

EARTHDAWN

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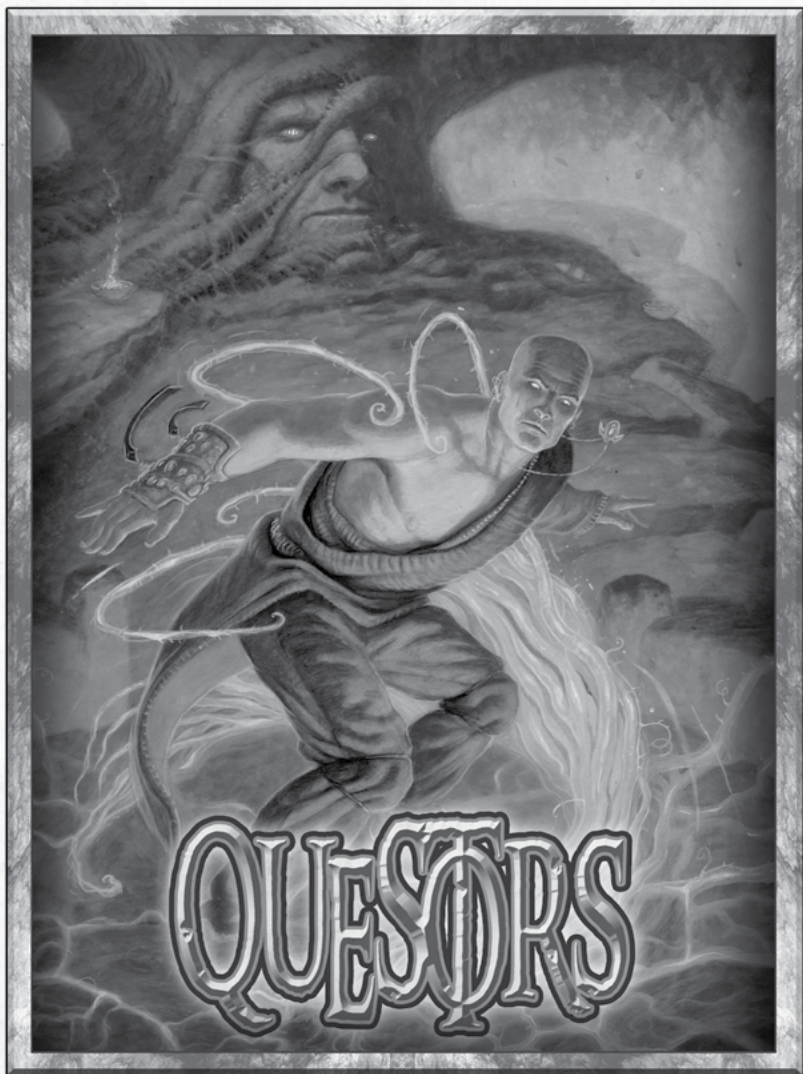
QUESTORS



AN EARTHDAWN — FOURTH EDITION — SOURCEBOOK

EARTHDAWN[®]

FOURTH EDITION



FASA GAMES INC. 2018



CREDITS

QUESTORS

Line Developer Josh Harrison

Project Manager Andi Watson

Rules Development Morgan Weeks

Writing Daniel G. Boice, William Bush, Josh Harrison, Anthony Jennings, Julien Pirou, Liz Smith, Russell Zimmerman

Additional Material David Marshall, Gregory Stuart Pettigrew

Editing Debbie Seale

Art Director Jeff Laubenstein

Layout Ian Liddle

Cover Design Jeff Laubenstein

Cover Art Jeremy McHugh

Interior Art Joel Biske, Travis Hanson, Jeff Laubenstein, Jeremy McHugh, Mark Nelson

