallen, Children of Lilith and Joanites, and its arrival turns the night into a party.

When they arrive, some Fallen and Joanites ask that Agnes wait a few days, perhaps a week, until Joan's forces are ready to Crusade. Agnes declines, and a few of the new arrivals decide to return to the Watchtower to let Joan know right away. The others are keen for Crusade and join in the revelry. This also presents a good opportunity for PCs who are not yet involved to become so by arriving with the Caravan.

The Caravan's arrival turns the victory feast into a wild night of fun for the Agnites, who are all still on a high from the day's successes. The Dahlians entertain with great skill, and any cares for those lost this day are forgotten. The Little Trickster, a man named Brehnsun, demonstrates fire blowing - some imitative Children receive some nasty blisters and a case or two of burnt lungs.

During the night's activities, the Children who caught the Sangis Z'bri the Baron had enthralled, some of them not yet in their teens, are caught up with sexual desire. PCs may get a shock when ones so young approach them, and the taint on them may be noticed - definitely by Tomoe or Agnes if not by the PCs.

During the night, Z'bri can be heard racing around and howling in the forest around the large camp, but only a couple manage to find their way in, and they are quickly, if not easily, dispatched. Brehnsun will only wink at suggestions that the Dahlians hide the army.

## TIPS AND RESOURCES

Advice for portraying Agnes and Her Fatimal powers is in *Chapter Five: Weaver's Resources* p.69.

**Hespirin:** *Vimary* p.86, or use or use *Agnite Warrior* p.93 with APP +1, BLD -1, INF +3, WIL +1, Leadership 2/+3, Synthesis 3 (Capriciousness and Inspiration), Agnite Baton.

**Keeper Jonathan Abrams:** *Vimary* p.45, or use CRE +3, KNO +1, PER +1, PSY -2, Dodge 2/0, Firearms 1/0, Lore (Keeper) 3/+1, Techlore (Electronics, Mechanics) 3/+1, Tinker 4/+3, Technosmithing (Jury Rig) 4, Jury Rigged Pistol.

**Wonder Monsters** see p.93

Details for **Agnite Batons** are on p.70.

When using Synthesis in Abonom, PCs should feel a strange dampening of their connection with Dream. Weavers are reminded to apply the penalties for using Synthesis in Z'bri lands and on Z'bri as per **T8 Rulebook** p.165. The section in *Lands of the Z'bri* (pp.71-77) provides a guide as to how the Z'bri lands will be perceived once the PCs move away from Agnes' protection.

When running the fight scenes on this and the next day (covered by Act Two), remember to emphasize the bizarre and disturbing nature of the battleground. All of this fighting is going to take place amid rivers of blood and nutrient, the organ fields, bodies of Flemis Z'bri and buildings made from human flesh. These details should be played up and used to remind the PCs of the grim horror around them.

All the details on the Z'bri Serf lands and the Z'bri are listed in **Organ Fields and Serf Lands** (p.73), the **Rakh Hive Iv'chet** (p.88), **Rakh Hive Battle Serfs** (p.89), **Rakh Hive Floaters** p.94 and **Skull Squid** (p.73).

In the Melanis Tower, there are six **Melanis Iv'chet Qh'far Monks** (p.91) and their **Qh'far Symbiot Mounts** (p.94). There are also some Melanis scientists with few fighting skills. All Z'bri use Sundering at -3 because of Agnes' presence.

For the Z'bri in the Koleris Towers, use the **Order of Bones, Koleris Pride Iv'chet**. Their stats should be considered to be AGI +1, BLD +1, PSY +1, WIL +1, STR +1, STA 35, UD 8, AD 8, Hand-to-Hand 2/+1, Melee 2/+1, Sundering 1/+1, no weapons except for claws UD+8.

In the Serf Lands, the Agnites and PCs must be wary of many Z'bri plants and other creatures that may cause them harm, all of which are fully detailed in **Horrors of the Z'bri** (pp.111-113).

**Vicweed:** 6-foot-tall plant, attracts prey by sounding like someone is caught within it, and then traps prey with crushing leaves and digestive juices; AGI +1, FIT +4, PER +3, STR +2, STA 30, UD 8 (as well as auto flesh wound per round) Camouflage 3/+1, Hand-to-Hand 3/+1, Strength competition to escape.

**Ripper Ants:** These have built huge mounds in the slaughter fields; Aggressiveness 3, Damage/turn 3, Damage Threshold 20, Random Horde Size 5d6, Basic Swarm Size five hundred.

**Rapine Vipers:** Enters host through natural orifices and exudes digestive juices; AGI +1, BLD -2, PER +2, STA 25, UD 8, Combat Sense 1/+2, Hand to Hand 3/+1, Auto Flesh wound every two turns (Deep wound if pulled out).

**Dermic Mites:** Infect subject with a poison, disease or experimental substance like condensed Z'bri Atmosphere.



## 1. Children's Crusade

There is also the worry of plague, as many of the Serfs in one hamlet are suffering from **Digger's Cough: Horrors of the Z'bri** p.120, Contagion 5 (airborne), Onset time: 2 weeks, Virulence: 6, Effects: MoF 0: Minor Cough; Failed: severe coughing (-1 action, Healing Threshold - MoF +2); Fumble: Flesh Wound per day, Healing Threshold - MoF +4)

**Bile Cannons: Horrors of the Z'bri** p.119, or alternatively BLD -2, INS +3, STA 20, Firearms 4/+0, Acid Attack (x10 Damage, Range 5 meters, 5 shots/day). Human Serf converted to living cannon. A hit target burns each round thereafter at MoS — the number of rounds since the initial hit.

**Sangis Flowers** are here in small quantities; details on them can be found on p.95.

### HOOK: TUNNELS OF TROUBLE

Tomoe requests that the PCs go off looking for a tunnel she has heard rumor of. Finding it now allows the PCs to be more involved as part of the lead body in the next Quest. Another option to get the PCs involved is to make them suspicious of Tomoe by allowing them to see her and a few Children sneaking off. PCs following them could then be drawn into the tunnels. Instead of using Tomoe as a hook, the PCs could easily stumble into the tunnel while pursuing Z'bri, when they go fighting with the Agnites. Likewise, an appropriate omen- and sign-oriented PC, like a Doomsayer, could have received signs of its existence and be able to lead the PCs to it.

Tomoe has sensed that the tunnel is important, although she does not know how. She only knows that it apparently leads under the river to the north. If Tomoe is involved in a quest to find the tunnel then Puck will definitely be willing to lead such an adventure. Regarding the location of the tunnel entrance, all the Neonate Guide tells the PCs is that it is under a Z'bri organ farm's main structure and was constructed by their ancestors before the Z'bri came.

The PCs will need to investigate the aftermath of the Agnites' efforts to destroy the Organ Farms (or sneak into a Farm that has not yet been attacked) to try and find this tunnel. The tunnel does exist and joins the section of Anger Line (**Vimary** p.70) that has been left alone by the tribes and Keepers for fear of the Z'bri. It is partly flooded and crosses under the river into a ruin on the far side. The tunnel has been repaired by the Rakh Hive to allow Z'bri to secretly cross beneath the river. This entrance into the H'l Kar is well concealed, and the tunnel is guarded at both ends by Living Building defenses and Z'bri.

### SCENES

The scenes here should be used to surprise and introduce some of the Living Building defenses that exist (see pp.71-73). Since the PCs will only be part of a smallish group, most probably they are going to need to take care, and it is advisable to have a Wonder Monster or two along to help them.

The idea is to draw the PCs into the tunnels that lead to the disused Anger Line system. Merely finding the entrance tells the PCs little except that it may be what they are looking for. They will need to travel a few hundred yards through Living Building tunnel sections and passages from the World Before, until they come across the much larger Anger Line tunnel. The disconcerting strangeness of the terrain combined with brief spurts of conflict with Z'bri defenses should keep the tension high. If the PCs try and leave prematurely, a large number of Z'bri Serfs and Z'bri can pour down after them, making them race toward the Anger Line for a defensible position. There is no natural light down here, and the moisture levels are very high, making it hard to light more fires. There are many side passages, and sometimes it is unclear which is the main passage. Side passages lead to traps, food stores, Serf work areas and guard posts.

### CLIMAX

The climax comes when the PCs find the Anger Line tunnel (a partially submerged underground railway tunnel). Here they must deal with a specially designed Z'bri guardian, a Rakh Hive Iv'chet (p.88). The Weaver should provide the PCs with a good opportunity to fight such a creature without the benefit of dozens of Children and Wonder Monsters to overwhelm it. This particular Iv'chet has four huge tentacle-like arms instead of paddles, and its body is stuck to the roof of the tunnel (count arms as being able to grapple up to 20 meters from the Z'bri, STR test vs. STR +5 to escape, Tentacles have STA 30 but -2 to hit if currently grappled). The last forty meters of flesh tunnel leading to the Anger Line is all *Sphincter Door* (p.72), which should surprise the PCs as it suddenly perspires and then pulses along its length, intending to eject them into the Anger Line below the Iv'chet.

### AFTERMATH

After they dispatch the Rakh Hive Iv'chet, the PCs must escape back to the group. An incentive to do this is that three normal Rakh Hive Iv'chet have left their northerly post to retaliate against the PCs' incursion, and are coming from the direction of the H'l Kar. With them are twenty Skull Squid, who are in the lead, and will pursue the PCs until they are once more out of the subterranean tunnels. These Skull Squid should arrive in dribs and drabs, to make the escape tense and fast. Once they escape, the PCs should realize that they have only a broad understanding of the tunnel's layout, as there were many side passages and it was very disorienting. But they do know it is there.

## ACT TWO: ASSAULT ON ABONOM FIELDS OF FLOWERS

*She is grown, and She desires Her vengeance.  
Trapped, I have watched on and tried to steer a safe course  
and my words have stopped them marching,  
choosing a closer enemy instead.  
But between the would-be lover Puck and the  
curiosity of Agnes, I have been unable to escape,  
becoming just another of Her toys.  
Rage consumes Her and Her power is everywhere.  
Pray that Joan arrives soon or we are all lost.*

Word to the Guides — Tomoe

### WEAVER'S SYNOPSIS

Having detected the location of most of the deadly flowers, Agnes leads Her little army along the fringe of the Z'bri lands and Rust Wastes, until they are close to the main Rakh Flemis Hive and the fields of flowers. They start to attack and burn the crops, but then the Rakh Hive retaliates and the fairy-tale Crusade dissolves into a violent struggle for survival. Giant War Machines attack, and the PCs must fight them and then seek out the control center for the great Trident in an attempt to stop more Machines from coming. Just as things are looking up, the Baron's trap is sprung, and Koleris and Sangis pour onto the battlefield, threatening once more to overwhelm the Children. The Act ends as all the Tribals fight desperately to regroup and hold back the attackers.

### IN SIGHT OF ABONOM

The next morning dawns bright and clear. During breakfast, Agnes decides the entire army will go quickly through the edge of the Rust Wastes to the east, to where the fields of deadly flowers were seen by Her scouts the day before. Their orders are to find the flowers, burn them and attack the main Z'bri flesh domes that surround the great Trident. Brehnsun says that the Dahlian Caravan will go with them and speed their journey along. Agnes' orders are for everyone to stay together so that they can best defend themselves.

The band sets off early, and after only a few hours the little army near fields of bright but poisonous flowers, where the eastern Abonom Serf fields meet the Rust Wastes. Not far away, the Great Trident towers from amid a small city of flesh domes. All is quiet; no Serfs can be seen in the nearby fields and behind them the red Rust Wastes are barren and silent. PCs with the Eminences of Death, Fate, Fury, Rage, Recognition or Wisdom may sense that something violent is about to happen (roll PSY vs. a Threshold of 5).

All around the outskirts of the Z'bri lands here are fields of flowers, quickly identified as the poisonous ones by various Agnites. The blooms' sweet perfume mixes with the morning air. Agnes is delighted at having found them. The flowers emit the Sangis Atmosphere and engender a strong desire to eat them in all nearby. Agnes' presence suppresses the Atmosphere for the most part, and only those that fail a test of WIL vs. Threshold 3 succumb to temptation and eat the Sangis Flowers (p.95).

There is a period of uncertainty and tension as Agnes appears to ponder whether or not She will go through with Her intended attack. Agnes sees a few giant Ravens circling high above and this appears to spur Her into action. She orders the fields set to flame and the attack to start against the nearest Z'bri farms and domes. The Dahlians, led by Brehnsun, help to burn the fields using their fire breathing tricks. The seeding flowers burn easily, filling the air with charring remnants. Several of Agnes' Wonder Monsters also breathe flame for a short while, setting afire great swaths of the land to the west of the army. In the haste, some Children are burnt and others need to be rescued.

The column of Agnites begins to slowly move toward the main Flemis structures around the great Trident; the Dahlian caravan remains behind. The Children begin their attacks on the apparently abandoned Z'bri Organ Farm buildings closer to the main Hives, leaving the fire to burn to their left and rear as they maneuver closer.



## DARK SKIES

The fires continue to burn, filling the area with smoke, but then the weather changes. Clouds whip up, quickly blotting out the sky, and freezing rain begins to fall. The great Trident sparks with lightning amid the darkening sky, drawing a cry of fear from the Children. The rain quickly turns to sleet, and then thick snow. The Children appear scared for the first time since they began Crusading, and draw closer to Agnes, shivering against the assault. Near Agnes, the cold and snow is not so bad, and some of the Wonder Monsters still breathe flame, which provides some heat to the lightly dressed Agnites. While the storm builds, Agnes keeps the column advancing but at a much reduced rate, as they now must trudge through snow and mud. She tells Her Captains to "keep the troops in order" and sends a wave of Inspiration through the Children, spurring them on. The Children are wild eyed, and some of the younger ones are crying as they advance toward the Z'bri buildings.

Suddenly, a rumble can be felt through the ground, and the largest part of one of the Z'bri domes breaks apart and comes toward the Agnites. This is a *Rakh Flemis Hive War Machine* (*Horrors of the Z'bri* p.113) that has been created to defend the Hive. It is one of several huge behemoths the Hive controls, actual Living Buildings rather than a cacophony of bodies like the "tide of flesh" seen in *Trial by Fire* (p.84). Abonom has been building these Flemis monstrosities for the possibility of war with the tribes or the H'l Kar. Initially they appear to the Agnites as tall dome-like buildings, but these are frameworks to disguise the War Machines from the Hive's enemies. The first War Machine to approach from the Rakh Hive's main building is the newest of the Machines, known as *Rind* (pp.74-75). It looks like a giant hermit crab, with several internal compartments built to carry Z'bri troops to the enemy across broken ground and through walls. Rind is some thirty meters tall and weighs about 300 tons.

Just after Rind begins its approach, another War Machine in the form of a huge serpent appears behind the crusaders, although it is actually far off in the Rust Wastes; its sheer size makes it visible. Agnes orders some Captains to attack Rind, and others to form a defensive circle while She deals with the Serpent War Machine by Herself.

Near chaos ensues. The Children scramble to obey orders as Agnes leaves them in order to stop the Serpent. Rind comes on at a steady pace toward the front of the column, and the Captains try to quickly get a large mob together to take it on. If the PCs want to join Agnes' fight against the Serpent, they will be in for a hard time. First, although the Serpent is a considerable distance away when it appears, Agnes knows that it is more of a threat than Rind. The Serpent, sensing Agnes' power, keeps back and strikes at those with Her but not at Agnes Herself.

For those who get a chance to look back at where the Dahlian Caravan was, they have vanished into the snowstorm using their Synthesis, and are nowhere to be seen.

## FIGHTING RIND

The idea of this fight is to allow the PCs a chance to shine as they lead the Agnites against the War Machine Rind (see p.74 for details of fighting inside Rind). Agnes is racing off to take on the Serpent War Machine, and the front of the column is too slow to avoid Rind's advance for more than ten minutes in these conditions. Rind is traveling at a steady "jogging speed" over the ice and snow, so the PCs and Children who are attacking Rind need to act quickly.

For the PCs to destroy Rind, they must avoid its claws and feet, and climb through one of its door orifices. Once there, they will need to battle to the brain center and control room near the top of the War Machine's spiral shell. The PCs will need to battle through Living Building defenses to get to Rind's brain room. This fight should be a haphazard affair, where the PCs are under pressure to act quickly to save all the Agnites outside; the Agnites have gotten bogged down in the nearby snow, and are under threat of being crushed or eaten by Rind.

Once the PCs have breached the "door" to the brain room, all of the group (and all others inside and near Rind) are subject to huge amounts of Flemis Atmosphere and momentarily become part of the Hive Mind. Only the strong-willed (WIL vs. Threshold 5) will be able to finish the job and kill Rind, an action which seems, because of the Hive Mind connection, tantamount to suicide. The PCs in the brain room will glimpse the Hive Mind, and will understand that the War Machines are controlled from the Trident by a Z'bri known as Count H'x; they catch a glimpse of H'x connected to, and seemingly manipulating, some strange fleshy controls. Those in the brain room also perceive that the best way through the Living Buildings to mount an attack on the Trident, an insight Rind gives them as it dies, in the hopes of seeing its companions (the other War Machines) released from their enslavement. Weavers may wish to give PCs who briefly touched the Hive Mind a Skill of 1 in Lore (Z'bri), or increase their current rating by one.

## SEEKING THE TRIDENT

Insight from Rind should help the PCs to mount a small covert attack against the Trident via the passageways Rind revealed through the mind link. If the PCs were not involved, then they can be drawn into the attack on the Trident when one of the Children, Puck or Tomoe seek them out for help.

It is a race against time, the elements and the Flemis to destroy the Trident. Megin will attempt to take charge, unless the PCs cut her off at the pass. Megin is the one who leads the strike team if the PCs did not assault Rind or otherwise did not learn the secret of the Trident. PCs could conceivably join her group once she has set out in order to get back into the main action.

The next shock for the rallying Agnites is a series of lightning bolts emitting from the Trident, which blast some Children who were running toward the Trident's domes. The best way to avoid the lightning strikes is to head into the Hive itself; fortunately, the insight from Rind has given them knowledge of the fluid tubes that are used to quickly convey Flemis around the Abonom Hive.



The PCs and those who are going with them (including the individual who has the Joshuan Spear) will have to enter into the living flesh of the Hive, using its slick pulsating passages and bile-conduit suction tubes to get to the Trident. It should be a disgusting and disorienting experience, spotted with running battles against the Rakh Hive defenders. Those trying to bring large amounts of equipment will soon find themselves encumbered and fatigued. When the PCs finally arrive, they must deal with the guards (four **Melanis Iv'chet Qh'far Monks** p.91) and Melanis technicians. In the Trident's control room, **Count H'x** awaits.

## DESTROYING THE TRIDENT AND COUNT H'X

Count H'x' ambitions towards the throne have obligated him to stay here and protect the Rakh Hive. Outnumbered and not expecting this attack, H'x remains confident he can jump into one of his other bodies at a moment's notice. Unfortunately for him, he is mistaken; an Agnite bully (or PC) has the Joshuan spear that the Baron has prepared specifically to kill H'x. When the bully (or PC) sees H'x, she is caught up in the waves of Atmosphere the Spear begins to emit, and feels compelled to attack H'x. (WIL vs. Threshold 7 to resist, vs. 5 for Joshuans; see p.70 for details on the Joshuan Spear.)

If Count H'x is slain, PCs attempting to destroy the Trident must then actually strike the mortal blow against the pulsing brain that sits on H'x' pedestal. Once the brain is destroyed, the Trident begins to melt down slowly. Flesh begins to fizz with acid, structures droop and all throughout the structure strange tearing sounds can be heard (although the Trident's outer shell remains intact).

The escape from the Hive should be a dramatic and dangerous race down more fleshy passageways, with irate Flemis and bubbling acid always close behind. Flesh doors will need to be torn open, toxic fumes resisted, and collapsing tunnels of human flesh struggled through. Once the PCs escape onto the snow outside, they will see that the sky is becoming clear again. The main Rakh Hive is partially melted, and steam is rising from it as ice and acid mix. In the distance, War Machines, some like Rind and others of more bizarre construction, seem no longer under the Hive's control, and remain immobile or head back into the Outlands and Rust Wastes. Agnes and Her army have partially destroyed several of the hive's domes, some of which are on fire. Her Children seem to have formed five fighting forces in various areas of the battleground, taking the fight to the Rakh Flemis Serfs and Z'bri. The Agnites seem to be doing fairly well, due to the presence of Agnes Herself. Then the Baron springs his trap.

## THE HUNTING PARTY

The trap involves the Baron, his Talon bodyguards and a hunting party of Sangis nobles with their own guards and riding beasts. Nearby, he also has a large Horde of Koleris that is held back until the Trident begins to crumble. The Baron's colorful

entourage appears from out of the Skrr Hive, at quite a distance from Agnes, although fairly close to a large Agnite group that is fighting around the Flemis domes. Most of the Sangis are costumed as hideous parodies of Dahlians, and carry nets. The Z'bri are outnumbered five to one, but have little fear of the Children. The Baron and some of his court concentrate and begin to 'call in' some previously "kissed" Children (**Horrors of the Z'bri**, *The Calling* p.91). These Children try to capture (but not kill) as many Children as possible, and then leave before Agnes can get to them.

Agnes races to save the Children from the Sangis but She and Her entourage are intercepted when the Koleris are unleashed and pour down from their hiding places in the lesser Rakh Hive domes. They effectively cut the group off, drawing Agnes and Her Children into a vicious fight. Many fall on both sides as the two forces clash in the mud, snow and blood. At this point, the battle seems to have turned badly on the Agnites; the blood-maddened Koleris have such an overwhelming control over the battlefield that they begin to take time to toy with the Children before killing them.

PCs could be quite near the Sangis when they arrive on the battlefield, allowing them to see the horror of the Z'bri shock attack. They may be able to even save some of the Children; perhaps a Captain is desperately trying to get her charges back to Agnes in one group, and needs the PCs' assistance. PCs who are capable fighters should be given a chance to rally groups of Children and guide the fighting, although the Koleris are formidable foes.

## TIPS AND RESOURCES

**Sangis Flowers** are here in large quantities; although Agnes is suppressing their Atmosphere, they might be encountered later or while away from Her and thus have full effect (p.95).

Advice for portraying Agnes and Her Fatimal powers is in *Chapter Five: Resources* p.69.

All the details on the Z'bri Serf lands and the Rakh Flemis Hive Z'bri are explained in **Organ Fields and Serf Lands** (p.73), and on the other pages detailing the **Rakh Hive Iv'chet** (p.88), **Rakh Hive Battle Serfs** (p.89), **Rakh Hive Floaters** (p.94), and **Skull Squid** (p.73).

It is recommended that Weavers read **Abonom** (p.73), **Rind** (pp.74-75) **The great Trident** (p.73) and the **Living Buildings** (pp.71-73) defenses before running this Act, since there many details involved. It is also recommended that *Flesh Building* encounters of the Weaver's own devising be prepared beforehand to add to the variety. If the PCs take on the Serpent with Agnes, use the statistics for *Rind*, but in this case, there are no entry doorways, and it can move as swiftly as a galloping horse.

## 1. Children's Crusade

**Count H'x: Vimary** p.117 (or alternatively use **Melanis Iv'chet**: AGI +1, BLD +0, FIT +1, WIL +3, Hand-to-Hand 2/+1, Melee 1/+1, Seduction 3/+2, Sundering (Appeasement, Soul Stealing, The One Thought) 3/+2) **Perfume Spray** (POT 9, Onset: 2 rounds, Euphoric + Sangis Atmosphere as if one hour of exposure). He also has a **Sangis Lust Serpent** (p.92) as a pet, which will defend him.

Guarding Count H'x in the Trident are four **Melanis Iv'chet Qh'far Monks** (p.91) and six **Melanis Scientists** (use **Agnite Warriors** p.93 with Claws (UD+6) and Sundering (Animation) 2).

The Sangis Z'bri Lords that form the Baron's Hunt are considered **Sangis Iv'chet** (p.96) who additionally have INF +2, KNO +1, WIL +3, Sundering (Appeasement, Soul Stealing) 3, and **Sangis Mounts** (p.95). They also have normal Sangis Iv'chet Guards; these are part of the Baron's personal guard, known as the **Talons** (**Vimary**, p.118). Use the **Koleris Pride Iv'chet** statistics for them, although they have the Sangis Sundering Aspects and use weapons and armor made out of colorful shell rather than bone.

The Baron, who can be found in **Vimary** (p.118), is using another form to conduct this rash theft. Although it is not intended that the PCs fight him personally, if they can make their way across the battlefield to him, they are likely to be subject to a Sundering attack (All Aspects) 5. The Baron should be considered a **Koleris Pride Iv'chet** with BLD +3 (in this form), APP +3 (in this form), CRE +3, INF +4, PSY +3, WIL +5. He will try to kill any PCs who try to take him on; without some brilliant tactical maneuvers and/or teamwork, the PCs will likely be hopelessly outclassed.

The Koleris Horde that attacks is made up of **Order of Bones**, **Koleris Pride Iv'chet** (p.90) led by **Ozmur, Koleris Pride Lord** (p.87). PCs fighting along with the main body of Agnites may be witness to Ozmur using **The Burning** (**Horrors of the Z'bri**, p.92) as he battles through the Wonder Monsters – melting them – and Agnites. Ozmur self-immolates, destroyed by **The Burning** when Joan first appears.

Careful use of pacing in this Act can be used to increase the tension dramatically. There is a period of silent build up where things go dark and the snow begins to fall, and then the two races against time to save the little army. Keeping the game moving along with this pres-

sure of time should help make the fight hectic, stressful, dangerous and disorienting, which is as it should be.

## ACT THREE: FALL OF ABONOM

*We had tried to be tough but so many of us were bleeding and in tears. The storm had gone, but it was still really cold. Agnes was coming back when huge Z'bri raced in from the southwest. It felt like a trap. We tried to use the creature we had slain to hide behind, but there was lots of them and they were strong. The Wonder Monsters really helped, surprising the Z'bri I think. Then we heard the screams of the others north of us. Somehow we knew it was the dark lord himself but we couldn't help them. Then Joan appeared and all started to go right. We're going to rescue those Children that were taken. It's our new cause.*

— Lysa, Agnite Bully

## WEAVER'S SYNOPSIS

The *Fall of Abonom* begins with Joan's arrival. Soon She and Her Crusaders have turned the tide of battle, chasing off the scattered Koleris and Flemis forces and pursuing the Sangis for a short distance. Once the Agnites and Joanites join forces, they set out to destroy as much of Abonom as possible before sunset. Joan leads troops against the main structures while Agnes, sensing the Melanis (the Z'bri House that tortured Her in **Trial by Fire**) nearby, sets off to avenge Herself.

## FALL OF ABONOM

An echoing battle cry is heard over the chaos, and Joan appears on wing above the battle. Only a few minutes behind ride Her Templars, cavalry and other mounted Joanite and Fallen warriors. This is a good time to introduce new PCs to the Quest, and have them ride in with Joan's mixed company of troops. Joan senses that the greatest threat on the field is the



Koleris and sweeps into the front of their ranks to protect the two hundred or so Children that have been surrounded. Joan cuts down as many of the toughest of the Koleris as She can, and soon has the warrior Z'bri reeling from Her ferocity. All present feel a powerful surge of Joan's energies wash over them, temporarily gaining Joanite Synthesis (Fury) at +1. Weavers are encouraged to use this flow of Dream to allow badly injured PCs to recover enough to join in again; their wounds are partially healed and harmful drug effects neutralized.

When Joan's troops arrive moments later, Joan leaves the fight with the Koleris and heads over to the remnants of the Sangis. The Baron has already fled with his captives, but some of his entourage cannot help staying behind to grab a few extra Children for their later entertainment. Joan's warriors ensure that they do not escape, and then return to fight the Koleris and elements of the Rakh Hive that are still on the battlefield.

After a bloody fight, the Koleris are turned and Agnes leads the Joanite forces after them, driving the beasts back toward H'l Kar. The Koleris Horde is well and truly broken, and only a dozen of the 250-strong attacking horde manage to return, in disgrace, to the Baron. The Baron is happy; he has eliminated Count H'x and the Rakh Flemis Hive threat. He has also given the Koleris a taste of tribal blood, and eliminated some of their stronger members. To top it all off, he has some new playthings, and he and his Lords return to the safety of the Ziggurat to 'relax.'

Once the Sangis and Koleris are driven off, Joan's and Agnes' forces come together. The Joanites are fresh and keen for more fighting, but most of the Children are injured and worn out. A meeting takes place; all the Agnite Captains, Joanite Templars and Fallen leaders attend. There is also a brief meeting of the Fatimas, and Agnes thanks Joan for Her help. The word spreads that there will be a few more hours of fighting to try and destroy as much of the Hive as possible, specifically the Melanis Towers to the north of the complex; Agnes feels the need for revenge. PCs can once again fight in the Hive, this time with Joan, or join Agnes and a mixed company as they lay waste to the Melanis Towers to the northeast. Fire is the main tool of destruction, with Joan and Agnes able to supply fuel and flame to ignite the landscape. Agnes' Wonder Monsters begin to breathe fire once more.

## JOSHUA SPEAKS

While laying waste to the Melanis towers, Agnes' group encounters another War Machine of mixed Flemis/Melanis design. This is a huge building-sized spider/crab-like creature — similar to Rind — and Agnes needs to find a way under its body armor to destroy it from inside. Several of Her fighters, including the PCs if they so wish, join Her in storming it. They penetrate the vast bulk of the creature's hide and fight their way to the thing's brain. When Agnes gets there, She dispatches its controller and touches the Hive Mind. It is not the Rakh Hive she communicates with, though, but the original Skkr Flemis Hive.

Everyone with Agnes is also affected briefly by this strange connection, and is subject to massive amounts of Flemis and Melanis Atmosphere. Many of them forget who they are and

start to believe they are Flemis, feeling compelled to defend the Hive (see Melanis Atmosphere Rules in the **T8 Rulebook** p.180 and 182 for further details). Friend fights friend, even with Agnes there; those who think they are the Hive fight those who are just now entering the control center and have not been so affected.

The Melanis Atmosphere connection has another effect for those influenced by it; it briefly allows those who are part of the Hive mind to glimpse Agnes' thoughts and motivations. The feelings are confusing, but the PCs can feel a clear sense of a need to prove Herself to the other Fatimas as well as a need to find Her own path without control from the others. Agnites and ex-Agnites affected this way may find themselves more strongly connected with Dream, and Weavers may wish to increase their Synthesis ability and Dreaming Skill for a brief time.

Shortly after, another spiritual wave washes over those in the War Machine and nearby. The Joshuan artifacts which Joan has incorporated into Her own form — and those She has given Agnes — begin to reverberate, and the Spirit of Joshua, or something that can only be understood as such falls upon everyone on the battlefield. Agnes is connected to the Hive Mind when this happens and She (and everyone else affected) has a vision of a fiery, pure rage burning deep in the H'l Kar Ziggurat.

"Joshua's Heart," whispers Agnes. Her voice courses through the minds of Her people, and all those affected by the Hive mind are returned to themselves. The collective vision continues; the Ravager appears as a giant, towering over the H'l Kar and smiting it with His great hammer. From the H'l Kar comes a great booming voice that is heard even on the fringes of tribal lands. The battlefields grow still as the long-dead Fatima speaks.

**"Guide them to cut through the land like fire."**

With this great omen, Joan takes Her forces to join Agnes and finish off the Melanis towers. The combined armies sweep through and destroy the towers, infected by a rage that carries everyone along on a swelling wave of power. As the sun begins to sink beneath the horizon, the army begins to fall back, gather their dead and head back to tribal lands.



## GOING HOME

So ends the *Children's Crusade*. The word on all the Crusaders' lips is the news of the sign of the Ravager. This helps dry teary eyes and gives the Children a renewed vigor, for they realize that they are now living part of this great Prophecy. The battle-ground is muddy and slick from the blood of all those that have fallen. The flesh domes of the Flemis Hive have been mostly collapsed and set alight, and a filthy black smoke that smells of burnt flesh fills the air. Of the original five hundred Children who set out on Agnes' Crusade, a little over two hundred were killed or captured by the Z'bri. Some thirty or so Joanites and Fallen have also been killed. Many of the dead and wounded are being carried by the Joanites or the remaining Wonder Monsters. A number of Agnites are known to have been taken in the Baron's ambush, and there are rumors now that Joan's Crusade will start and the children can be rescued.

Brehnsun and his Caravan have returned by the time the force gets to the edge of the Rust Wastes. They assist in bringing the Agnites, Fallen and Joanites back to the Tribal lands. The armies' destination is the Seven Fingers, where the same Yagan group who appeared the previous night holds a large funeral rite. It is a somber time, and the pained moans of the injured make the night a restless one. The triumph of the successful Crusade has momentarily faded as those present realize the enormity of the losses they have taken. Among the Joanites and Fallen the Prophecy and the visions of Joshua are eagerly discussed and repeated for others who were not there. There is much excitement in the camp, and during the night, many members of both the Fallen and the Nation come and go in order to hear more or spread the news.

## TIPS AND RESOURCES

The fall of Abonom is a chance to let the PCs take revenge or get a taste of the battles to come. The Tribals are hungering for revenge against the monsters who have killed so many, and the PCs likewise might find themselves caught up in the need to spill blood. The section on *Themes and Atmosphere* (p.10) has some advice on how to emphasize this theme to the Players.

Some of the previous fear and tension is abated in this Act, due to the arrival of Joan and Her capable fighters, but there is still plenty of opportunity to introduce more by emphasizing what the Agnites (and possibly the PCs) are doing to the Serfs and Z'bri under the excuse of vengeance. Blood-splattered children, bubbling with laughter as they chase down injured Serfs and Z'bri, should give the PCs reason to pause to consider their own actions.

There are some six **Melanis Iv'chet Qh'far Monks** (p.91) in each Melanis Tower, and about half will have their **Qh'far Symbiot Mounts** (p.94). There are also some Melanis scientists with few fighting skills. All use Sundering at -3 because of Agnes' and Joan's presence.

## BETWEEN QUESTS

About a week passes between the end of *Children's Crusade* and the beginning of *Crusade of the Heart*. The Rakh Flemis Hive has not been completely destroyed, but it definitely has been put out of commission as a military and political power. The single large Skkr Flemis Hive from which the Baron sprang his ambush was destroyed by the Crusaders and then later by the remnants of the Rakh Flemis. Some of the most northerly Rakh Flemis organ farms managed to escape attack by the Tribals or the Baron's Koleris, and they have taken in the survivors of the Hive that were driven out of the main part of Abonom.

Agnes and Her Children are still in mourning in the week before the Crusaders set out, but they are also strangely quiet and resolved. They are very angry with the Baron, and a group under Puck calling themselves *The Bears* (p.40) forms, with the intent to go and rescue the children taken by the Baron. Agnes makes a pilgrimage to Mortuary to see Baba Yaga, and many of the older Children come with Her. Mordred guards do not allow any others to attend or watch this meeting.

The Yagans spend this time conducting funeral ceremonies for those slain in the *Children's Crusade*. Several well-armed parties working with Joanites go into what remains of Abonom to conduct funeral rites, both for those fallen in battle as well as for the many bodies the Z'bri kept alive for many years as slaves and building materials.

