

EARTHDAWN[®]

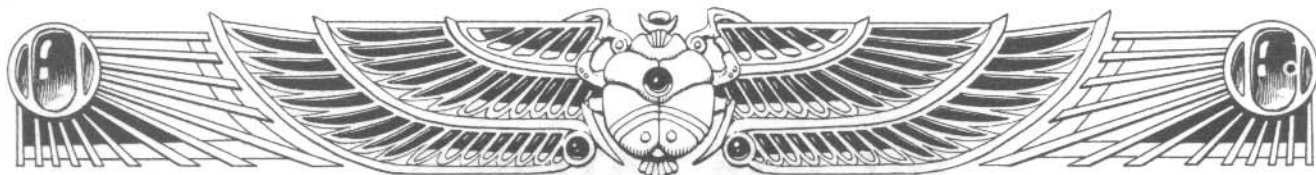
THE ORK NATION OF CARA FAHD[™]



THE ORK NATION OF
CARA FAHD™



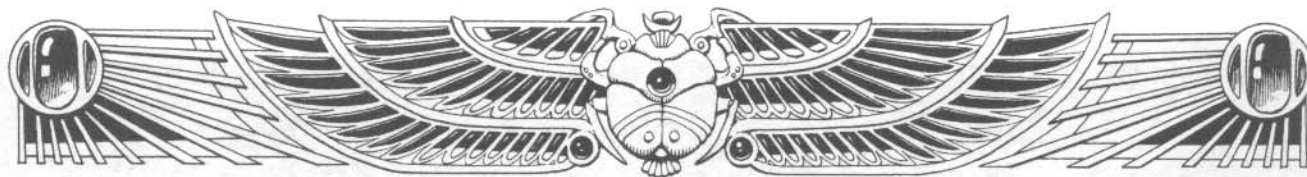
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CREDITS

Writing (in alphabetical order)

Jennifer Brandes
Chris Hepler

Project Development

Louis J. Prosperi

Project Editing

Robert Boyle
Diane Piron-Gelman
Sharon Turner Mulvihill

Earthdawn Line Developer

Louis J. Prosperi

Editorial Staff

Senior Editor
Donna Ipolito
Managing Editor
Sharon Turner Mulvihill
Associate Editor
Diane Piron-Gelman
Assistant Editors
Robert Boyle
Tara Gallagher

Production Staff

Art Director
Jim Nelson
Cover Art
Clint Langley
Cover Design
John Bridegroom
Illustration
Kent Burles
Clint Langley
Larry Macdougall
Mark Nelson
Layout
John Bridegroom

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THE BEAUTIFUL FIRE of MERA-A-A-ARG

o the Orks of Barsaive:

As I am a troubadour, I shall tell you a tale. Although you have heard it since your birth, you may not know this version, so have patience if it seems strange or is over-familiar.

Long ago, in a time not yet lost to history, two lovers lived at the center of the world. Although others looked at their home and saw rocky soil, barren fields and ferocious beasts, the lovers recognized their land's beauty. They looked upon the craggy ground where mountain met earth and beheld the face of Astendar, known in our old tongue as Mera-a-a-arg. When wild thundras fell beneath their spears, the couple remembered the animals' beauty and thanked them for giving their lives to grace their table. When they reclined on a sandy riverbank and let the water's melody play counterpoint to their leather drums, Mera-a-a-arg touched their hearts.

And though others rejected their ways as coarse and rough, they were content. Even alone, the lovers felt surrounded by friends, for they needed no one else. Their own company seemed as a party of thousands and joy filled the hours, for their love held them deeper than any before or ever since.

And though others rejected their ways, the Passions blessed the couple, for they planned their lives with love and their customs pleased Mera-a-a-arg.

And in time, the others grew jealous. They gathered around the edge of the lovers' home, and peered through their windows, wondering what hid inside that kept them so young and beautiful, what treasure they owned that gave them such delight.

And when the man demanded they leave, told them to be gone from his house, for he needed space for his wife and children, the spying neighbors fled. And as they ran, they cried crocodile tears and howled to their families that the lovers attacked them. So the throng gathered arms and descended on the couple, declaring that for punishment, they would rip the man from the warm arms of his lover and throw him into the world alone.

And though he slew a hundred men, his enemies still came from all sides. They boiled under the walls of his house and tore into his wife even as she clung to him and they rent her flesh and lit her on fire. As the flames licked at his arms and around her dead eyes, the man fled, never to return in eleven centuries of mourning.

But he does not know that his lover lives still, deep in slumber, awaiting his kiss, for Mera-a-a-arg does not let so powerful a love die.

An ugly story, you say? You have never heard a tale of such tragedy, such brutality?

Then it is only one of many as lost to you as the lovers to each other, for we orks remember few of our own tales. The verses of the troll-written Battle of Sky Point come easily to our lips, and our bodies move to the rhythms of elven dance, or tremble at the majesty of the sculpted gates of Throal, but we have forgotten our own arts, lost our own loves.

And we have lost Mera-a-a-arg.

True, She may stir your blood for a night of passion, move your hands as you beat drums to a furious tempo or echo your footsteps as you dance the *lukro* under the new moon's sky.

She may even smile in approval when you look up from a tattoo to find that a day and a night have gone by, but your vision now lives on the skin of your subject.

Mera-a-a-arg rejoices at such times, when we remember our own beauty and do not drown it with the empty patter of elves, the rigid pontificating of dwarves.

But She smiles little of late.

For She remembers (and how many of you do?) the days of Cara Fahd, when orks worshipped Her in their minds and words and actions, their arts unsullied by others who lack the passion to understand Her needs.

In Cara Fahd, orks lived by their passions. When love took us, we gave in to love and our days and nights were warmed by it. But when the ardor dissolved, we let it go, not soiling beautiful memories by continuing a relationship which had run its course. How many of you in Throal have the courage to do so now? Where, if a dwarven guildmaster knows that you are living out of wedlock, he will find a way to give your employment to someone else, someone who follows Throalic law?

In Cara Fahd, our children knew that anywhere they went they would be cared for, for all orks lived as a single family and their hearts held love for every member. How many of you in Kratas would let your neighbors alone with your daughters, allow your sons to play untended on the streets?

In Cara Fahd, orks understood that the only true judgments are made in love. When gahad gripped someone and he turned on his tormentor, he was judged not by unfeeling law books, but by his wives, his sisters, his neighbors, and they decided what made an act a crime, not a magistrate who cared more for parchment than people. How many in Bartertown would bring gahad as an explanation before the Magistrates?

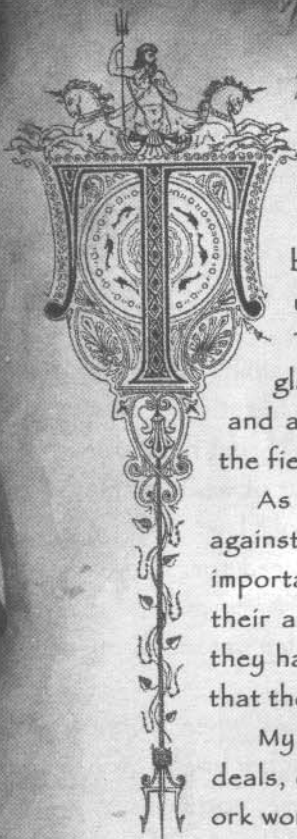
In Cara Fahd, we created art as we lived, building iron statues which clawed for the sky, complex whorls of tattoos that recorded the artist's gahad in bright ink, songs that shook the walls of Veren Canyon when sung in unison by ten thousand throats. Orks wove living crystal into the orichalcum threads of the Crown of Cara Fahd until even Queen Fallia of Wyrm Wood admitted its beauty. An ork captured a mountain in a fragile glass jar to create a weapon that made crystal raiders tremble. An ork composed the Hero's Sacrifice on Grallen's Field nine days after Hrak Gron breathed her last, and sang it with enough vigor to make the Moorsarantyoikan Liferock cry.

We understood that art was more than a pretty story to hide in a dusty library, more than a mural on the wall of an unlit home. Art filled our lives and our souls, and if you wanted to fall to your knees in a city street to draw King Wudra and the Obsidiman in the dust, we stepped around you until your work was done.

It is time to return. To rekindle ork traditions, to remind ourselves of Mera-a-a-arg, to feel Her fiery touch blaze through our veins once more. It is time to come together and awaken the land with our kiss.

It is time to return to our lost lover, for her Name is Cara Fahd, and without her we have been mourning for eleven hundred years.

KRATAS GRON



WHAT TRANKO WAS AND WILL BE

o the Orks of Barsaive:

I once rode astride a bull thundra alongside a mercenary company, because I had heard that by doing so, I would learn courage. And we came upon a legion of proud scorchers attacking the town we had sworn to protect. The scorchers drove through the dwarves' defenses like a hammer through glass, filling their arms with riches. Then we arrived, clad in gleaming chain mail, and accepted pouches of gold to protect the inhabitants. Our battle lasted until the field was swampy with blood.

As we withdrew, both sides let loose joyful shouts. They had wielded steel against one another and galloped off rich. They had survived another day. But most importantly, as the chieftains of both sides retreated, the scorchers rejoiced that their army fought with such skill that the deaths would please Tranko himself, for they had shown true courage. And our mercenaries screamed as eagles do, and said that their side, too, had pleased Thystonius, the Passion of conflict.

My companion told me, "That is not true courage. Those deaths were merchant's deals, orks killing orks in return for coins stamped with the faces of dwarf kings. No ork won that battle."

So we rode through western Barsaive searching for courage, and I saw a second battle. Ork slew ork over a year-long blood feud. By the end of the day, horse and rider alike were strewn like a child's toys, gasping and dying on the ground. As the two tribes withdrew, they swore their war would last forever, for nothing could repair their stained honor, and their willingness to fight in the face of so many deaths showed their courage.

My companion told me, "That is not true courage. Such wars exhaust the orks, and that is what the Therans love best. They will come soon and enslave the wounded."

So we rode through eastern Barsaive, and I saw a battle to end all battles. Two large groups of thundra riders charged each other, crushing small trees beneath their feet. Poisoned arrows fell upon elementalists and their fires turned night to day. The chieftains were the last to fall, and as they lunged at one another with dripping axes, they screamed that they killed for no reason but battle itself, because courage lies in the desire to please Tranko.

My companion told me, "That is not true courage. Those deaths were pain for the sake of pain, and that way pleases only the Horrors."

And I knew, as you do, that he spoke the truth, for my companion is the Passion Tranko, not dwarf, nor Theran, nor Horror. He is a Passion, and blesses only those who feel His touch in their fights.

Alas, we have left a scar on Tranko's heart. He waits for us silently, for Tranko does not ask for help, though His gahad rages still. Is this not the same Passion we know when racing our swiftest horses among rocky cliffs that would make an air sailor shake with terror? The Passion we know when we are pinned in a grumog choke and our breath and vision fades, yet we hurl our

opponent to the earth anyway? The Passion we know when we defend our children as Theran fire cannons rain down on our tents and houses?

Yes.

Yet everywhere in Barsaive, it is the same. On the Dinganni plains, orks charge one another, calling Tranko's Name as if He were a ready weapon. In villages along the Serpent, orks defend t'skrang from troll raiders, calling on Tranko as if He were a petty reinforcement. In the Throalic slums of Bethabal, orks fight for the pleasure of dwarf bettors, calling upon Tranko as if He were a last-ditch trick.

We have been sundered and scattered, not by a worthy enemy, but by apathy. Our legions fall, not before the five hundred ponies of the Throalic King's Lancers or the four thousand Theran swordmasters of Sky Point, but in the face of complacency. As our children settle in dwarven towns and human cities, we turn and run, afraid not of a battle, but of our own past.

Because once we were so much more than we are now.

Once, we felt true courage in our veins, and our cause pleased Tranko every day of our lives. We had a kingdom Named Cara Fahd, and its ground shook like an earthquake beneath the charge of twenty thousand cavalry of horses, thundras, dyres and griffins. We swept through Barsaive like a mountain torn from the earth which rolled over all in its path.

We fought not out of greed or hate, but to defend the land of our ancestors, where no ork feared whip or sword, where Hrak Gron died so we would always be free. When three nations tried to savage this glorious land, our king consumed them all in a blazing inferno so Hrak Gron's promise would not be in vain. In the stillness after our kingdom fell and its ashes dusted the jungle trees, our ancestors whispered to Tranko. Cara Fahd was not beaten yet. Its hope lay in its children, and its children's children, and in all orks.

Why have we not reunited, returned to Cara Fahd where our ancestors fought proudly to defend a nation they built and a king who looked like them?

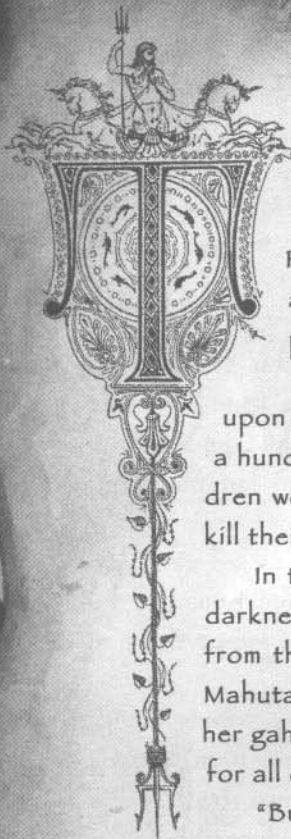
Why do we insult the favored of Tranko, leaving our families dishonored, their deaths unavenged? Why do we not join together and fight to take our nation back?

Because we have no courage. We spat in the face of our ancestors' heroic sacrifice because we could not admit to Tranko that we were too weak, too petty, too afraid of other Name-Givers to claim our place.

And if you do not want to kill me because of those words, then there truly is no courage left in the children of Hrak Gron.

So take up your arms, and put aside your differences to show Tranko that orks have courage, that orks feel His fire in their veins. Show that eleven hundred years are as a day to a true warrior, and return to Cara Fahd.

KRANKO'S GRON



THE PROMISE of BLOK

o the Orks of Barsaive:

I understand that many of you will not approve of what I have to say. Perhaps you will argue that you have established your own ways in a new age, and that I ask too much when I say to leave your dwarf and human friends, your profitable business, your comfortable life. If so, this letter is for you.

For long ago, the Passion Lochost, whom we knew then as Blook, looked upon orks and saw a people who did not value freedom. They had been enslaved for a hundred generations, and for a hundred generations they promised that their children would throw down the chains, their grandchildren take up spade and pickax to kill their masters.

In their hearts, they felt passion, but they had been too long without light, and darkness swallowed their hopes. Still, they spoke of the *Mahuta*, the one who comes from the midst of many, who brings us together in liberty. In those dark times, the Mahuta was Hrak Gron. In her, passion for change and freedom burned fiercely and her gahad tore through their fear, for she refused to free herself alone. Her fight was for all orks, and she tried to rouse them each night with stories of freedom.

"But it is dangerous," they said. "It could be worse than what we have now."

And when Hrak Gron broke through the wall and led them to the forests, only then did they know what they had missed. No ork looked back except to spit, and Lochost's fervor spread through them like the wind.

And what now? What does Blook see when He looks down on you?

Does He see a people who fight for liberty? Does He feel your need for Him, hear your prayers for perseverance as you continue His struggle against slavery?

No. He sees a people who are content. A people who no longer wish change if it will bring them hardship, fewer silvers, a bed on cold ground instead of soft feathers. He sees a people whose lips shape His Name while their hearts lie empty.

You deny this charge. Is it not enough that you wear no chains? That you spit when you hear the word Thera? That you attack a slave wagon when one happens across your path?

No. For we are still slaves if we do nothing with our freedom. Are you afraid to break your chains simply because they bound you so long that you know no other way? Can you see the shackles that bind your mind and tongue?

Every time you turn calmly away from an innkeeper who will not let you stay because he does not trust your tusks, you are a slave. Every time your children speak in Throalic and not *or'zet*, you are a slave. Every time you beg for a job far beneath your abilities, you are a slave.

So Blook is leaving, for He does not wait for those whose passions do not stir Him. He turns from your gilded prison, from the words which hold you tighter than any chains. Words that say that to be an ork and free is to be a criminal. Words that claim we cannot earn the respect of other races, that we do not need a nation of our own.

Throal pretends to be a haven of freedom, to fight slavery always, but its words are only a bandage on a thousand years of oppression. But we knew a land that was founded in freedom, that grew from the seeds of rebellion into a nation of change.

When I was growing up, among slaves in the Wejoto mine, we had a holiday every year on the first of Mawag. For one day, we refused to work, refused to let the masters and their whips tell us how to live. Instead, we gathered together, quietly praying to Blorc to free us.

And we swore an oath. "This year we toil under whips and hot irons. This year our fingers blister and burn for someone else's livelihood. This year we eat what we are served and are grateful for the scraps we are spared. Never again. Next year we will be free orks. Next year we will sever the chains, we will burn the scraps, we will kill the masters. But we will never heal our wounds. And we will never forget."

We told the story of the Mahuta, reminded ourselves that our heroes did not live only in the past, remembered that Blorc swore that whenever we truly needed it, a hero would rise from our midst, would break His people's shackles, even if they fought to keep them. That when we truly needed it, we could return to Cara Fahd. And we never did.

When the moon set, we let Blorc set with it. We let Passion leave our hearts, and became the slaves everyone thought us.

Never again.

For all orks who were bought and sold by slave holders, who fought to defend a kingdom where they are not welcome to live, I ask you. For all orks who heard their children curse fate that they were born orks, I beseech you. For all those who have suffered silently, or lost themselves to rage, I entreat you. For all who have stayed in their prisons because they did not know where to run, I plead to you. For you, I accept the burden of the Mahuta, and I implore you to look to Blorc. Realize that in your comfort you are as much a slave as any in Thera, but you hold the keys.

Long ago, when others looked at us and said that orks did not deserve the same opportunities as other Name-givers, we did not listen. We knew that their words hid fear that the Passions had granted their greatest gift only to orks, fear that gift would turn on them, the fear of gahad.

And we laughed as they hid in their traditions, for then we had a home. We had a kingdom. We had Cara Fahd.

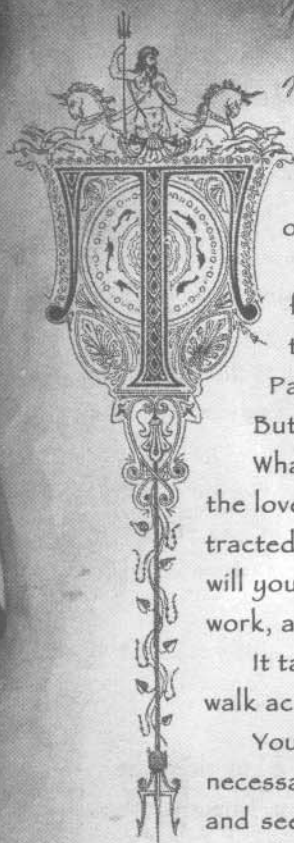
Now our ears are filled with the words of other Name-givers, and we seldom have time to listen to orks. And Blorc turns His face aside.

We must return to Cara Fahd. Now is the time, for Thera lurks on the horizon, ready to turn our silken chains to iron and our glass prisons to stone. Now is the time, because while you hurry to please your *ujnort* friends, you forget to change and rebel in the name of Blorc. Now is the time, for the Mahuta has returned and she demands that you follow, that you break free before she cuts through both shackle and foot to lead you to freedom.

Now is the time to recreate our land, to re-forge it with the blood of orks, spilled not in warfare, but in a promise. A promise that for as long as we or our children or our children's children live, Cara Fahd will be home to all orks, united in change and protected by the love of Blorc.

And we shall never be slaves again.

KRATHIS GRON



THE SLOW FLAME of JRIKJRIKJRIK

o the Orks of Barsaive:

You may be ready to begin, your hands on your sword hilts as you wait for the battle to take back Cara Fahd. You are ready to carve a nation from the broken armies of Thera and Throal, and proclaim your glory for all the Passions to hear.

But what then?

What will you do when the armies are slain, when the chains are shattered, when the lovers reunite? Will you leave your land and seek out new battles? Will you be distracted by the beauty of new lovers, or hold yourself imprisoned with new chains? Or will you stay to turn the blood to sweat, the passion of battle to the passion of hard work, a lover to a family, a victory to a nation?

It takes more than a declaration of freedom and a banner that stretches ten days' walk across Barsaive to build a nation.

You who would come to Cara Fahd, are you ready to throw down your swords when necessary and cut only stone to build roads? Are you ready to take off your helmets and see that the man you fought beside, who saved your life, was a blood enemy, a criminal or a beggar? Are you ready to put aside such differences, to embrace those you swore last week to destroy, to build a home together, stone by stone?

For there is passion in such work, as much as in anything, and this Passion, too, was hurt by the indolence and neglect of orks. This Passion is known to the dwarves as Upandal, but your ancestors knew him as Jrikjrikjrik, who watches for us always. He is the one who digs a well so that we may quench our thirst, and the thirst of all who come after. He is the one who fashions a hammer so that we can break not only our chains, but those of orks everywhere. He is the one who builds a fortress so that when we are too exhausted to fight, we may sleep safely and rise again.

Some of you turn away in disgust, and say Jrikjrikjrik has no place in an ork's life. You remember the years of slavery after the fall of Cara Fahd, when orks were chained in great lines and forced to build, forced with mortar and shovel and axe to prepare the great kaers for the Therans and the Throalites. You remember building dwellings to which you were not welcomed, and being given the broken shovels, the dried-out mortar to build for yourself. And you remember the self-righteous slave drivers who told you that such was the will of Upandal, for Upandal cared not for orks.

And so you turned your face from Him, but is He the true target?

Jrikjrikjrik did not force us into slavery; the Therans did. Jrikjrikjrik did not force us into hiding; the Horrors did. Jrikjrikjrik worked beside us, back and arms as tireless as any ork, to create a dwelling that would outlast the Scourge, so that no matter what the future held, we would emerge safely into it.

And we must turn to Him again, as free orks now, to build a nation that will last, to forge it with iron and hammer and wood so it will never fall. Stronger than any kaer, more enduring than

even the mountains.

And with Jrikjrikjrik we can do this, for He is not a momentary Passion who grabs us and leaves us spent. Jrikjrikjrik plans for the future, teaches us to build an ork nation that will be the rival of any nation in Barsaive. For if you buy a house, then you may make a home, but if you learn to build a house, then you may make Cara Fahd.

Still, I know some of you do not believe my words. What need have we for building, you ask, was not Cara Fahd a kingdom of warriors? Did not the orks of Cara Fahd live unfettered and free, traveling where the wind blew them without care for wall or border? Is that not what we strive to recreate?

Yes, I say, Cara Fahd was such a nation, and it grew like an oak that was nourished by the blood of its enemies. It grew strong and it spread its roots deep into the hearts of all orks. Yet when its enemies were too many, when its people gave up, when their gahad took them to other causes, Cara Fahd fell.

For we know the flame of gahad flares and sparks, lighting first from this Passion, then the next. One morning we sing a song to greet Mera-a-a-arg, then wrestle at noon with Tranko, and in the evening run free to feel Bork's blessing. And we scatter ourselves like the seeds of that great oak, catching in fits and starts. Some of us die of thirst in the plains, some of us are caught and chained in the mountains, and some of us ride to crush our enemies in the hills.

Cara Fahd fell, and for eleven hundred years we have been blown by the wind not as free warriors, but as lost children, for we have forgotten how to build. We have forgotten to call on Jrikjrikjrik and the slow-burning gahad, as hot and as ruthless as a blacksmith's forge. His fire does not run in search of battle, but marches inexorably toward our goal. It does not leave us like a lover's ardor, but nurtures with a mother's love. Nor does it make a land of constant strife, where we must fight always to escape our foes' arrows, but builds a wall to shield us and guarantee our freedom.

For Jrikjrikjrik's fire is not the blaze of desire but the steady flame of belief. For so long, we have believed nothing but what we saw before us: money, friends, tribe.

But when we work together to build a future, we believe in so much more. We believe in a land where any ork is free from the hate, the greed, the power of other Name-givers. We believe in our history not as a myth, but as a homeland and as a way of life that we had the courage to reclaim as our own. We believe in the mightiest land army in the Selestrean Basin, and the courage it takes to put aside clan loyalties to build something more powerful than all of us together.

We believe in orks.

As a people we are the seeds, scattered so far and so long ago, yet never taking root in inhospitable soil where we are yanked from the ground as soon as we plant ourselves. We must join together, so many seeds blooming and growing at once, and spread ourselves across the land so firmly that we can never again be uprooted.

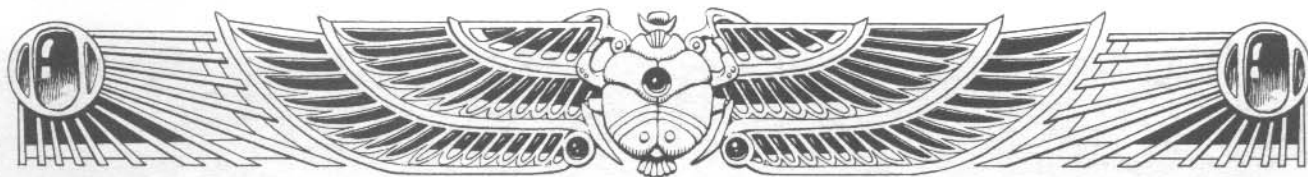
We must become a nation.

A nation that will stand against all who will try to destroy it.

A nation that will be open to any ork in need.

A nation that will last forever.

KRATHIS GRON



A WORD FROM KRATHIS GRON

This work is dedicated to the liberated slaves of the Wejoto mine on this first day of Mawag. Never forget, my friends, freedom is worthless if you do nothing with it.

Every night when I lay down to sleep, I cannot help but wonder on the nature of mortality. Though the Passions have graced me with an unusually long life, all things must end, and I with them. And so too, this nation. Despite what the Passions have led me to accomplish, regardless of the legions of people who followed this Passions-inspired dream to the hazardous jungles our homeland once inhabited, a single, terrible fear grips us all whenever we stop to think of it.

We may be forgotten.

This specter haunts me more persistently than any Horror or empire or dragon, and I know that its voice whispers in every ork's ear, from the southern plains to the highest peaks of the Delaris Mountains. All we have accomplished may come to nothing, an impressive crash of cymbals and beating of drums that falls silent as soon as the audience leaves. Worse, our music may never even be heard. In any venture, be it a song or a war, a trio of horrors wait night after day after night, watching for the slightest mistake or a single moment of fatigue. And these horrors are named Failure, Mediocrity and Oblivion. A hundred years, a thousand years from now, will anyone know what we have accomplished today? That Cara Fahd was a mighty ork nation?

Our nation has already faltered once, and nearly fell unrecoverable into the abyss. Only a multitude of orks' desire to truly regain the Passions' favor allowed our race to pull back our nation from that abyss and give it life's breath again. Despite this achievement, Cara Fahd may yet die within a year, for we are surrounded by enemies without and within.

This is my answer to that terrible fear, and I speak for all the orks of Cara Fahd. If we die, Cara Fahd may yet live. If Cara Fahd dies, these documents chronicling her rebirth may live. And if these documents pass away, may Death remember the glory of the Name-givers who would spit for her, sometimes to the left and sometimes to the right, but always with passion.

Copies of this account of Cara Fahd now belong to the Great Library of Throal and the great dragons Mountainshadow and Icewing—so that even if all we do is brought to ruin by our enemies and every ork is crushed, what we died to accomplish will not perish with us.

Krathis Gron
High Chief of the New Ork Nation of Cara Fahd
Mawag, 1510 TH

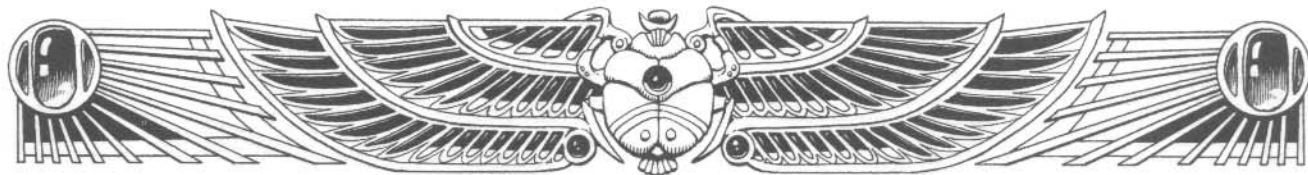
ON THE NATURE OF THIS WORK

I have long dreamed of the opportunity to participate in the creation of a document such as this. From the time I was but a young stripling trying to draw circle upon triangle upon square in the dirt of the plains, I sought to learn of those things in Name-giver society that could not be seen by the naked eye. Even when I was very young, I understood that behind every being, event and thing lies a story and a pattern. Sadly, many of the stories of my own people have been lost and forgotten. It is the intent of this work to recall such legends that we can, and lay the foundation for new memories and lessons to guide the future of this nation. Perhaps what we write here will also light the hidden pattern of the history of the ork peoples all over the world.

Many times over, my wishes in life have been fulfilled. My desire to see the patterns of life led me to become a wizard adept. Later, in search of a more permanent way of recording the patterns of life, I accepted the challenge of immortalizing the ways of Herok's Lancers in verse—but soon discovered that my work held no interest for the libraries of the Galeb-Klek or any others. (Many of these places also decided I was not worth talking to simply because of my mode of dress—as if thundra leathers were some label on a researcher's character or abilities!) When Krathis Gron sought me out the night following the now-famous Incident at Claw Ridge and asked me to compile this study of the ork people, I knew I had found my true calling at last.

This is the first document to be placed in the library at Claw Ridge, in the hope that our history shall begin anew and be recorded to outlast the coming war. I have traveled throughout our nation looking for those who would share with me the history of their tribe, and their observations on the formation of Cara Fahd. Included are such missives as my own "Ujnort's





Guide to Cara Fahd," Titanstroke Greybeard's assessment of our potential allies, and excerpts from the journals of those brave enough to adventure through our land in search of its ancient cities.

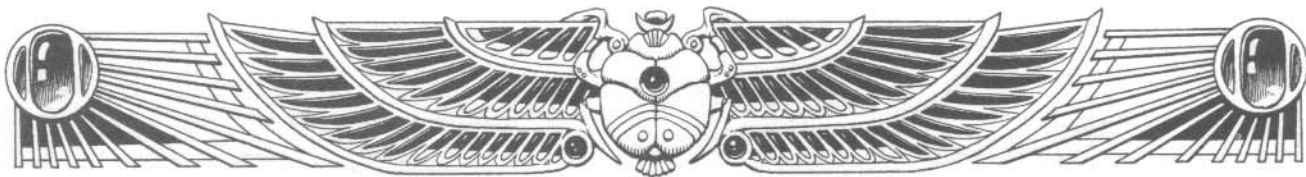
This book is more than a record of our accomplishments. It also serves as a living document for our High Chief, containing advice from leaders, shopkeepers, farmers and many others on how to improve our nation. And rest assured that Krathis Gron will carefully consider each and every word of advice, for she embraces the notion that this nation will only succeed through the personal effort and cooperation of every single ork who joins our fledgling realm.

For those others who read this and wish to join our cause, know that we would welcome such help. We need good people and powerful adepts to accomplish our aims, and no matter your race or your troubled past, you may find a home in Cara Fahd if your dealings are honest. Perhaps your own tales may find their way into the library of Claw Ridge.

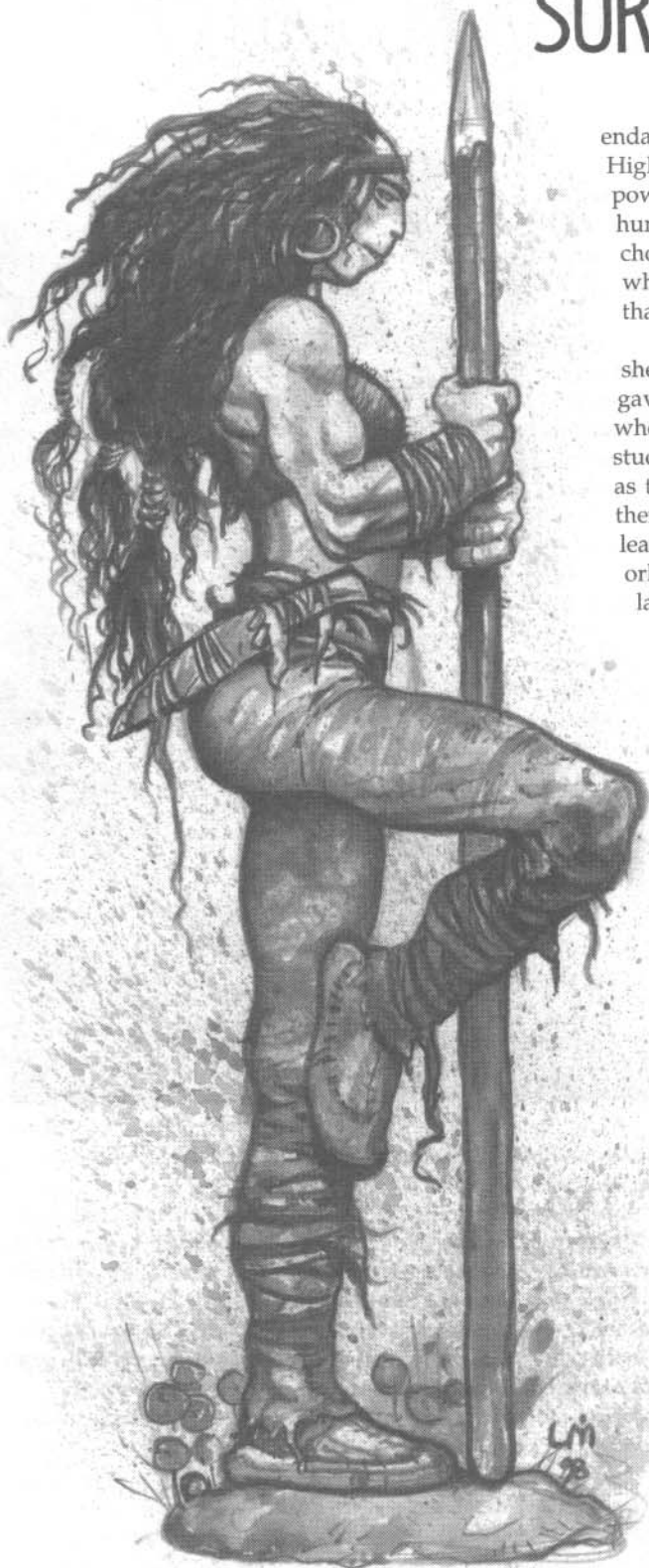
A warning to the reader: I find objective writing a contradiction in terms. The information here is the truth as its author sees it. Any more, no one can give.

Getaft Allthought
First Librarian of Cara Fahd
Mawag, 1510 TH





SURVIVING IN CARA FAHD



Krathis Gron, descendant of Hrak Gron, who was the legendary ork hero and first liberator, is far more than the title of High Chief she has accepted for herself; she holds the spiritual power of the *Mahuta*. The tale of the *Mahuta* is nearly eleven hundred years old and speaks of one whom the Passions will choose to reunite our people and rebuild our home. The orks who have come to rebuild Cara Fahd believe Krathis Gron to be that Chosen One.

Like her ancestor Hrak Gron, Krathis was born a slave, but she escaped and learned to love freedom. When the Passions gave her the task of recreating Cara Fahd, she traveled to Cathay, where she learned the knowledge of several lifetimes. While studying in Cathay, she wrote the letters that came to be known as the Seeds of Nation, which begin this compilation. She sent them all across Barsaive to blaze a path down which she could lead the orks into Cara Fahd. They were eagerly copied by every ork who could put pen to parchment and traveled across the land swifter than any horse could run. As the Passions Astendar, Thystonius, Lochost and Upandal inspired her, so she inspired the orks of Barsaive.

And our people began to listen.

When she returned to Barsaive, orks everywhere knew her Name. But Krathis knew that words were one thing and action another. For months she traveled to every town and city and village of Barsaive, calling on all orks to remember their identity as a Name-giver race and inviting them to leave their safe but empty lives for the hardship and glory of creating their own nation.

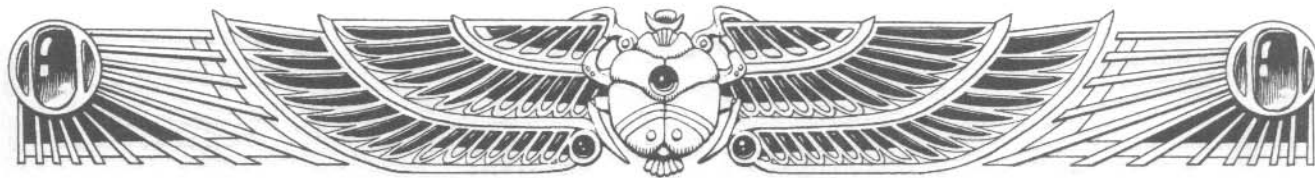
Every town she approached added its peoples to her caravan. Fathers and mothers carried their children and helped their elders limp behind her. The entire Broken Fang tribe tore through Barsaive as their horses and thundras raced to arrive first. One by one, the Metal Fist, the Thunderers, portions of Herok's Lancers, the Terath's Chargers and others carried their hopes into a barren land.

When the word had finally spread so far that every ork in Barsaive had heard the call of Cara Fahd, Krathis brought her followers to the land that awaited them, warning that the battle for respect was still to be fought.

Only a short while after we began to set our tent pegs into the earth, the armies of Throal and Thera blundered across our border, threatening to spill blood on our sovereign soil near Claw Ridge. But our people took up arms to defend their land and, instead of an empty field, the armies were greeted by thousands and thousands of orks with swords and spells and rakes in hand. This was the land of Cara Fahd, they were told, and any hostile action would be taken as an act of war. When the two armies slunk away, our people rejoiced.

Cara Fahd was reborn.





I title these documents "Surviving in Cara Fahd" rather than "Welcome to Cara Fahd" or somesuch because I do not lie to my readers. Our nation is neither an abscess of villainy nor a paradise, but it is as dangerous as the frontier north of Parlainth, the Servos Jungle or the Aras Sea. The land is still wild and our nation is small and new, so law is often what you, or the one with the biggest sword, make it. I cannot promise safety, but I can promise a land which is still being birthed. A land of passion and stories—a land, in short, for heroes.

ON THE GROWING LANDS OF CARA FAHD

To hear Therans tell it, Cara Fahd is a barbarous place where the natives of disease-filled jungles and barren hills would roast even the fiercest Barsaivian scorchers on spits and eat their heads. But to hear the Therans tell it, everyone east of Creana should be their willing *jaraleh* (the name the Therans give their pleasure-slaves in Marac).

The land of Cara Fahd lies between the Delaris Mountains and the Twilight Peaks to the north and east, and the Greenheart and Locust rivers to the south and west. According to some historical records, the ancient kingdom's borders ended at the rivers' shores, but my research indicates that the answer to, "What were the borders of old Cara Fahd?" is, in fact, "In what year?"

Records from the Galeb kaer of Dota indicate that Cara Fahd covered sweeping plains filled with herds of fine thundra beasts, but I don't know if its borders extended into the grasslands beyond the Locust or if the landscape merely changed during the Scourge, as befell the Badlands and Wastes. There is no doubt that our ancestors made war, and some records indicate that Cara Fahd's armies may have laid siege as far afield as the city of Vivane, but exactly how far our ancient brethren conquered before being driven back is unclear.

In the territory claimed by Cara Fahd today, there is a wide variety of terrain, though the joke I've heard is that Cara Fahd has two types of land: inhospitable and unforgiving.

THE NORTHERN BORDER

The Delaris Mountains are supposedly famous for their serenity. I confess that I do not share this opinion, as my first view of Cara Fahd was from those mountains while being stalked by four packs of Theran bounty hunters, trying to ride a fine war-horse from the Dinganni plains down a slope nearly as steep as a wall. After I abandoned my mount for my own two feet, I discovered the first thing a traveler needs to know about the mountains.

Their "serenity" comes from more than the bucolic setting. There is magic in the mountains that silences sound, an effect as dangerous as it is peaceful. One must remain constantly alert, watching behind, above and to the sides for mountain cats, espagra or the enormous cloud birds that can tear a thundra in two. Such creatures roam vast ranges, so you seldom encounter more than one in a single journey, but as several late bounty hunters know, that's all it takes. And in the Delaris, no one will hear your screams more than fifty strides away.

The Delaris are not completely hostile. The steep slopes soften occasionally into nearly flat, grassy highlands, ideal for herding. Such fields appear throughout the hills, following the meandering of and fed by the Delaris River, and provide nearly unlimited pastures for any animals more sure-footed than horses. Patchwork goatskin tents dot such fields, often resembling large boulders, home to generations of herders who live with only their sheep and goats. (One can always tell these Delaris men at Claw Ridge inns, because they shout every word.) The weather is generally cool and dry, but the near-constant wind buffets even the sturdiest tent.

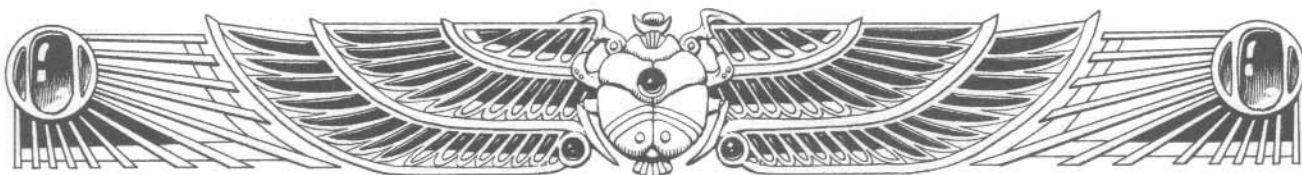
THE NORTHERN PASSES

Where the Delaris and Twilight mountains meet, and where the Liaj, Delaris and Valley Rivers converge, are several passes which see frequent use. This area is a key choke point for trade and travel, as strategically important to the Therans as it is to our new nation. The trading and farming town of Three Rivers is hotly contested by both nations at the moment, and its size is swelling to match its importance. Many of the passes also represent prime hunting grounds for the Bloodlore and Blackfang crystal raider trollmoots.

Of particular note is Vutta's Pick Gap, a narrow, high-walled pass where the mountains meet. Part of the Gap is actually a tunnel that runs beneath a ridge, which is frequently flooded by a shallow pool that is easily forded on any mount larger than a pony. The Gap is Named for Vutta, a character from an ork children's story who drunkenly challenged anyone in Cara Fahd to out-mine him, and in a furious race against Upandal, carved the gap in a week with his pick before collapsing dead of exhaustion.

With the flood of orks returning to Cara Fahd through this convenient path, thousands of horses and thundras have pounded its underbrush into a road leading straight to Claw Ridge. Merchant caravans bringing goods from the lower Serpent also travel through here. I admit with shame that some orks see the incoming travelers as easy pickings, and covet their goods and food or the beasts they ride. Asok Serpentborn, an honorable gentleman, has taken it upon himself to lend





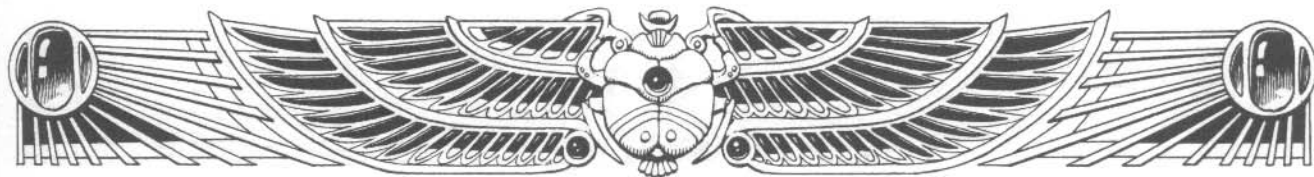
his cavalry to the protection of those who arrive in our nation unprepared for the dangers of its frontier. Titanstroke Greybeard's Thunderers also patrol, though they often arrive only soon enough to bury the corpses.

THE CITY OF CLAW RIDGE

On the southeastern slope of the Delaris Mountains sits Claw Ridge, our capital. The city of Claw Ridge surrounds a great granite fortress Named Wurchaz, a massive building dedicated to the Declaration of Sovereignty Krathis Gron delivered to the Therans and Throalites when they threatened to do battle on our lands, that lies directly under the claw-shaped overhang which gives the area its Name. The entrance to the box canyon where the Incident at Claw Ridge took place is just a dozen steps away. A dual temple devoted to Lochost and Thystonius was built over the exact spot where Krathis made her declaration. The walls of Wurchaz are earth-brown to show our devotion to the land, and its doors shine with obsidian.

Because Claw Ridge is still being constructed, only a quarter of its residents live in finished wooden or brick houses. The rest reside for the moment in horse-hide tents or log-and-rope shacks. Many have moved a half day's walk away to the flat, fertile flood-plain of the Delaris River, where they farm the rich soil.





OUR VAST FORESTS

The flat plain slopes quickly into scrubby forest, still heavily populated by herders. The tree line recedes every day, as thundras eat the young trees and trample the ground to a field—a few beasts can accomplish this destruction in weeks. Many orks make their homes in this lightly forested region, for they find plentiful game to hunt, yet remain far from the frightful beasts of the deeper jungle.

Small villages pepper the outermost edge, filled with orks who live by gathering fruits and nuts from the trees and raising pigs and goats in the underbrush. Since the Great Return, we have been harvesting wood to build dwellings in our cities, and to clear land for herd animals.

Forest covers the vast majority of our land, in the southern parts a thick tangle of young trees which have grown since the Horrors stripped the soil bare. This area is dry and hot, with isolated villages and small clearings where nomadic gatherers camp for a night or a season. Many dangers lurk in the forest, from vicious stingers to the deceptive genhis. Thundra and horse are both too large to move between the close-grown trees and so travelers are forced to go by foot, a frightening experience if you are alone, for the trees block sunlight and nearly invisible monkeys watch unwary travelers from the branches.

No one has explored the entirety of this wood, though a local troubadour once told me that on her travels she came across a band of orks who survived the Scourge not by the Rites of Protection, but through their own devices. They speak no Throalic, only the ancient ork language known as *or'zat*, and ran from my friend when she suggested the Scourge was over. If someone were to track down these relics of old Cara Fahd and perhaps even live with and study them, imagine what they could teach us of our ancestors, untouched as they are by contact with other races.

ENTERING THE DEEP JUNGLE

Before the Scourge, this area was a flat savanna of rocky soil and tough, scrubby grass, which was perfect for growing quaalz beans and pasturing thundras. Our ancestors recognized the land's value and built their greatest cities, temples and monuments on the plains. Like many areas of Barsaive, however, this land underwent a dramatic change during the Scourge. Legend says that a titanic struggle between two Horrors vying for territory caused Death's Eyes to erupt; once started, the twin mountains began to spew a constant stream of lava. While much of the flow simply fueled the fires of Death's Sea, enough of the lava spread up the mouth of the Greenheart River to heat the water for several days' walk. This, in turn, caused a warming effect in the general vicinity, which combined with the unusual weather patterns common to all mountain ranges and the eternal flow of strange seeds and vegetation from the Liaj Jungle via the Liaj River to gradually change the nature of the land from plains to jungle. The lush growth that resulted completely took over all human habitation remaining in the area, hiding it from those of us who now seek to rediscover our heritage.

The jungle hides more than ruins; those travelers brave or foolish enough to enter deep into this jungle emerge convinced that something or someone watched and followed them throughout their entire journey. These tales only increase the jungle's reputation for danger and increase the reluctance of adventurers to penetrate its depths in search of our past.

As you near the southern rivers, the air grows heavy with moisture. The frequent rain showers and lightning storms do nothing to dissipate the damp heat. The trees thrive in this atmosphere, and I have seen more varieties of plants here than anywhere in Barsaive, except for the Liaj Jungle. Many of the trees and other plants flower multiple times a year, and so the jungle often resembles an artist's palette with every known color dabbed across a background of green velvet.

Don't let its beauty fool you, though. Many plants now native to this area, such as the ghost mushroom, are poisonous if merely touched, let alone tasted. Though it is possible to survive by hunting and foraging in the jungle, few Name-givers dwell there. In fact, one tribe I met, who call themselves Hreta, ventured here from their forest homes and have learned to leach the poison from some plants, which they then eat. I must say, I was never brave enough to try their cooking!

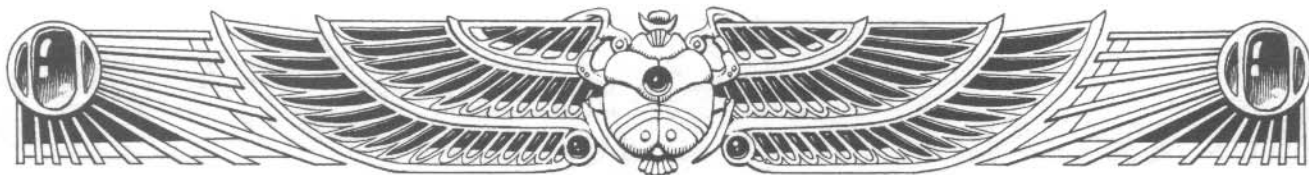
ON THE SHORES OF OUR RIVERS

The Greenheart River rushes from a small spring to the southwest, flowing along a broad, shallow bed to join the Locust River and then spill into Death's Sea. I have swum in its turbulent waters many times; my favorite part is right at the confluence of the Greenheart and Locust rivers, where the water is always pleasantly warm and the jungle creatures are few and far between. Storms pass frequently along the rivers, though they seldom last more than a few minutes.

The soft, swampy mud of the riverbank is lined with thousands of sturdy, flexible reeds that the t'skrang use for baskets, pens, flutes and many other purposes. When mixed with ground chalk from the mountains, the mud makes excellent clay for pottery and sculpture. Because clay is so plentiful, the t'skrang villages near the Greenheart make even their simplest plates and cups into works of art. A hundred or so strides away from the riverbank lies a narrow strip of cleared farmland, worked mainly by the fishing villages and, recently, a few orks.

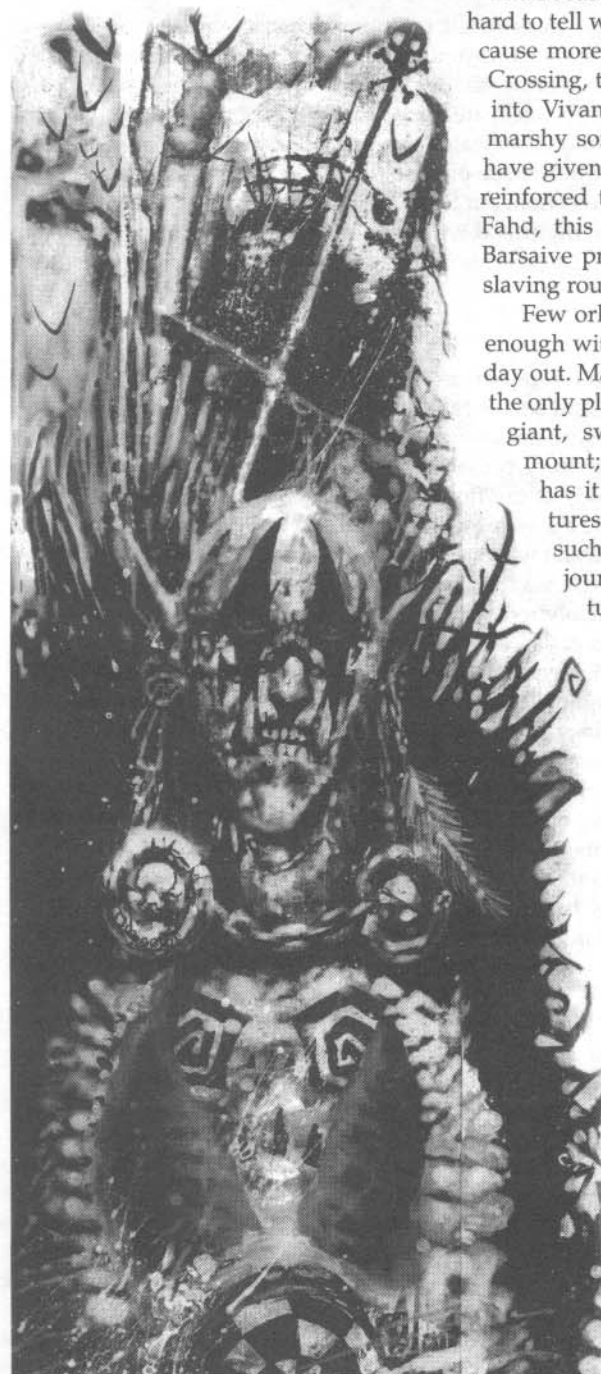
Most nearby settlements consist of t'skrang or human fishermen who live independent of all nations or owe allegiance to Vivane. Though these lands lie well within Cara Fahd's ancient borders, many residents refuse to accept the sovereignty of the





ork nation. Certain slavers and Theran sympathizers have sworn a campaign of terror against all orks, refusing any offer of peace that would allow them to keep their towns and us our nation. Though these agitators do not represent the majority, and in fact many villages have come to an amicable agreement with Cara Fahd, be wary of these pirates if traveling the river.

There are few t'skrang riverboats in the Greenheart, for the rough waters and rocky river bed make travel nearly impossible in many areas. Most boaters use canoes or pole flat-bottomed fishing skiffs through the calmer waters. There is little danger near to the shore except from Name-givers, but the river harbors enormous porcupine snakes known to eat swimmers, and lava frogs lurk in the steamy area where the river meets Death's Sea.



The Locust is wider and calmer than the Greenheart, its banks so marshy it is hard to tell where land ends and water begins. Theran provocateurs pursue their cause more fiercely along this river, especially around the town of Grimeye's Crossing, the location of the only sizable, permanent bridge to cross this river into Vivane Province. Most other bridges find only a temporary hold in the marshy soil or are regularly washed out during flood season, and the locals have given up the efforts to keep rebuilding. The Therans, however, recently reinforced the Grimeye bridge with magic; before the orks returned to Cara Fahd, this bridge served as their main thoroughfare between Vivane and Barsaive provinces, and they clearly do not intend to give up this trade and slaving route without a fight.

Few orks live in this area, for our efforts to rebuild our nation are difficult enough without the added pressure of facing attack or harassment day in and day out. Many cavalries have visited this place, however, for the Locust Mire is the only place in Cara Fahd to find the great beasts known as behemoths. These giant, swamp-dwelling thundras dwarf the most magnificent scorcher mount; they must use the water to support their colossal weight. Legend has it that the ancient denizens of Cara Fahd tamed these massive creatures for mounts, but the behemoths' indomitable will makes success in such an endeavor seem unlikely. Many a young cavalryman, however, journeys here to watch them and dream. Were a single one of these creatures tamed and trained for war, both rider and mount would be feared throughout the land.

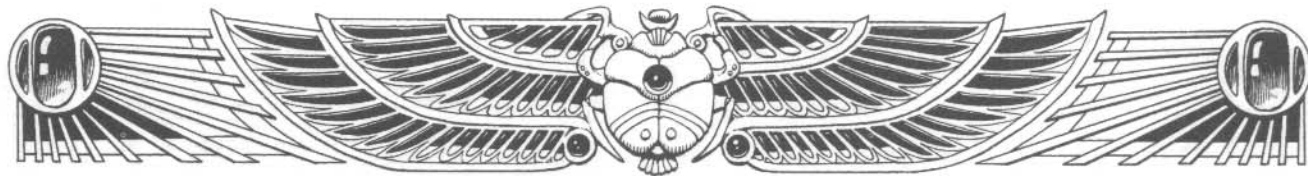
The Locust River takes its name from the swarms of these insects that plague the land around the river once every few years. Millions of locusts crawl from their hatching grounds in the muddy riverbanks, covering every surface with their red and yellow bodies. Fortunately for the Name-giver inhabitants of this area, a significant number of the insects succumb to various plants or fail to fly free of the clinging mud. They make good eating when boiled in quaalz.

THE SOUTHWESTERN PLAINS

The region on the other side of the Locust, often fought over by the people of ancient Cara Fahd and the people of Landis, is a land of rolling hills and grasslands, home to dozens of thundra herds rumored to be descended from the freed mounts of those who perished in the Fall. Our efforts to reclaim all our ancient lands have not yet reached this far, as rebuilding the areas we hold keeps us quite busy. We do hope to extend Cara Fahd's borders as far west as Hildingrist Crest someday.

Many cavalries have already begun culling the thundra herds for new mounts. With the constant threat of war looming on all sides, the thundras have become a necessity as well as a status symbol. Several independent scorcher tribes who refused our offer of unity still follow the herds, preying equally on Therans and their own people. Though no one here objects to a Theran death or two, most see these orks as petty, disgraceful fools who will eventually flee from our unified nation.





ON THE CONFLICTS THAT TEAR AT OUR LAND

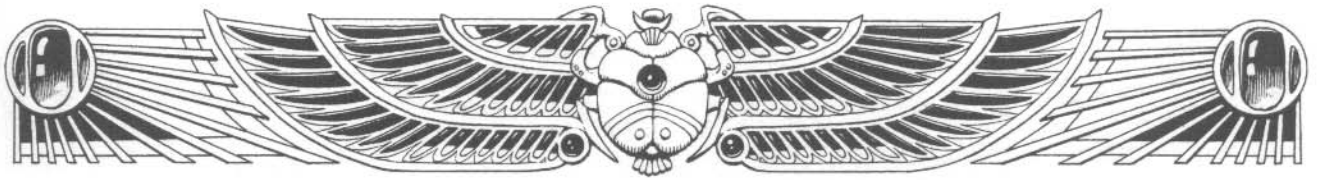
Though Krathis Gron's passion and wisdom brought orks from all over Barsaive to share in her dream of a nation, their diverse backgrounds and beliefs make conflict inevitable. Some have never lived within a single nation's boundaries, while others had not journeyed beyond the city of their birth. Orks from all walks of life and all situations now strive to learn each others' ways, and to unify their customs into a single, yet diverse, culture.

When Krathis arrived at Claw Ridge last year, she found numerous tribes, towns and individuals whose great-grandparents had chosen, after the Scourge, to return to the land of Cara Fahd. When I and other scholars scoured the area looking for those who had not yet heard Krathis's message, we discovered nearly forty-five thousand orks and more than thirty thousand other Name-givers already living within the bounds we proposed for the new Cara Fahd. With the flood of immigrants, that number has increased to more than a hundred thousand orks, with the other Name-givers maintaining a steady or only slightly diminished population. More orks arrive from Vivane Province every day as they leave their masters and join our struggle.

Half our population are former city-dwellers amazed at this untamed frontier that lies before them; the other half belong to nomadic tribes. Nearly twenty thousand hail from large Barsaivian tribes or cavalries who left their territories and contracts to join us here, the rest to the smaller local groups who are collectively labeled Carads—though only those whose ancestors have been here since the kaers first opened give themselves this Name. Of those, perhaps eight thousand are trained warriors or members of a cavalry, and only one in eight have studied as adepts. However, I say proudly that should it come to war, every ork in the nation save the most elderly or the babes in arms is prepared and willing to defend our home. Already, you can travel to any village and see the youth practicing with swords if they own them, or sickles and grain flails if they lack conventional weapons.

Sadly, many have chosen to exercise their new skills on our neighbors. Though I wish we had no cause to police our own nation, we need a group of adepts willing to quell the worst of the lot in the northwest by Grimeye's Crossing. Some recent immigrants were forced to settle in the marsh there because the better land is already taken, and they exercise their frustration on the humans and t'skrang nearby. While the humans pose little threat themselves, they need only the slightest excuse to call on Thera for protection.





The vast majority of *ujnort* in Cara Fahd are human, with *t'skrang* near the riverbanks and a smattering of elves, trolls and dwarves occupying the foothills of the Delaris Mountains and the banks of the Delaris River. In the jungle, you find few of any race, though small tribes of windlings lives in the trees, cultivating fungus and small birds for food. Many Name-givers have made peace with us, but a vast number chose to leave when we arrived, and still others have joined the hateful Theran-backed resistance groups centered in Grimeye's Crossing and Basstown.

THE ORKS OF CITY AND PLAIN

My *gahad* has often stirred me to action at the foolish behavior of those I otherwise call friends and neighbors. After all we have done and sacrificed to build this nation from jungle and ruin, *havuuts*, those bound beyond reason to tradition, persist in giving in to petty jealousy and mistrust. All that keeps us whole is that we each follow the same dream.

For example, my friend Kantra of Urupa has often shouted down his new neighbor Nukra because Nukra pronounces Mera-a-a-arg as Merag-er, the way the orks of Rugaria always have, for their speech is influenced by the Theran accent. Kantra insists that she does it purposefully to insult the Passion.

Nukra lets her chamber pots sit for weeks at a time, drawing flies to her home, a habit she finds hard to break because she grew up expecting the fieldmen to come to the door, but Kantra empties his into his vegetable garden, so Nukra doesn't eat Kantra's cooking because it is "like feeding a guest dung!" Neither is as bad as the habits of some natives of Kratas, who are used to simply flinging it from their windows into abandoned buildings next door. After a few such unpleasant surprises, many people decided they were happier with the ways and languages they know. So Claw Ridge has broken down into neighborhoods where orks of the same city gather, creating small replicas of Urupa, Jerris, Travar and so on.

The worst screaming matches are among the nomadic cavalries settling for the first time in Claw Ridge and Gevosht. Most lack even the simplest understanding of city life, leaving their horse dung and garbage where it lies, assuming the sheep pastured to the west of town are free for the taking and considering anyone who approaches to within three steps as either a potential threat or tryst. These are not small matters when multiplied by the thousands of nomads within our borders.

Those who lived their lives as scorcher have even worse problems, for they are used to thinking of cities only as victims of their raids, and understand as little as the other nomads of living among a society. Predictably, their pride seldom permits them to ask for help, and their first response to a problem is to kill it. I cannot count the number of disputes I have had to settle because all *ten* members of the Complaints Council are already occupied.

The scene is always the same, though the players vary. A merchant sells a scorcher his goods for the first price he asks, then begins haggling with an experienced bargainer while the scorcher remains in the store, watching the same goods go for half the price. The scorcher has a *gahad* that burns whenever he feels cheated, or perhaps discriminated against, or lied to. He doesn't see the bartering, only that two city orks are plotting against him right before his eyes, so he demands his "stolen" money ... and a fight begins. Or the merchant explains the situation, but still talks rings around the scorcher ... who also doesn't like feeling stupid. Or he now *knows* he's being cheated, and the fight begins when he shows the merchant how he *usually* gets his goods ... a process that often involves shoving the unfortunate shopkeeper through the shuttered windows of his own store.

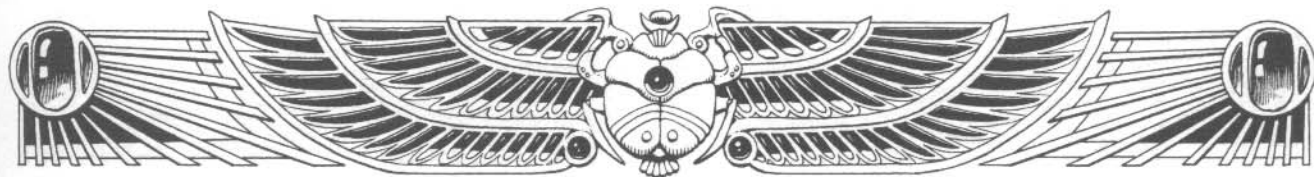
Tranko forbid that someone else in the clan hears the story and has his or her *gahad* triggered at the injustice ... or when her family members are hurt ... or if either side yells that the other is not a real ork because of his city ways or because he's a stupid rustic who doesn't know how to settle down and cooperate.

Naturally, these attitudes vary widely among individuals, and in a given town you are as likely to see a Travar merchant trying to learn "true orkness" on thundra-back as you are to see scorchers throwing rocks at merchant caravans. The arguments are most common in the neighborhoods of Claw Ridge, for the houses are packed together with barely room between for a shared vegetable garden. On the frontier, diverse groups either ignore each other or cooperate to defeat the elements, for they live in wider spaces and face problems that are far more serious than petty arguments—

I must cease writing for the moment; I am needed to settle a dispute.

Let me amend my earlier statement. On the frontier, disputes still occur, and though many of them are settled with arrows and blades, honest folk still ask for a neutral arbiter from Claw Ridge such as myself. I was just called on by two families from near Harvest whose eldest children recently married. Unfortunately, the young man was from a local tribe which follows very loose wedding ceremonies with little responsibility of mates to each other, while the girl's parents have followed Throalic customs and restrictions all their lives. Last week, when the man decided another woman had caught his eye, he dissolved the marriage according to his tribe's traditions. The girl's parents, feeling their daughter shamed, wished to force the young husband back to his vows or else kill him. Fortunately, they took my suggestion that the man simply pay his beleaguered wife a portion of his next five years' hunts. And I further advised that they learn more of each others' customs before undertaking such a serious commitment in future.





WAYS TO EARN RESPECT

Cara Fahd is unlike anywhere else in Barsaive. Our borders shift every day, and status within them fluctuates likewise. Crishep Turtleneck, a notorious thief and cheat on the streets of Urupe, was unanimously chosen as mayor of the town of Mountain's End over three months ago, and has earned the respect of Claw Ridge and Black Quarry alike for his fair decisions. Elsewhere in Cara Fahd, criminals rise to fame and fortune, while politicians and businessmen are driven to poverty by the dislike of their neighbors. Our nation offers—in fact, requires—every man and woman a chance to change their lives.

Because we have no entrenched royalty or even established professional guilds, every ork may hope that she might rise above whatever role she occupied before, and become rich, or influential or even a friend of Krathis Gron. In Throal, the average dwarf pays little attention to the power struggles between noble families; in Cara Fahd, such struggles touch every one of us as we seek to find our place.

Our nation is young enough that our very survival is uncertain, so status is a practical matter, often revolving around control of an important commodity such as food or crops. Dabrog Featherbrow owns a dozen separate pig farms and a barley field north of Gevosht and for a month had the entire city at his beck and call, for he decided if their dinner plates would hold meat or grass. Then Ulrek Notseen brought back a caravan from the deep jungle laden with the meat from a slain behemoth. In the middle of a town meeting, the orks turned away from Dabrog, promptly offering their services to Ulrek.

A visitor may be surprised to find that money is the least valued commodity for an ork in Cara Fahd. Rarely are trade routes reliable, and so coin means far less than goods or services to trade. Though some wealthy orks have moved in and Black Quarry's gambling houses and pit fights bring in steady silver, a settlement less than six months old rarely accepts coin in preference to food or other practical trade. When I killed the maddened skeorx terrorizing the village of Sykon and ended its rampage, the locals thanked me by giving of their most valuable commodity: their woodsmiths built me a fine wardrobe.

Military might, naturally, confers status among scorched and those who emulate them. In the face of encroaching war, everything martial becomes priceless, though we have faced only a few skirmishes so far. When Charok Redhand enters an inn, the keeper often serves him for free, partially to thank him for defending against Thera, and partially to acknowledge that he could raze the village to the ground if he was so inclined. However, even Redhand respects commodities; for example, horse trainers and weaponsmiths need bow before no one.

In return for the innkeeper's respect, Charok will praise the man's Name wherever he goes. Orks talk constantly among themselves, and a recommendation from Charok that your inn serves the best food for the lowest cost will double your patronage. Having powerful friends, or just lots of them, gives you more status than anyone could earn himself. Jesfuy Longrunner spent her childhood building friends in Cara Fahd and she can find any ork a job by matching his talents to the people she already knows—in her own way, she practically rules Claw Ridge. News of any kind—word of loved ones left behind in Bartertown, the current movements of old enemies or even the political choices of King Neden—means a warm welcome for any visitor. We have not lived here long and do not wish to stagnate.

Legends and magic also create status in Cara Fahd. Krathis Gron leads through her ties to Hrak Gron, her ties to the Passions themselves and because she fulfills our tale of the Mahuta, the Chosen of the Passions. But magic and words often twist like hanging snakes, and a new discovery that claims a chosen king or chosen tribe could vault another as high. No one knows what a legend may leave out; for example, I myself thought the Blades of Cara Fahd were swords, as I had heard no different, when in truth they are daggers.

This land of ours abounds in legends, even though many have been lost. Cara Fahd has no gold or silver mines or forests of elemental wood, so many our ancestors made their trade through crafts. This meant that a comparatively large number of elementalists and weaponsmith adepts trained within Cara Fahd's borders. No one knows what treasures they may have left behind when they fell, and each weapon or item recovered could grant its owner prestige, or possibly answer many of our questions. If Zarass Icthought succeeds in finding the Royal Seal of Cara Fahd's rulers, a hundred young hopefuls will flock to her side to share in the glory. Treasure-hunters already fight over even the most blatantly fake documents, drooling at a hint of the royal scepter, Grimeye's lance or King Wudra's soul stone. The list of Cara Fahd's lost symbols is long.

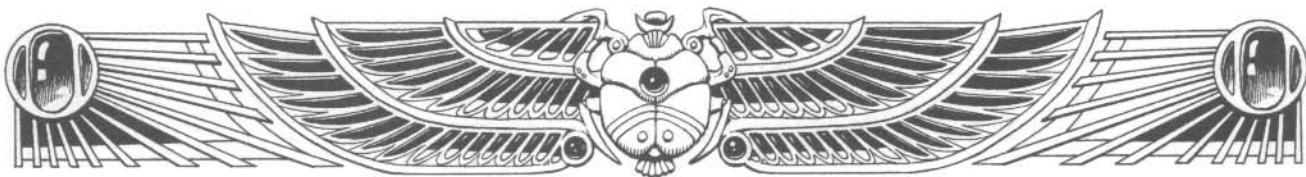
And it ends with the crown.

ON THE DELICATE BALANCE OF POWER

Krathis Gron declined to speak on the nature of Cara Fahd's government, feeling that she could not provide an objective view. Instead, I chose Jesfuy Longrunner, the young but skilled daughter of the famed Crossi Halftusk, who took over her mother's duties as Krathis's aide when Crossi left as ambassador to Throal.

—Getaft Allthought, First Librarian of Cara Fahd





Everywhere I go in Cara Fahd, I find people who are new here but still carry their old fears and prejudices. They act like they're in Throal and refuse to share a meal with me, or think things here are the same as in Thera and try to buy my favor simply because I work for the government.

Cara Fahd isn't like that. In Claw Ridge, we work not out of habit, but to fill a need, and we adapt to meet the demands people place on us. If the Metal Fist tribe needs carpenters, I post that for all to see on the south wall of Wurchaz and remember their request when chatting that night with new arrivals from the Woodcraft Guild of Jerris. When the road to Thundra's Rest washes out, I warn the caravans to go by thundra, not horse, and to carry gravel with them. Other governments may be formed from the parchment mazes of Dis, but ours works by the clear light of Mynbruje.

The descriptions below could change before the summer ends, but they represent what I've observed while working in Claw Ridge and watching Krathis Gron assemble a government with enough structure to function and enough freedom to develop and change.

