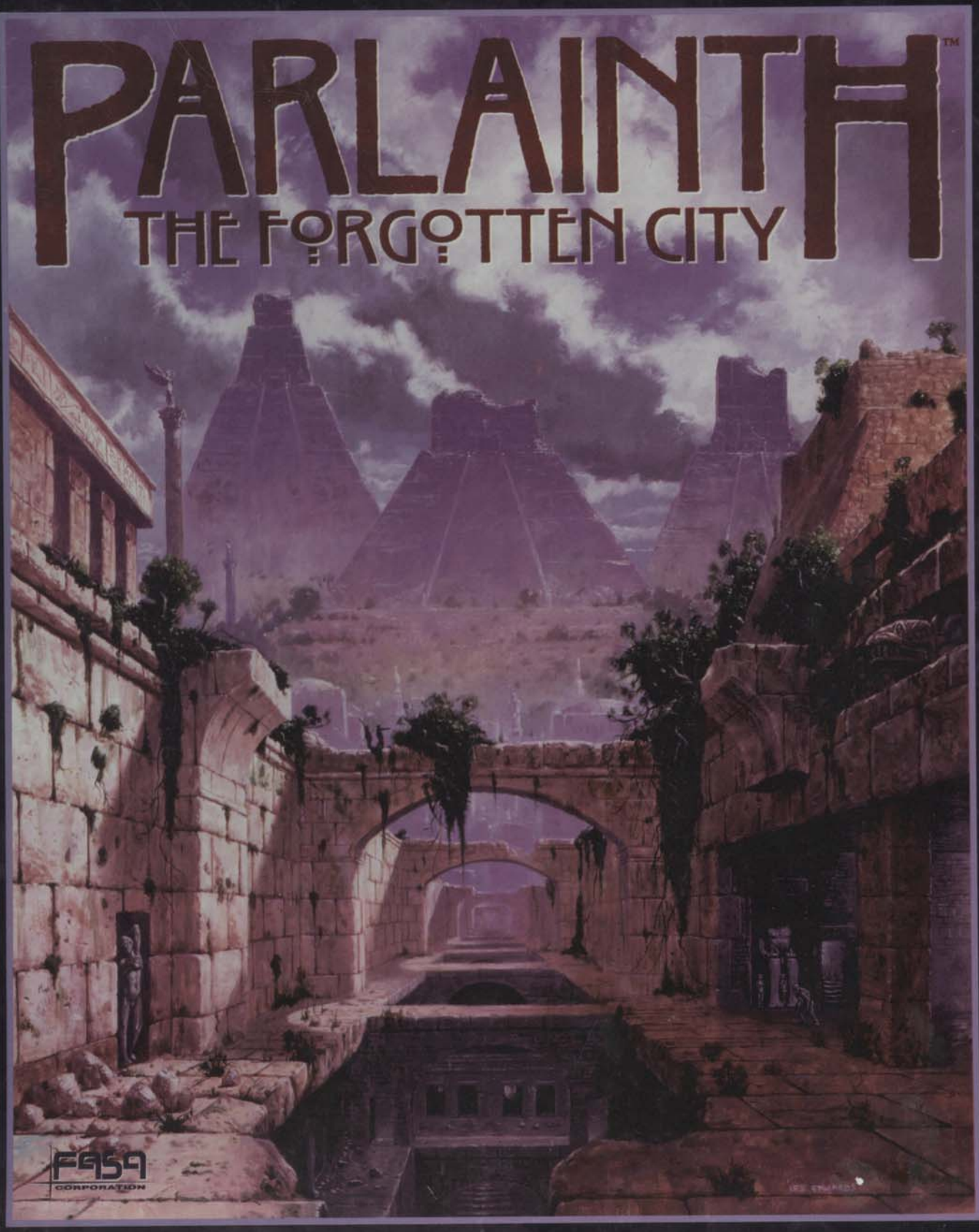
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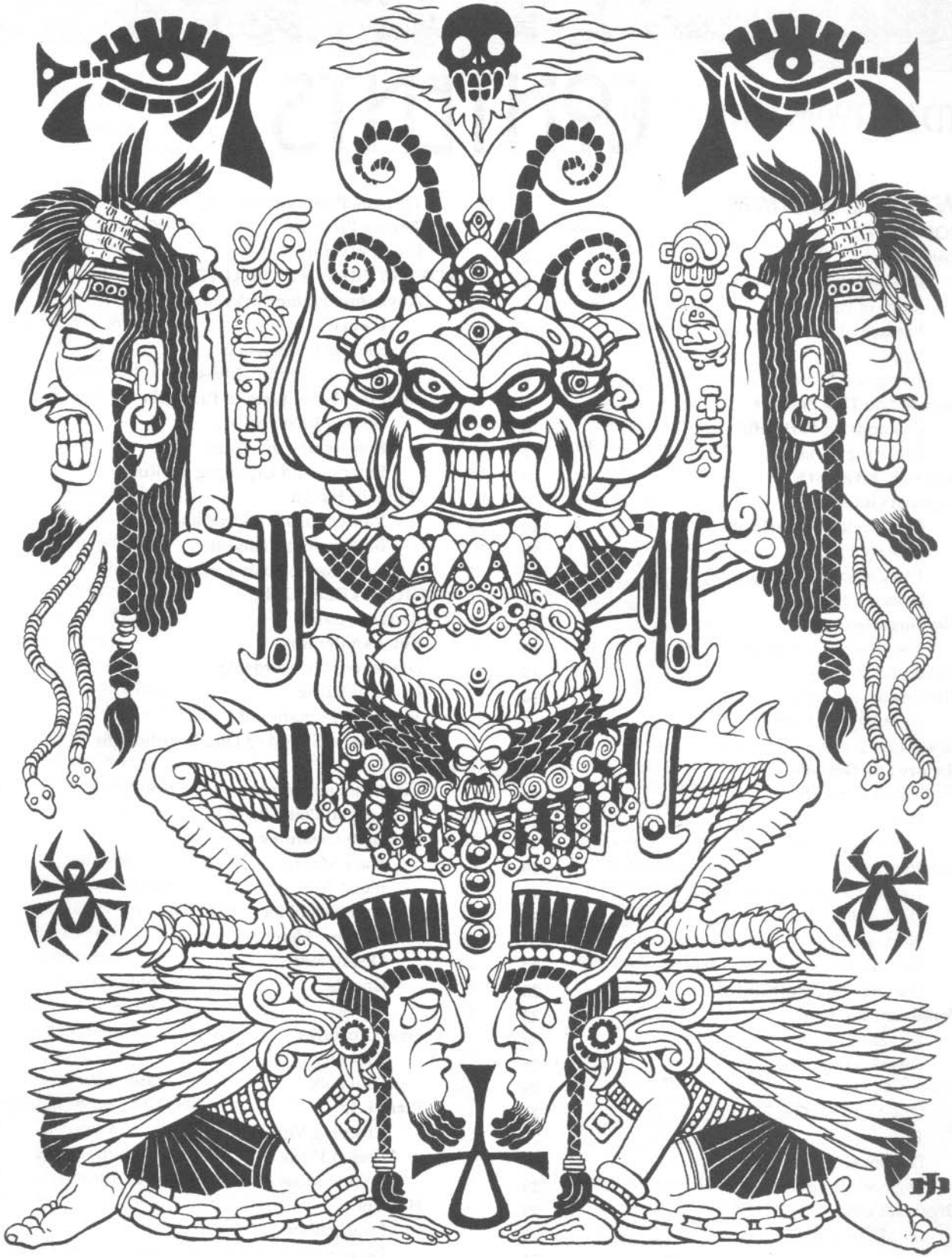
PARLAINTH™

THE FORGOTTEN CITY



A CAMPAIGN SET FOR EARTHDAWN BY ROBIN D. LAWS





PARLAINTH: THE FORGOTTEN CITY

FASA CORPORATION

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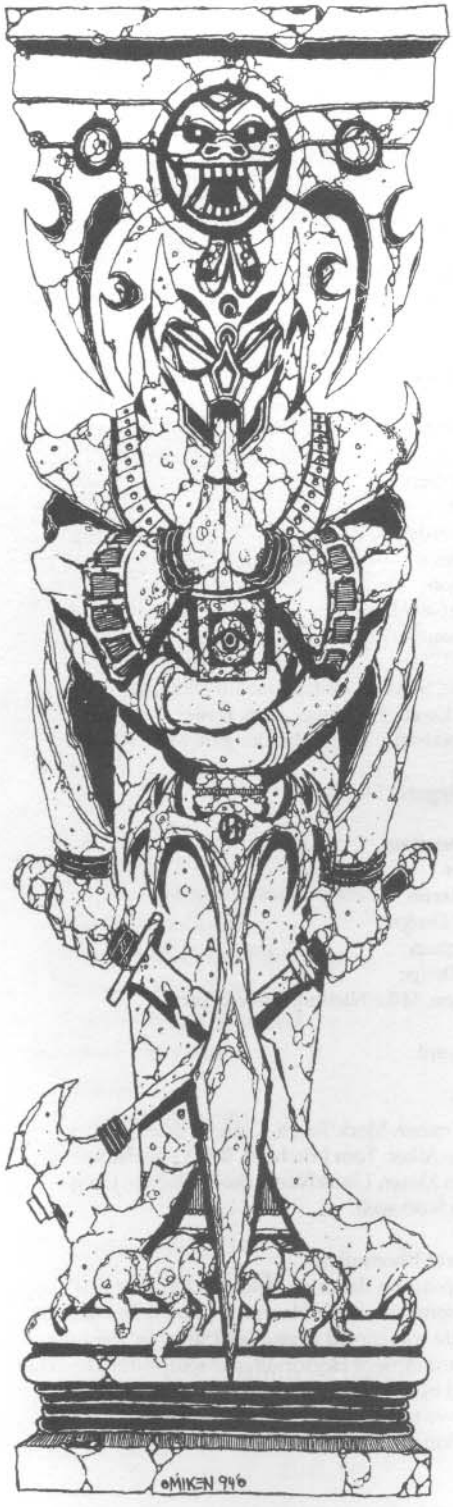
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A Note on the Cover Illustration:
The image that appears on the cover (and title page) of this volume is a representation of the Horrror *B'yzanthraa, The Eater of Souls.* This picture was copied from a wall relief by the human Bruspi. It is a fine example of Horror-altered sculpture. The relief depicts *B'yzanthraa* as he prefers to appear: holding aloft the severed heads of two fallen opponents while standing upon the backs of enslaved kings.



INTRODUCTION



Once the Theran provincial capital of Barsaive and the center of Theran authority for that land, the Forgotten City of Parlainth now stands in ruins, a monument to Theran folly and a last refuge for the Horrors. To the intrepid explorers who prowl through the remains of Parlainth, the city appears to be little more than a confusing mass of wreckage. Few of them see any rhyme or reason in the arrangement of its shattered buildings, winding and rubble-strewn streets, and dark, dank catacombs. To the average adventurer, Parlainth is merely a collection of places, many of them filled with fiendish traps, wherein glittering treasures and dangerous creatures hide. Parlainth is a puzzle, with most of the pieces still missing.

Much of Parlainth's history remains a matter of conjecture in the world of **Earthdawn.** At the beginning of the Scourge, an enchantment of unimaginable power erased all knowledge of Parlainth from the world. All clues to its location, its existence, even its very name, physically vanished from any documents or records referring to the city, and also vanished from all Name-givers' minds. Since the city's reappearance in Barsaive in 1452 TH (see the **Earthdawn** novel, **The Longing Ring**), a few ancient documents alluding to events in Parlainth have resurfaced, most recovered from the ruins. In fact, virtually everything known about the city in 1506 TH comes from exploration of the ruined city.

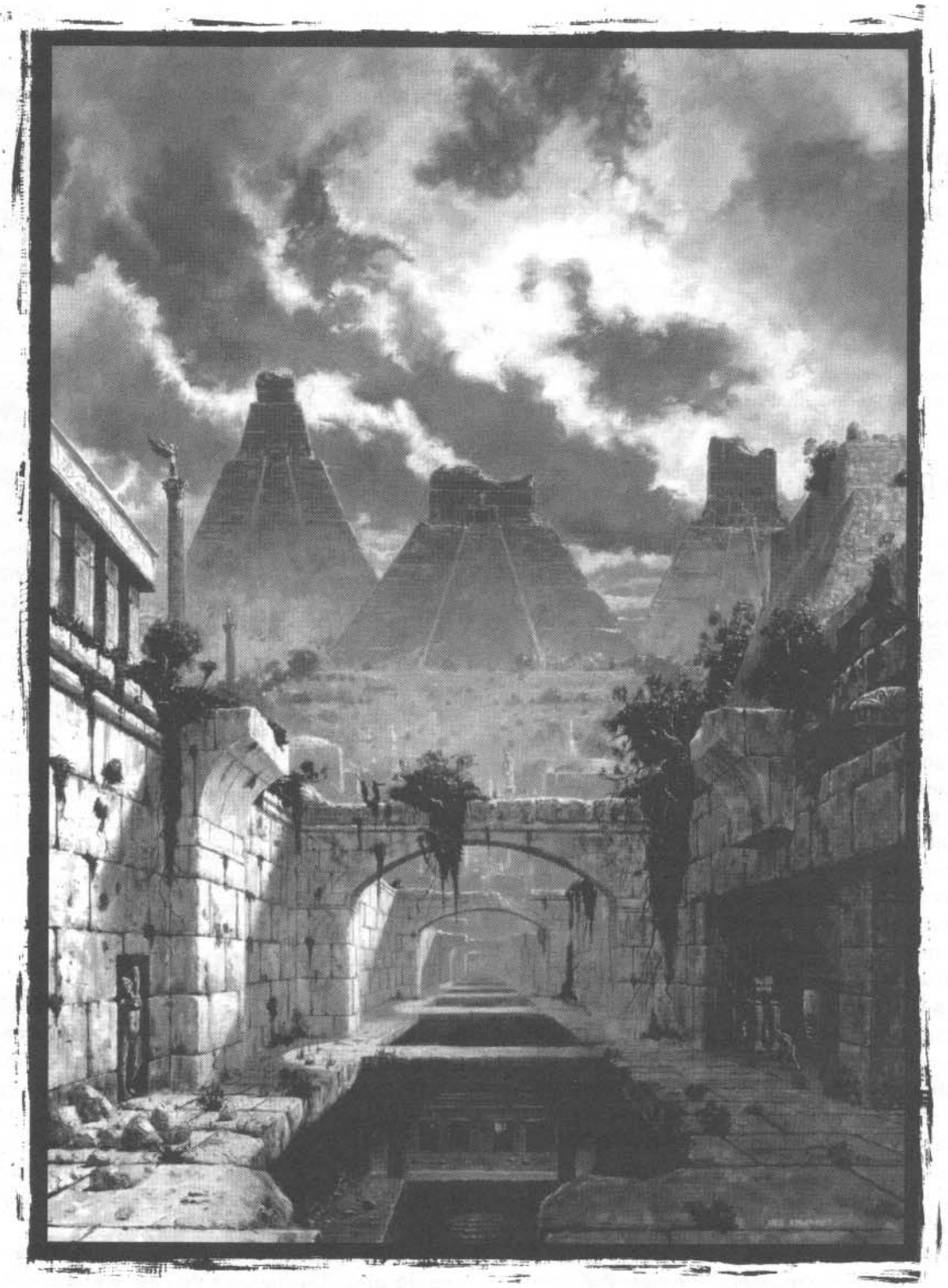
The denizens of Barsaive, and ideally the players in an **Earthdawn** campaign, know only fragments of Parlainth's story. Gamemasters, however, need to see the complete picture in order to set plausible, workable adventures in the Forgotten City. More than a random assemblage of monster lairs, Parlainth was built for a particular purpose and destroyed in a specific way. **Parlainth: The Forgotten City** provides all the information gamemasters will need to create years of adventures in Parlainth.

COMPONENTS

Parlainth: The Forgotten City contains a single volume divided into two sourcebooks: the **Parlainth Gamemaster Book,** and the **Ruins of Parlainth** book. This campaign set also contains a series of player handouts from **Vardeghul's Trove of Lore,** a map of Parlainth, and 18 full-color treasure/creature cards. Each of these components is briefly described below.

PARLAINTH GAMEMASTER BOOK

The **Parlainth Gamemaster Book** (**Parlainth GM**) provides the gamemaster with the background information and rules necessary to create and run adventures in the Forgotten City and/or the town of Haven. The book includes a history of Parlainth up to the present day, a detailed description of Haven, information on several of the town's prominent residents for use as gamemaster characters, and new treasures, creatures, and Horrors that characters may find or encounter while exploring Parlainth. This book also includes several adventure ideas, and detailed guidelines for creating and running adventures in Parlainth.



Ruins of Parlainth

The **Ruins of Parlainth** describes the ruins in some detail, including just a few of the fabulous treasures, sinister inhabitants, terrifying creatures, and traps that the characters may encounter in each area of the ruins. This book does not, however, map out every single square inch of the ruins. Parlainth is a vast city; even Barsaive's most dedicated treasure seekers cannot hope to explore all of it before another century or more elapses. The many unexplained mysteries of the Forgotten City allow gamemasters to create their own version of Parlainth, customizing the setting to serve their adventure campaigns. This book presents an overview of the ruins, breaking them down into nine main sections and providing examples of encounters and adventures that might typically take place in each section. This book offers enough background information and suggests enough different possibilities that the gamemaster can create an endless variety of adventures.

Vardeghul's Trove of Lore

The player handouts in **Vardeghul's Trove of Lore** offer various pieces of information on survival in the ruins of Parlainth and daily life in Haven. This material will also give both gamemaster and players a feel for their surroundings through firsthand testimony from those who lived through Parlainth's grandeur and terrors. Of course, life is never simple on the dangerous fringes of Barsaive, and the information in Vardeghul's Trove comes with several catches for the player characters.

First, this information is not free. A shrewd businesswoman, Vardeghul realized early on that knowledge would be a precious commodity in a get-rich-quick town like Haven. Therefore, the player characters must pay for each document before reading it. Second, Vardeghul's information is not uniformly reliable. Her trove consists of documents written by past visitors to Parlainth, scholars merely theorizing from afar, and citizens of the city before it disappeared, among others. Some writers are biased, others confused, a few even malicious. Like any collection of writings by various authors, the contents of Vardeghul's Trove must be read with a healthy dose of skepticism.

For additional information on Vardeghul and her Trove of Lore, see **Haven** and **Adventures in Parlainth,** pp. 20 and 26 respectively, of the **Parlainth Gamemaster Book.**

Map

The fold-out map included in this set shows the Map Wall of Parlainth. Located in the center of Haven, the painted map wall describes the areas of the ruins that have been explored so far. For more information regarding the map wall, see **Haven,** p. 22 of **Parlainth GM.**

Treasure/Creature Cards

The 18 treasure and creature cards in this campaign set feature full-color illustrations of some of the treasures and creatures in Parlainth. For information on using treasure cards, see p. 273, **ED**. The reverse side of each creature card lists that creature's statistics for the gamemaster's convenient reference during play.

How to Use This Product

Parlainth: The Forgotten City provides enough information about Parlainth to give the gamemaster a solid understanding of the ruins and how to use them in adventures and campaigns, yet leaves enough details undefined to give gamemasters a free hand in shaping the ruins to suit their story needs. To make best use of this product, the gamemaster should first read this introduction and the **History of Parlainth** in order to understand the Parlainth of 1506 TH. Next, the gamemaster should read **Vardeghul's Trove of Lore;** those firsthand accounts of Parlainth and Haven will give gamemasters a feel for the place that an objective history cannot provide. It is the small, atmospheric details that truly bring a game world to life—the speech pattern of a complaining merchant, the smell of a room at The Restless Troll inn, and so on. The documents in Vardeghul's Trove provide that atmosphere. Once a gamemaster has a feel for the setting, he or she can consult this book and the **Ruins of Parlainth** for the nuts-and-bolts information necessary to plan their player characters' first visit to Parlainth.

To use this product, players and gamemasters will need the **Earthdawn** rulebook **(ED).** Gamemasters running adventures and campaigns set in the ruins of the Forgotten City may also find the **Earthdawn Gamemaster Pack (ED GM Pack),** the **Barsaive Campaign Set,** and the **Earthdawn Companion** useful.

Customizing Parlainth

No single, correct version of Parlainth exists in **Earthdawn.** Much of the ruined city remains unexplored and therefore unknown, and even the more thoroughly explored areas may change from time to time. Gamemasters should regard the information that this product reveals about Parlainth as guidelines, rather than hard-and-fast rules. In fact, we encourage gamemasters to use this material as a starting point to make Parlainth their own.

In many places, the information given includes several possibilities. Throughout this book and the **Ruins of Parlainth** are sections labeled **Option 1, Option 2,** and so on. These options represent a number of choices the



gamemaster might make in a given situation. For example, each individual gamemaster decides the true motivations of the dragon Charcoalgrin, or whether a doorway exists beneath Torgak's Supplies and Goods that provides easy access to the catacombs. Gamemasters should feel free to choose alternatives not suggested in the text. When we suggest specific numbers or statistics, we believe those numbers best maintain game balance and suggest the gamemaster use them.

EXPLORING PARLAINTH

The ruins of Parlainth and all their hidden treasures await those adventurers and explorers bold enough to face the city's dangers and confront its often sinister inhabitants. Gamemasters can set countless adventures in and around the immense ruins, providing hours of adventuring for adepts of all Disciplines and Circles. The good news is that the gamemaster decides exactly who and what each adventuring group may find within the ruins of Parlainth, so he can tailor the treasures and monsters to exactly suit his players' group. The bad news is that Parlainth is one of the most dangerous places in all Barsaive, and gamemasters are encouraged to make Parlainth as deadly as possible without seriously unbalancing their campaigns. The Horrors and the Scourge corrupted the city's ruined buildings and catacombs almost beyond recognition, resulting in bizarre magical traps, twisted creatures, and plenty of peril from still-lurking Horrors.

Of course, Parlainth contains loot and magical treasures in proportion to its dangers. Player characters should not, however, expect to simply walk into Parlainth and leave unmolested with the most fantastic magical treasure they have ever seen. It is more likely that they will enter the city a dozen times or more before emerging with anything of real value. And characters must remember that many types of treasure only have value if someone else is willing to pay to possess them—receiving silver in exchange for booty also requires the characters to accept a certain amount of risk.

No journey into Parlainth is without risk, and gamemasters should make characters earn every single silver piece they take from the ruins. Well-prepared adventurers who take care when exploring the ruins will find that Parlainth holds many treasures, not only those worth money, but also magical lore and history. Characters who foolishly march into the ruins with no forethought, on the other hand, will learn of the dangers that await them the hard way.

HISTORY OF PARLAINTH



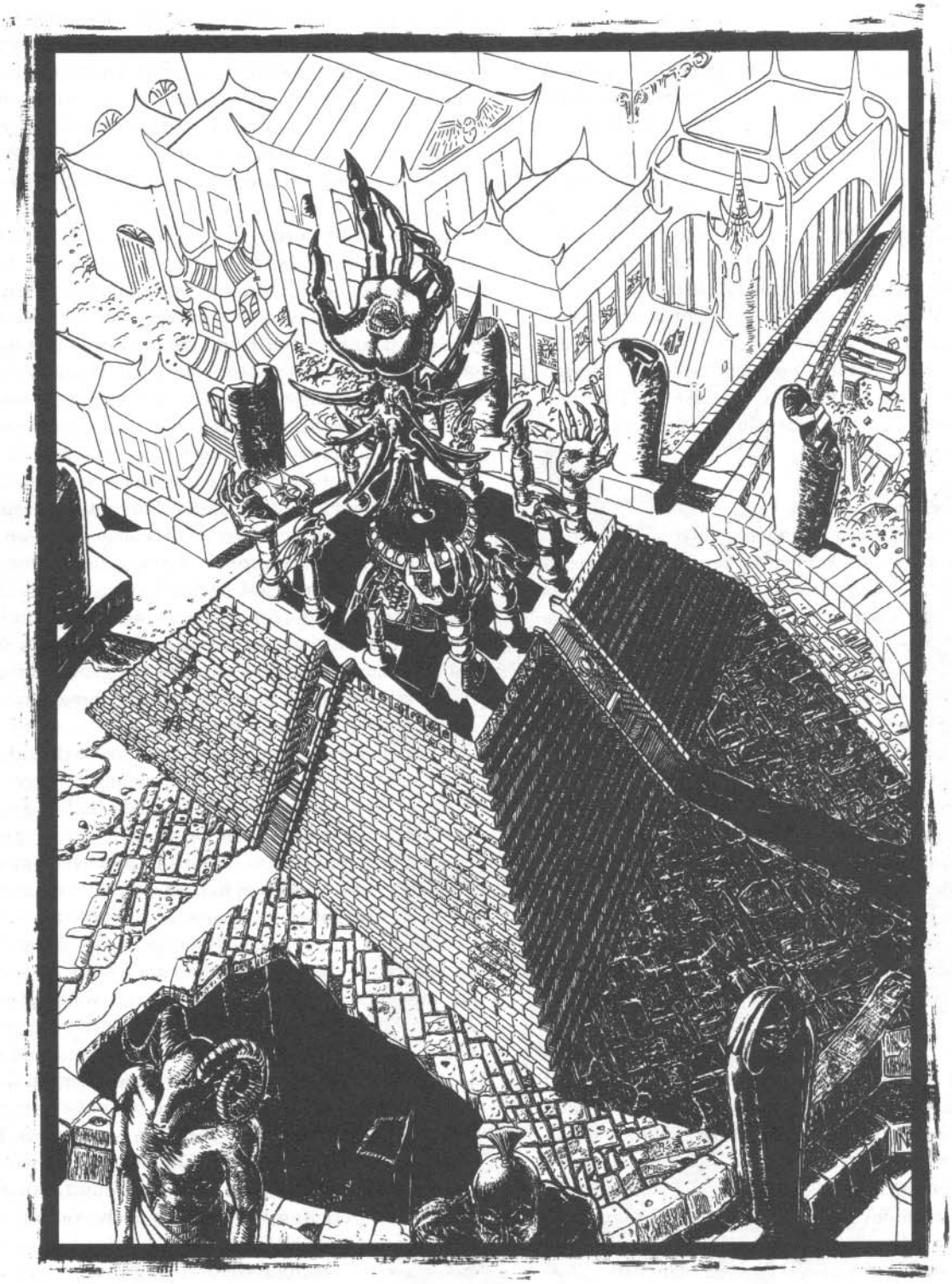
In order to run adventures set in the ruins of the Forgotten City, the gamemaster needs to know when Parlainth was built and why, as well as what caused its destruction. The following history of Parlainth will help the gamemaster understand the pre-Scourge Parlainth and the city of the current **Earthdawn** era.

IMPERIAL OUTPOST

The history of Parlainth begins with the first stirrings of Thera's imperial ambitions. In 50 TE (493 TH), soon after the Elder of Thera, Thom Edro, declared his realm an empire, he and his advisors declared Barsaive a Theran province and decided to build Parlainth as Thera's provincial capital.

The Therans expanded their empire into Barsaive both militarily and as a civilian power. The Theran Navy established itself at Sky Point in southern Barsaive in order to solidify gains made at the Battle of Sky Point (see p. 25, **ED**), while founding Parlainth as the center of civilian administration for the Theran Empire in Barsaive. The decision to symbolically separate Theran civilian and military power in Barsaive came at the recommendation of the astute Kern Fallo, a prominent Theran appointed as the first Overlord of Barsaive. He recognized that the new provincial capital would have great symbolic significance, and that he could more easily negotiate the submission to Thera of Barsaive's various independent rulers from a beautiful, awe-inspiring city of wonders than from a heavily fortified military stronghold. According to Fallo's plan, Parlainth's appearance should serve as pro-Thera propaganda. If Sky Point's garrisons were the iron fist of Theran power in Barsaive, Parlainth would be the velvet glove. It would represent everything noble about the Theran Empire—its culture, its art, its tradition of learning, its magical prowess. Parlainth would also serve as a helping hand to Barsaive, a vital center of magical knowledge for those preparing defenses against the coming Scourge. Above all, its beauty and grandeur would serve to make Theran occupation palatable by inspiring awe in native Barsaivians.

The decision to make Parlainth an exemplar of Theran civilization created repercussions that continue to this day. Almost immediately, the average Theran citizen began to identify with Parlainth, taking great interest in its progress and its reception by Barsaive's natives, whom the Therans regarded as quaint but backward primitives greatly in need of superior Theran example. Though the initial impetus for the declaration of Empire was the need to secure a steady supply of orichalcum, a flow disrupted during the savage last years of Barsaive's Orichalcum Wars (see p. 24, **ED**), the rise of Parlainth in the popular imagination changed the idea of the Empire into a noble mission. By viewing their imperial expansion as the great civilizer of "savage" Barsaive, the Therans awarded themselves the right to determine Barsaive's destiny. The Therans' emotional attachment to the imperial ideal strengthened during their years of seclusion in Thera during the Scourge. Though Parlainth itself was magically forgotten by most of the world, Theran dreams of supremacy were not. Now that the Scourge has passed, the Theran Empire has begun to dedicate considerable resources to reclaiming its errant province in the name of fulfilling Imperial destiny.



CONSTRUCTION OF PARLAINTH

To turn his vision of the perfect Theran city into reality, Kern Fallo hired the prominent architect Pumous Vectarian. Vectarian, in turn, was determined to allow nothing unseemly or unpleasant into "his" perfect Parlainth, but his political masters thrust various practical concerns upon him. He must build a network of cells to hold prisoners of the Empire, he must allow room for the construction of slave pens, and so on. Vectarian hit upon a single solution to all such dilemmas; whenever he could not avoid including something in his design that he found distasteful, he put it underground. His plans for the city's underground passageways eventually expanded so much that Parlainth became two cities: a place of beauty above ground, and a place of shame beneath. Opponents of the Theran regime later pointed out that Parlainth's design symbolized the entire Empire; the city, like the Empire it represented, was a façade of dazzling glories covering a dark and sinister reality.

MILITARY PRESENCE

Though Parlainth was intended primarily to serve as the center of civilian government in Barsaive, Vectarian's superiors ordered him to house the Theran Infantry in his city. As an island nation, Thera had achieved most of its military objectives by relying on its impressive airship navy. Despite the navy's overwhelming success at Sky Point, however, Thom Edro realized that he could not hope to hold Barsaive or future provinces with the navy alone. Therefore, he formed the Theran Infantry, a ground-based army intended to enforce Theran will by physically occupying rebellious areas. The army included both rank-and-file troops for mass battles and small teams of adepts who specialized in anti-guerrilla warfare. Edro also intended his new army to be the navy's rival, splitting the structure of military power between the two organizations in order to weaken the military's ability to overthrow him. Maintaining this split meant stationing the Theran Infantry headquarters in Parlainth, far from the navy nerve center in Sky Point.

Despite Vectarian's strenuous arguments, his superiors refused to put the infantry's barracks and command structure underground on the principle that such a location would be bad for morale. The inclusion of a military installation compromised Vectarian's grand vision of the city, a shock from which he never fully recovered. Eventually, the infantry proved a thorn in the side of Overlord Kern Fallo. Fallo generally preferred diplomatic solutions to problems, but infantry commander General Poweda Manybars agitated constantly for opportunities to use her forces and thus improve the infantry's standing and funding level.

THE CITYSCAPE CHANGES

Vectarian's original plan for the city divided it into quarters, joined at a central square. He intended total separation between the administrative quarter, the residential quarter, the military quarter, and the commercial quarter. As Parlainth's residents put down roots in their new city, however, they largely ignored Vectarian's master plan and settled where they wished. Wealthy Therans showed no interest in sharing living space with Barsaivian collaborators they regarded as uncouth, or with less well-heeled fellow expatriates. Many of them shunned the residential quarter, instead setting up housekeeping in the administrative quarter. Often, influential Therans took over empty space in government buildings; others built palatial homes in the quarter. Among the lower classes, shopkeepers wished to live near their businesses, and Parlainth's thriving merchant class soon demolished sections of Vectarian's carefully constructed commercial quarter in order to add living space and tailor the buildings to their specific requirements. In the residential quarter, Parlainthians separated into distinct neighborhoods, dividing down-on-their-luck Therans from poor Barsaivians from rich Barsaivians. Commercial establishments such as grocer's stalls and taverns sprang up in these neighborhoods, despite their illegal status under the Vectarian design. City officials, many of whom the arrogant architect had personally offended, freely permitted these zoning outrages, often in return for hefty bribes.

Changes in the underground city most clearly reflected Parlainth's preparation for the coming Scourge. As the need for haste in building kaers and citadels grew, the Theran demand for slaves multiplied. The Empire dispatched an entire class of officials to Barsaive to guarantee the steady flow of captives from the province to the imperial island, and Parlainth became an important way station in this trade in lives. The city fathers vastly expanded the underground area beneath the administrative quarter to accommodate the huge number of slaves waiting for transport to Thera. In so doing, they displaced the treasury vaults and moved them beneath the commercial sector. Meanwhile, they also expanded the area beneath the military quarter in order to house the various secret experiments being performed by Parlainth's magicians, Theran and Barsaivian collaborators alike. Because Parlainth had few engineers experienced in underground construction during this period, many sections of the various underground areas built after the initial construction of the city lacked proper structural support. The Horrors took advantage of this poor construction during the Scourge to collapse whole sections of the underground city.

RULERS OF PARLAINTH

Politically, Parlainth's role also changed rapidly from its formal opening in 100 TE (543 TH) to its disappearance at the beginning of the Scourge. Until 147 TE, Kern Fallo ruled Parlainth just as he ruled Barsaive. Though the city was officially run by a lord mayor, of whom there were twelve during Fallo's time in office, Fallo actually made the important decisions for Parlainth. As an appointee of the provincial government, the lord mayor served at Fallo's whim.

During his governorship, Fallo began using the dwarfs of Throal to enforce Theran influence over Barsaive. He convinced them that cooperation with Thera was their only chance of survival, and possibly Barsaive's as well. Despite their misgivings, the dwarfs reluctantly agreed to administer Theran justice in all areas of the province. Modern-day Theran scholars question this policy of Fallo's, claiming that this decision laid the groundwork for Throal's current domination of rebellious Barsaive, but at the time, most Therans praised his diplomatic skills. Fallo's policies reduced the need for military force in Barsaive, allowing Thera to turn its full attention to combating the threat of the Scourge. The debate as to the worth of Fallo's pro-dwarf policy has been further clouded by the fact that many of the relevant documents leading to this decision and outlining its limitations were magically altered by Parlainth's disappearance in 605; this confusion is just one example of the enormous repercussions of that act.

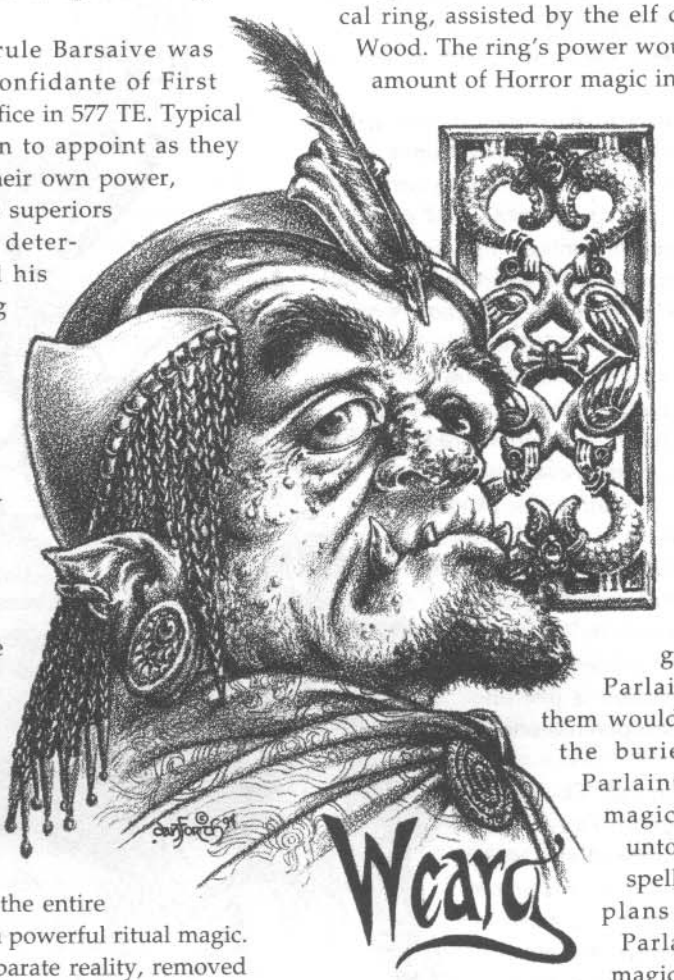
Recalled to Thera in 147 TE when Thom Edro decided that Fallo's talents were needed closer to home, Fallo was replaced by a long succession of functionaries who essentially stood back and allowed the dwarfs of Throal to govern Barsaive in Thera's name. These governors spent most of their time and energy finding new ways to increase the volume and profitability of the slave trade. At the height of this period, they converted sections of the military quarter to slave pens when the sheer number of captives overwhelmed existing underground chambers.

Parlainth's early, self-proclaimed role as exemplar of the noblest Theran values was by this time openly mocked in many quarters. Some residential neighborhoods had degenerated into shabby slums. The military, no longer needed to quell rebellion, hired out its



services to slave traders. Many officers' purses grew fat as they sent their men to round up slaves, both legally and illegally. During this period, the title of Barsaive's Theran ruler changed from governor to overlord. A sonnet by a noted Throalic poet of the time described the dark side of Thera rising up from the sewers and prisons of the underground to poison the light side of Thera, represented by the aboveground city of Parlainth.

The next figure of note to rule Barsaive was Overlord Ersh Wearg, an ork confidante of First Governor Olan Erdro, who took office in 577 TE. Typical of the officials the Therans began to appoint as they became increasingly arrogant in their own power, Wearg was expert at flattering his superiors but incompetent as a leader. A determined waverer, Wearg changed his decisions almost hourly. During Wearg's tenure, Parlainth turned all of its energies toward preparations for the Scourge. Even the slave trade dwindled; in Thera as well as in Barsaive, bracing for the coming tide of Horrors took precedence over all else.



THE FORGOTTEN CITY

While pursuing alternative methods of surviving the Scourge, Parlainth's magicians discovered a solution to the problem of protecting themselves that was startlingly different from that proposed by the researchers in Thera. Rather than building a kaer or citadel, they proposed moving the entire city of Parlainth from Barsaive with powerful ritual magic. Parlainth would rest in its own separate reality, removed from both the physical and astral planes until recalled to Barsaive by those who emerged after the Scourge.

As long as Parlainth existed in this other reality, the Horrors would not be able to find the city when they arrived in force to devastate the land. As an additional precaution, the magicians took steps to prevent the Horrors from even knowing that Parlainth existed. They prepared a second spell, even more powerful than the one intended to remove them from reality, that would ripple through Barsaive and Thera and erase all records and memory of the city's existence.

Overlord Ersh Wearg had his doubts about the idea, but he had just as many doubts about Thera's methods of defense. Covering his bets, Wearg allowed the magicians to go ahead with their plans, but also commanded the city's finest trapsmiths to build more standard defenses against the Horrors.

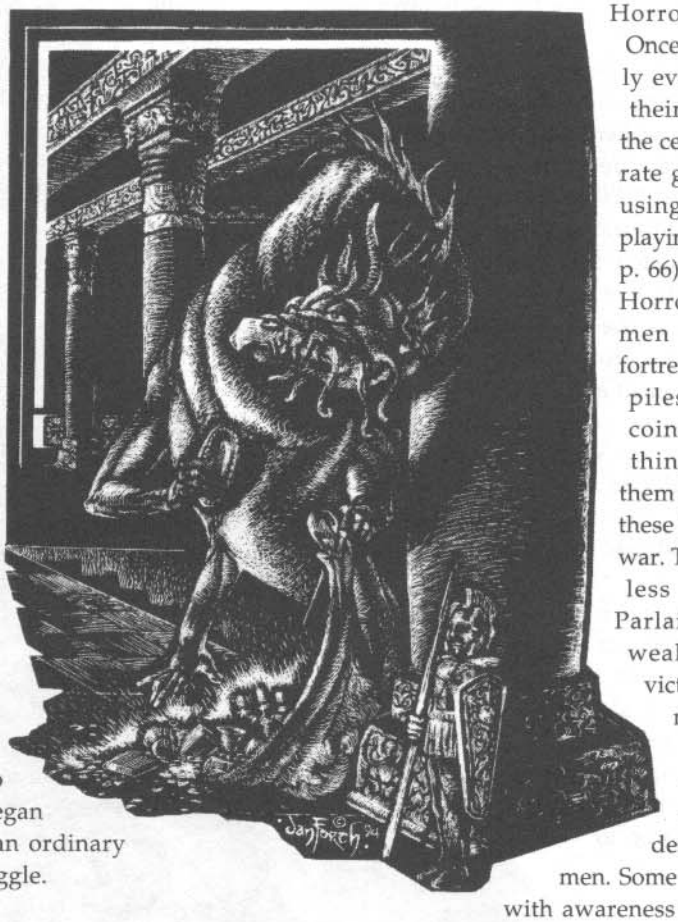
Wearg also wanted to know how the Barsaivian survivors of the Scourge would know to summon Parlainth back if all memory of the city had been erased. In response, the Parlainthian magicians forged a magical ring, assisted by the elf queen Alachia of Wyrm Wood. The ring's power would lie dormant until the amount of Horror magic in the world dropped to a predetermined level. That decrease would activate the ring's magic, creating in all who held it an overwhelming sense of loss and longing, along with visions of the lost city. The magic of this so-called Longing Ring would also subtly contrive the ring's passage from hand to hand to ensure the greatest possible number of seekers for the city. Once enough Namegivers began to search for Parlainth, one or another of them would discover and work out the buried, complex clues to Parlainth's existence that the magicians intended to leave untouched by the forgetting spell. One such clue, a set of plans for the new walls of Parlainth encoded with the magical incantation necessary to bring the city back, the magicians left in an unmarked container in the Great Library of Throal. They planted other, equally obscure clues elsewhere—in the pattern of the bark on a tree near the Elf Queen's court, in the migratory pattern of fish in the Serpent River, and so on.

In 601 TE (1044 TH), Parlainth's magicians announced their intention to enact their magics. Just before zero hour, Ersh Wearg panicked. Wearg and his household fled to Throal, in whose earth-and-rock kaers the overlord felt more confidence.

On the first day of 602 TH, the magicians cast their spells; Parlainth disappeared from Barsaive, its fabled splendor never to be seen again. With a single act, Parlainth had

become the Forgotten City. Ironically, Ersh Wearg and his most trusted officials were killed when a portion of the Throal kaer collapsed on them shortly after the sealing of Throal in 607 TE. Debate still rages as to whether the deaths were accidental.

Parlainth found its isolation from the world difficult to bear. Established primarily as a trade and political center, the city's relationship to the world had been its sole reason for existence. The magicians, unlike most other citizens, were delighted with their success and saw in it the opportunity to rule Parlainth free from the restraints of their Theran colleagues. Within months of Parlainth's disappearance, the magicians approached Lord Mayor Fucial Vastbelly and none too subtly suggested that he behave like a good puppet or they would make him the subject of a new magical experiment. Unfortunately, the magicians proved even less skilled at politics than former Overlord Wearg. Tensions mounted between Vastbelly and the sorcerers, who controlled the food supply, and Parlainth's once-powerful merchant class. Within a few years, the political deadlock erupted into street skirmishes, which in turn sparked a city-wide civil war. Between 607 and 611 TE, rival factions hurled lethal Theran war magics at each other, destroying entire sections of Parlainth. As the carnage began to mount, combatants on both sides began to suspect that something more than ordinary greed and ambition fueled their struggle.



THE HORRORS REVEALED

The first concrete sign that the Horrors had reached Parlainth came in the increasingly dark dreams of Parlainth's citizens. Soon the things began to reveal themselves to selected victims. Within a decade, everyone in Parlainth knew the dreadful truth: even as the city's magicians prepared their spells, a vanguard of Horrors had snuck into Parlainth under magical disguise. Parlainth's radical defenses had come to naught—the city was Horror-infested even before it disappeared. Only the array of traps that Wearg had ordered built without the magicians' knowledge gave the citizens of Parlainth any hope of survival. When the citizens realized the catastrophe that the magicians had brought upon them, they turned on the sorcerers and tore them limb from limb.

The Horrors' initial delight in having infiltrated proud Parlainth swiftly turned to fury when they realized that they were trapped beyond reality within the city, possibly forever. They ravaged the city with particular viciousness, slowly torturing the city's residents to death in order to extract the maximum suffering from each one. With no one left alive to destroy, the Horrors tore the city apart. Once they had ruined virtually everything they could get their claws on, they passed the centuries by staging elaborate games of simulated war using the city's falsemen as playing pieces (see **Creatures,** p. 66). During this period, the Horrors ordered their falsemen to build primitive fortresses, then they gathered piles of glittering trash—coins, gems, jewelry, anything valuable—and hid them in the fortresses, using these treasures as trophies of war. Though otherwise worthless to the Horrors, Parlainth's vast reserves of wealth became symbols of victory in their absurd and never-ending games. The Horrors refurbished old traps and even built new ones in order to destroy their rivals' falsemen. Some falsemen they endowed with awareness of a sort, making them virtual avatars of qualities the Horrors admired—guile, treachery, brutality, relentlessness, and so on. Many of these falsemen remain active in Parlainth to this day.

When the war games finally palled, the Horrors lapsed into frustrated slumber, dreaming of the day when some unsuspecting fool would return Parlainth to Barsaive. Some of the Horrors, despairthoughts in particular, maintained psychic connections to victims in the physical world, and whiled away their time mentally torturing those Name-givers they found in unprotected kaers. Most, however, simply dreamed of the terrible vengeance they would wreak on the world when at last they were freed.

PARLAINTH'S RETURN

Freedom came for Parlainth's Horrors in 1009 TE (1452 TH), when Therans, Throalic agents, elves, and others converged on the area where Parlainth had stood. Each faction had become aware of the Forgotten City through the Longing Ring, and each wished to be the first to unlock the city's secrets. Ironically, an independent ork thief named Garlthik One-Eye and his human protégé, J'role, were the first to set foot in the ruined city. (For a complete account of this event, see the **Earthdawn** novel, **The Longing Ring.**)

The discovery of Parlainth's destruction by the Horrors bitterly disappointed those touched by the Longing Ring, but many seekers of wealth saw the ruins as a boon. Where some saw destruction, these would-be explorers saw a vast repository of valuable goods left from the days of Imperial wealth and influence.

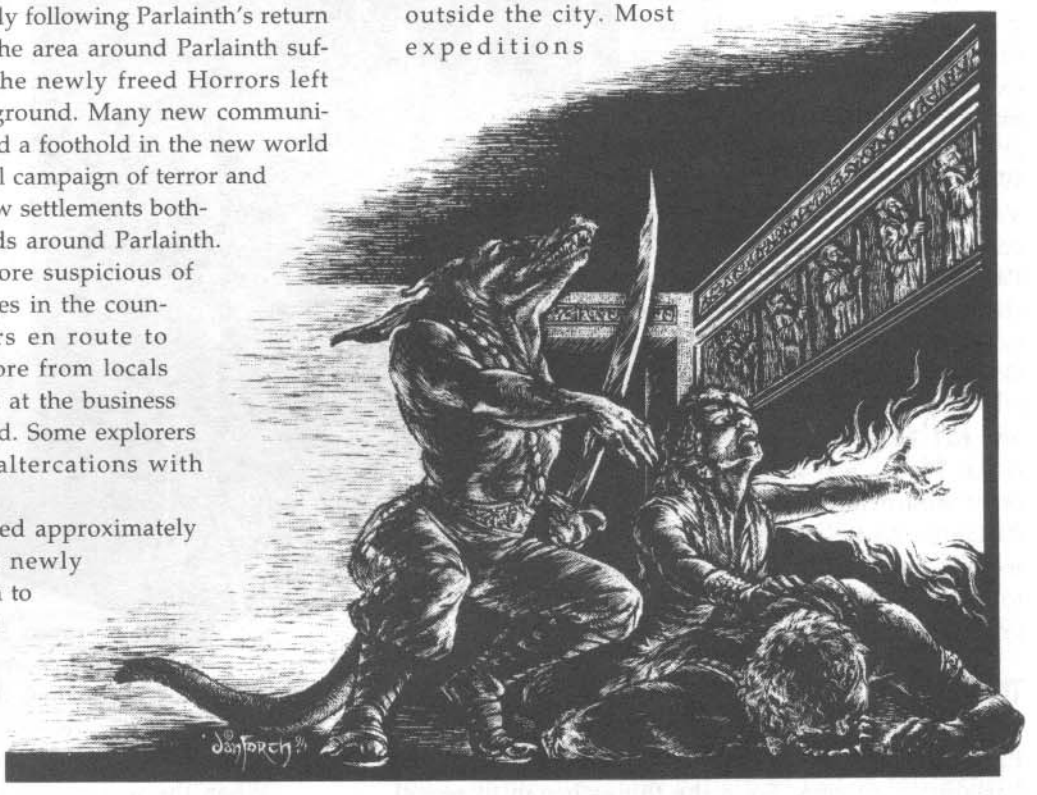
In the years immediately following Parlainth's return to the world in 1452 TH, the area around Parlainth suffered a mini-Scourge as the newly freed Horrors left Parlainth for more fertile ground. Many new communities that had scarcely gained a foothold in the new world were wiped out in an awful campaign of terror and destruction. To this day, few settlements bother to occupy the hinterlands around Parlainth. Those that do are even more suspicious of outsiders than most villages in the countryside. Treasure-seekers en route to Parlainth receive little more from locals than an invitation to leave at the business end of a pitchfork or sword. Some explorers even lose their lives in altercations with frightened, angry villagers.

The mini-Scourge lasted approximately three years. Some of the newly released Horrors moved on to more vulnerable pastures elsewhere in Barsaive. Others met their deaths at the hands of Barsaive's wandering heroes. Still others, realizing that their powers had waned with the world's reduced magic level, returned to Parlainth. In their long habitation of the city's ruins, the Horrors had permeated the entire area with corrupt astral energies, unknowingly making for themselves a lasting home. Forced by circumstance to remain in their former prison, these Horrors became even more determined to vent their inhuman fury against the Name-givers of Barsaive.

THE EXPLORERS ARRIVE

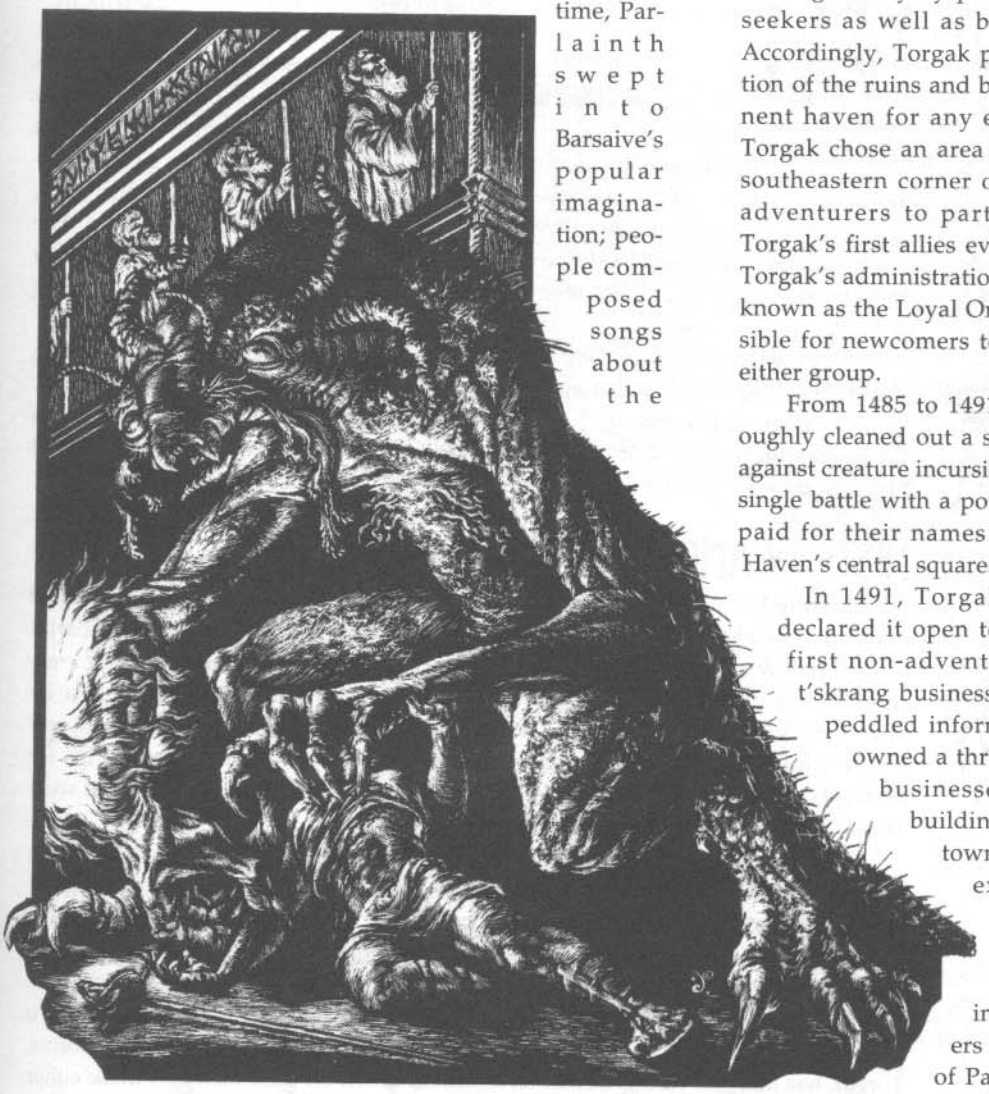
The Horrors' fury soon turned to sinister glee as they watched potential victims stream into shattered Parlainth of their own free will. Drawn by accounts of vast piles of loot available for the taking in Par-lainth's treasure vaults, a steady influx of adventurers began arriving in the city. Once the more intelligent Horrors understood the explorers' motives, they scrambled to gather up the coins and sparkling baubles for which these Name-givers seemed so willing to risk their lives. They reanimated the falsemen they had abandoned during their long sleep and reactivated many of the sprung traps in Parlainth's tunnels and streets. The Horrors began their evil war games anew, with opponents made of all-too-mortal flesh and blood.

From 1455 to 1491, explorers investigated Parlainth haphazardly. Rather than establishing a permanent base, adventurers set up temporary camps in the wilderness outside the city. Most expeditions came to Parlainth from some distance away, stayed until they found a significant treasure or (more likely) lost too many members to go on, and then returned whence they had come. Few explorers even knew of each other's existence, and no way existed for groups to correlate their discoveries. Maps made by explorers during this period are often difficult to decipher—even determining which part of the ruins they depict becomes a monumental task.



Logbooks, maps, and diagrams from expeditions in this period (referred to as pre-Haven by the cataloguing committee of the Library of Throal) are scattered throughout Barsaive; some may even exist in Theran-controlled territory, because Theran agents also explored Parlainth from the earliest days of its return.

Much information from the pre-Haven period must be considered less than reliable for other reasons. During that time, Parlainth swept into Barsaive's popular imagination; people composed songs about the Forgotten City and writers filled tomes with mostly ill-informed speculation about what might have disappeared along with it. Parlainth became synonymous with mystery, and it became fashionable to change the settings of old legends so that they took place in the Forgotten City. New legends also sprang up, tying together the few facts known about Parlainth with a thick cord of fancy. For this reason, explorers generally do not take documents predating 1485 TH too seriously.



Founding of Haven

In 1485 TH, a far-thinking troll named Torgak proposed a long-term project to an alliance of ork and troll adventurers with a common interest in Parlainth. Torgak and his fellows, frustrated at having repeatedly wasted time searching in areas already picked clean of treasure by an earlier exploring party, recognized the potential for making money by providing services to other treasure-seekers as well as by finding treasure themselves. Accordingly, Torgak proposed clearing out a small portion of the ruins and building in that area a safe, permanent haven for any explorers who wanted to use it. Torgak chose an area of the ruins he knew well, in the southeastern corner of the old city, and invited other adventurers to participate. The survivors among Torgak's first allies eventually formed the leadership of Torgak's administration, and also of the explorers' union known as the Loyal Order of Delvers. It is nearly impossible for newcomers to reach a position of influence in either group.

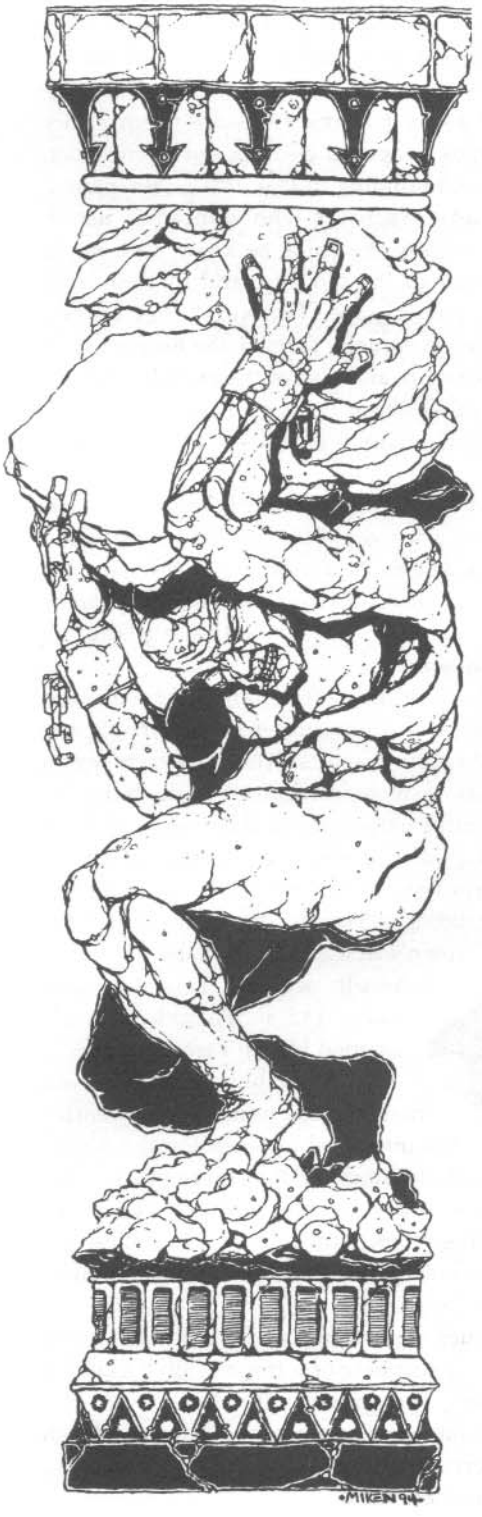
From 1485 to 1491, Torgak and his followers thoroughly cleaned out a section of Parlainth and fortified it against creature incursions. Many lost their lives, most in a single battle with a powerful Horror in 1487 TH. Torgak paid for their names to be enshrined on a plaque in Haven's central square.

In 1491, Torgak officially named Haven and declared it open to other adventurers. Among the first non-adventurers to settle in Haven was a t'skrang businesswoman named Var-deghul, who peddled information about the ruins and soon owned a thriving business. Torgak gave other businesses to his associates during the building of Haven—the ownership of the town's first inn, The Restless Troll, for example, went to Torgak's comrade Tylia. Torgak himself opened Haven's trading post.

The establishment of Haven increased the number of adventurers interested in plumbing the depths of Parlainth. Within three years, business outgrew the modest structures housing The Restless Troll and Torgak's Supplies and Goods. From these enterprises' early profits, their owners erected lavish new buildings.

Haven continues to grow and prosper, though it still retains the rowdy atmosphere of a frontier town founded by treasure-seekers. Though still often beset by hostile creatures and the subtle influence of the Horrors, Haven has earned a permanent place on the landscape of Barsaive, and permanent fame.

HAVEN



Any explorer planning to journey into the ruins of Parlainth would be wise to first visit Haven, the small town carved from a corner of the ruins. Haven offers vital goods and services and provides one of the few sources of reliable information about the Forgotten City.

The following section describes the town of Haven, its most prominent inhabitants, places, and organizations, and discusses the influence wielded by various political groups. Though we arranged the information in this section so that the gamemaster would find it easy to use as a reference, he or she should note that this arrangement places information on the same subject in several places. For example, information on Torgak appears in Notable Places, Prominent Citizens, and Organizations. The Organizations section and the discussions of political influences include a description and statistics for a prominent member of each group. In the abbreviated statistics given for minor characters, the numbers following the Attributes are step numbers.

Additional information regarding specific actions that characters might take in Haven are described in **Running Adventures in Parlainth,** p. 45 of **Parlainth GM.** We encourage gamemasters whose groups enjoy lots of social interaction and base-camp activities to flesh out the town by adding more business establishments and places of interest to those described below.

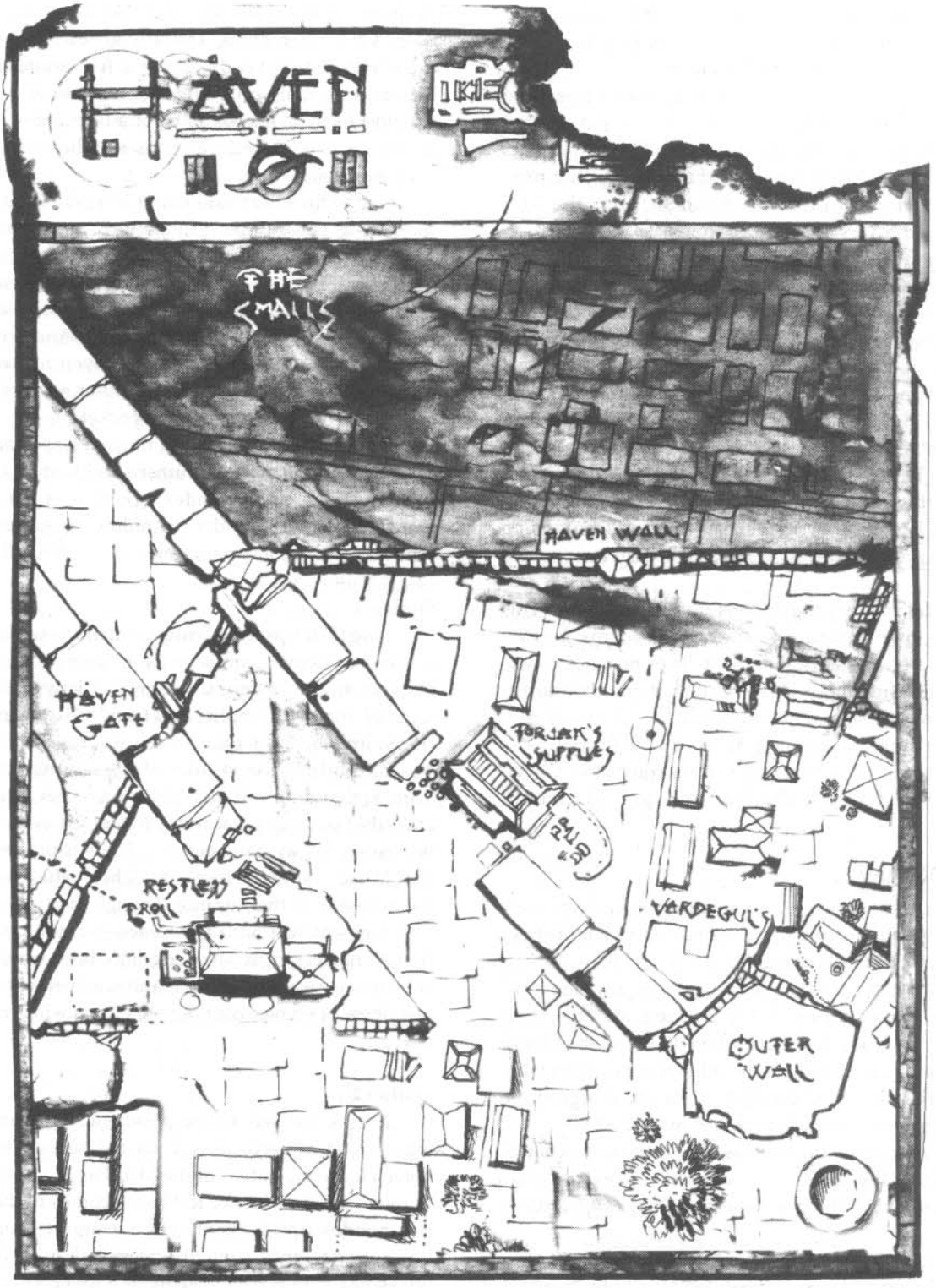
HISTORY AND GROWTH

Founded in 1485 TH by the famous troll adventurer Torgak, the town of Haven lies in a section of the area of Parlainth known as the Smalls. Together with several fellow troll and ork entrepreneurs, Torgak cleared Haven of hostile creatures and valuable treasures and partially refurbished it for use as a home base by adventurers exploring Parlainth. Those structures still standing they repaired, and Haven's founders built new structures on the foundations of old buildings too far destroyed to fix up. Among the first and largest of the refurbished buildings were Torgak's Supplies and Goods and The Restless Troll inn.

Since its founding, the town has grown outward from the ruins. Most of Haven's permanent residents live in the newer areas of the town, in modest buildings of wood and stone (for more about the geography of Haven, see **Layout of Haven,** p. 19). Torgak and others repaved the shattered portion of the ancient, southeast laneway that bisects Haven (see **The Laneways**, p. 84 of **Ruins of Parlainth**), and sanded down the unsightly stumps of broken statuary along the laneway's walls. To keep at bay the creeping vegetation that threatens to reclaim every part of the ruins, Torgak has taken to hiring former adventurers down on their luck and those either too old or too injured to risk their lives scraping for loot as gardeners. These workers spend their days pruning the vines, for which Torgak pays them a living wage. Player characters may also discover that these gardeners can offer accurate information and sage advice: explorers who wish to learn about the hard knocks of adventuring in Parlainth would do well to consult these humbly employed men and women.

HAVEN EXPANDS

After Torgak and his companions cleared the southeast corner of the ruins, they built their own homes and businesses as well as housing for the first expected


HAVEN
THE SMALLS
HAVEN WALL
HAVEN GATE
FORJAK'S SUPPLIES
RUG
RESTLESS TROLL
VERDEGUL'S
OUTER WALL

arrivals in the new town. This initially populated area, now known as the First Section, contains Torgak's Supplies and Goods, The Restless Troll inn, the Map Wall, and Vardeghul's Lore Exchange, among other places of note, and makes up roughly one third of Haven.

The next section of town to be built soon came to be called the Old Neighborhood, though it has only existed for ten years. Its residents, many of them Haven's earliest settlers, call it the Old Neighborhood to distinguish it from the rest of Haven. Like the First Section, the Old Neighborhood covers a third of the town.

Because it was built before Haven's most rapid period of expansion, the Old Neighborhood boasts several important business establishments. When Old Neighborhood residents wished to start their own businesses, Torgak dismissed the newcomers as unlikely to offer him serious competition and so allowed them to start up shops and services at will. Since that time, Torgak has learned to appreciate competition in the marketplace and regrets his earlier generosity. To even the score, Torgak levies high enough tariffs on the businesses of the Old Neighborhood to ensure that he will draw more customers and continue to offer better prices to traveling merchants than anyone else in town.

The final third of Haven has no official name. This part of the town contains most of the residents' homes, along with a few taverns and the stalls of merchants who cater to the residents of Haven rather than adventurers passing through to Parlainth. Among the most notable residents in this part of town is Pagmor Gilt-Throat, who arranges betting on the falsemen wars constantly waged within the War Zone (see **The War Zone,** p. 24 of **Ruins of Parlainth**).

MODERN-DAY HAVEN

Torgak and his deputies maintain firm but relatively benevolent control of the town. Adventurers who behave themselves should feel reasonably safe and at home.

Roughly 1,000 people live in Haven at any one time, though few remain for more than a couple of years. Some residents get rich and move elsewhere to spend their hard-won gold and silver. Many more fail to find anything valuable in Parlainth and eventually move on. A significant number die in the ruins. Torgak has mandated cremation for Haven's deceased for two reasons; Haven lacks enough space to bury the dead, and cremation prevents slain adventurers from being reanimated as dangerous cadaver men.

The recovery of loot from the ruins is the town's economic wellspring. Haven is inhabited largely by treasure-seekers and those whose businesses cater to such adventurers. The value of magical artifacts and information culled from the ruins means that Haven attracts more than its share of thieves and agents acting for various factions in Barsaive; Theran spies, Throalic agents, and occasional elves from Blood Wood are only a few examples. Only in Haven is normal social interaction possible; adventurers are most likely to encounter other adventurers in the town, as well as businessmen anxious to relieve them of their hard-won coins.

A wise thief once said that it is much easier to acquire treasure in Haven than in Parlainth, and more than one party of adventurers has risked all to secure some wondrous item from the ruins only to lose it to competitors in the town. Many of Haven's successful businessmen keep well-guarded fortunes tucked away. And any treasure found in the ruins must wait in Haven for transport to some other place: a cunning adventurer may transport any of these caches to his or her own pocket.

Torgak has deactivated all traps in Haven and blocked passageways to both the Southern and Eastern Catacombs, whose extensions run under a portion of the town. The gamemaster may consider the following options to represent the truth of those passageways.

Option 1

Torgak left open a single entrance to each underground catacomb complex as a business venture. The entrance to the Eastern Catacombs is located in the basement of Torgak's Supplies and Goods. Explorers can enter the Southern Catacombs via a guarded stairway that Torgak built in the middle of the southwest laneway. Torgak charges a toll of 1 silver piece per adventurer to enter the Southern Catacombs, and adventurers must agree in writing to pay damages of 100 silver pieces per guard should the sentries be forced to fight creatures who pursue the explorers to the entrance. Though these entrances offer a convenient way into the catacombs, the underground tunnels nearest them have long since been scoured clean of worthwhile swag. Hungry creatures sometimes congregate near these openings, confident that prey will arrive eventually.

Option 2

Torgak blocked all the passageways, convinced they represented too great a security risk to the town to keep open. However, cultists of the Mad Passion Vestrial recently found a new entrance to the catacombs in the basement of a nondescript, Parlainth-era house in Haven. Through this entrance, they smuggle creatures out of the ruins to wreak havoc in Haven, usually as a diversionary tactic for one of their elaborately futile plots.



The Explorers

Many of Parlainth's explorers chose to abandon life in normal society and reject the notion of making a living through hard, steady work. They want to strike it rich fast. The risk of sudden, painful death does not deter them—in fact, it adds to the Forgotten City's appeal. Even if others see them as grubby, greedy, dangerous, reckless, and foolish, the explorers see themselves as heroes. More explorers die than get rich in Parlainth, but the true adventurer believes that death only happens to the other fellow.

Others who come to explore Parlainth may seek powerful magical devices on behalf of political groups ranging from the Kingdom of Throal to the Theran Empire to the elven Blood Warders. Still others, such as pious followers of the Passions or half-crazed members of the Grim Legion, brave the ruins on the strength of personal convictions. Members of both groups consider themselves superior to those explorers motivated by the prospect of financial gain, whom they derisively call "ruincrawlers." In truth, little distinguishes any explorer from another save minor differences in behavior.

Layout of Haven

Only a third of Haven, the area first settled by Torgak and his associates, actually lies within the ruins of Parlainth. To protect themselves from marauding creatures and Horrors, Torgak and his friends built a wall around this area shortly after settling there. A gate stands where the southwest laneway intersects the wall; it remains closed except when explorers are entering and/or leaving the ruins. Torgak posts several guards near the wall to deal with the occasional creatures that try to enter Haven through the gate. All adventurers entering the ruins must agree in writing to pay damages of 100 silver pieces per guard should the guards be forced to fight creatures who pursue the explorers to Haven.

Newcomers built the other areas of Haven on the far side of the tumbled-down wall that originally surrounded Parlainth. Many buildings in the Old Neighborhood lean against intact portions of this wall, while the newest areas of town stretch further out from the ruins. Most of Parlainth's original wall bordering this corner of the Smalls has been leveled so that it does not separate the newer portions of town from the older areas. Most of Haven's buildings are stone, with the occasional few built of wood.

Notable Places

The following information describes those places in Haven that explorers and adventurers will most likely decide to visit when preparing for their adventures.

Torgak's Supplies and Goods

The most famous store in all of Barsaive offers an amazing number of goods for sale, especially considering Haven's relative isolation from the rest of the province. Money talks, and Torgak possesses a great deal of money with which to arrange for transportation of goods from far distant cities. He passes that cost on to his customers, cheerfully relieving them of the oppressive weight of coins and gems looted from the ruins.

Torgak's Supplies stocks all items listed in the Goods and Services Table (pp. 263–67, **ED**), with the exception of animals. Upon request, however, Torgak can arrange for fine animals to reach buyers in Haven within 2D6 weeks. Player characters will find that most items on the tables mentioned above cost one and a half times the listed price in Haven, including magical equipment (including any armor or shield with a Mystic Armor Bonus greater than 1). Anyone complaining about Torgak's prices gets a lengthy lecture on the risks and costs of doing business in Haven. All of Torgak's employees use roughly the same words for this lecture and heave a bored sigh before launching into it; they field this complaint constantly.

Because he allows no significant competition to exist, Torgak prices his goods as high as the market will bear. He boosts his prices by 150 percent whenever a major influx of cash pumps up Haven's economy. If an adventuring group finds a great trove of jewelry and immediately ships it to Throal for safekeeping, the local economy remains unaffected. If, however, this same group succeeded in driving off the cadaver men of the Eastern Catacombs and opening Queen Twiceborn's treasure vault, every adventurer in town would rush to grab part of the swag. Soon Haven would be afloat in loot, and Torgak would adjust his prices accordingly.

Torgak discourages potential competitors, though they rarely cause him trouble. Torgak and his cronies still own most of Haven, and those few others who own shops in Haven do business under his good graces. Torgak uses his deputies to hassle any newcomers intent on setting up a business, and also harasses anyone foolish enough to think of selling land or buildings to such an individual. If a newcomer actually manages to set up shop, Torgak lowers his prices to bargain-basement level until his new rival packs it in. So far, his pockets have proven deep enough to outlast all competitors. As soon as his opponent goes out of business, Torgak jacks his prices back up to the normal level.

Torgak claims to have no interest in buying valuables from the ruins, saying that no local market exists for them. In truth, Torgak will buy valuables whose resale value exceeds 2,000 silver pieces. He pays cash up front, but only 10 percent of an item's resale value. This 90 percent profit



margin reflects the risk and difficulty inherent in selling such items. (For more information on profiting from booty reclaimed from the ruins, see **Exchanging Booty for Silver,** p. 51 of **Adventures in Parlainth.**)

Shop Layout

After several years of roaring success in several converted, ancient buildings, Torgak spent a bundle of his profits to build his current shop. Modeled on the structures in the area known as the Vaults, Torgak's Supplies and Goods is an imposing building, lined inside and out with massive marble columns. Torgak finished the interior chambers in marble and polished metal with gilt fixtures. A statue garden adorns the roof, depicting Torgak and his friends standing in heroic postures, defending the earliest incarnation of Haven from a ravening pack of Horrors. An outside staircase allows visitors to climb up to the roof and walk among the statues. In its outsized desire to strike the viewer with awe, the garden is wonderfully vulgar.

In the shop's spacious main showroom, at least a dozen staff members are always on duty during business hours. They wear military-style uniforms dripping with gold braid, designed by Torgak. In response to their employer's insistence on classy, quality service, many of Torgak's workers have adopted the foppish mannerisms of court lackeys, which usually impresses the typical rustic adventurer no end.

The floor immediately above the main showroom serves as a warehouse, and also as home to Torgak's deputies and five largely unoccupied prison cells. Across from the cells is a lounge for the deputies' use. The third floor contains office space and Torgak's palatial private quarters. In addition, most people believe that the shop has a basement in which Torgak hides his money.

THE RESTLESS TROLL

The Restless Troll is named after its proprietor, a troll wizard named Tylia who served as Torgak's right hand during the clearing-out of Haven. A master of detail and logistics, Tylia saved Torgak's band from walking unprepared into disaster more than once. When Haven began to change from the home base of a group of troll and ork explorers into a real town, Torgak put Tylia in charge of accommodations. Her unofficial arrangements soon evolved into a booming temporary-housing business concentrated in nearby ancient buildings, and she soon saw the advantages of opening an inn. Tylia planned to call her establishment The Palace, but her first customers nicknamed it "The Restless Troll" in honor of her. Eventually she gave in to popular usage and officially christened it The Restless Troll.

Almost as imposing as Torgak's Supplies and Goods, The Restless Troll is a five-story pyramid faced in limestone, much like a typical mansion in the Vaults, with interior rooms finished in oak and mahogany. The inn's ground floor contains a spacious lobby and a huge tavern, and sleeping rooms take up four of the upper floors. Tylia maintains surprisingly modest quarters for herself on the top floor.

The rooms at the Troll are simple and comfortable, with no magical amenities. Tylia once offered them in some rooms, but after one too many adventurer declared them effete, she had them removed. A double-occupancy room costs 50 silver pieces, a suite for four costs 80 silver pieces, and a suite for six, 160 silver pieces. Prices at the tavern are double those listed for provisions on the Goods and Services Table (p. 266, **ED**).

The tavern is the center of Haven's social and business activities. The place is packed during the evenings, and a few regulars spend time there during the day as well. Dancers, troubadours, and other entertainments abound. At the tavern, information is traded, deals made, alliances forged, and gossip spread. Tylia does not object to brawls as long as the participants tidy up after themselves and pay for any broken furniture. (She makes a big profit on broken furniture.) Using weapons or offensive magic during a brawl, however, earns the offender a permanent invitation to leave. (Chairs are not considered weapons, broken bottles definitely are.) Even Haven's most violence-prone misfits rarely disobey the Troll's rules of engagement, fearing the professional and social catastrophe of being barred from that establishment. Adventurers without access to this place miss out on countless opportunities to find patrons and hear valuable tips.

VARDEGHUL'S LORE EXCHANGE

Vardeghul, a t'skrang struck by the urge to see the world, came to Parlainth on the first wave of opportunity seekers. After nearly losing her life on several forays into the ruins, Vardeghul stopped and looked around her at the swarms of scruffy adventurers descending on the city every day, each of them hoping to stumble on a treasure fabulous enough to make them wealthy for the rest of their lives. Few of them, she realized, would ever reach that goal. Most of them mounted aimless excursions into the vast ruins, hoping for a lucky find before one of the terrible creatures infesting the Forgotten City chose to make lunch of them. Many were slain, and the few who struck it rich did so out of blind luck. Little hard information on Parlainth existed, save a few ancient scraps rendered inaccurate and useless by the Horrors' ravaging of the city.