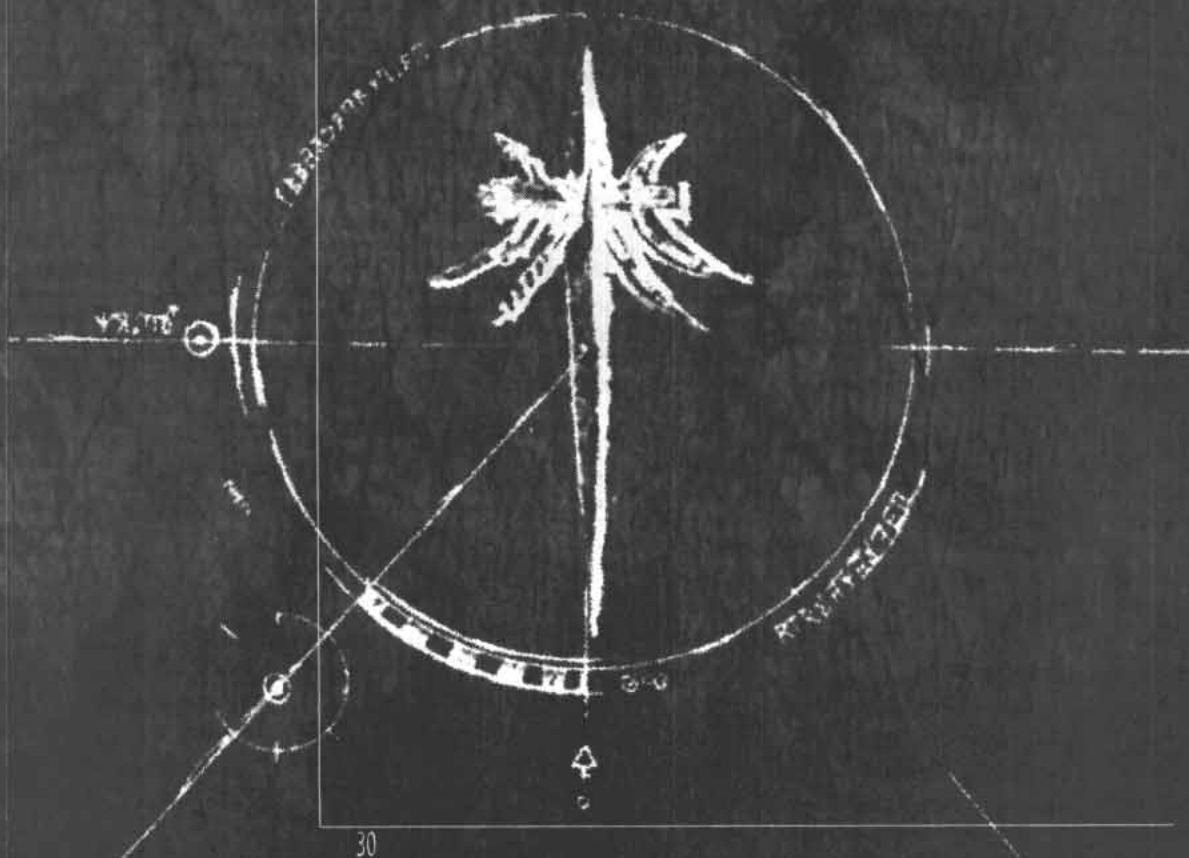
During this time, Joan and Agnes meet in the Watchtower to talk about the need for a new Crusade. They are assisted by their senior people, and possibly the PCs (if they have distinguished themselves). This occurs amid the arming for Crusade. For more information on these events, see Quest Two, *Crusade of the Heart* (p.30).



## Chapter Two: Crusade of the Heart

My dear Brother is still with us,  
His Prophecy unfolds.  
The Pact of the Dome once meant peace  
but the time for peace has passed.  
Gather your weapons and armor  
for we go into the lair of the ancient beasts  
to seek out the Heart we have lost,  
that was once such source of strength  
and security to us all.

Joan's words to the Crusaders





## QUEST TWO: CRUSADE OF THE HEART

*Crusade of the Heart* takes place some seven days after *Children's Crusade*. The Joanites and their Fallen and Agnite allies join together to finally begin the long-awaited Crusade against the Z'bri. Motivations for this attack vary dramatically even as the army forms. The Jackers are the strongest proponents of the upcoming battle, seeing this Crusade as just the first of many attacks to stir the rest of the Nation into action.

Act One, *Plan of Attack*, details the preparations for the Crusade made by both the tribes and Z'bri. Weapons and armor are being handed out, leaders chosen, tactics discussed and scouts sent out. The War Parties mix with and recruit from those who come to fight the Z'bri. Some short side Quests are suggested for PCs, such as the seeking of reinforcements and other assistance. A feint attack to distract the Z'bri is formulated and can be led by Agnes and those others who are left behind to protect the Nation while the Crusaders prepare their main attack.

Act Two, *Lair of the Beast*, is the longest Act, and covers the assault through the Sangis estates and into the Ziggurat. The Crusaders fight at first to kill the Z'bri, free prisoners and to find the resting place of Joshua's Heart, but then as their losses mount, they struggle just to survive and retreat from the Z'bri. It is as much a challenge to the Crusaders' willpower and internal strength as a challenge of mere arms to survive a plunge into the center of Z'bri power.

The flight from the H'l Kar is dealt with in the final Act, *Fleeing the Horror*. The Baron begins to unleash the full power of his forces against the Crusaders as they race to cross the Spine Bridge. The Crusaders and Agnite-led allies on the other side of the bridge combine to smash through the Koleris blocking Crusaders' retreat. Joan halts the Z'bri advance by using Joshua's newly reformed hammer to smash the Spine Bridge. The Baron directs flying and amphibious Z'bri at the Crusaders, but the Z'bri advance is finally halted when an assassin strikes at the Baron, sending the Z'bri leadership into turmoil.

## QUEST PRELUDE

About a week passes between the *Children's Crusade* and the beginning of *Crusade of the Heart*. Most of the Agnites have returned to the Playground, although several groups have decided to stay to train with Joan, with Agnes' consent. Every day the Joanite camps have been filled with the sights and sounds of preparations for the Crusade, the stockpiling of food, firewood and weapons taking place. Boats are also being built en masse. Banners, colorful livery, polished armor and signal horns are the island-wide signs of the Crusaders forming up to fight. Notably, the Joanite Rangers are recalled from the Outlands and the Winter Wolves return from the Duskfall. Some Joanite Hermit Blades also unexpectedly arrive to join the Crusade.

Meanwhile, relations between the tribes have begun to change dramatically. The Tera Shebans and Evans are distant and even more restrained in their dealings with the Joanites. The Dahlians have all but vanished, formerly bustling shops and shows now empty and silent. The Agnites are everywhere, caught up in the spirit of Crusade, and a few Yagans and Magdalites are seen involved in the preparations. The Fallen are attracted by this turn of events, and all omens are promising them victory. The Herites are grumbling about another Lilit, but the Jackers and Doomsayers are ecstatic at the news of Joshua's appearance and the words of the Prophecy. Unconvinced, most of the Herites stay clear and bide their time.

## BARON'S PLOTTING

The Baron has his own problems back in the H'l Kar. The Koleris want action on a large scale after losing almost an entire Horde to the Crusaders, and they claim the Seven Tribes have broken the Pact. The Baron tries to placate them by sending word to Tera Sheba through Flemis Ambassador Ult'maht (T8 Rulebook, p.72), asking for an explanation and recompense, or there will be full-scale war. This secret event, titled *The Ambassador's Gifts*, can be used as a Hook for the PCs to be involved with at any time before the main battle.

The Baron's spies report the Joanite and Agnite preparations for Crusade. Many among the other Z'bri Houses have also been watching, and it quickly puts a damper on the Baron's apparent victory at Abonom. The Baron advises that he prefers to force the tribes to fight their way into the H'l Kar, so that the Z'bri will have the advantage of home ground. He also knows that, by thus holding them back, he can stop his minions from getting out of control and wiping out all the virgin flesh that he and his Sangis Lords covet so dearly.

The Sangis Duke Belz'ey (*Horrors of the Z'bri* p.118) and Melanis Deacon Vytor (*Vimary* p.122) are also calling for a return to the glories of the past, although they agree that they are not best positioned to assault the tribes just yet. The Baron knows that for the time being the Skkr Flemis are supporting him for his recent actions against their treasonous brethren, the Rakh Flemis, and he has turned his attentions elsewhere.

A recent event among the Z'bri has torn the most dangerous House in two. The Melanis are split between the two claimant Princes, C'arhis (*Vimary* p.123), who has reaffirmed his loyalty to the Baron, and Vl'dus the Pretender (*Horrors of the Z'bri* p.52). Sangis Prince Fa'Cul (*Horrors of the Z'bri*, p.118) reports to the Baron that her Beauties have discovered that the self-appointed Prince of the Melanis, Vl'dus, has allied with certain Sangis and Koleris counts to bring about a coup when the Crusaders attack, and plan to blame Joan for the Baron's and C'arhis' demise.

For the Baron, it is just one coup plot replacing another, and he rearranges his plans to minimize the coup's success, and hopefully kill some ringleaders. He does not think that the Crusaders can really manage to do much damage to him without the complete support of the other five Fatimas, at least not as much as his scheming kin can do in return.

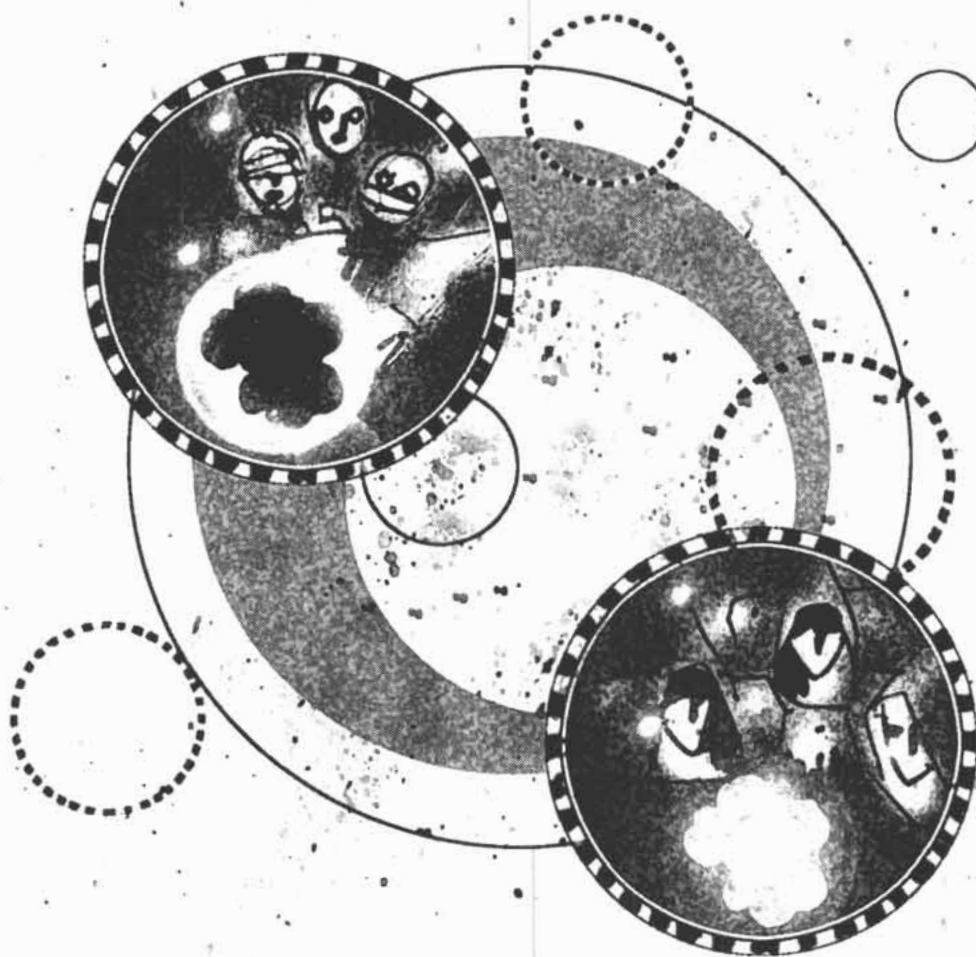
## 2. Crusade of the Heart

The Baron orders that the Koleris led by Prince K'ark'oom (one of the coup plotters), and the Joanite-led Crusaders must be turned against each other. The Baron, fearing the coup, is reluctant to bring too many Koleris so close to the Ziggurat, so he leaves many of them at the Spine Bridge or stationed away in the northern edge of the H'l Kar, ready for a counterattack.

The Baron decides it is best to have his enemies close to him, keeping them in his power without enough of their followers at hand to stage a coup easily. The Baron calls his Princes to a war meeting to plan the attack on the tribes. He refuses to let any of his suspected enemies bring anything more than an honor guard, to minimize the likelihood of an all-out attack. Eagerly, the Z'bri swarm to the great week-long festival of feasting and debauchery that is the war council. Their long deliberations delay their preparations, the Baron's tactics and timing maintaining a careful balance against his spies' reports of Joan's actions. Unfortunately for the Baron, things go worse than expected when this strategy allows Joan's Crusade to batter through the half-prepared Z'bri defenses.

## OMENS AND PROPHECY

During this momentous time just before the Crusade, omens and visions occur with increasing frequency among the tribes and Fallen. Signs of both glory and disaster are witnessed, and nightmares about dying in the H'l Kar haunt many who have had dealings with the Z'bri in the past. Weavers can use the PCs' dreams and nightmares as a means to remind them of and/or emphasize the horrors they have seen and are about to see. Symbols can be used to draw out some of the deeper mysteries about the Prophecy. PCs might have a vision of a fiery heart beating in the Ziggurat, illuminating a likeness of the Baron, while a black and loathsome heart is watched over by Tera Sheba in the Sunken City.



## ACT ONE: PLAN OF ATTACK

*Would that my lost Ardatli were  
here to see the Prophecy unfold;  
I take heart that her people march  
upon H'I Kar under her banner.  
Know that Joshua is never far away  
and that you will show the ancient enemy  
that is heart has returned again.  
So ends the false peace.*

-Guide Jaky Maque to the Eternal Flame

## WEAVER'S SYNOPSIS

In this Act, the PCs can get involved in the process of preparing for the battle ahead. It is another ideal time to introduce new PCs into the story, should they have resisted being involved in the *Children's Crusade*, or if a dead Character needs to be replaced.

In this build-up to the Crusade, the PCs can get involved in the organization of one of the War Parties, perhaps even leading one. Each War Party has a symbol and a purpose, and PCs undecided as to what to do might be attracted to a group with complementary views about the Crusade's purpose. During this time, the PCs can meet and work with the leaders of the Crusade, plan strategies and discuss the problems of logistics and communication. PCs who have shown themselves to be capable fighters and leaders should be asked for their input and allowed to influence the way the assault will be conducted, and there are various options presented to give some freedom to the Weaver.

PCs can get also involved in this Act by being part of the scouting parties that are watching the Z'bri and spying out ways to get to the H'I Kar that do not involve the Spine Bridge. PCs who did not participate in the *Hook Tunnel Trouble* during the *Children's Crusade* could do it now to find a way to secure this way to H'I Kar. There is also another Hook, *The Ambassador's Gifts*, which can be played by PCs involved in the Crusade, but also by those who plan to stay away, like ardent Herites or others mistrustful of the Fatimas. In this Hook, a dark side of Tera Sheba is exposed, further setting up reasons for the final Quest, *Dark Heart*, to take place.

This time of preparation is not all mundane. For those already following a warrior or warlike outlook such as Joan, Joshua, Lilith or the Jackers, there is a new Aspect of Synthesis, Righteousness (p.XX), they can learn and call upon. There are also insights in the form of omens and signs to be pondered. Weavers may also wish to create short spiritual Quests for Cells to find or create weapons or aid in the upcoming fighting.

## HEART'S DESIRE

Joan's main drive is to recover Joshua's Heart, but She has not revealed the complete truth to anyone beyond Her Templars, and many participants therefore see this Crusade simply as a chance to seek revenge upon the Z'bri. Many of the Guides and various visionaries know the truth, and suspect more from the words of Joshua's Prophecy, but stay silent on the matter and also try to silence others who speak openly. They do not want word of Joan's goal to get to the Z'bri or the other Fatimas.

The Jackers hope to kill the Baron and begin the process of driving the Z'bri away permanently. The Agnites and those who were involved in the *Children's Crusade* are filled with a similar desire to avenge themselves and to try and save those Agnites taken by the Baron's retinue during the fall of Abonom. The Children of Lilith and the Joshuans are also filled with a desire for revenge, suffering strange visions of burning gems and crumbling towers because of their connection to the Joshua's remains.

## INVOLVING THE PLAYERS

*Plan of Attack* provides an excellent time to introduce new PCs midway through *Broken Pact*. Since so many from all the tribes and Fallen are flocking to Joan's banner for the Crusade, and because there is a wide variety of reasons to fight the Z'bri, it should be easy to incorporate new PCs at this point.

This momentous time is attracting others from the various tribes. Yagans, Dahlians, Evans and even some Shebans are risking being outcast by joining with the Crusaders. It is quite conceivable that new PCs may be doing the same. Although treated with a degree of suspicion and restricted from being involved in the discussions of strategy, they are a welcome sign that this Crusade could develop into a united attack by the entire Nation. These new arrivals receive a degree of respect for the risks they are taking and their willingness to join the ranks against the Z'bri.

During the days between *Children's Crusade* and the actual attack in *Final Trumpet*, the PCs will need to find themselves a place in a War Party. The next two sections detail the major NPCs and several War Parties including the Burning Blades, which is the default War Party for the PCs.

## CRUSADE LEADERS AND POLITICS

The PCs are likely to see and be involved with many senior people among the Crusaders in the days leading up to the actual attack. Some of them are detailed here, along with their political position and personal objectives. Weavers should feel free to add or take away as many people as best fits their Cycle. Some listed here are not War Party leaders, but are likely to be involved with the PCs during this Quest and the next, and the Weaver is encouraged to introduce them to PCs early on so that there is some personal attachment to make the NPCs' fates more important to the PCs.



## 2. Crusade of the Heart

The majority of the leadership of the Crusaders is made up of Joanites, and they fall under the command of **Templar Shera Uhan'on**, who directs them on behalf of Joan. Shera is the one who coordinates and sanctions the formation of the War Parties (see *War Parties* next page). Shera has a *Command Staff* of Templars and several advisers from the Joanites and other outlooks including the Guide **Jaky Maque**. Below Shera's command staff, the different Joanite factions, Templars, Winter Wolves, Rangers, White Guard and Cavalry – all have their own leaders and respective War Parties. Many War Parties are made up of mixed factions that have similar objectives. Besides the Joanites, the main faction leaders are the Children of Lilith (headed by **Kallisti the Fair**), the Jackers (led by **Mek**), the Agnites (led by **Puck**) and a small number of Joshuans led separately by **Rikhard** and **Gen of Mahgog**, of the Joshuan Vanguard.

Others the PCs may encounter, who are not going on the Crusade but who will be part of the feint and counterattack, are the Cavalry Captain **Loren Basyi** (*Word of the Pillars* p.27), and the Agnites led by **Captain Hespinn**.

**Joan** is an awe-inspiring presence who does not leave the Watchtower prior to the Crusade's start, except for ceremonial matters. Joan's appearance should be used sparingly, to make sure She never feels commonplace to the PCs. Access to Joan is controlled through the Templars during this time, and even the Old Guard must receive permission before being allowed to approach Her.

**Commander Shera Uhan'on** is the Crusade leader and is likely to be only seen from a distance by most of the Crusaders. Should the PCs have important news, be War Party leaders or do something very brave, they may get to meet her in person at more than just an inspection of arms. Shera is always protected by her honor guard and spends her nights discussing strategy with Joan and other commanders.

**Winter Wolf Captain Kaet Fera'on** is the spiritual leader of the Winter Wolves. While there are older and wiser ones among the Wolves, Kaet proved her devotion to Joan and the Winter Wolf during Joan's great quest into the spirit world (**Warrior Unbound**). She captains the *Winter Wolves War Party*, which is made up exclusively of Joanite Winter Wolves. She defers to her companion Jem on some matters of strategy, but she is the one chosen to lead their primary War Party with the guidance of the Winter Wolf.

**White Guard Captain Alnesh Kil'on** (*Word of the Pillars* p.70) of the White Guard is extremely pleased with the Crusade and has taken to it wholeheartedly. A bit annoyed that Shera, and not he, leads the Crusade, Alnesh has refused to be part of the *Command Staff* during the fighting and has assembled his own War Party, the *Heart and Shield*. Alnesh spends much of his time prior to the actual assault with Shera and her council, arguing over strategy and making her work for his respect.

**Ranger Captain Toshi Luther'on** has returned from the Outlands with some of her Ranger brethren to join the Crusade. She and her group of twenty or so arrive the day before the Crusaders set out. They refuse to risk their lives under the command of another, and so form their own War Party, the *Sun and Stars*.

Toshi was almost outcast eight years ago when she was forced into the Outlands, but now she expects respect and has the skill to back up any question about her honor or abilities. For details on the Rangers see *Into the Outlands* p.12.

**Kallisti the Fair** leads the Children of Lilith War Party, known as *Eternal Flame*. A longtime follower of Lilith, Kallisti was a very close friend and occasional lover of Ardatli Maque. Once an Evan hunter, Kallisti spurned the fate of an arranged marriage and fled before she could be killed or outcast. Kallisti's resurrection of the *Eternal Flame Cell* that was disbanded during the persecution in *Trial by Fire* has given the Children of Lilith renewed purpose. Kallisti relies heavily on Cerah (p.84) to get things organized among the Children, because she tends to focus on her dreams and visions to the exclusion of almost everything else.

**Mek the Warrior** (T8 Rulebook p.95, *Vimary*, p.104) captains one of the largest War Parties. Made up almost exclusively of Jackers, the Party is rather predictably called the *Jackers*. Joan and Shera's recognition of his experience and ability allows him to attend all the senior meetings and strategy sessions. Mek will allow any Jacker into his War Party, which plans to be the first group into the Ziggurat. **Georgy** (p.85) vets any who wish to apply and organizes their food and equipment. Having lived through the reign of Lilith and the events of *Trial by Fire*, Mek has become a prominent leader among the Jackers. He still carries the Lilithian Greataxe that Lilith gave him, and has accepted a gift of armor from the Templars for the upcoming quest. The Guide Halos keeps a low profile, but also plans to travel with the Jackers.

**Captain Puck, Agnite Favorite** is leading a War Party of Children known as *The Bears*, seasoned from the *Children's Crusade*. The Bears also includes some of the Wonder Monsters that survived. Puck's hidden desire is to show Tomoe that he is a man and win her over with his bravery. Publicly, he sees this as a chance to strike back at the Baron and rescue the children that were taken.

**Templar Garret Kil'on** (p.82) leads one of the most mixed-faction War Parties, the *Burning Blades*, which is the default group for the PCs, should their allegiances and outlooks not fit any of the others. Garret was once very much on the fringe of Joanite politics for his outspoken criticism of the Shebans and his push for a new Crusade. Now that the Crusade is here, his long-term relationship with Shera has assured him a leading role in the fight. Garret sees the strength that comes from uniting the Fallen and Joanites as Joan wishes, and Shera has been very glad that he has tried to form the broadest mix. In return, she plans to make sure that his War Party gets an early chance at glory, to show the entire Nation that, united, they can achieve much.

**Gen of Mahgog** leads a Cell of Joshuans made up of Ravagers and Vanguarders. (T8 Companion, p.8) They have traveled from the Outlands upon hearing of the Prophecy spoken by Joshua during *Fall of Abonom*. Gen is inspired by the Crusaders and can see them living out the Prophecy. Gen has no time for fools and sees might as the best way to resolve the problems at hand, but at least he has some caution in the face of insurmountable odds; this has kept his group alive despite the odds. Gen respects martial ability, loyalty and hatred of the Z'bri above all things. His War Party is small, but they choose to fight alone, rather than rely on others to watch their backs. The War Party is well noted for its use of heavy armor and its members' preference to remain anonymous by wearing helmets with veils and cloth masks.

## TRIBAL ALLIES

A number of others from the tribal factions are also among those preparing for the Crusade. Some are here to help and join the fighting, whereas others are here to spy or make a profit. They are also here to remind the PCs that the other members of the Nation are not all against the Crusade. The Weaver can introduce these NPCs into activities the PCs are involved in while they prepare for war.

**Dahlions:** In amid the new Dahlian arrivals are **Brehnsun** (p.81), whom the PCs may already have met on the *Children's Crusade*, and **Whimsy** (**Vimary** p.89), who has left the Bazaar seeing opportunity to rack up some new favors from the Crusaders. While Brehnsun claims he is here to act as a guide, Whimsy stays in the background and sets up business in the Joanite camp, where she organizes her contacts. It has been a little harder in the Bazaar since the Shebans took over, but operating near the Watchtower is nearly as dangerous, and Whimsy is trying to make sure that the old Joanite Commander Yasmin Luther'on (T8 Rulebook p.98, **Vimary** p.92) does not find out she is here. Brehnsun is likely to get involved with the PCs again if they are part of the reconnaissance party to the tunnel or involved with the Burning Blades, which he convinces Garret to let him join.

**Evans:** A few Evan hunters are tempted by the call to Crusade, but the Evans are very reluctant to join as a whole; any who leave know they can expect to be outcast. They end up being mixed in with the Agnite and Fallen War Parties.

**Magdalites:** **Kaba Jansey** (**Word of the Fates** p.23), a former Bloodied Rose, sponsors two Bloodied Roses to spy for and fight with the Crusaders. Both are suspect and neither are given any position of note by Shera. A few others come but remain with Agnes' defensive army.

**Shebans:** There is a handful of Shebans who join the Crusaders. They are mistrusted, and none end up in any positions of seniority. Most of them are Sheban Watchmen who have a strong hatred for the Z'bri, although Senior Advocate Mylynda Dog'on defies the Sheban hierarchy with her presence.

**Yagans:** Among the dozen or so Yagans that arrive to join the Crusade, there are two are quickly accepted for their expertise and dedication to the cause, **Daemonseeker Andruie Synkl'on** and **Flesh Seer Kraig Stant'on** (**Word of the Fates** pp.83; 84). In the few days before the Crusade sets off, they are often seen wandering through the assembling forces, checking for signs of Z'bri taint and possession. Their actions are often met with a mixture of distrust and anger. A number of Fleshers arrive late in the week, and set up their own camp, rarely interacting with anyone outside of their group.

## WAR PARTIES

The Crusaders number some hundred Agnites (including Wonder Monsters), about six hundred and fifty Joanites and two hundred Fallen (including some forty Children of Lilith), as well as a handful of others from the various tribes, making about a thousand who will take the fight to the Z'bri. Others who are not in this number will defend Vimary and make themselves ready in case the Crusaders need rescuing by boat. These support troops will work under Agnes to conduct the feint and help the Crusaders return from the H'I Kar.

Joan's main strategy is to conduct a quick strike before the Z'bri can get properly organized to defend themselves. War Party leaders gain the title of Captain; their seconds in command are known as Seconds, and are considered to speak with the authority of their Captains. Shera is known simply as the Commander of the Crusade. Horn Blowers, who will hold the War Party's colors and communicate during the fighting, are also considered privileged positions and are thus privy to the battle tactics. Around four hundred and fifty of the thousand Crusaders are divided into affiliated War Parties below; the other five hundred and fifty are left to the Weaver to name and detail if she so wishes.

Weavers should feel free to create their own War Parties and to replace NPCs with PCs in the leadership positions, if it is appropriate. Before making adjustments to the War Parties detailed here it is recommended that the rest of this Quest be read to ensure that the fates of various groups and individuals can be matched to the Weaver's personal plans. Weavers should use the percentage losses listed within each War Party as an extremely loose guide, and should feel free to alter them to fit their Cycles.

Many of the War Parties have taken to identifying themselves with a single warrior who has led an exemplary life and fallen valiantly or been martyred. These deceased are referred to as Saints, those who are considered blessed by the Mother-Goddess and/or the Fatimas (depending on who is telling the story) for their efforts during their lives. The Eternal Flame, made up of Children of Lilith, bear the banner of Ardatli Maque, who died fighting a Winter Wolf (**Children of Lilith** p.85). Shera's Command Staff have Templar Valerie Valkin Ben'on, who disappeared fighting the Z'bri (**Vimary** p.92;), as their inspiration. Kara the Hunter (**Vimary** p.103 and **Trial by Fire** p.74) is taken up by the Hammer and Sword War Party as their Saint.

## 2. Crusade of the Heart

Each War Party's numbers are finalized a day or so before they set out. Each War Party has designed a symbol and a color combination to assist in locating their group in the fight to come. The symbol is typically a simple weapon silhouette or animal head on a brightly-colored field. In open battle and when rallying or receiving orders, these flags will be carried on spears or waved to direct the relevant War Party. Each Captain and Second, along with their strategists and senior fighters, attend meetings with Joan where the Templars explain the flag and horn codes and some of Her plans. Most War Parties bear some antagonism toward at least one other War Party, even though they are all now fighting together. These inter-Party relations may cause trouble later on, depending on the ability of their commanders to overcome personal feelings in a time of crisis.

All War Parties must prepare and carry their own food and water into the H'l Kar. Since no animals can be easily led through the destructive forces that twist the H'l Kar, some of Agnes' constructs are being employed to carry extra supplies. Lanterns, flammable liquids and torches are required to be carried by all War Parties and in significant quantities. Poulitces and bandages are also in large supply, provided by some of the more sympathetic Magdalites.

The Burning Blades War Party has been detailed in this Quest specifically for the PCs to create or join; the PCs, however, can be incorporated into any of the listed War Parties or in ones of the Weaver's creation. The Burning Blades are likely to come across the remnants of other War Parties during the fighting; when their numbers diminish, they will likely be forced to band with other Parties to survive the fighting. To make these future encounters more meaningful, the Weaver is encouraged to introduce and involve PCs with the other War Parties before they leave for the H'l Kar.

### COMMAND STAFF:



Made up of the Templar elite and a few of the Crusade-favoring White Guard, the Command Staff will accept no others into their ranks. Some of their number remain to guard the Watchtower and keep Lilith's remains and other Joanite treasures safe. Shera includes among her staff the old Joanite Jaky Maque, who is now a Guide. This gives the Eternal Flame a strong tie with the Joanites, even though the Joanites (the Winter Wolves faction, specifically) were responsible for Jaky's niece Ardatli's death.

### LEADER:

Templar Commander Shera Uhan'on

### SECOND:

Templar Jewlya Ben'on

### SAINT/SYMBOL:

Templar Valerie Valkin Ben'on / Joan's symbol superimposed on a red heart

### OBJECTIVE:

To direct the other War Parties in battle with the Z'bri, and to find and return with the Heart of Joshua.

### SIZE:

fifty-five members

### OUTCOME:

25% killed/lost.



**HEART AND SHIELD:**

The White Guard elders form the Heart and Shield. While their leader, Alnesh, firmly believes that it should be he who leads the Crusaders, they are loyal to Shera, Joan's choice. Alnesh has brought his daughter Maryss in as his second, and she dislikes Shera for the favoritism Joan has shown her. Maryss has sought to befriend the Winter Wolves, and the two War Parties plan to support one another in the fighting.

**LEADER:**

White Guard Captain Alnesh Kil'on

**SECOND:**

Maryss Kil'on

**SAINT/SYMBOL:**

Ra'Ham the Z'bri Slayer / White heart on black shield

**OBJECTIVE:**

Work with Joan to get the Heart back and kill as many Z'bri Lords as possible.

**SIZE:**

forty members

**OUTCOME:**

35% killed/lost.

**WINTER WOLVES:**

The Winter Wolves are fearsome fighters who consider themselves purists and care little for the fate of the Fallen. They steer clear of the other, mixed War Parties. Their Second, Jules, slew Ardatli Maque during a pitched battle, and the Winter Wolves find that the Eternal Flame have not forgotten the murder of their Saint. The Wolves claim that they were performing their duty, but some small fights break out before the Crusade starts. Shera keeps the two groups well apart. The Winter Wolves respect the Heart and Shield's purity and agree to support them during the Crusade.

**LEADER:**

Captain Kaet Fera'on

**SECOND:**

Jules Morth'on

**SPIRIT/SYMBOL:**

Winter Wolf Spirit / Blue wolf's head on white shield with red border

**OBJECTIVE:**

Destroy the Z'bri and protect the Command Staff.

**SIZE:**

forty-five members

**OUTCOME:**

60% killed/lost.

## 2. Crusade of the Heart

### SUN AND STARS:



This exclusive group of Rangers arrives shortly before the Crusade begins. A hardened group in rough furs and armed with well-worn weapons, they are very clannish in the presence of so many people, refusing to talk much and mistrusting everyone's motives. They take as their sigil the symbol of their lives, the sun and stars, finding the idea of Saints to be rather strange. They also dislike the Templars and White Guard War Parties, both for their elitism and their apparent disregard for the Rangers' abilities. The only ones the Rangers begin to bond with are the Jackers, who show themselves to be hardened warriors like themselves; also, several Rangers know Mek from 'the old days.'

#### LEADER:

Ranger Captain Toshi Luther'on

#### SECOND:

Ranger Levius Heka'on

#### SYMBOL:

White stars surrounding a yellow sun, on a black shield

#### OBJECTIVE:

Destroy Z'bri and show they are worthy of the highest accolades.

#### SIZE:

thirty-five members

#### OUTCOME:

40% killed/lost.

### HAMMER AND SWORD:



The Joanites who defected to join the Jackers to carry on the Crusade after Lilith was destroyed have returned to Joan after **Warrior Unbound**. They have drawn into their War Party a large number of Fallen with whom they have become friends over the last few years. They also ardently despise the Shebans; they permit no ex-Shebans among their ranks and are suspicious of those with Sheban friends. Many are very skilled at fighting, and form teams of three to support one another in battle. Many of them have the new Aspect of Righteousness (p.71). They are closely allied with the Jackers and the Eternal Flame.

#### LEADER:

Danis Morth'on

#### SECOND:

Lara "Blade" Jacobi'on

#### SAINT/SYMBOL:

Kara the Hunter / Sword and hammer crossed with Joan, Joshua and Lilith's symbols.

#### OBJECTIVE:

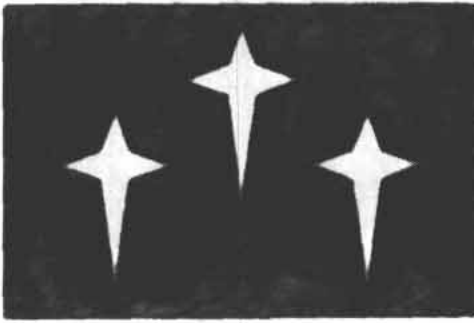
Destroy Z'bri, preferably the Baron.

#### SIZE:

fifty members

#### OUTCOME:

80% killed/lost. Almost destroyed in a Z'bri ambush in the Ziggurat; surviving members join other War Parties.

**ETERNAL FLAME:**

Formed after Lilith's demise and now resurrected after Ardatli's death, the Eternal Flame are led by Kallisti the Fair. They consider Ardatli to be the first true follower of Lilith and a martyr worthy of respect. Since Ardatli was slain by the Winter Wolves, there is an enmity between the two groups that occasionally breaks out into fighting. The arrival of Ardatli's aunt, Jaky Maque, has given them a friend and ally among Shera's Command Staff. The Eternal Flame are allied with the Hammer and Sword and, like them, exhibit the Aspect of Righteousness.

**LEADER:**

Kallisti the Fair

**SECOND:**

Cerah

**SAINT/SYMBOL:**

Ardatli Maque / Three white four-pointed stars on a black background.

**OBJECTIVE:**

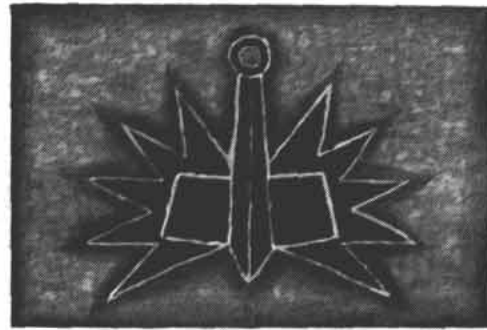
Destroy Z'bri, preferably the Baron.