The Habits of the High Chief

Five days after declaring sovereignty at Claw Ridge, the massed ork armies unanimously chose Krathis Gron as High Chief. Bronze Eyes and Charok Redhand tattooed the twin bracelets onto her hands, silver and black ink twined in an honor braid around runes of Cara Fahd, in the ancient ork language of *or'zat* on the left wrist and the modern version of that language, *or'zet*, on the right, symbolizing a rule that will last as long as her life, bound as tightly as cavalryman and horse.

She had done the impossible, recreated Cara Fahd and allowed us to share in its glory. We would have given her anything, but she chose to forgo riches and jewels and to be known simply as the High Chief. She was honored with the ultimate authority in the land, but she took it modestly, and made it clear that she would not supersede the tribal chiefs' powers for internal problems.

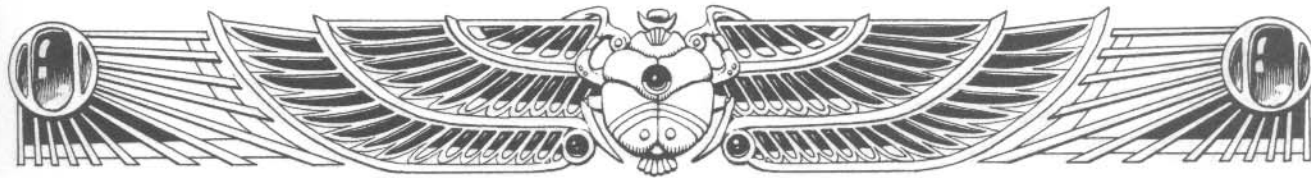
A friend of mine was cleaning the High Chief's apartments when a committee of orks from Bartertown, Travar and Urupa asked Krathis to take the title "Queen," because they were of the opinion that a chief would not be respected by the royalty of Throal and Blood Wood.

Krathis spoke at length, asking if they also wished her to flatten her nose and pull out her tusks when she spoke to others, and to change her very Name to deny its orkness. Cara Fahd is a nation built on *our* traditions; though she has adopted parts of Throalic law and the best aspects of ancient Cara Fahd to add to our current lifestyle, we have been led by chieftains for eleven hundred years, and a chief she will be. I'm told they left the room in tears.

Krathis wants everyone to know that she leads from duty and not ambition, wearing only simple leather clothing and living in a single apartment in the Wurchaz fortress, not some gilded palace. Though she recognizes the necessity of bodyguards, her chambers are open to any ork, day or night, and she does her best to answer all questions and grant reasonable requests. Invariably, members of Asok's Armbreakers vie for the privilege of protecting her, and they *thoroughly* question all visitors before letting them

near Krathis' precious person. Anyone seeking to disturb the Chief's rest or important business for trivialities is discouraged. Usually with iron cudgels.





The Advisory Council

Bronze Eyes of the Metal Fist, Charok of the Broken Fang, Titanstroke of the Thunderers and Moschtug of the Fists of Fahd serve as Krathis's advisors, primarily for military matters but also in the daily business of governance. The Passions guide Krathis, but she has never ruled a nation before, while three of these have led enormous numbers of orks for many years.

All the advisors live primarily in their tribal territories, but these four tribes border conveniently close to Claw Ridge for speedy travel to the bimonthly Council meetings. Getaft and my esteemed mother Crossi Halftusk are invited to attend to inform Krathis and the advisors of opinions in Claw Ridge and elsewhere.

All four have spent most of their lives cordially hating one another, and not much has changed since Krathis told them to work together. I have witnessed several earsplitting "discussions" among them just outside the meeting hall. Had there not been a flock of troubadours standing ready to immortalize their every action, I'm sure the point would have been quickly resolved with fists and feet.

I have served as my mother's scribe during more than one meeting and have seen that, despite their differences, they work as an astoundingly smooth whole. All four fear that another will gain Krathis's favor and depose them, so they scrutinize each others' arguments carefully, finding every flaw in reasoning. The speaker must have a well-laid plan to bring to his defense. Meanwhile, Krathis listens until they sum up the important points for her, only speaking to ask questions when she sees a condition others haven't. She is shrewd as well as wise.

Balancing the Tribes

Watching the haggling among her advisors (they are often worse than village horse-traders when they bargain for the tiniest plot of land or most minute promotion) drives home to Krathis her most important worry—keeping balance between the tribes. Every chieftain knows absolute rule in his own territory and they don't take well to sovereign orders. They came to Cara Fahd to follow the dream of a nation, but they still think like isolated bands and treat each other as competition, not brethren.

Their followers also find their loyalties sharply tested. They learn from birth to love their tribe above all else, yet they feel the pull of the Mahuta. Krathis has to juggle her demands on the chiefs with those to be made on their followers. One time, she preached to the Fists of Fahd on the importance of following their chief's decisions about territory, then convinced Moschtug the same afternoon to shift his border away from Claw Ridge. Titanstroke and perhaps Bronze Eyes have caught on to her manipulations, but they tolerate them gladly to prevent open conflict between them and Krathis.

Though it sometimes seems that all we do in Claw Ridge is make concessions to keep each tribe satisfied, the competition between each petty chief secures Krathis's role as High Chief, since each prefers her rule to his rivals'. And I haven't found any ork desperate enough for power that he would think of assassinating the Chosen of the Passions, even if he doubts her ability to lead.

Divisions of Power

All four advisors lived as raiders or led mercenary cavalries before joining Cara Fahd, so they're primarily concerned with military matters. All four put aside their arguments to plan Cara Fahd's defense against the invasion from Thera that will surely come. They also try to outdo each other in Krathis's eyes by patrolling the roads and borders, freeing slaves and defending against Thera-backed resisters. Asok's Armbreakers, who have sworn personal fealty to Krathis, police Claw Ridge, Black Quarry and unclaimed parts of the Delaris River, but the advisors handle the rest of the nation. All strive to show that *they* are worthy to become the general of the nation's official army and cavalry.

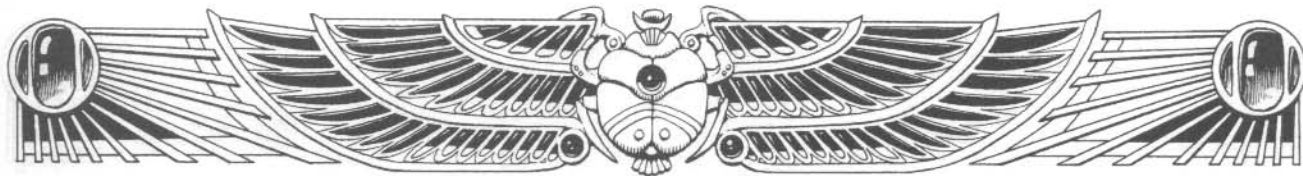
A friend of mine is a serving girl in the Wurchaz dining halls and she said she overheard Krathis mentioning she prefers Titanstroke Graybeard for general, but doesn't want to announce it until she can appease the others. I would wager she has adepts searching for anything that will placate them. But what would they settle for? A huge casket of gold? Cities of their own? Magic? Secrets?

Other matters of state are the responsibility of people who gained favor from the ranks of the merchants, scholars, bureaucrats, questors and adepts who joined Cara Fahd without affiliation to any tribe. Members of that group handle the majority of important positions in Claw Ridge: Ambassador to Throal, Overseer of Herds and Farming, Overseer of Roads and Construction and so on. I have no official title; just tell me what you need and I'll find someone who has it.

The biggest debate at every council meeting, tribal gathering or village dance is how Krathis will divide Cara Fahd's territory. The council recommends that every tribe of more than five hundred members be allowed to determine their borders (within reason, of course). With little farmland to go around, the fastest claim often gets enough land to feed four times his number of people, while former city-dwellers without a tribe make do with forest and jungle.

Several small tribes tried to unite for a day or two to reach the qualification mark, then split up into tiny bickering units once granted their land and the freedom to kill each other with impunity. After that, the council created certain restrictions and reserved the right to disapprove any tribe for a land grant. Each group must now show evidence of cooperation or shared culture and unite under a single Name, so most tribes don't undergo such a thing lightly. The serious ones seal the





bargain with a marriage between the chiefs' children, like in the Two Hands tribe that formed from the Crawling Knives and the Rumbling Dust. Curiously, half the members of the Dust are human, hailing from small villages in the southwest who joined the orks to gain recognition (and the right to complain to me in force).

Other than land, the council at Claw Ridge controls the decision to go to war, disputes between the tribes, relations with other nations and matters of trade, but the individual tribes retain their traditional control over criminal laws, marriage laws and disputes between people or families.

Krathis Gron wants to unite the tribes under a single, stronger government in order to cement the idea of nationhood in people's minds. She fears that when the Passions call her home, the tribes will fragment again and Cara Fahd will be torn apart by jealousy. For this reason alone, she seeks to establish an heir and line of succession for leading the nation.

There is hardly a man in Cara Fahd who has not imagined that he might catch the High Chief's fancy and father her children and heirs. As this makes her the *dramar* to his previous children, many think such a union will bring their families into riches and prestige. Krathis carefully avoids dalliances, not wanting to mix her personal feelings and political decisions until she has better sorted out who is trustworthy. But without unification, Cara Fahd may not last a decade beyond her death.

ON THOSE FACTIONS THAT DIVIDE CARA FAHD

Levanga Fire-Guard, a lieutenant in Hankarr's Spears, approached me to say that the divisions in Cara Fahd are not always visible to those in authority (though in briefer, more colorful language that I will not transcribe here). Her opinions follow.

—Getaft Allthought

I'm not denying that Cara Fahd's a dream, but like any dream, it's got parts that don't fit together or make sense when you wake up and look around. Near as I can tell, we've got us three mind sets over who's really calling the shafts on the roads and in the settlements, and your girl Krathis better keep 'em in mind, likewise any visitors.

Loyalists and Claw Ridge Lackeys

First off, we got a couple thousand imported city orks who work in Claw Ridge. I ain't saying they're all rabbit-*vuts* like the raiders in the Gurgling Gullet claim after you've gotten half an ale in 'em, but it's pretty obvious that the jobs in Wurchaz all go to the orks who've been readin' since the day they had eyes and were doing the same stuff back home. Not much time for training up workers out of the Carads, or maybe the other Claw Ridgers just don't want us taking away the spot they've got next to the High Chief's ear.

Most of them follow Krathis 'cause she's got the silver to go with her heart and her dream, if you know what I mean. The ones she's gotta watch for are the people that live *with* these loyal city orks. 'Cause jealousy spreads, and for every one she's hired, there's three more that didn't make it in. And they're worse'n us tribefolk, because we didn't *expect* those jobs.

I've heard talk by some city orks who're now out here with raiders and they just keep muttering stuff like "only the strong survive" when you overhear them talking all alone, you know? I don't like that trend, not a bit. Especially not since last week when that grain-barrel counter, Surrugh, he got his legs broke by the falling howdah, and had to be replaced. Howdahs don't just fall off a thundra, not without help. And others just grumble that Krathis is choosing people because they're loyal to her, not because they're the best. That Raggok, he talks to a lot more people a lot more often than she knows.

She may also wanna worry about those who're *too* loyal, you know, those who've gone all doe-eyed every time she looks at them 'cause they went to one of her performances and their brains couldn't handle that much magic, or those who think the Chosen One bit means she's all twelve rolled into one and can bring people back from the dead and turn Therans to glass and all that *quaalz*. They'll do anything she asks, but they're none too reliable, you know.

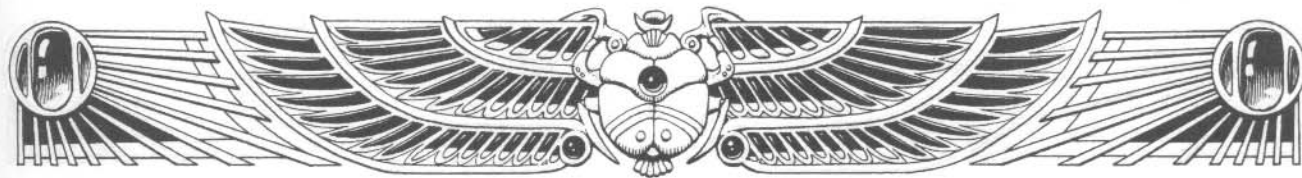
Of course, there are a few Passion-inspired idealistic types who really *believe* in the dream of Cara Fahd, but who's to say the voice in their head is really Blork, and not a Horror? And even if these few are willing to make sacrifices—hopefully not of their neighbors—in the Name of Cara Fahd and all orks, the chasm separating their dreams from reality can only be spanned by bridges of blood, sweat and tears.

War-Mongers and Quaalz-Brained Fools

Then you've got the orks who don't understand what's a dream and what's just a fantasy. I know you and Krathis keep an eye open for troublemakers, but you don't march in formation or sleep in a tent with 'em.

It's no secret that a lot of us were from here originally or not far down the road, and Theran slavers and soldiers leave orphans and widows behind like they're trailing bread. Some of the girls in my unit, they want this war. They want to climb on Vivane's walls, chain the Overgovernor like a dog and choke him on his own intestines, and then go to Thera and stick the First Governor's head on a pike to hold a spitting contest. And when you put them in an army that might just be able to





do it, they're not happy when you tell them they've got to wait. You hear it all the time: orks don't wait. You don't swallow gahad, you stoke it.

And the city orks, they're just accidents waiting to happen. I can count at least twenty that joined the Spears because they want to live "like real orks," and that means the stuff they hear from the troubadours. They want to ride thundras when they can't handle a horse and train with real spears and not wooden ones. But they don't have discipline. They were the ones who nearly killed the dwarfs at Claw Ridge even though we told them not to.

Even worse are the scorchers who never got the scorch out of their heads, 'cause the average raider fancies himself a warrior, but he doesn't understand war any more than politics. They're drunk on ork power and ork majesty and ork strength and they want revenge for the slavery they never suffered. They want to gut Therans and dwarfs just for the license to do it. They think we're a big scorching army that can tear apart Theran villages and run back to Claw Ridge, as if no air-ship will catch us. These fools are too stupid to worry about traps or tricks, and are easily manipulated by anyone who knows how to poke their gahad.

I'll even name names. I've seen this happening in the west, where the Elf Eaters are doing a whole lot more than looking mean at the elves and trolls in Lelithala. The Righteous Vipers, too, they've got some toughs who want to see what they can do to the citadel at Jerucz.

Zarass Icethought's putting a dangerous head on this snake. She's got four hundred lancers who want to kill dwarfs just to send the severed heads to her brother in Throal. But she knows how to lead, and she's preaching the *turgma*, the renegades who have no respect for Name-giver ways, let alone ork ways, off their horses and into her lap. She says she's got the courage to make this a *real* ork nation. She's doubled her troops in a few months, who knows what'll happen if she finds or makes some crown or dusty books that'll give her the appearance of the authority she craves?

Leaders' Factions and Other Folks to Watch Out For

Even those who know that we gotta wait for war and who stay in Claw Ridge and listen to Krathis sometimes can be a threat. It's a pretty sure bet that Greybeard, Redhand, and Bronze Eyes won't be walking off, but the Spears had a few run-ins with Moschtug back before he discovered that lineage of his, and when he wants something, he seizes it or he gets his fingers broken trying. His gahad drives him to be King of Cara Fahd, and no matter what noises he might make, he won't give up. Still, Krathis can probably keep him happy or just fool him, since everyone knows he couldn't empty a chamber pot on his own even if there were instructions on the bottom.

If you ask me, though, Moschtug's just more honest than the others. There's glory waiting just out of reach. Who gets to command the first ork army in eleven hundred years? And what losers will settle for being second best? Who will be King to Krathis' Queen?

It's all well and good that Krathis is Chosen, but the rest of us have to live in the land she makes, and she'll eventually get tired of it or she'll die and a lot of hands'll start grabbing for that crown. Every one of them wants to start a line of kings or queens, whether we call Cara Fahd a nation or not. A temptation like that'd make a chieftain leave his wife, take some liberties he shouldn't take, or deal with a Horror. I wouldn't be surprised if after she made a choice, there were folks still interested in siring kings by fair words and foul deeds, if you know what I mean. We've got a lot of tragedy plays coming up soon, whether in Wurchaz or the tribes' territories.

The real ones who'll start trouble are the medium-size fish that Krathis doesn't see, those second- and third-in-commands like Bradda Steeltooth of the Fangs. She's running three hundred troops personally, but she's never seen Claw Ridge. She's always down at the river, staring across at the Landis villages with their food and good farmland. And she keeps saying how every good general needs some assassins ...

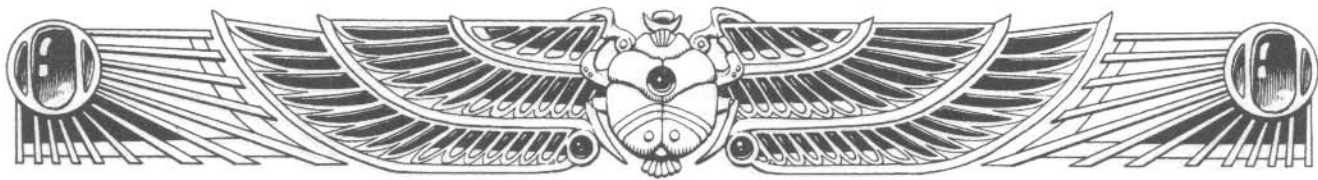
A lot of the ork common troops, they're here just because their unit's here. Their friends might've convinced them there's a good scorch in it, or they just don't want to be stuck on their own, where they're prey for other scorchers like the Skull Whargs. All of them follow the folks they know, and those folks might not be sitting on the Council. Krathis has talked to a lot of orks, but a lot more complain to the lieutenant one house away than ride four days to get an appointment with the Chosen One, you know?

That leads to some other rotten stuff, too. Horror temptation. Gold they didn't know was Theran. Secret orders from folks with their own agendas. The sort of thing Vestrial giggles at. Hankarr's Spears haven't hit any such trouble yet, and I don't make an accusation like that lightly, so that's my piece. Cara Fahd's only easy day was yesterday.

ON THOSE EYES AND EARS OF CARA FAHD

The following letter came from someone we refer to as "Twambo Tightfist," a now-defunct alias once used by certain members of the *karvusta*, an association of informants loyal to Krathis Gron. Krathis will not divulge when she first started gathering such people, but implied that during her stay in Cathay she cultivated contacts both there and in Barsaive as well as [ink stain]. For reasons of Cara Fahd's





security, we cannot yet record any names that might provide clues to current operatives' whereabouts, number, or, of course, names. Krathis will censor this document appropriately within the hour. However, it should be known that this was an archetypal explanation of what the *karvusta* do and do not. It was retrieved from the [ink stain] of a former agent's personal possessions after he died from a dis-ease of the lungs he caught in Vivane.

—Getaft Allthought

Wahura, [ink stain]!

I have important news, so secret that no one must see this letter. You have often mentioned that you wished you could do more for me after I helped you through the loss of your wife, and now I believe I have found the chance.

For some time, you have been asking me where I go, why I do not tell you the Names of the friends who visit my stable. Now the time has come, for I can tell you are serious about this matter and I have spoken on your behalf to give you this honor. In some ways, it is a little thing, and in some ways it could be grave, but your trade could be of use. Do not fear—no one is hurt, but unless you are careful, you may end up so.

You are invited into a circle of trusted friends of Krathis Gron, friends who work with her to improve the lives of orks everywhere and to ensure the safety of Cara Fahd. She needs your help. She needs you to join my organization, the *karvusta*.

The Karvusta

I know you've heard the word before, so let me set you straight. I am not asking you to become a liberator adept like Melag Cannar and Nazruth Dyingmind and break into Vrontok slave houses to free its inhabitants. That is not what the *karvusta* do, and in any case, Dyingmind should have learned that liberators get caught only once. He was part of the *karvusta*, true, but he was one of the twenty-four Fangs of Lochost, the *Hez'blork*, and their *gahad* speaks for them too loudly. They are the roughest facet on our jewel and rarely answer to Krathis or to common sense. Krathis tolerates their acts because she, too, wishes all orks freed, not because their movements are well-planned or well-run.

The rest of us are simply people doing our part for Cara Fahd, whom Krathis trusts enough to write her friends a few letters. Letters with information that you think I or Krathis might find interesting; practically what we have always written about, eh? Just leave them at the Golden Goblet theater in Vivane. One of our contacts will meet you there, answering to the code phrase [ink blot], and will deliver any pertinent information to the right people.

Because you are a physician, you may go places other people cannot. We value people such as you. You are practically invisible, as are servers in a restaurant, stage hands for traveling actors and stable boys. Yet you work close to merchants and Theran nobles. You can ask questions about what people commonly eat or where they went that might have made them sick and even the most suspicious will answer truthfully.

Then you wait as they tell you their troubles. Just think; all those simple questions you ask already, pass them on, with every detail you can remember. Do not pry. The job of a *karvusta* is not to question, but to listen. Do not seek out specific information, for they might remember suspicious remarks. That is best reserved for more experienced agents.

I cannot deny that there are *karvusta* who sabotage Theran-owned caravans to strand them where they might be collected by raiders, or eliminate key information in foreign lands, because I am not told otherwise. I *can* say that despite persistent rumors, Krathis does *not* sanction any assaults on the people or goods of Throal or Blood Wood.

Some *karvusta* are adepts whom Krathis trusts with a great deal of independent judgment. Often they are non-ork troubadours, wizards and scouts, or illusionists who can conceal their profession. [Hole cut in paper] is one; however, her attack on the supposedly Throalic caravan of [hole cut in paper] was in order to get the caravan to stop so she could "accidentally" kill [hole cut in paper] because she knew him to be an informant to the Therans! A month later, she was in [ink stain] posing as a buyer of slaves to discover the Theran slave owners' attitudes toward an invasion of Barsaive. You see, the higher levels of the *karvusta* may cloak themselves as anyone.

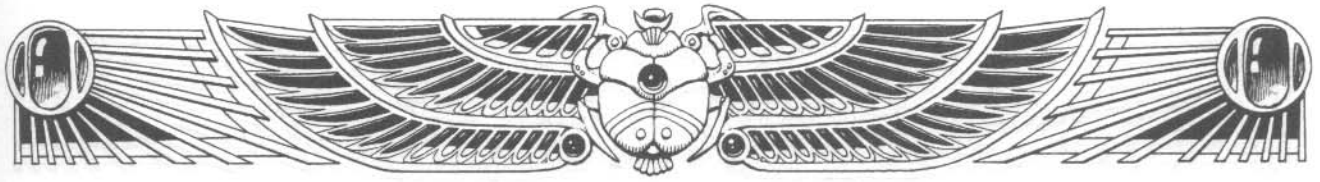
I cannot send you money for doing this; that would create evidence and promote suspicion. Were the Therans to discover undeclared silver, you would be questioned. However, this job is not without reward. I know you favor Rugarian hens, and I will send you a few. If anyone asks, they are from your mother's *lelkrarg* Twambo Tightfist. If you have money troubles, perhaps Twambo will help cover bad debts, but if you gamble it away, Twambo will cut you off, do you understand?

My duties have called me back to Cara Fahd; yes, we do operate there as well. Krathis puts eyes in turbulent places, and nowhere is more turbulent than new Cara Fahd. But I must remind you of her policy. Despite what you have heard, we do *not* interrogate our own people without just cause, though I should warn you of those who do.

The Nroto

I have recently caught the attention of the *Nroto*, a group of those frightening individuals who stalk Horrors. Krathis keeps them on a leash too loose for my taste, sending them through the ranks of the cavalries and sometimes even to simple immigrants, looking for any sign of taint.





Two of them are finally to take a trial by ordeal in ten days' times for their abuses of power. Mursgrut and Allhaz, the worst of the lot, were recruited from the Grim Legion. Though here they know they can't get away with extortion, two of them were paid gold to "speed their investigations" and render guilty verdicts. Given the twenty nroto I have seen, I would say another ten trials are in order. Fortunately, I have talked to Ubar Yahan, their informal leader, and he assures me that I am only watched closely due to my position, not my actions. So when you visit me this Strassa, be sure to bring your canvas and paints, for you may be tested mercilessly.

ON THE DAILY LIVES OF THE CITIZENS OF CARA FAHD

I took to the roads of Claw Ridge, Gevosht and Black Quarry with criers to announce the formation of the library of Claw Ridge, and that anyone might contribute to the section on daily life. Of a good flock's worth of parchment I selected the following essays, beginning with my own, which is being sold for a copper in most Barsaivian cities.

—Getaft

THE UJNORT'S GUIDE TO CARA FAHD

If you don't have tusks, you probably want to read this paper before heading through southwestern Barsaive. New Cara Fahd can be confusing and frightening to orks and non-orks alike, with a hundred thousand people shoved together in a tiny slice of land, and our many customs create some ... friction. Whatever your race, if you come to Cara Fahd, you can still be ujnort—one who does not understand.

What You Need to Know About Gahad

Gahad is a sensation felt by orks that triggers a passionate reaction in the face of a certain condition, like how a Name-giver's knee will jerk about when struck on a certain spot. But rather than just a knee, the whole ork moves, in response to situations far more varied than just getting struck. Though the reaction is not always violent, it is *always* direct. This streak of impulsiveness can be hard to control and gives many orks a reputation for indulging their supposed impulses for murder and crime. But do not make the mistake of thinking orks are constantly looking for a fight. Only a few things set off the gahad of any one ork and the more easy-going of us suppress most of those things when with friends and neighbors. However, this usually means bottling up our gahad until someone we *don't* care about comes along. This means whenever you are in the company of many orks (which will more than likely be your entire stay here), you are in danger of suffering the receiving end of a bout of a gahad, regardless of what triggered it.

And since every stranger ignores my advice on how to stay safe, let me instruct you instead on how to get killed in your first hour here.

Act as if we are ignorant savages who can do little but brew good ale; enter a bar, get drunk, act disgusted when the local serving women you're flirting with tell you the hurlg has cat fat in it, complain about the smell from the sorry-looking horses out front, order someone to get your drink because you assume he's a servant, then figure he's being quiet and twitchy because he's just sour-faced, get caught lying or cheating, then in the resulting brawl with the servers' brothers and husbands, accidentally kill one of them, and apologize by paying for the damages in Thera imperial florins.

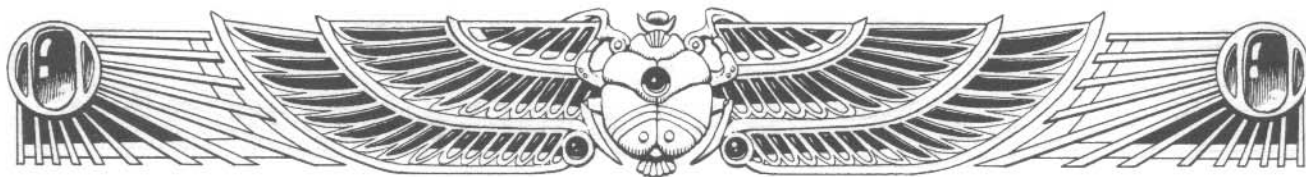
You will certainly trigger the gahad of at least one ork, and probably five to ten. The silent twitching is called *greeah*, and it is how orks who rarely bother to speak at any volume other than a shout signal one another that something is wrong. This is not to say that volume is the judge; rather, it is the *speed* of any talk and threats.

I know that isn't what you read in the library of Throal. Aren't orks brutally honest? Yes, they are, compared to other Name-givers. But if we were all brutally honest all the time, do you know how many gahad we would trigger every day? When I talk to Moschtug, he demands that we treat him like a king or he'll tear the throats from everyone in the room. And there are quite a few days when there's no way Bronze Eyes is going to say what he *really* thinks of Moschtug's ideas. So he uses our way of getting around gahad, "living talk," rattling off compliment after compliment that Moschtug knows don't really mean much, but make him feel good. A Council meeting is full of living talk. Otherwise half of us would be dead and the others invading Thera single-handedly.

An ork who shoots off insults quickly after threats is also using living talk, showing you the fire she has in order to win your respect. Pay little attention to such bluster; it may mean a brawl, but never a serious threat. An ork who tightens up and lets out one warning word is using "death talk." She means it.

So in Cara Fahd, you must avoid "weasel words"—not saying much until you are asked, and then muttering one or two words you don't really mean, trying to pretty it up. It's like using death talk to say "you look fine," or "pass the yams." So when you don't feel like chatting, for your own sake, *mean what you say*. Lying to an ork with death talk is worse than hitting her.





While you are getting used to this practice of near-constant speech, I suggest you avoid the following topics with people you don't know: slavery, infidelity or family loyalty, the ork's competence at her occupation, pastimes or favored hobbies, your opinions of their possessions, questions of who is really in authority, Horrors, politics and the entire Theran Empire.

What You Need to Know About Agreements

Nomads need little but a promise to seal binding agreements. Most ork tribes are used to simple words for small arrangements and blood oaths for the more serious. However, few merchants, especially windlings, are able or willing to swear many such oaths. The other traditional act of a clan chief, tribe chief or family head when he wants to seal an important bargain is to marry one of his children to a family member of the one he is making a compact with, which, again, unsettles ujnort (and perplexes obsidimen). Few formerly nomadic orks honor agreements on parchment; they often seem like "living talk" if they have too much writing on them, so most trading contracts should use as few words as possible.

Though many tribes are trying to learn to handle simple written contracts, many still insist on the traditional practices (mostly marriage) for really big deals, such as anything involving land, large numbers of animals, magic or protection. (The greatest share of the problem with executing written contracts between ujnort and tribal orks is that many nomadic orks are illiterate.) Naturally, most ujnort are very reluctant to enter into a marriage contract with an ork tribe, mainly because no other Name-giver race views marriage in quite the same way as orks. The most satisfactory ceremony for both parties seems to be a spoken agreement, a firm handshake and an exchange of a single item of roughly equivalent worth. Both sides consider such an agreement binding for as long as it takes to complete the transaction.

If you value your life, just remember that illiteracy does not mean stupidity. And here I must place my own call to arms, though only marginally related to the subject at hand: Krathis Gron knows that the message she sent in the Seeds of Nation has not reached orks who cannot read. She needs representatives who can read and write or'zet and are willing to learn Vagothian, Creanan and other exotic languages in an effort to bring the orks of such far-away lands to Cara Fahd. Not all will choose to come, but all must know of the choice.

On Customs That May Disturb You

One of the common complaints in Cara Fahd is that there is nothing to eat that isn't disgusting, spicy or unidentifiable except porridge. To some ujnort such as elves and obsidimen, this is definitely an acquired taste. For generations, Carads have eaten meat from any part of the local animals, including the hooves or feet, eyes, ears, tails and organs of thundras, crocodiles, porcupine snakes, cobras, rats, cats, dyres, goats, pigs and vultures. And in this tropical, humid environment with little access to salt, often the only way to preserve meat for more than a day is to lace it with peppers.

There are two foods eaten only by bullheaded young raiders that I advise you not to eat or even lick. One is the *uyataa* pepper. Its name means "green agony" in the old tongue and "scorned woman" in the new. It is a pale green monstrosity that frequently knocks orks down when they taste it. The cure for this is washing the mouth out with milk (*not* water, which only makes it worse). Broken Fang ordeal ceremonies involve licking this pepper.

The second is the venom glands of the Carad cobra mixed in beer or hurg and swallowed whole. They only poison if punctured or chewed, and otherwise make the pulse pound and the guts tremble in euphoria.

I must warn the traveler that many native Carads depend entirely on their goats and dyres for subsistence, and survive on a mixture of the animals' blood and milk when there are not enough to slaughter for meat. This practice sustains a minimum of life, and they also drink it ceremonially and for pleasure, even with other food. So when you see a neighbor wounding his animals or licking bloody fingers in public, think before you cry Horror.

Also do not be alarmed if an ork presents you with a three-to-five-foot brown snake as a gift, or if you find one in your neighbor's tent or home. These harmless creatures are called tent snakes, and are often kept to eat rats and mice. However, if you find a similar snake with a white pattern on its neck asleep in your boots or beneath your blanket, you have found a cobra and may be as alarmed as you like.

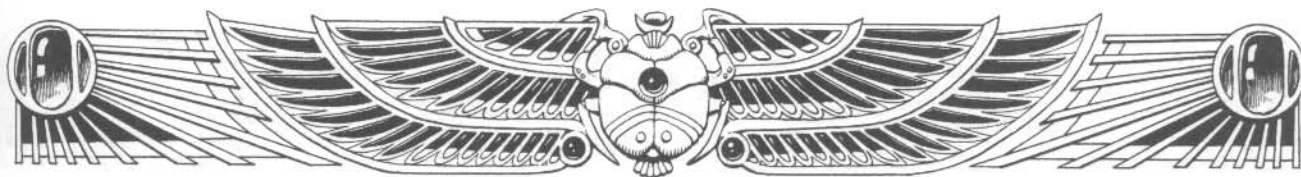
Lastly, Barsaivian orks rarely bathe unless they are sick. Bathing is seen as a remedy for a gahad that burns too hot, and is recommended by a physician or a clan chief as a light punishment for hotheadedness. Without gahad excess, too much water will sap the ork's strength, even leaving wrinkles on their skin as if to remind them of their coming age. City orks have gotten used to being teased about the practice, but do not ask a raider why he does not bathe or he will think you are wishing he would get old and feeble. You will get used to the smell. Everyone does.

CARA FAHD AFTER DARK

This piece came from Montoldo the Ever-Ready, an elven air sailor who had seven copies of similar letters addressed to his "one and only loves" in Sereatha, Shosara, Throal, Urupa, Travar, Vivane and Lake Ban. While that does not exactly qualify him as an expert, he said if I put this in the Library, he would quit writing me poetry and singing outside my window.

—Getaft





My Dearest Tarlene,

How I wish you were here, and not only because I miss you. You would love this place! As soon as the sun drops behind the trees, the horses begin to doze and for a moment, Black Quarry seems almost like that little Dinganni village last summer, because everything gets so still. But it doesn't last long; the orks here are just getting warmed up for the night.

Ork Sports

The first thing I tried was one of the roughest sports, and I think I broke a rib on the goal-bar. I went riding with some of the Thunderers, and as soon as we got to an open field, one of them stuck a *tussdi* stick in my hand and told me to stop the troll. Tussdi is a two- or four-team game played with a long stick with a net-like basket on each end that you use to hurl a leather ball into the opposing goal. Everyone's mounted on horses or thundras. The only person who isn't fair game to get a tussdi stick in their face from a charging opponent is the ball carrier, so you better believe everyone wants that ball. But when you chase it, the other players try to push you off your mount with shoulder or stick, or herd your horse the wrong way. There aren't too many other rules, except that if you score a goal on foot, you must find your horse and remount to keep playing. I wasn't the only one leaping wildly into the air to get a good shot.

My friends dragged me into Claw Ridge afterwards to "relax," but I think they were determined to see how much I could take. They started me off with the cheap hurlg, the stuff made with cat and pig fat, aged in saddlebags. Then it was time for the *hua* among the tents. It's a "toss race" where everyone ties their hands together with rope. I'm glad you trained me so harshly, otherwise I'd never have developed the strength to do this. You form a chain of six people per team, and pick up and toss the people in front of you over your back to the pair behind, then they pick you up and you go over. After that, I had a cup of goat-fat and I think horse-fat hurlg made with whole grain, and snatched a barley bread chunk to soak it up like sky raiders do before their drinking contests.

Recreational Fights

Next, we went down to see the *shpita*. It means "slaps," and basically it's gahad-baiting, seeing who can out-talk the others by making up obscene stories based on what they know of their opponent. It's all "living talk," but the sheer creative vulgarity made us burst out laughing. When one person starts to lose by letting their opponent provoke their gahad, you can see them twitching. When it gets too much for one ork, he gives up by slapping the other, and if the winner loses his temper at the slap and starts a fight, then *he* loses. Late into the night, the whole crowd is screaming for the two to fight.

When it comes to settling a score, there are open mud fields all over for *grumog-agu* wrestling. Its major rule is to clear the area of rocks and sticks, because if an opponent provokes another's gahad, they'll kill one another with whatever's in reach. Grumog-agu looks for all the world like some of the same moves of as those of *carromeleg*! I realize your pride in elven fighting styles, but you must come here to see how similar the ork ones are. They throw one another, choke with their forearms and even have that incredibly painful finger hold. *Rutra*, on the other hand, is much uglier. The orks bind their thumbs and fingers so they cannot maim or blind, then strike each other with shins, elbows, fists and the sides of their hands. The kicks are all low, to knees, groin and thighs; I think they are not quite as flexible as you, love. You must come here, if only to learn what other warriors can teach!

When I finished the porcupine-snake and cow-fat hurlg, I crawled over to watch the *drundeah* matches between the Thunderers and some Righteous Vipers. Drundeah always ends with a pig roast; the contestants joust with spears, swords, or claw in the case of one beastmaster I saw, trying to slaughter a running pig in one to three strokes while beans run out of an hour-box. The riders can't take more than three steps on the ground, so to hit the pig's legs and keep it from running you have to bounce down and leap back up to your horse again. The spear is easiest, of course, but is worth fewer points. I was told that in times of war, the orks use drundeah to sharpen their cavalry skills, and the "animal" running is often a captured enemy.

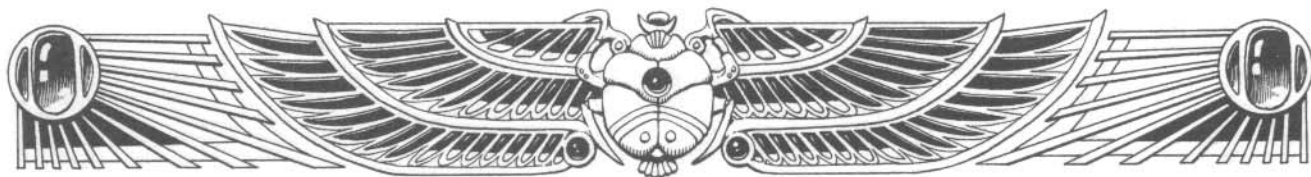
Cara Fahd's Dances

With some fresh pork in me (yes, I know, I'm falling away from my diet of only fruits, vegetables and grains) and some hard candy that stuck more in my teeth than my stomach, I finished off the meal with some deathly hot peppers to stay awake and danced all night. Rather than those close elven dances like at the Whirling Spire, ork dances are communal, with everyone gathering in lines and moving in time to the drums and horns. Terrifically loud, more cooperative even than the *ranetseitha*. I think one troubadour graced us with a solo performance of the *kukra*, a dance involving an intricate pattern of steps done at amazingly high speed, but everything was a little fuzzy by then. After that, I think I was honored with thundra-fat hurlg, but I don't really remember.

I wish I could show you the divine madness it is here, Tarlene. They live more in a day than your Kaltok does in a century. Serar te',

Montoldo





CONCERNING MY EXPERIENCE WITH SCORCHERS

We approached Navunya, a Bartertown merchant who has since settled in Gevosht, to pen a section on trade within Cara Fahd, but found him in the midst of writing to his aged mother in Throal about the dangers of scorchers and travel in our nation. Since we were also looking for information on that subject, we asked him to contribute his observations to the library.

—Getaft

Dearest Mother,

Thank you for your kind offers to visit Cara Fahd, but I insist you stay home. The nation is far too dangerous for one as delicate as you.

On my first journey through Vutta's Pick Gap, we were approached by an "escort" that rode with us ... until some fell back and some rode forward and they had us neatly surrounded. In my journey out of Black Quarry through the Twilight Peaks to avoid such matters, our "trader's map" led us into a dead end, and, of course, we were surrounded. On the trip back, we were pounced on at a traveler's well by orks who offered to sell us the antidote for the poison we'd been drinking, and the fourth time when they erupted from shallow pits beneath the grass, I just sold the ruffians our horses and told them I'd scout ahead for the patrols.

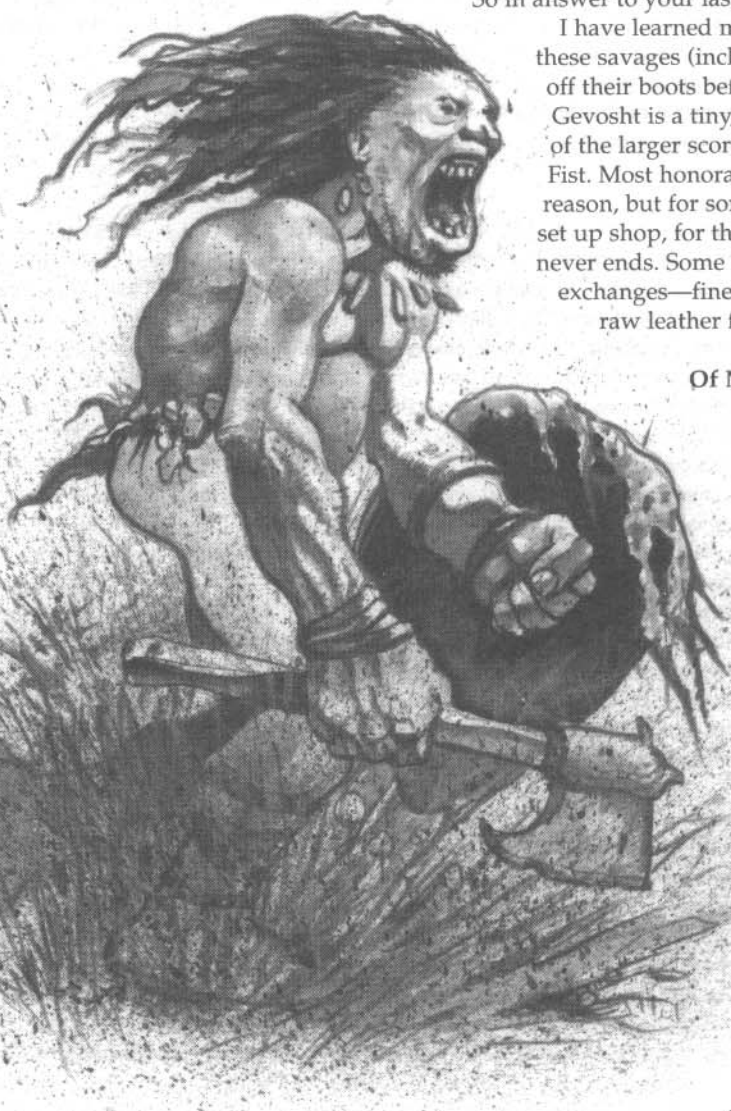
So in answer to your last letter, yes, there are a lot of raiders here.

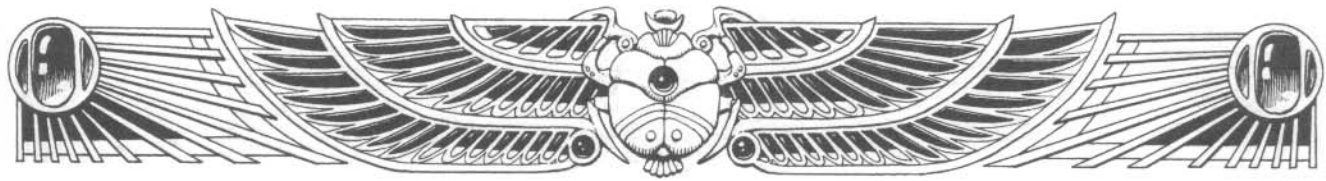
I have learned more than I truly wanted to know about these savages (including how they never clean horse dung off their boots before walking indoors). My current ranch in Gevosht is a tiny, rustic place, but it is located between two of the larger scorcher tribes: the Broken Fang and Metal Fist. Most honorable merchants avoid the town for just that reason, but for someone of my trade, it is the perfect place to set up shop, for the demand of scorchers for fine horses never ends. Some have money, but often they pay in exchanges—fine young animals for their older studs, or raw leather for saddles and bridles.

Of Nomad and Scorcher

A few weeks ago a young man entered my stables looking like his hair had never seen a comb or even a knife, wearing clothes that were more patches than cloth. I addressed him as a scorcher after he sat in a chair without bothering to unsling the bow on his back, and he erupted in gahad. After I removed the knife from the wall next to me, I asked why such an inoffensive word (as "scorcher" is considered in Cara Fahd) caused him such distress. I had thought him proud of his heritage.

He told me he was of the Bot'vessa, a local tribe who are not scorchers. Scorchers, he said, live off raiding, while his people are nomads, herding cattle on the plains and living off their meat and leather. Sometimes they take shares of crops from small villages in return for their extra hands cutting and gathering, but they avoid raiding or killing other Name-givers when not provoked.





I dared to ask my friend Bradda of the Broken Fang if the Bot'vessa had said it fair. Bradda comes into town frequently, and is rather civilized. She even cleans the blood off her dagger before cutting her food. (I'm serious, mother.) If I may paraphrase her, "Herding cattle softens bodies and minds, and any fool who lives that way is asking to be challenged by scorchers. If they cannot meet that challenge, they should be milked and bled like their cows!" But she added that there is a difference between established tribes such as the Broken Fang and the unNamed bands of raiders who attacked me.

Of Raider Size and Danger

The Broken Fang can support themselves without frequent raids, for they have had thousands of members for centuries. Their children and elders stay in one place long enough to gather food and their attacks are planned, either destroying an enemy entirely or stealing just enough that the target can recover to supply them again the next season. They cannot subsist on the spoils of a single wagon, and only attack wagon trains, sizable towns or Therans, often scouting out businesses ahead of time to find what routes are vulnerable to their efforts.

The smallest bands of five to twenty are the most pathetic and dangerous of the lot, for they were criminals long before they became raiders. Their members banded together after being exiled from other tribes for "unacceptable behavior" (which must be very extreme from what I've seen of "acceptable" behavior among the Broken Fang). Exiles usually die quickly, as they are banished on foot, alone, with few supplies. Cavalrymen, however, are allowed to take their horses (as most of these tribes treat rider and mount as a single Name-giver) when banished, granting them a greater likelihood of finding companions before perishing. These smaller bands have no limit to their atrocities.

I still find it difficult to tell the difference, and I'm sure you would see them all simply as wild-looking barbarians, for we have few like them in Bartertown. I would strongly caution those human friends you mentioned to be very careful if they plan to journey through here. The criminal bands prefer non-orks as their targets, and I have seen derogatory picture writing for "ujnort" on more than one shield. On the other hand, Krathis Gron wishes to earn the respect of foreign merchants, so Asok's Armbreaker's patrols save non-orks more rapidly than locals, whom they assume can solve their own problems.

After I wrote my third complaint to Jesfuy Longrunner, she finally issued protected status to legitimate merchants. For an extra fifty silvers a month, we receive gold-colored vests and horse blankets for our leading riders which alert the patrols that we require special protection. It is also possible to pay a much more exorbitant sum to the cavalries directly to receive special favors.

Of Raids Which Are Not War

Bradda told me that many tribes recognize that trying to settle a small area requires them to change their behavior. The smaller legitimate tribes, in particular, know they cannot waste time fighting each other when the larger ones could destroy them entirely, so much tribe-against-tribe raiding has become almost ritualized—with one trying to steal horses from another while the other tries to catch them (often good for my business, as the stolen mounts must be made up for somewhere). Neither takes enough to seriously hurt the other, nor do they hold grudges. Some groups also stage mock battles and jousts, though those who live within sight of Vivane province know that such practice could become deadly reality very soon.

I have been away on business often, but had the fortune to be home on the thirtieth day of last Rua, and found that Krathis Gron has declared the end of every month a holiday honoring Chorrolis by formalizing these horse-stealing contests. Full-grown warriors tiptoe around, trying to steal horses out from under each others' noses, like the games of Hide the Banner that we played as children. I have never laughed so much in all my time here, though it is also profitable—I must go now, for some youths outside have a familiar-looking horse to sell me. I couldn't think of a better way to start off Rua.

Navunya

ON ESTABLISHING TRADE IN CARA FAHD

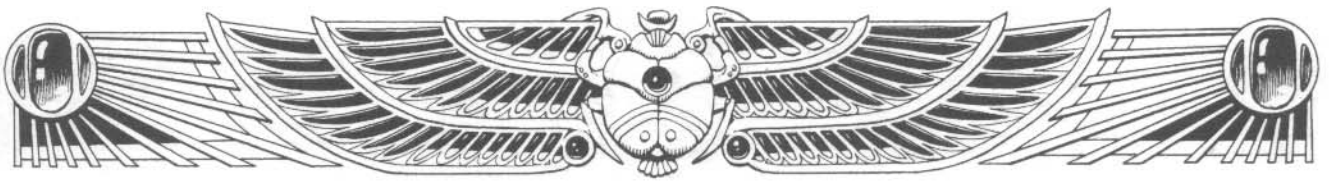
When asked to contribute his insights on trade, Navunya fussed a lot over the time and profit wasted writing for free and suggested we use this instead, a report to a former partner of his, explaining the business opportunities available here.

—Getaft

To the Estates of Vanya Urshtin,

I implore you again, join me in Cara Fahd. My stables in Gevosht already grow beyond my ability to handle alone, and demand keeps increasing. The new cities of Thundra's Rest and New Revalk both need quality animals, and you were, of course, the first my thoughts turned to.





Whatever you have heard of the poverty of Cara Fahd, I assure you it is exaggerated. Do not be discouraged when you arrive and find overcrowded fields filled with immigrants living in tents among their animals. The nation is young, but it will not remain poor. Now, dear friend, is the time to begin a venture here, before others settle. By the end of the year, there will be so much traffic in and out of Cara Fahd you could run across the wagon tops to Throal.

The government has neither the time nor resources to establish its own currency, and many inhabitants lack the bursting purses of wealthy Throalites, but they can pay in more than coin. If you establish an office here and trade with the locals for their thundra calves, fine leathers, iron and wood, you can send a caravan to resell the products in Urupa and Travar and be out only the cost of guards. And any profits stay whole, without the trouble of bribing money changers and losing to the exchange rate, like in Vivane.

Contributing to the Yerz'eth

The most encouraging new tradition in Cara Fahd is the lack of direct taxes! The first time the High Chief mentioned the word in public, people nearly dug out the foundation of Claw Ridge trying to bury their valuables. Krathis is no fool. She knows that there's only so far being blessed by the Passions will take you, and most people don't pray in their purses. Not wanting a riot in Claw Ridge, she decided to shut up and look wise and most of them forgot about it.

Instead, when people asked for more help than she could pay from the silvers in her own pocket, Krathis gave a great speech that was copied by two dozen troubadours and flown across the land on trained messenger bats, saying that all orks should think of themselves as families in a single tribe, and that they owe and are owed the respect of sisters for sisters. So saying, she established a fund called *yerz'eth*, meaning "nest money."

Those who have excess product, but not the time or means to sell it contact Krathis through runners or messengers, and she sends wagons to bring it to Claw Ridge. From there, it is redistributed to those who request it and they contribute their excesses in return. Anything not claimed in twenty days becomes property of the High Chief, who distributes it as she sees fit, sometimes as wages for those who work in Claw Ridge, but often sending merchants out of Cara Fahd to trade the goods for money or scarcities such as cloth and building stone. Those who escort the goods earn a handsome percentage, as Theran mercenaries have attempted to disrupt our caravans before.

Most remarkable about this system, however, is that any ork is allowed to request supplies from the *yerz'eth* with no obligation to contribute in return. Krathis declared it a point of honor for the tribes to support the nation, giving them congratulatory titles and privileges if they contribute a great deal. The tribes see it as a chance to prove they are the richest in Cara Fahd, and have taken up the competition with glee (and little forethought). The Metal Fist and Broken Fang, of course, strive to outdo one another by contributing huge portions of their meat, furs, leathers and even horses. It seems madness to me. The Bat'resen and Be'reki tribes nearly ruined themselves, trading away more food than they kept to feed their people, and ended up needing so much more aid than they had ever contributed that Krathis ordered them to stop. I believe they have since combined resources into a single tribe.

It is not madness. Krathis Gron rewards loyalty to Cara Fahd, and Charok and Bronze Eyes both want the ultimate reward; commanding the army or becoming king.

—Jesfuy Longrunner

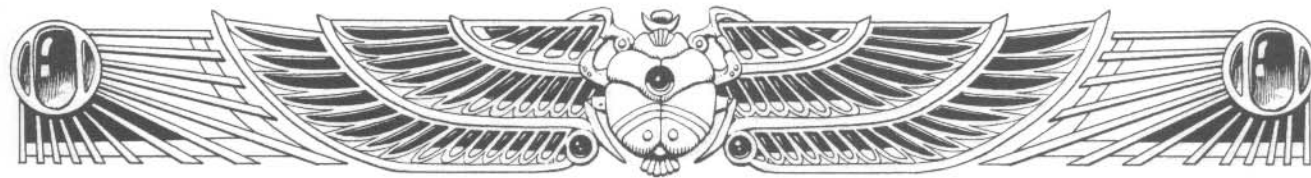
Merchants receive low honor in their system, however, and such inducements mean little. Do you see where this is going, friend? Imagine a place filled with a hundred thousand immigrants with no government to speak of, with a desperate need for anything from food to furniture, and no government to leach away the profits. You could make a fortune without even the expense of a bribe.

Of the Trades of Logging and Farming

As you might imagine, in a nation with little time to establish craft houses and an uneducated populace, much of Cara Fahd's wealth comes from its land. Your map does little justice to the lush southern forests and jungle. The trees include rosewood, mahogany, sandalwood, ebony and teak, all popular woods among the rich families of Throal, Travar and Vivane for furniture and sculptures, and many business-minded orks have caught onto the profit of cutting and selling the trees. Few know how to properly finish a board, however, or have the means to transport them, so bring wagons.

The wizards and weaponsmiths of New Revalk designed odd magical devices which speed up the processes of turning logs to usable lumber. One can also make coins off the piles of branches the woodcutters leave behind, selling them for firewood, bark armor or cheap leaf-brooms.





If you still prefer to stick to living cargo—and I remember fondly your lectures that no fashion diminishes the need for horses or meat—the cleared forests are a wealth of opportunity. After the largest trees are cut, thundra-riders move their animals in, and can turn the drier forests to rough farmland in a few weeks by eating the underbrush and well-manuring the soil.

Just south of Claw Ridge is the biggest farming belt, between the flood plains of the Delaris Mountains and the freshly cleared Carad forest. Pigs and goats are most commonly raised since they live easily in small areas with varied food, and do not require the vast pastures that cattle do (which in Cara Fahd are often taken up by horses and thundra). You can sell their meat at four times the usual price to the orks of Claw Ridge or the tribal lands, where they have yet to establish a way to feed themselves.

These farmers also grow barley, wheat, carrots, yams, quaalz beans, cabbages and peppers, and would pay gladly for fresh fruit or fruit tree saplings, for few fruits grow in the wild here.

Krathis fears that she will find few orks willing to settle down to the grueling life of a farmer and encourages settlers by granting free land, building materials and a first year's worth of seed to anyone willing to farm for four years. Such farmers often cluster together in small villages made up of people of every background, so you can usually find someone with a familiar name or accent. Surprisingly, this deal attracts upjorn from all over Barsaive.

Of course, the most profitable trade by far lies with the thundra and horse herds to the west. No one can tame and train an animal like an ork, and in Cara Fahd, even the smallest village's plow horse would put Travar's cavalry to shame. The scorcher tribes know how much their animals are worth, so don't try to cheat them, but they have little interest in any that can no longer keep up with the herd and will sell vigorous older studs for a pittance. The villages often have no idea what fine animals they own, and one sold me ungentled colts for a basketful of mushrooms gathered in the forest! It was only later that I learned that what I had traded them were in fact enough ghost mushrooms to coat a thousand arrowheads in poison.

For only the effort to train them, you can get the full price of a fine riding horse in any town in Barsaive. And the few who are silver-tongued enough to talk a tribe out of a fully-trained thundra retire as rich men.

Concerning the Phenomenon of the Iron Rush

The remaining industry of interest is mining. As you may recall from those trolls who tried to swindle us a few years back, the foothills of the Delaris Mountains and Twilight Peaks are full of metals and gemstones. Not only the famed living crystal (which the trolls guard fiercely), but also valuable gems and, most importantly, iron. With a nation full of people needing everything from swords to stew pots, striking iron is more valuable than finding gold in Cara Fahd.

And with Throal and Thera glaring at each other and counting their soldiers, anything iron from raw metal to finished swords, armor and arrowheads is selling like the Rites of Protection and Passage. A flood of people arrive every time a prospector strikes a vein and a hundred little towns spring up practically overnight. They have few laws and fewer morals, and most fall apart as soon as someone stakes a solid claim and drives the others away, or the vein runs out and the rest decide to escape with their skins. Black Quarry, outside Claw Ridge, is the biggest and richest of the towns, with a mine that will last for many years, but you'd best visit it prepared to take care of yourself.

This is an opportunity no one should miss, old friend. Even I have paid a few adventurous ruffians to do some exploring. I would not be surprised to find a lost mine from before the Scourge, or even a treasure-filled kaer.

On the Establishment of Trade Routes

As I have said, travel in Cara Fahd is dangerous and difficult, but no more so than bringing a caravan through the Servos Jungle or past the Thera Behemoth at Lake Ban to get to Travar. There are still few ways to reach Cara Fahd save through the mountains, as the river flows into Death's Sea, not the Serpent. Unless you feel like riverboating past Usun in the Liaj, go by land or come down in the airship landing fields south of Claw Ridge and Thundra's Rest.

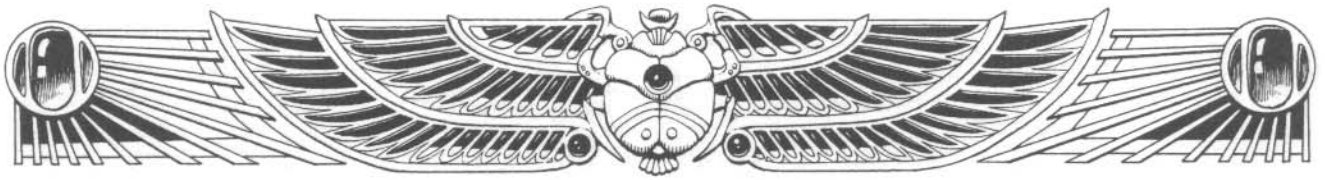
Once you arrive, you'll find Ibja Stonesplitter's laborers hard at work laying roads. Stone-lined streets already wind between Claw Ridge, Gevosht and Vutta's Pick Gap, and thundras have trampled flat paths to Thundra's Rest, New Revalk and Rekarten.

The major settlements (with the exception of the insular scorcher-run Rekarten) welcome merchants, so long as they hail from Throal, Jerris, Urupa, Kratas or a t'skrang aropagoi (not Vivane or Iopos). In the smaller towns, reception is often a coin toss. Some welcome any outside news, new products and new stories, but I have been driven out of isolationist villages or ignored by those who think they are self-sufficient, and you're as likely to meet rocks and curses as food and fire. Bring a troubadour always, and you are guaranteed a place to sleep even if they don't care for your products.

Rejruk's Foxes, the local tribe who built Gevosht, want desperately to increase their prominence in Cara Fahd and they welcome all business ventures, as do many other newly established towns and villages. If what I have written interests you in such a grand adventure and such potential for profit, sister, please visit me first. I hunger for news of Bartertown. I hope this finds you well.

Navunya





ON ORK CUSTOMS OF WORSHIP

Unlike some Name-givers who confine their worship to twice-yearly visits to their favorite temple, orks know that the Passions are with us in the smallest practices of daily life. These rituals and customs differ from tribe to tribe, and sometimes family to family, and so the questors of Claw Ridge are searching for the true ork way by studying every tradition found within our borders. Zajan Crook-knee, formerly of the Thunderers and now head of the Claw Ridge shrine of Garlen, has taken on the task of transcribing all those message stones that have arrived from every corner of the land. This represents but a small sample of the ways in which the orks of Cara Fahd worship the Passions.

—Getaft

I have taken great pains to transcribe these stones in as close to the speaker's original tone as I could, yet as with all records, they lose something in writing. The first, in particular, was spoken at such speed I was tempted to put no spaces between the words. I would appreciate it if questors of Floranuus would, in the future, not live their Passion while they are speaking for posterity.

Message Stone 48, received 6 Strassa 1510

Speaker is Guven Flamehair, a member of the Broken Fang tribe, Gev'Prakarool Clan

"... in the Broken Fang a lot of clans are dedicated to the protection of one of the Passions, f'rinstance my great-great-great-great-how-many-was-that-oh-well-it-doesn't-matter grandmother received a dream from Prakarool a long, long time ago that told her she should be devoted to speed and energy and he wanted to see her riding the fastest horses on the plains and celebrating the rebirth of the world so she went to Hevok Steel-Arm, the chief at that time, and told him her dream and he made her suffer the ordeal of the boiling stone until he was sure she wasn't lying or eating purple windling mushrooms again, but when he was convinced he told her to devote her family to Prakarool since He was jealous that Blook and Tranko and Muvuul already had whole clans devoted to their worship and saw too much fighting and not enough revelry, so my great-great-whatever grandmother and all her kids and grandkids made the Gev'Prakarool, a clan devoted to breeding the Broken Fang's fastest horses and thundras and reminding the chief not to get caught up in worry about the future for it is the duty of an ork to live for today, and since then we have taught our children the ways of Prakarool and many became questors, far more than in other clans ..."

I have found the practice of devoting an entire clan or family to the glory of a single Passion to be common among many tribes. The Carads have taken the idea to an extreme, often Naming or dedicating a clan to anything from Passions to revered ancestors. Most commonly, Thystonius and Lochost are thus honored, though Garlen's blessing and protection is sought nearly as often. Invariably, this does seem to earn the Passions' favor, for nearly a quarter of such clan members quest for their patron Passion.

Message Stone 52, received 28 Veltom 1510

Speaker is Yelad Diamond-Fist, of Namdroth

"When we emerged from Kaer Namdroth beneath the fires of the Twilight Peaks, we were surprised to discover others had forgotten the true ways of worship. Those who lived in kaers crafted by dwarves or humans engaged in the heresy of directly speaking to the Passions, assuming their petitions and wishes were worthwhile. The Passions are not gossip old women, willing to listen to the words of every ork who wants an extra silver a day or a pretty girl to grace his bed. For the Passions to listen, you must first convince them that your prayers are important. Only the greatest of heroes can serve as intermediaries, for if Hrak Gron or Cathon Grimeye finds your prayers worthy, the Passions are honor-bound to accept such a one's word. If you have such heroes in your own ancestry, the Passions smile on all your requests."

To be honest, I had never heard of such a belief before meeting Namdroth members and find no such reference in ancient ork records, so most likely this belief evolved in isolation in their kaer and became so central to them that they believe it universal. On the other hand, many of their abilities are quite spectacular (I am accustomed to thundras throwing orks about, not the reverse), so perhaps the Passions *do* favor their demands.

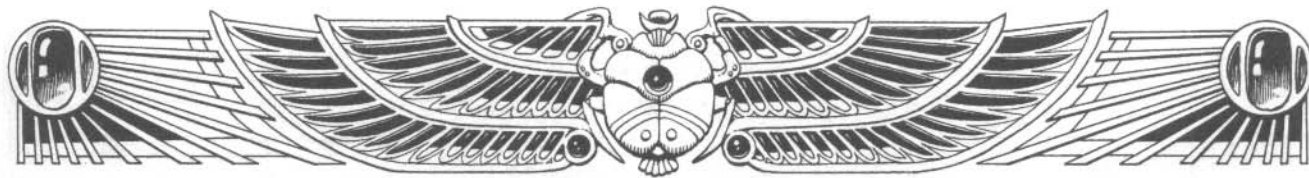
A more likely cause for their abilities, I believe, is in a later portion of Yelad's speech.

Message Stone 52, received 28 Veltom 1510

Speaker is Yelad Diamond-Fist, of Namdroth

"Only in the grip of gahad can a true prayer be said, as our souls are closer to the ancestors when we have no constraints between us. You must not squander the gift of gahad, as many corrupted folk do, on little insults and trivial excitements.





Such strength must be conserved and stored until needed. When you feel gahad take you, meditate upon your ancestors, ask them to bear the burden for you, and a calm will come, yet in the calm you know the storm waits just on the other side. The fury of gahad lies behind this barrier until called in war or in prayer."

I have heard tales of their techniques at work, and non-Namdroth who train long enough find themselves able to call on Passion-like feats when pushed to their limits.

My own tribe believes that an ork's gahad reveals if a Passion is interested in him. If your gahad spills frequently, you are not merely short-tempered or cruel as some ujnort say, but a questor who has not yet become acquainted with your Passion. When I broke my leg many years ago, for months after it healed to its present-day crippled state I flew into gahad every time someone spoke of my injury. Finally, I realized that my rage came not from shame, but a frustrated need to help others avoid the same fate. After I puzzled that out, Garlen appeared to me in a dream and accepted me as her student.

Such gahad can be from any Passion, not only the warlike ones, for rage often masks a deeper feeling. I know those whose gahad has led them to Mynbruje, Chorrolis, even Jaspre. Some believe that because orks rarely farm, we do not feel Jaspre, but anyone who has spent time with a cavalryman knows we honor Her highly, in Her original form as the guardian of the animals that sustain us.

Message Stone 101, stone 2 of 4, received 1 Rua 1510

Speaker is Hukhuk Yellowtusk of the Thunderborn Cavalry

"We don't hold for tellin' each other what we should think 'bout the Passions. That's a mite personal. But there is a festival we live and die by and everyone knows they's got to participate. That's *Rohodo*.

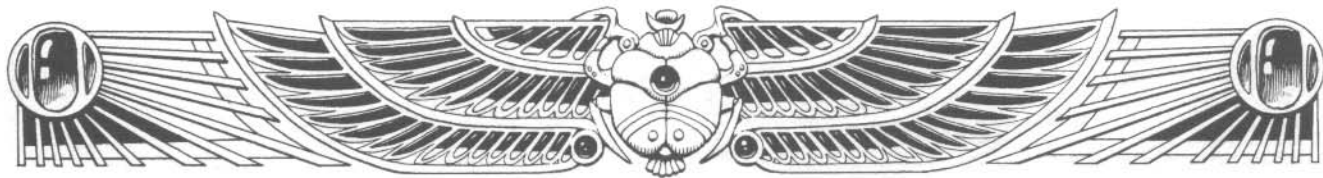
"When it starts gettin' 'round breedin' time for the dyres, our questors know the time's comin' when we needs to make sure Jaspre don't forget us this year. Jaspre's the Passion'll make sure we keep having calves and babies, for there ain't much good in a tribe without neither.

"When the cows come into heat, the women all gathers 'round to watch the mating, while the men are in the woods, dressin' in the ceremonial masks of dyre-skin and purifyin' themselves with fire an' water an' earth an' air. When they hear the bellows, the men runs in and splits up among the women while the kids beat the leather drums. We run between them, miming like we was matin', too. And when all are honored, we gathers together and dance the *lukro*, praying to Jaspre to keep us whole in the coming year and to keep our children healthy and give us plenty of 'em. Then everyone eats the first fruits of the season and the party lasts til dawn, though in my experience most folks split off long before then to do some private celebratin', you know?"

This seems to be a pre-Scourge holdover, because you can find a variation on this ceremony in almost every tribe of more than a hundred people, with the exception of the Metal Fist. Replace dyres with thundras or horses (and change the accent) and you've got an account of how most nomadic tribes spend Charassa. The dance is always led by a shaman or elemental, and results in many pregnancies for animal and ork alike. Whether this is due to Jaspre's direct intervention or the sheer number of "private celebrations" (which among some tribes are not so private) is unknown.

I hope I have given the layman reader a few useful drops of the torrent of individual ork customs that have crossed my desk. Many directly contradict each other, and reports of questor techniques previously unknown to Barsaivian scholars come in all the time. I would need more hands and eyes to travel to the more remote tribes and record these customs, because observing them directly is the only way to tell what works and what doesn't.





THE HISTORY OF CARA FAHD

—From the writings of Krathis Gron

When I was readying the orks of Barsaive to return to our homeland, I tried to find out about its history, to learn all I could of our true glories and tragedies. I spoke with the finest scholars of Barsaive and Cathay; I searched through the Great Library of Throal and the storehouses of Urupa in hopes of finding a book of ork law, or a single volume on Cara Fahd's creation, achievements and daily life.

I found nothing.

Though scholars aplenty claimed to know Cara Fahd's legend, I found that all had taken their knowledge from the same texts in the Library of Throal. There were hundreds of books and tablets on the Orichalcum Wars in those hallowed halls, but though the authors of them had different Names, they spoke with only two voices. The first used the words of a dwarf who had killed orks. The second used the words of a dwarf apologizing to an ork. Neither used the words of orks themselves. Urupa had precious little pre-Scourge history of any sort, and finally I realized I was foolish to look for our words on the parchments and tablets of other races. The words of orks are found on the lips of orks.

So I traveled among the ork tribes of Barsaive—the Broken Fang, who still bear the name of their ancient forebears, and the isolated warriors of Namdroth, who claim never to have left Cara Fahd or its ways. I spoke with the eldest of both peoples, asked what stories they had learned from their grandparents. I talked to troubadours, to the children of troubadours, to chiefs and questors whose duty includes remembering the tribe's history. But even these—our own folk—fell silent when I asked who founded Cara Fahd, or when our ancestors lost their chains, put down their hoes and became a nation.

After a time, when idle gossip and cold ale had loosened tongues and turned even practical minds to storytelling, I heard legends. They awoke memories of my mother singing softly by the mess pails ... a song of the *cara fahd*, of the heroic sacrifice.

I give you now the tale in that song.

ON THE GREAT UPRISING

Any ork worthy of the Name knows the story of the First Liberator, my distant ancestor Hrak Gron. Long ago, our people suffered far worse than any ork today, without even the memory of a nation to sustain them. For as long as other Name-givers had lived in ork lands and seen our rough faces, simple ways and short lives, they had enslaved us, and their chains had held so long that no ork remembered how to be free.

Except one.

Hrak Gron looked at her fellow slaves on the Lone Willow Farm, saw their bowed heads and weakened spirits, and anger and pity rose in her heart. She called on Mynbruje, Passion of Justice and Truth, to right the wrong of slavery and bring the orks their freedom. But the Passion refused.

"Justice lies in strength," Mynbruje said, "and you orks lack the strength to change yourselves. I have no justice for you."

Hrak Gron protested. "Justice lies in compassion and truth, not in the will of the strong. Otherwise, only dragons would know justice, for they are strongest, but you have given these other Name-givers their share."

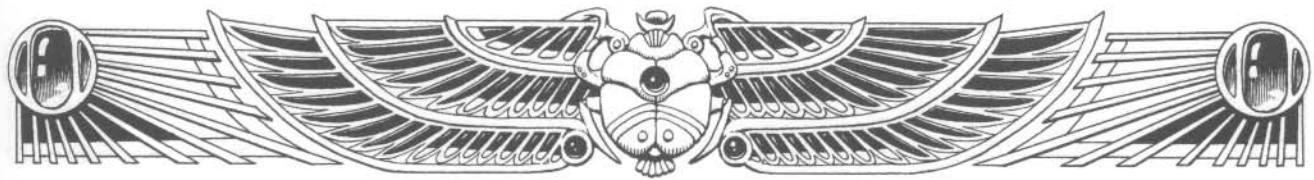
And this thought spoke to Mynbruje's heart, so he listened. "You speak truly," he said, "but I still have no justice for orks, for you are too weak-willed to make justice without aid. If you throw off your chains yourself, I shall make you a strong and righteous people, because you will have shown that you deserve my blessing."