Modern-day Parlainth existed as a jumble of shattered buildings and creature lairs scarcely resembling the great

monument to civilization described in the few rediscovered documents that mentioned it.

Vardeghul realized that accurate (or apparently accurate) information on the city might be the most valuable commodity of all, and that she could get rich by supplying it for the multitude of explorers who flocked to Parlainth to make their fortunes. Using her contacts as an adventurer to collect every scrap of information possible from those still risking their lives in the ruins, Vardeghul eventually accumulated an impressive stock of documents on Parlainth. She then opened for business, selling information and quickly becoming a wealthy tradeswoman.

Vardeghul's dark, musty shop smells strongly of rotting parchment, and adventurers should know what they are looking for going in. Vardeghul has turned miserly in her declining years and no longer gives out any information for free. She has little patience for uninformed adventurers who enter her establishment on a fishing expedition, hoping that she will inadvertently hand them a clue to the location of some valuable artifact that no one else has thought to seek. Unless customers ask for information on a specific topic, Vardeghul offers only to sell them her price list, which costs 5 copper pieces. This list appears on p. 48 of **Parlainth GM,** and is also one of the handouts in **Vardeghul's Trove of Lore**. Some of the titles on the list sound vague; Vardeghul lists them this way intentionally because adventurers are a hopeful lot, and the less specific a title sounds, the more likely they are to paint its content with their own greedy wishes before buying.



Vardeghul's customers also often assume that higher-priced documents contain more valuable information, though many of the lower-priced texts are probably of the greatest use.

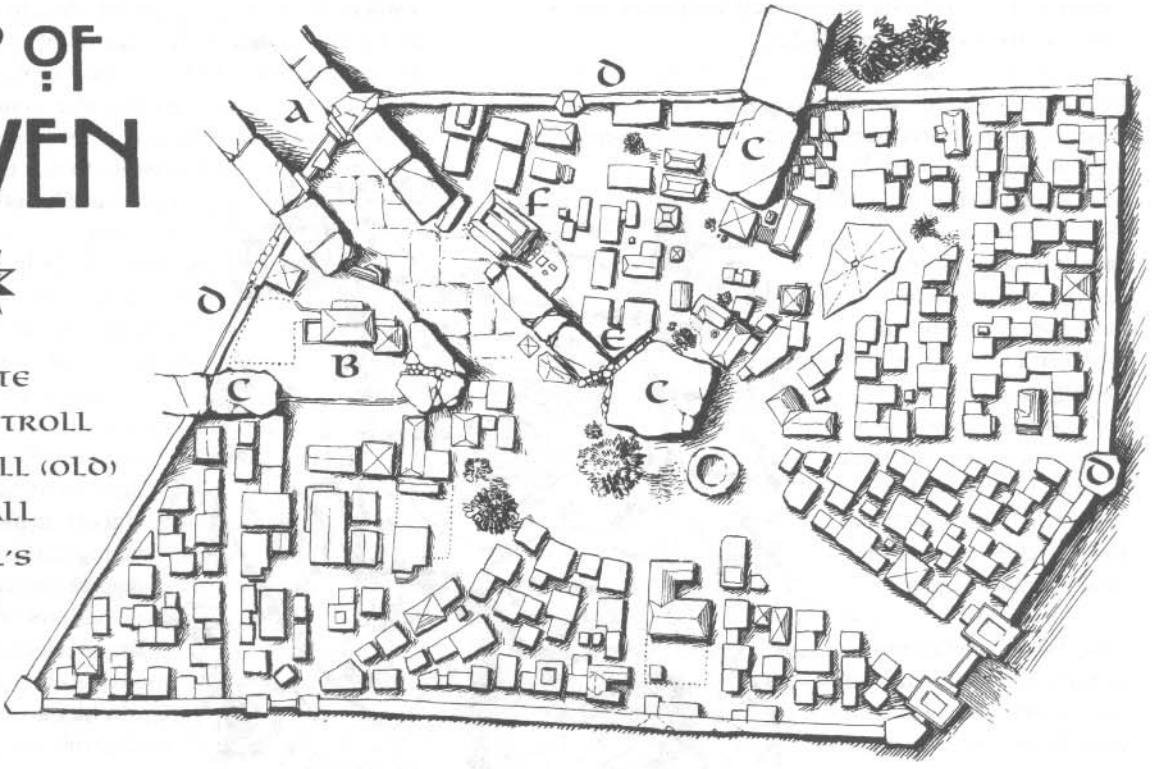
Vardeghul's incomprehensible filing system represents her first line of defense against robbers, because they find it impossible to tell the valuable secrets from the piles of obscure, academic prose. Equally effective at deterring break-ins and holdups are the Grobakk brothers: Steffgor, Chujonn, and Mahousk, the three surviving members of troll quadruplets. All four Grobakks came to Haven several years ago to make their fortunes in the ruins. One brother died slowly and horribly; grief-stricken, the others abandoned their adventuring careers and took jobs as guards for Vardeghul. They also sometimes serve as deputies to Torgak when he needs additional muscle to keep the peace. The Grobakks are incorruptible and unshakably loyal to Vardeghul. No brother would risk shaming himself in the eyes of the others by being the first to propose betraying their employer. The brothers look and often act identical, so much so that only Vardeghul and a few other long-time residents of Haven can tell them apart.

Each of the Grobakks works an eight-hour shift at the shop each day. The rest of the time they spend either at the tavern or in the small, wooden house they share with Vardeghul. Vardeghul leads a spartan existence, showing little interest in luxuries. Over the years she has amassed a small fortune, the truth of which may belong to any of the following options.

Option 1

Vardeghul's money lies hidden under the floorboards of her shop. Enterprising robbers would do well to ignore the scrolls and tear up the floor.

MAP OF HAVEN



Option 2

When it became large enough to be worth stealing, Vardeghul hid her fortune in a secure location in the ruins, which she visits every month along with two of the Grobakk brothers. A sufficiently stealthy band of thieves could follow them and snag Vardeghul's hoard.

Option 3

Vardeghul lives frugally because she sends most of her money to her village, whose members are trying to raise the funds for another boat. Those interested in stealing her earnings should look for leverage against the caravan masters with whom she deals.

HAVEN'S MAP WALL

Across the laneway from the entrance to The Restless Troll is the so-called Map Wall, a slab of limestone ten feet high and fifteen feet long. This wall is all that remains of an ancient building that once stood on that site. Since Haven's earliest days, as a public service to their colleagues, adventurers drew or painted their own additions to a rough map of the ruins. Of course, the map is full of maddening irregularities. Different adventurers used different scales when painting their sections, so distances are unreliable. The map also lacks a consistent key—different adventurers used different symbols to represent entrances to the catacombs, for example. One cannot always tell whether a marking refers to an aboveground feature or something in the underground tunnels; Torgak attempted to convince adventurers to use blue paint for the upper levels and red for the lower, but they used this convention inconsistently. As for the green paint on portions of the Map Wall, only a long-forgotten explorer knows for sure what that color was supposed to represent.

Most explorers consider the black lines on the map, painted by Tylia of The Restless Troll during the clearing of Haven, the most reliable. Intentional errors also exist in the map, some drawn by adventurers determined to throw others off the trail of a great find, others drawn by sinister folk seeking to lure explorers to their doom.

Despite the known inaccuracies of the Map Wall, efforts to begin a new and more precise mural constantly get bogged down in political maneuvering. Both the Loyal Order of Delvers and the Association of Unaffiliated Explorers (see pp. 29 and 31 of **Parlainth GM**, respectively) have proposed sponsoring a new Map Wall, but both factions fear (and rightly so) that the other might sabotage their efforts. No feasible way exists to guard such a public mural to prevent deliberate and accidental errors from creeping in.

A copy of the Map Wall is included in this boxed set.

THE OLD NEIGHBORHOOD

Several notable places in the Old Neighborhood are described below. For more information about the residents of Haven's Old Neighborhood, see the **Earthdawn** adventure **Mists of Betrayal**.

Loak's Legacy

Loak's Legacy bears the name of its late owner, the retired adventurer Loak Ironfist. A statue of him (or something that looks like one) stands in the dining room near the bar. The three-story inn has adjoining stables in the rear. On the bottom floor are the kitchen, bar, dining room, and private meeting rooms. The two upper floors contain bedrooms, including a large communal sleeping room. Accommodations in a private bedroom cost 8 silver pieces per night, and each meal costs 4 silver pieces. Individual drink prices average 1 silver piece.

The vast dining room offers two hearths, a long bar with padded, wooden stools, and several long tables with benches set along each side. Loak's does not provide small, private tables: they expect their customers to belly up to one of the long tables and rub elbows with their fellow patrons. During the day, the dining room does a modest business, but at night the place gets a little rowdy, filled with guests bragging about what they recently found or killed in Parlainth's ruins. Brawls frequently erupt, usually because one patron challenges another's story.

For those who desire more dining privacy, one of the three private rooms adjoining the dining room can be had for 1 gold piece. In each of these rooms, up to ten people can sit and enjoy their dinner in peace and quiet.

The communal room on the third floor contains plenty of bedrolls and sleeping furs. For the privilege of staking out a spot on the floor overnight, guests pay 1 silver piece. Needless to say, Loak's does not guarantee any kind of security in the communal room.

Brenula's Arms

Owned by Brenula, a female ork expert at repairing weapons and armor, Brenula's Arms is Haven's best-known smithy. Brenula sells all weapons normally available (see **Goods and Services**, p. 248, **ED**).

Hiermon's Residence

The rooms above Brenula's shop belong to the wizard Hiermon, Brenula's personal friend. He has lived in these apartments for ten years and has filled them with the clutter one might expect in a spellcaster's dwelling. Old books, mysterious crystals, alchemical implements, and other unusual items lay scattered casually on every surface. As he is one of the few sages who makes Haven his home, both the Loyal Order of Delvers and the Association of Unaffiliated Explorers hold Hiermon in high regard.

Agramen's Import/Export

In this compound of low-slung buildings, the human Agramen organizes his caravans, stores his wares, and runs his business. Caravans constantly arrive with goods and depart for points all across Barsaive. Many adventurers and mercenaries congregate here, seeking employment. As a competent caravan-organizer, Agramen maintains an efficient network of informants who can find out quickly whether any worthy warriors happen to be in the vicinity and in need of a few coins. If player characters stay in Haven for more than two hours, Agramen's network tells him who and what is new in town.

Unknown to the people of Haven, the prosperous Agramen is a Theran sympathizer. In addition to sniffing out potential employees, Agramen's spies ferret out anything and everything of potential interest to Thera. Because of Haven's close proximity to the city of Parlainth, the Therans make a point of monitoring the activities of adventurers in the town as well as in the ruins. Agramen obeys standing orders from his Theran superiors to report anything of particular note or value taken from Parlainth, and also hires bands of mercenary adventurers to search the ruins of Parlainth for specific ancient Theran treasures.

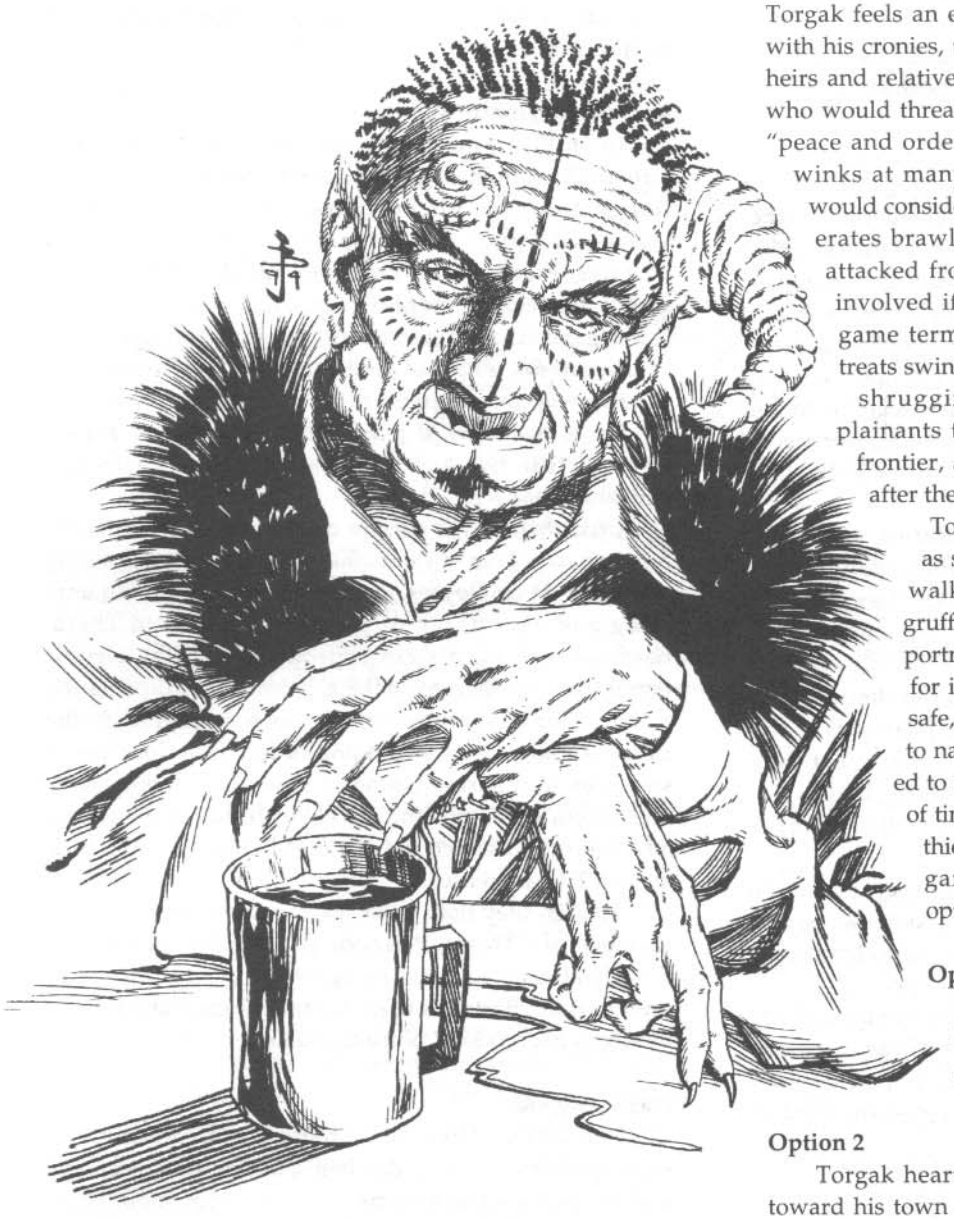
Though they both serve Thera, Agramen and Omag Bastabus (see **Theran Presence**, p. 36 of this section) studiously attempt to avoid being linked in any way. From time to time, Bastabus uses Agramen's caravans to send messages back to Sky Point and Thera.

Dag's Allgoods

Run by Dag Orksbane, a retired dwarf warrior, this shop specializes in everyday items, adventuring gear, and various potions and charms, many of them supplied by Hiermon. The bad-tempered Dag always looks and talks as if he wants to bite someone's head off, but since his retirement has not been known to harm a soul.

PROMINENT CITIZENS

The inhabitants of Haven make a diverse and rowdy lot, bound together only by their desire to extract wealth from the ruins and their need for mutual protection against its creatures. Some of the more prominent gamemaster characters in Haven and their followers or employees, along with their game statistics, appear on the following pages.



TORGAK

Some say that Torgak is Haven. To this statement, Torgak's detractors usually add, "Yes—both are dirty, ugly, and uncouth." Since founding the town with the help of a group of ork and troll adventurers, Torgak has reaped considerable benefits from his endeavor. His store, Torgak's Supplies and Goods, has grown from a storage room in a shattered stone hut to a marble hall almost as impressive as the ruined structures of the Vaults. Retired from adventuring, he now profits from the efforts of other explorers. Anyone who stays in Haven for any length of time ends up putting money in Torgak's pockets.

In addition to profiting financially from Haven, Torgak feels an emotional stake in its welfare. Together with his cronies, the original builders of the town or their heirs and relatives, Torgak enforces his law against those who would threaten Haven's peace and order. Of course, "peace and order" are relative terms in Haven. Torgak winks at many activities that others in his position would consider minor crimes. For example, Torgak tolerates brawling unless the victim was unarmed or attacked from behind, and even then he only gets involved if the fight resulted in serious injury (in game terms, Unconsciousness or Death). Torgak treats swindling with equal casualness, often simply shrugging his shoulders and advising complainants to be less gullible. Haven is Barsaive's frontier, and Torgak expects its residents to look after themselves.

Torgak is getting on in years, but his mind is as sharp as ever. This broad-shouldered troll walks with a rolling, swaggering gait. He's gruff and canny, similar to the grizzled sheriff portrayed in countless Westerns. He cares little for idle chat. His priorities are to keep Haven safe, to squeeze more profit from his store, and to nap when he feels like it. Anything unrelated to these objectives Torgak regards as a waste of time. If he holds any broad political sympathies or goals, he keeps them to himself. The gamemaster may consider the following options when playing Torgak.

Option 1

Torgak despises the Therans and will impede their goals as best he can without appearing unfair.

Option 2

Torgak heartily resents Throal's interfering attitude toward his town and subtly thwarts the dwarf kingdom's goals whenever possible.

Option 3

Torgak thinks that all organizations cause nothing but trouble and strife and so always favors the independent operator over the follower of a cause.

Torgak
Eighth Circle Troll Warrior

"We don't want any trouble here, do we? I didn't think so. No hard feelings, son. Come by the store later; got a good price on pole arms this week."

Attributes
Dexterity (13): 6/D10
Strength (21): 8/2D6
Toughness (17): 7/D12
Perception (16): 7/D12
Willpower (12): 5/D8
Charisma (16): 7/D12

Talents
Acrobatic Strike (8): 14/D20 + D4
Air Dance (8): 14/D20 + D4
Avoid Blow (8): 14/D20 + D4
Down Strike (8): 16/D20 + D6 + D4
Durability (Warrior) (10)
Gliding Stride (8): 14/D20 + D4
Karma Ritual (8)
Life Check (8): 15/D20 + D6
Melee Weapon (10): 16/D20 + D8
Second Attack (8): 14/D20 + D4
War Weaving (8):15/D20 + D6
Wood Skin (8): 15/D20 + D6

Karma
Dice: D4
Points: 38

Skills
Artisan/Wood Carving (1): 8/2D6
Haggle (6): 13/D12 + D10
Knowledge/Accounting (6): 13/D12 + D10
Speak Language (8): 13/D12 +
D10 (All major languages)

Damage
Death Rating: 130
Wound Threshold: 11
Unconsciousness Rating: 102
Recovery Tests per Day: 3
Recovery Dice: D12

Combat
Physical Defense: 7
Spell Defense: 9
Social Defense: 9
Armor: 9
Mystic Armor: 1

Racial Ability: Heat Sight

Equipment
Footman's Shield
Padded Leather Armor (worn when he expects trouble)
Warhammer (Damage 15/D20 + D6)

Loot

Torgak has amassed a fortune in excess of 30,000 silver pieces. Most people believe he keeps his stash in vaults beneath his shop, protected by vicious traps, but no one who knows the truth is telling. Make Torgak's treasure difficult to steal. He is attached to his money, and will avenge a major theft by killing the thieves.

TORGAK'S DEPUTIES

Torgak's full-time deputies also serve as highly placed members of the Loyal Order of Delvers (see **Organizations**, p. 29 of this section). These Name-givers respond to the sorts of trouble unruly player characters might cause. All possess the conservative mentality of followers and lead comfortable lives that they consider their just reward for helping to build Haven. They protect their town jealously, and are more interested in peace and order than in justice. In addition to the full-time deputies, Torgak also uses the three Grobakk brothers as part-time deputies (see **Vardeghul,** p. 26 of this section). At all other times, the Grobakks work for Vardeghul.

The gamemaster determines the Circles of the full-time deputies. In general, make the deputies a few Circles higher than the player characters when they first arrive in Haven.

Sealak
Troll Sky Raider

Attributes
DEX: 6 **STR:** 8 **TOU:** 7
PER: 5 **WIL:** 6 **CHA:** 6

Sealak sees life as a series of simple choices. To him, people are either good or bad. Sealak wants lots of food and drink, the company of his friends, and peace and quiet. Bad people stop him from getting these things, so Sealak gets rough with bad people.

Hookhoof
Ork Cavalryman

Attributes
DEX: 7 **STR:** 7 **TOU:** 6
PER: 5 **WIL:** 5 **CHA:** 6

Easily offended, Hookhoof becomes angry very swiftly if anyone insults his ork heritage. He feels a special hatred for slavers, and uses his position to harass any who stop in Haven.

Ireeka Shagmane
Ork Weaponsmith

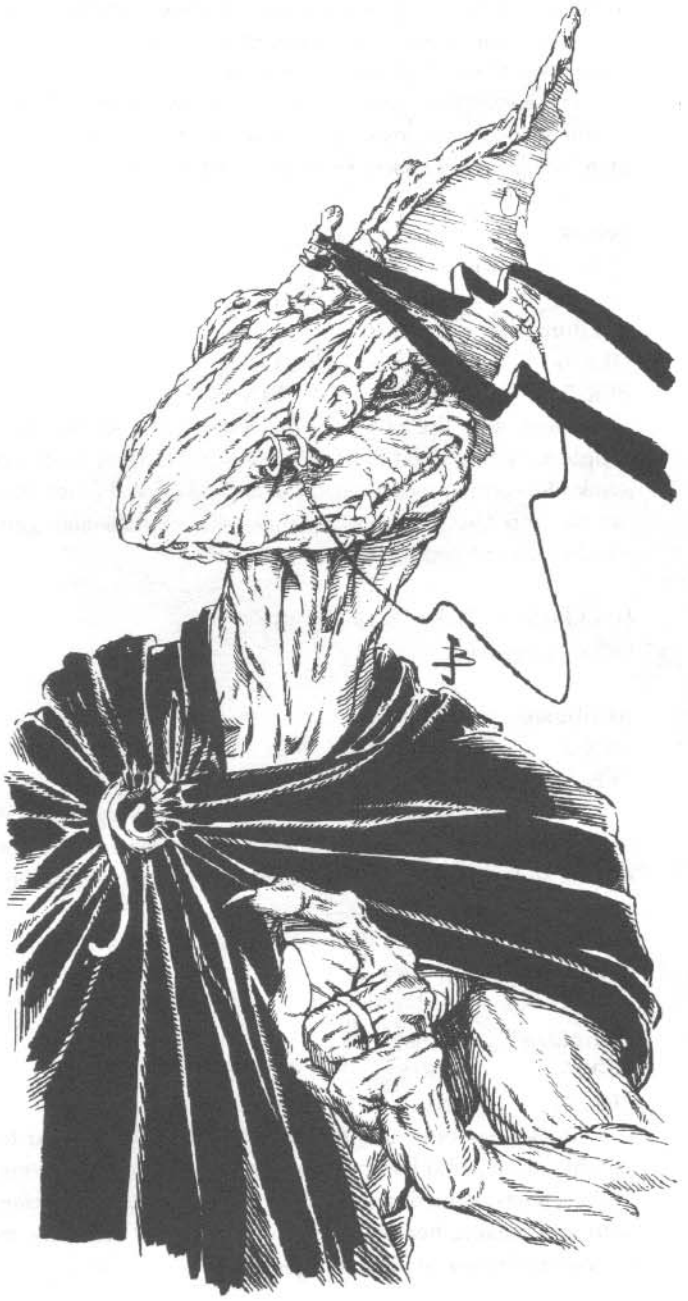
Attributes
DEX: 5 **STR:** 8 **TOU:** 5
PER: 7 **WIL:** 6 **CHA:** 5

Ireeka has been moody ever since she was forced to slay her sister, who had become a cadaver man after dying in the Twists. Sometimes she feels recklessly happy, joking with and teasing her fellow Havenites. Other times she is morose and prone to violent rages.

Dishara Eyes-of-Straw
Ork Wizard

Attributes
DEX: 5 **STR:** 5 **TOU:** 4
PER: 7 **WIL:** 7 **CHA:** 6

Dishara is one of few Name-givers to raise a family in Haven. Married to a potter named Yough, her two sons are nearing adolescence. Though level-headed and understanding, Dishara becomes an implacable foe when something threatens her family or her town.



VARDEGHUL

Vardeghul is a hard t'skrang to get to know. Lacking the usual flamboyance of her people, Vardeghul keeps her thoughts to herself. She frequently seems cranky, though no one knows whether she feels truly unhappy or is just putting up a front to unsettle her customers and force them into quick decisions. Many Havenites call Vardeghul an honorary dwarf, either a compliment or an insult depending on the speaker. Few adventurers can befriend her, or will even meet her except to conduct business of one kind or another.

Vardeghul
Third Circle T'skrang Swordmaster

"You wish to know the likeliest spots to find treasure? Hah! Doesn't everyone want to know! Striking it rich is not as simple as you've likely been told. I suggest you buy a copy of my price list—a bargain at 5 coppers—and select several documents. You read them, you'll at least know your heads from a hole in the ground, eh?"

Attributes
Dexterity (17): 7/D12
Strength (10): 5/D8
Toughness (11): 5/D8
Perception (14): 6/D10
Willpower (13): 6/D10
Charisma (17): 7/D12

Talents
Avoid Blow (3): 10/D10 + D6
Durability (Swordmaster) (3)
Heartening Laugh (3): 10/D10 + D6
Karma Ritual (3)
Melee Weapons (4): 11/D10 + D8
Taunt (3): 10/D10 + D6
Wound Balance (3): 8/2D6

Karma
Dice: D6
Points: 12

Skills
Acting (1): 7/D12
Knowledge/Legends and Lore (4): 10/D10 + D6
Read and Write Language (5): 11/D10 + D8
(Throalic, Human, Ork, Sperethiel, T'skrang)
Research (3): 9/D8 + D6

Damage
Death Rating: 54
Wound Threshold: 8
Unconsciousness Rating: 42
Recovery Tests per Day: 2
Recovery Dice: D8

Combat
Physical Defense: 9
Spell Defense: 8
Social Defense: 9
Armor: 0
Mystic Armor: 1

Racial Ability: Tail Strike (Damage 8/2D6)

Equipment
Broadsword (Damage 10/D10 + D6)

VARDEGHUL'S EMPLOYEES

Steffgor, Chujonn, and Mahousk Grobakk
Fifth Circle Troll Warriors

Attributes
DEX: 7 **STR:** 8 **TOU:** 7
PER: 5 **WIL:** 5 **CHA:** 5

These three surviving members of a set of troll quadruplets work for Vardeghul as guards. For more information about them, see **Vardeghul's Lore Exchange**, p. 20 of this section. The brothers also serve as part-time deputies for Torgak.

Other Information Peddlers

Though not the only information broker in Haven, Vardeghul is by far the most successful and reliable. Most others operate without a shop, doing their business in taverns and other places where adventurers gather. They rarely offer written information, and when they do, they must return to their hideaways to get the goods. A few of Vardeghul's competitors are briefly described below.

Bruspri

Attributes

DEX: 6	**STR:** 4	**TOU:** 5
PER: 7	**WIL:** 7	**CHA:** 7

A young human male, Bruspri hopes to emulate Vardeghul's success. He specializes in maps, but also collects documents. His prices average 20 percent higher than Vardeghul's. Bruspri talks very quickly and never sits still. When the adventurers first encounter him, he is nursing bruises received from an angry gang of orks misled by a map he sold them.

Golarma

Attributes

DEX: 5	**STR:** 6	**TOU:** 6
PER: 7	**WIL:** 4	**CHA:** 6

Golarma, a female ork, claims to have spent many years at the Great Library of Throal. Rather than selling documents, she recites information she says she memorized while at the library. Though she charges much less than Vardeghul for her information, Golarma occasionally makes disastrous errors.

The gamemaster may consider the following options to explain Golarma.

Option 1: Golarma never spent time at the library. In fact, she has a psychic link to a Horror who feeds her information about the ruins in order to lure unsuspecting adventurers to their doom.

Option 2: Golarma worked for years at the library on the cleaning staff. She memorized some material, but is perfectly willing to make up things she does not know.

Tylia

A friend of Torgak, Tylia runs The Restless Troll inn. A bundle of restless energy despite steadily advancing age, Tylia cannot sit still unless everything is in its proper place (which it never is). Unlike most of Torgak's band, Tylia does not admit to being retired. She still thinks of herself as an adventurer, and always has vague plans to gather companions for an expedition into one area of the ruins or another. She says that she will embark on these missions "after I get everything squared away." Things never seem to get squared away to Tylia's satisfaction, however, so the inn continues to take up all of her time.

Tylia
Seventh Circle Troll Wizard

Attributes

DEX: 6	**STR:** 6	**TOU:** 6
PER: 8	**WIL:** 7	**CHA:** 6

"What can I do for you? More ale? Of course! Is this batch to your liking? I thought it might be a little strong. You realize that the strap on your scabbard is nearly worn through, don't you? You ought to get that fixed. I can send for Lanthom the leatherworker, have him come right over and do it this minute if you want."

Pagmor Gilt-Throat

Wagering on the outcomes of the ongoing falsemen wars (see **While in Haven**, p. 47 of **Parlainth GM**) is a popular pastime in Haven, though more than one explorer has lost his or her hard-earned coin by betting big on a faction seemingly poised for victory. The Name-giver to whom these gains invariably go is Pagmor Gilt-Throat, a troll sky raider with a lucrative business taking book on these bets. Every week, Pagmor and his followers float over the War Zone in their crippled drakkar and note which falsemen control what strategic landmarks. This information allows Gilt-Throat to set booking odds that ensure his continued profits.

Gilt-Throat's drakkar, the *Unyielding*, is barely navigable because a portion of its hull is missing, but can safely cruise slowly above the ruins at an altitude of 180 feet. The mountains surrounding Parlainth tend to protect the city from strong air currents, and Pagmor never takes his drakkar out during the rare periods of high wind. He also avoids sailing near other airships; the *Unyielding* would be a death trap in a fight, and its lack of maneuverability could well lead to accidents. The *Unyielding* is useful for surveying missions but little else. Though Gilt-Throat makes most of his money running wagers on the falsemen wars, he will also take explorers sailing over the ruins for a fee. He refuses to risk his craft by stopping to pick up or drop off passengers.

Pagmor Gilt-Throat sees himself as a model citizen of Haven and attempts to act dignified at all times. He dreams of founding a business dynasty and going down in



history as one of the town's noble founders. Other citizens of Haven find Gilt-Throat's pretensions amusing and laugh at him behind his back. To his face, however, everyone shows the utmost courtesy, because Gilt-Throat is as well known for his violent temper as his skill at parting Haven's residents from their money. Topics guaranteed to send him into a rage include aspersions against trolls or sky raiders, suggestions that his gambling business tarnishes the heroic image of sky raiders, and insults about his clothes.

Lately, Pagmor has felt increasingly lonely. He wants to find a wife and father many children to carry on his name, and so will attempt to woo any unattached female trolls among any group of player characters.

Though Pagmor can be fooled, it is a difficult task, and equally difficult to avoid his wrath once he realizes he's been had. Cheating at gambling is a capital crime in Haven, and so Torgak turns a blind eye to whatever Pagmor does to punish cheaters and welshers. Pagmor's underlings, all fellow troll sky raiders, take grim pleasure in punishing those who cross their boss. Like him, they think highly of themselves and take offense easily.

Pagmor Gilt-Throat
Fourth Circle Troll Sky Raider

"What do you mean, you're not good for your bet? I'm very disappointed. I'm hurt, truly hurt. Now I have to punish you, and I hate that. Really. I'm a tenderhearted soul, so I am. It hurts me to punish people. That's why I pay these stout fellows. It won't hurt them to punish you. In fact, I'll wager they enjoy it. Oh, but you can't afford to make any more wagers, can you?"

Attributes
Dexterity (17): 7/D12
Strength (18): 7/D12
Toughness (17): 7/D12
Perception (11): 5/D8
Willpower (7): 4/D6
Charisma (9): 4/D6

Talents
Air Sailing (6): 10/D10 + D6
Avoid Blow (4): 11/D10 + D8
Durability (Sky Raider) (5)
Fireblood (4): 11/D10 + D8
Karma Ritual (4)
Melee Weapons (5): 12/2D10
Sky Weaving (1): 6/D10
Swift Kick (4): 11/D10 + D8
Throwing Weapons (2): 9/D8 + D6

Karma
Dice: D4
Points: 20

Skills
Artisan/Wood Carving (1): 8/2D6
Knowledge/Accounting (3): 8/2D6
Knowledge/Gambling (4): 9/D8 + D6

Damage
Death Rating: 88
Wound Threshold: 11
Unconsciousness Rating: 68
Recovery Tests per Day: 3
Recovery Dice: D12

Combat
Physical Defense: 9
Spell Defense: 7
Social Defense: 6
Armor: 0
Mystic Armor: 0

Racial Ability: Heat Sight

Equipment
Padded Leather Armor (rarely worn in town)
Troll Sling (Damage 11/D10 + D8)
Warhammer (Damage 14/D20 + D4)

Loot

Pagmor owns a fortune of 9,000 or so silver pieces buried in heavy iron chests in the basement of his Haven home. At least one of his followers guards it constantly, and the locks on all of the chests feature spike traps (see below).

Spike Traps

Detection Difficulty: 7

Spell Defense: 7

Trigger Condition: Trap is sprung when any item smaller than the key (a lock pick, for example) is thrust into the lock mechanism.

Trap Initiative: 10

Trap Effect: Barbed spikes spring out, possibly hitting the thief in the hands. The spikes do Step 10 damage. Characters suffering Wounds from the spikes cannot use the injured hand or hands until the Wound is healed.

PAGMOR'S EMPLOYEES

Pagmor's employees all obey him with unquestioning loyalty. Though they have reached higher Circles than their boss, they defer to his business sense, impressed by his ability to keep them rolling in gold with much less risk than they faced in their raiding days. Brief descriptions and game statistics for these gamemaster characters appear below.

Grentor
Sixth Circle Troll Sky Raider

Attributes

DEX: 7	**STR:** 8	**TOU:** 8
PER: 5	**WIL:** 5	**CHA:** 5

The snootiest troll of all Pagmor's cronies, Grentor walks through life with his nose in the air. He does not see his own utter lack of social graces or consideration for others. He speaks with a slight lisp, and becomes enraged when anyone imitates it.

Farflyer
Sixth Circle Troll Sky Raider

Attributes

DEX: 7	**STR:** 8	**TOU:** 7
PER: 6	**WIL:** 6	**CHA:** 5

A dreamy fellow, Farflyer imagines himself sailing through the skies again one day, saving beautiful troll maidens from the clutches of evil slavers, discovering great treasures, and building a wondrous legend. Instead of actually performing those heroic acts, however, he contentedly plays brute enforcer to Gilt-Throat while others make names for themselves braving the dangers of Parlainth. Farflyer has slipped into the comfortable life of Gilt-Throat's chief thug without even realizing that he has renounced his daydreams of glory.

Wallag the Black
Sixth Circle Troll Sky Raider

Attributes

DEX: 6	**STR:** 7	**TOU:** 6
PER: 6	**WIL:** 5	**CHA:** 5

Wallag the Black is a foul-mouthed swaggerer, notorious for the volume of his belches and the dedication with which he scratches himself. He likes to intimidate others—nothing pleases him more than the thought that others fear him. He stays in Haven because he enjoys his carefully built reputation in town as a blackguard. Oddly enough, he has a soft spot for the weak and innocent and is more likely than Pagmor's other employees to help out someone in trouble if justice demands it.

Vanargmog Sugarcruncher
Sixth Circle Troll Sky Raider

Attributes

DEX: 5	**STR:** 6	**TOU:** 6
PER: 4	**WIL:** 5	**CHA:** 5

Vanargmog Sugarcruncher earned his name for his love of pastries and other sweets. He almost always walks around town with his warhammer in one hand and a piece of cake in the other. Much more placid than his fellows, Sugarcruncher pretends to have a violent temper to keep the others from picking on him. He loves comfort and believes that his cushy job for Pagmor sets him up for life.

ORGANIZATIONS

Members of several local organizations make their home in Haven, as do members of organizations with a wider influence. Each group has its own agenda. The most significant of these organizations are described below, including a prominent member of each.

LOYAL ORDER OF DELVERS

One of Torgak's cronies, the ork Liniarg Blindingshout, founded and runs this explorer's mutual aid society with the help of other early residents of Haven. The order maintains the Map Wall and sponsors several celebrations in Haven during the year. The order's leaders encourage all would-be explorers to register as members of the Loyal Order of Delvers by paying a membership fee of 10 silver pieces, plus 2 percent annually of proceeds (if any) from the exploration of Parlainth. Underreporting loot is grounds for expulsion from the order. In exchange for the registration fee and the 2 percent annual dues, the Loyal Order offers the following services.

Hiring Recommendations

The Order's leadership recommends explorers for hire from among its members, of the appropriate Discipline and price range for any group wishing to hire. If player characters need to hire other explorers to round out their adventuring groups, the Loyal Order of Delvers is an important resource. Also, player characters looking for work are more likely to be approached by patrons if they join the Order.

Information Exchange

The Order maintains a list of which areas of the ruins its members have explored. If members have a question about the Vaults, for example, the leadership can tell them which other members possess firsthand knowledge of that area and might be able to give useful advice. For the benefit of everyone in Haven, the Loyal Order of Delvers also monitors additions to the Map Wall.

Mutual Protection

Loyal Order members try to look after their own. They often refer to each other as "brother" or "sister," and will come to the aid of fellow members in a street fight or other trouble. Members who make themselves particularly popular, buying lots of drinks for fellow members, for example, might even inspire their brothers and sisters to mount rescue expeditions if they get into trouble in the ruins. If the gamemaster wishes, he may use this as a plot hook in which player character members of the Order join a search party for a popular brother or sister.

Favors and Influence

Because Torgak and Liniarg Blindingshout are close friends, Torgak tends to see members of the Order in a positive light until they do something that proves otherwise. Torgak's deputies are all senior members of the Order and tend to give their brothers and sisters the benefit of the doubt when disputes arise. Gamemasters should treat other members of the Loyal Order of Delvers as having a Friendly attitude toward player character members, regardless of other factors.

Liniarg Blindingshout

Like her comrade Torgak, Liniarg Blindingshout finds herself getting on in years, but refuses to accept old age as gracefully as her old friend. Once a beauty who could break an ork's heart, she still tries to act the part of a seductive heroine. She recently began dyeing her white hair a shocking orange color, and never appears in public without heavy makeup on her eyes, cheeks, and lips. Virile young orks among player character groups will certainly be the object of her unsubtle advances. In the unlikely event that they accept her offers of affection, Liniarg is a "love 'em and leave 'em" gal. In her own eyes, she remains forever young. Those who allow her to maintain this delusion find her cheerful and pleasant, if boisterous. Those who remind her of her declining years suffer her explosive wrath. Liniarg bears grudges, and refuses to forgive anyone who attempts to apologize for offending her.



Liniarg wants to do things that make her feel young, and also wants to strengthen the Loyal Order of Delvers. This latter goal means keeping down the upstart ork Archiana Smoothskin and her Association of Unaffiliated Explorers. Even the thought of the younger, aggressive Archiana sends Liniarg into a shaking rage—Archiana reminds her too much of her own lost glory days. Consequently, Liniarg goes out of her way to make life miserable for any orks in whom Archiana shows a romantic interest.

Liniarg Blindingshout
Sixth Circle Ork Swordmaster

"Welcome to Haven. You have heard of the Loyal Order of Delvers? Of course you have. Join up, lad—the rewards for membership are well worth it. Quite strong upper arms you've got, haven't you? Beautiful muscles. You don't mind if I give them a little squeeze, do you ... ?"

Attributes
Dexterity (16): 7/D12
Strength (15): 6/D10
Toughness (14): 6/D10
Perception (14): 6/D10
Willpower (11): 5/D8
Charisma (16): 7/D12

Talents
Blade Weaving (5): 11/D10 + D8
Durability (Swordmaster) (8)
Heartening Laugh (6): 13/D12 + D10
Karma Ritual (6)
Maneuver (6): 13/D12 + D10
Melee Weapons (7): 14/D20 + D4
Riposte (6): 16/D20 + D8
Taunt (8): 15/D20 + D6
Trap Initiative (6): 13/D12 + D10
Winning Smile (6): 13/D12 + D10
Wound Balance (6): 12 /2D10

Karma
Dice: D8
Points: 40

Skills
Battle Shout (6): 13/D12 + D10
Conversation (2): 8/2D6
Creature Analysis (4): 10/D10 + D6
Engaging Banter (3): 9/D8 + D6
Flirting (6): 13/D12 + D10
Read and Write Language (2): 11/D10 + D8 (Ork, Throalic)
Seduction (2): 8/2D6

Damage
Death Rating: 90
Wound Threshold: 10
Unconsciousness Rating: 76
Recovery Tests per Day: 3
Recovery Dice: D10

Combat
Physical Defense: 9
Spell Defense: 8
Social Defense: 9
Armor: 9
Mystic Armor: 1

Racial Ability: Low-Light Vision

Equipment
Broadsword (Damage 11/D10 + D8)
Footman's Shield
Padded Leather Armor

ASSOCIATION OF UNAFFILIATED EXPLORERS

The Association of Unaffiliated Explorers provokes laughter among the members of the Loyal Order of Delvers simply because of its name; they point out that an organization of "unaffiliated" people is a contradiction in terms. The Association's hotheaded leader, Archiana Smoothskin, explains to anyone willing to listen that the term "unaffiliated" means that the members of her group refuse to be toadies in the pocket of the greedy, complacent Torgak. Angered by Torgak's cushy setup, Archiana started her rival group soon after arriving in Haven. She saw Haven as less a town than a business run by one troll, unelected and therefore with no legitimate authority. Since founding her Association, Archiana spends more time rabble-rousing in Haven than exploring the ruins. She wants Haven to become a real town with an elected mayor and sheriff who will jointly perform the duties Torgak now claims for himself. Archiana sees the Association of Unaffiliated Explorers as one means of breaking Torgak's power; to her mind, the Loyal Order of Delvers puts new explorers firmly in Torgak's camp at no benefit to the explorers themselves.

Archiana's organization offers its members the same benefits as the Loyal Order of Delvers, but its membership is only about a third as large as its rival. Consequently, Association members possess less information and aid to give one another. Also, some members of the Association of Unaffiliated Explorers are unsavory Name-givers kicked out of the Loyal Order of Delvers for breaking Torgak's peace or failing to pay membership dues. Roughly half of the Association's members are committed to reforming Haven; the other half are shiftless ne'er-do-wells. If Archiana actually achieves the office of mayor, as she hopes, she would likely run the latter element out of town. For now, however, she needs them.

When new adventurers arrive in town, members of the Association of Unaffiliated Explorers make it a point to be the first to seek them out and try to sign them up. They usually fail to mention the existence of the Loyal Order of Delvers, or at least do not say that the rival group is larger and more influential than the Association. For player characters who choose to join one of the two groups, the rivalry between them provides the gamemaster with a fertile source of plot hooks.

Archiana Smoothskin

A determined person, Archiana thinks of little these days save her goal. She makes every decision by considering how much closer it gets her to the mayor's chair. She feels completely confident that she would be the best possible leader of Haven. Archiana has no sense of humor, and never learned to respect her enemies. She especially despises Torgak as a greedy, corrupt autocrat, and Liniarg Blindingshout as a scatterbrained old bat. Though Archiana sees herself as a flaming torch of righteousness, she would readily ally with the Therans or worse if she could get closer to her objectives by doing so.



Archiana Smoothskin
Third Circle Ork Swordmaster

"The robber baron Torgak has used Haven as his personal preserve for too long now. His profit-taking days are over. It's time for our town to grow up and take charge of its own affairs."

Attributes
Dexterity (18): 7/D12
Strength (11): 5/D8
Toughness (11): 5/D8
Perception (10): 5/D8
Willpower (6): 3/D4
Charisma (17): 7/D12

Talents
Avoid Blow (3): 10/D10 + D6
Durability (Swordmaster) (4)
Karma Ritual (3)
Maneuver (3): 10/D10 + D6
Melee Weapons (5): 12/2D10
Taunt (3): 10/D10 + D6

Karma
Dice: D8
Points: 21

Skills
Acting (1): 8/2D6
Knowledge/Political History (2): 8/2D6
Knowledge/Scourge (1): 6/D10

Damage
Death Rating: 60
Wound Threshold: 8
Unconsciousness Rating: 48
Recovery Tests per Day: 3
Recovery Dice: D10

Combat
Physical Defense: 10
Spell Defense: 6
Social Defense: 9
Armor: 9
Mystic Armor: 0

Racial Ability: Low-Light Vision

Equipment
Broadsword (Damage 10/D10 + D6)
Footman's Shield
Padded Leather Armor

JUSTICE FOR ALL

Justice for All is a small political party interested in formally aligning Haven with Throal. A group of idealistic adventurers, members of this party make themselves thorns in the side of Theran agents in particular and slavers in general. All of them know the Council Compact of 1270 TH by heart and want to spread its doctrine to all Name-givers. Though none are dwarfs or Throalic citizens, they see opposition to the dwarf kingdom's political ambitions as the major obstacle to the spread of the Compact's philosophy. Because they wish to be seen as independent activists rather than paid agents, Justice for All members never accept money or other tangible rewards for their work from Throal.

The founders of Justice for All arrived in Haven a few years ago, pursuing a group of Theran spies against whom they sought vengeance. Realizing that Haven was a hotbed of Theran activity, they stayed in the town and recruited new members to fight Theran influence. Currently, they maintain an uneasy alliance with the Association of Unaffiliated Explorers. Both organizations want to wrest control of Haven's government from Torgak, but both have different plans for what to do once they gain power.

Justice for All members can serve as useful allies for player characters if they get into too much hot

water with the Therans. Player characters might even wish to join the party, but if they do, they invite implacable enmity from pro-Theran individuals and organizations.

Justice for All currently has a mere dozen members, all active adventurers led by Justice Bells, an ork liberator. For information on the liberator Discipline, see **Denizens of Earthdawn, Volume II**. Any gamemaster who does not wish to use that Discipline can make Justice a thief instead, substituting the appropriate talents. As the Barsaivian equivalent of Robin Hood, Justice considers what she does to be stealing power and influence from the Therans, and so her idealistic goals do not impede her progress as a thief.

Justice Bells
Fifth Circle Ork Liberator

"The choice is clear—freedom or slavery. Die, Theran dog!"

Attributes	**Talents**
Dexterity (13): 6/D10	Durability (6)
Strength (14): 6/D10	Freedom Search (5): 12/2D10*
Toughness (13): 6/D10	Freedom Weaving (5): 12/2D10*
Perception (16): 7/D12	Heart of Freedom (5): 11/D10 + D8*
Willpower (14): 6/D10	Karma Ritual (5)
Charisma (6): 3/D4	Mind Armor (7): 13/D12 + D10*
	Mind Blade (5): 11/D10 + D8*
	Melee Weapons (5): 11/D10 + D8
	Unarmed Combat (5): 11/D10 + D8

Karma	**Skills**
Dice: D8	Artisan/Acting (1): 7/D12
Points: 35	Knowledge/Political History (1): 8/2D6
	Knowledge/Theran Organizations (1): 8/2D6

Damage	**Combat**
Death Rating: 77	Physical Defense: 7
Wound Threshold: 9	Spell Defense: 9
Unconsciousness Rating: 63	Social Defense: 4
Recovery Tests per Day: 2	Armor: 0
Recovery Dice: D10	Mystic Armor: 0

Racial Ability: Low-Light Vision

Equipment
None

*For a complete description of these talents, see **Denizens of Earthdawn, Volume II**.



Justice Bells

Passionate and driven, Justice Bells sees the world in black and white. In her book, slavers and Therans deserve no mercy. Anyone who opposes them must be virtuous; any who defend them must also be evil. Some of her less fanatical followers try to rein her in when she threatens to go completely out of control, with limited success. Justice is such a loose cannon that Cleotha Splayfoot wants nothing to do with her despite their similar aims. Torgak sees her as a threat to order and his own position, but acknowledges that her following is just large enough to keep him from making any move against her. He forces himself to wait for her to make a big enough mistake for him to justify banishing Justice for All from Haven.

GRIM LEGION

This loosely affiliated group of warrior bands dedicates itself fanatically to destroying Horrors and those tainted by them. Like members of the Grim Legion everywhere, Haven's local crop dresses in black leather, affects a gung ho attitude, and generally feels that the end justifies the means. For more information on the Grim Legion, see the **Earthdawn** adventure **Infected**.

Haven's Grim Legionnaires have seen better days. Once a shining example of the best of their kind, they have gone Horror-hunting in the Twists a few times too many and all are now a little mad. They spend most of their time drinking their recurring hallucinations away in The Restless Troll, declaiming their victories against the Horrors. This sorry lot may prove helpful as informants or back-up fighters for adventurers out to kill Horrors. Otherwise, they serve as a graphic illustration of the sad fate that awaits those who try to tame Parlainth.

From time to time, Grim Legion bands from elsewhere in Barsaive come to Haven to search for a particular item in the ruins. These teams usually better reflect the organization's fearsome reputation. They usually try to shape up local Legionnaires, and sometimes they temporarily improve morale. After they leave, however, the locals sink back into dissipation.

The leader of the local Grim Legion is Hotbolt, a windling with just enough authority over the others to send them into the ruins often enough to find money to live on. Of them all, Hotbolt most strongly believes that they will someday make the Horrors of Parlainth cower in terror. In Hotbolt, the surliness common to Legionnaires seems comical because of her small size and the sorry state of her followers. Most self-respecting Legionnaires would immediately paste anyone foolish enough to insult them; tiny Hotbolt, however, must cope by pretending not to hear disparaging comments.



Hotbolt
Fifth Circle Windling Elementalist

Attributes

DEX: 5	**STR:** 4	**TOU:** 5
PER: 6	**WIL:** 6	**CHA:** 5

"You should have seen the Horror we killed. I thrust my spear right down its gullet and heaved it up through the thing's brain. You don't know nothing until you've smelled the hot breath of a Horror ... what do you mean, how long ago did we kill it? What does it matter? We did it before and we'll do it again—soon, real soon!"

THROALIC PRESENCE

King Varulus' informal representative in Haven is Cleotha Splayfoot, the operator of a caravan business that arranges trips between Throal and Haven. Torgak relies on her service to maintain his supply line of goods from elsewhere in Barsaive. To those who care about such things, Cleotha advertises her strong connections to the Throalic royal family, and most people in Haven suspect that she works for Throal as well as for herself, though they do not know to what extent. In fact, the Throalic government underwrites Cleotha's business in exchange for her efforts to maintain a positive image for Throal among the people of Haven. King Varulus believes that overweening arrogance will one day lead the Therans to attempt to occupy Haven, and he wants the townspeople on his side when that day comes.

Cleotha spends a great deal of time at The Restless Troll, buying drinks for newcomers and old-timers alike. Her naturally warm personality and clearly expressed sympathy for Throal come off as sensible talk rather than official propaganda. She has made an effort to befriend the leaders of both of the town's explorer societies without alienating either of them, a monumentally difficult task.

Cleotha often spends time in the company of known Throalic agents, but no one considers this unusual or unseemly. More often than not, people assume the agents are negotiating for her caravan service. Omag Bastabus, the resident Theran toady, spends a great deal of time and effort trying to prove that Throal is paying Cleotha directly in order to paint her as a spy rather than simply a Throalic sympathizer. Cleotha's hidden her financial dependence on Throal, if revealed, might cost her most of her carefully cultivated friendships.

Because Throal underwrites Cleotha's caravans, she can insure any merchandise she agrees to transport. She pays 25 percent of the resale value of any item lost or stolen en route to its destination. Her competitors rarely can afford to pay more than 5 percent because of the sheer danger of travel across Barsaive. Cleotha also keeps her prices competitive; she charges 75 silver pieces for each fifteen pounds of goods carried from Haven to Throal, while most caravaneers charge 105 to 110 silver pieces for a trip of similar length. The only disadvantage to traveling with Cleotha's caravans is that they travel only one route. Adventurers wishing to transport goods to other cities must hire the more expensive, less reliable caravaneers. Because Cleotha runs such an efficient and cost-effective operation, many adventurers choose to ship items for sale exclusively to Throal. By underwriting Cleotha, Throal keeps magical treasures flowing to the dwarf kingdom rather than to the Therans and Blood Wood. King Varulus considers this a selling point well worth the expense to the royal treasury.



Cheerful and competent, Cleotha truly believes in her mission. A passionate foe of slavery, she feels that Barsaive deserves the benevolent rule of King Varulus, whether all Barsaivians know it or not. If she keeps certain aspects of her role in Haven private, she does so for the ultimate good of its people. She believes they will thank her once Haven officially becomes a principality of Throal.

Cleotha Splayfoot
Dwarf Caravaneer

Attributes

DEX: 5	**STR:** 4	**TOU:** 4
PER: 6	**WIL:** 6	**CHA:** 7

"Of course it's important to be a proud Barsaivian. King Varulus wants us all to stand proudly together under the banner of freedom and justice. I can't understand those who fear Throal. If we do not stand together, we shall all buckle under Thera's yoke. What price your pride then?"

THERAN PRESENCE

Though Thera claims no official representative in Haven, the independently wealthy Omag Bastabus serves as Thera's top spy. Ostensibly in Haven as a private Theran citizen surveying the ruins of Parlainth, Bastabus acts as a liaison officer for the many Theran agents sent to Haven incognito. He offers them financial aid from the imperial coffers and canny advice on local conditions. Bastabus' involvement with Theran spies is an open secret; none of the town's adventurers are naive enough to believe he has no relationship with the many hooded figures who skulk through the city whispering to one another in thick Theran accents. No one can prove any criminal act against him, however, so he remains free to act as he will.

Though Bastabus presents himself as a man of great importance, the citizens of Haven only tolerate his presence because they have yet to catch him doing anything directly against Haven's interests. Torgak keeps a sharp eye on Bastabus but never acts directly against him, reasoning that the Therans will only send another spymaster more difficult to keep tabs on if Bastabus becomes less useful.

Privately a frustrated man, Omag Bastabus found himself shunted off to a dead-end position in the Theran bureaucracy because he took the wrong side in an argument and offended the First Governor's third cousin. Bastabus possesses great skill at performing his secret job, and it makes him angry to realize that his distant masters will never notice. He wants to find a way to build his personal power in Haven, but so far any useful long-range plans elude him.

Omag Bastabus speaks the diplomatic language of Thera, flowery and full of flattery. The rough-hewn explorers of Haven often find his phrasing laughable, but it arouses loyalty in fellow Therans and Theran sympathizers. Bastabus keeps his emotions tightly capped under an air of glacial calm. If excited beyond measure, he might forget himself so far as to raise an eyebrow.



Omag Bastabus
Human Diplomat

Attributes

DEX: 5	**STR:** 4	**TOU:** 4
PER: 7	**WIL:** 5	**CHA:** 7

"I am afraid, my dear and illustrious friend, that your accusation appears to have been formulated without complete awareness of the facts of the case. I am certain that if you take into account the reliability of the witnesses in question, you will see that the evidence for your claim is unfortunately of a questionable nature. I understand well the strain you have been under recently, my most gracious friend—I will not allow one slight,

somewhat ill-considered imputation to dampen the spirit of friendship that exists between us."

BLOOD WARDERS

No Blood Warders live in Haven, they only come to the town to pursue specific missions. Tension in Haven always ratchets up a notch when the blood elves appear. They look creepy and menacing, and bad things tend to happen around them. Many of Haven's residents want Torgak to bar them from town, but he refuses the request each time, claiming he'd sooner have them in plain sight than sneaking around, and that refusing them entry would surely get several of his deputies killed. He has managed to prevent the blood elves from buying any property in town, however, so Blood Warders must always stay at The Restless Troll where Torgak can keep an eye on them.

The Blood Warders crave magical lore and treasures, with which they hope to one day wipe all Horror-taint from Barsaive. The Blood Warders oppose the ambitions of Thera and Throal, but prefer to do so covertly for now. Often, the Blood Warders contrive to set agents of their two rival powers at one another's throats, then take the opportunity to slip in and seize the prize for which all three are contending.

Most often when the Blood Warders come to Haven, an elf named Fafedriel leads them, accompanied by a small force of high-Circle blood elves that includes other magicians as well as adepts of other Disciplines. Confident of their safety by virtue of their immense power, members of this group enjoy throwing their weight around.

Fafedriel speaks unusually loudly for an elf, and uses his vicious sense of humor like a weapon. He takes delight in openly mocking others, and cannot speak for more than a few minutes without giving a piercing, maniacal giggle. The gruesome reputation of the Blood Warders and tales of Fafedriel's personal power force even Torgak to grit his teeth and take the elf's unpleasant jests. Though other blood elves sometimes appear to regret their corrupted state, Fafedriel revels in the discomfort he arouses in others. He goes out of his way to make sure that his enemies hate him, because such strong emotions will lead them to make mistakes in their dealings with him.

Less dour than many of his colleagues, Fafedriel loves music and fine wine. On occasion, he even dances in The Restless Troll's tavern. This fondness for common pleasures appears to be his only redeeming trait. In general, Haven's residents think of Fafedriel as an utterly black-hearted villain.



Fafedriel
Twelfth Circle Elven Nethermancer

Attributes

DEX: 6	**STR:** 5	**TOU:** 5
PER: 7	**WIL:** 7	**CHA:** 6

"Do not feel shame that you are stupid, foul-smelling, humorless, cowardly, lacking in scruples, displeasing to the eye, incompetent, and without civilized manners. After all, adventurer, these are your good points."

ADVENTURES IN PARLAINTH



Adventures in Parlainth suggests ways to design adventures, including an outline format to help gamemasters organize the elements of their adventures. Three sample adventure outlines illustrate this method. This section also offers specific suggestions for running adventures in Parlainth, including how to get the characters involved, and researching, entering, and exploring the ruins. The final part of this section provides information on Vardeghul's Lore Exchange, including her price list; rules for betting on the falsemen wars; and considerations for selling booty.

DESIGNING ADVENTURES

Now that you know the secrets of Parlainth, you can create adventures that will immerse the player characters in the wonders and dangers of the Forgotten City. The earlier sections of **Parlainth GM** and the **Ruins of Parlainth** book provide many plot hooks. Whether you choose to base your adventures on these hooks or create plots uniquely your own, you must spend a certain amount of time setting the stage for adventures in the ruins.

Setting up adventures in Parlainth or in any ruin complex can be done many ways, but we suggest either hard-keying or soft-keying. Gamemasters may "hard-key" a section of the complex for the player characters to explore, mapping the portion of the ruins the adventurers express an interest in and marking the locations of any traps, creatures, and treasures you want to place in the area. During the adventure, simply check your notes to determine what happens when the players enter a new room, building, or chamber. The player characters control the pace of the adventure by deciding which areas to explore. The traditional way of running fantasy adventures set in dungeon complexes, hard-keying has been popular since the advent of roleplaying games.

To soft-key an adventure, devise a series of encounters you wish the player characters to experience, but do not tie them to specific locations on the map. The encounters occur wherever the players send their characters. Arrange the encounters to form a rising action, with minor encounters leading to major ones which, in turn, lead to a climactic scene. Or mix trap encounters with creature encounters, combat scenes with character interaction, and so vary the pace of the adventure. Though soft-keying still requires advance preparation, you can prepare far fewer encounters than for a hard-keyed adventure. The main advantage of soft-keying is that it allows you to weave a story that builds on a structured plot line rather than a series of unconnected meetings between adventurers and creatures. The risk of soft-keying is that a too-strongly structured story may feel unbelievable to the players, and they will feel manipulated if deprived entirely of choice, even blind choice, in directing the adventure. Just as the best writers of fiction disguise their narrative tricks, gamemasters may need to disguise a soft-keyed adventure as hard-keyed.

ADVENTURE FRAMEWORKS

No two gamemasters design adventures in the same way. Some prefer to plan for every possibility they can foresee, leaving as little as possible to



chance. This style is similar to hard-keying an adventure. Others prefer a looser style, where they plan the most significant events in the adventure but improvise the rest. This second approach more closely resembles soft-keying.

To help gamemasters prepare adventures in Parlainth (or anywhere in Barsaive), we suggest they use an "adventure framework." The adventure framework offers a method of outlining adventures that enables gamemasters to plan out the events of an adventure and, at the same time, maintain as much flexibility as they need. Rather than producing a fully detailed adventure, the adventure framework format serves as a shorthand method of preparing an adventure.

FORMAT

The adventure framework uses a five-part format that consists of the **Premise**, **Setup**, **Events**, **Climax,** and **Sequels**.

Premise

The Premise briefly summarizes the adventure and should incorporate any major sources of conflict or drama you wish to include in the adventure.

Setup

The Setup describes how the adventure begins and how the characters become involved in its events. This section may also include details of the adventure background, events that led to the adventure, and other ideas in the Premise. This section may be the longest and most detailed in the framework.

Events

Events describe the encounters, situations, and circumstances 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 happenings the characters did not anticipate. Most basically, events represent the obstacles or problems the player characters must overcome to complete the adventure successfully. Generally, adventures contain numerous events, as illustrated in the three fleshed-out frameworks that follow.

Climax

The Climax is the conclusion or resolution of the adventure. It describes the anticipated resolution, which may differ considerably from the way the adventure actually ends. Because player groups often take unexpected actions, we suggest the gamemaster plan for more than one possible climax to an adventure.

Sequels

The adventure framework refers to stories that might happen after the adventure or as a result of the adventure as sequels. Sequels may be adventures that feature the same non-player characters or include a magical item discovered in the first adventure. A theme, character, or item that carries over from one adventure to another helps create a sense of continuity in a campaign. See pp. 15–17 of the **Gamemastering Earthdawn** book in the **Earthdawn Gamemaster Pack** for more information about creating **Earthdawn** campaigns and maintaining campaign continuity.

SAMPLE FRAMEWORKS

As an example of how to expand each of the framework elements into a working adventure outline, we used the adventure framework format to create three typical Parlainth adventures. These adventures should provide the flexibility needed to integrate different player character groups into the action and previously established gamemaster character rivals and allies into the storyline. Determine appropriate game statistics for characters and creatures not described elsewhere in this book.

RACE FOR TREASURE X

Premise

Competing groups of explorers learn that a legendary magical treasure can be found at a particular point in the ruins. Each group sets out to find the treasure first.

Setup

At The Restless Troll, the player characters meet a group of explorers who are new in town. Like most newcomers, these explorers still dream of striking it rich. If the player characters do not bother to try to set them straight, other veteran adventurers in the bar make the effort. But these explorers have no interest in hearing bad news: they're sure they're about to cash in big.

The next day, one of the explorers—a t'skrang named Turamba—returns to The Restless Troll. She babbles nearly incoherently and her crest is now a shocking white. She tells everyone who will listen that her group followed an accurate map to a point in a section of the ruins of the gamemasters' choice. While telling her story, she drops several good clues for finding this spot where rests a fabulous magical treasure (either one of those listed in **Magical Treasures**, an item described in another **Earthdawn** product, or one of the gamemaster's own invention). Make the treasure something your players will not pass up. Turamba saw the treasure with her own eyes just before something she cannot even talk about slew her comrades.

The adventurers immediately realize that everyone in town will head out to search for this fabulous item. A veteran of the scene leans over, chuckling, and says, "The last time I saw a rush like this was when everybody thought Bashor found the sword Purifier in the Western Catacombs. Eight people died and there wasn't a creature in sight. All over what turned out to be a rusty length of pipe."

Most groups give up in disappointment when they realize how many others intend to search for the treasure. This leaves our heroes with three groups of rivals. Possible rivals include the Therans, agents of Throal, agents of Justice for All, mad questors, Blood Warders, bandits—the usual suspects. Choose rivals who provide maximum contrast to the player characters, or bring back villains from a previous adventure.

Event 1

The adventurers come upon a street fight in Haven between the rival group they hate the most and another group of explorers. The explorers are taking a severe beating, and if the player characters do not intervene, several of the explorers die. If the player characters choose to intervene, the bad guys withdraw. After the fight, the injured explorers explain that the bad guys attacked them to eliminate some competition for the treasure.

Event 2

The player characters enter the relevant area of the ruins, and a pack of its typical inhabitants attack them. For example, if the players enter the Vaults, they face members of the Unforgivables, in the Twists they meet ghouls, and so on.

Event 3

It turns out that Turamba's descriptions of the landmarks she passed lacked a certain degree of accuracy. The player characters become lost and must do some problem solving to connect her account to the actual landscape.

Event 4

The player characters encounter the rival group they find least loathsome. The rivals propose an alliance and offer to feed the adventurers. They then try to slip the player characters drugged drinks. The Name-giver pulling the switch uses the Fast Hand talent at a rank equal to the highest ranked player character talent. They intend the poison only to sicken the Characters, not kill them. Use a step number for the poison that the characters have a good chance of resisting. The poison instantly causes nausea and dizziness that reduces all of an affected character's step numbers by 3. If the player characters catch their rivals in this sneaky ploy, the rivals try to withdraw without combat.

Event 5

The player characters stumble across the third rival group, gleefully parading about with the magical treasure! They've found it already—or so they want their competition to believe. Several of the rival group's members appear to be injured, though this is just a ruse to get the adventurers to let their guards down. If attacked, the group "accidentally" drops the item while retreating. Actually, the "treasure" is a cleverly crafted decoy, meant to deceive their adversaries into returning to Haven in "triumph" while they recover the real item.

Event 6

The player characters near their destination and suffer an attack from Turamba's cohorts, now unnaturally alive (see **Unnatural Life**, p. 299, **ED**).

Climax A

The player characters burst into the chamber that contains the treasure. At the same moment, the three rival groups smash their way in from other entrances. A gigantic Horror stands in the middle of the chamber, a beast powerful enough to give all of the treasure-seekers together a tough fight. The thing lured the adventurers here deliberately for its own sport and roars in glee when it sees the assembled explorers.

Climax B

Assuming some or all of the player characters survive the battle with the Horror, they must still contrive to come away with the treasure. Some of the rival treasure-seekers are probably dead, others seriously wounded, but some will still be able to fight for the prize. Our heroes must either summon up their last reserves of fighting ability to claim it or fool the others with a convincing bluff or some other ploy.

Sequels

None of the groups who lost out feel happy about the affair. If the player characters keep the item, some of these groups launch periodic assaults against them in attempts to steal the item.

BLADE OF DECEPTION

Premise

The player characters find themselves defending a foe framed for murder.

Setup

The player characters receive a summons to a private meeting with a prominent Haven resident with whom they have an antagonistic relationship. (This means someone who periodically or even regularly causes trouble for the player characters, not a blood foe who has vowed to slay them on sight.) The identity of this foe varies depending on the situation. If the player characters speak out on their anti-Theran sentiments, it's Omag Bastabus (p. 36). If they're vehemently anti-Throal, they meet Cleotha Splayfoot (p. 35). If the player characters have butted heads with Torgak's justice system, the meeting is an attempt by Torgak (p. 24) to smooth the waters. If our heroes have taken up rabble-rousing for one of the competing adventurer's guilds, the rival organization's leader requests the meeting. If the group got itself in trouble with the bookie Pagmor Gilt-Throat (p. 27) the meeting is with him, and so on. For the rest of this adventure description, we refer to the character as "the suspect."



During the meeting, the suspect happens to look down and notice that his dagger is missing. He shows genuine frustration and sorrow at having lost it; the weapon is a family heirloom with valuable gems embedded in the hilt.

Later, Torgak's forces arrest the suspect—including Torgak himself, if appropriate—for the murder of a low-level member of a group that opposes the suspect. For example, if the suspect is Omag Bastabus, the victim is a minor agent of Throal. If they arrest Cleotha Splayfoot, the victim is a Theran lackey, and so on.

The crucial clue is the suspect's dagger, buried deep in the victim's back. But based on when witnesses last saw the victim alive and when he or she was discovered dead, the player characters know the suspect can't be guilty, because he or she was meeting secretly with them the whole time.

Event 1

If the adventurers conduct themselves less than scrupulously, they may be happy to see the suspect framed for a capital offense. In this case, a well-muscled troop of the suspect's supporters lean on the adventurers to persuade them to testify on the suspect's behalf. Do not let this turn into a pitched battle, even if the gamemaster decides to jump the gun and let the muscle lean on the players regardless of whether or not they plan to testify.

Event 2

Torgak or his deputies brush off the adventurers' testimony, because one of the deputies saw the suspect's persuasion force leaning on them. It looks like the player characters must solve the mystery.

Event 3

Word gets around that the player characters testified on the suspect's behalf, and now the muscle of a rival group comes to lean on them. The rival group takes issue with interfering do-gooders threatening this opportunity to get their enemy out of the way. Allow this encounter to escalate into a fight if some action seems necessary.

Event 4

The player characters assume the rival group framed the suspect and start to investigate them. This leads the player characters into even more trouble and gets them nowhere—the rival group is not involved.

Event 5

A low-ranking member of a third group turns up murdered, and clues point to the leader of a fourth group. When this leader comes to them to profess his or her innocence, the player characters should begin to discern a pattern.

Event 6

The player characters now possess a few more clues. Reward any sensible avenue of investigation with additional clues. For example, if the player characters investigate the backgrounds of the two very different victims, they may learn the victims had a mutual friend named Gildiza, a dwarf who makes her living selling gear salvaged from the ruins.

Event 7

Enraged partisans of the various accused or accusing groups refuse to believe that their enemies are innocent. Fighting breaks out in the streets and the player characters come under attack during the chaos.

Event 8

The player characters begin looking for Gildiza only to discover she has fled into the ruins. Fortunately, they can follow her trail.

Event 9

The player characters track Gildiza to the Vaults, where Charcoalgrin's forces—the Unforgivables—attack them. The Unforgivables attempt to capture rather than slay the player characters, then drag them to Charcoalgrin.

Event 10

The player characters find Gildiza by Charcoalgrin's side. The dwarf asks them if the town is in chaos yet. It turns out that Gildiza belongs to the Unforgivables and went to Haven specifically to foment unrest in preparation for a sneak raid on Torgak's Supplies and Goods. The player characters see Charcoalgrin's forces preparing for the attack.

Event 11

The dragon tosses the captured adventurers into a pit containing either a very big, very hungry carnivorous creature or some fiendish mechanical trap.

Climax

Assuming they escape, the player characters reach Haven ahead of Charcoalgrin's raiding force and convince the people to stop fighting and prepare to repel the attack. Charcoalgrin ordered the Unforgivables to abort the attack if the townspeople recover their senses and prepare to do battle. If the player characters arrive too late, they find themselves in the middle of a pitched street battle between the townspeople and members of the Unforgivables. The street battle may end with serious consequences—perhaps The Restless Troll or Torgak's Supplies is set ablaze, for example.

Sequels

Torgak might hire the player characters to organize a punitive raid against Charcoalgrin.

ASSAULT ON HAVEN

Premise

Every so often, the creatures of Parlainth rise en masse to attack the people of Haven. No one knows why, or can predict these attacks more than a few days in advance. The adventurers find themselves in Haven on the occasion of just such an assault.

Setup

Dread omens begin to appear throughout Haven. A terrible rainstorm hangs over the town for days, dumping sheets of water on buildings and turning the streets into a river of mud. A dog that roams around The Restless Troll gives birth to a litter of two-headed puppies. The corpse at a funeral sits up in its coffin, tunelessly sings a nursery rhyme and falls back into its eternal slumber. People begin to suffer disturbingly vivid nightmares filled with images of war and death. To determine if player characters suffer these dreams, secretly roll a Perception Test for each character against a Difficulty Number of 5. The old-timers know what all this means. They've seen omens like this before. Parlainth's creatures will soon attack Haven.

Event 1

The player characters must decide what they will do when the assault begins. Do they barricade themselves inside their homes and hope the creatures can't get through? Will they join the many residents who plan to barricade themselves inside The Restless Troll? Or do they choose to act heroic and position themselves on the town walls to try to hold the creatures back?

One thing is certain—if they flee the city, the townspeople brand them as cowards. On their return, the attitudes of all gamemaster characters in Haven toward the player characters will drop a notch—Neutral characters become Unfriendly, Friendly characters become Neutral, and so on.

Event 2

Hysteria hits the city. A group of angry troll explorers accuses the player characters of spying on behalf of the Horrors who plan to engulf the town. The trolls saw the player characters in their dreams and are convinced they're foul folk. A fight seems imminent, and other townsfolk gather around to see the outcome. If the player characters try to solve the problem with force, the other townsfolk begin to believe the trolls' tale. The Restless Troll management bans the player characters from the tavern for their "suspicious behavior," and the players must somehow win back the townspeople's trust and respect.

Event 3

Madness strikes. Several veteran explorers crack under the strain and assault the nearest targets: the player characters.

Event 4

A gamemaster character with a Friendly attitude toward the adventurers is caught sabotaging the defenses of The Restless Troll by removing the locks from the cellar door. The glassy-eyed character clearly seems possessed to the player characters, but hysterical townspeople—perhaps led by the trolls in **Event 2**—decide to lynch the poor fellow. The player characters must either sway the crowd or dispel the possession effect. The character attempting the Dispel Test must achieve a Good result to succeed. This possession is a side effect of the same force that causes the creatures to attack—see **Event 6**. Perhaps more townspeople and even some of the player characters begin to feel the tug of its influence.

Event 5

The rain suddenly stops. The sun shines, birds chirp, and the feeling of dread hanging over Haven evaporates. Newer members of the community relax and even begin what threatens to become a drunken celebration. The old-timers recognize these signs, too, and urge the player characters to rally the carousers to vigilance. The trolls cause trouble yet again: they were the first ones to start drinking and they're sick of being lectured. They start a fight with the player characters.



Event 6

As soon as the brawl with the trolls gets into full swing, the alarm goes out. Watchers at the wall report a swarm of creatures headed toward Haven. All residents begin racing frantically for shelters, walls, and barricades.

Event 7a

If the player characters decided to defend the walls, they fight a wave of determined creatures who outnumber them but possess only minor powers.

Event 7b

If the player characters barricaded themselves in somewhere, they hear the howl of creatures racing through the area. Then they see the young child of one of Haven's merchants wandering about looking lost. If the players want to save her, they have to leave the safety of their retreat to scoop her up, fight off the creatures, and get back inside their barricade without letting any creatures in.

In either 7a or 7b, the gamemaster may decide to allow a long-time enemy or rival of the adventurers to rescue them from a sticky situation. Our heroes then find themselves in the strange and probably uncomfortable position of owing the enemy or rival their lives. This option will not work if all the player characters' worst enemies are corrupt.

Climax

The final wave of creatures arrives and faces the adventurers. The intelligent creatures wear a peculiar glazed look in their eyes; the baser creatures seem positively rabid, screeching and foaming at the mouth. These tough creatures possess at least as much power as the characters assembled to defend against them. If the adventurers barricaded themselves in somewhere, the creatures smash their way through the barricades and into their midst. If the player characters are defending the wall, the final force of monsters comes streaming over it.

At the height of the creatures' frenzy, a spectre materializes over the skyline of Parlainth, seeming to rise from the Screaming Fountain. This transparent image looks like a giant snake with gray flesh, tattered dragon wings, and a single enormous eyeball mounted in the center of its face. When the image vanishes, the creatures scatter. The intelligent ones retreat as quickly as they can to their respective lairs, while the mundane creatures simply scatter in random directions. For days afterwards, the residents of Haven find strange creatures hiding in their cellars and gardens.

Those player characters who behaved heroically or slew many tough creatures earn the respect of the community and find it much easier to elicit favors and gain other concessions and boons from their fellow Havenites. Those who behaved selfishly or fought poorly earn scathing scorn and pity.

Sequels

The ghostly, one-eyed, snakey monster also appears in **A Letter Found in the Catacombs**, in **Vardeghul's Trove of Lore**. If sharp-eyed adventurers notice the connection, they might decide to head into the Vaults to investigate what causes the thing to manifest. Perhaps what passed for the soul of this long-dead Horror became trapped in a weird Parlainthian magic item, a gem, for example. Destroying the gem frees the Horror's spirit, which ends the periodic attack of creatures on Haven but may lead to other complications and other adventures.

OTHER ADVENTURE IDEAS

Pattern items, the lingering results of Theran magical experimentation, and any of the adventure ideas offered in **Ruins of Parlainth** also lend themselves to the adventure framework method of creating adventures.

Pattern Items

Ever since the return of Parlainth to Barsaive, explorers of the ruins and residents of Haven took it upon themselves to Name areas of the Forgotten City, Names which have been accepted.

This Naming created true patterns and pattern items for each area, and the parties that control certain areas of the ruins hold some of these pattern items. Twiceborn probably holds two or three of the pattern items of the Eastern Catacombs, and Charcoalgrin is said to possess all the pattern items of the Vaults.

These pattern items can serve as the focus for many adventures. For example, acquiring various pattern items offers the key to successfully cleansing any given area of the ruins of its Horrors and assorted other creatures, a goal worthy of any organization within Haven. Inhabitants of Parlainth may seek to obtain pattern items of areas controlled by rival beings. The Theran Empire might offer a great deal to acquire these pattern items as a step toward reclaiming its city from Barsaive.

Theran Magical Research

Before the Scourge, some of Thera's most powerful magicians lived in Parlainth, and their research may still await rediscovery in vaults inside the Western Catacombs. These valuable documents could inspire any number of adventures. The scrolls that explain the ritual used to take Parlainth away from this world might still exist, or the secret of the spell that erased all references to Parlainth from books and minds all over Barsaive and Thera. Of course, many extremely powerful people and groups would go to virtually any lengths to acquire these and lesser magical treasures.

RUNNING ADVENTURES IN PARLAINTH

Whether you use the adventure framework method to create an adventure or design the events some other way, once you complete your preparations for a Parlainth adventure you must still perform three tasks: get your player characters involved in the adventure, allow them to research the ruins if they choose to prepare for their adventure, then find out how they plan to enter and explore the ruins.

GETTING INVOLVED

The nature of your adventure dictates the best ways to get the player characters involved. If a group or individual hires the players to seek a treasure in the ruins, their involvement begins when they are hired. However, characters rarely get paid by someone else for adventures in and around Parlainth.

The most common and interesting way to draw characters into Parlainth is through legends that tell of magical treasure, countless riches, horrible monsters, and amazing magics. Ancient myths concerning all of Barsaive reverberate through the centuries, giving its people comfort and inspiring the boldest, most courageous, greediest, and luckiest to create legends to inspire future generations.