**SIZE:**

thirty members

**OUTCOME:**

80% killed/lost. Kallisti and all but a dozen of her troops are killed by a Melanis/Sangis trap in one of the Sangis palace complexes. The remains of the Eternal Flame, now led by Cerah, join the Burning Blades.

**JACKERS:**

The Jackers are a large band led by Mek, who has proven over the last few years that he has taken their cause to heart. Mek spends much of his time wandering the places where the Crusaders are assembling, trying to make allies and seek out those who might prove worthy of joining the Jackers. He soon falls in with Garret and Markus of the Burning Blades, and both War Parties begin to train and socialize together. The other allies that Mek finds are among the Sun and Stars War Party, where Mek has some old friends, and the Eternal Flame. The Jackers almost all exhibit the Aspect of Righteousness.

**LEADER:**

Mek the Warrior

**SECOND:**

Georgy

**SYMBOL:**

Jacker Symbol

**OBJECTIVE:**

Kill as many Z'bri as possible, preferably the Baron and his Lords, and do as much damage as possible to the H'I Kar.

**SIZE:**

sixty-five members

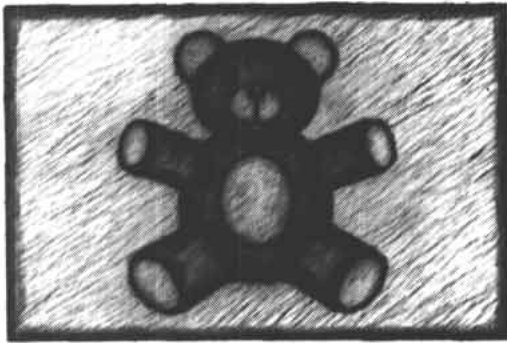
**OUTCOME:**

50% killed/lost. Assist in saving the Burning Blades and the Eternal Flame from an ambush during the assault on the Sangis palaces.



## 2. Crusade of the Heart

## THE BEARS:



The main Agnite War Party, The Bears are led by Puck and are made up of those Agnites not close to any of Puck's rivals in the tribe. Puck's rivals have joined primarily Joanite or Fallen War Parties. The Bears seem to be liked by all the War Parties that are made up of those they have had previous dealings with, and Shera plans to protect them until they get into the Ziggurat in order to give them a chance at achieving their objective of rescuing the lost children. Puck has chosen an older girl, Red Hood, to help him control The Bears; many of his own war council also have names taken from childhood tales.

## LEADER:

Captain Puck

## SECOND:

Red Hood

## SYMBOL:

A stuffed bear

## OBJECTIVE:

Rescue the children the Baron took.

## SIZE:

seventy members (including Wonder Monsters)

## OUTCOME:

30% killed/lost. Protected by other War Parties until get into Ziggurat. Find some of the Children taken during the Children's Crusade and rescue them, with the help of other War Parties.

## BURNING BLADES:



This War Party is designed as the default party for the PCs. By no means *must* the PCs join this group, although the Weaver will have to do more work if they join a different Party, as the possible activities of the Burning Blades are given more attention than the others in the following quest. The Burning Blades are a very mixed group, and quite large as well. They have allies among the Jackers, Eternal Flame and Hammer and Sword. Garret controls them more through charisma than with threats of expulsion or punishment. Shera is trying to push the Burning Blades into some early successes to show that Tribals and Fallen can achieve greatness working together.

**Garret** (p.82) is a worthy leader who bears the marks of his suffering for the Nation on his body. He is a good friend to Markus, and they seem inseparable during the week before the fighting.

**Markus** (p.83) does not speak of his dark secret, his knowledge that he will die on this Crusade. He accepts his fate, and knows that he will not be alone. In the meantime, Markus is living it up, making no enemies and forgiving any who slight him. As he says, life is too short for such pettiness when such a great evil threatens the Nation.

The Dahlian, **Brehnsun** (p.81), may already be well known to the PCs, but now he will attempt to become the PCs' friend, providing entertainment and tricks for their amusement here and during the Crusade. His motives will always be a mystery to the PCs, and his claim that he is on the Crusade to take a closer look at "old H'l Kar" is just one of his many oddities. Brehnsun is a capable fighter and should be able to help get the PCs out of tight places during the fighting, as well as helping the whole War Party move quickly when they need to. In effect, he is Dahlia's little bit of help to the Crusaders.

There is a group of three Joshuans working under one named **Rikhard** (p.86) who have come to fight the ancient enemy of their dead Fatima. They see joining Gen of Mahgog as a risky proposition and so they choose to Crusade with a larger band, seeing the united effort as a good tactical and symbolic choice. **Rikhard**, **Eloise** and **Fleur** are grateful to Garret for allowing them to join his group, and they are skilled at Outlands survival. They are already looking ahead at the next parts of the Prophecy, and might be persuaded to disclose that they believe a place called Capal to be the second city of Prophecy.

**Daemonseeker Andruë Synkl'on and Fleshseer Kraig Stant'on** (*Word of the Fates* pp.83; 84) are a strange couple. These two Yagans are likely to be able to help the PCs in the fight to come; they know the Z'bri taint and Atmosphere well, and can cure the infected. They can also be used to play up the horror of the Z'bri by relating creepy and disgusting, or useful and obscure, information about the Z'bri and how best to kill them. Neither of these two is likely to be tricked or take ridicule from PCs lightly. They and Brehnsun have an unspoken understanding to avoid each other.

#### LEADER:

Garret Kil'on

#### SECOND:

Markus Jacobi'on

#### SAINT/SYMBOL:

Silver sword, hilt down, surrounded by fire on a black shield.

#### OBJECTIVE:

Scouting, strategic attacks.

#### SIZE:

Around sixty members

#### OUTCOME:

Markus dies using Sacrifice to save a PC or Garret. Other outcomes are dependent on the PCs' actions, although the Party may well lose more than half its number during the Crusade. The Party is reinforced by survivors from other War Parties that suffer worse losses; these include members from the Eternal Flame and the Hammer and Sword.

### CRUSADE PLANNING

Joan wishes to see if She can surprise the Z'bri rather than make a full frontal attack on the well-defended Spine Bridge. The Command Staff consider strategies, and PCs who are Captains or Seconds can be involved in this process. Before proceeding with any plans, Joan wants scouting parties to take a few days to check out alternative routes. Joan wants to resist disturbing the Dream too much, to avoid alerting the Z'bri of Her forces' approach, so mundane methods of travel into the H'I Kar are given first consideration.

### 2. Crusade of the Heart

Some possible options are detailed here. The scouts' objective is to find a route which can bring the army near the eastern side of the Sangis palaces and Spine Bridge. Almost a thousand troops on foot will have to be able to cross under the cover of darkness in one night. If the PCs are in a position to liaise with the Command Staff to suggest alternatives and options, they should be encouraged to use it.

**Flotilla** One way across the river is by using a large flotilla of boats that can quickly ferry the Crusaders to the H'I Kar shore. This flotilla option is almost certain to be seen, and it is not a favored choice among the senior Joanites. Perhaps if a large distraction like a feint were conducted somewhere to draw the Z'bri away from the landing area before the flotilla set out, the crossing might be safer. Gen suggests sending a large contingent of the Crusaders through Westholm and then back toward H'I Kar to draw the Koleris away. This is likely to dangerously overextend supply lines and will reduce the number of Crusaders able to participate in the attack. A flank from the Westholm Bridge will need to quickly investigated, since there is not much time until Joan wishes to attack, and Dahlia will need to be sought out and bargained with in order to get troops moved quickly enough.

If a flotilla is the chosen plan, places for the boats to depart and land with regard to the currents and Z'bri watchtowers will need to all be planned and possibly explored by groups before the raid. To make this plan more viable, elements of the Crusader army could sneak across in smaller strike teams to dispatch known Z'bri watchtowers. The Flemis have schools of fish in the river that will alert the Hive to any intruders, but the Z'bri in the Hive will hold the information back from the Baron for a few hours; they are keen to see the chaos that will take place, and the resulting carnage will only make them stronger.

**The Tunnel** is the best option, and if the PCs were involved in the *Hook Tunnel Trouble*, they can easily lead a scouting party to secure the entrance. If the Hook was not played during *Children's Crusade*, it can be played out now. The Burning Blades are sent to secretly scout out the tunnel a few days before the assault, and the Hammer and Sword will secure the Vimary end. Jewlya Ben'on, Second to Commander Shera, will accompany the Burning Blades to make a detailed report to the Command Staff. This should form a dangerous but ultimately rewarding reconnaissance during which the rest of the Rakh Hive Flemis are cleaned out and the entrance on the H'I Kar side of the tunnel is discovered and quietly secured for the Crusaders.

## 2. Crusade of the Heart

### DEFENSE PLANNING

Those that remain behind have to prepare the defenses and set up a fake attack (see *Preparing the Feint*) to ensure that the Crusaders meet as little initial resistance as possible. Although this Quest is designed around the PCs acting as Crusaders, listed below are some hints for challenging PCs who remain behind.

Agnes is left to coordinate the defense while Joan is gone. She has several older Joanites to assist Her, as well as the young Guide Tomoe. PCs who helped out in the *Children's Crusade* will be welcomed to help plan the defense. Other possibilities are described below.

**Hunter Help:** Jaky or a Jacker may suggest that the PCs search out a Hunter in the hopes of gaining a powerful ally (see *Horrors of the Z'bri*, p.109). Such an ally should be kept strange and distant; the Hunters act only on their own terms, and only when they deem it is appropriate. Their power is particularly devastating and PCs may decide to search out the mysteries behind the Hunters' quests.

**Other Allies:** Requests will be sent to Fatimas and other potential allies. PCs with previous ties to Squats could help to gain their trust or promise of aid. Fallen PCs might be sent to Horn and Haven to try and convince more of the stragglers to come or at least get the Fallen to prepare their defenses. Such allies will be asked to help in defense and along the supply lines, and will be allowed to fight with the main force if they are committed enough. Keepers could also be sought out, or may come to the PCs and request help with their own problems fighting off the Z'bri.

**River of Dream:** PCs with a spiritual focus can be sent on a quest to find lost relics from the Liberation. There are also some potent rituals kept by the Yagans and Shebans that could help defend against Z'bri Sundering. If information about these could be obtained, or powerful Shebans or Yagans convinced to help, the rituals could be conducted either during the feint or in the later attack on the Spine Bridge. Another option is to seek out spirits of those that have died and convince them to assist in the defense of Vimary.

### ELSEWHERE ON VIMARY

The Herites stay firmly entrenched on Fallen land, sending extra people to guard the southern bank bridges. They are still wary of the Fatimas; Lilith's lesson has not been forgotten. The Lightbringers send some of their more skilled fighters to aid the Crusade, but most of the outlook stay on their islands to defend against the expected Z'bri attacks.

Shebans are, for the most part, desperately trying to keep watch on the Crusaders and the High Judges are seriously considering giving as much information as they dare to the Baron to try and

save the last vestiges of the Pact of the Dome. To this end, they invite the Z'bri to negotiate. This is covered under the Hook *The Ambassador's Gift*.

### PREPARING THE FEINT

Agnes has promised to defend the Joanite lines and the Nation's land when Joan is gone. She will be playing a decisive part in making sure this feint does not get out of hand. She spends Her time building some large and very dangerous looking Wonder Monsters; Her tribe rushes back and from the Rust Wastes and the Bazaar looking for metal scrap to add to Agnes' efforts.

The captive Keeper Jon Abrams convinces Agnes he can help by obtaining some materials from the Rust Wastes, and so She decides to let him go there under the watchful eye of some Agnites (or possibly the PCs). This could become a small Quest for less combative PCs or those with interest in the Keepers.

Agnes plans to lead the feint on the Spine Bridge, and then retreat and ambush the Z'bri if they pursue too far. This attack will occur earlier on the same morning that the Crusaders make the real attack. This should, in theory, draw Z'bri away from other parts of the H'l Kar and do some damage to the Baron's armies. Pit traps, flammable defensive zones and the like will be prepared. Help is needed for these efforts, and the PCs can be involved in deciding where such traps should go and getting the supplies for the building efforts.

Hespirin has a plan to force the Evans to help the Crusades by drawing some of the Z'bri into the sacred Hunting Grounds. She may want the PCs to help prepare the Evans for the attack so that they are ready to defend the Hunting Grounds properly.

### HEADING OUT

When the plan of attack has been decided, some seven days after the *Children's Crusade*, the Crusaders form up and head out as dusk falls. Most War Parties conduct a ceremony to receive blessing from Joan and to bond them to each other for the Crusade. Armbands, headpieces and pennants are given out, and must be carried by each member of the Crusade. Explanations about the need for discipline are personally reinforced by Joan as She inspects the Crusaders out of sight of the H'l Kar. Each War Party receives two horns to communicate with others during the battle; bearing these horns is a sacred duty. The pairs of horns each sound a different note than those given other Parties, so that they can be told apart easily, and they impart a protective aura of Dream around their bearers (AR +5).

### TIPS AND RESOURCES

There are a huge number of people and War Parties for PCs to learn about quickly. Weavers are recommended to draw up a listing of the War Parties along with their Captains, War Party



colors and symbols to help PCs keep track of who is who. If the PCs are involved as Captains, Seconds or advisors, making up maps of Vimary and H'l Kar for strategy sessions should be of assistance.

In *Plan of Attack*, it is very important to give depth to the NPCs who interact with the PC group; they are the people the PCs are going to fight alongside, and the ones the PCs will see triumph or fall. The sense of loss or shared victory will be enhanced if the PCs know and perhaps have relationships with some of the NPCs detailed in this Act.

### NEW ASPECT: RIGHTEOUSNESS

A new Aspect of Synthesis begins to manifest among the more fervent and dedicated Crusaders. This new Aspect appears among those who are the most passionate about the upcoming battle among the Joshuans, Joanites, Jackers and Children of Lilith (see *Weaver's Resources*, p.71).

### HOOK: THE AMBASSADOR'S GIFT

The Tera Sheban Judges (via the current Withered Rose Ambassador to the Ziggurat) send word to the Baron that they want to try and rebuild the Pact. The Baron, seeing little need for subtlety under the current situation, responds by sending Flemis Ambassador Ult'maht (*T8 Rulebook*, p.72) to hear what they have to say. The Magdalites arrange for the Ambassador to

be brought by boat from the H'l Kar down to Xstasis, and from there they go on in carriages to the Sunken City.

The settlement the Baron requests is in terms of people, namely Agnites and Fallen, whom he says are really to blame for this damage, anyway. He says he understands and will forgive Joan's actions in Abonom if this recompense is paid. Tera Sheba agrees, and gives the Flemis ambassador a goodly number of the prisoners that are currently in the Sheban cells awaiting trial. Although this is done at night and in relative secrecy, the rumble of carts carrying off prisoners, along with the questions of anxious relatives, quickly creates rumors around Vimary, which the PCs can easily intercept.

### SCENES

Joanite guards suspect the Flemis Ambassador's arrival when the Magdalite boat comes across from the H'l Kar. It could well be the PCs who are on watch and witness the colorful barge being slowly paddled at night down the river to Xstasis. The boat could then be followed, allowing the PCs to see the bloated body of the Ambassador. They can keep tabs on his movement until they finally see the prisoners being taken from the cells and sent back with the Ambassador in the early predawn hours. A Yagan Mordred is seen approaching the barge just before it departs, engaging in a brief and subdued discussion with the Flemis behemoth.



## 2. Crusade of the Heart

Another option is to have a Doomsayer PC or NPC have a vision and bring it to the attention of the PCs. The PCs can then attempt to stage a rescue. PCs may want to seek help from the Herites when they see the number of Sheban guards they will have to contend with. This could be tricky because they have probably been associating with the Joanites and will thus be looked upon with great suspicion by the Herites who have remained behind. Kyrt the Free (*Children of Lilith* p.89) is a likely one to assist them, putting the life of Fallen and his hatred for the Shebans above his distrust of the Crusaders.

## CLIMAX

The pacing of the events will be dependent on the PCs' actions, but the easiest time for a rescue is when the prisoners are being escorted into the wagons. Then the race will be on to stop the Sheban wagons, and the Sheban and Magdalite guards. Of course, they shouldn't be allowed to forget the ambassador and his powerful Sundering.

## AFTERMATH

The PCs and other rescuers will be forced to flee back to Hom another safehouse. The Shebans will attempt to pursue, but will only try to verbally persuade the Joanites into releasing the prisoners, which the Joanites will probably refuse to do. PCs who manage to keep the prisoners safe will be considered heroes by the prisoners and gain some measure of respect from the Herites. Not all Fallen are unjustly accused, however, and some of those freed are in fact dangerous and immoral killers. The PCs may have to reconsider their actions when murders or other atrocities occur that can be linked back to those they saved. When the Crusaders return from the upcoming *Crusade of the Heart*, the real story will have gotten loose, and will make it to Joan's ears.

## ACT TWO: LAIR OF THE BEAST

*Crusaders!*

*Tomorrow we strike at the heart  
of our ancient enemy.*

*Tomorrow we will take sword and flame  
and follow our Lady Joan.*

*It is time to revenge the wrongs  
that have been our burden since birth.*

*To arms, my friends! May your blades be true.*

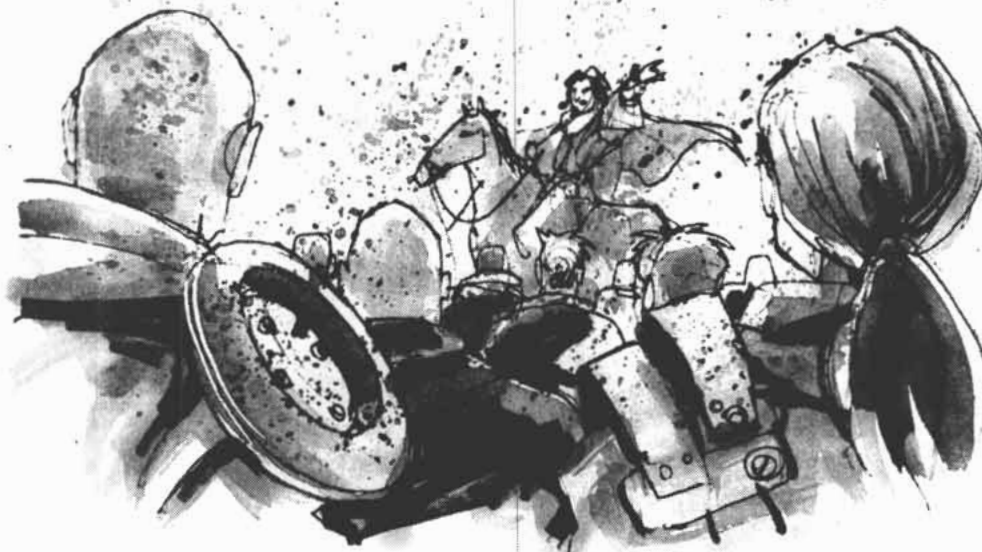
- Templar Commander Shera Uhan'on

## WEAVER'S SYNOPSIS

*Lair of the Beast* covers the Crusaders' attack on the Sangis palaces and the Ziggurat itself. In detailing the events that transpire, a focus has been given to the Burning Blades (p.10), who are backed up, albeit somewhat reluctantly, by the Winter Wolves. This Act is laid out to focus on the events that the Burning Blades are directly involved in, as well as other possible events they may see. This Act starts in the early evening of one day and ends near dusk on the next.

## REMOVING THE WATCHER

The first decisive action, taking place in the evening before the day the Crusaders plan to strike, is to send off the advance party that will attempt to sneak into the suspected Sangis watchtower that lies on the extreme outskirts of the H'I Kar. Commander Shera wants to send a War Party made up of Joanites and Fallen to show their unity in this first success. She anticipates that this combined effort will reduce the grumbling within the ranks about 'Joanite glory-hogs.' To this end, she selects the PCs' party if they are sufficiently mixed, or the Burning Blades specifically.



The target building is an outlying palace on the northeast of the H'I Kar, sitting on the edge of a large patchwork of organ fields and blood organ vineyards. This raid is conducted by night and the main order is that no word must get out to the Z'bri in the other palaces or the Ziggurat. If the PCs are coming by boat, they will have to disembark and move stealthily through extensive undergrowth teeming with dangerous Z'bri plants and creatures before they can strike at the palace. If PCs are coming from the tunnel, they will have less distance to go, but will need to negotiate through some outlying and rather pitiful Z'bri Serf farms owned by the Sangis estate they are attacking.

Commander Shera will come with them through the tunnel with a bodyguard to give them their last orders and field any questions. She also has with her some Templars from the Command Staff to help and report back on the success, as well as the Winter Wolves, who will assist in making sure none escape the attack. Shera's advice is to surround the structure, kill any Serfs they find, and then sneak in and kill off all inside. To prevent alerting the Sangis in other palaces, neither fire nor horns will be used; the cries of the dying will not sound unusual as long as no alarms are sounded. In running this stage, it is suggested that the Weaver create tension by playing up the difficulty of sneaking into the palace unnoticed and the mystery of what the PCs will have to deal with.

The palace, with its extra tall tower, is indeed a watch post for the Baron, but its Sangis Lord, Tyt'n, is so bored and decadent that he trusts his Z'bri Serfs to staff the watchtower. He also knows the Koleris are actively guarding the Spine Bridge, so he really does not think there is anything to be concerned about. On the evening when the PCs assault the palace, he and his Iv'chet are involved in a grape-organ pressing and tasting session in the main domes of the palace. Tyt'n grows a half-plant-half-flesh runner vine plant called *Merst*. *Merst* looks much like a leafless grapevine, but has veins and arteries to feed the deep red organfruit that Tyt'n presses and drinks. The final mixture is a strong drug mixture (*Merst*: Onset 6 rounds, Potency 9 per mouthful, Combination Euphoric/Hallucinogen). The lord and his knights are drinking while copulating with some flesh-crafted slaves; ironically, these were sent by the Baron to Tyt'n to encourage his diligence.

For details on the makeup of *Sangis Palaces* see p.75. Consider this compound to have some ten *Sangis Iv'chet* (p.95) in different states of *Merst* intoxication, and some sixty Serf slaves (of which twenty are *Sangis Guard Serfs*, p.95), all heavily flesh crafted for beauty or function. There is also one *Sangis Mount*, stabled in an aerie.

This assault should be fairly easy, and to maintain the rest of the battle plan as it is laid out here, it should be successful. The real test here is for some of the Burning Blades to scale the walls, let the rest in, and then kill all the Z'bri and the mostly defenseless Serfs. Many of the Z'bri are equally matched to the Tribals, and the Sangis Atmosphere (T8 Rulebook p.183) hangs heavy in the air; the PCs are likely to be here all night. This night is also an important night for omens and signs (for more advice see *Themes and Atmosphere* p.10). Those outside will witness a shower of brilliantly red falling stars and the moon will appear to be a strange blue in color.

Once the Sangis have been slaughtered, word is sent back to bring the Crusaders through to this position to be prepared for the next day's attack. Bodies will have to be dragged away and disposed of, probably in the nearby vineyards. The true horror of the Z'bri will be everywhere for the Crusaders to see, and PCs and others will find it hard to sleep much after the atrocities they have witnessed.

Commander Shera will set up as many troops as possible within the walls of the Sangis palace. She will personally thank the Burning Blades for their efforts if all went well. When false dawn comes, it provides an excellent opportunity to see the terrain that extends onwards to the Ziggurat. Shera will go over the attack strategy again with the Captains. If asked, she will tell them Joan waits with the others where they have come across (by boat or tunnel) and will lead them to join up in the morning, when stealth is no longer an issue.

## PALACE ASSAULT BATTLE PLAN

The plan is to wait until the Agnites' feint against the Spine Bridge occurs. Once the Z'bri are drawn out and their numbers assessed, the Command Staff's horn will sound to attack the Sangis palaces, which stand a few hundred yards away.

Commander Shera's plan is as follows. The Crusaders will divide up into three loose columns that will divide and press along three diverging routes through the Sangis palaces to the Ziggurat. Joan will lead the center group, which will be made up of a string of Joanite units, including the Command Staff and the Heart and Shield. The two other prongs of the attack will be led by a few seasoned mixed War Parties with the Hammer and Sword on the left, and the Jackers and Burning Blades on the right. All these prongs have the rest of the War Parties following them.

The idea is that the lead parties will work their way quickly toward the Ziggurat, and while they engage the first waves of the Z'bri, the forces behind will prevent rearguard Z'bri forces doing any real damage to the prongs. The Joanite groups in the center thrust will respond quickly to assist either of the prongs, which might be facing tough opposition as they go along. The two outside prongs will flank the Ziggurat once they arrive, attacking the vast structure from all sides.

With Joan at the lead, there is little chance of the attack being stopped before they arrive at the Ziggurat, but She will also be moving throughout the battlefield in order to assist where She can. Joanite runners will keep the Captains informed of progress and any changes to the plan. The objective of the right-hand prong is a large door that is known to exist in the outer skin of the Ziggurat. As soon as a War Party gets there, they should open it and keep it open to allow the rest of the Crusaders in.

## THE FEINT

Since it is not expected that the PCs will be involved in the Feint, here is a brief summary of its outcome and suggestions on how to involve the PCs if they do end up with Agnes.



## 2. Crusade of the Heart

The plan is to attack the Z'bri in the terrain south of the great Spine Bridge. Just before dawn, Agnes and about three hundred and fifty troops make their way from the Seven Pillars up along the river and into the Z'bri lands, where they swiftly destroy all they encounter. Agnes has brought several very large Wonder Monsters, which head quickly for the minor Z'bri bridge that reaches over to the land leading to the Duskfall, and continue their attacks there. This is all done in a matter of half an hour; nearby, about fifty Koleris gather and strain against their impulses to race forth and kill.

Agnes grows concerned that the Koleris will not be drawn away, and sends several Wonder Monsters to attack them at the bridge. Horde Warrior Sk'ksul (**Vimary** p.120) is in command of the Spine Bridge defense with the Baron's blessing, much to the ire of Prince K'ark'oom. Unable to hold his infuriated Horde back when the Wonder Monsters attack, Sk'ksul gives the order to unleash the Horde. Agnes leads a swift retreat into the Duskfall when this occurs. The Koleris pursue and manage to cut down many of the Crusaders before the ambushes are sprung within the Duskfall forest. It is about this time that the *Final Trumpet* begins.

Hiding in the Duskfall, along the several routes Agnes' army uses to flee the Z'bri, are large Wonder Monsters, pit traps, other Wonder-Synthesis-activated defenses, catapults and a good number of well-armed Joanite and Fallen warriors. They manage to stage a powerful counterattack against the Koleris, killing many and forcing the rest to withdraw at Sk'ksul's summons. The Z'bri then hurry back to protect the bridge, where they remain until Joan and the Crusaders fight their way back to Vimary in *Fleeing the Horror*.

PC efforts to get the likes of the Keepers or Z'bri Hunters to help should be incorporated into this battle. Any daring plans to ambush and destroy the Z'bri should be played through. A twist to this feint and ambush may be the presence of inquisitive Tribals who want to know what is going on. PCs could be caught up in a race to stop reports of their activities getting back to Tera Sheba, in case their efforts are halted while Joan is away fighting. There is also the possibility that the Herites or elements of the Doomsayers see this attack as either too risky or upsetting fate, and thus seek to sabotage the ambush or even alert the Z'bri, giving them the chance to try and take out Agnes.

### FINAL TRUMPET

The attack on the H'I Kar occurs as dawn breaks, following the attack on the Sangis watchtower. The PCs and the Crusaders cannot approach the H'I Kar from the northwest, where the Koleris Slaughterfields are, nor can they come from the north because of the presence of the Skkr Flemis Hives. The way from the south, close to the Spine Bridge, is too close to the feint to use properly. The default plan is to race into the outskirts of the Sangis lands, then to fight to the Ziggurat with aid from Joan's powerful Synthesis. Once the attack objectives are complete, the Crusaders will retreat across the Spine Bridge; the Vimary-based forces will launch an assault at the same time so that the Z'bri will have to fight on two fronts. The idea is to smash through the Z'bri lands from the north and join the defending fighters coming up from the southern bank.

Shortly after dawn, under a gloomy overcast sky, a horn is sounded, signaling the attack. With a cry, the Crusaders race out of the Sangis estate and from other places of concealment. Large banners are unfurled to indicate the leading War Parties for the three prongs. Joan flies over the group and strikes down the doors to the outer walls of the estate in front of the middle prong led by the Command Staff. Weavers are encouraged to draw up maps for tactically orientated Players to allow them to coordinate their attacks and perhaps direct the efforts of other War Parties in their prong.

The first hour of fighting is a period of high emotion, mixing valor and fear as the Crusaders assault the Sangis palaces surrounding the Ziggurat. During this time, the Z'bri and Serf opposition is erratic, as some flee, some attack and some just look on. Some Sangis nobles can be seen in their tall tower balconies, watching on apparently unconcerned as their Iv'chet fight, sipping nectar and listening to the cries of the wounded. The decadence of these Lords, combined with the drugs they are taking, leaves them detached from reality and unable to act. Other lords take to the air on flying Sangis Mounts to flee the assault, and Joan leaves the earthly fray to cut them out of the air before they can seek safety in the Ziggurat.

### EVENTS OUTSIDE

Apart from laying waste to Sangis palaces and the eliminating the variety of Z'bri guards that stay to fight, the PCs can be caught up in some dramatic events on their way to the Ziggurat. Suggested here are events that the Burning Blades can be involved in and other optional events to be used for the PCs or as background color for NPCs to relate to the PCs at a later time. Weavers should also tailor their own events based around the PCs' Outlooks and character subplots, to make this fighting as dramatic as possible. Weavers also might wish to create events that reflect their own views on the real darkness of the Z'bri natures.

**Rescuing the Eternal Flame:** The Lilithian War Party is caught in a pincer by unexpectedly stiff opposition. They blow their signal horns for assistance. The PCs' War Party (as well as others from other directions) can try and extricate them from the Sangis and Melanis party (use Melanis Iv'chet Qh'far Monks and Sangis Battle Serfs, led by a Sangis Iv'chet). The Eternal Flame has been decimated by this attack, and their leader Kallisti slain. Cerah now leads the dozen or so remaining members, and they join Garret's War Party, the Burning Blades.

**Temptation of Decadence:** In one palace the PCs raid, all the Z'bri are away at the Ziggurat for the battle discussion. The Sangis Serfs are at play while their masters are away, and a huge orgy is in progress. When the PCs break in, most of the Serfs have succumbed to the Atmosphere of their masters, and the PCs will have to be lucky or very careful to avoid being affected by the intense Sangis Atmosphere and joining the orgy (WIL vs. Threshold 6, minus possible modifiers for Fatimal presence or gifts). The PCs may also encounter part of another War Party — preferably people they know — who have already joined in the orgy.

**Sewer Beast:** The Burning Blades hear distorted cries nearby. If they investigate, they see a huge Z'bri beast decimating another War Party. The creature is a huge semi-aquatic Chained serpent beast that has risen up from an open sewer. Weavers should arrange for the monster to be just slightly more powerful than the PCs' group, so that they are unlikely to be able to do more than drive it off long enough to rescue the few remaining survivors from the attacked War Party.

**Joan's Rage:** At some point, the PCs' War Party should be assaulted on all sides by a mixture of Sangis and Flemis Z'bri, as well as Gek'roh and Z'bri monstrosities. The enemy numbers should be considerable enough to cause the War Party significant losses. This should be a hard reminder to the PCs that they could be the next ones under the talons and claws of the Z'bri. When they begin to rally against the beasts, Joan lands near to them to aid in another battle. Her presence fills them with rage and fury, healing Deep Wounds up to Flesh Wounds and causing Flesh Wounds to heal completely.

Ziggurat doors. Orders are also given for the horns to be blown to signal when the Ziggurat is breached so that Joan can lead the Crusaders away from the Koleris once the other War Parties are ready to defend against the Koleris at the doors.

See *The Ziggurat* section of the *Weaver's Resources* Chapter (p.68) for details on the *Gate House*. The huge Bone Sphincter Doors, set into the lower part of the structure, are practically unbreakable by the Crusaders. Z'bri inside the sloping bone edifice snipe with Sundering, arrows and javelins at the Crusaders below. If the PCs do not suggest a way to get into the Ziggurat and open the door from within, then Garret will. The objective is to lead the Burning Blades up the bone and flesh edifice to where the Z'bri and Serfs are attacking. After a difficult twenty-meter climb, the War Party must fight their way in and then seek out the controls for the great door.

### DEFEATING THE GATE KEEPER

When the prongs start to get close to the Ziggurat, the Koleris from the northwestern killing fields arrive en masse to attack the Crusaders. Joan leads the Command Staff, Heart and Shield and Winter Wolves to fight them, and orders come via runners to the other War Parties to quickly break or open the great

### THE BARON'S RESPONSE

When the attackers strike the Sangis palaces, the Z'bri Lords at the war council are thrown into turmoil. Not expecting an attack so early and by such a large force, the Z'bri make matters worse by delaying an organized response. When word arrives from the battlefield that several Sangis and Koleris lv'chet and two Lords have been slain, and that Joan is



## 2. Crusade of the Heart

leading the Crusaders to the Ziggurat, the council chamber erupts in chaos. The Melanis and Koleris are divided within their Houses by their various alliances. The Baron surrounds himself with his trusted bodyguard, The Talons, and many loyal Lords led by Count Bel'ey. Some of the Talons leave to direct some of the fighting and interrogate captured Tribals to learn the reason Joan is here. Once he hears about Joan's drive to reclaim Joshua's Heart, the Baron plans a trap.

The Knight Sl'Onis and the Sangis Prince have control over the main Sangis and Melanis fighting forces, which also include Flemis elements. The Flemis have agreed to seed their members through all the fighting and command elements; this will help coordinate the attacks quickly and hopefully make up for the losses being suffered in the current confusion.

Just as the Z'bri are rallying, the conspirators try and execute their plot to overthrow the Baron. The Baron and his trusted retainers, however, are ready. The Baron and his supporters target and kill Prince Vl'dus and some senior Koleris, and quickly end the coup almost before it begins. This further disorganizes the Melanis forces, however. In the confusion, Deacon Vytor is nowhere to be seen.

### Z'BRI RETALIATION ON THE NATION

The first Vimary hears of the main battle comes in the form of strike forces of Z'bri who have evaded the nation's support troops. Hom and Haven are attacked by Z'bri using hit-and-run tactics, coming up from the southern bank and the river itself. A few Sangis Lust Serpents (p.92) sweep across the skies above the Fallen Isles, their sinewy bodies dripping with bile.

### ZIGGURAT ASSAULT BATTLE PLAN

The Ziggurat is a massive structure that changes shape quickly and smoothly, to fit its master's whims. As a consequence, it is advisable not to concentrate too closely on mapping out the route available to the PCs. Once the doors have been breached, the Z'bri within seem sluggish and disorganized, a result of the surprise and the failed coup attempt.

**Hold the Gates:** Although the Koleris attack was broken up, the great gates need to be held so that the Crusaders have a way out. Joan rolls the door closed once the Crusaders have piled into the Ziggurat, but a few War Parties remain to defend the smaller entrances. This position is also a rallying point and a place to bring the injured and dead. Some of the less combative Crusaders and most of the badly wounded will only get this far into the great structure.

**Kill Z'bri:** The main objective of many of the Crusaders is just to kill as many Z'bri as possible and do as much damage to the Ziggurat as they can. The Jackers are among this group and lead several other War Parties into the depths of the building. One

place they do want to find is the Throne Room (p.76), so they can try and kill the Baron.

**Find the Heart:** Joan, the Templars and other trusted Captains and Seconds are here to find the resting place of Joshua's Heart. Joan senses that it is high up in the vast Ziggurat, and several groups of retainers head off in different directions trying to find their way up to it. Fortunately, Joan is able to coordinate them to some extent through Dream, but she is also occupied assisting other War Parties that have come to grief. Finding Joshua's Heart comes as a climax to this Act with *The Baron's Trap*.