At these words, gahad rose in Hrak Gron's breast. She grabbed a sharp rock and gashed her arm with it, swearing on her blood to prove orks worthy of justice no matter how long it took.

And Hrak Gron kept her promise, learning from the secrets of her own ork heart—the pure rage fired by Thystonius, the compassion of Garlen, the love of liberty taught by Lochost. And she studied the slave masters and saw that their power made them complacent. She learned to work around their rules, to duck beneath the lash of their whips and to preach to her fellow orks away from spying eyes and ears. She reminded her brothers and sisters that they, too, had traditions. They gave their children Names, told stories and felt the Passions, the same as any other Name-giver race. And for the first time, they began to chafe under the injustice of their servitude.

At last, Hrak Gron gathered her fellow slaves and led them against their masters, with no weapon save their minds and hands and no strength save their conviction. Her army slew every Name-giver who had lifted a hand against an ork, every one who had called them animals. They left only the children alive, for they would not butcher the innocent. To the children, they gave a warning for the other slaveholders—justice is unrelenting, and for every ork who remains a slave, another master will be slain.





Few slavers believed that mere orks could hurt them. They dismissed the slaughter at Lone Willow Farm as the slavers' incompetence, for they knew they could defend against any rebellion. Instead of releasing their ork captives, they drove them harder, seeking to break their spirits. But the orks rose as one people to join Hrak Gron's Company of the Free. And they fought a war against oppression that would not stop until they had liberated every slave.

Thus goes the tale every ork knows. But do you know how the war ended?

Few do, for it began and ceased in Throal's infancy, more than fourteen centuries ago. Only the few who know of Hrak Gron know that she died fighting for freedom in the Battle of Grallen Field, at that time already four decades old, yet refusing to let old age claim her.

THE BATTLE OF GRALLEN FIELD

From the single farmstead where it began, Hrak Gron's revolt spread swiftly across the land.

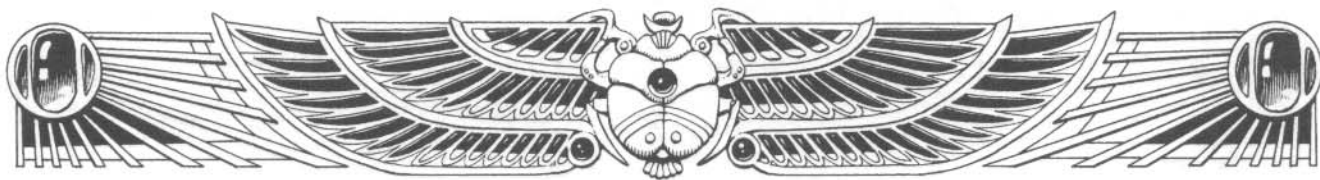
Armies of dwarfs and trolls and humans from nations whose Names are long-forgotten tracked her Company of the Free, because freedom for the orks threatened their very existence. In those days, kingdoms fought politely, agreeing on terms of battle; at first, therefore, they could not stand against the vicious determination of the orks. But the other races learned from us how to fight brutally, and in the Uprising's twentieth year, the nations of Barsaive came together to crush the ork company.

They tracked Hrak Gron's people to a region in southwestern Barsaive—then called the Madjork River Valley, now known as Cara Fahd. Even in the isolated villages that dotted the land, shackled orks planted the fields and cut the stone, and Hrak Gron was determined to let no slaver escape retribution.

The Company of the Free arrived at Grallen Field, a narrow flood plain between hills, and saw the villagers waiting to defend their farms. But when they stepped onto the plain, the orks also saw the combined armies of half-a-dozen kingdoms, among them the nearby human realm of Landis, allied with the village fighters. Rather than the minor battle they had expected, the Company was outnumbered ten to one.

Hrak Gron was unafraid. She believed that the Passions would help those in the right and called on them for aid. She prayed to Mynbruje, asking that the battle go to the just; but he turned his face from her, for she had not proven herself yet. Then she prayed to Thystonius, and he promised to aid her ... but he would aid her enemy also, as is his way.





Desperate, Hrak Gron cried out to all the Passions. But Garlen's comfort meant little in the face of so many foes, Lochost could aid their spirits but not their arms, and the speed of Floranuus would not help the orks when the armies surrounded them. Only one other Passion—Jaspree—felt the rightness of the orks' cause, and did what she could to aid the Uprising.

Over the nearby hills came a stampede of thundra beasts, ferocious monsters that no Name-giver could tame. At the sight of them, the shadows fell away from Hrak Gron's eyes. She saw not wild animals, but creatures who—like orks—would fight to the death to avoid slavery, but would work loyally alongside a friend.

Grabbing the leading bull's horn, Hrak Gron pulled herself astride the powerful animal and charged the startled armies. Her orks followed her example; mounted on thundras, they broke through the legions like a wave through a sand bank. For a day and a night the struggle raged, the orks implacable and the enemy troops innumerable, constantly swelling with reinforcements to replace the dead. Hrak Gron led the fighting with a stolen logger's axe; hundreds fell before her, to be trampled into the ground by her thundra's claws.

THE HEROIC SACRIFICE

But even she at last grew tired. As she fought off four soldiers, a single human archer lodged a shaft between her shoulder blades. The pain tore deep, through bone and flesh. Hrak Gron knew she was dying and wondered what she had accomplished. All around her she saw orks bleeding, crying, dying ... but every one glowed with pride in the cause of freedom, and not one head was bowed.

And then Hrak Gron knew she had done all that the Passions wanted. She had turned slaves into a free people who would defend their rights against any enemy. It is said she smiled, knowing she was no longer needed, and left the field so that the opposing armies would not have the pleasure of seeing her death. She knew that the orks would continue the fight without her.

As her heart's blood poured down her back, she thanked the thundra for its service and slid down from it, then pulled her broken body out of sight. When she could crawl no further, she reached down and grasped a dagger in a hand slippery with blood, then plunged it into her own breast so she would not bleed to death slowly.

The next day, after they had driven off the last of the armies, the Company of the Free searched for their leader. They followed her trail from the field, but at the end of it found only a pool of blood. It is said that Lochost himself could not stand to see Death imprison Hrak Gron and came to take her body. As they stared at the empty spot where her corpse should have lain, Mynbruje spoke to the gathered orks and said that he welcomed their prayers, for they were now his children.

The orks who had been with Hrak Gron longest, ever since Lone Willow Farm, guarded the place of her death until her blood soaked into the soil, pervading the land with her spirit.

The dates of Hrak Gron's life are open to debate. We do not know if she lived many generations, like Krathis, or even exactly when the first thundra was tamed, but estimations range from fourteen to sixteen centuries before the present. Some scholars believe that the Battle of Grallen Field took place up to a thousand years before Cara Fahd's founding.

—Getaft Allthought

The Temple and City of Cara Fahd

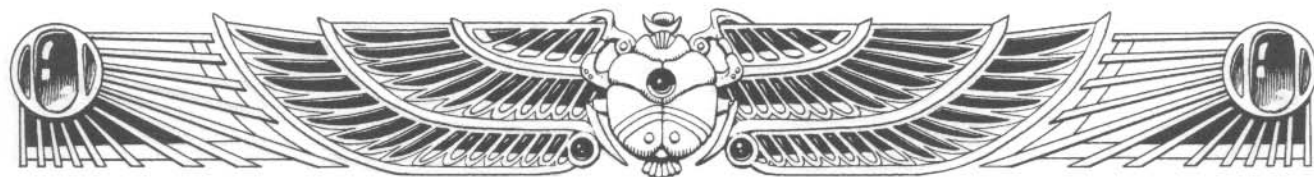
The followers of Hrak Gron built a temple to Lochost on the spot where their liberator had died, a shrine centered on the ground soaked with her blood. The orks Named the temple *cara fahd*, meaning "heroic sacrifice" in ancient or'zat. For generations, their descendants guarded the temple and thousands of pregnant women journeyed to dream the *vavraka* for their children in the presence of Lochost and Hrak Gron. Those who stayed served the temple, and their children did as well, until a small town grew around it. The town also took the Name of Cara Fahd.

Around this time, legends say that a nethermancer Named Gerot dug into the soil near the temple and found a fist-sized, blood-colored stone. With an unspeakably difficult ritual, he awakened the piece of Hrak Gron's spirit that remained in the rock. That was the first of the famed "soul-stones" used to communicate with the honored dead. The nethermancer died elsewhere in Cara Fahd and the stone was lost for many years.

Ujnort historians reject this history, even denying my ancestor's existence. They claim that the Great Uprising was many unconnected small rebellions, that the Madjork River is an invention and that the city of Cara Fahd formed long after our people came to this area. But they are wrong.

The city of Cara Fahd lay near the banks of one of the three rivers that flows through our land, but the Name Madjork long ago fell into disuse, and I found no one who could say which of the rivers it was or who knew the city's location. Cara Fahd was abandoned when the kingdom fell; all records of it have since been lost. After the Scourge, even the land changed, and I fear the city's ruins now lie hidden in the southern jungle. I believe the temple offers a strong thread to the pattern of the ancient kingdom, and I would give much to find and reopen it.





REGARDING THE GOLDEN AGE OF CARA FAHD

As Cara Fahd became a city, many orks chose to live on the lush plains nearby, raising the descendants of Hrak Gron's thundra herd and becoming famed as cavalymen. Our people had traditionally been herders, and after a hundred years of slavery, many feared a settled lifestyle. And so, even as the city grew, the nomadic tribes also swelled a hundredfold. Soon, not only the city, but the lands around it came to be called Cara Fahd, in honor of Hrak Gron's sacrifice that gave orks a land of their own.

ON THE FORMATION OF THE EIGHT TRIBES

The eight tribes of ancient Cara Fahd sprang from the eight surviving Lone Willow Farm slaves who led the Company of the Free off Grallen Field. They and their descendants bore numerous children, as all orks sought honored alliances with them. After several generations of intermarriage, these eight groups had become permanently linked and were known as the eight tribes of Cara Fahd. Splinter factions broke off occasionally and new ork tribes migrated to the area, but these eight remained closest to the city, retiring within its walls when their bones grew weary of saddles and cold ground.

All Barsaivians knew and feared them, for their horses were swift and their arms strong. These tribes were the Broken Fang, founded by Baeltro Broken-Fang; the Open Eye, founded by Gurvesth Open-Eye; the Screaming Falcons, founded by Hravan Julek; Lochost's Jaw, founded by Guvenyi Herl; Hemlock's Kiss, founded by Ferew Hemlock; the Golden Cobras, founded by Rekek Yverel; Freedom's Touch, founded by Qaaan Heuklo; and the Urvaniyeklamna, founded by Lamna Juckyv (I could find no translation of this tribe's Name). The modern-day Broken Fang tribe claims to be directly descended from its ancient namesake, but I found no proof either for or against that claim.

The tribes dispersed after the Fall of Cara Fahd, and only a few records still exist that tell of their famous chiefs and exploits. During the Scourge, the bloodlines mixed or disappeared entirely, and not an ork now alive knows for certain if he or she is descended from the ancient chiefs—though dozens of Carad clans and tribes claim such relationships.

A place in Cara Fahd waits for any adventurer willing to seek out remaining records or lineages of these ancient people. I want the truth known, so that the pull of history may make our own tribes strive to match their ancestors' glories or take over their hereditary positions. It would shame all orks if our noble ones wandered Barsaive today ignorant of their glorious heritage.

CHOOSING A KING

For nearly a century the city of Cara Fahd grew slowly, its people content to hunt in the forests for food, herd horses, thundra and cattle and occasionally farm, though the rocky soil produced little yield. When the city grew to ten thousand people and a half-day's walk across, however, the residents began to wish for a leader. Some people took up trades, selling their crafts for food and goods; these townsmen wanted money and someone to solve disputes between families. Some began selling their wares to foreigners, sparking struggles between city orks and nomads as trade caravans passed through tribal territories without leave.

Alarmed that the conflicts might grow out of control, the city's residents petitioned the temple questors, asking them to pass laws and gather armies to defend those who relied on their guidance. The questors refused, declaring that Lochost had no interest in laws and leadership. The city orks then decided to select a leader from their own numbers, but no clear choice presented itself. Orks had no royalty and no experience in ruling anything larger than a tribe. Factions formed around some of those who wished to rule, and soon there were open brawls in the city streets as each ork sought power for himself.

Then the chiefs of the eight tribes of Cara Fahd, whose lands lay nearest the city, came as they did each year to give thanks at the temple and tombs of their ancestors. The chiefs took charge, commanding that the fighting cease. "Are you not all orks?" they asked. "Are you not descendants, in mind and body, of the heroic sacrifice that brought us together as a single people?"

"We are," the people responded, "but we have grown apart without a leader. We need a king, for we are as many as other great nations, but we have no laws or chief of chiefs to keep our peace."

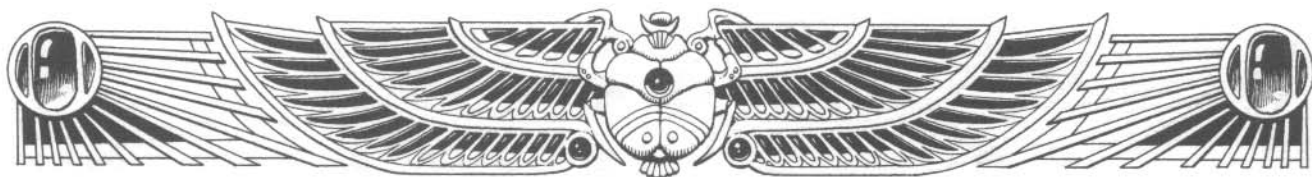
And the eight chiefs saw the truth in the people's words, and they too argued, for each believed that his own experience made him most suited to be king. And the city's orks broke apart still further, backing one or the other chief as king, until the dispute threatened to tear apart Cara Fahd in a civil war.

The Qualification

Ultimately, the orks chose to settle the matter in a manner pleasing to Thystonius without needless spilled blood. They would hold a week-long series of contests, testing every skill an ork would need to be king. For almost a year, the eight tribes planned the events of Qualification and spread word of them throughout the land.

The tribes opened the contests to all who cared to test their prowess, and orks flocked to the city of Cara Fahd from all over Barsaive in search of power, honor or merely to be mentioned in troubadours' ballads. Tribal chiefs, village headmen





and the greatest soldiers of many armies all came to test themselves in the Qualification. But the eight chiefs remained the finest candidates. Their legs were strong, their hearts proud and their minds swift.

The games began with the simple and physical, a grueling race through the heights of the Delaris Mountains and across the mouth of Death's Sea. From there, they became steadily harder. Every day dozens of candidates dropped out, but the eight chiefs won again and again.

The Legend of Wudra Muntak

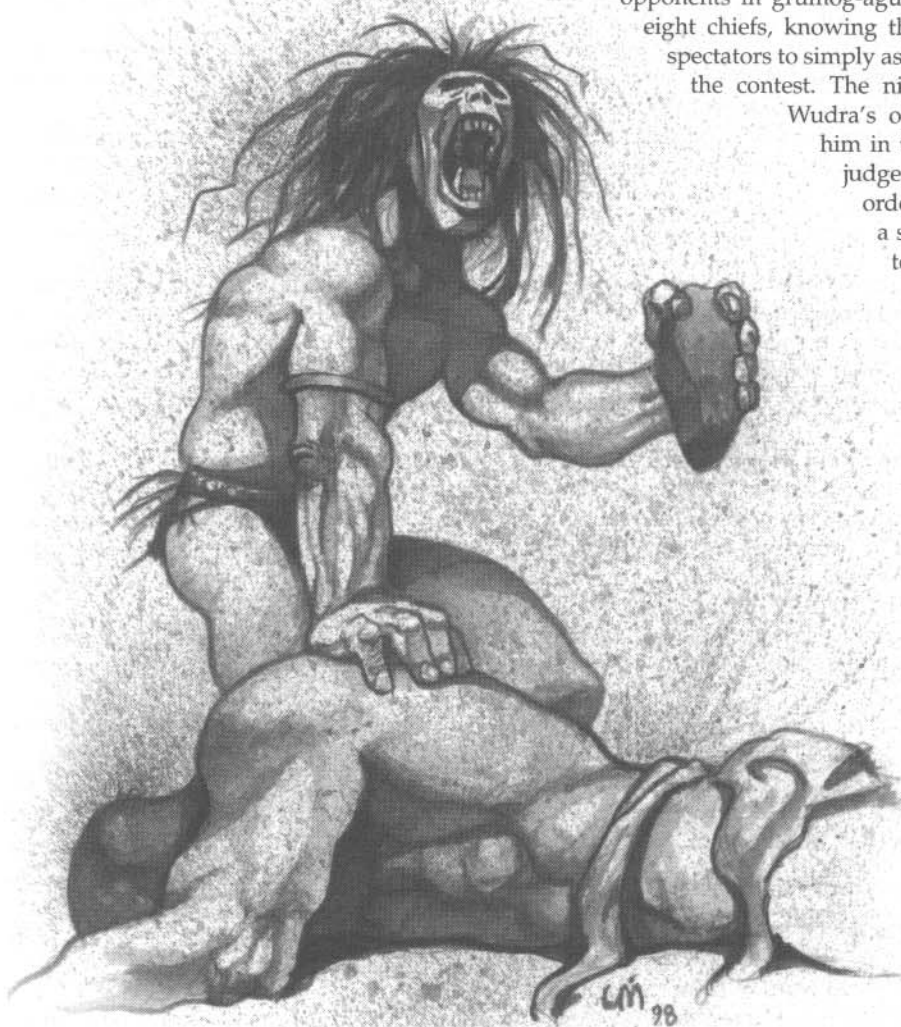
The Qualification continued with jousts and fencing, with formal dinners at the tables of elven lords and debates with long-winded Throalic scholars, with tests of courage and tests of purity. And through it all, a single ork ran neck-and-neck with the eight chiefs. The youngest on the field, he was slim and wiry and bounced back from exhaustion faster than the older chiefs. No one knew where he hailed from, and he never said. His Name was Wudra Muntak, and the sound of that Name soon became hateful to the eight.

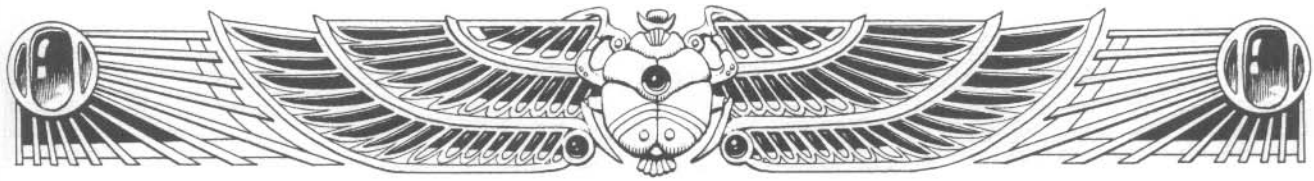
One night, shortly before the Qualification was to end, the eight chiefs compared scores and discovered that if Wudra won one more test, he would earn the crown of Cara Fahd. And jealousy rose in their hearts, for each had been convinced that *he* would be the first king. The chiefs would accept defeat by one of their own, but not at the hands of an unknown boy. And so together they plotted to defeat Wudra Muntak. If they could not achieve the kingship through skill, they would steal it through treachery.

The next contest pitted the surviving contestants against opponents in grumog-agu, wrestling as ork slaves once had. The eight chiefs, knowing that Wudra was too popular among the spectators to simply assassinate, plotted a way to make him lose the contest. The night before, they learned the Name of Wudra's opponent from the judges and attacked him in the darkness, crippling him. The contest judge, under the influence of the eight chiefs, ordered a visiting obsidian warrior to act as a substitute, even though all the other contestants would be wrestling other orks.

Wudra guessed what must have happened, but had no time to protest before the fight began. The obsidianman toyed with his opponent, letting Wudra in close and then driving him back with a single, stone-armed strike. At first Wudra tried to fight fairly, determined to acquit himself with honor no matter what the odds. But when the obsidianman knocked him to the ground for the tenth time, so hard that he could only lie there panting with half his ribs broken, the unfairness of it overcame him. The chiefs had swindled him, robbed him of his victory and of the glory of Thystonius.

Gahad gripped him. His eyes clouded with rage and he rose from the ground with a sharp rock clenched in one fist. The rules of the contest specified no weapons, but Wudra was beyond constraints. As he drove the rock into the obsidianman's head, a voice spoke, filling the crowd with wonder.





The match had taken place on the very spot where the nethermancer Gerot had perished, and the stone in Wudra's hand was Hrak Gron's soul stone. As Wudra's blood awakened her soul, Hrak Gron spoke to the crowd, telling of the chiefs' treachery and declaring Wudra the only ork fit to rule Cara Fahd.

The crowd rose as one to slay the chiefs, but stopped when Wudra held up a hand. "Do not hurt them," he said, "or you will be worse than they. Their tribes love them; they have led their people well and defended our land against marauders. Everyone is allowed one mistake in the grip of passion; let this be theirs."

The crowd listened to their new king, and punished the eight chiefs only with their own shame. After a time, the chiefs became King Wudra's most loyal protectors and he honored their tribes by giving each a task to fulfill for as long as Cara Fahd existed.

The Broken Fang guarded the kingdom's northern border, ever vigilant against the highland trolls whose lands lay nearby. The Open Eye fought in the south, expanding Cara Fahd's territory and driving off acquisitive humans from Landis. Lochost's Jaw trained the cavalry, and the Screaming Falcon settled disputes, dispensed justice and captured criminals within Cara Fahd. Freedom's Touch provided ambassadors to foreign nations, while the Golden Cobras handled trade and made sure the treasury door could never open inward, so thickly piled were the coins behind it. Urvaniyeklamna trained wizards and enchanters and kept track of magic and learning. Hemlock's Kiss provided liaisons to the temples and Passions, and often sent sons and daughters of the tribe to study under powerful questors.

LIFE IN THE GOLDEN AGE

Wudra ruled from the city and christened the entire kingdom Cara Fahd. He earned the people's love as well as their respect, for he interfered little in their daily lives. Under Wudra, orks lived as they always had. The nomadic tribes herded and hunted and raided only when food grew scarce. Within the city, silversmiths coined money and trade grew in foodstuffs, horses, weapons and crafts. Most trade took place between the city and nomad tribes, but tentative relations with the human and dwarf cities of Rehen, Treylin and Fewmej formed over the years. These cities, in the land that the Therans call Rugaria, were all destroyed in the Orichalcum Wars or during the Scourge.

The tribes remained largely independent, with all internal matters handled by their chiefs. Wudra's government administered disputes, presided over ceremonies within the city and settled arguments between tribes. The king also handled relations with other nations and coordinated the efforts of all orks in war and defense.

On Establishing Order

Wudra was as kind as he was wise, though his reign was fraught with difficulties. It fell to Wudra to make Cara Fahd a true kingdom, closing its borders and driving out those who thought to prey on its temporary weakness and chaos. The troll tribes known as crystal raiders were accustomed to thinking of orks as easy targets and had grown fat on our herds and harvests. It took many a brutal lesson to drive the orks' newfound strength through the trolls' thick skulls.

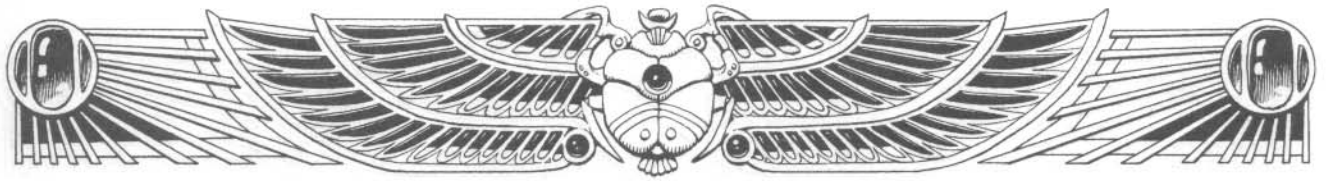
The Broken Fang deserve the most credit for ending that particular menace, but Wudra himself led the Battle of Raining Fire, where thousands of ork archers congregated to protect a single village from a fleet of troll airships. They drove back the trolls, slaying seasoned raider and deckhand alike. The raiders knew then that the orks could tear out their throats, and they turned their attacks elsewhere in respect for their formidable foes. From that day, our herders no longer feared the skies. The ork cavalries also fought t'skrang pirates and human bandits and patrolled our riverbeds day and night on tireless thundras, until our neighbors acknowledged Cara Fahd's sovereignty.

Within the kingdom, Wudra acted with no less courage. Ork troubadours still sing of Nagyemi and Rogk, the headstrong chiefs of the Fleetwind and Strongmace tribes, who did not wish to unite to preserve peace in the kingdom. They had warred with each other for three generations and refused to stop even when Wudra ordered all tribal conflicts brought before him. They deliberately tested his strength by sending full cavalries to clash in the field, and ignored Wudra's orders to cease even when he rode into their territory to tell them personally. For this offense, Wudra cut them both out of their saddles and married each of their wives to the other's successor.

Wudra reigned for twenty-five years and died peacefully, having made his kingdom a mighty one. He had accomplished great things, as had all orks in our land. Our beastmasters tamed diverse creatures such as dyres and griffins for cavalymen to ride. Our artists carved sculptures of granite and fashioned images in iron that proclaimed our love of freedom and all living things. Songs and stories grew as thickly as wildflowers on the open plains; surrounded by their own people, the troubadours watched and wrote of the lives of orks. Many artifacts created during Cara Fahd's golden age likely still exist; finding them would bring any ork glory.

All this is not to say that King Wudra turned Cara Fahd into a nation like any other, where Thystonius was ignored and Lochost despised. He allowed the tribes the freedom to settle their differences with fist and club, and brought young orks together to train and compete in games meant to please the Passions. But he taught us not to direct our anger against each other, and to care for all orks as a single family. This sense of unity was the true kingdom that Wudra gave to his people.





On the Emdachot

I have found a few references to the *Emdachot*, an archaic word meaning “steadfast.” This group—the best warriors, scouts and cavalymen from the eight tribes, as well as city residents and younger children of merchants with no other trade—made up an elite military force answerable only to the king. Only a hundred strong, they trained in groups of five to defend important holdings from foreign raiders, to perform espionage on potential enemies and to free slaves anywhere they found them. Half of them stayed within Cara Fahd, while the other half journeyed into other lands.

I intend to re-establish the Emdachot. This spring, I will preside over a contest open to all orks who wish to join, based on the trials of the Qualification. The Emdachot will make staunch defenders—especially if tied to the pattern of our nation, as were the legendary heroes known as Cara Fahd’s Protectors.

THE FALL OF THE FIRST DYNASTY

For almost a hundred years, Cara Fahd continued to choose its kings and queens through Qualification contests. Though the winners were rarely related by blood, they are called the First Dynasty because they were all equal heirs to Wudra’s wisdom, honesty and valor. Under their rule, Cara Fahd prospered peacefully, the eight tribes protecting them from invasion.

By the time King Gorchen began his reign, however, the Qualifications had fallen into corruption as more and more judges sought to promote their own friends and relatives rather than the most worthy contestant. The people of Cara Fahd, grown content through years of plenty, had little interest in whose backside kept the throne warm, and did not interfere when Gorchen—a cruel and petty ork—was proclaimed king. They were soon to regret their indifference.

Gorchen taxed his subjects heavily and used the money for his own pleasures, and soon the orks of Cara Fahd grew discontented with him. An ork Named Odra, son of a prominent Cara Fahd merchant, took advantage of this dissatisfaction and trained a rebel army in secret. Eventually, he attacked and overwhelmed the minimal palace guard and hanged King Gorchen in the public square. Odra then abolished the Qualification and declared himself king, and his son the heir to the Odra dynasty. The reign of Odra marks the change from the Golden Age to the Age of Wars.

Many believe that Krathis descends from the children of Wudra’s line. She is far nobler than Moschtug, who claims descent from the brutal Odra line.

—Titanstroke Greybeard

ANCIENT ENEMIES AND THE AGE OF WARS

—As written by Getaft Allthought

Krathis Gron devoted her studies primarily to the orks of ancient Cara Fahd, seeing the surrounding world as a backdrop to ork activities. My studies extended beyond that to the other ancient kingdoms that influenced Cara Fahd’s growth. Though few records written by orks survived the Fall of Cara Fahd, the histories of neighboring kingdoms abound with references to Cara Fahd’s most aggressive actions.

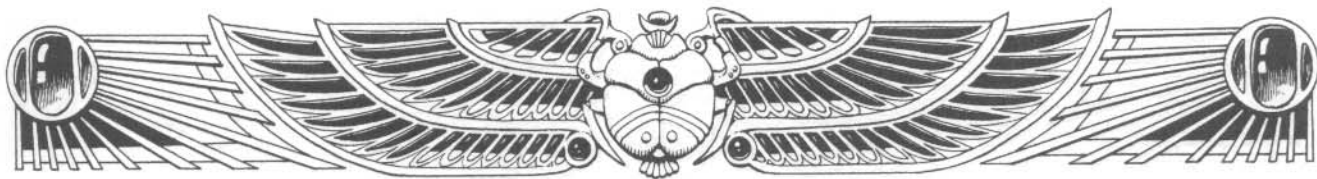
I encourage explorers to add their finds to our library. We have pieced together what little history we know from a hundred different half-sentences contained in writings found in a hundred different kaers, and I suspect this is the only way in which we will ever discover the whole truth of ourselves as a people. For example, to verify Krathis’s statement of when the first thundras were domesticated, I found images on pottery shards from Basstown, depicted in a drawing in the Twin Libraries of Landis, one of which had been buried in the breached Perrith kaer until its discovery four years ago and the death of its resident Horror Naayit, the Diseased One. Then, of course, I had to figure out how the Landisians marked their years before the founding of Throal and Thera, and learn to translate the ancient Galeb dialect myself, because existing Landisian works on that subject were grossly incompetent.

Naturally, most other nations recorded Cara Fahd’s doings only when at war with it. The dearth of information on peaceful times does not mean that there were none, though I cannot deny that our nation indulged in frequent and bloody conflicts. As much as I would like to present an ork history full of noble acts and just rulers, I cannot claim that Cara Fahd fought all of its struggles in self-defense. I can, however, explain some of their causes and what effect they had on the surrounding kingdoms, beginning with Cara Fahd’s most frequent opponent: Landis.

ON CONFLICT WITH THE HUMANS OF ANCIENT LANDIS

Landis was already a powerful kingdom when Hrak Gron died, and during the Golden Age it numbered more than 180,000 inhabitants, of which perhaps 150,000 were human. They came mostly of three peoples; the Galeb, the Nachmane and the Schrassae. The latter two merged with so many other tribal groups that they lost their separate identities long before the Scourge. According to their own legends, human tribes had lived in the Landis region for more than five thousand years





before the dawning of ancient Cara Fahd. Judging from the many works left behind by artists and historians, Landisian kings seem to have commanded high esteem from their people, or at least a healthy respect. From the viewpoint of our ancestors, however, many Landisian rulers were less than worthy, and led their people into conflict with the ork kingdom whenever it suited their purposes. At other times, we orks were the aggressors. Overall, the history of Cara Fahd and Landis is not a pretty one.

Of the War of Horses

I'm sure Landisians and orks fought during the reigns of the Wudra kings, but these battles were small-scale or ordinary enough that the historians of Landis did not consider them worth mentioning. The first Named war I found occurred five years into the reign of King Odra, when he tried to expand Cara Fahd's borders into the valley between the upper Greenheart and Locust rivers.

King Itieni of Landis, a provincial-minded man, greatly feared Cara Fahd and blew the small incursion of a single nomad tribe out of proportion. He imagined that the claiming of a few thundra-lengths of border territory was a prelude to an invasion of his entire kingdom, and struck back with twice the number of troops that represented the Cara Fahd invaders. The Landisian army penetrated ork lands well past the rivers, attacking Cara Fahd's horse herds to cripple its cavalry. After two wet seasons of war (referred to as "summer" in pre-Scourge Throalic), the two sides negotiated a peace to end what became known as the War of Horses. The borders of both kingdoms remained unchanged.

The War of the Winged Messenger

King Wuruchug of Cara Fahd instigated the next, far bloodier war, seeking to invade Landis in response to what the Landisians claim was "an imagined slight." What the slight was, their records do not say. King Shakuru of Landis sent his infantry to lay siege to the city of Cara Fahd, via the Liaj River to avoid the remaining cavalry, while his own horsemen led Wuruchug on a chase through Landisian forests. This maneuver, called Shakuru's Turn, forced the orks to retreat home, for they dared not let their city and temple fall. A quarter of the nation's citizens lived there, including Wuruchug's daughter and heir.

This war earned its Named from Shakuru's messenger to Wuruchug, who said, "I come to you on the wings of peace." King Wuruchug returned the luckless messenger with his lungs pulled out through his back and a note saying, "There are your wings."

The Second War of Freedom

Queen Mwiinde of Landis, Shakuru's daughter, was the first to inspire human hatred of all orks among her people. She belonged to a cult that believed humans were the first and only true people, with the other Name-giver races being born out of them (as if humans could possibly birth windlings and trolls!). Mwiinde claimed that this cult, Named the First and the Last, was older than ancient Landis.

If my translation is correct, Mwiinde's war with Cara Fahd began when the Klek people first arrived in Barsaive from the far north. Mwiinde took their arrival as proof that humans could survive anywhere, and attempted to take over Cara Fahd so that the Klek could build homes there. Cara Fahd fought desperately, for Mwiinde freely committed atrocities—slaughtering infants and sending the able-bodied to slave in her mines, to name only a few. Even Landisian history acknowledges her bloodthirstiness, referring to her as "the Fearsome." By the time the war ended, Landis had extended its sovereignty deep into Cara Fahd to near the Twilight Peaks, though Cara Fahd's city never fell.

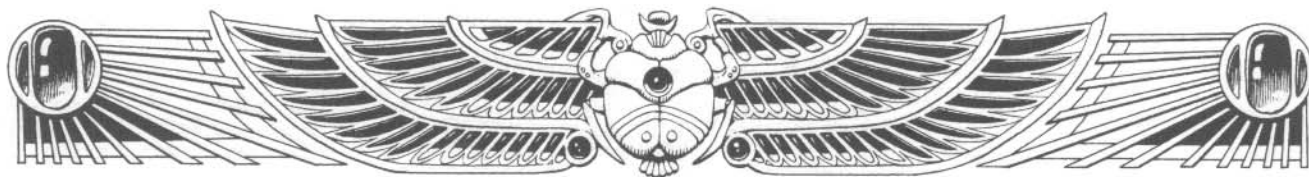
After witnessing the horrible deeds committed in their name, the Klek founded a cult of pacifism known as *Yzerene*, which became almost universal among them. Many Klek were healers and artists, as recorded in the song *The Tears of Jamirica*, and Mwiinde's war of conquest appalled them. So common did *Yzerene* become that by the time of the Scourge, the Klek "knew no war," as the humans say, and the Galeb easily subjugated them.

Of Lugrul's Wars

Three of Wuruchug's sons died in the Second War of Freedom, and the throne finally fell to King Hajonga at the war's end. The next king of Cara Fahd whose Name is recorded was Lugrul; I imagine several other kings came and went in relative peace before King Lugrul brought Cara Fahd to real glory ... and terror.

King Lugrul's forty-four-year reign remains the longest in Cara Fahd's history, and the most frightening. Among his many nicknames are "The Drowning King," "The Impaler," "The Blood Monarch," "The Unforgiving" and "The Terrible." He was most often referred to as "the Dragon of Cara Fahd." He may or may not have actually dealt with dragons; in all likelihood, this nickname came from the fury of his conquests. He drove the aging Queen Mwiinde's forces out of Cara Fahd and beyond Landis's previous border, and also created the karvusta spy corps to bring him secrets from the Landisian fortress-city of Tisoara.





Fortunately for many, Lugrul had little interest in arcane matters and so did not learn the truth of Tisoara's most secret and powerful magic. But he soon held the city's more accessible secrets—techniques used by Landisian weaponsmiths to make superior, lightweight armor, and the creation of the targeting eye blood charm. The war he fought to gain these things became known as the Secrets War, and was soon followed by the War of Jaspre's Wrath.

The War of Jaspre's Wrath was notable, according to songs regarding it, for the first large-scale use of beastmasters and their animal companions in battle. The sight of a tamed behemoth wading into battle inspired fear on a scale hard to imagine. Behemoths resemble water-born thundras, but with dragon-like necks and tails. Lugrul's behemoths were covered in blood-pebble armor (an immense expenditure for a creature a hundred feet long), carried catapult crews on their backs and could kick aside thundras like scrawny cats. Landisian forces fled before these monstrous beasts and Lugrul's armies conquered half of Landis before, as Landisian records say, "our brave soldiers rallied and fought them to a stalemate." Considering the portrait of Lugrul drawn from his other actions throughout his reign, as well as the sheer power of Cara Fahd's forces, I suspect that the war ended because Lugrul lost interest in it. Content to swallow up half the enemy realm, he turned his attention toward other amusements.

Of the Fruits of War

These wars led to the development and perfection of many weapons now seen throughout Barsaive and Thera. Who knows what other devices the famed ancient weaponsmiths invented in their furious competition to stay ahead? No doubt they devised threaded and Named lances, and magical weapons and armors galore. But if the story of Cara Fahd's master wizard, Cenad Illrew, is any indication, greater weapons yet exist—ones that have attained the status of legend.

Depending on which version of the story you believe, Cenad Illrew was either a dangerously unlucky inventor of wizard spells or one of the finest adepts in the world. He hit upon (or deliberately designed) a spell to capture an entire city and store it in a bottle. Bereft of a safe place to test such a spell, he worked and reworked the formula until he thought it sufficient. As war threatened and he was sent to the front, he fired the new spell at the Landisian citadel on Mount Raal. Into the bottle went the mountain, but not the citadel above it ... which promptly fell several thousand feet, along with Cenad.

One story says that Cenad fell to the slope beneath him, living long enough to see the citadel tumble down. Another states that he bravely sacrificed himself in order to create a magical item that would survive the ages, the Horrors and anything else that might happen. The bottle, with all the rocks of Mount Raal inside it, could not be broken. It came to be known as Mountain's Weight, a mace that could shatter the walls of a fortress in one blow. King Lugrul is said to have had the mace dug out from under the wrecked citadel and given to the Emdachot. I do not know who wielded it, only that it was greatly feared, to judge from Landisian writings.

After the acquisition of Mountain's Weight, Lugrul swept far into the Delaris Mountains and claimed Vivane as his southwestern border (though he never actually held the town). He soundly defeated King Kulal of Landis and even kidnapped his queen, Derrin, apparently for the fun of it. One book from Kaer Erythen suggests that Queen Derrin bore an ork son by Lugrul who was imprisoned by Kulal for years after he paid Lugrul's ransom and got Derrin back. One story even says that the son escaped into Cara Fahd; if it is true, then the blood of two kingdoms runs in the veins of his descendants (assuming any still live).

Of course, even a fearsome and ruthless king like Lugrul could not accomplish so much alone. Lugrul made fearsome allies in all corners of Barsaive, and did not hesitate to use them toward his own ends.

THE FORMATION OF USTRECT

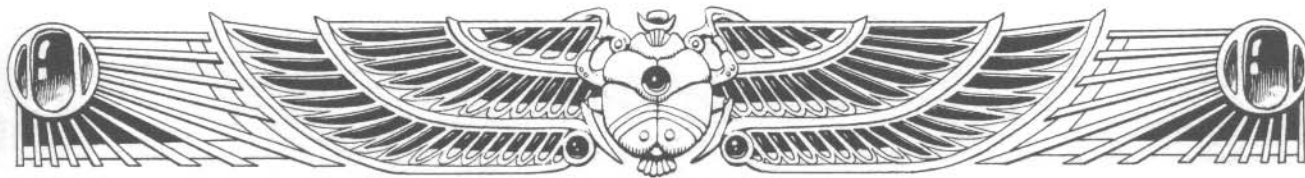
By 360 TH, the troll clans of Ustrect had become prosperous. Many trolls had settled in Ustrect lands, though they did not yet call themselves a kingdom. These lowlanders allied with Throal and traded living crystal, orichalcum and True air for grains from the dwarf kingdom's vast stores, spiced fish from the Serpent River and crafted goods of all sorts. Under such peace and wealth, many trolls grew fat and comfortable—by their own standards, if not by those of other Name-givers. Not all of them trained as warriors, and clan chieftains supplemented their forces with mercenaries of other races and Disciplines when fighting highland troll raiders. Their cavalry had barely mastered the stirrup, let alone the cavalryman Discipline, but Ustrect's warriors had something Landis had never seen in war: airships. And King Lugrul thought the time had come to show them.

R'Graya Bash'ak, First King of Ustrect

To hear Landisian historians tell it, Ustrect was little more than a puppet of Cara Fahd, a preposterous notion that ignores the significant role Ustrect would play in the future of this region of Barsaive.

Landisian history insists that spies of King Lugrul selected R'Graya Bash'ak as a potential king of Ustrect because his vast stupidity made him tractable, but from what I have read of his tactics, this is a salve to Landisian pride. Vain he may have been, but not stupid. According to Landisian records, Lugrul stole into the troll chieftain's ancestral home one night and





persuaded him to join in a dark pact with a Horror or some nefarious spirit to give R'Graya Bash'ak otherworldly powers and charisma. Supposedly, Lugrul gave the troll a sapphire-colored blood charm that R'Graya wore always. No one knew what it did, but R'Graya allegedly claimed it could not be removed until his death. Whatever the truth, R'Graya was crowned first king of Ustrect at Arrakal, its capital city, only a few years after his supposed dead-of-night meeting with Lugrul.

Historical texts from Landis insist that R'Graya's crowning took place after several private meetings with Lugrul, and over the protests of some isolationist trolls. It also insists that Ustrect first pledged its airships to support Cara Fahd against Landis after the coronation, as well as when Lugrul led an unsuccessful foray to conquer the Blackfang moot of the Twilight Peaks.

OF CONQUEST IN THE DELARIS MOUNTAINS

Before Lugrul became king, the Delaris River valley was home to a sizable troll, dwarf and human population. The silencing effect familiar to modern-day travelers in the Delaris region existed even then along its fertile banks, though people know as little of the reason as they do now. The valley's inhabitants fought with the orks occasionally, usually over the exploits of an association I will call "the Silent," as in Landisian histories, rather than "those horse thieves of the Delaris," as they are called in Cara Fahd's surviving records of the period. Similar groups may dwell in the Delaris region to this day.

The Silent were locally famous thief and scout adepts who lived in an unnamed citadel in the Delaris; they lived by stealing, using lip-reading, a complex language of hand signals and various aspects of thief magic to help them remain unseen. From Cara Fahd they stole horses, among other things, which earned them Lugrul's enmity. When he invaded to stop the thieves, he met little resistance from the lowlanders. However, by the time he destroyed the Silent, tensions were building in Barsaive that would come to a head during the Orichalcum Wars.

As the long years of peace between ork and troll began crumbling under increasing greed for orichalcum, Lugrul turned his eyes toward the greatest prize: Throal. Landis was already courting the dwarf kingdom, hoping to trade for valuable orichalcum that would fuel the immense amounts of magic needed to prevail against Lugrul's brutality.

Seeing the trade of the future, Lugrul set his subjects to mining the Delaris foothills for True earth and put elementalists and weaponsmiths to work night and day combining it with other elements they had bought or stolen to make orichalcum. Records indicate that Cara Fahd's iron-working in the Delaris reached its height in 399 TH; most ancient threaded armor likely dates from this period. One could hardly look up a slope without seeing mines, many of which no doubt became kaers when the Scourge struck.

OF THE HARASSMENT OF THROAL

King Lugrul renewed his alliance with Ustrect when a queen took over the troll kingdom in 401 TH, just as the crystal raiders began the Orichalcum Wars in earnest. I shall write more of the troll queen presently.

At that time, Throal was supplying the rich foreigners then known as "Theran Islanders" with orichalcum, which caught Lugrul's attention. He gathered raiders from all the major ork tribes to attack Throalic caravans on the Dinganni Plains, in addition to fighting with Landis. He planned for these assaults to lead to an attack on Throal itself, but in 402 TH his health failed. Landisians believe he went mad in his last days as some wasting disease ground down his brain. The histories say that Lugrul ultimately died of a spider bite in the privy, though I suspect this tale conceals long-term poisoning by any of his countless enemies. The histories do not say whether or not nethermancers prepared a soul-stone for him; I wonder if the discovery of such a thing would be good or bad for Cara Fahd.

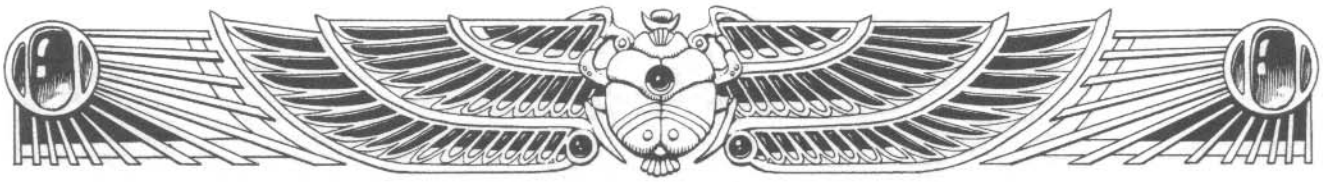
Throal responded slowly to the ork raids, for Queen Jonatha of the dwarf kingdom refused to believe they were conducted by a genuine army rather than individual marauding bands. Part of this, to be sure, stemmed from legitimate confusion of Cara Fahd's cavalries with independent ork raiders who had no connection to Cara Fahd, such as Nykkra's Screammers. After Lugrul's death, the war effort fell apart as each tribe sought to gain riches for itself rather than to take Throal for Cara Fahd.

The ork kingdom faced other troubles as well. Lugrul's ten-year old grandson, Wujemba, was his only surviving relative and became king in Name at that tender age. The Emdachot ran most affairs of state until Wujemba grabbed the reins of power for himself at sixteen. And as those who are watching current politics know, young and untrained kings make for hot heads and hasty judgments.

CONCERNING THE ORICHALCUM WARS

When crystal raiders of the Swiftwinds trollmoot assaulted Shosaran orichalcum shipments in 400 TH, they sparked a flood of similar raids by the Stoneclaws and Bloodlores, which soon turned to open warfare that cut off many cities from their allies and supplies. Landis at this time was ruled by Queen Zarina, Mwiinde the Fearsome's daughter, who ascended the throne in 385.





While King Lugrul still lived, Zarina conducted a secret campaign to fan rebellion in ork-dominated villages where humans also dwelled. After his death, she built up her army and then struck at Cara Fahd in earnest, sweeping her infantry up the Delaris River to seize ork-controlled orichalcum mines while her cavalry attacked Cara Fahd in the south.

Her army advanced as far as the city of Cara Fahd and the heavily protected mining towns in the mountains, but could not breach their walls and so settled in for a siege. At that point, the Emdachot called all the ork raiders back from Throal to surround her. But she anticipated their move, and the two armies circled one another in Cara Fahd's forests at an impasse.

The stalemate lasted for a frustrating year without a single significant battle. A famous Landisian poem, *Camouflage*, tells of wood-skinned warriors of each side hiding in the undergrowth, until both realize that the breath they feel on their skins is not wind, but another Name-giver's breath. The warriors attack one another and then lie dying, their eyes on the orichalcum-colored sunset, realizing they were fools to waste the breath of life.

In the following year, the battles began. Cara Fahd and Landis continued fighting almost continuously for all forty years of the Orichalcum Wars. For a considerable amount of that time, Cara Fahd gained enough of an upper hand to force Landis to pay tribute; however, the human kingdom never ceased its efforts to break free of the ork yoke, and frequently succeeded at least briefly.

THE REVENGE OF THE FORGOTTEN QUEEN

I must apologize here, because in not a single source could I find the name of Ustrect's queen, nor how she rose to power. Curiously, the troll kingdom's ruins were fairly well-preserved, except for certain hieroglyphic figures on copper mugs and murals that depicted the trolls' palace. While many courtiers are present in these scenes, the center spot where the monarch ought to be always appears untouched by any artist's hand. Similarly, parchment records have blank spaces where the queen's Name should be. At first I thought this similar to the magic used to conceal Parlainth; yet, unlike that magic, whatever deliberately tore the queen's Name and image from every record left evidence of its passing. I can be certain that the ruler of Ustrect was a queen only because of numerous feminine references and a painting that survived the troll kingdom's fall, titled *The Romance of Queen _____ and K'relna*.

This queen declared war on Cara Fahd in 407 TH, sending troops into the Great Sword Valley where orks had seized troll orichalcum mines. After amazing atrocities on both sides, such as the Red-Legs Massacre and the Golden Cobras' annihilation of the Master's Crucible mine, the three-way war between ork, human and lowland troll turned into a virtual free-for-all as various crystal raider trollmoots descended on all of them. Meanwhile, Throal could not help its Delaris and Landisian allies because Nykka's Screamers, a scorcher army the size of the modern-day Metal Fist, destroyed half of Throal's caravans and pushed almost into the Throal Mountains. Only the dwarfs' airships and their temporary alliance with the t'skrang House V'strimon kept them from going under.

The War of the Great Sword lasted for more than a year. Though neither Ustrect nor Cara Fahd nor Landis ever conquered a Twilight Peaks moothome, the mines changed hands frequently.

THE REIGN OF WUJEMBA BACKSTABBER

When King Wujemba took power in 408, he swiftly earned the Name Backstabber by allying with Throal to crush Ustrect, while sending raiders against Throalic orichalcum supplies heading toward Vivane. He embraced the Name, for he knew that quick changes and ruthless devotion to self-preservation were all that could see Cara Fahd through this chaotic time. As Wyrn Wood struck against the Scythans in a widening of the wars, Wujemba attacked Throalic caravans. Despite his ruthlessness and betrayals, however, Wujemba was considered something of a reformer compared to Lugrul.

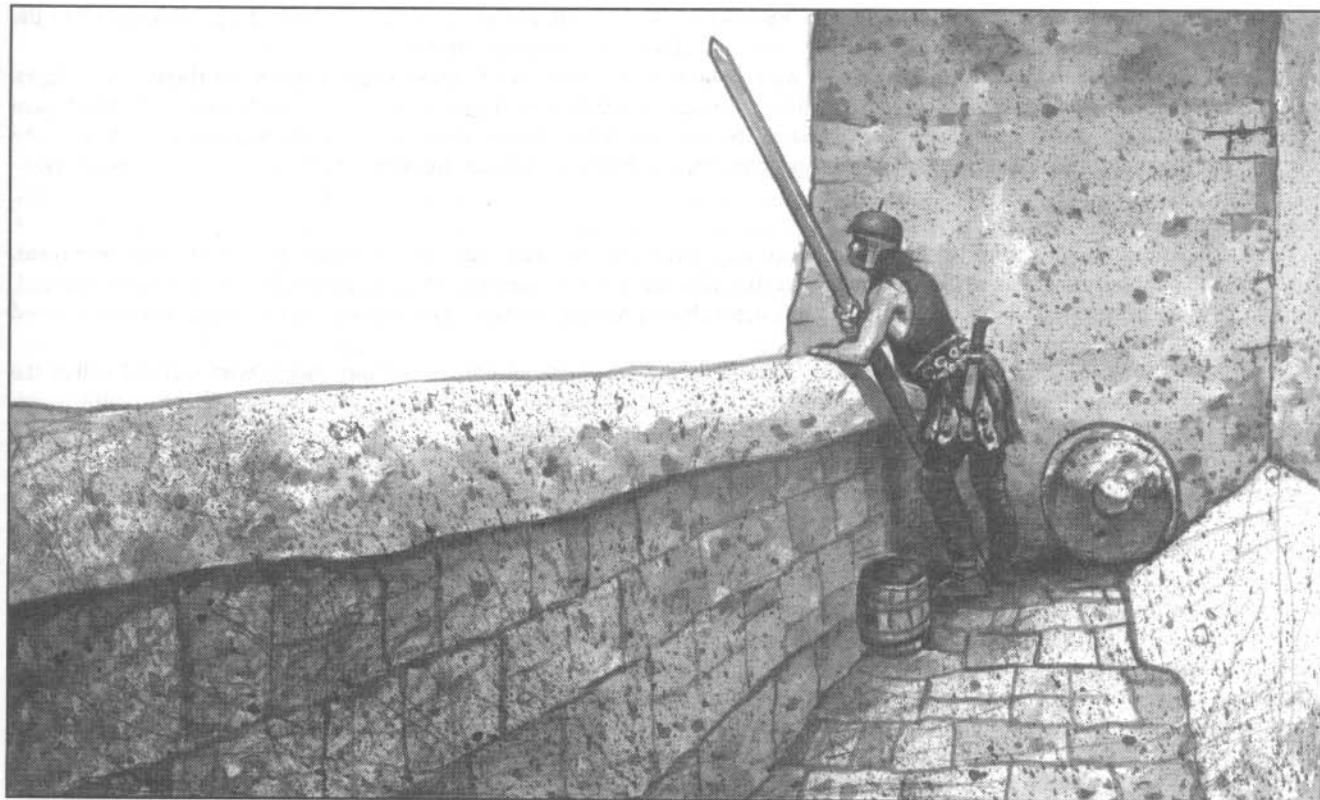
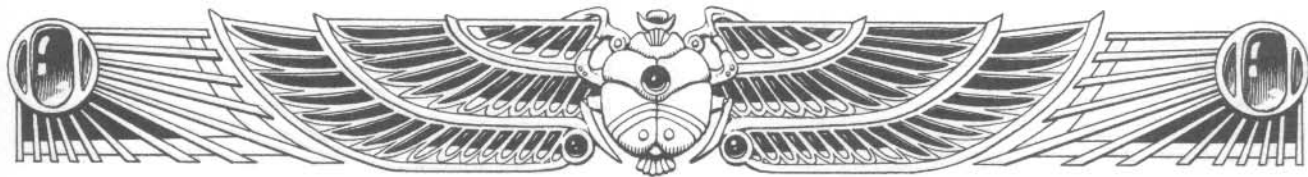
A Horror-marked saural would have been a reformer compared to Lugrul. Getaft does not tell of his worst atrocities because children might read this. Wujemba conducted warfare in a civil fashion, abolishing torture, death magic and other questionable practices Lugrul was rumored to use.

—Krathis Gron

Wujemba Backstabber was the first dwarf appellation that became the Name of a famous ork, as Wujemba formally adopted it. This phenomenon continues today in the second Names of orks such as Charok "Redhand" and Heva "Metal Fist," though traditionalist orks still Name their children in old or'zat ("Krathis Gron") or give no second Name when all in the tribe know each other ("Moschtug").

Throughout his reign, King Wujemba was torn between supporting his father's Name and empire as the tribal chieftains wanted, and freeing the conquered lands to concentrate on protecting Cara Fahd. He often waffled for months before making decisions. He believed that only by taking great risks could Cara Fahd hope to survive the Orichalcum Wars, and many of the decisions for which he was called crazy at the time brought Cara Fahd its greatest victories.





Personally, he was a nervous and erratic man subject to bouts of melancholy and mania, as evidenced in the Names of his children. When Cathon Grimeye was born, Wujemba Named him for the grim sights he had been born to see, but by the time of his daughter's birth the next year, he was certain she would be a beacon of peace and so Named her Raellek Peacetoucher.

THE RISING TIDE OF WAR

After almost a quarter-century of constant fighting, Wujemba brought three years of peace to Cara Fahd from 423 through 425. However, that peace came at the cost of Cara Fahd's southern plains, the territory in the Delaris Mountains and an agreement to release Landis from its tribute obligation. Wujemba's karvusta did not realize that during these same years, Queen Zarina of Landis was receiving unofficial Theran aid from orichalcum merchants in Vivane. During the lull, Landis took advantage of the orks' and trolls' exhaustion to trade for orichalcum and weapons. Zarina built another army on an immense scale, with magicians beyond compare, readying them for war against Cara Fahd.

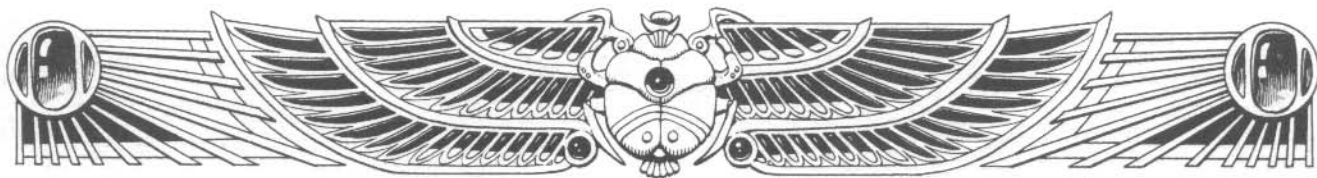
Cathon Grimeye and the Egrandu

Meanwhile, the young heir to the ork throne, Cathon Grimeye, had grown into a reasonable and intelligent man—considered one of Cara Fahd's best and brightest for not only surviving the wars, but prospering after them. He visited Landis during the brief years of peace, and studied with the humans and grew fond of them. When Landis attacked Cara Fahd in 425, Cathon cast about for some way to spare both his people and those of Landis from yet another useless war.

King Wujemba had no sympathy for the humans of Landis, and attacked them again and again across the Greenheart River. At one site, the dead bodies created a nearly flat path across the water, and so this place was Named the Ford of Corpses. He gave Cathon control of the Emdachot and told him to break Landis, ordering him to sweep down from the west and stop the Landisian army at any cost.

During the first few battles, eight Emdachot stood out from the rest. They operated so smoothly together that they might have been a single mind distributed among eight bodies. As Cathon Grimeye came to know them, he wished to honor them and use them for other things than massed battle, for he saw that they were true heroes of Cara Fahd. On numerous occasions (and the list is quite long), these eight defended the helpless, gave up their comfort for those in need and risked their lives to save others. Their names were Nhag Katurm of Hemlock's Kiss, Pobov Gaarz of Lochost's Jaw, Kragen Overtall of





Freedom's Touch, Imurs Dudar of the Golden Cobras, Gebya Buundarilk of the Screaming Falcons, Jurgan Nergrawl of the Broken Fang, Mogrok the Proud of the Open Eye, and Yibja Tat of the Urvaniyeklamna.

Cathon asked Rugaah Gloh, one of the finest weaponsmiths in Cara Fahd, to make eight daggers for these eight adepts, Naming the weapons the Blades of Cara Fahd. Calling the eight adepts apart from the rest of the Emdachot, he Named them *Egrandu ah Cara Fahd*, Protectors of the Heroic Sacrifice. Among other things, they swore to protect Cara Fahd from the Horrors that had begun to appear in the world, and remained at home to defend the nation while the armies were away.

The Nine Emeralds of Landis

The ork armies swept through Landis almost to its capital city of Vava, leaving hundreds of humans and orks dead. Grimeye then sent a messenger to Queen Zarina, saying that he did not want any more people killed over wealth. Instead, let them have a contest; he would call out eight of Cara Fahd's greatest warriors, she would call out eight of Landis's, and they would fight in the armies' stead.

Zarina agreed; she believed that her adepts, known as the Emeralds of Landis, would surely win. Cathon called the Egrandu out of Cara Fahd and sent his army home to take over defending the land, so confident was he that his eight champions could win any challenge.

And so the heroes fought, both groups wielding legendary weapons. When the fighting ended, the eight of the Nine Emeralds of Landis chosen for the contest lay unconscious or dead.

With a terrible cry, Queen Zarina dashed to one of the Emeralds, the swordmaster Eralk Achertain, and held him close. Over his dying body, she swore a blood oath not to rest until every one of Cara Fahd's orks was dead or enslaved. And so despite Cathon Grimeye's efforts to use the Egrandu to end the war on a small scale, the kingdoms would destroy one another, this time for the love of Eralk and Zarina.

The Final Days of War

Zarina's objective now was not to take Cara Fahd, but to destroy its army so that the crystal raiders and the forces of Ustrect could finish off the ork kingdom with the least cost to Landis. Both sides dug in, and for years the war burned cold, with most of its casualties caused by sheer attrition. The two realms' armies were evenly matched, but gradually the battle turned in favor of those with more abundant supplies: Landis.

In her final days, Zarina was said to have become crazed by her desire for revenge. She ordered her troops to practice blood magic, death magic and finally sacrifice magic as if pulling weeds from a garden—anything to win the final victory over the ork nation she hated.

I have heard that Queen Zarina was involved with a cult known as the Iron Legacy, but I suspect this is only talk of our recent discovery projected on villains of the past.

—Krathis Gron

ON THE BETRAYER

While the Orichalcum Wars dragged on, Horrors flourished on the misery they caused. Though the wars began well before the Scourge, some Horrors had already revealed their terrible machinations: eyewitness accounts of the period describe the major Horrors Tempter, Giftbringer, Joie and Druisdadt. I do not wish to speculate on the possible corruption these monsters visited on so many kingdoms, but in the vicious war between Cara Fahd and Landis, Horrors bred and thrived on each side's hatreds, jealousies and ambitions.

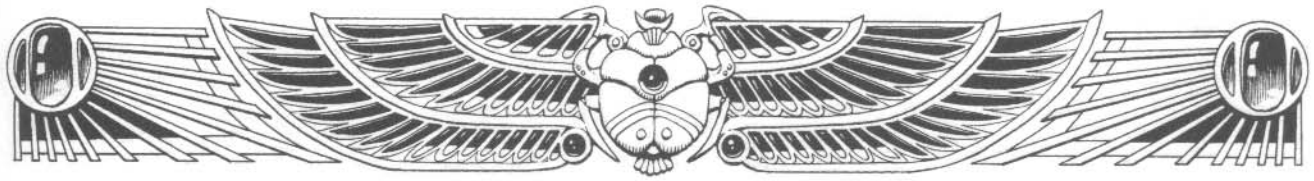
The Betrayal of the Protectors

The Protectors of Cara Fahd slew more of these monsters than any other heroes, but made a fatal error when they did not notice that a construct of the Named Horror Betrayer had marked the swordmaster Kragen Overtall before he destroyed it. Soon afterward, when King Wujemba was terribly wounded, Cathon Grimeye became king in all but name, and had to turn his attentions to the wider war rather than to the individual battlefield. This meant leaving great responsibility in the Protectors' hands.

For several years, the Protectors found that their best efforts kept going wrong. Loyal men and women they had worked with for years would spill secrets to the Landisians, and people whose lives they saved often died of other causes within a week. At length, Kragen Overtall discovered that he was Horror-marked and fled into the jungle, hoping to seek aid (from whom is unclear) or at least take his corruption far from Cara Fahd. Grimly, for Kragen was a friend and a part of their souls, the other Protectors tracked down their partner and slew him. Then they buried him and his Horror-taint far from home.

Or so they thought.





The Betrayal of Cara Fahd

The remaining Protectors changed their Name to rid themselves of the Horror's touch, becoming the Seven Spokes. They retired from Horror-hunting to throw themselves fully into the war against Landis, for they no longer trusted their own judgment against Horrors.

But they did not realize that Betrayer still lived in them. Through the Seven Spokes, the Horror tore the armies of Cara Fahd apart just when they should have been strongest. The Horror manipulated the heroes' research on tactics and magic, allowing them to craft seemingly sound plans that fell apart from secret weaknesses. The Seven Spokes' speeches to the troops manipulated the orks' gahad so much that they fought without strategy and without concern for supplies; archers often ran out of arrows at critical points, or whole groups of warriors starved in the wake of victory.

Through the Seven Spokes, Betrayer enhanced the orks' pride to dangerous levels, making them foolishly confident enough to fight a three-front war against Landis, Ustrect and Throal. In the name of honor, Betrayer-touched Emdachot killed themselves after the slightest failure, cutting down the flower of Cara Fahd and leaving the inexperienced in charge. And when the Egrandu rode north as diplomats to Throal and Ustrect, seeking peace, their actions only encouraged the other kingdoms to attack while the orks were weak.

This is why modern-day orks despise suicide as the least noble death. The mind and body always die, but only a Name-giver can kill his own soul.

—Titanstroke Greybeard

When the Seven Spokes finally learned of their own Horror marks, they tracked down Betrayer and banished the Horror through an obscure ritual, returning to Cara Fahd only for the final battle against Landis. Despite all that Betrayer had corrupted, the Horror could not twist Cathon Grimeye, who I believe was the finest cavalryman the world has ever known. He continued to fight for years, salvaging narrow victories to buy himself more time, rallying his troops when the Horror filled them with fear and the Landisians demanded surrender. He struck each of the attacking armies and fled, remaining free though thousands of soldiers chased him. Ultimately, he knew he must outlast one woman: Queen Zarina. Each year, she renewed her blood oath to destroy Cara Fahd's army and its Protectors, and each year she got a little weaker. Once she and her blood magic were gone, the ork kingdom would have a real chance to sue for peace.

THE INFERNO OF THE EIGHT

After learning that forces from Landis had seized a lava field located to the south and west of Death's Eyes (in the western region of the Twilight Peaks), Cathon Grimeye designed his final plan. He leaked information to the Landis and Ustrect armies on the location of his remaining force, letting them know that he was preparing to reclaim the lava field. This patch of ground held hundreds of elemental fire spirits, bound there by conquering Landisian magicians. Cathon intended to use his enemies' magic against them, destroying the opposing armies no matter what the cost. His preparations complete, he waited for the opposing armies while his finest adepts alternately led and harried the enemy forces to make sure that all of them would arrive at once.

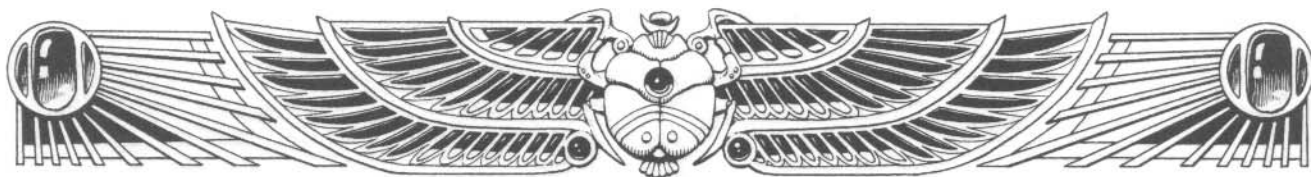
The final battle began on an evening in the month of Rua. Five of the Seven Spokes fought as Cathon's bodyguards, but regardless of their efforts the orks faced a massacre. Almost the entire Landisian army, along with a sizable chunk of Ustrect's forces, descended on the few hundred orks who had survived to this point.

One by one the orks sacrificed themselves, using magic to destroy hundreds of enemy troops until every reserve soldier had to join the fighting and the field ran redder with blood than with fire. Yibja Tat, the Spokes' elemental, raised fire spirits from the field to protect Cathon Grimeye as Queen Zarina's army rolled forward to join the howdah of Ustrect's forgotten monarch.

As they approached, Grimeye raised his orichalcum-tipped lance, and he and the Egrandu performed a ritual to release the hundreds of fire elementals bound to the field. As the spirits turned on their captors, the field exploded into an inferno, with a roar that could be heard as far away as Sky Point. So powerful was the explosion that the mere sound of it triggered avalanches and shattered caves of living crystal in the Twilight Peaks; it blew a hole in the lava field so deep that it changed the level of the land. As molten stone, chunks of rock, torn war towers, soldiers' limbs and torn thundra flesh rained down on the terrified forces, Death's Sea flowed into the gap, filling the battlefield like a tidal pool. The airships above it were torn apart by the shock wave and flung out of sight, presumably perishing in the lava.

Cara Fahd's last warriors fell with their Protectors and their prince. Landis lost its army and its monarch. So died Cathon Grimeye, last cavalryman of old Cara Fahd.





THE FALL OF CARA FAHD

The explosion gave Grimeye's ailing father a heart attack as far away as Cara Fahd's Raano Field, killing him scant minutes after his son. I can find no records of what happened to Raellek Peacetoucher—whether she was present at ambassadorial talks or battles, if she lived up to her Name, or even if she survived to adulthood.

The armies of Landis and Ustrect suffered mightily from Grimeye's sacrifice, and both returned home to lick their wounds rather than press on to conquer the depopulated ork realm. Both the ork kingdom and Landis declined sharply throughout the next generation. With the death of nearly half of Cara Fahd's population in the wars, including most of fighting age or older, those remaining—many of them little more than children—could not run a nation. Many took their younger siblings and emigrated to the Delaris Mountains and Dinganni plains, or south into Rugaria. In Throal, Ustrect, Scol and Landis, they were spat upon as poor immigrants and thieves. Called "scorchers" for what their elders had done in the wars, the children were turned away. Many chose to live as raiders, fulfilling the Name given them by setting fire to farms and towns across Barsaive when they had taken what they wanted.

Landis stagnated after the war, its people remaining within its borders but losing interest in maintaining their nation's strength. Some suspect that Grimeye cursed Landis; others say it merely exhausted itself, and the other Barsaivian nations came to so dominate the orichalcum trade that Landis became nothing. When Ustrect and Throal came to prominence through their trade with Thera, many humans scattered to those kingdoms, adapting to their ways as humans do. By the time the Theran Empire flew its behemoth *Victory* over Cara Fahd on its way to destroy the trollmoots that had started the forty years of war, the shadow of that vast ship passed over two nations already almost forgotten.

ON THE EFFECTS OF THE SCOURGE

The Theran Empire's formation in 440 TH ended the Orichalcum Wars, though Cara Fahd was already beyond recovery. All orks know what followed for our race.

As Throal became the Empire's administrative arm and the Therans built their provincial capital of Parlainth, Thera's grip tightened around all Barsaivians, and none more so than the orks. The Therans enslaved no other race as often; we had once again become many and strong, but we lacked a nation to defend us. We became targets for Theran slavers who valued our strong backs, but who otherwise saw us as little better than beasts. And so our history died for a time, because slaves do not write history.

As the Scourge loomed ever nearer, those of our people without a valued trade had to sell themselves as slaves to ensure a place in a kaer, or else stay free as part of a band of raiders. Most scorchers caught were, of course, enslaved as punishment. And in those days, even more than now, few bothered to discriminate between criminal scorchers and harmless nomads, for either could be sold for profit to a flesh-dealer. With so many orks homeless and unprotected, Thera found us easy pickings, and their Throalic collaborators did little to stop them.