Legends are what people share across tables in taverns and inns and around campfires. These provide the stories of treasure and adventure that lure Name-givers of all races and genders and ages to re-explore their world. And in the years since Parlainth's return to Barsaive, legends of the Forgotten City have spread like wildfire. Many of these legends tell the tale of another place or time, or offer nothing more than wishful thinking, but as many others truly hold the secrets of Parlainth's past. Tales and stories of Parlainth particularly abound in Haven, where every evening someone spins a story of the Forgotten City in the common rooms of The Restless Troll and other local establishments.

These tales represent the most colorful way to get players involved in adventures in Parlainth. Because many player characters come to Haven and Parlainth specifically to seize a chance at striking it rich in the city's ruins, they should jump at carefully worded hints or clues about possible treasures. And allowing the players to choose, from several legends, which adventures their characters get involved in lets them feel they are in charge of their characters' lives, which is as it should be.

RESEARCHING THE RUINS

Any player group that enters Parlainth's ruins without first researching its route and destination deserves all the

trouble that it finds. Countless dangers await all who venture into the Forgotten City. Hungry creatures, foul folk, and working traps fill Parlainth's ruins. Characters must find a way to anticipate the perils into which they travel and determine exactly what they hope to find.

Player characters can research the ruins several ways. They may purchase information from the various peddlers who sell fact and fancy about Parlainth to interested parties. The best known of these is Vardeghul (see **Vardeghul's Lore Exchange**, p. 47, for guidelines on purchasing information from Vardeghul). Others also make a living selling information, but Vardeghul has proved to be the most consistent source of reliable information regarding Parlainth, and she deserves her reputation.

Characters may also gather research on the ruins by talking with the locals. Nearly every resident of Haven can tell numerous stories of the treasures Parlainth holds, as well as the dangers. While many of these tales are tall indeed, each one contains some truth about the ruins or appropriate advice for adventuring there.

Some might consider the two explorer guilds based in Haven the most reliable sources of information about the ruins of Parlainth. Both the Loyal Order of Delvers and the Association of Unaffiliated Explorers include members who have ventured into Parlainth many times and returned. For the right price, many of these individuals would willingly share their "trade secrets." Naturally, members of these associations are more likely to be friendly, open, and honest with other members of their respective guilds, but for enough silver they will talk to almost anyone.

ENTERING AND EXPLORING THE RUINS

Once the characters decide on an adventure and perform any research they feel necessary, they must enter the ruins. This simple statement belies the significance of that act, which deserves careful consideration of at least two important points: traveling through the ruins, and surviving obstacles on the way.

Traveling the Ruins

The player characters will discover that they can reach any part of the ruins several different ways, and each route offers unique dangers and difficulties. For example, reaching the Smalls or the Twists can be relatively easy because both areas border the southwest laneway just outside Haven's gates. If the characters need to reach the far sides of those areas, the task immediately becomes more complicated. Characters might also find it relatively easy to enter the catacombs, because numerous entrances to the undercity exist, some in Haven. Again, if the characters must travel to the part of the catacombs farthest from Haven, such as the Western Catacombs, their task immediately becomes more difficult.

Most experienced explorers consider the laneways the quickest, most dangerous route between the aboveground areas of the ruins. The wide-open laneways allow fairly easy passage, but they also offer the dangers of ambush by rival groups or monsters, manmade traps, and uncertain footing. Player characters can also reach aboveground areas by traveling around the wall surrounding the ruins and entering at one of the frequent breaks or holes in the wall, a somewhat safer route but plagued by the nasty creatures that live in the forests surrounding the city.

The player characters may find reaching the underground areas of Parlainth even more treacherous. By far the safest way to reach a specific part of the catacombs is to travel to the aboveground area over the desired catacombs and find an entrance down from there. Though this option forces the characters to face the perils of the laneways, their only alternative is to go into the catacombs at the nearest entrance and travel through the underground areas to their chosen destination. The near-impossibility of navigating underground and the fearsome creatures that dwell in these subterranean chambers make this route even more dangerous than the aboveground paths.

Known Obstacles

The moment the player characters enter the ruins, they expose themselves to the true dangers of exploring Parlainth: the creatures, inhabitants, and conditions of the ruins themselves.

The abundant creatures that make their homes in the ruins of the Forgotten City present the foremost obstacle to exploring the city. These include mundane and magical creatures, Horrors, Horror constructs, and even certain types of hazardous plants (see **Creatures**, p. 71).

More intelligent inhabitants of many of the areas do not take kindly to explorers. For example, adventurers traveling through the War Zone must deal with many types of falsemen, while those entering the Eastern Catacombs must eventually face cadaver men en masse. For more information on these inhabitants and how they react to trespassers, see the **Ruins of Parlainth**.

Player characters may also meet rival explorers in their journeying. These other adventurers may be searching for the same treasure or pursuing the truth of the same secrets as the player characters. Just as often, rival explorers have their own agendas and may simply ignore the characters rather than attack them on sight. A group of rivals may choose to join forces with the player characters to achieve a goal, or trail and ambush them after the player characters find the loot they were seeking.

Finally, the poor physical condition of the ruins themselves creates dangerous obstacles. The civil war that devastated Parlainth and the infestation of the Horrors destroyed much of the city and replaced its beautiful streets and imposing buildings with debris and rubble. Though some areas took less damage than others, in general, most areas of the ruins make travel difficult. Characters will find many blocked roadways and gaping holes and pits leading to the undercity. Numerous traps set by Name-givers and Horrors lie poised to capture the unwary, many built by the original inhabitants and some by current inhabitants. The Horrors known as scurriers devote all their time and energy to resetting, repairing, and rehabbing traps throughout the Ruins. For more information about various common traps, see the **Exploration** sections in the **Ruins of Parlainth.**

WHILE IN HAVEN

For information, supplies, and other adventuring amenities, Haven is the only game in town. The characters will likely use the town as a base from which to launch their various expeditions into the Ruins, and while in Haven, most explorers do two things: visit Vardeghul's Lore Exchange and bet on the falsemen wars. This section also provides some guidelines for how characters can exhange their hard-won treasure for silver.

VARDEGHUL'S LORE EXCHANGE

The documents that make up **Vardeghul's Trove of Lore** represent only a fraction of her entire collection, essentially her top-selling scrolls. Feel free to create additional documents tailored to your adventure needs.

Vardeghul's shop is a simple, one-room store. The single entrance leads to a counter behind which Vardeghul sits at a desk and scratches out copies of her scrolls. Rows of old wine racks stacked with scrolls fill the space behind her desk.

Only Vardeghul knows the secret of her filing system: she keeps track of everything in her head, refusing to write anything down. Her system isn't perfect; sometimes she may spend up to half an hour finding a specific document. In such cases, she invites her customers to sit on the plain wooden bench in the store and wait. She answers complaints about her lack of speed with muttered t'skrang curses. Sometimes Vardeghul knows information she does not have or can't locate in document form. She offers to prepare a written version within twenty-four hours if clients insist on a document instead of a verbal account.

Intellectual Property Rights

Vardeghul takes care to ensure her documents remain exclusively hers. First, she requires every customer to sign an agreement when purchasing her scrolls. (**Vardeghul's Trove of Lore** contains a copy of this agreement.) The signers grant Vardeghul or her agents the right to visit on them the physical punishment of her choice if they sell, rent, or give away any of her scrolls without her written permission. This section of the agreement allows Vardeghul to operate with impunity when signers violate her non-distribution agreement. Very early in their association, Torgak ruled that Vardeghul's agreements were inviolable, and his deputies do not intervene on behalf of adventurers under attack from Vardeghul's muscle.

If they prefer, Vardeghul allows customers to take a blood magic oath in place of signing the formal agreement. This oath causes 1 point of damage that cannot be healed for 1 week. After that time, the character can heal the damage as normal, but if the character ever violates the oath, the blood magic causes a permanent Wound that can never be healed. (For further information on blood magic, see the **Blood Magic** section, pp. 44–50, of the **Gamemastering Earthdawn** book in the **ED GM Pack**.)

Vardeghul does not retain a regular staff of henchfolk to enforce these agreements; her reputation for ruthlessly punishing violators guarantees that no long-time residents of Haven will buy one of her documents from a third party. In fact, they warn would-be sellers that they're risking a severe beating or worse by their actions.

On those rare occasions when Vardeghul must punish a violator, she hires ruffians from the tavern of The Restless Troll. Like any town on the edge of civilization, Haven supports many unsavory adepts who remain in the city despite having failed to find treasure in the ruins. These types would willingly form a mob at the slightest provocation, and Vardeghul pays them well to confront and punish those who violate her purchase agreement. She considers any fees paid to ruffians well-spent in the long run, because her strict enforcement policy keeps her information exclusive and therefore valuable. She usually hires a dozen enforcers at a time, more if the erring clients appear to be particularly powerful. Even high-Circle adventurers think twice before crossing her because of the sheer nuisance value of being pursued by such a gang.

Selling Information to Vardeghul

Vardeghul constantly seeks to increase and update her stock of information and so allows adventurers to barter information for scrolls as well as purchasing documents outright. However, Vardeghul drives a hard bargain. She places a low value on the verbal accounts of explorers of the ruins as she considers them a notoriously unreliable bunch, which makes sorting the truth from the tall tales a difficult, unrewarding task. In general, Vardeghul offers no more than five silver pieces worth of credit for any verbal

report or adventurer-drawn map of the ruins. She may open her purse wider for information such as political or trade gossip, provided she feels confident in the reliability of the source.

Vardeghul prefers recovered documents above any others. She considers these far more useful than contemporary accounts of the ruins because these records often contain valuable clues and seem less biased. Vardeghul can distinguish genuine antiques from fakes and adds her rank in the Research skill to her Social Defense when characters try to sell her forgeries.

Determine the price Vardeghul will offer for a recovered text by comparing the document to similar samples in **Vardeghul's Trove of Lore**. Vardeghul wants information she can sell repeatedly to avaricious treasure-seekers, and so the more directly the information pertains to great finds within Parlainth, the more she'll pay for it. Vardeghul's purchase price for a document roughly equals her selling price for a copy of that document. Remember, she intends to sell many duplicates of each purchase, and over time her profit becomes quite impressive. Player characters can haggle for a better deal in trade as well. For example, Vardeghul may offer to exchange a copy of a document with a selling price of 50 silver pieces for an original she considers worth 40.

VARDEGHUL'S PRICE LIST

Document	Price
An Adventurer's Lament	25
A Fragmentary History of Parlainth	25
A Fragment Concerning the Ruins	25
A Questor's Tale	25
A Visit to Haven	25
Transcript of an Interrogation	35
Disturbing Wonderments of the Western Catacombs	45
From a Wall in The Twists	45
A Tract against Falsemen	50
Testimony Regarding the Horror Hunter	75
Treasures of the Forgotten City	75
On the Architecture of Parlainth	100
An Encounter with Twiceborn, Queen of the Dead	100
An Intercepted Theran Message	100
A Letter Found in the Catacombs	125
A Lost Theran War Machine	145
A Plan to Rob the Theran Treasury	175
Various Detail Maps	
Eastern Catacombs	35
The Smalls	40
The Twists	40
The Vaults	40
Northern Catacombs	50
Western Catacombs	50

Price List

Vardeghul offers thousands of documents. **Vardeghul's Price List** shows prices for those documents provided in **Vardeghul's Trove of Lore**. All prices are listed in silver pieces. Characters cannot preview copies of documents. We also provide a copy of this price list in **Vardeghul's Trove of Lore** as a handout for the players.

BETTING ON THE FALSEMEN

Characters may pass the time in Haven or try to beef up their funds by betting on the falsemen wars fought perpetually in the War Zone (for background on falsemen, see **Creatures,** p. 66, and **The War Zone,** p. 24 in **Ruins of Parlainth**). Pagmor Gilt-Throat (p. 27) runs the most profitable betting scheme in town, and anyone betting on the falsemen wars with Pagmor must observe Pagmor's rules.

Player characters can place bets with Pagmor by making propositions or choosing a side and wagering on its progress. To make a proposition, for example, a bettor may propose that one falsemen army will be pushed beyond a certain point or that one general's forces will split into splinter groups. The bettors also name a time frame for their prediction, the end of the week or month, for example. Pagmor considers the proposition and gives the bettors odds.

Determine the odds Pagmor sets by deciding the likelihood of the proposition's outcome or the difficulty of the goal. Pagmor pays off according to Pagmor's Odds Table.

Determine whether the conditions of a proposition are met by making an appropriate test for the leader of the group that must satisfy the conditions of the bet. For example, if a bettor proposes that Guile will persuade Breakage, a lieutenant in Smasher's army, to switch allegiance, make

a Charisma Test for Guile against Breakage's Social Defense. Breakage, who is slightly more charismatic than the average corrupted stoneman, has a Social Defense of 7. Therefore, Pagmor offers the bettor even odds. Modify the Difficulty Number of the test to reflect additional factors. For example, if the bettor proposes that Guile will turn Breakage very quickly, increase the Difficulty Number. If the bettor predicts the switch will take a month, reduce the Difficulty Number.

PAGMOR'S ODDS TABLE

Difficulty of Task	Difficulty Number	Odds
Easy	1–6	No bet
Average	7–12	Even Odds
Hard	13–18	2:1
Very Hard	19–22	3:1
Heroic	23+	5:1

Most bettors choose the second method of wagering, in which the bettor chooses a side in the fighting and bets on its progress on a weekly basis. Pagmor uses a dozen major landmarks of the War Zone that the falsemen seem to contest most fiercely as benchmarks to measure each army's progress. At the end of each week, the bettors either receive a payoff or lose to "the house," depending on how many of these landmarks changed hands in their favor during the week. Bettors may wager any amount of money. The payoff depends on the net number of landmarks taken by the bettor's army (Pagmor subtracts lost landmarks from those won by the army) per Pagmor's Payoffs Table. For example, if Guile's army captures three landmarks but loses two during the course of a week, Pagmor's system counts Guile's army as having won only one landmark.

PAGMOR'S PAYOFFS TABLE

Number of Landmarks Taken	Payoff
1 or less	None
2	Even Odds
3	2:1
4–5	4:1
6–7	8:1
8–9	15:1
10–11	30:1
12	100:1

The easiest way to determine each army's progress is for the gamemaster to simply assign to each army what he considers an appropriate number of landmarks won or lost, depending on how he wants the outcome of the betting to affect his story and/or the player characters, then consult Pagmor's Payoffs Table to determine the odds and pay the characters or take their money. Keep in mind that on average, only a few landmarks should change hands in the course of a week and that an army that starts to do extremely well will probably fall apart.

To determine how many landmarks change hands by rolling dice, decide what percentage of the total falseman population belongs to each army, then set a step number for each army, assigning 1 step for every 5 percent of the population belonging to that army.

To determine the outcome of the wars each week, make a test using the step number for each army against a Difficulty Number of 8. The number of landmarks each force takes depends on the success level of the test.

If the armies achieve high levels of success or the gamemaster rolls bonus dice, the number of landmarks captured by all three sides may exceed the 12 designated by Pagmor. In this case, award the earned number of landmarks to the force with the highest result, then the earned number of landmarks to the army with the second-highest level of success, and so on, until all 12 have been awarded.

To determine which opponent each landmark was taken from, flip a coin or roll odds/evens on a die. Keep track of the number of landmarks controlled by each group each week, because you may need to fudge the results at some point to serve the story.

FALSEMEN SUCCESS TABLE

Success Level	Landmarks Captured
Poor	0
Average	1
Good	2
Excellent	D4
Extraordinary	D6

Remember that Pagmor chose these

landmarks—the falsemen may not measure their success by this yardstick. However, successfully capturing landmarks does correspond to general success in the battles. In the example below, Never Surrender showed a remarkable surge of success in the second week. Dramatic turns like this tend to shake up the falsemen leadership. Never Surrender's underlings, sensing victory, might well split into factions in an attempt to seize power, allowing Guile or Smasher or both to stage comebacks against these split forces.

Though Pagmor resents the fact that he loses money from adventurers placing side bets on which army will have the highest number of landmarks at the end of any given week, he doesn't offer odds for this sort of betting because the combatants change so quickly. He considers this type of wager a sucker's bet he can't control, whereas his system offers fairly consistent odds in his favor regardless of who is on the rise or fall in the War Zone.

On a fine, sunny day early in the month of Mawag, the troll adventurers Piwt and Nawrf decide to place bets on the falsemen wars with Pagmor Gilt-Throat.

At this point in their perpetual struggle, Guile and Smasher each control 40 percent of the total falsemen population, giving each leader Step 8. Never Surrender controls the remaining 20 percent of the falsemen, for a Step Number of 4. Smasher and Guile each claim five landmarks and Never Surrender claims two.

The gamemaster rolls dice to determine the number of landmarks each force takes.

Smasher's roll is 7, a Poor result. It takes no landmarks. Guile's roll produces an Average result, and so the falseman's army takes one landmark; a coin toss determines that the landmark is taken from Smasher.

Never Surrender's roll is a 6, with a bonus die roll of 6, and another bonus die roll of 5 for a total of 17—an Excellent result. The gamemaster consults the Falsemen Success Table and rolls D4 to determine the number of landmarks taken. The result is 1, and a coin toss determines that Never Surrender captures its landmark from Smasher.

The end result: Smasher is down two landmarks, and Guile and Never Surrender are each up one. None of the bets pay off, and Pagmor cleans up.

Guile now controls a total of six landmarks, and Smasher and Never Surrender claim three each.

The next week's results defy the odds. Due to bonus dice, Smasher gets an Excellent result of 16 while Guile and Never Surrender both get Extraordinary results of 22 and 20, respectively. The gamemaster rolls 1D4 for Smasher's landmarks and gets a bonus die, for a total of 6 landmarks. The gamemaster rolls 1D6 for Guile's landmarks, getting 2. Never Surrender gets a bonus die on its 1D6 roll for a total of 8.

The total number of landmarks, 16, is greater than the 12 available for capture. Guile had the highest initial roll, so its army receives the 2 landmarks indicated by its 1D6 roll, one from each of the other two armies. Never Surrender had the next highest roll at 20 and so gets its 8 landmarks, taking all of Guile's initial holdings for the week and two of Smasher's initial holdings. This leaves only 2 landmarks available for the lowest roller, Smasher, who takes them from Never Surrender.

In this case, all the landmarks changed hands. Smasher is down to 2 from 3, a net loss of 1. Smasher's backers lose their bets. Guile is down to 2 from 6, a net loss of 4. Also a bad bet. But those with money on the long shot, Never Surrender, win because its landmarks increased from 3 to 8, a net gain of 5.

LANDMARK HOLDINGS

	Smasher			Guile			Never Surrender		
	Won/Lost	Net Gain/Loss	Final	Won/Lost	Net Gain/Loss	Final	Won/Lost	Net Gain/Loss	Final
Starting			5			5			2
Week 1	0/2	–2	3	1/0	+1	6	1/0	+1	3
Week 2	2/3	–1	2	2/6	–4	2	8/3	+5	8



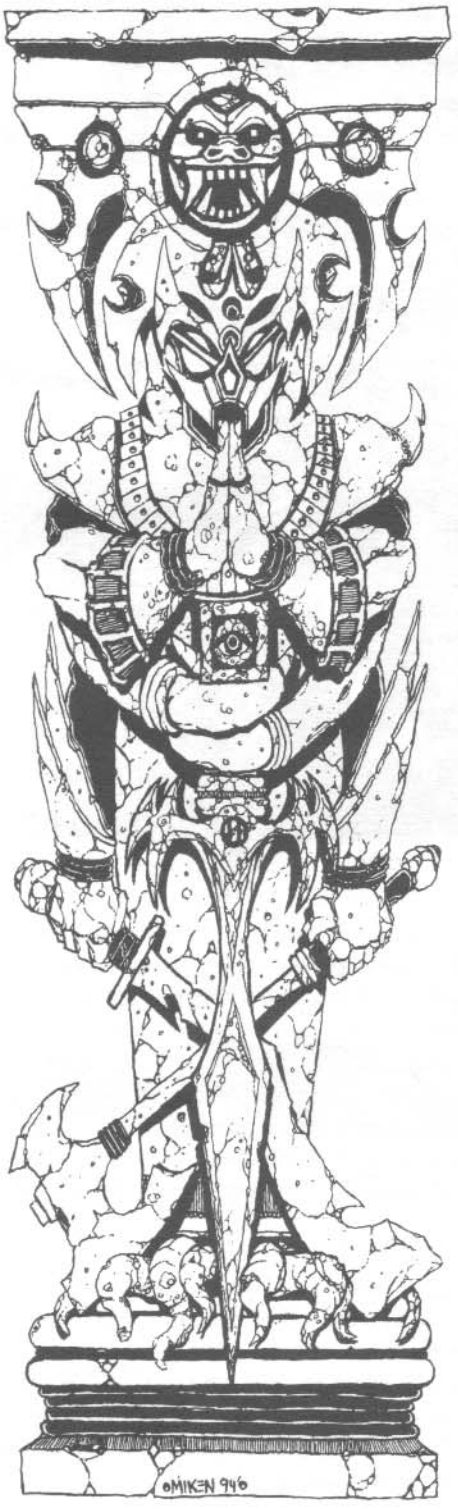
EXCHANGING BOOTY FOR SILVER

When adventurers find a valuable piece of jewelry, a famous tapestry, or some similar treasure in the ruins, they cannot expect to immediately convert it to cash in Haven. Unless they have a specific buyer in mind, they must arrange (and pay for) the item's transport to a likely market. If they send their treasure by caravan, they can only hope that the caravaneer is honest or does not get robbed en route to his destination. They must also find a trustworthy, competent person to sell the item once it arrives at its intended market, which involves giving up a hefty percentage of the item's eventual sale price. Some items may take a long time to sell, leaving the adventurers waiting months or more before they see a cash profit. Finally, adventurers' portions of the proceeds from the sale may be stolen on the road back to Haven or appropriated by a dishonest caravaneer.

The only way to avoid all this potential trouble is to risk other, equally serious problems; the adventurers may choose to personally travel with their find through miles of dangerous territory in the hope of selling it themselves once they reach civilization.

Though he publicly states that he has no interest in buying treasure found in the Forgotten City, Torgak will buy valuables whose resale value exceeds 2,000 silver pieces. He pays 10 percent of an item's resale value, cash up front, and argues that his 90 percent profit margin fairly reflects the risk and difficulty inherent in selling such items. In addition to Torgak, small-time treasure dealers periodically come to Haven and offer to buy valuables at 15–25 percent of their resale value, though they may or may not produce silver up front. Some of these dealers may be nothing more than clever swindlers. Certain caravaneers also may prove willing to buy less valuable items for up to 30 percent of their resale value.

MAGICAL TREASURES



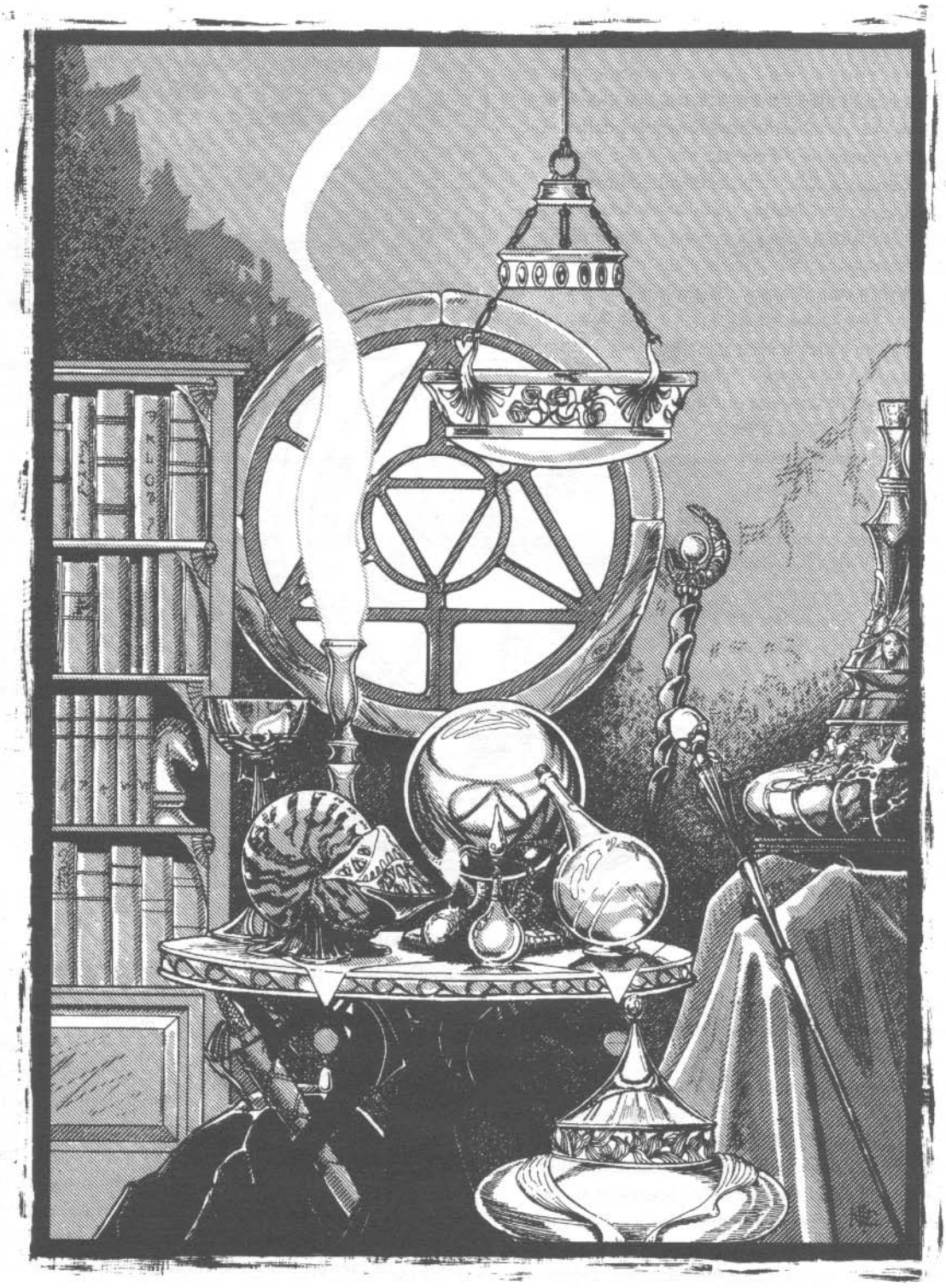
This section describes legendary, magical treasures that gamemasters may place in the ruins of Parlainth. Many of these treasures possess properties that make them more likely to appear in the Forgotten City than elsewhere in Barsaive. Naturally, gamemasters may choose not to introduce the items in this section into their versions of Parlainth or Barsaive, or may design other, unique magical treasures for their own use (for more information on creating magical items, see **Magical Items**, p. 55–73, **ED Companion**). If they wish to use items in their game mentioned in the document titled **Treasures of the Forgotten City** (part of **Vardeghul's Trove of Lore**), gamemasters may create game statistics for those treasures.

This section does not assign these treasures to specific locations in the ruins. Gamemasters should use these treasures in the same way as all other treasures published for **Earthdawn,** placing them wherever in Parlainth or Barsaive that best suits their story line. Gamemasters should feel free to ignore the claims of historians such as the author of **Treasures of the Forgotten City,** who place most known or rumored treasures in Parlainth.

The simplest and most enduring plot hook for fantasy adventure remains the old favorite, "find the magic item." Gamemasters may found an entire campaign on the merest rumor of a magical treasure lost in the Forgotten City. In **Earthdawn,** the adventure doesn't stop when the characters find the treasure. After surviving peril after peril in search of a legendary item, a search they undertook to satisfy their own interests or at the behest of an employer, the player characters must learn the Key Knowledges of their magic item and perform Deeds to unlock its secrets. Only then does it become more than simply a treasure to sell for monetary gain.

Over time, even the most alluring find-the-treasure plot line may bore your players; when that time comes, try exploring variations on the theme. For example, emphasize the struggle between the competing factions seeking to claim the treasure more than the item itself, making the dangers inherent in acquiring the treasure a mere prelude to the real trouble. To help gamemasters design interesting, unique, treasure-related adventures, most of the descriptions of magical treasures in this section include a plot hook for incorporating the item into an ongoing story line.

As with anything else found in the ruins, there must be an explanation for magical treasures found in Parlainth. For example, most unique magical items left in the ruins were either manufactured in Thera and shipped to Parlainth or designed by the unorthodox magical researchers working in the ancient city. Those manufactured in Thera, such as the Horse of Battle and Diadem of Overlordship, often connect the user of the item to the Theran Empire in some way, typically requiring the user to swear an oath of loyalty. Those treasures designed by the magicians of Parlainth, such as the Mirror of Turnaround, tend to be very strange and disturbing and are sometimes still connected in some way to the Horrors the magicians sought to combat. A few legendary items, such as the Butterspider Box, belonged to residents of Parlainth at the time the city disappeared from Barsaive.

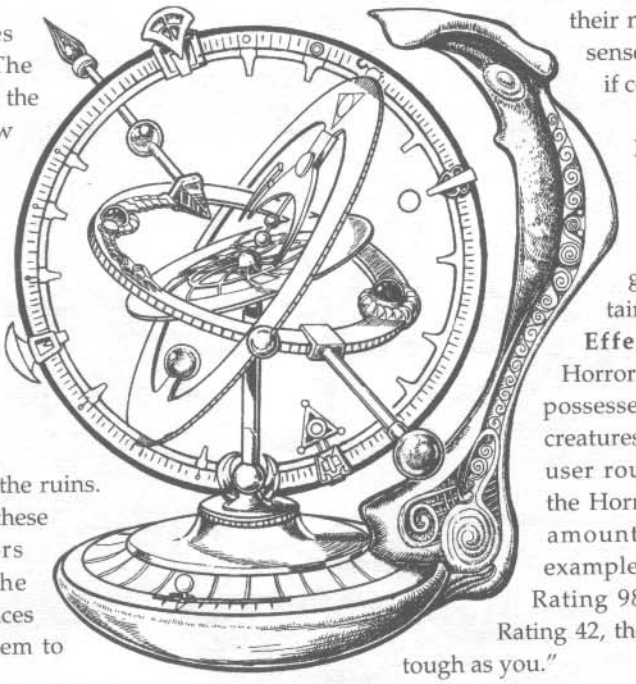


ASTRAL SEXTANT

Maximum Threads: 2
Spell Defense: 15

A globe-shaped copper device about a foot and a half in diameter, the astral sextant contains several gears and wheels, all of which spin in a dizzying, mechanical dance when the user activates the machine by pulling a lever mounted on the sextant's side. Opposite the lever is something that might be a directional pointer, but its significance remains unknown unless the user attaches a thread to the sextant, as does the meaning of the whirring, whirling circles within circles.

The astral sextant is one of many magical instruments developed by the Parlainthian sorcerers in their quest for defenses against the approaching Horrors. The gamemaster may choose to use one of the following options when deciding how many of these magical wonders exist.



Option 1

Parlainth's magical researchers built only one astral sextant in the last days of the pre-exile period, in order to devote most of their efforts to the magics of exile.

Option 2

Several astral sextants survive in the ruins. Parlainth's magicians made many of these useful devices, but the Horrors destroyed most of them during the Scourge. The Horrors hate these devices and go out of their way to smash them to bits.

Thread Ranks

Rank 1 **Cost:** 300
Key Knowledge: The user must learn that this device is called an astral sextant.
Effect: When the user pulls the lever, he or she hears a voice as clearly as if someone were speaking a bit too loudly into his or her ear. Any other character with a thread attached to the sextant will also hear the voice. The voice tells the thread holders the location of the nearest Horror in the direction that the device is pointing, including its distance in a straight line away from the sextant's pointer. A difference of even a few degrees will result in a different reading; the sextant cannot detect a Horror even slightly to one side of the straight line from the pointer.

Rank 2 **Cost:** 500
Effect: The voice reveals the type of Horror in question.

Rank 3 **Cost:** 800
Key Knowledge: The user must learn the precise location of the chamber in which the astral sextant was built.
Effect: The voice also reveals the Name of the Horror in question and whether the Horror senses the user's presence.

Rank 4 **Cost:** 1,300
Effect: The device detects Horrors, Horror-marked individuals, and Horror constructs. The voice reveals the distance between these threats and the user, their names, whether or not they sense the user's presence, and, if constructs, what type.

Rank 5
Cost: 2,100
Key Knowledge: The user must learn how many gears the astral sextant contains.
Effect: The device reveals Horror powers, talents, and spells possessed by any Horror-touched creatures it detects. It also tells the user roughly how much damage the Horror can take relative to the amount the user can take. For example, if the Horror has Death Rating 98 and the user has Death Rating 42, the voice says, "It is twice as tough as you."

Plot Hook

A band of wanderers accuses one of the player characters' friends, newly arrived in Haven, of being a Horror in disguise. Despite the adventurers' defense of their friend, the wanderers' story seems convincing to enough people that Torgak imprisons the friend in the interests of keeping order. A retired explorer sympathetic to the adventurers tells them he once heard a tale of a magical device that can detect Horrors, and that it lies somewhere in Parlainth (in a specific location determined by the gamemaster). In order to clear their friend, the player characters must find the sextant before the people of Haven resort to mob justice. When the adventurers return to Haven with the astral sextant and activate it, they discover that the wanderers are the true Horrors in disguise.



BUTTERSPIDER BOX

Maximum Threads: 1
Spell Defense: 12

This treasure consists of two parts: a rusted tin box and the Healing Butterspider inside. The Butterspider is a fist-sized piece of lard (not butter, as its common name indicates) sculpted into the shape of a wolf spider with a remarkable degree of fine detail. Though the Butterspider can heal, the magic allowing it to do so actually comes from the rusted tin box.

When first discovered, the tin box contains an intact Butterspider. Player characters can use this Butterspider to speed the healing of an injury. When the spider is touched to the injury, the victim gets a free Recovery Test. Each such use partially melts the Butterspider, and it may not be used again unless replaced within the tin box, where it reforms. The healing magic does not work unless the user of the item has at least one thread attached to the box.

Thread Ranks

Rank 1 **Cost:** 200
Key Knowledge: The character must learn that the box is Named the Butterspider Box, and must know to attach the thread to the decrepit box rather than the lard sculpture.
Effect: The Butterspider gives a free Recovery Test to any victim whose injury it touches. This power can only be used once per day per person. Also, if a character with a thread woven to the empty box puts a fistful of lard in it, a new spider forms if that character sacrifices a Recovery Test.

Rank 2 **Cost:** 300
Effect: The Butterspider adds 3 steps to the free Recovery Test it gives to any victim whose injury it touches. This effect may be combined with the effects of other magics, but may only be used once per day per person.

Rank 3 **Cost:** 500
Key Knowledge: The user must compose and memorize a short verse explaining why the spider is a symbol of life and healing. The poem must be recited without error when sacrificing a Recovery Test to re-form the Butterspider; an error in the recitation means that the Butterspider produces only the Rank 2 effect. The user must recite the poem each time he or she re-forms the Butterspider.
Effect: The Butterspider adds 6 steps to the free Recovery Test it gives to any victim whose injury it touches. The *Butterspider also adds the same number of steps to any* effort to dispel lingering negative magic, including Horror powers. This power can only be used once per day per person.

Rank 4 **Cost:** 800
Effect: Same as Rank 3, but the spider adds 9 steps to the free Recovery Test and Dispel Magic Test, if applicable. This power can only be used once per day per person.

Rank 5 **Cost:** 1,300
Deed: The user must vow to never knowingly harm a spider, even in self-defense. Should the character break this vow, the tin box and Butterspider vanish, reappearing in a random location in Barsaive. Though the user may not know it, the vow does not include jehuthra because they are not spiders (despite their strong resemblance to arachnids). This Deed is worth 500 Legend Points.
Effect: Same as Rank 3, but the spider adds 10 steps to the free Recovery Test and Dispel Magic Test, if applicable. The user may attempt to regenerate a destroyed or severed appendage or organ, such as a limb withered by the Wither Limb spell (p. 180, **ED**), no matter how long it has been damaged. This power can only be used once per day per person.

Rank 6 **Cost:** 2,100
Effect: Same as Rank 5, but the spider adds 11 steps to the free Recovery Test and Dispel Magic Test, if applicable. This power can only be used once per day per person.

Rank 7 **Cost:** 3,400
Key Knowledge: The character must learn that the Passion Garlen created the Butterspider, and must hear the Butterspider's Name from Garlen's own lips. In exchange for the name, Garlen will most likely send the character on a quest or exact vows from him or her, or both.
Effect: A touch of the Butterspider may restore life to undead creatures such as cadaver men and spectral dancers or to those unnaturally alive. The step number for the test used in this process is equivalent to the user's Recovery Test step number plus 11 steps, made against the

undead being's Spell Defense. An Excellent or better success cures the insanity caused by the victim's experiences as an undead monster.

Plot Hook

Queen Twiceborn of the cadaver men (see **Eastern Catacombs**, p. 63, **Ruins of Parlainth**) wants very much for a Name-giver to use the Butterspider on her and return her to a normal life after so many centuries of undeath. In fact, she would pay any price to achieve this goal. Her subjects, however, and possibly the gharmhek (see **Eastern Catacombs**), would do just about anything to stop the adventurers from reclaiming their great leader for the land of the living.



DIADEM OF OVERLORDSHIP

Maximum Threads: 1
Spell Defense: 24

The Diadem of Overlordship is a delicate, gold filigree crown encrusted with rubies, diamonds, and emeralds. Its gold looks tarnished and its gems cloudy until a character attaches a thread to it, at which point it shines brilliantly. Theran magicians created the Diadem in 443 TH to help the provincial governor awe his Barsaivian subjects.

Thread Ranks

Rank 1 **Cost:** 500
Key Knowledge: The user must discover the item's true Name. Its popular name, the Diadem of Exceeding Dignity, is useless.
Effect: When worn, the Diadem boosts the user's Charisma step by 1 and adds 2 points to his Social Defense.

Rank 2 **Cost:** 800
Effect: When worn, the Diadem boosts the user's Charisma step by 2 and adds 3 points to his Social Defense.

Rank 3 **Cost:** 1,300
Key Knowledge: The user must discover the date of the Diadem's manufacture (443 TH) and the name of its first user (Kern Fallo).
Effect: When worn, the Diadem boosts the user's Charisma step by 3 and adds 4 points to his Social Defense.

Rank 4 **Cost:** 2,100
Deed: The user must be appointed Overlord of Barsaive by the First Governor of Thera in an official ceremony. This Deed is worth 1,300 Legend Points.
Effect: When worn, the Diadem boosts the user's Charisma step by 5 and adds 5 points to his Social Defense.

Rank 5 **Cost:** 3,400
Deed: Without the aid of the Diadem, the user must win allegiance to Thera from a community leader among each of Barsaive's Name-giver races. This Deed is worth 2,100 Legend Points.
Effect: When worn, the Diadem boosts the user's Charisma step by 6 and adds 6 points to his Social Defense.

Rank 6 **Cost:** 5,500
Effect: The Diadem boosts the user's Charisma step by 7 and adds 7 points to his Social Defense. It also allows the user to overwhelm with awe any intelligent creature in his or her line of sight by making a successful Charisma Test against the target's Spell Defense. The awed individual may do nothing but genuflect to the user for a number of rounds equal to the Diadem's thread rank. The victim regards the user with an Awestruck attitude until the user does something to break that trust.

Plot Hook

Throalic agents in Haven hire the adventurers for an unusual mission. Instead of finding a great magical treasure in the ruins of Parlainth and bringing it out, they must take the Diadem of Overlordship, which has been in Throal since just before the Scourge, into the ruins and hide it from the Therans, who are actively searching for it. The Throalic agents thought they had safely hidden the diadem, brought to the dwarf kingdom by Overlord Ersh Wearg, in one of Throal's underground cities, but recently a team of high-Circle Theran infiltrators killed many citizens of Throal in a nearly successful attempt to recover the Diadem. Only luck and skill allowed Throalic agents to spirit the Diadem out of Throal, and they galloped for Haven with the Therans in hot pursuit. Throal's only hope is to let some unknown adventurers (the player characters) hide this powerful artifact in ruined Parlainth where they hope it will be lost forever. The player characters must find the most dangerous, inaccessible place in the ruins and

leave the Diadem there. If they try to use the Diadem themselves, the Throalic agents teach them a fatal lesson. If they are too slow in finding a hiding place, an equally dangerous group of Therans catches up to them.

Horse of Battle

Maximum Threads: 1
Spell Defense: 23

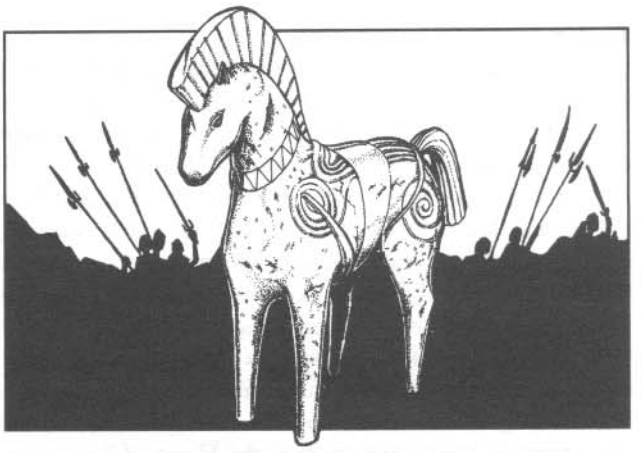
The Horse of Battle is a crude, stylized clay figurine small enough to fit in the palm of a human hand. A character who sees it and makes a successful Knowledge Skill Test with a relevant skill (such as Theran History) would recognize it as an example of early Theran art.

Thread Ranks

Rank 1 **Cost:** 500
Key Knowledge: Twelve Horses of Battle exist, each with a different Name. The user must learn that this Horse's name is Far Lands Strider.
Effect: At a cost of 1 point of Strain, the user may trigger the magic in the Horse of Battle so that it becomes a full-sized mount made of clay. It has the game statistics of a war horse (p. 304, **ED**), with an Armor Rating and Mystic Armor Rating of 4, and cannot be knocked unconscious. When the damage it suffers equals or exceeds its Death Rating, the Horse of Battle automatically returns to its smaller form, and the user must spend a Recovery Test to activate its magic again. If the user wills the Horse of Battle to return to its smaller form, the character recovers the point of Strain he originally spent.

Rank 2 **Cost:** 800
Effect: The magical mount increases its Initiative, Attack, Damage, and Knockdown by 1 step, gains 1 point for all of its Defenses, and adds 2 points each to its Armor and Mystic Armor Ratings. Its Combat Movement becomes 100, Full Movement 120.

Rank 3 **Cost:** 1,300
Key Knowledge: The user must discover the nature of the Deeds required to attain Thread Rank 3 and higher ranks. He must learn that all of these deeds require some form of allegiance to the Theran Empire.
Deed: The user must seek out and swear allegiance to the current Theran Overlord of Barsaive. If the user breaks his vow, either by disobeying an order of the Overlord or by knowingly acting against Theran interests, the Horse of Battle vanishes after severing all threads between it and the user, reappearing somewhere in Theran-controlled territory. This Deed is worth 800 Legend Points.



Effect: The mount increases its Initiative, Attack, Damage, and Knockdown by 2 steps, adds 2 points to each of its Defenses, and increases both its Armor and Mystic Armor Ratings to 8. Its Combat Movement becomes 120, Full Movement 140. The Horse's Perception step increases to 7; it gains the ability to understand the user's native tongue, and so can carry out the user's instructions. To determine whether the horse understands a given set of instructions, assign the instructions a Difficulty Number based on their complexity and make the Horse's Perception Test against that number.

Rank 4 **Cost:** 2,100
Effect: The mount adds 3 steps to its Initiative, Attack, Damage, and Knockdown, 3 points to each of its Defenses, and increases both its Armor and Mystic Armor Rating to 10 each. Its Combat Movement becomes 140, Full Movement 160. The Horse's Perception step increases to 10.

Rank 5 **Cost:** 3,400
Deed: The user must seek out and swear allegiance to the First Governor of Thera. If the user disobeys an order of the First Governor or knowingly acts against the governor's or Thera's interests, the Horse of Battle vanishes and severs all threads between it and the user, reappearing elsewhere in the Theran Empire. The user may disobey orders of the Overlord of Barsaive without penalty if they directly conflict with an order from the First Governor, or if they obviously harm the First Governor's personal interests. This Deed is worth 1,300 Legend Points.
Effect: The mount adds 4 steps to its Initiative, Attack, Damage, and Knockdown, 4 points to each of its Defenses, and increases both its Armor and Mystic Armor Rating to 12. Its Combat Movement becomes 160, Full Movement 180. The Horse's Perception step increases to 13, and it can speak in the user's native tongue.

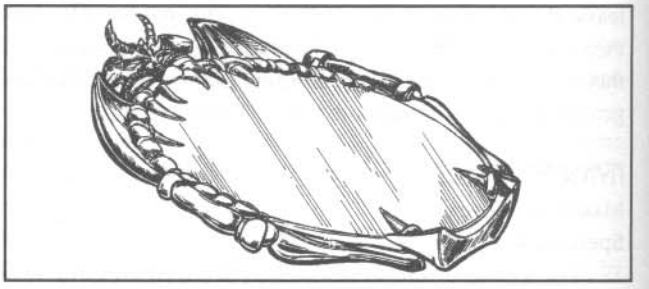
Rank 6 **Cost:** 5,500

Deed: The user must vow in the presence of the First Governor of Thera to seek out and slay at least one active enemy of the Theran Empire per year. At his discretion, the First Governor may select the enemies the user must pursue, though this enemy may not be of a lower Circle than the user's. The user must fight the final battle with the enemy in a heroic fashion that will honor the name of Thera (no backstabbing or skullduggery) and in such a manner that knowledge of this Deed will spread. The best way to fulfill this latter requirement is to ensure that either a large number of people or a popular troubadour witness the user's great moment. Should the user fail to confront the enemy in the proper fashion, the Horse of Battle vanishes and severs all threads between it and the user, reappearing elsewhere in the Empire. This Deed is worth 3,400 Legend Points.

Effect: The mount adds 6 steps to its Initiative, Attack, Damage, and Knockdown, 6 points to each of its Defenses, and increases both its Armor and Mystic Armor Rating to 18. Its Combat Movement becomes 200, Full Movement 220, and the Horse may also fly at those speeds. The Horse's Perception step increases to 20, and it gains the knowledge skills of Theran History and Theran Politics at Rank 1 each.

Plot Hook

One of the player characters, preferably a cavalryman, experiences recurring dreams of a marvelous clay mount. In the dreams, the mount speaks to the character, saying that its current owner will soon lose the mount and that it will then appear in an area of Parlainth's ruins chosen by the gamemaster. Soon afterward, a Theran champion rides into town. He or she has orders to slay an explorer loyal to the Kingdom of Throal, but has begun to have doubts about the rightness of this action. Nevertheless, the champion attacks the explorer in the middle of Haven, with the player characters and many others looking on. The champion easily bests the explorer with the help of his wondrous mount, but rather than strike the fatal blow against his target, the champion throws down his sword and renounces his loyalty to Thera. The magical horse disappears. That same night, the player character dreams of the horse, and the beast names the specific chamber in the ruins where the character can find it. Upon setting out to claim the horse, the character discovers that dozens of local adventurers have dreamed the same dream and all set out for the same spot simultaneously.



MIRROR OF TURNAROUND

Maximum Threads: 2

Spell Defense: 27

The magicians of Parlainth created the Mirror of Turnaround during their search for ways to fight the Horrors. They hoped to manufacture several such mirrors, but only had the time to make one. A perfectly circular mirror in a silver frame with rugged hand grips on each side, the Mirror will not reflect anything until a character attaches a thread to it.

Thread Ranks

Rank 1 **Cost:** 800

Key Knowledge: The user must discover the item's Name.

Effect: The Mirror of Turnaround resists the effects of the Horror powers Animate Dead and Corrupt Karma with a Spell Defense of 9. If the user interposes the Mirror between a Horror using a power and the victim of the attack, the Horror must overcome the Mirror's Spell Defense before it can attack its target. If the Horror's attack fails to defeat the Mirror's Spell Defense, the power's effect rebounds onto the Horror.

Rank 2 **Cost:** 1,300

Effect: Same as Rank 1, but the Mirror's Spell Defense increases to 11. The Mirror also resists the effects of Cursed Luck and Unnatural Life.

Rank 3 **Cost:** 2,100

Key Knowledge: The user must learn the name of the Mirror's designer, Garaduga the Omnivorous.

Effect: Same as Rank 1, but the Mirror's Spell Defense increases to 13. The Mirror also resists the effects of Damage Shift and Thought Worm.

Rank 4 **Cost:** 3,400

Effect: Same as Rank 1, but the Mirror's Spell Defense increases to 14. The Mirror also resists the effects of Terror and Karma Tap.

Rank 5 **Cost:** 5,500
Key Knowledge: Garaduga the Omnivorous killed a captured Horror to make the Mirror. The user must learn the Horror's Name, Phaargmaasz.
Effect: Same as Rank 1, but the Mirror's Spell Defense increases to 15. The Mirror also resists the effects of Horror Mark, Skin Shift, and any unique Horror powers not mentioned on pp. 297–299, **ED**.

Plot Hook

A haunted-looking stranger calling himself Gemseeker comes to Haven and hires the player characters to escort him into the ruins. Gemseeker claims to be looking for a jeweled pendant lost by his father, the troll explorer Lebaru. In fact, he is following the suggestions of a Thought Worm planted in his mind by a Horror. The Horror wants him to find the Mirror of Turnaround and destroy it. Someone using the Mirror almost killed this particular Horror during the Parlainth Civil War, and the Horror swore revenge against it despite the fact that the Mirror is an inanimate object. As soon as they find the Mirror, the Horror appears to claim its prize, and the player characters may be its next victims unless they have figured out enough clues to use the Mirror's powers against the Horror.

STRIKEBACK, SHIELD OF LORA EVERTHOUGHT

Maximum Threads: 2
Spell Defense: 19

The Shield of Lora Everthought is a bronze, oval shield, roughly 3 feet long and 18 inches wide, decorated with an elaborate knot design. The knot was the symbol of the Theran Army stationed in Parlainth before the Scourge. Without a thread, the shield carries a +2 Armor Bonus and has no Initiative Penalty.

Lora Everthought was an ork swordmaster and a lieutenant in the Theran Army assigned to Parlainth in 575 TE. When the Horrors provoked the civil war in Parlainth, Lora Everthought stood among the first to battle the Horrors directly and also to die at their hands.



Thread Ranks

Rank 1 **Cost:** 500
Key Knowledge: The user must discover that the shield is Named Strikeback.
Effect: The shield's Armor Bonus increases to +3. The shield also grants the wielder a +1 Mystic Armor Bonus.

Rank 2 **Cost:** 800
Effect: Armor Bonus increases +4, Mystic Armor Bonus +2.

Rank 3 **Cost:** 1,300
Key Knowledge: The user must learn that the shield once belonged to Lora Everthought.
Effect: The shield adds 2 points to the wielder's Spell Defense. This bonus increases to +3 against Horror powers or spells cast by Horrors.

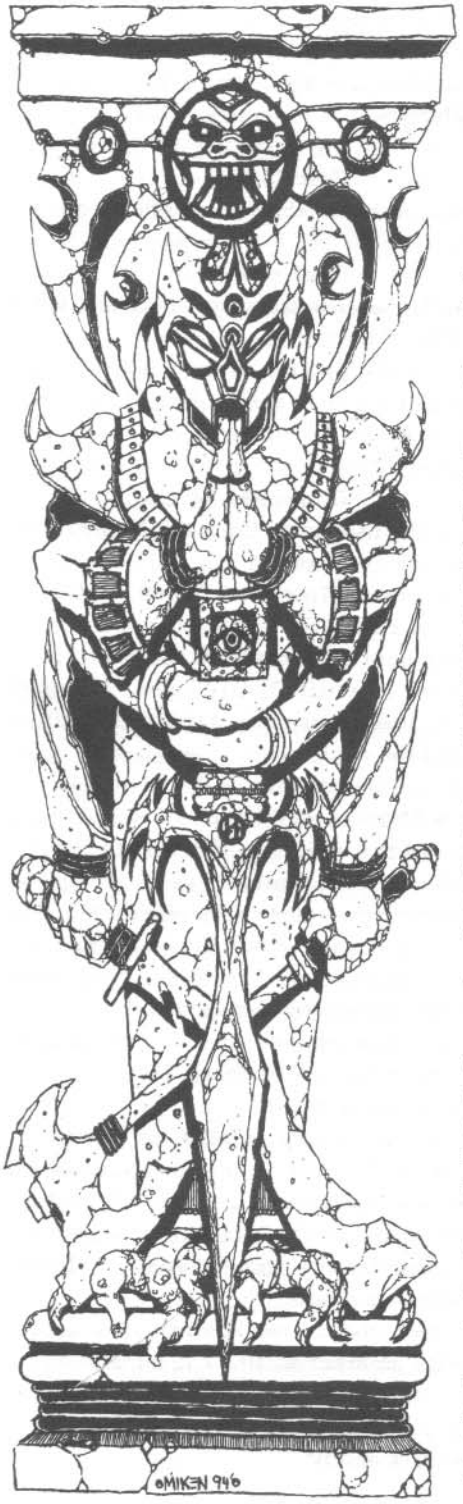
Rank 4 **Cost:** 2,100
Effect: Armor Bonus increases +5, Mystic Armor Bonus +3.

Rank 5 **Cost:** 3,400
Key Knowledge: The user must learn where and when Lora Everthought fell to the Horrors.
Effect: The shield adds 3 points to the wielder's Spell Defense. This bonus rises to +4 against Horror powers or spells cast by Horrors.

Rank 6 **Cost:** 5,500
Key Knowledge: The user must learn the Name of the Horror that killed Lora Everthought.
Deed: The Horror that killed Lora Everthought still lives in the ruins of Parlainth. The wielder must travel to the place where Lora died, confront the Horror, and slay it. This deed is worth 3,400 Legend Points in addition to those normally earned for killing Horrors of the same type.
Effect: The shield's Armor Bonus increases to +6, its Mystic Armor Bonus to +4. The shield also adds 4 points to the wielder's Spell Defense. This bonus rises to +5 against Horror powers or spells cast by Horrors. At a cost of 2 points of Strain, the user may turn attacks back upon an assailant using the shield's Strikeback ability. Once per round after the wielder is attacked, he may make a Strikeback Test, using his Perception step plus the shield's thread rank as the step number for this test. If the test result equals or exceeds the attacker's Spell Defense, the attack rebounds on the attacker. The attacker takes all damage from the attack, including Armor-Defeating Hits.

Note that the wielder may only use the Strikeback ability if an attack hits the shield. A successful maneuver to go inside a shield (see p. 201, **ED**) keeps the user from taking advantage of the shield's Strikeback ability.

CREATURES



Creatures of all shapes and sizes inhabit the ruins of Parlainth. From krilworms and shadowmants to espagra and even Horrors, the ruins of the Forgotten City teem with creatures, most of which pose a serious threat to explorers and adventurers.

Though all creatures described in the **Earthdawn** rulebook and in other **Earthdawn** products may be found in the ruins of Parlainth, many of the creatures described in this section live only in Parlainth or possess some special connection to the ruins. This section describes the creatures characters are most likely to encounter in Parlainth and offers guidelines for planning creature encounters in the Forgotten City.

CREATURE ENCOUNTERS

In most published **Earthdawn** adventures, creature encounters serve as an element to advance the main story line rather than occurring as random events. In adventures set in Parlainth, however, we encourage the gamemaster to inundate his player characters with creature encounters and make a large percentage of them completely unrelated to the main plot. The multitude of creatures inhabiting Parlainth are part of what makes it such a dangerous place; without such creatures and Horrors, Parlainth would simply be one more ruined city plagued by a few traps here and there. By adding frequent creature encounters to his adventures in Parlainth, the gamemaster creates the atmosphere of constant threat appropriate to the Forgotten City. Throw as many wandering creatures at the characters as you like; after all, they knew what they were getting into!

The only important consideration in deciding how many and what kind of creatures to throw at the adventurers is to link the area in which the adventure takes place to the types of creatures usually found in that area. Most creature encounters in the War Zone, for example, should somehow involve falsemen, while encounters in the Northern Catacombs most often involve subterranean creatures such as krilworms or shadowmants.

LEGEND POINT AWARDS

The **Gamemastering Earthdawn** section of the **Earthdawn** rulebook provided a system for balancing the Total Legend Award for a game between four elements: completing session goals, completing the adventure goal, defeating creatures or opponents, and acquiring treasure. The number of creature encounters we recommend you use in Parlainth clearly has the potential to seriously unbalance the Legend Awards system.

Gamemasters can avoid overbalancing the Legend Award system by adjusting the Total Legend Award to compensate for the unusual number of creatures in the ruins, or simply treating the extra earned Legend Points as an additional Legend Award.

The gamemaster may choose to adjust his adventure's Total Legend Awards to reflect higher creature awards. The **Earthdawn** rulebook suggests that each game session should provide about a Legend Award's worth of Creature Legend Points per character. Depending on how many creatures the characters face and the level of danger they present, when designing adventures in Parlainth the gamemaster can



increase that to one and a half, two, or even three Legend Awards' worth of Creature Legend Points per character.

Instead, the gamemaster may determine Legend Point Awards for his adventure according to the guidelines in **Gamemastering Earthdawn**, pp. 228–247, **ED**, and simply group together any extra points for defeating creatures in encounters unrelated to the main story line as a separate award. The characters receive the Legend Points their actions earn, but the total number of Creature Legend Points the characters earn overall runs higher than normal. Again, gamemasters should still avoid awarding a disproportionately high number of Creature Legend Points, as excessive awards for any one element may unbalance the game. In general, the number of additional Creature Legend Points each character earns should not exceed two to three times the overall Creature Legend Award for the adventure.

COMMON CREATURES

Many creatures previously described in the **Earthdawn** rulebook or in other **Earthdawn** products commonly appear in the ruins of Parlainth. For players' and gamemasters' convenience, statistics for common creatures previously described in the **Earthdawn** rulebook and in the adventure **Terror in the Skies** appear in the following section.

BLACK MANTIS

Attributes

DEX: 8	**STR:** 16	**TOU:** 10
PER: 8	**WIL:** 7	**CHA:** 2

Initiative: 10
Number of Attacks: 4
Attack: 10
Damage: 17
Number of Spells: NA
Spellcasting: NA
Effect: NA

Physical Defense: 10
Spell Defense: 5
Social Defense: 15
Armor: 8
Mystic Armor: 2
Knockdown: 16
Recovery Tests: 4

Death Rating: 51
Wound Threshold: 16
Unconsciousness Rating: 44

Combat Movement: 45
Full Movement: 90

Karma Points: 5

Karma Step: 10

Legend Points: 550
Equipment: None
Loot: Eggs worth 150 silver pieces each. The eggs also count as treasure worth Legend Points.

Commentary

The black mantis is a huge insect with a thick, black carapace that acts as natural armor and eight arms, each ending in a barbed spike. The mantis uses these spikes to spear its prey, then carries the prey to its mandibles and devours it. Six legs support the mantis' 15-inch thorax, and also help it climb most rough surfaces.

The Horror Rasper-Nor created the black mantises and used them as soldiers when it attacked Talon Kaer (see the **Earthdawn** adventure **Terror in the Skies**). The horrible creatures climbed the kaer's walls using tangled fronds of glow-moss and other natural handholds, and ravaged the kaer more swiftly than even Rasper-Nor had thought possible. After destroying Talon Kaer, the black mantises spread across much of Barsaive. When Parlainth returned to the physical plane, several black mantises in the surrounding area made nests in the ruins; now the creatures infest many areas of the city.

BLOOD BEES

Attributes

DEX: 7	**STR:** 2	**TOU:** 5
PER: 5	**WIL:** 4	**CHA:** 2

Initiative: 7
Number of Attacks: 1
Attack: 9
Damage: 8
(+ Step 5 per round)
Number of Spells: NA
Spellcasting: NA
Effect: NA

Physical Defense: 9
Spell Defense: 6
Social Defense: 6
Armor: 2
Mystic Armor: 0

Knockdown: 2
Recovery Tests: 2

Death Rating: 31
Wound Threshold: 8
Unconsciousness Rating: 22

Combat Movement: 45
Full Movement: 90

Legend Points: 75
Equipment: None
Loot: None

Commentary

Blood bees resemble 2-foot wasps with an accordion-like sac flapping from the thorax. When attacking, the bees fly backward, strike their prey with the sticky sac, and then fly forward. The forward motion extrudes a hollow spine from within the sac, which punctures the victim's skin and drains his blood. Once filled, the bag becomes heavy enough for the bee to pull free. The laden insect then flies back to its nest to feast on the blood of its victim.



If a blood bee achieves an Armor-Defeating Hit in its initial attack, loss of blood causes the target additional damage in each round equal to the result of a Step 5 Damage Test. A blood bee's sac can hold nearly half a gallon of blood, so this blood loss can prove fatal. To remove the bee, the target character must knock it down by inflicting at least 8 points of damage on it. If the character succeeds in inflicting the necessary damage and the bee fails its Strength Test (see **Combat**, p. 195, **ED**), the bee is knocked down. Knocking down the bee may look easy, but keep in mind that the creatures always attack in swarms.

A blood bee's sac is terribly susceptible to salt. If a bee touches salt, it sustains Step 3 damage. A character who coats himself in salt enrages the bees, but the buzzing swarms rarely gather the courage to attack. There is a one-in-ten chance per Combat Round that the bees will attack a salt-covered character.

BONE-SHAMBLER

Attribute

DEX: 10	**STR:** 15	**TOU:** 20
PER: 7	**WIL:** 7	**CHA:** 2

Initiative: 10
Number of Attacks: 2
Attack: 12
Damage: 15
Number of Spells: NA
Spellcasting: NA
Effect: NA

Physical Defense: 7
Spell Defense: 5
Social Defense: 15
Armor: 10
Mystic Armor: 5
Knockdown: 20
Recovery Tests: 3

Death Rating: 75
Wound Threshold: 15
Unconsciousness Rating: 50

Combat Movement: 20
Full Movement: 40

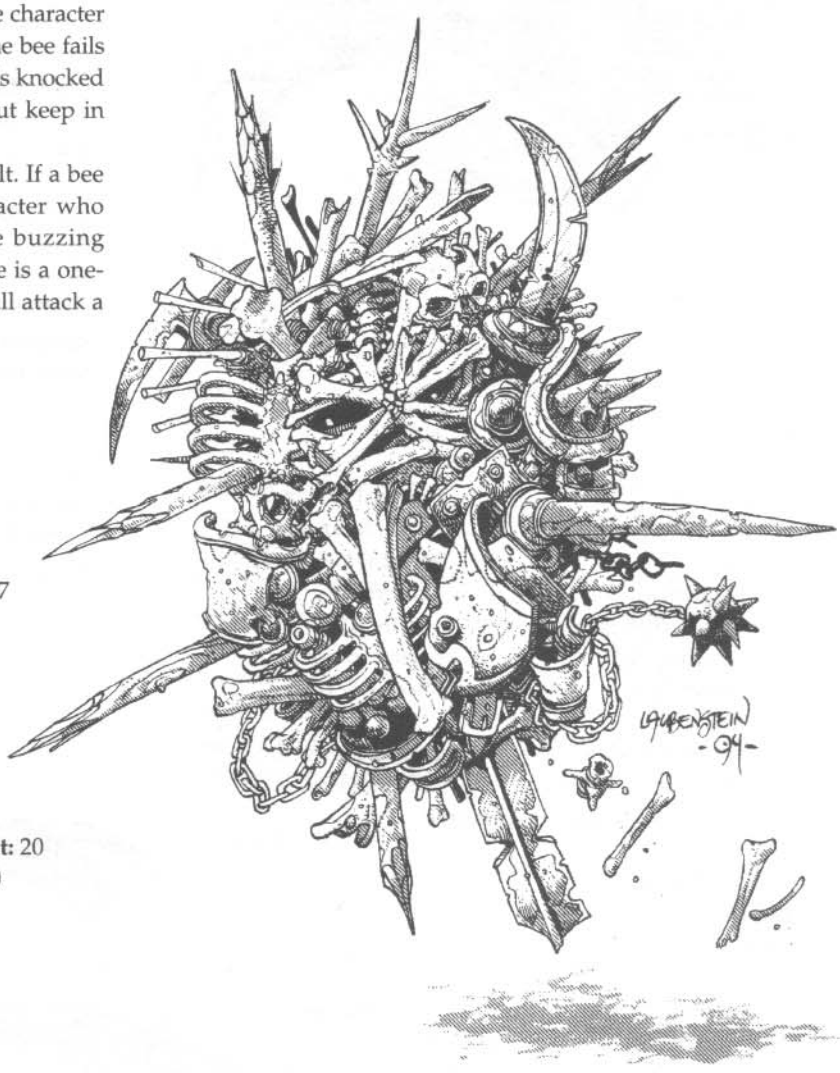
Karma Points: 5

Karma Step: 10

Legend Points: 700
Equipment: None
Loot: None

Commentary

Bone-shamblers are a horrible form of undead Horror construct built from the thousands of bones that litter the ruins of Parlainth. Many, though not all, bone-shamblers also consist of gold and silver pieces incorporated into their bodies. Bone-shamblers move by rolling, the bones and their former owners' armor and weapons rattling with a sound guaranteed to set teeth on edge. When a bone-shambler attacks, jagged bones and broken weapons protrude from its "arms" like giant spikes. A bone-shambler sees through "eyes" made of smaller bones, and can ambush a target from behind. If it takes damage equal to its Death Rating, a bone-shambler shatters into hundreds of bone fragments. Unless these fragments are scattered or destroyed, a bone-shambler can re-form itself in 1 to 4 hours.





CADAVER MEN

Attributes

DEX: 4	**STR:** 6	**TOU:** 7
PER: 3	**WIL:** 6	**CHA:** 4

Initiative: 4
Number of Attacks: 1 (4)
Attack: 7
Damage: 9
Number of Spells: NA
Spellcasting: NA
Effect: NA

Physical Defense: 5
Spell Defense: 6
Social Defense: 11
Armor: 0
Mystic Armor: 0
Knockdown: 7
Recovery Tests: 2

Death Rating: 36
Wound Threshold: 9
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Combat Movement: 25
Full Movement: 50

Legend Points: 110
Equipment: None
Loot: None

Note: Cadaver men fly into a rage if Wounded, and may make 4 attacks per round until the character who Wounded them is dead or 10 rounds have passed, whichever comes first. For a complete description of cadaver men, see p. 288, **ED**.

DEMIWRAITH

Attributes

DEX: 7	**STR:** 6	**TOU:** 6
PER: 6	**WIL:** 8	**CHA:** 5

Initiative: 9
Number of Attacks: 1
Attack: 7
Damage: 9
Number of Spells: (1)
Spellcasting: 12
Effect: Chilling Touch

Physical Defense: 7
Spell Defense: 9 (14)
Social Defense: 13
Armor: 6
Mystic Armor: 4
Knockdown: 7
Recovery Tests: 1

Death Rating: 38
Wound Threshold: 10
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Combat Movement: 60
Full Movement: 120

Legend Points: 225
Equipment: None
Loot: 5D6 x 10 silver pieces

Note: Because a demiwraith is not a true undead being, its Spell Defense against spells targeting the undead rises from 9 to 14. Demiwraiths also use a magical effect called Chilling Touch; to inflict it, a demiwraith must touch the target and make a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test is successful, the victim takes 1 point of damage per Combat Round and remains frozen in his tracks until the effect is dispelled or the character makes a successful Willpower Test with a result of 9 or better. For dispelling purposes, treat Chilling Touch as a Circle 2 spell. For a complete description of demiwraiths, see p. 290, **ED**.



GHOULS

Attributes
DEX: 5 **STR:** 4 **TOU:** 6
PER: 3 **WIL:** 3 **CHA:** 5

Initiative: 5
Number of Attacks: 1
Attack: 7
Damage: 8
Number of Spells: 1
Spellcasting: 8
Effect: Poison

Physical Defense: 7
Spell Defense: 5
Social Defense: 7
Armor: 4
Mystic Armor: 0
Knockdown: 5
Recovery Tests: 1 (7)

Death Rating: 36
Wound Threshold: 10
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Combat Movement: 50
Full Movement: 100

Legend Points: 90
Equipment: None
Loot: 3D6 silver pieces

Note: Ghouls produce a magical toxin called cacofian that remains inert until activated by a ghoul's Spellcasting ability. The ghoul must strike the victim with a successful Attack Test to release the poison, then make a successful Spellcasting Test in the same round to activate the cacofian. The poison affects its victim for 6 rounds, or until dispelled or resisted. For dispelling the toxin, treat it as a Circle 2 spell. Resisting the toxin requires the victim to make a Toughness Test against a Difficulty Number of 10. This test counts as the resisting character's action for that Combat Round. The poison does progressive damage per round that armor cannot reduce, for every round in which it remains active. In the first round it does 1 point of damage. In the successive 5 rounds, it does 4, 5, 10, 15, and 20 points of damage, respectively.





OGRES

Attributes
DEX: 7 **STR:** 11 **TOU:** 9
PER: 4 **WIL:** 5 **CHA:** 3

Initiative: 4
Number of Attacks: 1
Attack: 12
Damage: 16
Number of Spells: NA
Spellcasting: NA
Effect: NA

Physical Defense: 7
Spell Defense: 8
Social Defense: 6
Armor: 7
Mystic Armor: 1
Knockdown: 9
Recovery Tests: 3

Death Rating: 50
Wound Threshold: 12
Unconsciousness Rating: 45

Combat Movement: 35
Full Movement: 70

Legend Points: 110
Equipment: Ogre club, chain mail
Loot: 1D6 x 10 silver pieces

Note: All ogres wield huge lengths of wood imbued with ogre magic. In the hands of an ogre, they add 5 steps to the user's Strength step. An ogre club that remains out of contact with an ogre for more than 24 hours becomes an ordinary club. For a complete description of ogres, see p. 307, **ED**.

NEW CREATURES

The creatures described below are new to **Earthdawn**. All may appear in Parlainth, and some may be found only in Parlainth.

FALSEMEN

Falsemen are servitors animated from various inanimate substances by the powerful Theran magicians. Initially constructed to carry out tasks deemed too sensitive for slaves, falsemen eventually became a status symbol in Parlainth. Several magicians founded wealthy merchant houses using profits from the manufacture of falsemen (see **A Tract Concerning the Falsemen** in **Vardeghul's Trove of Lore**). The faddish demand for falsemen explains the wide variety of materials, some of dubious practicality, from which they were fashioned.

In general, falsemen lack an independent consciousness, instead responding unthinkingly to those magically attuned to it. A character who wishes to give a falseman orders must first weave a thread to it using the falseman's Spell Defense as the Difficulty Number. Because falsemen possess a limited capacity to understand instructions, the character who successfully weaves such a thread must make a Charisma Test to issue an order to a falseman against a Difficulty Number based on the complexity of the order. The simpler the order, the lower the Difficulty Number. The sample orders below indicate the levels of difficulty common to various kinds of orders.

Easy (Difficulty Number 5): "Prevent anyone from entering this room."

Average (Difficulty Number 9): "Prevent anyone but me from entering this room."

Hard (Difficulty Number 15): "Prevent anyone from entering this room unless they wear a brooch identical to the one I hold before me."

Very Hard (Difficulty Number 21): "Prevent anyone from entering this room unless they wear a brooch identical to the one I hold before me, except for orks. Orks may not pass even if they have a brooch."

Heroic (Difficulty Number 25): "Prevent anyone from entering this room who seems untrustworthy or of hostile intent."

Note that orders requiring falsemen to exercise judgment are the most difficult for them to follow. Also, successfully issuing an order does not mean that the falseman will carry it out as the character wishes. In the case of the final example, the falseman may understand the order, but may decide who seems hostile in an arbitrary way.

However, most falsemen cannot be controlled by player characters. Endowed by the Horrors with rudimentary consciousness and exposed to those powerful beings' evil for centuries, these falsemen grew beyond blank-minded constructs. They have minds of their own of a sort, and pose a serious threat to hapless explorers.

After destroying the population of Parlainth, the Horrors trapped in the city nearly went mad from boredom until some of them thought to stage war games against each other using falsemen as pieces. The Horrors gave the falsemen minimal awareness and aggressive instincts in order to add spice to the games, which the falsemen still play. Some attack anything that moves; others have spent centuries honing a blind instinct for torture and cruelty. A select few may have evolved to a level of self-awareness greater than the Horrors ever intended, but these rare individuals seem viciously insane by civilized standards.

A character weaving a thread to a Horror-corrupted falseman faces unimaginable danger. If the Horror who corrupted the falseman maintains an active link to the construct, the Horror may attempt to Horror-mark the adventurer attempting to weave such a thread, whether or not that character is in the Horror's line of sight. Also, the character must use the Horror's Spell Defense as the Difficulty Number for his or her thread weaving attempt, not the falseman's. Some Horrors set traps for unwary adventurers by corrupting falsemen and ordering them to act untouched, hoping that some foolish adventurer will try his luck at controlling the falseman.

A few corrupted falsemen may also have Karma Points, granted to them by their controlling Horror. Such a falseman usually has the same Karma step number as the Horror, but sometimes has lower Karma.

In the following game statistics, numbers separated by slashes reflect the different values of untouched and corrupted falsemen. The values for the untouched falsemen appear to the left of the slash, those for corrupted falsemen to the right of the slash. Player characters may meet either type of falseman in the ruins, as a few untouched falsemen still serve as guards for various rooms and vaults. Regard the statistics for corrupted falsemen as a guideline rather than an absolute; not all corrupted falsemen have exactly the same statistics. For more information about some of Parlainth's more famous corrupted falsemen, see **The War Zone**, pp. 28-29 in **Ruins of Parlainth**. Armor-Defeating Hits are not possible against falsemen.

STRAWMEN

Attributes

DEX: 5	**STR:** 5	**TOU:** 5
PER: 2/6	**WIL:** 2/6	**CHA:** 2/6

Initiative: 6
Number of Attacks: 1
Attack: 7
Damage: 8
Number of Spells: NA
Spellcasting: NA
Effect: NA

Physical Defense: 6
Spell Defense: 3/7
Social Defense: 3/7
Armor: 0
Mystic Armor: 0/2
Knockdown: 5
Recovery Tests: 0

Death Rating: 23
Wound Threshold: 5
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Combat Movement: 18
Full Movement: 35

Legend Points: 35/45
Equipment: Knife (+1 step to Strength step)
Loot: None



Commentary

Strawmen, animated wicker mannequins, are quite common in the ruins of Parlainth. The Horrors constructed strawmen in great quantities and few of the originals, simple servitors created by the magicians of Parlainth to perform non-strenuous physical tasks or serve as conversation pieces at parties, survived to the present. Adventurers should assume that any strawmen they meet are extremely hostile. Fortunately, the flimsiness of their component material makes them more of a nuisance than a threat. Since Parlainth's return to Barsaive, the word "strawman" has slipped into the Throalic language to mean a weakling or an easily defeated opponent. When debaters use arguments they know are without merit in order to draw out their rivals, they are said to be building a strawman.

Strawmen are especially vulnerable to fire. Once set alight, they take progressively doubled damage from fire each Combat Round until completely consumed. The gamemaster may choose one of the following options for running strawmen in his game.

Option 1: Gamemasters may use strawmen to give the players a satisfying victory over a mass of opponents.

Option 2: Other, more powerful falsemen may conceal themselves inside a straw exterior, giving characters expecting an easy victory a nasty shock. Horror magic might have created a few tough strawmen capable of slaying the overconfident.

WAXMEN

Attributes

DEX: 6	**STR:** 6	**TOU:** 6
PER: 4/7	**WIL:** 4/7	**CHA:** 4/7

Initiative: 6
Number of Attacks: 1
Attack: 8
Damage: 9
Number of Spells: NA
Spellcasting: NA
Effect: NA

Physical Defense: 6
Spell Defense: 6/9
Social Defense: 6/9
Armor: 0
Mystic Armor: 0/3
Knockdown: 6
Recovery Tests: 0

Death Rating: 26
Wound Threshold: 6
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

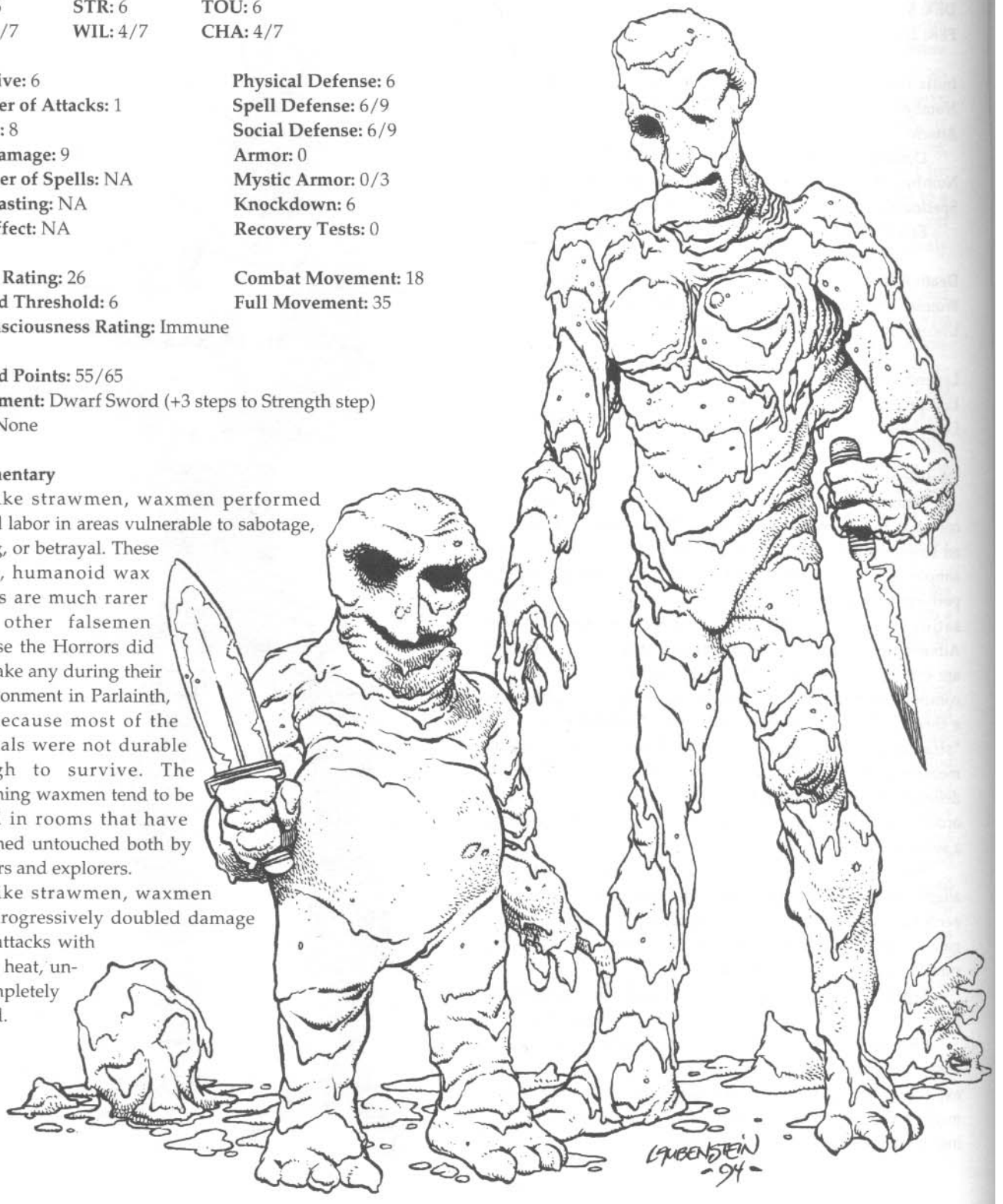
Combat Movement: 18
Full Movement: 35

Legend Points: 55/65
Equipment: Dwarf Sword (+3 steps to Strength step)
Loot: None

Commentary

Like strawmen, waxmen performed menial labor in areas vulnerable to sabotage, spying, or betrayal. These crude, humanoid wax shapes are much rarer than other falsemen because the Horrors did not make any during their imprisonment in Parlainth, and because most of the originals were not durable enough to survive. The remaining waxmen tend to be found in rooms that have remained untouched both by Horrors and explorers.