Internet: www.fasagames.com

Contact: contact@fasagames.com

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

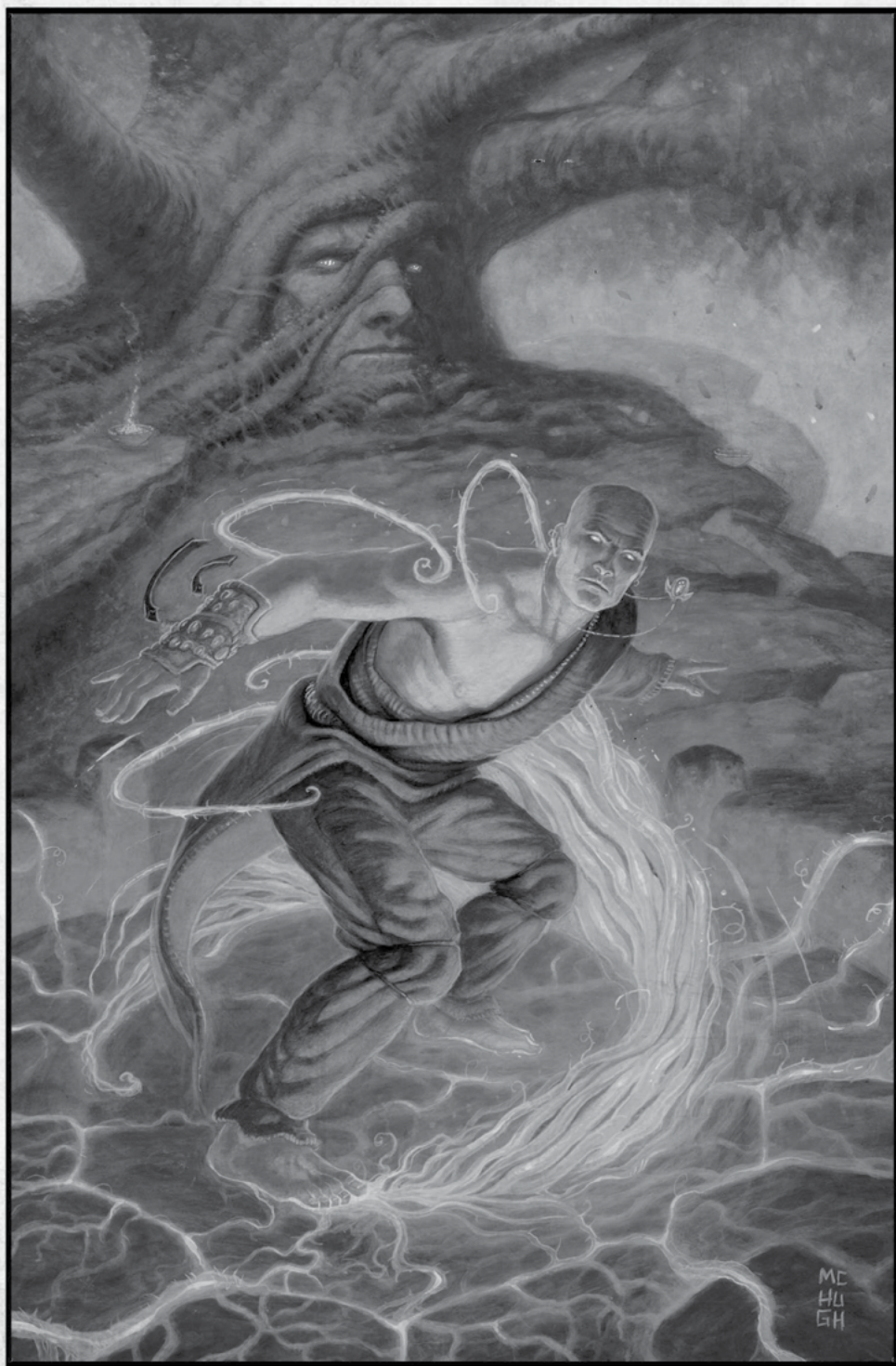
THE NATURE OF THE PASSIONS.....	9	ELATION'S FLAME.....	47
Appearances.....	10	How Grimtruth Was Granted a	
Origin.....	10	Miracle.....	47
Other Lands.....	12	Of Taddeo the Windling.....	49
Back to the Point.....	14	Floranuus's Fiery Forms.....	49
Motives.....	15	Floranuus's Ideals.....	51
Closing Thoughts.....	16	The Recruitment of New Questors.....	51
FOR LOVE AND BEAUTY.....	19	Meddling and Its Perils.....	52
Astendar's Song.....	19	The Power of Optimism.....	53
Astendar and the Beggar.....	20	The Importance of Parties.....	54
Astendar's Light.....	22	THE HEALER'S PATH.....	57
Being One of Astendar's Chosen.....	23	Being Called to Heal.....	58
Those Who Embrace Astendar.....	25	How We Heal, How We Learn.....	59
Astendar and Her Family.....	26	The Healing Nature of Fire.....	61
Final Thought.....	27	Healing the Mad Passions.....	62
SPREADING THE WEALTH.....	29	On the Disciplines and Healing.....	63
3 Charassa 1475 TH.....	29	SERVING THE GREEN FATHER.....	67
1 Teayu 1479 TH.....	30	New Growth.....	67
17 Rua 1481 TH.....	31	The Call.....	68
22 Mawag 1481 TH.....	32	The First Questor and the First Seed.....	70
1 Sollus 1483 TH.....	32	Why Jaspree is Important.....	72
18 Raquas 1485 TH.....	33	Jaspree Is Everywhere.....	73
2 Strassa 1489 TH.....	34	THE LADY OF CHAINS.....	75
7 Veltom 1493 TH.....	35	The First Bonds of Slavery.....	75
17 Mawag 1494 TH.....	36	The Raid on Vartan.....	77
A SHIELD FOR EVERY MIND.....	39	What Chains Have I Forged?.....	78
On the Philosophy of Dis.....	40	The Chains Rattle.....	80
On Misconceptions Surrounding Dis.....	41	The Bindings of Instruction.....	81
The Iron Legacy.....	42	THE EMPATHY AND BALANCE OF	
On the Role of Dis in Daily Life.....	42	JUSTICE.....	83
In Which Slavers are Given a Glimpse of		How Empathy Outweighs All.....	84
True Bonds.....	43	Compassionate Justice.....	86
Paperwork as Defence and Potential		In Saving A Life.....	88
Recruitment.....	44	On the Imbalance of Importance.....	89
Relationships with other Passions.....	45	Justice and the Law.....	90