**Rescue:** The Bears are here to save the missing Children, and some other War Parties are keen to find loved ones who were taken by the Z'bri. They all head out and try to stay in touch with one another, but are soon split up by the fighting and the bewildering nature of the Z'bri stronghold. Many head down to find the cells that are reputedly under the Ziggurat. In Act Three, *Fleeing the Horror*, some of the would-be rescuers are trapped in the *Labyrinth of Desire*, and need to be rescued themselves.

**Find the Treasure:** A few War Parties are here to take back the riches they have heard stories of. They are happy to avoid the Z'bri and seek out the towers where they figure the Lords must have their wealth. Their overall success will be limited; their greed will make them take unnecessary risks, resulting in most of the treasure hunters being killed or taken by the Z'bri.

### EVENTS IN THE ZIGGURAT

In the Ziggurat, Joan will consolidate the War Parties twice for major pushes through well-protected inner gates, but for the most part, the War Parties fight a solitary and desperate series of skirmishes throughout the fortress. The Ziggurat's Living Building defenses and Atmospheres take their toll as well. Joan can be used at times to save the PCs' War Party from apparently insurmountable odds if the PCs get into too much trouble, but the use of a literal 'deus ex machina' should be avoided if possible. Pitch the level of the opposition at just above what the PCs should be able to confront; they should be able to keep themselves alive, but only through the use of creative and daring plans and strategies.

The PCs should be given opportunities to use tactics and trickery to kill the Z'bri, as well as to rescue prisoners (some who may themselves may be a threat now, tainted as they are by the Z'bri) and get a glimpse of some of the disturbing secrets of the Z'bri Houses. Eventually, the Command Staff will find what they think is the resting place of Joshua's Heart, and the final rally will begin.

For details on the makeup of the Ziggurat and its many defenses and wonders, see *Weaver's Resources*, pp.76-77.

Much like in *Events Outside*, the PCs can be involved in more than just fighting and exploring the perverted wonders of the Ziggurat. Here are some events to add dramatic to the fighting involving other War Parties. Suggested here are events that the Burning Blades are involved in and other optional events. Again,



it is suggested that Weavers should tailor their own events based around the PCs' outlooks and character subplots, to make this fighting as dramatic as possible.

**Sangis Seduction:** The Sun and Stars needs to be rescued from deadly seduction by the Baron's *Sangis Tempters* (p.77). Thoroughly enchanted, those that are charmed and still awake will fight to protect "the lovely ones." Friend may be pitted against friend in the ensuing struggle. To make matters worse, a few Sangis Iv'chet (p.95) have become aware of what is going on and plan to turn the encounter into an orgy with the PCs by using their perfume sprays to overcome them.

**Talons:** The Burning Blades come across what remains of the Winter Wolves War Party, which was split up in the fighting. Hot on the Winter Wolves' tails are a large group of Koleris led by a few of the Baron's personal bodyguard, the Talons. The Burning Blades need to fight off these Koleris. During the fight, Cerah saves the life of Captain Kaet Fera'on. After the fighting, Kaet thanks Cerah and apologizes "on behalf of the Clan" for the actions that led to Ardatli Maque's death.

**Markus' Sacrifice:** At some point during the fight in the Ziggurat, Markus (p.83) uses the Aspect of Sacrifice to save one of the PCs' lives at the expense of his own. Alternatively, he might save Gareth's life while the PCs watch on. Rather than contrive a mortal blow to create this scene, it is suggested that Markus be present when the PCs fight something particularly deadly (like a Z'bri Lord or Koleris Iv'chet), so that the dice dictate the Character's death. Markus' use of Synthesis need not be rolled (or his roll can be "fudged"); he will die, and the PC will be spared.

**Battle of Pearl Hall:** At some point, after much fighting and confusion, Joan will summon all the still-fighting War Parties to regroup to Her side. She, with the Command Staff, Heart and Shield, Jackers, Sun and Stars and Hammer and Sword, gather for an assault on a heavily protected gate. The defenders are a Lord, various Serfs, Monstrosities, Gek'roh and a mixture of Iv'chet from all the houses, numbering over a hundred in total. They are defending the *Baron's Throne Room*, allowing their Lords time to escape. Joan is assembling Her forces in a large hall whose surfaces are slippery mother-of-pearl. The defenders lurk behind pillars and spines of this bony material at the far end. Joan will wait until She has enough of Her best troops present and will then lead the charge. It is a cramped and dangerous fight, even with Joan present. Use the statistics for the Iv'chet on page 96. After the attack is underway, other Z'bri arrive to flank the Crusaders, but despite significant losses to the Crusaders, the Z'bri should be vanquished and almost all killed. This event will be one of the primary subjects for tales after the Crusade, and anyone present at this fight will always be considered a hero by any other Crusader, Joanite or Agnite.

## THE PRINCE AND JOAN

Eventually, the chamber where the great Fatima Joshua's heart rested for several decades will be discovered. It is a large chamber, with a window of thin bone on one side that allows a view of the outside. Near the window is a huge dais. There is

little initial opposition, just a few *Sangis Serfs* (p.95). The chamber is remarkably bare, mostly made of bone, horn and heavily tanned flesh. There is a large burn mark on the dais, which is also stained by what appears to be smoke. This is where Joshua's Heart lay until a few years ago, when it was given to the Lord of Capal, Nemerath.

If the PCs find the chamber, have them see if they sense the Joshuan Eminence that still stains against the Z'bri taint. Successful checks of Eminences of Fate, Wisdom, Inspiration, Life, Empathy, Mystery or Recognition will allow the PCs to sense that the heart was here (roll PSY vs. Threshold of 7). There is also a strong connection with Dream and Synthesis here, and anyone who touches the burnt area will be infected by Joshua's rage (WIL vs. Threshold 10, if failed PC will enter a berserker rage, applying the MoF as a bonus to all Fury Synthesis rolls, as per **T8 Rulebook** p.168; subject also is considered to have the Eminence of Force and Aspect of Rage **Children of Lilith** p.76 as long as she remains in the chamber). The touching of the burnt area by a Fallen, Joshuan or Joanite will create a ripple in Dream that Joan will sense, bringing Her and Her War Parties to this chamber. When She and Her Crusaders start to amass, Joan leans down to touch the burned mark, and senses that Her Brother's Heart has been taken far away. At this moment, the Baron springs his trap.

## THE BARON'S TRAP

The Baron has requested that Prince K'ark'oom (in the Baron's own Flemis Armor and wielding an intricate Za'vin Blade, **Horrors of the Z'bri** p.119, 120) and his Koleris guards ambush Joan here. The Baron actually expects him to lose, and knows that Sk'ksul will supersede K'ark'oom as Prince, leaving what remains of H'x' group little to offer the new Koleris Prince. This, the Baron hopes, will solidify his power base once more.

The Z'bri begin to pour in through the apparently solid wall at the other end of the chamber. Joan is sent into a rage by the Z'bri's appearance and the knowledge that the Baron has betrayed the Pact by disposing of Joshua's Heart. The Koleris Horde and the Crusaders clash as Prince K'ark'oom and Joan engage one another. The Koleris horde only manages to get some twenty warriors in before the wall they are passing through becomes hard as stone. Some Z'bri are trapped halfway through the wall, and many more are left on the other side; this is the first step of the Baron's betrayal of the Prince. Amid the fighting, Joan vows to destroy Tibor's Heart; Her voice carries clearly through the sounds of battle and with it comes a strange sense of joy (PCs with one of the following Eminences may roll PSY vs. Threshold 7 to recognize a new strength in Joan's voice and actions — it is Kara the Hunter's spirit coming forth (Threshold 9): Fate, Wisdom, Inspiration, Life, Empathy, Mystery or Recognition).

Joan brings forth the immense weapon that has been both Joshua's Staff and Lilith's Spear, and uses it to slay the Koleris Prince. The duel is close-fought, but at a critical moment, the Prince's borrowed blade seems to turn aside of its own will,

## 2. Crusade of the Heart

leaving its wielder defenseless. The tussling of the Crusaders and Z'bri is merely a chaotic mass around these two combatants; the fighting grinds to a momentary halt when K'ark'oom's death scream echoes through the chamber.

Once the Prince falls, Joan sweeps through the rest of the Z'bri; between Her and the Crusaders, it is a quick end to the attack. The Baron is long gone by the time the Hordes of Koleris are killed or driven back. Joan senses this and sounds the retreat, leading those with Her back to the great door they originally used to enter the Ziggurat. The Baron has ordered most of his forces to assemble outside for the counterattack against Joan and the Nation.

## TIPS AND RESOURCES

When using Synthesis in Abonom and H'l Kar, PCs should feel a strange dampening to their connection with Dream. *Lands of the Z'bri* (p.71) in *Weaver's Resources* provides a guide as to how to run all perceptions in the H'l Kar and Abonom. Weavers are reminded to apply the penalties for using Synthesis in Z'bri lands and on Z'bri as per **T8 Rulebook** p.165. In a Fatima's presence, though, significant bonuses apply.

PCs with Agnes may get caught up in the political problems that started in the *Children's Crusade*, clashing with a Favorite as they plan their ambush. With Puck away, Tomoe is without a protector besides Agnes, and PCs may have to protect her from Megin or Hesperrin.

For the Z'bri, use the archetypes on page 96 or use PSY -1, STA 25, UD 4, AD 4, all combat skills 1, Sneak 2, Dagger AD+3, Club AD+5.

For Gek'roh (Chained Z'bri) and Z'bri Monstrosities use either the archetypes on page 96 or the following:

**Gek'roh:** (AGI +2, BLD +2, FIT +1, PER +2, STA 40, UD 9, Claws/hooves/fangs UD+10, Tough hide AR 10, Combat Sense 2/+2, Dodge 1/+2, Hand-to-Hand 3/+2);

**Monstrosities:** (AGI+1, BLD+2, PER+1, STA 30, UD 9, AD 7, Claws/hooves/fangs UD+5, crude weapon UD+8, tough hide AR 5, Combat Sense 2/+1, Dodge 2/+1, Hand-to-Hand 3/+1, Melee 1/+1).

## ACT THREE: FLEEING THE HORROR

*And so Joan led us back,  
the five hundred of legend,  
covered in the filth of the beasts and  
wondering what had become of Her  
lost Brother's heart.  
Strange how She could not feel  
His heart burning in Her as She soared.  
The Pact of the Dome  
was now irrefutably broken.  
Earth and Dream trembled at  
what was to come as  
the Rule of Law came to an end.*

— Jaky Maque, Guide

## WEAVER'S SYNOPSIS

In this last Act, Joan leads Her Crusaders out through the wall of the Ziggurat and swiftly toward the Koleris Horde waiting on the Spine Bridge. The Baron and his assembled army are in orderly pursuit. Agnes acts quickly at Joan's appearance to lead the Vimary fighters in an attack on the Spine Bridge defenders, while Joan completes the pincer on the H'l Kar side.

The Koleris are strong, but their numbers have been reduced from fighting Agnes previously in the *Feint*, and they are now caught between two large Fatima-led forces; they briefly fight and, once their numbers have been significantly reduced again, a call is sounded and the survivors flee by leaping into the Great River. Joan and Agnes meet and Joshua's great hammer is reformed. The Crusaders flee to the Vimary bank of the river, and Joan smites the Spine Bridge, shattering several of its vertebrae and forcing most of the Baron's forces to halt. The Baron orders flying and amphibious troops to attack anyway, but is then badly wounded by an assassin placed by the Flemis. The Z'bri are suddenly stymied without the guidance of their principal lord, and mill around in confusion and accusation, some calling for attack, some for retreat. Then the three Fates appear on the banks of the river, their strange and powerful presence stymieing further pursuit. The Crusaders and Z'bri both retire, leaving guards to watch for further signs of aggression.

## <<D>> MAZE OF FLESH

With the death of Prince K'ark'oom and the destruction of those few Horde warriors that were able to accompany him, Joan tells the Crusaders it is time to leave. A quick discussion between Captains takes place, and, barring intervention from the PCs, it is decided that they will return to where the others are defending the great door to the Ziggurat. While they descend, the horn blowers keep sounding the summons to try and get as many of the Crusaders as possible to return from their various objectives. Several Crusaders who are badly wounded are quickly tended to, and are carried in the middle of the column as it travels.

Descending, the Crusaders make good speed as Joan slices through the maze of flesh. Commander Shera makes sure that a rear guard leaves signs for any straggling Crusaders who come across the trail. On their descent, the Crusaders are met with some Z'bri resistance but it is quickly crushed. Shera also sends some mixed War Party groups to respond to distant cries and horn trumpeting for assistance. PCs who have got themselves lost or trapped by Z'bri could be rescued and rejoin the Crusaders at this time.

## LABYRINTH OF DESIRE

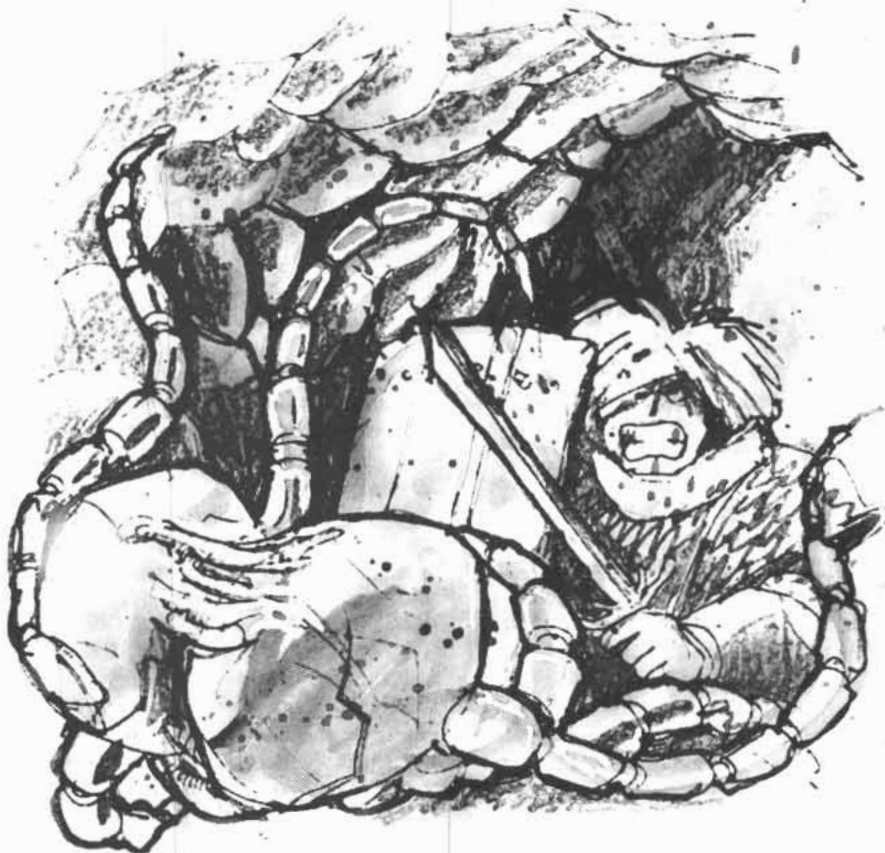
The Bears and some other War Parties have gone off to try and rescue the missing Tribals, and the Weaver can have them return at this time. If the PCs did not accompany these rescue groups, then they can be given a hook and a chance to go looking for the Crusaders to help them rescue the missing children from the Baron's cells. The children are being held in a trap known as the Labyrinth of Desire, a series of warm, pulsating, slippery arteries which randomly branch off into small organ-like rooms. The Bears find the missing children in these rooms, but the young Crusaders are also captivated by the labyrinth's fatal temptations. In these organ chambers, the intoxicating fumes bring on sleep and also tap into each victim's most potent desires, making the fantasies manifest in the sleepers' dreams. Such slumberers are very hard to wake, and the slick tunnels make it very hard to drag the unconscious out to safety.

PCs who go and help Puck will need to resist the slumber (Onset 6 rounds, POT 6, 4 if they are in pain from wounds; resist with HEA or WIL, Sedative/euphoric). They will then need to carry or use rope to haul out the dozens of sleeping children and Crusaders. Once several children are removed, the Labyrinth will attempt to stop any more from being taken by changing its layout and sending Skull Squids after the rescuers.

## ESCAPING THE ZIGGURAT

The Crusaders all assemble at great doors of the Ziggurat. Those that were left to defend the entrance only had to fight for about half an hour before the Koleris left. They suspect an ambush is being prepared. Shera and Joan hold a meeting of senior officers, and the consensus generally agrees with this line of thinking. Discussions take place about finding and escaping through the other door, but similar concerns regarding a potential ambush are raised.

PCs are encouraged to offer ideas, suggestions and plans at this point. If nothing is offered, Joan will lead the Crusaders (who are now quite encumbered with their wounded) up inside the Ziggurat some distance to an external wall that faces toward the Spine Bridge and Vimary. She will then explain that they will go down the sloping sides of the Ziggurat and toward the Spine Bridge. A vanguard and rear guard must be formed to protect the wounded and their bearers in the center of the force.





## 2. Crusade of the Heart

Joan then smashes through the outer wall forty or so meters above the outside ground level. It is now sunset, and the first stars are appearing in the twilight. Joan leads Her Crusaders down the Ziggurat's lower tiers and off through the burning Sangis estates toward the Spine Bridge. Her powerful presence in Dream assists the Crusaders by reinvigorating them as they follow Her. The column of Crusaders, banners flying in the torchlight, makes a swift passage away from the Ziggurat, with the vanguard fighting off the occasional assault by various groups of Z'bri.

Fortunately for the Crusaders, the Baron has placed himself and his troops to ambush them at one of the two exits, and those few Z'bri watching elsewhere are quickly dispatched by the Crusaders as they race to the bridge. The number of Crusaders is now about five hundred, most of those wounded — meaning that around half of those who set out on the attack have been lost to the beasts. In the distance can be heard the hooting and cries of the Baron's army as they move to chase the Crusaders before they can escape. Soon the forerunners of the Baron's force start to strike at the Crusader rear guard.

Waiting at the Spine Bridge are the remaining Koleris led by Sk'ksul. The Horde here is still large, even after Agnes' efforts, and as Joan's Crusaders make their way down, the Koleris, at Sk'ksul's command, prepare their defenses from the advantage of the bridge's height. It is at this time that Agnes leads Her Children, the other Joanites and the Fallen to attack the Koleris from the Vimary side of the Spine Bridge.

Joan and the vanguard assault the Koleris at the H'I Kar side of the bridge, and the Z'bri are soon retreating back up the bridge in the face of the Crusaders' onslaught. The Baron's Z'bri are now massing, with those too eager to wait dashing forward to attack the rear guard.

## THE HAMMER

Just when it looks as though the Crusaders are going to be crushed between the two Z'bri forces, Agnes and the most capable of Her force attack the Koleris from behind on the bridge. In moments, the Koleris find themselves faltering under the two Fatima-led armies; the badly wounded Sk'ksul screams a retreat and the Koleris leap from the bridge into the river below.

Once the last of the Koleris are swept from the bridge, Joan and Agnes meet and together they assemble Joshua's great hammer — Joan carrying the Staff and Agnes the Hammer-head (taken from the Watchtower). The Crusaders flee past them to the Vimary side, the rear guard fighting a rapid retreat against the Baron's waves of Z'bri. Once the bulk of the Crusaders are across, Joan smites the Spine Bridge with Joshua's Hammer, shattering several of its vertebrae and forcing most of the Baron's forces to halt. The Z'bri that have crossed before the bridge is partly collapsed are quickly dispatched by the Vikings.

The Baron's forces mill around as the great Spine Bridge bleeds and pumps forth large volumes of bile. Some Z'bri leap the gap, only to be pulverized by Joan and the Crusaders. In the distance, the Baron orders flying and amphibious troops to attack anyway. Then, in the dim red glow of dusk, the Baron is silhouetted against the sky, raising his arms in a vain gesture of triumph. As He opens his mouth to give the order, a blade finds purchase in his chest and he topples backwards, absorbed into the body of a Flemis Lord. The Beasts all turn upon one another, and the sight is obscured in a writhing mass of blood and twisted flesh.

A standoff ensues, as the Crusaders battle the few Z'bri that have flown or swum across the river. On the far bank, as the Z'bri are arguing and fighting among themselves, a ghostly wind rises, giving the Z'bri pause; on the Vimary bank, the three Fates watch silently, half-lit by the sun setting in the west. This seems to unnerve the Z'bri, and the Lords order their forces back to the H'I Kar. The Fates quickly vanish into the shadows of dusk.

The Crusaders and Z'bri both slowly retire, leaving guards to watch for further attack. Agnes remains as well, while Joan leads the others back to the Seven Fingers and then onto the Watchtower. Joan is uncommunicative as She returns, and Shera sees to it that She is left alone. Joan seems pleased when a huge black-robed figure approaches, creaking as it walks. Joan addresses it as Baba Yaga. The figure speaks in a harsh voice, saying that She will go and guide all those who fell in the H'I Kar. She collapses into a murder of giant ravens, which wheel about before flying north in a seething black cloud.

That night, and much of the next day and night, Joan's forces recover and tend their wounded at the Seven Fingers, expecting a retaliatory strike. Great fire pits burn through the dark midnight hours. Most of the Crusaders who went to the H'I Kar are caught up in their silent thoughts or seeking to get drunk and forget, if momentarily, the horrors they have witnessed. There is a sense of mourning; the loss of so many dulls any thrill of victory that might remain.

## TIPS AND RESOURCES

The objective of this Act is to give a resounding end to the great Crusade with a last desperate retreat from the H'I Kar. Despite the fact that this Quest focuses on the impersonal 'big picture' of the events, the issues faced are very personal, and, depending on the PCs' abilities and injuries, they should play a relatively major role in the Crusaders' retreating column. The strongest stand by Joan or guard the rear flanks of the force, the less wounded helping the incapacitated to make it back to safety.

Joan's presence in the Crusade should be emphasized during this Act. Whenever She is nearby, Her people receive the support described under *Joan*, p.69. Her fury, and Her ability to kill even the most powerful Z'bri Iv'chet with ease, should be awesome to PCs who witness it. When the PCs are in the Ziggurat, they should feel weak and enervated when they are bereft of Joan's presence. Her distance from them in such a dangerous and horrific place should be something they feel deep down inside, like the loss of a protective parent to a child or the withholding of a drug from an addict. This feeling of

safety when they are in Her presence, and the pain of separation when She moves away, should help remind the PCs of what they have lost or given up by being part of the Eighth Tribe, and remind them exactly why the Seven Tribes follow their Fatimas so fervently.

When the Crusaders try to make it to the Spine Bridge, it is recommended that Weavers keep the pressure on any PCs in the two guard groups by throwing Z'bri, Serfs and monsters at them at a steady rate; Joan's presence will continue to give them a boost. This is one of the most climatic confrontations in the Crusade, and deserves to have significant attention paid to building tension.

To help the PCs avoid getting knocked out of the action too early on from wounds, Weavers might wish to bring in a number of ex-Evan Fallen with the Synthesis Aspect of Anima (**T8 Rulebook** p.172), which will allow the rapid healing of PCs during the fighting. These healers will be left at the main

Ziggurat doors with the wounded. Note that this healing act can only be done once per person per day. For those Crusaders who receive *Permanent Injuries* (**T8 Rulebook**, p.151), Weavers may wish to replace "brain damage" with deep psychological disorders resulting from trauma caused by the horrors of the Ziggurat. Such post-traumatic disorders may mimic the effects of the Atmospheres of the Z'bri, and may involve forgetfulness, rage, nightmares and other afflictions.

## BETWEEN QUESTS

There is just this night and the next day before the third Quest, *Dark Heart*, begins. If the PCs stay with Joan and the Crusaders, they will get a chance to eat, sleep, re-equip and be medically attended to. On the morning after the next, Quest Three begins. If PCs stayed with Agnes to watch for the Z'bri, the Weaver should consider throwing a few Z'bri at them, especially if the PCs are keen for more fighting and/or missed part of the Crusade.



## Chapter Three: Dark Heart

There was a Pact between  
the Nation and the Beasts  
when we won freedom but not peace;  
A deal was struck between the Seven  
and the Baron of the Z'bri -  
we would entrap the hearts of those  
who only knew hatred and rage.  
But now that peace is at an end  
and I go to the Sunken City to destroy  
our side of the bargain.  
Crusade again with me.

-Joan on the Pact





## QUEST THREE: DARK HEART

The final Quest of **Broken Pact**, *Dark Heart*, brings about a resounding finality to the end of the Pact of the Dome. The shattering of the Pact ends the relative peace between the Z'bri and the Fatimas that has lasted since the end of the Liberation.

*Dark Heart* begins about a day and a half after *Crusade of the Heart*, with Act One, *Seeking Justice*. Joan is still vague and is unwilling to discuss the details of the Pact, but it should be clear from Her speech (previous page) that there is something in the Sunken City that She needs to do to end the current conflict.

Joan leads any willing Crusaders on a day-long assault on the Sunken City, with strict instructions to minimize both death and damage to the Shebans and their holdings. Their objective is to search each building and bring all the Judges to the great Court Hall so that Joan can speak to them in front of Tera Sheba. The Shebans and other Tribals offer up resistance, and some fighting takes place on the shores and on the water in the Sunken City. Joan does not fight for the most part, but Her presence alone motivates the seasoned Crusaders to brave the defenses set up by the Fisher King. During this attack, the Herites, Fallen and those Tribals with long standing grievances against the Shebans mercilessly strike out to take their revenge.

The second and final Act of *Dark Heart* is *Shattering the Pact*, which covers the final assault on the Court Hall. Here the Shebans mount a determined defense, but to little avail as Joan intercedes. Joan enters the Hall and seeks out the resting place of Tibor's Heartstone. She is followed by the Crusaders who can pass the Truth warding. Tera Sheba turns away, and Joan shatters the stone with a blow from Joshua's Hammer. The sun sets, and the Crusaders leave the Sunken City, either to return home or to the Watchtower.

## QUEST PRELUDE

*Crusade of the Heart* ends in the evening, by which time the Crusaders have, for the most part, eaten, slept and had their wounds tended. Some remain with Agnes to launch sporadic and small-scale defenses against Z'bri stragglers. Throughout the night the rage of the beasts can be heard across the river and through the Duskfall Forest. Dreams that night are filled with nightmares of rivers of blood, bonfires the height of mountains, and a heart in flames; the next day, most of the Crusaders sleep late, trying to recover mentally and physically from their ordeal.

Joan returns to the Watchtower with Her senior people, ordering them to rest. She goes to meditate under guard in the chamber where She keeps Her most sacred items, including relics of both Joshua and Lilith. The Templars and senior Joanite Crusaders rest, rousing after a while to have a midnight discussion; they talk about Joan's declaration during the fight with the Z'bri Prince and about the attempt on the Baron's life. Trusted PCs may be allowed to attend and hear Shera saying that above anything else, they must support Joan no matter what Her orders are; otherwise, She may relapse into the introspection that has lain on Her since Shera's mother's time.

Jaky Maque offers up the opinion that the Pact of the Dome was an obstacle to the healing that needs to take place. She continues by asking how the Nation can ever expect to be free from the Z'bri if they have an alliance with them. If the PCs are not present at this conversation they could speak to one of the elders the next day, so that they hear this perspective.

During the morning of the next day, messengers go out to the Seven Fingers and other watch areas, calling in the Joanites and Agnites, asking for celebrated and honored Crusaders by name. When they are assembled, and Agnes and Her retinue have arrived, Joan comes forth and gives Her speech (previous page) to them. There is a strange silence after this proclamation, and everyone looks at one another as they consider the ramifications of what is to come. Joan says She will give specific orders as to how they will fight the Shebans on the next morning. In the meantime, Agnes will direct the watch to the north and command all who would remain behind and protect against the Z'bri. Joan says that the attack on the Shebans must be seen through, and that those in the Sheban ranks who resist them will suffer.

After this speech, members from the Nation and the Fallen leave to take word to others throughout Vimary, Hom and Haven. By evening, most of Vimary has heard word of the Joanites' planned assault on the Sunken City. Megin takes word to Tera Sheba herself. Many of the Nation and even some Crusaders are saying that this attack is a further sign that the beginning of the end for the Nation is at hand. The Theme of Apocalypse (p.10) is prevalent among all but the Joanites and Agnites, who trust in their Fatimas. A strong current of Revenge is flowing among the Fallen and some Joanites as well.

The next night, there are great feasts in the Joanite camps, both to celebrate the victory against the Z'bri, as well as to bid a ritual farewell to the many dead. During this celebration, many give voice to the feelings of freedom that have manifested now that Joan appears to have finally broken from Tera Sheba's control. From the Nation, groups come to hear about what happened, celebrate, mourn and to question the Crusaders about the next day's attack. The intrigue is so high that even the normally frosty Evans and distant Yagans come down in significant numbers to hear the tales. Dahlians and Magdalites are present in large numbers. Only the Shebans are clearly (and understandably) absent. Rumor and speculation abound about the preparations that may or may not be taking place in the Sunken City during the evening.

If the PCs do not wish to join Joan the next day, there are several other ways they might become involved. PCs who wish to keep fighting the Z'bri can, of course, deal with the Z'bri who are occasionally crossing to Vimary to fight or spy. Mek is leading a party of Jackers defending Vimary; they have little interest in the Nation's internal politics, and PCs would be welcomed into this group. PCs with ties to Tribals might get to witness their mixed reactions of anger (Evans and Yagans) or smirking interest (Dahlians and Magdalites) to Joan's words.

### 3. Dark Heart

PCs may also go to Hom and Haven, and be caught up in the strong sense of revenge that is sweeping the place. Many of the Fallen harbor a deep resentment for the Shebans, such that they will be willing to help the Joanites attack the Sunken City. Hal Ninva and other Lightbringers call for calm, and advise letting Joan handle things, but they are ignored for the most part. The Herites are all going to go, although they plan to do what they want and openly state that they are not assisting Joan. The Doomsayers are also very active; many plan to go and witness the "great day." The Fallen, being so close to the Sunken City, will get a good view of the latter parts of the fighting.

#### ACT ONE: SEEKING JUSTICE

*It was as though it had not rained for years and then a great thunderstorm broke. So deep, so vast was the rage for the atrocities done to us, the lack of mercy shown, that we poured down on the Sunken City with just one thought — vengeance!*

*Some tried to stem the flow, but it was like trying to stop the rain from touching the ground.*

*The Herites were the fiercest, as if they had lived for this very day. Kyrat and his people, the most moderate of these Fatima-haters, grinned and raced for boats to exact their revenge. The other extremist Herites were worse, talking of bloodbaths and death to all the lawgivers. I watched with disappointment as Troy spoke in earnest about what she would be doing to the judges. I wondered if Joan's people would stop them, or if they would let the Fallen vent this long-boiling hatred. Even the Crusaders who had gone off to fight the Z'bri did not hate this deeply. We despise the Z'bri simply because we are born to do so, but we despise each other even though we can choose not to; as always, free will creates the most enduring and potent works, even when one is building her own destruction.*

— Altara Ven

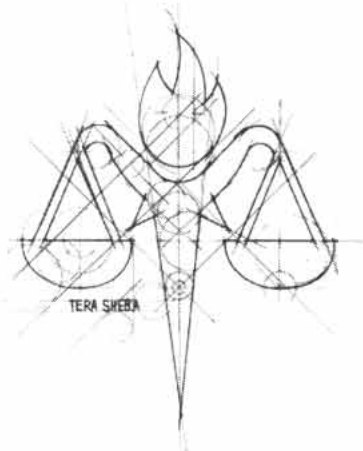
#### WEAVER'S SYNOPSIS

In *Seeking Justice*, Joan gives orders to fight only if resisted, and to advance on the Court Hall. She wants to make sure that all the Judges and High Judges come to witness the statement She is to make there when She ends the Pact of the Dome.

The Crusaders spread out and form a marching line down to the water's edge, sending parties in to check each of the buildings as they pass. Initial opposition is verbal, accompanied by a few desultory arrow shots from snipers. Word is that the new Watch, led by the Fisher King, has orders directly from Tera Sheba to keep the Joanites out of Sheban territory. Some other Tribals also try to halt the Crusaders. Joan stays on wing, moving slowly from rooftop to rooftop or flying over the scene, not participating in any fighting herself. The Crusaders fight and search in an orderly fashion for much of the morning, making sure no Judges have slipped through their net. During this time, Shebans are defeated, disarmed and held in custody, with words of reassurance that they will be released by nightfall.

The Joanites sweep through Sheban land holdings. Then, starting at either end of the flooded part of the cities, they slowly move toward the Court Hall. Once at the water's edge, the Joanites are forced to use as many boats as they can commandeer; the Shebans have taken most of the local supply, and the Joanites were only able to bring a few. The Herites arrive with boats of their own and offer to assist; barring any vocal protests from her seconds, Shera consents.

Once the Joanites take to the water, the resistance gets fiercer and more organized, and the sniping continues. The afternoon begins to drag on as the Crusaders slowly search each building. Meanwhile, the Herites are proving to be as bloodthirsty as they had bragged. Taking advantage of the disarmed prisoners, the Herites reap their revenge, trying to conceal their actions from the Crusaders. Those Herites helping to take buildings also make sure that some resisters are killed in the fighting rather than captured. Some fights start between the Crusaders and Herites over these atrocities.





## ASSEMBLY

On the second morning after the Crusaders return from *Crusade of the Heart*, Joan assembles Her Templars, cavalry and any others who have sworn allegiance to Her, and gathers them outside the Watchtower. Some are carrying boats.

The mood is determined, but some decide not to participate because of wounds or uncertainty over Joan's turning against Tera Sheba. The Burning Blades have largely disbanded due to wounds and ideological differences, so the PCs are no longer held back by commanding officers or War Party ties.

Joan announces that come sundown, the Shebans will see for themselves the pain that they have caused so many others. The Crusaders who come with Her are to collect all the Judges and High Judges to bear witness to Joan and Tera Sheba's final words. All the Sheban buildings will be entered — by force, if necessary — to ensure that all the Sheban elders are found and brought out. Joan declares that the Shebans can no longer hide away in the Sunken City, isolated from their kin. She says that any Shebans who resist the Crusaders should be fought, but all who accept Joan's judgment should only be disarmed and held until sundown. No fires are to be lit; no unnecessary deaths are

to take place. Joan commands that at dusk, all Crusaders are to return to the Joanite lands or the Seven Fingers to continue to watch for the Z'bri. Joan declares She will not be fighting unless Tera Sheba Herself interferes. (PCs with one of the Eminences of Fate, Wisdom, Inspiration, Life, Empathy, Mystery or Recognition may roll PSY vs. Threshold 7 to recognize a new influence in Joan, namely Kara the Hunter's spirit coming forth.) If any try to argue with Joan about this, She will leave it to Shera to deal with them. There are a significant number of non-Joanite Crusaders who do not agree with Joan's impending attack on the Shebans; they either lay low or go north to watch for Z'bri attack. The Crusaders who are following Joan's wishes form up in a loose column and head toward the Sunken City.

Joan soon leaves the Crusaders and flies high above that part of Vimary, the Hammer of Joshua clenched in Her hand. Somewhere deep inside, Joan is changing. Most of this rebellion against Tera Sheba is being brought out by Kara's soul, joined to Joan's own life force and altering Her personality back to the assured and passionate Warrior She used to be. Joan is avoiding the battle because She does not want to enter a rage and lay waste to the Sunken City; She is feeling intense pain and grief, both because of the Pact and Kara's suffering.



## SHEBAN ORDERS

Shera orders the Crusaders to spread out and be ready when they get closer to the Sheban lands. Joanites are loosely formed into the War Parties they were part of during the Crusade, although Shera has asked the Captains and other seniors to accompany her to speak with the Shebans. Shera reinforces the order that there is to be no unnecessary violence, and that the objective is to find all the judges and bring them before Joan at the main Sheban building.