ENTERING THE KAERS

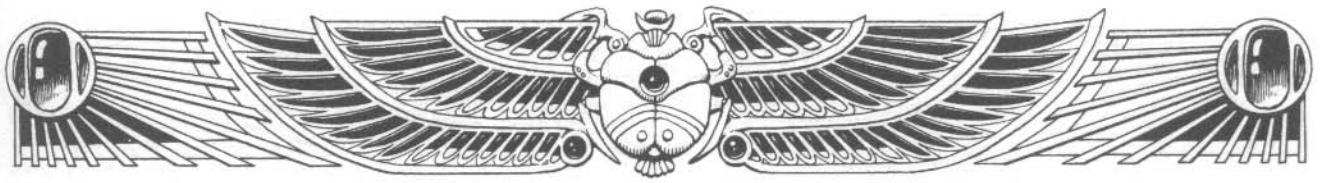
By the time the kaers closed, few orks remained in the lands of old Cara Fahd. As far as I know, only two kaers in Cara Fahd received the Rites of Protection and Passage legitimately, for many orks had either left to join northern kaers or preferred to take their chances trying to take over a kaer rather than swear allegiance to Thera.

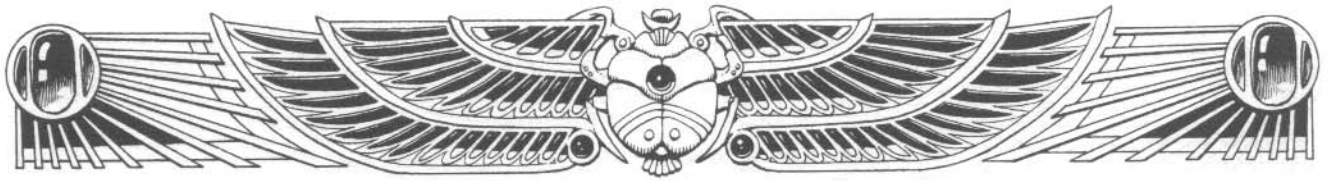
A group of mystic warriors called Namdroth traded some of Cara Fahd's treasures (I would pay much to find out which, but their modern-day descendants will not say) to form their kaer. Several bands of nomads joined to form Kaer Carad, trading their herds for the Rites. Other ork kaers may exist, but I found no records of their formation or of their emerged descendants. Raiders often found only the partial protection of half-formed kaers or poorly translated versions of the Rites. I would not be surprised to find that Horrors breached many ork kaers because of shoddy construction, or that some kaers remain sealed to this day because their inhabitants lack elemental clocks or the Book of Tomorrow, and so believe that the Scourge continues. Other orks sheltered all over Barsaive, alone or with other races. Many, such as the Broken Fang, settled in the Delaris Mountains and Twilight Peaks, where natural caves made kaer building easy.

One cannot give a general picture of the life of kaer-bound orks, for it varied depending on those with whom they sheltered. I have talked to elders of every Name-giver race to get a picture of the treatment of orks during the Scourge, and every person I spoke to gave me a new story to add to the thousands I have read.

In one kaer, elves invited orks in only if they would accept elven ways and attempt to emulate them. In another, the kaer's dwarfs and orks held competitive games every year to see who would be allowed to have more children; in yet another, Horrors fed off the orks' resentment and convinced them to breach the doors in the name of the Passion Lochost. Some orks became illiterate, but retained a glimmer of their past and culture through a complex oral tradition in which, among other things, every member of the kaer was required to memorize the Book of Tomorrow as it was translated into or'zet.







On Problems of Language

By the seventh Throalic century, the long association of orks with other Name-givers had significantly changed the ork language from or'zat ("Old Tongue of Cara Fahd") to or'zet ("Traveler's Tongue"), which was characterized by a switch from mostly one- and two-syllable words ("Cara Fahd" and "Hrak Gron") to a more complex grammar and longer words ("Kawjujwak" and "vravraka"). Pronunciation switched to better suit dwarf mouths, a trend that was to have unforeseen but devastating consequences.

The language shift did more damage to Cara Fahd than a millennia of abandonment and five centuries of Horrors. The Throalic map maker who drew up the map of Barsaive for the Book of Tomorrow heard an ork's pronunciation of "Cara Fahd" as "Cara Fard," and so wrote it on the map from which all Barsaivians learned of the land. You have probably seen one yourself with this dreadful mistake.

To all ujnort, let me say the "f" is pronounced as one does with tusks, *not* with the top teeth on the bottom lip, but the top lip on the bottom teeth, and the "h" is the Throalic way of representing something closer to *Faaud*, rolling the sound with deep ork vocal chords, which idiot dwarves can mishear as "Fard." Excuse me while I smash a shelf full of dwarf histories or something—my gahad is smoldering again.

The error in the Book of Tomorrow caused people throughout Barsaive to think of and mispronounce the Name of the ancient ork homeland as "Cara Fard" for four and a half centuries. The near-obliteration of the kingdom's proper Name drastically weakened its Pattern, as neglect effectively reNamed the land as a place with no history. Only after the Scourge could those scholars who remembered or recorded or'zat shift the pronunciation back to the correct form.

OUTSIDE THE KAERS

While we now have more practical explanations for what happened to our land, we also embrace the legends that claim this change in the land's identity may have changed the topography. When we reemerged into the world, the rivers had changed their courses; southern plains and savannahs were humid jungle; and the beaches had become volcanic rock.

Oddly, instead of destroying plant life as happened in many places, the Horrors' influence turned Cara Fahd's dry plains to lush jungle. Perhaps the Horrors knew that concealing the ruins of our kingdom beneath impenetrable undergrowth would devastate us far more than simply scorching the earth.

No doubt those who remained outside the kaers perished early, though on my own travels I once found remains scarcely more than a hundred years old. The bones were stretched into impossible shapes; I shudder to think that some Horrors may have kept unprotected orks alive for the entire Scourge simply to torture them. Our library has received reports from explorers of several breached kaers, filled with the dead and a few living Horrors (fortunately slain by said valorous explorers, to whom Cara Fahd owes a debt of thanks), but in every case thus far the creatures destroyed the kaers' records along with their inhabitants, and so their Names remain unknown.

Namdroth elders tell tales of a Horror known as Jyurk, "The Mutterer" in Throalic, which whispered through their kaer's door at them for several years in an attempt to drive them insane. They finally drove it away by expanding their kaer further back into the Delaris Mountains until the region's silencing magic shielded them from the sound of the Horror's voice—perhaps this explains why Namdroth members are usually so silent and solemn. They do not know if Jyurk still exists.

ON EMERGING FROM THE KAERS

All across Barsaive, when orks left their kaers, they faced a difficult choice. Should they continue to live as farmers and artisans, or take to the plains and live like their ancestors (or however they *thought* their ancestors had lived)?

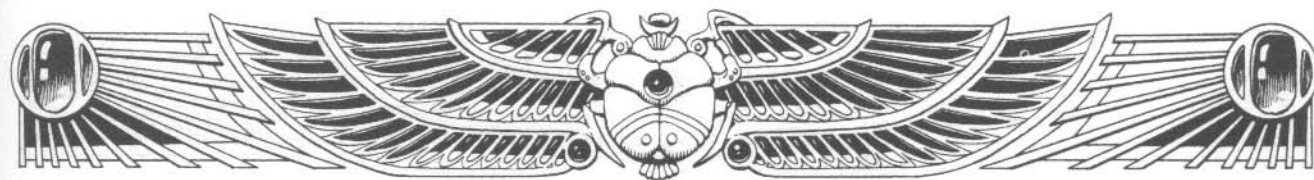
As you can tell just by walking into Claw Ridge, orks made both these choices and everything in between, including living as nomadic artisans or city-dwelling thieves. However, my colleague Jesfuy Longrunner's work in Claw Ridge involves asking each immigrant to Cara Fahd for a history of his parents' and grandparents' occupations, and from that we have put together a general profile.

For the most part, the inhabitants of all-ork kaers brought numerous animals inside and built their shelters with space enough to practice the cavalryman Discipline. Most of these, such as the Broken Fang, gladly left confinement for life as nomads. The kaers offered little opportunity to learn to hunt, however, and plenty to train in fighting each other, and so most of these kaer-dwellers became raiders and thieves rather than hunters or herders.

For descendants of our victims, know also that the Horrors' poison rendered the land mostly barren. There were few animals to hunt or plants to eat save those claimed by other Name-givers.

—Tarjak Stormcloud, Broken Fang





In small kaers of mixed races, orks rarely had the same status as other Name-givers; these orks followed several paths upon reemergence. Most left to form all-ork villages, where they continued to farm as they had in the kaer. Many young men and women joined larger tribes such as the Thunderers. Inhabitants of those few kaers that had kept good relations between the races often founded mixed villages, where they could live much as they always had. Wealthier orks in the city-sized kaers, such as Throal, stayed and prospered, while poorer residents sought to take revenge on the dwarfs who had frequently wronged them.

And from every place and all walks of life, some orks remembered stories of ancient Cara Fahd and sought to return there, hoping to resurrect it as a haven for orks.

On the Formation of the Carads

The people of Kaer Carad and Kaer Namdroth emerged when the first flood of immigrants came into the lands of ancient Cara Fahd. But while the Namdroth kept to themselves just outside their mountain kaer and refused to talk to strangers (insisting on preparing for the arrival of a Mahuta that few others believed in), the Carads welcomed the returning orks as brothers, and many cross-marriages occurred.

It probably helped that the first wave of immigrants arrived during Rua, right in the middle of Rohodo. I've seen Carad Rohodo festivals, and I doubt they even realized they were celebrating with strangers. A quirk of fate had brought many into the Carad kaer who bore twins, and the first matings between the natives and newcomers must have been blessed by Jaspree, for they produced a phenomenal number of children.

As is the ork way, most marriages broke apart easily, and new pairings soon made it impossible to sort out ancestry. Within half a generation the immigrants gave up their old identities and began calling themselves Carads.

Soon, however, the land around their kaer in the lower Twilight Peaks could not support them all. They spread throughout Cara Fahd, splitting into smaller tribes known in the old or'zat fashion as the "Bat-" and "Bot-" (daughters and sons) of their founders. These tribes chose several ways of life, ranging from a small number who raided Landisian villages, to those who settled down to farm, to the majority who lived as herders or hunters, ranging throughout the land to follow the animals.

Before long, the harshness of the post-Scourge land turned the once-friendly Carads hostile and isolationist. They took to fighting each other and the immigrants who continued to trickle in from Barsaive and Vivane. These later arrivals stayed apart and do not consider themselves Carads, though most outsiders refer to all local ork tribes as such.

On the Fate of Landis and Ustrect

Landis suffered even worse than Cara Fahd during the Scourge, for it had not fallen so far beforehand. Most Landisians cooperated with the Therans after Cathon Grimeye's sacrifice destroyed their ruler, and the land was dotted with innumerable little village kaers and even three large citadels—Vava, Tisoara (home of one of the Twin Libraries of Landis) and Kelensk. The realm's population had grown to outstrip its available shelters by the time the Scourge hit; many people perished because the poverty-stricken nation could not afford to build more kaers and had little mountain territory in which suitable caverns might exist.

Far more died within the kaers, however, possibly as a result of Cathon Grimeye's alleged dying curse. Vava, Tisoara and Kelensk were all found in ruins, and more than half of the smaller kaers still have not opened. There are not enough adventurers in Barsaive to explore them all, however, so we do not know if people remain alive inside them. After the Scourge's end, those Landisians who survived were joined by Name-givers from all over Vivane and Rugaria provinces who fled Thera's reconquest of their homes. These folk have formed a barrier to Theran expansion into Barsaive for many years.

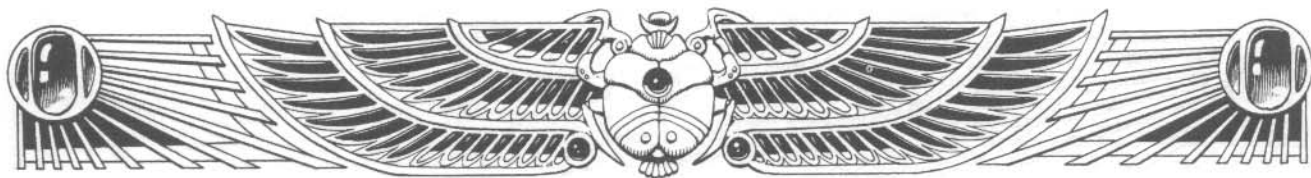
Ustrect also fell during the Scourge, suffering the worst fate of all. The people of Ustrect had all gathered in a single citadel at Arrakal, which did not survive the Scourge. No one has yet learned exactly what caused the citadel's downfall, and many Horrors are said to remain in the area.

ON RELATIONS WITH VIVANE PROVINCE

The people of Landis and the Carad tribes fought fiercely against Theran encroachment during the past half-century. Though enmity remains between the two, the overwhelming mutual threat of Thera has often required them to work together. I have reason to hope that, in the war that is surely coming to us, the many small and disunited villages of Landis will welcome Cara Fahd as an ally and begin to heal the damage done so long ago in the Orichalcum Wars.

Many Landisian villagers, of course, must still contend with ork raiders who prey on their grain stores and herd beasts, and so the recent offer of protection from Krathis Gron received mixed reactions at best. However, Krathis intends to keep the offer open, to prove to Landis and the world that *this* Cara Fahd will honor its alliances rather than act like the barbarians many continue to think us.





At least one messenger came back in a saddlebag. The Landisians are stubborn fools who blame Cathon Grimeye for their own failure to build sturdy kaers, and they cannot see an ork without remembering their lost glory. There will never be friendship between us.
—Odheru Thundravoice

Officially, the city of Vivane pays little attention to Cara Fahd, but ork raiders have often attacked Theran troops and the caravans of Vivane's merchants, and many individuals in that city burn for revenge.

ON THE FATE OF OUR NATION

Warrior adepts have a saying: politics is knowing who is an enemy and who is a friend that just thinks like one. I asked Titanstroke Greybeard, who quoted me this phrase, to write down which of Barsaive's other nations are our enemies and which our allies. Greybeard is among our most famed warrior adepts, as well as chief of the Thunderers tribe and commander of its mercenary cavalry.

—Getaft Allthought

To the Council of Cara Fahd:

Now is a time of troubles for us militarily. Our people remain factionalized, and no one knows whether any leader will march his family and tribe into a rain of fire cannons on the orders of an ork he has never met. Though many of the city orks who have traveled far in the name of unity can accept such an idea with relative ease, the tribes are used to their old ways, whether raiding or outright war.

Please understand the difference. A raid is a daring exploit in which you come away with food or herd beasts or money or treasure. War is hurling yourself into a line of orks simply to plug the gap with your body after six others fell before you, because your commander says it is necessary—or worse yet, because a dwarf king younger than I am says that it is necessary. And that forgettable death—to be just another Name on the long list of casualties that will soon be read at Claw Ridge—strikes doubt into ork hearts and makes them hesitate.

Meanwhile, we have other pressing problems that will also determine our choices—not only whether to ally with Throal, as the dwarf king wishes, but everything else we may need to do in the coming months and years.

ON CARA FAHD'S FIRST CONCERNS

We are a poor nation. By this I do not mean that our people generally live in poverty; many a wealthy ork has made his way here and given all he has to his new home, and Cara Fahd's swaths of land may be farmed for food and offer resources that we are steadily turning to silver. However, we lack the overwhelming riches of certain very large nations to our west and east.

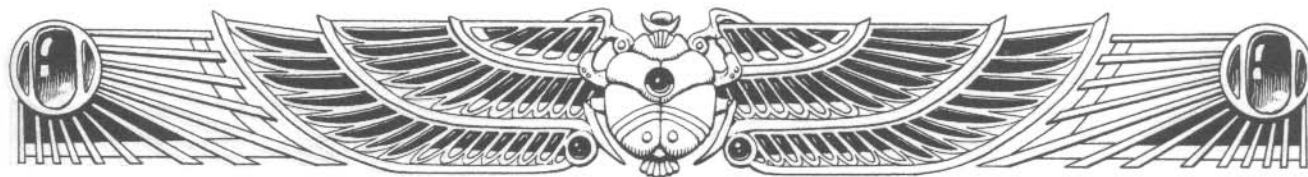
For example, we raise no monies from taxes to fill our treasury because the tribes will not stand for it. Our air fleet consists of one drakkar manned by a crew that has not sailed under its current captain in combat. We have no ancient coffers full of silver (or have found none yet, anyway), no riches gained from a near-century of trading in orichalcum or True elements, no armories full of weaponsmith-tempered broadswords and plate mail, no good count of standard equipment, no more than one year's worth of preserved food in our storehouses, no order of highly trained military spellcasters, no army of slaves to cut apart for death magic and no stone fortress virtually immune to magical attack that can soar above us and sit on us if it so desires, showering eight hundred adepts down on us from a fortified position.

I trust I have made my point.

These unpleasant truths must change, quickly. War is coming, and soon. We do not enjoy the luxury of the time required for conventional methods of stockpiling, commissioning and negotiating with dozens of trading houses for the best craftsmanship at the lowest price. We must find other ways of making ourselves strong.

We need teams of weaponsmith adepts training other weaponsmith adepts, because it takes too long to learn the craft without magic. We need elementalists working night and day creating feasts from single plants, because a thundra eats an elf's weight in grain every morning. We need someone to steal or create orichalcum nets to collect True air. We need warriors and sky raiders insane enough to steal airships so that we can collect True fire from Death's Sea, fight off the creatures that dwell there and get our pickings home past the trolls of the Twilight Peaks. We need upjort spies stupid enough to enlist in the Theran army and tell us their plans, but smart enough to find turncoats. We need ambassadors willing to talk to Icewing or even Usun and see what it would take to get the dragons to protect our skies. We need liberators to spark slave revolts in Vrontok, Jerucz and Vivane to stop those cities from sending reinforcements to Theran troops already in Barsaive. We need Horror-stalkers to clear Cara Fahd's southern jungles and—dare I say it—unleash the monsters on Thera somehow. We need archers who will sleep in shifts as they watch Thera's General Crotias at the fortress of Sky





Point; they must be capable of shooting her the moment the war starts, and keep shooting until she is dead. We need troubadours like Rabalk Whitesmile, who just this morning used his uncanny knowledge of people to root out a spy and inspired a mob of city orks to lynch the traitor on the spot.

We need the legendary weapons we once possessed: Mountain's Weight, Grimeye's Lance, the Blades of Cara Fahd and even the sword Purifier. We need to rediscover them *now*, because the Therans have been known to give their generals orichalcum-plated shields as a promotion bonus. Most of all, we need people to help us for payment not in coin, but for the glory we give them, the songs we write about them, the tracts of forested land we will award them, or the simple pleasure of spitting in the Thera Empire's face.

And some more cavalry wouldn't hurt.

ON POSSIBLE ALLIANCE WITH THROAL

Throal is perhaps our strongest potential ally but also our most difficult one. Their potential comes from what they can offer.

The plains around Throal are home to thousands of farmers who produce far more grain than they eat, enough to sustain us as well as them. Throal also has enormous reserves of citizens, silver and weapons. Most important is its position as the heart of Barsaive, for cities such as Travar and Urupa will not struggle against Thera if Throal falls. Throal's army contains three thousand foot soldiers and trains more every year, in addition to five hundred members of the king's cavalry. However, the costs of alliance with Throal may outweigh the benefits.

On the Drawbacks of Alliance

An alliance with the dwarfs risks offending many of our people. Zarass Icethought of the Chargers openly despises Throal, and Charok Redhand and Bronze Eyes came here to fight for orks, not dwarfs. More than a third of our people feel as they do, and so a Throalic alliance could catastrophically lower our troops' morale just when we need them to fight at their best. Should these factions split further, Cara Fahd might fall apart, leaving a hundred thousand disorganized, bickering orks right in Thera's path. Should that happen, we will be slaughtered.

And even if we can convince our people to accept the dwarfs as allies, we still have no guarantee of the dwarfs' good intentions or competence. If we side with King Neden and charge into battle, we don't know how long he will fight before surrendering. An Iopan, not a Thera, assassinated Neden's father, King Varulus; if Neden's anger against Thera switches to a different target, Thera can then turn its full attention to us. If that happens, the dwarfs will cheer to see a Thera behemoth land on Claw Ridge—not out of hate, but from relief because the blow has fallen on someone else instead of them. We must not become a sacrificial lamb to protect Barsaive from Thera simply by getting in the Empire's way.

Conversely, we may be able to use our geographic position to our advantage. We are Thera's gate to Throal, and the dwarfs know it. If war starts, they know we will fight Thera anyway, formal alliance or not. We might use our position as leverage to get all the benefits of an alliance without requiring public approval of formal cooperation, or the burden of dealing with our erstwhile allies once the war ends.

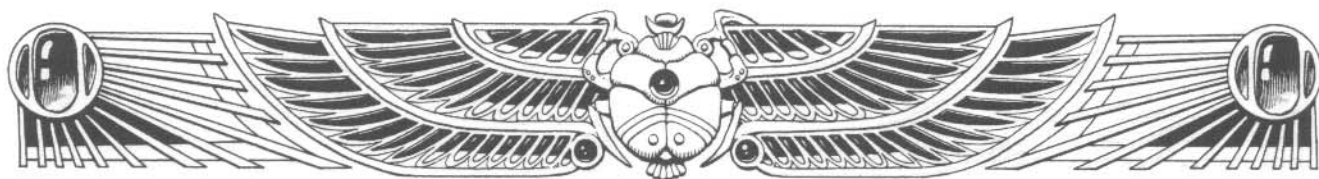
Of Throalic Diplomats in Cara Fahd

His Majesty's Diplomatic Corps currently has a small contingent in Cara Fahd and are assisting a mixed team of Throalic nobles, merchants and military men sent to represent all of Throal's interests in negotiations. We must show these visitors that Cara Fahd is more than some petty scorchers' realm that will turn on them (whether or not we intend to eventually). I would like a mixed group of ujnort and orks to show each of our visitors a good time, to protect them against diplomatic incidents and any "brawls" that are in fact instigated by Thera assassins, and most importantly, show them what Cara Fahd can be.

I understand that Captain Stetgarth of the Arm of Throal was asked to escort Throal's official ambassadors, Heren Gevek and Velia Teren, "for their protection." If I were Neden, I would send operatives disguised as servants and grooms; he may have done so. Throal will no doubt want to steal some of our troops away; for those who left comrades behind guarding the dwarf kingdom, agents of Throal may play on old loyalties to get them to return. For others, they may try the age-old tactic of baiting our youths' gahad. We cannot let this happen; our soldiers are our bargaining chips for Throal's silver, enough to put this nation together and absorb the cost of this war. We must guard the secrets of Wurchaz from the diplomats as strictly as we guard them from the Therans, for diplomats all too often double as spies. And the spies of a friend are the worst kind of enemy—one that you cannot kill without creating an incident.

Neden had a good idea when he sent the brothers Umo and Pepara from the Yilwaz trading house to accompany negotiations. They were kidnapped by ork scorchers and sold into slavery as children, and so they remain equally suspicious of orks and Therans. Treat them like live cobras: carefully and with respect, for I believe they are here to judge how





"civilized" or sane Cara Fahd may be. Above all else, do not speak of raids or indulge your gahad in front of them. They will write any trade agreements, so do not offend them even if the Diplomatic Corps seems more friendly.

Agents of the Throalic House Ludi are here without permission as far as I know, and they seem to be a disaster waiting to happen. Those lovers of Chorrolis, Passion of greed, are here for profit, not for their king. I have overheard their talk of setting up branches in the towns of Black Quarry and New Revalk. Such business is good for us, but they have yet to learn enough ork etiquette to get by—or to avoid being bilked. Three orks of my acquaintance have already sold them land they do not own, leaving it to me to sort out the mess. Set the Yilwaz brothers to watch their Ludi compatriots—no trouble can come to us if a Throalite disciplines a fellow Throalite, and it will keep the Yilwaz noses out of politics and in trade, where I much prefer them.

Of Orks in Throal

I know Crossi Halftusk is already in Throal, trying to get official recognition of Cara Fahd as a sovereign nation. Such recognition, of course, is merely a symbol; Throal has sent ambassadors already, and so official recognition is only a matter of time. I would like a backup team of adepts watching Crossi, as she may be the target of Theran or Throalic spies.

Crossi reports that the ork cavalries guarding Throal have all sent people to watch the negotiations. We cannot break Earal Bloodstroke away from his beloved dwarfs (I sometimes wonder if dwarf blood runs in his veins!), but Terath the Contemplative might be swayed if convinced that Neden is not the kind of king he wishes to defend. If Terath leaves, Earal's soldiers may follow. (I do not know if they would come here, however, if only to confound Earal's sister Zarass.) Failing that, we should remind the cavalries that Cara Fahd welcomes and protects all orks while Throal may lead them to die against the Therans.

The five hundred lesser cavalries in companies such as the Stinking Renders and Death's Lingering Kiss are incompetents, but might be trained, and little ties them to Throal. If they will not leave, they might funnel us surplus food and equipment from the dwarf kingdom or provide spies for Cara Fahd.

Throal and the Theran Behemoth

Neden is about as flexible and subtle as a stone broadsword, and likely cannot carry the day alone against the Theran forces at Triumph. However, Throal's troops may rise to the occasion. Further, rumors insist that he hopes to persuade the crystal raiders of the Twilight Peaks to join Throal's cause and prevent the Therans from supplying their behemoth by air. We should support this effort, whether or not the trolls or dwarfs ally with us. I cannot think of anything our tribes will enjoy more than raiding every rich Theran shipment forced to head toward the behemoth overland. Watch for such opportunities and take them whenever it is convenient; the dwarfs' and the trolls' sense of honor may lead them to pay back such a favor, even if they never asked for it.

We should never commit to attacking the behemoth, however. Five war towers drawn by thundra beasts could make a difference in such a battle, but it takes thirty days by wagon train to get there and requires a supply line spread out all over Barsaive—easily disrupted by an airship attack. Thera would love such a chance to harm us, and the crystal raiders might well pillage us just to test their axe edges. Talk around this topic if the diplomats push it, but do not sign anything.

I support giving the dwarfs "unofficial" help that our people will not learn of until victory; specifically, sending groups of adepts that Thera cannot identify as ours to breach their fortress. Therans are Name-givers like any others; they sleep, they whore, they feel fear and guilt that we can exploit. Most importantly, they get lazy, and often capture slaves to serve them inside the behemoth's walls. Truly, Barsaive needs a liberator more than ever ... and who better than adepts posing as slaver-bait to insinuate themselves into the heart of Theran doings?

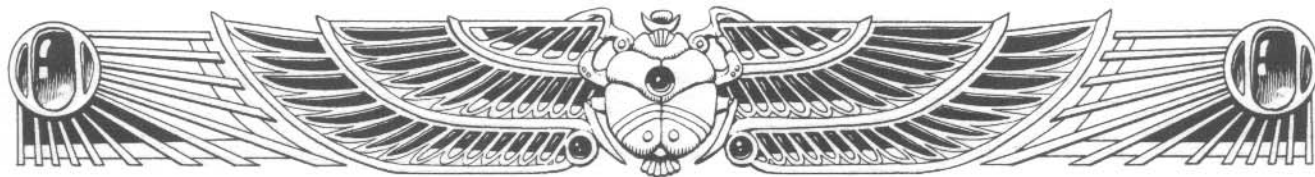
OF WAR WITH THE THERAN EMPIRE

No ork in Cara Fahd would support an alliance with Thera to attack Throal, nor would Thera believe such an offer for a moment. But as much as I despise the unnatural Empire and wish it struck by lightning from Mynbruje's stars, we may gain an advantage by remaining neutral until a critical time. We fight for *our* independence, not Barsaive's.

To achieve this, we must carefully plan *when* to draw Thera's attention. We need time to build our army; let the dwarfs and t'skrang lead the Therans out and play with them while we bide our time. However, I disagree with those who say that letting the Therans and Throal crush each other and looting both afterward is a sound strategy.

The Theran behemoth cannot crush Throal without an army of several thousand to back it up, and that many troops must, by default, enter Barsaive through Cara Fahd. We might convince Thera that we are frightened of them, taking advantage of their arrogance, and let them through our land only to strike them on their return. But they would likely catch on and obliterate us just when we think them fooled, or simply out of habit. Many of our people could not keep such a secret; but if we told no one, they would attack the Therans anyway.





No matter what course we choose, we should be cautious ... and yet, we cannot wait too long. If we let Throal fight alone, the dwarf kingdom will battle to the death a little at a time, taking Thera's attention from the rest of the world. I do not believe that Throal has any hope of defeating the Empire on its own ... but it can surely make them suffer, and it will. This means that Thera is likely to bring in help. The Empire has 3,800 troops and 700 cavalry in the city of Vivane; another 1,200 wait at Jerucz and 1,100 more throughout Vivane Province, with 108 griffin cavalry. The entire Third Legion—4,200 troops—waits in Rugaria. If we let Throal die slowly, we will be left to fight these reinforcements. But if we combine our efforts with those of Throal and others near the beginning and scare the Therans off by showing them that the cost of conquering Barsaive is not worth the profit, we increase our own chances of survival a hundredfold.

With proper tactics in open plains, we could beat Thera's cavalry and infantry. However, we would also be exposed to their cursed airships. In the woods, safe from ship bombardments, our thundras must maneuver between trees, which kills the flexibility upon which our fighters depend. The solution: those airships must not fly on the days that we make war. I don't care how we manage it.

Of Theran Spymasters

Akarenti Ilfaralek of Vivane cannot stand to be thwarted. His schemes to destroy our fledgling nation failed, and we should not give him the opportunity for revenge. However, he likely resents whatever orders have kept him from attacking us. If we can, we should use that anger to sow dissent between him and his superiors or troops. I do not favor killing him; he is a man we can taunt, and angry Therans make poor judgments.

Palinque, that phlegm-laden-skunk-dung turgma, still lives despite his machinations. Jesfuy Longrunner's rumor mill says that someone of his description was seen in the camp of the Legion of Damnation with Guurshtut Hatespitter, trying to stir those blood-crazed fools to attack Cara Fahd. I have a tame thundra beast with a vettaskin bridle for whoever brings me Palinque's head—post that on the wall at Wurchaz, please.

Of the Ravenous Skull Whargs

The most evil of orks still haunts us: Karak Bloodeyes, chieftain of 4,500 screaming, rabid Skull Wharg tribesmen. Having met his clans in battle, I can say that few of them have even the smidgen of nobility ascribed the Metal Fist or the Broken Fang. Once hatemongers out to destroy Throal, now they want to drink our blood and take over our nation—not because they care for history, but because they cannot stand any ork having more power than they.

Their cavalry numbers nine hundred or more, and they have struck several of our caravans south of Kratas. I suspect they receive aid from nefarious allies—Iopos, Thera, the Mad Passion Raggok or even the Horrors—for my tribe's oracles regarding Bloodeyes have given signs of the blackest filth and the ruin that he will bring.

Our information on the Skull Whargs is limited. My fourth daughter Breik once studied their ways from afar; they indulge in a crude form of ancestor worship, preserving and wearing the skulls of their greatest fighters. They also believe in an ork creator spirit whose skull is the earth, and who allegedly gave orks the license to do with the world as they please. They sacrifice animals and other Name-givers (who are only "higher animals" in their estimation) before important tasks to gain the ork creator's blessing.

More worrying are their war towers and the Tylon mountain griffins I have seen among their forces. We must find someone to spy on them so that we might learn how to use them somehow. They are too much of a wild wolf to live with, but I would prefer to see them destroyed by Thera (and taking many Therans with them) than by us. I have no wish to declare war on an entire tribe of fellow orks, even mad ones ... or Horror-marked ones, as some have alleged they are.

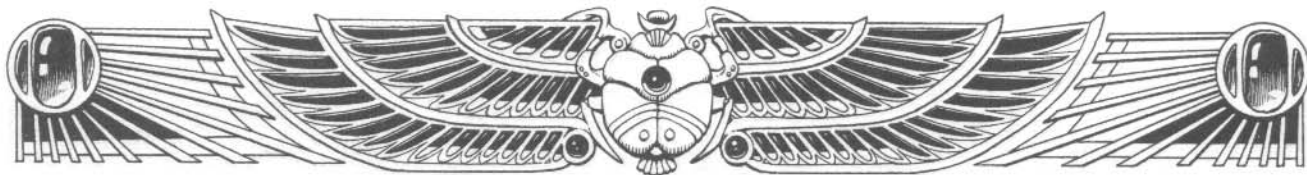
Of the Crystal Raiders and Their Airships

We need the crystal raiders' airships, by dealing or stealing. Both are possible.

Dealing is a thorny issue. Most trolls despise trading, and to my knowledge no one has ever gotten them to cooperate in a combined-arms attack save for one instance, during the Theran War. Our best chance of accomplishing this is to question their supremacy in the air and hype Thera's navy as a challenge to their racial, clan and personal honor. Word it carefully, though—as a challenge, not an insult, or such a speech will probably end with the speaker's death. A few members of Thunderaxe's Cleavers have lived with trolls; send the most level-headed of these with the negotiator, for only one who has lived with trolls can truly understand the complexity of their customs.

The highland trolls accept raiding as a way of life, and so stealing their airships may be our best bet if we can manage it. I propose sending our best warriors to try it while providing a distraction—rich and well-guarded caravans for the crystal raiders to attack, or negotiations in which to embroil them. If they respond by assaulting Cara Fahd, they may have some initial success, but they tend to trust their opponents to fight fairly (as they see it) and employ limited tactics. They rely on their strength in hand-to-hand fighting and their bravery to frighten the opponent; their actual airship weapons are light, and they largely depend on boarding. Those tactics may work against a ship, but "boarding" a charging thundra cavalry confounds





them. Nor do they suspect trickery, such as trunks of "preserved meat" to steal that actually contain warrior adepts and air sailors willing to slit their throats at night.

I am not concerned with their Raisers of Ustrect who seek to copy us and form their own kingdom. A race that will not give its own birthing women help are too uncaring, too stupid and will soon be too few to build another nation.

ON THE VENOMOUS SNAKES WHO RULE IOPOS

It is obvious that Iopos wishes to sit out the coming war and pick up the pieces afterward. Regrettably, the city lies too far away for us to crush it in one mighty cavalry charge, pardon my frankness. The Iopans might make allies of convenience, but a city full of people who willingly enslave their souls to a madman like Uhl Denairastas is not my idea of a reliable friend.

I may be less than reasonable about Iopans just now. Asok's Armbreakers caught an Iopan spy this morning shadowing your Cathay elementalists, and I have heard that Iopan wizards are scouring the jungle for our treasures. With your permission, I will send our captive's head back to Uhl, packed in uyataa peppers, in the hope that the fumes will keep off the flies long enough for the Denairastas to recognize his face. If the Passions smile, perhaps Uhl's heart is weak and the smell will kill him.

ON OTHER POTENTIAL ALLIES

The t'skrang of the Serpent River and the elves of Blood Wood are each potentially useful, but more as trading partners or neutral targets of infrequent raids for supplies, as they are unlikely to field troops either against or for us. We have no commitment to either, but I see no reason to raid Throal-friendly river ships when those of Thera's allies in House K'tenshin are closest to us. Queen Alachia of the elves, I hear, is utterly indifferent to our existence. We should not antagonize her—we cannot afford another enemy just now—but other than that, we need give her little thought.

The cities of Kratas and Jerris were the first to recognize us officially, and they are good sources of information and trade. However, they have no armies. We should therefore leave ironclad negotiations with them until we see where we are after the war.

Herok's Lancers, though orks, were split when Asok's Armbreakers left the tribe. Asok claims that Herok might try to destroy all Cara Fahd to take revenge. However, that little troubadour is far from trustworthy when it comes to his ego and his grudges, and what Herok wants for his tribe is not our only concern. Some of the families of Herok's Lancers went with Asok, and so we may exploit these ties of blood. Also, weakened as he is by the loss of a third of his people, Herok Shatterbone desperately needs to strengthen those who remain, and has taken to increasing raiding lately. This does not sit well with some of his folk, who had become accustomed to paid mercenary work and are used to having money; some even came to regard fighting under contract as morally superior to raiding, and consider themselves dishonored by the need to resort to stealing. If Herok is deposed and his successor more easily swayed to Cara Fahd's cause, the Lancers might bring a thousand more cavalry to our forces.

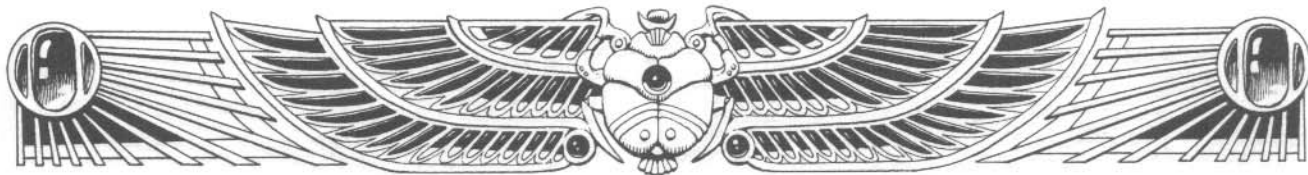
Finally, we must consider the humans whose villages lie in ancient Landis. The people of Basstown and Grimeye's Crossing have not forgotten the scorching raids they suffered all their lives, and will not forgive hundreds of dead and thousands of silvers stolen just because we have a new leader. They cannot afford not to fear us. However, they are less unified than we and have as much to lose should the Therans come marching into Barsaive through their land. Some want to ally with us against Thera; some to ally with Throal against us; some to ally with Thera; and some want only to protect their own homes by any means at hand.

I recommend a treaty, sent by emissaries to each individual village. Such agents must be skilled enough to carry on the peacemaking in good faith, and willing to police our own tribes so that they do not violate any agreement, yet not so sympathetic to the humans that they will forget Cara Fahd's interests. A mixture of ork and human emissaries would be ideal. For any alliance with Landisian towns to work, we need to prove that we will make a better friend than Thera, despite our unfortunate history with their forebears.

I hope these suggestion help put things in perspective. As always, I and my people are at your disposal.

Titanstroke Greybeard
Mawag, 1510 TH





ON THE AREA OF CLAW RIDGE

I have asked Jesfuy Longrunner to write of the city of Claw Ridge, built very near the spot on which Krathis Gron first declared Cara Fahd a new nation. If this text is truly to be a legacy for our children, then knowledge of the origins of Cara Fahd and its capital city is surely worth including.

Jesfuy is one of those rare orks who never forgets faces, Names and conversations, and refers to virtually everyone she has met as "friends." Readers may get the impression that she knows every Name-giver in Cara Fahd, though in truth she knows only some thirty thousand of us. Though her gossip may not always be completely reliable, she is in general a truthful and accurate commentator.

—Getaft Allthought

ON THE CONSTRUCTION OF CLAW RIDGE

The evening after the standoff between Thera, Throal and Cara Fahd at Claw Ridge, Krathis Gron scanned the area with a warrior's eye and made a choice. A fortress built into the ridge next to the box canyon where the standoff took place could be defended against Thera and crystal raider airships, and would also make an appropriate symbolic setting for Cara Fahd's new capital city. She even considered how best to survive a siege before the rest of us had thought of war, planning to divert the underground river near Claw Ridge for an internal water supply and a hundred other things. As she drew up plans for the fortress with single-minded attention, her followers raised tents around the ridge and dragged logs from the forest to build houses. Before the end of Strassa, a maze of tents and shacks covered the ground near the site of Krathis Gron's Declaration.

Krathis gave Ibja Stonesplitter, famed mason of Jerris, the burden of turning this chaos into a city. His workers built the first few dozen houses of flood-plain mud hardened into brick, in the style native Carads use. Soon, Ibja came up with a simple design for log cabins that could be raised in half a day, and those quickly outpaced the brick-drying process.

As I write this, the building of Claw Ridge is still going on. Of course, plenty of folk don't want to wait for Ibja's crews and have put up their own houses, making the architecture haphazard. From neighborhood to neighborhood, you can see foyers such as those found in Kratas, Throalic wall murals etched into the brick while still damp, Travar-style triangular archways and the squat, square houses common in Urupa. Late arrivals or those too lazy to build dwell on the growing city's outskirts in horse-hide tents.

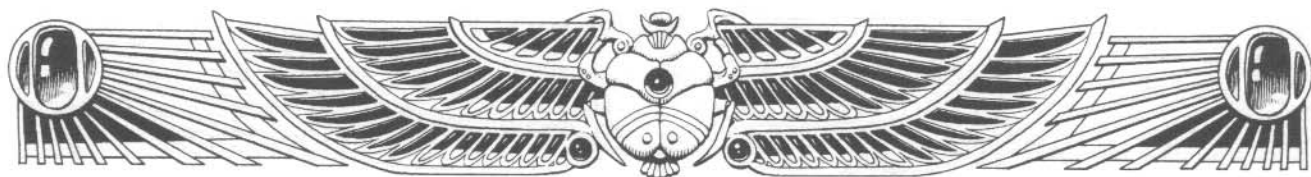
Among the more eye-catching buildings in the city is the home of Yadd Ergrumm, a silver-lender from Bartertown. He brought his entire house with him—disassembled, with every brick labeled—and put it back together in Claw Ridge. The construction, mortaring, painting and decorating of this mammoth dwelling employed a fifth of Claw Ridge's loggers and artisans, making Ergrumm one of the city's more influential and well-respected citizens. It took him a good four trips to get all his money here; assorted possessions are still trickling in, always escorted by at least six guards. (I've heard that his funds are running short after such profligate spending, and yet he has recently been seen drinking celebratory thundra-hurlg with Moschtug of the Fists of Fahd. Perhaps Yadd wants a voice in the Council as well as on the streets and is cultivating Moschtug in order to get it.)

Groups of orks who follow the same profession often congregate in a single neighborhood. Occasionally, this poses problems; to give one example, a group of archer's schools and falconer's guilds chose to locate themselves not two hundred yards from the Shrine of Garlen, which releases doves and songbirds once a month to celebrate peace. I doubt this placement was accidental. Those at the shrine are less than pleased at the toll taken among their birds by arrows and hawk kills ... but back to the subject at hand.

The houses near the fortress stand in neat lines, built by organized groups of city orks. The incoming Carads and others, however, built additions out from this city center like spokes on a wheel. The result? A street name can disappear and then reappear two roads to the right, while the path you are walking stays straight. Some streets are paved with slate or gravel because the residents wanted to walk on something firmer than mud; other streets, often mere steps away, turn to quagmires after rain. Our capital is chaotic, colorful and still coming together—and I would not live anywhere else in Barsaive, not for all the gold in a dragon's hoard.

Claw Ridge is by far the largest city in Cara Fahd, with upwards of 35,000 residents, and more gathering in tents around it every day. Representatives of every trade live here; some are already beginning to form guilds, most notably the stone and metal workers and clothiers. Over it all looms the fortress of Wurchaz, the heart and soul of our reborn nation.





THE GLORY OF WURCHAZ

Wurchaz, the old or'zat word for Claw Ridge, is the Name of the central fortress. The long front half of the building nestles against the claw-shaped cliff that gives this area its Name, and several of the fortress's most important rooms, such as the Council Chamber, were carved from the rock of that cliff.

A throng invariably waits outside the fortress doors, forming an unofficial market of meat and pepper vendors, incense sellers and orks hawking everything from used clothing to carved dolls. As anyone with money usually comes to Wurchaz at least a few times a month, these vendors can make a healthy living simply selling to those walking in and out. Despite the chaos created by the dense and noisy crowd, Asok's Armbreakers manage to keep a clear path to the doors of Wurchaz at all times.

Once past the mob, the visitor reaches the smooth slate courtyard and sees Wurchaz's wooden administrative buildings branching to either side of the central stone fortress. On the long walls of these buildings are countless tacked-up parchments and painted messages, announcing what the citizens of Cara Fahd have to say in a great variety of languages. A wide awning runs along the entire wall, protecting the messages from rain. From my window, I can see poetry dedicated to the Passions, listings for hired hands of every stripe, a few posters for wanted criminals and a slanderous song about Charok Redhand. If you want to find anything or anyone in Cara Fahd, check the wall.

A pair of thirty-foot towers frames the gatehouse doors, as intimidating as they are magnificent. The towers are meant to aid in the fortress's defense; in the first days of building, Ibja called on the Passion Jrikjrikjrik (Upandal to you outlanders) to construct these and other towers slowly out of the air, so that we might imitate them. The Passion showed us how to build not only defensive structures, but also towers for quarry work and siege towers that roll from place to place on enormous wheels, to be brought out for attack or moved in to protect the city as needed.

Cara Fahd's new seal sits above the gatehouse doors, the red hardwood from which it is made mirroring our flag's background color. The seal bears the honor-braid symbol, a broken circle that all orks strive to make whole. Its strands of silver symbolize our rich future, black obsidian shows inner contemplation and the long death of Cara Fahd, and orange-yellow fire symbolizes the life of an ork (currently worked in bright copper, though Krathis intends to replace it with orichalcum).

Both towers bear the standard of Claw Ridge, a five-fingered iron claw on a background of beaten copper. The walls glitter from the shards of obsidian mixed into the mortar, intended to make scaling them difficult and dangerous for even the most skilled of thieves. An iron fence atop the tower shelters a pair of ballistas manned by archer adepts, and I have heard Krathis talking to Asok of hollow shells to be fired from our four flame cannons with devastating effect if necessary. As Krathis intended, Wurchaz is a symbol of power for our people and a deadly trap for any would-be invader.

INSIDE WURCHAZ

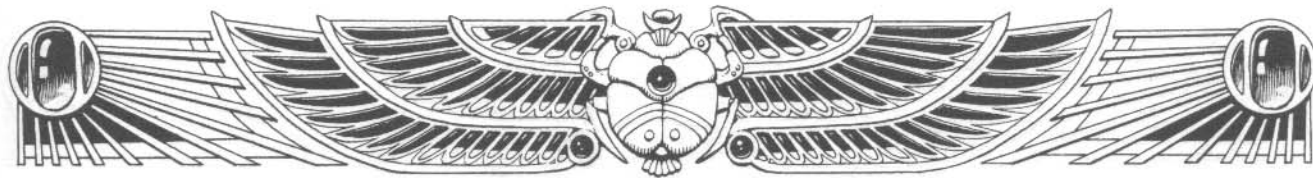
Ibja and Krathis designed the inside of the fortress for comfort and practicality. The outside doors open onto an audience chamber filled with wooden benches and wide stone desks, where visitors announce themselves or ask questions about Cara Fahd and Claw Ridge. I head the *magnu*, loyal volunteers who staff this chamber for little more than steady food and a bed. You do not want to hear about the vast numbers of people we must cheerfully serve, nor the shpita-fuel we could tell of nearly every citizen. I know some *magnu* feel that selling such information is simply a perk to our job, but I encourage all to have the sense to at least not take such bribes in front of Asok's Armbreakers.

The Library lies to the left as you enter the fortress, next to a storeroom that contains all things devoted to knowledge and history, as well as non-sensitive records. The contents of the yerz'eth, the rotating stock of supplies available to any in Cara Fahd who request them, plus the stored medicinal herbs and shrines to the Passions lie to the right. Guards block the way straight back, which leads to the inner and Council chambers.

Dozens of stoneworkers are still busy carving out additional expansions, and anyone in Wurchaz can feel the vibrations of their picks and magic through the floors. When completed, the fortress will be a maze of untold complexity, as Ibja is following plans inspired by Upandal. Though no one admits it, I believe he intends to add several hidden doors, secret passages, underground exits to the canyons and the Delaris River, and even rotating rooms—for I have walked down every open tunnel, and the distances don't add up. Parts of the design resemble a kaer, as if Krathis planned for Claw Ridge to be able to weather something as terrible as another Scourge while she was drawing the plans.

Elementalists and wizards, including the ones Krathis brought from Cathay, regularly enter the inner chambers to work on secrets to which I am not privy (though I can't imagine why). Dvilgaynon, the elementalists' mysterious leader, is rumored to practice magic in the eastern Twilight Peaks. Some stonecutter friends of mine once found the grass near the fortress coated with molten glass, the soil torn up and replaced upside down, and two ten-foot high trees—one made of solid copper and the other of limestone! Krathis says they are simply collecting elemental earth to strengthen the walls and rock of Wurchaz; I wonder what else they might be up to.





OF MOUNTAIN'S END

Several small villages associate themselves with Claw Ridge, preferring Krathis Gron's governance to that of the tribal lands. Mountain's End, built only a short walk by foot from Vutta's Pick Gap, is the first place where most travelers stop after a harrowing journey through the mountains. Nicknamed the "Inn Town," it has between four and ten thousand residents, depending on the night, and no fewer than forty-one taverns and twenty-two inns in which are served nineteen types of hurlg. (Beware the trollmoot version called "Hydra's Breath"; it contains ground-up acidic crystals from the Twilight Peaks that light the drink with its characteristic slow-burning, green fire.)

Mountain's End was originally a shrine to Garlen built by Ramu of the Namdroth to offer weary travelers shelter. When immigrants began arriving in Cara Fahd hundreds at a time, the shrine couldn't keep up with the demand and several folk opened inns nearby. Unlike Ramu, the proprietors of these establishments had not sworn a vow of poverty. They charged for rooms and meals, assured of business simply because the demand was so great.

When the frantic pace of immigration first began to slow somewhat, the inns found themselves needing to attract custom. They started by offering good hurlg, then nightly entertainment by resident troubadours, then such frills as imported feather beds, honeyed elven dishes and fawning stable grooms. Finally, with the floods of newcomers slackening even more, many innkeepers have begun resorting to outright harassment of the competition. Some spread rumors of the others' incompetence; a few even pay thugs to loudly disturb the sleep of customers at neighboring inns. At most, however, the traveler can still get a good meal and a decent night's rest.

The other business of Mountain's End is wood-cutting, and the logging guilds welcome people of all races whose arms and backs are strong. The logging operation in Mountain's End is run by a handful of elves, who manage the process far more carefully than does the Broken Fang to the south. They take only young trees and plant replacements wherever they can. Street vendors sell wood dust for starting fires, available in water-resistant leather wallets at three for a copper, as well as honey, syrup and candies made from sweet sap.

Six of the best archers in western Barsaive live in Mountain's End, a group known as the One-Arrow Quiver. They occasionally join with Asok's Armbreakers to serve as the town's guardians, handling such everyday problems as the aforementioned sleep-disturbers. Crishep Turtleneck, the skinniest ork I've met, became mayor of the town a few months ago. He encourages what he calls "healthy competition," but frowns on violence. Clearly, he hopes to keep the less savory competitive practices of inn and tavern owners from escalating into anything worse than loud noises at inconvenient hours.

To my mind, the only place to visit without the risk of exorbitant prices, drunken parties or loud, extravagant troubadour-and-illusionist shows remains the Shrine of Garlen. Arrive early, though; it gets crowded.

OF HARVEST

You can smell the breads of Harvest before you see it. Nestled in narrow fields of wheat and barley as high as a t'skrang's eye, Harvest provides almost a quarter of Cara Fahd's grain. Farmers from all over Barsaive, Vivane and Rugaria provinces settled here and shared their techniques, strains of plants and farming magic to create hardy crops that impress even questors of Jaspre. Harvest's contributions form the heart of the yez'eth, including bread meal, porridge, sun-dried bucket bread, roasted oven loaves, pepper bread and some fine rat-killing hounds, which they exchange for meat, cloth, metal and stone.

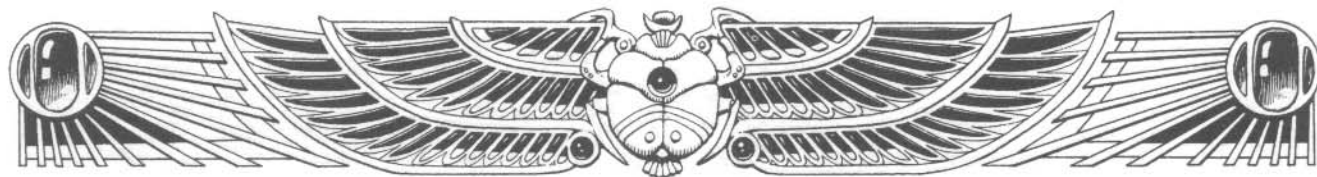
The farmers of Harvest never cease their efforts to improve life and safety in their town. All children learn to read and write, for younger sons and daughters often wish to take jobs in Claw Ridge. The council of seven who run the town have dedicated it to Mynbruje, and I have no doubt that in time Harvest will become a center of learning as well as of barley.

Harvest's grain silos, some as tall as ten orks, tempt scorchers who have yet to settle down and Krathis Gron has spent many sleepless nights worrying about the town's vulnerability. A single spark could turn it into an inferno. Her elemental-ist friend Dvilgaynon is working on magic to bring water from the river into a tower to be built in Harvest, thereby providing a ready supply to douse any fires. Similarly, Tomari Diamond-Fist, a council member's son, founded a school of warrior adepts to protect Harvest from raiders. The adepts learn a good deal of non-magical fighting as well as their Discipline magic, to better teach the farmers to defend themselves with sickles, scythes and grain-flails.

RESIDENTS NOBLE IN MANNER IF NOT BIRTH

I went to Travar when I was younger and was amazed at how many people there knew nothing about those they worked with every day. Such a thing could not ever be said of Claw Ridge. Krathis Gron and her circle of friends effectively run this city, if not all of Cara Fahd and so I will briefly describe these influential individuals.





KRATHIS GRON, CHOSEN OF THE PASSIONS

Everyone knows what Krathis has done since writing the Seeds of Nation, but not many people have heard about her life before that because she doesn't like to talk about it. Let me fill in the details. I'll bet nobody singing her legend years from now will remember that Krathis liked eggs for dinner, or once told a shpita about Thera First Governor Kanidris that paralyzed Moschtug, Titanstroke, Bronze Eyes and Charok with laughter.

Krathis grew up in the Wejoto copper mine in the Caucavic Mountains, where Thera exiles ran a secret slave operation despite Throal's laws against slavery. Krathis doesn't know how long her family was held there, but both she and her mother were born in the mine. Her mother's mother had passed down many stories and songs of the old days of freedom, as well as the legend of the Mahuta whom the Passions would send to the orks in their day of greatest need.

Krathis never let her spirit break as other orks did. She constantly stretched and exercised to keep her body healthy, her thoughts always on fighting rather than compliance with the slave-masters. When pensive, Krathis tells of the single time she was allowed outside to run in the rain near the mining town. For the first time, she knew freedom and her destiny to become a warrior, for she danced on air as adepts do. And slave and master alike recognized her potential for greatness when she endured beating after beating without a word or grimace.

After her mother died from the choking dust of the mine, Krathis began work on a secret side tunnel branching from an isolation shaft. Patiently, she picked at the stone for more than five years, never giving up even when tempted by despair. Never since then, she says, has she so needed the sheer grit and determination the Passions granted her. The mine was destroyed years ago, but supposedly the isolation shaft still exists with Krathis's first song scratched into the wall (she says it's awful). When the tunnel was finished, Krathis used it to escape.

Once free, she explored the world, first joining an adventuring band and traveling through Barsaive and then signing on as a member of an airship crew and seeing much of the rest of the world. She began to train as a troubadour, modifying her mother's old songs for the air sailors. By the time she became a caravan trader, she believed her good life was a reward for striking out of the mine, and she would soon retire happily. Then she was set upon by bandits near Cathay, who slaughtered her companions and scattered her caravan. She alone escaped death and wandered, half-starved, through the wilderness before the Passions rescued her and inspired her to write the Seeds of Nation.

Though most orks believe that her visions made her turn to the guidance of Blork (Lochost to outlanders), I don't think she is a questor of Blork as everyone says. She wants to build a nation that will last, not to inspire the constant change and rebellion Blork loves. Even in her private life, she pays meticulous attention to details, an action much more appropriate to the Passion Jrikjrikrik.

The Passions enabled Krathis to stay young and beautiful, even after many years of study in Cathay (she won't say how many). Some people, Getaft Allthought among them, believe that Krathis owes her youth to being somehow tied to the pattern of Cara Fahd—a fascinating theory, to be sure, but there is no proof of it so far as I know. Whatever the cause, almost all the women in Claw Ridge slavishly copy her every dress and hairstyle, as it is widely known that Krathis is the loveliest ork in Cara Fahd. She's a petite five foot eight, with long black hair that she usually keeps braided, and dusky brown skin. Her warrior training keeps her stomach flat and gives her solid muscles that turn men's heads even before she speaks. In public, she always speaks loudly—far differently than in private, where she is unfailingly gentle and considerate.

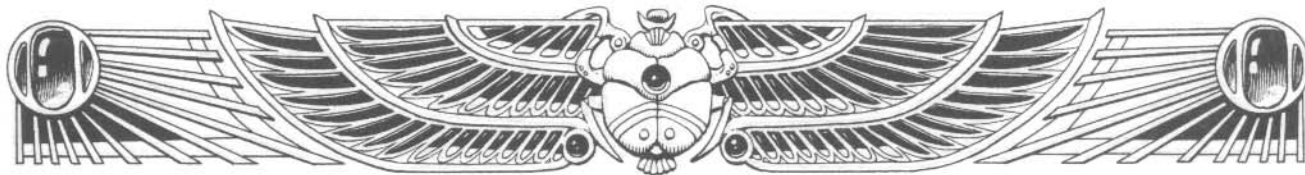
Though she is certainly bright, dedicated, passionate and otherwise so amazing that troubadours around the world have rightly committed her parables and ballads to parchment, in private she shows that she is also a Name-giver like everyone else. Her image means so much to so many orks that she must carefully manage it, and she must also carry the burden of making difficult choices that affect the lives of thousands. I am proud and blessed to call her friend.

CROSI HALFTUSK, HONORED AMBASSADOR TO THROAL

Krathis met my mother Crosi at the Half-Grown Beard tavern when Krathis first brought her followers to Cara Fahd. They quickly became friends, and Krathis turned to her as an advisor and confidante. Mother is convinced that Krathis is the best thing that ever happened to orks; she'd marry an elf if Krathis told her to. Mother is an excellent associate and counselor; she's got her nose in everyone's business, but won't tell anyone anything told to her in confidence.

A month after the Declaration, when Moschtug of the Fists of Fahd started to get big-headed and that perennial troublemaker Zarass Icethought was supporting him, Krathis sent Mother to Throal, because she knew the nation needed allies against outside threats. Meanwhile, she took care of making sure that Cara Fahd didn't fall apart from within. The crisis has since passed (for the moment), but Mother remains in the dwarf kingdom. She says the treaty process is painfully slow; all the dwarf noble houses are debating with King Neden over every point, often trying to upstage or embarrass him. And when they caught Mother making speeches to the orks in Bethabal about real rulership, the dwarfs really got their little noses out of joint. The process seems to be proceeding in spite of its difficulties, however. We will see what, if anything, ultimately comes of it.





Meanwhile, I have taken over Mother's duties in Claw Ridge as Master Coordinator, and I can't tell you how many times I've seen lazy, uninspired, despicable double-dealings in the Overseers' department because they don't catalog the names, family names, home province, intended territory, description, adept Discipline and rank and great deeds of those who come to our nation! How hard is it to remember those you've talked to?

GETAFT ALLTHOUGHT, FIRST LIBRARIAN OF CARA FAHD

Getaft came to Cara Fahd with Asok's Armbreakers, after she and her then-husband Asok talked half of Herok's Lancers right out from under Herok's nose. Never a raider at heart, Getaft spent more time in cities than on the trail, especially in Jerris where she trained as a wizard. She has reached the seventh Circle in her Discipline, and needs only a master's eye to advance to eighth Circle.

Getaft is extremely short, only eyebrow-height next to Krathis, and wears her blonde hair loose. Though she spends most of her time these days managing the library, she still dresses in black thundra leathers and her two children, Hespera and Gevvi, spend as much time learning to ride and fight with their father as they do in Wurchaz.

After my mother left, Getaft became Krathis Gron's closest friend, spending so much time in Wurchaz that she and Asok separated, though they remain close friends. She seems completely devoted to Krathis and Cara Fahd, but her tribal loyalties also remain strong, for she simply won't admit that Titanstroke Greybeard can do anything better than Asok can. Though not an official advisor, she speaks often at Council meetings, serving as arbiter between the four often-contentious ork chiefs (who I think couldn't lace their own boots without a woman's help).

Her personal interests lie more in history than in progress, and she took charge of finding adventurers to search for the ancient ruins and treasures of the old kingdom of Cara Fahd. Her experiences with Herok make her less trusting than Krathis. A librarian friend of mine tells me that Getaft and Asok privately hope that Herok's remaining Lancers and the crazed Skull Whargs remain outside of Cara Fahd, despite what Krathis says about ork unity.

IBJA STONESPLITTER, OVERSEER OF ROADS AND CONSTRUCTION

When Ibja Stonesplitter arrived in Claw Ridge in the month after the Declaration, he waited patiently outside Krathis Gron's door for a solid week before she finally had time to speak with yet another ragged immigrant. He then announced that he was a questor of Jrikjrikrik, and that his Passion had ordered him to serve Cara Fahd in any way he could. Krathis recognized his honesty and named him Overseer of Claw Ridge on the spot.

Ibja is a marvel of organization who maintains Upandal's ideals in everything he does. Hesitant about his newfound power at first, he soon took over more and more duties. Now he single-handedly manages the construction of Wurchaz, as well as laying and repairing roads and organizing building crews for the neighborhoods of Claw Ridge. He pays his workers with goods from the yerz'eth, though he takes for himself only what he needs and sleeps on a straw-stuffed cot in his office in the gatehouse.

Ibja seems without personal ambition; he says that seeing the city function as Jrikjrikrik wants is reward enough. I have found no one who knows of any secret vices he has, if he is married or who has ever seen his gahad take hold. I'm certain he knows every secret of Wurchaz even better than Krathis.

LANTA PLANTFINGER, OVERSEER OF HERDS AND FARMING

Lanta was one of Krathis Gron's first recruits, from the village of Goldenfield outside Throal. She is accustomed to being obeyed, because it provokes her gahad to repeat an order even once. I believe she was the one to suggest the idea of the yerz'eth to Krathis, who rewarded her by putting her in charge of it.

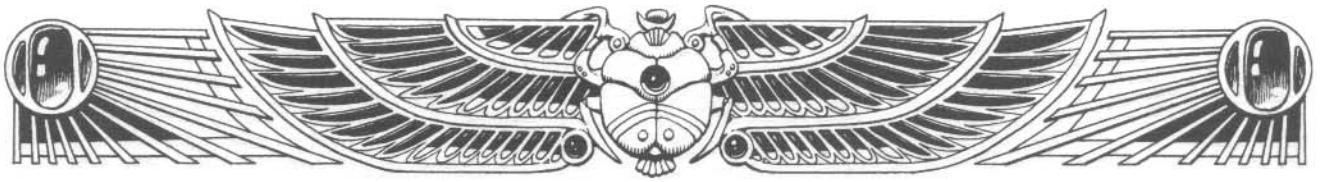
A frazzled-looking woman with rough brown skin, dark brown hair and no tolerance for laziness, she seems to sleep even less than the rest of us, for she is always available to any who request supplies from the yerz'eth. She doesn't hesitate to demand help, but the legions of volunteers who surround her never seem to lessen the load. She blanches every time new immigrants arrive, for she fears the land cannot feed so many. Not an adept herself, she is constantly searching for elementalists and questors of Jasprey who can help our farmers grow enough food to feed our increasing numbers.

MUKTAR BONEMENDER, HERBALIST AND PHYSICIAN

Muktar, an old friend of mine who grew up next to the Half-Grown Beard, holds no official position, but plays an important role in Claw Ridge. A skilled herbalist and physician such as Muktar stays constantly busy with the injuries too often brought on by raiding, construction accidents and drunkenness.

Dark-skinned and dark-haired, Muktar is tall and lanky and often appears brusque or unfriendly upon first meeting, because he is usually lost in thought. A caring and efficient healer, he has few interests outside his art. Many bristle at his refusal to chatter in the way that we call living talk; they don't realize that the village from which we both came was mostly human, and that Muktar picked up many human traits, including a certain habit of silence. He has founded a small school





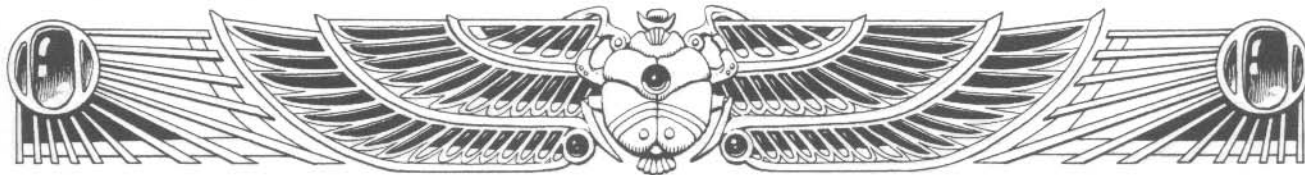
of physicians and his students are devoted to him. I have heard rumors lately, however, that his senior pupil, Hekyn Lighttouch, uses herbs for more than curing sickness. Apparently a small underground market has sprung up for Hekyn's love potions and other such concoctions.

SORGA FIREHEART, MY ASSISTANT

Though Sorga is only one of the many magnu who assist me in solving disputes, Krathis has befriended her. I can't imagine why, for her conversation is often like listening to a jabbering cuckoo. I have not been invited to her meetings with Krathis, and Sorga has few friends I can ask about them. She is cold to almost everyone—whether from simple shyness or from disdain for any who can't help her improve her own position, I can't say.

She styles her copper-colored hair to imitate a Carad nomad, though she wears silks and jewels at celebrations with far more ease than the coarse wool of everyday garments, so I suspect she has spent time among wealthier folk than those of her home village of Longtrench near the Locust River. She became a scout there, which raises the question of why a well-trained adept wants to spend her time writing names and answering questions in Claw Ridge. Her sharp senses serve her well in this task, however, and she already knows nearly as much about the city as Ibja or I. She is unfailingly helpful, and often takes on more than her share of the work (helping to balance the occasional lazybones; the girl is a life-saver sometimes). Hopefully, before long she will feel comfortable enough here to drop her guard and make some real friends; meanwhile, I cannot fault her efficiency at her task, nor her devotion to Krathis.





MAJOR TRIBES AND SETTLEMENTS

Because Krathis must understand her people to govern them, I asked the chieftains of each of our major tribes to write how they would like to be remembered a century from now—to record their histories, customs and strengths. Except for Charok Redhand's demonstration in the streets of Claw Ridge of how he would like to be remembered (and the subsequent need to reassure two thousand city orks who panicked after witnessing a parade that included lightning blasts and hauling bystanders up across a thundra's withers), we received reasonably reliable accounts of each major tribe.

We have no easy division of spheres of influence among us, no convenient noble houses or such. The indigenous Carad clans, though they outnumber the Barsaivian immigrants, do not belong to large groups like the tribes listed here, and so their stories are told in another chapter. The simplest way to organize this information was in order of numbers, largest tribe to smallest.

—Getaft Allthought

THE CHANGING WAYS OF THE METAL FIST

Bronze Eyes of the Metal Fist was delighted to recount tales of the largest tribe within our borders ... until I handed him quill and parchment with which to do so. This particular valued advisor has been so busy becoming one of the most feared scorchers in Barsaive that he never learned to read and write. Fortunately, his daughter Tresseg offered to transcribe her father's words for us. She has taken the liberty of adding her own comments.

—Getaft Allthought

THE TALE OF METAL FIST

When our honored ancestor Heva Ulya of Kaer Olanioyu first stepped into the sun after the Scourge, she led her many people onto the rocky plains beneath the Tylon Mountains. They had waited for this day for centuries, chafing under the bit of the humans who ruled the kaer and who had tried to remake the orks in their image. But their own freedom bewildered them. Heva's followers wandered without purpose, settling here and there, unsure of what they wanted.

When only eleven remained with her, Heva began to despair. The glories of ancient orks that she had dreamed of restoring seemed mere bedtime stories for children; reality was digging for hours in the dirt for a meager meal rather than riding the plains in swift pursuit of prey.

One night, Heva's band arrived at a village settled by Throalic dwarfs. As Heva rode into the firelight, she saw a vast crowd gathered around a few orks who were dressed in black leathers, their faces scarred with the symbols of Thystonius. Their arms were wrapped in chains.

A fat dwarf stood before them. "You are criminals," he announced to the silent, defiant orks. "You raid because you are greedy, not because you are noble. Your ways are a bandit's, not a free man's. Your symbols mean nothing." And from the chief ork's scabbard the dwarf pulled a sword whose blade was etched in ancient or'zat, and threw it into a bubbling cauldron of molten bronze.

The sight of the ancient language shining on the blade fired Heva's gahad. She led her followers on a charge through the crowd, screaming that she and the prisoners would live as orks, free of dwarf words and human tools. Unafraid of pain, she plunged her hand into the cauldron after the sword and grasped its hilt.

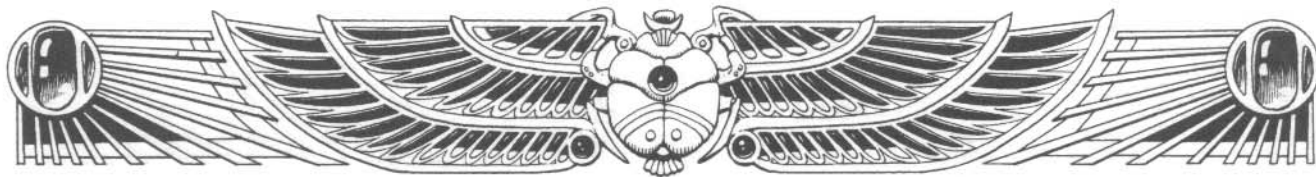
The boiling metal scorched her flesh down to the bone. But Heva held on and lifted out the half-melted sword, her forearm coated in liquid metal that hardened in the breeze. And she announced through gritted teeth that she and her metal fist would lead her people away from this place, to follow the ways of their ancestors. They would never again sleep within walls built by dwarf or human, never again pick up a spade when a sword was within reach. She swore to show the black-hearted dwarfs that there *was* a way to be an honorable raider. Her children would create the way of the Metal Fist, and would gather followers from among all those who felt the wind of the plains in their blood and the fire of gahad spurring them to freedom. Through northern Barsaive she led her folk, stopping at every open kaer to gather followers, and she slew those who kept slaves.

When you think of our tribe, you orks of Cara Fahd, remember that we have never scrambled for dwarf coin. We have never admitted defeat. We live by djoto, the honorable way of Heva Metal Fist.

ON THE WAY OF DJOTO

You would-be orks, huddled in fear behind city walls, know little of us. You see only raiders who come in the night and harm your neighbors, hear only screams instead of gahad pounding with the blood in your ears, see only bleeding bodies instead of the atrocity that the dead and wounded forced on the earth. You think we raid without reason; you do not understand that our targets earned their fate. So I will tell you of our ways, and perhaps you will see. But whether you do or not, we are the Metal Fist and we will not change to please anyone.





Djoto does not mean random destruction. It means teaching a lesson to those who have justly earned the enmity of the Passions for their unnatural ways. All who enslave others, or who fawn on and serve them, are weeds in the garden of the earth. Any who shelter the Theran dung that subjugate Barsaive, or accept their coin or speak their words, we uproot. And any who do not live by the natural order of the world do not deserve to live peacefully in it. We are the guardians of that order, and will defend it to the last drop of our blood.