Like strawmen, waxmen take progressively doubled damage from attacks with fire or heat, until completely melted.







STONEMEN

Attributes
DEX: 6 **STR:** 10 **TOU:** 12
PER: 4/10 **WIL:** 4/10 **CHA:** 4/10

Initiative: 6
Number of Attacks: 2
Attack: 11
Damage: 22
Number of Spells: NA
Spellcasting: NA
Effect: NA

Physical Defense: 12
Spell Defense: 6/13
Social Defense: 6/13
Armor: 13
Mystic Armor: 0/5
Knockdown: 18
Recovery Tests: 5

Death Rating: 55
Wound Threshold: 13
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Combat Movement: 25
Full Movement: 50

Legend Points: 500/600
Equipment: None
Loot: Any reasonably intact pieces of a shattered stoneman can be sold as sculpture and count as treasure worth Legend Points. Depending on the quality of the workmanship, an intact head is worth D6 X 100 gold pieces; an intact head and torso might be double that value. Intact pieces of those rare stonemen sculpted from semiprecious stone such as jade or turquoise may bring quintuple that value.

Commentary

The Horrors made no stonemen of their own, so all stonemen remaining in Parlainth survived from before the Scourge. Constructed to serve as guards for sensitive sites, each one was carved holding a stone weapon. Because Parlainthians considered stonemen to be status symbols as well as sentries, their intricate ornamentation and classical grace of form make them attractive statues. Stonemen used in the Horrors' war games may show chips in their ornamentation. Slightly damaged stonemen remain formidable adversaries, and are more likely to have become homicidal under the Horrors' influence.

STEELMEN

Attributes
DEX: 8 **STR:** 20 **TOU:** 18
PER: 4/14 **WIL:** 4/14 **CHA:** 4/14

Initiative: 6
Number of Attacks: 2
Attack: 13
Damage: 25
Number of Spells: NA
Spellcasting: NA
Effect: NA

Physical Defense: 11
Spell Defense: 6/19
Social Defense: 6/19
Armor: 16
Mystic Armor: 0/9
Knockdown: 20
Recovery Tests: 6

Death Rating: 70
Wound Threshold: 15
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Combat Movement: 25
Full Movement: 50

Legend Points: 650/750
Equipment: None
Loot: Player characters may sell reasonably intact pieces of a broken steelman as sculpture. Such pieces also count as treasure worth Legend Points. Depending on the quality of the workmanship, an intact head is worth D6 X 100 gold pieces; an intact head and torso might be double that value. The few steelmen sculpted from precious metals are worth even more: any part of a copper steelman is worth five times the same part of a standard one, silver steelmen are worth ten times copper, and gold are worth ten times silver.

Commentary

Rarer and more durable than stonemen, steelmen once fulfilled the same purpose as their stone counterparts. Like the stonemen, many of them make dazzling art objects as well as potentially deadly foes. Steelmen reacted well to the rudimentary consciousness that the Horrors gave to some falsemen, and therefore tend to be somewhat more intelligent than other falsemen so endowed. Steelmen untouched by Horrors usually continue to perform their original duties, guarding a place or item of value to the long-dead Theran rulers of Parlainth.



FOUL FOLK

Attributes

DEX: 5	**STR:** 5	**TOU:** 5
PER: 5	**WIL:** 5	**CHA:** 5

Initiative: 6
Number of Attacks: 1
Attack: 7
Damage: 8
Number of Spells: NA
Spellcasting: NA
Effect: NA

Physical Defense: 6
Spell Defense: 6
Social Defense: 6
Armor: 0 (2)
Mystic Armor: 0
Knockdown: 5
Recovery Tests: 2

Death Rating: 31
Wound Threshold: 8
Unconsciousness Rating: 22

Combat Movement: 25
Full Movement: 50

Legend Points: 35
Equipment: Dwarf Sword
Loot: None

Commentary

Foul folk offers a catchall term to describe Name-givers corrupted by the Horrors. Though foul folk may exist anywhere in Barsaive, some unknown force draws many of them to Parlainth (see **Inhabitants,** p. 51 of **Northern Catacombs** in **Ruins of Parlainth**). Some stories recently accorded the status of legends say that the tainting of Parlainth by the Horror Hunter Buualgathor attracts the foul folk, but many Name-givers doubt such tales.

Most foul folk look very much like normal Name-givers, except for a slightly crazed, somehow evil look in their eyes. Their corruption robbed them of the last remnant of good, and only those foul folk with extremely high Charisma can convincingly mimic positive emotions such as love or joy. The statistics above represent an average human member of the foul folk. Foul folk exist among all the Name-giver races, and their statistics vary according to their race. To create foul folk of other races, gamemasters should consult the **Average Racial Attribute Value** and **Average Racial Step** tables, p. 56 of the **Earthdawn Gamemaster Pack,** and alter the Foul Folk game statistics as appropriate.

A few of the foul folk are adepts. For appropriate game statistics, use the Discipline archetypes listed in **Disciplines,** pp. 67–91, **ED.**

PLANT LIFE

The Scourge corrupted many things in Barsaive, including plant life. In certain plants, such as the three examples given below, the corruption of the Horrors awakened in them rudimentary, animal-level intelligence and turned harmless foliage into potentially deadly adversaries. In addition to the following three plants most often encountered in Parlainth, we encourage gamemasters to mutate existing plants or create new, equally deadly plants to keep players on their toes.

Characters with the Wilderness Survival Skill or knowledge skills in areas such as Botany or Natural Sciences can tell the difference between normal plants and their dangerous counterparts, usually by making a successful test using the appropriate skill against a Difficulty Number of 8 or 9. Where appropriate, the Difficulty Number for detecting dangerous types of plants appears in the plant's description.

CREEPING VINES

Attributes

DEX: 7	**STR:** 6	**TOU:** 6
PER: 6	**WIL:** 8	**CHA:** 5

Initiative: 9
Number of Attacks: 4
Attack: 7
Damage: 9
Number of Spells: NA
Spellcasting: NA
Effect: NA

Physical Defense: 7
Spell Defense: 9
Social Defense: NA
Armor: 6
Mystic Armor: 4
Knockdown: NA
Recovery Tests: NA

Death Rating: 150
Wound Threshold: 20
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Combat Movement: 15
Full Movement: 30

Legend Points: 225
Equipment: None
Loot: None

Commentary

Creeping vines possess a malign, animal-level intelligence and will attack any animal or player character within the vines' five-foot reach. Like many dangerous plants in Barsaive, creeping vines look like ordinary vines. Characters with such knowledge skills as Botany or Natural Sciences may detect creeping vines by making a successful Knowledge Skill Test using the appropriate skill against a Difficulty Number of 12. Creeping vines make 4 attacks per Combat Round, using their sharp leaves and thorns. In some rare cases, creeping vines can move into attack range instead of waiting for a victim to venture close enough. Most of the vines intelligent enough to do this grow within the ruins of Parlainth. In addition to a standard assault, creeping vines can also grapple characters within their reach (pp. 197–98, **ED**). Once they attack a target, creeping vines continue to attack until the target moves beyond their attack range, the vines are destroyed, or the target dies. Large and tough, creeping vines have an unusually high Death Rating for a plant. Though possessed of an animal-level intelligence, that mind is not smart enough to recognize or react to social interactions and any spells that affect the victim's mind, and so those types of attacks have no effect on creeping vines.

POISON VINES

Attributes

DEX: 0	**STR:** 0	**TOU:** 2
PER: 0	**WIL:** 0	**CHA:** 0

Initiative: NA
Number of Attacks: 1
Attack: 7
Damage: 9
Number of Spells: 1
Spellcasting: 12
Effect: Poison

Physical Defense: 2
Spell Defense: 2
Social Defense: NA
Armor: 0
Mystic Armor: 0
Knockdown: NA
Recovery Tests: 0

Death Rating: 38
Wound Threshold: 10
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Combat Movement: NA
Full Movement: NA

Legend Points: 20
Equipment: None
Loot: Poison sap, worth D10 x 4 silver pieces

Commentary

Poison vines look very much like the ordinary, harmless vines that grow over most of Parlainth's ruined buildings. Few visible marks distinguish poison vines from their harmless counterparts, but characters with knowledge skills such as Botany or Natural Sciences may detect poison vines by making a successful, appropriate Knowledge Skill Test against a Difficulty Number of 7.

Poison vines contain a toxic sap; the oil that coats the vines' razor-sharp leaves contains the same toxin. A character who brushes past these leaves may suffer cuts without realizing it, allowing the poison to affect him. The poison causes an extremely irritating rash that reduces all of the target's step numbers by 1. This effect lasts until the

character applies a poultice or poison antidote; or for 7 days (whichever comes first). The healing powers of a questor of Garlen or any questor of Jaspree can also neutralize the poison.

If characters attempt to hack down a poison vine, use the statistics listed above for the vine. Because poison vines cannot fight back, they are easy to kill.

ROLLING MOSS

Attributes

DEX: 0	**STR:** 0	**TOU:** 1
PER: 0	**WIL:** 0	**CHA:** 0

Initiative: 1
Number of Attacks: 1
Attack: 25
Damage: 4
Number of Spells: (1)
Spellcasting: 12
Effect: Sleep

Physical Defense: 2
Spell Defense: 2
Social Defense: NA
Armor: 0
Mystic Armor: 0
Knockdown: NA
Recovery Tests: 0

Death Rating: 10
Wound Threshold: NA
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Combat Movement: NA
Full Movement: NA

Legend Points: 10
Equipment: None
Loot: None

Commentary

Rolling moss, deep green in color with dark roots, grows in subterranean areas as well as outdoors. Its ability to grow swiftly over anything in its path gave rolling moss its name (though even rolling moss cannot grow on a rolling stone). Rolling moss can, however, grow fast enough to cover an animal or character within two hours.

Though swift when compared to the growth rate of normal plants, rolling moss moves slowly enough that a character or creature may notice it creeping over his body, even in his sleep. To become aware of the moss, a sleeping target must make a successful Perception Test against a Difficulty Number of 21.

Because it possesses only rudimentary intelligence, rolling moss attacks solely for food, and will attempt to cover conscious as well as unconscious victims. Any character remaining motionless for 1–2 hours may be covered in rolling moss, unless the character makes a successful Perception Test to notice it. When the moss begins to creep toward the target but does not yet cover any portion of the character, the Difficulty Number for the Perception Test is 11. Once the moss begins its attack by growing over a hand or foot, the Difficulty Number drops to 5.

Rolling moss produces an aromatic pollen that acts like a paralytic poison, putting the target character or animal to sleep. Once the moss has covered 95 percent of its target, the gamemaster must make a Spellcasting Test for the moss against the target's Spell Defense. If the test is successful, the pollen induces a sleep-like, paralytic state. To awaken from this effect, the affected character must make a Toughness Test against a Difficulty Number of 9 plus the number of minutes since the pollen took effect. For characters attempting to wake up without aid, the gamemaster should allow the character to make a Toughness Test against a Difficulty Number of 14 after 5 minutes. Any aid a character receives in waking drops the Difficulty Number for the Toughness Test to 5. Using any radical method to wake a character, such as splashing water in his face, attacking him, and so on, automatically wakes the victim.

If a character or animal does not wake from the paralysis within 4 hours, the moss begins to take root in the victim's body. The gamemaster must make an Attack Test for the moss against the victim's Physical Defense. Armor offers no protection against rolling moss, because it creeps along the body beneath a character's armor. If the Attack Test succeeds, the gamemaster then makes a Step 4 Damage Test for the moss to determine the damage done by the moss' roots digging into the victim. The moss can only attack its victim once per day; this limit allows characters a chance to wake up and stop further attacks.

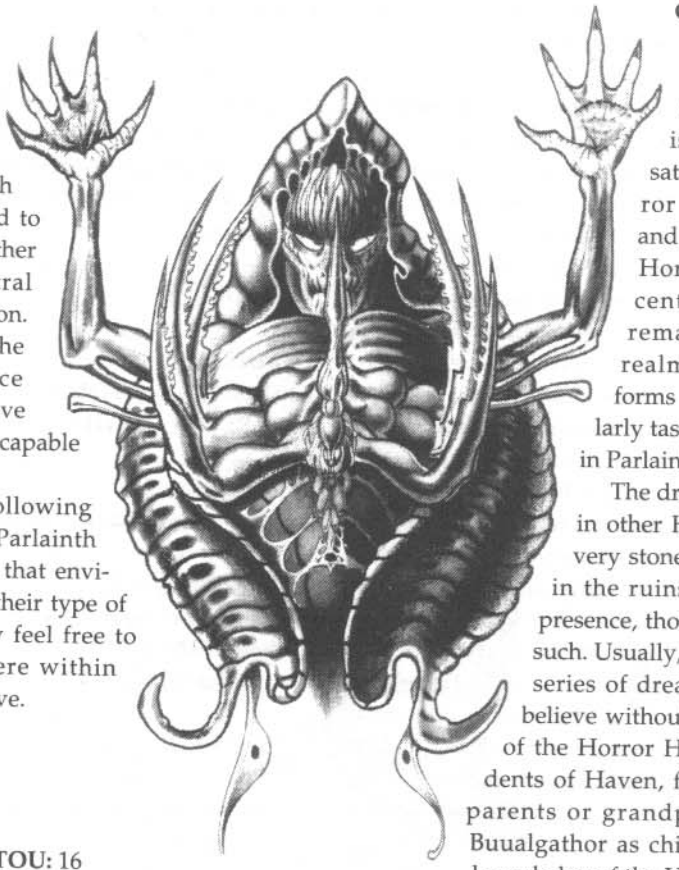
If a victim wakes up after the moss makes a successful first attack, the victim must remove the roots that have burrowed into his or her body. The difficulty of this task depends on how much damage the character has taken from the moss. If the total damage is less than the victim's Wound Threshold, the victim may simply pull the moss out, taking Step 2 damage in the process. If the total damage done to the character exceeds his Wound Threshold, the moss has dug so deeply into his or her body that only the elementalist sterilize-object spell can remove it (p. 160, **ED**). Note that an awakened victim takes no additional damage from the moss, no matter how long it takes him or her to get rid of it.

Unless the victim can free himself from the moss, it will eventually kill him. Many of the explorers and animals whose corpses litter Parlainth's tunnels and streets met their deaths this way.

HORRORS

Parlainth must claim the dubious distinction of hosting Barsaive's densest population of Horrors. The Horrors caught in Parlainth when it left the physical world to escape the Scourge attracted other Horrors, shining through astral space like a beacon of corruption. In that age, the city became the Horrors' playground; since Parlainth's return, the ruins have attracted many of the Horrors capable of remaining in Barsaive.

We have described the following Horrors as lairing near or in Parlainth and its environs, and consider that environment particularly suited to their type of corruption. Gamemasters may feel free to locate these Horrors anywhere within Parlainth or elsewhere in Barsaive.



BUUALGATHOR

Attributes

DEX: 24	**STR:** 16	**TOU:** 16
PER: 24	**WIL:** 23	**CHA:** 19

Initiative: 22
Number of Attacks: 7
Attack: 22
Damage: 28
Number of Spells: 2
Spellcasting: 23
Effect: See text

Physical Defense: 20
Spell Defense: 21
Social Defense: 21
Armor: 30
Mystic Armor: 32
Knockdown: 18
Recovery Tests: 10

Death Rating: 230
Wound Threshold: 25
Unconsciousness Rating: 190

Combat Movement: 100
Full Movement: 200

Karma Points: 35

Karma Step: 18

Legend Points: 150,000
Equipment: None
Loot: None

Powers: Damage Shift 15, Detect Horror 15, Mark Trace 19 (see below), Spells: (Circle 8 Nethermancer spells) Silent Walk 15, Terror 10

Commentary

Buualgathor, also called the Horror Hunter, considers Name-givers to be very unsatisfying prey. It finds greater satisfaction in feeding on the terror and pain of other Horrors, and so was the bane of its fellow Horrors in Parlainth for all the centuries in which the city remained outside the material realm. Buualgathor finds bloatforms and despairthoughts particularly tasty, both of which are common in Parlainth.

The dread that Buualgathor inspired in other Horrors permeates Parlainth's very stones, and those who spend time in the ruins often sense Buualgathor's presence, though they cannot identify it as such. Usually, this sensitivity manifests as a series of dreams or a strong tendency to believe without question rumors or legends of the Horror Hunter. Many long-time residents of Haven, for example, insist that their parents or grandparents told them tales of Buualgathor as children, though in truth their knowledge of the Horror Hunter comes from the memories of the Horrors living in the ruins. For several perspectives on the Legend of Buualgathor, see **Testimony Regarding the Horror Hunter** in **Vardeghul's Trove of Lore**. Other Horror Hunters may exist, but Buualgathor is the only one known to exist in Barsaive.

Buualgathor appears as a humanoid figure, usually of the same race as the person seeing it, wearing a dark cloak that seems to move with an eerie life of its own. On closer inspection, those who behold this Horror can see that the "cloak" is an appendage made of the same ropy tissue as the rest of the Horror Hunter's body. When Buualgathor engages in physical combat, it throws back the "cloak" to reveal seven blade-like arms, each of which may attack during a Combat Round. Buualgathor also has two stunted, weak arms with normal hands.

Buualgathor finds most of its prey by following the link between a Horror-marked Name-giver and his or her tormentor to the Horror's lair. Buualgathor tries to catch Horrors in the act of tormenting their victims, because the sudden change from tormentor to victim makes the Horror's terror more acute. To hunt in this manner, Buualgathor uses the special Horror powers of Mark Trace and Detect Horror, described below.

Detect Horror: The Detect Horror ability allows the Horror Hunter to notice the presence of Horrors, Horror-marked characters, and Horror-cursed items. To use this power, Buualgathor makes a Detect Horror Test against the Spell Defense of the Horror it wishes to hunt (which may be physically present, or responsible for a mark or curse). A successful test means the Horror Hunter locates the Horror, marked victim, or cursed item, and knows what type of Horror it is hunting. If more than one Horror, Horror-marked victim, or Horror-cursed item lies within the Horror Hunter's view, compare the result of the Detect Horror Test to the Spell Defense of each Horror, marked victim, or cursed item. Buualgathor detects all those whose Spell Defenses do not exceed the test result.

Mark Trace: In order to trace a Horror through its Horror-marked victim, the Horror Hunter must touch the victim's forehead. Though Buualgathor prefers to use its withered hands to make this link, its blade appendages work just as well. The Horror Hunter then makes a Spellcasting Test against the victim's Spell Defense. If the test is successful, the thread of magical energy between the victim and the Horror becomes briefly visible. The Horror Hunter rides this thread to the Horror's physical location; to outside observers, it appears as though the Horror Hunter turns to visible energy and shoots along the glowing thread. Though allowing Buualgathor to destroy the Horror tormenting them may seem appealing to Horror-marked characters, only the suicidal hope for Buualgathor to use its Mark Trace power on them, because the Horror-marked individual suffers damage in the process equal to the result of the Horror Hunter's Spellcasting Test. Mystic Armor reduces this damage.

One of the following options may represent the truth of Buualgathor's current activities.

Option 1

Buualgathor left Parlainth long ago, but fear of the Horror Hunter remains. Remembered terror pervades the dreams and memories of the residents of Haven strongly enough to make the Horrors remaining in Parlainth think twice before marking victims they encounter in the ruins.

Option 2

Buualgathor feels a nostalgic fondness for its most fruitful hunting ground and returns to Parlainth every decade or so to pick off a few old enemies. Whenever it returns, Haven experiences an upsurge of false sightings of Buualgathor's cloaked form, as well as an epidemic of nightmares centered on the Horror Hunter.

Option 3

Though Buualgathor is too fearsome a foe for most adventuring groups to face, the gamemaster may use the Horror Hunter to dispatch a Horror-marked gamemaster character before the adventurers' eyes. Buualgathor can provide an appropriately gruesome way to get rid of a character that the gamemaster needs to dispose of for plot purposes.

DECEIVERS

Attributes

DEX: 13	**STR:** 6	**TOU:** 8
PER: 14	**WIL:** 11	**CHA:** 15

Initiative: 15
Number of Attacks: (2)
Attack: 10
Damage: 12
Number of Spells: 6
Spellcasting: 22
Effect: See below

Physical Defense: 7
Spell Defense: 8
Social Defense: 9
Armor: 0
Mystic Armor: 10
Knockdown: 3
Recovery Tests: 4

Death Rating: 28
Wound Threshold: 7
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Combat Movement: 50
Full Movement: 100

Karma Points: 20 **Karma Step:** 8

Powers: Animate Dead 12, Corrupt Karma 12, Cursed Luck 12, Damage Shift 12, Empathy Net 20, False Form 20, Thought Mirror 20 (see below), Spells: (Circle 1 Wizard spells)

Legend Points: 1,000
Equipment: None
Loot: None

Commentary

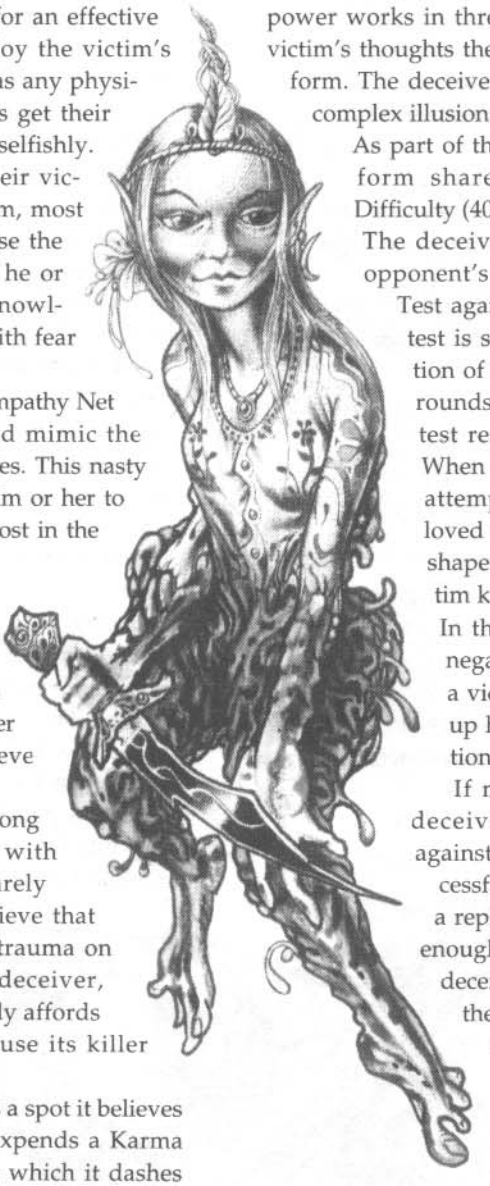
Few people know what deceivers really look like, for they almost always appear cloaked in illusion. Even in death they assume a false form. According to a few reports from powerful illusionists who have beheld deceivers with true sight, they appear humanoid in shape, no more than four feet tall, covered from head to toe in gray, lumpy skin that resembles writhing brain matter. These illusionists saw no sensory organs or other visible features.

Deceivers usually roam in packs of 6 to 8. They delight in using trickery to lure victims to their destruction, either physical or mental. Deceivers use their Empathy Net power (see below) to mentally scan an unsuspecting victim from a distance and determine his or

her most noble instincts. Then the deceivers use the Thought Mirror power (see below) to create a large-scale illusion meant to appeal to those instincts. Finally, they use their False Form power (see below) to fit themselves seamlessly into the illusion. When the victim comes to investigate, the deceivers reveal themselves and attack. This element of surprise makes for an effective ambush, but the deceivers seem to enjoy the victim's feelings of shock and betrayal as much as any physical damage they might inflict. Deceivers get their thrills from punishing those who act unselfishly. Given a choice, they prefer to leave their victims barely alive rather than killing them, most likely in hopes that the victim will refuse the next opportunity to act heroically once he or she recovers. Deceivers revel in the knowledge of having stained a shining soul with fear and self-doubt.

In combat, deceivers combine their Empathy Net and False Form powers to identify and mimic the appearance of their opponent's loved ones. This nasty trick unsettles the opponent by forcing him or her to hack away at those he or she cares for most in the world. If its opponent succeeds in killing a deceiver, the Horror plays one final trick: it shapeshifts into a precise copy of its slayer as a child between the ages of six and ten. More than one hero has been attacked in the act of disposing of a deceiver corpse by righteous assailants who believe they have caught a child-murderer.

Of all the Horrors, deceivers are among the easiest to kill despite the ferocity with which they defend themselves. They rarely flee from fights, and many scholars believe that they care more about inflicting mental trauma on others than their own survival. To a deceiver, death at the hands of a Name-giver simply affords the Horror another opportunity to cause its killer harm.



Empathy Net: Once a deceiver selects a spot it believes will attract the right kind of victim, it expends a Karma Point and performs a brief ritual during which it dashes out the brain of a living creature against a rock. After this gruesome rite, the deceiver waits until a Name-giver approaches to within 500 yards of it, at which point the power of the ritual mentally alerts the deceiver to its victim's presence. The deceiver then makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense of any Name-givers within the 500-yard range. If the test is successful, the Empathy Net power fills the deceiver's mind with images from the Name-givers' minds. From this telepathic flow, the deceiver can determine what situations would most likely trigger a self-sacrificing response from the targets, what their past and present loved ones look like, and what they looked like as young children.

False Form: The False Form power allows the deceiver to mimic anything it sees in an Empathy Net scan. This power works in three ways, depending on which of the victim's thoughts the deceiver is using to inspire the false form. The deceiver can, for example, become part of a complex illusion created by its Thought Mirror power. As part of the thought mirror, the deceiver's false form shares the thought mirror's Sensing Difficulty (40) and Disbelief Difficulty (26).

The deceiver can also assume the form of an opponent's loved one by making a False Form Test against the victim's Spell Defense. If the test is successful, the victim suffers a reduction of 2 steps to all actions for a number of rounds equal to the difference between the test result and the victim's Spell Defense. When the effect wears off, the deceiver can attempt to adopt the form of yet another loved one. Because the deceiver changes its shape while its opponent watches, the victim knows he or she is fighting an illusion. In this case, however, disbelief does not negate the 2-step reduction. Even though a victim knows he is not really chopping up his mother, he still finds the act emotionally difficult to perform.

If mortally wounded in combat, the deceiver makes a final False Form Test against its killer's Spell Defense. On a successful result, the deceiver transforms into a replica of its opponent as a child. Oddly enough, this change is not an illusion. The deceiver actually becomes a dead child of the relevant Name-giver race, matching its opponent at that age down to the last freckle.

Thought Mirror: The Thought Mirror power allows the deceiver to use images gleaned from an Empathy Net scan to create a complex illusion that appeals to the victim's sense of heroism. Examples include a mother and baby trapped in a burning building, a drowning child being swept down a river, or a kitten being stalked by a rabid dog. The illusion covers 5 square yards for every 1 of the deceiver's Spellcasting steps. The Step Number for most thought mirrors is 20, giving the illusion a Sensing Difficulty of 40 and Disbelief Difficulty of 26.

GHARMHEK

Attributes

DEX: 4	**STR:** 4	**TOU:** 30
PER: 20	**WIL:** 20	**CHA:** 4

Initiative: 4
Number of Attacks: 1
Attack: 9
Damage: 11
Number of Spells: 1
Spellcasting: See text
Effect: See text

Physical Defense: 4
Spell Defense: 10
Social Defense: 4
Armor: 10 (head)/0 (body)
Mystic Armor: 10
Knockdown: See text
Recovery Tests: 5

Death Rating: 58
Wound Threshold: 17
Unconsciousness Rating: 51

Combat Movement: 8
Full Movement: 16

Karma Points: 15

Karma Step: 12

Powers: Animate Dead 15*, Damage Shift 10, Horror Mark 10, Terror 10

Legend Points: 400
Equipment: None
Loot: None

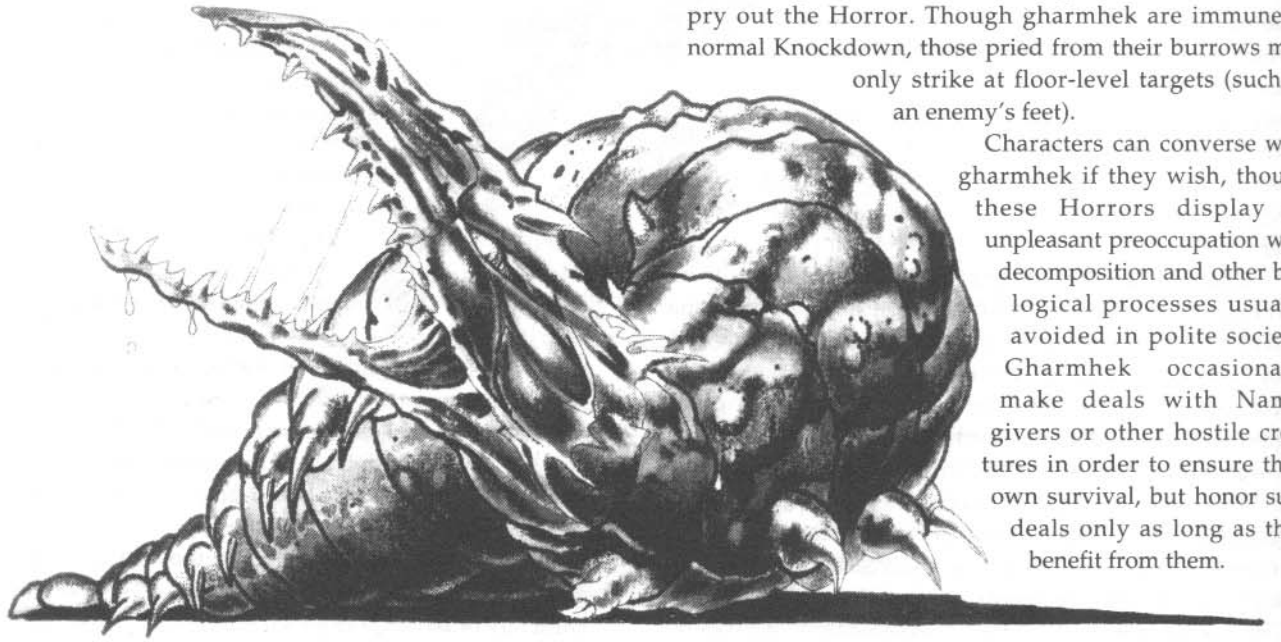
*Unlike most other Horrors, the gharmhek can use their Animate Dead power within 100 feet of the victim, and need not touch the victim.

Commentary

These loathsome Horrors feed on Name-giver feelings of distaste and revulsion. Less robust than many of their kind, they skulk in safe burrows waiting for dead Name-givers to be brought near them. They prefer to live near graveyards, catacombs, field hospitals, and other such places where the dead abound. The gharmhek use their Animate Dead power to make cadaver men of the corpses, then wait for Name-givers to approach and react with disgust to the sight of the walking dead. Living Name-givers react especially strongly to the unlife of those walking dead they knew personally; the specific, negative emotions of these Name-givers is a rare delicacy to the gharmhek, who quiver in pleasure when they detect it. A brief shot of such personal revulsion can sustain them for months. When forced to do without it entirely, the gharmhek hibernate, surviving in sleep for centuries.

The gharmhek resemble bizarre reptiles, with frills of heavy bone behind their armored heads and sharp, fearsome-looking beaks for mouths. Their tiny, dark eyes burn with cruel intelligence. Their flabby, snakelike bodies extend roughly three feet behind their heads and are encrusted with scabs and sores that often leak a milky, greenish fluid. The gharmhek protect their weak bodies by burrowing into the ground or into earthen walls, exposing only their armored heads. A gharmhek is at a great disadvantage out of its burrow. Those experienced in fighting them usually try to pry them loose in order to expose their pulpy posteriors. To force a gharmhek from its burrow requires a successful Strength or other appropriate test against the gharmhek's Physical Defense, as well as a pole or some similar implement with which to pry out the Horror. Though gharmhek are immune to normal Knockdown, those pried from their burrows may only strike at floor-level targets (such as an enemy's feet).

Characters can converse with gharmhek if they wish, though these Horrors display an unpleasant preoccupation with decomposition and other biological processes usually avoided in polite society. Gharmhek occasionally make deals with Name-givers or other hostile creatures in order to ensure their own survival, but honor such deals only as long as they benefit from them.



SCURRIERS

Attributes

DEX: 9	**STR:** 5	**TOU:** 11
PER: 9	**WIL:** 9	**CHA:** 4

Initiative: 10
Number of Attacks: 1
Attack: 9
Damage: 11
Number of Spells: 1
Spellcasting: NA
Effect: NA

Physical Defense: 7
Spell Defense: 8
Social Defense: 8
Armor: 6
Mystic Armor: 10
Knockdown: 8
Recovery Tests: 4

Death Rating: 47
Wound Threshold: 13
Unconsciousness Rating: 40

Combat Movement: 30
Full Movement: 60

Karma Points: 15

Karma Step: 12

Powers: Cursed Luck 13, Repair 25 (see text)

Legend Points: 350
Equipment: None
Loot: None

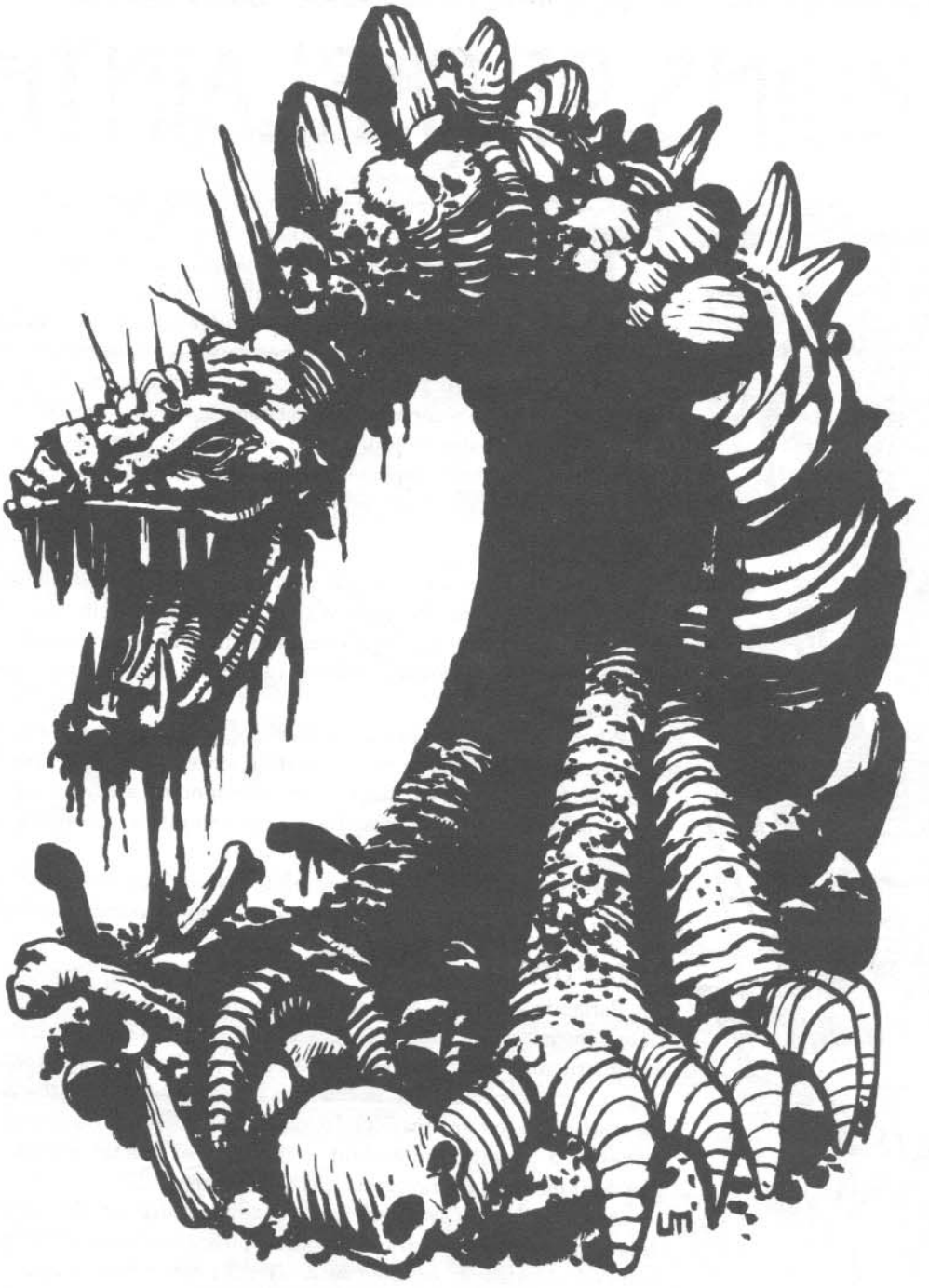
Commentary

Rarely seen elsewhere in Barsaive, scurriers are regrettably common in the ruins of Parlainth. Most Name-givers find the sight of these small, humanoid Horrors disturbing. Exposed bits of living brain bulge out from their skulls, their saucer-shaped eyes glow with a pale, sickly color, and coarse, insect-like hair covers their bodies. Weak and cowardly by nature, scurriers prefer to harm their victims from a distance. They scurry through the rubble, using their Repair power to restore the Forgotten City's many damaged and deteriorating traps in hopes of catching hapless explorers. The scurriers feed on the pain and suffering of their trapped victims. Though scurriers usually flee when threatened, they fight ferociously when cornered.

Repair: The Horror power of Repair allows scurriers to use elemental force to fuse together the broken pieces of a trap. A scurrier using this ability makes a Repair Test against a Difficulty Number determined by the gamemaster, based on the condition of the item in question. For example, a trap that needed only a single part replaced would be an Easy task (Difficulty Number 6); restoring a trap corroded into a pile of rust would be Heroic (Difficulty Number 23). For more information on determining Difficulty Numbers, see **Gamemastering Earthdawn,** p. 244, **ED.**



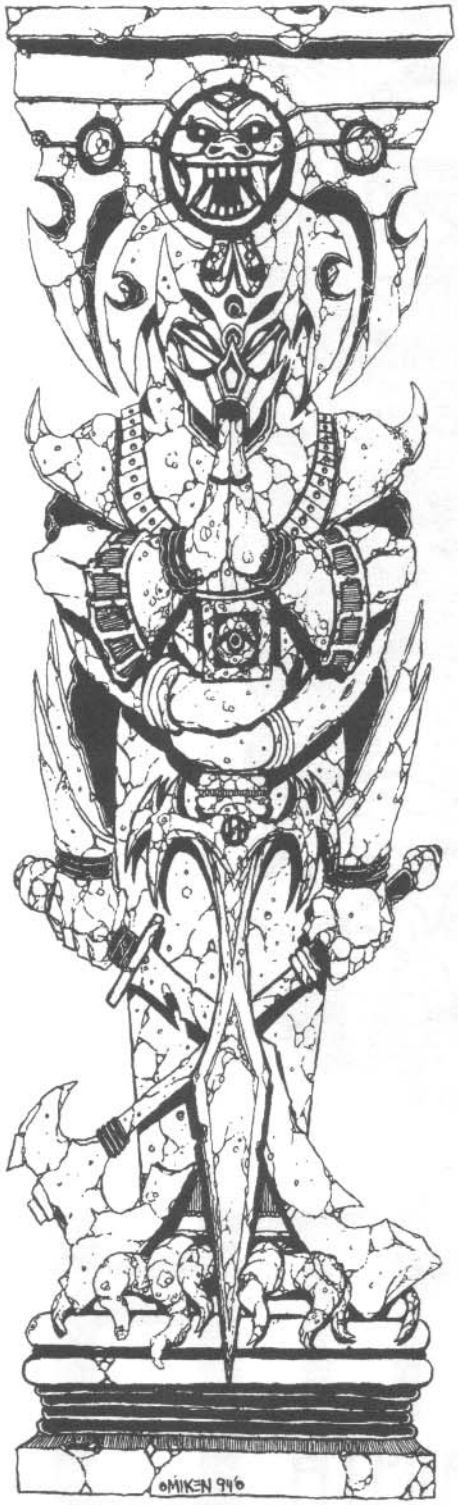

END OF BOOK ONE



PARLAINTH

BOOK 2: RUINS OF PARLAINTH

RUINS OF PARLAINTH



The ruins of the Forgotten City of Parlainth can be divided roughly into nine areas, popularly known as the Laneways, the Twists, Southern Catacombs, the War Zone, the Western Catacombs, the Vaults, the Northern Catacombs, the Smalls, and the Eastern Catacombs. This book provides a brief overview of the ruins of Parlainth, then describes each area in more detail, covering the physical surroundings and pertinent information about each area's contents and inhabitants. This information is designed to allow the gamemaster to tailor each area of the ruins to his game. See **Area Descriptions**, p. 6, for an explanation of the elements of each description.

OVERVIEW

Parlainth is a vast city, roughly diamond-shaped, with the long axis of the diamond pointing toward Thera (see map). Each side of the city is about 5 miles long; within Parlainth's shattered walls lies more than 25 square miles of ruined buildings, shadowed streets, and crumbling catacombs infested with Horrors and other fearsome creatures.

When Parlainth reappeared in Barsaive, it returned to a land blighted by the centuries-long Scourge. In the generation since the city's return, the Barsaivian wilderness encroached on much of the surrounding area. Parlainth currently lies between a vast forest to the north and west, and plains and mountains to the south and east.

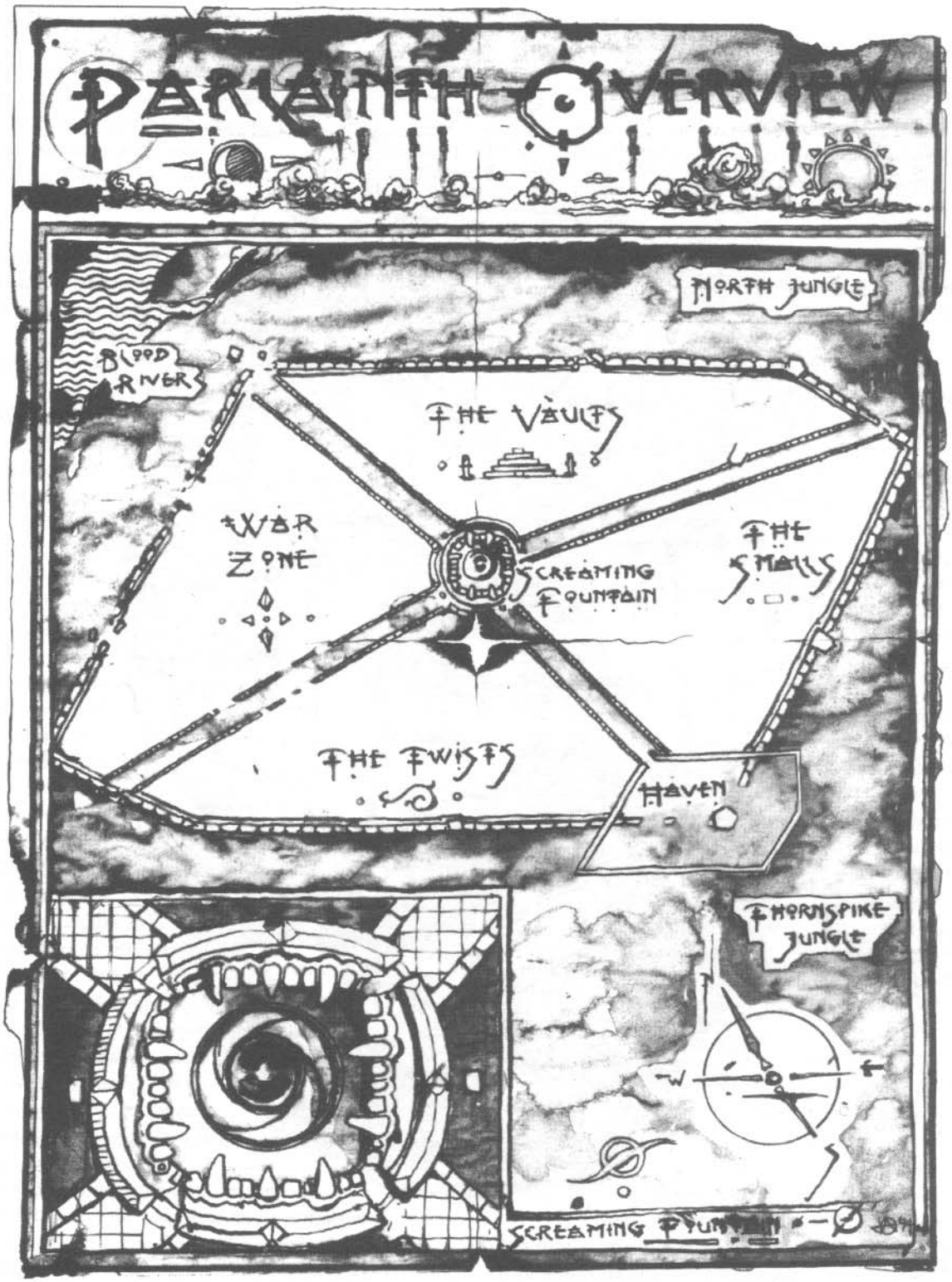
The Therans conceived of and built Parlainth as two cities: the area aboveground, surrounded by a huge wall, and the underground catacombs.

SURFACE CITY

Parlainth's builders intended their provincial capital to inspire awe and fear among the native population and so they constructed it on a grand scale, designing every structure that could be considered a public building at least half again as large as actually necessary in order to make those visiting the city feel small in comparison to the greatness of Theran achievement. In its ruined state, Parlainth serves as a gigantic monument to the folly of mortal arrogance, its size and grandeur mocking the hollow boasts of braggarts.

Most buildings are made of limestone, badly weathered by time and the depredations of the Horrors, the once sharp, clean lines of the limestone blocks rounded, chipped off, or eaten away. The ornamentation so beloved by the Theran artisans who built the city in ancient times is scarcely recognizable, and the stone looks unnaturally colorless, the shade of dead flesh.

Parlainth's monumental style of Theran architecture favored ziggurats, four-sided stepped pyramids, for public buildings. Ornamental fluted pillars adorn even the simplest structures; the buildings' true purpose often giving the lie to the air of importance implied. Only rarely do they actually support the buildings to which they are attached. Domes and thin, pointed, minaret-like towers also found their way into Parlainth. Encouraged to experiment with their designs in order to stun the eye, Parlainth's architects produced a cityscape that its critics called a gaudy profusion of incompatible shapes fighting each other for the viewer's atten-


PARAMATH OVERVIEW
NORTH JUNGLE
BLOOD RIVER
THE VAULTS
WAR ZONE
SCREAMING FOUNTAIN
THE SPIRALS
THE TWISTS
HAVEN
THORNSPIKE JUNGLE
SCREAMING FOUNTAIN

tion. Now that civil war, nature, and the Horrors have toppled or demolished most of the taller structures, the crazy-quilt look is less obvious, but the amazing variety of buildings makes the work of historians and explorers alike extremely complicated.

Local Flora and Fauna

The surrounding jungle began to take over the ruins of Parlainth soon after the city reappeared in Barsaive. Massive vines and creepers, some as thick as a troll's arm, wind their way up most buildings, providing a convenient means of scaling walls for those proficient at climbing. Many Barsaivian plants can survive in scant soil; even a thin ridge of dirt on a shelf or terrace may support any number of broad-leaved varieties, and tall, flowering weeds poke their way up between shattered paving stones all over Parlainth's streets. Some plants bear edible fruit for the hungry adventurer to pluck and eat, but many more are poisonous. Player characters who lack the advantage of Plant Lore or similar knowledge skills should avoid eating anything they find growing wild in the city. Many plants developed defenses against predators (and impatient adventurers hacking their way through dense growth); knife-edged leaves and needle-sharp spines on tree bark await the unwary. Other plants spread their seeds by clinging to animals and adventurers who brush against them; explorers resignedly picking burrs out of their clothing and the manes of their mounts are a common sight in the adventurers' enclave of Haven.



A wide variety of creatures live in the ruins, ranging from small rodents and larger mundane animals such as lions and wolves to magical creatures such as gargoyles and espagra. Parlainth also claims the dubious distinction of being the most densely Horror-infested area left in Barsaive, and so counts large numbers of the so-called Horror constructs such as jehuthras, black mantises, and several species of invae among its inhabitants. For more information about the wildlife that plagues the ruins of Parlainth, see **Running Adventures in Parlainth** and **Creatures** in the **Parlainth Gamemasters Book** (**Parlainth GM**).

THE CITY WALL

When the Therans in Parlainth decided to escape the Scourge by sending the city away from the world, they commissioned the dwarf stoneworkers of Throal to build a limestone-and-granite wall around the city. Because the Therans intended the wall to be part of the ritual that would eventually bring Parlainth back to Barsaive, Parlainth's magicians created unique specifications for the stones used in building the wall. The stones held within their structure the phrase to be spoken in order to bring Parlainth back. Seven tomes in the Library of Throal contained diagrams of the stones, but the spell that sequestered Parlainth also erased from writings and memory all mention of the stones' purpose (for the story of Parlainth's return to Barsaive, see the **Earthdawn** novel, **The Longing Ring**).

Parlainth's wall is three feet thick and once stood 20 feet high, surrounding the ruins at a distance of roughly 50 feet from the outermost buildings. The once-white stones are

gray with age and stained with the blood of those slain in the Horror-driven wars fought in the city during the Scourge. Reduced to little more than a series of scattered piles of rubble, more than half of the wall crumbled to pieces during the Horrors' reign in the city. The city's current occupants partially rebuilt the wall in certain places for safety, and to better control the area in which they live.

During the height of the Horrors' rampage through Parlainth, many city residents desperate for escape sought to break through the wall. The more primitive Horrors caught up with these unfortunates in the no man's land between the wall and the city limits and devoured them where they fell. The area became a killing ground for the Horrors and their constructs; the first explorers who set foot in Parlainth after the city's return found the no man's land littered with skeletons.



DOWN IN THE CATACOMBS

Beneath the streets of Parlainth lies the undercity, *a maze of underground* tunnels and chambers used by the Therans to conceal aspects of Theran life considered distasteful by the provincials, such as the slave trade, magical experimentation, and the machinery of death. Those who built the undercity included slave pens, storage areas, magical experimentation chambers, burial areas, and the Theran treasury in their plans. Over time, the Therans moved many storage areas and even the treasury in order to create more space for the ever-larger number of slaves. By the time Parlainth escaped the physical world, the undercity barely resembled the architect's original design. Many of these dramatic changes took place without regard to structural safety, and during the Horrors' reign of terror, much of the undercity collapsed, trapping and sometimes killing its residents.

The original underground only extended downward two or three levels. Over time, the Therans expanded parts of the undercity to include fourth, fifth, sixth, and even seventh levels. While most of the original underground areas were built of limestone and granite, the later expansions held to less strict construction methods and used dirt floors in nearly all of the lowest levels. The most unfortunate explorers find those floors that have become thick mud and even quicksand the hard way. The walls and ceilings of many lower levels collapsed long ago, making passage through them especially difficult.

The Therans built most corridors as small as possible in order to maximize the space available underground, making most passageways only seven feet high and *five to six feet wide.*

Flora and Fauna

Like the surface city, Parlainth's catacombs abound with plant and animal life. Many unusual types of fungus and moss thrive underground. One particularly nasty moss, known as "rolling moss" by explorers, grows so quickly that it might even grow on a rolling stone (thus its name). Many times has rolling moss covered luckless, sleeping adventurers in a mere few hours.

The startling variety of creatures that live in the undercity make exploring it a risky proposition. Krilworms and shadowmants abound, and many other fearsome creatures are a common sight. Some creatures infest only certain areas of the catacombs; it's hard, for example, to walk more than a few feet in the Eastern Catacombs without bumping into cadaver men.

AREA DESCRIPTIONS

Each of the areas of Parlainth described in the following sections begins with a short, fictional journal entry written by an explorer who traveled through the area in question. Intended primarily to suggest an appropriate mood for each area, the gamemaster may also use these as additional documents sold at Vardeghul's Lore Exchange (see p. 20, **Parlainth GM**).



Following the journal entry, the information about the area is organized into three parts: **Overview**, **Exploration**, and **Adventure Ideas**.

Each part may contain **Options**. In most cases, these suggestions simply provide the gamemaster with a few ideas for events and creatures we consider typical for that area, or alternate explanations for circumstances the player characters may encounter. In those cases in which we provide specific rules, statistics, or other numbers, we believe those options represent a way to introduce an element into the game and still maintain game balance. As always, we encourage the gamemaster to adjust these numbers to suit his game and style of play.

OVERVIEW

The overview of each area includes the area's original name, used to describe the area during Parlainth's heyday; the area's location in relation to other areas of the ruins; notes on each area's connection to its underground or aboveground counterpart; a physical description of the area, including a map; and brief descriptions of the area's original and later uses.

Map

Each map depicts a representative portion of a given area. Gamemasters can use these maps as models for designing their own ruins, or simply populate the given maps with appropriate inhabitants and treasures on the spur of the moment.

Uses

Gamemasters can use any area's original use to logically determine what that area now looks like by considering the type of buildings that might have originally stood in a given place.

This section also describes any changes an area might have undergone since its construction, ranging from rebuilding prior to the Scourge to changes wrought by Horrors or explorers. The gamemaster can use these details to determine the current condition of the ruins.

EXPLORATION

This section describes who and what explorers might encounter in a given area. Information in this section falls into the categories of **Inhabitants**, **Booty**, **Traps**, and **Encounters**.

Inhabitants

Inhabitants includes creatures or other Name-givers that may live in a given section. In some cases, this section includes profiles and game statistics of particularly important characters or creatures.

Some areas of the ruins are no man's lands, and specific entities or organizations claim other areas for their territory. Characters entering controlled areas may face immediate opposition, depending on who governs the area. If someone or something has organized the inhabitants of an area, their organization appears in this section.

Booty

This section describes any valuable salvage to be found in any given area, the nature of which depends largely on the area's original and later uses and the nature of its current inhabitants.

Traps

This section describes the types of traps that explorers might find in an area. Many traps in the city's surface areas, such as pits and holes that lead into the lower areas, occur naturally.

Armor-Defeating Hits: If a character triggers a trap and cannot avoid it (see **Trap Initiative**, p. 210, **ED**), the character suffers the trap's effects. Armor reduces the damage done by most traps unless the gamemaster achieves an Armor-Defeating Hit when making the trap's Effect Test. To determine whether or not the trap achieves an Armor-Defeating Hit, find the character's Armor Rating in the Difficulty Number column of the Success Level Table (p. 246, **ED**), then compare the result of the Trap Effect Test to the Armor Rating. If the Effect Test result is Excellent or better, the trap has defeated the character's armor.

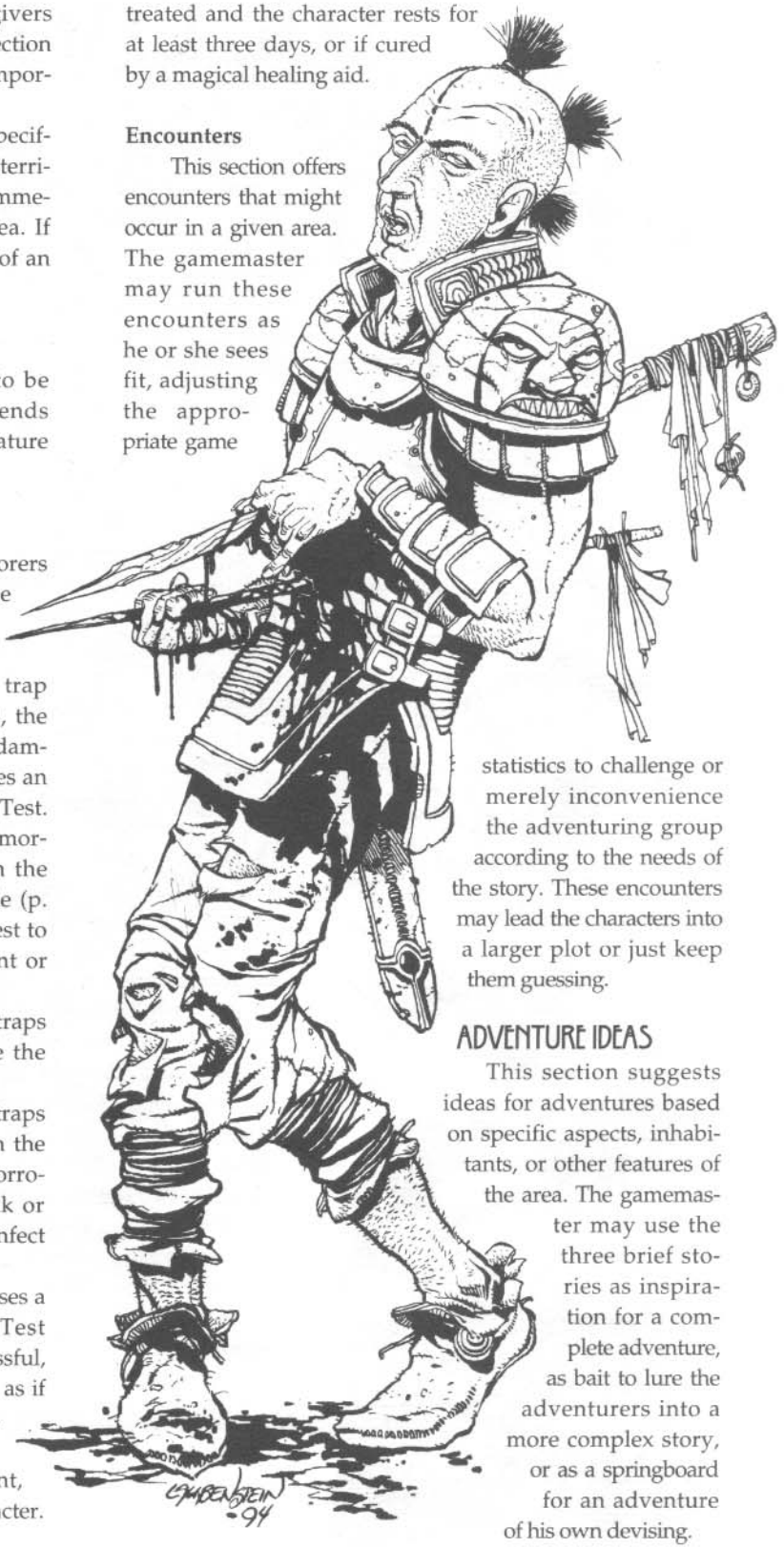
To determine Armor-Defeating Hits for magical traps that make Spellcasting Tests against the victim, use the procedure given on p. 194, **ED**.

Current Condition: Many of the spike and blade traps encountered in the ruins have rusted and corroded in the centuries since their construction. In some cases, the corrosion weakens the spikes or blades so that they break or cause less damage. The rust and corrosion might also infect the wound the trap inflicts.

If damage inflicted by a rusty or corroded trap causes a Wound, the gamemaster makes a Step 5 Damage Test against the victim's Toughness step. If the test is successful, the Wound becomes infected. Treat an infected Wound as if the victim were affected by a debilitating poison (p. 208, **ED**). The infection has no effect on the victim until three to five days after he receives the Wound; at that point, fever, delirium, and nausea overcome the injured character. The infected Wound heals only if it is treated and the character rests for at least three days, or if cured by a magical healing aid.

Encounters

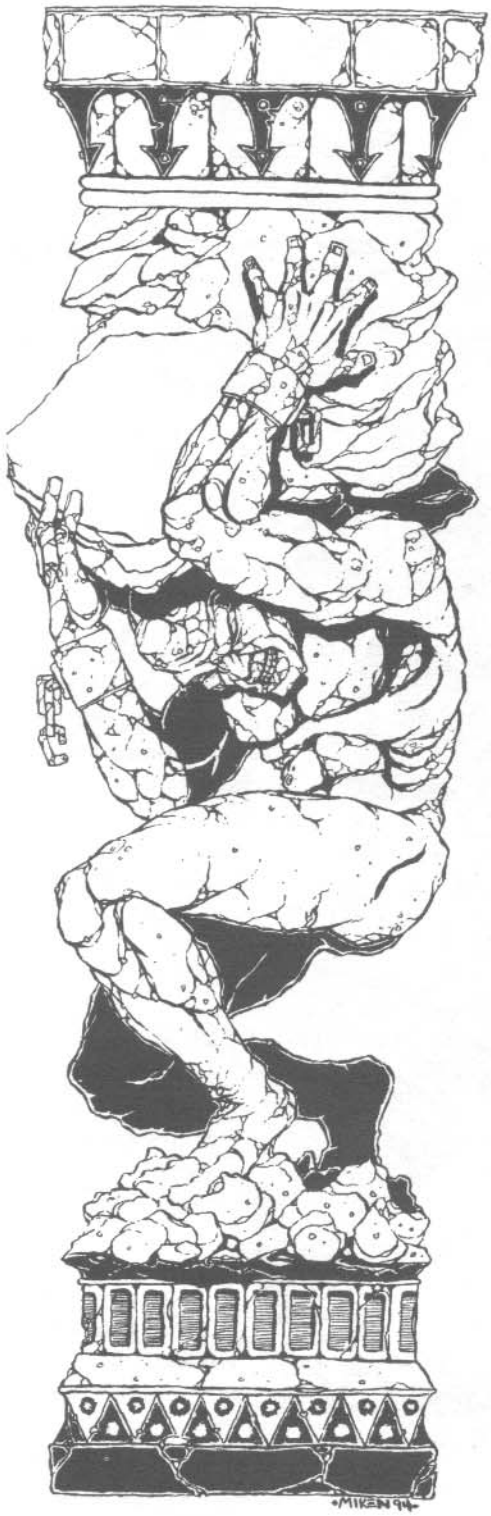
This section offers encounters that might occur in a given area. The gamemaster may run these encounters as he or she sees fit, adjusting the appropriate game statistics to challenge or merely inconvenience the adventuring group according to the needs of the story. These encounters may lead the characters into a larger plot or just keep them guessing.



ADVENTURE IDEAS

This section suggests ideas for adventures based on specific aspects, inhabitants, or other features of the area. The gamemaster may use the three brief stories as inspiration for a complete adventure, as bait to lure the adventurers into a more complex story, or as a springboard for an adventure of his own devising.

THE LANEWAYS



—From the legend of the cavalryman Jor of Tlack

I stood there watching the dwarf dance a little jig of excitement. Me, I just wanted to clear out. I always say, you're nothing but a big target in the Laneways—no cover. Especially from above. I hate flying critters. They spook me and Kronos, too. Kronos was twitching his ears, stamping about. Bad sign, that. Kronos always knows when something bad's about to happen.

The dwarf kept chattering away. I tried to ignore him, to keep my eyes peeled for sudden movement. No luck. He insisted on me paying attention. He was gloating. Almost hugging himself. He spilled the whole story to me then and there. Or tried to, until I threatened to clout him across the face if he didn't shut up.

He'd bought this old diary some fool said he found in the ruins. Turned out to be written by one of the craftsmen who'd laid the mortar in the Laneway walls. Man claimed he'd stashed a great treasure inside a hollow brick, under the statue of Chavos Tallari ("Who?" I said). So the dwarf went all the way to Throal, studied the books. Found some old document that told him exactly which smashed-off stump of a statue used to be Chavos Tallari. So Kronos and I sat out in the open Laneways for next to forever, watching the dwarf count pairs of wrecked stone feet.

He finally found the right one, tapping the blocks till he heard the hollow sound he wanted. Then he started to whack away at it.

Just then, Kronos whickered. I heard a rumbling noise. Looked 'round. There they were, galumphing down the road from the Screaming Fountain—four orks mounted on thundra beasts. I'd heard the Unforgivables had recruited some renegade scorchers; now I knew what for. Cleanup duty.

I grabbed the dwarf by the neck of his cloak, tried to haul him up onto Kronos' back. He shrugged me off, grabbing for the stone he'd just cracked open. Something poked out from inside—a little statue, it looked like. I booted the dwarf in the head, tossed him up on Kronos, grabbed the treasure, and bolted.

Kronos didn't need me to spur him on. We rode as one, a single mass of forward-moving muscle, widening the distance between us and the scorchers. A sling stone sailed past us, then another. The paving stones of the Laneways rumbled under the thundra beasts' massive feet. I swore. Kronos and I could outrun them, but they'd get plenty of shots at us. Our best chance depended on them not knowing the lanes as well as we did.

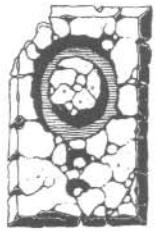
We banked hard to the left to avoid a troll-sized termite nest. I snuck a quick look back at the scorchers; they looked like good enough riders to miss the nest, even on their bigger steeds. But would they know about the pit I'd just jumped Kronos over? And even if they did, could they stop those ungainly mounts in time?

Kronos landed nimbly on the other side. The dwarf flopped around on my saddlebow. He'd have a few good bruises—I'd cry over them, sure. Behind me, I heard a great crash, and the pounding of thundra hooves stopped. I pulled up and whirled about, then had to laugh. The thundra beasts' weight had collapsed a huge chunk of the lane and they'd all plunged into the pit below. Good luck to the scorchers, getting their steeds up out of there. Twiceborn's cadaver men would feast tonight.

There's a reason I've always been a horse man.







OVERVIEW

Parlainth's founders named the laneways the Grand Boulevards. In the city's heyday, each boulevard also carried an individual name; the southwest boulevard was called Thom Edro Way, the southeast, Elianar Messias Way, the northeast was Kearos Navarim Way, and the northwest Carote Matru Way (after an early Theran poet).

The four laneways meet at the Screaming Fountain in the middle of the ruins. From that central point, each boulevard radiates diagonally out toward one of the four corners of the city.

The original plans for the city intended the laneways to separate the city into four quarters. From around 540 to 590 TE, those in charge of subterranean development began to ignore the plan and expand their respective passages to run beneath the laneways themselves. They also dug connecting passages between the underground quarters, both approved and unofficial. As a result, explorers entering an exposed section of underground passageway from a laneway cannot be sure whether the passage belongs to the righthand quarter, the lefthand one, or simply connects the two.

DESCRIPTION

Each of the four laneways is approximately twenty feet wide, bordered on both sides by a containing wall roughly 10 feet high. Gaps in the walls lead into side streets. The statues that once lined the top of each containing wall have been reduced to disembodied stone feet or lie in pieces across the lane; many vanished altogether long ago. Though the remaining damaged pieces have no worth, the statues' exquisite workmanship shines through even those fragments. (Explorers "salvaged" the few relatively intact pieces in the early days of Parlainth's return, and these reminders of another era now adorn the galleries of wealthy collectors and organizations.) Each statue stood about twenty feet high and depicted a Theran notable of the early sixth century TE.

Weather, time, and war broke the giant paving stones of the laneways. Some now lie on top of others or wedged into the ground at right angles (providing excellent cover for ambushers), and thick weeds grow between the stones everywhere the soil is exposed. Many grow far larger than normal for their species, and others seem mutated, as if the presence of the Horrors twisted their most basic nature. Some plants are even carnivorous. Gaping holes in the roads expose the tunnels far below.

Explorers who travel the laneways court danger. A well placed spy or scout can see for miles along the roads, spotting many a luckless band of adventurers long before the adventurers see their enemy. Despite the dangers, the laneways still offer the quickest route through the ruins, a particularly important point for adventurers intent on being first to reach a treasure spot or fleeing for their lives.

USES

The laneways originally served as Parlainth's main thoroughfares, easing the passage of goods and people through the city and at the same time overwhelming the visitor with a wondrous tableau of light, air, and music. The Singing Fountain, a huge fountain mounted on a massive, stepped pyramid at the point where the laneways converged, piped music as occasion demanded and wove complex patterns of water on command. The Therans surrounded this awe-inspiring sight with the largest and most finely wrought statuary in the city. So high was the fountain's pyramid base that those who stood on it could survey the entire city and the countryside for miles in all directions.

During the Horror-driven civil wars that ravaged Parlainth, the laneways became crucial strategic objectives. Those who controlled them could move large numbers of fighters or equipment quickly through the city. The many battles to take and retake them, however, quickly destroyed their usefulness by making them impassable to armies.

The Singing Fountain, corrupted by Horror magic, now emits a horrifying scream unsettling to anyone close enough to touch the fountain's base. The fountain mentally assaults those who come too close to it; when this happens, the gamemaster must make a test using the fountain's Mental Assault Step (see **Mental Assault Options**, following) against the Spell Defense of the intended victim.

The corruption has drastically altered the fountain's appearance. The facial features of the three decorative statues whose heads remain intact—those of the Mad Passions, naturally—are horribly contorted. The fountain now runs with blood rather than water, rendering the delicate patterns of its ever-changing streams extremely gruesome.

The gamemaster must determine the range of the fountain's scream and the effectiveness of its mental assault. The gamemaster may choose any of the options listed below.

Mental Assault Options

1. The fountain has a Mental Assault Step of 20.

2. The fountain's Mental Assault step waxes and wanes from as low as 5 to as high as 25, following a cycle that no one has yet figured out.

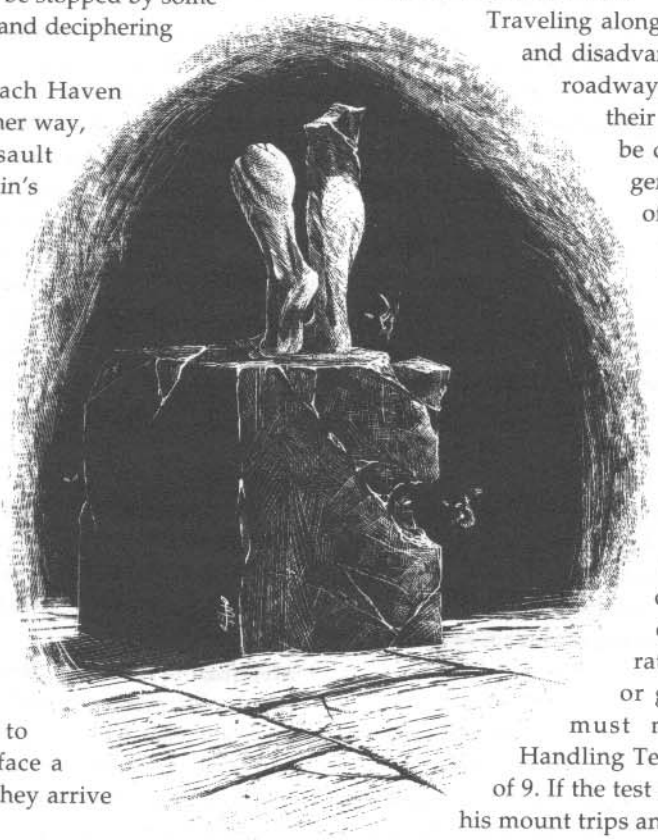


Range of Scream Options

1. The scream carries no further than the base of the pyramid, a mystery of Horror magic that none of the Forgotten City's adventurers feel inclined to examine too closely.

2. At times, the range of the scream increases. During one of the periodic risings of the creatures in the ruins (see **Assault on Haven**, p. 43 of **Parlainth GM**), the scream might reach as far as Haven, causing an epidemic of madness. These episodes can only be stopped by someone traveling to the fountain and deciphering its mystery.

3. The scream might reach Haven independent of an attack. Either way, the effect of the mental assault varies according to the fountain's success level.



Average Success: The victims feel compelled to leave the area. In order to conquer this compulsion, they must make a Willpower Test using the result of the fountain's Mental Assault Test as the Difficulty Number. Those who fail the test and leave find that the compulsion fades in a number of minutes equal to the Difficulty Number. Once those minutes have elapsed, the victims may attempt to return to where they were, but must face a second mental assault when they arrive there.

Good Success: Victims pass out, remaining unconscious for a number of minutes equal to the result of the Mental Assault Test.

Excellent Success: Victims become temporarily insane, behaving in a dangerously extreme manner for a number of hours equal to the result of the Mental Assault Test. The gamemaster determines the exact symptoms of the madness, depending on the character of the victim. For example, a quick-tempered and violence-prone character might become a homicidal maniac, assaulting everyone in sight. A nervous character might roll up into a ball and weep. The group joker might scamper and caper about, giggling maniacally as he dances into the hide-out of a pack of demiwraiths. When the duration of the effect elapses, victims do not remember their actions while insane.

Extraordinary Success: The victim becomes permanently insane in the manner described above. Even if the player is cured of this insanity in some miraculous way, the victim loses a point of Perception. This loss reflects that while the effects of the madness can be dispelled, the dire emotional resonances of Parlainth's ruins cannot be removed by any known magical means.

EXPLORATION

Traveling along the laneways offers advantages and disadvantages. Though the long, straight roadways allow swift movement even in their dilapidated state, they still must be considered among the most dangerous places in the ruins. Creatures of all manner inhabit the areas near to the laneways and frequently venture onto them.

Rubble and broken paving stones, traps, and other debris obstruct the lanes, and so attempting to move at any speed faster than walking increases the risk of the traveler falling victim to accidents and other misfortunes. Characters who attempt to run or make their horses gallop may only move at half their normal rate. Characters or riders running or galloping along the laneways must make Dexterity or Animal Handling Tests against a Difficulty Number of 9. If the test is unsuccessful, the character or his mount trips and falls.

Some riding animals, like thundra beasts, are strong, sturdy, and naturally armored, which makes them better suited to traveling over the laneways' rough ground. For characters riding such beasts, reduce the Difficulty Number of the Animal Handling Test to 5.

At the gamemaster's discretion, explorers in the laneways may run across any or all of the following.

INHABITANTS

Explorers may encounter any creature normally found in Parlainth either traveling on a laneway or waiting hungrily nearby in ambush. Explorers may also pass others bent on looting the ruins who took to the roadways: old drinking buddies from the Restless Troll, foul folk, Theran agents, followers of Mad Passions, and devotees of the Hand of Corruption represent only a few of the

possibilities. Note that no organized band of creatures or other inhabitants of the ruins currently consists of sufficient numbers to consistently patrol or control any of the roadways.

BOOTY

Because the laneways were the most accessible area of the ruins, intrepid explorers cleaned out virtually all the loot hidden there even before the founding of Haven. A few treasure caches remain, but these remain very well hidden. Adventurers might reasonably expect to stumble across gear or swag belonging to explorers who met an unfortunate and gruesome end on the roadway, pick up valuable items dropped by fleeing adventurers, or steal a few modest baubles from enemies who attempt to ambush them.

TRAPS

Parlainth's inhabitants set countless traps in the laneways in an attempt to protect themselves from the Scourge, to little avail. Horror-driven armies of madmen tripped most of those traps during the city-wide civil war of 607–611. The laneways of 1506 TH are littered with sprung blade traps rusted beyond repair. A few working models may remain, however, built into the containing walls or hidden beneath the paving stones.

Intelligent Horrors reset some of the original blade traps and built other traps. Creatures from the underground passages beneath the laneways often camouflage holes in the roadway to capture unsuspecting adventurers.

Blade Trap

Blade traps generally feature several sharp blades set to slit a victim's throat or cut him across his legs. The blades in most of Parlainth's traps are centuries old and rusted or corroded. These rusty blades can cause infected Wounds (see **Traps,** p. 7 of this book), or may be so weakened that they do less damage than a clean, new blade.

Use the following statistics for a typical blade trap.

Detection Difficulty: 7
Disarm Difficulty: 9
Trigger Condition: Pressure plate, trip wire, or moving a specific stone.
Trap Initiative: 17
Trap Effect: Several blades spring from the ground beneath the victim or from the walls. The blades do a total of Step 13 damage. Most of the blades are rusted and may break against armor. If armor prevents the trap from doing damage to a character, the blades shatter.

ENCOUNTERS

The following three encounters represent typical events and meetings the characters may experience as they travel through the laneways.

Ghost Battle

As the characters travel along one of the laneways, the gamemaster secretly makes a Perception Test against a Difficulty Number of 9 for each character. For every successful test, that character hears the scraping of boot soles against paving stones and the whisper of blades being pulled from scabbards, and the sounds immediately increase in volume so that all the characters hear arrows whistling through the air, sword blades clanging, and shouted curses in the dwarf and elf languages. Before long, cries of pain and howls of grief rend the air. The sounds come from all around—the explorers seem to be surrounded by a fierce and bloody skirmish, but can see and feel nothing.

Unless the adventurers somehow learned of the phenomenon previously, they have no way of knowing that they have encountered the ghosts of battling Parlainthians from the time of civil war soon after the disappearance of the city. At the height of the phantom conflict, all the characters must make Willpower Tests against a Difficulty Number of 10. A character who fails the test is overcome with fear and runs at full speed in a randomly chosen direction for a number of rounds equal to the difference between the test result and the Difficulty Number. Talents and spells used to dampen fear work normally.

Meeting the Hand of Corruption

As the characters travel along the southwest laneway, the gamemaster makes a secret Perception Test against a Difficulty Number of 6 for each character. Any character whose test is successful notices a group of Name-givers hiding behind a pile of paving stones. This group is the latest in a particularly unsavory set of recruits to the Hand of Corruption, the band of fanatics dedicated to destroying all life because they believe the world to be irretrievably corrupted by the Horrors.