Shera, the senior Crusaders and a guard of Templars approach the large group of Shebans at the Watch post they are closest to. With Shera is Georgy the Jacker, who has made herself the Fallen liaison for the Joanites this day. Judge Krynn (*Children of Lilith* p.31 for further information; add *Melee* 2/0) has thirty Shebans from the Watch ready to fight, as well as the Watch Commander, the Fisher King (*T8 Companion*, p. 24). The groups meet, and weapons are gripped with concern as the tension rises. Shera explains what the Crusaders have come to do, repeating the important elements of Joan's speech, and assures them that none will be harmed.

With assistance from a bodyguard, the Fisher King stands up from where he was concealed by the Shebans, and dispels some tension by formally replying with a greeting and thanks for the Joanite efforts against the Z'bri. Judge Krynn is obviously put off-guard by the Fisher King's intrusion, and is quick to give Tera Sheba's rebuff, which is that none may intrude on Her and Her tribe's land this day.

Both sides eye one another; Shera wants to avoid bloodshed and knows that if it starts here, then the day will be worse for all. She asks for a few minutes to talk with her people and to give Judge Krynn some time to consider Joan's proclamation. The Fisher King says he will take word to Tera Sheba, and his guards help him down toward a boat at the base of the street. A few minutes later, he is rowed away.

Shera moves some twenty meters off and discusses their position with the commanders. Obviously they must press on, hopefully using an overwhelming show of force to bring about a quick surrender rather than a prolonged fight. Shera sends about half of the senior Crusaders back to where their troops are stationed, to order them to continue as planned; they are to form lines at the eastern and western ends of the Sunken City, and use boats to clear each building they pass as they make their way toward the Court Hall. The Herites' boats are needed, and so they are allowed to help, but Shera says they should be watched and prevented from breaking Joan's orders.

Soon a boat arrives from the Sunken City, and a runner comes up to Judge Krynn. If the PCs are still with Shera, they may notice some discussion accompanied by hard looks at the Joanites. Krynn calls and waves for Shera to come down. When Shera and a reduced number of guards and senior Crusaders approach, Krynn walks toward her to pass her a scroll of parchment. There is a brief scuffle behind him, and the runner breaks past the guards and charges at Shera, a dagger drawn. A

quick-acting PC might be able to be the one to save Shera; if not, Georgy will almost casually turn the blade aside on her armored forearm. The would-be assassin will then be cut down by someone with Shera, possibly a PC, as a fight ensues. So begins the Crusade of the *Dark Heart*.

## SHEBAN TACTICS

The Fisher King is in control of the organization of the Sheban defense and he has done a good job, even given the many limitations the Shebans have compared to the well-trained and heavily armed Joanites. Wanting to avert bloodshed, he is keen to take Joan's words to Tera Sheba, but Her orders are to kill Shera and any others who challenge Her orders to keep the Sunken City free of outsiders. The Fisher King is then ordered to his command position on top of the Court Hall to ready the defense, and a messenger is sent to undertake the attempted assassination of Shera.

After Shera and the Crusaders have put down the Shebans at the guard post, killing many Shebans in the process, several crossbow-armed archers begin firing from rooftops and high windows all along the length of the Crusaders' lines. The Crusaders raise their shields and run for cover, but some unlucky ones fall from mortal wounds. Joanite discipline soon restores order to the ranks, and the Crusaders begin to follow the attack plan. A thin line of Joanites guards the north shore side of the city, while the rest go to the west or east and begin the building-to-building fighting.

Until the Crusaders get to within a few blocks of the Court Hall of Solitude, they face the efforts of snipers including the feared Black Owls (p.94), who prefer to ambush Joanites in the long unlit corridors of the buildings. A few deadfalls and other makeshift traps are also reason to take care as they search hastily abandoned buildings in the Sunken City. Several of the outlying buildings have been barricaded properly, and resistance is only given when the Joanites try to get in. These are mostly filled with Novices and Junior Clerk, led by Advocates, Senior Clerks and a handful of Sheban members of the Watch (p.60). A couple of buildings protect some of the Judges and so are well defended and prove to be difficult to take. All these obstacles slow the Crusaders down for hours as they slowly use boats to move their numbers forward and tighten the circle of warriors around the Shebans.

During this time, some of the Herites take their chances and attack the Shebans, although the Shebans' readiness makes this difficult. When they try to light fires or kill unarmed Shebans, the Crusaders swiftly stop them, although they attempt to do so without loss of life; they can sympathize with the Herites. Kyr quickly sees that more boats for the Joanites will be useful, and sends half of his followers back to Hom and Haven to acquire more boats. Once a few blocks of the Sunken City are taken, the Herites get impatient and begin to mount more significant attacks; the Joanites cannot be everywhere at once, and thus have a limited ability to stop the resulting atrocities.

With the morning wearing on, more Fallen also arrive in large numbers, and the Joanites try to get them to help hold the

Sheban prisoners taken after each defended building is neutralized. Many of the Fallen are willing to do this rather risk more fighting, but once the Joanites are gone, beatings and verbal abuse of the prisoners take place. On the whole, though, the Fallen's behavior is nowhere near as severe as the Herite acts of castration, terror and murder.

## TRIBAL TROUBLE

About an hour after the fighting begins, a large number of Evans arrive behind the Joanites who are watching the dry northern side of the Sunken City. Many of the Evans are armed, but they look a little daunted when the Joanites sense they are a threat. Shera withdraws from the flotilla with a large bodyguard to deal with them. PCs may also want to back her up or see what is going to happen. The Evans are led by Storm Cry (**T8 Rulebook**, p.78) and they are angry at this treason against the Nation. Shera tries to explain, and a heated debate ensues. Just as it looks like bloodshed cannot be avoided, Joan lands with a crash and says simply that this is between Her people and Tera Sheba's. She leaves, and the Evans mill around and finally break away. They are intimidated but still angry at actions they fear will bring down the Nation, especially now that the Z'bri are up in arms.

Many other Tribals from the Bazaar and other tribal lands come to watch in disbelief during this time. Even the great Eva flies over the mid-afternoon destruction. Great Ravens circle on high, and a group of Dahlian boats watches from a safe distance on the river.

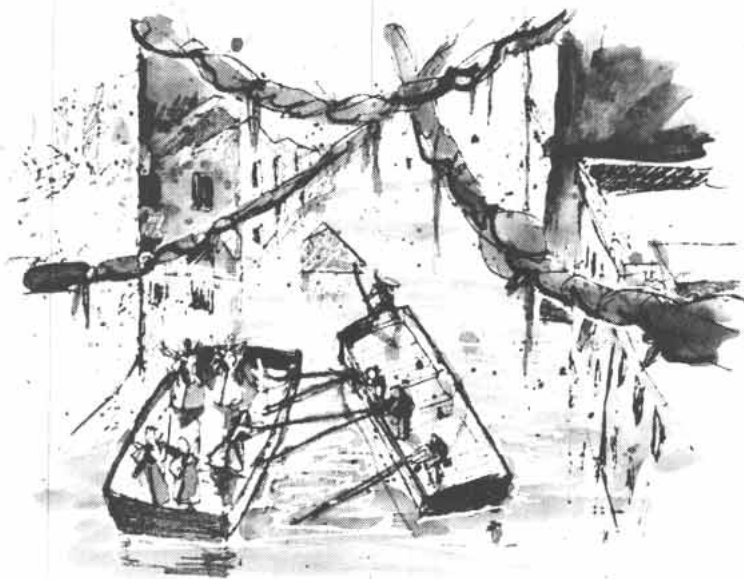
## SUNKEN CITY EVENTS

During the fighting, PCs can get caught up in other events secondary to the attack. These events should help humanize what is going on and test the PCs moral and ethical ideals. Weavers may wish to add specific events relating to PCs'

backgrounds and past experiences to make such events more personal.

**Sacred Words:** PCs sight smoke and respond to see if they can stop it, as per Joan's orders. When they arrive, they find the building only partly lit, but burning too furiously to be easily put out. Clerks and Advocates are trying to save piles of scrolls and texts; the burning building is old Judge Gebriel's (**T8 Rulebook** p.72) personal library, containing both texts he has written on law and the Fallen, as well as historical documents from the Liberation and before. The PCs will need to decide what they should do: put out the fire and possibly let him escape, or seize him and let the fire destroy the writings. The PCs may also have to deal with the Herites who might have lit the fire to get the Shebans out in the open in order to kill them. Judge Gebriel is in a fluster over his precious books and will cry out for help to keep them from the fire. None of the Shebans with Gebriel will resist the PCs unless the PCs are clearly going to hurt them.

**The Bully:** Judge Sakai has promised Megin (p.80) a place as an Advocate if she helps him, and suggests she will go far in the Shebans. Megin and her Wonder Monster are with the Joanites and Fallen Crusaders as they go about subduing the Shebans. Megin hangs back, and once the main line has passed through an area, she checks to see if Murray is capable of freeing those taken under guard (by killing their Fallen or Joanite guards). She then unleashes Murray and shows the Shebans her letter from Sakai explaining her role. If the freed Shebans are experienced fighters, Megin tells them to get weapons and fight the invaders. Once Megin is a safe enough distance away to keep up the facade, the Shebans take up their arms and skirmish against the Joanites from behind. The PCs may see this and intervene, or they may start to suspect a turncoat when they start seeing Shebans that they remember having captured and imprisoned. Megin is destined to be killed by PCs, Joanites or Agnites before this day is over.



## TIPS AND RESOURCES

Healing and recovery between *Crusade of the Heart* and *Dark Heart* should be especially swift to allow wounded PCs to join the assault on the Shebans. A number of Ex-Evan Fallen and Evan healers favorable to the Crusade have the Synthesis Aspect of Anima (T8 Rulebook p.172) that encourages rapid healing, allowing PCs and other Crusaders to go into action on the following day.

The fight with the Shebans is a slow and methodical affair. This Act consists largely of house-to-house fighting, along with a constant fear of snipers. The Joanites move systematically to clear the buildings the Shebans are defending, while smaller teams search those the Shebans have abandoned, looking for booby traps. Bloodshed does occur, but once several senior people are killed in each building, the rest holed up with them quickly give up. Even so, it takes most of the day to clear all the buildings and gather the few Judges who were waiting in outlying buildings.

This Act is all about the theme of Revenge (p.10), and PCs should be placed in positions which allow them to unleash pent-up frustrations and anger stemming from the suffering they have endured under the Shebans. The Herite atrocities should also spark inner conflict, because the PCs are likely to relate closely with the reasoning of the more moderate Herites like Kyr, and will find it hard to fault them for harming the Shebans.

The Sheban opposition, as well as Sheban Watch, can be classed as follows:

The **Novices** and **Junior Clerks**: use KNO +1, WIL +1, STA 25, AD 4, UD 4, Archery 1/0, Boating 1/0, Hand-to-Hand 1/0, Law 1/+1, Melee 1/0, Notice 1/0, Read/Write (Sheban) 2/+1.

For the **Advocates** and **Senior Clerks**: use AGI +1, INF +1, KNO +1, WIL +1, STA 25, AD 4, UD 4, Archery 1/0, Combat Sense 1/+1, Dodge 1/+1, Hand-to-Hand 1/+1, Law 2/+1, Melee 1/+1, Read/Write (Sheban/Tribal/Fanzay) 2/+1, Ritual 1/+1.

All Shebans have access to; Crossbow (+1 ACC, DMx17, 6/12/24/48 ROF 0/3), Staff (+1 Parry, AD+5), Shortsword (+1 parry AD+8), Heavy Cloth Armor (AR+3).

**Kyr the Free**: statistics can be found in *Children of Lilith* p.89, else treat as the Unchained below with Leadership 2/+1, Synthesis 3.

For Kyr's cell, **The Unchained**, use AGI +1, CRE +1, PER +1, STA 25, UD 4, AD 5, Archery 2/+1, Boating 2/+1, Combat Sense 2/+1, Disguise 2/+1, Dodge 2/+1, Forgery 1/+1, Hand-to-Hand 1/+1, Melee 2/+1, Stealth 2/+1, Streetwise 2/0, Theatrics 1/0, Throwing 1/+1.

## ACT TWO: SHATTERING THE PACT

*Even as the Z'bri howled their hatred at us from their twisted existence in H'l Kar, we watched the collapse of the Pact that had kept the peace for so long. Then came the schism.*

*Joan led Her people against Her Sister, and with a blow of Joshua's mighty hammer, ended our way of life. The rain of blood began its fall as Prophecy had foretold, and I waited for the first crimson signs to show me the way forward.*

— Jaky Maque, Guide

## WEAVER'S SYNOPSIS

Eventually, the Court Hall is reached, and Shera prepares to lead the final attack to breach the great doors. Before the Joanites can attack the formidable structure, Joan dives down and smashes the great doors open with Joshua's hammer.

The Court Hall is where the final confrontation takes place; the PCs should be present, so that they get to witness these momentous events. A group, possibly the PCs, finds Marshal Bartholomew Medi'on and sees that he is brought before Joan. She asks the whereabouts of 'the heart,' of which he claims to know nothing. Kara's spirit cries out, and Joan slays Medi'on.

Tibor's Heartstone is behind string protection in Tera Sheba's most sacred chambers. Crusaders who can face the Synthesis Tera Sheba is using to protect the place may follow Joan here. In a large room, Tibor's Heartstone sits in a gilded cage. Tera Sheba turns away as Joan approaches, and Joan smashes the Heartstone with Joshua's Hammer. The Pact of the Dome is finished, and the reverberations of Her actions will soon be felt all through Vimary. Joan then confronts Cylix and symbolically maims him. The Joanites leave, releasing their Sheban captives.

## OLD PAIN

Late in the afternoon, the Crusaders surround the great Court Hall. They have managed to capture some Judges who were not in the Court with their comrades, and have placed them under careful guard. Some smaller, more distant structures burn from accidents and Herite attacks, but for the most part, the bloodshed has been minimal. With a large flotilla of boats (many of which have been taken from the Shebans), the Joanites begin to prepare for the final assault on the most sacred of the Sheban holdings. There is a long wait as Shera passes by in her boat, advising her troops and discussing the attack plan. She only wants those she can rely on most to be among the first through the great doors, but the doors themselves need to be breached.

Joan shocks everyone by diving out of the sky and smashing the doors off their hinges with Joshua's hammer. The Joanites cheer and race forward in their boats, landing quickly and rushing to join Joan. They assemble to march in, bracing against the occasional shot of a crossbow. Joan enters the Hall and speaks to the Shebans.



"Bring me the Marshal Bartholomew Medi'on," She says simply. Shera repeats the request as an order, and the Joanites storm into the Court Hall. They meet many prepared forces, but their strength soon destroys the barriers and they begin the hunt for judges and the Marshal. The PCs should be able to join those pouring in to do Joan's bidding. The Herites remain at a distance on the steps of the Court Hall, watching Joan with distrust.

Joan's request is at the instigation of the spirit of Kara, which now resides in Joan. Kara's subconscious influence on Joan has given Her a burning desire to see this man face to face, but even She has no idea what She plans to do once he is before Her. If the Marshal dies when resisting capture, then his body will need to be brought before Joan/Kara, but if he is taken alive, then She asks the whereabouts of the 'heart.' Wild-eyed, he shakes his head as Joan leans over him. After a moment of indecision, Joan grabs the Marshal with Her free hand and throws him against the wall. His back snaps with a resounding crack, and he falls limply to the ground. Another silent moment passes and Joan says commandingly, "Bring the Judges to bear witness." At that, She stalks into the Court Hall with a slow and determined gait.

## END OF PACT AND PILLARS

In the time it took to find the Marshal and bring him before Joan, the Joanites have only managed to take over part of the building. The most sacred areas around Tera Sheba Herself are well fortified and guarded, and the fighting still going on to take them. Joan arrives, walks through the Joanite ranks unharmed, tears down the Sheban barriers and smashes open the thick inner sanctum doors.

PCs who try and pass through the doorway step through a wall of Truth Synthesis that will see any dark secrets, bringing down recrimination and justice. Any person who crosses and who is guilty — defined by the Weaver — of highly excessive violence or unnecessary killing this day, or who harbors strong intentions to do harm to the Judges or Tera Sheba, will suffer a Flesh Wound (from the minor heart attack they receive) and be thrown back by Dream, to lie unconscious and smoldering nearby. She will rouse in a few moments, shaken and unable to approach the threshold again. She will continue to have brief flashbacks of the events that caused her to be blocked by the barrier, something that Weavers may wish to continue as a subplot involving a haunting by the spirits of those who were harmed by the PC. Anyone tainted by Z'bri Atmosphere or possession will be automatically repelled by the barrier, with similar wounding and effects. Those that are innocent of such desires must still face their own conscience or also be so injured; they must pass a check of WIL vs. Threshold 4 to walk through unharmed, although the Weaver should vary this based on each PC's intentions (Herites, for instance, are vs. 7).

Through the doors, in the dimness of a large windowless chamber, stand Tera Sheba and Joan. A few lanterns light the room with a flickering glow, revealing a library filled with many books, scrolls, and pictures. A large gilded cage holds a blood red crystal the size of a man's head. PCs who have seen Z'bri Heartstones will possibly recognize what it is, and may even connect it with the smaller versions that the Guides wear. The

gem is the great Z'bri Lord Tibor's Heartstone.

In the silence of the chamber, those that have followed Joan, including Shera and Jaky Maque, watch as the dimly lit figure of Tera Sheba turns slowly away as Joan approaches the stone. No words are spoken, and the atmosphere is filled with tension. Anyone who tries to speak will be unable to make a sound. Slowly, the Joanites bring in all the Judges and High Judges. More silence passes, and then Joan moves.

Joan lifts the gilded cage; it crumples with a squeal of tearing metal. Joan then steps back and swings Joshua's Hammer, shattering the Heartstone, and with it, the Pact of the Dome. There is an immediate explosion at the thunderous blow. The floor trembles, and a blast washes back over those within the chamber, hurling them to the floor. Outside, the sun seems to blaze brighter and hotter for a few seconds. Cracks appear in the buildings of the Sunken City. A large wave is sent rippling away from the Court Hall, swamping boats and flooding high ground. In the distance, one of the Skyrealms over the Bazaar bursts into flames; it continues to burn all that night, a victim of the ancient power of the now-broken Pact. The Z'bri in the north feel the destruction of the Heartstone as well, those who had once been bound to Tibor bursting into flame or crumbling into ash when the Heartstone's power dissipates.

Joan then turns to leave. High Judge Cylix, under Templar guard near the door, has a furious expression upon his face, and his are the first words after the echoes die down. Facing Joan, he screams, "What have you done. . . you have forgotten yourself!"

Joan responds swiftly. Her great sword moves almost too quickly for the eye to follow as it is drawn and slices Cylix' right arm off at the elbow. The High Judge collapses in tears and blood; his severed limb is picked up by Shera and tossed to where Tera Sheba stands. Joan speaks, Her words heard even by those immediately outside the Court Hall:

"The Law Giver has lost Her right arm this day."

With that, the sun vanishes below the horizon, and the light dims to late twilight. Joan leads the way out and commands that they return home to watch for the Z'bri who will be coming. All those Shebans taken in battle are to be released; Templars and senior Joanite Crusaders see that this is done. Joan returns to the Watchtower with Her retinue, walking across the water and then continuing onward to Her tribe's holdings.

## TIPS AND RESOURCES

If the Marshal was killed before being brought before Joan, his body will be brought before Her anyway, by other Crusaders, if not the Players, and similar words will be quietly spoken.

The pacing of this Act is not so important as creating the right atmosphere for the final scene. Weavers may wish to emphasize the eeriness of the moment, and the incredible warping of Dream that comes from standing in the presence of two Fatimas.

## Chapter Four: Cycle Ramifications and Outcomes

And so it has come to pass.

The darkness has been illuminated  
and the beasts rise one last time to  
end what was always to be.

The darkest days are almost here.

I see flames, I hear death, I smell suffering.

There is no time to rest!

— The ranting of Marc, Doomsayer



## CYCLE RAMIFICATIONS AND OUTCOMES

The end of *Dark Heart* demolishes the Pact of the Dome that kept the Nation relatively safe from the Z'bri, and also ends the union of Tera Sheba and Joan that protected the Nation. Although many among the Joanites, Agnites and Fallen are happy with Joan's actions, the Crusades and the break with Tera Sheba, there is, nonetheless, an atmosphere of dread laying thick in the aftermath. The Z'bri have not stopped screaming their anger and frustration from the northern shores and the deep woods, and now the Nation has turned in upon itself, sending the tribes into uncertainty. It is only a matter of time before some Z'bri Lord, or perhaps even the Baron, rallies the Z'bri and sends them crashing down on Vimary.

## COUNTING THE DEAD

In all three Crusades, many have been killed or lost to the beasts. Along with the previous persecution of the Fallen, the deaths are starting to take their toll on the strength of the Nation and the Fallen. The large number of deaths — over 700 — during *Broken Pact* has a powerful effect on the Agnites, Joanites and Fallen. Everyone knows at least one person who fell in the Crusades or the limited reprisal attacks. There is a strong sense of loss and a feeling of mortality — and the Z'bri continue to gather their strength in the north.

## 4. Cycle Ramifications and Outcomes

## FALLEN PERSPECTIVES

The ties between the Joanites and Fallen first forged during *Trial by Fire* and *Warrior Unbound* are now solidly cemented by their shared experiences in the Crusades. Although the two groups are still separate entities, there are many among their numbers who no longer distinguish between Tribal and Fallen, seeing themselves all as the Children of Prophecy. The presence of the common enemy has completely broken down concerns over tribal or Fallen allegiance for many involved in the Crusades.

## CHILDREN OF LILITH

Cerah is now the nominal leader of the Children of Lilith. The Children have suffered another dreadful blow; many of their already-small number were killed in the Crusade. They have very strong ties with the Joanites, who have thanked them for keeping Joshua's (and in turn, Lilith's) dream for the future alive. The Guide Jaky Maque is an important friend to Cerah, helping her adapt to her new leadership role. The Children are trying to associate themselves with the Joshuans, since their causes are very similar.

The restoration of Joshua's hammer, which was also once part of Lilith, has both groups discussing the closeness of their Outlooks. Some of the Joshuans take up the Children's offer of a secure place to stay, and join the Children in Lilith's Palace. Both groups also venture to the Watchtower to seek permission to see the sacred artifacts that were once parts of their Fatimas.





## 4. Cycle Ramifications and Outcomes

## DOOMSAYERS

The Doomsayers still show no signs of leadership or coordination after the loss of Veruka, but remain focused on their dark visions of the near future and the words of Joshua's Prophecy. More Dreamquests are being taken, and Doomsayers are actively seeking others to go into the dangerous parts of Vimary and the Outlands to help them understand their visions. There has been some enigmatic and symbol-laden talk about the need to find Joshua's heart to find the future of the Eighth Tribe.

One loose alliance of Doomsayers is planning an expedition north to follow the signs that indicate the Fallen must go this way. They also hope to escape the Z'bri persecution, and are trying to convince the Fallen as a whole that they should leave the Z'bri and the Tribals to fight it out by themselves.

## HERITES

The Herites are in good cheer after the Crusade of *Dark Heart*. The feud between Tera Sheba and Joan is marvelous for them. They are still exhilarated after being able to slaughter many of the Shebans, although even some of the Herites find Troy's Ravagers' actions appalling.

Kyrt has established himself as a solid and commanding leader for most of the Herites. Several of his most trusted friends have formed a bodyguard so that the likes of the Black Owls do not assassinate him. Kyrt has plans for further actions against the Shebans, but says that they need to find out where Joan is going next. Kyrt also recognizes the possibility of Z'bri retaliation, and is hatching a plan to focus the Z'bri's attention on the Nation and not the Fallen. To this end, his confidants are discussing a secret deal with the Z'bri and exploring the possibility of leaking information to the beasts.

Troy Fenys, on the other hand, wishes to keep up the pressure on the Shebans, and moves her people into the Joanite camp around Joan's Watchtower for protection. From here, she plans to launch secret attacks against the Sheban elite, knowing that Joan's people will protect the Ravagers from retaliation.

## JACKERS

Many Jackers died gloriously in the Crusade. Rewards for their help have been given out by Joan and Her tribe in the days following the Crusades. Mek is undisputedly their leader now, and the Jackers are following his lead and staying close to the Joanites. Georgy and Mek are now discussing preparations for the impending Z'bri attack with Shera. The Jackers have joined the Joanites in guarding against the Z'bri incursions, waiting for the big push that will signal the final battle between the Nation and the Beasts.

## LIGHTBRINGERS

Hal Ninva and Kymber Reva are publicly impressed with the success of the Crusade. Now that the Fallen are back, they are making efforts to advance the fortification of Hom and Haven. They are also considering abandoning the Fallen to join Joan's people instead, but this position is considered a last resort.

Hal Ninva is very concerned about the treatment the Shebans have suffered. Personally, he thinks that this rift is likely to make things easier for the Z'bri when they attack. He awaits word from Judge Sakai, and is considering leaving the Fallen if the Shebans will have him back; he does not think that Hom and Haven will be safe. Whether his wish is a delusion has yet to be tested, but as the days pass and his ever-more frequent and strident messages are ignored by Sakai, Hal's long-hidden cruel side is starting to rise to the fore, as his chance of returning diminishes even in his own mind.

Kymber Reva is secretly quite concerned over the safety of the Fallen. If they are to stay on Hom and Haven, there are only a few places large and secure enough to weather a determined Z'bri attack. Kymber has already supported Cerah and the Children of Lilith in their efforts to fortify Haven. Kymber wonders if perhaps the Fallen need to put aside their differences with the tribes and fight as one against the Z'bri, rather than hiding out. In the meantime, Kymber is seeking out some of the long-time Fallen to see what they think is best.

## TRIBAL PERSPECTIVES

The Nation is suffering from mixed emotions at the end of the Crusades. On one hand there is joy at the blows dealt to the Z'bri, and on the other, dread that the Z'bri will not wait to allow the Nation to strike again. The split between Joan and Tera Sheba is also generally seen from two extremes, one side seeing it as good news that Joan is Herself again, the other deeply disturbed by what appears to be a collapse of the basic structure of the Nation. In response to the Shebans' apparent loss of leadership and the damage to the Watch, the Evans, Shebans and Yagans are paying close attention to their people for signs of disloyalty, and the number of exiles — both Fallen and non — is increasing.

## AGNITES

Hespirin and Puck control the two strongest factions in the Agnites, and hate each other with a passion. Puck's charisma, coupled with his efforts during the Crusade, has allowed him to increase his following, and Hespirin's old tricks are failing to dislodge Agnes' favoritism toward him. Puck and Hespirin both appear to be affected by Agnes' change; their physical age appears to have altered to mirror Agnes' mental state rather than their actual age.

The Agnites suffered large losses during the Crusades, making them more serious and mature as a whole. Their apparent invulnerability has been shattered by these losses, and now they are talking more about the need to join forces with the Joanites

or Fallen to deal with the fighting to come. Many of the Children are suffering from constant nightmares and strange spiritual experiences involving ghosts of friends and other, more malevolent spirits. Some of those touched by the Z'bri are finding it hard to adjust back into tribal life, and still suffer from personality problems.

Agnes has also matured as a result of seeing the loss of Her loved ones during the Crusades. In the aftermath of the fighting, She is spending more time with Baba Yaga and Joan, leaving Her Children to fend for themselves.

## DAHLIANS

The Dahlians are still keeping their agenda well-concealed. Brehnsun has once more vanished, along with his Caravan. The Dahlians are keen to hear the stories of those who went on the Crusades, but offer little in the way of thoughts for the near future. They return to their usual ways, with little regard to the Z'bri threat or the rift between the Pillars. The Herites are spreading rumors that the Dahlians were the ones who tricked Agnes and Joan into going on the Crusades, and likely prompted Joan to take on the Shebans as well. One Herite cell, the Six Petals, is spying on the Dahlians to try and guess the next big event the Dahlians are organizing.

## EVANS

The Evans have cut themselves off almost completely from the Joanites, Agnites and Fallen, claiming that the Crusading tribes have unleashed the Z'bri upon the Nation. The Evans have quickly moved in to support the Shebans after the Crusaders' departure, and secret meetings have been taking place about how to deal with Joan and the Z'bri threat. The Evans also appear to be distancing themselves from the other Fates, supporting the Shebans in their efforts to maintain peace.

The Evans now assist in the Watch's role in Vimary, and guard all the entrances into their own lands. Preparations are being made to protect bridges and defend homesteads. Food is already being stockpiled for the war, and a generally poor barter rate is applied for Joanites who need supplies. Westholm becomes an earthen fortress, sealed off from any but the Evans.

## JOANITES

The Joanites have lost many experienced and brave souls to the Crusades. Soon after the last Crusade, Shera arranges a series of promotions to fill the senior positions. Some thirty Templars are appointed from the bravest of the Joanites; Garret Kil'on and others receive thanks and weapons from Joan at the ceremony. Together, they make up Shera's Command Staff, which still sports the colors of Valerie Valkin Ben'on.

Some of the War Parties are granted status as Joanite Companies, greatly honoring them and their Captains. They are allowed to keep their colors, and their leaders are assigned to participate in the new War Council. The Heart and Shield, Sun and Stars

## 4. Cycle Ramifications and Outcomes

and the remains of the Hammer and Sword all receive this honor. The Winter Wolves and Rangers are asked to remain within Joanite territory for the time being, and help to train any who wish to learn various hunting and battle skills. Soon after this ceremony, the Captains are ordered to get their War Parties up to fighting strength; the best warriors from disbanded War Parties like the Burning Blades are sought out to fill the ranks.

Several of the Fallen who joined Joan are also rewarded, including Mek and others. The PCs could be among these, if the Weaver wishes, and receive Joanite Blades or armor. They are also offered tattoos to mark their bravery in service, which will accord them respect, food and shelter from any Crusading Joanites they meet.

Nostra Guy'on remains in the Sunken City, and the Old Guard he led is disbanded. When this happens, many of the Old Guard go to join Nostra, but more than half of them find other places among the Joanites.

## MAGDALITES

The Magdalites are still torn by the rift between Tera Sheba and Joan; now that the schism has come to blows, the Magdalites are on the verge of splitting themselves, the elders torn between allegiances to the two Pillars. This is especially true after the Crusader attack on the Z'bri Ambassador in their care. The ensuing power struggle within the Tribe of the Lover is stymieing any attempts to prepare for the war with the Z'bri.

Many of the Magdalites' number have already slipped off to look toward the Outlands and Capal. Working with a few Dahlian caravans, they are trying to assess the Z'bri's strength as well as seek other allies against the beasts.

## SHEBANS

High Judge Sakai Dan'on gathers his allies around himself and moves into Cylix' old offices in the Courthouse the evening after the Joanites' attack in *Dark Heart*. Meant as temporary measure while Cylix recovers, it is clearly a permanent assignment as far as the other Judges are concerned; many publicly declare their support for Sakai, and any Judges who are known to have supported Cylix find their requests and messages to the High Judges go unanswered. Gatterra Medi'on (**T8 Companion** p. 27) takes Cylix in while he heals.

Sakai acts quickly to promote his allies and to remove a few of Cylix' supporters. Delray Seth'on (**Vimary** p.114), Ellen Dan'on (**Weaver's Assistant** p. 27) and Judge Gebriel (**T8 Rulebook** p. 72) are all promoted and given important positions within the courts.

After the terrible attacks and atrocities which took place during the last Crusade, Sakai suspends the Sheban tribe's normal activities by ruling that a state of emergency exists. He then orders the Fisher King to fortify the Sunken City, and declares that all Clerks, Advocates and those other junior ranks not directly engaged in food gathering are to be enrolled in the

## 4. Cycle Ramifications and Outcomes

Watch. Sakai then sends out diplomatic groups to the Evans, requesting food and assistance, which is readily given. Finally, Sakai asks that the notorious Black Owls recruit worthy candidates to replace their losses and at least double their original numbers.

The Fisher King immediately ensures that all Sheban buildings that are on shore or not easily defensible are abandoned, and that the Shebans relocate to the inner core of buildings around the Court Hall. Furthermore, he relocates catapults to the city's rooftops and oversees the building of several strongpoints around the newly-defined outer perimeter. Finally, boats carrying extra supplies are brought inside all the main areas, as though in preparation for a siege.

## YAGANS

Baba Yaga's thoughts and motives regarding the Crusades are unclear, as are those of Her tribe. Clearly, Baba Yaga has supported both Agnes and Joan by Her presence and the presence of Her children during the Crusades. The Yagans as a whole have been indifferent to the Crusaders, however. Yagans have been seen engaging in rituals of immense size, rumored to involve upwards of thirty Dreamers. The purpose of the rituals (beyond divination) is unknown, although speculation runs rampant.

## OUTSIDE THE NATION

The time of **Broken Pact** and the Crusades has had a significant impact on the Z'bri and other Outlooks. Since the Crusade involved Joshua's Heart, or at least the search for it, the Guides and Joshuans were drawn in and their presence was felt more keenly among the other Tribals and Fallen.

## GUIDES

The fulfillment of Joshua's Prophecy is an immediate priority for the Guides. Some of them went on Crusade with the Joanites to see destiny unfold and help steer the course of events. Others, like Jaky Maque and Tomoe, represent new blood in Vimary for the Guides. Jaky has now become one of Shera's permanent advisors, and keeps in constant contact with the Children of Lilith, as well as the Guides of Hom.

Tomoe is a neonate Guide, working towards becoming a full Guide, but is still not aware of the many mysteries that her brethren keep. Tomoe maintains her strong ties with the Agnites (especially with Puck and Agnes Herself), a connection that places a great deal of responsibility on her shoulders.

## JOSHUANS

More Joshuans are appearing in Vimary. Now that it is clear that the Prophecy of Joshua is unfolding, more and more Joshuans are likely to be drawn to be part of that destiny. Rikhard, Eloise, Fleur and the band led by the Vanguard Gen of Mahgog are just the first of the new wave. Kilbane and the other Ravagers are on a high after the Crusade against the Z'bri. They quickly leave to find others that they left behind, who come back to Vimary.

## MARIANS

The Marians played little part in **Broken Pact**, although the recent split in the Magdalites is part of their long-term plans. The outcome of that schism will either see the Marians flourish or be reduced to an impotent force. The Marians are so caught up their current problems that they have had no time for the Crusaders, although they are greatly concerned by the impending Z'bri attack. Ties with the Joanites and Fallen are being sought to help the Marians survive the war with the Z'bri.

## Z'BRI

The Z'bri are in turmoil after **Broken Pact**. The Baron did a good job of destroying those who sought to depose him, but now his life and power are uncertain; his remaining enemies are struggling to get a quick outcome so they can organize the revenge all the Z'bri want to inflict on the Nation. The Flemis have withdrawn their opinions and support, awaiting the outcome in silence. The Baron has appointed Sk'ksul as Prince of the Koleris, but rather than support the Baron, Sk'ksul has started fighting with Melanis Prince C'arhis over tactics and future plans.

Prince Sk'ksul does not want to hold off his revenge against the Nation as the Baron has asked, and has already ordered the Koleris Hordes into the H'l Kar proper to defend against further attack. Sensing another coup in the making, Prince C'arhis has called in his own forces (after purging them of the pretender's supporters), and they now protect the Baron in the Ziggurat. To make matters worse, Sangis Prince Fa'Cul, although officially on the Baron's side, argues that now is the best time to strike, before the Joanites recover and the other tribes get properly prepared for the battle.

## KEY DEVELOPMENTS

**Broken Pact** brings with it a number of important developments. Two of these dominate the others and are discussed here.