The Truth.....	91	Devotion Abilities.....	136
THE MONSTER INSIDE.....	93	Devotion Points.....	136
Mudshoal	95	Acts of Devotion.....	137
A Passion's Lessons.....	96	Falling Out of Favor.....	138
Haloke	97	Questor Descriptions.....	139
Betrayal	99	Astendar.....	139
The Last.....	100	Chorrolis.....	140
THE NATURE OF STRUGGLE.....	103	Dis (Mad Passion).....	141
Of Valor, Conflict, and War	103	Floranus.....	142
One Questor's Vision	104	Garlen.....	143
On the Organized Faith of		Jaspre.....	144
Thystonius.....	105	Lochost.....	145
On How Thystonius Affects You as an		Mynbrue.....	146
Adept.....	106	Raggok (Mad Passion)	146
On Relations with Other Passions and		Thystonius.....	148
Their Questors	108	Upandal.....	148
Final Thoughts	109	Vestrial (Mad Passion)	150
A TIME TO BUILD.....	111	Devotion Descriptions.....	151
Words with the Master Mason.....	114	Talents, Skills, and Devotions.....	151
Conflict Renewed	115	Overseen Projects.....	151
VESTRIAL REVEALED.....	121	Acrobatic Defense.....	152
The Role Vestrial Plays	121	Acting	152
Dedication to Vestrial.....	121	Air Speaking	152
Welkyn and the Chakta Birds.....	122	Alchemy	152
How I Came to Vestrial.....	124	Animal Bond	152
Serving Vestrial	126	Animal Leadership.....	152
GAME INFORMATION.....	129	Animal Talk.....	152
Passions in Barsaive	129	Armor of Thystonius.....	152
Questor Characters.....	131	Artisan	153
Becoming a Questor	131	Artist.....	153
True Nature of the Passions	131	Assess Intentions	153
Starting Play as a Questor	132	Astendar's Muse.....	153
Choosing a Patron Passion.....	132	Astendar's Voice	153
Adepts vs Questors	133	Astral Sight.....	154
Devotions.....	134	Avoid Blow	154
Advancing Devotions.....	134	Awaken the Wood.....	154
Questor Devotion Benefits	135	Awareness.....	155
High Rank Questors.....	136	Bardic Voice.....	155
		Battle Bellow.....	155
		Battle Shout.....	155
		Beast Summons	155
		Bloom and Flourish.....	155
		Book Memory	155

Break Shackles.....	156	Gliding Stride.....	166
Bribery	156	Graceful Exit.....	166
Buttress Armor	156	Grave Commands.....	166
Call Animal Companion	157	Grave Empowerment.....	167
Chains of Obedience.....	157	Great Leap	167
Challenge of Dis.....	158	Grip of Chorrolis	167
Cold Reminder.....	158	Haggle	168
Compel	159	Heal Animal Companion.....	168
Conceal Object.....	159	Heart's Wish.....	168
Conversation.....	159	Heartening Laugh.....	168
Craftsman	159	Hone Weapon.....	168
Creature Analysis	160	Impossible Hide.....	169
Danger Sense.....	160	Impressive Display.....	169
Defiant Shout.....	160	Incite Obsession.....	169
Desolate	160	Incite Rage.....	169
Detail Oriented	160	Incite Rebellion	169
Diplomacy	161	Inspired Endurance.....	170
Disarming Smile	161	Inspired Might	170
Disguise Self	161	Intimidating Bellow.....	171
Dominate Beast.....	161	Inspired Tenacity	171
Durability 5.....	161	Invigorate.....	171
Eidetic Memory.....	161	Jaspree's Solace	171
Emotion Song.....	161	Jury-Rig	172
Empathic Command	161	Lasting Impression	172
Empathic Sense.....	162	Leadership	173
Enchanted Gift	162	Let's Make a Deal.....	173
Encouraging Oratory	162	Lifesight	173
Energy in Motion.....	162	Lion Heart.....	174
Entertainer.....	163	Lip Reading.....	174
Etiquette	163	Living Death	174
Evaluate	163	Love in Bloom	175
Evidence Analysis.....	163	Melee Weapons.....	175
Fast Hand	163	Mimic Voice	175
Fertility's Season	163	Mynbruje's Eye.....	175
First Impression	164	Open Mind.....	176
Forgery	164	Passion's Comfort.....	176
Fortify.....	164	Passion's Empowerment.....	176
Friend of the Land	165	Passion's Insight	177
Frighten.....	165	Passion's Inspiration.....	177
Garlen's Relief.....	165	Perfect Focus.....	178
Garlen's Solace.....	165	Photographic Memory.....	178
Garlen's Touch.....	166	Physician	178
Gift of Life.....	166	Pidgin	178

Plant Talk.....	178	Submit.....	183
Poisoned Influence.....	179	Surprise Strike.....	184
Project Management.....	179	Tactics.....	184
Psychometry.....	179	Taste of Power.....	184
Questor.....	179	Telling the Tale.....	184
Rally.....	180	Thought Link.....	185
Remember Conversation.....	180	Torment.....	185
Research.....	180	Touching the Past.....	185
Resist Influence.....	180	Tracking.....	185
Resist Pain.....	180	True Sight.....	185
Resist Taunt.....	181	Undermine.....	185
Safe Path.....	181	Upandal's Armory.....	186
Safe Thought.....	181	Upandal's Palisade.....	186
Seal Home.....	181	Vestrial's Tongue.....	186
Shield the Innocent.....	181	Vicious Wound.....	187
Silence Influence.....	182	Vital Strike.....	187
Slough Blame.....	182	Wilderness Survival.....	187
Sprint.....	182	Wind Catcher.....	187
Stealthy Stride.....	182	Winning Smile.....	187
Steel Thought.....	182	Wound Balance.....	187
Steely Stare.....	183		
Stride of Floranuus.....	183	INDEX.....	188
Streetwise.....	183		









THE NATURE OF THE PASSIONS

For the opening chapter of this work, we present an essay by the t'skrang scholar Aletso R'kella. Aletso is not a questor but has made a large part of her life's work collecting stories about the origins of the world. Since many ancient tales feature the Passions, she became something of an authority on the subject. She graciously agreed to compile some thoughts but warned her efforts might not end up shedding light on the subject the way we hope. After reading her words, I agree with her assessment, but only in the sense it shows how little we know and how much knowledge remains to be learned.