If the characters sneak up on the Hand members or attack them, they face a pitched battle with enemies much like them. Each character fights a seedy looking, underfed opponent of the same Circle and Discipline as his or her own. The Hand members carry gear similar to that of the adventurers, but only a handful of copper pieces in cash. If improvising the encounter, use the player characters' game statistics for their enemies. The Hand members fight until one of their number falls unconscious, then abandon their fellow and escape down a hole in the roadway, landing in an underground passageway.

If the adventurers approach the Hand members, the lead member hails them with the complaint, "Took you long enough!" This Hand of Corruption gang assumes that the adventurers belong to the reinforcements their superior told them to wait for before marching on the lair of the dragon Charcoalgrin in the Imperial Palace (see description of Charcoalgrin, p. 44 of this book). They have orders to slay the dragon and claim its loot for the Hand of Corruption. In fact, the Broker who commands this crew considers them a pack of loose-lipped incompetents and so sent them on a suicide mission.

Persuasive player characters can convince the Hand members to lead them to their Broker. He turns out to be the local head of the Hand of Corruption, Masahik the Good-Humored. If the characters decide to participate in the raid on Charcoalgrin's lair, they discover that the Hand members have no battle plan. If the player characters insist on devising one, the Hand members obstruct them at every turn, pointing out nonsensical flaws in any proposed course of action. If the entire group actually manages to assault the dragon's forces, the Hand members abandon the fight as soon as anyone in the group, including the player characters, falls unconscious.

Sighting Scurriers

At any point the gamemaster deems appropriate, the characters spy a trio of small, scurrying figures far ahead on the laneway, fiddling with something on or in the containing wall. As the player characters draw closer, they see that the creatures seem to be repairing a blade trap. The creatures resemble small humanoids covered in coarse hair. Pulsing bulges of living brain matter protrude from their skull cases; their saucer-sized eyes glow a dull, yellowish-green. When they see the adventurers, they leap over the containing wall and disappear.

These creatures are scurriers (see p. 77, **Parlainth GM**). They always avoid a fight if possible, but attack fiercely if cornered.

ADVENTURE IDEAS

The following adventure ideas represent typical reasons characters might have for venturing into the laneways and include optional explanations for the circumstances and situations they discover there.

MAPPING THE LANEWAYS

A group of businessfolk sees fat profits in clearing and maintaining the laneways of Parlainth. They hire the player characters to map (in excruciating detail) every foot of the southeast laneway and to judge what kind of patrol force might be needed to keep the roads free from marauding creatures. The explorers discover firsthand the true danger of the laneways, but must fulfill their deadly mission in order to get their hands on the healthy chunk of coin they have been promised upon completion.

BOUNTY HUNTERS

The Loyal Order of Delvers (see p. 29, **Parlainth GM**) recently placed a hefty bounty on the heads of a vicious bandit gang in the habit of waylaying explorers on the southeast laneway as they enter the ruins. The player characters take the job in order to do something heroic and get paid at the same time. Clever players may realize that the bandits are behaving oddly—logically, they should wait to ambush the explorers leaving the ruins with loot. After defeating the bandits, the characters investigate their backgrounds and discover that the Therans paid the brigands to provide a diversion while Theran agents search the area for a coveted, magical treasure.

SECRET OF THE EASTERN CATACOMBS

A loud, repetitive, metallic clang echoes nightly from the ruins, disturbing the sleep of the residents of Haven. The player characters investigate, and discover minions of Twiceborn the cadaver queen (see p. 63 of this book) hard at work digging new passageways in the Eastern Catacombs. Unfortunately for the adventurers, the cadaver men prefer to keep their activities secret. If the player characters survive the cadaver men's assault, they may attempt to infiltrate Twiceborn's court in order to discover the real story behind this operation.

Option 1

Twiceborn has discovered a map with a secret vault marked on it. The vault contains jewels that once belonged to a prominent merchant's family, and Twiceborn wishes to add them to her collection.

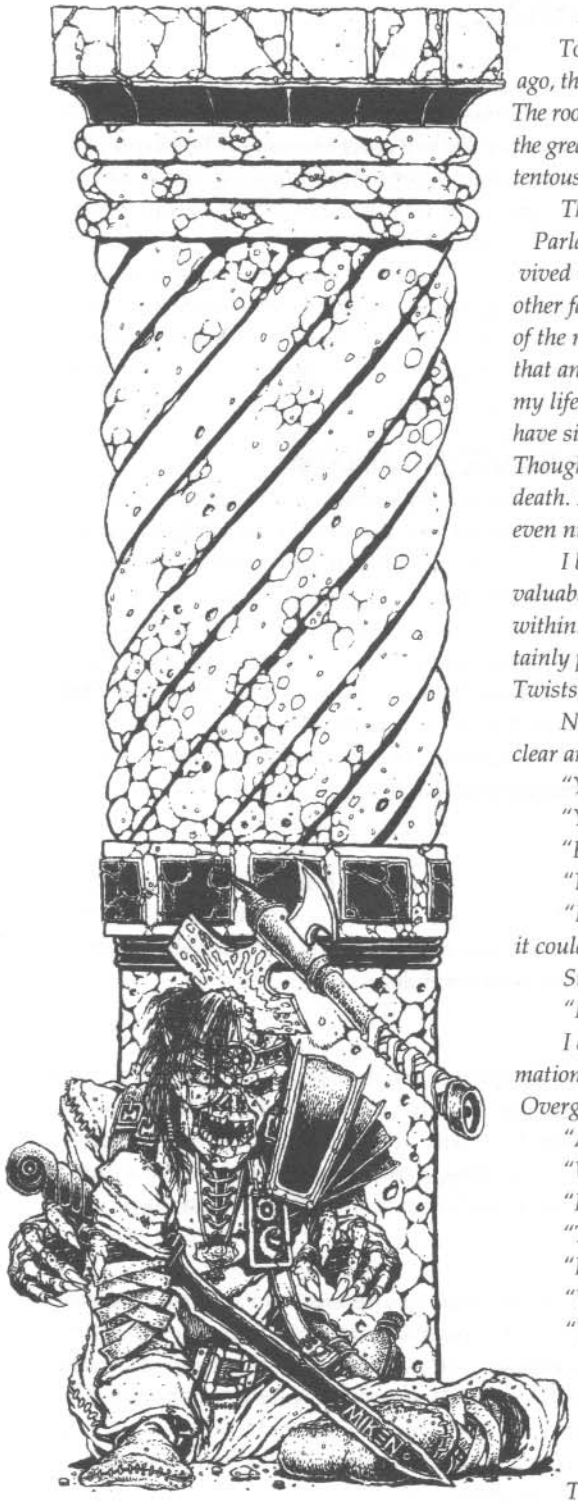
Option 2

Twiceborn intends the new passageways as a defense against intrusion by adventurers. In Twiceborn's considered opinion, too many accurate maps of the entrances to her realm are floating around Haven, and so she is building new tunnels and seeding the old ones with traps.

Option 3

At the behest of a supposed questor of Upandal, Twiceborn has her cadaver men building useless passageways as a tribute to that Passion. The questor promised that Upandal will help Twiceborn and her people live again. In fact, the questor is a disguised thief who hopes to distract Twiceborn sufficiently to break into her vault of riches uninterrupted.

THE TWISTS



—An account of an event magically observed by Casmar Bundra

To my amazement, the room looked precisely as it had when last I saw it so many years ago, that sad day when Wariz died in her vain attempt to touch the soul of a spectral dancer. The room had gathered more dust and grime, but remained otherwise unchanged. Considering the great value of the items contained within its walls, its untouched condition struck me as portentous.

The room filled most of the first floor of a building in the Twists. Long ago, when Parlainth lived, this shop catered to the wealthiest of its citizens. Miraculously, it survived unscathed all of the disasters that overtook the city. The shop sold fine porcelains and other fancy containers, and I knew the ancient vases, jars, and amphoras lining the shelves of the room would command great prices in the world outside. Years ago, when the Horror that animated the spectral dancer oozed up from the floorboards and forced me to flee for my life, I bitterly lamented the fact that we had been unable to snatch even a single jar. I have since given myself to the service of Throal, and such petty concerns mean little to me. Though perhaps back then, my regret simply masked my grief and shock over Wariz's death. I had never witnessed a death, until hers. Now I have seen so many that I cannot even number the victims.

I bade my followers stand back, and entered the shop alone. If no one had touched the valuable porcelain jars in so many years, that meant something foul most likely awaited within. I had a good idea what it was. Given the vastness of Parlainth's ruins, it was certainly possible that no explorer had ventured to this shop since I had left it. But in the Twists, one's bleakest imagining usually turns out to be the truth. And so it was for me.

No sooner had I stepped fully into the room than I heard a voice. Wariz's voice, as clear and melodious as ever, coming from everywhere and nowhere at once.

"You have finally come back for me," it said. "You left me behind."

"Yes."

"But you could not help it."

"No."

"It overwhelmed you with fear so that it could have my dying corpse to itself. So that it could change me, and keep me here forever."

Suddenly, I wanted to cry. "I have come back for you, Wariz."

"It is too late."

I cleared my throat. "I serve Throal now. We need to know where you filed the information on your old Theran informant, Honyptus. He has returned to Barsaive as advisor to Overgovernor Kypros."

"Ah, he has risen within the ranks. Unsurprising."

"Wariz, tell me for the sake of Throal. Then I shall leave you to rest undisturbed."

"Rest? I get no rest here."

"Tell me." I was trembling.

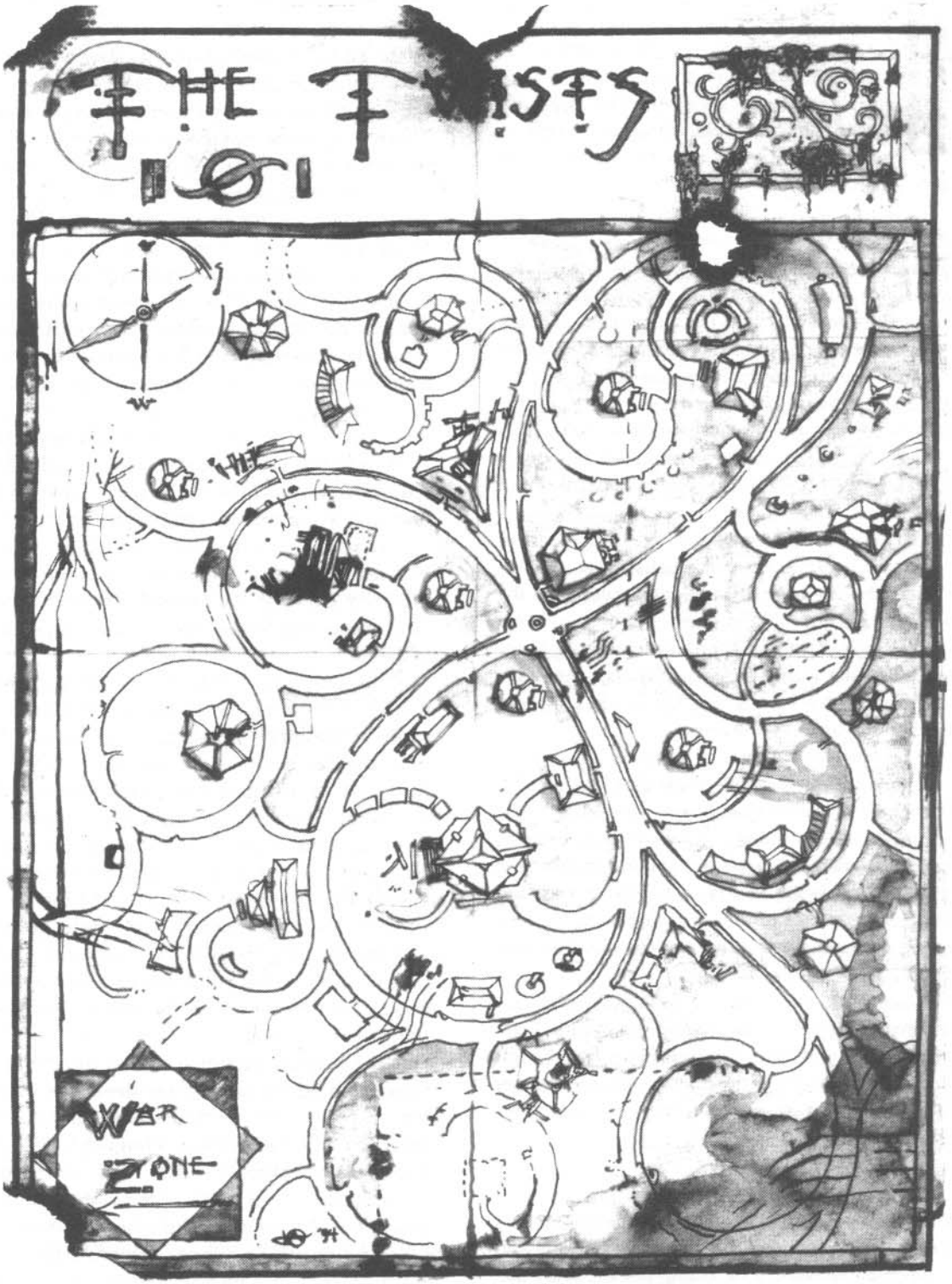
"I cannot do good now. I have crossed the threshold."

"Wariz, show yourself."

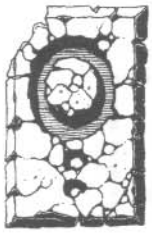
"You will regret it."

The next moment I fell to the floor, a river of pain running through my head. Huge, moist hands gripped my throat, half tearing at it and half squeezing. Then I saw an unmistakable pair of violet eyes floating in the air above me. Wariz's eyes ...

I died that day. I, too, have crossed the threshold. Do not follow me, retainers of Throal. Do not follow me.


WAR
ZONE





VERVIEW

Originally known as the Merchant Quarter, the Twists cover the southern quadrant of the ruined city.

Beneath the Twists lie the Southern Catacombs, trap-laden passages and rooms where the Therans once hid the treasures of Parlainth.

DESCRIPTION

The Twists are so named because the streets of this quarter wind around and twist back upon themselves. Though this feature makes the Twists an easy place to get lost in, the area is fairly easy to map because each street possesses unique features. In the limestone buildings gracing the streets of this quarter, gentle curves replaced straight lines as the basic unit of design. Before the Horrors came, the slopes and rounds in the area created a soothing, reassuring feeling, as if the buildings grew naturally from Barsaivian soil.

Nowadays, an intangible sense of dread hangs over the Twists. The sky overhead is perpetually overcast, even when the rest of the city basks in sunlight. Explorers in the Twists often hear distant thunder even on those rare days of clear skies. When storms roll through Parlainth, lightning strikes the Twists. If drizzle soaks the rest of the ruins, sheets of rain drench the Twists. The Twists always feel a trifle cooler than the surrounding areas.

Despite its unnatural level of rainfall, the Twists remains arid, largely devoid of the plants that flourish elsewhere in Parlainth. A few stunted, brown vines cling to the walls, and only the most hardy and determined weeds poke through the cracks between the paving stones. The most abundant plants in the Twists are fungus, molds, and mosses. Fungus sometimes drapes entire buildings, giving off nauseating odors and assaulting the eyes with sickeningly bright colors.

In stark contrast to other areas of Parlainth, which suffered widespread destruction, the Twists resembles a ghost town. Explorers find most of its buildings intact, as though its inhabitants abandoned it to the mushrooms and mosses mere hours ago and may soon return to reclaim their homes and businesses.

USES

Originally intended to serve as Parlainth's commercial quarter, the Twists was filled with shops for retailers and craftsmen, open-air bazaars, inns, eating places, livery stables, banks, schools, and offices for services of all kinds. The Theran architects designed its gently twisting walkways to make strolling and browsing a pleasant experience, and constructed buildings pleasing to the eye in order to relax the visitor and tempt him to stop and buy.

In spite of authorities' attempts to restrict all homes to the city's residential quarter, the better-heeled merchants of the middle class bent the architectural laws in order to set up housing closer to their places of business. These merchants' homes are less ostentatious than the pyramidal monstrosities favored by the aristocracy, which provided immense amusement to the more practical-minded businessmen and shopkeepers. The merchants preferred more modest housing, in keeping with what they considered their position as the hard working, hardheaded Name-givers who represented the real backbone of the Theran Empire. They built houses almost indistinguishable from their businesses, in many cases combining the two. The public rooms of such buildings faced the street, and the private rooms lay at the back. By the sixth century, shortly before Parlainth's disappearance from Barsaive, fashions had changed. In buildings dating from that time, shop space took up the bottom floor and living space the upper stories.

Though left virtually untouched by the Horror-induced civil war that engulfed Parlainth after its departure from Barsaive, the Twists later became the site of terrible events that forever tainted and steeped it in an aura of dread.

The Horrors in Parlainth manipulated the civil wars to be an orgy of slaughter. Within a few years, most of the city's inhabitants lay dead. During that time, the Horrors realized that they could not return to Barsaive or to their own astral realm. They were trapped in Parlainth, possibly for eternity. As many of them needed mortal suffering the way natural creatures need food, the more intelligent Horrors devised a system of long-drawn-out torment for the remaining Parlainthians, rounding up the beleaguered citizens and imprisoning them in the Twists, the only area left intact. Some of the buildings in this area still bear the magical wards by which the Horrors imprisoned their unfortunate victims.

The Horrors subjected the captured Name-givers to slow, methodical torture, the details of which must be left unspoken. But no matter how carefully the Horrors tried to keep their victims clinging to painful life, the captives eventually died. The death of the last Parlainthian forced many of the Horrors into dormancy; others starved to death. Still other, stronger Horrors survived by corrupting the falsemen, artificial constructs built as servants by the people of Parlainth. These Horrors pitted the falsemen against each other in war games to amuse themselves while they waited for someone to call Parlainth back to Barsaive.



The pain and terror felt by the Horrors' captives permeates the Twists' mundane and astral atmosphere with suffering and death. The shades of the last citizens of Parlainth still haunt the area, and any sound made in the Twists echoes a faint undertone of their cries and wails. The place now serves as a sanctuary for the undead and other creatures of the night. Living beings find the Twists emotionally oppressive and constantly feel that dozens of unseen and hostile eyes watch them from all sides.

MAP

The map shows the tangled layout that gives the Twists its name. The shaded areas mark the walkways of the original commercial district; doors of buildings set along these paths face the public walkways. Most buildings also offer smaller back exits.

EXPLORATION

The following inhabitants, booty, traps, and encounters are common among the Twists.

INHABITANTS

The pall of dread hanging over the Twists makes it unappealing to all but Horrors, undead beings, and the most vile of creatures. Any Name-givers who attempt to set up permanent residence in this area gradually become insane; most sensibly relocate before the place claims their reason. Even the cadaver men who live here have less intelligence than those elsewhere, too mindlessly crazed and bestial even to join Twiceborn's kingdom in the Eastern Catacombs (see p. xx).

BOOTY

The city merchants accumulated considerable hoards of coin and valuable luxury items as a natural result of trade, but had little interest in magical treasure. The Horrors took the choicest items as trophies for their war games, but plenty of marketable loot remains to be salvaged from the Twists. Many items soaked up the prevailing air of dread and madness; gems are particularly susceptible to this effect, and those found in the Twists often reflect much less light than similar untainted jewels. Those who wear gems recovered from the Twists often fall victim to fits of depression or nightmares of torture, or they may suffer from rashes of bad luck. Beautiful (and expensive) paintings, tapestries, and other works of art left in this part of the ruins changed subtly over the years, so that the eyes of any Name-givers depicted look sad or foreboding. China and silver often give the food prepared or served on them the taste and smell of rotting flesh.

Not all items are so cursed, but sorting the tainted valuables from those untouched is a difficult task. Most experienced collectors of fine wares avoid items retrieved from the Twists; the sly seller or reseller learns to lie about the background of such pieces. Note that minor or major curses, rather than Horror curses, affect most cursed items from the Twists (see pp. 211–12, **ED**).

TRAPS

To prevent the escape of the last Parlainthians, the Horrors seeded the Twists with magical traps. Many of these powerful, magical snares, as well as others set to protect valuables and treasures, remain in place. The owners of many houses and shops also protected their valuables with mechanical traps that still wait to be sprung.

Magical Trap

The Horrors blocked the doors of many shops and buildings with magical traps, many of them triggered by opening the door in a specific manner. Most of these traps trigger mental assaults (see below).

Detection Difficulty: 21

Spell Defense: 13

Disarm Difficulty: 15

Trigger Condition: The gamemaster makes a Step 13 Spellcasting Test against anyone who opens a door in a specific way—for example, by pushing rather than pulling open the door of a shop. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the trap triggers its effect.

Trap Initiative: 25

Trap Effect: Step 15 mental assault

Characters may suffer a mental assault by triggering a trap, or simply by approaching certain areas in the Twists. In the latter case, the area's atmosphere of anguish functions as a giant magical trap of sorts. Certain locations within the Twists carry a stronger negative imprint than others; for example, a shop made into a torture pen that still contains the implements of pain and skeletal remains of its victims exudes a greater degree of dread than a candlemaker's shop in the same area left untouched since the Scourge. Like magical traps, places with an especially powerful imprint of evil mentally assault those who come near them.

In both cases, the gamemaster should make a Mental Assault Test against the target's Spell Defense. The step number for this test varies according to the emotional charge of the place; the aforementioned torture pen, for example, might have a Step Number of 20. A place where prisoners were kept but not harmed, by contrast, might have a Step Number of 10. The effect of the attack varies according to the success level achieved.

Poor Success: Allows the victim to shrug off any serious effects of the attack. He or she simply feels uneasy, as if someone "just walked over his grave." Such a victim becomes immune to mental assault in that particular location.

Average Success: The victims feel compelled to leave the area. In order to counter this compulsion, they must make a Willpower Test using the result of the fountain's Mental Assault Test as the difficulty number. Those who fail the test and leave find that the compulsion fades in a number of minutes equal to the difficulty number. Once those minutes have elapsed, the victims may attempt to return, but face a second mental assault when they do.

Good Success: Victims pass out, remaining unconscious for a number of minutes equal to the result of the Mental Assault Test.

Excellent Success: Victims become temporarily insane, behaving in a dangerously extreme manner for a number of hours equal to the result of the Mental Assault Test. The gamemaster determines the exact symptoms of the madness, depending on the character of the victim. For example, a quick-tempered and violence-prone character might become a homicidal maniac, assaulting everyone in sight. A nervous character might roll up into a ball and weep. The group joker might scamper and caper about, giggling maniacally as he dances into the hide-out of a pack of demiwraiths. Once the duration of the effect has elapsed, victims have no memories of their actions while insane.

Extraordinary Success: The victim becomes permanently insane in the manner described above. If the insanity is cured in some miraculous way, the victim loses a point of Perception. This loss reflects the fact that, while the effects of the madness can be dispelled, the dire emotional resonances of the ruins cannot be removed by any known magical means.

Curse of the Twists

Another feature of the Twists' dread aura that the gamemaster may use as a trap is the Curse of the Twists. According to legends told among Haven's explorers, any who die in the Twists suffer the unhappy fate of returning as undead beings. The gamemaster may choose any of the following options.

Option 1: Fortunately, the curse is merely a rumor.

Option 2: A rare few who die in the Twists return as undead. The gamemaster makes a Step 4 Animate Undead Test for the Twists against the deceased character's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the victim becomes an undead being. Characters with a Charisma step of 8 or higher become spectral dancers. For those with lower Charisma, determine the type of undead creature they become using the character's Circle. Non-adepts and adepts of Circles 1–3 become cadaver men. Adepts of Circles 4–6 become ghouls, and adepts of Circle 7 or higher become unnaturally alive (see p. 299, **ED**).

Option 3: Many who die in the Twists return as undead. The gamemaster makes a Step 9 Animate Undead Test (see Option 2).

Option 4: Most who die in the Twists return as undead. The gamemaster makes a Step 14 Animate Undead Test (see Option 2).

Option 5: All who die in the Twists return as undead. The effect described in Option 2 happens automatically.

ENCOUNTERS

The following three encounters represent typical events and meetings the characters may experience as they travel through the Twists.

Knowledge of Evil

The adventurers come upon a ragged explorer, his clothing singed and torn, his face crisscrossed with scars and cuts. They may have seen him before in better circumstances, perhaps back in Haven. He carries an olive-colored, leather-bound book. Upon seeing them, he screams, "You can't take it! You can't take it! You can't take it!" and hides the book behind his back. If the player characters attempt to take the book from him, he resists to the death, even if hopelessly outnumbered. Use the game statistics for the human nethermancer, p. 77, **ED**, for this character.

The book contains a series of diagrams and notes describing the most painful, nonlethal means of torturing each of the different Name-giver races. Any character who makes a successful Perception Test against a Difficulty Number of 6 realizes that the book is bound in troll skin; troll characters make this test against a Difficulty Number of 4. A Horror compiled the book from its own observations of the last Parlainthians to be tortured and die. As one might expect, the book carries a curse—an insanity-inducing, Step 15 mental assault. Anyone rendered insane (an Excellent or better result) by the book while holding it suffers a mental compulsion to keep it from others, which lasts for the duration of the insanity.

The characters may resolve this encounter peacefully. The adventurers can let the nethermancer pass without trying to get the book from him, or a wizard can use a Dispel Magic spell to dispel the insanity effect and allow the nethermancer to drop the book. The nethermancer has no memory of anything since finding the book in a ruined building in the Twists several months ago, but he warns the player characters not to touch it. Destroying the book earns each character 100 Legend Points.

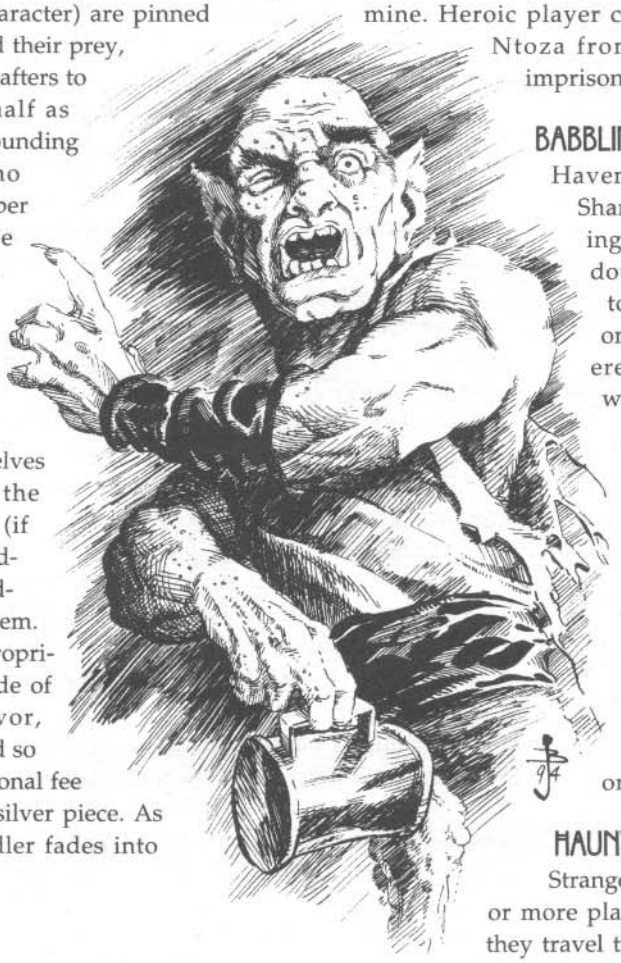
Watch Out for Falling Rocks

The adventurers wish to explore a two-story building in which ghouls have set a trap. The ghouls have weakened the floor of the second story, hauled up several tons of rock and paving stones, and hung the rocks in heavy netting attached to the rafters. As soon as an adventurer enters the house, the ghouls release the netting, sending the rocks crashing through the unsound second floor onto the adventurers. The falling stones do Step 16 damage to each character on the first floor, and those who take more than 22 points of damage (including those reduced by armor that do not harm the character) are pinned under the rocks. Having trapped their prey, the ghouls leap down from the rafters to attack. The house contains half as many ghouls as adventurers, rounding up. If the adventurers who escaped being trapped outnumber the ghouls, the creatures flee through a second-story window.

For the ghouls' game statistics, see p. 295, **ED**, or p. 65, **Parlainth GM**.

Ghosts of Explorers Past

If the characters find themselves in dire straits in the Twists, the gamemaster may rescue them (if he feels they deserve it) by sending the ghost of a powerful, fiddle-playing troubadour to aid them. The fiddler takes an action appropriate to the situation: turns the tide of battle in the adventurers' favor, frees them from their chains, and so on. He then demands the traditional fee for playing the fiddle, a single silver piece. As soon as they pay him, the fiddler fades into nothingness.



ADVENTURE IDEAS

The following adventure ideas represent typical reasons characters might have for venturing into the Twists.

SCOURGE SURVIVOR

A troll adventurer named Berryblood returns to Haven from Parlainth, claiming to have found a survivor of the Scourge imprisoned in a building in the Twists. Unable to free the survivor from a magically trapped building, he returned to enlist the help of the adventurers. Berryblood convinces them to make the effort by pointing out that the survivor's memories of the Scourge represent a gold mine of information. Her rescuers can cash in on her knowledge and sell it to others anxious to understand Parlainth then and now.

The survivor is an ancient elf named Ntoza, who sustained herself for these many centuries by eating the fungus growing all over the inside of her magically reinforced cell. If the adventurers help Berryblood rescue the elf, they discover that the Horror's torture scrambled her memories. Berryblood, however, is determined to squeeze valuable information from his potential gold mine. Heroic player characters may decide to rescue Ntoza from Berryblood as well as from imprisonment in Parlainth.

BABBLINGS OF A MADMAN

Haven's village idiot, an ork named Shanga, once traveled Barsaive earning a living as a renowned troubadour. He ventured into the Twists to find his lover, an explorer lost on a salvage mission, and discovered that his unfortunate darling was now a ghoul. The shock of that experience turned Shanga into a harmless, drooling madman who begs for coppers to buy ale. If the adventurers listen to him and decipher his babblings, they learn that Shanga apparently stumbled across a great treasure in the Twists. The gamemaster may use any treasure published in previous **Earthdawn** products or create one of his own.

HAUNTING DREAMS

Strange dreams trouble the sleep of one or more player characters, dreams in which they travel through the Twists to a particular large building. The characters always wake up before entering the place. Eventually, all members of the group share this dream so many times that none of them can sleep soundly. In order to banish the dream they must enter the Twists, follow the dream path, and confront whatever exists behind the building's closed door. The building happens to be inhabited by a unique and particularly nasty Horror. If the adventurers succeed in slaying the Horror, each of them dreams that a long-dead Parlainthian thanks them for killing her long-ago torturer.

SOUTHERN CATACOMBS



—From a tale told repeatedly by Derlan Kaot, one of Parlainth's longest-surviving explorers

Nobody believes me when I say I was inside the ancient treasury of Parlainth, but it's true. My fellow explorers and me had gone down to the Southern Catacombs, where rumor said the treasury was all those years ago. We didn't more than half believe the rumors, of course. We were just giving the catacombs a good going over, just in case. Slow and methodical, looking into every room, cataloguing it, searching it stone by stone. Just in case. You should have seen Andultz search those rooms. No one can search a room like Andultz.

Even the hallways we searched, careful as could be, though it got more and more likely we'd die of some awful attack the longer we stayed down there. In fact, we'd just managed to fend off a troop of ghouls when Glas leaned against the wall to rest and accidentally hit a pressure plate or trip wire or something. We heard a scraping sound, and then suddenly the chunk of wall next to Glas started to move. It slid down into the floor, and showed us a corridor. We were so excited we barreled right through that opening, caution be cursed!

Right away spikes shot out from the walls, impaling Tonbu. We tried to get him off, but we couldn't cut him down. The spikes were in too deep. Etrea figured the doorway would raise back up again right quick, and if we didn't keep going it would close up and seal us in. We felt bad about it, but we left Tonbu there. He begged us to finish him, but none of us could bear to do it.

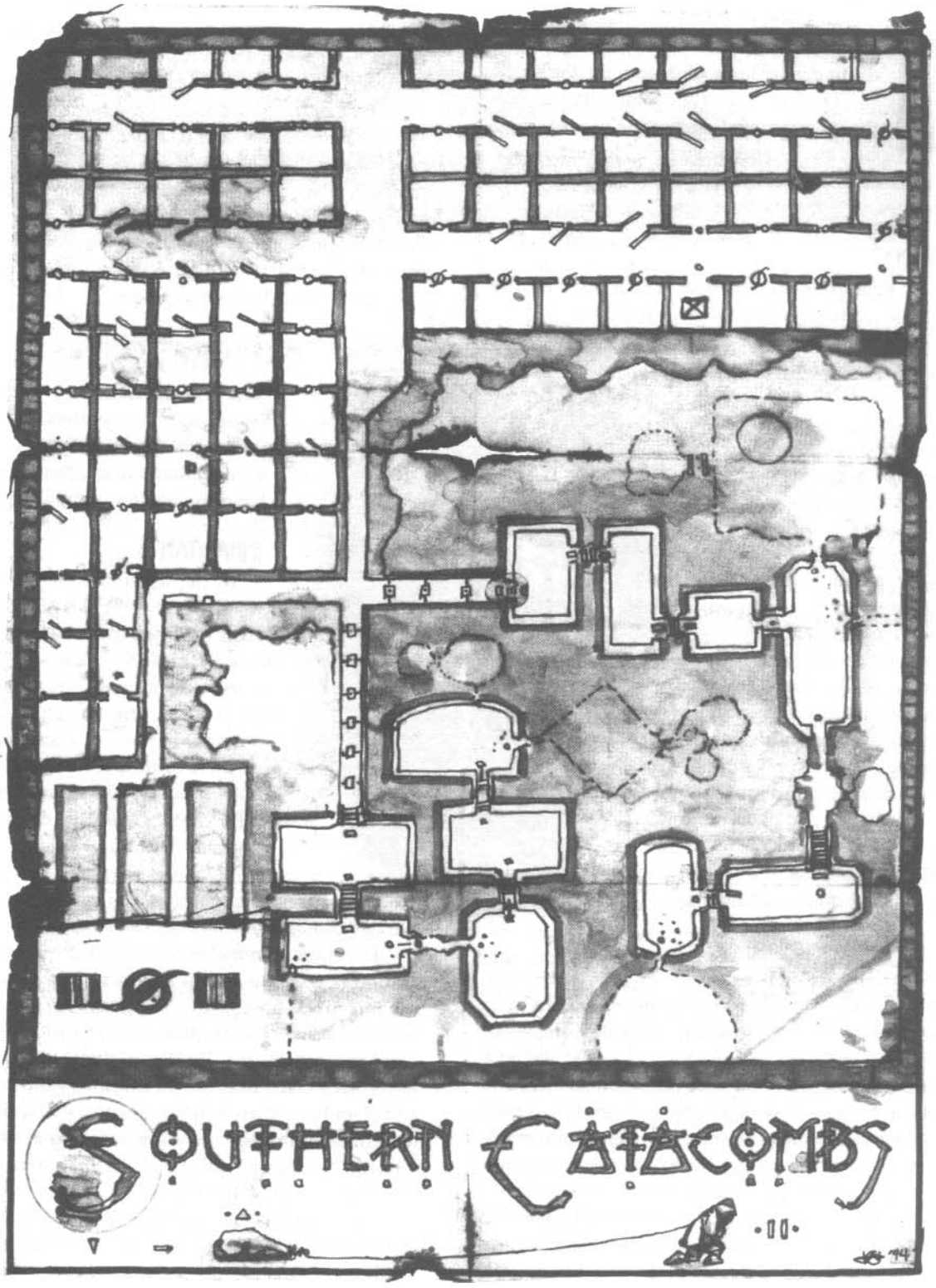
So we kept going. We let Andultz lead, figuring his thief ways would protect him from traps. Within ten paces, he disappeared before our eyes, shimmering into nothing like the air over a campfire.

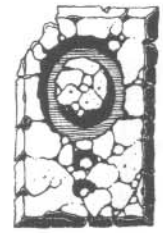
So we put the windling magicker in front, thinking she'd sense the next magical trap using her astral skill. She went ahead for a little while, then turned around all of a sudden. Her face was different—scaly, with big red eyes and fangs. She mind-daggered Glas to death before I got off a shot with my bow and took her right out. And people say an archer is no good underground!

That left Etrea and me. Ahead of us, we saw a door with a big, bronze lock smack in the middle of it. Neither of us had a talent for picking locks, so Etrea jammed the tip of her sword into the lock—I guess she thought she'd pry it off or something. Maybe what happened next was an illusion, but I'd swear something on the other side grabbed her sword and pulled her through the lock! I heard thumping on the other side of the door for a while, then it stopped.

Way behind me, I heard the screech of the door we'd first come through. Sure enough, it was rising back into place, well on its way to locking me in forever. I ran like the Hunter of Great Dragons himself was behind me, and vaulted over the rising stone just before the door slammed shut. The last thing I saw was Tonbu, bleeding to death by inches, still begging me to finish him with an arrow shot.

I've been back to that spot a dozen times since, but I can't figure how Glas tripped that opening. It was the treasury, though. All those traps? Must have been.


SOUTHERN CATACOMBS



VERVIEW

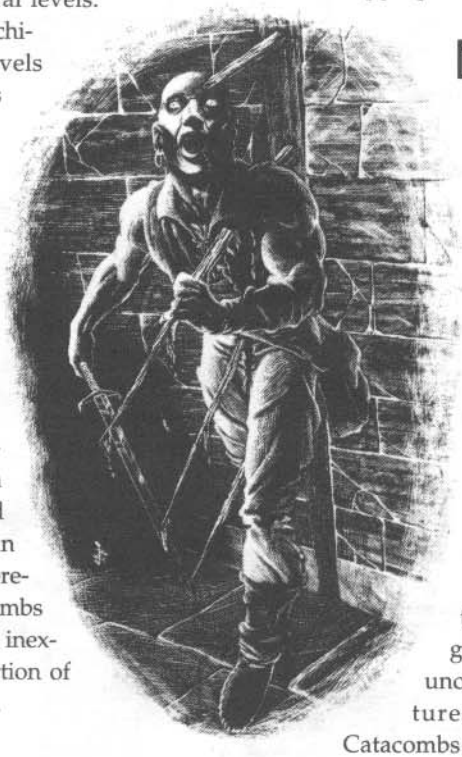
Originally named the Storage Center, the Southern Catacombs are the quarter of the undercity located beneath the Twists.

The Southern Catacombs lie beneath the most haunted area of the aboveground city, but because few of the Horrors' atrocities took place below ground, the pall of dread that curses the Twists does not infect the Southern Catacombs.

DESCRIPTION

Greatly expanded downward over the years, the Southern Catacombs consist of several levels. Most of the upper levels follow the architects' original design; most lower levels use rougher materials and look less finished.

The upper passages of the catacombs are large, reasonably dry, and finished with smooth blocks of stone. Though they lack the distinctive decoration of the Western Catacombs (see p. 34), the careful workmanship given to their creation remains obvious. Wide, high corridors lead to several rectangular chambers whose ceilings average 20 feet high. The catacombs follow a regular pattern, with a few set arrangements of rooms and hallways repeated several times. An experienced mapper of the area can predict the layout of any part of the catacombs based on previous exploration, but the inexperienced may easily confuse one portion of the underground tunnels with another.



USES

The Southern Catacombs originally served as storerooms. Parlainth's officials rented the storerooms out to any who could pay for them, mainly the merchants of the commercial quarter above, who used them to store their goods and supplies. As the increasing need for slave pens claimed more and more space in the area now called the Northern Catacombs, Parlainth's city fathers moved the treasury reserves into empty vaults in the Storage Center, reinforcing several rooms and installing a plethora of traps, both mechanical and magical, to deter thieves. After several intrepid individuals, whose names were lost to history, attempted to break into this makeshift treasury from rented storage chambers, the city stopped renting rooms to private individuals. Many of the storerooms stood deserted for years even before the city fell to ruin.

MAP

The right side of the map shows the catacomb's original construction. The left shows a section of the treasure vaults built when Parlainth's treasury moved from the Northern Catacombs at the height of the city's power.

The gamemaster decides how much treasure (if any) remains in the vaults, and whether or not various creatures now inhabit these rooms. If any of the vaults still contain treasure, place locks on each of the many doors, at least some of them magical. Needless to say, traps abound. If organized inhabitants control this area of the catacombs, they long ago disabled the original locks and put other appropriate defenses in place.

EXPLORATION

The inhabitants, booty, and typical encounters that explorers may face in the Southern Catacombs are left to the gamemaster's discretion. The categories below offer a few options.

INHABITANTS

Allowing the individual gamemaster to populate the Southern Catacombs as he sees fit lets the gamemaster more easily tailor the area to work as part of his or her pre-existing campaign. For example, if the player characters struggled against the plottings of a particular group of conspirators prior to their arrival in Parlainth, the Southern Catacombs makes an ideal location for that group's headquarters. If the gamemaster feels that Parlainth needs more uncontrolled areas inhabited by random creatures, he can easily make the Southern Catacombs a no-Name-giver's land.

Depending on the gamemaster's choice, the creatures and other denizens in this area may vary greatly. If some organized group controls the Southern Catacombs, for example, it may have sufficient power to keep other creatures out of the area. However, the group might just as likely have taken over only a fraction of the area's tunnels and chambers, forcing group members to spend considerable time and energy erecting defenses against creature attacks. (Needless to say, the player characters might be the first to run afoul of those defenses ...)

Gamemasters may wish to begin setting adventures in Parlainth before deciding who lives in the Southern Catacombs. If so, simply keep the player characters out of that area for a while, and their actions may provide hints for creating interesting opposition.

The following options suggest groups that might control the Southern Catacombs.

Option 1

A few years ago, Theran agents established a secret base in the catacombs in order to operate free of interference by hostile Havenites. Both Agramen and Omag Bastabus (see **Haven**, pp. 23 and 36 of **Parlainth GM**) regularly send messengers to this base. If the player characters happen to discover this base and make its presence known, Haven would erupt in controversy over whether or not to wipe it out.

Option 2

The secret base may belong to other groups, such as Blood Warders; agents of Throal, the discovery of whose presence might provoke a slightly less hostile reaction in Haven than Therans or Blood Warders; questors of Mad Passions; the Hand of Corruption; some group of foul folk similar to but more sophisticated and intelligent than those who inhabit the Northern Catacombs (see p. 51 of this book); or an intelligent creature of the gamemaster's own devising.

BOOTY

The gamemaster may choose whether or not the player characters find vast hoards of wealth in the vaulted chambers, perhaps distributing it according to one of the options listed below.

Option 1

The large quantities of loot in these catacombs all belong to the opposing group of the gamemaster's choice, whose members seized it and are using it to fund their operations.

Option 2

Vast treasure caches still exist, so heavily trapped that no one has yet succeeded in stealing their contents.

Option 3

If the gamemaster decides that no one controls the Southern Catacombs, most of the treasure left there was likely pilfered during the early years of exploration. Rumors still persist of piles of treasure hidden in secret chambers; the rumors may or may not be true.

TRAPS

Vast numbers of sprung traps litter the catacomb's otherwise regular, featureless hallways. Wise adventurers regard those few stretches of the tunnels that lack sprung traps with great trepidation, because it stands to reason that several traps must still remain active.

Spike Trap

The spike trap, described in the journal entry at the beginning of this section, appears to be the most popular trap used in the Southern Catacombs. Their makers concealed the traps along the tunnel walls, carefully hiding the spikes in the spaces between the stones. A thin layer of mortar completely conceals other spikes, making these traps much more difficult to detect.

Detection Difficulty: 15
Disarm Difficulty: 15
Trigger Condition: Pressure plate or trip wire
Trap Initiative: 25

Trap Effect: Spikes shoot out from cracks in the walls on both sides of the hall, striking the character who tripped the trap. The spikes do Step 23 damage to the victim. If the trap achieves an Armor-Defeating Hit against the victim, and the character takes 20 or more points of damage, he or she is impaled on the spikes. Other characters may attempt to ease the victim off the spikes; to do so requires a successful Dexterity Test against a Difficulty Number of 18. If the test fails, the gamemaster makes a Step 10 Damage Test against the victim.

Once triggered, most spike traps block the corridor. To push the spikes back into the walls, a player character must make a successful Disarm Mechanical Trap or Dexterity Test against a Difficulty Number of 15.

Option: If the gamemaster left the Southern Catacombs open as a potential home to various creatures, scurriers might well find it prime hunting ground. These small humanoids fix and reset old traps to catch their victims, and so explorers might fall afoul of the same traps over and over again.

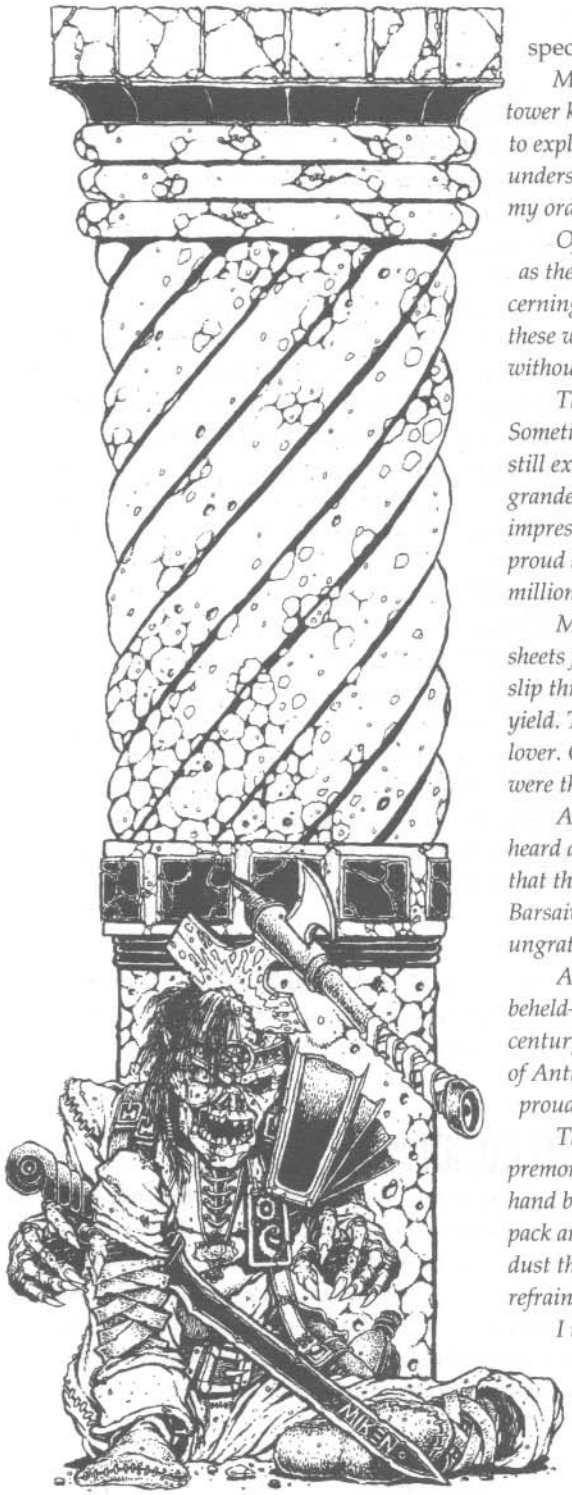
ENCOUNTERS

The nature of typical events and meetings the characters experience here depends entirely on what inhabitants *the gamemaster chooses to place in the Southern* Catacombs.

ADVENTURE IDEAS

As with encounters, the adventure ideas that will entice the characters into the Southern Catacombs must grow from the gamemaster's choices. For inspiration to create unique adventures, gamemasters may model circumstances in the Southern Catacombs on the Adventure Ideas sections of other areas of Parlainth, or consult **Adventure Frameworks**, beginning on p. 38 of **Parlainth GM**.

THE WAR ZONE



—From the personal journal of Thanos Vanous of Vrontok while on special duty for Provincial Admiral Tularch

My hirelings did not care to be in the War Zone at all, let alone inside the ruins of that tower known as number 2. The fools feared the wrath of the falsemen. I had twice attempted to explain to them that the falsemen do not feel emotions such as anger, not in the way we understand them, but the subtlety of this point eluded them. They might even have refused my orders if they knew we stood within the stronghold of a falseman warlord.

Of course, their feelings meant nothing to me. Indeed, I planned to slay them as soon as they discovered the true nature of my foray into the War Zone. If my intelligence concerning Guile proved accurate, the falseman and his followers would aid me in disposing of these witnesses. If my gambit failed—well, better to die in the service of Thera than to live without honor.

The tower had once been a gigantic guard post built of huge, limestone blocks. Sometime during the centuries since its erection, it had toppled onto its side. A few like it still exist in my glorious homeland, though none so large or of such an intimidating grandeur. I have read that everything in Parlainth was built on a vast scale in order to impress Theran might on the slow-witted Barsaivian mind. It saddened me to see this once-proud symbol of our influence so humbled, lying broken on its side in the strangle hold of a million vines.

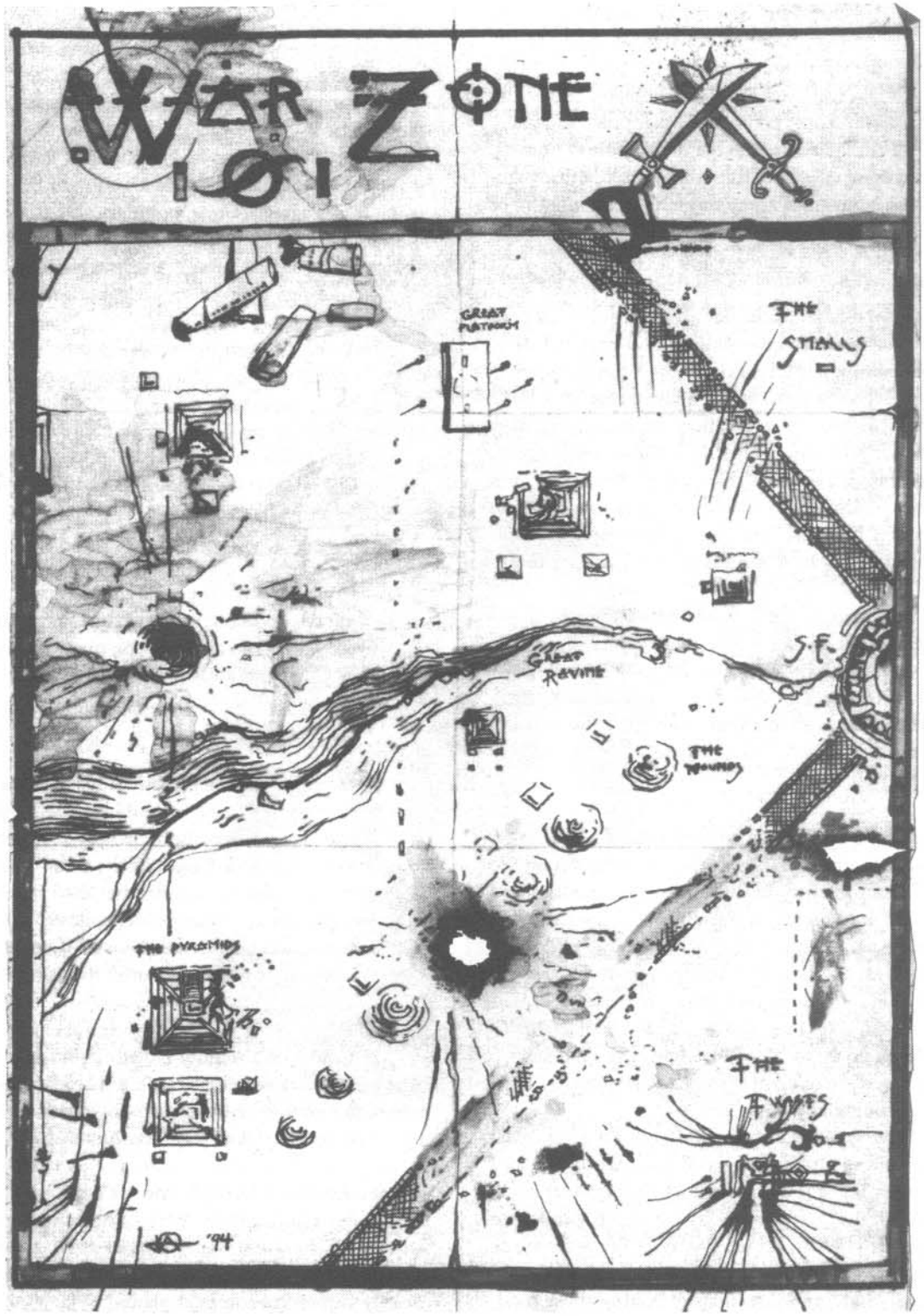
My henchmen at first refused to chop their way through the vines, which hung in thick sheets from the top of the tower through every hole in the masonry. Instead, they tried to slip through the growth as if through a curtain over a tavern door. But the vines refused to yield. They clung to my companions, seeming to clutch at and touch them as intimately as a lover. Only after I duped my followers into believing that the falsemen were hard of hearing were they willing to hack at the plants.

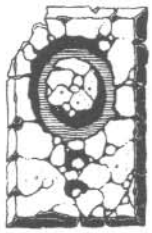
As the axes struck at them, the vines seemed to shrink away. I could have sworn that I heard a faint hissing, as if the plants swore vengeance on us. I could not resist the thought that the vines' strange behavior symbolized all too accurately the state of affairs throughout Barsaive. Our former rights over this Passions-forsaken land lay in ruins, its wild and ungrateful denizens resisting our cleansing return.

As if to confirm my darkest broodings, one of my hirelings—the ugliest elf I ever beheld—cleared a set of vines to reveal a great seal of Thera. It was a fine specimen of sixth-century glazed ceramic heraldry and would have fetched a fine reward from the Directorate of Antiquities. The colors of the seal shone as brightly as when they were first fired, still proudly proclaiming Thera's power and grandeur.

The elf returned his hatchet to his belt and rummaged through his pack. I felt a terrible premonition of what was about to occur, but could do nothing to stop the elf lest I show my hand before reaching Guile. As I watched, angrily helpless, the elf drew a mace from his pack and delivered a ferocious rain of blows upon the great seal, shattering it into colored dust that he and the others proceeded to spit upon. Fortunately, they did not observe that I refrained from joining them.

I resolved to take care of the elf personally.


WAR ZONE
101
GREAT PLATEAU
THE SMALLS
GREAT RAVINE
S.F.
THE MOUNDS
THE PYRAMIDS
THE DUNES
'94



OVERVIEW

Originally named the Military Quarter, the War Zone lies aboveground and forms the western quadrant of the city.

The Western Catacombs lie below the War Zone, and many open pits and craters provide access to the underground tunnels. Explorers find these entrances difficult to reach; thick vegetation obscures many, and many more lie in the middle of falsemen-controlled territory.

DESCRIPTION

The War Zone is an open, flat area devoid of all construction save several ruined buildings and broken bits of statuary, but completely overgrown by a thick carpet of jungle plants. Even the walls of the quarter display a layer of living green. The dense vegetation can only be hacked through with a machete or similar thick blade, and it grows back with alarming swiftness. Excavation becomes especially difficult; by the time a team of diggers uncovers the foundations of a building or a catacomb entrance, a platoon of hungry plants covers the soil they exposed in the process.

Of any buildings in the city, the buildings under this canopy of green are in the worst condition. Even in the Smalls, for example, explorers can still guess at the purpose of each structure. The War Zone, by contrast, is literally a pile of rubble, and explorers can only guess at the original purposes of most buildings there.

USES

The Military Quarter once housed a sizable contingent of the Theran Infantry in Barsaive. (For information on the role of the Theran Infantry in fifth-century TE politics and military affairs, see **History of Parlainth**, p. 8 of **Parlainth GM**.) Barracks, parade grounds, administrative buildings, stables, smithies, and supply depots covered the area. Because the Military Quarter's architects intended it to be a display of Theran might as well as serve a practical purpose, they designed many of the buildings to be much larger than function demanded and placed threateningly martial statuary throughout the quarter.

As the Scourge approached, Parlainth's Theran masters put the infantry to commercial use, capturing and guarding slaves for shipment back to Thera. Most slave pens lay beneath the quarter now known as the Vaults, but at the height of slaving fever, the War Zone's parade grounds housed thousands of captives. The infantry commanders hastily built guard stations to control these thousands, often by converting barracks or administrative buildings.

During the city's civil war, which began soon after Parlainth's disappearance, contending armies of rebels and loyalists fought over the War Zone's supply depots and magical siege engines, destroying both sources of might in the process. The war reduced the once-mighty Military Quarter to a shambles before the battleground shifted to the Vaults.

When the Horrors had slain all of Parlainth's Name-givers, they completed the destruction of the War Zone by using it to stage elaborate, pointless war games to alleviate their boredom. The Horrors preferred to set their falsemen against each other in the War Zone because the now-flattened buildings gave them a clear view across the open plain.

Parlainth's return to Barsaive prompted the onslaught of the strangling vegetation now covering the War Zone. Greenery of some sort covers most of the Forgotten City, but the plants in the War Zone seem more robust and tenacious than those in other areas. The gamemaster may choose to explain this phenomenon with one of the optional reasons given below.

Option 1

The plants thrive on a magical nutrient, an unintentional side effect of magical experiments conducted under the surface of the War Zone for many years before the Scourge. Only the soil of the War Zone contains this unique element.

Option 2

Questors of Jaspree secretly intend to coax the jungle into reclaiming the ruins of Parlainth, beginning with the War Zone. They keep their project secret because the questors fear reprisals from the treasure-hungry explorers of Haven. The questors believe that the Horror-filled ruins must contain things Name-givers should not know, and that Barsaive will be a better place as soon as a protective layer of greenery completely buries the Forgotten City.

Option 3

The spirit of a mighty Horror believed slain during a war game actually merged with the nearby jungle, creating a malign intelligence. It plans to take over the ruins, thereby "winning" the game it lost centuries ago.

Characteristics of Local Plants

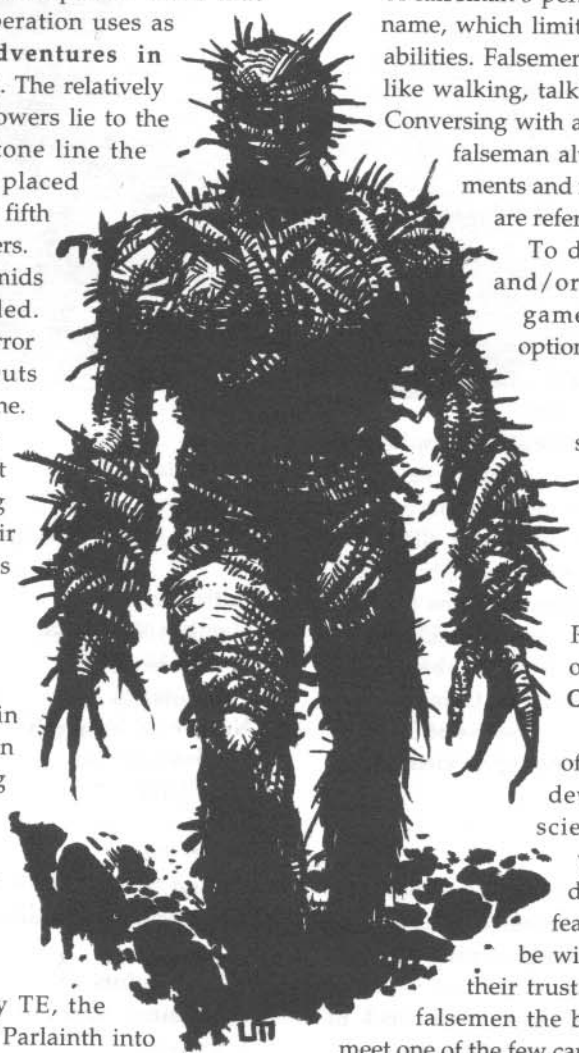
Many plants in the War Zone can harm characters exploring the area. Some of these are described in the **Creatures** section of **Parlainth GM**; others are simply deadly variants of common plants.

The sap of certain plants is caustic and can injure characters who touch it. The sap causes Step 5 damage once per

round for 5 rounds. The leaves of many plants grow sharp edges, often coated with poisonous oils. These toxins have a Step Number and Spell Defense of 10, and can cause paralysis or even death (see **Poisons**, p. 207–8, **ED**). Some plants squirt poisonous or acidic fluids when cut, making clearing these plants with swords or machetes very risky. These acids do Step 12 damage for 5 rounds.

MAP

The War Zone map shows the specific ruins that Pagmor Gilt-Throat's betting operation uses as landmarks (see **Running Adventures in Parlainth**, p. 49 of **Parlainth GM**). The relatively intact remains of three toppled towers lie to the northwest. Piles of smashed stone line the southwest laneway, the rubble placed there by game-playing Horrors; a fifth mound sits to the north of the towers. Four of Parlainth's familiar pyramids also remain, though badly eroded. Some unimaginably powerful Horror magic created the ravine that cuts through the center of the War Zone. The ravine intersects with the Western Catacombs, and the most desperate losers in the ongoing falsemen wars usually make their stand in its depths. This landmark is extremely well defended.



EXPLORATION

Because the War Zone's main inhabitants are the falsemen engaged in their never-ending wars, everything the player characters experience in this area somehow relates to the falsemen and their conflict.

INHABITANTS

During the seventh century TE, the Horrors gathered the falsemen of Parlainth into the War Zone and began using them to fight full-scale mock battles. In order to make them fiercer and capable of some independent action, the Horrors Named the falsemen. Because Naming an object changes its magical pattern, reNaming these magical constructs gave them rudimentary personalities and desires and heightened their marginal intelligence. The Horrors, of course, Named their falsemen according to traits they found desirable in fighters, traits most Barsaivians consider negative or dangerous. Recognized and distinct falsemen still active in the War Zone include Backstabber, Vicious, Merciless, Wicked, Foul, Murderous, Fiendish, Enraged, Menace, and Inexorable. The Horrors reserved these more impressive names for stonemen and steelmen, the falsemen constructed of the sturdiest material. Waxmen and strawmen, the last of which the Horrors learned to make themselves, tend to carry demeaning names such as Stink, Suicidal, Dregs, Sneak, Filth, Rot, and so on.

A falseman's personality corresponds directly to its name, which limits as well as defines its actions and abilities. Falsemen are one-dimensional beings, more like walking, talking, abstract concepts than people. Conversing with a falseman can be quite tiring, as the falseman always returns to a few simple statements and ideas. Falsemen have no gender, and are referred to as "it" rather than he or she.

To determine the nature of falsemen and/or create falseman characters, the gamemaster may use the following options.

Option 1

Falsemen cannot develop consciousness beyond their rudimentary personalities. Those corrupted by Horrors lie beyond redemption, though falsemen with names like Deception and Liar might try to convince adventurers otherwise. Player characters may slay falsemen on sight without guilt.

Option 2

Few falsemen rise above the limits of their names, but some eventually developed self-awareness and conscience. These falsemen feel overwhelming guilt at what they have done and torment themselves with fear of the Horrors; such beings might be willing to help adventurers who win their trust. Player characters should give all falsemen the benefit of the doubt, in case they meet one of the few capable of virtue.

Even though their Horror masters abandoned them, the falsemen still wage pointless wars over control of the remnants of buildings arbitrarily dubbed strategic in the War Zone. As new splinter groups arise, allegiances shift, and the falsemen mark their changing loyalties by wearing arm bands of different-colored fabric. No group ever manages to win a decisive victory, and so no one group truly controls the War Zone. Falsemen serving on the side of a general who seems close to winning invariably rebel and

begin fighting over the spoils before victory is won. The current state of affairs began in 1504 TH, when three major factions existed. One of them stood on the verge of wiping out the other two until early 1505, when rebellious officers within it split the faction into three separate parties. In the current year, 1506, one of the smaller original factions gained equal footing with one of the splinter groups, and a third group made up of falsemen who oppose both of those factions is slowly gaining strength.

Though no falseman controls the entire War Zone, all of them act either Unfriendly or Hostile toward outsiders (see **Social Interactions**, p. 235, **ED**). Explorers who wish to travel through the War Zone unmolested may want to secure the permission of the leader who currently controls the part of it through which they plan to pass. Such permission does not guarantee safety, however; a new battle may shift faction boundaries within a matter of hours. Allying with falsemen also poses danger. Though some of them try to recruit skilled fighters from adventuring parties, these Horror-corrupted falsemen simply cannot get along with Name-givers for extended periods. At any moment, a falseman may snap and suddenly assault a Name-giver it appears to have befriended.

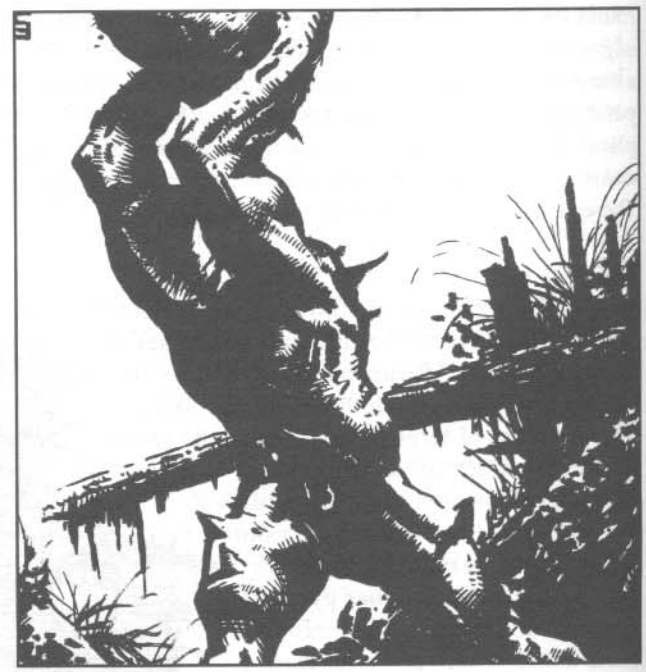
The falsemen wars are curious affairs bound by bizarre rules incomprehensible to all but the falsemen. Falsemen rarely die in battle, instead withdrawing when faced with superior forces. The standard rules of the war allow one falseman to defeat another without hitting it, but when Name-givers become involved, the falsemen show them no mercy, attacking with lethal force whenever possible.

Some residents of and visitors to Haven bet on the falseman wars (see p. 48, **Parlainth GM**). Gamemasters who wish to randomly determine the progress of the various falsemen factions can use the system provided in that book.

Prominent Falsemen

At present, two steelmen stand at the top of the heap in the ongoing falseman wars, Guile and Smasher. A stoneman named Never Surrender is forming an army from the remnants of other forces defeated by Guile and Smasher, and the fortunes of all three armies shift from week to week. If the player characters remain in Haven for any length of time, they hear frequent reports that up-and-comers now lead in place of some of these figures. A stoneman named Viper, for example, is quietly recruiting rebels within Smasher's camp in hopes of supplanting that leader; Viper may succeed at the gamemaster's discretion.

Game statistics for the three most prominent falsemen appear below. For more information about falsemen, see the **Creatures** section, p. 66 of **Parlainth GM**.



Guile

Attributes

DEX: 10	**STR:** 18	**TOU:** 18
PER: 16	**WIL:** 14	**CHA:** 13

Initiative: 11
Number of Attacks: 2
Attack: 12
Damage: 20
Number of Spells: NA
Spellcasting: NA
Effect: NA

Physical Defense: 10
Spell Defense: 8
Social Defense: 10
Armor: 16
Mystic Armor: 0
Knockdown: 18
Recovery Tests: 0

Death Rating: 70
Wound Threshold: 15
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Combat Movement: 25
Full Movement: 50

Legend Points: 600
Equipment: None
Loot: None

Commentary

Guile loves trickery and prefers to achieve victory by underhand methods. Whenever it serves its purpose to do so, Guile deceives. Its favorite phrase, which it repeats ad nauseam, is, "Victories are won or lost before the battle begins." Guile gladly accepts help from adventurers, but feels compelled to betray them even if betrayal does not serve its long-term interests.



Smasher

Attributes

DEX: 10	**STR:** 20	**TOU:** 18
PER: 12	**WIL:** 12	**CHA:** 12

Initiative: 11
Number of Attacks: 2
Attack: 15
Damage: 25
Number of Spells: NA
Spellcasting: NA
Effect: NA

Physical Defense: 13
Spell Defense: 8
Social Defense: 8
Armor: 16
Mystic Armor: 0
Knockdown: 20
Recovery Tests: 0

Death Rating: 70
Wound Threshold: 15
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Combat Movement: 25
Full Movement: 50

Legend Points: 600
Equipment: None
Loot: None

Commentary

Smasher is brute force incarnate. The frontal assault constitutes the only strategy in its playbook; "We smash them now!" is its battle cry. Smasher respects only the big and strong and will not ally with Name-givers who display any thought or impulse beyond simple brutality.

Never Surrender

Attributes

DEX: 8	**STR:** 18	**TOU:** 12
PER: 10	**WIL:** 10	**CHA:** 10

Initiative: 10
Number of Attacks: 2
Attack: 11
Damage: 22
Number of Spells: NA
Spellcasting: NA
Effect: NA

Physical Defense: 12
Spell Defense: 5
Social Defense: 5
Armor: 13
Mystic Armor: 0
Knockdown: 18
Recovery Tests: 0

Death Rating: 55
Wound Threshold: 13
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Combat Movement: 25
Full Movement: 50

Legend Points: 600
Equipment: None
Loot: None

Commentary

Never Surrender embodies beleaguered determination. Less clever than Guile, weaker than Smasher, it hopes for victory through perseverance. Never Surrender willingly waits until its foes make rash mistakes on which it can capitalize. It tends to repeat its own name, saying, "We will never surrender; never surrender."

BOOTY

At one time, treasure and loot abounded in the War Zone. The Horrors collected coins, gems, and magical items from other areas of Parlainth and brought them to the War Zone to use as trophies for their falsemen. Though the falsemen more frequently fight over possession of a crumbled ruin or unique hunk of rock, some remarkable pieces of jewelry still serve as trophies. Most former trophies, however, simply lie discarded among the tangled vegetation and crumbled buildings. To find these valuable pieces requires a systematic, painstaking excavation, a nearly impossible task in the midst of warring, homicidal falsemen. Those lucky few to emerge from the War Zone carrying treasure found their booty through dumb luck.

TRAPS

Guile's forces continually construct primitive traps to hamper their rivals, mostly pits and snares. The dense vegetation also creates natural pit traps. Vines that look like part of the jungle floor often conceal a steep drop into the Western Catacombs. The pit traps built by the falsemen are much more primitive than those found in other areas of Parlainth.

Pit Trap

Detection Difficulty: 7
Disarm Difficulty: 7
Trigger Condition: Trip vine
Trap Initiative: 10
Trap Effect: Victim falls into 15-foot-deep pit, taking Step 6 damage. Spikes stick out of the floors of some of these pits and inflict additional Step 7 damage to the victim.

ENCOUNTERS

The following three encounters represent typical events and meetings the characters may experience as they travel in the War Zone.

Meeting Humorless

While hacking through the underbrush, the characters hear a commotion ahead. They emerge from the undergrowth into a small clearing where they see a stoneman named Humorless beating a flamboyantly garbed male dwarf to death. The dwarf, a swordmaster, made the mistake of Taunting the stoneman. The Taunt effect lasts for another 3 rounds after the characters appear, reducing each of the stoneman's steps by 2; for Humorless' statistics, use the game statistics given for Never Surrender, p. 29. If the adventurers remain motionless, the furious stoneman fails to notice them and stomps off to rejoin its fellows in Smasher's army. If the characters attract Humorless' attention, it attacks them. In either case, the swordmaster dies. He ventured into this dangerous area because he was down on his luck; he carries little useful gear, and his purse is empty.

War Trophy

The characters come upon a crude effigy made from the hollowed-out head of an espagra; someone attached jehuthra limbs to it as additional horns, and impaled it on a stake. A character who makes a successful Evidence Analysis Test or other appropriate test against a Difficulty Number of 9 realizes that the effigy is the totem of one of the falseman armies. If the adventurers take the symbol away from Parlainth with them, dogged and stealthy strawmen belonging to Guile's forces pursue them as far as Haven. By taking the trophy, the characters unknowingly join the never-ending war game. Strawmen repeatedly ambush them until they return the trophy to Guile's territory, which shifts constantly. If the player characters destroy the totem, they must create a new one similar enough to the original to deceive the angered falsemen. Depending on the gamemaster's story needs, the strawmen can offer a real threat or simply be a nuisance.

Tiny Bauble

As the characters pass through or near a stand of trees, a glint of light strikes the eye of any character who makes a successful Perception Test against a Difficulty Number of 7. High up in a thin, gnarled tree, that adventurer sees a jeweled necklace dangling from an overhanging branch. A quick look at the tree reveals that its bark consists of a sheath of sharp needles; anyone firmly grasping the trunk or a branch takes Step 7 damage for every round that he or she holds onto the tree. The gamemaster should reward any clever scheme to get at the necklace; for example, an archer may use his or her True Shot Talent to slice through the twig supporting the jewels. However, the adventurers must get the treasure swiftly. At the end of 10 rounds, a pack of waxmen appears that outnumbers the characters 3 to 1.

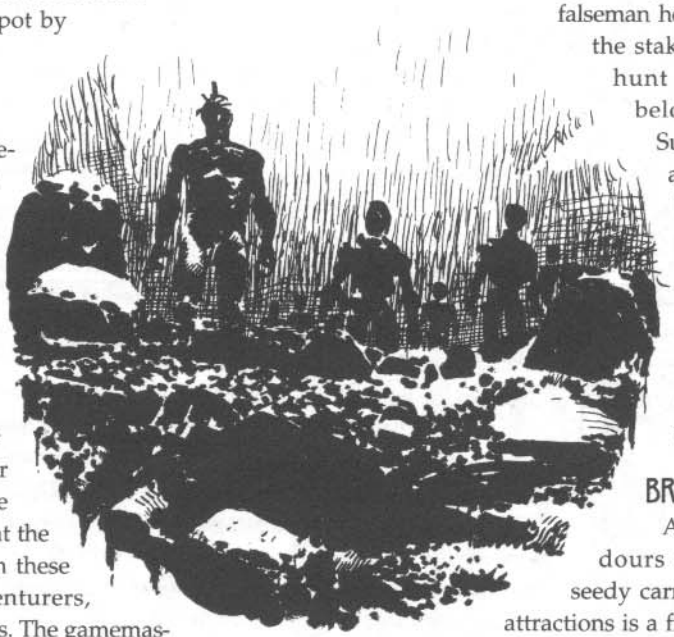
The necklace is worth 200 silver pieces and may also provide a clue to the location of a greater treasure (gamemaster's discretion). A chakta bird picked it up from the jungle floor, then dropped it while fleeing an espagra.

ADVENTURE IDEAS

The following adventure ideas represent typical reasons characters might have for venturing into the War Zone and include optional explanations for the circumstances and situations they discover there.

FIXING THE WARS

An ork known as Claydigger approaches the adventurers with a proposition to manipulate Pagmor Gilt-Throat, the troll bookie who runs the betting on the falsemen wars (see pp. 27 and 48, **Parlainth GM**). Claydigger took a long-shot bet on Guile to retake a ruined pyramid known as the Depot by the end of the following week. If he wins, he wins big; a loss puts him in big trouble with Pagmor and the bookie's assorted enforcers, because Claydigger does not have the money to pay up. The ork offers the adventurers a percentage of his winnings if they head to the War Zone and influence the battle so that Guile takes the Depot by the appointed time.



DESTROYING THE FALSEMEN

A consortium of entrepreneurs arrive in Haven and announce that they will pay adventurers to head into the War Zone and destroy the falsemen. The consortium offers bounty for falseman heads: 50 silver pieces for a strawman, 75 silver pieces for a waxman, 500 silver pieces for a stoneman, and 1,000 silver pieces for a steelman. Once the consortium's expert verifies that the heads are genuine, they return these dubious trophies to the adventurers, who may sell them as art objects. The gamemaster may decide that one of the following options represents the truth in this adventure.

Option 1

The entrepreneurs are legitimate, but the bounties too low to compensate for the dangers of an expedition into the War Zone. At the rate adventurers can possibly succeed in thinning the ranks of the falsemen, it will take decades for this scheme to make the War Zone safe for excavation. In the meantime, other dangerous creatures tend to take the falsemen's place. After several of their members venture into the War Zone and fail to return, the Loyal Order of Delvers and their rivals, the Association of Unaffiliated Explorers, unite to run the entrepreneurs out of town. In response, the entrepreneurs hire the adventurers as advocates to persuade the two organizations to let them stay.

Option 2

The entrepreneurs are Theran collaborators seeking to reduce the number of explorers in Parlainth by sending as many as they can on a suicide mission. Low bounties not withstanding, many desperate adventurers consider the difficult task of dispatching falseman in the War Zone more likely to pay off than a treasure hunt in any area of the ruins. In this case, the player characters expose this despicable deception by Thera's imperialist lackeys.

Option 3

Guile bribed the consortium to take out its opposition, supplying them with treasure in exchange for their services. They assign the bounty hunters to specific areas of the War Zone, supposedly to stop explorers from poaching falseman heads from one another. Actually, the stakeouts guarantee that explorers hunt falsemen only in territories belonging to Smasher and Never Surrender. Admirable player characters can expose this scandal and bring the traitors to justice. Less scrupulous ones might accompany the entrepreneurs into Guile's territory to collect their reward. Of course, Guile plans to betray its erstwhile allies (and the adventurers) rather than give up a valuable trophy.

BRING 'EM BACK ALIVE

A group of disagreeable troubadours comes to town and sets up a seedy carnival. Among the most popular attractions is a fight to the death between a battered stoneman and an untamed, vicious creature of some sort; many of Haven's explorers enjoy betting on these bloody matches, making the fights a source of income for the carnival. The troubadours offer a generous bounty to adventurers who bring them unusual live creatures (no Horrors, please) in fighting condition. In this adventure, the player characters can pick up some cash while facing the interesting challenge of bringing the creatures back alive.

As soon as the match begins, the stoneman launches into a pleading speech, asking spectators to set it free; it claims to be a sentient being, which should not be enslaved. A debate ensues, heated enough to escalate into a brawl. Most Havenites revile the practice of slavery, but many are equally disturbed by the idea that falsemen may be more than unthinking constructs to be destroyed on sight. If the adventurers argue on the side of the falseman, it begs them to show their heroism by freeing it. If they argue against it, the troubadours offer them a generous bounty to recover the stoneman after a group of fanatical abolitionists frees it.