Long ago, the Passion Kawjujwak—Erendis, for those who have forgotten his true ork Name—created a natural order. When the Horrors drove him mad, he upset it, and so it has fallen to us to preserve it. What is this order? Nothing more or less than the natural law created by Erendis and his fellow Passions. The earth smiles on those who follow her cycles, who accept her gifts and do not bind her to their will. If you travel as a beast does, you will find food enough to feed your family and your animals will survive for another season. To chain wild beasts and replace trees with straight lines of grain offends Jaspree; if she wished grain to grow in a field, she would grow it. If she meant a house to have the permanence of a mountain, such houses would be everywhere without any Name-giver troubling to build them.

We live in harmony with Jaspree. We travel with the light, following the sun south when days are longer, returning north in the days of darkness. We do not train our mounts, but cooperate with them, and when we take from farmers, they deserve their misfortune. Their food feeds us and their clothing warms us, and we show them the folly of seeing permanence in anything save Jaspree's blessings. Sometimes we kill them, but only when they are foolish enough to get in our way.

Don't believe my father when he says that every raid follows the way of djoto. Make no mistake, we care more for other Metal Fists than for Jaspree. If we are hungry, we take what is available, from farmer, nomad or animal. When the tribes gather together on the longest night of each year, our clan leaders compare their treasures and tell tales of their victories. Those who win bragging rights gain a status that eclipses even the chief's if his clan had a bad year (though our Clan of the First Spire has won as long as I have been alive).

—Tresseg Heatsky

The Code of Djoto

Every Metal Fist learns to recite the code of djoto before he is four seasons old, and you must know it to understand us. The code includes one commandment for each finger that creates two fists.

1. The blood of heroes runs through the Metal Fist, and in that blood is the true way, and to the true way we owe our loyalty. We stand with our sisters in times of war, because we are the one true people.
2. Respect the way of all things below and above you, for the high may crush the low and the low may drive the high. As the universe has its order, so too does the Metal Fist.
3. Bring challenges before the whole tribe; killing in quiet is the way of Mad Passions and Horrors.
4. The survival of all outweighs the survival of one. Therefore, do not question the chief in times of war.
5. Achieve perfection over others, but do not let ambition drive you to corruption. Avoid Horror-greed even if it means the death of your whole clan, for that is better than the death of the world.
6. Do not kill the young or those who carry young. Life-to-be is the most precious life.
7. All peoples were created as free as the land, and all remain so. Enslave nothing—neither animal nor plant nor Name-giver.
8. Stay always moving, for without change there is no freedom, and without freedom, there is no life.
9. Do not betray hospitality; those with whom you share meals are as your brothers. But if you are betrayed, destroy the traitor and all that he values, for the Metal Fist are no one's tool.
10. Give metal for metal, coin for coin and death for death.

ON THOSE WHO RIDE IN THE METAL FIST

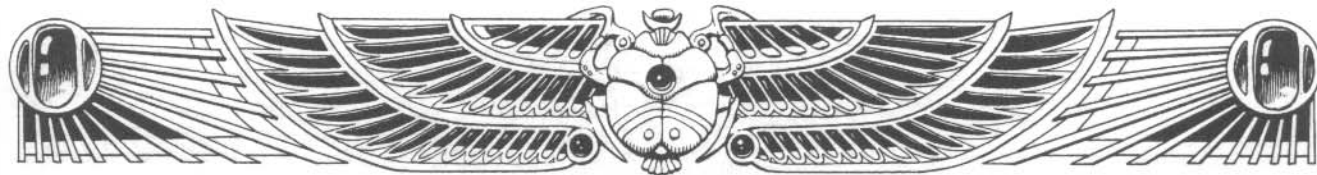
The Metal Fist are eight thousand strong, for our women are healthy and most bear a half-dozen children or more. All are raised in djoto, though not all become warriors. Two thousand of our number raid, while the others—nursing or pregnant women, children and those grown too old to hold a spear or sword—remain behind in camps, gathering and preparing food, making tents and clothing and teaching the next generation to carry on our ways.

Every child trains to fight, but few are chosen by mounts or beasts to become cavalryman or beastmaster adepts (though we have a hundred such in the Clan of the First Spire alone). Our life in the mountains taught us the secret of guiding mounts over the roughest earth, and many a crystal raider tribe has trembled to see the thundra cavalry of the Metal Fist clawing straight up the steepest slope.

Those who cast spells remain close to the earth as shamans or elementalists. Rarely do we harbor wizards or nether-mancers, for most of them seek to know too much and to change the order of things. Claw Ridge will come to ruin relying on such book-bound meddlers for guidance.

We tolerate no thieves within our tribe. We do not sneak in darkness; we attack openly and without fear, and we take silver or other things only after their defenders have surrendered or died. Our raiders wear leathers dyed in the shade of sunrise and sunset, so that all may see us from afar.





The Twelve Clans

There are twelve months in the cycle of the year, and so we have twelve clans. Children are born into their mother's clan and remain members of it their whole lives, though a man may travel with his wife's clan for as long as the marriage lasts. All Metal Fists are forbidden to marry within their own clan or the clan of their fathers, for the Passions reject such matings and any children who come of such couplings. Most marriages take place during the longest night, when all twelve clans congregate at the fork of the Tylon River to renew our vows to the way of djoto and add our stories to the Metal Fist legend.

The clans are Named for the twelve spires of the Tylon Mountains that tower over the lesser peaks in which we lived before we chose to follow Krathis Gron and help rebuild Cara Fahd. The clan member whose deeds won him the greatest praise at the last Long-Night Festival rules the clan for the coming year. We strive always to follow the eighth command of djoto, roaming across Barsaive from the Tylons to the Twilight Peaks, each clan traveling and raiding alone. When clan leaders are sisters or husband and wife, they may raid together, but it is difficult to support so many.

Our clan chieftains are invariably adepts, and each guards a single one of the twelve threaded gauntlets of the Metal Fist. A chief loses his gauntlet if his position falls to another, and so all strive to be worthy of remaining clan chief for many years. This ensures that a clan's chief is always the ork best suited to hold that honored place.

ON THE LIFE OF A METAL FIST RAIDER

Our children learn early that the world is harsh and that they must fight to survive. Few of our women enjoy the company of swaddlings; they wean their infants early and return to the saddle, leaving the babes in the care of those too old to ride.

Though they grow up in the safety of camp, the young ones see battles raging across the nearby plains, and gahad runs so thick in their veins that they often toddle toward the smoke. When strong enough to ride a pony off a lead rope, they begin training.

The children are barely four when they leave their mothers. I have seen tribes who let their little ones stay children for longer, and I must say it makes for sweeter tongues and less death talk. It is true that most Metal Fist elders care for the children they mentor, and remain close to their charges even after they are grown ... but it is not the same. —Tresseg Heatsky

The children do not leave their families entirely, for they remain with the same clan, but they travel in a band behind the others and sleep in a tent with children of the same age rather than their parents and siblings. Before they are old enough to raid, the children work with the elders and nursing mothers to gather food for the tribe in addition to learning the ways of a Metal Fist warrior.

On Training

Warriors too old to keep up with the raiders instruct the children. They first instill in their charges the principles of djoto, teaching them that they must be willing to give up comfort and even life for the tribe. These schools, called *rekart* or *reken*, keep boys and girls separate, for they remain in them through puberty and cannot have their training interrupted by distracting romances and pregnancies.

The young warriors train in horsemanship, archery, swordsmanship, hunting, wrestling, body painting and metal-smithing. Only the elderly work with leather or cloth. The children learn to rely on one another, not on their trainers, who remain distant in order to force them to stand together against outsiders. Each generation of children will form their clan's first line of defense some day, and so it is vital that they learn to depend only on themselves.

Beginning in his or her eleventh year, on the longest night, each child is fostered to a warrior from a different clan for two years. The trainees serve their mentors by cleaning saddles and armor, feeding horses and caring for the clan's wounded, in return for advanced teaching. After six months with a mentor, the trainee rides in his first raid, with the guardian watching to keep the young one out of trouble.

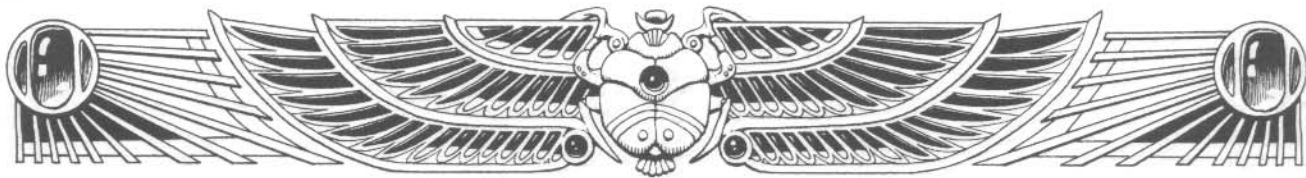
Fostering takes place just when every young ork thinks of nothing but the fires of Mera-a-a-arg—Astendar, the Passion of love. I think this tradition serves mainly to ensure that amorous encounters occur outside the clan. Some such play among children is natural, but incest is another matter. —Tresseg Heatsky

CONCERNING OUR PLACE IN CARA FAHD

Krathis Gron arrived in the Tylon mountains on the longest night, when all our clans had gathered to celebrate the year's deeds. We had heard of the Seeds of Nation and wanted to meet this woman who claimed to speak for the way of the true ork even though she did not follow djoto. Her words intrigued us, for she understood our place in the universe.

Father means that he and the other clan leaders had ridiculed the whole idea until they heard Krathis Gron speak—and were touched by her words despite their thick skulls. Those of us who speak to orks outside the tribe had heard the Seeds already, and we felt the truth. Orks are not meant to live in isolation. Though djoto teaches that other orks are only slightly higher than other Name-givers and animals, Krathis realized that all orks must come together as one people. Tarjak Stormcloud, my husband even then, showed me that our way





was not the only one. I made certain that everyone with an open mind in the Metal Fist had heard or read the Seeds of Nation—and then we, the enlightened, persuaded our pigheaded elders to follow. —Tresseg Heatsky

She stirred us. In ancient Cara Fahd, all orks knew djoto in spirit if not words, and we could not allow the Broken Fang weaklings and those headless fowl of farmers and city dwellers to rebuild our nation without it. When the longest night ended, we stayed in our gathering to debate the wisdom of joining Krathis Gron. For six turns of the moon we moved only a few hours a day to follow the herds. Finally, we decided to journey to Cara Fahd. The reborn ork nation needed our guidance, and we would go there to teach other orks djoto.

Not entirely. We also went because I told Father that the Broken Fang had already arrived, and he refused to give up his foolish rivalry with Charok Redhand. —Tresseg Heatsky

We contacted Krathis Gron, who sent adepts to help protect our women and children as they traveled south. Meanwhile, many of our warriors journeyed north of Lake Ban to turn the Therans' attentions toward us instead of toward our vulnerable ones. After a dangerous journey, we arrived in Cara Fahd. Soon afterward, the support we gave when routing the Therans at Claw Ridge earned me my rightful place as advisor to Krathis.

On Our New Tribal Lands

When Krathis commanded each tribe to choose a single territory, the rocks of Claw Ridge echoed with our outrage. We build no walls, and no walls stop us. We laid claim to the largest swath of land to the east of Claw Ridge as befits the largest tribe in the nation, but our territory does not end there. Unlike the Broken Fangs and Asok's soft little Armbreakers, the raiders of the Metal Fist have not allowed ourselves to be confined in one place. Our clans still roam throughout our lands and into the unclaimed forests and jungle, living as we always have. Many even range into Vivane Province to strike against Therans or into the Delaris Mountains and Twilight Peaks to guard our land against the vicious trolls.

A simple duty, as few trolls have any real interest in Cara Fahd. Many Metal Fist have settled in our territory near the town of Gevosht, which lies in nearby lands claimed by Rejruk's Foxes, because they realize we must adjust to our new home. Our neighbors are fellow orks now, not human or dwarf farmers whose past contempt toward us made them our enemies. We have increased the number of animals that we herd and hunt, for we cannot feed all eight thousand Metal Fists on the spoils of war when the only people we can raid are our countrymen. We still do not touch shovel to earth, however, for djoto remains strong among us. —Tresseg Heatsky

On Rekarten

We have not built cities to soften us. Our one permanent camp of Rekarten serves not as a dwelling for turgma, but as a ground where all the clans' children together can train quickly before war between Barsaive and the Therans begins anew. The young warriors and their instructors live in the same tents we have always used, but we have taken lumber from the south to set up a few larger buildings: a hall for the trainees to eat in and storage rooms for food and weapons. Some weaker souls have built shops and businesses, but they are not true Metal Fists if they do not prefer life on the open ground to the confinement of roofs and walls.

Rekarten lies near the road from Gevosht and so it sees plenty of traffic each day. Father is correct in that it is still mostly made up of tents, but more than a hundred shops are clustered in the camp's center. Many orks have taken advantage of Rekarten's location to establish businesses selling horses, weapons, food or clothes to travelers and to the Metal Fist trainees.

The town has grown to be nearly as large as the Broken Fang's town of Thundra's Rest, though my father rages each time a raider chooses to settle in the camp. He demands that we discourage travel to Rekarten, as it interferes with the younglings' training, but most of us are practical enough to ignore such strictures, and even Father does not object to having weaponsmiths so conveniently close. Naturally, no one is permitted to farm in our territory, and food to gather becomes scarce quickly, so many traders have taken to selling their surplus grain and meat in Rekarten—another service to which my father cannot reasonably object.

With so much that we need, businesses grow daily. The last I heard, Jogok Scar-Cheek—a level-headed ork—opened an inn in Rekarten for travelers from the Gevosht road. Because no one is officially permitted to settle permanently in Rekarten, there are no wooden houses, but many settlers have taken to sleeping in their shops. —Tresseg Heatsky

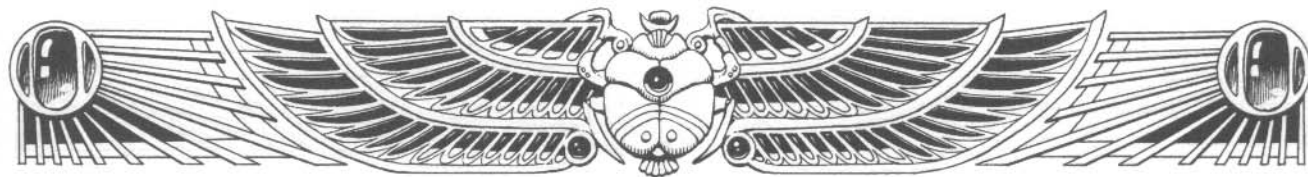
ON OUR MIGHTY LEADERS

The strength of a tribe lies in its leader, and the Metal Fist are the strongest of all tribes—in number and in fighting skill, in power of words and swiftness of deeds, in strong cries of children and bone-shaking roars of the five hundred thundra, five hundred stajian and one thousand horses we lead in charges over the hills of Barsaive. As the leader of the fiercest orks in Cara Fahd, I, Bronze Eyes, remain ever vigilant and keep my warrior's edge finely honed so that I may defend us against all threats.

Bronze Eyes, Chieftain of the Tribe

I have ruled the Metal Fist for twenty-one years, ever since my sisters died—the longest a Metal Fist leader has remained in power, for I have never lost a battle nor sustained a serious injury in a fight. I command the respect of all. I have led bat-





ties against troll and obsidiman, brought Theran airships down with my arrows and learned to fight from all the beasts of the land, for I trained as a cavalryman and beastmaster, and the natural world is my ally.

Though my eyes are black, my mother Named me Bronze Eyes because the Metal Fists shine forth from my soul. I lost my first Name when I became chief, for so all have done since Heva became Metal Fist. I stand as tall as a young tree—an imposing sight on the battlefield—and my people follow me with more discipline than the best-trained cavalry, for we fight for freedom rather than coin. In the council of Krathis Gron, my voice rings loud-est, for I alone have experience in leading so large an army ...

I assume that the library requires an accurate portrayal of the Metal Fist leader, not boasting about all the reasons that he should sire Cara Fahd's future kings. My father is certainly a brilliant tactician and he always fights to preserve his people; he cares deeply for all of us, though he's not always very good at showing it. He can indeed lead Cara Fahd's army to victory; Charok Redhand is the better cavalryman, but Father knows how best to use every man in his force.

Father has reached Eighth Circle in both the beastmaster and cavalryman Disciplines and excels at both, for he is more tender toward animals than people. He can be short-tempered, though rarely when in council with Krathis—he knows that presentation means much when dealing with leaders. His gahad is set off by those who disobey djoto, and so he must constantly struggle to remain calm in the face of so many farmers and city dwellers when he is in Claw Ridge.

I have seen that Krathis Gron has more respect for his advice than for that of my poor Tarjak's quaalz-brained father. Charok's pig-headed resistance to change makes my father look like a questor of Lochost by comparison. Both, however, are conservative and quarrelsome (at least with each other), and will likely remain thorns in Cara Fahd's side until Tarjak and I succeed to the leadership of our two tribes. —Tresseg Heatsky

Tresseg Heatsky

My daughter will follow me as chief of the Metal Fists, for our women lead, and the chief's eldest living daughter always inherits. Though I have children in every clan, Tresseg was given to the Clan of the First Spire by her birth-mother of the Fifth Spire, because her place as heir was under my eyes.

Tresseg has a wild streak, a good sign in any ork. But—copy this down—she has too much faith in those who are not of the tribe. She actually made her first marriage to the worm-spawn Tarjak Stormcloud of the Broken Fang, and she follows Krathis Gron as though Krathis were Lochost incarnate.

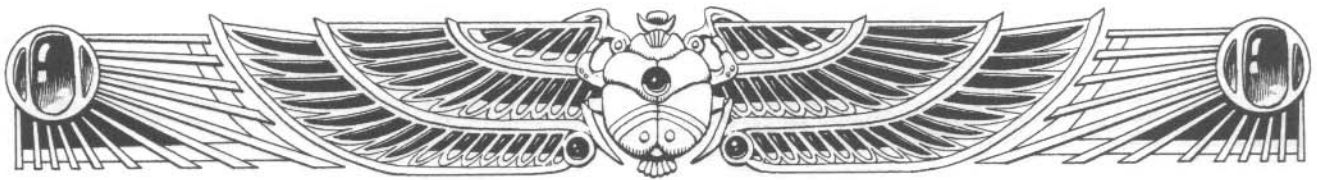
Tresseg may dally with Tarjak for now, but she will learn her place in the tribe before I die. Her daughter Verken was born of that Broken Fang whelp and is a mongrel dog. Verken will never lead the Metal Fist, even if I must banish her. Better that Tresseg should have chosen her thundra beast to sire the brat.

Verken will inherit both tribes, and she will unite them to show that all Cara Fahd must work together. She will finish the task that Tarjak and I have begun. It has been difficult; only by demonstrating to both Father and Charok that our two tribes can best serve Cara Fahd and the Mahuta by uniting were we able to get the two of them to consider an alliance. After much discussion, we finally rammed it through their graying heads that our two tribes are more similar than they ever thought. Among other proofs, Tarjak and I pointed to the Passion Clans of the Broken Fang and our own Clans of the Spires, which legend tells us are the Passions themselves. We Metal Fists Name ourselves for the Passion Spires of the Tylon Mountains; the Broken Fangs Name themselves for the Passions. Our two tribes alone of all orks do this. Surely this is proof that we were brethren before we were sworn enemies, and our fathers accepted it (however grudgingly) as such. Both Bronze-Eyes and Charok have slowly come to understand that both our tribes, so strongly tied to the Passions, are destined to unite.

Even so, the process has only begun. We orks are a hundred thousand warriors strong, far more than the Therans can field, and yet Krathis needs Throal. Why? Because we have not proved that our tribes can cooperate! I will accomplish this, and soon, for only then can orks truly be free. —Tresseg Heatsky

Tresseg achieved Fifth Circle in the cavalryman Discipline last year. More training and a few years of war will show her the rightness of djoto. I accepted her marriage to Stormcloud as a gesture of peace only because Krathis asked it of me, to quiet the near-war we had over it. The Fang's idiotic customs are an insult to orks, but the Therans are worse, and more dangerous. So let the Fangs destroy Vivane, and then die in Thera's counterattack. I will lead Cara Fahd to victory over all their bodies.





THE BROKEN FANG: FIRST ORKS OF CARA FAHD

Chimuwenda Bareback sent this letter and many, many more pages about the Broken Fang tribe, primarily because Charok Redhand's oft-quoted obscenities about what I could do with my parchments led to a minor altercation between us. This enraged Krathis (and, I would like to add, embarrassed Charok no end, as even the mightiest cavalryman in Cara Fahd looks foolish when his own hair is choking him. As he will never so much as glance at my library, let alone read this document, I feel safe noting our conflict truthfully for posterity). Chimuwenda clearly seeks to promote herself and Charok over the strict truth, but in the main her notes are accurate, and they serve admirably as an apology.

—Getaft Allthought

A GLIMPSE OF THE GLORIOUS BROKEN FANG

I have heard that Bronze Eyes himself wrote of his tribe's feeble accomplishments. I, Chimuwenda Bareback, write of my tribe's glories, for a single one of our clan chieftains can out-think the Metal Fists' "master tactician." We have done so countless times; we are the Broken Fang, and we have never lost a battle—not even to the Therans. We have been so favored because we alone remain of the eight ancient tribes who founded Cara Fahd, and we preserve the true ways rather than a corrupted form of earth-worship. With the Broken Fang returned home once more, Krathis Gron speaks truly when she says Cara Fahd cannot be beaten.

Our ancestors were on the field where Hrak Gron died, fighting the combined forces of every slave-holding nation in Barsaive. Baeltro, a simple farm slave turned warrior by his pure heart and proud spirit, led the best fighters of the Great Uprising, for Hrak Gron trusted him more than any of her other followers. We have more evidence of this favor in Krathis Gron herself, who is descended from the children of Baeltro and Hrak Gron.

The simple orks of the Great Uprising carried only staves and knives, but Baeltro knew no fear. Killing the nearest slavers with his bare hands, he threw their swords one by one to his men, and then seized his own to carve a path through the armies to the Landisian general, Bayalerre. As their eyes met, Baeltro saw evil light shining through Bayalerre's eyes, and he faltered ... but only for a moment. For he knew that he fought not only the forces of Landis, but the insanity of the Mad Passion Raggok as well.

I find this unlikely, as the Battle of Grallen Field must have taken place long before insanity claimed any of the Passions.

—Getaft Allthought

Baeltro knew he could not retreat, though Raggok's sword tore through him again and again, for if he fell, his followers would lose heart. Yet who could win when fighting the Passion of pain?

So he let Raggok's next blow strike him and trapped the Mad Passion's blade between his ribs. Then he lunged forward and bit Raggok's throat, breaking his teeth on the Passion's armor but tearing a hole from which sprayed bright blood. Baeltro then turned to his troops and screamed, "See! Their general is dying! Fight on, for I have only a broken fang!" And before Death took Baeltro, the tribe that would be known as the Broken Fang rallied and scattered the slavers, including the possessed General Bayalerre. To this day, we fight every battle to the bitter end, as Baeltro commanded our forebears.

The valor of their leader bound the tribe together, and they remained in the lands near Grallen Field that would become Cara Fahd. Many generations later, when the great Cathon Grimeye chose the kingdom's Protectors, he chose first from the Broken Fang; when he needed volunteers to walk into the inferno to destroy Landis once and for all, our hero Jurgan Nergrawl rode into the field of fire knowing that Death and its sea would follow.

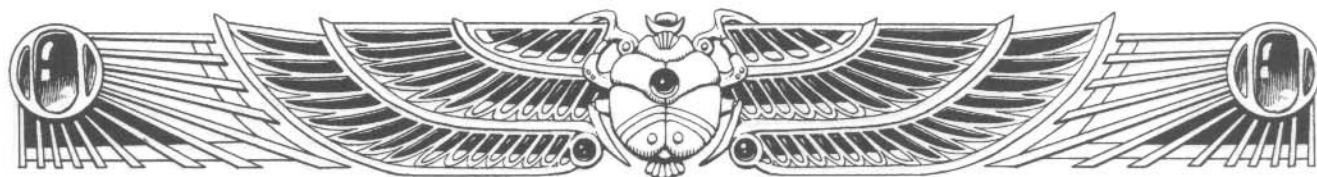
And when the Therans took Barsaive, we alone remained free, killing their emissaries and stealing their Rites of Protection. We even took the kaer of Sare Bett'a from their finest soldiers! Centuries later, unsullied by human or dwarf ways, we stormed out of our kaer at the Scourge's end and found magnificent animals on which to ride across the Dinganni plains. We were still the same magnificent Broken Fang tribe, and so we are to this very moment!

CLANS OF THE BROKEN FANG

The Broken Fang numbers fourteen clans, the Nine Heroic Clans and the five Passion Clans. Our Nine Heroic Clans are named for our most famous ancient heroes, each one from a different adept Discipline. I am of the Bat'Oona—the Daughters of Oona—descended from the great archer Oona Urjwak, who slew the legendary troll warrior Gnask G'ral Tavok; he was the puppet of the Horror Yorauuz, the Flailing Death. Though many (including myself) choose Disciplines other than those of our clan ancestor, every clan encourages its young to follow its founder's ways. The Bat'Oona boasts the deadliest archers in Barsaive, and if those pinch-nosed elves from the Wood think otherwise, they can come to Cara Fahd to prove it.

Charok Redhand is of the Bot'Baltra, our largest clan—the Sons of Baltra, who was Baeltro's son and a cavalryman. Bradda Steeltooth commands the Bat'Nyemo, whose bladesmen will turn those delicate ujnort at Sky Point into fat for our





hurlg. Lesser clans include the Bot'Kangroth, nearly invulnerable warriors; the Bot'Wuzra, full of teasing and beautiful troubadours; the nethermancers of the Bot'Elyo, who perform our funeral and birthing rites and remain ever vigilant for troublesome spirits and Horrors; the Bot'Yud, whose scouts can track a bird through the air; the Bot'Marabo, whose weapon-smiths can turn horse-shoes into serviceable daggers; the Bot'Nergrawl, whose beastmasters will tame the behemoths native to the south even if they must live in the swamp for thirty years to do so; and the masters of the elements in the Bat'Grumrog, who call rainbows from the sky and shake the earth. We have trained mighty adepts in the past, and will continue to do so in the name of orks and Cara Fahd, for we of the Broken Fang remember our past glory better than any.

The Passions have given us clans as well—not so numerous as the Heroic Clans, but no less noble and strong. When a Passion wishes to bless the Broken Fang, that Passion sends a dream to one of us; that person's descendants form one of the smaller clans that use the or'zet name *Grev*, meaning "the feeling ones." These clans—currently the Grev'Tranko, Grev'Blork, Grev'Muvuul, Grev'Pakarool and Grev'Grenkaklank—supervise activities that befit their Passions and produce most of our tribe's questors. Broken Fang chiefs know the tale of the king who sought to rule the Passions, and make sure always to show proper respect.

On Our Unstoppable Might

We numbered a mighty 5,600 orks a week ago, before I gave birth on horseback to my fifth infant (raising our numbers to 5,601). Our larger clans number between four hundred and eight hundred, many of them raiders, and city orks desiring a true ork's life seek to join the Broken Fang every day. We train them as hard as we do our own soldiers; the weaklings fall out, as it should be, for only the best orks may earn the honor of joining the Broken Fang. Those we adopt become our own, treated no differently than those who are Broken Fang by birth. The Passion clans' members number between twenty and fifty raiders each.

The Bot'Baltra and Bot'Nergrawl alone own thundras—four hundred and one hundred and fifty respectively, far more than the Metal Fists or the Thunderers cavalry. But we do not triumph by thundras alone; Broken Fang inventors built our five battle towers, pulled by our beasts and equipped with flame cannons, ballistae and catapults. These fearsome towers are a match for any airship or riverboat! And our eight-hundred horse cavalry once made Throal tremble, and will again if the Mahuta desires.

ON OUR ANCIENT CUSTOMS

If you wish to learn of old Cara Fahd, seek out the Broken Fang, for we live as orks did in the Golden Age of our ancient kingdom. We alone practice many arts and customs dear to the hearts of our ancestors—among them the art of tattooing, the rites of marriage and *eunabo* and customs pertaining to war and death.

The Art of Tattooing

Anyone may recognize a Broken Fang raider by her fine tattoos, drawn with needles of bamboo from the jungles of Cara Fahd. Such tattoos portray our heroes and our connection to them, often highlighting great events from the warrior's own legend. Our own Ferug Skin-Painter designed the tattoos that grace the wrists of the Mahuta. Cavalrymen decorate their mounts as well, covering the animal's skin with the Names of famed mounts of the past.

The Rite of Eunabo

The Broken Fang value cavalry and understand the ways of horse and thundra better than any other tribe. Our youths, once Named and reared, are not considered adults until they pass the *eunabo*—the Rite of the One from the Many.

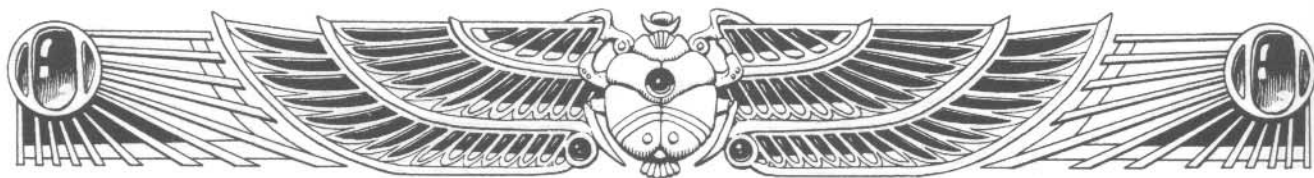
Chimuwenda deliberately words her statements to sound closer to Krathis's writings. "Eunabo" actually means "the choice of the herd." All traditions change, including the Fangs', and their usual behavior is more selfish and less like our research on ancient Cara Fahd than this status-seeking letter would indicate.

—Getaft Allthought

When our children reach their thirteenth spring, they enter the herd of horses and wait among them for a day and a night. If a child is cavalry material, a horse chooses her. If the horses ignore the child, she is taken to the thundras and left with them to be chosen. If rejected by the thundras, the child must find her own way home from the wilderness; whether an adept or not, every Broken Fang considers this a chance to show his or her toughness and bravery. My clan moved on two days' ride without me, and I had to chase them down!

Only a tribe of dung-brained weaklings would allow their elders to choose a mount and path for them. Broken Fang parents help their young, but do not interfere with unnecessary encouragement or challenge, and our children trust that the tribe understands them. Even those who leave for a time invariably return, for the Broken Fang way resonates with all true orks, and none would permanently succumb to any other life.





Marriage Exchanges

Broken Fang mothers arrange their children's first marriages, usually with someone of another clan so as to strengthen ties between us. Some marry for love, but adepts value their training over all else and usually marry into the clan that teaches their Discipline best. Some young lovers swear blood oaths in their marriage vows, and their separate clans will stay within three days' ride of one another for the year. At weddings, the two families prepare and exchange star-dust bundles, an ancient mixture of light crystals ground into papyrus. This ritual binds their clans in war as well as peace. By exchanging these bundles, the clans of the young couple are bound to protect and defend each other for as long as the marriage lasts.

When burned, the bundles send up glittering smoke, alerting all Broken Fangs in sight that enemies are near. When you see one Broken Fang clan, do not doubt that more wait nearby, their kin ties linking them like a string of jewels.

Customs of War and Death

Veterans of raids paint their shields red with a broken fang, so that when clans combine for war, the commanders can see at a glance which warriors have been blooded. Those with husbands, wives or children not on the battlefield wear black chakta and raven feathers, so that they can retreat from a hopeless battle and pass on the legend of those who sacrificed themselves.

Death rituals have always mattered in the warrior kingdom of Cara Fahd. Broken Fang chieftains pass their legacies and possessions to their oldest sons just before dying; if one changes his mind, however, all Broken Fangs must respect his dying wish because to do otherwise is to dishonor our forefather Baeltro.

The chieftainship of tribe and clans passes from father to eldest son, as Baeltro gave it to his son. Only when a son is foolish or inattentive does the chief pass him over—usually for a loyal friend or bodyguard who fought at the chief's side in his last battle. To gain such a bequest from a dying tribal chieftain or clan chief is the only way a woman can become a chief. Upon becoming clan chief, she changes the clan's name from "Bot-" (sons of) to "Bat-" (daughters of) the clan's founding hero.

Many Broken Fangs, especially women, carefully plan to spend the chief's dying moments alone with him. Assassinations are common, for they are the only route to power for a woman without sons. This too, Tarjak and I will change.

—Tresseg Heatsky

OUR UNSWERVING LOYALTY TO CARA FAHD

When Krathis Gron spoke to us, we knew that finally all orks would be reunited in the ways of our ancestors. We invited her into our tribe, and though she refused the honor, we still support her and Cara Fahd. By this, and by being the first to respond to her call, we show our loyalty.

Our Lands and Thundra's Rest

The many camps of the Broken Fangs extend from the farmland near Claw Ridge down through the cleared land where our thundras tore apart the forest. Almost a fifth of our number cut trees to house our brethren and build towers and battering rams, or hunt animals to provide hungry orks with meat.

Our territory extends farther south than that of any other tribe, for we do not fear the unknown. The town of Thundra's Rest deep in the jungle has become a sprawling city of fifteen hundred. Once merely a watering hole for beasts, Thundra's Rest now resounds with the crash of falling trees and the twang of hunters' arrows. We have built many houses, from small huts for those who have not yet proven themselves in battle to the five-room palace of our chieftain Charok Redhand, though he is seldom at home.

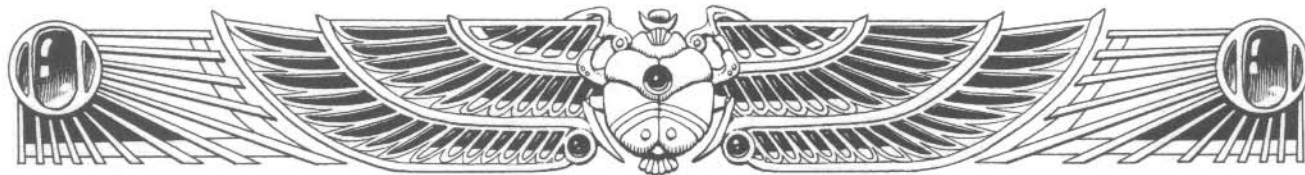
Our city does not waste space on sellers of trinkets, nor would we ever sell our horses or thundras to those who have not bonded with them in the proper ritual. Instead, Thundra's Rest procures the things most necessary to our lives in this nation—food and wood. The streets run with the blood of slaughtered animals—meat for almost all of Gevosht and Claw Ridge, packed in pepper that an ujnort would die upon smelling. Our old or lame mounts become thundra-fat hurlg and meat for the Mahuta's table in Wurchaz, a fitting rest for any thundra. Children and elderly skin and cook the beasts, while our cavalry and warriors spend their days preparing for war.

We need all the food and building materials we can get, but I implore Krathis to send someone to teach the Broken Fangs moderation. If they do not stop clearing trees at their present frantic pace, there will soon be only barren plain and mosquito-breeding water south of Thundra's Rest.

—Lanta Plantfinger

Every day our explorers bring some new creature or other out of the jungle, either tamed or dead. Already we have slain fifteen Horrors that infested it, and every one we kill adds to the glory of the Broken Fang. In their furthest travels south, our





scouts have reached the t'skrang of the Greenheart River and are acquiring their spices for our meat. We await the Mahuta's word to send them to Claw Ridge, for the Broken Fangs will gladly serve any of Cara Fahd's needs.

ON OUR MOST NOBLE LEADERS

Other tribes may claim noble leaders, but none are so much so as the chieftain of the Broken Fang. Charok Redhand leads us in the true ways of orks, and those poised to follow him in leadership also understand the legacy they must uphold.

Our Famed Chieftain Charok Redhand

Charok Redhand has devoted his life to the art of war rather than the study of etiquette, and only turgma would not easily forgive a lack of "proper manners" in the finest cavalryman alive. He attained Twelfth Circle in his Discipline last year at the age of forty-three, when most other orks still living have retired to their beds. He was trained by the ghost of his grandfather, the famed Rygrem the Unkillable. His abilities are legendary. When he was fourteen, he single-handedly cleared Kaer Memdrar of a wormskull; at the battle of Axman's Ford, he split his forces twice in the face of four times his number, yet his charges broke and routed the Skull Whargs. In Misty Gap, he led his own reserves to strike the killing blow against the insane dragon Kathun. He will lead Cara Fahd's charge to shatter the pillars of Sky Point when the time comes, for his gahad burns for revenge against Thera. And he will not stop there. He will not stop until the ujnort who would destroy us in Iopos and Throal or among the Stoneclaw and Bloodlore trollmoots all bow before the might of orks and swear on their own blood that they will never again threaten Cara Fahd. Only he can train and lead the world's largest ork army to expand Cara Fahd's borders until they can hold every ork in the world.



So that sculptors may properly re-create his image, our noble chief is just an inch shy of seven feet tall, with broad shoulders and muscles large enough to haul a troll up on the withers of his seventh thundra, Mantor. The six honor braids in his hair commemorate noble beasts who were less durable than he and bravely gave their lives in battle. Tattoos cover nearly all of his body save his face; they depict Cara Fahd's fall, his own strike against the dragon Kathun, his leap to the Stoneclaw airship *Durkazal*, and the symbols of the nine Heroic Clans, nine sane Passions and his three deceased wives. We rest assured that his next tattoo will depict his marriage to the Mahuta, leaving just enough space for the image of their infant son-to-be: the first king of the new Cara Fahd.

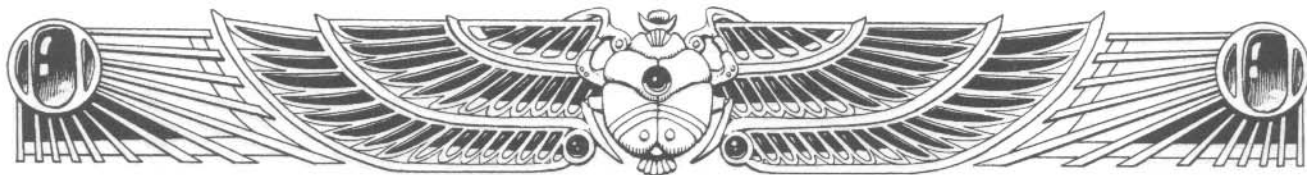
Of His Eldest Son, Tarjak Stormcloud

In case of his father's unfortunate death, Tarjak Stormcloud will inherit the Broken Fangs' chieftainship. He believes the clan chiefs will permit him to join our forces with the Metal Fists, but neither the chiefs nor his esteemed father see any reason to burden ourselves with that tribe of quarrelsome scorchers unless they agree to undergo thorough training that befits a *real* cavalry. The foolish lad even accepts the possibility of an alliance with Throal, should Krathis Gron be so short-sighted as to make one. He clearly cares more for training in flashy t'skrang sword techniques than for studying the history of Cara Fahd, or he would know that orks ally with no one. Having attained only the Fifth Circle as a swordmaster and Third Circle as cavalryman, this naive boy is far better in the line than in command.

Of His Ready Son, Llwayndo Tightstring

Llwayndo Tightstring, Charok's son by Edra Stronghands, has the favor of many clan chiefs and has trained with the Bat'Oona to reach the Seventh Circle in his archer Discipline. He has a fine mind and ready hand which, when combined with his skills as a Third Circle cavalryman, make him an excellent candidate for tribal chieftain. Though he seems apprehensive of assuming such an awesome burden, I am sure that were Krathis Gron to give him a rousing speech or one of her famous songs, he would rise to the occasion.





THE BALLAD OF ASOK'S ARMBREAKERS

The following is the most unusual account we received of the major tribes' formation and ways of life. Asok's Armbreakers came together extremely recently, and Asok does not wish to wait for time to give his band the air of legend. Trust a troubadour to exaggerate even his own life ...

—Getaft Allthought

CANTO I: THE MAHUTA ARRIVES

In evening's gentle glow their horses pranced,
And Herok's Lancers shivered at the thrill.
Across eleven centuries of time,
A legend journeyed through their mountains' chill.
The trail of the Mahuta crossed the hill.

Within each questing mind she lit a spark,
A quandary that roused the dullest soul.
Her words had carved a puzzle in their hearts,
That bitter doubt no answer could console.
Who would they see ride down that dusty knoll?

Then she arrived, her skin a dusky gold
That shone like burnished honey in the light.
Her left hand held her stallion's leather reins,
The future of our people in her right.
Her very presence lit the kaer-dark night.

And at her words, the Lancers leapt to follow,
Their vows forgotten, yielding to her plea.
At her behest, they vaulted to their thundras
As Cara Fahd's commanding cavalry.

But one among them paled with jealousy.

Krathis didn't ask the Lancers to be Cara Fahd's "commanding cavalry" any more than anyone else. She merely gave them the same choice as every other ork in Barsaive—join or not.

—Odheru Thundravoice

CANTO II: HEROK'S RESPONSE

With eyes that glittered like volcanic glass
Did Herok Shatterbone rise to the stand,
His voice an ocean wave that lashed the crowd
To batter down their faith, to reprimand,
And wrest his people from her dainty hand.

The very fires dimmed when he demanded
The Lancers make no compromise between
The false Mahuta and their tribe and families.
But though he feigned his motives were pristine,
Never would the Chief bow to a Queen.

"What do you plan," he asked, "for your great nation,
The army that you raise, the tribes you seek?
Will Cara Fahd's brigades attack the Therans,
Call on this Passions' aid of which you speak?
Or will you cower, powerless and weak?"

But within Herok's camp, those valor-scarred
Eight thousand hearts that swore they would not care,
Groped blindly toward a life of more than battle.
Yet not a single ork among them dared
To face the challenge in Chief Herok's glare.

Yet Herok's flint-struck gaze betrayed his fear;
He could lose all before the moon descended.
He strove to hold their hearts with words and stories
Of wars they'd shared, of battlements defended,
And asked them, "Will you see our tribe thus ended?"

Eight thousand howls of faith were Herok's answer.
Their chief's reminder shattered legend's trance.
Words writ in ink paled next to bonds of blood;
With Herok all had sworn to take their chance.
He was the arm, and they the iron lance.

Herok is generally quite easygoing about letting people join and leave the tribe. His reaction that night was extremely unusual. He must have felt in Krathis's words what his future would hold.

—Getaft Allthought

But Asok Serpentborn, of gentle voice,
with hair like flax and eyes like polished lead
stared at the sunken soil where she had rested
and knew with mingled rapture and cold dread
That he would follow where the Mahuta led.

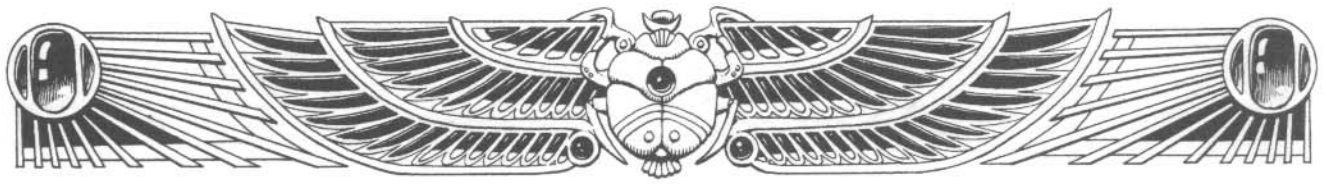
For he alone still felt her urgent plea
To throw off chains of worthless obligation,
To fight no more for coin, but Cara Fahd.
And Asok trembled in anticipation
To join the planter of the Seeds of Nation.

CANTO III: ASOK'S CHOICE

Among the Lancers a full season passed,
No single ork allowed to speak her Name;
For daily Herok feared further rebellion,
While Asok fought frustration and hot shame
That tore his heart like claws of burning flame.

He saw in each day's dawn an invitation,
To join the growing ranks of Cara Fahd.
Though pain it was to turn against his chieftain,
To leave behind a path he'd always trod,
Yet her words tore like blades at his gahad.





In private he bespoke the noble chief,
Whom till that day, he'd loved as well as life;
Each morning hoped that Herok's mind had changed.
But orders stood, an icy-edged steel knife,
That stabbed each Lancer's soul with endless strife;

Till Herok's anger drove him to commit
A crime so foul it tore tradition's seams.
He killed four orks who left for Cara Fahd,
Who risked their lives to strive to reach their dreams.
And Asok rose between their hopeless screams.

Still on his golden horse, he raised one fist
In ancient rite of challenge none ignored,
And loosed his rage upon the bloodied chieftain.
Like lava from the earth, gahad outpoured,
And his thin, trembling hand unsheathed his sword.

This portion fairly represents the truth. Asok went crazy when he saw Herok slaying a family who had done no wrong save listening to Krathis Gron. The Lancers' traditions state that if anyone challenges the leader while mounted, the leader must listen. Asok made quite an inspiring picture sitting on that yellow horse of his, fist held high and sword out.

—Getaft Allthought

Though Herok's answering bellow shattered boulders,
Still Asok held, his lanky frame unbending
Against the furious gale of Herok's rage.
The fox had bit the bear, uncomprehending;
The air grew thick with history impending.

CANTO IV: ASOK SPEAKS

No thought for consequence, he raised his sword
And wrote his lesson on Chief Herok's face,
And cried, "True orks, raise arms against this traitor!
For his foul cowardice has stained our race.
Let us now leave for Cara Fahd's embrace!"

And Asok's words took root within his kin,
And stroked their hearts with lines of Mera-a-a-arg's fire.
In rousing voice, like thundra roars in spring,
He told of Cara Fahd, land of desire,
And fanned each heart's longing to burn still higher.

Then Tranko took his lips with storm-brought strength.
Spitting rage like poison, he commanded
They pull their swords from greed, turn minds from pain,
And join the vast battalions that had landed.
Return to Cara Fahd, Passion demanded.

With Lochost's righteous wrath he slammed his fist
Into the ground to shake the very stone.
"No ork must wear the chains of isolation!"

Leave alien lands and carry all you own,
For freedom lies along the journey home!"

At last did quiet Upandal persuade them
Their hands could make far more than horse-hide tents.
In Cara Fahd, their swords would build a nation,
Their clever arms and minds a world invent;
A world no Theran master could prevent.

Though Herok yowled like a wounded tiger,
Fair half his troops set forth to take their chance
With Asok and with Cara Fahd's Mahuta,
Who with one word and not a backward glance
Had broke the arm and shattered Herok's lance.

Actually, Asok only persuaded a third of the Lancers, a fairly large proportion of whom were women, children, metalworkers and so on. About three thousand people followed him out of the camp, but his fighting force is only a tenth of that.

—Getaft Allthought

CANTO V: JOINING CARA FAHD

And when their feet touched blessed Claw Ridge soil,
They fell upon their faces in a bow.
Before the gates of Wurchaz and the Chosen,
They swore with all their hearts a solemn vow;
They had come home, and would not leave it now.

Forever after, Asok's tribe would follow
Wherever Cara Fahd's Mahuta led.
They gave their lives to guard the nation's people,
To follow each command the Chosen said,
For they were hers forever—alive or dead.

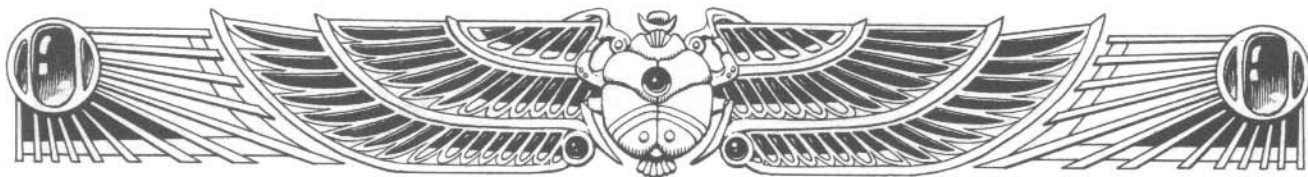
But Herok waits with patience for his vengeance.
The cold rage in his heart will not forgive.
He now is Cara Fahd's sworn enemy.
And to Asok, a promise he can give—
If they two meet again, just one shall live.

Asok exaggerates a bit, but I was there at the time and the gist of the song is true. Herok feared that if he followed Krathis to Cara Fahd, he would lose control of his tribe, for he has ever led more by fear than by persuasion. Many wished to challenge him, but no one dared until Asok spoke up and convinced us to leave. Since then, Asok and his followers have sworn personal fealty to Krathis Gron and Cara Fahd. They have no higher loyalty, and so Krathis made them her primary police force for Claw Ridge, Vutta's Pick Gap and private council meetings.

As the only tribe to form solely for Cara Fahd, the Armbreakers hold a special place in the hearts of its people. The Armbreakers declined to accept a separate tribal land, preferring to control a Claw Ridge neighborhood, with members of the tribe living wherever Krathis assigns them.

—Getaft Allthought





The only place the Armbreakers are special is in Getaft's heart, because she was married to Asok when he left the Lancers and her four-year-old son Hespera is the heir to the tribe's chieftainship. Many Armbreakers are not used to the kind of responsibility they've been given, and a few mugs of hurlg can sometimes loosen their lips about what they've seen in their duties. For those assigned to guard private councils, loose tongues can be trouble.

—Jesfuy Longrunner

THE CELESTIAL DESTINY OF THE THUNDERERS

Titanstroke Greybeard, chief of this tribe, showed little interest in writing what he called "another blasted letter" for the library, but suggested that his wife, Ri'gat the Merciful, knew the ways of the Thunderers and might contribute. An excellent suggestion, and we are indebted to Ri'gat's fair-minded portrayal—a pleasant change after bravado as thick as cat-hurlg.

For those readers familiar with the Passion constellations used with Shantaya's Sextant, please note that the constellations Ri'gat refers to are not the same as those used by Barsaivian map-makers.

—Getaft Allthought

I hear the whispers in the streets of Claw Ridge when my husband and I walk toward a council meeting. They point and say that Titanstroke does not deserve his place at Krathis Gron's side because the Thunderers took no part in the Declaration of Sovereignty. They claim that his advice is false; they say he did not care enough for Cara Fahd to follow Krathis immediately like so many others did, or that the Thunderers are cowards and opportunists who waited until the hardships of the early months had passed before joining the nation. But they are wrong. We had good reason to wait, and it was none of what they say.

It was written in the stars.

THE FORMATION OF THE THUNDERERS

Our people came from Kaer Lekchve'n to the northwest of Throal. Barely five hundred members of our tribe survived the Scourge and the hunger and disease so rampant in life underground. When the kaer's elemental clock had stalled for half a generation, our grandparents knew it was time to emerge and prepared the Ritual of Opening. However, when they broke the great door's seal, a fearsome sight greeted them. There was no sun as they had been told. Instead, the kaer's walls shook with a mighty crash and bright branches of white lit the sky, while lines of water fell like arrows.

After more than thirty generations of dimness and silence, our people were struck dumb by the fury of the elements. For countless moments they remained in the kaer's entrance, not knowing if the great storm meant that the Horrors had won. They could see nothing but sodden darkness, could smell only water, could feel only cold, damp wind washing against them. Then, as they watched, the skies parted and the roiling gray clouds moved aside for the calm peace of night. And in that night shone a hundred thousand tiny lights that seemed to push the storm away.

Almost immediately, our forefathers realized that they had seen rainfall and stars, of which they had read in the *Book of Tomorrow*.

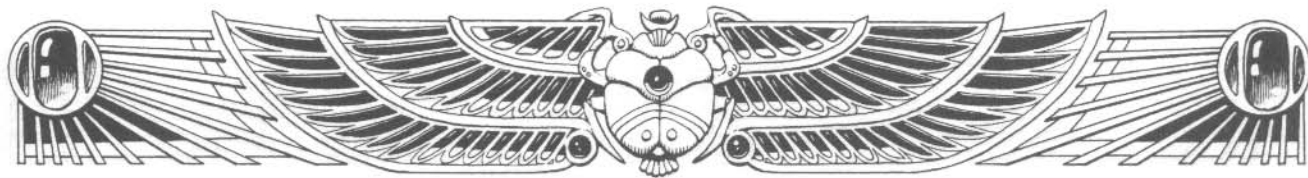
They knew that the stars had only hidden behind the clouds, that they had not truly controlled the storm. But they also recognized that their first impression had revealed the deeper truth of the world's Pattern. For in the stars we see the constellations of the Passions who guide the world and shape it, controlling everything from the force of lightning to the most loving touch of Name-givers.

And we chose the Name Thunderers, for we drew on the power of the storm while realizing that the stars point our way.

On Becoming a Cavalry

For more than sixty years, we traveled through Barsaive, living as raiders—for we remembered the ways of our ancestors, and looked





with scorn on those who built houses and plowed the ground as if they had scarcely left the kaer. We followed the great herds of deer on their migrations; we fed on their meat and on what we stole from towns, for the stars told that this was our time to grow strong.

And as we rode and hunted and raided and grew, we learned to be warriors. We had few adepts in the kaers, for the only one to enter shelter with us was a troubadour who could only teach her Discipline. But once outside, we picked up other adepts, for we welcomed any ork in need so long as he or she agreed to follow our ways. Many of our strongest men and women found that the ways of the beasts sang in them; they bonded with the horses of the Elvegvi Plains, who lived and grew strong alongside us. Others learned the paths of the warrior and archer, and those who traced the pattern of the heavens found themselves drawn to nethermancy or wizardry. Our chiefs encouraged schooling, for it was a time of learning rather than doing.

Then, in one momentous year, a shooting star appeared in the sky as the mother of the child who would become Chief Zrack Lone-Roar gasped in labor. We knew from this sign that Zrack Lone-Roar would bring great changes to our tribe.

Even as an infant, Zrack screamed defiance of every constraint. He grew up restless, dissatisfied with tradition. His father and our chief then, Gluven Arrowhead, recognized his son's brilliance when the lad led his first raid against the Throalic town of Violetdale at age eight, but Zrack's cleverness lay far deeper than simple good tactics. His black eyes saw everything, and his curiosity was boundless. He learned how the world worked—not only the easy patterns of sunlight on plants, the passing of days and the ways of horses, but also the deeper intricacies of trade and the relationships between races. And he saw that orks stood lowest in the eyes of other Name-givers, and that our lives as raiders only supported such views. By shunning trade and taking what we needed, we had exiled ourselves to the fringes of society.

So when the constellation of Chorrolis crossed to lie side by side with that of Lochost, Zrack Lone-Roar saw the sign's meaning: that we could finally accept trade without losing our freedom. Zrack called the Thunderers together almost thirty years ago and announced the new path down which the stars told us to go; from then on, we would be a cavalry rather than a raiding tribe, and we would receive coin and contracts from others in return for our protection. And for this, other Name-givers would give us the respect that our skills and swift minds deserved.

Though many Thunderers protested the magnitude of the change, Zrack persuaded us to accept it. He gave us uniforms to wear in place of our tattered leathers—midnight blue to show that we were as relentless as the night, and golden trim to symbolize the power of the lightning and the stars. As years passed and we fulfilled every contract with honor and pride, our confidence grew and others learned to trust us. Soon all Name-givers knew that a contract with the Thunderers was as if chiseled in stone.

ON LIFE AS A CAVALRY

Titanstroke Greybeard, our Chief-General and son of the great Zrack Lone-Roar, succeeded his father when Zrack was killed in battle protecting a Throalic caravan in which rode young Prince Neden himself. We often worked for Throal because Titanstroke appreciated King Varulus's opposition to slavery, and because the dwarfs' coin came quickly and reliably.

Save for the end of raiding, little else changed in the tribe, for we retained many of our ways and customs. We trained our sons and daughters as soldiers, rather than accepting any menial who wished to join our ranks as they do in Herok's Lancers. We gave our children free choice of their destinies, but many saw nobility in war, and almost always more than a quarter of our number were in the saddle and ready to fight. The rest contributed otherwise to the Thunderers' welfare—preparing food, clothing and tools, bearing and caring for our children, studying and revering the Passions. I chose early to give up training for war and devote myself to comfort and healing.

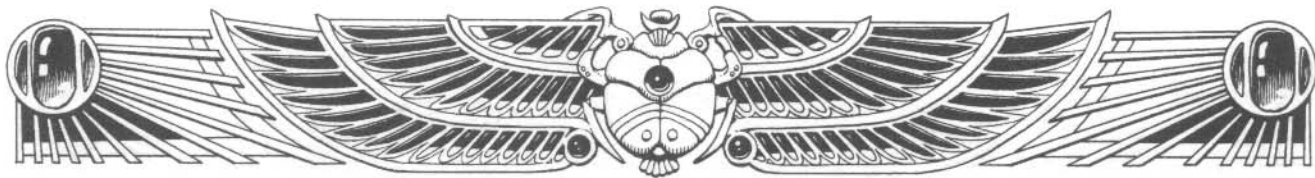
On Training

We let our young decide for themselves if they wish to become adepts, and every adept in the tribe of whatever Discipline makes himself available to an interested student. Only after achieving First Circle can an adept begin training with the cavalry. Non-adepts who wish to become soldiers must apprentice to an older rider for a similar time.

Before beginning their war training, cadets spend a week alone with each other, allowing them to become friends before subjecting them to the pressure of working together. Usually, the children split naturally into groups of four to nine people whose talents and personalities blend well. These groups, the *cerri*, receive a private tent and instructor and train together from then on, only separating to spend holidays with their families. They learn to think and work almost as closely as a cavalryman and his horse.

When its members are grown, the *cerri* become the base units of our cavalry, for their cooperation makes them astounding fighters. Naturally, many often choose group Names, and if they are adepts, this tightens their mutual bonds to the point where many develop abilities and magics available only to their group.





Ri'gat has the right of it. I have fought against Star's Light, one of the best-known cerri. They were six to our fifteen, but half my companions fell before we retreated. The secrets of Thunderer training should be shared with all orks.

—Tresseg Heatsky

On Worship of the Passions

Our tribe appreciates the orderly, from the pattern of the stars to the workings of a well-trained cavalry to our worship of the Passions. I know many orks say that Passions should be worshipped only when the mood strikes, but anyone who studies the ways of the universe can see that the Passions design everything for order and balance. They would not have shaped the constellations to their images if they did not want us to follow the stars' movements and act as they dictate.

Though we feel each Passion in us at times, just as all orks do, we do not give in to the impulse to worship whenever it takes us. Instead, we set aside certain holidays to worship each Passion when his or her constellation is closest to the earth. We ask favors of them as a tribe, not as individuals, using the prayers our ancestors composed before entering the kaers so that they would not forget the Passions during the long years of darkness and quiet. Many of our fellow orks claim that these practices offend the Passions or constrain them, but I have felt the Passions' pleasure in my heart when I recite the old words.

Few Thunderers become questors, for closing your mind to all but a single Passion often creates madness. All thirteen Passions have their place in the workings of the Universe. To close yourself off from any is like trying to live with only a heart and no brain, or for the earth to stay green with only sun and no rain. Only when a person's gahad grips him so strongly that he cannot live with it do we know that he must quest, for that Passion's choice has already warned off the others.

ON CHOOSING CARA FAHD

When our people read the Seeds of Nation, they became dissatisfied with our way of life. We had thought that a mercenary cavalry allowed us the best of both worlds, for we warred as orks and yet lived without fear of law or revenge-seekers. But Krathis Gron's words touched us; she made us realize that though we fought against slavery by working for Throal, we had not fought for orks.

And so our greatest diviners turned to the skies—but for six full turns of the moon, the stars said nothing. Though we ached with longing to join Cara Fahd, we remained where we were, no longer content to work for pay but uncertain about our future.

Then, on the very day of the Declaration of Sovereignty, the skies themselves rejoiced at the freedom of orks. As the constellations of Upandal, Thystonius, Lochost and Astendar moved together, a shower of stars fell from the sky, a fiery rain that pointed south—for the stars, too, wished to join Cara Fahd's cause.

One star seemed to hover over the promised land, and for the first time in his life, my husband Greybeard felt a diviner's ecstasy. His eyes shone with the skies' light, and he declared that we would journey to Cara Fahd and become its greatest protectors. For this purpose alone, our ancestors were compelled to train as warriors rather than settling as simple farmers. We would be tied to Cara Fahd forever, and would defend its soil and its leaders until the whole world acknowledged us or every Thunderer had spilt his last drop of blood.

Rejoicing, we took our possession onto our horses' backs and rode without stopping until we had reached our new home.

On Life in Cara Fahd

Krathis Gron welcomed us as she does everyone, but out of respect for my husband's years of experience as general of our cavalry, she asked him to become her advisor on military matters and affairs of state. Titanstroke gladly agreed, for he had hoped that his training and expertise would not go to waste in a land that at first needed builders more than warriors.

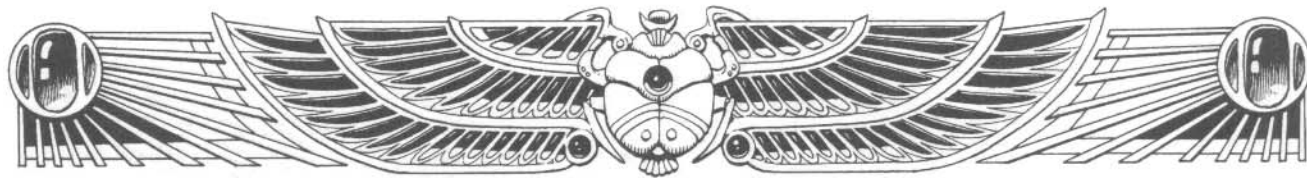
Many of us were happy to settle after so many years of moving from place to place at the behest of new employers. Titanstroke soon bargained for and won control of a large territory almost directly south of Claw Ridge. While he and his warriors patrol Cara Fahd's borders to protect travelers from Therans and scorchers, the rest of us have built houses and mobilized to protect our territory from Broken Fang ruffians trying to expand theirs at our expense.

Unlike many tribes who cannot change when the times call for it, we did not regret leaving our nomadic ways, for we had kept them by need rather than by choice. Now we are building towns and laying roads, for we have come home to a place that we will never leave.

On New Revalk

My son Uyaj Monkeyquick is an adventurous, creative lad at only nine years old, and he spends most days walking through the woods looking for magical weapons and great monuments of ancient Cara Fahd. His first find was by far his best; only an hour's walk from the forest's edge lay the rough-hewn bricks of old buildings, cobblestones rubbed flat with time and even the half-crumbled steps of an ancient temple of Astendar. We called the best scholars in our tribe and in Claw Ridge to see what Uyaj had found inside the temple: a mound of ancient clay tablets whose writing was still legible.





The library is hard at work translating the ancient formal or'zat, but we learned quickly that the ruins were the city of Revalk, famed in ancient Cara Fahd for its arts. On the night of our great discovery, though rain fell in sheets, the clouds never moved to cover the constellation of Astendar, and we knew that she smiled on our find. Through us, Revalk would once again live as a great city.

Though the ranks of our cavalry remain closed to anyone not of our blood, we need far more than our two thousand orks to run a city, and so have opened New Revalk to all Name-givers. We are building rapidly, repairing the old ruins when possible and using the trees we clear away as lumber for new homes. Already, more than a thousand settlers have come, among them several entrancing troubadours and at least one questor of Astendar.

Though the city is being built in part to honor the ancient arts it enshrined, reality tells us that war against the Therans is coming soon, and so we have surrounded New Revalk with a sturdy stone wall. In addition, Titanstroke set aside the city's southern half to house soldiers and horses, so that our city may have its defenders nearby.

ON THOSE INFLUENTIAL IN THE THUNDERERS

We do not require those in the tribe who influence us most to always agree with each other, or even with the ways of the tribe; as we have learned, we must be open to the idea that change may come more than once in a tribe's travelings.

Titanstroke Greybeard

Our Chief-General is Krathis Gron's closest advisor, for he alone realizes the care that goes into planning a war and leading a nation. Because of this, she trusts his advice far more than the hot-headed words of the bandits who share the council with him. He alone among them truly respects her and does not covet her power. He wishes only to use his talents as he always has, in command of his cavalry. He has achieved Seventh Circle as both a cavalryman and a warrior adept, and received a medal of valor from King Varulus himself for his efforts in battle against the Skull Whargs.

Titanstroke is nearing forty and has led us for more than twenty-five years. Though his beard and hair turned gray at eighteen, his body remains strong and his mind active. He has thirteen children, and I, his fourth wife, expect the fourteenth before war begins. However, he spends little time in New Revalk with me these days; more often, he is patrolling or talking with Krathis Gron. I think our time together will end soon, when they marry, for no more suitable ork exists to work beside our High Chief and father her heirs.

Haracha Hawkhunter

Titanstroke's cousin Haracha, a beastmaster, leads the cerri Star's Light, our fiercest cavalry unit. She and Titanstroke married when quite young and parted after the birth of his twin heirs, Zracken and Varull, who jointly lead the Ground Storm cerri. Ground Storm is our only thundra unit.

Haracha does not care for the stars' portents, and resents the time Titanstroke spends on bettering Cara Fahd. She believes he should care only for the Thunderers, not for other orks or our nation. Only a few heed her in these matters, but many respect her advice as a soldier. She thinks as directly as the beasts she so loves, demanding that we fight Thera now. These rash words, sadly, gain her many hearers.

Zajan Crook-Knee

Many years ago, Zajan rode in my husband's cerri, Freedom's Call, until a fight to protect the town of Greenleaf from a corrupted Liferock left him with a broken leg that healed crookedly. He can no longer walk or ride without crippling pain. He has since devoted himself to Garlen, to heal others' injuries and to protect the tribe, but he was never happy being carried in litters from place to place.

When we arrived in Cara Fahd, Zajan found his destiny as surely as Titanstroke had. He befriended Krathis Gron and settled in Claw Ridge, where he would no longer be subject to the agony of travel. Zajan runs a shrine of Garlen in the city, and from there organizes questors to assist Krathis and care for a small portion of the city's wounded. He and Titanstroke remain friends, and the two spend long hours with Krathis Gron discussing more and better ways of protecting Cara Fahd.

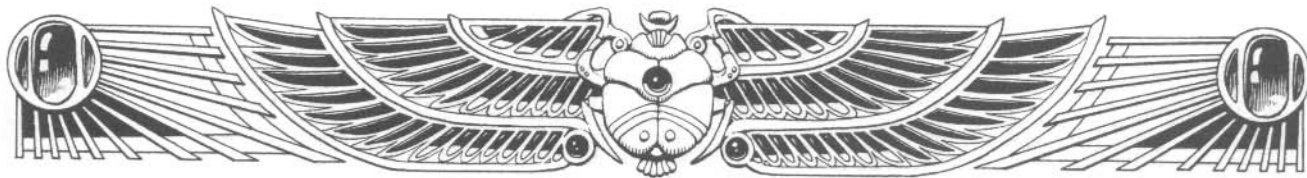
A FEW WORDS FROM REJRUK'S FOXES

This was the first document to arrive in my library. It was written by Rejruk Softpaws, chieftain of the indigenous Carad tribe Rejruk's Foxes.

—Getaft Allthought

I'm sure that after you're done playing monkey-troop games with the Broken Fists, or Metal Skulls, or whatever they call themselves this week, you'll get around to asking about a real ork tribe—so here's what you need to know about Rejruk's Foxes.





We aren't nomads, really, and we're older than you might think. Our people came here after the Scourge (we didn't keep track of just when) and settled in a village they called Gevosht to farm after a couple of treks through what used to be Landis showed us that orks still weren't too welcome there. Don't think that just because my Name is Rejruk that I founded the tribe or that we're some short-lived, copper-stealing bunch of bandits. We've been around for a while. As for me, I took the Name Rejruk just like all our chiefs do because we want to show that our tribe will stick around through anything outsiders or bad leaders throw at us.

I won't bore you with our mighty war history, because it's a long list of getting our kneecaps handed to us by anybody with more than a hundred cavalry. We don't like fighting when we're outnumbered two to one. Or ten to one. But don't toss this letter aside just because we're small. Size isn't everything—and we are more important to Cara Fahd than you may know.

ON THE CITY OF GEVOSHT

You may recognize the Name Gevosht. That farming village founded by our seven hundred ancestors has since become the second-largest city in Cara Fahd, because we know that a nation needs industry and trade and centers of learning if it's to amount to anything. And frankly, obsidimen may grow beards before those "advisors" of Krathis Gron's figure out that pearl of wisdom. So we've been sending our men to help Ibja Stonesplitter and his road builders in Claw Ridge, and raising our own houses and markets in Gevosht to attract city orks so that Claw Ridge isn't flooded with them.

Gevosht is the only city in Cara Fahd that was planned from the start and looks it (no offense meant to you in Claw Ridge). Our cobblestone streets are straight, with signs at every corner. Our buildings are all simple and serviceable, and we keep businesses to the outskirts of town so that they are more easily accessible from the roads.

Of course, while we were building all this to help out our fellow orks, we've had certain problems. For example, our farms used to lie on land just south and east of Claw Ridge. That's right, the same land you folk in Claw Ridge so cheerfully gave away to the Broken Fang and Metal Fist. They trampled our crops into the ground before we could harvest them—but we didn't complain. Complaining is a waste of time. We set to work building and trading instead.

But then came new problems—like the fact that when the Broken Fang and Metal Fist are busy playing "bull thundra in heat" and butting heads, they don't care who gets in the way. And Gevosht and my tribe are trapped between them. And I'm not going to tell Charok Redhand (who has eight times our numbers) or Bronze Eyes (who has twelve times our numbers) that their blood-swilling scorchers can't come into town to water their large, ornery, sharp-horned beasts.

So we adjusted, and now we're making silvers off them. We use their money to pay craftsmen, so trading companies flock to us. But those tradesmen come to me to keep order when the Fists and Fangs get full of themselves, and ask what I intend to do about it. I'd like to tell the scorchers that they can't use my town for a battleground whenever a Broken Fang swordmaster swaggers into a tavern and tells a Metal Fist rider that she can feel his "little fang." But that would just get us a beating, so instead we sit quietly and clean up the mess afterward. And it's a *big* mess. Have you ever seen a cavalryman's horse run into a tavern to rescue her from danger? Then you have some idea what happens when a small herd of thundra beasts does the same.

But when I ask if you can make a few rules to help us, it's not a complaint. Think of it as a bargain, because Rejruk's Foxes don't need more aid than we can give in our own way. And we've got some skills you might find useful.

OUR PARTICULAR TALENTS

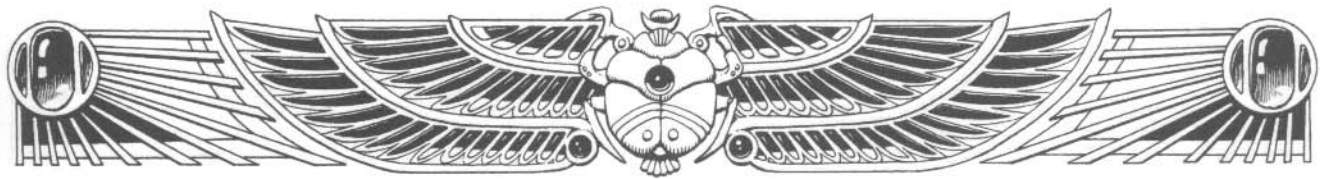
In Throal, we'd probably be called a cavalry rather than a tribe because we've sold our services, but fifty riders isn't enough to do much as warriors—especially with horses and orks who are kind of scrawny, compared to the bruisers in so many other tribes. But we're a lot better than anyone else at scouting. And screening. And breeding faster horses and lighter cavalrymen. If you've ever seen an archer or scout adept sprint, you have an idea what our cavalry does.