~Mataxes, Scribe and Scholar at the Great Library

“**F**or every question answered, a dozen more rise in its place.” These words, spoken to me by my mentor Whitwell, seem especially true in light of the ones I set down today. As a Troubadour, I traveled Barsaive and lands beyond collecting legends and tales. Many of these tales feature the Passions. In them, they act as mentors, teachers, obstacles, and sometimes even heroes in their own right.

While these tales recount actions the Passions took in the past, describe ideals they hold dear, or teach lessons to the audience, there are hardly any that reveal anything about their nature or where they come from.

These questions have long puzzled scholars of the Passions. To the average farmer, laborer, or merchant, they seem unimportant. The Passions are and have been. What purpose do these questions serve? Why do we need to know?

Knowledge is useful, even if its eventual purpose is unclear. The pursuit of knowledge led to Elianar Messiah discovering the Books of Harrow, helping us survive the Scourge. The spread of knowledge through the Book of Tomorrow united Barsaive under a common language and purpose (as imperfect as it may be at times). The accumulation of knowledge at the Great Library helped destroy numerous Horrors and brought the inhabitants of many kaers to new lives on the surface.

To that end, I examine the insights provided by various legends and tales. As quickly becomes clear, these tales cannot be taken as *history*; they are often mutually exclusive, and sometimes even contradict themselves. They are ripples on a river, which the wise captain uses to discern the shape of the rocks beneath.

APPEARANCES

The Passions lack a fixed form or appearance; they appear as male or female, present as any Namegiver race, and some even present hybrid shapes, combining animal and Namegiver. In nearly all cases, they take on an appearance with relevance or meaning to the individual they appear to, even if it is not necessarily what the person expects.

For example, while the most common descriptions of Garlen present the Passion as female, there are examples of Garlen appearing as male. This is especially common among the t'skrang; our *chaida*, or egg-parent, is male and the nurturing figure of traditional t'skrang society. But there are also tales of Garlen appearing as a wizened male hermit offering shelter to a lost explorer or traveler.

In some cases, a Passion's varied appearance can manifest differently to observers at the same time. One report of Thystonius at the Siege of Triumph has the Passion appearing as an ork, dwarf, or human depending on who is doing the telling.

What does this characteristic tell us about the Passions? The only solid conclusion drawn by most scholars is the Passions are unique. Nothing else, in our experience, displays this level of mutability.

But that conclusion assumes what the Passions show us is real. Are their forms truly malleable, or are the faces they present a mere affect or illusion? If the latter, what are their true forms and why do they show us what they do?

ORIGIN

Did the Passions create the world and, by extension, Namegivers? Or were the Passions created by Namegivers? Looking to the tales offers no clear answer.

One legend from Scythia talks about the world being crafted on Upandal's forge, with the other Passions contributing various aspects. An elf tale describes Caynreth, the First, created by Jaspre and Astendar as a companion for Oak Heart, the great tree. T'skrang legends tell of the Spirit Mother, who gave birth to the four dragons, whose mating resulted in the Namegiver races. This resembles a crystal raider tale claiming Namegivers were created by Griahk'kan, the Spirit of All Things. In these legendary cycles, the Passions do not appear until later.

The trouble with these origin stories is they describe, as one legend puts it, "a time before time." These are myth, not history. Since the Passions themselves are not forthcoming with answers, we must fall back on conjecture.

The Passions are tied to various aspects and ideals of Namegiver existence. Family. Love. Freedom. Justice. It makes sense, then, for the Passions to be creations of Namegivers; impressions upon the world formed by the thoughts of myriad individuals.

Some are unsatisfied with that answer. Why are there so many varied, yet similar tales of the Passions creating Namegivers, or at least being involved with the earliest days of civilization?

If the Passions were given form by the collective will of Namegivers, does that collective will still influence their nature? If so, what does that say about the Mad Passions, whose nature changed so radically in the early days of the Scourge? Does their madness reflect something in our own natures? That might make redeeming the Mad Passions a more difficult, perhaps impossible, task.

Perhaps Namegivers gave the Passions their initial form, but once set in motion they take on a life of their own. As they interact with Namegivers and the world's magic, they grow and change in a way similar to True Patterns.

The Otallp school has forwarded a radical idea: they posit the Passions are, themselves, sentient True Patterns. The argument is the ideals they represent are primal, powerful forces, among those first Named by the earliest Namegivers. Since then, as people interacted with the ideals of Justice, Family, or Love, these True Patterns grow ever more significant, gaining a life of their own and acting to increase their influence and power.