WESTERN CATACOMBS



—From the adventuring log of Vassily Vos, one-time thief for Anderly's Adventurers

I hate magic. I don't know how I got talked into entering the worst cesspool of tainted, cruel, strange magic in all of Barsaive. That's a lie. I do know. Mothers, don't let your daughters marry no wizards, that's all I can say. Their husbands will always get them into bad trouble.

Zydek insisted that we explore the famous Western Catacombs of Parlainth. I said let's not push our luck, let's be happy with the money Throal paid us for breaking up that slave ring. But you know wizards when they sniff a mystery. And there's no bigger mystery in this world than the Western Catacombs, or so Zydek says.

So we hired some local talent at loose ends, including one who knew a way into the catacombs. Zydek acted just like a little boy at fair day, stopping to look at every picture on the walls, babbling about inscriptions, touching everything. If we'd run across anything fragile, he'd have broken it for sure.

After what seemed like a decade, we stopped in front of a door that looked like it had been shut for a thousand years. Ten feet high, solid silver. Zydek was beside himself, wondering what lay behind it. Me, I was wondering how we could get it off its hinges and transport it out of the catacombs. And how in the name of the Passions we could ever arrange to sell such a thing. After muttering under his breath for a good long time, Zydek dispelled the magical lock on the door. It took all our combined strength to get the huge thing open but it swung into the room with nary a creak, as silent as if it'd been oiled.

We stepped inside, and the light crystals in the wall sconces flickered to life as if they knew we were there. I didn't like that. Big room, maybe forty feet up to the vaulted ceiling. The room looked to be an almost perfect circle, and right off I noticed two strange things. One section of the wall, the one we faced, looked like a slice of the night sky, full of coldly twinkling stars. And in the dead middle of the room stood an elf in embroidered robes, frozen with a look of terror on his face, eyes open and unblinking.

Zydek shuffled up to the stock-still elf and the rest of us tensed, ready for something bad to happen. He looked close at the embroidery—he's an expert on robe patterns, ancient and modern—then told us that the robe marked the elf as a nethermancer in the employ of the Theran government from sometime in the early tenth century. Aside from being frozen stiff, the elf was in pretty good shape for being five hundred years old.

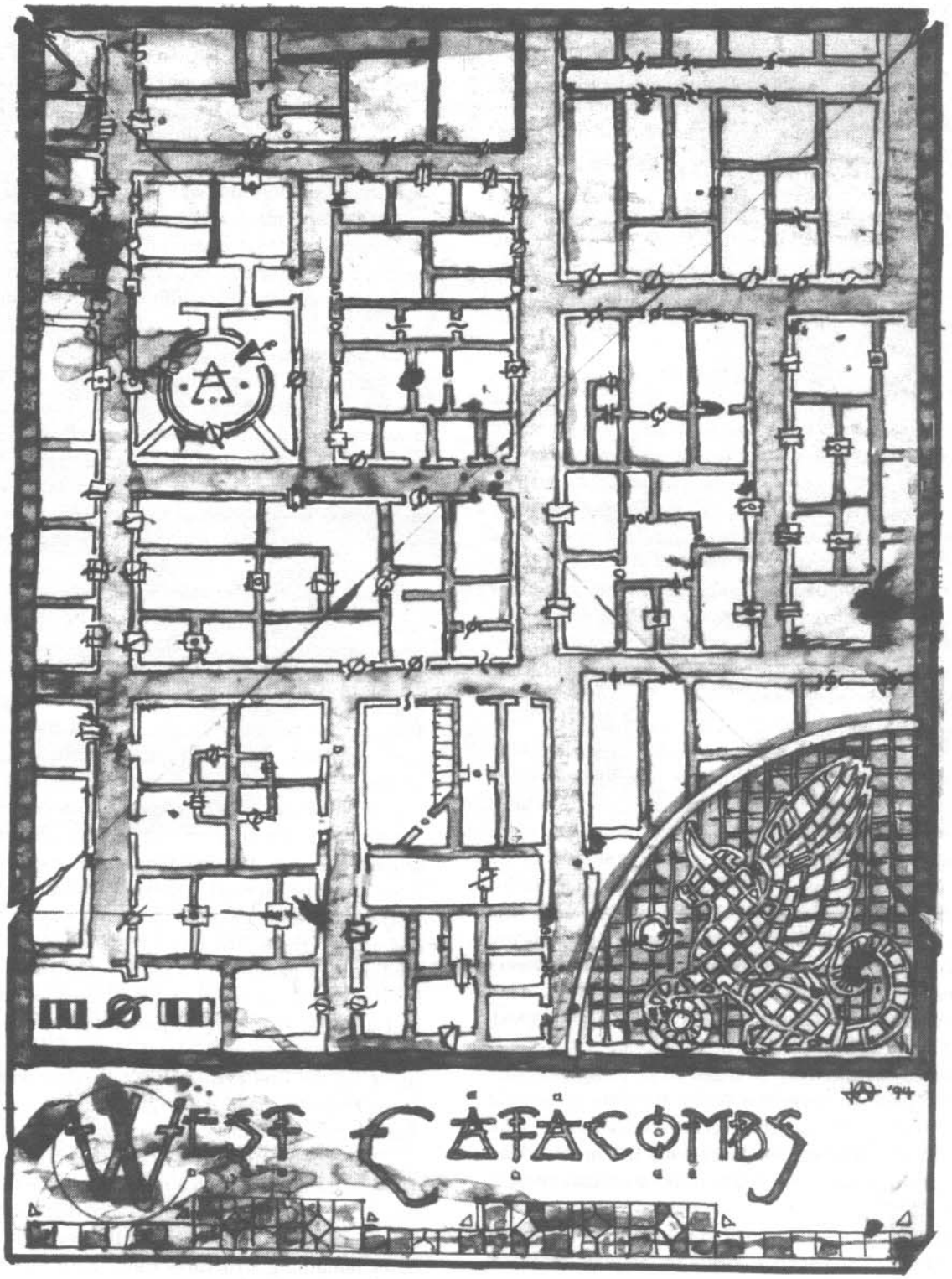
I looked around the room. Aside from the wall of stars and the frozen elf, the place was bare. "There's nothing here worth taking," I said, "so let's go."

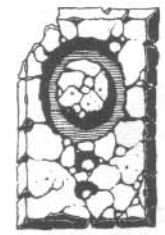
Zydek said, "My dear, there is no treasure greater than knowledge." Always says that, the stupid oaf. Makes me want to shake him till his brain rattles against his head bones.

I started to say, "Try repairing your armor with nothing but knowledge" when the elf crumbled to bits before our eyes, giving off a terrible reek and shooting fumes and smoke into the air. Zydek stepped back, blinded and choking.

The bits of crumbled elf began to shake and jump, and next thing we know is the dust now looks like a dozen or so miniature gargoyles. A tiny gargoyle hits just as hard as a full-sized one. Never knew that—could have gone my whole life without knowing it and been happy.

What price knowledge now, Zydek? Hmmm?


WEST CATACOMBS
'94



VERVIEW

Originally named the Experimentation Chambers, the Western Catacombs lie beneath the western quadrant of the above-ground city. Various expansions of the undercity left these catacombs virtually untouched, largely because the magicians in the area used their clout to resist any changes to their experimentation chambers.

Above the Western Catacombs is the War Zone, from which falsemen occasionally fall through their rivals' pit traps. Any falsemen encountered in the catacombs work singlemindedly to get back out to the War Zone, and therefore constitute the chief opposition to explorers wishing to enter the Western Catacombs.

DESCRIPTION

The Therans built the Western Catacombs with wider corridors and larger chambers than most other parts of the underground city. Sconces that once held light quartzes line the hallways and chambers, though most of the gems are shattered or missing. Grasping tendrils of the War Zone's thriving plant life choke the small air vents near the corners where the walls and ceilings meet, vents that might at one time have provided passage for windlings. The gamemaster may decide to link the lingering malign energies of the Western Catacombs and the uncanny virulence of the War Zone's vegetation.

The tunnel and chamber ceilings are of sculpted plaster, the walls finished with limestone slabs. The slabs bear stylized, magical characters chiseled into the stone with fine attention to detail. Many explorers mistakenly believe them to be wards, but the designs serve only as decoration. If translated, the magical characters spell out slogans of the Theran Empire, such as, "We labor not for Thera, but for the world," "Civilization brings responsibility," and "The whip when persuasion fails." Many of the slogans are unreadable; Horrors, captives, and legions of explorers have chipped away at the stone and carried away many large chunks. Other wall sections are discolored, scorched, buckled, scratched, and even melted.

Colored marble tiles, arranged in pleasingly regular geometric patterns cover the floors. Intricate mosaics at corridor intersections depict the great magicians of Theran history in dramatic scenes. Limestone fragments, dead leaves, rat droppings, and shards of bone obscure most of these designs.

The experiments performed in the catacomb chambers dictated their varied shapes. While rectangular chambers are the most common, others form pentagons, hexagons, octagons, and even circles. Heavy iron doors once protected each chamber. Explorers now find eight out of ten doors standing open or torn off their hinges, bent into new shapes, or melted. The few doors that remain closed are held shut with powerful magical locks of Spell Defenses ranging from 10 to 15. Explorers who succeed in opening these locks sometimes gain access to rooms untouched since the early seventh century TE; in other locked rooms, destructive forces crept in through vents to damage or destroy their contents.

Chamber floors and walls are finished in undecorated limestone slabs, many badly damaged by unknown forces. Most rooms suffered structural damage that makes them unstable and prone to collapse, and cave-ins often kill explorers who poke about without sufficient caution.

USES

Before the Scourge, Parlainth's Western Catacombs served as one of Barsaive's great centers of magical research. Parlainth's creative, unorthodox magicians earned quite a reputation for innovation, and many talented Theran sorcerers requested postings to Parlainth to join their ranks. The decision of the Parlainthian magicians to flee the Scourge by taking the city out of reality sprang directly from Parlainth's rivalry with the Theran School of Shadows, which many Parlainthian sorcerers considered too conservative. In retrospect, of course, the "hidebound" Theran approach proved to be the safer course.

The Parlainthian magicians did not limit their research to protective magics, but followed several lines of inquiry. They researched new spells, studied the relationships between planes, dissected captured magical creatures, and developed magical techniques of waging war in order to aid the Theran Infantry in its rivalry with the Theran Navy.

The Experimentation Chambers actually fulfilled their original use up to the time the Horrors took over the city. Even after the Horrors appeared, Parlainth's magicians worked frantically to come up with a way to defend their city against them. The city's most powerful spellcasters died in the Chambers in a momentous battle against the Horrors in 612 TE, an epic conflict deserving of a legend—had anyone survived to tell it. During this battle, Parlainth's magicians unleashed a number of powerful spells for the first and last time, slaying many Horrors. Those fantastic magical energies also caused most of the damage to the chambers and passageways.

The spells thrown during this fight soaked the Western Catacombs with a magical residue that lingers to this day. Characters using the Astral Sight Talent in these catacombs can see that the walls, ceilings, floors, and other remaining structures pulse with mystical energy. This energy captured like a fly in amber the emotional



resonance of the suicidal triumph of the Parlainthian sorcerers and the panic of the dying Horrors. This powerful emotional aura may cause characters who use Astral Sight to suffer from feedback. Compare the result of a character's Astral Sight Test to his or her Spell Defense. If the result exceeds the Spell Defense, these ancient emotions overwhelm the character and he or she may only weep and gasp for a number of rounds equal to the difference between the Spell Defense and the test result. If the result reflects an Excellent or Extraordinary success level, the character also sees visions of that dramatic last battle. The visions provide gamemasters with an excellent opportunity to introduce oblique clues to the group's current adventure.

The mystical energy also creates unusual magical effects within the Western Catacombs, creating a magical booster or dampener effect at the gamemaster's discretion. The gamemaster also determines exactly where and how these effects occur. The effects last for as long as the character remains in the area of effect determined by the gamemaster.

When serving as a booster, the mystical energy adds 2 steps to the effect of any spell, talent, or spell-like ability (such as dragon or Horror powers). However, if a character attempting to cast a spell or use a talent rolls all ones, the character suffers emotional feedback that lasts for a number of rounds equal to the difference between the Difficulty Number of the test in question and the test result. When dampening magical powers, the energy reduces all tests for talents, spells, and creature powers by 2 steps.

Option

The gamemaster may use the following option when the player characters explore the Western Catacombs.

A renegade cell of Parlainthian magicians tried to study the Horrors hands-on in order to learn enough about them to fight them effectively. They learned spells to summon the Horrors from their tainted corner of astral space, but those taking part in this project became corrupted by the things they contacted. These corrupted magicians let the Horrors into Parlainth before other magicians cast the spells to take it out of the world. As a result of these sorcerers' activities, the Western Catacombs contains a chamber with an open gateway to astral space. Fortunately for Barsaive, the chamber lies behind several intact locked doors safeguarded with heavy warding.



MAP

The section shown is typical of the Western Catacombs, wide corridors connecting large experimentation chambers of different sizes. Point A is the entrance to this portion of the catacombs from the War Zone, a simple hole dug through the earth. Adventurers entering the catacombs this way must use spelunking techniques to do so, keeping an eye out for crazed falsemen as they descend into the chamber or corridor.

EXPLORATION

The following inhabitants, booty, and traps represent common encounters in the Western Catacombs.

INHABITANTS

The area's mystical energy attracts many magical creatures, often drawing them to the catacombs against their natural inclination. Bog gobs, for example, frequent the tunnels, even though the dry, stone passageways bear little resemblance to the bog gobs' preferred, swampy habitat. A few groups of cadaver men live in the Western Catacombs, some exiles from Twiceborn's realm and others recently reanimated corpses who know nothing of the Queen of the Dead. Explorers also have run across other loathsome creatures, including crakbills, demiwraiths, ghouls, gargoyles, krilworm nests, lightning lizards, ogre twins, spectral dancers, and triplicants. The twisted magic lingering in this area sometimes bestows on these creatures odd new abilities: characters should never assume that anything they encounter here is a normal example of its kind.

The gamemaster may consider the following options when determining the nature of the Western Catacombs' inhabitants.

Option 1

Creatures drawn to this area remain despite a scarcity of food, and their desperate hunger makes them fight and often slay each other. Most creatures that explorers encounter are recent arrivals, already driven largely by hunger and therefore more aggressive than usual. The bones of creatures who starved to death pile up knee-deep in some chambers.

Option 2

In a curious side effect of the area's magical energies, creatures who live in these catacombs require much less sustenance than normal. In a sense, the magic feeds them. With the need for food substantially reduced, the creatures need not prey on each other to survive, and so many of them stay near their nests rather than pursuing intruders. Many of the creatures live unnaturally long lives; some have been in the catacombs almost since Parlainth's return. Characters might be surprised to find so few creature remains.

BOOTY

The Western Catacombs contain a treasure worth more than gold and gems—magical information. The tiniest scraps of documents retrieved from the tunnels and chambers produce eager bidders among agents of Throal, the Therans, and the Blood Warders of Blood Wood. Explorers may find grimoires, magical tomes, equipment

for arcane research, new spells, and magical items (intact or otherwise) in the Western Catacombs.

TRAPS

The magic that permeates the catacombs is slowly twisting the area, creating impossibly strange magical traps to greet the unwary. Spontaneously generated illusions abound. Examples of typical traps include stairways that appear to go up but actually go down; passageways where gravity suddenly reverses itself; poisonous mists; and warps in space that transport characters elsewhere in the catacombs, the city, or even in Barsaive. Barriers of magical force, both visible and invisible, move randomly throughout the tunnels and chambers; spells known and unknown fly at intruders from the empty air. For an account describing some of these strange occurrences, see **Disturbing Wonderments of the Western Catacombs** in **Vardeghul's Trove of Lore.**

Note that the area's magical traps often move from place to place or suddenly coalesce at random. Most of these traps have nethermancy or wizardry spell effects. Many of the traps resemble shimmering fog or a wall of energy and so are easy to see.

Magical Trap

Detection Difficulty: 5

Spell Defense: 19

Disarm Difficulty: 19

Trigger Condition: The gamemaster makes a Step 17 Spellcasting Test against the Spell Defense of any character inside the fog. If the test is successful, the character triggers the trap.

Trap Initiative: 30

Trap Effect: The trap casts an Onion Blood spell (p. 86, **ED Companion**) against the character who triggered it. The spell has Spellcasting Step 17 and Effect Step 23, and does damage in each round for 10 rounds.

Secret Doors

The Western Catacombs also contain many secret doors to rooms and passageways, created by the residents of the area to hide experiments and allow discreet travel through the catacombs. In many cases, what an explorer might take for a magical trap is in fact the mechanism for opening or closing such secret doors. Most secret doors close automatically after a certain amount of time, often only a few minutes. The gamemaster may choose to use the secret doors according to the following option.

Option: During their research into the magical concealment of Parlainth, its sorcerers opened gateways to various realities. Creatures from other games or fictional sources that are otherwise incompatible with **Earthdawn** might exist in the Western Catacombs, having fallen into the tunnels through these gateways. Gamemasters who want to thoroughly confuse the adventurers can also let them fall through these gateways to other game settings, anything from other fantasy worlds to completely different genres.

ENCOUNTERS

The following three encounters represent typical events and meetings the characters may experience as they travel through the Western Catacombs.

Threads

As the characters wander through the catacombs, make secret tests for any characters with Thread Weaving Talent against a Difficulty Number of 6. Characters whose tests are successful detect a number of unattached threads moving through the air, undulating as if alive. Have the characters who notice the threads make Charisma Tests against a Difficulty Number of 5; if any character is successful, the threads float over to him or her and affectionately entwine themselves around that character's ankles, arms, and legs.

These loose threads exist as a result of a centuries-old magical experiment in which a magician managed to give them animal-level intelligence. Finding no immediate use for his discovery, he abandoned the experiment and trapped the threads inside a crystal, which other explorers recently broke. The sentient threads now roam the catacombs looking for human companionship. Explorers "adopted" by the threads discover that their strange new "pets" seek them out whenever they return to the Western Catacombs.

This encounter poses no danger to the explorers, but they do not know this and therefore might find it unnerving. Use the threads to foreshadow a powerful magical menace; as the explorers get closer to the magical threat, the sentient threads skitter away in fear. Explorers of lower Circles should interpret this behavior as a warning to turn back.

Passageway

Once the player characters have spent considerable time in the Western Catacombs and traveled a reasonable number of its passageways, make a secret Detect Trap Test against a Difficulty Number of 14 for any characters who possess that talent or skill as they march through yet another corridor. Those whose tests are successful see a shimmering in the air ahead. The shimmer blocks the entire corridor, and represents a magical trap triggered by anyone walking through it. Characters who achieved an Excellent success have a hunch that the trap will sweep them away to another location if they step through it. To

dispel the trap requires a successful Dispel Magic Test against a Difficulty Number of 18.

If the characters walk through the trap, it transports them to a stretch of corridor virtually identical to one they have already explored. Only those characters who consistently paid close attention to the carvings on the walls can immediately identify their location.

This trap, set by Parlainth's magicians just before their last stand against the Horrors, was designed to confuse and delay the enemy. The magical energies from the last battle warped the trap so that this magical phenomenon now travels through the catacombs, moving to a different position with every sunrise. An inconvenience rather than a hazard, this trap makes reliable mapping difficult and can prevent the characters from returning to a particular chamber if the gamemaster so desires for story purposes.

Obsidiman Demiwraith

The characters pass through a secret door, entering a largely unexplored area of the catacombs. As the characters round a corner, they hear a voice ahead calling, "Thank goodness you've come! Quick, free me, before the Dwallik shows up!" They walk toward the voice, turn another corner, and see an unarmed obsidiman chained to a huge, metal spike driven through the tile floor.

The captive is Thombara, an obsidiman-turned-demiwraith whose existence has been prolonged by Horror possession. Make secret Perception Tests against a Difficulty Number of 5 for any obsidimen or other characters with knowledge skills relating to obsidiman anatomy. If any character's test is successful, he or she realizes that Thombara is dead and decaying. No one else can tell a dead but animate obsidiman from a normal one.

Thombara claims to be the prisoner of the Dwallik, a grotesque, insect-headed Horror keeping him as a plaything. He begs the adventurers to break his chains and free him. If they ask how he came to be taken prisoner or request other, similar information, he says only that the Dwallik could return at any moment. If the adventurers choose to leave him, he begs them to reconsider until they pass out of earshot.

The magic of the Western Catacombs has made Thombara immortal. Whenever his Death Rating falls to 0, he turns into a noxious-smelling mist of a particularly evil shade of yellow. Within 24 hours of his "death," he reappears at a random location in the catacombs. A single-minded demiwraith, Thombara pursues the same explorers until he succeeds in slaying them. Nine years ago, he waged such a campaign against a group of troll adventurers who finally realized they could only get rid of him by imprisoning him. They overpowered him, dragged him back to the Western Catacombs, and chained him to the floor. Since that time, Thombara waits for someone to free him. Once released, he attacks his rescuers even if he is hopelessly outmatched. If killed, he comes after them once he re-forms, and pursues them until the adventurers imprison him again.

Thombara boasts no intelligence; he simply finds his quarry and launches a frontal assault. He can pose a significant threat to beginning characters, especially if he finds them alone. Higher-Circle characters find Thombara to be a colossal nuisance, always attacking at the most inconvenient moment. He may leap upon adventurers during love trysts, business negotiations, political meetings, and so forth. Before pouncing, he shouts his battle cry, always a variation of, "This time you shall not defeat me, fools!"

Each time the adventurers reduce Thombara to mist, the adventurers collect 225 Legend Points. The trolls who chained him stripped him of any treasure, so he carries nothing of value. Before returning to confront the adventurers after his first attack, he recovers a weapon from the ruins and uses it in subsequent assaults.

For game information on demiwraiths, see p. 290, **ED** or p. 64 of **Parlainth GM.**

ADVENTURE IDEAS

The following adventure ideas represent typical reasons characters might have for venturing into the Western Catacombs.

LIVING MURAL

The explorers find a moving mural painted on a tunnel wall. These legendary paintings, created with illusion magic, once could be found in every part of Parlainth, but the Scourge destroyed nearly every one. This mural shows a group of hardy warriors of various races fording a stream. They hold their weapons high to ward off a rain of flaming arrows. Strangely, the faces of the figures in the painting bear uncanny resemblances to residents of Haven that the adventurers recognize. One of them even looks like one of the player characters (determined by the gamemaster).

Soon after the painting's discovery, the real-life counterparts of the figures it depicts begin to turn up murdered, one by one. The order of the killings corresponds to the order of the figures from left to right, and only two more victims stand between the killer and the player character.

The painting, designed to inspire the magicians of Parlainth, placed their faces in a stirring portrait of a famous battle that the Therans won during the Orichalcum Wars. The mural's magic sought out the individuals working near it and put their faces in the painting, changing as



different magicians came and went from the catacombs. Its magic has begun to work erratically, randomly picking up the images of residents of Haven. One of these images is the killer, a local resident unbalanced by several disturbing encounters in the ruins. Seeing her own face in the painting pushed her over the edge, and she is killing the people shown with her in order to destroy the "evil, soul-stealing picture." The player characters must solve the mystery of the killings before the murderer slays their companion.

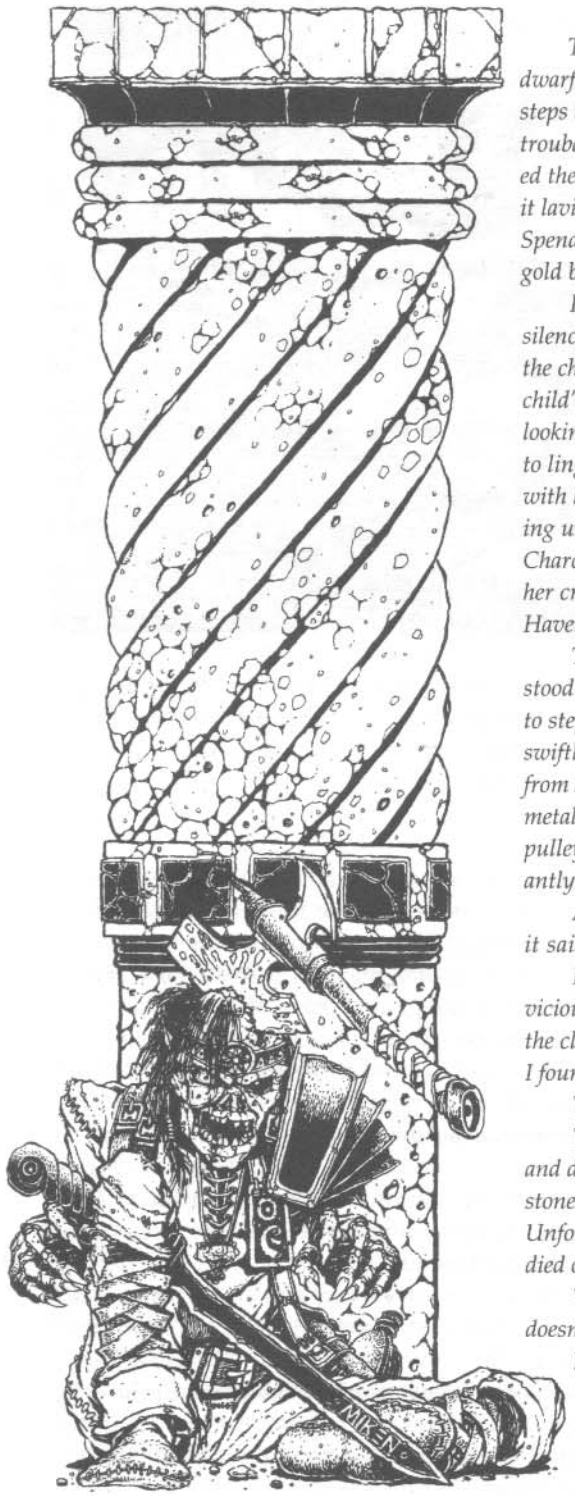
SOLE SURVIVOR

A down-on-her-luck human beastmaster by the name of Jarri Farleaper approaches the player characters and tells them that she is the last survivor of a band of explorers who recently died in the Western Catacombs. Jarri and her companions discovered a secret room full of scrolls, some of which looked intact, but were attacked by a creature that looked like a cross between a panther, a dragon, and an octopus before they could do more than look at the scrolls. Over too many drinks in a local tavern soon after her escape from death, Jarri foolishly told both Theran agents and Blood Warders about the secret room, and that only she knows how to find it again. Representatives of both groups threatened to kill her if she gives the secret to the other. Jarri wants the player characters' help in getting her hands on the scrolls, figuring she has a shot at staying alive if she can carry out enough booty to buy off the Therans and the warders. In return for the player characters' aid, Jarri promises them a piece of this dangerously valuable trove of knowledge.

THE RIVALS

Incognito representatives from the rival Theran Infantry and Theran Navy come to Haven to search for remnants of a fantastic Theran war machine supposedly developed by Parlainthian magicians (see **A Lost Theran War Machine** in **Vardeghul's Trove of Lore**). Navy personnel approach the player characters to hire them for a delicate task—they are to follow the infantry's hired explorers into the ruins, report on their activities, and hamper them whenever possible. The player characters should not search for the war machine themselves, but merely report any clues they find to the navy commander. They are not permitted to harm any of the infantry hirelings, as such action might touch off a nasty feud that neither branch of Thera's military can afford. Of course, the infantry's group does not necessarily feel similar qualms about harming the player characters.... The adventurers may play the assignment straight, doublecross the navy by approaching people from the infantry, or try to find the war machine themselves in the hope of profiting by creating a bidding war.

THE VAULTS



—From the legend of Frustinado, the Wealthy Thief

The pyramid loomed before me, cloaked in a mantle of creeping green. The crippled dwarf had told me that the chamber of gold awaited me therein. I counted the steps. Seven steps up, south side—there was the opening to the chamber. I felt my lips smile. Soon the troubadours would hail the name of Frustinado throughout Haven. I had already calculated the maximum amount of gold I could carry away—two hundred pounds. I would spend it lavishly, living like a king to build my legend for all to know. Frustinado, the Spendthrift Thief. The nickname rang pleasantly in my mind's ear. I could already feel the gold between my fingers.

I climbed up the steps of the pyramid, wrapping myself in a protective blanket of silence, stealing the quiet from the surrounding world. The movement required to reach the chamber would expose me to the greatest danger of being seen. So far, I had found it child's play to elude the infamous Unforgivables, but I took no chances. Slowly I moved, looking all around over the vast area of the Vaults. A dazzling sight, but one I did not care to linger over. The buildings of the Vaults stood taller than those elsewhere in the ruins, with larger spaces between them. Not an ideal area in which to practice the art of remaining unseen. In the distance I could see the temple where rumor says the dragon Charcoalgrin lives. I shuddered at the very thought of her name. I had heard many a tale of her cruelty and capriciousness from other explorers who sat by the fires of the inns in Haven; some of them might even have been true.

Though it felt like an eternity, it took very little time to reach the seventh step. Then I stood before the hole in the pyramid wall that the dwarf had described to me. As I prepared to step through the opening, my ever-keen instincts alerted me to the presence of a trap. I swiftly backed away, just as broken knives and sharpened metal fragments rained down from above. When the deadly shower stopped, I looked up to examine the sprung trap. The metal had lain hidden in a net, attached to a nearly invisible wire through an ingenious pulley mechanism. The trap appeared to be of recent manufacture. This was most unpleasantly curious, for the dwarf had described the chamber of gold as untouched.

A voice echoed from the back of the chamber. "Another visitor for Charcoalgrin," it said.

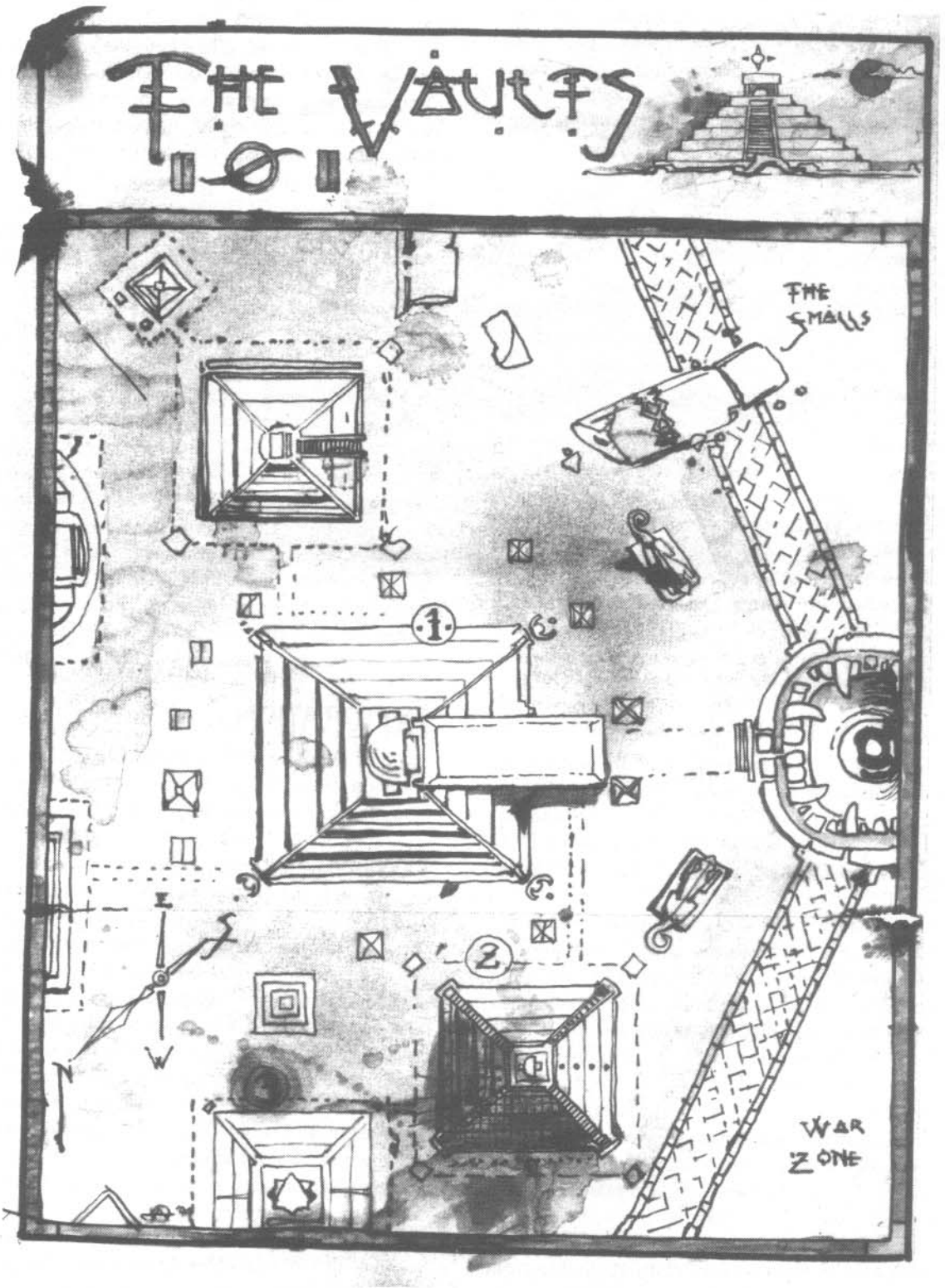
I slowly turned to divine the source of these most unwelcome words and saw a tall, vicious-looking ork woman accompanied by a motley gang of other Name-givers. All wore the clay badges I had been warned to fear, and carried an assortment of killing implements. I found the sight most unsettling.

The ork croaked, "She likes visitors, she does."

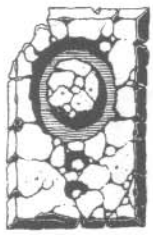
The chamber held not a single piece of the gold that had lured me here. It was bare and dirty, littered with bedrolls, cooking gear, jars, pots, and stinking garbage. Its limestone walls were stained in many places with the smoke of campfires. Clearly, the Unforgivables had lived in this place for weeks, if not longer. My hopes of great wealth died once again, dashed like breaking waves upon a rocky shore.

The ork pointed the tip of her troll sword at me. "Come along now. Charcoalgrin doesn't like waiting. She wants to talk to you. You do like to talk, eh, human?"

Never trust a one-legged dwarf.


THE VAULTS
THE SMALLS
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2
W
WAR ZONE





OVERVIEW

Originally named the Administrative Quarter, the Vaults comprises the northern quarter of the aboveground ruins. Beneath the Vaults lie the Northern Catacombs, over which the dragon Charcoalgrin exerts a certain degree of control.

DESCRIPTION

The Vaults contain Parlainth's largest and most eye-catching structures. Pyramids dominate the landscape, complimented by many other unusual shapes. Columns, friezes, and statuary adorn the buildings, and the faded remnants of murals cover the walls, though time and the Horrors have defaced the images that once danced upon them almost beyond recognition. The wide walkways are paved with clay stones embedded with bits of colorful tile in geometric patterns. Gardens with statues fill many of the area's spacious squares, along with pools and fountains. None of the fountains run anymore, and the pools either dried up or became filled with weeds and muck.

Many of the towers in the Vaults collapsed long ago, and now are inhabited by those who seek refuge under Charcoalgrin's leathery wings. Deserted pyramids and towers offer likely sources of salvageable loot, but Charcoalgrin's patrolling Unforgivables make reaching the loot extremely difficult.

USES

Serving as the heart of the Theran Empire in Barsaive, the architects designed the Administrative Quarter as an overwhelming display of Thera's might and grandeur. Though many of its buildings served practical uses such as headquartering Theran officials and their Barsaivian allies, most were built primarily to impress.

Soon after the first citizens of Parlainth arrived via airship from Thera, the upper classes among them rejected Imperial Architect Pumous Vectarian's plan to settle all of the city's residents in the residential quarter. Accustomed to living apart from those they saw as inferiors, the Theran elite in Parlainth promptly shifted their homes to the administrative area, near where they worked. Though straying from the city plan was officially illegal, a simple bribe to a city manager allowed the upper-crust civil servants to build their homes in the Administrative Quarter.

As this practice gained increasing acceptance, the rich began to construct ever more palatial mansions. Built to advertise their owners' wealth and status, these ostentatious homes soon became hardly distinguishable from Vectarian's pompous office buildings. As the years wore on, Parlainth's wealthy spent more and more money and effort on outdoing their neighbors with larger, taller, more imposing homes.

During Parlainth's civil war, Horror-maddened combatants looted the mansions; both the war and the Horrors blasted many a palace and office block to rubble. In the early days after Parlainth's return, explorers swarmed over the Vaults, assuming that the richest-looking buildings must contain the greatest treasures. Around the time that Torgak the troll and his people settled a corner of the Smalls and Named it Haven, the dragon Charcoalgrin took up residence in the Vaults' Imperial Palace, using it as her personal power base. A throng of sinister followers has patched up many of the buildings around the Palace to use for housing and defense.

MAP

The map depicts a birds-eye view of the area around Charcoalgrin's palace, which faces the Screaming Fountain. Charcoalgrin spends most of her time under the palace's balcony. The three former government buildings nearby serve as barracks for Charcoalgrin's gang, the Unforgivables, though most of the chambers remain empty. A large number of wooden guard shacks surround the palace, only two or three of which are occupied consistently (gamemaster's choice). A small crowd of courtiers hangs around the awning of the palace, listening to Charcoalgrin and keeping a watchful eye out for intruders.

EXPLORATION

The following inhabitants, booty, and traps represent common encounters in the Vaults. The Inhabitants section also describes and gives stats for the dragon Charcoalgrin.

INHABITANTS

Though any creatures of the gamemaster's choice can live in the Vaults, the player characters will certainly run afoul of the Unforgivables in this area. These renegade Name-givers and even a few creatures pledge their loyalty to Charcoalgrin in exchange for a role in an organized, relatively safe society. The Unforgivables wear rectangular, fired-clay badges in the shape of a stylized dragon head, made by a group of orks living in the area. Captured badges may prove useful to the player characters; any creatures or other Unforgivables who spot adventurers wearing them mistake the adventurers for Unforgivables, unless the observer makes a successful Perception Test against a Difficulty Number of 6.

Orks, trolls, dwarfs, and humans make up the largest number of Unforgivables. Only a few windlings, obsidimen, and t'skrang belong to the group. Many of the Name-givers in the gang are adepts of Second through Fifth





Circles, but many are also simply mundane fighters, thieves, or raiders.

In addition to the Name-givers, the ranks of the Unforgivables also include ogres and a few griffins, drakes, and gargoyles.

Charcoalgrin's statistics and a description of the dragon appear below.

Charcoalgrin

Attributes

DEX: 18	**STR:** 23	**TOU:** 27
PER: 19	**WIL:** 20	**CHA:** 25

Initiative: 21
Number of Attacks: 3
Attack: 23
Damage: 12
Claws (x 2): 30
Bite: 32
Number of Spells: (2)
Spellcasting: 23
Effect: See text

Physical Defense: 25
Spell Defense: 22
Social Defense: 20
Armor: 29
Mystic Armor: 14
Knockdown: 27
Recovery Tests: 12

Death Rating: 240
Wound Threshold: 25
Unconsciousness Rating: 220

Combat Movement: 80
Full Movement: 200

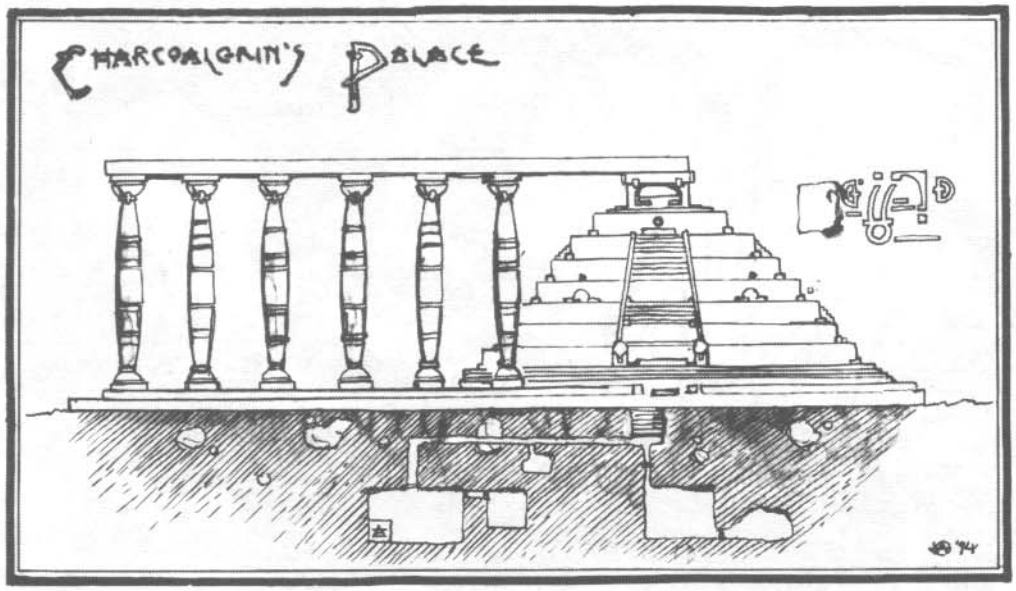
Karma Points: 25 **Karma Steps:** 10

Powers: Armored Scales 25, Disrupt Fate 25, Dragon Breath 25, Fear 25, Lair Sense 25, Regeneration 15, Suppress Magic 13, Venom 20, Wingbeat 20

Legend Points: 230,000
Equipment: None
Loot: Charcoalgrin maintains a massive trove of loot in the several basements of her lair in the Imperial Palace. Far more coins, gems, magical treasures, and other valuable items are crammed into the palace than a single adventuring party could hope to carry away in a single trip. If Charcoalgrin dies by fair means or foul, expect the inhabitants of the Vaults and most likely the Eastern Catacombs to descend on the palace like locusts and pick it clean. Magical items aside, the cash value of Charcoalgrin's trove is greater than 350,000 silver pieces; any treasure taken from Charcoalgrin's vaults is also worth Legend Points.

Commentary

Charcoalgrin takes great pleasure in organizing the lives of her followers. She knows each one by name and keeps careful records of their abilities, personalities, and past histories. She knows when an Unforgivable harbors mutinous thoughts even before he realizes it himself. She rewards loyalty generously and punishes the disloyal swiftly, publicly, and spectacularly. Her political skills



reach such extraordinary heights that if she were not a dragon, she might be a general or a queen. Over the years, many explorers have tried to outwit her or undermine her strength. None have succeeded, and she keeps the gnawed and shattered bones of those who failed in a special gallery in the palace.

A compulsive conversationalist, Charcoalgrin keeps a group of sycophants on hand at all times with whom to converse. She considers herself an authority on everything, and expertly holds forth on any topic under the sun. Her lengthy lectures on obscure points of dull subjects often exhaust her underlings, who care little for anything other than food and loot. They take care, however, not to show their boredom. Though Charcoalgrin generally treats her minions well in order to keep their loyalty, this is her one blind spot. Those who yawn during her talks usually end up as a pile of ashes. Consequently, every Unforgivable dreads being summoned to a personal audience with the dragon.

Charcoalgrin's love of talk provides an obvious opportunity for adventurers to meet her. She lives in the Grand Promenade of the palace, a courtyard covered by a long, stone awning supported by pillars. On the Promenade, Theran Overlords once conducted their public business for all to see. Charcoalgrin installed heavy rag curtains on all sides of the awning so that none can see her. A character granted an audience with the dragon must stand close enough to the curtain to listen to her thrumming, bass whisper without seeing her terrible face. The sound of her scales scraping against stone and the sight of her wings flapping the curtains as she shifts position are enough to frighten even the bravest adventurers.

Player characters might reach Charcoalgrin by entering the Vaults with captured badges and bluffing their way past the motley crew of guards that stands watch at a respectful distance from the Grand Promenade. If suitably impressed, the guard captain will approach Charcoalgrin with the adventurers' request for an audience. If this request intrigues Charcoalgrin, she will allow the adventurers to approach. She generally accepts petitions that allude to ways of getting treasure or that flatter her pretensions to unlimited esoteric knowledge.

Several guards stand at the ready to dispose of the adventurers if they become violent, though Charcoalgrin does not need their help. The guards, however, regard it as a point of honor to kill any troublemakers before their mistress bestirs herself. As with her followers, Charcoalgrin greets any display of boredom, impatience, or disrespect on the part of the adventurers with the sudden appearance of her massive snout and a withering exhalation of dragon breath.

Charcoalgrin organizes her forces to patrol the portions of the Vaults nearest to the palace. While patrols move throughout the Vaults, their regular beats leave the outer regions relatively unprotected. Unforgivables-controlled territory covers just over half the Vaults, centered on the palace and its surroundings, the northeast laneway, and the Screaming Fountain. Within this area, regular patrols accost intruders and eject anyone who fails to give the password. These patrols, made up of unscrupulous Name-givers and intelligent creatures, often try to kill trespassers for sport if they think they can do so without risk. Several patrols will rush to the aid of any of Charcoalgrin's "subjects" who cry out in alarm, and patrols fighting adventurers receive swift reinforcements if they call for help. Player characters cannot go through the Vaults killing inhabitants and taking their loot with impunity. By attacking one creature in the Vaults, an adventurer or group of explorers risks bringing a lethal response from all the rest. Charcoalgrin declines to participate in these defensive actions personally ... so far.

Charcoalgrin and her Unforgivables may be motivated by one of the following options.

Option 1: The Unforgivables simply want to be left alone while making a dishonest living raiding the few villages around Parlainth for food. They respect Charcoalgrin's power and the good deal she offers them, but any given Unforgivable aspires only to a full belly and a safe place to sleep.

Option 2: Charcoalgrin, corrupted during the Scourge, aims to carry on the destructive campaign of the Horrors now that their power has diminished. She loves to strike terror into the hearts of others and revels in chaos and destruction; she has chosen her Unforgivables because they share those traits. The Unforgivables consider sadism and cruelty admirable, and compassion offensive. Though some of Charcoalgrin's followers begin as amoral beings drawn to the dragon in hopes of a full belly and safe place to sleep, they eventually become as evil as the rest of Charcoalgrin's forces. The average Unforgivable feels at his best and most important when tormenting the weak.



BOOTY

Because they served as the administrative seat of Theran power in Barsaive, the Vaults never contained much magical treasure or valuable lore. As for other valuables, the player characters might find more than they expect. Though Charcoalgrin routinely sends patrols out to search the ruins for treasure, she allows them to keep virtually nothing for themselves. Her guards search the treasure-hunters to make sure they carry no more than a few coppers; all other money goes to Charcoalgrin. Because they see so little reward for their efforts, the treasure patrols do not look as hard as they should and so may fail to notice valuables such as gems and other luxury items.

TRAPS

Most traps the adventurers encounter in the Vaults are simple snares and similar traps recently installed by the Unforgivables. The gang's few renegade magicians also set a few simple magical traps. Many dangerous traps guard Charcoalgrin's lair, especially near her basement hoard. Most other traps protect the living spaces, intended to injure invaders and to warn patrols of their presence.

The Unforgivables set most of the snare traps in the Vaults near buildings or trees, and designed them to ensnare the victim or trigger an alarm that alerts the Unforgivable patrols. In some cases, the group uses thorny vines as snares, occasionally coating the thorns with a debilitating poison. The poison has a Step Number and Spell Defense of 10.

Snare Trap

Detection Difficulty: 7
Disarm Difficulty: 9
Trigger Condition: Trip vine
Trap Initiative: 21
Trap Effect: A vine snags the triggering character's feet and lifts him above the ground, leaving him dangling upside down in midair. Many of these traps incorporate an alarm bell that rings as the victim triggers the snare.

ENCOUNTERS

The following three encounters represent typical events and meetings the characters may experience as they travel through the Vaults.

Ogres

The player characters encounter a patrol of ogres, one ogre for every cavalryman, swordmaster, sky raider, or warrior among the adventurers and one for every two additional player characters. Loyal to Charcoalgrin and fond of violence, the ogres are bored and spoiling for a fight. Fortunately, the ogres are also exceptionally stupid, and the adventurers can talk their way out of trouble. If members of the adventuring group happen to be wearing Unforgivables badges, the ogres might believe they are fellow members of the gang because all other Name-givers look alike to them. If the player characters choose to fight, the ogres cry out for help as soon as they seem to be losing. Another ogre patrol of the same size as the first arrives in 1D8 rounds, and an identical patrol turns up every 1D8 rounds after that until the fight ends. The first patrol of ogres cries for help as soon as two of their number go down; the other patrols call for help when one goes down.

For the ogres' game information, see p. 307, **ED** or p. 65 of **Parlainth GM.**

Escape!

As the adventurers round the corner of a building, a ragged, grime-spattered dwarf runs toward them and throws himself at their feet. He claims to be one Fordanio, a linguistic scholar, captured with his wife by the Unforgivables a month ago. Vividly describing the gang's raid on a farming community about twenty miles from the ruins, he says that he and his wife were there to study the different dialects of communities isolated during the Scourge. He begs the adventurers to come with him, to help him free his wife and take them out of the ruins. If the adventurers seem hesitant, he offers a reward from his wife's wealthy family. Fordanio is telling the truth, up to a point: the Unforgivables did indeed capture him and his wife, but several years ago. She is long dead, and driven mad by grief, Fordanio threw his lot in with his captors. He intends to lure the adventurers into an ambush of a mixed patrol of ogres, ghouls, and falsemen.

Skirmishes

The adventurers hear the clash of arms in the distance. As they approach the sound, they see two patrols of Unforgivables fighting over a gorgeous, obviously valuable tapestry dropped carelessly among the weeds and broken paving stones. Each patrol wants the honor of taking it to Charcoalgrin. If sufficiently stealthy, the adventurers may steal the tapestry from under the noses of both patrols. If the patrols catch them in the attempt, both groups launch themselves at the player characters while calling for reinforcements.

ADVENTURE IDEAS

The following adventure ideas represent typical reasons the characters might have for venturing into the Vaults and include optional explanations for the circumstances and situations they find there.

BOUNTY HUNTING

The leaders of the village of Whitemark, which lies near the ruins of Parlainth, come to Haven and announce a bounty for several members of the Unforgivables who committed terrible crimes against them in a recent raid. They bring sketches of the particular miscreants they want in custody, and will pay a number of silver pieces equal to each Unforgivable's Legend Point Award to anyone who brings the criminals to the village for execution.

INTERVIEW WITH A DRAGON

Noting the enduring demand for her documented interview with the Cadaver Queen Twiceborn (see **An Encounter with Twiceborn, Queen of the Undead** in **Vardeghul's Trove of Lore**), Haven's loremistress Vardeghul offers the player characters a handsome reward to obtain a similar interview with the dragon Charcoalgrin.

DRAGON LOYALTIES

A rumor sweeps Haven that Charcoalgrin is secretly acting on behalf of the Kingdom of Throal. According to

the story, known agents of Throal were seen in the Vaults engaged in genial conversation with Unforgivable patrols. To base an adventure on this idea, the gamemaster may consider the following options.

Option 1

If the player characters feel sympathetic to Throal's aims, have a worried Throalic agent approach them. Her assignment does not involve consorting with the Unforgivables, and she finds it difficult to believe that any Throalic agent was given such a task. She hires the adventurers to discover the real situation. The player characters must infiltrate the Vaults to get the information they seek. If they join the Unforgivables to do so, they must run a gauntlet of dangerous and humiliating loyalty and suitability tests. Once they earn the gang's trust, they discover that a distant branch of Throal's royal family is planning a coup and hope to persuade Charcoalgrin to lend them some of her most able followers as assassins. As soon as the adventurers discover this secret, a wily Unforgivable patrol leader twigs to the fact that the adventurers are ringers, and plots their deaths.



Option 2

If the player characters believe the dwarfs of Throal to be power-hungry manipulators, agents of another, appropriate power hire them to sniff out the truth: Barsaivians against Throal, Therans, Blood Warders, and so on. The hiring agent, worried that big, bad Throal is up to something, wants to send someone into the Vaults to check out his suspicions. As in Option 1, the best course is to infiltrate the Unforgivables. This time, however, the adventurers compete for membership with a large number of other wannabes; agents hired by all the other powers listed above are attempting the same dangerous job. Catching on to each others' games, the competing bands of adventurers try to expose the others in order to impress Charcoalgrin with their own loyalty. If the adventurers survive the weeding-out process, they discover that the whole mess came from a wager between the dragon and a crafty Throalic agent who bet that the mere appearance of a plot would lure agents of several factions to their doom. (This was the agent's most recent plan to identify and reduce his competition in Parlainth.) The player characters watch the Throal agent receive a valuable item from Charcoalgrin as the payoff of the bet; immediately afterward, the dragon captures them, intending to kill them and entertain her minions with their death throes. If the adventurers escape, they can try to steal the wager payoff from the Throalic conspirator as compensation for their trouble.

NORTHERN CATACOMBS



—From *Tales of A Liberator*, collected by the Librarians of Throal

About five feet by ten feet the room was, with one wide side facing the corridor. A set of crisscrossing iron bars created a wall between the room and the corridor, and a small door in the middle of it swung open to admit prisoners. Unlike the dozens of other, identical cells lining that dank hallway, the lock on this one had not rusted shut. I even had a set of working keys for it, which I'd lifted from a peg in the larger guard station adjoining the hall of cells. For five hundred years those keys had dangled there, waiting for someone to come along and use them.

The keys and the cell formed the basis of an argument between me and my childhood friend, Jarbok. A friendly argument, mind you, but a serious one, rising from the different paths we chose. To those on the outside, those paths seemed to run side by side. But paths that run side by side never meet, do they?

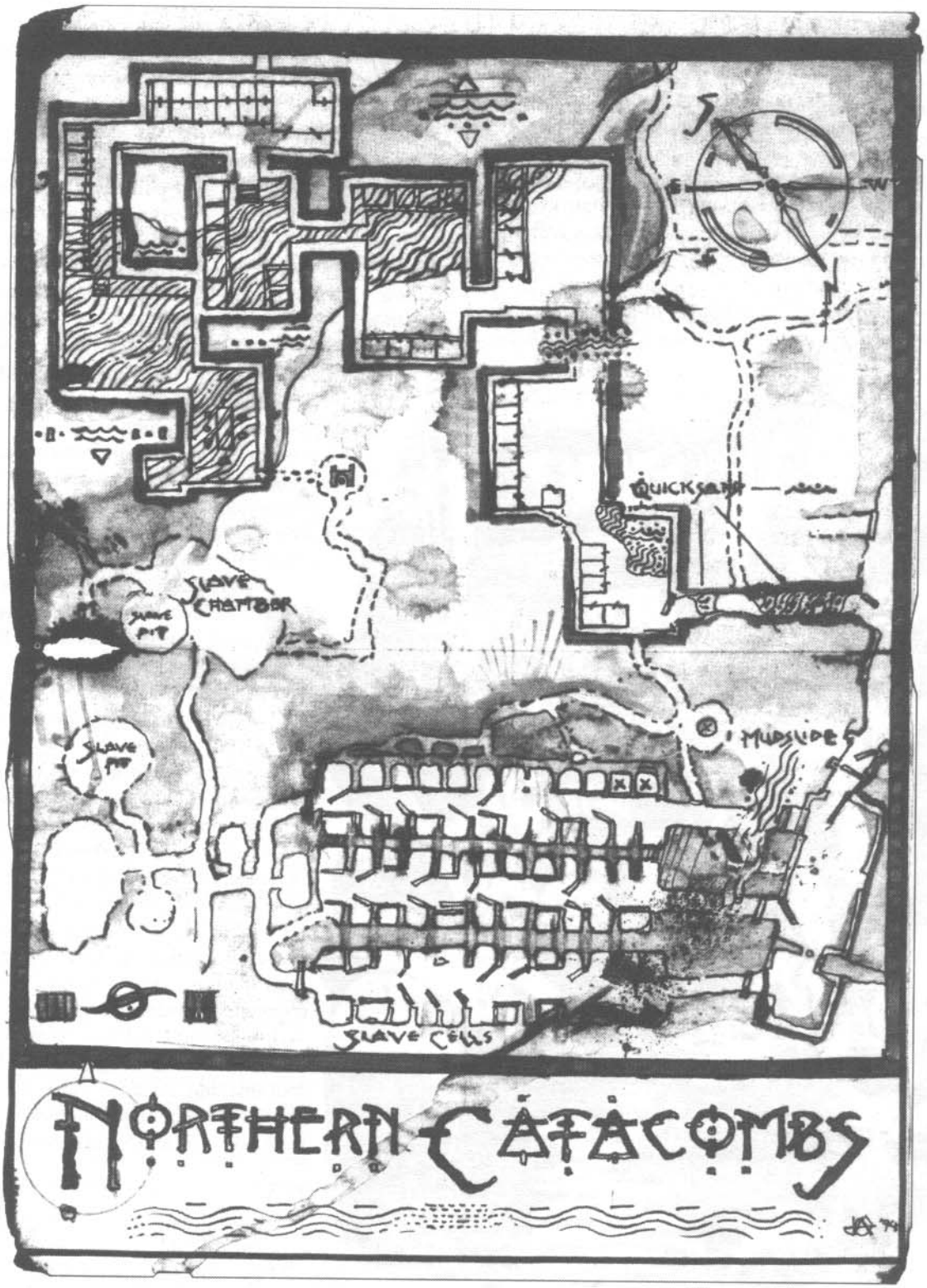
Jarbok is a questor of Lochost. I follow the Discipline of the Liberator. Both of us risk our lives to rinse Barsaive clean of the filth of slavery. Our goals are the same, but the rules we must abide by sometimes divide our methods.

I wanted to put our captive behind bars to rot forever. Frish the Stranger, one of the most feared slave raiders in northeastern Barsaive, knelt before us, covered in filthy rags. We had harried him across the countryside for months, cutting down the thugs who followed him one by one. Desperate, Frish eventually fled where he thought no one would follow—to the Northern Catacombs of Parlainth, home only to madmen and Horrors (and, suitably enough, the belly of the ancient Theran slave trade). Centuries ago, these cells had held miserable slaves awaiting shipment to Thera. If I had my way, one of them would keep Frish until he starved to death. Jarbok disagreed. A rigid follower of Lochost, he could not allow anyone to be imprisoned, not even one who had stolen freedom from so many. The ways of the Liberator are more flexible, allowing delicious irony of the kind I had in mind.

Frish's frantic blubbering interrupted our debate. "You don't understand," he whimpered. Like all bullying slavers, he was at heart a fearful coward. "The madmen have told me of these catacombs! They shun this place—they prefer to live in noxious, damp and muddy tunnels than these cells, though these are drier and warmer. They say a Horror roams these slave pens, feeding on the misery inflicted here centuries ago! Slay me if you must, even slowly—but do not leave me here, locked in and helpless, to await the Horror!"

We kicked Frish until he lapsed into silence, then discussed what he had said. Jarbok won the day by reminding me of the tale in which the trickster t'skrang begs his ork captors not to throw him in the river. In the tale, the orks throw the t'skrang into the river, and he mocks them as he swims away. Clearly, Frish preferred to take his chances in the catacombs rather than face certain, fatal vengeance at our hands.

So we dragged him from the Northern Catacombs, girding ourselves to face the Unforgivables who would no doubt harry us on our way through the Vaults above. As we left the tunnels behind, I thought I heard the unearthly whining of something that sounded hungry and disappointed.


QUICKSAND
SLAVE CHAMBER
SLAVE PIT
SLAVE PIT
MUDSLIDE
SLAVE CELLS
NORTHERN CATACOMBS

OVERVIEW

Originally named the Treasury, the Northern Catacombs are the underground chambers beneath the Vaults.

The Vaults, controlled by the dragon Charcoalgrin and her Unforgivables, lie directly above the Northern Catacombs. The Unforgivables keep a close watch on all exits from the Northern Catacombs into the Vaults. Inhabitants of the Northern Catacombs can only leave the tunnels with the permission of these guards: the guards regard the denizens of these catacombs as filth, and frequently harass or harm them. The Unforgivables, accustomed to lunatic foul folk arriving in the Vaults seeking entrance to the catacombs, grudgingly escort these deranged individuals to an entrance after relieving them of any valuables they might carry as a toll. If one is willing to impersonate a drooling madman, gaining entrance into the Northern Catacombs is easy. Getting out again is another story.



DESCRIPTION

The Northern Catacombs contain a few passageways finished in stone with wall paintings and floor mosaics that outdo even the resplendent Western Catacombs in style and splendor. These wide corridors lead to various large rooms with high ceilings, also built of finished stone. The rest of the Northern Catacombs are crudely built and unfinished-looking. Narrow corridors lead to rough-hewn chambers scarcely large enough for a human to stand upright. Individuals taller than 5 feet, 11 inches must stoop to pass through the tunnels in this portion of the catacombs.

Most of the rooms here are cells, separated from the passageways by iron bars suffering from various degrees of rust. The few door locks that still function have a minimum Difficulty Number of 6 for the purposes of Lock Pick Tests; the Difficulty Number rises with the amount of corrosion affecting the lock (see **Creating Difficulty Numbers,** pp. 244–45, **ED**).

During Parlainth's centuries away from Barsaive, the Horrors diverted a river and created a swamp near the city's northern side. When the Forgotten City returned to the province, the swamp began slowly leaking water into the ruins, most noticeably in the Northern Catacombs. Exposed soil in the catacombs feels damp to the touch, and a four-inch layer of mud covers the floors of most unfinished corridors. In other places, the mud conceals patches of quicksand. Needless to say, the quicksand makes running through unfamiliar corridors quite dangerous. In addition to the mud and ooze, some lower chambers and corridors are partially submerged in foul-smelling, stagnant water, while still others have completely collapsed into piles of mud, wet clay, and broken stone.

USES

When Imperial Architect Pumous Vectarian first drew up plans for the city, he designed the northern quarter of the underground city to serve as an Imperial Treasury to store the vast

sums of money that came and went through Parlainth. Though the smallest of the four quarters, it contained ample guard chambers, extensive traps, and storage rooms. The few, large, decorated rooms are the ancient guard chambers.

Within a few years of its founding, Parlainth's city fathers realized that the item of exchange most demanded by the city's Theran masters was not coin, but slaves. Parlainth became a giant holding pen for slaves captured throughout northern Barsaive, and the city excavated and built new tunnels and chambers to house the wretched captives. These unfinished, earthen cells and rooms make up most of the Northern Catacombs. Deeming it unwise to house the slaves near the gold reserves, city leaders moved the Treasury to the area now known as the Southern Catacombs.

MAP

The chambers on the right-hand side of the map were fully finished, originally intended to house the Provincial Treasury. These rooms are sinking slowly into the muck. At the gamemaster's discretion, these rooms may contain traps restored by scurriers, or folk foul may live here if no active traps exist. Creatures or minor Horrors may also live in these rooms, with or without the presence of traps. The area to the left on the map, built during the height of slaving fever, represents several guard chambers connected to long rows of cells. Insane foul folk most likely live in these rooms, having dug fragile entryways through the mud walls at Points A and B.

EXPLORATION

The following inhabitants, booty, and traps represent common encounters in the Northern Catacombs. This section also offers several options to explain the situations and circumstances of this area of the ruins.

INHABITANTS

Foul folk of the most degraded type live in the Northern Catacombs, so far unbalanced that they can only exist at a near-animal level. These Name-givers represent the living wreckage of the Scourge, incapable of becoming or even posing as normal members of society. Some mystical beacon seems to attract them to Parlainth; the most crazed and bestial of Barsaive's Name-givers often instinctively head for the ruins. Tramping along on foot and surviving on what meager meals they can forage, many of these wretches die en route. Of those who make it to Parlainth, any not immediately eaten by creatures or slain by the city's other lethal occupants usually head toward the Vaults, where the Unforgivables grant them passage into the dank, muddy tunnels. Most of them spend the rest of their miserable lives in the dark tunnels of the Northern Catacombs.

The muddy tunnel walls provide homes for a wide variety of revolting but nutritious insects that comprise the primary food source for the foul folk. Most denizens of the catacombs spend all of their waking hours combing the walls for bugs; stronger foul folk pick on the weaker ones and steal their grubs.

Few of the foul folk function as adepts, and most fight poorly. They have little equipment, wielding weapons the equivalent of daggers and wearing no armor whatsoever. When sufficiently aroused, however, they attack in waves, throwing themselves on their enemies with great ferocity and sometimes overwhelming the victim by sheer numbers. More often, however, these tactics result in a sickening blood bath, as the foul folk continue to leap upon the explorers' weapons with suicidal determination.

The suffering and degradation in this area draws Horrors to it like flies to a carcass. Some of the more disgusting Horrors lie cozily buried in the mud, feeding on the misery of the foul folk. These Horrors may even be responsible for the mystic beacon that seems to attract the mad to this Passion-forsaken corner of the ruins.

Numerous inhabitants of the catacombs claim to be the area's rightful rulers. Any such declarations show only the declarers' delusions of grandeur: these people are little more than savages and have almost no social organization at all. Explorers in this area often find themselves face to face with a grunting, grubby, would-be leader who offers to lead them to some great treasure in exchange for helping him to overthrow his enemies. If the explorers feel desperate enough to go along with this bloody-minded request, they usually discover that their new ally's "evil enemies" exist only in the maddened creature's brain. Most of the time, the supposed chief the explorers are helping does not know where to find anything more valuable than mud.

BOOTY

The Northern Catacombs contain the least amount of treasure in the ruins. What little of worth that the foul folk brought with them, the Unforgivables stole. As for the riches Parlainth once stored here, they were carefully catalogued at the time of their removal to the Southern Catacombs. Rumors persist, however, that early explorers of the ruins stashed treasures in these tunnels, intending to return for them later. The gamemaster may consider the following options as the truth behind those rumors.

Option 1

The rumors are true. In the early years of exploration, the Northern Catacombs were less damp and treacherous,



and also uninhabited. Several well-known bands of adventurers stored their booty in these tunnels for safekeeping, then returned to more dangerous areas of the ruins to retrieve one last valuable treasure. Many did not survive that final foray, leaving several choice valuables in what is now regarded as the nastiest, poorest portion of the ruins.

Option 2

The rumors represent the highest form of wishful thinking. A perennially hopeful lot, explorers cannot imagine a place without something worth looting. Nothing exists in the Northern Catacombs but unrelenting misery.

TRAPS

Natural traps are common in the catacombs, particularly quicksand and mudslides. Diseases and parasites run rampant among the foul folk, some of them quite contagious. The city officials disarmed most of the mechanical and magical traps in the original treasury vaults when the treasury moved to the Southern Catacombs, but they might have missed a few. Others may have been reactivated in the interim.

Quicksand

In the game statistics given below for quicksand, the Detection Difficulty represents the character's ability to recognize the quicksand. Characters with Survival Skill or applicable knowledge skills add 2 steps to all skill tests to recognize quicksand. The Trap Initiative represents how difficult it is for the character to jump away from the quicksand before it sucks him all the way in.

Detection Difficulty: 9

Disarm Difficulty: NA

Trigger Condition: Character stepping into quicksand

Trap Initiative: 17

Trap Effect: A character who falls into the quicksand begins to sink at a rate of 3 feet per round. To get out of the quicksand, the character must grasp some object (such as a rope held by other characters) and pull himself out or be pulled out by his companions. During the first round the character spends in the quicksand, he or she must make a successful Strength Test against a Difficulty Number of 5 in order to pull himself out. Other characters attempting to haul out their companion must make the same Strength Test. The Difficulty Number increases by 2 for each round after the first.

If a character sinks below the quicksand's surface, he or she begins to take damage from drowning. During the first round in which he is submerged, the character takes Step 5 damage. For each additional round, the character adds 3 damage steps.

ENCOUNTERS

Most of the encounters in this area involve foul folk. For game information on these inhabitants of the Northern Catacombs, see p. 70 of **Parlainth GM.** The following encounters represent typical events and meetings the characters may experience as they travel through the Northern Catacombs.

In the Name of the Passions

The adventurers meet several foul folk who greet them with great excitement, falling on their knees before them. These individuals believe that the adventurers are the Passions appearing to them in the flesh. The foul folk invented a myth for themselves in which the Passions will appear to them, deliver them from their wretched state, and restore their senses. These foul folk, slightly less crazy than most, recognize their madness. If the adventurers escort them out of the ruins and clean them up, they might restore the poor sufferers to some semblance of sanity. Of course, these wretches make a huge and potentially dangerous nuisance of themselves as long as the explorers stay in the ruins. They follow the player characters everywhere and loudly proclaim their divinity, which alerts hostile foul folk and other dangerous creatures to the explorers' presence.

The Vengeful Dead

Chegnur, the spirit of a slave who died long ago in the pens, took over the vulnerable mind of one of the foul folk, then used his considerable Charisma to surround himself with a coterie of loyal lunatics. He desperately wants to escape from the Northern Catacombs to wreak vengeance on his Theran captors, and will not accept that he and those who enslaved him are long dead. Any Therans he sees become targets of his fury; if the player characters are wearing Theran insignia or carry looted gear of Theran design, the possessed foul one assumes they are Therans and commands his followers to attack. From any other adventurers, he demands aid in achieving his revenge.

Note that when the slavers captured Chegnur, they brought him directly to Parlainth from the country and immediately put him in the slave pens, where he remained. Therefore, he possesses almost no useful knowledge of ancient Parlainth.

Hard Feelings

The adventurers find an old enemy in the Northern Catacombs, posing as one of the foul folk in an attempt to rally them as expendable troops in his cause (determined by the gamemaster). The enemy commands the loyalty of enough foul folk to give the player characters a hard time of it; he or she orders these loyalists to kill the adventurers, lest they escape and alert others to the enemy's plan.

ADVENTURE IDEAS

The following adventure ideas represent typical reasons the characters might find for venturing into the Northern Catacombs.

ALL THIS FOR A PLANT

A scholar hires the adventurers to find a rare freshwater weed native to Parlainth, which the scholar believes to possess medicinal properties. He will pay well for enough living plants to grow and propagate back in his workshop in Bartertown. He sends the adventurers to the Northern Catacombs, having seen a frond of the weed clinging to the boots of a dwarf swordmaster just returned from that region. The swordmaster, named Gwynnad, was so shaken by his experiences in the catacombs that he refused to speak of them to anyone. In fact, the weed does grow in several submerged chambers in a dark, dank corner of the catacombs. Unfortunately for the adventurers, a nasty aquatic monster also lives under the stagnant water.

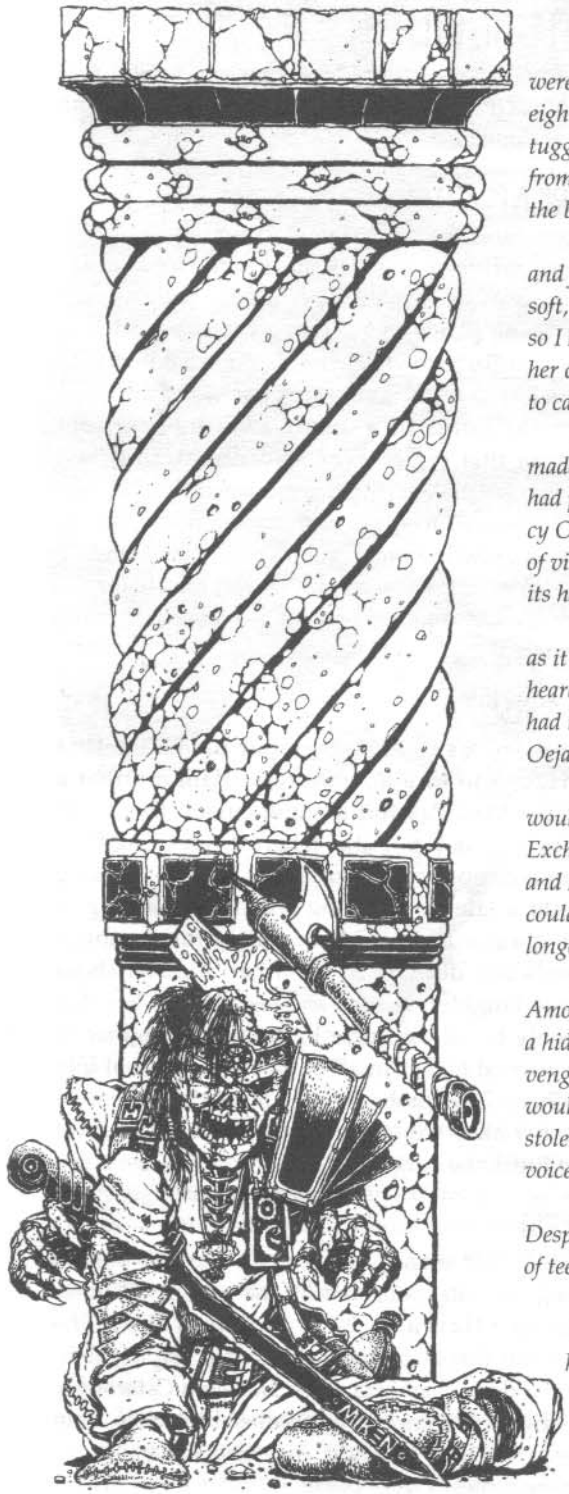
PASSION'S CURSE

A renowned t'skrang storyteller named Wilitia comes to Haven to hire adventurers, claiming that a questor of the Mad Passion Raggok cursed her. Once widely respected as a popular teller of tales, she now suffers from a compulsion to turn even a brief, amusing anecdote into a tale of appalling cruelty. According to Wilitia, the questor overheard her telling funny stories to her friends and decided to teach her a lesson about the futility of laughter. A sage she visited told her that she could only break the curse by bringing laughter to the most wretched beings in all of Barsaive: the foul folk of the Northern Catacombs. Wilitia hires the adventurers to keep her alive while she visits the catacombs and attempts to break the curse.

FROG JUMPING

A great deal of money is riding on Haven's annual frog-jumping contest, sponsored by the gambler Pagmor Gilt-Throat (see **Haven**, p. 27 of **Parlainth GM**). The adventurers hear that huge frogs with terrific leaping ability live in the sodden chambers of the Northern Catacombs. If they can bring a real brute of a specimen back alive, train it, and keep rivals from killing it, they stand a fair chance of winning the contest's large purse.

THE SMALLS



—From the personal diary of Marn Idda, brigand of Parlainth

I knew it was the right building even before I stepped inside. No matter that there were thousands of identical buildings, arranged in identical patterns, all forty-two by eighty-four paces in dwarf reckoning as far as the eye could see. I knew this place. It tugged at my soul. I'd called it home for years. Too many years. Years that had been stolen from me, that I could never recover. I could only do the next best thing; avenge myself on the bandit who stole them from me.

Before I stepped through the doorway, I stopped to run a hand along the limestone and felt the diamond pattern carved into it. So many times, when my fingers were still soft, I had run my hands over these very diamonds. They helped me to think back then, or so I had thought. So many times I had thought of running away. Of leaving Oejanni and her crude companions—my crude companions—behind. Yet I never did. My saviors had to carry me away in the end, fighting and squalling like a maddened cat all the way.

I shook my head and stepped into Oejanni's lair. The wave of emotion that hit me made me stagger. The smell, the familiar smell of vine and venison stew filled the air. It had permeated the walls, the moth-eaten carpets, the hides that provided what little privacy Oejanni's hovel permitted. How many nights had I choked down yet another bowl full of vine and venison? My head swam. I pulled my dagger Manykills from its scabbard, felt its hard, hungry hilt in my hand. It reminded me of my objective, my mission.

I stalked through the hovel, kicking at the hides, overturning pots. Everything looked as it had back then. Too much so. Oejanni and her bandits were not here, or I would have heard them carousing and roistering from many paces away. If they'd been here, I'd have had to change my tactics. But I knew where they'd be: out harassing unfortunate villagers. Oejanni always was predictable. That would cost her dearly.

Again and again, the scenario replayed in my mind. Oejanni and her latest dupes would stumble through the doorway. Already, they would be drunk. Laughing. Exchanging filthy jokes. Slapping each other playfully about. Then I would step forward, and Manykills would find its long-desired home in Oejanni's breast. Before the others could react, I would use my talents, whirling and striking home until they could resist no longer. Then I would vanish into the dark, my task accomplished.

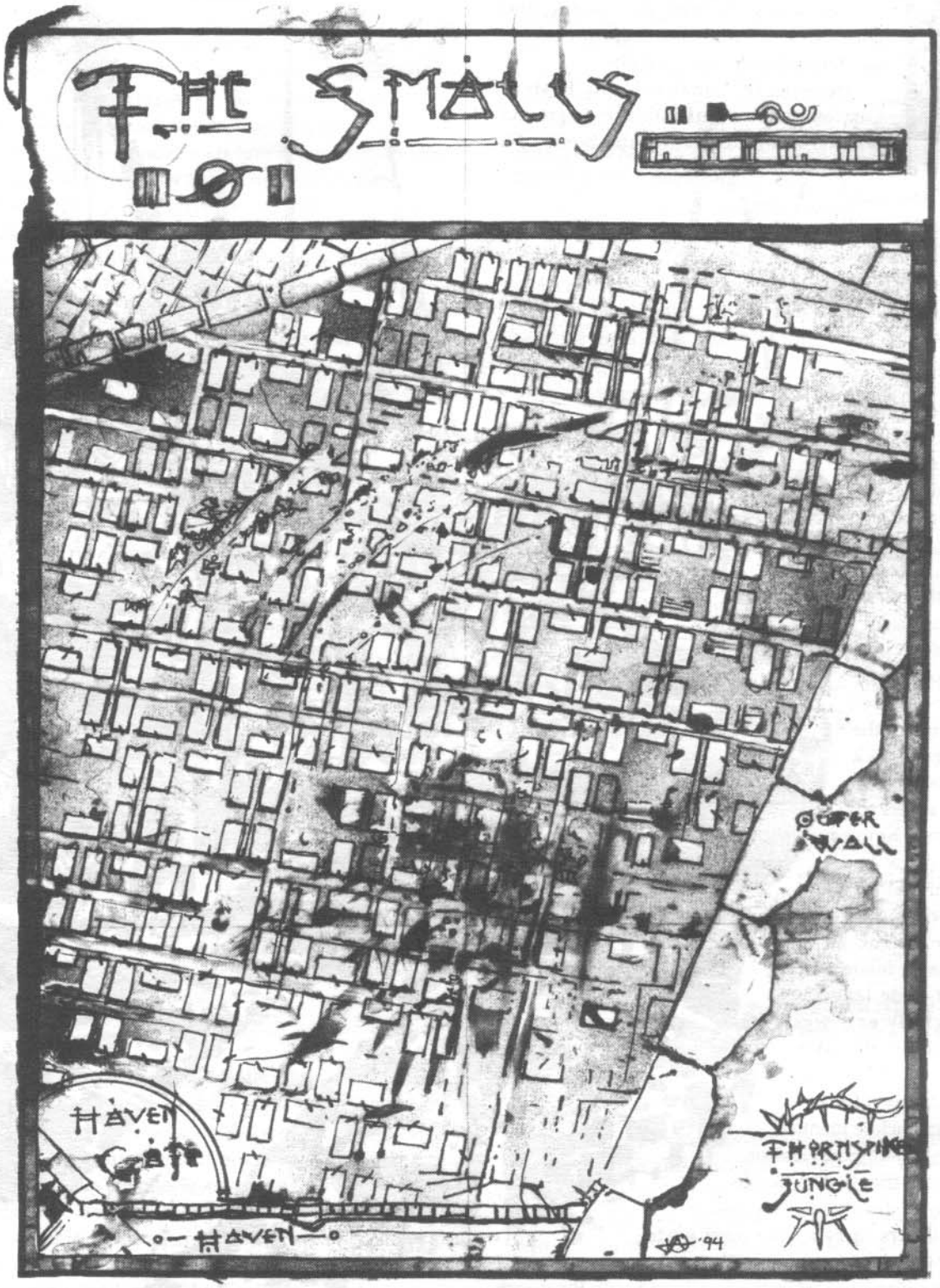
I whirled, startled. I heard voices in the distance. Laughing. Singing. Hooting. Among them, Oejanni's unmistakable squall. My grip on Manykills tightened. I looked for a hiding place, the best place to spring from. Then I rejected such cowardly thoughts. My vengeance would mean nothing if she did not see my face before she died. I doubted she would understand my hatred. How could Oejanni know what it is to have your childhood stolen? My face grew flushed with fury, and my heart pounded hard in my chest. The voices drew nearer.