And our customs may do you more good than any code of honor or legendary feats. Our rite of passage, the *Ni-basaal-cutcro*, requires us to catch a wren or weasel in the forest with our bare hands and bring it back alive. Without passing this rite, no Fox can be accepted as an adult. The rite proves that we have the skills to survive on our own, the commitment to stick to an assigned goal even if it's not the most interesting, the stealth and light touch needed to complete such a task and the level-headedness not to be distracted by fighting or wanderlust. Until a Fox shows these skills and commitment, no one would consider him or her able to give fully to adult obligations like marriage or child-raising.

And the skills of the *Ni-basaal* carry over into other areas. For example, capturing a wild animal is simple compared to stealing a Theran soldier's horse when a Theran army is camped right across the Greenheart River, full of adepts just looking for the chance to chop up some orks. Do you begin to see the uses of our abilities?

Don't get me wrong. We're not thieves. But a thief's speed and stealth can come in handy. After all, it's hard to fight what you can't see and can't catch.





Let me give you another for-instance. Say you've got two thousand troops crossing through a mountain pass on their way somewhere, but the two thousand in the lead can't talk to the other three thousand further back in the mountains. So you send messages—which sometimes can wait, but sometimes it's a warning. And if your scouts are hurrying back to tell the reserves about the second column of enemy soldiers heading their way, victory or defeat comes down to who's got a faster airship or faster horse. And I know we only have one airship. Are you beginning to see it now?

We've trained in every terrain from the plains of Landis to rivers, jungle and forest. We've ranged into the Twilight Peaks and Delaris Mountains and even gotten a good look at the Horrors up at Stormhead. And what we've done before, we can do again.

So when I suggest that you come down to Gevosht and visit sometime, preferably with some spare adepts or a few of Asok's less rowdy Armbreakers to help us out against the Metal Fists who're choking the Throalic ale-sellers who water their hurlg, it's a trade. You make sure thirty hatchet-wielding raiders with arms as thick as their skulls don't turn Cara Fahd's second-largest city into firewood, and we'll be there whenever you need us. For war, for sending messages to Throal, for the karvusta or anything else suited to our talents. We can also keep secrets, which is why I'm not bragging about our history and people. If you want to know more of us, talk to me. Once I know I can trust you, you'll find out. But not before.

IMPORTANT PERSONS AMONG US

Important is as important does, my mother used to say. All it means is that if others trust you to lead them, then you better be worthy of that trust.

Rejruk Softpaws

If you want to talk to the woman who can get Crosi Halftusk out of Throal, past the Skull Whargs and Bloodlores and into Wurchaz in two weeks without using an airship or a single one of your soldiers, follow the road to Gevosht (and please tell someone to shore it up with logs before the rainy season) and look for any of the women with silver-tipped tusks.

They know how to find me. I'm about six feet three, with light brown hair, blue eyes and ruddy pink skin, and I'll be wearing a fox-fur sash. We can go hiking, and if you can keep up, I'll tell you about the Foxes' tradition of running and the creation legend that tells why we follow the fox. And I can introduce you to our cavalry adepts, who'll show you just how fast they are (and they're not bad on a horse, either).

Odheru Thundravoice

You probably already know my eldest daughter, Odheru Thundravoice (don't let the Name fool you—she's out of her bossy phase, though she can shout down anyone when necessary). I've hardly seen her since she traipsed off to Wurchaz and devoted herself to your service, but I hear you've got a dozen wizard and scholar hangers-on, so you may not have paid attention to her. Odheru spent a lot of time in Landis going through the ancient libraries, and I think she's currently taking advantage of her scout training to map Cara Fahd for the library you hope to build in Claw Ridge. She's been working without pay or thanks so far, or a decent escort into the southern jungles. Now, I'm not telling you how to reward loyalty, but she'll be running the Foxes some day, and I'm sure she'd like a city that's flourishing, not a battleground between bullies. You might want to think about that. Meanwhile, if you ever need to find me, just look for her and your message will get here. Quickly.

A REPRIMAND OF ZARASS'S CHARGERS

Terath the Contemplative kept his Chargers in Throal, but he claims to wish Cara Fahd well. When he heard we were gathering material on the tribes for our library, he donated this correspondence between himself and his daughter Zarass Icethought, so that we might have an inside view of a dissenting opinion (as if we are all completely unified here!).

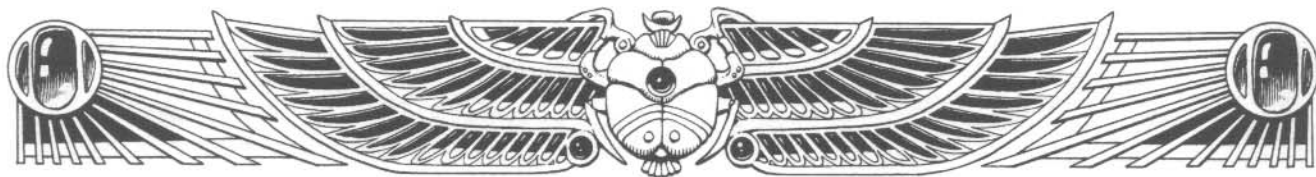
—Getaft Allthought

To My Daughter Zarass,

You know I disapprove of your rash decision to join Cara Fahd. I have sympathy for the nation, though my duty lies with Throal and the people who depend on me. Had you asked, I would gladly have given my blessing to you and any who chose to join the ork nation. But your decision to run away with the two hundred warriors and horses I put in your charge opened my eyes to the complaints your brother has ever made concerning your behavior.

I hear that you spoke to your fighters, commanding them to love freedom "like real orks" and to "prove themselves worthy" by joining Cara Fahd to destroy Thera without relying on "decaying dwarf kingdoms" to do so. Now I ask you, daughter, to tell your people that if they wish, I will take them back. If you truly care for freedom and not just killing, you will give them that choice. Many of those who followed you left behind wives and young ones, for you gave them no warning. It must be hard to adjust to a strange land while fighting all the time and with nothing of home to comfort them.





You are also welcome to return. Though it will be long before you have my trust again, my love stays with you always. But know also, daughter, that if you bring war with Thera upon yourself, I will pray every night to Mynbruje that they have mercy on you, for you can expect no help from me.

Terath the Contemplative
Borrum 21, 1509 TH

Father,

You are a fool. My warriors were miserable in Throal just as I was—just as any ork would be who loves freedom more than perfumed dwarf toadies. We need no families, and we spit on your pity and your aid.

We are an important tribe here, far more than mere watchdogs licking the feet of Varulus and now Neden. Here, every ork who can fight is given real respect, and you know I have bested those twice my size and age.

When my cavalry arrived, Krathis Gron welcomed us. She knew of your reputation for cowardice and that you cared more for the choking dust of libraries than the clean dirt of the plains. But she thanked me for my courage in breaking out of your scroll-bound ways and joining Cara Fahd, by granting me land large enough to hold twice the two hundred riders I brought. And I have since filled that space, for the Elf Eaters followed me out of Throal. Likewise the Righteous Vipers, a small but fierce local tribe, joined my people to learn warfare from my legendary skill.

We live here as our ancestors did, before you sold us to dwarfs for the money to buy plate mail and your precious books. We fight for ourselves, living off the land's bounty and the small western villages, where humans and dwarfs still dare linger. Every morsel of food they raise is stolen from our land, and so we reclaim it to feed ourselves. Unlike the land granted to you by Throal, which you don't even own, our territory is ours forever. We roam across it whenever the mood strikes us, planting our tents at night, for no one may put up dwarf-style buildings in *my* land. Our horses graze freely on our wide plains, within sight of a thin veil of trees to the west that the upnort think hides them from our eyes (they are wrong).

But even this paradise is endangered, for Krathis Gron is falling prey to the cowardice that comes to leaders of too many. Lately, her words have begun to sound as soft as yours. You may smile to hear that she wishes to ally with Throal, but the orks of Cara Fahd will not stand for such betrayal of everything for which we came together. If Krathis tries to force those dwarf dung on us, we will create our own nation where we may live like orks, and we will war against Thera alone if we must. The Passion Tranko guides us; we cannot fail. And I shall lead, for in Cara Fahd the throne lies not with a doddering monarch or his incompetent son, but waits for her who *finds* it! And I am close, father, very close.

The ruins of ancient Cara Fahd lie beneath the southern jungle near the Greenheart River, and their magic will surpass anything Throal or even Thera has. I will use that magic to become Queen of Cara Fahd. My people stand behind me, along with other orks whose gahad burns for freedom. We do not need books and writing! Ork hands are made to hold swords, not pens. We are not yet strong enough to challenge Thera or Krathis, but we will be soon, for I can feel the ancient city's pull. The magic waits there, and the throne.

I may see you again soon, Father, but not when I return to Throal to ask your aid and forgiveness. I will see you when you travel to Cara Fahd, to ask my blessing to enter as the father of its sovereign. Then, perhaps, you will see then that I can be as merciful as you ... to those who deserve it.

Zarass Icethought

I don't know what this "ancient city" is, but Zarass exaggerates her troops' capabilities. She has gained only a few hundred more followers, mostly local and with more enthusiasm than training. And she is not a kind leader. Her people are as bloodthirsty as she, but even they keenly feel their lack of unity. They have no history to bind them together, and many Chargers are reaching desperately for anything to give them a sense of pride. Their anger and frustrated ambition opens them to all kinds of perils: to the persuasive words of troublemakers like Zarass, or perhaps even to Horrors. Be careful if you ever meet Zarass, for her temper may erupt without provocation.

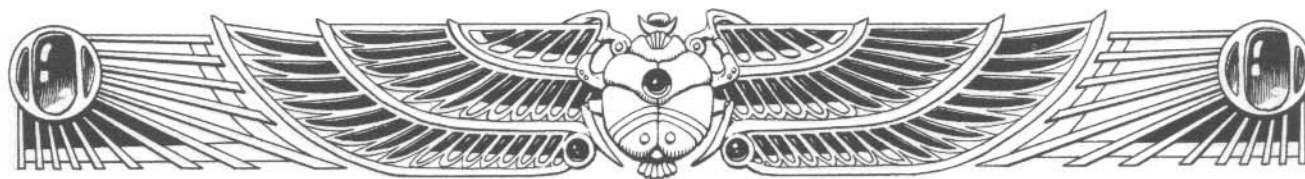
—Getaft Allthought

THE ROYAL GRACE OF THE FISTS OF FAHD

This document was presented to me in silver leaf on a copper-framed parchment by Luvdug, a relation of Chief Moschtug. Exactly what relation confused me; one report said Luvdug was Moschtug's second son and another that he was Moschtug's nephew, son of his half-sister Granuk. I soon found that both were true. Such things are not unusual in the Fists of Fahd.

Further, I must elaborate on his supposed connection to Cathon Grimeye. The tablets he speaks of were cut and artificially weathered, and found in an old grain mill. In other words, fakes. But at least part of his claim is valid, and knowledge of it has spread among





many orks who grow rich from his mines (and to Yadd Ergrumm, who has gotten even richer from them). For these reasons, Krathis Gron gave him a place on the council.

I should warn the reader that Moschtug penned this document himself, so do not scoff at it in his presence.

—Getaft Allthought

To the orks of Barsaive,

It is time you recognized the King of Cara Fahd, Moschtug the First, for you now have the honor of reading his first proclamation. Though King Moschtug the First has lived the free and simple life of a dauntless, glorious ork cavalryman, I have learned to write as befits my high station.

This transformation from valiant hero to noble king occurred one night in the throes of gahad. I received a vision from the Passion Tranko, who said in a shining voice to enter the ruins far to the south, for there lay a treasure beyond imagining that would lead me to countless victories in the Name of Moschtug and Cara Fahd.

And as I dug in the tower's ruins, humbled like a slave (but still ever majestic), I discovered etched into stone tablets words of silver, a recounting of the lineage of Cathon Grimeye's son Vendruj, and his son Wilbrag, and so on for sixty generations, ranging through the lands of Cara Fahd until it ended with Schrumflo the Lucky, my grandfather. Thus, when you read this document, you can sleep soundly knowing that Moschtug the First is descended from Cathon Grimeye, the last king of old Cara Fahd, and he shall defend you from Theran and Horror alike.

OF THE RICHES AND MIGHT OF THE FISTS OF FAHD

The Fists of Fahd have trained fearsome cavalry for as long as the sun shines in the sky, and we are nearly half thundra and half horse, a claim no other cavalry can make. Our fifty-eight cavalry will lay their lives down for Cara Fahd, and our families of three hundred and fifty more add to our numbers every day. Yet we know that one does not rule by numbers alone. One rules through purity, and through remaining true to the ancient wisdom of Cara Fahd that flows through the veins of King Moschtug and his descendants. I carry this wisdom in my own body; it is instinctive to me, as a true son of the great Cathon Grimeye. And in its ways I have instructed all my tribe.

Truly, the ways of the Fists remain unsullied by the touch of the low-born. We have never practiced Naming rituals that weaken our Patterns with foreign words. Such appellations as "Redhand" and "Bronze Eyes" twist in our pure ork mouths. We do not need Throalic tongues or nicknames translated from dwarf-speak when the pure syllables of or'zet run off our tongues like water. And we have never taken coin from foreign Name-givers who think we should be paid to die for them. We have always lived by the land and our wits, permitted to survive and thrive by virtue of my great wisdom. So it has been, and so it always shall be.

On Copper Cauldron

After our steadfast loyalty to Krathis Gron on her homecoming trail, I settled my people in the town of Copper Cauldron and invited thousands of our fellow orks to take advantage of our bounty. The silver, copper and iron mines near the town produce much of Cara Fahd's valued metals, so our riches exceed those who till the ground for coins.

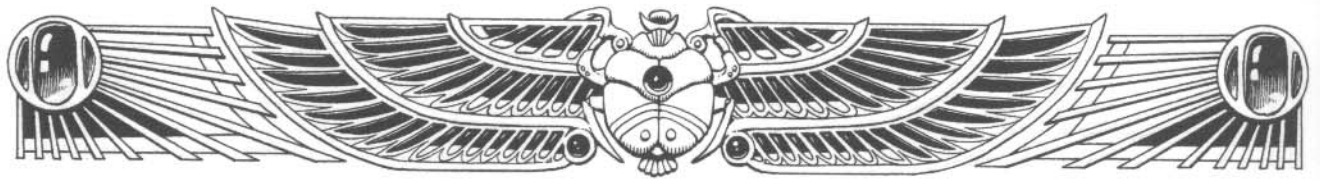
Though the humans who once lived in my capital of Copper Cauldron have long since left our borders, the orks of the town pledged their silver and support to my rightful recognition as monarch. Copper Cauldron may now be only a few bark and wood houses with dirt roads, but it will soon be the capital of all Cara Fahd, mightier even than Claw Ridge. Its mines lie ten minutes' walk to the west, but under my grand tutelage, I shall expand Copper Cauldron right up to the mines' very doorstep.

My own palace in my capital is constructed of stone as stout as my body, rising a mighty two stories into the sky. The door is covered with the purest brass that shines in the morning sun as brightly as the history of Cara Fahd. There I hold court each morning to almost a dozen people who come to ask me questions. I answer all of them as my great wisdom instructs me.

On the Purity of the Fists of Fahd

Though Krathis Gron has not yet proposed marriage to me, I know that she soon will. To properly honor such a historic event, the Fists of Fahd will change even our most valued traditions. In order to keep our line pure, the chieftains of the Fists of Fahd through whom Cathon Grimeye's blood still flows have made sure to marry only others of the same royal line. As surely as such matings produce fine horses and strong thundras, they have produced me and my children. I shall make an exception for Krathis Gron, however, because she is descended from Hrak Gron and is therefore a suitable mate.



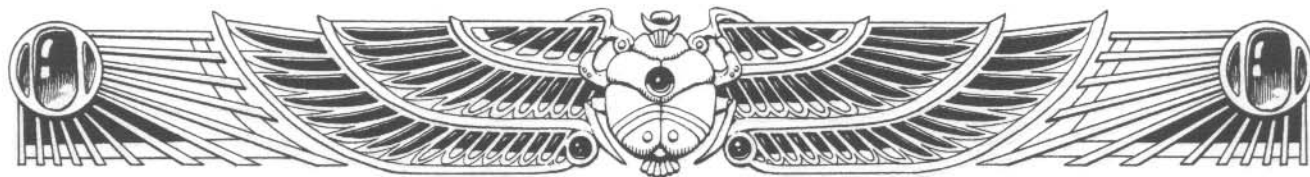


OF KING MOSCHTUG'S ROYAL PRESENCE

My muscles are like beaten metal, but little else about me is beaten, for I know not the meaning of the word. Having attained the Sixth Circle as cavalryman and the Fifth as warrior, I can lead the Therans to their doom at our hands. All orks will look up to me astride my thundra Glumphlad, gilt in the silver of Copper Cauldron and decorated in espagra leather as befits the true king of Cara Fahd.

My mighty red beard blazes like Cathon Grimeye's flames, my jutting jaw recalls the mighty crags of Claw Ridge, my unblinking eyes the shape of Cara Fahd itself (though without the muddy rivers, for King Moschtug does not cry) and my stout chest a barrel of pure thundra-fat hurlg. My clenched fist is the Fist of Fahd, and its whitened knuckles send many soldiers reeling in fear. I could not list all my sweeping victories on a petty parchment leaflet. Far better for the troubadours to recite them at my coronation, to keep our ork art of storytelling alive. And now I must have my head fitted for my crown, and so must end this writing. Rejoice that you have touched the words of the true king of the ork nation, Cara Fahd.





ON THE MINOR IMPORTANT TRIBES OF CARA FAHD

Vanyk Auldsinger is a troubadour whose research into ancient Cara Fahd offered an invaluable contribution to this book and Cara Fahd's reformation. She traveled the land before and after Krathis arrived and knows nearly every tribe of more than two hundred people. More than half of the forty thousand descendants of Kaer Carad live in hundreds of tiny tribes, most of which look very similar to outsiders. Though we cannot catalogue them all, below are several Carad tribes and others of note, by virtue of size, voice or trouble-making capacity.

—Getaft Allthought

CONCERNING THE RIGHTEOUS VIPERS

Two years ago, I marched for weeks on end through the Delaris foothills, searching for an ork I heard was descended from royalty. Alone and weary, I was set upon by a dozen bearded raiders who threw me roughly onto a horse. Though I cried for mercy, they dumped me in their camp and bound my hands. They wore undyed horse-skin pants, their chests tattooed with a roughly drawn Carad cobra, hood flared. They ignored my pleas in Throalic, and brought me before their chieftain Orguk only when I asked for mercy in or'zet.

Staring up at the gigantic ork, I feared for my life and my virtue. I begged him to save me from the horrid fate his men had planned and, to my surprise, he replied in city Throalic rather than foothills ork. I spun a quick tale, and when I told him of my mission to find King Moschtug, he scowled, but wished me well. Orguk had only taken over the Vipers recently, apparently after fleeing a misunderstanding in Kratas. Though the Vipers and the Fists of Fahd were enemies since their post-Scourge founding, Orguk had tried to bridge the breach by marrying his daughter to Moschtug's first son. Their alliance seems stable if rocky.

Knowing I was no longer in danger, I asked of their ways. Orguk said they lived entirely off raiding, for they had no interest in farms or herds. With luck, they found hapless travelers through the Delaris, but normally preyed on ork farmers such as Rejuk's Foxes who lived on the southern flood plains, and human miners who found the hills' copper and silver tempting. Their fifty-one raiders rode small sturdy horses of mountain pony stock, neither fast nor strong, but they could survive on little food and climb well.

I thanked them for their mercy and stories, but did not get my silver back.

THE VIPERS TODAY

I had the fortune to return to my Viper friends a few weeks before this writing. They have fallen on hard times since the Declaration of Sovereignty, for they have no fine products, large numbers or noble lineage to offer Claw Ridge, and Krathis largely ignores them, offering no more than the standard welcome.

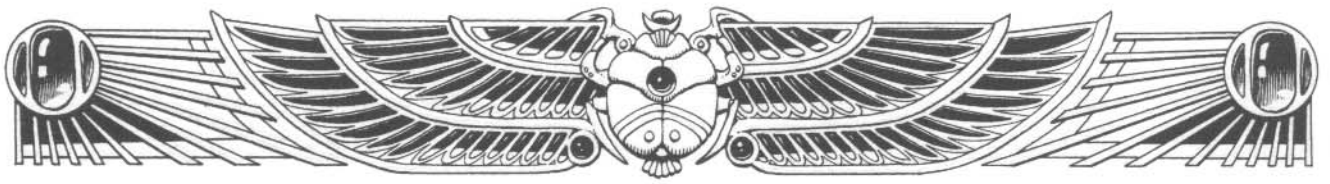
Moschtug, his head swelled further by his elevation to his position as one of Krathis' advisors, decided that the Righteous Vipers should be absorbed into the Fists of Fahd. Since the chieftains' children have recently married to form ties of blood between them, he evidently thought integrating the rest of the tribe was a short step. However, as Moschtug explained his idea, he made a condescending remark about Orguk's intelligence in front of the Council—setting off Orguk's gahad. The two came to blows, though the reparations were quick. They remain allies today, though somewhat cooler in their relationship than before. Orguk's daughter Tirag and Moschtug's son Uvtug are living with the Vipers to raise their infant son.

Orguk, desperate to gain more than the tiny territory Krathis granted him, is reaching for alliances. His plans, I believe, are as nefarious as any scorcher's. He would merge with a larger tribe and gain the chief's favor, then kill to take the position for himself. He did such to gain leadership of the Righteous Vipers after he won the chieftainship in a card game and the old chief refused to leave. Right now, he is cozying up to Zarass Icethought, for his raiders will work with anyone to gain riches or glory. Unfortunately, Moschtug hates Zarass, for she is yet another rival on scale with his real worth, and if Moschtug catches Orguk negotiating with her, their alliance with the Fists of Fahd could be threatened.

MY EXPERIENCES WITH HANKARR'S SPEARS

Three years back, I was traveling between Halsuk Pond and the three shacks that were Thundra's Rest. Searching for the tribe called Bot'Parool, I found scarred, stocky, screaming ruffians who thought I was threatening their camp (though what damage one woman could do to three hundred country orks, I don't know). They wore poorly cured skins and pig leathers and spoke no Throalic, only or'zet, but their habit of hunting vicious boars gave them a speed and accuracy with throwing spears that I remember from the scars I bear. Fortunately, I wear armor despite the forest's heat.





ON THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE BOT'PAROOL

My return to this tribe last month was a pleasant surprise. What I remembered as a tangle of roots was now a passable forest path, and the Bot'Parool ambush site was no longer a gloomy thicket, but a small town of well-patched tents and thatch huts. Instead of wild boars roaming free, I found several pens with calm sows and squealing piglets, and I smelled cooking yams and pork.

Shocked but curious, I knocked at the sturdiest hut's door, and was greeted by a plump, smiling woman dressed in Throalic wool, with an infant on one hip. She spoke the dwarven tongue as if she'd been born to it, but I recognized the customary Bot'Parool marriage scars on her cheeks.

In answer to my questions, she told me the transformation was her responsibility. She was Jekve, the sister of Tergen, the Bot'Parool chieftain, and so according to their traditions her sons would inherit the chieftainship (the men have little faith in their wives' fidelity and consider their sisters' sons more closely related). When she turned fifteen, city orks had begun pouring into Cara Fahd, and Jekve went to Claw Ridge to learn what Krathis intended for the Bot'Parool. She arrived at almost the same time as Hankarr Steelwit, a famous swordmaster from Travar's Founding. Hankarr and Jekve fell in love, and soon married over the protestations of Tergen.

Shortly after the birth of Jekve's son, Tergen died, vaulting the Travar ork to chief of the Bot'Parool. To everyone's surprise, he opened the tribe to city orks who wished to join, and cross-trained the Bot'Parool and his old teammates from the Founding in fighting techniques and adept magic. Traditionalists objected at first, but soon realized the increased size of their tribe and widening of their talent pool effectively transformed them from merely a pig-killing Carad tribe to a landed people.

As soon as all internal resistance to his changes faded, Hankarr reNamed the tribe Hankarr's Spears, for he was impressed with the tribesmen's prowess. In less than a year of training, the tribe has grown to more than a thousand people and its members (who own few horses due to their forest home) make up one of Cara Fahd's premier infantry companies.

Their mix of members from all over Barsaive gives them a curiously metropolitan feel, even in their tent villages. They speak primarily Throalic and sell their services as foot soldiers to Krathis for food from the yerz'eth, for the forest cannot support the swollen population. The original Bot'Parool members and customs seem to have been completely absorbed and submerged, though the tribe still follows traditional Carad practices such as rohodo.

Hankarr is charismatic and personable, the archetypal swordmaster, but I fear underneath he is little better than a common mercenary, for neither he nor his followers care much for Cara Fahd or Krathis. He does not see the glory of Krathis's dream, instead merely seeing a place to live that offers him a steady trickle of silver. The native Carad members are the biggest hold Krathis has on the Spears, for the Bot'Parool will not leave their ancestral home, and Hankarr dotes on Jekve and his son.

CONCERNING THE THUNDERBORN CAVALRY

I first met the Thunderborn Cavalry near the Greenheart River. They are thin, long-legged orks for the most part, certainly far less imposing than almost all other tribes, but what they lack in personal presence they make up for in the element of surprise: they ride the strangest animals I've ever seen. The beasts' faces are flat and cow-like, and their backs rise up the height of a small dwarf in a giant hump. Around the hump they sling saddlebags, and the riders sit low on the creatures' necks, feet touching the shoulders. The animals' legs resemble a thundra's and their tails a cow's, but they are covered with fluffy brown fur, and two immense, wicked horns curl towards the sky.

I couldn't help but ask what these magnificent beasts were called. This was exactly the right question, for though the cavalry is quite fierce and generally unfriendly, none can resist a chance to praise their animals. One ork told me they rode dyres, carefully cultivated from the single herd they found after the Scourge.

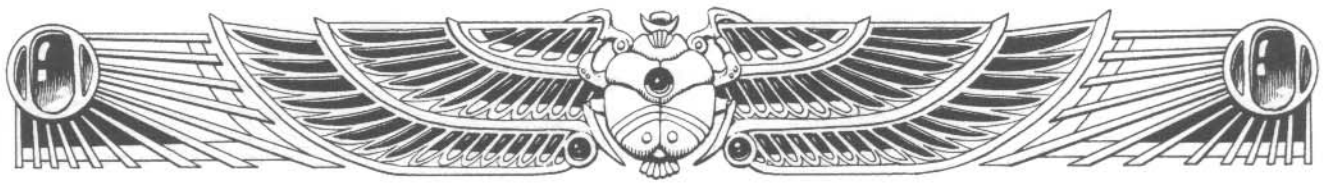
The Thunderborns enjoy a very close relationship with their animals; even non-cavalrymen choose a mount before they reach puberty and train with it until they seem to direct the beasts with a thought. This silent, nearly imperceptible communication may be a result of the animals' awkward shape—the rider's position is precarious, and the animals' mouths are too short and tough for a bit, so subtle leg pressure is the only way to direct them.

Riderless animals they herd, milking and breeding the females and butchering others. As far as I could tell, they subsist almost entirely on dyre products—drinking milk mixed with dyre blood, burning their dung, eating their meat, and wearing their skins. When they need other supplies, they take their hundred riders (out of six hundred members) into Vivane Province to steal clothing, bread, pots and baskets.

THE THUNDERBORN CAVALRY AND CARA FAHD

Until recently, the Thunderborn didn't have a Name; the only outsiders they saw fled in fear, so they referred to themselves simply as "the people." But Hecratinj, their aging cavalrywoman chief, saw that her tribe might be ignored by Krathis Gron, or even worse, absorbed by some part of the thousands of ork scorchers gathering together after the Declaration, and





so looked to ally her tribe with an honorable and powerful force. Unfortunately, the Broken Fang were too proud, and the Metal Fist too set in their ways.

When Titanstroke Greybeard and the Thunderers arrived, Hecratinj studied their ways and discovered they shared several old traditions. After swearing a mutual oath of aid, Hecratinj Named her tribe the Thunderborn Cavalry, and claimed a territory adjoining the Thunderers'.

For the last year, the Thunderborn have invited the best cavalymen and tacticians from all the tribes in Cara Fahd to demonstrate to the Thunderborn their techniques and teach their theories, intently training for the coming war. They say they support Krathis wholeheartedly, but I think they fear an invasion of their homeland by the Therans more than anything. Hecratinj also realizes that military might will be their best bargaining chip with Claw Ridge, for they have little else to recommend them.

Many other tribes call the Thunderborns "horse-killers" for their fighting strategy of impaling enemy horses on one or both horns of their mount and then using the dyres' incredible strength to hurl the hapless animal (and often rider) through the air. This tactic will prove useful against Thera, but it won them no friends among their neighbors.

ON THE FORMATION OF THUNDERAXE'S CLEAVERS

I was present for the official formation of Thunderaxe's Cleavers, such as it was. The Seeds of Nation drew orks from all Disciplines to Cara Fahd, including dozens of ork air sailors from all over Barsaive, and even a few sky raiders and ex-newots from the crystal raider clans. Like many orks who shared a profession, they gathered in a single neighborhood, in this case, southern Claw Ridge. Though these disparate elements held a lot of things in common, the ex-newots brought so many of their highland-troll ways to their new home that this supposedly united group indulged in a good many brawls. After the fourth tavern had to close for repairs and after the thousandth complaint about the cursed, shield-beating racket, Jesfuy pointedly asked the lot of them to make themselves useful or move on.

After this loose conglomeration of like-minded men and women spent several weeks milling back and forth between Harvest and Black Quarry, Gerun Thunderaxe emerged as leader of the group. Yes, *the* Gerun Thunderaxe. The Ninth Circle crystal raider no'a'g'ral turned Throalic air sailor had decided to try his luck in Cara Fahd. Embarrassed by being run out of Black Quarry by the Metal Fist, Gerun decided to make something worthwhile out of his ragtag clan and declared that he and any good sailor was honor-bound to do more in this country than drinking and wenching. They would become admirals of Cara Fahd's new air navy.

Unfortunately, they needed an airship first. It was clear that Krathis couldn't *buy* a ship, and no one had the elemental air or experience to *build* one, so Gerun bellowed he'd do it the sky raider way.

Knowing that stealing a trollmoot's most prized possession was suicidal for any adept, he left with Silash the Ever-Needy, Nirag Shieldchewer and a handful of others on a hot night, leaving a note saying if they weren't back in a month, they should raise a mug for them during the next Thystonius-shout.

Two weeks later, I was woken at dawn by a stout Travaran sky raider Named Yorlk to listen to the sounds of distant battle. Rushing from our inn room in New Revalk, we saw the outline of a small drakkar in the distance. It was difficult to make out distinct shapes at first, and I instantly jumped to the most terrifying conclusion. Gerun had been captured and these were trolls come to take their revenge on Cara Fahd!

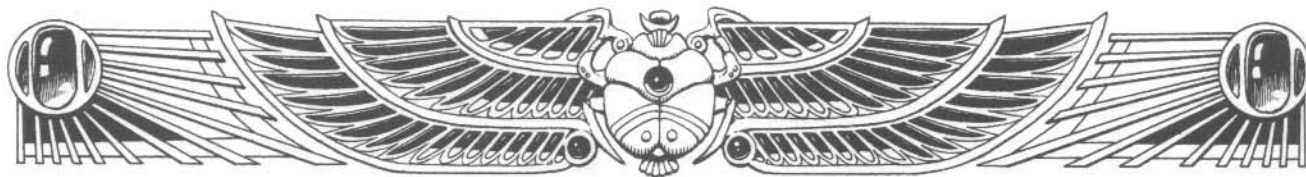
As the ship drew closer, my fears deepened, for we could hear shouts in the troll tongue, and knew that if Gerun was indeed on the ship, he was doomed if trolls yet remained. We quickly roused the entire village, waiting with arrows nocked and swords drawn. Still far off on the horizon, the ship began careening sharply back and forth, as if Vestrial himself was at the helm. On several of the sharp turns, the ship dropped bodies—not gracefully gliding sky raiders, but troll-sized shapes that fell and spattered like ripe vegetables. (We discovered later that unfortunate Nirag was among those shapes.)

The ship plummeted closer, rocking wildly from the battle we now could see raging on its decks. Only a handful of trolls and orks remained, all wounded, and they moved with the weariness and desperation of a long, hard-fought battle. And there was Gerun, moving so fast he seemed half a crew of orks, laying about with his axe like a madman, cursing the trolls as his weapon drove them mercilessly over the edge, smashing their shields and skulls to create the thunderous noise I thought was a cannon barrage.

The remaining orks also fell from the ship, leaving Gerun and one troll still standing. As Gerun advanced on the final troll, the raider desperately crashed into Gerun and held on for his life as the boat keeled sideways. The pop when Gerun's wrist snapped could be heard even over the wind. But Gerun did not grimace, merely heaved the troll off the ship, his own axe falling over the side. But the troll held on with one hand, his muscles straining to climb back to the deck.

Weaponless and smoking with fiery blood, Gerun looked about and found only a meat cleaver stuck into the wood near a raider's unfinished breakfast. Wrenching it free, he brought the blade down on the troll's hand. With a stunned look, the troll watched his fingers fly far away ... with the drakkar.





Gerun grabbed the wheel and righted the ship, bellowing "Behold, Cara Fahd's first airship, the—."

Unfortunately, he was cut off, as Gerun had no crew to help him safely *land* the ship. So Cara Fahd got its first airship dock as well: two hundred yards of chewed-up grass, sprayed sod, and smashed houses outside New Revalk. My thanks to the Thunderers for their understanding.

With a great cheer, the sailors Named themselves Thunderaxe's Cleavers and the ship the *Lost Finger*. In gratitude, Krathis allowed them a small territory near the New Revalk air dock, though they had barely ninety members, not the five hundred required to be recognized as a tribe.

Astute readers may notice how many "Thunder-something" tribes we have. Cara Fahd also holds the Thunderstruck, Thunder Fists, Thunderhooves, Children of Thunder, and my old adventuring group, Mynbruje's Thunder. I think thunder impresses scorchers because it's the only thing that can drown out their parties.

—Getaft Allthought

ON THE ELF EATERS

I have spent little time with these blood-thirsty savages. Though they claim to be a great cavalry, they have fewer than a hundred members, and I don't believe they've been closer to a battle than a midnight throat-slitting.

But they are dangerous. Those hundred used to work as a Throalic cavalry (though what the dwarves thought they could *do* is beyond me). After the Elf Eaters mercilessly beat, trussed, and slaughtered harmless elves at their leader's behest, King Varulus (Mynbruje preserve him) suspended them. When they heard Zarass had left the dwarf kingdom to follow Krathis Gron, the Elf Eaters decided to cut their losses and take to the trail (stealing the weapons and armor the Throalic treasury had provided, I hear).

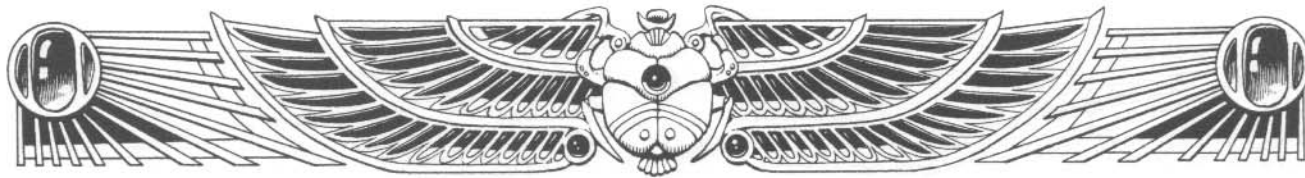
Their sudden arrival in a nation full of orks who aren't intimidated by their pranks has crimped the Elf Eaters' style. I have it on good authority that on his first morning here, one of their marshals imperiously ordered an ork woman quietly reading on a stoop to get him a meal so she might "gain his favor."

This woman was Tresse Heat sky of the Metal Fist. She broke his arm and half his ribs without even putting down her book.

They have been currying favor with the larger tribes since then, but still bully travelers and the human villages to our west unmercifully. They have a particular hatred for Lelisthala, a troll and elf village to the far west, and their atrocities need to end if there is to be peace.

The Elf Eaters live near Zarass's territory and follow her commands and example slavishly, recruiting anyone who can hold a spear or sword and says she wants to gut the Overgovernor. With Zarass's recent absence, however, Sandahg, the Elf Eaters' young, blonde and coldly merciless general, fancies herself next in line to lead the Chargers. When Zarass gets back, she'll turn Sandahg's skin to slippers if Orguk doesn't kill her first to bring his own alliance to a head. Any of the three would poison the other if they thought their position endangered.





ON THE UNIFICATION OF THE TWO-HANDS TRIBE

When I used to scout into the southeastern jungle searching for ancient cities, I faced far greater danger from animals than Name-givers, but on one occasion had the misfortune to build a camp right in the middle of a war ground between the Crawling Knives and the Rumbling Dust. Since the first day the Rumbling Dust moved into Knives territory from further west, the two Carad tribes hated one another.

The footmen fought without skill or precision, cutting each other down with bows and spears (though not handling them nearly as well as the Bot'Parool). I quickly retreated from the battle ground, but stayed on in their territories to learn the source of their fierce enmity. It sprang from the fact that the Dust had been marrying with Galeb-Klek humans in the western villages, and though the children of such matings were largely ork, they had adopted many human customs and treated their human relatives as equals. The Knives claimed that the Dust's tradition of keeping a single mate and mourning their dead was a corruption of ork ways, and were determined to destroy them to rout out this abomination.

At first I thought this war irreconcilable, but now the tribes have joined under the Name Two-Hands to take advantage of Krathis's territory offer, proof that money cools a burning heart—for land is often better than money in Cara Fahd. I immediately went to their small land deep in the jungle to put this event to parchment.

The old chief of the Knives had died in the last year, and the son, Hekyejek, grew tired of the senseless war. Instead of fighting, he chose to talk to the Dust chieftain's daughter, born of a human woman, to learn her tribe's culture. The two convinced the girl's father that their marriage would seal an alliance, allowing them to claim a larger territory and influence in Cara Fahd.

Interestingly, their territory is in the direct path of the Basstown and Kerup anti-ork resistance, but the humans seem to respect the Two-Hands' human blood and ways and do not attack them. Indeed, Hekyejek managed on one occasion to stop a battle between Ilfehena's forces and a Claw Ridge caravan, convincing the Basstowners that he would speak for their troubles to Krathis.

Krathis believes the Two-Hands are an example orks should follow, and our best hope for peace with our neighbors. Tresseg Heatsky, though not overly sympathetic toward humans, has befriended Hekyejek, for the peaceful integration of the two ork tribes foreshadows what she ultimately hopes to accomplish with the Broken Fang and Metal Fist. Perhaps Mera-a-arg can conquer Tranko yet.

The Two-Hands understand my words better than most orks. If we cannot befriend other Name-givers, we cannot hope for a nation ever at peace, within or without.

— Krathis Gron

ON THOSE MYSTERIOUS ORKS KNOWN AS NAMDROTH

I know no one privileged enough to see the inside of Kaer Namdroth, where the mysterious Namdroth warriors live to this day, or to have heard more than a fraction of their rich history. Theirs is not a secret society, but a society with secrets. I believe they have a spiritual reason for this, related to their beliefs about the Mahuta.

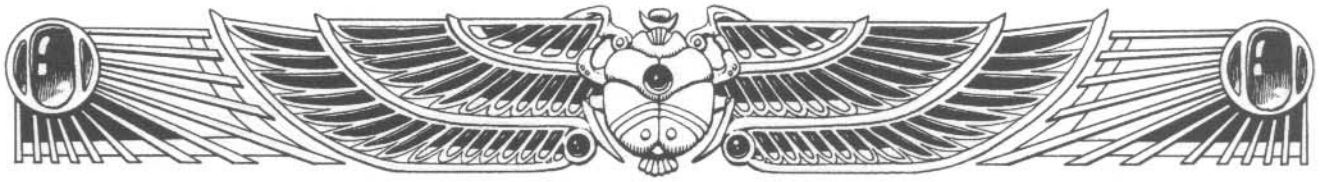
The members I have seen wear loose white robes intricately embroidered with woolen thread. Though these undoubtedly have some mystical significance, I do not believe they are magicians. Only twenty Namdroth members roam Cara Fahd, though they must have a larger group living within their kaer in the Delaris Mountains.

If you believe those few elders that speak to others, the kaer's founders were not a tribe, but an order of warriors who predicted Cara Fahd's downfall and eventual rebirth as far back as King Lugrul's reign. After Cara Fahd fell, the warriors immediately began building their mountain fortress. This became their ancestral home, kaer and retreat from the world. They refused to associate with other Name-givers beyond a few necessary words, claiming that the Passions had chosen them to preserve ork culture, giving them the legend of the Mahuta to spread and support throughout Barsaive.

Namdroth's warrior adepts are unmatched in skill, talent and ferocity. I myself have seen Yelad Diamond-Fist of Namdroth wrestle a thundra to submission and lift an obsidiman over a fence. Yelad is the most senior Namdroth member in Claw Ridge, but he has hinted that the patriarch remains in the kaer, some sixty-five years old! The Namdroth warriors obey Yelad without question and all are frustratingly closed-mouthed, though only on certain topics, with no apparent rhyme or reason to their silences.

They willingly train any young ork in their toughening and sword techniques, and even reveal the source of their effectiveness, but will not share the exact words of the Mahuta legend. I have not heard of a single instance in which an outsider was allowed to join or marry into the Namdroth, and the one member I asked about this peculiarity refused to speak to me again. All we can know is that they have some purpose beyond aiding Krathis.



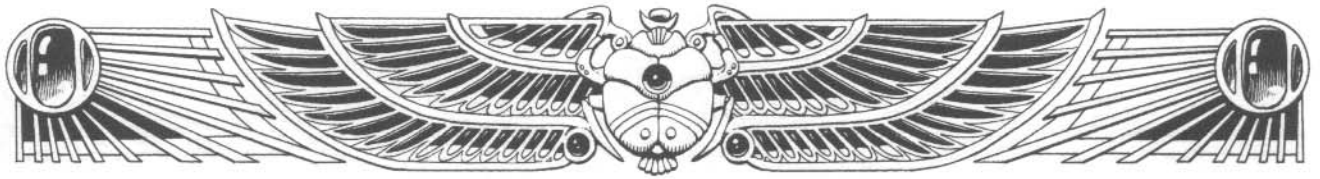


Five nights ago, I saw a Namdroth hanging a human by Nas Bultura Road, and though he noticed my presence, he seemed so sure of his purpose that he did not care what my opinion or reaction might be. "A Theran," he said, killing him as matter-of-factly as if he were tromping through horse dung. "The Mahuta will be protected from them."

How to interpret those words? What to do about it? The dead man said nothing, as did I. But I know there have been other incidences where those who might be considered a threat to the Mahuta were slain preemptively.

Krathis does not trust the Namdroth's refusal to share their knowledge of ancient Cara Fahd, nor does she like their near-worship. She is still trying to court them through friendship, requesting honest responses to her questions, but she grows frustrated and I would not be surprised if she soon resorts to sending karvusta or independent adepts to learn for herself what they won't offer freely.





OF PEOPLE AND PLACES BEYOND THE TRIBES

In addition to our numerous tribes, Cara Fahd is home to many other Name-givers of all races. Humans, trolls, elves, dwarfs and even windlings and obsidimen live within the borders of our nation. Many of these have chosen to accept the sovereignty of Cara Fahd, but others have not, and so are potential enemies within.

The following collection of writings describes some of Cara Fahd's most significant friends and enemies within the nation's borders and the places in which they dwell. It also includes journal entries concerning the deep jungle, where few Name-givers live, but which may hold secrets of vital importance to Cara Fahd.

ON EXPLORING THE DEEP JUNGLE

I fear Zarass Icethought is right to believe that the ruins of Cara Fahd lie hidden in the deep jungle. Many adventurers have contributed their journals and records to our library, and the three excerpts below seemed to offer the most accurate portrayal of the difficulties and rewards of exploring. I found the last one particularly disturbing; it offers insight, but no real answer about Zarass Icethought's strange behavior.

—Getaft Allthought

IN SEARCH OF ANCIENT CARA FAHD

—From the journals of Bograth the Twice-Dead, illusionist
12 Sullus 1509

The jungle day dawns hot and wet, and our fragile map has begun to wilt. We have taken great care to shield it from the constant rain, so the ink is still legible (barely). The words lead us on, maddening though they are; they were written before the time of Shantaya Nightstar, before any part of Barsaive was mapped by airship. This map is the first of a hundred that might guide us to the ancient city of Cara Fahd. It and all the others contain the damnably vague instruction, "Follow the river." No doubt more accurate guides lie moldering in breached or forgotten kaers. I wish we had one of them here now.

At least our map has something more than just "Follow the river" on it, though it took me some time to turn the scrawls into useful information. "By the snake's elbow," our map reads. "Between the great face and the red forest."

The snake's elbow is the fork of the Greenheart, I'm sure of it, for in ancient or'zat, the river was Named for the snakes within it. As for the red forest, the forests changed during the Scourge, and so we seek the Great Face. According to my research, it's a hillside shaped like an ork's face, but who can see between these damned thick trees?

Nonetheless, we must continue. Krathis Gron herself blessed our journey, for to find the ancient city is to find the lost temple—a building whose connection to ancient Cara Fahd imbues it with magic drawn from the lost history of all orks. She awaits our discovery, and we cannot disappoint her.

[This page was heavily water-stained. —Getaft Allthought]
15 Sullus 1509

We've been robbed! Last night the pirates of that thrice-cursed Star Ilfehena attacked our boat, scant minutes after a massive porcupine serpent left Sinu and K'thuchu bleeding on the deck. Those dwarf bandits came up from the water and charged our tiny boat, though we did not provoke them. We fought with precision and every raw bolt I could hurl, but when that foul dwarf woman called another serpent to upset the raft, it was all I could do to hold K'thuchu's head above water as I waded away. They grabbed my pack from my hands, with our precious map inside it. It lies with the enemy now. We may never find Cara Fahd's true glories unless someone recovers it, and I fear our wounds are too grievous for us to attempt a counterattack ...

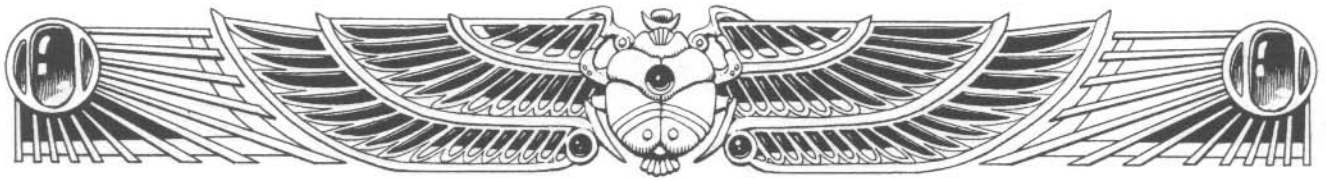
FINDING THE HOLD OF COURAGE

—From the journals of Vanyk Auldsinger, troubadour
3 Raquas 1508 TH

Great Passions! It's been corrupted! The Hold of Courage, the seat of ancient knowledge we sought for so long! We finally found it, right by the triple peak, and passed the test of strength and courage. Inside were huge statues of polished stone, ready to hold the soul-stones from which our ancestors tell us their wisdom.

But when my brave companions and I placed a stone in one of the hollows, we learned the dreadful truth that all the magic of our ancients could not protect their souls from Horrors. We sheltered ourselves during the Scourge; why did we not





do the same for our honored ancestors? We left them alone, vulnerable to every torment the Horrors could inflict, and the Horrors drove them mad with centuries of pain. When the maddened souls of our ancient ones descended upon me, I tried to drive them off gently, mindful of the great heroes they once were. But they brought the Hold of Courage down around us, and now only its ruins attest to our past bravery.

Oh, it is too horrible! The souls of the Egrandu, the Emdachot, all our ancient noble ones! I cannot bear it. I will never return to that place. I have burned the map that led me there, but the knowledge remains with me forever—a curse that pains me like an infected wound.

17 Riag 1509 TH

Today I ventured once more to the ruins of the Hold because the Mahuta asked me personally to return there, and I can refuse nothing to the one who brought the dream of a millennium to life. She asked that I seek Hrak Gron's soul stone, for she hoped that her ancestor's spirit had been strong enough to survive the Horrors' assault. If it did, and if I could find its stone, Hrak Gron might yet help guide Cara Fahd. I hesitated to cross the rubble that was once the Hold's doorway, for I could not face Krathis if I found that Hrak Gron, too, was lost to us.

But to my surprise, after a day and night of picking through the ruins, I found no sign of Hrak Gron's stone. Despairing, I flung myself on the ground to mourn our lost hero. I recall *perfectly* the distinctive chip knocked from it from when King Wudra hit his tormentor, during the first Qualification so many centuries ago. I read of it in a history and the lyrics of three ballads. I'm sure I saw that stone among the others here. Can someone have taken it? Or could I have been mistaken, and her stone lies elsewhere? If it was in the Hold of Courage, did it escape the Horror taint? We must find it to know.

And if Hrak Gron's soul *is* tainted, what fearsome Horrors could have done such a thing? What now will happen to Cara Fahd?

ON THE MYSTERY THAT HOLDS ZARASS ICETHOUGHT

—From the journals of Mwar Soulshaker, nethermancer of Zarass's Chargers

29 Rua 1510 TH

I have seen a sight that sends shivers down my spine. I, who looked the Horror Zuveg Ten-Heads in the face; I, who have ripped the skin from an enemy's body and then sat down to dinner; even I cannot eat or sleep for the disturbing thoughts that crawl through my mind like botfly larvae.

Chief Zarass honored me greatly when she asked my company on her search for ancient Cara Fahd. We traveled through the jungle for almost twenty days before finding anything, but what a discovery we made at last! Not ten yards from our camp lay a stone ridge ... or so we thought until Rill gave the vines that covered it a half-hearted chop. Stone it was—not a natural ridge, but a granite wall of ork workmanship. And behind it a city, almost intact, with a vast tower rising from its center.

Eager for a closer look at this marvel and too impatient to seek an entrance, I climbed an intact vine and looked over the wall. What I saw chilled my heart and froze the exultation on my lips. The soil near the tower was stained red, with crushed stones and char marks, as if something horrible had stalked through. When I dared look into the astral realm, I saw magic so strong that my sight still burns. Its power was far beyond anything Cara Fahd or any Name-givers could create. Misery pervades the place, and I received an overwhelming image of orks in chains. I have tasted Horror touches before, but this was somehow worse ... and different.

But Zarass saw none of this, though I have tried to tell her. She saw only the or'zat words carved into the walls, the tools and weapons of ork manufacture and the skulls with tusks still visible. She believes she has found ancient Cara Fahd and will not leave the wall. Instead she sits there, hour by hour, poring obsessively over every stone, piling the ones that have crumbled and categorizing them with a neatness and patience quite unlike her.

She dares not enter the city, for the first explorer to pass the walls froze in place until we lifted him out with great hooks. He now swings between frozen silence and gibbering insanity. He cannot form language, but babbles a senseless stream of sounds. And still Zarass sits, eating only the monkeys she shoots and roasts without even bothering to skin them.

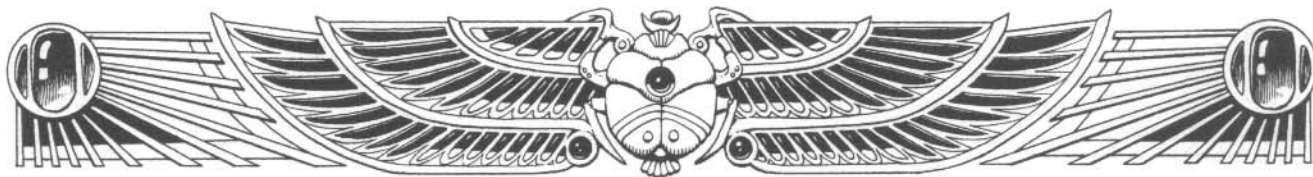
I wish Zarass could see this place as I do. Whatever can drive a chief and a warrior like her to label stones for hours on end is madness. And she has not even entered the ruins.

I fear whatever once walked in this citadel ...

CONCERNING OTHER NAME-GIVERS IN CARA FAHD

Yorlk Cloudsmasher, currently of Thunderaxe's Cleavers and formerly of the city of Travar's air navy, submitted the following observations. I've met Yorlk, and would not vouch for his complete accuracy. But as helmsman of Cara Fahd's only airship, he has a unique





perspective, and during his eventful life has spent time almost everywhere in Barsaive. Below are his comments on the settlements of other Name-givers with whom Cara Fahd maintains civil relations, as well as those who count themselves among our enemies.

—Getaft Allthought

What with all the ork pride that Krathis Gron is spreading all over Cara Fahd, most nobody thinks about the other people living around here. That's because they don't see anyone who isn't living next door. I mean, honestly, for all the roaming these scorchers think they do, they won't walk two doors down the street of a town to borrow a cup of lard if bellowing'll make someone else bring it to them.

Now sky raiders like me, we don't stay anywhere for more than a day if we can help it. (I'll take the wind in my face and a crows' nest over silk sheets in a comfortable inn any day.) So we've learned how to tell quick if we're welcome or not. And we see what's happening all over—and I can tell you, things are heating up in Cara Fahd that'll take more than pretty words to calm down.

We've got thirty-five thousand or so ujnort here, most of whom aren't happy with us. Doesn't help that some monkey-brained fools are trying to make things worse because they think we're invulnerable. "Cara Fahd for orks," they cry, as if we couldn't afford to let those of other races who want to be neighborly stay here and live quiet among us. As if the presence of a single other Name-giver somehow sullies "ork purity," or some such rubbish. And as if the others who live here are no use to Cara Fahd.

Well, let me say it. We're not invulnerable. But we can turn the Therans into a wet smear across Barsaive if we learn to use what we have. And that includes those ujnort who, for whatever reason, want to work with us instead of against us.

ON THAT POWERFUL HUMAN KNOWN AS DVLGAYNON

Krathis has her own pet ujnort —Name of Dvilgaynon—working night and day for Cara Fahd, and I say good for her as long as the ujnort's willing. While Krathis was in Cathay, she got friendly with a gaggle of human magicians who helped her learn what she needed to know to re-create Cara Fahd. A few came back with her, Dvilgaynon among them. Dvilgaynon seems to be their captain; the others treat her with more deference than they do Krathis, like she was royalty. Or she may be their master teacher and have magic enough to turn the lot of them into stone if they rub her the wrong way. I don't know much about magic, but I've heard that Dvilgaynon once turned a wall inside Wurchaz to solid bronze just to prove a point.

She's tall for a human, larger than most of us—a giant compared to the little Cathay folk. She's got hair as black as jet and strange yellow-bronze eyes that don't blink more than once a minute. Unsettling.

I've only talked to her once, and that was plenty. Not that she was rude, mind you; in fact, she was so polite it made my hair hurt. But she watched me like she was checking teeth on a horse. We weren't talking about anything important, but she considered every word before she spoke it as if we'd been discussing arcane secrets. I'm a living-talk man myself, and all that pondering of hers made me nervous. The other Cathay folk are quiet, too, so maybe they all just act like that. I've not spent time in Cathay myself, so I don't know.

Of course, just because I wouldn't want to spend time drinking with Dvilgaynon doesn't mean she isn't useful. My friends on the Wurchaz building crews in Claw Ridge say she's done more work than any of them without ever picking up a tool. None of 'em stop to think that if Dvilgaynon just did all the stuff they do, Krathis wouldn't have brought her all the way from scorchin' Cathay! No, she's here to do something else.

I don't know what they're planning, but Dvilgaynon asked what I thought of the wind patterns around the cloud of Horrors covering Stormhead. I told her they had to be strongly magical, not having changed in thirty years excepting an occasional gust to the north. She asked me a few more leading questions in her completely calm manner, like it was an everyday occurrence to chat about interfering with wind patterns and Horror clouds. If she was trying to rattle me, it worked.

There's more to Dvilgaynon than Yorlk suspects. Humans don't usually live that much longer than we do, but she and Krathis studied in Cathay for twenty years or more, and neither of them looks a day over twenty-five.

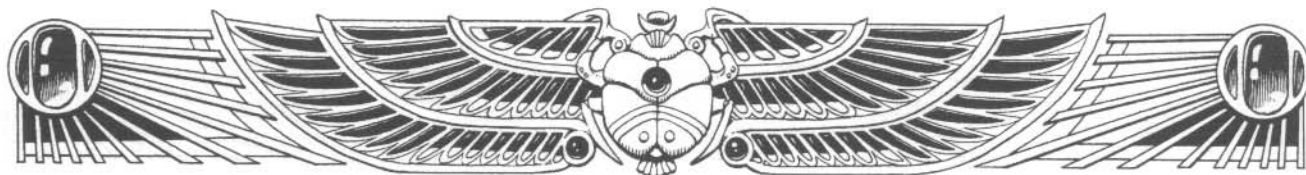
—Jesfuy Longrunner

ON THE BOATS AND POTS OF KELPOYA

If you're ever flying over southwest Cara Fahd and a bunch of crazy humans start shooting flaming arrows up at your airship and throwing illusions in front of your captain's eyes so that he starts swerving wildly and eventually nose-dives straight into some rocky shallows in the Locust River, and when you look up you're surrounded by t'skrang covered in swirly black tattoos and with four-inch spikes coming out of their tails, ears and noses, don't panic. It happened to me once. You'll be fine.

Those t'skrang are from Kelpoya, a bitty island that sits smack in the middle of the rockiest area of the Locust. The whole place is just one big stone, maybe an hour's walk across, but they've built it up so much you hardly notice. There's barely





room to move between the buildings, and their docks, boats and stilt houses extend another couple hundred yards into the water on all sides. There's nothing but bare rock beneath the mud-brick buildings, but that doesn't bother them; they grow fish and kelp instead of vegetables.

The kelp gardens are pretty, if you go for that sort of thing. The Kelpoya t'skrang grow river weed, *d'janduin* and *kuratai*, twining the vines around underwater columns. The overlapping shades of green and waving leaves create a masterpiece of living tapestry. None of the t'skrang will build houses next to the columns; they say it'll spoil the effect.

Kelpoya's Items of Trade

I don't know how, but those t'skrang can turn their kelp into a drink that makes hurlg seem about as potent as goat's milk. They call it *kel' dui*, and it's so green it practically glows. It has a deceptively light taste; you can drink two glasses and feel fine, but when you get up you'll find you've misplaced your legs and have to wait a day until they come back.

The folk of Kelpoya are as friendly as only t'skrang can be. They fed me more fish than I ever want to see again and helped patch up the ship. Some of my crew were worried about letting "riverworms" touch an airship, but all boats follow similar principles, and the Kelpoyans are the best boaters in Cara Fahd.

They trade with a lot of city orks, and Krathis Gron herself has visited the village a few times. Kelpoya was thriving long before we all came here, and it trades with villages in what used to be Landis as well, but its folk hold no grudges against us like some of the Landisians do. Kelpoyans sell spices and boats, and also beautiful pottery. They mix the river mud with ground stone to give it different colors, then paint their bowls and pots and such with river weed-based dyes and glazes. Most immigrants to Cara Fahd left behind a lot of plates and pots when they came to Cara Fahd, carrying as few unnecessary as they could. When they got here, they needed replacements, and so the t'skrang cleaned up selling to everyone who was establishing a household.

The t'skrang love their river and don't like going on land much, so we trade them lumber to build their boats and iron to make those flashy swords they like so much, and they're as happy as a Theran with a pile of orichalcum. All those tattoos and quills make them look a bit strange, but their lahala explained to me why they deck themselves out that way. Most of their meat and leathers come from those big river snakes, which also keep away other dangerous animals, so the t'skrang show respect for the beasties by wearing their quills and tattooing their skins in snake-like patterns.

My *vruken's* a troubadour, and she nearly tore my ears off when I left Kelpoya without asking if the t'skrang had a library. So a few days later, I marched back down there. The t'skrang slept through the Scourge rather than live underground, and so the folk in Kelpoya were more likely than any to have intact records of old Cara Fahd (no parchments rotted away by moldering earth, for example). Turns out that they do have a library, chock-full of documents from before the Scourge, when they traded with the ancient Carads. They've even got some stories that tell a lot about old ork ways. Unfortunately, they're sharp traders intent on taking every copper they can get from us, so Krathis is still negotiating for some of those records.

THE MIRACLE AND MENACE OF BLACK QUARRY

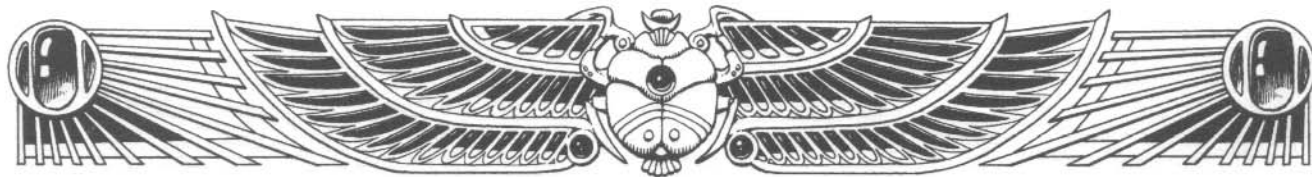
From the sky, Black Quarry looks like a haze-covered, foul-smelling pit of a town. When you're walking, though, you can hear the drums beating and horns blaring, night or day, from dozens of taverns. And you know that a good meal, a tasty cup of ale and an evening's good entertainment aren't far away.

This isn't Mountain's End, where the glitter exists just to lure you inside a dusty inn with lumpy beds. Black Quarry never sleeps, and the only beds they sell are ones where you won't be alone for very long. Or, if that's not your taste, the gambling dens serve free hurlg to anyone throwing dice or shuffling cards to lay stakes for anything from a night's stay upstairs to all the iron in the Delaris Mountains. Not that anyone owns it all to sell, but you wouldn't believe the number of people drunk and greedy enough to gamble for something like that.

Because that's why they're all here. Iron. When the human villagers of nearby Pecancreek started quarrying rocks to wall off their town from us ork "invaders," they found iron in the broken bits. Our folk got to hear of it, and suddenly every lazy tick in Cara Fahd came sauntering out with a pick and bucket to the place that became Black Quarry. Though if it were me, I'd have named the place "Little Kratas." Most iron prospectors don't find anything, or they hit a vein that runs dry within the month. Of course, more than a few have struck it lucky and gone from scruffy leathers and scrub ponies to silks, jewels and chariots. Black Quarry had sixty or seventy mine owners at last count, though most honest orks call them all thieves. I can't count the number of times I've heard tell of rich owners paying some fool to steal claim deeds or to cause the competition an unfortunate accident.

The smell in the town is pretty bad. Nobody cleans the garbage from the streets, and if you kick a pile of it, you can find the odd sleeping drunk or hidden corpse. Smelting kilns burn night and day; on really warm days the smoke rises no higher than the rooftops, and all work (and play) stops while people lie in bed, gasping for breath. Some whisper that the "choking sickness" comes from a Horror or a curse, but it generally passes within a day. Then the fun begins again, as if nothing happened. Because people don't notice deaths in Black Quarry. There's too much of it to care.



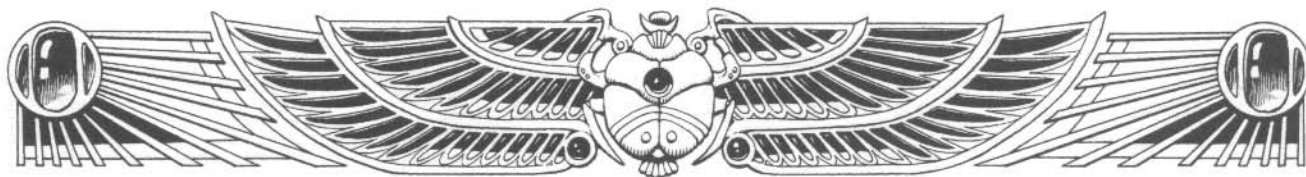


That's part of the downside of all the fun. Greed's the fashion here, and even the good people never take it off. So watch out, because there's always someone in a crowd as likely to kill you for a map as ask directions. Take a good look at the parchment posters of wanted men and women outside the town; those sketches are practically a list of Black Quarry's residents. Two of Asok's Armbreakers guard the posters at all times, because they've been set afire twice.

Almost two thousand people live in Black Quarry, and that many again visit every day from all over Barsaive. Riders of the Scorched Plain gamble with t'skrang pirates from the Serpent River and foul-mouthed windlings from the Delaris, who get drunk under the table by dwarfs from Kratas. Thieves, mercenaries and friendless beggars have flocked to the town hoping to get rich quick. Metal Fist warriors look for cutpurses to strangle, and cheap brothels poison their deadbeat customers. Even the Skull Whargs, who piss on ork unity, sometimes come to Black Quarry looking for silver or a good fight. The only concession to etiquette in this town is that you don't ask anyone about his past if you don't want to wake up wondering who left your neck open.

I love this place.





ON THE REFUGE OF LELISTHALA

I stopped here once on a journey through the mountains, as it's so conveniently located right at the nexus of the Delaris and Locust rivers. From what I'd heard from my mates in the Righteous Vipers (got the common sense of mushrooms, but they're good folk), Lelisthala was no end of trouble. The Vipers told me that the trolls and elves there hated orks and wanted to bring down Cara Fahd no matter what it took. Now, the last piece of advice I got from a Righteous Viper landed me in the kind of trouble I'd rather not talk about, so I checked this one out myself.

I was pretty careful and came up on foot, so as not to scare them. Good thing, too. They've got archers watching the skies all the time, and catapults filled with uyataa pepper paste, and barrels full of arrows all over the town. But none of these came my way. Once the locals saw I wasn't wearing a Thera uniform or bright-colored leathers like a tribesman, they let me in the gates (impressive ones—troll stonework, elven decorations) and took me to meet their headman, Gronthon Shorthorns.

Gronthon's an aging troll who keeps his gray hair short, his horns polished and his clothes clean. He was born a slave in Vivane, and led a revolt to free the twenty slaves from his household about fifteen years ago. The particular Therans who owned him believed in having elves in the house and trolls in the field, and so a strange mixed group wandered north with Gronthon. They stuck together mostly because they didn't have the skills to survive apart. They wanted to get as far from Vivane as they could, and eventually they ended up near the rivers, where they built their own village.

Gronthon was the definition of courtesy—invited me in, fed me a pork roast and a fermented honey wine that made my ears tingle (we should trade for that, it makes a great hurlg chaser). But he told me in no uncertain terms that he and his people had worked for fifteen years to build a town and fortify it against the Therans, and they weren't going to leave because of a bunch of orks.

I asked why they couldn't just let us live where we were and we'd gladly stay a few hours' walk from their fields and houses. And Gronthon said that was exactly what he wished; he'd sent Krathis Gron a missive saying so and asking for peace. But, he said, some quaalz-brains calling themselves Elf Eaters had attacked Lelisthala's fruit pickers without provocation. A few days after the latest assault, the villagers had found the shreds of their peace offer lying next to the messenger's unconscious body, a half hour's walk from the village gates!

Now I'm a sky raider, and even I know better than to beat a messenger—especially one carrying a message of peace! Gronthon's main goal is to avoid going back to Thera. He could do it by working with us, or by allying with the Basstown resistance and thereby giving our enemies a base inside Cara Fahd. If that happens, we'll be fighting two fronts before the war with Thera even starts. Someone has to stop those turgma Elf Eaters before they drive a town of peaceful folk to war against all orks.

OF POSSIBLE ENEMIES WITHIN OUR BORDERS

Though individual foes of the orks may exist in any village of foreigners within or near our territory, real opposition to us and to our nation exists principally among a few groups in a few places. Here's what I know of them, and may Krathis Gron make good use of it.

OF THOSE MAD QUESTORS, THE IRON LEGACY

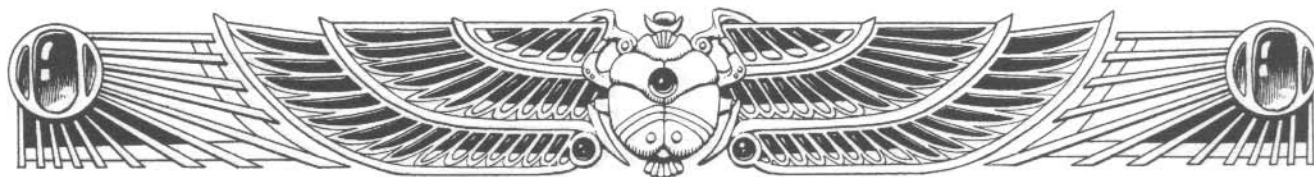
A couple of months after the Declaration, Claw Ridgers started hearing awful stories about villages being sacked, children tortured and enslaved and declarations of war screamed into the night air. When they heard about enslavement, they knew it wasn't the scorcher tribes practicing business as usual (just a little joke; most of the scorchers have gotten so civilized that they even wipe the foam from their mouths before speaking. Amazing what a little dream can do ...).

Anyway, the folk at Wurchaz tried to keep it hushed up long enough for them to figure out what was happening, but orks *will* talk, so it wasn't long before every two-copper raider tribe had heard of the perpetrators: a cult called the Iron Legacy, a bunch of raving fanatics apparently devoted to the Mad Passion Dis who think they can kill Dis's enemy, Lochost, by enslaving all orks. If they honestly think they've got a chance against the Passion of freedom, they ought to see about getting smaller heads, because clearly there's too much air around their puny brains.

These so-called questors were committing dreadful atrocities in their Passion's Name—but the thing about Dis is, he's predictable. And so are the folk who follow him. The Iron Legacy thugs weren't taking many pains to keep hidden or be subtle; they'd just charge down from the mountains and butcher everyone in their way. So one day the Thunderborn, Thunderaxes and Thunderers got together, chased them back to their camp and killed a few hundred.

They were nasty fighters, but there's more orks in the world than people willing to worship a Mad Passion, and they weren't prepared for us. They relied on their favorite trick of killing someone's will and making them *want* to be enslaved. That works against one or two people, but it doesn't affect horses, dyres or three hundred cavalry at a time. My ship was flying oversight, just to make sure no Iron Legacy turgma ran away without being spotted; when we swooped low, I saw one





of those black-robed freaks muttering and dancing while a Thunderer was bearing down on him with battle-axe at the ready. His spell froze the Thunderer, who dropped her axe ... but her horse kept going, and kicked the questor so hard he must have landed somewhere over the next hill.