~Barroth of the Elm

If they applied the slightest bit of rigor to their analyses, they would realize not all ideals are internal concepts! Nature exists independent of Namegivers, as does motion. The Otallps are so enamored with the "Realm of Ideas" they try to fit everything into that mold. It's shoddy scholarship.

~Kishaw Elb, scholar of the Argent Veil

If the Passions were not created by Namegivers, then—by process of elimination—they came about on their own. Yet this results in its own host of questions. The Passions are demonstrably tied to different concepts, and most of those concepts are strongly tied to Namegiver society. Did the Passions'

association with those concepts appear with them, or did they take them on later?

If they are part of the Passions' initial nature, did they first manifest before or after Namegivers? As I demonstrated earlier, there is no agreement or consistency between the old tales. If the Passions appeared before Namegivers, that implies those concepts are inherent aspects of the universe itself, and the Passions somehow passed them on to Namegivers (an event recounted in some legends). If the Passions came after Namegivers, that feeds back into the idea Namegivers gave rise to them.

As you can see, attempts to untangle one knot of the Passions' origin leads to other snarls. I leave it to the philosophers.

The author forgets one possibility: The Passions did not take on their association with various ideals until later in their existence.

~Ashu

That just raises more questions!

~Mercurio the Lucky

OTHER LANDS

My discussions thus far have focused on the Passions as we know them in Barsaive. It may surprise the reader to learn that different lands worship or tell tales about different Passions. As you can imagine, this changes one's perspective when diving into the depths of their nature!

Thera acknowledges the same Passions we know in Barsaive. There are few Theran questors, and it may be because they do not honor or worship them as we do. It may be because the Therans are so convinced of their own superiority they don't recognize the necessity of the Passions. If this weren't enough evidence of their culture's sickness, they still view Dis as the embodiment of order, denying her madness.

Perhaps the reason we do not superstitiously honor the Passions as you provincials do is because we have visited other lands and seen there is nothing special about them.

~Deldred, Eighth Legion Attache

One question that puzzles scholars is whether the Passions in other lands are the same as those we know in Barsaive, just called different names. I don't believe this to be the case.

In Creana, for example, there are striking similarities between Chorrolis and Berah, the Silver Passion of Wealth, and Mav-Nah bears some resemblance to Garlen. But where we recognize twelve Passions, the Creanans have ten greater Passions and dozens of lesser ones. They also have Passions who bear little resemblance to those known to us. Sanep is the White Passion and Judge of the Dead. Amaz-Chelk is the Red Passion of the Earth, and not worshipped (or discussed) in Creana.

Creana also does not seem to have questors. At least, not as we know them in Barsaive. There are "priests" who act as intermediaries between the Passions and the common folks, and represent their aims in Creanan society, but they do not display the magic powers granted to questors.

Their Passions are also a convoluted family under the leadership of Tabru, who the Creanans call the Father of All. Despite being called father, Tabru did not create the world, or even Namegivers. Rather, he is the child of Ureth, the River Mother, who—according to legend—sprang from dragon tears falling on Amaz-Chelk.

In distant Indrisa, the Passions are also an extended family, led by Halambuta. Indrisan Passions show some of the same mutability as our Passions, but their changes reflect changes in the world. Halambuta appears male during Indrisa's dry season, and during that time embodies paternity and travel. During the rainy season, the Passion is known as Halambutar, appearing female and representing motherhood and fertility.

Halambuta's three offspring make up the next generation of Indrisan Passions and change gender according to their own schedule. Those three gave birth to the next generation of Passions, whose forms are fixed. Each successive generation is less powerful than the one before.

Indeed, the people of that land believe it unwise to directly worship the Passions. Instead, the Indrisans revere *thibomata*. Thibomata are heroes from legend who performed great deeds under the tutelage or advice of a Passion. An Indrisan seeking a Passion's aid will ask an appropriate thibomata to intercede on their behalf.

One curious aspect of this practice: despite the number of thibomata in Indrisan legend, and their importance in the relationship between Passions and Namegivers, none have arisen since well before the Scourge. What this means is anybody guess. As in Creana, there is nothing resembling questors as we know them.

The Passions still make their wishes known! The author neglects to mention the *dhuna*, children of Ivasti tasked with punishing those who break the observances. My uncle told me of a merchant acquaintance of his who witnessed their justice.

~Hajjapul the Faithful

Many of these reports are unverified. I suspect the *dhuna* are a Horror or Horror constructs lurking in the wilds.

~Berain the Traveled

In Vasgothia, the Passions are dead, slain by the Horrors in a mighty war during the Scourge. Little knowledge remains of these beings; their Names are lost, and only a few crude images have been found depicting them.

Some Vasgothians have adopted the Passions of Barsaive, Creana, or other lands. Others in the region have forsworn Passion worship entirely, honoring the sacrifice of the lost Vasgothian Passions by not adopting others to replace them. Naturally, there are no questors of these dead Passions.

The dead Passions provide strong evidence that Passions in other lands are not simply the ones we know under another guise. After all, while three of our Passions went mad from the Scourge, none of them were killed, and there is no evidence of lost or forgotten Passions.

BACK TO THE POINT

But what, I can feel you asking, does this long digression about foreign Passions actually mean? What information can we glean from the tales of Passions in other lands? These are excellent questions.