## WAR ON THE HORIZON

The Crusaders' attack on the Z'bri has everyone in the Nation and Fallen expecting retaliation, and those who know that the Pact of the Dome has been destroyed also know that with it goes any chance of a new peace. The nightly incursions by the Z'bri keep the tension rising, and many suspect that whatever happens next, it will be the definitive act that will forever change their way of life. People now rarely travel at night or into the forests at any time unless in large, heavily armed groups. Westholm is all but cut off from the Nation. All efforts are devoted to fortification, food gathering, weaponsmithing and discussions to prepare for the coming war.

## JOAN/TERA SHEBA SCHISM

The schism between the Pillars brings with it an end to the comfortable way of life the two Fatimas provided to the Nation. Now the Pillars are separated, Tera Sheba and Joan are no longer there to watch over the Tribals and protect them from the Z'bri. To some, Joan appears to have lost Her mind and taken up Her dead Brother Joshua's cause, while Tera Sheba appears to have abandoned Her long-sought leadership of the Nation and forsaken the tribes in their darkest hour.



## Chapter Five: Weaver's Resources

They will be blind until I come to tell them truth.  
They will fear the wrath of wisdom and learn the  
wisdom of wrath. They will see the young grow, and  
know their destiny.

They will live in dreams and see ghosts die. They  
will find the barrier to truth and heal it with a  
wound...

- From the Prophecy of Joshua



## ROLEPLAYING FATIMAS

Fatimas should never be presented as beings whose presence can be ignored or treated as mundane. Their powerful connection with Dream makes their presence felt by everyone nearby, inspiring respect, awe and obedience. A strange sense of heartfelt love, well-being and intimacy is present in all who are near them. Fatimas like Joan, Tera Sheba and Agnes will always have an entourage of some of the most senior people of the tribe with them, and when stupid, flippant or aggressive questions are put to the Fatima, the senior Tribals will step in quickly to prevent further offense or wasted time.

Weavers should aim to have Fatimas speak as little as possible about Dream, the Pact of the Dome, the origins of the Z'bri and similar secrets. This will help to keep their mystique and stop PCs from using them to uncover the large secrets in the game in such a simple way. When Fatimas wish to convey such wisdom, it is usually at their own pace and for particular reasons.

It is advisable to have Fatimas speak little and let their senior people do the talking, to avoid the Fatimas' words from becoming commonplace. During **Broken Pact**, Puck (**T8 Rulebook** p.40), Megin (p.80) and Hesperrin (**Vimary**, p.86) are all good choices as speakers for Agnes. Commander Shera (**T8 Rulebook** p.56), Winter Wolf Captain Kaet Fera'on (p.34) and White Guard Captain Alnesh Kil'on (**Word of the Pillars** p.70) are all good choices as speakers for Joan.



## AGNES

Agnes has recently moved into an adolescent phase, leaving behind some of Her childishness. Now She gives the impression of adolescence, both in Her patterns of speech and action. Consequently, She acts more maturely, but She can also easily be caught up in moments of fun, frivolity, spitefulness and posturing. Her voice is a little deeper and Her use of language more complex. Agnes is also trying to mature Her tribe, encouraging things like manners, politeness, cleanliness and the imitation of adult ways — especially those of the Joanites. During the *Children's Crusade* She also becomes very interested in the idea of discipline, feeling like the Queen of Her tribal army as it marches forth. Her Favorite Children thus become Her "officers," chosen as much for their military ability as for their ability to relate to Agnes.



## JOAN

Joan's voice is deep and husky, a coarse whisper that is heard through all other conversations and noise. Joan carries a very powerful presence that easily intimidates those around Her. She is much more dynamic than She ever has been in the past, using Her great strength and power to assist in preparations for the Crusade.

Although the Weaver can force PCs to roll Intimidation vs. 10 (and suffer MoF penalties to all actions) if they wish to do something that will clearly offend the Joanites and Joan, it is better to deter the PCs from such actions by describing to them the mixed sense of intimacy, well-being and friendship they experience in Joan's presence. Joan's conversations tend to be philosophical, cryptic, prophetic or evasive. All Joan's actions are performed in a steady and sure way, Her stride purposeful, Her gaze penetrating. Some Fallen may be reminded a great deal of Lilith, although Joan seems less passionate than Her impulsive 'niece.' Joan carries Joshua's hammer shaft, which She has taken from Lilith's body.

## USE OF FATIMAL POWERS

Fatimas are incredibly powerful compared to PCs, Z'bri, and even the likes of Lilith (see **Children of Lilith** pp.74-75). Fatimas can use all the Eminences and Aspects with maximum effect, although they are the best at those of their tribes. They are likewise immune to the use of Synthesis or anything but the most powerful Sundering. Anyone within a few hundred meters of a Fatima has protection against Sundering if the Fatima so chooses, so its use by Z'bri during the Crusades is at -2 penalty. During the Crusades, the Fatimas should not make the PCs invulnerable, but they are a useful way to keep PCs alive and in the game through their healing powers and protection. Anyone healed by a Fatima should feel a strange sense of connection with them, no matter their previous relations. This will fade in time (the time the wound would have taken to heal naturally), but until then it will be difficult to go against the Fatima's interests and desires, or to speak or act against them.



## 5. Weaver's Resources

## AGNES

Agnes carries with Her a sense of Inspiration (**T8 Rulebook**, p. 166) whose effect comes to the fore when She needs the Children to act against the Z'bri. At such times, PCs will need to resist a Threshold of 6 to not be so inspired; fumbles indicate an epiphany of some sort. This effect should be noticeable after the event, and should serve as an uncomfortable reminder of the Fatimas' ability to control the Nation's people.

## JOAN

Joan's presence in battle provides several benefits to those who fight alongside Her. PCs will feel a wave of Synthesis which makes them feel strong, powerful and brave. In game terms, Fatigue and System Shock are ignored. These Characters also receive +2 to any use of Synthesis. All Skill fumbles are ignored, and all Z'bri the PCs are fighting receive -2 on all their rolls (including Sundering). In addition, the Joanite Aspect of Battle (**T8 Rulebook** p.172) can be used with no build-up time, and PCs who are wounded at this time or already have a Deep Wound are considered to have the Eminence of Fury (**T8 Rulebook** p.168). When describing these effects, it is advisable to avoid references to Silhouette system mechanics; rather, the Weaver should refer to the renewed vigor and power that the PCs sense, and only mention the bonuses when Players make the appropriate rolls.



## AGNITE BATONS

The Batons Agnes gives to Her Captains are imbued with both Her and Joan's Synthesis. They provide the bearer with the Joanite Eminence of Fury (**T8 Rulebook** p.168) and the Agnite Eminence of Inspiration (**T8 Rulebook** p.166) at Level 1, or add 1 to an existing level of those Eminences. When wielded in battle, they also can provide the Joanite Aspects of Battle (**T8 Rulebook** p.172) and Righteousness (next page). Treat as Club +1 Parry, +7 damage against Z'bri.



## JOSHUAN SPEAR

The Baron has in his possession part of Joshua that was found on an intruder many years ago. It is a spear fashioned from a part of the now-slain Fatima Joshua. The Baron has kept this particularly lethal weapon safe in case he needed to rid himself of a powerful rival, and now that time has come. Count H'x has become too much of a problem, and the Baron's plan is to use the artifact to kill him irrevocably. Over a long period of time, the Baron has studied and teased at the Synthesis within the weapon, somehow redirecting it to "hate" Count H'x. This twisting of the innate Rage in the weapon will attempt to force the bearer to seek out and slay H'x when he comes to their attention. It is a plan not without risk, but the Baron has taken the gamble that it will work; if the scheme fails, his elite Talon bodyguard will do the job. See *Tunnel of Trouble*, *Children's Crusade* for more details.

The Rage within the spear can be sensed by anyone with Synthesis of 2 or higher who examines it closely, especially if they are a Joanite, Jacker, Joshuan, or a Child of Lilith. This spear was once part of Joshua, a piece the Baron has kept for a time such as this one. If the weapon strikes a Z'bri, it will limit their powers to leave their body and also inflict much damage.

Joshuan Longspear (+1 to hit/+2 to parry/+1 to Synthesis use/+2 to Rage Synthesis or grants it to one who does not have it already/ DM 17 / Unbreakable).

## ASPECT: RIGHTEOUSNESS (JOANITES, JACKERS, JOSHUANS (CHILDREN OF LILITH): PSY. THRESHOLD 4)

During the uprising in the camps, there was born a need for spiritual purity, a moral cleansing to rid humanity of the filth they had been tainted and oppressed by. Righteousness allows the Dreamer to receive a bonus in response to any Sundering Aspect used on her while she is awake and aware of Z'bri nearby. The Dreamer rolls her PSY versus a Threshold of 4; the MoS applies as a bonus to any resistance or defensive rolls she must make. Furthermore, when physically attacking Z'bri or being attacked by them, this bonus can be applied to Resistance rolls against Atmosphere and defensive actions like parries or dodges. The Dreamer cannot use any other Synthesis Aspects in the same round she uses Righteousness, and any other Synthesis effects end when this Aspect is used.

It is up to the Weaver whether or not the PCs learn of the Aspect of Righteousness and/or obtain it. As a general guideline, PCs who have shown themselves to be devoted to wiping out the Z'bri should be able to learn Righteousness as part of the martial and mediation practices that the Templars are teaching. The other qualifiers a Weaver may wish to impose are that the Character concerned has not harmed a Joshuan or, if she has done so, has sought forgiveness. Those Characters with WIL or PSY at +1 or better are more likely to manifest this Aspect, and usually will not manifest it if these Attributes are negative. It is also possible for it to manifest itself in a PC during the battle with the Z'bri, possibly to help save her in her darkest hour.

## LANDS OF THE Z'BRI

When the PCs are in the H'I Kar and the deeper parts of Abonom, the Weaver is encouraged to describe the terrain in detail. All that lives in the earth in these regions is twisted and perverted. No food or water exists that is not poisonous, diseased or tainted in some way. Weavers are encouraged to constantly remind the PCs of the disturbing nature of the terrain they are passing through, and to never let them take anything for granted as they might in normal wilderness areas. When traveling through these places, PCs should never be able to feel at ease or truly safe anytime they are not with a Fatima.

In these Z'bri lands, all the color appears to have been leached out of everything and even companions will begin to look washed out as the fatigue of battle sets in. Perspectives are skewed and distances cannot be judged clearly, leading to confusion and disorientation. Other senses, like sound and smell, are likewise confused. Screams and the sound of fighting will seem to be closer or farther away than their actual source. Echoes will be corrupted, changing the tone and intent of the words to darker ones when they are heard. Sometimes whispers carry, and at other times, shouts fail before they leave the throat. There are no nice smells in the H'I Kar that do not have some vile trap connected with them. Most smells are foul, food will be

almost impossible to eat and one's own saliva will begin to taste of vomit and less savory substances as time goes on.

Everything in the Z'bri lands that is not bone fields or blasted and poisoned earth has some form of twisted life growing on it. There are the organ fields, mass graves and flesh-plant vineyards which Serfs and flesh-crafted insects tend to. Any Z'bri construction is a *Living Building* (see below) that uses flesh for almost all its parts; the bodies that make up such buildings, no matter how far they have been reduced to component muscles and organs, still live. Some are more sentient than others, and badly wounded PCs may find that the buildings in which they are seeking refuge are attempting to absorb or digest them.

## LIVING BUILDINGS

In **Broken Pact**, there are many buildings made of flesh and bone that have limited sentience. Flemis buildings tend to be part of the Hive mind, whereas Sangis buildings tend to be controlled by an Iv'chet whose body is part of the construction. Sangis Lords always refer to their Spires by the name they have given them and their Iv'chet "brain." The Ziggurat itself has several such personalities extending over its various regions.

The *Living Buildings* are detailed here, preceded by information on the defenses they can summon against intruders. Many of the Z'bri buildings have flesh-crafted defenses that will attack intruders. They have been detailed here by name, with corresponding descriptions and game stats. Many of the Flemis, Melanis and Sangis buildings encountered in **Broken Pact** will make use of these defense systems. Feel free to add your own or alter the lethality of the ones presented here. Following the description for each Living Building defense system are statistics for its use in the game. It is left to the Weaver to decide exactly what defenses the PCs will come up against in these various Living Buildings, although in some cases suggestions have been given.

*Camouflage* is a Threshold for Notice Skill checks to detect a defense before it can attack a person. These Notice rolls are at -2 when looking out for someone ahead of the person. When detected, the Living Building defense systems can be destroyed by brute force, and AR and STA ratings are given to represent the difficulties of doing this. Some devices will fight back, but most can be attacked once they are revealed without such a danger. Some traps are designed to have four or five of the same system layered in close proximity to one another to surprise incautious attackers. Many of these devices also receive a bonus to attack if they surprise an intruder, usually reflected in brackets after the Melee score.

Door-opening devices and disarming systems for defenses have various triggers and switches. Some require Sundering to activate, while others have organs and nerves that need to be touched in a certain way. For most PCs, the only way to figure out these devices is by trial and error or by being concealed and seeing Z'bri use them.

## 5. Weaver's Resources

Lighting in Living Buildings can come from simple windows of bone and flesh or recessed organs that generate dull glows of various colors. The light organs work on various principles, but most are filled with a bioluminescent substance that glows when the building supplies the organ with heat and power.

- **Acid Nipple:** An acid-squirting nipple group will douse intruders or food for the Living Building in digestive juices to accelerate digestion. Four or five nipples are usually placed very near to one another when used as a defensive system. Camouflage 4 (3 in Sangis Building, because they are everywhere) Combat Sense 1/-1, Squirting 2/+2, DMx5, Range 2/4/8/16 (will burn each round thereafter for a number of rounds equal to the MoS, the Damage being equal to the original MoS minus one for each round thereafter), AR 3, STA 20. Hacking into these to kill them will subject the weapon used to a large amount of corrosive juices, likely damaging it. Bone is immune to the acid.

- **Bone Blade Traps:** These shoot a spear or swing a razor-sharp bone blade when an intruder is seen by the device's eye, or when an object (like a floor rib) is touched without first giving a password (in Z'bri or Serf). Camouflage 5, Combat Sense 1/+2, Melee 2/+1 (if victim surprised, then +3), DMx10, AR 5, STA 40, has a 1 in 3 chance of shattering on metal armor.

- **Bone Sphincter Doors:** These doors are so thin as to be translucent when they are closed. They are the result of molding dozens of bones together to create several triangular tooth-like segments that bite toward one another to close a passageway. Camouflage 3, Combat Sense 2/+0, Melee 2/+2 (if victim surprised, then +4), DMx11, AR 20, STA 100, may shatter a tooth on metal armor on a 1 in 6 chance (reduce combat Skills and Damage by -1). If a door hits somebody with a MoS of 3 or more, it is considered to have caught her in its jaws and will crush/cut her for an automatic hit each round, inflicting a Deep Wound (reduced to a Flesh Wound if the victim is wearing metal armor or if allies help brace the door open).

- **Electric Tentacles:** These are a defense system to deter straying Serfs or to knock out or kill intruders. They are also used in torture rooms to assist in the application of pain. They function as Tentacles (see below), but also have an additional electrical attack of Intensity 3+1d6 (T8 Rulebook, pp.153-154).

- **Gas Chamber:** When Sangis want to entertain, they usually use these chambers, constructed with bony and spiked floors, full of comfortable fleshy pillows. In these rooms, the Z'bri can get some assistance generating the mood through drugs. When one of several organs are pressed, the chambers fill with potent, gaseous drugs — Potency 8, Onset: 4 rounds, both Euphoric and Hallucinogen which must be rolled for separately (T8 Rulebook, pp.152-153); also infects subjects with Sangis Atmosphere; PSY vs. 10 (T8 Rulebook, p.183). Camouflage 7.

- **Absorption Pit:** One potential trap is actually a disposal system that takes the form of a floor sphincter that is easily hidden in the flesh work designs of most Living Building floors. When it opens quickly, it can swallow a medium-sized or smaller person easily (BLD of +1 or less). It will then either crush them with its powerful muscles and digestive juices (STR +2, Light Wound every six rounds) or send them off by mucus tube to a sewer tube. Camouflage 7, STA 20, no armor.

- **Seed Dart:** The Sangis have a weapon that shoots a bone filled with potent disabling drugs. The weapon can only be part of a Living Building, and is usually mounted in a thick wall near an access point. It is sometimes used by the Sangis to force members from other Z'bri Houses to partake in their orgies. (Range 7 meters, ROF 0/12, DMx3, Potency 8, Onset: Instant, Euphoric; also infects victims with Sangis Atmosphere; PSY vs 11 (T8 Rulebook p.183). Camouflage 2, AR 5, STA 20.

- **Sphincter Door:** A very common feature in Z'bri architecture is the *Sphincter Door*, a longish passageway made of muscle that can clamp closed. Not particularly dangerous, it can nevertheless pummel and pin intruders. Camouflage 1 (or 6 for those deliberately hidden), Combat Sense 2/+3, Melee 2/+4 (if victim surprised then +6), DMx3, AR 3, STA 90; if it hits, it entangles the subject and has a STR of 4 for purposes of keeping its grip. These doors can suffocate ensnared victims; consider them to inflict a temporary Flesh Wound every five rounds one is trapped. Such systems typically alert the Serf or Iv'chet guards.

- **Tentacle:** The tentacle systems are a very common defense to keep Serfs from straying without harming them. Camouflage 4, Combat Sense 1/+1, Melee 1/+1 (if victim surprised then +3), Dodge 1/-1, DMx3, AR 5, STA 30; if it hits, it entangles the subject and has a STR of 2 for purposes of keeping its grip. Such systems typically also alert the Serf or Iv'chet guards.

- **Living Flesh Walls:** Walls (floors and ceilings) are made of flesh, resin, bone and sometimes stone, varying in thickness from a few millimeters to a few meters. Living Flesh Walls are riddled with veins, arteries, nerves and nutrient channels. Larger support walls are typically almost a meter thick, and have even larger channels that can pass animals as large as a human. It is quite feasible to cut through walls, and examples of the Armor Rating and Stamina per one-meter-square section are given here and in associated Living Building text. Outer walls are known to scream when wounded, and also weep tears to quench flames. When attacking walls, the attacker rolls a normal to hit versus a defense of zero to calculate how much damage she inflicts. Blunt weapons suffer -2 to hit, except against Thin Bone and Mucus Walls.

- Thin Flesh Wall (AR 3, STA 20)
- Thin Bone Wall (AR 12, STA 40)
- Mucus Wall (AR 3, STA 40, STR +1; repairs 2 rounds)
- Internal Wall (AR 40, STA 100)
- Support Wall (AR 70, STA 150)

## DISSOLVER LEECHES

In areas of Living Building digestive systems, the aggressive Dissolver Leeches help break down flesh and attack intruders. About 10 centimeters in length and pinkish red in color, they seek out foreign flesh and burrow into it, emitting dissolving juices. When they are killed (or accidentally trodden on), they pop, splashing those nearby with their corrosive juices.

Aggressiveness 4, Damage/turn 4, Damage Threshold 30, Random Horde Size 6d6, Basic Swarm Size 200.



## SKULL SQUID

Most of the Z'bri servants are lesser Z'bri or Serfs, but there are some truly bizarre Serfs who are only barely recognizable as being of human origin. One of these species is the Skull Squid, crafted to float in the nutrient-rich channels of Living Buildings, allowing quick response to areas of intrusion anywhere in the complex. More animal than human, they are able to leave their fluid environment for periods of up to an hour to defend the complex and collect material to spawn more of their kind. Each Z'bri House tends to vary the abilities of these creatures; Sangis Squid have fully functional sexual organs, while those created by the Koleris have acid instead of a sedative poison in their bite.

**Highlights:** Twisted, Alien, Shocking.

**Attributes:** AGI +1, BLD -1, FIT +2, INS +3, PER +2, WIL +1, STR +1, HEA +1, STA 30, UD 6

**Skills:** Athletics 2/+2, Combat Sense 2/+2, Dodge 2/+1, Hand-to-Hand 3/+1, Navigation (H'l Kar) 3/+0, Notice 2/+2, Stealth 2/+1, Swimming 3/+2.

**Weapons/Abilities:** Claw (x8), Tentacle Entangle (x3), Bite (x12 — only usable on entangled opponents — poisoned, Potency 9, Onset: Instant, Sedative), Rubbery Hide (AR 5). Immune to acid and electric shock.

## ABONOM

The Flemis which makes up most of what is known as Abonom has been living in fear of attack by the Baron for two human generations, and has had its fair share of attacks from the tribes as well. Furthermore, the Skkr Flemis Hive, from which the Rakh originally seceded, has been trying to reabsorb it, assassinating its leaders in an attempt to take it over. With all these threats, the Rakh Flemis has spent much of its time designing new guard Serfs and other more powerful defenses, like the Great Trident.

Other exiled Z'bri of other Houses also call Abonom home, having fled the Baron's reign or been outcast. Thus, Koleris and Melanis towers dot the landscape of Abonom. For more information, see *Vimary*, pp.78-79.

## ORGAN FIELDS AND SERF LANDS

The Serf Lands are a great ring of fields surrounding Abonom, where attendant Z'bri Serfs grow flesh, bone and wheat. Feeding these fields are rivers of nutrients, which wind their way through to the edge of the flesh fields and then dip below the surface to return underground. Each of these outlying regions is protected by a Rakh Hive Iv'chet (p.88), who directs its dozen or so Battle Serfs (p.89), Skull Squid and a handful of Floaters (p.94) against intruders. Weavers should feel free to add other Z'bri minions of their own design.

## HIVE DOMES

Most Flemis domes are on the inside of the circle of fields that makes up the outer extent of Abonom, although some now sit at the fringes. The outermost domes are for the Serf farmers, their guards and the Iv'chet overseer. The domes are made up of corkscrewing tunnels that lead upward, opening onto sleeping and storage chambers, Floater aviaries, meditation rooms and prisoner cells. Serfs normally sleep in the highest levels, their guardians below. Dome walls are Support Walls that scream when wounded; they are also hard to burn, weeping tears to quench any flames. Most have large Sphincter Doors to allow access, and Gas Chambers or poisoned (Potency 8, Onset: 4 rounds, Sedative) Bone Blade Traps to disable intruders. Skull Squid use the nutrient channels in the walls to respond to breaches and intrusion, bursting forth from the rift or nearby sphincters to attack intruders.

The domes closest to the Trident and main hive are larger and home to specialist Z'bri and Serfs. The lower sections of these walls are reinforced with stone material (+30 AR to Support Wall). Within these larger domes, it is very easy to get disoriented and lost. Defense in the larger halls consists of Floaters that burst out through mucus walls, huge Sphincter Doors that extend for whole floors, which fall away into pools of bile filled with Skull Squid and other traps designed to take out whole groups of assailants. Rakh Hive Flemis Lords will avoid engaging intruders in combat, but if forced to do so, they will become as one in their Flemis Living Armor (*Horrors of the Z'bri* p.119), using powerful Sundering to trap attackers in the walls of their Hive.

## MAIN SKKR DOME

The Baron forced the Rakh Hive to accept the presence of the Skkr Hive in the midst of Abonom some two generations ago, to placate the angry Flemis. The Skkr Hive has grown its "embassy" into a huge building and has built defenses all around the Rakh Hive for the army it expects will one day spill from the Hive and try and take it over. It is from here that the Baron stages his "Hunt" during the *Children's Crusade*.

## THE GREAT TRIDENT

The Great Trident is a relatively new feature of Abonom, built under the guidance of the Melanis near the center of the Hive. Its base and lower levels are made mostly of bone-reinforced support walls (+30 AR, +50 Stamina). The huge outer Bone Sphincter Door (Camouflage 0, Combat Sense 3/+2, Melee 3/+3, DMx20, AR 75, STA 150) is surrounded by a dozen Bone Blade Traps. Behind this door is a guard group of eight Qh'far Iv'chet Monks (p.91).

Apart from these defenses, and the occasional Bone Sphincter Door and Bone Blade Trap, the rest of the construct is filled with Flemis and Melanis Serfs and Iv'chet. The exception for the *Children's Crusade* will be the presence of H'x and his body-guard; the Baron has seen to it that the other guards normally assigned to protect the Trident have been removed.

## WEAVER'S RESOURCES

### 5. Weaver's Resources

The "brain room" of the Trident lies at the center of the crosspiece. Here, a huge brain sits under a mucus surface and allows those that meld with it to direct its weather power, lightning attack and control of the Flemis War Machines. This is normally something far beyond any human's mental ability, but further details of its use are discussed under *Children's Crusade*.

#### MELANIS TOWERS

Melanis towers are typically well protected against attack, and those around Abonom are no different. Each tower's outer wall is impregnated with stone to make it fire-retardant and almost impossible to breach without siege equipment (Support Wall AR +50, STA +50). Each tower sports only one large Bone Sphincter Door (DMx20, AR 60, STA 130) surrounded by eight Bone Blade Traps. If one can scale or fly up the thirty-meter-tall height, the roof is surrounded by spikes and more Bone Blade Traps, but does allow access to the tower's interior through a Bone Sphincter Door. All towers have ears and eyes to sense any approach.

Each Melanis Tower is built for a particular purpose, based upon the activities of its controlling Iv'chet or Lord. Some are just strongholds for the Qh'far, supporting stables and Serfs to care for them. They can also act as signaling posts, training grounds, artists' retreats, places of meditation and sanctuary for Z'bri fleeing the Baron. Other Melanis Towers are research places, where experiments can be conducted in privacy. Such towers are filled with specially crafted Serfs to serve their Lord's work. Almost all towers have hidden living quarters for the most senior Melanis to hide or rest.

#### FLEMIS WAR MACHINES

Flemis War Machines were created during the days of the camp uprising. Formed from hundreds, sometimes thousands of bodies, these behemoths are each distinct living organisms that have mostly been in hibernation since the Tribal-Z'bri Pact (see also *Horrors of the Z'bri*, p.113). The Rakh Hive has spent the last few generations rebuilding some of these machines in secrecy, hoping to surprise whomever first tries to attack them. The Rakh Hive (with Melanis help) has also built the huge Trident to control the War Machines that lie dormant in the Duskfall and distant Outlands.

#### RAKH WAR MACHINE — RIND

Rind is the result of a major overhaul and rebuilding of one of the largest of the War Machines. Rind appears to be one of the many Living Building Domes, but when released, will burst free to reveal its true nature. Rind is built like a huge hermit crab, its lower body sitting on many large and armored legs, while much of its mass is concealed in an enormous spiraling shell. Rind is designed to be sent forth against the strongest part of an enemy force and survive whatever onslaught is returned.

The great shell protects Rind's delicate organs and brain. From the Brain Room, Rind's Iv'chet or Lord controller can guide Rind on the battlefield. The great shell is also designed to carry some fifty Battle Serfs and their Iv'chet masters. Once in the thick of the enemy, Rind can unleash these fresh warriors to provide support and additional attacking power. This is also intended to allow Rind to serve as a siege engine, releasing troops after defensive works have been breached. The troops pass through several orifices beneath and to the rear of Rind's lower body.

Rind is not yet fully rebuilt, nor is its psyche completely absorbed by the Rakh Flemis group mind. The Flemis cannot put many troops in Rind, for fear of upsetting it; Rind has a phobia about organisms invading it. Already, the Rakh Hive has mentally grafted Skull Squid servants into Rind's body and mind to help it feel confident it can defend itself, but Rind has yet to face the horror of battle.

When using Rind in *Fighting Rind*, balance out the number of Living Building defenses against the combat abilities of the PCs and those with them. Inside Rind's internal passageways, there are glowing organs that give off a dull yellow light. All of Rind's outer doors are Bone Sphincter Doors. Rind's internal walls are all *Support Walls*, forcing PCs to only use the passages and not make any doorways or passages of their own in Rind's body. Rind's internal defenses are mostly in the way of concealed Bone Blade Traps triggered by Rind's sight, which comes from eyestalks along the passageways. Immediately outside his Brain Room is a room of Electrical Tentacles in which *Skull Squids* (modified to be immune to electricity) wait concealed.

Rind's Brain Room has an extra-strong Bone Sphincter Door (AR 30, STA 200) protecting it. Once it is breached, all those inside Rind (and even some who are outside but nearby) will be subject to a massive amount of Flemis Atmosphere (T8 *Rulebook* p.180) which links them to the Hive Mind and makes them feel as though they are part of Rind and Rind is part of them. This makes it very difficult to destroy Rind's brain, which sits in the Brain Room. It also means that the Characters can sense the approach of at least seven other War Machines that will all be here in an hour or so. Furthermore, those subject to the Atmosphere feel Rind's hunger and sense its contented digestion of the Agnites it has managed to catch. All affected individuals need to make a check of PSY vs. Threshold 6 to not suffer -2 to all actions for the next ten minutes due to disorientation and nausea. To actually strike the mortal blow against Rind, a WIL vs. Threshold 8 is needed. Before the blow can be struck, those inside and right next to the brain room will also "understand" that Rind and the other War Machines are coming at the control of the Great Trident — and that the giant creatures, given a choice, would prefer not to obey the commands of the cruel Count H'x.

**Attributes:** AGI -4/0\*, BLD +25, FIT +5, INS +3, PER 0/+1\*, WIL +4, STR +15/+3\*, HEA +5, STA 500/40\*, UD 40/20\*

**Skills:** Combat Sense 3 0/+1\*, Hand-to-Hand 3 -4/0\*

**Special Abilities:** 12 Pincers/Claws (x15), Ram/Stomp (x50)

\*First figure is Rind's main body ram/stampede. The second is for Rind's external claws, spear limbs and legs.

Belly (Support Wall +40 AR, +40 STA)

Pincers/Claws/Spear Limbs/Legs (Interior Wall) — If Rind loses 10 or more it is slowed by half, and likely will retreat into shell crushing any in the troop rooms.

5 Doors (Bone Sphincter Doors)

Shell (External — 2 x Support Wall; Internal — Support Wall; Shell has Bone Blade Traps and more Bone Sphincter Doors on way to brain area)

## SANGIS PALACES

Sangis Lords live in palaces around the Ziggurat. Each palace is surrounded by large walls which enclose the Lord's possessions, keeping them safe. Guard Serfs led by Iv'chet protect this perimeter and also patrol the inside, which includes organ fields, twisted gardens, bathing pools, stables and the Serfs' quarters. These all sit at the base of the Lord's living quarters, a tower known as the Spire. The compound is filled with areas of flesh art and sculpture, from hedges of human hair to statues of growing bone. Compounds are typically separated from each other by roads, open sewers or nutrient river moats. The outermost compounds of the Sangis estates in the H'I Kar are actually inhabited by more powerful Lords who use the space around them to cultivate exotic species of plant-organ vines. The palace of Sangis Lord Tyt'n in *Removing the Watcher* is one of these.

## COMPOUND

Each Sangis Lord sees to it his Serfs are guarded as well as protected; for a traditional Sangis Lord, wealth and respect are based upon the number and quality of the slaves he owns. Trusted Serfs and several Iv'chet have full-time duty watching from the compound's stone and thorny bone walls (reinforced Support Walls AR +40). They report to the senior Iv'chet (known as the Groundskeeper) who is responsible for the Lord's security. It is tradition for the Groundskeeper to keep a pack of Kun'il (demon hounds, *Horrors of the Z'bri* p.116; can also substitute Wolves with BLD 6, all other Attributes at +1, and AR 5), which he unleashes on intruders or escaping Serfs. Many Sangis estates also have flesh weapons to detect and attack intruders. Seed Darts have become popular on the inside of perimeter walls to disable and capture both escapees and intruders.

## SERF'S QUARTERS

At the base of the Lord's Spire are the domes of the Serfs and Iv'chet. When attacked, many of these domes are evacuated to channel attackers into defensible areas of the complex. To slow attackers, some domes are filled with noxious or sedative gases and fluids. Others are collapsed to limit the number of access areas. There are many living building defenses between the Serfs' Quarters and the Iv'chet area right at the base of the Spire. Tentacles, Sphincter Doors, Bone Blade Traps and other living defenses are here to attack intruders.

## SPIRE

The Spire is the most decorative and deadly of the Lord's holdings. It has a mind of its own, an Iv'chet who has been immortalized by being crafted into the building's personality. In the Spire, the senior Iv'chet hold their final stand against determined attackers. The nastiest of living building defenses are kept here, such as Acid-Nipple-lined walkways that extend over sewage pits filled with Dissolver Leeches, with Seed Darts nearby to knock intruders off. Gas Chamber traps are also common. The Spire's support and internal walls are all reinforced (AR +15, STA +30).

The armory is located within the base levels of the Spire. A Lord's Flemis Living Armor (*Horrors of the Z'bri*, p.119) will be here if the Lord is particularly powerful. Also in the lower levels are the cells for the Lord's current favorite prisoners. The upper floors of the Spire hold the boudoir, a senior Iv'chet guard station and the aerial stables. The boudoir is the Lord's entertaining chamber, opulently decorated with flesh art and stolen artifacts. Large bone and cartilage balconies provide views across the nearest neighboring towers and of the great ziggurat. It is common for a few Seed Darts to be mounted on these balconies; these can fire down upon the Serfs in the organ fields below or turn and fire into the guest chambers. Some Lords have secreted acid organs within their palaces, in case they are forced to flee an aggressive neighbor; these organs are intended to spill acid and lethal gases down the Spire, destroying everything within.

## ZIGGURAT

The Ziggurat (see also *Vimary*, p.76) is a huge structure built of stone, resin, bone and flesh. It rises toward the sky like a great twisted flower, spilling out as it rises, forming towers and balconies. From its center rises the Ziggurat proper, which contains the great Throne Room. Above that are the Baron's enormous conical living quarters, where he keeps hundreds of Serfs and Z'bri. The Ziggurat also extends deep into the earth of the H'I Kar, where Serfs can be found toiling in subterranean gardens and beast pens. Also deep underground are hidden areas for experimentation and torture; despite the Ziggurat's size, the Baron prefers to keep the aboveground areas reserved for his own use.



## ZIGGURAT LAYOUT

There are only two major doors into and out of this living fortress. One is on the south side and leads to the Spine Bridge and the other is on the north side and leads to the rest of H'I Kar. Inside the Ziggurat, there are numerous passageways, bile transport tubes and stairs leading away in all directions. Any PCs that make it into the Ziggurat should be overwhelmed by the structure's confusing layout, and any attempts to map it will soon prove difficult because of the constantly shifting nature of the living tunnels and rooms. Indeed, the Ziggurat does not obey the laws of reality, a fact which should soon become apparent as the PCs explore. Some apparently solid walls are fluid, while others that look fluid are solid. Sometimes blood and bile runs up walls in defiance of gravity; rooms full of breathable fluid or bizarre light- or time-bending effects are also common.

In all this confusion, there are a few places in the Ziggurat whose locations are fixed. Apart from *The Gate Houses*, the *Baron's Throne Room* lies near the top of the Ziggurat, and the *Baron's Personal Chambers* are at its peak. There are several spires and towers around the structure that are used by the Princes and senior nobles of the various Houses. The Baron keeps some aerial stables here for his *Sangis Mounts* and other flesh-crafted flying Serfs. Most of the remaining areas can only be found with certainty by Z'bri connected with the heart of the Ziggurat, something the Crusaders will not manage easily or without cost.

All throughout the Ziggurat run giant arteries and veins that pump blood, bile, food and waste all around the complex. Some of these also function as transport tubes; Serfs and Z'bri are propelled along slippery fluid- and air-filled tubes by pulsating muscles. In other places, it is possible to move swiftly up or down by teasing and riding the ejaculation tube or diving into a huge throat to be swallowed and excreted. The pervasive Atmosphere of the Ziggurat should be a constant threat, and although most of the structure exudes Sangis or Flemis Atmosphere, a few areas are also Melanis and Koleris (T8 Rulebook pp.180-183).

What follows is a breakdown of several major chambers and places in the Ziggurat. It is far from a complete list and Weavers are encouraged to add further locations and traps of their own creation.