After that incident, the Iron Legacy got smarter and stopped going after heavily populated areas. Instead, they've started working with human illusionists in the town of Three Rivers to disguise their raiders as orks, trying to turn villagers and trollmoots against us. This tactic worries me. I don't want to knock heads with the Rockhorns and Bloodlores, and I'm not sure how to convince them that the Iron Legacy isn't us if the Legacy raiders are clothed in illusion magic.

Even more disturbing, they're going after people we don't know. We were scouting over the forest once recently, when just for a moment I saw black robes fluttering through a break in the trees. Sure enough, a gang of cultists were up to their tricks, chopping through children and shooting crossbows all over the place. That got my gahad up, and when our fire cannons clicked empty, there wasn't much left of the attackers. I think they were Iron Legacy, because we haven't heard anything about any Keys of Death or Raggok worshippers or Hand of Corruption spies or ... well, I'll grant there's a lot of mean-spirited folk in black robes killing their fellow Name-givers in Barsaive, but I'm pretty sure the Iron Legacy was behind this forest assault.

That means two things. It means the Legacy's in the south of Cara Fahd, and that they're going to get as thick with our human enemies in Basstown and Kerup as tar and feathers. Worse, we don't know where all the tiny Carad tribes are that live in the southlands. The Iron Legacy could pick off twenty or thirty tribes in Cara Fahd's southern jungle and we'd never hear about it until they were on our doorstep. Those harpy-dung, saural-breathed bastards should be hung with their own entrails, and I think half of Cara Fahd would volunteer to tie the knots, but someone's got to find them first. We've already tried an air sweep, but they're nowhere in sight. Yet.

OF THE LEGION OF DAMNATION

I've had to lie low in Vivane a time or two, and I've heard what they think of Carad tribesmen—vicious killers who can eat Barsaivian scorchers for breakfast and still have room to scarf down a village or two. The Carads, they say, hate everyone, killing children and animals as often and as gleefully as adults. They supposedly bathe only in blood and can scarcely keep their hands off their swords long enough to rut.

From what I know (which is a lot more than the common folk of Vivane), most Carads have more in common with the herders of the Dinganni Plains and the hunters from the Liaj than whatever troubadour tale that bloodthirsty description crawled out of ... unless the Vivaners had the Legion of Damnation in mind.

Unfortunately, Krathis Gron has yet to be convinced that any ork is beyond reach, even when the Legion sent her peace messenger back to Claw Ridge in pieces tied to the backs of several ornery vultures. So who does she send next to check out the Legion's territory? The air navy—who else?

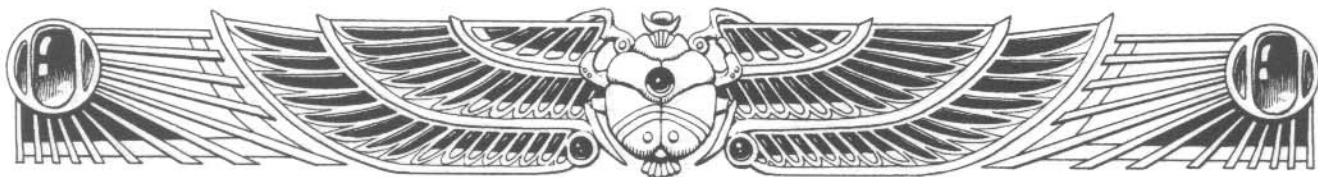
It's hard to get an accurate head count when you're dodging crossbow bolts, but I'd wager the Legion amounts to about two thousand, living in rough tents that smell like no one's bothered to cart the horse dung out of them. The Legion's camp is surrounded by a deep moat and rudimentary stockade walls. They seem to survive purely on raiding; I didn't see a single animal that wasn't saddled for battle; in fact, I didn't see too many, period. I don't think they have the patience to care for them. Saw no food crops growing, either. The few among them who weren't warriors wore a strange mismatch of clothes that marked them as coming from all over Vivane Province, Rugaria Province and Cara Fahd.

While my friends snuck around like ferrets, scouting the place out, I pounced on a noise in the woods. The maker of the noise was a little ork girl, maybe seven summers, dressed in tattered silks. She begged me not to hurt her, so I put one of my axes down.

She told me her Name was Tsegeweini Littlehout, the youngest daughter of Guurshut Hatespitter. That's right, Hatespitter—the foul chief of the Legion, who's so fat you can see him even from the air. I was suspicious at first, but the poor mite seemed starved for attention, so I asked her questions while keeping my eyes peeled for Daddy. She said her tribe had only been in Cara Fahd for a generation or so; before that, they wandered over most of Rugaria Province. When they reached Cara Fahd, they killed off some native Carads, took the women as wives (if you can call them that) and grabbed the territory they wanted, right where the rivers meet Death's Sea. They're doing something with the lava; Tsegeweini didn't know what. Guurshut is completely insane, from what I can tell; he may even be part of a cult, though none of the stories I heard said which.

Ever since the Legion arrived in our lands, they've been terrorizing Cara Fahd and the villages of old Landis. More so than even the turgma Elf Eaters and other addle-brained scorcher bands, they take and do whatever they want, because they fight without thought for casualties. Most people prefer to give up and run rather than face these madmen. They sometimes kidnap women to breed more warriors (as their tactics guarantee a constant need for reinforcements), but kill men and children.





The Legion wasn't too destructive when they stuck to raiding small villages for food; they didn't have the numbers to be a big threat. A few years ago, though, Guurshut captured a Theran elementalist who agreed to help them become the most fearsome orks in Cara Fahd (Tsegeweini didn't know why). This Theran dog gave them some magical warhammers and promised to channel the power of Death's Sea to make them invincible. I don't know how much magic he has, but the Legion's warriors believe they're invulnerable now (and they were no cowards before), so they've been taking on bigger and bigger targets—including cities and half a Theran cohort.

Tsegeweini said the Theran magician convinced her father that Cara Fahd held vast, poorly-defended riches, and ever since then he's targeted Carad settlements. He's even gone as far as Thundra's Rest at least once. Someone needs to get into the Legion camp and have a talk with that magician, but I'm not volunteering.

Tsegeweini ran away after half an hour or so. It seems Daddy's killed people for talking to her before, and she liked me too much to risk my getting caught. Sweet kid.

THE RESISTANCE OF BASSTOWN AND KERUP

Until the Declaration, both Basstown and Kerup were tiny fishing settlements—Basstown mostly inhabited by humans and Kerup mostly by t'skrang, but no one cared enough to tell much difference between them. It didn't take much to feed and clothe nine hundred folks, so they kept out of the way of orks and traded with other ujnort instead. Then those twice-cursed quaalz-brains, the Legion of Damnation, got wind of the silvers the townsfolk made off their fish and serpent skins ... just before Krathis Gron brought fifty thousand extra orks into Cara Fahd.

After Guurshut Hatespitter rode into town on one of his scrawny thundras, killed a few kids in Basstown and gutted Kerup's leader on her own front stoop, the townsfolk got a mite protective. They started taking out swords they hadn't used for generations, but they were no match for the Metal Fist and Broken Fang clans (I won't name Names) who charged into both villages looking for buckets of gold because they heard from the Legion that there was money to be had. When they didn't find it, they tore up the towns, figuring at least to have some fun. Their chiefs yelled at them for their stupidity later on ... but no one bothered apologizing to mere ujnort.

Things went downhill from there. After piling up broken stones and sharp shards of glass to make a wall, the Basstowners and Kerup folk cut their trees to build boats. Then they melted all the iron they could get their hands on—tools, fish hooks, cooking pots—and forged arrowheads. Lots of arrowheads. The next orks they saw were some harmless Carads looking to trade for snake meat, and the townsfolk committed some atrocities of their own. I think it was the "we won't be ruled by slaves" note they pinned on the bodies before dumping them in front of Claw Ridge that really got people's ghahad up.

No one bothered to trace the events that led to this tragedy as far back as I did (except the for Two Hands tribe, where I heard it). Everyone else just figured the folk of Basstown and Kerup were Theran-loving, ork-hating ujnort who deserved as good as they gave. Pretty soon, any other Name-givers who didn't want to live with orks showed up in Kerup or Basstown, asking to join the "Basstown Resistance." The hatred got so thick you'd need a good axe to cut through it.

In the past nine months, both towns have swelled with more than five thousand refugees in stick shacks. I can see why they're angry. From the air, the land around the two villages looks like a moving carpet, until you realize you're looking at Name-givers packed so close together they need a schedule to breathe. The roads are clogged with folks sleeping in them; even the dung-trench is backed up, and every day a new pestilence breaks out because there's nowhere to isolate the sick. And meanwhile, these poor folk think of all the orks, most of whom have never worked a day in their lives, who are living off their harvests in the homes they built and rubbing down thundra beasts with Grandma's patchwork quilt. Most of Copper Cauldron's humans ran to Basstown when the Fists of Fahd took their mines, and they've brought money enough to pay Landisian smiths for decent weapons.

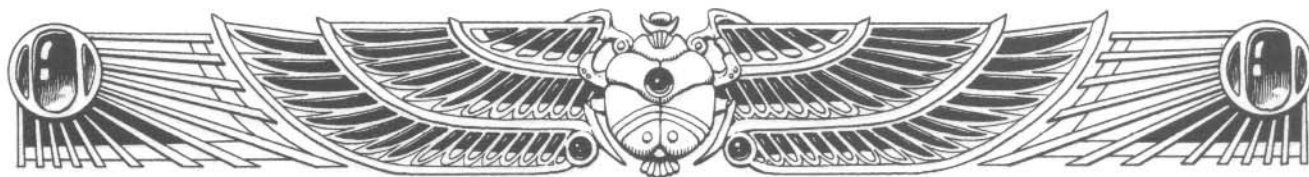
Ilfehena's Crew

The real resistance leader is a dwarf beastmaster Named Star Ilfehena. From what I've heard, before the Declaration she was a reclusive, foul-tempered hermit who grew up in Basstown but left it to live in the jungle. She's got some Metal Fist-like ideas about the sanctity of plants and animals, and when she saw a flood of Broken Fangs clear-cutting the forests, she snapped.

When she led a pack of four skeorxes against the Bot'Vrobuun clan and brought back their heads, the blood got her fellow ujnorts' attention and vaulted her to the top of their miserable heap. She moves by stealth through the jungle and over water to make it seem like her resistance fighters come out of scorchin' nowhere when attacking ork settlements or travelers. Showing tusks on a boat too near her turf means you're in the market for a beast attack. So take along a lot of friends and some spiked armor when traveling south.

Ilfehena hasn't got enough troops to attack anything north of the forest yet, but her people lurk in the roadside trees near Thundra's Rest and butcher any lone orks they see. It may still be possible to make peace with them if we make major con-





cessions like giving up our claim to the riverbanks, but every day that goes by brings another village attack and makes peace that much harder.

About the only thing I can say in their favor is that they hate Therans as much as orks do. In the face of war with the Empire, maybe they'll turn their aggression on someone more deserving of it. Then again, for all I know, Ilfehena could be part of the Iron Legacy.

THE THERAN FILTH OF GRIMEYE'S CROSSING

The town known as Grimeye's Crossing was an ork town back during the Orichalcum Wars, set on the Locust River's bank to give troops somewhere to stay while striking Landis. But Grimeye left it with the Protectors of Cara Fahd, and we all know their sad fate. The troops escaped when Landisian troops attacked, but the humans got the town. Proud of their victory, they put a beaten-bronze plaque in the town square that read, "Grimeye's Crossing: The Line No Ork Will Cross." Local humans brag that not a single ork has lived in Grimeye's Crossing since that time.

After the Scourge changed the weather in Barsaive, the land around Grimeye's Crossing became a quagmire and behemoth feeding zone. Not too many folk wanted to live in such a place, and so the Therans in the south of Barsaive set up a small stockade to guard their bridge over the Locust (it's the only part of the river calm enough to build on). Ever since the Declaration at Claw Ridge, though, swamp real estate must've suddenly shot up in value, because Therans're pouring into Grimeye's Crossing. Maybe it's got something to do with all the money to be made enslaving and collecting bounties on all the "known scorchers" who suddenly seem to be popping up in the region.

We decided to pay Grimeye's Crossing a neighborly visit a few weeks ago (you know, see if we could borrow a cup of True Air), and we didn't much like what we saw. They've got houses full of weapons, many of which are probably magical. Other houses held rows of single beds; one had a stove big enough to cook for a thousand people. And when we peeked into windows, all we saw was young men and women of fighting age, not a single oldster or child among them.

Whatever it once was, Grimeye's Crossing is not a town. Not anymore. It's a scorchin' military outpost. And it's inside our southern border!

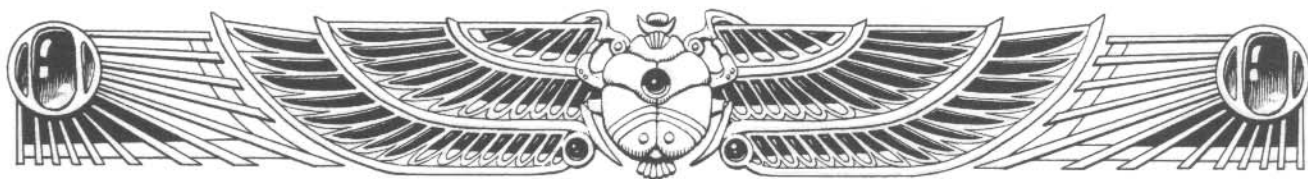
Of course, someone saw us. They've got people practicing combat formations in the middle of the night, because they never stop. Someone must have given a signal, because suddenly everyone jumped out of bed, swords in hand, and started coming after us.

And who should I recognize in front but my old friend Edjar Hesfara, Eighth Legion swordmaster? My crew and I were already on our toes, so we managed to get back to the *Lost Finger* with nothing worse than a few curses, but I don't think there's any question what's going on. The Basstowners might be bought off with land, but the Therans won't give up until their price is paid in ork lives.

Every time we've flown over the place since, we've seen humans, elves and even a few trolls in the fields, training horses, drilling and marching. When we swoop by them, they brandish their swords in unison. I don't think we can hope to reason with them. Those young Name-givers have never seen a war Thera hasn't won.

And, Passions preserve us, neither have we.





GAME INFORMATION

The Ork Nation of Cara Fahd is a sourcebook for **Earthdawn** players and gamemasters. This book offers a look at the newly reborn nation of Cara Fahd, including fictional descriptions of the people and places of this new nation forged during the events depicted in the **Earthdawn** product **Prelude to War**. Players can use the material in this book to enhance the backgrounds of ork player characters, as well as to expand their knowledge of the world of **Earthdawn**. In addition, gamemasters can use the wealth of material on the ork tribes and other aspects of Cara Fahd to create new adventures, flesh out the game world and open up new areas for player characters to explore in ongoing campaigns.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

In addition to the **Earthdawn Rulebook (ED)**, players and gamemasters who wish to use the material from **Cara Fahd** may find **Denizens of Earthdawn, Volume Two** and the **Earthdawn Companion** useful. The former provides considerable information on orks and the customs, history and rituals touched upon in this book. The latter provides additional information on the cavalryman discipline so common among the orks, along with some thread-items and weapons used by the orks of Cara Fahd.

Gamemasters using this book may also find helpful the material in the **Earthdawn** adventure **Blades** and the epic **Prelude to War**. The adventures in **Blades** explore the history and legacy of the Blades of Cara Fahd, important magical items from Cara Fahd's past that can play a part in its future success and/or failure. The information in **Cara Fahd** takes the events in **Prelude to War** into account and looks at some of the possible ways this new ork nation may become involved in the conflict brewing in Barsaive.

Each section of this book is taken from a work being compiled for the Library of Cara Fahd under the guidance of Getaft Allthought, advisor to Krathis Gron, Cara Fahd's leader. This sourcebook begins with a reproduction of the Seeds of Nation, the letters Krathis Gron wrote after her Passions-inspired vision to rebuild Cara Fahd. Following this is an overview of Cara Fahd that describes the geography of the land, highlights the tensions between the different types of orks who have come to live there, and looks at the daily lives of orks in this new nation. The following chapter provides the history of Cara Fahd, starting with its origins before the Scourge and leading up to its fall during the Orichalcum Wars. Following the history section is a chapter describing Cara Fahd's capital city of Claw Ridge, built on the same spot where Krathis Gron first declared Cara Fahd reborn in **Prelude to War**. Following this are sections devoted to the major and minor tribes that make up the bulk of Cara Fahd's population. These two sections

each include information about the customs, practices and territories of the various tribes, along with descriptions of the tribes' leaders. These are followed by a section detailing other important people and places in Cara Fahd, including many nearby settlements that are none too happy about their new ork neighbors.

The final chapter of this book provides game information based on the material in the previous chapters. This includes notes on running adventures and campaigns set in Cara Fahd, three adventure frameworks based in Cara Fahd, descriptions of several new magical items and abilities, and several creatures native to this region of Barsaive. This section concludes with a glossary of ork words.

ADVENTURES AND CAMPAIGNS IN CARA FAHD

The following rules and advice are intended to help gamemasters run adventures and campaigns in the ork nation of Cara Fahd.

AFTERMATH OF PRELUDE TO WAR

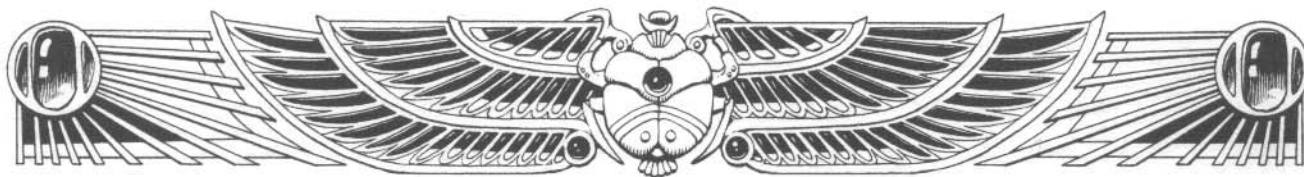
The ork nation of Cara Fahd as described in this book is based on the assumption that certain events described in **Prelude to War** occurred. All of the adventures in **Prelude to War** are assumed to have been completed successfully. Specifically, this means that Krathis Gron escaped from Red Pot (as depicted in the adventure idea **Imprisoned by the Passions**), the Metal Fist tribe arrives in Cara Fahd at full strength (as depicted in the adventure framework **Night Maneuvers**), and there is no battle between the forces of Thera and Throal at Claw Ridge (as described in the adventure framework **Incident at Claw Ridge**).

A Changing Population

Before the events of **Prelude to War**, Barsaive's ork population was largely scattered throughout the province, with a large number living in the region of Cara Fahd. Many orks also lived in the nearby provinces of Vivane and Rugaria.

The Seeds of Nation letters reached most orks in these places, and many, including three and a half of the five largest scorcher tribes in Barsaive, elected to follow Krathis Gron and settle in Cara Fahd. The Incident at Claw Ridge in which Krathis reNames Cara Fahd happened in the latter half of 1509 TH, with just less than 20 percent of Barsaive's orks having already relocated. Over the next several months, thousands more orks and a few other Name-Givers immigrated to the new nation. By the time Getaft Allthought collected the documents that make up the fictional portion of this book, roughly 70 percent of





Barsaive's orks had "wagoned the path." Nearly every free Barsaivian ork who isn't living in a lost kaer has a friend or relative who has gone to Cara Fahd.

APPROXIMATE POPULATION BREAKDOWN OF NEW CARA FAHD

Race	Percent of Population
Orks	75
Humans	8
T'skrang	7
Dwarves	6
Trolls	2
Elves	1.5
Windlings	less than 1
Obsidimen	less than 1

Integrating the Heroes of Prelude To War

Player characters who were instrumental in the events of **Prelude to War**, particularly in the **Rise of the Ork Nation**, may have changed Barsaive's history. If they helped Krathis in previous adventures, she knows the characters and treats them according to how they behaved. In this case, this book gives an idea what the other major players of Cara Fahd are doing, so the gamemaster can integrate them into an existing campaign. If anything said here does not fit the tone or facts of the campaign played out by the player characters in his or her group, the gamemaster can easily change the people, places and events, or make minor adjustments to fit the heroes into the situation described. For example, if at the end of **Prelude to War** the gamemaster arranged for the player characters to be part of Krathis Gron's council, the council members here are still the people the characters will work with—if not in the position described in this book, then they are trying to acquire that position.

If the player characters failed to successfully complete some or all of the adventures in **Prelude to War**, the gamemaster may have to do a little more juggling in order to get the player characters involved in adventures and campaigns set in Cara Fahd, but it's still possible. For example, if the Metal Fist tribe was scattered and are only at half their strength, Bronze Eyes and Tressag Heatsky would likely try desperately to recruit indigenous Carad tribes to shore up their numbers and, of course, they'll be in need of adepts to assist them. This creates an adventure as the adepts seek out a legendary treasure for the Metal Fist tribe, rabble-rouse or stage a public display of Metal Fist might, and do everything in their power to send Carads flocking to them. Soon, the Metal Fist once again becomes the enormous tribe described in this book.

Cara Fahd as the Opposition

Possibly the worst thing for the heroes' reputations in Cara Fahd is if they sided against Krathis Gron in **Prelude to War** and made an enemy of her entire nation, by helping Thera at Claw Ridge, for example. In this case, the characters are unlikely to ever work for Cara Fahd, but this book still can serve as a basis for adventures and campaigns, or at the very least as an excellent source of recurring villains. The fictional accounts that make up this book assume an ork point of view and describe Cara Fahd as a "good guy" nation, but by taking on a different angle on things, Cara Fahd can become a deadly evil empire.

For example, you could call Cara Fahd a nation run by stinking, superstitious, blood-drinking, farm-burning, lazy orks who think gahad and spotty oral history give them an excuse to butcher merchants and steal silver, and you wouldn't be far off. Given this point of view, infiltrating their ranks to stop their rapid growth and "lead those criminals away in chains to do honest punishment in a Theran mine" is as legitimate an adventure idea as any.

GETTING THE HEROES TO CARA FAHD

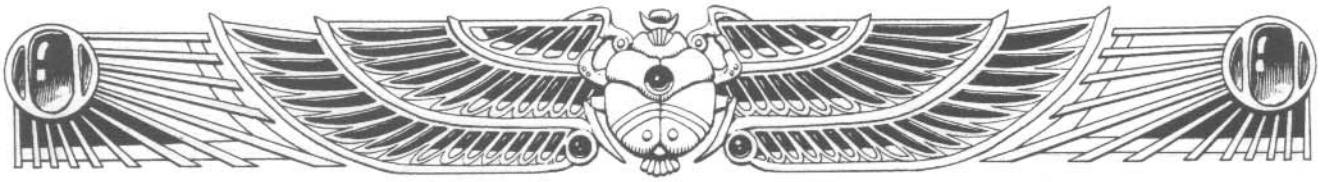
It is relatively easy to get your player characters involved with the fledgling nation, since Cara Fahd is openly inviting settlers. Below are a few ways to get your characters to Cara Fahd to take advantage of the opportunities it presents.

The Promise of A New Life

Life in Cara Fahd appealed to thousands of orks from all backgrounds, no matter where they were from or whom they dealt with before. Many joined the nation because they thought they could find a better future. On the legitimate side, this means a great many merchants have traveled there to set up shop, as well as explorers who could use some player character escorts. On the seedier side, Cara Fahd also appeals to those orks who wanted to escape from something in their current situation—those who owed people money, or would be thrown in jail on some other charges. Perhaps they left their homes for honest reasons, but are the sole source of some critical piece of information needed back in their home town.

Each of these backgrounds can create a hook for an adventure that takes the characters to Cara Fahd. Wherever the characters are, someone can ask or hire them to find a relative, the person who murdered his best friend, the former grand master of the college of wizardry, or a Discipline trainer who went to Cara Fahd to seek their fortune. And not only orks are going to the nation. Plenty of Barsaivians are dissatisfied with their current lot, especially those who were living near Lake Ban and want no part of the war with the Theran behemoth. The heroes, their friends, relatives or teachers may also find Cara Fahd's wilderness and lack of authorities appealing.





Because They're Orks!

Naturally, player character orks may travel to Cara Fahd because they're orks! If the players haven't thought out their background and lineage but want to join the new ork nation, let them choose among the tribes discussed here or surprise them with long-lost relations.

If the characters have ever trashed an ork scorcher band, whether ten members or ten thousand, the game-master can generate a quick, exciting plot by making sure any survivors team up with someone reasonably powerful in Cara Fahd. They could have turned over a new leaf to start a thundra ranch or run a 750-ork tribe, or perhaps they find new "friends" outside of Cara Fahd such as the Legion of Damnation, Herok's Lancers or the Skull Whargs. How these wronged orks act depends on how kind the heroes were when they had the upper hand.

Lastly, orks have their own macho culture of strength. If the characters are rough-cut Thystonius-calling sky raiders or similar testosterone-laden heroes, have someone dare them to go to Gevosht or Black Quarry and swill hurlg for a week, get into bar fights with thundra cavalry and play tussdi with Broken Fangs to see how "real orks live" before the primary plot begins.

Money

There is an enormous amount of wealth (if not silver) in Cara Fahd if the heroes play it right. On the low end, they can hire out as (or guard) loggers, miners or construction workers, or offer their magical talents directly to the powers-that-be in Claw Ridge. Rich merchants need bodyguards if they're dealing in Black Quarry; logging barons need unscrupulous people to convince forest locals to clear out (and the locals need defenders), iron mine owners need tough prospectors who aren't afraid of big troll claim jumpers and Krathis Gron could use a couple dozen rediscovered kaers to find lost records and treasures. The player characters could go prospecting for gold/silver/iron in the wilds of the Delaris Mountains, or start their own exploration and mapping business. Not to mention all the favors they can trade for by spying, counter-spying, threatening or delivering messages between the major tribes.

Secrets, Politics and Power

Every powerful faction in Barsaive wants inside information on the ork nation, whether to tear it apart or wrangle better trade deals. Such secrets as how Wurchaz is built, how many True air and fire kernels Krathis has, what's in Dvilgaynon's grimoire and other information about Cara Fahd's leaders can be sought by any power in and out of Cara Fahd. The Holders of Trust, the Eye of Throal, Theran spies, concerned Landisians and practically every tribe and person in Claw Ridge want to know each other's plans, and they need a lot of people who aren't known agents to stir up trouble against their enemies. And the factions

involved shift daily—Blood Wood has little interest in Claw Ridge now, but Alachia will quickly change her tune if her spies tell her the streets of the new nation are crawling with Theran agents and she wants to know what they've found out.

Because promotion in Cara Fahd is not based on birth but on power, usefulness and charisma, the player characters can become major movers in Claw Ridge very quickly. A couple favors for Titanstroke Greybeard and they could marry one of his innumerable children, be officially Named a cerri, or be let in on secret plans that even Krathis doesn't know about. (You assumed he didn't have secret plans? What kind of ork chieftain would he be if he didn't?)

Intra-tribe incidents happen almost every hour. For example, look at Hankarr's Spears' territory. How do they get to Claw Ridge? Along the Metal Fist and Broken Fangs' roads, or by looping around through the mountains, taking three times as long? All the tribes have authority to handle "problems" in their own territory, and establish "taxes" (tolls or highway robbery depending on their mood) for other tribes passing through. Every time a member of the Spears travels, there's the possibility of an explosion. This becomes an adventure as characters defend one side or the other, try to head off such problems before they start, or investigate the mess afterward to find the culprits.

Lastly, if the characters are too famous to be spies, they may be "donated" by an important patron to help quell troubles in Cara Fahd; it needs to be stable if it will form the front line of defense against the Theran army.

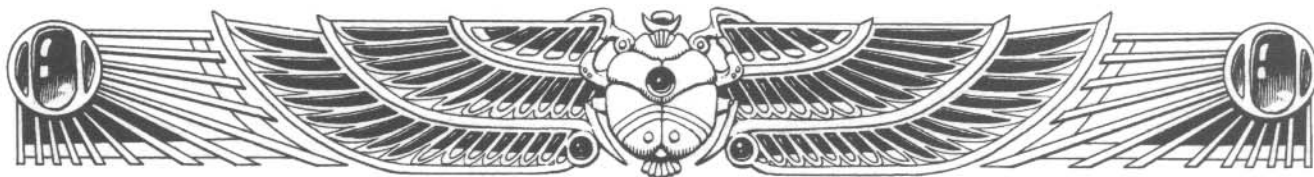
Exploration and Magic

Cara Fahd is Barsaive's frontier. Though its history may seem extensive, there are thousands of gaps. Where was the ancient city of Cara Fahd? Why didn't the Carad orks stay near it before the Scourge? Even if the city is found, where was the major trading hub from the orichalcum mines in the Twilight Peaks?

Of course, with so many legendary kings and heroes, the possibilities for legendary items of great power are everywhere. Who was the Ninth Emerald of Landis who had to stay off the field as his closest friends fought the Protectors of Cara Fahd? When Zarina dabbed at her lover's wounds, wouldn't the handkerchief she used take on some kind of power? Did King Lugrul grant mercy even once in his entire life, and if so, how did his supplicant convince him? These questions are deliberately left open to be used in your campaign. The history of **Earthdawn** is made of legend upon legend, and in each one lies some kind of magic, whether a little flicker or a world-shaking epic.

The ruined cities, breached citadels and kaers offer glimpses at this history through any number of mundane or magical recording devices, and through deciphering the Pattern of legendary objects. Every character mentioned in the history, and every item, tribe or incident in the other





chapters can all serve as hooks to grab the characters and bring them to Cara Fahd to create their own legends.

A Cara Fahd Campaign

If your players would like a change, creating a group of ork (or ujnort) characters who all live in Cara Fahd can start the game off with definite goals and themes. Perhaps the characters are from a lost kaer that opens right under Claw Ridge, and every chieftain wants them to join their tribe (while common orks dealing with them have contempt for the simple kaer fools). They could all be from one tribe such as a Thunderer cerri, Rejruk's Foxes, their own small **Carad** tribe looking to forge alliances, a mixed bag from all over Barsaive, or ork friends dedicated to binding their warring tribes together by becoming the Emdachot.

An all-ork campaign would likely tend to be a bit chaotic, but that can be fun. An average group of six players means there are a minimum of twelve things that will set off the group's gahad and drive them to do something utterly passionate and often ill-advised. Of course, if everyone's gahad conditions are alike, players and gamemasters need to work extra hard to prevent the campaign from becoming one-dimensional.

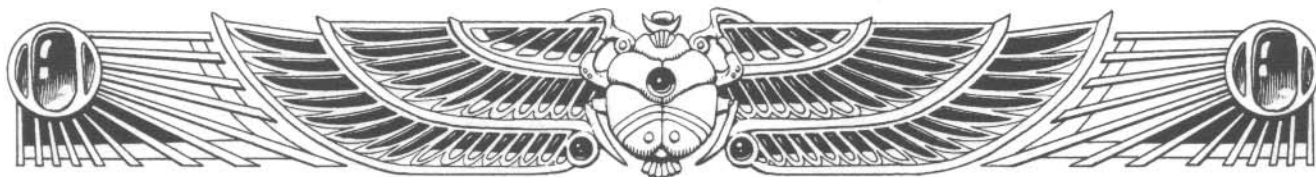
MONEY AND TRADE

Everyday life in Cara Fahd is more hand-to-mouth than in most other **Earthdawn** cities and nations. Unlike in Throal, a character can't simply go to a store to buy a new saddle and know he will find one. Whether the merchant has anything to sell depends on whether his caravans were attacked by scorchers; whether he will accept money or favors in return depends on whether he lives in Cara Fahd or is just passing through; and whether he's even in the same place the characters last saw him depends on whether he was harassed/killed by his neighbors, could find/earn enough food, or decided he wanted to be a "real ork" and join a tribe.

As a general rule, Cara Fahd is accustomed to accepting Throalic coin. However, about 10 percent of Cara Fahd's merchants trade so strictly with nomadic bands that they will not accept coinage on the grounds that one can't eat or wear it, and as such, the traders insist on bartering for everything. Getting such traders to accept precious metals usually adds 10–50 percent to the item's cost to make up for the expense of a trip to a bigger trading hub to exchange it or buy new supplies.

Whether or not the characters can acquire an item they want, no matter what they offer for it, is also chancy. Only 10





percent of stores carry items specialized for a race other than orks (such as windling-sized weapons), and these are double the price given in the *Earthdawn* rulebook before the merchant adds his commission. "Common" magical items, threaded items and fancy, artistic, or decorative goods (tapestries, silk dresses, engraved weaponry, jewelry) are similarly rare and sell for anywhere from 120–200 percent of the rulebook price.

Common goods in Cara Fahd include leather work, simple iron weapons, wood, furniture and mounts of any kind. These are cheaper than elsewhere in Barsaive, though merchants may charge standard prices to characters who are obviously fresh off the wagon trail.

Since most trade is through barter, these price differentials can work to the character's advantage. If they bring an embroidered Throalic dress (costing 22 silver) with them, there's a good chance they could trade it for a fully trained horse (125 silver) in a *Carad* village, since everyone has horses, but a village woman could get any ork's attention in a dress like that.

Food prices vary more than other goods. In Claw Ridge, for example, Harvest usually provides more than enough grain for the whole city, but whenever the Metal Fist cavalry comes to town, their five hundred thundra, five hundred stajian and one thousand horses eat enough to cause a shortage for everyone (as well as defoliating the place and eating the thatch off the roofs). Basic foods like bread, quaalz beans and goat meat are available, while fancier fare (e.g., nectar wine for windlings, fresh fruit brought from Blood Wood, fish found in the Serpent River but not the Greenheart) is more expensive.

ENTERTAINMENT

Ork nightlife tends to provide some level of hazard for the individual participating. For the majority of these entertainments—tussdi, drundeah, grumog-agu, hua and rutra—participating characters use combat skills or talents such as Trick Riding, Melee Weapons and Unarmed Combat, or appropriate physical attributes. Characters may also learn the new skill of Athletics, described below.

Athletics

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity Step

The Athletics skill allows a character to attempt any action besides combat which requires physical exertion. Running, dancing or sports such as those described in this book and *hach'var* (p. 100 in *Throal, The Dwarf Kingdom*) all involve the use of Athletics. This skill may be substituted for other skills of physical exertion such as Climbing, Trick Riding, Acrobatics or Swimming when making a test with those skills. However, as those skills each require more specialized training than Athletics provides, the user suffers a –3 Step penalty when using Athletics in this manner.

Under some conditions, Athletics may help a character avoid taking Strain from long travel times or physical exer-

tion, but never from the use of magical talents. In such a case, add the Athletics skill rank to any Toughness test made to avoid Fatigue (using the Difficulty Number guidelines in the basic rules and gamemaster screen as appropriate).

EATING ORK FOOD

Ork stomachs can handle food vile enough to make another Name-giver very, very sick. Ork food in general is spiced to the point where most elves, windlings and t'skrang have difficulty eating it: the gamemaster may choose to require a Toughness (5) Test if these races eat more than a small amount of ork food without bread or milk to soak it up. If they fail, they find out the origin of the Name "hurlg."

Hurlg

Most races find the notion of drinking decaying animal fat mixed with grain alcohol revolting at best. Non-orks wishing to drink hurlg must make Willpower (7) Tests to even swallow the foul brew. After every mug an unjort player character chokes down, he must make a Toughness (7) Test; failure means a bad reaction such as stomach cramps, vomiting, or passing out.

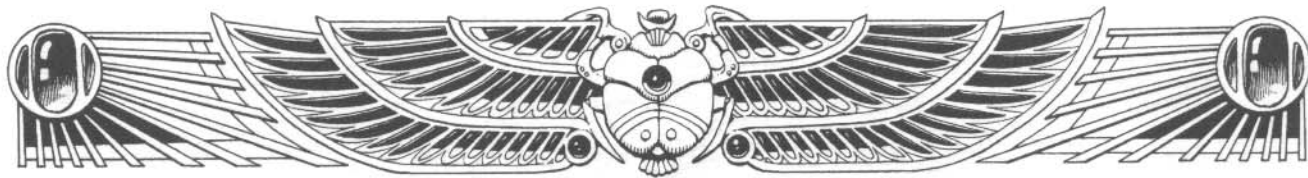
While under the influence, the character (ork or not) adds 1 to the Difficulty Number of any action she tries to perform for each cup after the first, including the Toughness Tests. After a character consumes more than five cups, the gamemaster may also judiciously apply the penalty to actions which normally require no tests, such as walking, speaking and picking up another glass of hurlg without spilling it. The many sumptuous varieties of hurlg discovered by ork brewers are no different in strength, only taste (such as the subtle difference of the bouquet of thundra versus cat fat).

That Pepper

The uyataa pepper is perhaps the nastiest substance voluntarily eaten in Cara Fahd, as it is actively at odds with Name-giver biology. The pepper juice is so acidic as to cause skin irritation if left on the flesh of any Name-giver but obsidimen. The pepper juice burns any sensitive nerves it comes in contact with such as in the mouth or eyes; if it gets in either location (i.e., someone licks it or rubs her eyes with the juice on her fingers), it causes great pain, causing a –1 penalty to all steps. The affected area must be washed out with milk and then water. To avoid this effect, the victim makes a Toughness or Resist Poison (8) Test. Attempting to actually swallow a bite while one's mouth is burning requires a successful Willpower Test against a Difficulty Number of 8.

The villagers of Lelithala make a mash of uyataa peppers, water and ground glass which they hurl at hostile intruders using catapults. If this mixture lands on exposed skin, the affected character takes Step 3 damage every round until it is washed off; armor protects against this damage.





Ghost Mushrooms

The ghost mushroom, found in Cara Fahd's jungles, is a white fungus with translucent gills beneath its cap that corrodes and dissolves soft tissue, the same way a spider bite turns an insect's guts to liquid inside the exoskeleton. The mushroom is a substance commonly eaten by orks in Cara Fahd, usually by naive explorers who mistake it for something less toxic. Many indigenous **Carad** stories and plays involve the murder weapon of a salad made with ghost mushrooms served up by smiling assassins.

The poison has a Spell Defense of 10, and a Step 8 Effect Test for the debilitating pain this fungus causes when touching the skin. If eaten or injected, ghost mushrooms cause Step 18 damage each half-hour until the character dies or is given magical treatment.

DEALING WITH GAHAD

Every ork in Barsaive has a gahad which drives her to follow her impulses, and in Cara Fahd, the vast majority of Interaction Tests will involve at least one ork. Often the "gahad chain" will set off an entire family, clan or tribe, all with their own pet peeves.

As described on p. 121 of **Denizens of Earthdawn, Volume 2**, each ork has at least two conditions that will set off his or her gahad, and two conditions that will never trigger gahad under any circumstances. For instance, Getaft Allthought's gahad goes off when she is confronted with scholarly incompetence and when someone causes danger in a supposedly civilized, public place. However, it never goes off at "disgusting" bodily functions others consider rude or inappropriate, and never when she is slapped. (This makes Getaft really good at shpita.)

When confronted with something that triggers a gahad attack, the ork chooses to fight it or give in. Resisting requires a Willpower Test, with a Difficulty Number assigned by the gamemaster according to the severity of the stimulus. Certain talents and skills can substitute for the Willpower roll, such as Resist Taunt and *Guhvuul* (described under **Tribe-Specific Magic**, p. 119). If the character succeeds at this test, he or she can choose to act rationally.

Whenever an ork tries to resist gahad, she suffers a "hangover" of heartburn-like pain or other symptoms such as hallucinations within 3D6 hours. This causes the ork to subtract from 1 to 5 steps from all tests, depending on the severity of the stimulus (for example, -4 for a Very Hard test). This hangover lasts 30 minutes per Difficulty Level of the Willpower Test to resist giving in to gahad.

In the case of two conflicting gahad conditions, the "never" condition prevails. For example, if a dragon were in the market outside Wurchaz belching flame because it ate too many peppers, it would not trigger Getaft's gahad: belching is a natural bodily function, so even though it is endangering those occupying a public place, Getaft can control herself without penalties.

If the ork does not resist gahad, she must take a direct physical action to alleviate her passion, of an intensity similar to severity of the stimulus. If the action taken is minor compared to the stimulus, the hangover is reduced by a level the gamemaster deems appropriate.

Getaft is in a game of shpita with Moschtug, where they let off a stream of insults until they hit one another's gahad. "Hey, Mosch, I heard that people were bowing and scraping behind you as you walked down Vrolok Lane yesterday," Getaft begins, "until you plugged the hole in your purse." Since Moschtug's gahad goes off whenever someone doesn't treat him like a king, the gamemaster determines this would be Hard for Moschtug to resist, and rolls his Willpower against a Difficulty Number of 13.

He makes it, but knows he is going to suffer a hangover for an hour and a half if he doesn't let it out. He screams loudly and gesticulates wildly, throwing back "Well, I heard Merrox in Throal was already praising your Name for your documents. He had to fix all your misspellings of Cara Fard, though, to fit with all the Throalic maps!"

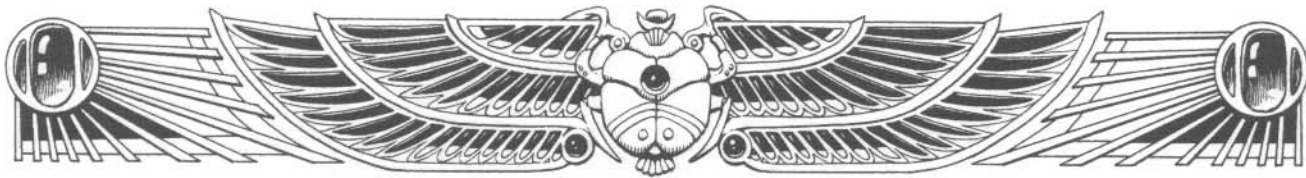
The physical action of wild screaming isn't quite enough to alleviate Moschtug's gahad, since he'd much rather beat the wizard's pasty head in. But since Moschtug sees Getaft rage at the joke about mauled ork Names, the gamemaster judges the yelling was at least an action of Average intensity. This means his hangover will be reduced to half an hour ($90 - 60 = 30$ minutes) and only a -1 ($3 - 2$) step penalty.

Orks cannot save up extra successes and use them to alleviate later attacks of gahad. However, they may alleviate the coming hangover by "making up for it" within a number of Combat Rounds equal to the Difficulty Level of the test. In the above example, Moschtug had a Hard test, and so had to act within 3 Combat Rounds. If Moschtug changes his mind and really does beat Getaft's head in, he will stop the coming hangover, but only if he does so in the next 2 Combat Rounds.

Gahad hangovers have cumulative penalties, but only up to a maximum of -5 steps. There is no limit on duration; orks can be twisting in pain for days after swallowing enough gahad.

Most orks discover their first gahad impulses when about two years old. As the ork ages, the conditions which set off her gahad gradually develop. Each triggering condition stays with the ork for most of her life, but can be added to or replaced by major experiences such as beginning another Discipline or losing a close friend. There is no limit on the number of triggering conditions an ork can have during his lifetime.





Gahad and Living Talk

Most sane people in Cara Fahd speak in ways designed not to trigger another ork's gahad. By chattering loudly and in an animated fashion, an ork implies that everything he says is meant casually and inoffensively, no matter what the content. Doing so requires appropriate roleplaying or an Etiquette, Storytelling or Charisma Test against the listener's Social Defense. If the roll succeeds, the ork does not have to make a Gahad Test even if the words are offensive.

Gahad Uses and Troubleshooting

Orks have a saying: "Trouble comes from the heart." This is a euphemism for "gahad gets orks into outrageous messes just when it's most inconvenient." Like the orks, gamemasters can find gahad both helpful and an immense headache.

On the bright side, gahad is a lever the gamemaster can use to draw any ork, whether player or gamemaster character, into a fracas. For example:

- The heroes are scouting out an evil nethermancer's house, but are too wary to enter. The gamemaster knows the critical clues are inside, but they're about to miss them. When a Metal Fist ork in the group pauses for dinner, a couple at a nearby table casually mention they sold a thunder calf to a nethermancer for her experiments, which means she's violating djoto on top of her other misdeeds. This sets off a gahad attack in the ork, who can either charge into the house or suffer a painful hangover that will make him nearly helpless.

- The heroes have been acting unheroic, tearing through Black Quarry as though they have a license to kill. When they get into yet another deadly bar brawl, the bartender's gahad goes off and he assaults them with his bare hands. If he is hurt, that night his eight-year-old-son finds them, attempting to brain them with a stick. He doesn't care if he dies—all he cares is that someone hurt his father. His mother comes after him, unarmed, screaming for the characters not to hurt her son. If they still don't get the point and slaughter the family, the rest of their clan puts the characters on summary trial for their crimes.

- The heroes need help exploring the last few areas of a dangerous kaer, and head back to Claw Ridge to rest, resupply and heal. Out of silver, they ask a researcher if he knows anything about the kaer. Rather than paying, they challenge the researcher, saying he can't find anything about it, then suggest that if its treasures were uncovered, it might help in war against the Therans. With patriotic and personal gahad on fire, the scholar finds the information in record time and insists he accompany them back (and gets himself into trouble all the way).

If troublesome players use gahad as an excuse for killing everyone they meet on the road, or have picked a too-troublesome gahad condition, the gamemaster should

remember that the player picks the trigger, but the gamemaster chooses how they react. Therefore, a violent player's character might be very surprised to find himself running in fear the next time he gives in to gahad. Other reactions include greedily eating everything in sight, lusty attempts to get someone's favors, euphoric cartwheeling and frantically working at terrible cost to the ork's body. Most orks in Cara Fahd quickly forgive these passionate outbreaks. Ujnort are another story.

KINSHIP, STATUS AND INTERACTION TESTS

When asking for favors, trying to figure out another character's hidden traits, or otherwise interacting socially with members of a clan or tribe, the gamemaster may use the optional Kinship and Status modifiers from the Status and Kinship Table when using Interaction Tests (pp. 237–40, ED). The basic Interaction Tests allow for Deceit, Insight, Intimidation, Making an Impression and Favors. Additionally, certain talents that target Social Defense such as Taunt and Emotion Song work more easily on characters who know the adept intimately.

The Status and Kinship Table (p. 107) provides suggested step penalties and bonuses for Interaction Tests based on the relationship between the character and target. Clan/family and tribe are the primary social forces in a tribal character's life. The average tribal ork finds it easier to understand body language and colloquialisms of a speaker if the person was raised in the same setting he was. Similarly, it becomes harder to trust anything coming from a hereditary enemy.

Insight represents talents or skills which can detect if a character is lying, or sense their emotions. Deceit, its opposite, does not use these modifiers.

Favors are any actions that try to wheedle concessions from the target, including the Haggle talent and bribery skill.

Impression covers inspirational or emotion-affecting magic such as Heartening Laugh, Emotion Song and social skills such as etiquette and conversation. Depending on the tribe's marriage customs, flirting and Winning Smile may receive these modifiers or their opposite. For example, if a Metal Fist member tries to seduce someone in his clan (considered incestuous) it should be more difficult, not less.

Taunt is the use of cutting insults and the Taunt talent.

Acting is the use of acting and disguise skills and talents to fool the target.

Any other social activities, such as Intimidation, receive no modifiers. If two conditions are fulfilled, such as a tribe member who is also a family enemy, enmity takes precedence.

The "status" descriptions reflect the general hierarchy of a given tribe. Though tribes vary widely in their methods of promotion, the pecking order has its own social pressure. For example, though it is easy to curry favor (Favors or Impression) with members of the tribe or clan, the chieftains (high-status individuals) are slightly harder





to impress, as it is their business to solve disputes and give concessions judiciously. The modifiers below reflect this.

Naturally, specific player characters' relationships and opinion of their tribe can vary widely from the "typical ork" and should be worked out with the gamemaster.

STATUS AND KINSHIP TABLE

Target is a	Favors/			
	Insight	Impression	Taunt	Acting
Stranger	0	0	0	0
Tribal enemy	0	+2	0	0
Clan enemy	0	+3	0	0
Tribe member	-1	-1	-1	+1
Higher status	-1	0	-1	+1
Clan member	-2	-2	-2	+2
Higher status	-1	-1	-2	+2

THE CITADEL OF TIRTHON

The ancient ruin Zarass Icethought thinks is ancient Cara Fahd is in fact far more dangerous. The remains are the forgotten citadel of Tirthon, the largest kaer in Cara Fahd, which was settled by Theran sympathizers from Landis who took ork slaves in with them.

Just after the Scourge, Dis and Lochost began warring (p. 319, ED), and the slave camp right outside Tirthon was where they began a symbolic fight using its inhabitants, ultimately tearing both camp and citadel apart with the power of their struggle and destroying everyone within.

The site of a battle between Passions, the ruined citadel contains a curse on a scale beyond anything Name-givers can cast. For purposes of astral sensing and traveling in astral space, consider the region surrounding Tirthon the equivalent of a Corrupt region.

The curse on the place makes its Pattern alternate with Dis's rigidity and Lochost's chaotic freedom. Any character who spends more than a few minutes touching its walls must make a Willpower (7) Test to resist its effects. They must repeat the test for each day they remain at Tirthon, increasing the Difficulty Number by 1 per day. (If a character leaves and returns, it begins again from the base Difficulty.) Successful resistance means only slight compulsions that favor the activities of one Passion or the other; for example, Zarass Icethought has been resisting the call of Dis, but has developed a compulsive desire to stay and catalog every stone of the citadel, though she will return to normal if forced to leave. Other victims may develop minor desires to change things such as their clothes, their mode of speech, or their minds as Lochost infects them.

If the character fails the Willpower Test, the effects are far worse; the effects of the curse become serious personal-

ity disorders as they repeat actions constantly or run about maniacally attempting to change everything they find (other people's minds, the fact that trees grow leaves, the Theran Empire's hierarchy ...).

If a character enters the citadel, she receives the full effects of the curse, for the Passions' war enters her and she is caught between pure order and pure chaos, alternating catatonia with mania. For each yard inside the walls, another test is made, increasing the Difficulty Number by 1 each time.

Curing the effects of the curse requires the intervention of a Passion or an epic quest, and heroic effort on the behalf of the cursed one's friends as they put up with the unfortunate victim's actions. No one yet has figured out how to lift the curse on Tirthon itself.

CARA FAHD'S TRUE PATTERN

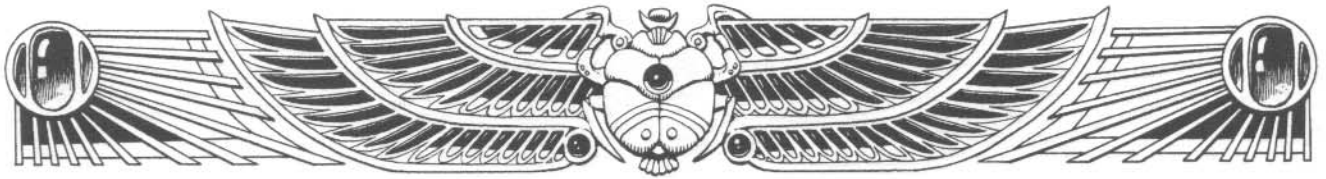
One of Krathis Gron's main concerns is the nature of Cara Fahd's True Pattern. This is the first time in the history of Barsaive that a new nation has been reNamed the same Name as something that fell apart centuries ago. A warrior/troubadour, Krathis does not know much about Pattern magic theory and goes mostly by her instincts, so she is not sure whether the Naming has created a new Pattern to supersede the old one, or is breathing new life into the old Pattern, essentially weaving the six hundred years of being called Cara Fard into its history to provide continuity between the old and new.

She herself is primarily interested in creating an ork nation, not in any obscure magical theory. However, she would like to acquire pattern items under the advice of Getaft and Dvilgaynon, who recognize such items' significance to re-forming the land.

Because the history of the old land is becoming important to those who live in the new, however, the two Cara Fahds share a number of pattern items. These include the ruins of the ancient city of Cara Fahd, Hrak Gron's blood and the temple of Lochost where it was spilled, Hrak Gron's soul stone, Grimeye's Lance and the crown or scepter of Cara Fahd.

The two patterns are in uneasy balance. In heavily populated areas such as Claw Ridge, new Cara Fahd is completely dominant. In the deserted jungle, the presence of explorers thinking about the old land has partially reawakened the old Pattern without replacing it, leading to tales of unusual phenomena such as ghostly cities manifesting at night where they existed centuries ago. Some people rumor that the new pattern has hastened the destruction of the old; as a new Name cuts off old magic, so ancient ruins are turning to dust and documents fading. Many old ruins' patterns remain corrupted by Horrors, however, and so the phenomenons' true causes are anyone's guess.





THE BLADES OF CARA FAHD

Characters who own the Blades of Cara Fahd may find themselves drawn into the problems of the ork nation. Their actions with the Blades and what they did during the adventures of **Blades** can affect the nation's rebuilding in several ways.

If Betrayer has been destroyed, the Blades are little more than powerful magical items of historical importance. However, if Betrayer is still in the Blades and they are brought within Cara Fahd, Betrayer's curse heightens rivalries between tribal factions, possibly even allowing Betrayer to Horror mark important characters with whom they come in contact.

Krathis Gron would like to re-consecrate the Blades to her newly forming Emdachot and tries to get the characters who possess the Blades to either join or give up the Blades. If they join, Krathis lets them keep the daggers, but assigns an ork "mentor" to closely watch non-ork characters to make sure they have the interests of Cara Fahd at heart. If they give up the Blades, Krathis Gron offers them to the top eight contenders in a tremendous contest of strength, magic and loyalty to Cara Fahd, making the winners Cara Fahd's new Protectors and the leaders of Emdachot.

If the characters give away the Blades while they are still Horror-tainted, Betrayer works his corruption through Cara Fahd's defense forces, and by the time war comes around, Cara Fahd may experience the same ignominious death it did last time. Eventually, new ork heroes will seek the source of the curse and destroy it—and perhaps the player characters, too.

COMMON CARA FAHD STATISTICS

Below are statistics for non-adept ork cavalymen of four different experience levels and average liberators of several Circles. Adept cavalryman statistics may be found on page 112 of **Prelude to War**. Discipline talents are listed in **bold type**, talents which require Karma are in *italics*.

Ork Cavalryman (Non-Adept)

Attributes

Dexterity (13): 6/D10 Perception (11): 5/D8
Strength (19): 8/2D6 Willpower (11): 5/D8
Toughness (16): 7/D12 Charisma (11): 5/D8

Skills

	Green	Seasoned	Veteran	Commander
Animal Bond	1/6	3/8	4/9	5/10
Battle Shout	1/6	2/7	4/9	5/10
Charge	2/10	3/11	5/13	7/15
Melee Weapons	2/8	3/9	5/11	7/13
Sure Mount	1/9	2/10	4/12	7/15
Trick Riding	1/7	3/9	5/11	7/13

Skills

	Green	Seasoned	Veteran	Commander
Down Strike	—	2/13	5/16	7/18
Maneuver	—	2/8	4/10	6/12
Unarmed Combat	—	1/7	3/9	5/11
Wheeling Defense	—	1/7	3/9	7/13
Riposte	—	—	2/11	4/13
Second Attack	—	—	3/9	4/10
Shield Charge	—	—	2/10	4/12
Wheeling Attack	—	—	3/9	6/12
Anticipate Blow	—	—	—	3/8
Heartening Laugh	—	—	—	3/8

Damage

Death Rating: 39
Wound Threshold: 11
Unconsciousness Rating: 31
Recovery Tests: 3
Recovery Dice: 7/D12

Movement

Full: 70
Combat: 35

Combat

Physical Defense: 7
Spell Defense: 7
Social Defense: 7

Initiative Dice and Physical/Mystic Armor by Type

Padded Leather: D10 (4/1)
Padded Leather and Rider's Shield: D8 (7/1)
Hide Armor and Rider's Shield: D6 (8/2)
Ring Mail and Rider's Shield: D4 (9/1)
Chain Mail and Rider's Shield: D4-1 (10/1)
Plate Mail and Rider's Shield: D4-2 (12/1)

Weapon Damage by Type

When charging, use the weapon step below plus the Charge Rank plus the mount's Strength step for damage.

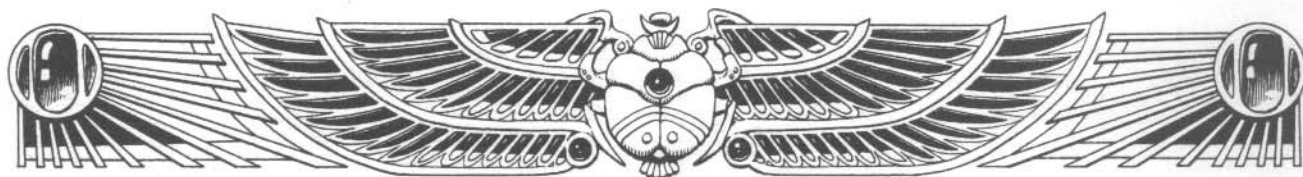
Dagger (10/D10+D6)
Mace or Spear (12/2D10)
Broadsword (13/D12+D10)
Lance
Riding Horse: 20/D20+D8+D6
War Horse: 22/D20+D10+D8
Stajian: 23/D20+2D10
Thundra: 24/D20+D12+D10
Dyre: 27/D20+D10+2D8

Ork Liberator

Attributes

Dexterity (12): 5/D8 Perception (13): 6/D10
Strength (13): 6/D10 Willpower (16): 7/D12
Toughness (14): 6/D10 Charisma (14): 6/D10





	Circle				
Talents	1st	2nd	3rd	5th	7th
Freedom Search	1/7	2/8	3/9	5/11	7/13
Karma Ritual	1/1	2/2	3/3	5/5	7/7
Melee Weapons	2/7	2/7	4/9	5/10	7/12
Mind Armor	2/9	3/10	3/10	5/12	7/14
Mind Blade	1/1	3/3	4/4	5/5	7/7
Ritual of Atone.	1/8	2/9	3/10	4/11	7/14
Durability (7/6)	—	1/1	3/3	5/5	7/7
Free Mind	—	2/8	3/9	5/11	7/13
Unarmed Combat	—	2/7	3/8	5/10	7/12
Heart of Freedom	—	—	3/10	5/12	7/14
Shackle Shrug	—	—	3/8	5/10	7/12
False Shackles	—	—	—	5/10	7/12
Thread Weaving	—	—	—	5/11	7/13
Lion Spirit	—	—	—	5/5	7/7
Lock Pick	—	—	—	5/10	7/12
Dead Fall	—	—	—	—	7/14
Freedom Song	—	—	—	—	7/13
Power Mask	—	—	—	—	7/14
Shout of Justice	—	—	—	—	7/13

	Circle				
Damage	1st	2nd	3rd	5th	7th
Death Rating:	36	43	57	71	85
Wound Threshold:	10	10	10	10	10
Unconsciousness					
Rating:	28	34	46	58	70

	1st	2nd	3rd	5th	7th
Karma					
Karma Points	10	12	15	20	27
Dice: D8					

Initiative
Dice: D8

Movement
Full: 65
Combat: 33

Combat
Physical Defense: 7
Spell Defense: 9
Social Defense: 8

Armor: 2
Mystic Armor: 2

Weapons/Armor
Padded cloth armor
2 daggers (Damage 8/2D6)
Miner's pick or sledgehammer (Damage 12/2D10)

Notes

Fourth Circle: The liberator can spend Karma on actions using Willpower only.

Fifth Circle: Increase Physical Defense by 1.

Sixth Circle: Increase Social Defense by 1.

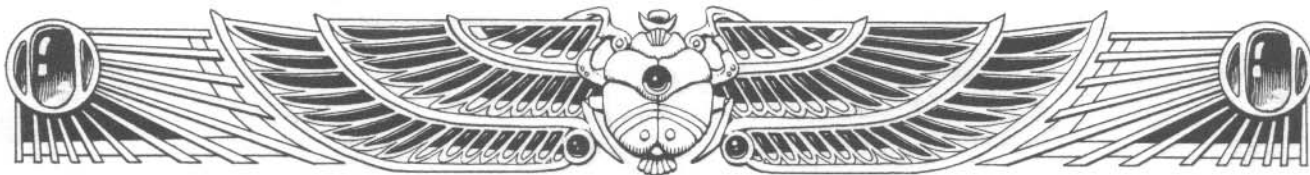
Seventh Circle: Increase Spell Defense by 1.



IN THE SADDLE

The *Earthdawn Survival Guide* (pp. 91–93) contains information on the care of most common mounts in *Earthdawn*. The following rules supplement the existing rules by providing a comparison of the speeds, weights and costs of various mounts. Inns in Cara Fahd assume all trav-





MOUNT STATISTICS TABLE

All weights and carrying capacities are in pounds unless specified. Lifespan is in years.

Mount Price	Purchase Cost	Feeding Full/Combat	Speed Capacity	Carrying	Weight	Lifespan
Dyre*	4,500	5	75/35	1,850	1.5 tons	25
Elephant	3,000	30	43/22	2,500	6 tons	70
Goat**	10	1cp	48/24	50	150	15
Granlain	115	1	57/29	1,600	1.5 tons	20
Griffin	7,500	10	57/29 (120/60)	200	600	45
Horses						
Draft	150	5cp	54/27	500	1,800	30
Pony	110	5cp	90/45	200	700	25
Rejruk	500	5cp	140/60	150	900	20
Riding	125	5cp	120/50	200	1,000	25
War	1,500	5cp	100/80	500	1,800	25
Huttawa	95	8cp	57/29	400	600	15
Kue	100	2cp	70/35	20	25	10
Pack Mule	100	2cp	57/29	400	900	20
Stajian	3,500	1	100/50	600	1 ton	25
Thundra	4,000	5	90/45	1,450	3 tons	45
Troajin	100	2	57/29	125	400	20
Zoak	115	1cp	70/35 (150/75)	20	25	15

* Dyres are described on pages 20–21 of **Creatures of Barsaive**.

** Windlings who cannot afford a more specialized creature often ride goats because they're easy to train, can carry a proportionally huge amount of weight and eat nearly anything.

Granlain, huttawa, kue, troajin, and zoaks are described on pages 119–23 of **Adept's Way**.

Stajian are detailed in **Creatures of Cara Fahd**, p. 123.

Note: cp = copper pieces

elers come with mounts and include stabling costs in the standard room prices. A saddle in Cara Fahd costs about 20 silver, a bridle 10 and a howdah 120. A farrier's services (horse shoeing and basic veterinary care) cost 5 silver.

The Mount Endurance Table lists the number of hours a day each type of mount can travel. When it exceeds that number, it takes the listed Strain cost per hour. The numbers should give gamemasters and players an idea of the comparative abilities of various mounts, which are not always directly related to their Toughness. For example, griffins are tougher than horses (reflected by the Toughness Step), but flying is more tiring than walking, and they are high-strung, so they cannot work for as long in a day.

Mounts purchased at character creation, a cavalryman's starting mount or any mount bought from a typical Barsaivian dealer comes trained for riding and will generally not get spooked in combat, though temperament may vary among individuals. Untrained mounts may be purchased for 75 percent of list price. Training can be accomplished with the Animal Bond or Animal Training talents (p. 96–97, ED), both of which may be learned as skills.

NEW WEAPONS

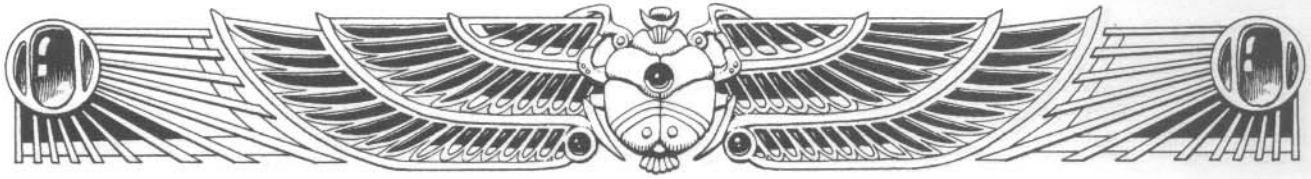
Below are descriptions and game rules for a number of new weapons that characters might encounter or learn of while in Cara Fahd, as well as rules for using the Riposte talent against large weapons such as lances.

Ballistae

A ballista is an oversized crossbow-like weapon, often mounted on a tripod frame braced on the ground. Cocking a ballista requires 2 Combat Rounds and usually requires a winch mechanism (though characters with a Strength Attribute Value of 25 or higher can do so by hand). While the ballista spears only punch a medium-size hole in airships and riverboats, they are quite deadly against Namegivers. Attempting to hit anything faster or smaller than a stationary wagon, however, is a Called Shot (–3 steps to the Attack Test).

Light ballistae have two-foot "arms" and fire a spear that weighs about two pounds. The spear has a Damage step of 8 and a range equivalent to a medium crossbow. They cost 450 silvers, with each spear costing 1 silver.





MOUNT ENDURANCE TABLE

Mount	Toughness	Recovery Tests/Day	Hours of Work/Day	Strain Cost/Hour
Dyre	14	4	10	2
Elephant	9	5	8	1
Goat	6	2	10	1
Granlain	8	4	8	3
Griffin	9	4	4	4
Horses				
Draft	8	3	10	2
Pony	8	3	8	2
Rejruk	7	3	6	4
Riding	8	3	8	3
War	8	3	8	2
Huttawa	8	2	8	2
Kue	6	3	5	3
Pack Mule	8	4	10	1
Stajian	10	5	8	2
Thundra	12	7	8	1
Troajin	6	2	6	4
Zoak	6	3	4	5

Medium ballistae are about the size of a single bed for a human, fire a four-pound spear, and have a Damage step of 10. Its Ranges are: Short 2–50, Medium 51–150, Long 151–220. They cost 750 silvers, each spear costing 3 silvers.

Heavy ballistae are commonly used on airships, especially drakkars. Their spears are twelve feet long and ten pounds apiece, with a Damage step of 12. Their ranges are: Short 2–50, Medium 51–100, Long 101–250. The ballista costs 1,500 silvers, the spear 12.

Ballistae Firebolts

During the War of Secrets, the orks developed a ballista spear with a hollow tip, with two tiny compartments separated by a thin layer of brass. Just before the weapon was fired, one compartment was loaded with a kernel of True air, the other True fire. The ballista was fired as the True fire began to burn through the brass. As the spear penetrated a solid surface, the tip was crushed or the fire burned through, causing an explosion equivalent to a fire cannon blast (Step 18 Fireball) inside the target. Though unreliable, the effects could be devastating. Ork explorers have recently rediscovered and recreated this weapon.

To load a firebolt ballista, the loader must make a Dexterity (4) Test; failure means the True Elements come into contact and explode, causing Step 18 damage to the loader, Step 10 damage to any characters with 5 yards and destroying the ballista. If loaded successfully, the ballista must be fired within 5 rounds before the brass burns and the explosion occurs anyway.

On a Good or better Attack Test result, the firebolt explodes, adding 6 steps to the ballista's damage and delivering Step 14 damage to any other targets with 10 yards.

Firebolt loads cost 215 silvers plus the cost of the spear, but have so far only been used by Thunderaxe's Cleavers. They can be sized to any ballista. It is possible to fashion similar weapons for arrows and hand-held spears, but this is impractical (read: stupid and dangerous) due to the expense, precision and speed required in loading, faster burning times, and an uncomfortable blast radius.

Vuutro's Flame Cannons

Vuutro's flame cannons load a hollow, five-pound wooden or metal shell filled with pitch, oil, hurlg or another sticky flammable substance, sealed with a plug that contains a kernel of True fire. The firing mechanism drops and crushes a kernel of True air in the breech of the barrel, creating a powerful explosion that sends the shell flying. As it hits a solid target, the shell and plug rupture, splattering the enemy with a sticky liquid that immediately bursts into flame. If targeted on a Name-giver, the cannon is considered to be performing a Called Shot (–3 steps to attack).

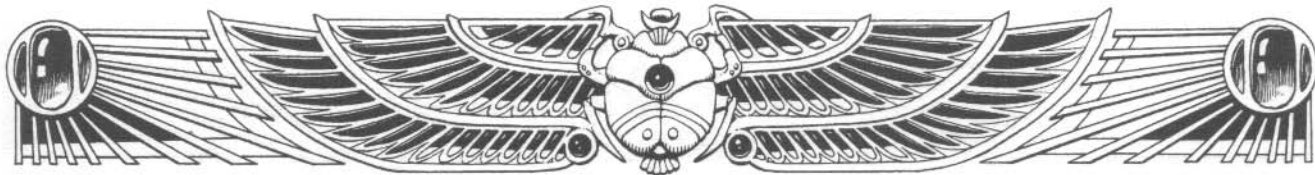
The shell does Step 8 damage on impact. As the shell ruptures, the oil mix is spread over the area. The size of the oil spread is based on the result of the Damage Test, and spreads one yard for every 4 points of damage rolled on the Damage Test. Armor reduces the damage of the shell, but does not affect the spread. If the Damage Test result is less than 4, the shell remains intact.

Ignited by the True fire in the plug, the flaming oil starts at Step 3 damage and increases by 1 step every succeeding round until it is scraped off or smothered with sand or True water. The crew must also eventually deal with the loose kernel of True fire rolling around on their ship. Anyone fighting on a surface of flaming oil must make a Dexterity (7) Test each round to stay upright and takes burning damage.

When using the Ship Combat rules (p. 129, *Earthdawn Companion* or p. 120, *Crystal Raiders of Barsaive*), airships loading Vuutro's flame cannons in place of their normal cannons increase their Firepower damage step by 1. Ships hit by Vuutro's cannons also take burning damage, which starts at Step 3, plus one for each level of success 1 (Average) to 4 (Extraordinary) on the Attack Test. Burning damage increases by 1 step every round. Wooden airships and structures do not reduce burning damage by their Armor Rating. Stone airships are immune to this damage.

Double any crew losses killed by burning. If hit in successive rounds, new fires add their steps to previous fires. To douse the fire, a number of crew members equal to the current Damage Step need to smother the flames. Each person doing so reduces the Burning step by 1.





The effective range of the shell is half that of normal fire cannons. Vuutro's cannons only hold one shot and must be reloaded every time they are fired, unlike normal fire cannons.

Vuutro's cannons and their design are currently a Cara Fahd national secret, though spies may have ferreted out this knowledge. As such, they are not for public knowledge or sale. However, one acquired and sold would fetch at least 12,500 silvers.

Riposting Long Weapons

When a character is using a particularly long weapon, an opponent that Ripostes may not be able to reach their attacker for the counterstrike. The riposting character needs a weapon no less than 2 sizes smaller than that of the attacker in order to reliably hit their opponent in return. For example, a lance (Size 6) may be riposted with a troll sword (Size 4) but not by a broadsword (Size 3). Unarmed combatants (and most creatures) are assumed to be using Size 1 weapons. As a rule of thumb, treat creatures with horns to have 1 Size increase for every foot or more of natural weapon; for example, a two-foot thundra horn is Size 2.

The Riposte Test is made normally against long weapons, and can deflect such attacks normally; the return blow simply cannot damage the assailant if the riposter's weapon is not large enough. However, there are a number of conditions that bypass this handicap. The rule does not apply if the Riposting character has a higher Initiative result than his opponent, has successfully used the Maneuver talent on the opponent, or if the opponent is using the Charge talent or skill, as each of these situations allows the riposting character to move into an effective range in which to use Riposte.