Let us start by looking at the similarities. In all of these other lands, the Passions are powerful supernatural beings that embody varying ideals and characteristics. They inspired or mentored Namegivers of the past, granting them power either by teaching them magic or direct investiture. Even in lands where the Passions are more distant, they set out behaviors and expectations intended to guide Namegivers on the right path.

There are, of course, differences as well. Most notable is that questors appear to be a distinctly Barsaivian phenomenon. Even among the Vasgothians who honor Barsaivian Passions, there are vanishingly few native questors. Our Passions are also more active, appearing to Namegivers in need of their ideals. In other lands, the Passions are distant, and there are often more of them.

Which brings up a line of inquiry I don't think I've encountered before. If Passions can be numerous, distant, or even forgotten, might figures from racial legends and creation stories be considered Passions? I mentioned the Spirit Mother and Griahek'kan, but there are others. Might the notion of Death as a Passion not be as far-fetched as some argue?

Or, perhaps, calling beings such as Tabru, Amaz-Chelk, or Halambuta Passions is the wrong approach. Despite the superficial similarities, the differences are numerous enough to consider whether a different category might serve better. And I didn't even discuss the bizarre practices of the Taleans, who revere a Passion that is yet to be!

These are turbulent waters, and no clear course has been charted.

MOTIVES

Why do the Passions do what they do? What do they gain through their relationship with Namegivers? If anything, this part of our knowledge is the murkiest.

The Passions inspire and instruct. Most tales featuring the Passions involve them supporting an individual to great deeds, or punishing transgressions. The song of Maxton of Thamos is one such tale of warning. In his pride, this ancient king tried to command the Passions. They built him the palace he desired, but it proved his downfall. Maxton and his queen wandered lost in the halls laid out by Erendis and built by Upandal, hypnotized by the beauty of Floranuus's robes.

Is their behavior driven by love, as questors claim? Are they acting as parents, guiding us on the right path and correcting our errors? That makes sense if, as some legends say, they gave rise to Namegivers.

But if they didn't, what then? It is certainly possible that as thinking beings the Passions could care for and love Namegivers without a direct parental bond. There are numerous examples of such relationships among Namegivers. Indeed, Astendar herself embodies an aspect of that, where Namegivers from different families come together in love.

Is there another possibility? The Nethermancer T'shan V'ruda has presented one.

V'ruda, known best for his controversial ideas about the Horrors, has suggested the Passions are sustained by the emotions they inspire in Namegivers. The Horrors feed on emotions. Why, he argues, should we assume they are the only astral beings to do so?

Few scholars give his theory any consideration. The Horrors arrive in our realm from some unknown Netherworld when the mana cycle reaches its

A heretical one.

~Shovan, beloved of Mynbruje

peak. There is no evidence the Passions are likewise affected. None of the old tales of the Passions feature the Horrors, or even warn of their coming.

And yet, there are rumors of foul folk and cultists being granted powers by a Horror. They spread despair and pain, serving the Horror's purpose. Is that so different from what a questor does? The thought brings troubling questions to mind. While V'ruda may be off the mark, we shouldn't discount an idea because it makes us uncomfortable.

CLOSING THOUGHTS

I have presented much information about the Passions in this essay, but few solid conclusions. It should be clear to the reader why this is so. So where does this leave us?

I will lay out my conclusions. I believe the Passions are ancient, powerful spirits. In the vanished mists of legend, they may have once been ally spirits, or something akin to them. We know that spirits grow in power and intelligence over time. Whatever kind of astral entity they originally were, the Passions have grown beyond the classification and understanding of our present-day scholars.

It is possible the Passions, both in Barsaive and lands beyond, come from the previous magical age. As to why our Passions still involve themselves in the lives and affairs of Namegivers, when Passions from other lands are distant? For that I have no answer.

The Passions may be enigmatic, but their influence is felt by all. Unlocking their mysteries does not make them any less real or prevent them (or their questors) from involving themselves in our lives.

But as I said at the start of this journey, the search for knowledge is important. We don't know where we're going if we don't look back to where we've been and ask questions. Each answer steers us toward the safe harbor of understanding.

Studying the skies opens the secrets of navigation. Research into True elements resulted in items that make the lives of the common folk easier. What we learn about the Passions may not have an impact on the life of the farmer or merchant today, but it may be important tomorrow.

Who knows? That knowledge may, one day, offer the keys to restoring the Mad Passions to sanity.







FOR LOVE AND BEAUTY

Regarding Astendar, the Library was contacted by Ferret, a human who is a Swordmaster and Thief as well as a questor of Astendar. Despite being known in some quarters as a hedonistic rake, his viewpoint seemed a good addition to this tome.

What follows is all in his own words.

~Theodor Willit, Researcher and Scribe for the Great Library of Throal

ASTENDAR'S SONG

I first heard the dulcet notes of My Lady's song after I had been following the Paths of Swordmaster and Thief for many years.

She called me to her embrace and has taught me how to truly appreciate the many ways one can love another, as well as how to bring others love. She also inspired me to not only embrace and enjoy all artistic creations, but the desire to create my own. She is the music I dance to when I face another in a duel, and she is the muse that guides my hand as I paint. She reminds me that when I steal a woman's heart, I must leave a bit of myself behind so that the pain is softened by pleasing memories.