Oejanni stepped through the doorway. Gross, she was, twice as fat as when I'd left. Despite the gulf of years that separated us, she recognized me. She smiled, exposing a row of teeth blackened and as ruined as Parlainth.

"Scarecrow!" she cried. I hated that name. "Welcome back!"

I rushed forward, dropping Manykills. Sobbing, I buried my face in her bosom. I held her tight, and she rocked me in her massive arms.

I was home. Like it or not.


THE SMALLS
OUTER WALL
HAVEN GATE
HAVEN
THORNSPINE JUNGLE
94

OVERVIEW

Originally named the Residential Quarter, the Smalls makes up the eastern quarter of the aboveground city.

Beneath the Smalls lie the Eastern Catacombs, once Parlainth's underground cemeteries and currently the home of a "kingdom" of cadaver men. These cadaver men occasionally surface in the Smalls, but never reveal the various entrances to their realm.



DESCRIPTION

Explorers gave the Smalls its name in recognition of the fact that the architect designed its buildings much smaller than those in the other three quarters of the surface city. Of the mostly one-story stone houses, roughly half of the buildings lack roofs, some from cave-ins, others torn off. Some houses offer shallow basements; all feature simple decorations of basic, geometric designs.

The area follows a grid; five-foot wide laneways run precisely east-west and north-south, intersecting at 90-degree angles. Many blocks of these lanes enclose identical buildings, making navigation extremely difficult. The Smalls offers few distinctive landmarks, and even explorers carrying the most up-to-date maps find it hard to keep their bearings. Several popular jokes set in the Smalls end with the punch line, "A15? I thought this was block B15!"

USES

Originally designed as Parlainth's only residential area, the Smalls on paper created a place where rich and poor, Theran and provincial, could live in the perfect unity and harmony celebrated by Theran poets as the objective of the Empire. Imperial Architect Pumous Vectarian designed each house as a 20-by-40-foot bungalow, centered on a living area that included a kitchen and two small, separate rooms located on either side of the central space.

Vectarian, however, overestimated the Parlainthians' enthusiasm for these egalitarian living arrangements. Within a few short years, the upper classes migrated to technically illegal but more impressive housing in the Administrative Quarter (the Vaults). Upwardly mobile citizens fled to the Merchant Quarter (the Twists) as quickly as they could afford to do so. Still others tore down their one-story homes and erected multistory buildings or changed the internal arrangement of their existing houses. A few commercial establishments, mostly public houses, set up shop in the quarter, demolishing the existing structures and building ones more suited to their needs.

Though not considered a strategic target during the Parlainth Civil War, the Smalls suffered terribly after the Horrors revealed themselves and began to annihilate the population of the city. Inhumanly strong Horrors that tore houses apart to get at their occupants did most of the damage. The Horrors abandoned the Smalls once the city's residents lay dead because they found their war games easier to fight in areas with more open space.

MAP

This map can represent any section of the Smalls with only slight modifications. As he or she wishes, the gamemaster may add a few larger buildings here and there and/or move demolished buildings around.

EXPLORATION

The following inhabitants, booty, and traps represent common encounters in the Smalls.

INHABITANTS

Many creatures infest the Smalls because the broken houses in that area make excellent lairs. The buildings are easy to defend and close to abundant prey. For those same reasons, many Horrors who returned to Parlainth after rampaging through less hospitable areas of Barsaive also live in the Smalls. The Name-givers likely to hide out in this part of the ruins include worshippers of Mad Passions, agents of the Hand of Corruption, foul folk, slavers, and bandits.

No group controls all of the Smalls and most organizations find it difficult to successfully defend even a few blocks.

BOOTY

In their rush to hoard coins and jewels to use as war trophies, the Horrors skipped over the Smalls because it offered too little wealth to justify the effort of searching for it. Adventurers sometimes unearth caches of valuables, but they tend to be of little worth—a few coins buried in the basement centuries ago by a family of modest means, for example. The wealthier residents of this quarter stored their valuables elsewhere.

Most of the truly marketable items in the Smalls were stashed there since Parlainth's return, either by creatures who collect shiny things or by outlaw organizations such as those mentioned previously. Some explorers also hid their finds in the Smalls with the often vain intention to come back for them. Their unfortunate owners either died before recovering the treasures or simply lost the hiding places in the confusion of the Smalls' identical streets and buildings.

TRAPS

Parlainth's long-dead citizens set many traps to slay Horrors, most of them in the streets of the Smalls. Some of these are still active, and the scurriers recently repaired others (see **Creatures,** p. 77 of **Parlainth GM**). Outlaws and intelligent creatures often install primitive traps inside the buildings in which they live.

The most common trap in the Smalls dumps debris and rubble onto characters who trigger it. Most of these traps defend the inside of buildings, but they occasionally appear in the alleys between buildings.

Falling Debris

Detection Difficulty: 7
Disarm Difficulty: 9
Trigger Condition: Trip wire or pressure plate
Trap Initiative: 20
Trap Effect: Falling rubble/debris, which does Step 15 damage to any character caught beneath it.

ENCOUNTERS

The following encounters represent typical events and meetings the characters may experience as they travel through the Smalls.

Foul Folk

While exploring the Smalls, the adventurers hear a sound around the corner of a building. If they investigate, they discover a thundra beast snuffling about, searching for food. Its dead rider, an ork cavalrywoman, still sits on its back. Several yards away lies an unconscious ork dressed in tatters, bleeding from a fresh wound. Known as Julor Silentslippers, this woman is one of the area's foul folk who make their livings looting

the bodies of weak or dead explorers and selling their gear to local bandits. When Julor wakes, she will try to convince the adventurers that she is an explorer fallen on hard times, the rightful owner of the dead ork's equipment and mount. In fact, the dead ork died in a fight with Julor's bandit friends, and when Julor tried to loot the corpse, the loyal thundra beast attacked her. An adventurer with the Animal Bond talent can overcome the thundra beast's natural wariness by making a successful Animal Bond Test against a Difficulty Number of 7. If successfully retrained, this brave and spirited beast serves its new owner well.



For Julor's game statistics, see the Foul Folk entry in **Creatures,** p. 70 of **Parlainth GM.**

Lost in the Smalls

The adventurers find themselves deep in the Smalls when a strange cloud of shimmering air gusts toward them. Though the player characters do not know it, the cloud is a lingering magical side effect of a terrible spell cast during the waning days of the civil war. When the cloud reaches the player characters, the gamemaster makes a Step 13 Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among the adventurers. If the test succeeds, act as if it failed in order to misdirect the players. The spell effect causes the adventurers to lose their bearings. The explorers believe they are facing a wrong direction (chosen by the gamemaster). Until the player characters reach a recognizable landmark or make clever use of a talent such as Direction Arrow, give them incorrect directions.

Stonemen

The adventurers spy a pair of exquisite stone statues, a male and female dancer locked in a passionate embrace, outside a modest house. As the adventurers draw closer, perhaps wondering how to chop off a hunk of each statue for sale elsewhere, the statues come to life and attack. In their disguise as finely crafted statues, these stone falsemen look out of place in the Smalls and wary adventurers will know to avoid them. The stonemen, driven homicidally mad by a Horror's influence, feel compelled to slay as many Name-givers as possible and often set this trap successfully.

A reasonably intact head from the male statue is worth 200 silver pieces; an intact head and torso, 300 silver pieces. The female figure has much greater artistic merit; its head is worth 500 silver pieces, its head and torso 1,000 silver pieces. The statues also count as treasure worth Legend Points.

ADVENTURE IDEAS

The following adventure ideas represent typical reasons the characters might find for venturing into the Smalls and optional explanations for the truth of what they find there.

THE DESPAIRTHOUGHT PUPPET

An obsidiman puppeteer newly arrived in Haven delights the raucous crowd at The Restless Troll with a

fast-moving, low comedy performance. The lead character, a foul-mouthed dwarf named Gruncho, deserts his nagging wife for a life of adventure. Gruncho solves all of his problems by whacking the other puppets with a stick. The climax of the show is a confrontation between Gruncho and a puppet representing a despairthought that has a distinctive red triangle on its head. At the end of the play the despairthought puppet delivers a haunting lament, singing that life is not so simple as a puppet show. Make a Step 15 Spellcasting Test for the song's magical effect against the Spell Defense of each adventurer who hears it. Every adventurer for whom the test result is higher than his or her Spell Defense is affected by the song and feels compelled to enter the Smalls and search for the lair of the despairthought with the red mark on its head. Listeners insufficiently able-bodied to go exploring pool their resources to offer a reward for the Horror's death, without knowing why.

The gamemaster may consider one of the following options as the explanation for this phenomenon.

Option 1

In the despairthought's lair, the adventurers find the long-dead corpse of the obsidiman puppeteer. The despairthought drove him to suicide, and his ghost sought revenge.

Option 2

The puppeteer is a spirit, summoned through a magical treasure owned by a thief disguised as a businessman. The thief recently came to Haven expressly to rob the town blind while half its citizens search the ruins for the nonexistent despairthought.

LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT

Word comes to Torgak that the elf Anderiel, an early explorer of the ruins, has passed away. In order that his name might be remembered by a younger generation of explorers, Anderiel made provision for them in his will. He left a precious treasure (of the gamemaster's choice) somewhere in the Smalls. His will contains three different sets of clues leading to the item. The will asks Torgak to choose the three most ambitious groups of treasure-seekers in Haven and give each of them one set of clues. The team that proves its merit by finding the item first gets to keep it and also learns from the will the item's first Key Knowledge. Torgak chooses the player characters as one of the three teams. Unfortunately for them, their competitors intend to stop at nothing to win the contest; still other groups, jealous at not being chosen, try to steal the clues from the player characters.



THE CRAWLING FOXES

Members of a bandit group called the Crawling Foxes approach two of the player characters in Haven, in separate encounters. The Crawling Foxes, headquartered in the Smalls, are notorious for waylaying wounded and weakened explorers and taking their equipment and booty. Each of the bandits who approaches the player characters wants to hire a few adventurers to pose as new members of the gang and then assist him in a power struggle against the other bandit. In this adventure, the player characters can play each side against the other and dispose of a major menace to honest adventurers, with the chance of scooping up some of the Foxes' ill-gotten loot for themselves.

EASTERN CATACOMBS



—From a private report to Queen Alachia regarding diplomatic relations with the Cadaver Queen Twiceborn

The accounts of the Eastern Catacombs of Parlainth that we hear at our exalted Queen's court describe it as a place of winding, narrow passageways lined with raw earth, like a version of the Pit that goes on forever. But I saw no such thing.

I saw an anteroom to the Kingdom of the Dead, and most royally appointed it was. It looked more alive than any other part of the ruins of Parlainth I have seen. The floor was of marble, polished to a dazzling sheen. Its many imposing columns gleamed as richly, their bases and capitals covered in beaten, polished gold. I even saw several marble biers, though it is hard to say what use the inhabitants of the Eastern Catacombs make of them.

I made several inquiries of the honor guard that escorted us to this point, but our guides, alas, proved close-mouthed, as wary of us as my bodyguards were of them. They greeted my questions regarding the construction of this marbled hall with most uncivil mumbles and shrugs. I knew that this area served the citizens as a funerary parlor during the heyday of Parlainth, so perhaps I knew more than they. Though rumor claims that many of the subjects of this most peculiar kingdom remember Parlainth before the Scourge, surely there live in it many subjects of more recent vintage.

Each of our guides stared openly at our thorns. I find it hard to characterize their expressions as they watched our blood drip to the shining marble floor. Irritation? Hunger? Envy?

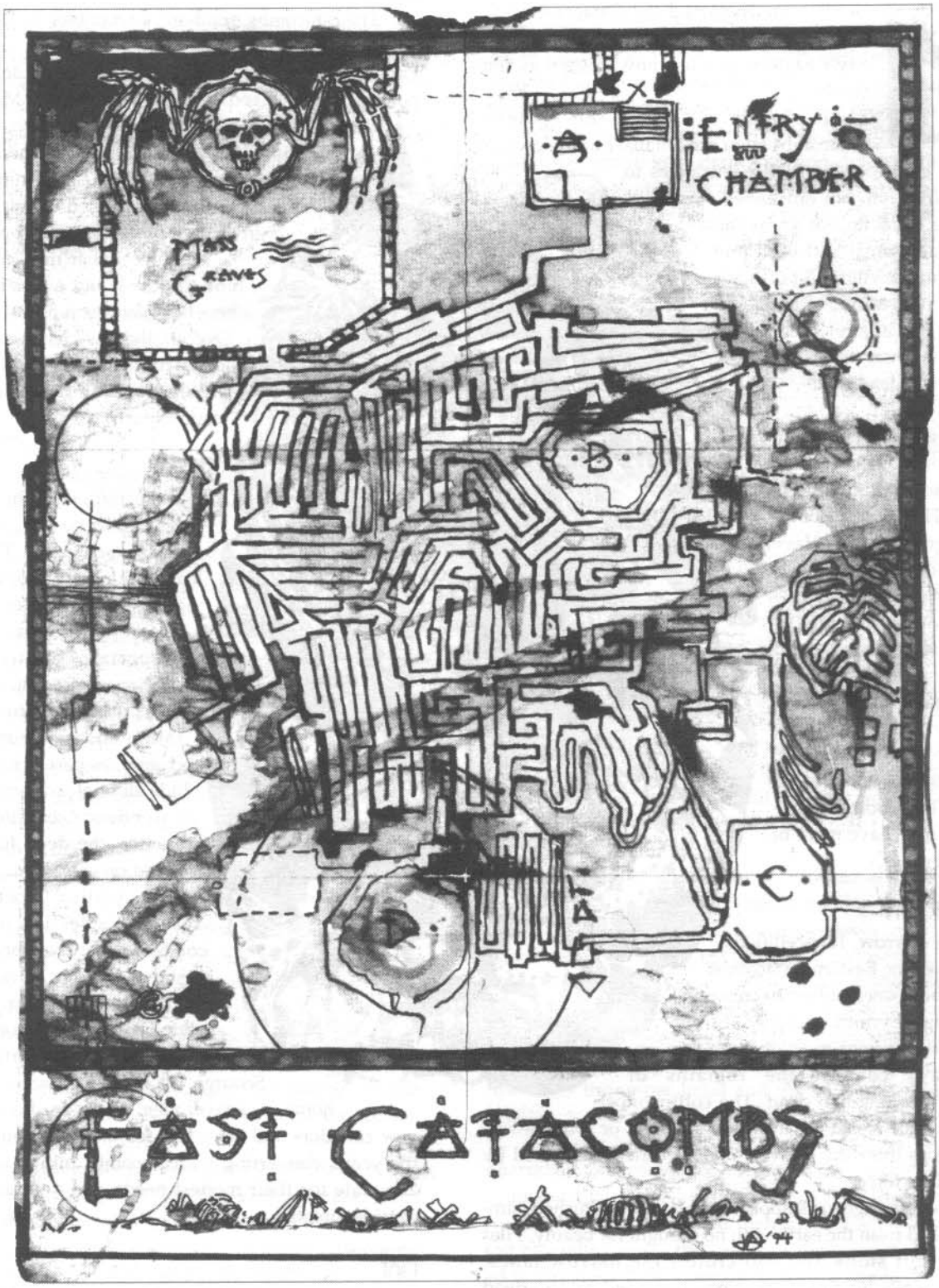
A pair of walking corpses attired in colorful silks unrolled a long purple carpet, heralding the arrival of the Ambassador of the Dead. Both carpet and silks were faded, torn, and rotting. I found this display of vanity most strange at first, considering its source. Then I realized that the dead things' desire for ostentation might make a bargaining point for our cause; we could offer them new finery to replace their decrepit symbols of rank.

Six cadaver men of most loathsome aspect carried a beautiful litter of polished bone into the room, in which reposed the Ambassador. Perhaps the long years of pain have changed my perceptions, but I must confess that I found this artifact's beauty both subtle and elaborate. The Ambassador stepped gingerly from his conveyance, as if a misstep might forever damage his desiccated body.

The Ambassador walked forward, holding forth a bony and trembling hand upon which rested an opal ring, its jewel the color of a milky eye. I had no idea what response he expected to this formal gesture, and merely gazed at him as if upon an equal. Then he spoke, in the flowery dialect of ancient Thera. Though I speak reasonable Theran, I found the archaic usages of his speech an impediment to understanding.

"Greetings, Ambassador of the Blood Wood," croaked the Ambassador of the Dead. "On behalf of my Queen, the estimable Twiceborn, I convey our most sincere regards to your Queen, the formidable Alachia."

Not for the first time, I wondered if our most noble Blood Warders were leading us down paths better left untrod.


A
ENTRY AND CHAMBER
MASS GRAVES
B
C
D
EAST CATACOMBS

OVERVIEW

Originally named the Catacombs, the Eastern Catacombs lie under the surface city's eastern quarter, now known as the Smalls.

Explorers can enter the Eastern Catacombs from the Smalls, but the cadaver men carefully guard the entrances to their kingdom. No entrances exist that the dead do not know, and they place sentries at each one. Adventurers will find it difficult, but not impossible, to persuade the cadaver men to permit entry to their realm. The dead occasionally need goods and services from the outside world, and prefer to have merchants come to them. They know that if they ventured into Haven, its residents would slay them on sight.

Groups of five to seven cadaver men guard most entrances to the Eastern Catacombs. Depending on the entrance's exact location and its proximity to Queen Twiceborn's chambers, it may have more or fewer sentries.



DESCRIPTION

The narrow, low-ceilinged tunnels of the Eastern Catacombs wind about one another to create a daunting labyrinth. Shelves cut from the rock that lines most of these passageways contain the remains of Parlainth's long-ago dead. The coffins most corpses once rested in have been smashed or rotted away, and bones litter the shelves, many of them disturbed by mysterious forces.

Most passageways appear rough and unfinished, simply hacked from the earth with no thought for beauty. Piles of dug-out stone and soil clutter the narrow lanes. Passageways leading to sections occupied by the dead whose families boasted wealth have cobblestone flooring, limestone tiles, or, more rarely, polished granite, and even marble.

The catacombs' resident cadaver men occasionally dig new tunnels through the dense, clay-like soil beneath Parlainth. Most of these passageways are crude, badly supported by scavenged, often rotting timber. Most of these tunnels collapse within weeks of their excavation, closing off the tunnels around them when the supports give way. The cadaver men generally leave boulders removed during excavation in the first place they find convenient.

The cadaver men also took the time to hollow out a few large chambers that also seem prone to cave-ins. Overall, the few chambers originally constructed in the catacombs are much sturdier than their newer counterparts.

USES

In keeping with the customs of their island nation, where land was scarce, the Therans of Parlainth placed their dead in catacombs built under structures used for other purposes. Imperial Architect Pumous Vectarian also placed all of the areas needed for funeral preparation and ceremonies underground, as part of his scheme to hide all unpleasantries in his city of wonders. According to Theran practice, the dead lie in coffins placed on shelves along the catacomb walls. Most families reserved a section of the catacombs so that their bodies would be stored together. Wealthier families paid to have their sections of shelving covered in decorative stone.

Since the beginning of the Scourge, the Eastern Catacombs served as home to cadaver men. These dead creatures built new corridors and chambers for their own purposes over the years, converting the catacombs into living quarters adequate for their modest needs and defensible against outside threats.

MAP

The map shows a typical portion of the Eastern Catacombs. Room A is a funerary chamber, where

Parlainthians performed death rites in pre-Scourge days. The cadaver men hollowed out Room B into a large hall which might serve as Twiceborn's court, if the gamemaster chooses. Room C is used to accomplish the cadaver men's secret purposes; it may contain an armory, or perhaps Queen Twiceborn's treasure vault. The treasure vault should be protected by extensive traps. Area D might be used for the cadaver men's social gatherings, or perhaps represents a lair of gharmhek (see **Inhabitants,** below).

EXPLORATION

The following inhabitants, booty, and traps represent common encounters in the Eastern Catacombs. This section also provides statistics and information on Twiceborn, including several options to explain her existence and motivations.

INHABITANTS

The southernmost portion of the Eastern Catacombs remains largely uncontrolled, populated by many varieties of subterranean creatures as well as minor Horrors and their constructs. The cadaver men of the Kingdom of the Dead control most of the rest of this area. Explorers attempting to enter the Eastern Catacombs must contend with large numbers of these cadaver men. In general, cadaver men would be judged insane by Name-givers' standards, but intelligent. The cadaver men of Parlainth make an unusual effort to convince themselves that they remain civilized beings.

During the Horror-inspired Parlainth Civil War, minor Horrors known as the gharmhek (see p. 76 of **Parlainth GM**) burrowed into the Eastern Catacombs and reanimated those slain in the fighting above. Most Horrors prefer to reanimate suicide victims, but the gharmhek proved less fussy. They brought back to a mockery of life any reasonably intact corpse placed in the funeral halls. For many months in late 610 and early 611 TE, the gharmhek's activities escaped the notice of the preoccupied citizens above. When the gharmhek amassed enough cadaver men, they simply waited for Parlainth's citizens to take refuge from the fighting in the catacombs. Much to the delight of the gharmhek, the cadaver men set upon the fleeing citizens with savage ferocity (see **A Letter Found in the Catacombs** in **Vardeghul's Trove of Lore**).

Like the other Horrors trapped in Parlainth, the gharmhek eventually ran out of living victims. They became dormant, waking just often enough to maintain the blood magic that kept the cadaver men from crumbling into dust. The gharmhek waited with deadly patience for the eventual return of the living to Parlainth, keeping the cadaver men alive to meet them.

During the gharmheks' hibernation, the cadaver men existed free from the direct mental control of the Horrors. They gradually developed their own culture, a grim parody of the Theran elite. The cadaver men refused to admit that they were truly dead, and greatly feared the creeping insanity that struck many of them as the years became decades and the decades centuries. Hoping that strong leadership would keep them sane and civilized, the cadaver men chose a monarch and created a court to serve her. They also developed a strict system of laws and a rigid social hierarchy that depended on the degree of civilization each individual could demonstrate. A walking corpse who could recite the collected poems of Carote Matru took a higher position than a dead, uneducated, stable cleaner. Cadaver men could rise in the hierarchy by learning new skills deemed civilized; they could also fall by succumbing to insanity, which eventually reduced many to babbling idiots. Ultimate authority rested with the monarch, but individuals enjoyed quite a bit of autonomy in ordering their inferiors about.

The Coming of Twiceborn

Roughly two hundred years after the initial deaths of the cadaver men, a t'skrang cadaver named Twiceborn assumed the throne. She died on one of many dangerous journeys into the other areas of Parlainth, where the Horrors still waged the falsemen wars. On a previous trip, she discovered various tomes on Theran etiquette, and her mastery of these gave her sufficient social standing and authority to depose the cadaver queen and take her place. The gharmhek performed additional magic on Twiceborn, making her far more powerful than the average cadaver man. To explain this, the gamemaster may consider one of the following options.

Option 1: Upon ascending the throne, Twiceborn embarked on an ambitious plan to subdue the gharmhek. At the cost of what passed for many cadaver man lives, she succeeded in capturing the gharmhek and putting them in traps. She offered the captive Horrors a choice: follow her orders or die. Some gharmhek chose oblivion, but many others went along with Twiceborn's demands, hoping to one day turn the tables on her. To this day, Twiceborn maintains the upper hand and the gharmhek obediently continue to extend the lifespans of their former playthings.

Option 2: Twiceborn struck a deal with the gharmhek. She convinced them that they stood in danger of losing their lives because one day her people would realize that they could end their miserable life by slaying the gharmhek while they slept. If the gharmhek pretended to be under Twiceborn's thumb, she would bring them more victims on the inevitable day when the living returned to Parlainth.

Twiceborn's Kingdom since the Return

The return of Parlainth to the world seemed at first a great boon to the cadaver men. With the rest of the ruins largely emptied of Horrors, Twiceborn thought herself master of the entire city. Then the explorers came, treasure seekers who invariably attacked the cadaver men on sight. Twiceborn withdrew her forces into the central portion of the Eastern Catacombs, which they were experienced at defending. Soon the ranks of the cadaver men began to grow for the first time in centuries, as adventurers died and the remaining Horrors reanimated them. Those who made their way to the Eastern Catacombs found themselves welcome in the Kingdom of the Dead, and the gharmhek used their blood magic to keep the new arrivals "alive."

Loyalty to Twiceborn among the dead is greater than ever. The old social hierarchy system gave way to a personality cult centered around her, and it seems unlikely that even a corpse with a superior grasp of Theran etiquette could depose Twiceborn now. Even if her charisma failed to sustain her followers' loyalty, Twiceborn's control of access to the life-sustaining Horror magic might still allow her to keep her grip on power. Whether the cadaver kingdom could survive the loss of its queen seems uncertain; certainly, any successor to Twiceborn would need to determine the t'skrang cadaver's exact relationship to the gharmhek and duplicate it.

Twiceborn and her cadaver men tightly control most of the Eastern Catacombs. The cadaver men appease the few Horrors or creatures that they fear with offerings of food left in the passages those Horrors and creatures call home. A pack of hungry ghouls controls an area in the northernmost passageways, and they often fight with the cadaver men. At the moment, an uneasy truce exists between the two groups of undead.

Twiceborn

Attributes

DEX: 8	**STR:** 6	**TOU:** 10
PER: 6	**WIL:** 8	**CHA:** 8

Initiative: 9
Number of Attacks: 1
Attack: 10
Damage: 12

Number of Spells: NA
Spellcasting: NA
Effect: NA

Physical Defense: 10
Spell Defense: 7
Social Defense: 10
Armor: 6
Mystic Armor: 4
Knockdown: 6
Recovery Tests: 0

Death Rating: 58
Wound Threshold: 17
Unconsciousness Rating: 51

Combat Movement: 25
Full Movement: 50

Legend Points: 3,000



Equipment: Living Crystal Armor, Troll sword (adds +6 steps to Strength step)

Loot: Twiceborn's heavily guarded treasure vault practically bursts with coins and other valuables, as well as magical treasures of the gamemaster's choice. It holds much more loot than any adventuring group could possibly take away all at once. To steal from Twiceborn, adventurers must get in and out of the vault unmolested by guards while avoiding the many traps installed inside the treasure chamber. Aside from the magical treasures, the cash value of Twiceborn's hoard is roughly 100,000 silver pieces.

If some group succeeds in breaching the vault and slaying its defenders, creatures from all over the ruins would descend on it as soon as they learned of the catastrophe.

Commentary

Twiceborn has survived and prospered for more than four centuries by being a shrewd, calculating ruler who realizes that her best interests coincide with those of her people. She desires only greater security for the Kingdom of the Dead, and adventurers dealing with Twiceborn should suspect her actions when she seems to act from any

other motivation. Twiceborn does not allow desire for revenge or any other emotion to interfere with her decisions, nor does she carelessly risk the not-lives of her followers. Instead, she cautiously examines the risks of any course of action before embarking on it. Difficult to fool, Twiceborn is adept at deceiving others. Her name inspires both shudders and grudging admiration among the adventurers of Haven.

Twiceborn was born in 1010 TH to a crew covenant on the Serpent River. Her unusual name came from a dream of her egg-parent which suggested that the new hatchling was destined to become human. Twiceborn clings to the notion that she will become human one day, fulfilling the prophecy behind her name. She refuses to accept that the second birth her name refers to is probably her reanimation. Twiceborn would betray her people without a second thought if given the opportunity to become human, but would need to be convinced that the transformation would truly happen before abandoning her kingdom.

BOOTY

Twiceborn stores a heavily guarded hoard of loot in a converted funeral vault. In addition to coin and gems, this treasure vault may contain magical treasures the cadaver men do not know how to use (gamemaster's discretion). Individual cadaver men may carry valuable items or cash; though they have little use for money, Twiceborn's followers try to emulate the society of the living as best they can.

Many of the cadaver men also possess valuable information. Roughly three-quarters of them were born in the fifth century TE and would likely remember the history of Parlainth erased from the world by the spells of vanishing (see the **Earthdawn** novel, **The Longing Ring**). They also represent one of the few sources of information on events in Parlainth after the city disappeared. The cadaver men know exactly how valuable the explorers consider such information, and dole it out carefully. Many cadaver men enjoy endangering overly inquisitive explorers, offering false information to lead the unwary into traps or encounters with powerful and dangerous creatures. Remember, even the most rational cadaver man must be considered deranged by any other standards: even an honest description of an event or a place is bound to be affected by the warped perspective of the long dead.

TRAPS

Passages leading to and from any blocked-up entrances to the Eastern Catacombs are heavily seeded with simple mechanical traps. Areas used regularly by cadaver men contain relatively few traps.

The most common type of trap found in the Eastern Catacombs is a smash trap. Large slabs of rock drop onto explorers, often breaking limbs or pinning down the characters until the cadaver men arrive.

Smash Trap

Detection Difficulty: 9
Disarm Difficulty: 11
Trigger Condition: Pressure plate
Trap Initiative: 15
Trap Effect: Falling rocks that cause Step 17 damage over an 8- by 8-foot area. If a single character takes more than 20 points of damage, the character is pinned beneath the rubble. Clearing the rubble off a pinned character takes at least 5 minutes of game time.

ENCOUNTERS

The following three encounters represent typical events and meetings the characters may experience as they travel through the Eastern Catacombs.

Going Down Below

In order to have encounters in the Eastern Catacombs, the characters must get to this area. They must either discover and break through a closed-off entrance, or convince Twiceborn's undead sentries to allow them in. When attempting the latter strategy, the player characters may meet and interact with any or all of the cadaver man squad leaders described below. Each squad leader heads up a small group of at least three other guards, but the leaders do all the talking. If the characters convince a different group of guards to allow them entry to the catacombs, a few guards from that company escorts them to one of these three squad leaders. When resolving interactions using talents or Interaction Tests (see p. 235, **ED**), treat all guards as having a Hostile attitude.

Altinius: This undead dwarf, fussy in life, became obsessive in undeath. He enjoys playing bureaucrat, interviewing in minute detail all who attempt to enter the catacombs, even when he has no intention of allowing them in. He asks questions until he finds real or imagined contradictions in someone's story, then pounces on these mistakes, demanding that the explorers explain them. When roleplaying an encounter with Altinius, the player characters must present an ironclad, error-free argument in favor of the cadaver man allowing them into the Eastern Catacombs.

Hagernia: This dwarf troubadour always fancied herself a skilled seductress, and refuses to let a little thing like death slow her down. She speaks in a voice one might call sultry were it not marred by the extra air wheezing out of her half-missing jaw. When explorers seek entrance to the Eastern Catacombs, Hagernia takes the opportunity to paw over the male explorer with the highest Charisma (except

for t'skrang, windlings, and obsidimen, to whom she is not attracted). She treats this individual as the leader of the adventurers and addresses all queries to him. If she decides in favor of the explorers, she insists on a passionate kiss from the "leader" as the price of entry.

Jaon Goldenhair: If you choose to have the player characters encounter this gamemaster character, have them meet her first as a living adventurer in Haven. Jaon Goldenhair is an elf beastmaster who came to the ruins with a group of other novice explorers to make her fortune. The adventurers might meet her and chat with her at The Restless Troll about the chances of making a killing in Parlainth. The next time they see her, it's as a cadaver man sentry. Jaon begs them for the mercy of a quick and permanent death, imploring the adventurers to attack her. If they do, the other cadaver men attack them in return; if they do not, she refuses them entrance to the catacombs.

Meeting Peron Kelt

Once the characters enter the Eastern Catacombs, any who examine the area astrally may notice that one guard, an ork female named Peron Kelt, has a thread woven to a mace on her belt. The presence of a thread should make the adventurers suspect something wrong, because cadaver men do not retain in death the talents they possessed in life. Any adventurer who makes a successful Knowledge Test against a Difficulty Number of 5 using a knowledge skill relating to creatures, Horror magic, or magical theory, knows this fact and realizes that a true ork cadaver man could not have an active thread.

If the adventurers confront Peron Kelt with their suspicions about her in front of other cadaver men, she cries out that they are attacking her and launches herself at them. Other cadaver men in the area join the attack, D4 additional cadaver men arriving per round to assist in Kelt's defense.

If the adventurers manage to take Peron Kelt aside and ask her about the thread, she denies being any different from any other cadaver man. If they press the issue, have the characters doing the talking make Charisma Tests against Kelt's Social Defense. On a successful test result, the adventurers get her to admit that she is not dead, just covered in deathly pale makeup in order to look dead. Kelt and her lover, Geramon, came to Parlainth last year to make some easy money as explorers. Cadaver men slew Geramon, reanimated him, and forced him to serve Twiceborn. Unable to live without him, Kelt came to the Eastern Catacombs claiming to have been slain and reanimated by a Horror elsewhere in the ruins. No one has questioned her imposture so far, and even Geramon does not know Kelt is still alive.

Unscrupulous adventurers can inform on Peron Kelt in an effort to get on Twiceborn's good side. If they do, Twiceborn thanks them for the information and orders Geramon to slay Kelt in front of the adventurers so they can witness the awful consequences of their decision. Twiceborn now feels she owes them a favor.

If the adventurers choose to keep Peron Kelt's secret, she pays them with minor bits of information. If the gamemaster so desires, she can provide a crucial clue in whatever adventure he's running. Note, however, that Peron Kelt strongly identifies with the cadaver men. Prolonged exposure to them is making her progressively crazier, and she refuses to reveal anything that might threaten the survival of Twiceborn or her people.

Peron Kelt
Fourth Circle Ork Warrior

Attributes	**Talents**
Dexterity (14): 6/D10	Acrobatic Strike (4): 10/D10 + D6
Strength (16): 7/D12	Durability (5)
Toughness (15): 6/D10	Karma Ritual (4)
Perception (12): 5/D8	Melee Weapons (4): 10/D10 + D6
Willpower (11): 5/D8	Throwing Weapons (4): 10/D10 + D6
Charisma (10): 5/D8	Tiger Spring (4): 4/D6
	Unarmed Combat (5): 10/D10 + D6
Initiative	War Weaving (1): 6/D10
Dice: D10	Wood Skin (4): 10/D10 + D6

Karma	**Skills**
Dice: D8	Artisan/Wood Carving (1): 6/D10
Points: 40	Knowledge/Cadaver Man Etiquette (1): 6/D10
	Knowledge/Legends and Lore (2): 7/D12

Combat	**Damage**
Death Rating: 83	Physical Defense: 8
Wound Threshold: 10	Spell Defense: 7
Unconsciousness Rating: 64	Social Defense: 6
Recovery Tests per Day: 3	Armor: 5
Recovery Dice: D10	Mystic Armor: 1

Racial Ability: Low-Light Vision

Equipment
Buckler
Lightning Mace (see p. 275, **ED**), one Rank 1 thread attached (Damage 12/2D10; becomes 15/D20 + D6 for 1 round at the cost of 1 point of Strain)
Padded Leather Armor

Kai Sharp-Ears

If the adventurers come to the catacombs to find information on Parlainth's forgotten history, they may run into a cadaver man troll named Kai Sharp-Ears. Kai may or may not supply accurate information, depending on the gamemaster's story needs. Magician characters, however, should be wary of Kai; even before her death in 611 TE, Kai harbored a homicidal dislike of spellcasters. The words, "If you read this, you die" appear in magical script on her helm for any character who makes a successful Read and Write Magic Test against a Difficulty Number of 5. The words are not a curse, they merely state Kai's attitude toward sorcerers. If any of the adventurers look like spellcasters (i.e., did not bother to conceal their distinctive robes), Kai demands that they leave the catacombs before she speaks of anything. If the other adventurers balk at this demand, she threatens to attack them.



ADVENTURE IDEAS

The following adventure ideas represent typical reasons characters might find for venturing into the Eastern Catacombs.

TO DIE, OR NOT TO DIE

Merbaria, an elderly former adventurer who struck it rich during Parlainth's early days, hires the adventurers to discover the truth of rumors that her daughter Bolacia died in the ruins and now suffers unlife as a cadaver man in Twiceborn's retinue. Because they only intend to gather information, the player characters can easily use nonviolent means to gain access to the Eastern Catacombs. Once there, they discover that Bolacia is indeed a cadaver man in Twiceborn's retinue, a little insane, but happy. When the adventurers report their findings to Merbaria, she offers to double her fee if the player characters will slay Bolacia to put her out of her assumed misery and erase this blot on the family honor.

A MESSAGE TO KAI

A Theran noble, Baugatus Airsniffer, approaches the adventurers and offers them a fee to carry a message to the cadaver man Kai Sharp-Ears. If the player characters sneak a peek at the letter, they discover that it offers Sharp-Ears a hefty reward if she agrees to give false testimony in a legal dispute. Both Airsniffer and another Theran noble, Shavatus Warplanner, claim ownership of a number of items recovered in Parlainth that have since been returned to Thera. Rediscovered documents indicate that Kai Sharp-Ears considered herself a friend of the original owner of these items. Baugatus Airsniffer claims to be the original owner's illegitimate son, and if Sharp-Ears supports that claim, Airsniffer then can demand financial compensation from Shavatus.

When the adventurers arrive in the Eastern Catacombs, they discover that Shavatus hired a rival exploring group to arrange a similar bribe. Kai Sharp-Ears no longer remembers whether her long-dead friend bore unofficial children or not, but chooses to amuse herself by putting the representatives of each side through a series of dangerous tests.

KIDNAPPING

While interrupting a kidnapping attempt in Haven, the adventurers learn that a gang of foul folk have been grabbing healthy Havenites and taking them to the Eastern Catacombs. There, Twiceborn orders them killed and resurrected as cadaver men. By kidnapping residents of Haven, Twiceborn hopes to increase the population of her kingdom and make the town reluctant to attack her for fear of being forced to kill their newly undead kin. Torgak offers the player characters a reward if they put a stop to Twiceborn's plans, through diplomacy or force.

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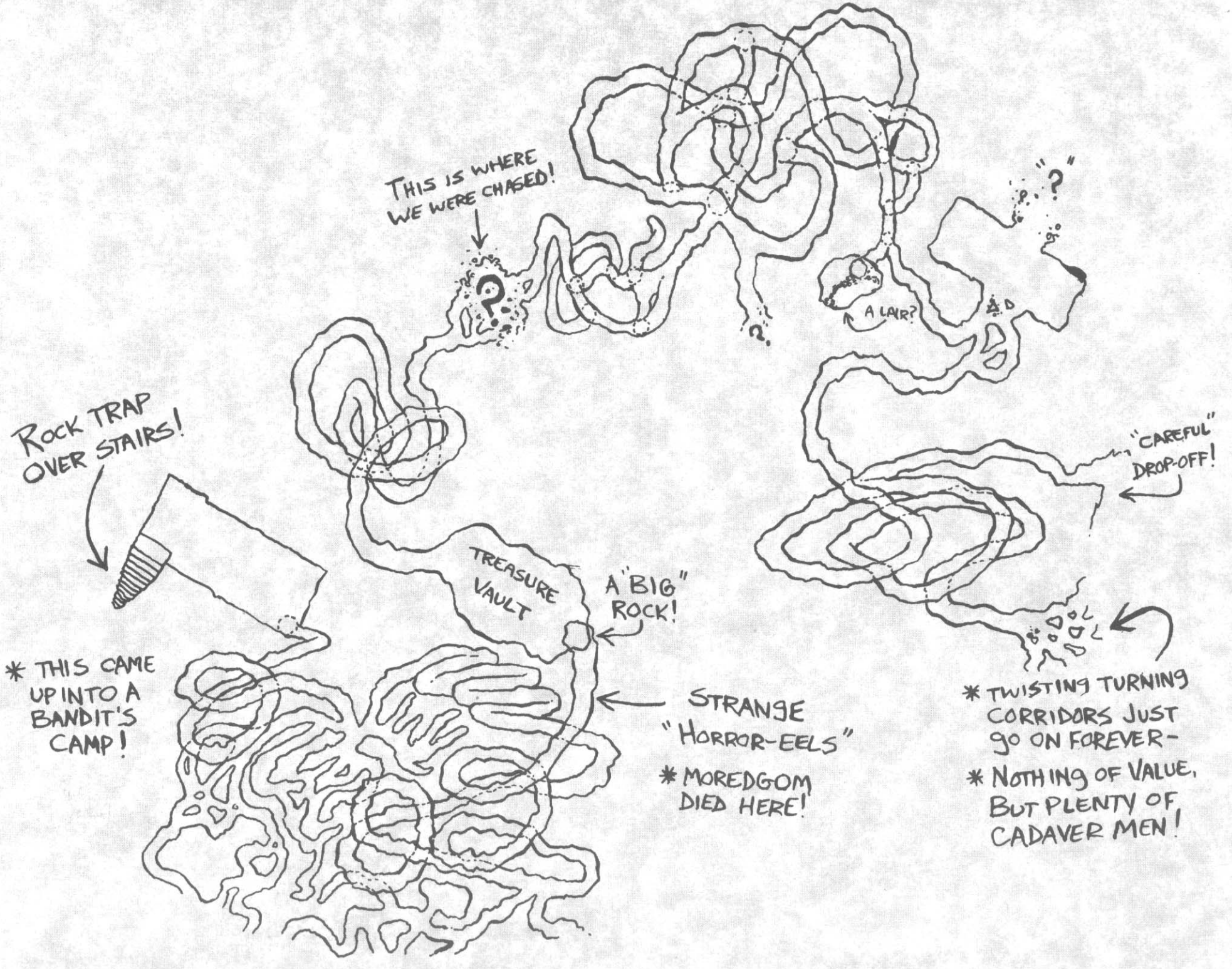



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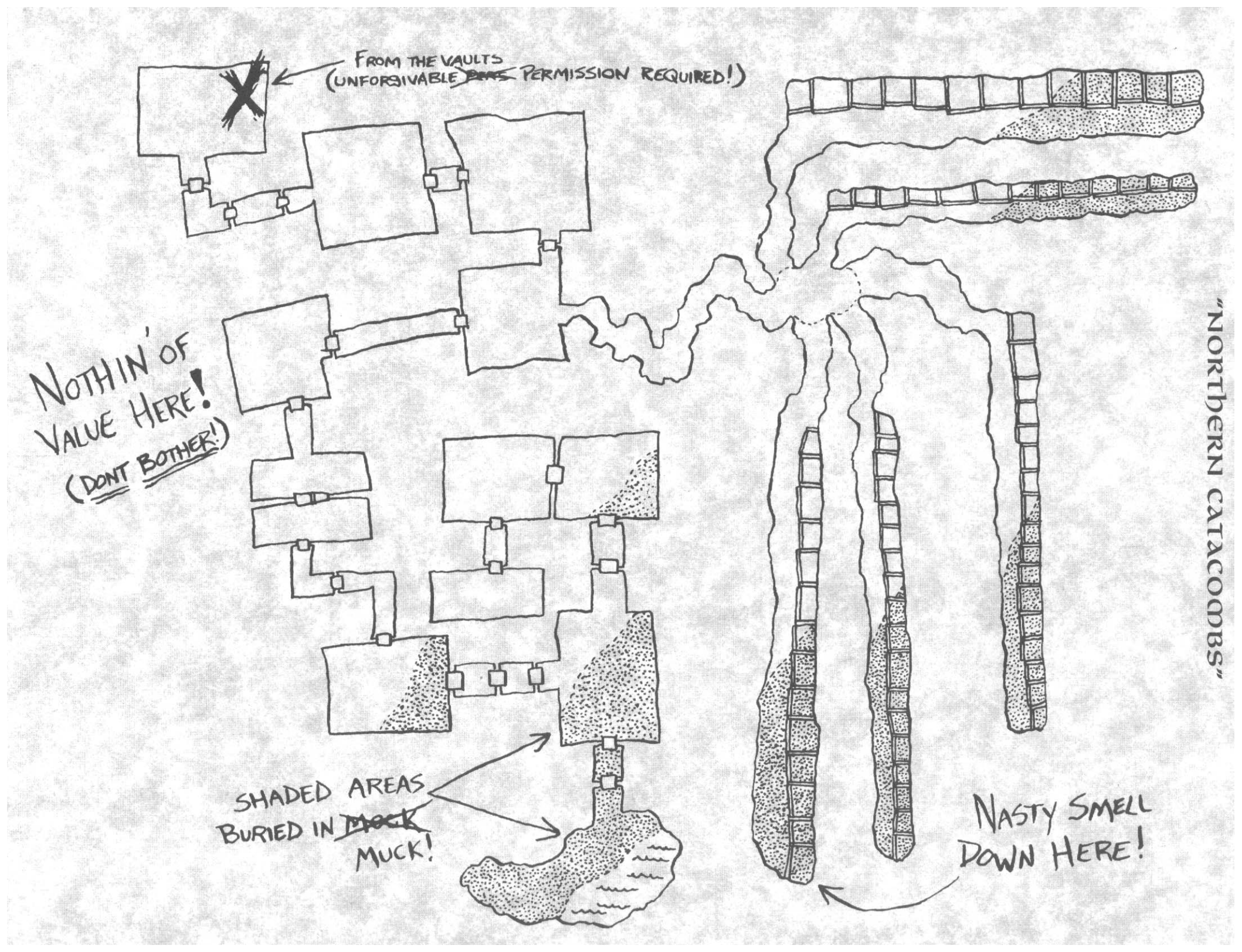

FASA CORPORATION

"The Vaults"

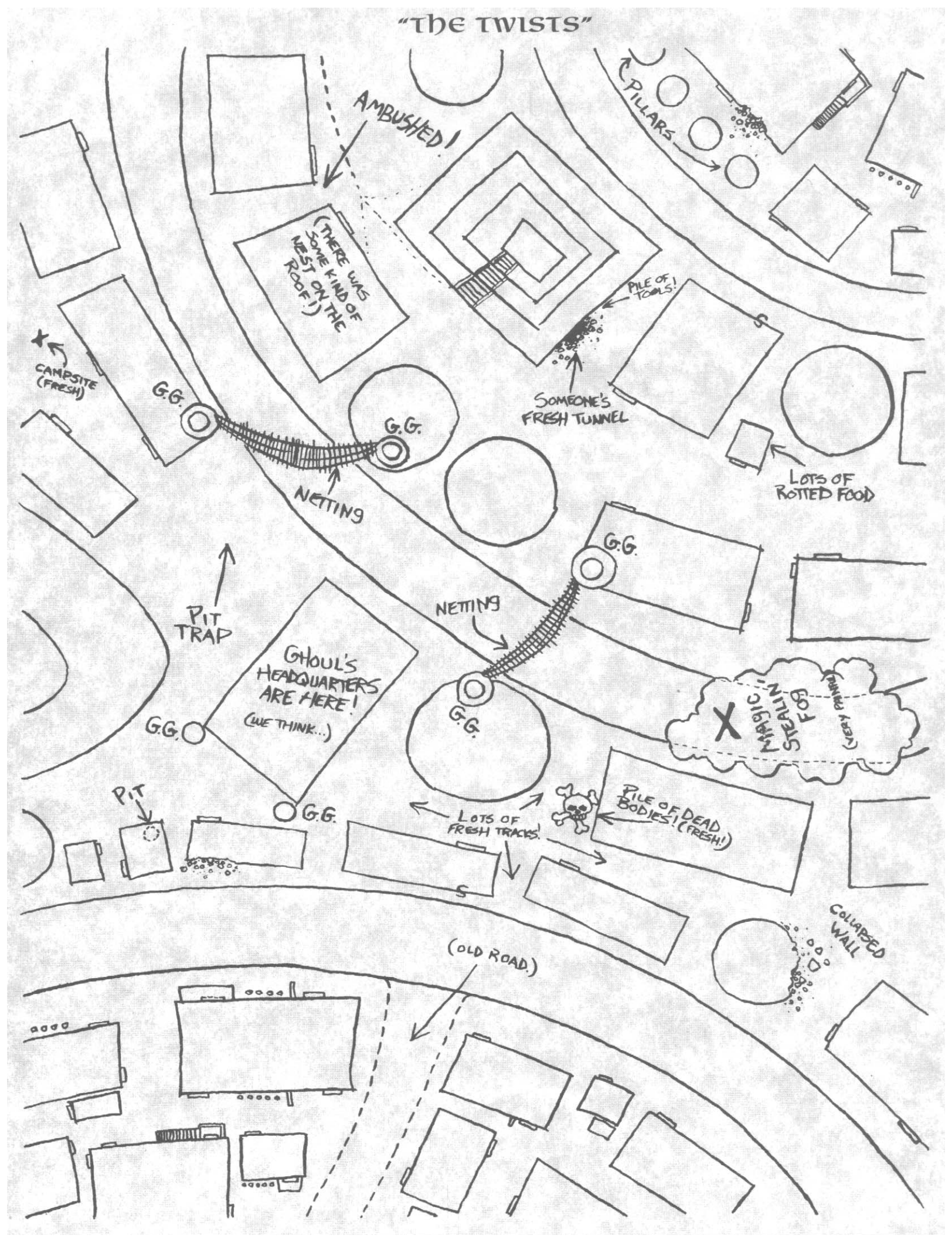
CHARCOAL GRIN
GUARD HUTS
WHERE THEY DIED
X - MYSTRAB
⊗ - KRICKAN
☒ - CAUSEMAKER
△ - TOMBLAS, DEB, MEDIDRIEL, CHAM'S.
○ - MYSELF



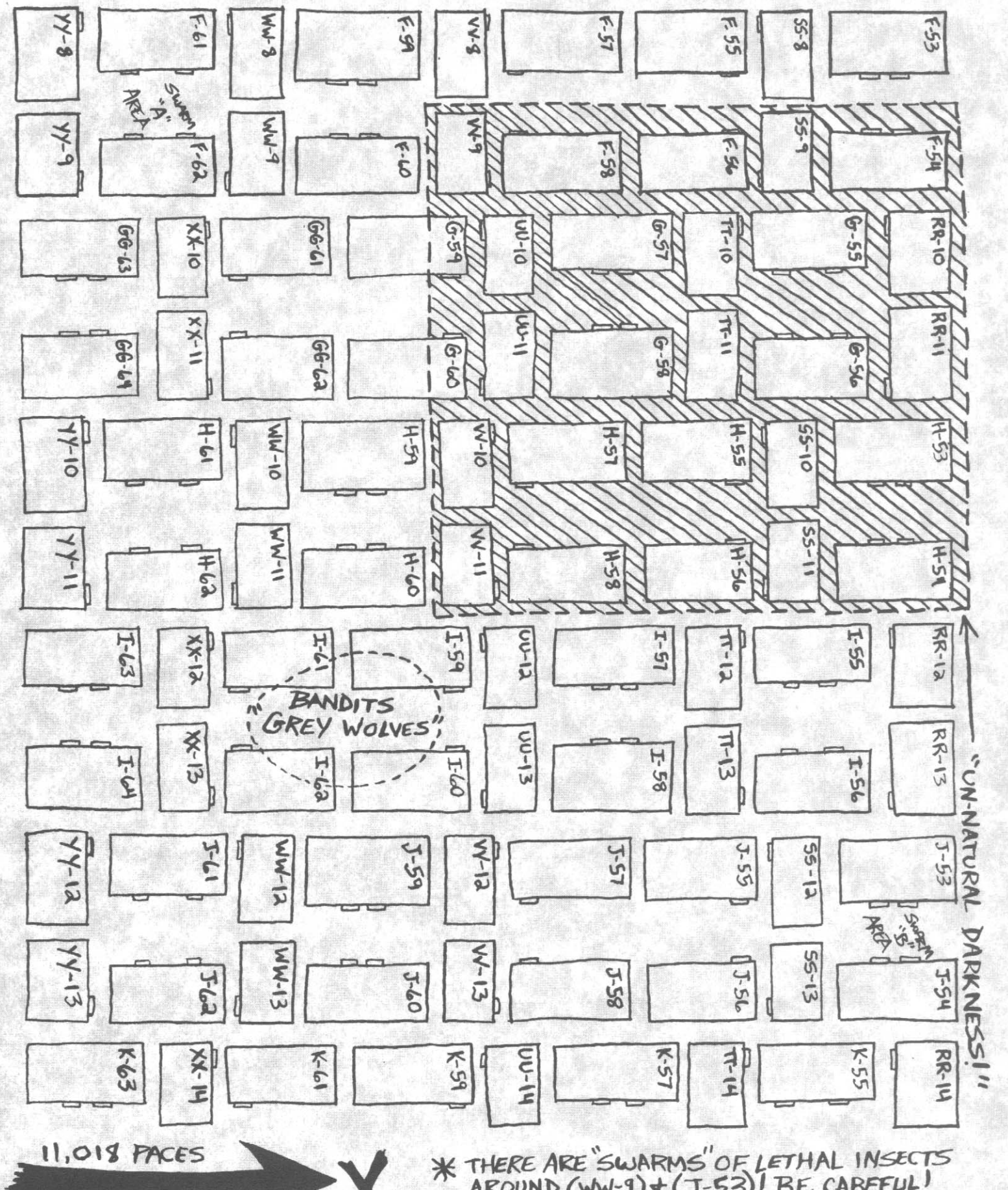
"EASTERN CATACOMBS"


FROM THE VAULTS
(UNFORGIVABLE ~~BRAS~~ PERMISSION REQUIRED!)
NOTHIN' OF VALUE HERE!
(DONT BOTHER!)
SHADED AREAS BURIED IN ~~MOCK~~ MUCK!
NASTY SMELL DOWN HERE!
"NORTHERN CATACOMBS"

"The Western Catacombs"


"THE TWISTS"
AMBUSHED!
PILLARS
(THERE WAS SOME KIND OF NEST ON THE ROOF!)
PILE OF TOOLS!
CAMPSITE (FRESH)
G.G.
G.G.
SOMEONE'S FRESH TUNNEL
LOTS OF ROTTED FOOD
NETTING
PIT TRAP
G.G.
NETTING
GHOUL'S HEADQUARTERS ARE HERE! (WE THINK...)
G.G.
G.G.
MAGICAL FOG
STEALTH
(VERY FAINT)
PIT
G.G.
LOTS OF FRESH TRACKS!
PILE OF DEAD BODIES! (FRESH!)
COLLAPSED WALL
(OLD ROAD)

"THE SMALLS"


"UN-NATURAL DARKNESS!"
SWARM "A" AREA
SWARM "B" AREA
BANDITS "GREY WOLVES"
11,018 PACES FROM BONEYARD!
X
* THERE ARE "SWARMS" OF LETHAL INSECTS AROUND (WW-9) + (J-53)! BE CAREFUL!
* AWFULLY NASTY SMELLS AND SOUNDS COME FROM THE (F-54)-(VV-11) AREA!

FORMAL AGREEMENT

This agreement, in consideration of the mutual covenants of the parties hereto, is made at Haven, on the _____ day of the month of _____, between the honest tradeswoman Vardeghul and _____, hereafter referred to as the "Adventurer."

The existence of this agreement in no way implies that the honest tradeswoman Vardeghul condones or approves of any actions taken by said Adventurer in the course of his or her explorations, nor does it imply any obligation between the honest tradeswoman Vardeghul and the Adventurer other than those specifically named within this document.

THE ADVENTURER

I. Agrees to purchase from the honest tradeswoman Vardeghul a document entitled _____ for a fee of _____, to be presented in advance to the honest tradeswoman Vardeghul in exchange for the right to possess a copy of said document.

II. Agrees not to lend, hire, or sell said document to any third parties without the express, written permission of the honest tradeswoman Vardeghul.

III. Agrees that upon any violation of the strictures defined in Clause II, the Adventurer shall accept any penalties that the honest tradeswoman Vardeghul deems appropriate.

IIIa. Agrees that said penalties may or may not include cash fines (including punitive damages as well as to the repayment of any ill-gained profits from said violation of Clause II) and may or may not include the application of physical force with the intent to cause harm, either temporary or permanent.

IV. Agrees that the honest tradeswoman Vardeghul may appoint deputies or representatives as she deems fit to enforce the penalty or penalties enumerated in Clause IIIa.

V. Agrees to take full responsibility for the Adventurer's use of the document specified in Clause I, indemnifying the honest tradeswoman Vardeghul from any penalties or damages that may result from the Adventurer's use of the information contained in said document.

VI. Agrees that the honest tradeswoman Vardeghul presents the document specified in Clause I solely as a conveyor of information, and that despite her best efforts to provide goods of the highest quality to her clients, she cannot guarantee the veracity of the information contained therein. The Adventurer further agrees that he or she will take no actions against the honest tradeswoman Vardeghul in recompense for injuries, damages or other negative consequences of errors contained in said document.

VI. Agrees to pay an additional signing fee in the amount of 5 copper pieces to the honest tradeswoman Vardeghul to defray various and sundry expenses associated with the signing of this agreement.

THE HONEST TRADESWOMAN VARDEGHUL

VII. Agrees that the Adventurer may specify additional recipients of the document specified in Clause I at the time of the signing of this agreement, for the purposes of exemption from the strictures enumerated in Clause II. To wit, the honest tradeswoman Vardeghul grants the Adventurer her express, written permission to share the contents of the document specified in Clause I with the individuals whose names appear below, provided that the Adventurer pays an additional 10 percent of the fee specified in Clause I for each individual named herein:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

NOTE: No more than five individuals may be named; any further names shall be considered invalid, even if the Adventurer pays the honest tradeswoman Vardeghul the aforementioned additional fee for said individuals.

This agreement shall be binding upon the benefit of the executors, administrators and assigns of the Adventurer and the successors and assigns of the honest tradeswoman Vardeghul.

IN WITNESS THEREOF, the parties have executed the agreement and affixed their signatures hereto on the date above first mentioned.

ADVENTURER

_____

DATE

_____

VARDEGHUL'S

DATE

_____

PRICE LIST

The following list contains those documents that the patrons of the honest tradeswoman Vardeghul have found most useful, as well as a selection of those newly received documents that the honest tradeswoman deems of most interest. Upon request, patrons may purchase any of the thousands of additional documents related to Parlainth in the honest tradeswoman Vardeghul's possession, at her discretion and upon the signing of a formal agreement and payment of the requisite fees. All prices are in silver pieces. Patrons may not read documents or any portion thereof before buying. The honest tradeswoman Vardeghul refunds no coin and makes no exchanges.

DOCUMENTS FOR PURCHASE

An Adventurer's Lament.....25
A Fragmentary History of Parlainth.....25
A Questor's Tale.....25
A Fragment Concerning the Ruins.....25
A Visit to Haven.....25
Transcript of an Interrogation.....35
Disturbing Wonderments of the Western Catacombs.....45
From a Wall in The Twists.....45
A Tract Against Falsemen.....50
Testimony Regarding the Horror Hunter.....75
Treasures of the Forgotten City.....75
On the Architecture of Parlainth.....100
An Encounter With Twiceborn, Queen of the Undead.....100
An Intercepted Theran Message.....100
A Letter Found in the Catacombs.....125
A Lost Theran War Machine.....145
A Plan to Rob the Theran Treasury.....175

VARIOUS AND SUNDRY USEFUL MAPS

Eastern Catacombs.....35
The Smalls.....40
The Twists.....40
The Vaults.....40
Northern Catacombs.....50
Western Catacombs.....50



An Adventurer's Lament

So Vardeghul says she pay me to sit and talk and you write down what I say? Then I say this is good. She want me to talk about Parlainth? Mmmph—not so good. But she pay good coin, so I talk.

My name? I Premag, ork warrior. I explore Parlainth many years, almost nine years now. Now I be leaving. I work hard, risk my life many times, got nothing to show for it. I go find work as guard somewhere, nice steady job. Dreams of gold in Parlainth, they don't feed you.

Found treasures here, plenty. Me, I been out in the ruins with everyone else. I fought every kind of creature you can think of and plenty you can't. Got my arm nearly hacked off, my head nearly bashed in, my insides almost tore out. You name a part of me, and I name you a creature tried to take a bite out of it.

First treasure I found was a sword, pommel covered in gold and jewels. Was just like the ones the lily-hands wear—you know, them lily-hands with the fine clothes and nothin' better to do than stare down they noses at folk. My crew and me, we thought we rich. So we take the sword to Haven to sell it and what happen? Nobody 'round here can pay what the sword's worth. Torgak, he not buyin', says he got treasure coming out his ears. He give me maybe a tenth what it's worth, he says. Says that to my face. Now, my crew and me just got to Parlainth, just found this pretty sword. We don't want to go all the way back to Bartertown—might miss out on findin' more treasure. So I ask this caravan driver, name of Arca, to take the sword to Iopos for me and sell it there. She keep 20 percent for her troubles, I tell her. Well, never saw her again, never saw a copper of that money. Everyone said I could trust her. Everyone full of troll spit.

Next we find a silver owl. Toy for children, magicked to sing lullaby in elf talk. This time I trust only caravan driver I know. I send messenger to Bartertown to bring my cousins Whiterock and Ouff with a bunch of their mates. They come here to take silver owl back to Bartertown to sell it. No hear from them again. Few months later, troubadour comes to town, says he met an ogre offered to sell him silver owl. Ogre says he killed a bunch of orks to get it. So now I got dead family and still no money for my treasures.

So when we found diamond bracelets, my crew and me decide we sell 'em ourselves. No more sitting around Haven while folk swipe our treasure. Be our own caravan, kill anyone tries to take the treasure from us. So we set off for Bartertown. Next night, we get ambushed by almost as many things with teeth and claws as we had to kill to get bracelets in the first place! Not much of Barsaive safe these days outside the cities, we sure find that out. So we stop in town to rest and have a drink. Me, I taste no ale for weeks. Need it bad, you know? Drink too much, I guess. People in town got mad, told some slavers passing through that we break the law and so they can have us. Had to use bracelets to bribe our way out. No good—things went bad and we had to fight. Half of my best friends died.

You hear what I say, now. When you think you got luck, you don't. Buunda to that. Your troubles just beginning. Just as many outside the ruins as inside who want to take the treasure you got in blood and pain. And didn't just happen to me—I hear many stories like mine. I hear some folk who found magic treasure from legends, they got Theran dogs and stinking Throalites and crazy Hand of Corruption and Blood Warders and Thystonius knows who all come sniffin' around to steal treasures. Haven?—huh, some haven. Here, just when you think everything's gettin' good, somebody bury a dagger in your back.

Anyone who read this, Premag wish you better luck than I had.



On the Architecture of Parlainth

A party of explorers led by the late dwarf thief Heneticus discovered the following document in the South Catacombs in 1495. Its author, Pumous Vectarian, appears to have been the Theran official in charge of planning the building of Parlainth. Though many treasure-seekers might find city planning a dry subject, anyone intending to plunder the city would do well to understand the reasoning behind the arrangement of the metropolis.

The document is dated according to the Theran calendar. The approximate Throalic year is 493 TH.

—Vardeghul

7/3, 500 TE

An Epistle Concerning the Correct & Proper Means of Building in Parlainth

Humbly Submitted by the Architect Imperial Pumous Vectarian to His Grand & Benevolent Overlordship, the Most Blessed First Governor of Thera, Thom Edro

Also to the attention of His Excellency Kern Fallo, Overlord of Barsaive; Orlubus Kenec, Building Commissioner of Parlainth; and to any other worthy officers of Thera who shall have need of it.

Having been duly and officially commissioned to ascertain the wisest course of action with regard to the creation of the city of Parlainth, and having consulted with many of the finest builders in the land, and having spent considerable time in deepest thought and profoundest communion with the Passion Upandal, I have reached the following conclusions, may they please the reader.

Parlainth is not to be an ordinary city, shaped by the random choices of individual Name-givers in pursuit of their own goals of commerce and fellowship. The building of this our capital city in Barsaive is a grand venture, a direction of Imperial resources toward a great achievement that occurs perhaps once a lifetime. Those of us privileged to give of our time, knowledge, and wealth in this great endeavor owe many thanks to the learned judgement of our First Governor, who in his infinite wisdom has commanded the creation of a city in Barsaive that will reflect the grandeur and power of our beloved Thera. If Parlainth resembles even the faintest shadow of our mighty homeland, we shall have succeeded beyond measure at our greatest work.

To the task at hand—Parlainth shall be a city conceived as such. It will not become grand in the fullness of time, but rather begin with grandeur. It shall spring full-blown from the barren soil of benighted Barsaive, from its first day taking its place among the world's great cities. In laying the stones of Parlainth, we have a unique opportunity to build the perfect city, one without the nonsensical and haphazard meanderings of streets and quarters all too common to cities that grew without the firm, guiding hand of dedicated planners and craftsmen. In this as in all of its aspects, Parlainth shall be a Theran city, a beacon of civilization to Barsaive and the world.

To quote the immortal words of the renowned founder of Theran architecture, Pullomos Vrabo, every city has a purpose for being, which the construction of the city should fulfill. Parlainth has two purposes: to demonstrate the superiority of Theran culture to the uncultured & ignorant natives of Barsaive and to serve as a military stronghold from which to take action against the recalcitrant foes of Thera (should they, in their blindness, fail to appreciate the gifts we would bestow).

The underground city will serve to disguise the sad necessities of empire: the prisons, the slave quarters, the secret chambers where our scholars and generals devise powerful new magics of war and protection for the empire's benefit. The underground city shall also hide the unfortunate necessity of death within a thoroughly modern edifice constructed for the efficient execution of funerals and the burial of the fallen. That which is not beautiful in Parlainth will find its home beneath the dark earth. The underground city shall also conceal documents & treasures of great value, for it is well known that among the huddled, unwashed, vulgar masses of Barsaive are many thieves and marauders who may attempt to harm our beautiful city in its earliest days. The city beneath the earth shall both conceal the unsightly and secret and hide that which is most precious. I shall speak no more of the underground city; the less said of it, the better.

The aboveground city shall capture the beauty and grandeur of Thera, with bold yet elegant lines symbolizing the strength and purity of the Theran way of life. The eye shall see nothing unpleasant in this city. Open spaces, buildings pleasing to look

upon, and places of comfort shall compose it. I shall design its buildings so that the music of troubadours echoes from one wall to the next, amplifying and multiplying the felicitous effect of the notes. Vast, moving murals shall adorn Parlainth's public buildings, showing the observer (most particularly the ignorant, Barsaivian observer) the erudite mind and generous nature of our beloved First Governor, Thom Edro. Censers full of tantalizing incense shall burn in the streets, perfuming the air breathed by all who enter the city. I propose to give the central circle, the great feature of all Theran cities, particular prominence in Parlainth. It shall sit on a platform, dominated by a great fountain containing statuary of great magnificence. Figures of the twelve Passions, each bedecked in the armor of a Theran general, shall watch over our city from a pillar in the fountain's center. Our greatest magicians shall enchant the fountain so that it brings forth not only water, which will appear in a dazzling spectrum of ever-shifting colors, but also soft music of surpassing beauty. On state occasions, a simple adjustment will cause the fountain to play a martial air, or any other music as befits the glorification of visiting dignitaries.

Radiating from the circle and its fountain, which I sincerely expect will be recognized as one of the Wonders of the World, will be the four quarters of Parlainth. (It has long been a matter of great frustration to me that many cities are considered to have "quarters" when the number of their quarters exceeds four. This irritating practice makes the term "quarter" quite a vexing misnomer, and I am determined that we shall have precisely four quarters in our ideal city.) The quarters I propose are as follows: the Governmental Quarter, the Business Quarter, the Residential Quarter, and the Military Quarter.

The Governmental Quarter shall contain the public buildings from which Overlord Kern Fallo and his ministers shall administer Theran law and govern Barsaive. From the vast Palace of the Governor to every building in which any public business is transacted, the structures in this quarter shall be of great size and solidity, so as to make the heart of the loyal Theran swell with pride and reverence and cause the sullen and rebellious native to shrink with trepidation. Tall pillars and sturdy towers shall abound, all of them seeming to touch the sky.

Wide streets and lanes, with small shops in profusion shall grace the Business Quarter. Rather than displaying the distasteful and chaotic variance of form one finds in cities that have been allowed to grow without pruning, each shop shall conform to one of a few chosen appearances so as to flow together (in a manner of speaking) for the greatest visual harmony. To give your lordships an example, I envision gentle curves and quaint decorations used in great profusion, as curves and delicate embellishments are most pleasing of all forms to the eye.

The Residential Quarter shall be a place of comfort where Thera's loyal citizens may while away their private hours in peace and seclusion. To create a bond between Theran residents of our great city and loyal Barsaivians, each home shall be of identical shape and dimensions. This outward sameness shall demonstrate that all are truly equal under the impartial and just eye of the Theran Empire.

It pains me greatly to report that plans for the Military Quarter remain in doubt. I have engaged in laborious consultation on many occasions with General Poweda Manybars and must admit that her understanding of the elevated purposes behind this great enterprise of ours remains quite limited. I therefore put my case to Your Excellencies, that you may hear and fairly judge my plans. I envision the Military Quarter as an open area suitable for military practice, and everything within it (the few necessary buildings, statuary, and the like) formed to inspire our soldiers to attain victory. Structures shall be built of rough-hewn stone carved in forceful shapes and placed in precise formation in imitation of our gallant men and women on the battlefield. Alas, General Manybars continues to raise petty practical concerns at every turn, thwarting me in what I can only conclude is a deliberate attempt to mock the pre-eminent role that the art and science of architecture should play in this undertaking. With your intercession, my worthy patrons, I trust that such vexing political obstacles shall speedily disappear from our path.



It is my hope and conviction that the Imperial City of Parlainth shall long and gloriously stand as a testament to our accomplishments long after we have turned to dust, that it shall serve as an arm etched permanently in stone to forever wave the bright and glorious banner of Thera.

Yours in exceeding humility,

Pumous Vectarian, Imperial Architect

Disturbing Wonderments of the Western Catacombs

The following document is an excerpt from the Compendium Esoterica, that unwieldy and ever-changing tome by the prolific dwarf wizard, Barakus. The Esoterica is a fascinating collection of unclassifiable information that Barakus has uncovered in the course of researching his countless other works. Reading the Esoterica, of course, presents a twofold problem; Barakus' prose is a turgid mess, and he has verified few, if any, of his gleanings. I have added errata to this material whenever possible; doubtless more errors exist in it than I am able to correct.

—Vardeghul

It is with great trepidation that I embark upon the following descriptions of tales and anecdotes of the so-called Western Catacombs of the Forgotten City, otherwise known as The Ruined Parlainth or perhaps only Parlainth. For these wonderments are of such magnitude that I fear many may suspect that I write not truth, but mere phantasie. Indeed, perhaps this is so, for I am merely a humble presenter of such scraps of esoterica that fall my way and merely allow the gentle reader to draw his own conclusions as to the truth or falsehood of these tales.

Several people have recounted the story of the discovery of a mysterious human, one Samel by name, in Parlainth's Western Catacombs in 1480 TH. This Samel was a man of significant verticality and great width about the shoulders and chest, possessing long tresses of a raven hue, unfortunately overburdened with grease. Many claimed that his eyes glowed with madness, and his ravings uneasily impressed the hardy individuals who rescued him (at the time of his discovery, he was single-handedly battling a pair of gargoyles with his bare hands, and to all appearances succeeding).

When at length his saviors made bold to speak with him, this Samel claimed to have been born of a different world and to have traveled to many other worlds during the course of a lifetime so long as to be fantastical. "Cursed tough gargoyles in your world, fellows," were his reported first words to his deliverers. Truly a mighty warrior, Samel also had possession of certain abilities that he called spells. When examined by expert wizards, however, Samel's magic was proclaimed to be nonsense. This forcefully stated contention by the aforementioned wizards might indeed have held the field, were it not for an unmistakable demonstration of said abilities in the creation of several small lightning-bolts which singed said wizards in the seats of their trousers and robes. This demonstration, while serving as a pertinent reminder of magic's many manifestations in the Universe, also caused much consternation with its immense affront to wizardly dignity. During his days in Haven, the stranger Samel seemed in a perpetual state of mental discomfiture. This, in addition to his most strange and somewhat fearsome powers, caused many to give him a wide berth.

In time, Samel's joy in slaying various and sundry creatures was much remarked upon and appreciated. No longer could any deny his powers, and indeed, none wished to. When the residents of Haven discovered that Samel had ventured into the Western Catacombs once more never to return, his disappearance was the cause of great sadness. Though the application of simple logic to Samel's vanishing would suggest that he met an untimely death at the hands of the opprobrious occupants of the dangerous ruins, many of his comrades were heard to insist that Samel had traveled onward to yet another world, to confuse the residents thereof with his strange and mad tales.

Haven was not founded until 1490 TH. In his reference to the city, Barakus is probably referring to a temporary camp occupied by explorers. I have grave doubts as to the truth of this tale; I have lived in Haven since its beginnings and have never heard of Samel.

—Vardeghul

In 1477 TH, two elf brothers emerged from the Western Catacombs proclaiming that they had met a new and hitherto unknown Passion therein, and that they had metaphysically intermingled with the brothers of the said Passion. This intermingling, they claimed, made them in essence identical to these two brothers, or nearly so, and therefore they were, if not Passions themselves, then very close to being such. They underwent a ritual in which they Named themselves Vili and Ve (for reasons as yet inexplicable), but most strangely they retained the

talents and abilities that their earlier-Named selves had possessed. Within a very short time, they gathered to themselves a core of questors of the (alleged) Passion with whose siblings they had interchanged essence and were last heard to be heading north and west from Iopos.

⊕ ⊕ ⊕

Somewhere on or about 1483 TH, a human troubadour named variously Uriz, Heffera, or Rehem Sixswords, allegedly ventured into the Western Catacombs in the company of other adventurers. In the catacombs, he met a talking lightning lizard who claimed to be the reincarnated spirit of his late sister. The lizard shared all of his memories, and answered to the most exacting specification all inquiries that the troubadour posed in his efforts to force the lizard to renounce its claims to be his sibling. After this most unusual meeting, the troubadour and the lightning lizard traveled for several years together, until a sad encounter with ork scorchers resulted in their mutual demise. The scorchers asserted that the flesh of the lightning lizard was of an impressively savory nature when roasted.

⊕ ⊕ ⊕

In 1472 TH or thereabouts, an ork nethermancer emerged from the Western Catacombs with a passing strange story. Before his daring venture into the ruins, he had a brown left eye and a green right eye; upon emergence, he found himself in possession of a green left eye and a brown right eye. Moreover, he had become right-handed rather than left-handed, and a scar that beforehand had marked his left cheek now marked his right. The nethermancer asserted that his changed condition came upon him as he passed through a weeping cloud, which whispered to him a tale so sad he could not bear to tell it.

⊕ ⊕ ⊕

In 1476 TH, a party of hardy adventurers were slain by a rain of cheese in the Western Catacombs, leaving only a single survivor to tell the tale.

In this entry, Barakus appears to have confused the Sperethiel words for "cheese" and "acid," which are often confused by incompetent translators. Then again, one never knows in the Western Catacombs.

—Vardeghul

⊕ ⊕ ⊕

In 1481 or in 1465 TH or perhapswise in both, explorers broke through a lock of terrible intelligence that kept shut the iron door to a room deep within the Western Catacombs. The lock devoured one of their hands with rusted iron teeth, chewing off the flesh down to the last scrap but leaving the bones, blood vessels, and nerves horribly intact. But this horrific occurrence is the least of the wonders of which this account tells. Within the chamber hung a painting of most wondrous real and lifelike quality, looking not flat as paintings are wont to do (considering that they are of two dimensions and two dimensions only), but having depth, so that one could peer into it and focus one's eye alternately upon elements in the fore, back, or middle ground and see in them the qualities commonly held to belong to the third dimension in which we all live. The painting depicted a group of battle-weary adepts, frozen in postures representative of frustration and anger. As the adventurers drew near to the painting, all but one of the party fell into it, and the figures in the painting fell out onto the floor as solid beings. Those released from the painting proved to be adepts, who had lived in the years before the Scourge and been imprisoned in the canvas by a foul Theran sorcerer. The Name-givers freed from the painting proceeded to beat the remaining explorer unconscious; he awoke without his purse, staring at a painting that contained the terrified images of his companions. In a panic, he fled the ruins, and spent his subsequent years attempting in vain to find the painting and rescue his friends. Some few years after his fortunate escape, his body was found in the Western Catacombs impaled on the word "ubiquitous," which by some magical means had acquired solid form and a knife-like edge.



An Encounter with Twiceborn, Queen of the Undead

The following is a report by the dwarf scholar Horowel the Curious, written in 1500 TH. Though Horowel intended his work for the collection of the Great Library of Throal, poor financial planning forced him to sell me all rights to this document. Horowel returned to Haven in Veltom of 1502 for another expedition to the Eastern Catacombs, from which he never returned. According to a report from a source I consider reliable, a cadaver man bearing Horowel's distinctive cheek tattoo was seen attending Twiceborn in Gahmil of that year.

—Vardeghul

After protracted negotiations with the dreadful, decaying sentries at the southernmost known entrance to the Eastern Catacombs, I received permission for an audience with Twiceborn, the legendary Queen of the Undead. I succeeded in gaining entry to the cadaver men's heavily guarded "kingdom" by displaying my heretofore useless knowledge of archaic Theran table manners, an occurrence that I found oddly disconcerting. To find the cadaver men concerned with something so mundane and absurd as table etiquette simultaneously touched my heart and disturbed me. Like most Barsaivians, I had expected the undead to be wholly monstrous; but they clung to the notion that they are still Name-givers despite being dusty, mummified corpses preserved only by the most appalling magics imaginable.