SAMPLE ADVENTURE FRAMEWORKS

The adventure framework format is an adventure outline that gamemasters can use to plan out the events of an adventure while maintaining as much flexibility as they need. Each adventure framework has five parts: **Premise**, **Setup**, **Events**, **Climax** and **Sequels**.

The **Premise** briefly summarizes the adventure and describes its major sources of conflict or drama. The **Set-Up** describes how the adventure begins and how the characters become involved in it. This section may also include events that have led to the adventure, and background on other ideas touched on in the **Premise**. The **Events** in each framework describe encounters and events that occur during the course of the adventure. These may include situations that pose problems for the characters, actions by the adventure's antagonists, creature encounters or simply unexpected occurrences. In other words, events are the

obstacles or problems the player characters must overcome to complete the adventure successfully.

The **Climax** describes the likely conclusion of the adventure. (If player characters take unexpected actions, the ending of the adventure may differ significantly from the ending described in the **Climax**—therefore, gamemasters may want to plan for more than one possible conclusion.) **Sequels** describe stories that might happen after the adventure or as a result of the adventure. Sequels may be adventures that feature the same non-player characters or include a magical item discovered in the first adventure. By running sequel adventures, gamemasters can create a sense of continuity in their campaigns.

These frameworks provide examples of the types of adventures possible in Cara Fahd, dealing with intra-tribal rivalries, exploration and the human resistance, and foreign espionage, respectively.

THIS TOWN AIN'T BIG ENOUGH ...

Premise

The heroes find a Metal Fist tribesman in trouble with the Broken Fang, and must make peace between the two tribes by discovering the third party who set them up.

Setup

The characters are staying in Gevosht when a thundra beast trots down the road toward them. When it reaches the characters, it snuffles, nips their sleeves and bellows, trotting a few feet away and looking back as if it wants them to follow. If they ignore the thundra, it becomes a (large and heavy) pest until they pay attention to what it wants or begin to chase it. If the heroes look closely, the animal has a few cuts on its tough hide.

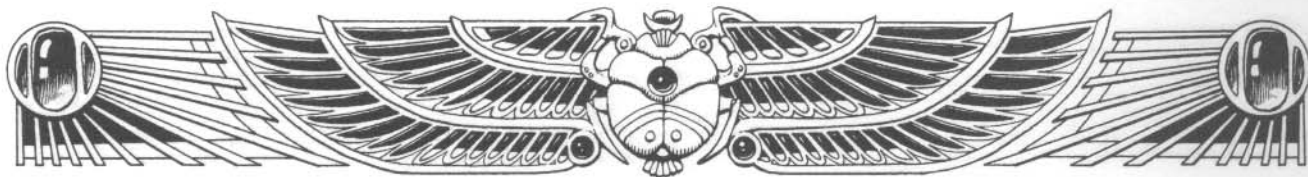
Event 1

The thundra leads them west into the forest, where they spot a campfire. Three thundra, five horses and their Broken Fang riders are eating dinner nearby. Tied to a tree behind them is a member of the Metal Fist tribe (recognizable from his clothing), unconscious and beaten black and blue. The thundra snorts at the sight; clearly it wants the characters to help its rider.

This is a diplomatic incident waiting to happen. Either the Metal Fist was in Broken Fang territory, or the Broken Fang kidnapped the Metal Fist. The characters should free the raider, Riggu Blackmane, however they can—diplomacy (unlikely and difficult), combat (difficult but possible) or stealth (easier after the raiders fall asleep if they can keep the thundra calm until then).

If the characters do nothing, the agitated thundra bellows loudly and charges the camp. This sets the Broken Fangs against the characters, as they assume the characters sent the thundra to attack them.





Event 2

As soon as Riggu is conscious, he goes berserk with gahad and tries to kill the Broken Fang (or tear apart their corpses) unless held down. He yells that the Broken Fang must have manipulated Krathis and his tribe will back him up if he takes apart the idiots who caused this mess. As any conscious Broken Fang can confirm, they were told by a Claw Ridger (with a brass badge of office, no less) that the Metal Fist had pillaged the wrong folk and Krathis says they should arrest all the Fists they can find and bring them to Claw Ridge to hear who's really in charge. The first Fist they found was Riggu, and the "arrest" quickly turned into a beating.

Riggu wants to run to his dramar (Hinda Shortstride, the short-tempered chieftain of the Clan of the Fifth Spire), tell them Krathis is betraying them for the Broken Fang and then attack the Fangs to get the bloody butt-kicking revenge his clan and tribe have wanted for ages.

This would, by the way, start a medium-size war in Gevosht. The characters can probably guess that this supposed Claw Ridge official is an impostor, and that Krathis should learn of the impending problem.

Event 3

Knocking Riggu on the head won't solve the problem. If he doesn't return, the Clan of the Fifth Spire will start looking for him, eventually in Broken Fang territory. The situation will get even worse if the characters kill him and the word gets to the Clan of the Fifth Spire, whose hundred or more cavalymen hunt his killers mercilessly.

The characters should investigate this official and unmask his manipulations before war breaks out. Riggu says that the Broken Fang called him "the blotchy guy" because of the large red birthmarks on his neck and arms. If the characters ask around in Claw Ridge, they learn that the "badge of office" is a fake, as they don't exist. Jesfuy Longrunner, if given a description, remembers the "blotchy guy" as Bundo Skratama, a native **Carad** who once lived southeast of Gevosht, but recently filed a claim for iron mining in Black Quarry.

Event 4

Black Quarry is ... well, Black Quarry. After enough asking around (and suffering their fair share of waylaying attempts, bar brawling, pickpocketing and shpita contests if the characters are new faces), the heroes learn where Bundo came home to roost: the Half-Horse Inn.

The Half-Horse is well-to-do, with paid guards, carved wooden furnishings and horse-fat hurlg. When the characters arrive, Bundo is there, unfortunately under the protection of Nilair Melesas, a prominent elven mine owner with buckets of money and twelve or so well-paid human and ork adept guards, who have no intention of letting Nilair's good friend get dragged off.

However, if the characters explain the situation (or look suspicious enough that he asks) Nilair claims to "understand their plight," and he is, after all, a gamblin' man ...

Climax

The characters can nab Bundo in a number of ways. They can duke it out with all the guards right there in the common room of the Half-Horse (which even has a chandelier to swing from), earning them the wrath of Nilair and his rich relatives. They can kidnap Bundo out of Nilair's home later that night, sneaking onto his sprawling thundra ranch and trying not to spook the herds into a stampede. Or they can play the Black Quarry version of strip poker where whomever loses gets stripped ... of all their possessions and most of their consciousness. Or they could bet on just about anything (blindfolded sword duels, wrestling with trolls, the next leaf to fall from a tree, or all of the above) in order to win Bundo from Nilair.

Bundo tries to run if he sees his fate being gambled away, but the characters and gamemaster character guards should be able to restrain him easily. Once caught, he can be "persuaded" to reveal that he has a grudge against Rejruk Softpaws and was trying to get her town of Gevosht smashed apart. Nilair tacitly approved of it (Nilair denies this) because it would eliminate one of Black Quarry's competing cities. When Bundo is dragged before Riggu, the Clan of the Fifth Spire, and any remaining Broken Fangs, the tribes grudgingly agree to keep their peace, thank the heroes and present them with gifts: fine horses, silver, an arranged marriage or two and all the elephant-fat hurlg they can drink.

COME TO RUIN

Premise

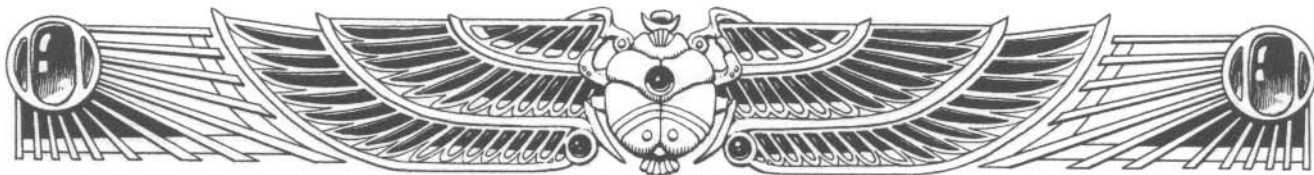
The characters hear that a map that will supposedly lead them to ancient Cara Fahd has fallen into the hands of the anti-ork resistance. Searching for the map and city takes them among native tribesmen, claim jumpers and pretentious t'skrang river pirates. They eventually find a town that is a valuable clue to the ancient capital's location, but not the city itself.

Setup

The player characters are in a tavern full of roughneck adventurers bragging about their past deeds and making fun of each others' failures. Eventually, the conversation turns to the recent loss suffered by the ork cavalryman Slessargh Stonemace, whose map to Cara Fahd's ruins was stolen by humans and t'skrang in the Bastown resistance.

Slessargh's team was hit too hard to attempt to get the map back themselves, and the majority of the braggarts are not even real adepts and won't risk themselves searching for it, so the characters now have a perfect chance to find





the ruins of Cara Fahd (they think), and earn all the prestige and gratitude that will go to those who rediscover it.

Event 1

The characters have to get into Basstown, the seat of the vicious anti-ork resistance. For non-ork player characters, this is fairly simple. Basstown is already swollen with refugees whom the orks drove out of their homes.

If the characters can demonstrate that they have magic skills and can make themselves useful, Basstown welcomes them openly.

If there are orks in the party, they will need to use stealth or magical disguises to remain unnoticed, or else they will confront a very nasty situation; if they can't prove they're not Carad, they're in for a world of hurt.

Event 2

Basstown is packed. It's swollen to ten times its normal size with human, troll, dwarf and elf refugees living in camps. It's hard to sit down without touching another Name-giver. From the talk the characters hear, the description Slessargh gave of the people who attacked him matches a pirate crew led by a t'skrang named K'ti. K'ti is a boatman/swordmaster who spends most of his time on a riverboat in the Greenheart.

Getting on the riverboat to retrieve the stolen map requires some smooth impersonation, quiet feet or lots and lots of flashing blades. Bringing back K'ti's sword, purple hat or tail tip counts as treasure worth Legend Points, as he's fairly famous on the Greenheart.

Once the characters are aboard, they can find the map as well as a decent haul of t'skrang spices, silver, kel'dui and copper ore.

Event 3

Now the adepts have a centuries-old water-stained map copied from the original and written in old or'zat using landmarks from before the Scourge. Ork History or Item History reveals that the copier's Name is in native Carad, in a dialect traceable to the Bat'Jrugma, a tribe that reverted to hunting and gathering in the southern jungles shortly after leaving the kaer. (If someone has Read and Write Language, they still need translators, because the

directions have colloquialisms such as, "once you go past where the Bot'Hyurg fish from the great tree's knee ...")

Event 4

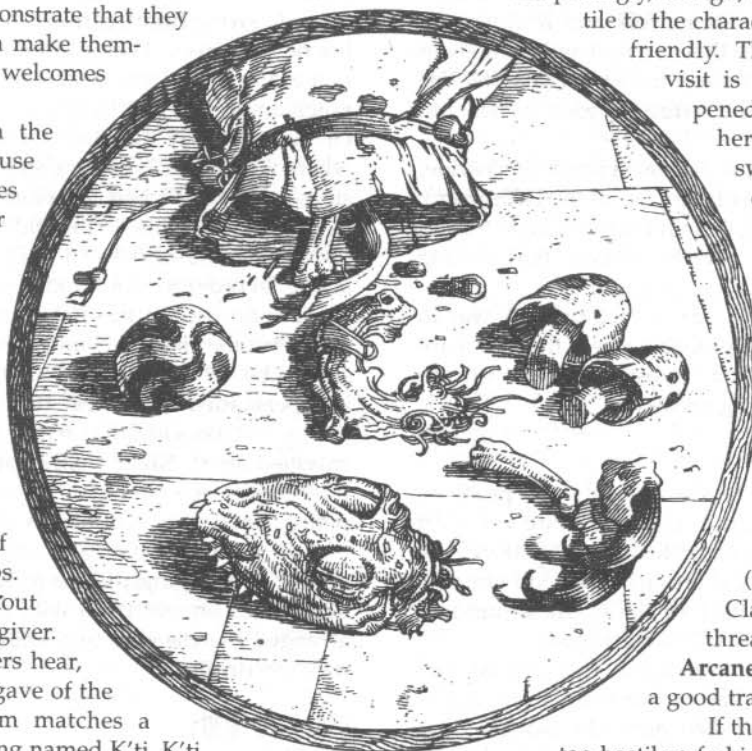
The jungle is, naturally, an opportunity to plague the player characters with mud slides, ornery crakbills, Carad cobras and ten-inch mosquitoes.

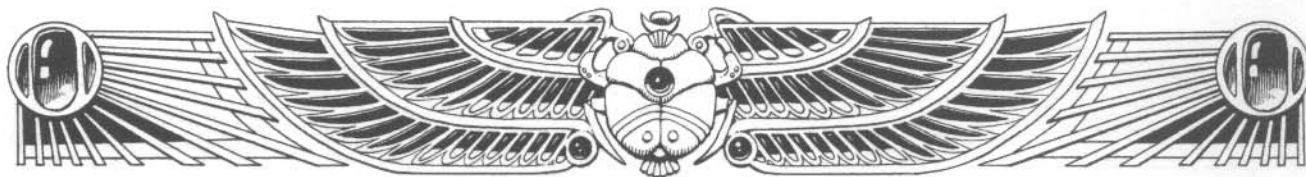
Surprisingly, though, the Bat'Jrugma are not hostile to the characters. In fact, they're overly friendly. They think the characters' visit is the best thing that's happened in years. They want the heroes' belts, broaches, swords, cloaks, boots, windings, blood pebbles and so on. They try to convince the characters that they have no possessions; they share everything with one another, and if the adepts want help, they better start sharing. On the bright side, the characters may be able to get ghost mushrooms, medicinal poultices, nice hides (worth fifty silver back in Claw Ridge) and even some threaded rain clubs (p. 74, *Arcane Mysteries of Barsaive*) on a good trade.

If the heroes treat the natives in too hostile a fashion, they're going to have to knock somebody over the head to get the translation out of them. There are five warrior adepts in the tribe, and ten or so non-adepts who will chip in against the adventurers with arrows and spears if necessary.

Climax

The translation and landmarks do indeed lead to a half-buried city that the map says is the "seat of the nation." Unfortunately, the colloquialism refers more to the "hind end of the nation," and half-preserved clay tablets inside the city's borders indicate it was Named Gnarog, an ancient river town with a bad reputation. However, it is still a ruin from before the Scourge, which is a valuable discovery. Most non-magical organic goods have rotted away centuries ago, leaving metal that is hard to corrode (such as gold or silver), some of which may provide historical clues as well as being valuable. As a river town, it conducted a great deal of trade in ancient Cara Fahd and was the site of a minor battle with Landis, giving the characters plenty to study for their efforts.





More pressing is the band of adventurers who attempt to jump the characters' claim to the ruin. They catch up to the player characters after the adepts do a few hours' exploring. Some warrior and beastmaster thugs heard about the map and have been trailing well behind the characters. They've looked for Cara Fahd before and came up empty, and they have no intention of letting anyone find it before them. Though they're tougher than the heroes, the characters can use the jungle and city defenses to their advantage.

The adepts can find enough information in the ruins to make Getaft and Krathis Gron quite happy; knowing where this town is gives them an idea of where the Greenheart River flowed before the Scourge, leading them closer to the real Cara Fahd.

TRAIL MIX

Premise

The Council at Wurchaz have discovered that a spy has been inside the fortress' secret rooms. They hire competent adepts to track him down and bring him in for interrogation (or worse). They need someone not employed by Cara Fahd proper so that the spy's contacts won't recognize the pursuers (or because they trust the adepts if they've helped Cara Fahd in the past).

Setup

A messenger bat lands on the adepts' windowsill or a nearby fence. It seems to have come from the direction of Wurchaz, which a distinctive copper band around its neck confirms. The note attached to its leg reads, "The fortress needs able-bodied adepts. Inquire within. Please leave this message on the bat and release it." The bat flaps off to continue advertising.

If the adepts go to Wurchaz, they see the usual chaos around the front desk, though a fair number of the crowd look like mercenaries and sell-spells—probably brought by the same bat as summoned the characters. If they shove their way through to Jesfuy, she only knows that Getaft will be out to speak to them all within the hour.

Event 1

After a wait in a hot, stuffy, crowded room that smells like fifty sweaty orks, the characters (and all the other adepts) are taken off and interviewed in groups by Getaft. She eases into the subject slowly, asking, "Where are you from? How loyal are you to Cara Fahd? Will you submit to being blindfolded and entrusted with a national interest? How about a blood oath not to reveal anything you see? Can you see auras?" and so on. Only when she has been impressed by their capabilities does she hint at the problem.

Event 2

Getaft discovered that one of the secret rooms in the fortress was breached, and it's possible that the intruder

also penetrated even the war rooms and escape passages. Her first suspects are the people working among the stonecutters and construction crews, or possibly one of the many ambassadors, but she doesn't have time to track down a suspect herself (and any thief would know to avoid her).

If the characters are up to the job, she blindfolds them and takes them down to examine the room the Council knows has been broken into. They walk past a falling stone door inset with living crystal chunks to find rows of orichalcum-laced pots and fire cannons. The room burns with the barely contained True fire in the jars. Whoever was in here got a good estimate of how much ammunition Cara Fahd possesses and a good look at the mechanism that fires Vuutro's cannons. There is a lot more weaponry here than the heroes or anyone reading the Cara Fahd compilation in the library would expect. Where did it all come from?

Asok's Armbreakers watch the characters' every move as Getaft leaves them to examine the evidence.

The Evidence Analysis talent and Perception (9) Tests can reveal that the complicated stonework and locking mechanisms protecting this room mean the intruders had to use levitation and trap-defeating magic to get into the armory, in addition to stealing a key. A Good result tells the characters that the intruder(s) used both thief and wizard magic.

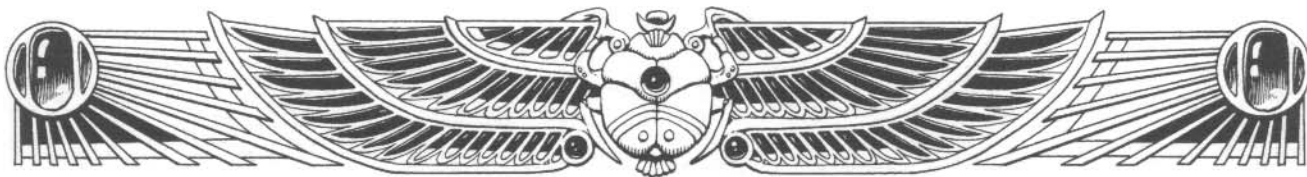
Event 3

Getaft knows many of the dwarven stonemasons are sympathetic to the Throalic attempts to woo Cara Fahd into an alliance and that the ambassadors who meet with the Council in the upper levels may well be spies. She gives the characters a list of potential suspects beginning with these two groups, but cautions the characters against overlooking other potential suspects just because they don't appear on the list.

Asok's Armbreakers know little of use except that no more than one stoneworker takes a break at any time. The stonemasons deny any desire to spy; they say it's just a job, and as professionals such actions would go against their ethics (trust the dwarfs to take the moral high ground). Following the Throalic ambassadors only reveals that none of them follow either the wizard or thief Discipline. The best course (which gamemaster characters may suggest themselves) is for the player characters to throw out a lure and see who bites. With Krathis's permission, they can spread a rumor that they've been inside Wurchaz and are of questionable loyalty, and see if someone tries to buy secrets from them.

The alternative is to trust the characters with the karvusta's list of usual suspects and hope that the adepts don't get caught in a lie or reveal too much as they attempt to track down the spies. This step means the characters are essentially functioning as karvusta themselves, and so will be pressured to swear a blood oath to Cara Fahd. Additionally, the leaders of the karvusta will be watching them throughout their investigation (though the player





characters may recognize they are being tailed, they will not be told the watchers' Names).

Event 4

Eventually, they narrow the potential information brokers down to one man: Drugo Yarne, a thick-necked ork weaponsmith who attempts to get them drunk and talking. Though he cleverly refuses to incriminate himself, he does eventually arrange to meet the characters the next night to discuss a "financial proposition."

If the heroes talk to anyone about the meeting or the break-in before the meeting (Drugo has them followed by a nethermancer friend's nightflyers), or seem entirely too savvy (always suspicious), the meet turns out to be a trap with ork bladesmen springing from all sides. If they convince Drugo that they're easily bribed fools, he pays them in old Throalic gold coins. At one point, he mentions he has "done this before." That's the heroes' cue to take him out back and find out what he knows—he's a middleman for spies.

Event 5

Drugo is tough, but he cracks eventually, telling them that he doesn't know who he works for or when to expect his next contact; he just gets letters and funnels money. A few months ago, he was asked to vouch for a human stoneworker, Amrie, to get him on the construction crew. His shadowy benefactors choose Drugo to witness for the man because the honesty of weaponsmiths is legendary.

To buy his own life, Drugo tells the characters where Amrie lives. But when they arrive, his neighbors say Amrie took off for the Delaris Mountains on horseback just a few hours ago.

Event 6

There's a fair amount traffic on the road, and the characters can face any number of minor encounters along the way, including a tense moment with roaming Righteous Vipers, a wagon-load of multi-racial immigrants, a caravan from Throal or a swooping cloud-bird (see p. 122) attempting to eat a horse or two. Eventually, the single horse trail splits in two, one going to the Bloodlore trollmoot of the Twilight Peaks and the other toward the road to Throal. Either direction would make sense for a person spying on Cara Fahd. However, if the characters follow either trail, bystanders on the roadside remember no one matching Armie's description, and the adepts figure out that this was all a false trail meant to mislead followers. He was in the traffic that went by. They'll have to double back.

Climax

Picking up his mostly-obliterated trail a mile to the south, the characters discover that he met up with a group of five riders and headed toward the Theran citadel at

Jerucz. In a final chase, the heroes must catch him before a Theran patrol sees his magical flare in the sky and comes out to protect him. The climactic fight is between the characters and Amrie and his five adept guards, with the threat of the imminent arrival of 120 Jerucz soldiers. If the characters are floundering, have the cohort show up at the same time as an ork troop sent by Jesfuy to back up the adepts, and let them slug it out. This isn't the cavalry coming over the hill so much as a fierce, massive and frightening battle.

Regardless if Amrie is captured or killed, the heroes have effectively saved the day by preventing any sensitive information from being passed to the Therans, getting into the good graces of Getaft and Krathis Gron. They may be asked to join the karvusta if they acquitted themselves in a particularly professional fashion, or merely showered with praise and silver, with their Names engraved on the Wurchaz wall, a single brick for each hero. After all, they've got to save space for the future ...

NEW MAGIC IN CARA FAHD

Because Cara Fahd is forming on the remains of a once-great kingdom under the constant threat of war, magic is very important to how it will reestablish its pattern and defend itself (or help the war effort sponsored by the dwarfs). This section describes new spells, magical items and threaded and legendary items that player characters may find, see, hear about, buy or have used against them in Cara Fahd. All listed costs are in silver pieces unless otherwise noted.

COMMON MAGICAL ITEMS

Bone Charms

Many ork tribes make magical charms from the bones of dead enemies who fought with valor, hoping to take for themselves the dead opponent's strength and courage. They are available in two versions.

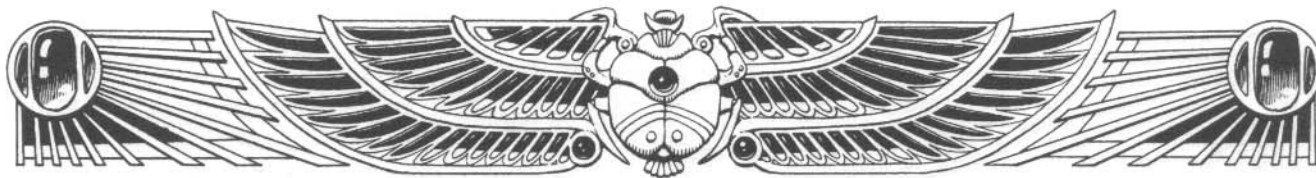
Common bone charms are left unshaped, as small chunks of knuckle-sized bone set into the wearer's skin with a metal pin. These do 1 point of permanent damage and increase the wearer's Toughness step by 1 for the purposes of Recovery Tests (and those talents that substitute for Recovery Tests) only.

Shaped bone charms are worn only by tribal chieftains or magicians, and are carved into shapes meaningful to the wearer, often representations of a Passion. These may be up to four inches long, are attached along the wearer's forearm, and are otherwise identical to Absorb Blow charms (p. 258, ED).

Cost: 175

Creation Difficulty: 10





Living Hair Barding

This is a type of armor usually used for mounts, but occasionally worn by Name-givers, made of thundra hair woven together with small bits of elemental earth to create an armored mat like rhinoceros horn. It is woven into the mount's own hair by a trained cavalryman or beastmaster. For each of the next four days, it does a point of permanent damage until it has grown roots into the animal's (or Name-giver's) bloodstream. It provides no protection until completely set in. Living Hair provides an Armor of 4 and Mystic Armor of 4, and does not shatter or degrade. It has effectively no weight, and an Initiative penalty of 1. Living Hair does not cover head, hands or feet. Removing the barding takes four days.

Cost: 350

Creation Difficulty: 18

Bark Armor and Shields

Bark armor and shields were originally created by the Namdroth, woven from hursthen tree bark (a short, stubby tree with shaggy, easily-stripped bark). Recently, many orks have recognized its uses. Like fernweave, the armor is "living" and provides its Mystic Armor bonus only when watered once every three days. However, bark dries more easily than fernweave, and once dried out, it cannot be revived. Bark armor provides an Armor of 3 and Mystic Armor of 3, has an Initiative penalty of 2, and weighs 20 pounds. Bark shields have a Armor Bonus of +2, a Mystic Armor Bonus of +1, and an Initiative penalty of 1. They weigh 5 pounds and have a Shatter Threshold of 14.

Cost: 100 for armor, 15 for shield

Creation Difficulty: 16

NEW SPELLS

All the following spells may be used by shamans as well as by characters of the primary Discipline associated with the spell.

Ork Stoke

Circle 3 Wizard Spell

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 7/15

Range: 75 yards **Duration:** Instant

Effect: Sets off gahad

Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

Ork Stoke allows the caster to set off an ork's gahad in response to any comment, subject or situation. The spell lasts only an instant, stirring the ork's gahad, but does not force them to comply with it. The targeted character may resist gahad as usual, for the usual penalties. This can overcome even the conditions which never set off an ork's gahad. This spell affects only orks.

Rampage

Circle 6 Wizard Spell

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty:** 12/19

Range: 25 yards **Duration:** Instant

Effect: Sets off gahad

Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

Rampage is an area-effect version of Ork Stoke, which sets off the gahad of all orks in a 100-square-foot area. The spell targets the highest Spell Defense of the group, plus 1 for each additional target. Ujnort are not affected.

Silent Stampede

Circle 7 Illusionist Spell

Threads: 6 **Weaving Difficulty:** 11/20

Range: Touch **Duration:** Rank hours

Effect: Silences sound

Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The spell silences all sounds of a large group of people—movement, talking, breathing, horses whinnying—for a number of hours equal to the illusionist's spellcasting rank. Because the spell is an illusion, any test made (deliberately or inadvertently) that might reveal the group's existence counts as a Sensing Test. This spell does not conceal the group from sight, smell or feel. The Spellcasting Test is made against the highest Spell Defense in the group.

To cast, the illusionist must touch each person and animal as he weaves the threads. Anyone who joins the group after the spell is cast is not silenced, and hearing such a person gives anyone else an automatic Sensing Test to penetrate the illusion.

TRIBE-SPECIFIC MAGIC

Several major tribes have developed unique items, spells, skills and talent knacks that enhance their special abilities and reputation. As a general rule, these tricks remain secret from outsiders, but with Krathis's encouragement of cooperation among orks, it has become possible to learn or acquire some of these magic abilities. Tresseg Heatsky and Tarjak Stormcloud are aggressively teaching their tribes' secrets to anyone who will listen, and encouraging others to do the same.

Metal Fist

The Metal Fist are best known for their ability to ride up steep hills, and for the legendary threaded gauntlets the clan chiefs wear.

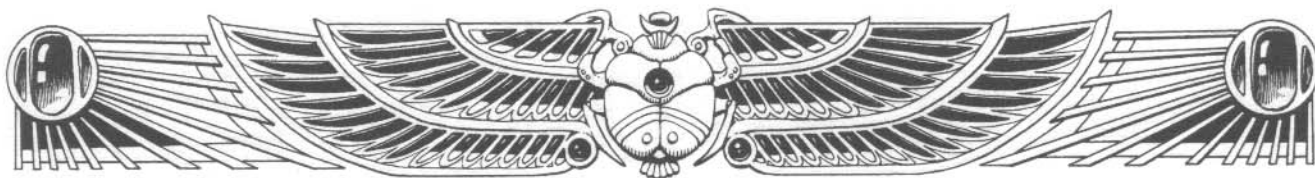
Mountain Hoof Talent Knack

Discipline: Cavalryman **Talent:** Trick Riding

Rank: 6 **Cost:** 100

The Mountain Hoof talent knack allows a cavalryman to ride his mount at extremely steep angles, up to a 60-degree slope. This causes 2 points of Strain per round to both the rider and the mount. The mount cannot be carry-





ing more than a single rider and a minimum of equipment, and cannot drag anything behind it while traveling in this way. It is said that Metal-Fist herself could ride up walls with this knack (but it is also said that she could fly, spit lightning and eat uyataa by the saddlebag).

Clan Gauntlets

Maximum Threads: 1

Spell Defense: 12

Twelve of these gauntlets belong to the clan chiefs of the Metal Fist. They were made when the twelve clans first formed, to tie them together in memory of Metal Fist. The gauntlets are bronze, magically softened to the flexibility of a normal gauntlet. With no threads, they add + 2 steps to the wearer's Damage Tests.

Thread Ranks

Rank 1 Cost: 300

Key Knowledge: The wearer must learn the Name of the clan gauntlet.

Effect: The gauntlets add + 4 steps to the wearer's Damage Tests.

Rank 2 Cost: 500

Key Knowledge: The wearer must know the ten principles of djoto.

Effect: The gauntlets add + 5 steps to the wearer's Damage Tests.

Rank 3 Cost: 800

Key Knowledge: The wearer must learn the exact words uttered by Metal Fist when she withdrew her arm from the pot of bronze.

Effect: The gauntlets increase the wearer's Wound Threshold by +1.

Rank 4 Cost: 1,300

Effect: The gauntlets increase the wearer's Wound Threshold by +2.

Rank 5 Cost: 2,100

Key Knowledge: The wearer must learn the Name of the last clan chief to wear the gauntlet.

Effect: The wearer can speak into the gauntlet to communicate with the wearers of the other gauntlets; those who have a thread of any rank tied to their gauntlet can hear the speaker's words from up to 5,000 miles away, though only those with Rank 5 threads can respond.

Broken Fang

The Bot'Elyo clan of nethermancers has developed a spell to scare off attacking cavalries' mounts, sowing confusion and often leaving unhorsed riders for the Broken Fang to deal with at their leisure.

Horse Call

Circle 1 Nethermancer Spell

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 5/13

Range: 50 yards **Duration:** Rank + 5 rounds

Effect: Spooks horse

Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell allows the caster to scare an opponent's mount. To cast it, the nethermancer must be able to see the animal and make a Spellcasting Test against the animal's Spell Defense. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the target animal runs away in fear for 5 + Rank rounds. If attempting to use this spell against a cavalryman's mount, use the higher of the animal's or rider's Spell Defense. The spell works against wild animals as well, but was designed for warfare.

On an Extraordinary success, the animal deliberately bucks its rider off before bolting. The Sure Mount talent helps resist this part of the spell effect.

Asok's Armbreakers

The Armbreakers were formerly part of Herok's Lancers. Though they broke off from that tribe, they chose to maintain some of their traditions, including the secret of making threaded armor from animal bones.

Threaded Bone Armor

Maximum Threads: 2

Spell Defense: 13

This armor is made from the bones of a dead animal or Name-giver, usually by using the rib cage to encircle the wearer's torso, with the gaps between the ribs filled with magically enhanced filigree and a helmet made of a hollow skull. Though it seems gruesome, the armor is actually intended to honor the dead. Without threads attached, this armor provides a 3/2 Armor Rating. There are similar barding versions available.

Thread Ranks

Rank 1 Cost: 300

Key Knowledge: The wearer must learn the Name of the armor.

Effect: The armor provides an Armor Rating of 5 and a Mystic Armor bonus of 3.

Rank 2 Cost: 500

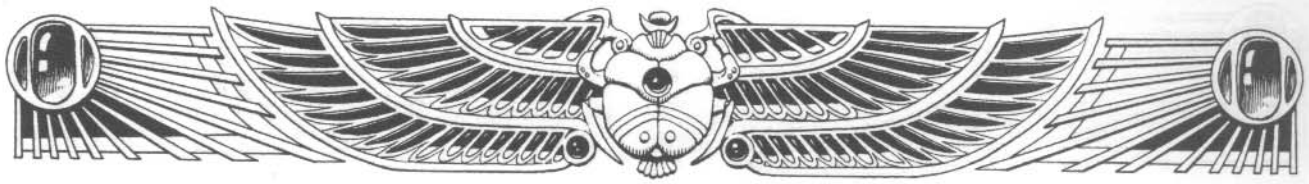
Effect: The armor provides an Armor Rating of 6 and a Mystic Armor bonus of 4.

Rank 3 Cost: 800

Key Knowledge: The wearer must learn what animals the bones come from.

Effect: Increase the wearer's Spell Defense by 1 against fear or other emotion-affecting spells and powers.





Rank 4 Cost: 1,300

Effect: Increase the wearer's Spell Defense by 3 against fear or other emotion-affecting spells and powers.

Thunderers

Thunderer cerri train in small-unit tactics to the total exclusion of all other types of training. The intensity of their training and the level of cooperation such training fosters has allowed them to develop talent knacks and tactics that help each member of the cerri at once.

Feinting Lunge Talent Knack

Discipline: Cavalryman **Talent:** Charge

Rank: 6 **Cost:** 200

When the cavalryman is charging an opponent, she may declare that she is setting her opponent up to be hit by another character, and declare which teammate will gain the benefit of the knack. She then spends 1 Karma and 2 Strain as she draws the opponent out of line with her blow or feint. The attack does not have to succeed in order for the ally to gain the bonus.

The designated ally adds +3 steps to the damage of his next Attack Test. No one aside from the designated ally can benefit from this bonus. If the opponent is able to take an Action or is attacked before the designated ally attacks him, the bonus is negated. In this case, the user still suffers the Strain and Karma loss.

Feinting Retreat Talent Knack

Discipline: Cavalryman **Talent:** Trick Riding

Rank: 5 **Cost:** 100

When a cavalryman is using Trick Riding to successfully dodge an attack, she may declare that she is setting up her assailant to run into her teammate's next blow. The cavalryman spends 3 Strain and declares the recipient of the bonus before making the Trick Riding test.

The aided teammate adds the cavalryman's rank in Trick Riding to her next Attack Test against that opponent. If the opponent is able to take an Action or is attacked before the designated ally attacks him, the bonus is negated.

Rejruk's Foxes

The Foxes are best known for the speed of their mounts, due to both breeding and a talent knack their cavalrymen have developed. Note that horses bred by Rejruk's Foxes have Combat and Full Movements of 60/140 yards per round.

Swift Hoof Talent Knack

Discipline: Cavalryman **Talent:** Trick Riding

Rank: 3 **Cost:** 100

Much like the Sprint talent available to archers and scouts, the Swift Hoof talent knack generates 1 point of Strain every round of use, and adds 10 yards to Full

Movement and 5 yards to Combat Movement for each rank of Trick Riding possessed by the cavalryman. This knack may be used in the same round as an Attack Test.

Namdroth

Namdroth warriors have developed a skill called Guhvuuul that they can use to focus their gahad in a version of meditation. This focus allows the warriors to use its effects as a mental shield. Learning this skill is part of their religion; they believe every ork should handle his gahad this way, and so they willingly teach Guhvuuul to anyone who asks to learn.

Guhvuul

Step Number: Rank + Willpower

To use guhvuuul, the ork must meditate on his Passion every time he is in the throes of gahad, thinking about using the fury in a controlled way and reserving some of that anger for an appropriate situation in the future. He can then call on the stored passion the next time he is in the throes of gahad to protect him from attempts to distract him from the object of his rage, such as soothing or fear-causing spells and powers. This protection lasts only as long as the ork is submitting to his gahad, and the ork suffers a -1 step penalty for one hour the next morning, much like a minor gahad hangover.

The ork rolls his Guhvuuul skill against a Difficulty Number determined by the gamemaster (based on the severity of the situation), trying to draw upon as much stored anger as possible. For example, if the ork is facing down the nethermancer who slew his parents and won't be distracted by anything, the test might be Easy (Difficulty Number of 2) while it might be Heroic (Difficulty Number of 15) if he's protecting a merchant he doesn't care about.

If the test is successful, the ork adds his skill rank to his Social and Spell Defenses against mind- and emotion-affecting spells and powers. Each level of success beyond Average adds an additional +1 to the character's Spell and Social Defense Ratings (i.e., Good +1, Excellent +2, Extraordinary +3).

Guhvuul can only be taught by members of Namdroth, and costs the usual number of Legend Points and time to learn (pp. 221-22, ED). Namdroth members have taken a vow of poverty and do not charge money to teach the skill, though they may require certain favors of their students, or the observance of their religion.

UNIQUE TREASURES AND LEGENDARY ITEMS

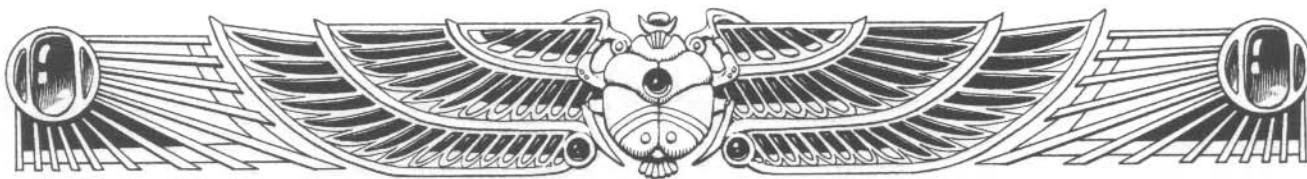
Grimeye's Lance

Maximum Threads: 3

Spell Defense: 26

This is the lance with which Cathon Grimeye started the Inferno of the Eight and destroyed Cara Fahd and





Landis. No one knows whether the lance survived the blast, or if it was carried away before lava covered it.

The lance is black wood that seems surprisingly hard. The tip was once covered with an orichalcum-plated spear tip, but is now charred to a blackened wooden nub. The grip is heavy bronze. With no thread woven, it does STR + 9 damage.

Thread Ranks

Rank 1 Cost: 500

Key Knowledge: The wielder must learn the Name of the lance.

Effect: The lance does STR + 10 steps damage.

Rank 2 Cost: 800

Effect: The lance does STR + 12 steps damage.

Rank 3 Cost: 1,300

Key Knowledge: The wielder must learn the Name of the weaponsmith and elementalist who worked together to create Grimeye's Lance.

Effect: The lance was permanently infused with fire from the inferno. Whenever a target is struck by the lance and suffers a Wound, they suffer additional Step 5 heat damage each round for a number of rounds equal to the thread rank.

Rank 4 Cost: 2,100

Key Knowledge: Cathon Grimeye swore a dying oath before he released the fire elementals. The wielder must learn what Cathon Grimeye said just before destroying the field.

Effect: The wielder gains the talent Rally (p. 35, *Earthdawn Companion*) at Rank 1 (or adds 1 to his existing Rally talent).

Rank 5 Cost: 3,400

Deed: The lance lost its orichalcum tip when Grimeye shoved it into the lava to free the fire elementals in the Inferno of the Eight. The character must re-forged the lance's tip with a nugget of orichalcum. This requires a Forge Blade Test against the lance's Spell Defense. This Deed is worth 2,100 Legend Points.

Effect: The wielder gains the Rally talent at a rank equal to the thread rank (or adds his thread rank to his existing Rally talent, with a maximum Rank of 15).

Rank 6 Cost: 5,500

Deed: The wielder must swear a blood oath before the leader of Cara Fahd, promising to protect it from enemies within and without, even to the death. This deed is worth 3,400 Legend Points. Cara Fahd must have a functional government for this Deed to be accomplished.

Effect: The wielder can summon the ghosts of the Seven Spokes to aid him in any fight to protect the ork nation. The

wielder suffers a permanent Wound each time the ghosts are summoned.

The exact statistics and natures of the Spokes are up to the gamemaster, but they are high-Circle adepts (legendary status 3 or 4) of seven different Disciplines. During a fight, the Spokes can be harmed only by magical attacks (magical weapons, spells, adepts using talents) and fight until death without an Unconsciousness Rating. When the battle is over, the Spokes disappear immediately. If the ghosts are killed, they can never again be summoned.

Mountain's Weight

Maximum Threads: 4

Spell Defense: 25

At first, this looks like a simple glass wine bottle, but upon closer examination it appears to be full of stone and tiny bits of grass. The bottle has the words "Oppression crushes souls. I crush oppression." in ancient or'zat etched in the glass. This is the famous "mace" inside which Cenad Illrew imprisoned Mount Raal. It was long used by the Emdachot commander, but was lost in the Orichalcum Wars. Without a thread woven to it, it cannot be lifted, for it weighs as much as a mountain.

Thread Ranks

Rank 1 Cost: 500

Key Knowledge: The wielder must learn the Name of the mace.

Effect: The mace does STR + 7 steps damage.

Rank 2 Cost: 800

Effect: The wielder begins to draw out the weight of the mountain in controllable doses. The mace does STR + 9 steps damage, and the wielder may spend Karma on Damage Tests made with Mountain's Weight.

Rank 3 Cost: 1,300

Key Knowledge: The wielder must learn how Mountain's Weight was created.

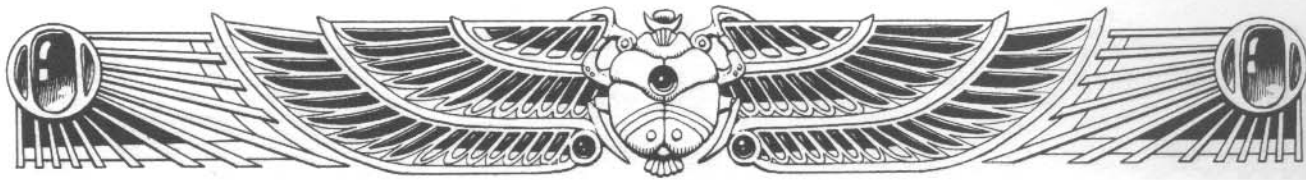
Effect: The mace does STR + 10 steps damage, and adds its thread rank to the opponent's Knockdown Difficulty if he suffers a Wound.

Rank 4 Cost: 2,100

Key Knowledge: The wielder must learn the Name of the Landisian citadel Cenad was trying to capture.

Effect: Mountain's Weight does STR + 11 damage, and the wielder may destroy the opponent's armor. The Damage Test is made normally, but if the wielder achieves an armor-defeating hit, roll an additional die using the thread rank of the weapon as the step number (for example, use Step 4/D6 for thread Rank 4). This additional die is known as the Thread Rank Die. Subtract this result from the target's





Physical Armor. If there is no Physical Armor left, subtract from the target's Mystic Armor. Armor based on natural hide or Willpower returns after the opponent's first Recovery Test; damage to armor the character is wearing is permanent until repaired.

Rank 5 Cost: 3,400

Key Knowledge: The wielder must learn if Mountain's Weight's creation was intentional or accidental.

Effect: The mace may perform an armor-defeating hit on barriers (kaer doors, stone walls, Theran behemoths and so on). If the wielder achieves an armor-defeating hit against the barrier, roll the Thread Rank Die as described in Rank 4.

Rank 6 Cost: 5,500

Deed: Like Cenad in the War of Secrets, the wielder must steal a military invention which was previously unknown in his land from a hostile foreign power. This Deed is worth 5,500 Legend Points.

Effect: On an armor-defeating hit, the wielder may choose to spend up to 3 Karma Points on the Damage Test. The cost for this is 3 Strain Points per additional die. The wielder must declare how many Karma dice he is going to roll before making the Damage Test.

Shanguh's Mighty Hearts

Maximum Threads: 1

Spell Defense: 19

Shanguh's Mighty Hearts resemble small, leathery, sealed pouches. In fact, they are the mummified and shrunken remains of the hearts of ancient warrior adepts known collectively as Shanguh, forgotten by all but the Namdroth. The hearts are threaded blood charms which must be swallowed in order to be used. When swallowed, the hearts attach themselves to the inside of the stomach wall. This causes 2 points of permanent damage, and cannot be removed without killing its owner. Seven of these heroes once existed, though Yelad has only two hearts and does not know where the others are.

Thread Ranks

Rank 1 Cost: 300

Key Knowledge: The user must learn the Name of the Shanguh hero whose heart this is.

Effect: The user gains +2 steps to his Strength step. This also increases the step number of all Strength-based talents.

Rank 2 Cost: 500

Effect: The user gains +3 steps to his Strength step. This also increases the step number of all Strength-based talents.

Rank 3 Cost: 800

Key Knowledge: The user must learn what commonly set off the ancient hero's gahad.

Effect: The user gains the Guhvul skill at a rank equal to her thread rank. If the user has this skill, he gains a bonus to his skill rank equal to the thread rank.

Rank 4 Cost: 1,300

Key Knowledge: The user must learn the purpose of the Shanguh order's existence. This was a closely kept secret even in ancient Cara Fahd.

Effect: The user gains +4 steps to his Strength step. This also increases the step number of all Strength-based talents. In addition, he may take Strain in order to increase this bonus by the thread rank. This requires the user to take a number of points of Strain equal to his Wound Threshold, and lasts for a number of rounds equal to the thread rank.

Soul Stones

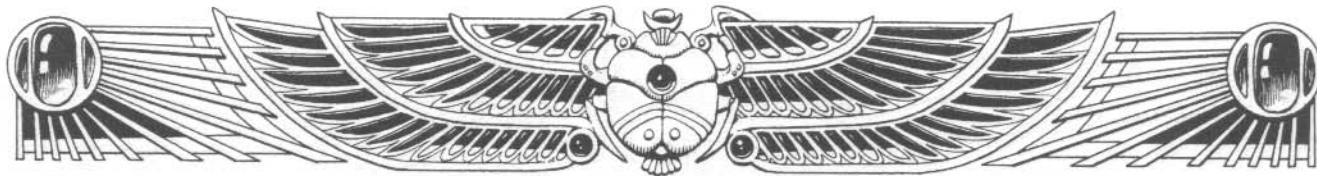
As described in the adventure set **Blades**, an order of nethermancers in ancient Cara Fahd created a ritual that could trap the souls of the recently dead inside specially prepared soul stones, which could then speak to those who activated them. In this way, orks preserved the wisdom of their greatest heroes, even if they died young.

If the gamemaster wishes, any number of these stones may have survived the collapse of the Hold of Courage during the adventure **Grave Wisdom** (pp. 42–53, **Blades**). A few also may have escaped being Horror-marked over the centuries of the Scourge. Finding an unmarked stone, a ritual to erase the Horror mark, or instructions for the ancient ritual used to create these stones will win any character a place of honor in Cara Fahd. Figuring out how to communicate with the stones after finding them, now that the statues which held their voices were destroyed, can be the subject of yet another quest.

Even once found, the characters must accept that these stones are not passive, cooperative magical treasures—they're the souls of great ork heroes. They've got pettiness, a hunger for power, rude speech patterns and even gahad. If the players characters communicate with the hero in the stone, he may want anything from a second chance at life to the honorary title of King of Cara Fahd to the chance to be reunited with one of his descendants. Gamemasters choose the level of cooperation or pigheadedness each individual hero displays.

More troublesome is Hrak Gron's soul stone. This is a pattern item of old Cara Fahd and Krathis desperately wants it recovered. However, it disappeared from the Hold of Courage and no one knows when or why. Hrak Gron's stone should have more powers than the average ork hero—someone on friendly terms with the soul in the stone might receive liberator talents, questor of Lochost powers or be periodically possessed by the spirit of Hrak Gron herself as she speaks to the descendants of her nation (giving the hapless character a status very similar to the Chosen One).





CREATURES OF CARA FAHD

The following new creatures are native to the region of Cara Fahd.

BEHEMOTH

Attributes

DEX: 5 STR: 16 TOU: 17
PER: 4 WIL: 10 CHA: 4

Initiative: 6
Number of Attacks: 1
Attack: 7
Damage: 25
Number of Spells: NA
Spellcasting: NA
Effect: NA

Physical Defense: 7
Spell Defense: 13
Social Defense: 12
Armor: 10
Mystic Armor: 2
Knockdown: 16
Recovery Tests: 9

Death Rating: 113
Wound Threshold: 22
Unconsciousness Rating: 98

Combat Movement: 42
Full Movement: 85

Legend Points: 3,640
Equipment: None
Loot: None

Commentary

Nicknamed "swamp thundra," these giant beasts have attained near-mythical status among Cara Fahd's cavalymen. Physically, they resemble thundras with dragon-like necks and tails and shorter horns. The males stand ten feet high at the shoulder, are twenty-five feet long and weigh about fifteen tons. They are usually slow, shy and secretive, supporting their bulk in the waters of the Locust River mire in southwest Cara Fahd. Though generally docile, they attack by stomping and goring if threatened. The males live to be twenty-five years old, the females fifty. They grow throughout their lives, so it is possible to find a female behemoth in excess of sixty feet.

Males make up roughly four-fifths of the small population. They need vast territories to feed, so a single herd usually consists of one female, three to five males and no more than three half-grown young.

Behemoths are extremely ornery and resistant to taming, even from beastmasters. Any efforts at taming, soothing or riding behemoths require an Extraordinary Success with the Animal Bond talent.

CLOUD BIRDS

Attributes

DEX: 10 STR: 20 TOU: 20
PER: 10 WIL: 3 CHA: 3

Initiative: 9
Number of Attacks: 2

Physical Defense: 8
Spell Defense: 5

Attack: 14
Damage:
Talons: 15
Beak: 25
Number of Spells: NA
Spellcasting: NA
Effect: NA

Social Defense: 9
Armor: 5
Mystic Armor: 1
Knockdown: 25
Recovery Tests: 9

Death Rating: 130
Wound Threshold: 24
Unconsciousness Rating: 122
Combat Movement: 16
Full Movement: 32
Flight: 85/170

Legend Points: 12,600
Equipment: None

Loot: Cloud bird pelts are valued in many cities and can be sold for 500 silvers. This counts as treasure worth Legend Points.

Commentary

Cloud birds were so named because their immense size allows them to block the sun like a passing cloud. They are gray with white underbellies, with a wingspan ranging from fifty to a hundred feet. They nest in high mountain peaks all over Barsaive, so their feathers are soft and fluffy, like a snowy owl.

They feed primarily on mountain sheep and goats, but can easily carry a full grown horse or baby thundra. Name-givers who do not bathe on a regular basis are distasteful to the cloud bird and are taken only when food is scarce, or when they have young who need small prey brought to the nest to practice hunting. At such times, the parent birds carefully keep Name-giver-sized prey alive, carrying them gently in their great talons and depositing them in nests the size of a small house that contain one to three baby birds. The young cloud birds have Strength, Toughness, Movement and Death/Unconsciousness Ratings roughly half those of the adults.

MESSANGER BATS

Attributes

DEX: 8 STR: 5 TOU: 6
PER: 8 WIL: 3 CHA: 5

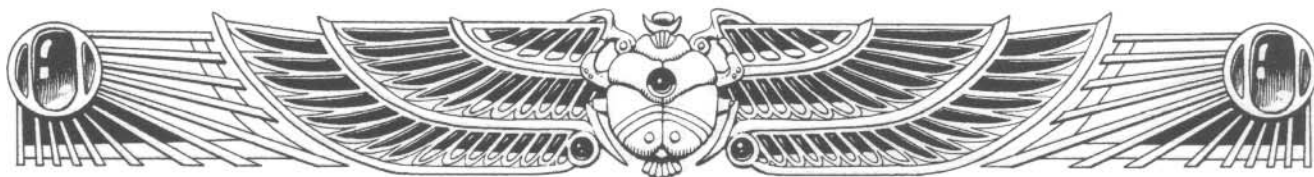
Initiative: 9
Number of Attacks: 1
Attack: 9
Damage: 5
Number of Spells: NA
Spellcasting: NA
Effect: NA

Physical Defense: 12
Spell Defense: 7
Social Defense: 4
Armor: 2
Mystic Armor: 2
Knockdown: 7
Recovery Tests: 1

Death Rating: 35
Would Threshold: 9
Unconsciousness Rating: 27

Combat Movement: 5
Full Movement: 10
Flight: 110/220





Legend Points: 55

Equipment: None

Loot: Direction-sensing organs, worth 200 sp. This counts as treasure worth Legend Points.

Commentary

Messenger bats are slightly larger than windlings, with monkey-like faces and long fingers at the ends of their wings. They are usually brown, gray or black and are found primarily in Cara Fahd's jungles, where native Carads have tamed and trained them for years.

The bats can navigate locations perfectly, using magical direction-sensing organs in their heads, memory of the sun and scent cues in order to fly to any given location. If ordered to fly to any place that it has previously been, even as an infant, the bat will be able to get there. For this reason, Cara Fahd uses them to deliver message stones and papers between the towns. Getting them to understand an order, however, requires a beastmaster. Critical information is not usually sent via messenger bat: they are slow-witted, easily distracted and can be intercepted by anyone who feeds the bat.

The bats eat insects, small mice and lizards, and do not attack Name-giver-sized creatures. When attacked, they invariably fly away unless cornered, in which case they flap their wings in the attacker's face to distract him, and bite only until there is room to flee.

PORCUPINE SNAKE

Attributes

DEX: 7 STR: 10 TOU: 10
PER: 3 WIL: 5 CHA: 3

Initiative: 8

Number of Attacks: 1

Attack: 9

Damage: 10

Special: See below

Number of Spells: NA

Spellcasting: NA

Effect: NA

Physical Defense: 7

Spell Defense: 6

Social Defense: 10

Armor: 7

Mystic Armor: 1

Knockdown: Immune

Recovery Tests: 3

Death Rating: 60

Wound Threshold: 15

Unconsciousness Rating: 53

Combat Movement: 10

Full Movement: 20

Swimming: 50/100

Legend Points: 390

Equipment: None

Loot: Quills worth 100 silver pieces (when sold to the Kelpoyan villagers only).

Commentary

These gigantic snakes can grow up to sixty feet long and more than a foot in diameter. They are thick-bodied, weighing several hundred pounds. They feed primarily on fish, turtles, beavers and other snakes, but gladly eat pigs, chickens and anything up to human size. They are a muddy brown-green with intricate black swirled markings on their backs and yellowish stomachs.

Normally, porcupine snakes are lazy and good-natured (for snakes), allowing curious onlookers within ten feet before they strike a defensive and threatening posture of puffing up their bodies and hissing. They feed at relatively long intervals and are only dangerous when actively threatened or very hungry.

When a porcupine snake attack succeeds, it tries to constrict its prey in its coils, suffocating them before consuming them. In such a case, both the snake and its victim make Strength Tests with the higher result being successful. If the victim's result is higher, he is able to prevent the snake from constricting him. If the snake's result is higher, it coils around the prey in the same round as the initial attack, but does no extra damage. Each round thereafter, both opponents repeat the Strength Test. If the character remains ensnared, he takes Step 12 damage, increasing by 1 step each round. The snake does not stop constricting until a full five minutes have elapsed.

When hurt or surprised, the porcupine snake inflates to nearly twice its diameter, popping three-inch quills as hard as ivory out from underneath its scales. To anything already constricted, this defensive measure inflicts an extra Step 15 damage every round. A thrashing, irritated porcupine snake with quills out may strike a character with its tail or body, doing Step 13 damage, but reduce its Attack Step to 4 to reflect that it is merely thrashing, not actively attacking.

STAJIAN

Attributes

DEX: 7 STR: 10 TOU: 10
PER: 5 WIL: 6 CHA: 4

Initiative: 7

Number of Attacks: 1

Attack: 9

Damage: 14 (17 charge)

Number of Spells: NA

Spellcasting: NA

Effect: NA

Physical Defense: 9

Spell Defense: 7

Social Defense: 8

Armor: 5

Mystic Armor: 1

Knockdown: 10

Recovery Tests: 5

Death Rating: 61

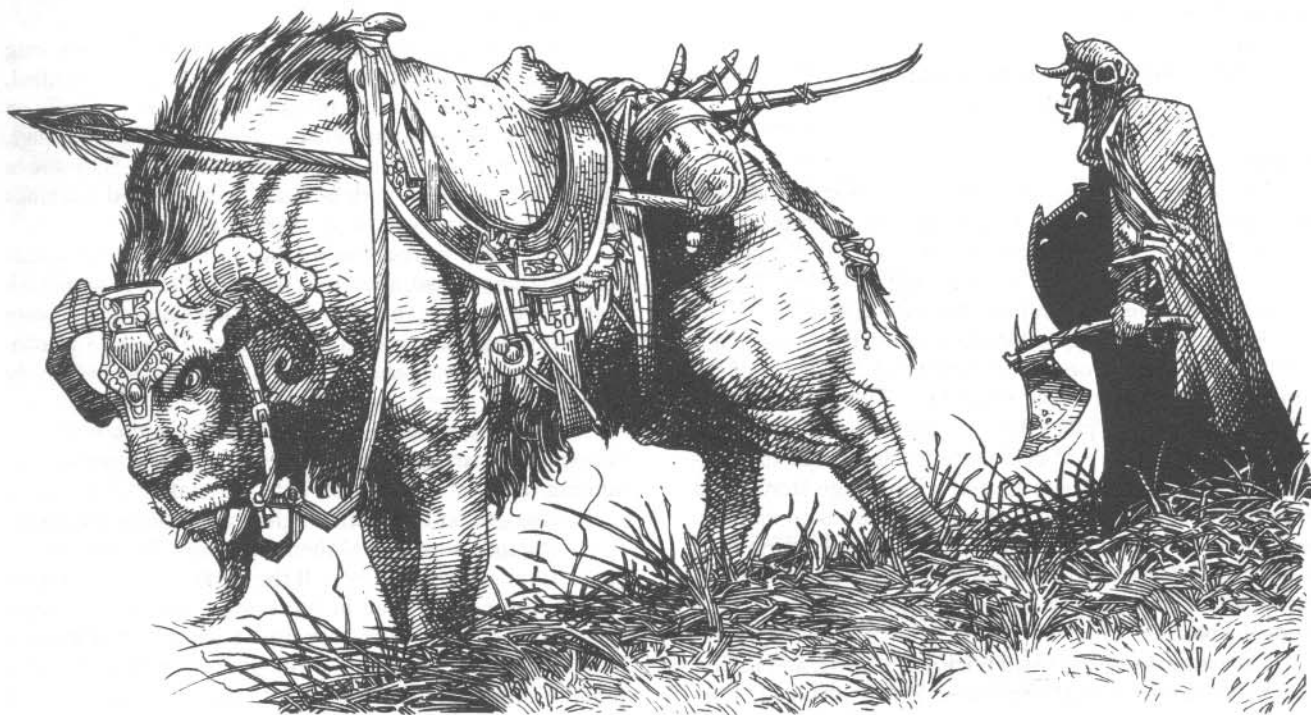
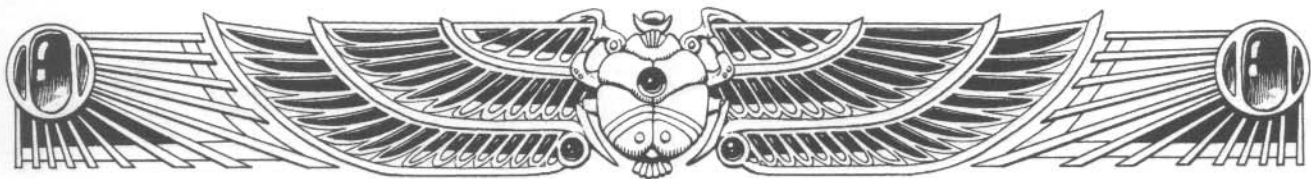
Wound Threshold: 15

Unconsciousness Rating: 54

Combat Movement: 60

Full Movement: 120





Legend Points: 110

Equipment: None

Loot: As for rider.

Commentary

Stajian are large, bison-like animals often used as mounts by ork cavalry, notably the Metal Fists. They are six feet high at the shoulder and less massive than a thundra, but faster, and far stronger than a horse. Their broad hooves make them good navigators in both swamp and mountains.

Ornery in the extreme, wild stajian fight frequently for dominance of their herd, and such behaviors continue in domesticated animals, meaning stabled stajian must be watched carefully. This tendency can be trained to be directed at enemy mounts, however, and a ridden stajian will gleefully gore, bite and kick opposing animals or Name-givers without direction from its rider. No troops that use stajian consider the beasts to be trained for war, however, since its use of such tactics is unreliable.

Stajian live wild on the plains near the Tylon Mountains, but the Metal Fist tribe has brought breeding stock into Cara Fahd's pasture land. They eat anything from grasses to tree limbs and usually congregate in herds of five to ten females and young and one to six males. They are rare in most of Barsaive, and can be purchased for 3,500 silvers in most cities, or 2,500 in Claw Ridge.

GLOSSARY OF ORK TERMS

As described in the **History** section of this book, the ork language has changed over the years, with the short syllables of or'zat replaced with the longer words of or'zet. Below are common ork words used in Cara Fahd.

conj. = conjunction

(inf) = informal

(ins) = insulting

interj. = interjective

n. = noun

ah *conj.* Of. Usually omitted in favor of simply connecting the two words with an apostrophe.

bat *n.* Daughter. Usually seen as Bat', "daughters of-"

bot *n.* Son. Usually seen as Bot', "sons of-"

Blork *n.* The Passion Lochost. Also used in his honor as an expletive.

buunda *interj.* Expletive, often accompanied by an obscene gesture to show contempt for the recipient.

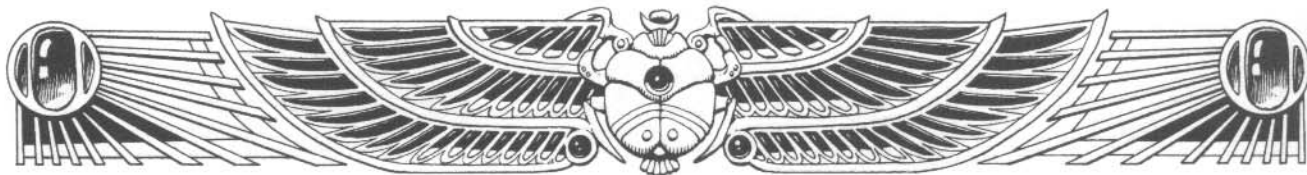
Cara Fahd *n.* The Name of the ork kingdom, literally "Heroic Sacrifice."

cerri *n.* The training groups and small fighting units of the Thunderers' cavalry. Literally, "battle siblings." Or'zet has no separate words to distinguish brother and sister.

djoto *n.* The code of honor followed by the Metal Fist scorcher tribe. Literally, "the way of life."

dramar *n.* The new mate of an ork's mother or father, to





whom a child owes respect and obedience, and from whom he can expect advice and guidance.

drundeah *n.* "Execution." A game in which the participants spear wild pigs or war hostages. Children play a tag-game version.

egrand *n.* Protector. Seen most commonly in the phrase Egrandu ah Cara Fahd, the official or'zat title for the Protectors of Cara Fahd and wielders of the Blades.

Emdachot *n.* The elite military group of ancient Cara Fahd. Literally, "steadfast."

eunabo *n.* Broken Fang ritual in which a horse chooses his cavalryman. Literally, "the choice of the herd."

gahad *n.* Impulse on which an ork must act or suffer loss of concentration and physical discomfort. Refusing to follow gahad often leads to what is known as a "gahad hangover."

Grallen Field *n.* The field where Hrak Gron died. Also where the ancient city of Cara Fahd is located.

greeah *n.* Silent twitching to take the edge off imminent gahad.

Greeb *n.* The Passion Jaspre.

Grenaklank *n.* The Passion Chorrolis

grumog-agu *n.* An unarmed wrestling match in imitation of the fighting of slaves. Grumoge is the verb "to wrestle."

havuut *n.* Someone who clings to tradition for no reason. Literally, "blind man."

hez *n.* Fang.

Hez'Blork *n.* An order of liberators who free slaves and spy for Cara Fahd's government. Literally, "Fangs of Lochost."

hua *n.* A relay race where the participants are tied together at the wrist and throw their partners over each others' shoulders.

hurlg *n.* Alcoholic beverage made from fermented rye mixed with animal fat. The type of fat used determines its quality, from low-grade cat fat to celebratory thundra fat.

Jrikjrikjrik *n.* The Passion Upandal. Jrikjrik means "tower."

Kawjujwak *n.* The Passion Dis.

kart *n.* Young boy.

karvusta *n.* The Cara Fahd government corps of spies. Literally, "silent eyes."

ken *n.* Young girl.

kukra *n.* A dance involving rapid and elaborate foot movements and a strong drumbeat.

lelkrarg *n.* The child of an ork's former mate or the child of a present mate by another ork.

lukro *n.* A fertility dance dedicated to Jaspre that involves a lot of touching and swaying movements.

Madjork River Valley *n.* The site of the legendary Battle of Grallen Field. Which, if any, of the existing rivers was the Madjork is unknown today.

magnun *n.* Volunteer. Plural is magnu.

Mahuta *n.* The Chosen of the Passions. Orks across Barsaive passed down the legend of a Mahuta who would reappear among their race in the orks' greatest time of need. By the time Krathis Gron was born, few remembered this legend.

Mera-a-a-arg *n.* The Passion Astendar.

Mikbruug *n.* The Passion Mynbruje

Muvuul *n.* The Passion Garlen.

Namdroth *n.* A mysterious tribe/kaer/order of warriors who claim to live in the uncorrupted manner of old Cara Fahd. Literally "strength preservers."

ni-basaal-cutcro *n.* The rite of passage into adulthood for members of Rejruk's Foxes. Literally, "stealing passage from the Passions."

Nko-Gu *n.* Metal Fist.

nroto *n.* Horror-stalker. Also an order of Horror-stalkers maintained by Krathis to guard against corruption.

or'zat *n.* Ancient ork language.

or'zet *n.* "Traveler's Orkish." The modern ork language influenced by Throalic.

Prakarool *n.* The Passion Floranuus.

quaalz *n.* Type of kidney bean, staple of the ork diet. Also used to indicate idiocy, as "full of quaalz."

Raggok *n.* The Mad Passion's name is an or'zet word.

rek *n.* School.

rekart *n.* Metal Fist training for boys.

reken *n.* Metal Fist training for girls.

Rohodo *n.* Fertility festival involving lukro, drumming, and "private celebration."

rutra *n.* A martial sport developed from ork boxing. It includes kicks and can quickly become deadly.

shpita *n.* Gahad-baiting contests in which contestants taunt and slap each other to see who loses her temper first. Literally, "slaps."

skraacha *n.* "Scorcher," though it connotes living every day with passion, amazing deeds and extreme measures, uncompromising even in death.

Tranko *n.* The Passion Thystonius.

turgma (*ins*) *n.* A deviant ork; one who engages in acts of slavery, fails to seek out grand deeds, engages in blood betrayal and so on.

turgan *n.* City ork.

tussdi *n.* A sport similar to lacrosse, jousting and frenzied mob stompings.

ujnort *n.* Non-orks; literally, "they who will not understand."

uyataa *n.* An extremely potent hot pepper. Means "green agony" in or'zat and "scorned woman" in or'zet.

vravraka *n.* The dream of a pregnant woman in which the unborn child specifies his own Naming ritual.

vruken (*inf*) *n.* Girlfriend. Literally "mate-girl." Male form is "vrukart."

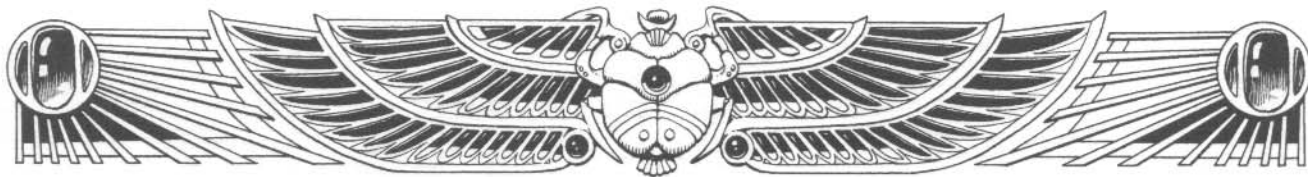
vut *n.* Dung. Used as expletive.

Wejoto *n.* The mine in the Tylon Mountains where Krathis Gron was born. Named by the Metal Fist, it means "against the way."

Wurchaz *n.* The fortress built at Claw Ridge. Literally, "Claw Ridge."

yerz'eth *n.* The fund from which any ork in Cara Fahd can request supplies. Literally, "nest money."





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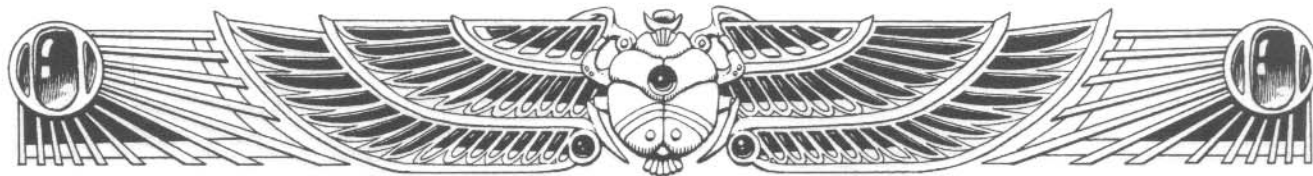
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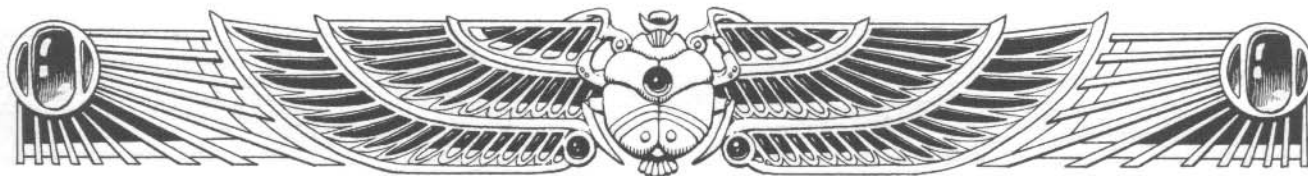
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ISBN# 1-55560-345-9 \$18.00