While she praised my skills of seduction, she taught me how to ease the pain of the eventual separation, leaving them simply dreaming of the next time we would meet. She praised the way I moved in the dance and rhythms you only see between two opponents facing off against each other but showed me how to respect and exult in another's skill and ability. She praised my art, my skill, my passion and lust for life. Then she revealed to me how to share such things is far better than celebrating only myself. My Lady seduced me into her embrace, and I have felt her caress ever since.

My Lady Astendar is my greatest lover and my closest friend. She knows each part of me and adores them all. She drives me to not only create beauty, but to share it with others so that they may know her love as well. She inspires me to learn new

*A Swordmaster and Thief.
Not a Troubadour? This fellow
is wordy enough to be one.*

*~Kavok Fireheart, Troll
Warrior of Ardanyan.*

*His words flow like a river.
You are a thoughtless thug,
Kavok.*

*~Anwen, Questor of
Astendar*

forms of expression; whether it is painting, sculpture, or dance, all are ways of adoring her and sharing her with the world.

Some think Astendar merely the Passion of Romance or Art, and of course that is true. However, she is also the Passion of Beauty and Creativity. She is the inspiration of each and every Namegiver who ever had a wonderful idea, the kind of idea that will bring a smile to even the dourest Troll.

Ferret can be somewhat lavish in his use of words, but no one should doubt his devotion.

~Jett, Troubadour and Swordmaster of Bartertown

ASTENDAR AND THE BEGGAR

To help grant you a better understanding of My Lady, I will share with you a story a Troubadour friend of mine shared with me one night in bed.

There once was a beggar who lived in the darkest alleyways within Kratas. He kept to the shadows for the sun was too bright and burned his weak eyes. His friends were a pack of anklebiters that followed him and were not put off by the stench of his unwashed flesh. His skin was puckered with countless scars earned by sleeping on the jagged rocks of Kratas' ruined alleys. Even the most despicable and hateful brigands who skulked among the ruins of Kratas pitied the beggar, and few would step nearer than several feet away from him. His own wretchedness protected him from the villains of Kratas.

Still, the beggar was alone, and his heart cried out for a comfort none would ever give him.

In his loneliness he would climb to the highest roofs in the dark of night, and he would softly sing his sorrow to the stars that glittered above.

One night, as he gazed into the night sky and sung, he saw a star streak across the sky and down to the far horizon. "Oh, beautiful jewel," he whispered, "Would that you were a beautiful princess who fell into my arms. My songs would all praise your love."

Then he heard a soft, melodious voice speak behind him, "My handsome sir, I am no princess, but you may have my love if you desire."

The beggar scrambled back and turned to see who had snuck up upon him. The panic he felt changed to amazement as he saw a beautiful woman wrapped in a rose-colored, glowing haze floating before him. His anklebiter friends were curled together below her, peaceful and not at all afraid. Immediately he knew she was Astendar, and he began to sob.

"Why do you weep?" Astendar asked him.

"Oh, my Lady! Your beauty shames me. A wretch like me does not deserve your grace and attention!" He cried.

"A wretch?" she gasped, "There is no wretch here my handsome sir. There is only a man with a silken voice that brings joy to the stars themselves. I have come to grant you a boon, for you please me greatly. Will you accept it?"

The beggar looked into Astendar's shimmering eyes and nodded eagerly, "Yes, oh yes!"

My Lady took the beggar's hands in hers, and he could feel the warmth of her love flow around him. "If I give you my boon, there is a price you must give in return. You must take your voice and leave the shadows behind. You must go into the light and leave the bleak streets of Kratas. You must share your song with everyone you meet as you travel. The old, the young. The lovers and the lonely. Your voice must fill their hearts with joy and their lives with beauty. Love and joy can be expressed not only through an intimate caress, but through art and song. Your voice, your song, can be how you share beauty with all Namegivers. Can you do this for my boon... for me?"

The beggar shivered in fear, for what she asked of him. A forlorn man, unwanted and unwashed, how could he accomplish such a task? But, as he looked in her eyes all his fear fell away, and her love bolstered his spirit. "I will do this," he promised, "I will pay this price gladly for the sake of beauty and love. For you."

As the last words left his lips, Astendar leaned down and kissed him. The rosy glow surrounded him, and warmth flowed through his body. The glow faded, and now the beggar stood alone looking over the rooftops of Kratas. He gathered his belongings and by the time the sun was rising over the dark canopy of the Servos Jungle, the beggar had begun his journey.

For months the beggar traveled from village to village, singing to each and every Namegiver he met. Disgust would change to rapt wonder as his voice conjured images of beauty and filled hearts with passion. In return the beggar was given food and drink, safe lodging and warm baths. As he journeyed, the grateful and heart-touched Namegivers would replace his worn and dirty clothing with new and fresher garb in thanks. By the time he reached the edge of Bartertown he was a new man. No longer the beggar, but a handsome and well-dressed man filled with the love of Astendar. His voice, his song, a gift to all who would listen.

For years the singer, a beggar no more, walked across the length and breadth of Barsaive. He knew joy in the bright eyes of children and elderly alike, and he knew love in the arms and whispered promises of many a maiden. Everywhere he traveled he brought hope and jubilation, and those who heard his song often found themselves inspired to create or to love.

Then one day, as the singer walked slowly down a well-worn wagon path, his bones creaking softly, and his breath ragged.

A familiar voice rang out behind him, "Handsome man, will you sing for me?"

The singer turned slowly, weakly. He faced Astendar once more, and she smiled lovingly at him. His eyes began to fill with tears, and he fell to his knees.