**Outer Wall:** The Outer Wall of the Ziggurat is triple the strength of a normal Support Wall. Serf Guards and living defenses watch for trespassers. There are several small entrances, but the main routes are through the two main Gates: huge fifteen-meter-wide bone sphincter doors which are effectively unbreakable.

**The Gate House:** The area around the gatehouse control room is a series of bony chambers where organs filled with acid are being readied to be used on the attackers when Joan returns. The amount of acid and tainted bile could even threaten Her power, if She steps in its way by attacking the door personally.

The Gate Keeper is in a huge bone room shaped like the inside of a skull. The room sits some ten meters above the fifteen-meter diameter doors. Access by crawling through its "eye" and "nose" slots is possible, but those that do so will certainly gaze

into the Gate Keeper's great eye. The Gate Keeper is a huge Flemis Z'bri (use *Rakh Hive Iv'chet* p.88) which is surmounted by a 1 meter diameter eye. All who gaze into the eye and the ten pupils that glide around its yellow/red surface are automatically attacked by the Sangis Sundering power of Soul Stealing (T8 Rulebook p.183), where the Gate Keeper's Influence is +5 and its Sundering 3 (fighting using a reflective surface avoids this attack but is conducted at -3). It will attempt to pit the War Party's members against each other, and can control up to ten of them at one time. WIL rolls when a Character is endangering herself as per the power's description are versus a Threshold of 7, not 5, but can be made each round she is fighting. Once the creature is vanquished, it will disintegrate slowly and the muscles that control the great door will go into spasm, causing it to open and close violently for a minute or so unless it is braced with something strong.

**Aura Chamber:** Created by the Melanis, this is a place where thousands of nerves meet. The chamber's atmosphere is dry and crackling with static electricity, as bioelectricity snaps and shoots around. Some sparks will only give a shock, but some are more lethal. Anyone entering the chamber with large amounts of metal (sword or armor, for instance) will be struck by a charge of 3+d6 intensity (+ metal armor's Encumbrance x 2) (T8 Rulebook pp.153-154). A colony of *Skull Squids* (p.73) lives in the chamber's honeycombed roof and will respond quickly to any disturbances.

**Baron's Throne Room:** PCs are most likely to encounter this after the *Battle of Pearl Hall* in *Crusade of the Heart*. It is a huge place with several alcoves and pools of warm liquid which the Z'bri bathe in. The chamber is mostly made of bone, horn and heavily tanned flesh, and is covered in Z'bri mystical symbols. A huge dais sits near a thin bone window; the dais is marred by a large burn mark, and is also stained by what appears to be smoke. The smoke is the effect of the power of the artifact's Dream on the Z'bri Sundering; this is where Joshua's heart laid until a few years ago, when it was given to Count Nemerath, a Melanis Lord of Capal. The Baronial throne is also located in this room. It is a great seat of warped bone and flesh, a melted and distorted being that has been shaped in to a great throne. Several Bone Blade Traps protect the throne when it is not occupied by the Baron.

Anyone who passes the defenses and climbs onto the throne is immediately infected by the powerful Sangis Atmosphere (Potency 8, Onset: Instant, Euphoric; also infects victim with Sangis Atmosphere: PSY vs 13 see T8 Rulebook, p.183), likely leaving her permanently emotionally scarred in regards to sex; in the future she will see it only as a source of physical release, and never again as an emotional or loving act. It also will destroy her connection with Dream, lowering her Synthesis ability by 2 while giving her +1 to Appearance as well as her Seduction, Lore (Z'bri), and Human Perception Skills (if the Character does not have one or more of the listed Skills, she receives them at level 1). The victim also will now have the Sangis Atmosphere at Threshold 2, not 3. Weavers may allow Synthesis powers that protect against Z'bri to reduce the effects here.

A person who sits on the throne can sense everything occurring in the room, a psychic link that detects her desires and any strong sense of lust or deception. If this happens, Weavers may want to give a PC some secret knowledge about those in the room. Finally, the one who sits on the throne is marked as tainted, and a Yagan Flesh Seer will be able to detect her as such (and will probably want her killed). Weavers may wish to allow a ritual to lift this "curse" to form the basis of another Quest for the PC.

**Baron's Personal Chambers:** This chamber lies at the peak of the Ziggurat, in a great tower above the Baron's Throne Room. It is guarded by *Sangis Tempters* (see below) and also a few of the Baron's elite bodyguard, the Talons. The chambers are a series of rooms that defy reality with extreme examples of changes in the laws of physics. It is also a place where the most disgusting and perverse sexual living sculptures can be found, a shocking sight that will require a check of PSY vs. Threshold 6 to avoid being instantly repulsed and desperate to leave the room. Anyone who fails this test will suffer nightmares for months to come; those who pass the test will still be affected for weeks. Anyone who climbs onto the Baron's bed of blubber and sexual organs will suffer the same effects as sitting on his Throne. PCs in these chambers should be quickly disoriented and find themselves constantly assaulted by Sangis and Flemis Atmospheres. Some Children taken during the *Children's Crusade* are here and can be rescued, although they will need a great deal of emotional support and ritual cleansing to recover from the horror of their experiences.

**Bone Maze:** The Maze was created so the Koleris could train and let out their aggression. It is a labyrinth of human flesh walls which can form opponents from its organs, muscle, and tissue to fight against intruders. Each flesh fighter is attached to the wall from which it spawns by a tethered umbilical cord; if the cord is broken, the creature collapses. The opponents vary in toughness, the strongest form being: AGI +1, BLD +2, FIT +1, PER +2, STA 40, UD 9, Claws/hooves/fangs UD+10, Tough hide AR 8, Combat Sense 2/+2, Dodge 3/+1, Hand-to-Hand 3/+1, Melee 2/+1. The Bone Maze can also form Living Building defenses.

**Chamber of Thought:** This chamber is a dimly lit red room filled with brains connected to screaming mouths. It is a challenge to the sanity of any who enter through one of its several sound-proof orifices. If a check of WIL vs. Threshold 6 is failed, the MoF acts as penalty to all actions and the person becomes disoriented and nauseous. A fumble means that they have gone temporarily insane at the horror of the place. This chamber is used by Melanis Qh'far Monks (p.91) to meditate; PCs will find six of them here, who will fight to the death. Worse yet, the Melanis Atmosphere is particularly powerful here, with a Threshold of 8 for each minute spent here.

**Chamber of Renewal:** This is where the Sangis Iv'chet and Lords slough off their skins when they feel the need for a change. The large and long chamber stinks of decaying flesh and other foul smells, and is festooned with many bone growths to help the Z'bri shred their flesh. At one end, there is a large pool of nutrients containing Dissolver Leeches (p.72) that will attack any non-Z'bri. The Chamber is dark and only lit by crackling energy that occasionally sparks along a spine in the roof.

**Nurseries:** There are several of these warm, long, low-roofed chambers. They are dimly lit in red and full of stiff, foul-smelling hair. Many vats of bodily fluids cover the floor. Tucked away in these pools and the multitude of orifices that line the walls are the infant Serfs who are being specially grown to provide bodies for the powerful Lords of the Ziggurat. The Sangis Atmosphere (Threshold of 7) is particularly potent here, and male and female genitalia are hidden all over the walls and floors for visitors to indulge in. A Sangis Iv'chet normally tends to the nurseries.

**Rage Room:** The Koleris have a room where they get to let go of their restrictions, if only momentarily. The Rage Room is made of soft mucus that glows with a soft gray/red light, and can only be entered by passing through the mucus walls. The room is filled with stalagmites and stalactites of mucus that glow palely and quiver if approached — they will fight intruders with Combat Sense 1/+2, Hand-to-Hand 2/+1, UD 4. This room is humid and contains dense Koleris Atmosphere (Threshold 8).

**Sangis Tempters:** Guarding the Baron's private areas of the Ziggurat are the *Tempters*, carefully crafted Serfs designed to seduce and sedate all interlopers. The current trend is for top-quality sex Serfs to appear as unaltered as possible, waif-like and innocent; this may confuse Crusaders into thinking they are prisoners to be rescued. Treat them as humans with APP +3, FIT +1, PSY +2, HEA +1, STA 30, Hand-to-Hand 2/+0, Dodge 2/+0, Seduction 2/+3, Sangis Atmosphere (Threshold 4, 6 on flesh contact with person). Their saliva is Potency 8, Onset: 4 rounds, both Euphoric and Sedative which must be rolled for separately (T8 Rulebook, pp.152-153); it also infects victims with Sangis Atmosphere at the equivalent of an hour's exposure: PSY vs. 10.



## TOMOE (NEONATE GUIDE)



Tomoe was once one of Joan's Templars, but during the Trial of the Fallen, she heard a calling from the body of Lilith. Touching the remains, she fell deep into Dream; when she woke a week later, she knew her destiny lay outside of Joan's people. Coming to Hom, she met with the other Guides and in a prophetic dream about the Crusades, she set off to join Agnes to help guide Her during the battle to come. She is not a full Guide, and knows she has some years to go before she will properly be considered one of them.

Tomoe has been with Agnes since She was freed from the Z'bri, advising Her on what the Z'bri are like in battle and helping Agnes mature as a warrior. Agnes has sometimes been upset with Tomoe's counsel, and Tomoe is worried She will act against her good advice. Contacted by Baba Yaga in the guise of Den-Hades, Tomoe inadvertently sends written and Dream reports to the Crone as well as the other Guides about Agnes' growth.

Tomoe's recent closeness to Joan has allowed her to meet old friends and act as an emissary between the two tribes. Her biggest problem is Puck's infatuation with her. If she rejects him, it may disrupt the power balance in the Agnites in favor of Hesperrin, but she questions the morality of her own feelings if she accepts him. The choice seems too obvious — which is why she resists it.

## HIGHLIGHTS:

Talkative, Diplomatic, Secretive

## EMINENCES:

Devotion and Fury

## ATTRIBUTES:

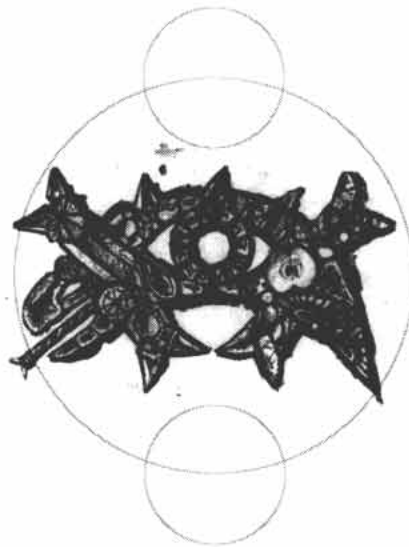
AGI	+1	APP	0	BLD	0	CRE	+1	FIT	0
INF	0	KNO	+2	PER	0	PSY	+2	WIL	+1
STR	0	HEA	+1	STA	30	UD	4	AD	5

## SKILLS:

Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Animal Handling	1	+1	Combat Sense	2	0	Dodge	1	+1
Dreaming	2	+2	Hand-to-Hand	1	+1	Human Perception	1	+2
Lore*	2	0	Melee	1	+1	Notice	2	0
Read/Write**	2	0	Riding	1	+2	Speak ***	2	0
Survival (Foraging)	2	+1	Tactics	2	+1	Throwing	1	+1
Synthesis ****	2		* (Joanites/Joshuans)			** (Tribal, Joanite)		
*** (as written plus Sheban and Agnite)						**** (Battle and Sacrifice)		

## EQUIPMENT:

Katana (+1 Parry, AD+ 9/13), leather robe, chain vest and helm (AR 10), boots, Shortsword (+1 parry AD+8), Telescope, two Z'bri Heartstones.





## JAKY MAQUE (GUIDE)



With Joan's return from Her Dream quest to recover souls from the Sea of the Lost, there arrived in Vimary another Guide — Jaky Maque. Jaky was an outcast from the Joanites some twenty years ago, sent into the Outlands for the heresy inherent in her visions of the future, a fate that also met her niece Ardatli Maque (see *Children of Lilith*, p.85). Jaky claims to have returned at the direction of her niece, whose ghost she encountered during a vision-quest into the River of Dream. Ardatli's ghost spoke of the Prophecy and the great Crusade that would reveal the truth about where the hearts of those wishing freedom truly lay.

Jaky has returned to the Joanites, who have accepted her back into their ranks, although she remains a Guide. Joan Herself has given Jaky a privileged position as an adviser to Commander Shera Uhan'on. Jaky has a great deal of knowledge about the squats, with whom she lived and traveled for many years.

Jaky claims to have a piece of Joshua that she found during her first year of wandering, and which has guided her steps since then. She also has good connections with the Z'bri who have turned against their own kind, known as the Hunters (*Horrors of the Z'bri*, p.67-71 — especially Foris). Jaky spends much of her time with the Eternal Flame before the Crusade starts, gathering stories about her niece from Kallisti and Cerah, as well as anyone who claims to have spent time with the young martyr.



## HIGHLIGHTS:

Old, Haunted, Wild

## EMINENCES:

Force, Devotion and Righteousness

## ATTRIBUTES:

AGI	-1	APP	0	BLD	0	CRE	+1	FIT	0
INF	0	KNO	0	PER	0	PSY	+2	WIL	+3
STR	0	HEA	+2	STA	35	UD	4	AD	5

## SKILLS:

Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Archery *	3	-1	Combat Sense	2	0	Dodge	2	-1
Dreaming	3	+2	Hand-to-Hand	1	-1	Healing	2	0
Leadership	2	0	Lore**	3	0	Melee	2	-1
Navigation***	3	0	Notice	2	0	Ritual (Squat)	2	0
Speak****	2	0	Survival*****	2	+1	Synthesis*****	3	
* (Longbow)			** (Joshuan/Squat)			*** (Outlands)		
**** (Joanite, Joshuan, Squat, Serf)			***** (Shelter/Foraging)					
***** (Rage and Sacrifice)								

## EQUIPMENT:

Longbow (enchanted Acc+2, DM x17) and arrows, leather robe (AR 5), Shortsword (+1 parry AD+8), some Z'bri Heartstones. Enchanted Net (A net of human hair attached to a piece of metal — which once belonged to Joshua — that will capture a Z'bri's Heartstone if the net is covering a Z'bri when they are slain).

## CAPTAIN MEGIN (AGNITE BULLY AND FAVORITE)



Megin thinks she should have been born a Sheban. Among the Agnites, she mimics the lawgivers, holding trials and tribunals for those children who made the mistake of offending her or challenging her position. Megin is confident and passionate, and likes to throw around her intellectual weight and self-assurance.

Now in her seventeenth year, she thinks she might try and join the Shebans; she has grown bored of the Agnite pettiness and constant power-plays, and she cannot seem to dislodge Hesperrin as Agnes' Favorite. She is an influential figure in *Children's Crusade*, acting as a disciplinarian in the pseudo-military structure the Agnites are trying to effect.

Megin keeps an eye on all non-Agnites and has a Sheban dislike of the Fallen, which leads to her persecuting them at all opportunities. She also likes the idea of handing out corporal punishment. Megin has a pet Wonder Monster Bear known as Murray that acts as her "sergeant at arms" when she holds court. During the Crusades, she always rides on a Wonder Monster.

Megin dislikes Hesperrin passionately for trying to get her into trouble, and is bent on seeing Hesperrin fall from favor. During the attack on the Sunken City, Megin secretly helps the Shebans, with the help of the Sheban Eminence of Truth to conceal Murray's actions from Agnes.

### HIGHLIGHTS:

Short-Tempered, Impatient, Headstrong

### EMINENCES:

Inspiration

### ATTRIBUTES:

AGI	+1	APP	0	BLD	0	CRE	+2	FIT	+1
INF	0	KNO	+1	PER	0	PSY	+1	WIL	0
STR	0	HEA	+1	STA	30	UD	5	AD	5

### SKILLS:

Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Athletics	2	+1	Combat Sense	2	0	Craft (Sewing)	1	+2
Dodge	2	+1	Dreaming	1	+1	Hand-to-Hand	2	+1
Human Perception	1	+1	Law	1	+1	Leadership	1	+1
Lore (Shebans)	1	+1	Melee	2	+1	Navigation*	2	+1
Notice	2	0	Read/Write**	1	+1	Ritual (Sheban)	1	+1
Speak***	2	+1	Survival****	1	+2	Throwing	1	+1
Synthesis	1		* (Playground)			** (Tribal, Sheban)		
*** (as written plus Agnite)			**** (Foraging)					

### EQUIPMENT:

Staff (+1 Parry, AD +5), old Sheban robe, lantern, Murray the Wonder Monster.



## BREHNSUN (DAHLIAN FAVORITE)



Brehnsun is one of Dahlia's favorites, to whom She trusts some of Her most delicate plans — he was the leader of the group that went to Mahgog to set up the Lilith trick. Usually assigned to assist tribal groups during their travels across Vimary and into the Outlands, Brehnsun is perfectly placed to gather the secrets of the most influential members of the other tribes. His network of allies is extensive, but most who have dealt with him are never quite sure who owes whom the last favor.

Dahlia has seen to it that he has been trained by the best, including assassins from the Magdalites and hunters from the Joanites. Brehnsun gets about a lot, but unlike his fellows, he usually refuses to use disguises, preferring his quick wits and Synthesis to see him through any situation. He dislikes killing, and has an easygoing manner which has served him well in the past.

It is rumored among the Dahlians that Brehnsun is actually Dahlia Herself in disguise, and it is a rumor Brehnsun is happy to promote in order to get ready assistance when he needs it. Brehnsun has no ambitions to lead the Dahlians, content to remain the Little Trickster of his own Caravan. He claims, usually with a wink, that he only needs the thrill of a good bit of espionage or elaborate jest to keep him going through the days.

## HIGHLIGHTS:

Cheerful, Humorous, Secretive

## EMINENCES:

Illusion and Motion

## ATTRIBUTES:

AGI	+2	APP	0	BLD	-1	CRE	+2	FIT	+1
INF	+2	KNO	0	PER	+1	PSY	+2	WIL	0
STR	0	HEA	+1	STA	25	UD	4	AD	5

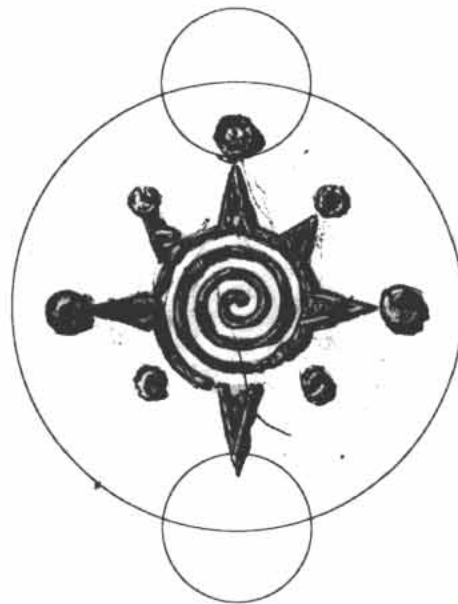
## SKILLS:

Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Camouflage	2	+2	Combat Sense	1	+1	Dance	1	+2
Dodge	2	+2	Dreaming	2	+2	Hand-to-Hand	2	+2
Human Perception	2	+2	Investigation	1	+1	Leadership	1	+2

Lore (Dahlians/Poisons) 1/0, Melee 2/+2, Navigation (Land) 2/0, Notice 2/+1, Read/Write (Tribal) 2/0, Riding 1/+2, Seduction 2/0, Sleight-of-Hand 2/+2, Sneak 2/+2, Speak (as written plus Squat, Joanite and Agnite) 2/0, Streetwise 2/+2, Theatrics 2/+2, Throwing 1/+2, Synthesis (Metamorphosis, Puppet Show) 3.

## EQUIPMENT:

Longsword (Dahlian Artifact +1 Acc/DAM/Synthesis), throwing daggers (poisoned as darts), blowpipe with poison darts (Potency 12, Onset: 2 rounds, Sedative), Dahlian Medallion (+1 Dreaming and HEA rolls, immune to poison), leather armor (AR 5).





# GARRET KIL'ON (TEMPLAR)



A long-term friend of Shera Uhan'on, Garret has worked hard among the Joanites to achieve the tasks set for him by his commanders, even at his own political expense. He consistently refuses to participate in the convoluted politics that impact even the tribe of the Warrior, a stance which has led many to assume that he's simply very good at hiding his true involvement. All his stance has truly gotten him is a lack of fervent allies.

Close to being sent into the Watch or forced to become a Ranger by Nostra Guy'on, the call to Crusade (which he has long supported) has brought Garret all he has ever wished for. Garret's loyalty is now more of an asset than it ever was before, and he burns with the righteous fury of Joan and Her children.

Badly burnt and scarred by several battles with Z'bri and Gek'roh trespassers into Joanite lands, Garret holds little fear of the beasts anymore. He plays out each fight clinically and coldly, intent solely on getting the job done. He hates the Z'bri and sees them as the biggest threat to the future of the Nation. He approves of the passion of the Fallen, and judges the people under him on the purity of their hearts, not their outward allegiances or power-plays. He is a good friend to Markus Jacobi'on.

## HIGHLIGHTS:

Friendly, Strong, Fearless

## EMINENCES:

Devotion, Fury

## ATTRIBUTES:

ACI	0	APP	-3	BLD	+1	CRE	0	FIT	+1
INF	+1	KNO	0	PER	+2	PSY	+2	WIL	0
STR	+1	HEA	+2	STA	40	UD	6	AD	7

## SKILLS:

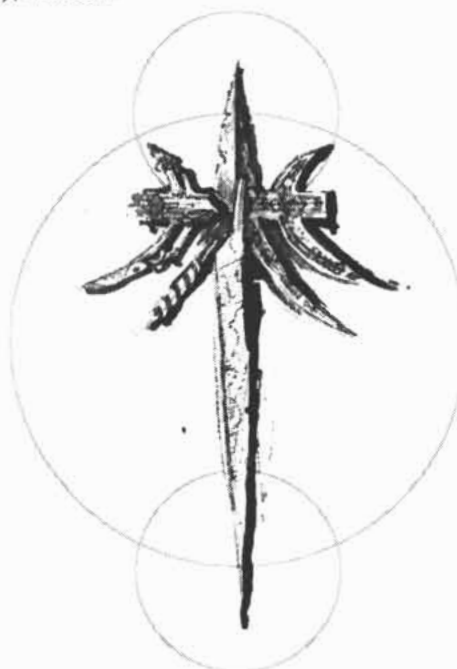
Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Animal Handling	1	0	Archery	2	+1	Athletics	3	+1
Combat Sense	3	+2	Dodge	2	+1	Hand-to-Hand	2	+1
Healing	1	0	Human Percept.	2	+2	Leadership	2	+1
Lore (Poisons)	1	0	Lore (Z'bri)	2	0	Melee (Swords)	3	+1
Navigation*	2	0	Notice (Tracking)	2	+2	Riding	2	0
Ritual	2	0	Survival (Shelter)	2	0	Swimming	2	+1
Tactics	3	0	Throwing	2	+1	Synthesis **	3	

\* (Abnom/H'l Kar)

\*\* (Battle, Sacrifice and Righteousness)

## EQUIPMENT:

Joanite Greatsword (+1 Attack/Parry/Synthesis AD+21), light chain and plate armor and helm (AR 10), Shortsword (+1 parry AD+8), crossbow.



## MARKUS JACOBI'ON (TEMPLAR)



Markus, once a man content only when alone with his blades and his thoughts, is now a very happy man. He left the tribes years ago due to his inability to reconcile the old tales of Joan as a vengeful and righteous Warrior with the meek and shackled Fatima who ruled his heart during his childhood. Now that Joan has broken fully from the hold the Tera Sheba had over Her and has called for Crusade, Markus has returned from his self-imposed exile as a Hermit Blade to take up the cause.

Markus has suffered greatly during his life away from the Nation, his small hovel attacked by beasts and wild animals dozens of times over. He suspects that some forces within the tribes had been trying to remove him, and his response was simply to wait for death to come. Somehow, however, the final blow never struck. He has been told by a Yagan mystic that he will die during this coming Crusade, but Markus is undeterred. His character and skill have won him both the opportunity to return to his tribe and a place among the Templars, and he plans to live every day to its fullest.

Markus is a character who should be used to personalize the loss of those who fall in the H'I Kar; it is simple to regard a war as simply a matter of numbers. Markus' strength in the face of his irrevocable and impending doom should serve to remind the PCs of what they are truly fighting for.

Markus has spoken to the Guide Jaky Maque about his fate; this knowledge may get back to the PCs before or after he dies.

## HIGHLIGHTS:

Happy, Brave, Doomed

## EMINENCES:

Devotion, Fury

## ATTRIBUTES:

AGI	+1	APP	0	BLD	0	CRE	0	FIT	+1
INF	+2	KNO	0	PER	+1	PSY	+3	WIL	+1
STR	0	HEA	+2	STA	35	UD	5	AD	6

## SKILLS:

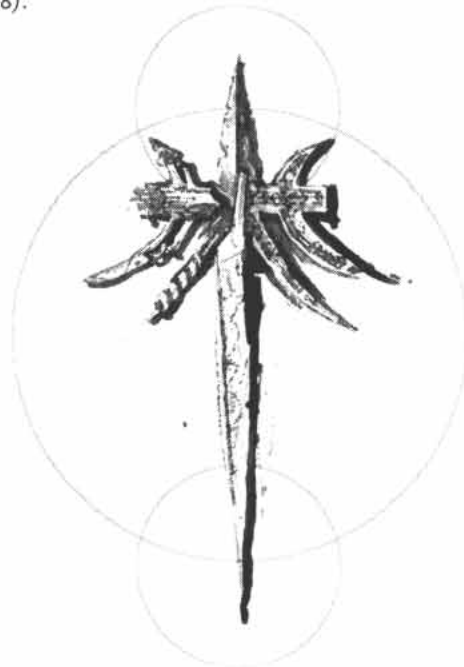
Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Animal Handling	2	0	Athletics	1	+1	Combat Sense	2	+1
Dodge	2	+1	Hand-to-Hand	2	+1	Human Perception	2	+3
Leadership	1	+2	Lore*	2	0	Melee (Swords)	2	+1
Music (Flute)	2	0	Navigation**	2	0	Notice (Tracking)	2	+1
Riding	2	+3	Ritual	1	0	Survival (Foraging)	2	0
Tactics	2	0	Throwing	2	+1	Synthesis ***	2	

\* (Duskfall/Hunting Grounds) \*\* (Hunting Grounds)

\*\*\* (Battle, Sacrifice, Righteousness)

## EQUIPMENT:

Joanite Longsword (+1 Attack/Parry/Synthesis AD+16), light chain and plate armor and helm (AR 10), Shortsword (+1 parry, AD +8).



## CERAH (CHILD OF LILITH)



Cerah is very strong willed, and Kallisti the Fair recognized her ability and dedication soon after Ardatli's death. Cerah is very proud to be the Second to the *Eternal Flame*, the War Party of the Children of Lilith. Her devotion to this Crusade borders on the fanatical, and she is often seen diving into heated arguments and discussions with other Captains and Seconds.

Once an Evan Nanny (*Word of the Fates* p.107), she "fell" to join Joan after having visions of the Prophecy of Joshua. She has always disliked Joanites, always thinking that they were too self-important and proud. When the Winter Wolves slew Ardatli during the siege of the Fallen Isles, Cerah's dislike turned to hatred, and deep down, she decided never to trust them or let her pride get control of her.

Cerah is most intrigued by Halos and Deus, and by the newcomers Tomoe and Jaky. Deep down, she suspects these "Guides" hold secrets about existence that she needs to understand to be complete, and she has asked Jaky to help her deal with her grief over the double loss of Lilith and Ardatli.

## HIGHLIGHTS:

Aggressive, Inspired, Compassionate

## ATTRIBUTES:

AGI	+1	APP	+1	BLD	0	CRE	0	FIT	+1
INF	+1	KNO	0	PER	+2	PSY	+2	WIL	0
STR	+1	HEA	+2	STA	35	UD	5	AD	5

## SKILLS:

Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Agriculture	1	0	Athletics	2	+1	Archery	3	+1
Combat Sense	2	+1	Dodge	2	+1	Hand-to-Hand	2	+1
Healing	2	0	Human Percept.	1	+2	Intimidate	1	0
Leadership	3	0	Lore *	2	0	Lore (Z'abri)	2	0
Melee	2	+1	Navigation**	2	0	Notice	2	+1
Read/Write***	2	0	Riding	2	+2	Speak****	2	0
Sneak	1	+1	Swimming	2	+1	Tactics	2	0
Throwing	1	+1	* (Joshua/Lilith)			** (Hunting Grounds)		
*** (Tribal, Evan)			**** (as written plus Squat)					

## EQUIPMENT:

Lilithian Longsword (+1 Attack/Parry/Synthesis AD+16), light chain and plate armor and helm (AR 10), Shortsword (+1 parry AD+8), crossbow (+1 Acc, DMx17, 6/12/24/48 ROF 0/3).





## GEORGY (JACKER)



Georgy used to be a Sheban, but was cast out for her pro-Crusade stance and her criticism of certain well-placed senior officials. Although she first fell in with the Herites, she strongly believed that the solutions to the Nation's problems lay in dealing with the Z'bri first above all else. After all, the Keepers and Squats certainly aren't going anywhere anytime soon. Mek saw her passion and inducted her into the Jackers. Her organizational skills, attention to detail and sheer tenacity have earned her a place of respect among the Jackers and the Herites.

More of a leader than a frontline trooper, she still accompanies some of the guerilla strike teams into the H'l Kar on trips against the Z'bri. During these trips, Georgy interrogates Serfs and Z'bri for information.

Georgy is a very strong promoter of the Crusade, adding her silent nods of approval to the general cries for justice and vengeance. After *Crusade of the Heart*, Georgy begins to develop an infatuation with Shera Uhan'on, even leaving Mek and the Jackers to join Shera when the Joanite leads the assault on the Shebans. Despite her attempts at friendship, however, Shera's single-minded devotion to the vanished Valerie Ben'on has begun to change Georgy's devotion to bitter envy.

## HIGHLIGHTS:

Aggressive, Strong, Weathered

## EMINENCES:

Truth, Bravery and Righteousness

## ATTRIBUTES:

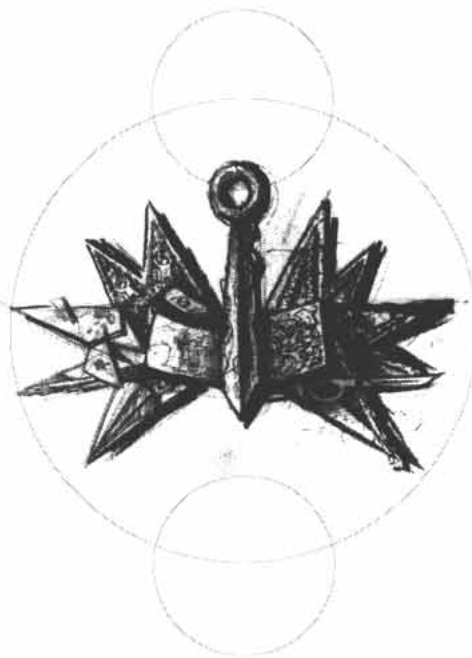
AGI	0	APP	+1	BLD	-1	CRE	0	FIT	+1
INF	+1	KNO	+1	PER	0	PSY	+1	WIL	0
STR	0	HEA	+1	STA	30	UD	4	AD	4

## SKILLS:

Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Athletics	1	+1	Combat Sense	1	0	Dodge	1	+1
Hand-to-Hand	1	+1	Human Percept.	1	+1	Leadership	2	+1
Lore (Shebans)	2	+1	Lore (Z'bri)	1	+1	Melee	2	+1
Navigation (Land)	2	+1	Notice	2	0	Read/Write*	2	+1
Riding	1	+1	Speak**	2	+1	Sneak	1	+1
Survival (Shelter)	2	+1	Tactics	2	0	Throwing	1	+1
Synthesis	2		* (Tribal, Joanite, Sheban)					
** (as written plus Squat and Serf)						*** (Truthsaying)		

## EQUIPMENT:

Shortsword (+1 parry AD+8), Self Bow (DM x6) and arrows, reinforced leather armor (AR 5), survival gear, lantern, maps.



# RIKHARD, JOSHUAN LEADER



Rikhard will probably first be encountered during the second Crusade, within the Burning Blades War Party. He has arrived only days before from a Joshuan settlement in the Outlands, bringing along his companions Eloise and Fleur (treat as Jacker (p. 96) with APP +1, BLD 0). They are all rather tight lipped, deferring to Rikhard for his comments before revealing any of their knowledge or suspicions about current events.

The three heard the call of Joshua during the *Children's Crusade*, and believe their place is among the Crusaders. They came prepared for battle, armed with shortswords and longbows. While Rikhard is a fervent believer in the Prophecy, his companions are less so, and seem to be involved for the sole purpose of wiping out a nest of Z'bri.

Rikhard is recording the events of the Crusade so he can take them back to the other Joshuans to show how the Prophecy is being fulfilled. He is deeply interested in informaton about the Lilith affair, and the deaths of Kara the Huinter and Veruka the Wraith at the hands of the Joanites and Shebans. He also keeps contacts with the Marians, although mostly by correspondence.

## HIGHLIGHTS:

Weathered, Wise, Determined

## EMINENCES:

Force and Vengeance

## ATTRIBUTES:

AGI	0	APP	-1	BLD	0	CRE	0	FIT	+1
INF	+1	KNO	+2	PER	0	PSY	+2	WIL	+2
STR	+1	HEA	+1	STA	30	UD	4	AD	4

## SKILLS:

Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Athletics	2	+1	Combat Sense	2	0	Dodge	2	0
Hand-to-Hand	2	0	Human Percept.	1	+2	Leadership	2	0
Lore (Joshuans)	2	+2	Lore (Z'bri)	2	+2	Melee	2	0
Navigation (Land)	2	+2	Notice	2	0	Read/Write*	2	+2
Riding	1	+2	Speak**	2	+2	Sneak	1	0
Survival (Shelter)	2	+2	Swimming	1	+1	Throwing	1	+1
Synthesis***	3		* (Tribal, Joshuan, Marian)					
** (as written plus Squat and Serf)			*** (Rage and Righteousness)					

## EQUIPMENT:

Shortsword (+1 parry AD+8), Longbow (DM x10) and arrows, leather and metal armor (AR 8), survival gear, lantern, maps, diary.



## OZ'MUR, KOLERIS PRIDE LORD

Oz'mur leads a Pride of the Order of Bones. He is an ambitious but very loyal follower of Captain Jhin'ko'var (see **Horrors of the Z'bri** p.30). He is looking for an opportunity to shine, and this is it. Oz'mur plans to hold back while his Pride fights, until he can determine who is worthy of his attention. Oz'mur has not had a chance to really let go in many, many years, and he plans to use the Aspect of The Burning to win or die on this day. His Iv'chet are very loyal to him, doubly so now that he has won this chance to attack the hated tribes.

### HIGHLIGHTS:

Clever, Ambitious, Driven

### ASPECTS:

Shattering, Sundering, Burning (**Horrors of the Z'bri** p.92] WIL vs 5, each MoS adds to all combat rolls for two turns, then Z'bri suffers D6 flesh wounds as it bursts into flames.)

### ATTRIBUTES:

AGI	+3	APP	0	BLD	+3	CRE	0	FIT	+3
INF	+3	KNO	+2	PER	+2	PSY	+3	WIL	+4
STR	+3	HEA	+3	STA	55	UD	12	AD	12

### SKILLS:

Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Athletics	2	+3	Combat Sense	4	+2	Dodge	2	+3
Hand-to-Hand	4	+3	Leadership	3	+3	Melee	4	+3
Navigation*	3	0	Notice	2	+2	Ritual (Koleris)	3	0
Swimming	2	+2	Tactics	3	0	Throwing	2	+2
Sundering	3		*(Killing Fields)					

### EQUIPMENT:

Colossal bone Battle-ax (-1 parry AD+18 — poisoned Potency 10, Onset: Instant, Lethal, also infects with Koleris Atmosphere: PSY vs 9; see **T8 Rulebook**, p.183), tough hide and bone armor (AR 10), bone Shortsword (+1 Parry, AD+8), claws (AD+8).