Further negotiations, this time with Twiceborn herself, I carried on through intermediaries. The foppish swooning of these courtiers over their queen provided an odd contrast to their advanced state of physical decay. The chief advisor, a former ork once Named Guanya, paused every so often during our discussions to replace her left eyeball, which had a disconcerting tendency to tumble out onto her cheek when she became excited.

At length, we reached a compromise. Upon my return to the enclave in the catacombs the following day, the cadaver men would escort me to Twiceborn's private chambers. There, I would present her with a gold necklace set with twelve diamonds, fourteen opals, and three Death Cheat charms. Provided the necklace met her approval, she would graciously permit me to ask her ten questions. Thankfully, the queen was pleased with the gift, and I wasted no time presenting my queries.

"Your majesty, I thank you for granting me this rare audience," I began. "The people of Barsaive are most curious about the nature of your realm. In choosing to quench their thirst for knowledge, you have demonstrated remarkable generosity. Many a time . . ."

"You may now ask your questions," Twiceborn said.

"Of course, Your Highness. Is it true that you have existed as a cadaver man—er, woman—since before the disappearance of Parlainth in 1047 TH?"

"Yes."

"Remarkable! Your Majesty, you possess a virtual trove of knowledge," I said. "Are you aware that none now living in Barsaive, even those alive at the time of Parlainth's disappearance, have any memories of the Forgotten City?"

"So I have been told."

"Perhaps you could share with me your memories of those days?"

"Perhaps you could ask a more specific question."

"Ah, well. You were—are—a t'skrang. Were you born in Barsaive?"

"Yes."

"Could you perhaps describe relations between Therans and Barsaivians at that time?"

"In those days, all life was a desperate race to escape the Horrors," Twiceborn said. "Such small matters as one's nation were forgotten. The Therans seemed our only hope of survival, and like many in Barsaive, I thought of myself as Theran."

"Yet you lost the race to escape the Horrors, did you not?" I asked.

"Obviously."

"You have—er, existed now for nigh onto four and a half centuries. According to my understanding, cadaver men cannot exist for such long spans of time except by the aid of blood magic wrought by Horrors. How is it that you and your people continue to exist?"

"We have reached certain accommodations."

"With Horrors, I take it?"

"That is one logical conclusion."

"Our books tell us that a cadaver man's unnatural condition inevitably drives him mad. I must say that you do not seem mad. Would you care to comment on the truth of our accounts?"

"Things are not always what they seem, little scholar," Twiceborn said as she bared her teeth in a smile I found most alarming.

"Yes, of course. Ah, I have heard many reports in Haven of fighting between your people and explorers, in which many Name-givers have been slain. Do you think it possible to live in peace with your neighbors?"

"They wish to kill us. We have learned not to give them the opportunity. If they wish peace, they must seek it," she said and smiled again. "Until then, we will gladly add to our kingdom from the ranks of the greedy, foolish, and ill-tempered. The cold, dry hand of death is a greatly civilizing force."

"So you deny the reports of unprovoked attacks by your people. . ."

"By my count, you have used up your allotment of questions. Good day, little scholar."

At that point, Twiceborn drew herself to her full height, her living-crystal armor reflecting the torchlight eerily through the chamber. She swept from the room, and despite her deathly appearance, for a moment I became entranced by the spell of her charisma. I scarcely had time to take a breath before two stinking, burly corpses pulled me roughly from my seat and dragged me to an unfamiliar exit from the catacombs. Without a word, they tossed me to the hard, rubble-strewn ground outside as though I were a sack of meal.

I have learned little in this tantalizing first meeting. Indeed, Twiceborn's answers raised more questions than they satisfied. I must raise the money to return, so that I may ask her more. Queen Twiceborn of the Kingdom of the Undead holds the keys to many mysteries, and I would be no scholar did I not confess my desire to unlock them.



A TRACT AGAINST FALSEMEN

The following is a translation of a fragment of Sperethiel text recovered on an expedition into the ruins of Parlainth by an adventuring team with the curious, collective name of Fourteen Ears, Six Noses. The adventurers discovered it near the Collapsed Towers on the 19th day of Strassa, 1487 TH. The top and bottom of the original parchment are torn away, leaving only a portion of the original text. I believe that this tract (for such it appears to be) was written around 1000 TH, and that (given the subject matter) the writer made many copies of this document and distributed them around Parlainth.

—Vardeghul

. . . in this terrible time of trouble, when our very civilization is at stake, the foolish and foppish persist in following fashionably idle pursuits and thereby wasting the valuable time and energy of our finest magicians. At a time when we should act with firm resolve and courage, we grow lazy, arrogant, and fat.

Far be it from me to name names, but I feel impelled to single out a certain elementalist whose robes have many coins embroidered upon them, an elf who has forsaken his rightful duties to turn out more and more of the accursed falsemen that so plague our existence. Everywhere in our streets and houses, one sees falsemen: straw falsemen, wax falsemen, gleaming crystal falsemen, falsemen with feathers, falsemen with horns, even falsemen with glowing golden eyes! These abhorrent creatures of unthinking matter will obey our every whim—provided we can express our whims simply enough for their almost non-existent minds. We parade our newest falsemen about, attempting to outdo each other in their splendor. What started as a satisfactory idea—to create loyal servants who could not betray our most secret purposes—has become wasteful folly.

The case against falsemen is threefold.

First, it is unseemly to concern ourselves with petty matters of fashion and status when the overwhelming threat of the Horrors bears down upon us. Better to shackle our pride and turn it toward our will for survival than fritter our energies away on walking baubles! Second, as I alluded to earlier, the creation of falsemen is a criminal waste of our magical resources. Third, and most grievous to my mind, the existence of falsemen weakens our moral resolve. Just the other day, I heard a respectable lady of the governor's court state that greater numbers of falsemen would enable us to one day free our slaves. Such a declaration borders on treason! Slavery built the Theran Empire, and slavery sustains it to this day. Slavery makes our enemies fear us and our allies keep faith. Should we be so foolish as to exchange our slaves for mindless, glittering automatons, we would gain only the richly deserved laughter of all who now tremble at our approach!

Speaking both from my position as Vice-Secretary of the Slave Trader's Mutual Society and also as a deeply concerned citizen, I demand that the manufacture of falsemen be banned, their sale prohibited, and existing falsemen dismantled.



For those who do not find the above arguments sufficient, let me present another. As the long-dreaded Scourge approaches, one can only imagine what the Horrors might do when they find these strange constructs. Who knows what fiendish . . .

Here the document ends. A reward awaits any who find a more complete version.

—Vardeghul

From a Wall in The Twists

The following is a transcription of a message written in the language of magic on the interior walls of a large, relatively undamaged area in the region of Parlainth now known as The Twists. Ainall the Astonishing first transcribed the message in 1500 TH. To my knowledge, the original message remains intact.

—Vardeghul

As we explored the chambers the Horrors have imprisoned us in, we found the brush and paint that I now make these words with. The paint is a sign from my beloved Passion, Dis. In his wisdom, he has ordained that we shall set down an account of these dire times, bringing order (if only in this narrative) to a time that otherwise contains only chaos and misery.

We are among the last living Name-givers in Parlainth. I can hear the screams of our fellows from surrounding rooms and buildings as the Horrors slowly torture them to death. The extravagant and wasteful killing spree that the Horrors first indulged in is long past. They have realized that they are as trapped as we, and that once we are gone they will have no one to harm. If they wish to feast on our pain, they must extract it from us bit by bit. And so our sole reward for being quick, stealthy, and resourceful enough to evade the Horrors' initial onslaught is a slow, unmerciful death.

I have not admitted this to my fellows (none of whom can read these words), but I write this as a calculated act of defiance. I want the Horrors to find it, to seize me and rend me limb from limb for daring to write here. Such a death will spare me the agonizing torments others have suffered.



Our newest jailer is a Horror with an unsettling resemblance to true Name-givers. Though a weird and shambling thing, it holds a familiar shape—a head, torso, two arms, two legs. Its legs resemble coiled snakes; its arms, the tentacles of an octopus; and its head a huge, pulsing clot of blood. Still, its similarities to my own form disturb me more than the ugliness of its aspect. I am most disturbed by the thing's eyes, which seem to glow with a malicious intelligence. It looks at us in long, measuring gazes whenever it brings us the indigestible slop that is our only nourishment. I shudder when it looks into my face, for I swear I have seen it smile—an insinuating, strangely understanding smile. So far, the thing has taken no notice of this message, which now covers an entire wall. Perhaps the language of magic is invisible or of no interest to it. It seems my earlier hope of enraging the Horrors into killing me quickly was but a futile delusion.



They took the first of my cellmates today: Podas, the ork peddler. Before the Scourge, a great Theran wizard such as I would never have lowered myself to speak to Podas. I would have regarded him with the lofty contempt a master would show his natural slave. But the miserable terror of our existence has made us equals. My memories of spellcasting scattered to the winds. I have become a mere sack of flesh, cowering in my boots like any common man. I cannot bear to dwell on our hubris. We thought we could escape them, but we have trapped ourselves with the Horrors.



Podas is back. They have taken one of his fingers, an ear, and an eye. Our jailkeeper spoke today for the first time. It said, "We will return for you tomorrow, Podas." Its voice turned my bowels to ice; the thing mimicked me almost perfectly.



I have not been able to write for many months, ever since I beheld Podas the second time they returned him. They took him thirteen

times in all; after the last, he did not return. They took Dollak, Fransmuir, Jenneta, Celthek, Ramma and many others as well. I weep, writing their names. I will write all the names when I have strength. I will start a new wall just for the names and leave this wall for my account. I do not know why I persevere. The Horrors seem to take no notice. The writing does not ease my soul, yet I feel compelled to continue.

Twelve of us remain alive. The screams from elsewhere rarely sound, these days. Perhaps we twelve are truly among the last Namegivers left in Parlainth.

I hope they take me next.

Last night I dreamed of Podas. I asked him why I keep writing on these walls when doing so gives me no solace.

"You will have no solace," he said. "Hope of solace died when the Horrors appeared. You write not to ease your heart, but to remember us. We will linger here long after the Horrors have gone. Outlasting them will be the only revenge we can take."

Today I began writing all the names on the wall. I will try to remember the name of everyone I knew who dwelled in Parlainth when we removed it from the world. I will write down as many as I can.

Our number has dwindled to four. I fear that the Horrors are saving me for last. Poetic justice, I suppose, for I helped to set this once fair city on its disastrous course.

I am shaking so hard, I can scarcely hold the brush. The Horror caught me writing. Instinctively I whirled about, attempting to hide the brush from it. In doing so, I knocked over the jar of paint. Wet gold spilled on the floor, oozed along a depression in the tiles straight to the scaly feet of my hideous captor. Despite my earlier wish to be caught and slain outright, I experienced the impossible—greater fear.

It smiled hugely, turned, and left us alone.

It returned three hours later, leaving a jar just inside the threshold of our chamber. I approached it cautiously and opened it, expecting food.

Paint. More gilt paint.

I spoke to it today. I asked it why it had given me more paint, why it wanted me to continue writing. It answered in my own voice.

"Because we want to be remembered as well," it said. "Because of your foolish magic, we may die here. Or perhaps we will merely slumber. Whatever happens, some day our time will pass. We want our deeds remembered, to terrify and appall all who see this place. Through you, we will horrify generations yet unborn."

I have tried to erase all my work save the names of the dead, but I cannot. To do what little I can to thwart them, I shall make this sentence my last.



A Fragmentary History of Parlainth

I have written this history based on my readings of countless documents over the years, many of which may be purchased individually at reasonable rates. I last updated this account on the 13th of Borrum, 1504. In the interest of enriching the world's store of precious knowledge, I encourage all adventurers who discover new truths about Parlainth (especially in the form of documents) to remember that this establishment will outbid all competitors for such valuable material.

—Vardeghul

Parlainth as we know it reappeared in Barsaive in 1452 TH. The precise events leading up to the rediscovery of the city remain a mystery, largely because of the involvement of at least three competing powers: Throal, Thera, and the elves of Blood Wood. Only the kingdom of Throal has issued a public explanation of the affair. According to the Throalic version, researchers discovered clues in the Great Library of Throal that a vast, beautiful city once stood in northeastern Barsaive, and that a specific incantation could bring it back to our world. Citing various records in their vaults, the scholars of the Great Library claimed that Parlainth had attempted to protect itself from the Horrors by physically removing itself from our world and erasing all knowledge of the city from the minds and hearts of Namegivers. This statement seems reliable enough and would certainly explain why so little information exists on the city in Barsaivian archives. If I may be so bold as to include a personal note, I find it terribly chilling that a mere spell, no matter how powerful, can alter records as well as memories throughout the known world. Such a thing puts the reliability of any document in question. What other truths has another's magic suppressed? Which of our beliefs are mere figments of a sinister magician's imagination?

But I digress. The Throalic version of Parlainth's return contends that agents of Throal successfully recovered the city despite the efforts of Blood Warders and Theran agents to keep the city imprisoned far from our reality. My own consultation with reliable sources indicates that this statement is less than candid. Both Blood Wood and Theran sources make similar accusations against Throal and each other; each party claims to have brought the city back in the face of opposition from the other factions. I suspect that all parties are being parsimonious with the truth. I also have reason to believe that other, less influential individuals and powers played vital roles in the city's rediscovery, but at this time I may offer no specific names.

As everyone knows, the "wondrous and beautiful" city that returned in 1452 was but a ruined shell of its former self. Even its shattered pieces, however, inspire awe in those who look upon them. What was this city when its residents still breathed? Early reports from those brave enough to enter spoke of piles of treasure and coin too large for even sizeable bands of adventurers to carry outside the city walls. They also spoke of terrible creatures, of a place where the strength of the Horrors had scarcely abated. The remnants of the city's architecture identified it as Theran in origin; predictably, many theories arose to explain its existence.

Records that predate the arrival in Haven in 1491 of the first trained historian (that is to say, myself) cannot be considered reliable. In the absence of facts, myths and fantasies soon arose to explain the existence of Parlainth. Even old legends were said to have taken place in a mythical Parlainth. Many, if not all, such tales are completely untrue.

A vital discovery concerning the Forgotten City came to light in 1495 TH, when an explorer found a document entitled "On the Architecture of Parlainth" in the Southern Catacombs (a copy of this document can be bought

from this establishment for the reasonable price of 100 silver pieces). Written in 493 TH by the Theran Imperial Architect prior to Parlainth's construction, this document offers a wealth of information to all adventurers planning to explore the Forgotten City. In addition, the document confirms that the Therans did indeed build Parlainth as their imperial capital in Barsaive.

Information on the years leading up to the disappearance of Parlainth and its fall to the Horrors remains scarce, though this has not stopped many scholars and sages from offering notable theories. One such theory contends that Parlainth's disappearance was achieved by a cabal of magicians already corrupted by a powerful Horror too large to enter our reality. Allegedly, these sorcerers used magic to deliver the entire city into the colossal maw of this beast, which devoured the city in a single gulp and then spit out the mangled remnants that remain today.

Other scholars claim that the treacherous Theran Overlord Ersh Wearg, known to have died in Throal in 1050 TH, delivered Parlainth to the Horrors. Various explanations are given for this betrayal, all of them barely understandable to those of us with a less than perfect grasp of the intrigue rampant within the Theran government of the period. I consider this theory may be no more than a Throalic fireside tale.

A third theory states that Parlainth's attempted escape from the Horrors failed because a mother saw that her child had wandered past the city walls just as the magicians were completing the ritual that would remove Parlainth to its otherworldly haven. According to the story, the child's father was one of the magicians. Upon spying his wife's frantic efforts to retrieve the child, he became distracted just long enough to omit a crucial syllable from his warding magic. The mother carried the child to safety within the city walls, but the loss of that single sound in the chant allowed the Horrors to find and destroy Parlainth. Though inventive, I suspect this story is only a romantic fantasy.

Other accounts claim that the spell to erase all memory of the city was not quite strong enough to make the great dragons forget its existence. Allegedly, the dragon Mountainshadow struck a pact with Verjigorm, the Horror that hunted dragons during past Scourges, and revealed the location of Parlainth in exchange for a pledge to let the dragons be. Verjigorm then led a horde of Horrors to destroy the Forgotten City. I do not believe this account myself, smacking as it does of typical anti-dragon prejudice, but I include it in the interests of writing as complete a record as possible.

All things considered, the little we do know of Parlainth's true history remains speculation, for the Forgotten City's crumbled walls seem to jealously guard the mysteries of her long-dead inhabitants.



A Letter Found in the Catacombs

The famed adventurer Dontara the Gong and others discovered the original of the following document while exploring The Vaults in 1498 TH. This letter is one of the few accounts so far discovered that describe events in Parlainth soon after it retreated from the world. Though the letter is written in the Throalic tongue, the author's name suggests that he or she may have been an ork.

—Vardeghul

Eighth Week/Fifth Day, 611

Dear Sobarj,

I have just witnessed a scene of such breathtaking dread that I can scarcely remain still. I write of it for the benefit of history, assuming we are ever again known to history. If I do not write this down now, I might later convince myself that it never happened, that I saw nothing more than a dark dream or a fantasy created by a delirious illusionist. But it was real, all too terribly real.

The war against the Lord Mayor's forces had turned in favor of the rebel Headbreaker, and blood ran freely through the cracks in the streets. Headbreaker and her troops advanced, accompanied by the Horrors that supported them. One of the accursed things was so immense that its stinking maw could have devoured an airship. And from that terrible maw the thing emitted a terrible laughter that rumbled through the city like thunder. As the mayor's troops braced for a last stand in the Great Palace, a mighty one-eyed snake arose from among them, its flesh the color of rotting meat and its leathery wings torn. I saw this and realized that both sides battled each other for the cruel amusement of the Horrors. Vast and dreadful, the creatures sang in fierce joy as their mortal pawns fell upon one another, sister slaying sister and father slaying son.

My few companions and I, who had remained loyal to the Lord Mayor, knew then that the city had fallen to the Horrors. Truly, our doom had come upon us. As if of one mind, we ran blindly seeking another place to hide—something, anything that might serve as a shelter. Somewhere in the city, there had to be protection against the evil abominations before us.

I thought first of the catacombs, having buried a relative there only a week before. We ran toward Parlainth's residential quarter, unable to close our ears to the gleeful shrieks of the Horrors who now controlled the battle. We collected people along the way, gathering the frightened and fleeing as trousers gather burrs. By the time we reached the entrance to the funeral hall, we numbered nearly a hundred. Moving as one, we swarmed into the hall and bolted its doors shut behind us, throwing every piece of furniture and solid object we could lift against the doors to further bar the way. Then we ran from the hall into the narrow passageways of the catacombs, mindlessly searching for places to hide. Had we been capable of thinking clearly, we would have recognized the futility of our actions. But perhaps it is better to grasp for survival, even foolishly, than to abandon hope and remain still in the face of certain death.

Within minutes I found myself alone in the dark maze of tunnels, though I could hear others scurrying through adjacent corridors. I paused for a moment to draw breath. I found the cool, dusty smell of old death and decay oddly refreshing, an almost pleasant contrast to the reek of blood in the streets above. As I gradually became aware

of my surroundings, I realized that I had instinctively run to the only place in the catacombs familiar to me—the family crypts. I rested against the silver shelving in the blessed silence, remembering how I had refused to look at it the day mother brought it home. Now it seemed the only reassuring thing in my world.

Then I heard the screams. The Horrors had breached our refuge, or perhaps they had been there all the time. Agonized screams and dreadful, choking cries echoed from all directions; our attackers seemed to lurk everywhere in the dank tunnels. I reached for my dagger, panicking, unsure in which direction to run. Who had been slain already? Whom could I save? Suddenly, a bony hand gripped my shoulder. White pain howled through my arm. I spun around to face my assailant and to my mortal anguish, I beheld the decaying face of my own brother. You, my brother, given a mockery of life by the Horrors, resurrected to slay me.

I became an animal, thinking nothing, merely lashing out for my own accursed survival. To live, I slew you a second time. My heart died the first time I killed you, when you rose up against me wearing Headbreaker's colors. Your second death at my hands broke my spirit. I cannot go on. I wait for death. I welcome it. I would go to meet it, were I not still a coward.

I write this letter to you, Sobarj, even though you are dead. Soon I shall join you. I have helped a few others in the catacombs make their way back out, but those of us who have survived have no hope of escape.

How much suffering will the Horrors put us through before they finally destroy us?

I am sorry for what I have done, my brother. Perhaps we shall meet again in a better place than this, and I may ask your forgiveness face to face. But perhaps no such place exists. This letter, this futile expression of grief and guilt that you will never see, must suffice. May the Passions forgive us both for our evil deeds.

Farewell.

Nomburi



An Intercepted Theran Message

The following missive came from the purse of a caravan driver, purloined by Samova, the self-proclaimed Patriotic Burglar of Throal. It appears to be an official message from a Theran spy to Overgovernor Kypros of Sky Point.

—Vardeghul

23/3, 1062 TE
An Epistle in Reference to a Request for the Apprehension of an Enemy of Thera
Humbly Submitted by your Loyal Servant, Chantal Girten
To His Grand & Benevolent Lordship, the Most Revered Overgovernor of Barsaive, Kypros

My most esteemed superior, I regret to inform you of the many and apparently insurmountable obstacles that lie between your orders as expressed in your Details of Assignment of 19/4 and the execution of the same. Most humbly I beg that you not take this epistle as diminishing or belittling in any way the importance of the aforementioned orders, for indeed the charges laid against the subject of the search you have commanded are of the utmost seriousness. Truly it goes without saying that anyone (such as myself) who values the honor and heritage of Thera would spare no effort to see the miscreant apprehended, so that the consequences of the crimes she has committed be illustrated to her in the most forceful way possible.

I fear, however, that fortune does not smile upon Thera in this matter. I have acquired intelligence, the veracity of which I have no doubt, indicating that the criminal has fled into the area of Parlainth known to local scavengers as "The Smalls." If you will consult my report of 37/4, 1060 TE, entitled "A Full Report on the Physical Disposition of Theran Property, Specifically the City Known as Parlainth, Also Known as The Forgotten City," this area is the part of the ruins least amenable to the sort of exhaustive, house-to-house search necessary to locate and apprehend the miscreant in question.

Though your Lordship is no doubt occupied with many matters of surpassing import, I would respectfully urge you to reacquaint yourself with the details of my aforementioned report. Careful study of it will greatly reduce the prevalent misunderstanding regarding the current state of Parlainth that, as in this unfortunate case, has led your Lordship to proclaim Details of Assignments that cannot be carried out. For your convenience, I quote from the relevant section report, to wit:

"Although piecing together evidence on the exact condition of ruined Parlainth remains difficult in the face of the widespread disappearance of documentary evidence along with the disappearance of the city, it seems reasonable to conclude that the region now known as "The Smalls" consisted of housing provided for the average citizen of Parlainth. The Smalls incorporates a vast area of small houses—none, alas, left whole—laid out in most pleasing uniformity. However, this uniformity poses great difficulty in finding specific locations within The Smalls. All of the houses are identical, arranged in a repeating pattern that makes any one portion of the area look the same as any other. The Smalls has therefore become a refuge for scoundrels, charlatans, and others too foul to live even among the riffraff of Haven. In addition, the area is infested with bandits and dangerous creatures. It seems unlikely that The Smalls ever contained (or still contain) Theran property of any value, but it is my considered opinion that the

graverobbers who have infested the city like ticks since its rediscovery have concealed their ill-gotten gains here. It is my further opinion that the reclamation of property proposed by Theran officials in their Plan for Consideration of 42/3, 1049 TE requires much greater resources and manpower than are currently available to myself and my colleagues. At your Lordship's request, I will gladly share my knowledge of the practicalities of the situation in further discussion of plans to increase our commitment to the clearing of The Smalls and other potentially rehabitable areas of Parlainth."

As your Lordship, in his vast wisdom can deduce easily from the above excerpt, the feasibility of a systematic search through The Smalls is, given the extremely limited manpower and equipment at my disposal, questionable at best. I have taken the liberty of quietly offering a reward for the capture of the miscreant to a number of local ruffians loyal to silver coinage, if not to Thera. Included among their number are several windlings, who have conducted an aerial survey of the area in question. They failed to sight the criminal, despite her distinctive appearance. However, they indicated that a fugitive might evade notice easily among the countless, small buildings in the area. They also observed that they suffered through several barrages of arrows, which hampered their attempts to conduct a thorough survey. Upon close questioning, I realized that they had no way to ensure covering all of The Smalls in their search. Whenever forced to avoid the aforementioned volleys, they invariably lost their places; each time, they simply started over at the nearest spot where no arrows or sling bullets were forthcoming.

I regret that the windlings' efficiency does not match that of trained Theran agents, and the small sum I am able to muster from my current budget allows me to hire very few of them. Unless the urgency of this case is reflected by the provision of increased logistical support, a course of action that I wholeheartedly favor, I doubt that the Detail of Assignment in question can be executed.

I remain, your loyal servant,
Chantal Girten



A Plan to Rob the Treasury

An explorer who wishes to remain anonymous discovered the original of the following text rolled up inside a wooden tube in a jehuthra nest in the Southern Catacombs. The original was written on linen in ink, in Sperethiel disguised by a simple letter-substitution code.

—Vardeghul

Gonum—

Hold onto your cloak, brother—I have news that will make us wealthy beyond our greatest imaginings! The names of the Seven Elf Thieves will be celebrated in song and story for decades to come!

This day, I have learned that the Theran lackeys in Parlainth intend to move the city's treasury from one underground location to another. You realize what that means, don't you? Parlainth's gold reserves will be, however briefly, vulnerable to a well-planned and executed strike. A strike that the Seven Elf Thieves shall make! So cease your dallying with the serving maids of Alachia's court and proceed to Parlainth with haste. The magic that binds our patterns together demands that you be present for our greatest success!

Further persuasion is doubtlessly redundant; I know you will be here. You cannot resist the challenge, any more than I. However, I shall explain my plan because I cannot stop anticipating the splendid day we carry it off. (And if any holes remain in it, I know that you will find and fill them.)

As we discovered when first we investigated the possibility of pilfering the gold reserves, the treasury is so well guarded as to bring sorrow to the heart of any honest thief. Fortunately, the leaders of the city have determined they need more room for underground slave pens. And of course they must have the space currently occupied by the treasury for that purpose.

Excuse me while I spit at the thought of that loathsome practice. The Theran curs deserve to lose their precious gold to us—their blood gold, acquired from the traffic in lives! We, my brother, must free it from their reeking, Theran fingers! (There now, you need not grit your teeth at my digressing. I now return to my most delightful subject.)

Parlainth's officials (stupid as day-old thundra beasts, all of them) intend to move the treasury from beneath the government quarter to beneath the commercial quarter. Once it is in place, we can bid our gold farewell—the Therans are building even more ingenious and fearsome traps to catch the unwary thief than they had in the old treasury. I hear from certain friends (a barmaid and an army officer whom I regularly allow to beat me at dice) that the Therans have even enlisted a handful of sorcerers to add magical snares inspired by their studies of the astral plane and Horrors. Do you see now the need for haste? The move takes place but three weeks hence. To entertain any hope of success, we must purloin the gold on its way from the old treasury to the new. So pull on your riding boots and get galloping!

I propose that we rent one of the storage bins under the commercial quarter, as we did when we confused those trolls out of their Sword of Transmogrification. You will scarcely credit this, but the new treasury is connected to the storage area! A deplorable example of planning in haste, wouldn't you say? I say we teach these Therans the error of their ways. They are already growing fat and soft as the Scourge approaches. (Which reminds me—let us be far

from this place when the astral monsters arrive. Let us stay safe in the bosom of our revered Elven Queen—Alachia will keep us and our gold safe.)

My little barmaid can give me at least a day's advance notice before the moving of the treasury. Because none of the traps will set until all the gold and jewels and whatnot are safely ensconced within their new home, we can slip in and take as much gold as we can carry away before the Therans have finished slagging their bundles of treasure down the halls. It should take the best part of a day for the Theran guards to transport the chests of gold alone—the magical treasures will take Chorrolis knows how long. Plenty of time for us!

Six high-Circle warriors will guard the new treasury at all times of course, but our comrade Partera has been busily weaving a thread into the heart of a Poison Golem which should make short work of them. I also intend to hire a few ork warriors to bear the brunt of the fighting should something go wrong. And we can leave them behind afterward, should the Therans require a captured culprit or two. As for getting away swiftly (burdened as we shall be with caskets of our favorite yellow metal), I will use my newly acquired Wand of Upwards Burrowing (remind me to tell you that tale!) to shoot us upward through the stone roof and paving stones into the heart of the business quarter. Jurtu and Smilodil will be waiting aboveground with seven of the fastest steeds in Barsaive, and we gallop straight for the city gates. We may have to shoot a few sentries on the way out, but otherwise we should be far from Parlainth before the Therans realize that we have taken their gold.

I am still attempting to convince Jurtu, Partera, and Lamplifter not to wait for the arrival of magical treasures. Smilodil, Longstride and myself want to get the gold right away and get out—less risky, to my mind. After all, we can live forever and a day on even the smallest crumb of Parlainth's reserves. Also, the Therans will find it that much easier to track us down if we try to sell unique and therefore recognizable items. Gold speaks every language, as they say! What? Not here yet, brother? What are you waiting for?

Rabhuca



A Questor's Tale

The following letter is from Hasarl, a questor of Garlen, to her brother Thamrosh, questor of Lochost. Sent from Haven to Urupa via caravan, the letter was returned to Haven when the caravan driver learned that Thamrosh had left Urupa for parts unknown. In the intervening time, Hasarl had disappeared without a trace. I then received the letter for safekeeping.

—Vardeghul

My Dearest Brother,

It has been some time since last I heard from you. I trust you are progressing in the service of your patron. As for me, my travels have taken me up mountains and across jungles to Parlainth, where I encountered a place devoid of all Passions save the mad ones. Here is my telling:



It happened that I ventured beneath the earth in the company of four brave souls, to a place where even the sunlight would not go. With me came the windling beastmaster Frozen Carnival, who had taken a vow of silence; the dwarf sky raider Metros, who had sworn never to eat the flesh of animals; the ork archer Younj Dying-Day, who had sworn to find his long-lost son; and the t'skrang thief Golderic, who had freely sworn a year and a day's service to me for past healing rendered.

In the town Named Haven, that lies near the ruins Named Parlainth, we had heard a troubadour's lament concerning the place called the Northern Catacombs. His song told of a place that draws to it all of Barsaive's madmen as the flame attracts the moth, and we knew we had finally reached the end of the various quests that drove us. We had found the place which had called us.

When we attempted to enter the catacombs, a band of wretches blind to the ways of the Passions demanded our weapons, goods, and hard-won coin as payment for passage. My companions fell upon our foes and beset them sorely until they relented.

The narrow mud tunnels of the Northern Catacombs stank of dampness and rot. As we walked, the muddy floor sucked at our boots like a greedy child at a sugar-stick. We saw leeches and parasites in great numbers, some as large as a windling.

At length, a hunchbacked elf hailed us, styling herself Shendriel, Queen of the Mad. Shendriel was a pitiful thing, half-eaten by parasites, drooling, and clad in filthy rags. This self-named queen begged our aid in restoring her to her rightful throne, from which she claimed her son Morgrok, Lord of the Crazed, had deposed her.

I spoke to her, saying, "We have come to rescue you from madness, to deliver you from the pit of darkness into the daylight. We have come to sever the bonds between you and the Horrors that have darkened your minds and teach you the ways of the true Passions."

Then Shendriel spoke, her words still clouded by Horror-thought: "I shall follow you and emulate your ways if you slay my son Morgrok. Cleave his skull in twain, break his bones, make him die in agony so that I may regain my throne and proclaim your wisdom to my people."

I replied to her, "You must first come out of the twilight. We must burn the veil of madness from your eyes. Then you will see that the murder of your son is an act not of justice, but of bloody vengeance. You shall not kill your son, but be reconciled to him and he to you. This healing of the soul is the way of Garlen."

Shendriel answered, "We shall kill you."

At her words, countless wretches of all the Name-giver races, similarly clad in rags and spittle, sprang forth from a hidden trap door. I called for my companions to show mercy to the wretches, who wore no armors and bore feeble weapons. In the end, however, it was slay or be slain. The putrid, green water that lay atop the muddy floor soon ran dark with blood, and we sickened at the sight. At last, only we and Shendriel still stood.

Shendriel laughed, as a child would laugh. At the sound, the hair of Younj Dying-Day turned stark white, for he recognized among the slain the face of his own son.

We departed then, wandering through the muddy tunnels, the only sound the weeping of Younj Dying-Day. At length we met Morgrok, so-Named Lord of the Crazed. He was an ork and thus could not have been son to Shendriel. The followers of Morgrok beset us sore, and again we spilled much blood in the fight for our lives.

For these many days I have lingered in these halls of madness, offering my healing gifts to any I can reach. Alas, it is all to no avail. I cannot cure the fever of their madness, despite all my pleas to Garlen for her aid.

Thus ends my telling.



I beseech you, Thamrosh, travel to Haven. It may be that the madness infecting these poor souls is not a sickness, as I first thought, but an enslavement of the mind and soul. If so, the gifts of Lochost may do what the gifts of Garlen could not. The liberation of the most unfortunate beings on this earth would bring you much honor in Lochost's eyes and please him well. Did not Garlen call upon Lochost in the days of the crystal plague to liberate the soothing solvent from its imprisonment in the stones?

In the shadow of Garlen I remain,
Hasarl



A Fragment Concerning the Ruins

In 1500 TH, I commissioned the following document from Jotorri, the dwarf nethermancer. Until her recent disappearance, Jotorri could claim the widest range of experience of any in exploring the various sections of the ruins. I very much hope that she returns to further broaden our knowledge of this mysterious place.

—Vardeghul

Those of us who risk our lives to explore Parlainth generally divide the ruins into eight areas: four above ground and four below ground. Each area has its own unique geography, treasure, and threats to life and limb. Long, straight laneways, like the spokes of a wheel, divide the areas. Following these laneways allows one to move quite swiftly through the ruins, but the laneways also harbor their own dangers. Some of the horrible creatures (and worse things) that move swiftly through the rubble are things one wishes strenuously to avoid.

We call the eastern aboveground area the War Zone. Hardy vines and bushes, clinging tenaciously to life, exist in uncanny profusion here. Some say the lowest-growing vines possess a malicious intelligence and move to trap the feet of the unwary. The War Zone is inhabited by falsemen, magical constructs created by citizens of Parlainth before the Scourge. The Horrors drove these pitiful creatures to homicidal mania during the Scourge, and now the remaining falsemen wage constant wars against one another, all too often catching explorers in their crossfire. In Haven, one can make money by betting on these crazed and pointless battles; I consider such actions unseemly.

We call the northernmost aboveground quarter the Vaults for the grandeur of its architecture. This area drew many early explorers, who believed the grandest buildings housed the greatest treasures. The presence of the dragon Charcoalgrin has made exploring the Vaults a particularly hazardous undertaking, however. In recent years, Charcoalgrin has taken over the Palace of the Overlord and organized the other creatures inhabiting the area into roving gangs that repel intruders. She has also accumulated many treasures and riches, which she guards jealously. Though Charcoalgrin will listen to reason when the whim strikes her, she has a heart as dark as pitch. Avoid her if at all possible.

The westernmost above-ground quarter, which we call the Smalls, is full of houses and small buildings, many of them reasonably intact. Because of its relative wholeness, some mistakenly take this area to be the safest quarter of the ruins. But appearances can deceive. In truth, the Smalls is a no-man's-land inhabited by fearsome creatures, bandits, cutthroats, and other foul folk. Any treasure found in the Smalls may well have been hidden for safekeeping after its discovery elsewhere, and so taking it may invite pursuit by outlaws inclined to robbery and murder.

The last aboveground area, the southern quarter called the Twists, abounds with half-demolished limestone buildings. Many of these appear to have been shops, but precious little of value remains among the crumbling walls. Many explorers have encountered shades of those destroyed during the Scourge in this eerie place. Horrors also seem to display a peculiar affinity for the Twists, though no one knows why. I have known Horrors to hoard treasure, as dragons do, in order to entice victims to approach them. Trust no one encountered in the Twists; more than likely they are Horror-marked, if not Horrors themselves.

The underground areas of Parlainth are all catacombs, to the north, south, east, and west. The Western Catacombs hold peculiar magics that play tricks on the mind (or perhaps on time and space, I know not which). Unfortunately, its many wonders are tainted with the corruption of the sorcerers who once studied nefarious arts

within the earth-and-stone walls. In their desperate quest to save doomed Parlainth from the Horrors, Parlainth's sorcerers committed offenses against nature that the mind can scarcely comprehend. Many magical treasures await the explorer of these catacombs, but most are tainted with the touch of Theran mages and even Horrors. The prudent explorer will treat them with caution.

Traps both magical and mechanical abound in the dank tunnels of the Southern Catacombs, as do scores of wild creatures. Once home to Parlainth's treasury, the Southern Catacombs may hold great promise for seekers of coin and jewels. However, be warned that others have picked many of its vaults clean long ago. Those that still hold treasure are those still guarded by the most fearsome traps.

The Northern Catacombs are darker than the rest, and niter and bilious green rot cover their walls. These tunnels are so narrow that a good-sized troll can scarcely walk through them without scraping his shoulders against the weeping stone. Like the Smalls, the Northern Catacombs may serve as a safe storage space for treasures discovered elsewhere. A colony of wretched and debased foul folk lives here. Their leader, known to them as the One-Eyed King, pays homage to the dragon Charcoalgrin. I have never seen the One-Eyed King and so cannot say what he looks like.

The Eastern Catacombs are home to a kingdom of cadaver men, ruled by an undead t'skrang whom her subjects call Queen Twiceborn. Cadaverous sentries clad in moldy finery guard all known entrances to these catacombs, rarely permitting outsiders to enter. These ruins contain treasure, but Twiceborn jealously guards it. She will bargain, but only if the bargaining serves her own interests. Attempting to breach her treasure vault will result in almost certain death.

The reader of this document should be aware that my words cannot be the full truth, for each area of Parlainth contains vast unexplored portions. Also, what I know of the ruins may well change. If a powerful Horror were to take up residence in the ruins, for example, it might draw followers away from the fearsome Charcoalgrin (or bring more loathsome followers of its own). Therefore, reader, do not stake your life on anything I have written. In truth, the only certain thing is that the Forgotten City conceals countless surprises. At times, I believe that the city has acquired a malign intelligence and has become a trap to lure the foolish to doom. This claim, however, I cannot prove, and speculations have little value.



Testimony Regarding the Horror Hunter

The following reports and rumors describe a mysterious being known variously as the Horror Hunter, the Cleaver of Shadows, and The Knife That Cuts the Storm. For all the legends about this being, few have ever seen it.

—Vardeghul

The Speaking of Futureless, an Ork Scorcher, 1496

You never heard of the Horror That Hunts Horrors? Pah, you are stupid then. Everyone learn this story from mother, everyone. Mine tell me many times, between punching me in the jaw for being coward.

She say to me, you scared of my fists, boy. Good thing, for my fists can beat you bad. But I scared of many other things, 'cause they can hurt *me* bad. Nobody in this world what isn't scared of something else. Even the mighty dragons, they fear Verjigorm, big Horror too frightening for you and me to even imagine what it look like.

Many things in this world that's right to be scared of, but the worst is Horrors. They can tear not just your flesh, but your mind. My mother seen it. She seen what Horrors leave behind. But she say Horrors have things they scared of, too. They most scared of the Cleaver of Shadows, the Tornado that Eats Tornadoes—Buualgathor, Hunter of Horrors.

Buualgathor has seven arms, each a mighty blade for cleaving other Horrors in half. It can see a thousand miles everywhere, hear every heartbeat. All Horrors live on pain and fear, but Buualgathor don't want the pain and fear of ordinary folk. We not scared enough, not hurt enough. Horror Hunter need the strong fear and pain that only other Horrors feel when *they* be the hunted.

So whenever my gahad swells my breast with fear, I think of what scares me and remember that something scares you, too. Then I am calm; I reach for my sword and scream my battle scream, and all is good again.

The Speaking of Teodoro Barn-of-Rats, an Ork Nethermancer, 1500

Wasn't until I got to Parlainth that I started hearing the rumors. All the adventurers whispered about It when you got enough drink in them. I ran into a windling who had a word for It in her native tongue—it means Knife That Cuts the Storm. A bunch of dwarfs said they knew plenty of ancient legends about It. Even a band of scorchers knew about It; they called It the Cleaver of Shadows, the Horror That Hunts Horrors. Said they had known about It from the cradle, that any ork would know of it.

Me, I heard nothing about It growing up. I briefly left Parlainth for other parts of Barsaive, looking for stories about this Horror Hunter. Nowhere else did I find anyone who claimed any knowledge of the thing. When I got back, I started remembering times when my mother told me stories of the Horror Hunter. If I close my eyes, I can picture her telling me. But I know she never did.

Me, I think something is making us in Parlainth aware of the Horror Hunter. It wants us to believe we have known of it all our lives. Don't know why, and I'd rather not. I know only one thing—I have yet to meet anyone who has met the Horror Hunter. Many say they know someone who's seen It, but no one says they have. Funny stuff—I smell a rat.

The Speaking of Bazfor the Tempted, Dwarf Warrior, 1503

I'd not swear that what we ran into was the Horror Hunter, but it might have been. We were searching for treasure in the Southern Catacombs and had cleared out a pack of strawmen—well, burnt them out, to be honest. They'd fought with unusual ferocity for wickerheads, which should have told us something. Soon after the battle, we found a chest full of jeweled combs and thought we'd struck lucky.

My sister Twelgranth, as head of the expedition, went for the combs first. The second she touched them, she staggered back as if someone had walked over her grave. She says, half-choking, "By the Passions, Bazfor, I've been marked."

We knew what that meant, and our blood froze. Twelgranth was Horror-tainted. Some Horror had put its essence into that comb, waiting for fools like us to come along and touch it. Now it could do whatever it wanted with my sister. By the time we got out of the ruins and made it back to our rooms at the Restless Troll, she was already crying and screaming from all of the terrible things the Horror was saying in her mind.

We checked out of the Troll that night, afraid of what the other patrons might do when they saw my sister was tainted. We camped under the stars. We couldn't sleep, of course, not with the Horror ripping my sister's mind apart.

Suddenly, a cloaked figure appeared behind us. Now, we're no green first-Circlers—we know how to mount a watch. But this thing slipped up to us without a one of us taking notice. To me, it looked like a dwarf, but I can't remember any of its features except for its soft, kind eyes. Our swordsmaster thought it looked like a t'skrang, and our troll illusionist swore the thing was troll-shaped. But we all saw the same eyes—grey, fatherly eyes that told us everything would come out right.

It spoke in a voice that sounded male and female at the same time and completely reassuring. Even though we'd camped on a plain, with no walls or cliffs to bounce its sound, its voice echoed all around us. I'll never forget its words: "Never fear. I hunt Horrors, and I shall destroy the foul fiend that has marked your comrade. Slowly. Before it dies, it shall beg for mercy—and receive none."

The figure placed its hand on Twelgranth's forehead, and something like a giant, glowing thread lit up in the sky. The thread went from Twelgranth all the way over the horizon. The Horror hunter dissolved into light, too, and shot along the thread toward its terrible prey.

Then Twelgranth's head exploded. I wish I could forget that sight.

I swear to you, my tale is true. Not many true stories have morals, my dear Vardeghul, but this one does. Just because a man shares your enemies does not make him your friend.



A Lost Theran War Machine

The following appears to be a secret report to authorities in the Kingdom of Throal from the dwarf scholar Sephiverius, fellow of the Throalic Library. Though I cannot verify its contents, I believe it a reliable piece of work. As always, readers are invited to make their own judgments.

—Vardeghul

21st Doddul, 1498 TH

Sirs—

Having concluded my investigation of the existence of land-bound Theran war machines, I regret to inform you that my results are inconclusive. However, given the number of references to a particular war machine that I discovered in the course of poring over countless ancient documents, I would venture to say at least one war machine may exist somewhere in the ruins of Parlainth.

It is undoubtedly true that the question of land-bound war machines has long been a matter of contention among scholars of Theran military practice. Reports of the existence of abandoned war machines surface from time to time, including various claims of their spectacular magical abilities. Often, these claims differ little from countless legends of miraculous treasures awaiting discovery by some enterprising adventurer. While many artifacts of great magical power doubtlessly remain among Parlainth's ruins, for every real item a thousand exist that are merely the products of overactive imaginations.

Therefore, one must consider the facts before marshaling the immense resources necessary to search for these supposed Theran devices. At first glance, the facts do not look encouraging. As we all know, the Theran conquest of Barsaive was almost exclusively a naval victory. The Empire's vast force of airships crushed the crystal raiders at the Battle of Sky Point in 442 TH, thereby ensuring the submission of other Barsaivian governments. Certainly, it is well known that the Theran airships were equipped with mighty magical weapons, but no credible reports of land machines actually used in a Theran war exist.

However, certain documents recently discovered in Parlainth have fallen into my hands. (I have taken the liberty of remunerating the agents who supplied this material to me on behalf of the Great Library of Throal.) And these documents reveal something quite remarkable.

These documents are plans for the construction of a fantastic war machine. After careful study of the parchment and ink used in these documents, I can safely estimated they were created between 950 and 975 TH. According to the Theran calendar, they date from the heyday of Parlainth, roughly a century before its disappearance. The style of the documents resembles that of other Theran military documents of the period. Though they may be forgeries, I believe may indicate the existence of a fearsome weapon that we would do well to understand.

The war machine apparently functions by projecting a powerful beam of energy at the enemy—according to a scribbled marginal note, the designer of the weapon believes it capable of devastating entire regiments. The main feature of this war engine is a vast ring of crystal, perhaps twenty feet in diameter. Along the edge of the ring are thirteen holes, into which the wizards operating the machine apparently thrust their arms. The ring seems to have enabled (or was meant to enable) the wizards to pool their talents in order to generate a massive charge of magical energy.

The plans show the crystal ring being carried onto the battlefield on a wheeled, wooden platform pulled by draft animals. Suspended above the ring is a smaller crystal shaped into a lens. Four poles rise at angles from the platform, meeting

in the middle to form scaffolding to support the lens. Suspended below the lens is a basket, which I assume was intended to contain a soldier who would direct the lens at its target.

The adventurers who discovered these plans found them within a rotting basket that apparently matched the one drawn on the ancient parchment. This circumstance leads me to conclude that the machine may have in fact been built during Parlainth's ascendancy. Whether the Theran military intended it to defend against Barsaivians or Horrors is difficult to say, and I have found no evidence of this item's use in the field. The adventurers discovered the documents and basket in the extensive, underground tunnels beneath Parlainth, under the area that most scholars believe was the center of the city's military activity. Though I cannot be certain, I believe it likely the Therans conducted magical research for military purposes in the tunnels where these plans were found.

But even if the fantastical machine did exist at one time, it may no longer be intact. The people of Parlainth might well have attempted to use it against the Horrors that destroyed them. If so, most likely the Horrors tore it to bits. Nonetheless, I believe that these plans present an opportunity Throal cannot afford to pass by. Even if the machine is in pieces, we might learn a great deal from its remnants. And if we could duplicate such a machine, it could prove invaluable in our struggle to remain independent from Thera.

I have taken the liberty of drawing up a budget for an expedition to Parlainth to search for the machine. Though my delicate health prevents me from venturing into the ruins personally, I hereby volunteer to oversee this important mission.

appendix

I recorded the following testimony from a member of Sephiverius' expedition of the year 1499. The source wished to remain anonymous.

—Vardeghul

Nothing—that's what we found. The catacombs under the military quarter were picked clean by the first wave of explorers, who left nothing more than coppers lying about—coppers and dust and crumbled stones. Oh, and plenty of creatures that'd give you nightmares just to hear about. That fool Sephiverius couldn't believe that we'd found nothing—he kept sending us back to look for secret doors. We're lucky none of us died. Some formless, jellylike, lizard thing kept harrying us—that was the worst thing we contended with. I don't think it was a Horror—might have been a normal animal once, and the Horrors twisted it. Thank the Passions we're packing up and going home—it seems that Sephiverius' insidious joint rot is getting worse. Waste of time and money, that's what this expedition has been. I'm looking forward to seeing my family back home in Throal.



TRANSCRIPT OF AN INTERROGATION

Torgak conducted the following interrogation, transcribed by myself, on the ninth day of Rua, 1505. Additional questioning took place later, for which I was not present. A trio of adventurers calling themselves the Lords of the Vine captured the subject of the interrogation in the Vaults and brought him to Torgak to claim a reward he had offered for captive members of the Unforgivables, a gang of marauders and cutthroats known to frequent the Vaults.

—Vardeghul

TORGAK: The prisoner is a male ork, perhaps twenty-five years old. He wears a targeting eye. His left arm is covered with tattoos of . . . what are they, skulls?

(Prisoner responds with contemptuous spitting noise.)

TORGAK: None of that, now. You're not all cuddled up in the wings of your big dragon anymore.

(Prisoner remains silent.)

TORGAK: I'm talking to you, you hear me? Hm? I said, do you hear me?

(Prisoner remains silent. Torgak draws a small knife from his belt.)

TORGAK: I've heard that the most painful injury you can possibly inflict on someone is to cut through the little web of skin between the thumb and first finger. I wonder if that's true.

PRISONER: I say nothin' to you, stinking troll.

TORGAK: Ah, but you just did.

PRISONER: Didn't.

TORGAK: We're going to get along fine you and me, I can tell. Tell me your name.

PRISONER: Don't need to tell you my name.

TORGAK: You're right, you know. I'm not really interested in your name. I'd rather know how many of you there are.

PRISONER: How many what?

TORGAK: That clay badge you're wearing—what's it supposed to be, a dragon head?

PRISONER: If you think so, stinkin' troll.

TORGAK: Some say those who wear badges like that call themselves the Unforgivables.

(Prisoner remains silent, deliberately looking away from Torgak.)

TORGAK: They say the Unforgivables are reeking cowards, that they run like baby chickens when faced with danger, that they only strike from behind, that they mate only with their own cousins, and that not even rats will live where they bed down.

PRISONER: You—(here follow a string of obscenities in the ork tongue. While shouting and cursing, the prisoner attempts to wriggle out of his bonds, but succeeds only in bouncing around in his chair).

PRISONER (after pausing for breath): You stop laughing at us when we overrun your stinkin' little town, stinkin' troll! The Unforgivables are mighty, many! Today the Vaults, tomorrow all Parlainth! We drive you all into the wilderness, we run the streets of Haven red with your blood! Then we take all Parlainth's magic treasures and build army to kill all our enemies! Throal be scared of us, beg for mercy! Even Thera be scared of Charcoalgrin! She lead us to victory!

TORGAK: You believe that, don't you, son?

PRISONER: Shut up.

TORGAK: And how long has Charcoalgrin spent preparing for this strike on Haven, hmm? Fifteen years and counting. She must have started when you were a whelp hiding behind your mother's skirts—

PRISONER: Don't talk about Klajno's mother, you stinkin'—

TORGAK: So Klajno is your name. Nice to meet you, boy. Let's think about what you've told me, Klajno. Charcoalgrin plans to take over Barsaive, but in fifteen years she's gotten little more than a chunk of rubble—

PRISONER: The Vaults are best part of Parlainth—where all the rich used to live. We have storehouse full of treasures to turn on your stupid joke of a village.

TORGAK: A storehouse full of treasures. And just where is this storehouse?

PRISONER: If you think I tell you, you're even stupider than—

TORGAK: We already know where it is, Klajno. I just wondered if you might be ready to tell me the truth.

PRISONER: I tell you nothing.

TORGAK: I can understand why you're afraid to talk. There's no shame in being afraid of that dragon.

PRISONER: I do not fear my mistress. I keep silent to do her honor.

TORGAK: And when we spread the word that you talked, she'll trust you. She'll just think we're lying. Won't she?

PRISONER: You cannot get word back to Charcoalgrin, troll.

TORGAK: Then you needn't fear telling us what you know. We'll give you a fast horse and a purse full of coins; you can run beyond her reach before she even knows you're gone.

PRISONER: She already know I'm gone.

TORGAK: Why Klajno, that's not a tear running down your cheek, is it?

PRISONER: Is blood. Those elves smash my head, it runs with blood.

TORGAK: Mmmhmm. So how does Charcoalgrin know you're gone already?

PRISONER: We have discipline. Our commanders check on their forces. Roll calls.

TORGAK: Perhaps your commander is forgetful.

PRISONER: Vramyl the Cruel is not forgetful woman.

TORGAK: Tell me, is Vramyl ork? Troll? Human?

PRISONER: I say nothing! I say nothing!

TORGAK: I distinctly heard you, boy.

PRISONER: Shut up.

TORGAK: So Charcoalgrin already knows you're missing, hmm? You must feel quite confident. Those aren't tears at all—you've none to shed. Your mistress is surely coming to rescue you. After all, she values your loyalty, yes? (Pause.) Speak up, boy.

PRISONER: I sacrifice my life for the Unforgivables. I swore oath.

TORGAK: Sacrifice your life, hmm? Even when the death promises to be an exceptionally painful one? But then, you're a man of the world, Klajno. Doubtless you've seen many a drawing and quartering. Suffering one shouldn't be much worse for you. Me, well, you can call me a coward, but I don't watch. I have to look away ... awful, just awful.

PRISONER: You do not frighten me.

TORGAK: I daresay not. For as the running horses tear your body in pieces, you will have the satisfaction of knowing that your silence has won you a great benefit from Charcoalgrin. Refresh my memory, boy—just what is that benefit, again?

PRISONER: I am loyal, my mother taught me loyalty above all—

TORGAK: Your mother, would she be proud of your loyalty to a dragon?

PRISONER: She would be proud I am loyal.

TORGAK: Where can we find your mother?

PRISONER: What you want with my—

TORGAK: We need to know where to send the pieces, Klajno. Now, about Charcoalgrin—is she working for the Therans? Is she Horror-touched, as some say?

PRISONER: Shut up, shut up, shut up! I listen no more!

Torgak: Do you consort with Horrors, Klajno? Do your commanders?

(Prisoner bursts into frenzied sobs.)

TORGAK: Poor Klajno—you are weary. I will return when you've rested. And then we will have this conversation all over again.



Treasures of the Forgotten City

The following document was commissioned in 1496 by the elf caravaneer Gorodiela of Kratas. Gorodiela used the account in a handbill to advertise her services and attract treasure-seekers to Haven. This commercial motivation puts the veracity of the document in doubt, but I have spoken to the document's author, the ork scribe Raham, who asserts he wrote nothing that was untrue to his knowledge. Barring the payment of a fee I thought outrageous, he declined to elaborate on certain elements of the text he has since learned are false. However, he did restore the disclaimer at the beginning of his original report, which Gorodiela excised in the original handbill.

—Vardeghul

Parlainth, the legendary Forgotten City, remains largely a mystery. The ruins of this wondrous city are rumored to hold many treasures, but hard evidence of such booty is scarce. And where evidence is lacking, imagination steps in to fill in the empty spaces. Because of this, many of the treasures listed here may not be any more than the legacy of some long dead storyteller's imagination.

Still, for every imaginary treasure, Parlainth likely holds a dozen more prizes of untold powers, waiting to be claimed by the brave and unflinching Name-givers of Kratas. So why risk your life stealing coins from well-armed marks? Take a trip with Gorodiela and steal fabulous treasures from a dead and defenseless city.

The Stones of Pavaar Manythroats are one such treasure. According to legend, these boulders of granite would transform themselves into whatever their owner needed most. If the owner was hungry, they would become ripe melons. If an owner was drowning in the dark sea of melancholy, they would sing strains of soothing, heavenly music. In the hands of a hostile owner, they became catapult stones of great destructive power. The Stones could even heal the wounded and the sick, or so the stories say. Several legendary figures from the days before the Scourge are said to have owned the Stones of Pavaar Manythroats. The first to hold the stones was Pavaar Manythroats himself, the ork chieftain said to have devoured in a single gulp the seven Therans who enslaved his family. Vieno the Despairing, the Countess of Nevermore, and The Strident Bell are but a few of the famous figures said to have owned the magical boulders. The last appearance of the Stones in records is in a letter written in 1039 TH by a merchant of northeastern Barsaive. That account told of a t'skrang mountebank in Parlainth who would allow visitors to view the stones for a small admission fee.

The ruins of Parlainth are also said to hold the Diadem of Exceeding Dignity. An item of Theran manufacture, the Diadem held a power that enabled the dark-hearted Theran overlords to enforce their will on the free patriots of Barsaive. A blazing gallery of fiery rubies and fine gold filigree are said to cover the crown, whose power would make all drop to their knees in the presence of its wearer. The Diadem was the property of the provincial overlords, who donned the crown only on great state occasions, so as to preserve its sense of grandeur. Accounts clearly state that the human thief Jianna Half Face stole the Diadem in 519 TE. Half Face is known to have died at the hands of Theran infantrymen a few years before the vanishment of Parlainth, and so the Diadem may have been in Parlainth at the time. Others believe Provincial Overlord Ersh Wearg, the last Theran ruler in Barsaive, took the crown when he fled the city before its disappearance. Wearg died later in a cave-in at Throal. And so if Ersh Wearg had the Diadem, it seems likely the dwarfs of Throal recovered the prize centuries ago. But as the rulers of Throal have never been known to use the Diadem, I would wager the crown lies somewhere in Parlainth.

The Book That Devours Love was a small volume in the dwarf tongue, bound in the hide of a scaly Horror. The nethermancer Cretiabus, an early member of the Grim Legion, created the book, which bestows five great powers—specifically useful against the Horrors—on any who study its contents. No doubt more than a simple perusal was meant by this—most likely the reader had to attach threads to the tome. Each of the five great powers had a great cost. The reader would first lose his love for pleasures of the senses; then, his love for his own survival. Sources differ on the next two losses. The final loss was the loss of all love others had for the reader. Cretiabus committed suicide after slaying a Horror whose power was so great that to this day its name cannot be written. Recountings of his unusual legend state that he took the book with him to the fire that destroyed him. But other accounts suggest that the magicians of Parlainth had access to the book in the days before the Scourge. If these accounts are

true, the book may still lie in the West Catacombs, the area of the ruins where the magicians discovered countless secrets of awful import.

The Horse of Battle was a magical figurine, said to be the work of either Elianar Messias or Kearos Navarim, great savants from the days of Thera's founding. When touched to earth, the Horse of Battle became a magical mount for its user. As the user attached more threads to the Horse, its speed, strength and power grew. In 467 TH, the provincial governor Kern Fallo is said to have escaped a scorcher ambush with only the aid of his Horse of Battle, which apparently decapitated the three most vicious scorchers with a single kick of its flashing hooves. No one knows whether the Horse remained in Parlainth until its disappearance or was lost (and possibly recovered by Throal) in the cave-in that slew Ersh Wearg.

Descriptions of the Lifter of the Slain vary. Some accounts describe the item as a rope spun of gold and silver. Others tell of a tinder box with a living eye where the flint should be, or a lamp of green clay in the shape of a dragon. The Lifter of the Slain is mentioned in an account of a great battle in 499 TH, in which agents of the Theran magicians of Parlainth destroyed a monastery devoted to Raggok. The victors claimed the Lifter among the spoils. The item is said to have bestowed power over life and death, returning the slain as cadaver men, ghosts, or as fully normal beings with no memories of having died. However, this last use exacted a high price—for each slain Name-giver returned to full life, another known to the Lifter's user would die. The closer the resurrected was to the user, the closer the victim would be. According to legend, the head of the monastery once revived a passing acquaintance, a peddler, with the Lifter. Soon afterward, a new initiate of the order, arrived that day, died. On another occasion, the head of the order revived her slain husband, and soon her young daughter withered in the cradle.

The Scryers of Four Directions were discolored metal crosses with crystals affixed to each end. Each crystal could describe surrounding terrain, detect the approach of enemies, the presence of supernatural creatures, the presence of magical treasure and locate any of the user's beloved in the compass direction marked by the crystal. The user could attach threads to only a single crystal at a time. So a single user could know only of things in one absolute direction. However, other users could extend threads to unused crystals, so that when four individuals were tied to a scryer, it worked at its full capacity. The Therans manufactured scryers in Barsaive, but the exact location of the manufacturing site has been lost. Parlainth is now thought to have been the Theran center of magical research in our land, and so is the likeliest candidate. The key knowledges of scryers were answers to philosophical questions relating to unity and cooperation between Barsaivians and their Theran masters.

The Lodge of Miracles was a pile of carved wooden sticks, stored in an ivory case. When thrown onto the ground by a user who had attached a thread to them, the sticks formed themselves into a small but sturdy wooden shelter, according to legend. Several popular songs attribute various powers to the Lodge as well. These songs claim the Lodge enabled its user to foretell the future or to instantly transport himself by stepping into the Lodge at one place and out of it into another. Other stories attribute the Lodge with the power to generate great warmth against cold and coolness against great heat, to sour the milk of cows who passed into it, to transfigure the milk of cows who passed into it into wine, to turn paupers into rulers and vice versa, to withstand great assaults, to make women barren and men infertile.

The eleventh century troll wanderer Short Horns, whose legendary cleverness features prominently in most of these songs, was the last to own the Lodge, legends claim. Many documents referring to Short Horns have odd blanks in them, which leads me to conclude that these spaces once contained references to Parlainth and were erased by the spells of forgetting that accompanied the city's disappearance. Most likely Short Horns and the Lodge were in the city when it vanished.

This list describes only a few of the many treasures rumored to lie among the ruins of the Forgotten City. The Shovel of Frustration, the Ever-Igniting Congreve, the Six Straws of Seduction, the Healing Butterspider, the Expression of Loyalty, Domas Doma's Font of Controversy, the Profound Palm Branch, and many other items are said to remain in Parlainth as well.

No other area of the known world is believed to contain as many magical treasures as the Forgotten City of Parlainth, and no one who reckons himself a great adventurer should pass up the promise of its shattered limestone ruins.



A VISIT TO HAVEN

The following account is from the soon-to-be-published memoirs of Buujman the Traveler.

—Vardeghul

No journey through the area would have been complete without a stop at Haven, the frontier town reclaimed from the ruins of that fabled city, Parlainth. I found Haven a rough and tumble place where crudity of language is common and drunkenness is considered not a vice but a virtue. In other words, Haven was a welcoming place for a vagabond such as myself, accustomed as I had become to the pinch-faced hostility of the villages of the hinterland. I acquainted myself with the locals by buying several rounds of drinks and soon earned the undying friendship of the town's most determined ale tasters.

The headman of the town is the troll Torgak, whose gruff charm became apparent to me after I regained consciousness the next morning on the floor of the town jail. It seemed to me he genuinely cares for the people of his town and would do so even if he did not profit considerably from each and every one of them through the extortionary prices they are forced to pay for merchandise at Torgak's Supplies and Goods.

Although I had not planned to venture into the fabled ruins of the Forgotten City—I have developed too great a fondness for my neck for such adventures—I made inquiries about the opportunities there nevertheless. Quickly I found myself in the midst of a controversy between two rival service organizations, the Loyal Order of Delvers and the Association of Unaffiliated Explorers. These two groups expel much hot and noisome breath upon new arrivals to the treasure-hunting game, as each group is eager to enlist the newcomer in their own numbers. But the benefits of membership in either group were soon lost to me in the course of a scuffle between partisans of each. My escape from this altercation left me with a parched throat I could quench only at the Restless Troll, a fine establishment of rather unexpected comfort in the heart of the dangerous wilds.

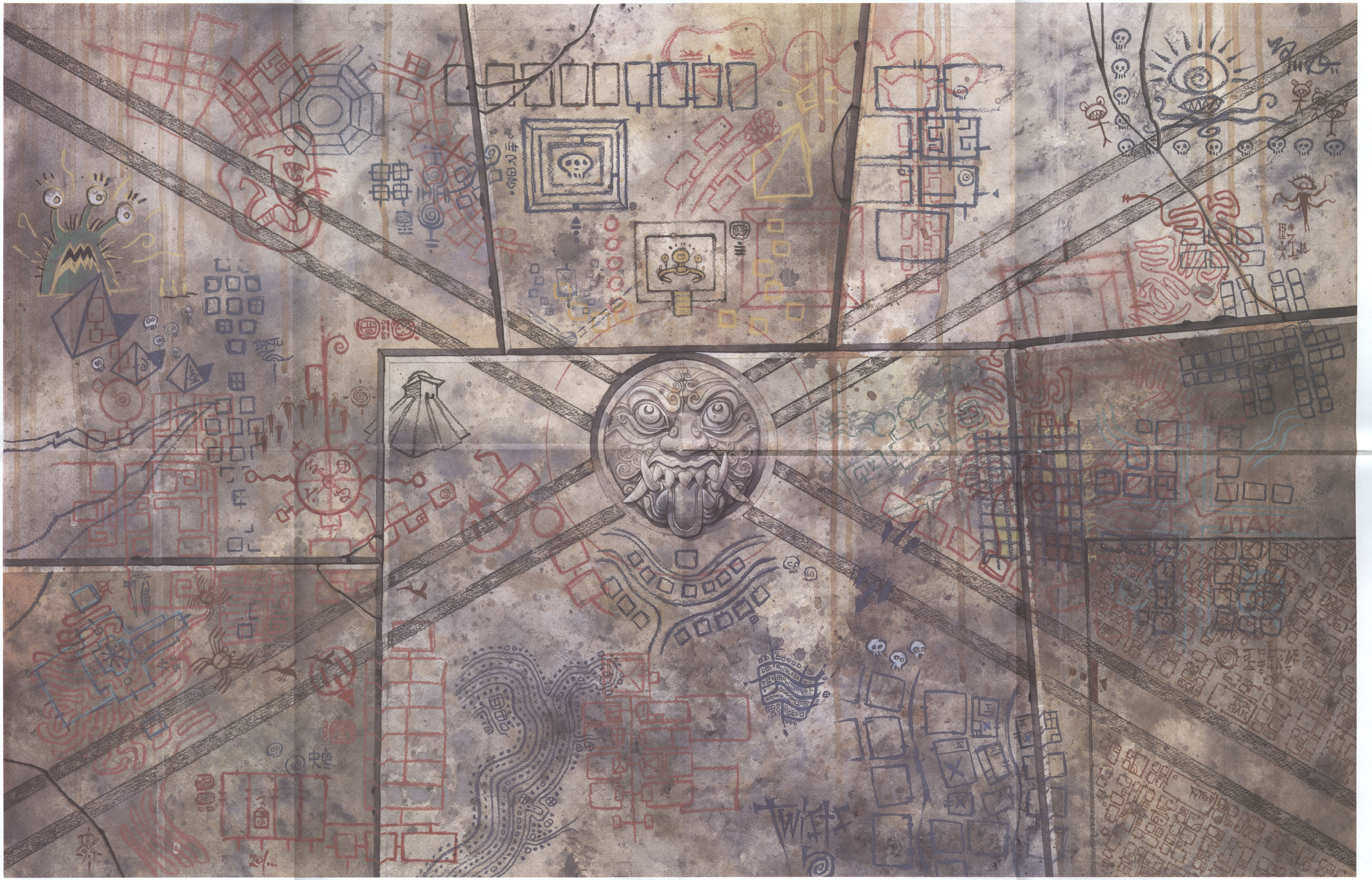
Later I had the displeasure of meeting many hooded figures who—despite their protestations of Barsaivian lineage—spoke in marked Theran accents. To confirm their allegiance, I entered into a lengthy condemnation of First Governor's personal hygiene habits. Not to my surprise, their vicious physical reaction to my harmless japery revealed them as Theran spies. To my surprise, I discovered that Torgak does not consider allegiance to Thera criminal in and of itself. And to my greater astonishment, he considered the cowardly blows they had inflicted upon me business as usual and dismissed my pleas for legal remedy against them.

Soon after my encounter with the Therans, a coterie of stuffed-shirt dwarfs, obviously in the pocket of Throal, approached me. I reacted as any proud Barsaivian would. I rejected their offers of friendship and scorned Varulus' attempt to extend his power over all of us. Another melee seemed inevitable when the arrival of a party of Blood Warders, dusty from the trail, quieted the barroom. None of us could disguise our stares at these pathetic yet haughty blackguards, whose flesh bled from the countless tiny thorns that pierced it.

Later in the evening, a t'skrang merchant took me aside and generously explained that Haven is a hotbed of intrigue, full of rival groups attempting to cheat each other out of the ancient bounty of the ruins. The t'skrang also offered me an opportunity to sell portions of my journal for cash, and despite her (portion deleted—V).

I remained in Haven a few more days, but after becoming involved in a matter concerning the ownership of a certain censer of alleged magical properties—a tale I care not to recount at this time—I found it prudent to bid Haven farewell. Perhaps some day I shall return, when I have developed the wisdom needed to keep my eyes more open and my mouth more firmly shut. And on that day I shall, I promise you, enjoy more of the Restless Troll's fine and woody ale.





Blue markings = Surface architecture Red markings = Subterranean architecture Green & Yellow markings = ?

PARLAINTH MAP WALL

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EARTH DAWN
STRIKEBACK


EARTH DAWN
DIADEM OF OVERLORDSHIP


EARTH DAWN
MIRROR OF TURNAROUND

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EARTH DAWN
GHOULS


EARTH DAWN
STONEMEN


EARTH DAWN
JEHUTHRA

GHOULS

DEX: 5 STR: 4 TOU: 6
PER: 3 WIL: 3 CHA: 5

Initiative: 5
# of Attacks: 1
Attack: 7
Damage: 8
# of Spells: 1
Spellcasting: 8
Effect: Poison

Physical Defense: 7
Spell Defense: 5
Social Defense: 7
Armor: 4
Mystic Armor: 0
Knockdown: 5
Recovery Tests: 1 (7)

Death Rating: 36
Wound Threshold: 10
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Combat Movement: 50
Full Movement: 100

Legend Points: 90
Equipment: None
Loot: 3D6 silver pieces

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STONEMEN

DEX: 6 STR: 10 TOU: 12
PER: 4/10 WIL: 4/10 CHA: 4/10

Initiative: 6
# of Attacks: 2
Attack: 11
Damage: 22
# of Spells: NA
Spellcasting: NA
Effect: NA

Physical Defense: 12
Spell Defense: 6/13
Social Defense: 6/13
Armor: 13
Mystic Armor: 0/5
Knockdown: 18
Recovery Tests: 0

Death Rating: 55
Wound Threshold: 13
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Combat Movement: 25
Full Movement: 50

Legend Points: 500/600
Equipment: None
Loot: (See P. 69)

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JEHUTHRA

DEX: 5 STR: 5 TOU: 7
PER: 8 WIL: 9 CHA: 5

Initiative: 5
# of Attacks: 2
Attack: 13
Damage: 11
# of Spells: (1)
Spellcasting: 11
Effect: See Text (ED p.305)

Physical Defense: 9
Spell Defense: 13
Social Defense: 9
Armor: 8
Mystic Armor: 4
Knockdown: 5
Recovery Tests: 3

Death Rating: 55
Wound Threshold: 13
Unconsciousness Rating: 50

Combat Movement: 30
Full Movement: 60

Legend Points: 250
Equipment: None
Loot: Thorax 1D12 X10 silver pieces. Counts as Treasure worth Legend Points.

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EARTH DAWN
BUUALGATHOR


EARTH DAWN
GHARMEK


EARTH DAWN
CADAVER MEN

CADAVER MEN

DEX: 4 STR: 6 TOU: 7
PER: 3 WIL: 6 CHA: 4

Initiative: 4
# of Attacks: 1 (4)
Attack: 7
Damage: 9
# of Spells: NA
Spellcasting: NA
Effect: NA

Physical Defense: 5
Spell Defense: 6
Social Defense: 11
Armor: 0
Mystic Armor: 0
Knockdown: 7
Recovery Tests: 2

Death Rating: 36
Wound Threshold: 9
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Combat Movement: 25
Full Movement: 50

Legend Points: 110
Equipment: None
Loot: None

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GHARMHEK

DEX: 4 STR: 4 TOU: 30
PER: 20 WIL: 20 CHA: 4

Initiative: 4
# of Attacks: 1
Attack: 9
Damage: 11
Mystic Armor: 10
# of Spells: 1
Spellcasting: (See p. 76)
Effect: (See p. 76)

Physical Defense: 4
Spell Defense: 10
Social Defense: 4
Armor: 10 (head)/0 (body)
Knockdown: (See below)
Recovery Tests: 5
Recovery Tests: 5

Death Rating: 58
Wound Threshold: 17
Unconsciousness Rating: 51
Combat Movement: 8
Full Movement: 16

Karma Points: 15 Karma Step: 12
Powers: Animate Dead 15*, Damage Shift 10, Horror Mark 10, Terror 10.
Legend Points: 400
Equipment: None Loot: None

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BUUALGATHOR

DEX: 24 STR: 16 TOU: 16
PER: 24 WIL: 23 CHA: 19

Initiative: 22
# of Attacks: 7
Attack: 22
Damage: 28
# of Spells: 2
Spellcasting: 23
Effect: (See p. 73)

Physical Defense: 20
Spell Defense: 21
Social Defense: 21
Armor: 30
Mystic Armor: 32
Knockdown: 18
Recovery Tests: 10

Death Rating: 230
Wound Threshold: 25
Unconsciousness Rating: 190
Combat Movement: 100
Full Movement: 200
Karma Points: 35 Karma Step: 18
Legend Points: 150,000
Equipment: None Loot: None
Powers: Damage Shift 15, Detect Horror 15, Mark Trace 19 (see p. 74), Silent Walk 15, Spells (Circle 8 Nethermancer), Terror 10.

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DECEIVERS



BUTTERSPIDER BOX



STRAWMEN

STRAWMEN

DEX: 5 STR: 5 TOU: 5

PER: 2/6 WIL: 2/6 CHA: 2/6

Initiative: 6
# of Attacks: 1
Attack: 7
Damage: 8
# of Spells: NA
Spellcasting: NA
Effect: NA

Physical Defense: 6
Spell Defense: 3/7
Social Defense: 3/7
Armor: 0
Mystic Armor: 0/2
Knockdown: 5
Recovery Tests: 0

Death Rating: 23
Wound Threshold: 5
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Combat Movement: 18
Full Movement: 35

Legend Points: 35/45
Equipment: Knife (+1 Strength step)
Loot: None

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DECEIVERS

DEX: 13 STR: 6 TOU: 8

PER: 14 WIL: 11 CHA: 15

Initiative: 15
# of Attacks: (2)
Attack: 10
Damage: 12
# of Spells: 6
Spellcasting: 22
Effect: (See p. 75)

Physical Defense: 7
Spell Defense: 8
Social Defense: 9
Armor: 0
Mystic Armor: 10
Knockdown: 3
Recovery Tests: 4

Death Rating: 28
Wound Threshold: 7
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune
Combat Movement: 50
Full Movement: 100
Karma Points: 20 Karma Step: 8
Powers: Animate Dead 12, Corrupt Karma 12, Cursed Luck 12, Damage Shift 12, Empathy Net 20, False Form 20, Thought Mirror 20 (see p. 75), Spells (Circle 1 Wizard).
Legend Points: 1,000
Equipment: None
Loot: None

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EARTH DAWN
WAXMEN


EARTH DAWN
SCURRIERS


EARTH DAWN
STEELMEN

STEELMEN

DEX: 8 STR: 20 TOU: 18

PER: 4/14 WIL: 4/14 CHA: 4/14

Initiative: 6
# of Attacks: 2
Attack: 13
Damage: 25
# of Spells: NA
Spellcasting: NA
Effect: NA

Physical Defense: 11
Spell Defense: 6/19
Social Defense: 6/19
Armor: 16
Mystic Armor: 0/9
Knockdown: 20
Recovery Tests: 0

Death Rating: 70
Wound Threshold: 15
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Combat Movement: 25
Full Movement: 50

Legend Points: 650/750
Equipment: None
Loot: (See p. 69)

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SCURRIERS

DEX: 9 STR: 5 TOU: 11

PER: 9 WIL: 9 CHA: 4

Initiative: 10
# of Attacks: 1
Attack: 9
Damage: 11
# of Spells: 1
Spellcasting: NA
Effect: NA

Physical Defense: 7
Spell Defense: 8
Social Defense: 8
Armor: 6
Mystic Armor: 10
Knockdown: 8
Recovery Tests: 4

Death Rating: 47
Wound Threshold: 13
Unconsciousness Rating: 40
Combat Movement: 30
Full Movement: 60
Karma Points: 15 Karma Step: 12
Powers:
Cursed Luck 13, Repair 25 (see p. 77)

Legend Points: 350
Equipment: None Loot: None

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WAXMEN

DEX: 6 STR: 6 TOU: 6

PER: 4/7 WIL: 4/7 CHA: 4/7

Initiative: 6
# of Attacks: 1
Attack: 8
Damage: 9
# of Spells: NA
Spellcasting: NA
Effect: NA

Physical Defense: 6
Spell Defense: 6/9
Social Defense: 6/9
Armor: 0
Mystic Armor: 0/3
Knockdown: 6
Recovery Tests: 0

Death Rating: 26
Wound Threshold: 6
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Combat Movement: 18
Full Movement: 35

Legend Points: 55/65
Equipment: Dwarf Sword (+3 Strength steps)
Loot: None

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EARTH DAWN
ASTRAL SEXTANT


EARTH DAWN
BLOOD BEES


EARTH DAWN
HORSE OF BATTLE

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BLOOD BEES

DEX: 7 STR: 2 TOU: 5

PER: 5 WIL: 4 CHA: 2

Initiative: 7
# of Attacks: 1
Attack: 9
Damage: 8
(+ Step 5/round)
# of Spells: NA
Spellcasting: NA
Effect: NA

Physical Defense: 9
Spell Defense: 6
Social Defense: 6
Armor: 2
Mystic Armor: 0
Knockdown: 2
Recovery Tests: 2

Death Rating: 31
Wound Threshold: 8
Unconsciousness Rating: 22

Combat Movement: 45
Full Movement: 90

Legend Points: 75
Equipment: None
Loot: None

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THE FORGOTTEN CITY

The ruins of Parlainth beckon the bold explorer, promising profit and peril. For centuries, this fabled Theran city lay hidden in astral space, all knowledge of it erased by a powerful spell until a thief and his apprentice found the lost magic that would bring Parlainth home. Now this ancient seat of Theran power has returned to the land of Barsaive, its people slain and its buildings and streets ravaged by Horrors. Vast sections of it remain unexplored, concealing glittering treasures and objects of unknown power behind crumbling walls and in dank catacombs. Only the boldest adventurers dare explore mysterious Parlainth, risking its dangers in search of wealth. Only those with the courage to challenge the fearsome Horrors lurking in its ruins can claim the name of hero.

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