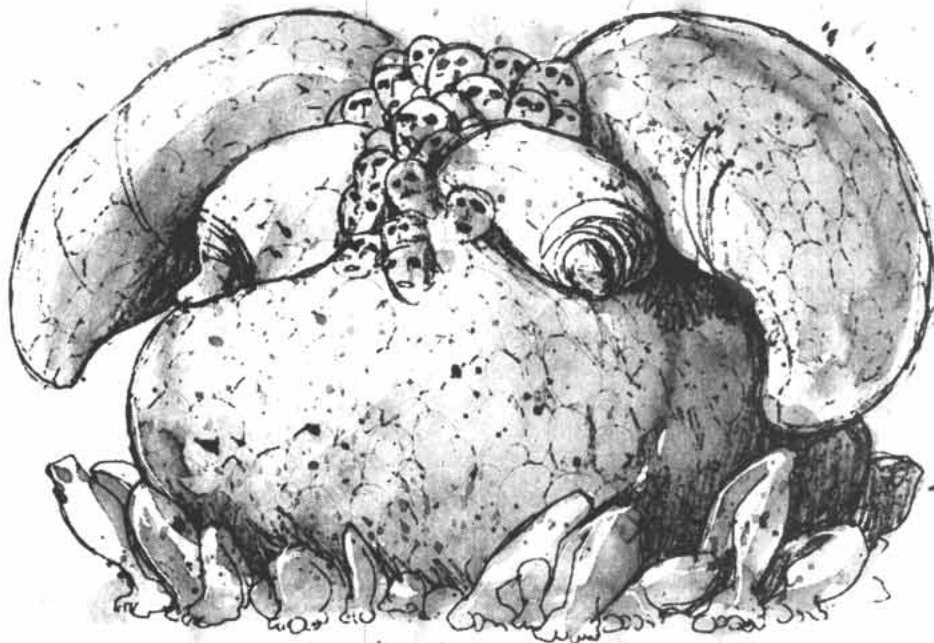
## 5. Weaver's Resources

## RAKH HIVE IV'CHET

The unusual individuality exhibited by the Rakh Hive has promoted the separation of the Hive into more individual units, not unlike the Iv'chet of other Houses. These Flemis Iv'chet principally overlook the outlying defenses of the Hive, and over the years their numbers have grown immensely. Now each Serf plantation has an Overlord Iv'chet to direct its farming and defense. Groups of these Iv'chet also form special response teams to deal with incursions. They use the nutrient rivers to move quickly to where they are needed.

## HIGHLIGHTS:

Bloated, Huge, Fearsome.



## ASPECTS:

One Thought, Assimilation, Body Severing (Horrors of the Z'bri, p.93)

## ATTRIBUTES:

AGI	-1	APP	0	BLD	+9	CRE	0	FIT	+2
INF	+2	KNO	+3	PER	+2	PSY	+2	WIL	+5
STR	+5	HEA	+2	STA	80*	UD	20	AD	19

## SKILLS:

Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Combat Sense	3	+2	Dodge	1	-1	Hand-to-Hand	4	-1
Healing	2	+3	Leadership	3	+2	Lore (Z'bri)	2	+3
Melee	2	-1	Notice	2	+2	Ritual (Flemis)	2	+3
Speak*	3	+3	Swimming	3	+2	Tactics	3	0
Sundering 2.								

\* (Z'bri, Tribal, Joanite, Squat, Serf)

## EQUIPMENT/ABILITIES:

Punch (UD +7), Ram (-2 to hit, UD +20), Acid Nipples (Range 4/8/16/32 (Will burn each round thereafter for MoS rounds, the Damage being equal to the original MoS minus one for each following round), Tough/Rubbery Hide (AR 8).

• If killed, explodes like a Floater of third its size in d6 Rounds' time.

## RAKH HIVE BATTLE SERFS

For many years, the Rakh Flemis have expected attack from other Z'bri or the tribes. Raids by both groups have forced the Rakh Hive to experiment with new foot soldier designs that are better able to withstand their opponents. The Rakh Hive has been heavily influenced by the success of the armored Joanite cavalry and the Koleris Hordes.

The Hive's approach has been to create Serfs in a bizarre mix of Serf, Z'bri, riding beast and Tribal warrior. These Battle Serfs form an elite among the Serfs and live like medieval knights among their kin. They wear armor or have protective carapaces, and use weapons picked up or traded from the tribes.

The Battle Serfs are all mind-linked to the Hive and act with a great deal of coordination on the battlefield. If more than two are within line-of-sight of each other, they can merge perceptions and act with an inhuman synchronicity, drawing other members of their battle group to join.

### HIGHLIGHTS:

Fearsome, Disturbing, Coordinated

### ATTRIBUTES:

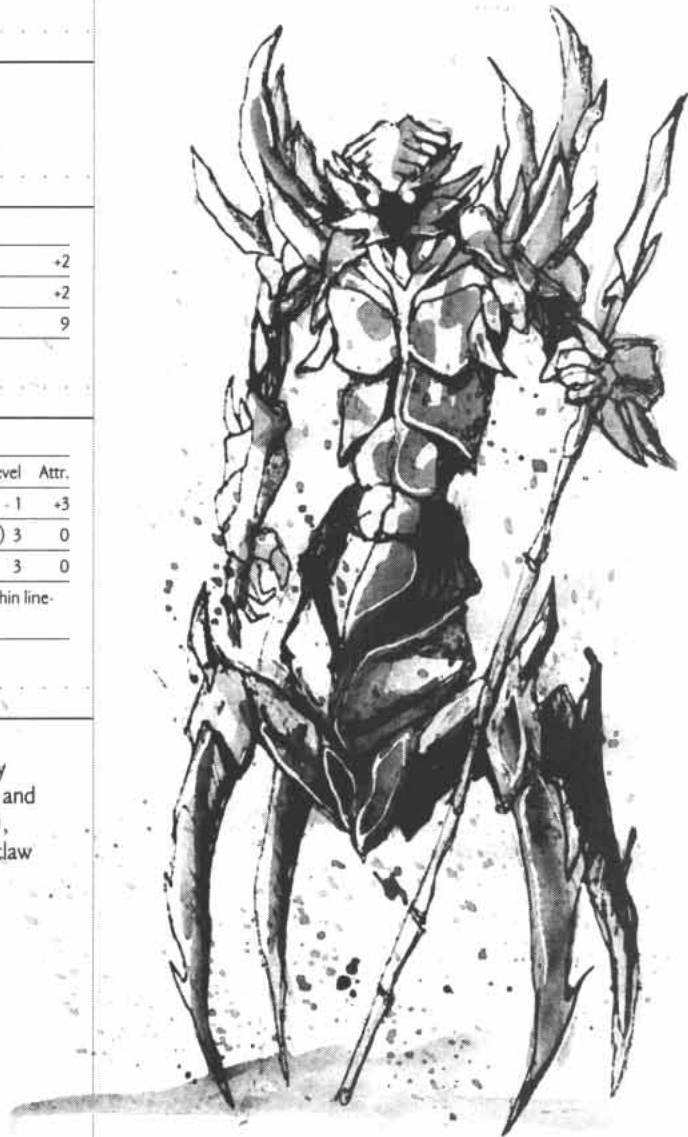
AGI	+3	APP	0	BLD	+2	CRE	0	FIT	+2
INF	0	KNO	+0	PER	0	PSY	0	WIL	+2
STR	+2	HEA	+2	STA	40	UD	9	AD	9

### SKILLS:

Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Athletics	2	+2	Combat Sense	3	0	Dodge	-1	+3
Hand-to-Hand	2	+3	Melee	3	+3	Navig. (Abonom)	3	0
Notice	2	0	Swimming	2	+2	Tactics	3	0
Throwing	2	+3	Synchronize (+1 to Combat Sense when within line-of-sight of additional Battle Serf. Non-cumulative effect.)					

### EQUIPMENT:

Poleaxes (-1 attack/ +1 parry AD+15), Longsword (-1 parry AD+11), large bone shield (+3 parry, Enc -1), heavy chain and plate armor and helm (or Carapace replacements, AR 14), Shortsword (+1 parry AD+8), throwing javelins (AD 8), claw (AD+8).





## ORDER OF BONES, KOLERIS PRIDE IV'CHET

The Koleris Horde known as the Order of Bones is fanatically loyal to the Baron (see also *Horrors of the Z'bri*, p.30). They are one of the most powerful orders, and a good third of their Horde is present at the fight in Abonom, and another two-thirds are at the defense of the Ziggurat.

Theirs is an ancient order that respects the traditions and blood-sworn oaths of the past. These Koleris Knights arm and armor themselves with human bones, extruding new weapons and shielding out through their tattered and stripped flesh. They live for the moment of release that comes in the thick of battle, striking out at their opponents with brutal glee.

### HIGHLIGHTS:

Fast, Violent, Deadly

### ASPECTS:

Shattering, The Burning (*Horrors of the Z'bri* p.92] WIL vs 5, each MoS adds to all combat rolls for 2 turns, then Z'bri suffers d6 flesh wounds as it bursts into flames.)

### ATTRIBUTES:

AGI	+3	APP	0	BLD	+2	CRE	0	FIT	+1
INF	0	KNO	0	PER	+2	PSY	+2	WIL	+2
STR	+2	HEA	+1	STA	40	UD	10	AD	10

### SKILLS:

Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Athletics	2	+2	Combat Sense	3	+2	Dodge	1	+3
Hand-to-Hand	3	+3	Leadership	1	+2	Melee	3	+3
Navigation*	3	0	Notice	2	+2	Ritual (Koleris)	2	0
Swimming	2	+2	Tactics	2	0	Throwing	2	+2
Sundering	2		• (Killing Fields)					

### EQUIPMENT:

Bone Longsword (-1 parry AD+10), tough hide and bone armor (AR 10), bone spear (+1 parry AD+8), bone throwing spears (AD 8), claws (AD+8).



## MELANIS IV'CHET QH'FAR MONKS

The Qh'far are the soldiers and guards of the Melanis, living as warrior-monks to keep their brethren safe from both external and internal threats (see also *Horrors of the Z'bri* p.55 and p.106). They wear green and black cloaks to distinguish themselves from the rest of their kin.

Those Qh'far living in Abonom are responsible for the defense of the outlying Melanis towers, acting as shock troops with the Koleris from the backs of their symbiotic mounts. Surprised by the arrival of the Agnite Crusaders, they do not react with any real speed, and many hold back their attacks until the Koleris Horde has done its work on the tribal intruders.

### HIGHLIGHTS:

Calm, Bizarre, Lethal

### ASPECTS:

Chaining

### ATTRIBUTES:

AGI	+3	APP	0	BLD	+1	CRE	0	FIT	+1
INF	0	KNO	+4	PER	+3	PSY	+2	WIL	+2
STR	+1	HEA	+2	STA	40	UD	8	AD	7

### SKILLS:

Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Acrobatics	2	+3	Athletics	2	+1	Combat Sense	3	+3
Craft*	2	0	Dodge	3	+3	Hand-to-Hand	3	+3
Healing	2	+4	Leadership	1	0	Lore (Z'bri)	2	+4
Melee	2	+3	Notice	2	+3	Riding	2	+2
Ritual (Melanis)	2	+4	Sneak	2	+3	Speak**	2	+4
Tactics	2	0	Sundering	2		* (Flesh Painting)		

\*\* (Z'bri, Tribal, Squat, Serf)

### EQUIPMENT:

Bony Fist/Knee/Elbow/Shin/Head (UD+4, -2 parry), bone staff (+1 parry AD+10), tough hide (AR 8), bone spear (+1 parry AD+8), bone throwing spears (AD 8), body blades (UD+8, no parry).



## 5. Weaver's Resources

### SANGIS LUST SERPENTS

The Sangis have designed and bred flying feathered snakes that they keep as pets and guards. The serpents are used en masse against potential enemies, their primary function to disorient the victims and prevent any further offensive organization against the Sangis masters.

Displaying an odd intelligence all of their own, the serpents will sometimes refuse to attack their designated targets and/or turn against their owners or trainers with an unexpected ferocity. Sangis Lords have taken to tagging serpents that have displayed signs of this type of behaviour, and keeping these oddities separate from the bulk of the stock. This has not prevented ever more of the mutation from being bred, however, and suspicions have risen that the species has some kind of Sundering powers all of its own.

Although small (no more than a meter in length) the Lust Serpents carry venom in order to disable their opponents and make them susceptible to Sangis sexual advances, even on the battlefield. Sangis Iv'chet and Lords like to keep these pets curled around their necks and shoulders when they are not being trained or cared for in the aeries.

### HIGHLIGHTS:

Fast, Colorful, Fearsome

### ATTRIBUTES:

ACI	+2	APP	0	BLD	-4	CRE	0	FIT	+2
INF	-3	KNO	0	PER	+2	PSY	0	WIL	+1
STR	-2	HEA	+2	STA	10	UD	1*		

### SKILLS:

Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Combat Sense	2	+2	Dodge	2	+2	Hand-to-Hand	2	+2
Notice	2	+2						

### WEAPONS:

\*Dart (x2 damage — Potency 7, Onset: 8 rounds, Hallucinogen (T8 Rulebook, pp.152-153); also infects with Sangis Atmosphere, PSY vs 9, Tail Spike (x5), Flight



## WONDER MONSTER — BEAR

Most of Agnes' offensive Wonder Monsters are formed in the shapes of predatory and fearsome animals, such as bears, giant cats and mythological creatures. They are about as intelligent as a very smart dog, and can sense Z'bri Sundering as a bad thing that must be destroyed. A few of the elder children ride on their shoulders into battle. They will only obey Agnites (or ex-Agnites currently in Agnes' favor), and Agnes is aware of almost everything they see.

**Highlights:** Big, Fearsome, Loyal

**Attributes:** BLD +8, FIT +2, INS +3, PER +1, WIL +2, STR +5, HEA +3, STA 80, UD 18

**Skills:** Combat Sense 2/+1, Dodge 2/0, Hand-to-Hand 2/0, Notice 2/+1, Understand Spoken (Agnite, Tribal) 2/0.

**Weapons:** Bite (x9 damage), Bear Hug (x16), Claws (x10).

Immune to Acid/Drowning/Poison/Fear/Disease/Sundering (unless made of flesh), half damage from Fire. Natural Armor 10 points.

## WONDER MONSTER — ELEPHANT

About half of Agnes' Wonder Monsters are for carrying Her younger Agnites, supplies and potential wounded. They also can spearhead charges into the enemy, providing protection for Her child warriors in battle. These Wonder Monsters are formed in the shapes of typical and mythical beasts of burden. Most have a childlike simplicity to them, as if they were built from pictures in storybooks. Each one carries a makeshift howdah, usually protected with makeshift walls or shields, that can hold five or six people. These Wonder Monsters are about as intelligent as a very smart dog or elephant. They will only obey Agnites, and Agnes is aware of everything they see.

**Highlights:** Big, Lumbering Loyal

**Attributes:** AGI -1, BLD +13, FIT +3, INS +2, WIL +2, STR +8, HEA +3, STA 105, UD 26\*

**Skills:** Combat Sense 1/0, Dodge 1/0, Hand-to-Hand 2/0, Notice 1/+1, Understand Spoken (Agnite, Tribal) 2/0.

**Weapons:** Charge (x15 damage), Trunk grapple (x5), Stomp (x16).

Immune to Acid/Drowning/Poison/Fear/Disease/Sundering (unless made of flesh), half damage from Fire. Natural Armor 14 points.

## AGNITE WARRIORS

Among the Agnites, the older children are capable hunters and fighters. They are brave to the point of foolhardiness, taking on anything with a battle cry and dragging their companions with them. Singly, they are less brave and tend to be very defensive. Agnite warriors are also rather brutal and cruel, teasing enemies they have disabled before finally killing them. During the *Children's Crusade*, much of their pent-up anger at not being treated as proper warriors among the tribes comes out, driving them to take on anything they can and bring back trophies of their kills. They also copy what they believe are Joanite ways to show they are real warriors.

**Highlights:** Wild, Dirty, Unpredictable.

**Attributes:** AGI +1, BLD -2, CRE +1, FIT +1, KNO -1, PER +1, STA 20, UD 5, AD 5

**Skills:** Athletics 2/+1, Combat Sense 2/+1, Dodge 1/+1, Hand-to-Hand 2/+1, Intimidate (Children) 1/-2, Melee 2/+1, Notice (tracking) 1/+1, Sneak 2/+1, Streetwise 1/0, Swimming 1/+1, Tactics 1/+1, Throwing 1/+1.

**Equipment:** Short Spear (+1 parry AD+6), Club (-1 parry, AD+3), Shortsword (+1 parry AD+8), Dagger (-1 parry AD+3), Throwing Javelins (AD 8), mismatched leather armor (AR 3), face paint, candy and toys.

## JOANITE TEMPLARS

The Templars are the elite of Joan, usually traveling on horseback in full armor. They are used to running down Z'bri in the Hunting Grounds and Duskfall. When going on foot, they tend to wear less armor and carry bows and two-handed weapons. The Templars' preferred way of disposing of Z'bri is by burning. Templars tend to respect any who show hatred of the Z'bri, a proven ability to fight and who conduct themselves in an honorable way.

**Highlights:** Brave, Honorable, Militant

**Attributes:** AGI +1, FIT +1, PER +1, PSY +1, WIL +1, HEA +1, STA 30, UD 5, AD 5

**Skills:** Animal Care (Horse) 1/0, Animal Handling 2/0, Archery 2/+1, Athletics 2/+1, Combat Sense 2/+1, Dodge 1/+1, Hand-to-Hand 2/+1, Leadership 1/0, Lore (Duskfall/Hunting Grounds) 2/0, Lore (Z'bri) 1/0, Melee 2/+1, Navigation (Vimari) 2/0, Notice (tracking) 2/0, Riding 2/+1, Ritual 1/0, Survival (Foraging) 2/+1, Swimming 1/+1, Tactics 2/0, Throwing 2/+1.

**Equipment:** (Mounted) Longsword (-1 parry AD+11), large wood shield (+3 parry, Enc -1), heavy chain and plate armor and helm (AR 14), Shortsword (+1 parry AD+8), throwing javelins (AD 8), horse tack and harness, warhorse.

(On Foot) Poleaxes (-1 attack/ +1 parry AD+15), Longsword (-1 parry, AD+11), Shortsword (+1 parry, AD+8), Longbow (DM x10) and arrows, light chain and plate armor with helm (AR 10), survival gear, oil flasks.



## BLACK OWL OPERATIVES

One of the Shebans' best fighting forces is the Black Owls (see also *Children of Lilith*, p.92), a secret force of Shebans who operate as spies and assassins. Since the Lilith affair, they have shifted focus to fighting rather than spying. When fighting comes to the Sunken City, the Black Owls respond by leading groups of Sheban guards to defend the main structures. They use hit and run tactics to try and confuse the attackers and lead them away from important personages and places. They use owls during the raid to communicate.

**Highlights:** Fanatical, Secretive, Mysterious

**Attributes:** AGI +1, FIT +2, KNO +1, PER +1, STA 25, UD 5, AD 5

**Skills:** Archery (Crossbow) 2/+1, Boating 2/+1, Combat Sense 2/+1, Dodge 2/+1, Hand-to-Hand 2/+1, Human Perception 1/0, Interrogate 2/0, Law 1/+1, Lore (Sheban/Poisons) 1/+1, Melee 2/+1, Navigation (Sunken City) 1/+1, Notice 2/+1, Read/Write (Tribal, Sheban, Farnzay) 1/+1, Riding 2/0, Speak (as written, plus Evan) 2/+1, Sneak 4/+1, Swimming 1/+1, Tactics 2/0, Theatrics 1/0, Throwing 2/0.

**Equipment/Abilities:** (Two Crossbows) Hand Crossbow (DMx6, 4/8/16/32), Crossbow (+1 Acc, DMx17, 6/12/24/48 ROF 0/3), Repeating Crossbow (-1 ACC, DMx7, 7/14/28/56 ROF 0 / Clip of 6), 1d6 Poisoned Crossbow Bolts (Potency 8, Sedative or Toxin, 4 Round Onset), Shortsword (+1 parry AD+8), Leather Armor (AR:5), Night Vision, Animal Kinship (Owls).

## SHEBAN GUARDS

Shebans have now taken over much of the duties of the Joante Watch within the main areas of Vimary. They have had to train to be more like soldiers than scholars, but still need training and seasoning if they are to be effective fighters. Currently, they rely on their crossbows and the threat of the law to deal with troublemakers. All the guards ultimately report to the Fisher King, newly returned from his self-imposed hermitage.

**Highlights:** Militant, Bureaucratic, Stern

**Attributes:** AGI +1, KNO +2, INF +1, PER +2, STA 25, UD 5, AD 5

**Skills:** Archery 2/+1, Boating 2/+2, Combat Sense 2/+2, Dodge 1/+1, Hand-to-Hand 1/+1, Human Perception 1/0, Interrogate 1/0, Law 2/+2, Lore (Sheban) 1/+2, Melee 2/+1, Navigation (Sunken City) 1/+2, Notice (Disguise) 1/+2, Read/Write (Tribal, Sheban, Farnzay) 1/+2, Riding 1/0, Speak (as written, plus Evan) 2/+2, Swimming 1/+1, Tactics 1/0.

**Equipment:** Crossbow (+1 Acc, DMx17, 6/12/24/48 ROF 0/3), repeating crossbow (-1 Acc, DMx7, 7/14/28/56 ROF 0 / Clip of 6), staff (+1 Parry, AD+5), Shortsword (+1 parry AD+8), heavy cloth and leather armor (AR:5).

## RAKH HIVE FLOATERS

A traditional defense of the Rakh Hive has been the Floaters. These creatures are floating balls of crafted flesh, possibly inflated skins of children and adults, ranging in size from a human head to that of a small building. They move by way of an air-powered propulsion system, allowing them to float against even stiff breezes. Their offensive weapon is either a poisonous touch or an explosive death, which rains poison and bone shards over a large area. Their hive mind contact causes them to flock like birds on wing. Their poison needs to contact flesh to work. The creatures can voluntarily explode if they make a check of WIL vs. Threshold 6.

**Highlights:** Alien, Deceptive, Surprising

**Attributes:** AGI +1, BLD -6 to +3, FIT 0, INS +1, PER +1, WIL 0, STR -3 to +1, HEA +2, STA 10-50, UD 1\*

**Skills:** Combat Sense 1/+1, Hand-to-Hand 1/+1, Notice 1/+1.

**Weapons/Abilities:** \*Contact Poison (Potency 7, Onset: 8 rounds, Lethal (T8 Rulebook, pp.152-153), also infects with Melanis Atmosphere — PSY vs Threshold 8; Explode (If it suffers a Serious Wound, it will explode, doing damage to those nearby. The area of effect is equal to approximately 8 meters + the Floater's BLD. All within that range get to roll a dodge vs 7; all those within twice that range dodge vs. 3. Those that fail get hit by 1 to 3 — roll randomly to see how many — shards for AD 10 +BLD, and if the blow penetrates their armor they are also poisoned). Float.

## QH'FAR SYMBIONT MOUNTS

These beasts are actually the twisted moldings of several people, specially designed to carry the Qh'far Monks. They are shaped much like beasts of burden (although they have a varying number of "legs"), but closer examination reveals the truth, as each mount sports several human heads near its front end, amid heavy bone plate protection. These symbiotic creatures actually combine their minds with their riders, allowing both to act in a coordinated manner.

**Highlights:** Twisted, Disgusting, Horrific

**Attributes:** AGI +1, BLD +8, FIT +1, INS +3, PER +1, WIL 0, STR +5, HEA 0, STA 65, UD 18

**Skills:** Athletics 2/+1, Combat Sense 3/+1, Dodge 1/+1, Hand-to-Hand 3/+1, Navigation (H'I Kar) 3/0, Notice 2/+1, Speak (Serf, Squat) 1/0, Swimming 2/+1.

**Weapons/Abilities:** Stomp (x10), Claw (x8), Horn Charge (x16), Tough Hide (AR 10).

## SANGIS FLOWERS

The Sangis flowers grow in colorful bunches in the earth or out of corpses. They give off a sweet fragrance and also a touch of Sangis Atmosphere (PSY vs. 3) which tempts one to eat them after inhaling the perfume, in addition to causing sexual arousal. The flowers grow and expire quickly. After a month or so they seed, casting hundreds of little feathered seeds into the air. Quickly they find root and grow into flowers within a month as long as it is not too cold, in which case they lie dormant until spring.

Sangis Flowers contain a Lethal Toxin (Potency 8, Onset: One hour, Effects last for triple normal time), and typically multiple doses will be taken if several flowers are eaten.

## SANGIS GUARD SERFS

It is the fashion this year in the H'I Kar to have Serfs molded into the form of large, beautiful men. The objective is to construct what appear to be unblemished and uncorrupted examples of masculinity. Lords pit teams of these men against each other in wrestling matches to find the strongest for their evening's entertainment. More than just decorative, these Serfs have been muscled and toned to enforce their master's law against other Serfs. Many Lords have seen fit to conceal weapons under the Serfs' flesh to deal with more problematic intruders.

**Highlights:** Beautiful, Disturbing, Sexual

**Attributes:** AGI +1, APP +2, BLD +2, FIT +2, WIL +1, STR +2, HEA +2, STA 45, UD 9, AD 9

**Skills:** Athletics 2/+2, Combat Sense 2/0, Dodge 1/+1, Grooming 2/+2, Hand-to-Hand 2/+1, Melee 2/+1, Navigation (Ziggurat) 3/0, Notice 2/0, Seduction 2/+2, Tactics 1/0.

**Weapons:** Poleaxes (-1 attack/ +1 parry AD+15), Shortsword (+1 parry AD+8), sub-dermal spike (AD+5, Potency 7, Onset: 4 rounds, Hallucinogen (T8 Rulebook, pp.152-153); also infects with Sangis Atmosphere, PSY vs 9), leather and bone armor (AR 5).

## SANGIS IV'CHET

Each Lord's palace compound has several Iv'chet who serve and protect their master. Hundreds also serve the Baron directly in the Ziggurat. While often busy playing politics, trying to raise and maintain their status, these Z'bri are also deadly when they need to be. Sangis tend to fight not with strength, but with guile and surprise. With tensions rising over the last year, the Baron has passed down word that the Sangis Sundering secrets are to be made more available to the rank and file Iv'chet so that they might better serve him in the difficulties to come. Another of the Baron's gambles, it does mean that the Sangis are gaining more potency.

**Highlights:** Beautiful, Disturbing, Erotic

**Aspects:** Two of: Appeasement, Soul Stealing, Perspective (Horrors of the Z'bri, p.91)

**Attributes:** AGI +2, APP +3, CRE +1, INF +3, BLD +1, FIT +2, PER +1, PSY +2, WIL +2, STR +1, HEA +2, STA 40, UD 8, AD 8

**Skills:** Acrobatics 1/+2, Athletics 2/+2, Combat Sense 3/+1, Dance 2/+2, Dodge 3/+2, Etiquette (Court Intrigue) 2/+3, Grooming 2/+3, Hand-to-Hand 3/+2, Interrogate 2/+1, Leadership 1/+3, Melee 3/+2, Navigation (H'I Kar) 3/0, Notice 2/+2, Ritual (Sangis) 2/0, Seduction 3/+3, Speak (Z'bri, Tribal, Serf) 2/0, Sneak 2/+2, Tactics 2/+1, Throwing 2/+2, Sundering 2.

**Weapons:** Living Whip (AD+4, Entangle, Potency 7, Onset: 8 rounds, Hallucinogen (T8 Rulebook, pp.152-153), Perfume Spray (Potency 9, Onset: 2 rounds, Euphoric, Hallucinogen, Stimulant or Sedative + Sangis Atmosphere as if one hour of exposure), Steel Razor Gauntlet (AD+6), Throwing Nails (AD+2, Potency 8, Onset: 2 rounds, Euphoric or Sedative), Panic Spike (self inflicts on the Z'bri a superficial wound which injects a Potency 10 Stimulant), Flesh Cloak (Living being, entangles in melee or if thrown, Hand-to-Hand 2/+1), Leather/Flesh armor with ligament reinforcement (AR 5).

## SANGIS MOUNTS

The Baron and his Lords have a stable of flying mounts with which they conduct raids into the Nation. Many Lords also use them to travel from the top of their palace Spires to the Ziggurat. The Sangis also house beasts like the Melanis Qh'far, but true Sangis mounts are considered a sign of decadence that Sangis Lords respect.

**Highlights:** Beastly, Disturbing, Violent

**Attributes:** AGI +1, BLD +6, FIT +5, INS +4, PER +2, WIL +1, STR +5, HEA +3, STA 70, UD 16

**Skills:** Athletics 2/+1, Combat Sense 3/+2, Dodge 1/+1, Hand-to-Hand 2/+1, Navigation (H'I Kar) 3/0, Notice 2/+2, Speak (Z'bri, Serf) 2/0, Spit 3/+1.

**Weapons:** Claw (x8), Tail Lash (x16), Spit Poison (ranges to targets below, halve if horizontal, 10/20/40/80, Potency 8, Onset: 2 rounds, Lethal), Tough Hide (AR 8), Flight.

## WEAVER'S AID: GENERIC GAME STATISTICS

The following table provide a quick-and-dirty summary of major game statistics for standard character types. Much more complete generic archetypes appear on pages 40-47 of the **Weaver's Assistant**. The table below summarizes those, some types from the **Tribe 8 Rulebook**, and some other types that might prove useful. Note that these statistics are intentionally on the low end of the spectrum of ability and meant to represent somewhat everyday people. Talented NPCs will have higher stats.

## GENERIC ARCHEIYPE REFERENCE TABLE

Name	Attributes	Skills	Notes	Page
TRIBALS				
Agnite Barren	AGI +1, FIT +1, PSY -1, WIL +1, STA 25, UD 3, AD 4	Hum Per 1/-1, Melee 1/+1, Nav. 1/+1, Survival 1/+1	dagger (AD +3)	WSA, p. 40
Dahlian Dancer	AGI +2, APP +2, FIT +1, STA 25, UD 3, AD 3	Acrobatics 1/+2, Dance 2/-2, Seduction 2/+2	-	WSA, p. 40
Evan Nurse	INF +1, KNO +2, PSY +1, STA 25, UD 3, AD 3	Healing 1/+2, Herb. 1/+2, Mythology 2/+2	medicinal herbs	WSA, p. 41
Joanite Warrior	BLD +2, FIT +2, PER +1, STA 30, UD 7, AD 7	Com. Sense 2/+1, Dodge 1/0, HTH 2/0, Melee 2/0	sword (AD +8), armor (AR 10)	WSA, p. 41
Magdélite Concubine	AGI +1, APP +2, INF +1, WIL +1, STA 25, UD 3, AD 3	Grooming 2/+2, Seduction 2/+2, Streetwise 1/+1	-	-
Magdélite Diplomat	CRE +2, INF +2, PER +1, STA 25, UD 3, AD 3	Disguise 1/+2, Etiquette 2/0, Hum Per 2/0, Notice 2/+1	dagger (AD +3)	WSA, p. 44
Pellis Artisan	CRE +1, KNO +2, PSY +1, STA 25, UD 3, AD 5	Craft (skin) 2/+1, Melee 2/0, Ritual 2/+2	skinning knife (Acc 1, AD +3)	WSA, p. 45
Sheban Advocate	INF +1, KNO +1, WIL +2, STA 25, UD 3, AD 3	Interrogation 1/+1, Law 2/+1	-	WSA, p. 46
Weaponshaper	AGI +1, BLD +2, KNO +1, PER +1, STA 35, UD 6, AD 7	Craft (weapons) 3/0, Lore (weapons) 2/+1, Melee 1/+1	any weapon	WSA, p. 43
Yagan Mordred	KNO +2, INF +1, PSY +1, WIL +2, STA 30, UD 3, AD 3	Dreaming 2/+1, Ritual 2/+2, Synthesis (Curse) 2	ritual implements	-
FALLEN				
Child of Luth	INF +1, PSY +1, WIL +2, STA 25, UD 3, AD 4	Lore (Lith) 2/0, Melee 1/0	Sword of Lith (Acc +1, AD +13)	-
Doomsayer	KNO +1, PER +2, PSY +2, STA 30, UD 3, AD 3	Dreaming 2/+2, Lore (Joshua) 1/+1, Ritual 2/+1	-	-
Henite	AGI +1, BLD +1, FIT +2, STA 25, UD 3, AD 5	Com Sense 1/0, Dodge 1/+1, Melee 2/+1, Sneak 2/+1	Sword (AD +8)	-
Jacker	AGI +1, FIT +1, WIL +1, STA 25, UD 4, AD 5	Com Sense 2/0, Dodge 1/+1, HTH 1/+1, Lore (Z'br) 1/0, Melee 2/+1	Sword (AD +8), Armor (AR 10)	-
Lightbringer	INF +2, WIL +1, PSY +1, STA 25, UD 3, AD 3	Etiquette 1/0, Leadership 2/+2, Theatrics 1/0	-	-
Z'BRI				
Flemis Iv'chet	BLD +5, WIL +3, STA 50, UD 9, AD 9	Speak (tribal) 2/0, Lore (Ancient Z'br) 1/0, Sundering (One Thought) 2	Hide (AR 5)	T8, p. 178
Koleris Iv'chet	AGI +3, BLD +3, FIT +3, WIL +2, STA 50, UD 10, AD 10	Com Sense 2/0, Dodge 2/+3, HTH 3/+3, Melee 3/+3, Sundering (Shattering) 2	Bone blades (AD +10), Hide (AR 15)	T8, p. 178
Melanis Iv'chet	KNO +3, PER +2, WIL +2, STA 30, UD 3, AD 3	Dreaming 2/0, Lore (spirit) 2/+3, Ritual 3/+3, Sundering (Animation) 2	books	T8, p. 178
Sangis Iv'chet	APP +3, CRE +1, WIL +2, STA 30, UD 3, AD 4	Leadership 1/0, Melee 1/0, Seduction 3/+3	bone rapier (AD +8)	T8, p. 178
Serf	FIT +1, PSY +1, STA 25, UD 3, AD 3	various menial skills	-	WSA, p. 47
Cek'roh (Chained)	AGI +2, BLD +2, INS +2, PER +2, STA 40, UD 6	Com. Sense 2/+2, HTH 3/+2, Sneak 2/+2	Claws (UD +10), hide (AR 10)	WSA, p. 41
Monstrosity	BLD +4, PSY +2, STA 30, UD 8, AD 7	Com Sense 2/0, HTH 2/0, Melee 1/0	Claws (UD +5), hide (AR 5)	WSA, p. 47
OTHERS				
Keeper	FIT +1, KNO +2, WIL +1, STA 25, UD 3, AD 3	Firearms 2/0, T-smithing (any) 2/+2, Tinker 2/0	handgun (DM x15)	-
Merchant	APP +1, INF +1, STA 25, UD 3, AD 3	Haggling 2/+1, Streetwise 1/+1, Trade 2/0	-	WSA, p. 44
Squat	FIT +1, STA 25, UD 5, AD 4	Archery 2/0, Com Sense 1/0, HTH 2/0, Melee 1/0, Survival 2/0	Short bow (DM x7)	WSA, p. 45
Thief	AGI +2, PER +2, STA 25, UD 3, AD 3	Dodge 2/+2, Sleight-of-hand 2/+2, Streetwise 2/0	-	WSA, p. 46