"Oh, my Lady!" the singer gasped, "I will gladly sing for you. I have known such happiness in sharing my song and seeing the joy it has brought. I have seen others inspired to find beauty and share it in return. I have seen sorrow fade to be replaced with elation and bliss. I would never have experienced any of these things without your guidance and love."

The singer began to sing, but his voice began to crack and rasp, his breath came shorter and shorter. He began to cry, his body wracked with deep sobs.

Astendar knelt down beside the singer and brushed one golden hand across his tear-stained cheek, "Why do you weep?" she asked.

The singer looked up and into her eyes, "I am old my Lady, and no longer will my voice sing loud and true. Age has stolen away my song. I have failed you."

"Oh, my handsome man," she softly laughed, "You need no voice to sing, for I have always heard the song in your heart. It is not the voice I hear, but the heart. It is not the painting I see, but the vision the artist seeks to share. It is in the giving that I find the truth of the one who gives." She took the singer in her arms, and he could feel the warmth of her love as the rosy glow wrapped around the both of them.

The next morning a traveling merchant found the singer's body laying up against a tree, a smile on his pale, wrinkled face.

ASTENDAR'S LIGHT

It is the act of giving that shows the truth, and Astendar inspires each Namegiver to give the essence of what they are to others. She is there in the excited tingle that young lovers share. She smiles when elderly couples hold hands. She watches as the tailor sews a new dress for a young maiden. She laughs in joy as a child draws a simple drawing of her family.

Without Astendar life would be bland and gray. My Lady breathes color into our world and we are all the better for it. Her gift to all Namegivers is the ability to not only create, but to find joy in the act of sharing such creations

It seems this Ferret fellow forgets that Floranuus is the one who brings light to the darkness. Why do all Questors of Astendar want to claim His aspects for their Lady?

~Nysara, Questor of Floranuus

Why can't Questors of Floranuus be happy with their boats, and leave the bringing of joy to those who know best how to do so?

~Anwen, Questor of Astendar

with others. She opens our eyes, revealing to us the hearts of those around us and encourages us to share ours in return.

When we face grief, or know the deep sting of sorrow, she shines her light upon us. That light guides us out of the shadows of despair and reminds us of the beauty and love that exists for all of us. When someone grieves, it is our duty to remind them of the love that was and the love that can be again. Through art we can share memories, hopes, and dreams that might ease the pain of loss and restore another's faith in the world.

Astendar gives us the gift of hope and love. How can we not give back?

BEING ONE OF ASTENDAR'S CHOSEN

As I said previously, I had been following the Paths of both the Swordmaster and Thief disciplines for many years before Astendar called me into her arms.

Even though I was not yet one of her chosen, I was hungry for any and everything that brought happiness and joy. The need for such things burned like a starving fire deep within my being.

I had been born an orphan, not so different from the beggar in the story, surviving on the filth-drenched cobbles of Bartertown. For many years I walked the path of the Thief to simply survive. Then I was found by my mentor, the Swordmaster Forthos, who changed my life forever. He showed me the artistry and wonder of the discipline, and I learned that I could be more than what I had thought I was. I had faced risk as a Thief, and as a Swordmaster I could find even more, but I found something else too. The swooning of the ladies as I flourished my sword made my heart swell. The envy of the men as I bested them in each challenge offered roused my laughter. A Swordmaster was a hero, and heroes were given something a Thief could rarely steal. Admiration.

Once my apprenticeship to Forthos had ended, I eagerly began my travels through Barsaive. I went wherever fortune took me and fed my ravenous hunger for each new experience and delight I could find. I sought out the admiration and glory with a fervor. It filled a hunger I had never really understood.

It was several years later, at the age of twenty-one, that I found myself at the end of a trail of defeated foes, empty chests, and broken hearts. I had lived a full and exciting life, yet I still felt that empty hunger. Nothing I had found had satiated it, not gold, treasure, or even arms of the women I seduced. I took and took, all I could find and still felt hollow. Then I heard a story that drew my attention from my misery. It was a tale of a young woman who had abandoned her family and friends to find a man who had stolen her heart. Destitute and alone, she traveled from village to town searching for that man, and I was he.

Guilt and shame overcame me. Every seduction had been a game, a frivolity. I took what was offered and left, never returning the favor. I had never once considered that the broken hearts I left behind me in my travels would lead to broken lives. I was struck with the realization of how my selfishness could

have brought harm and ruin to another. I was a Thief, of course, but I was also a Swordmaster and with this epiphany I set out to find the woman I had hurt.

I found her many days later on the road to Kratas, a victim of some bandits who stood around her. They were laughing at her broken and bloody form, unaware of my approach. My swords sang as they stole each life, my dance was beautiful and terrible as each bandit fell to my rage. I was laughing as the last one choked out his final breath, but my laughter died when I saw her.

I rushed to her, and though fatally wounded and dying, she smiled up at me and held out her hand. I took the shaking hand and spoke words of desperation. Telling her that she would be fine and that I would get her to safety. She gasped for air, but her smile never faltered. She whispered five words and then Death took her.

I knew you loved me.

Grief.

Guilt.

Shame.

I was overwhelmed and lost. I sat there with her in my arms throughout the night. I was the broken one now. "I knew you loved me," she had said. I had never given love a thought, but now I realized that I had loved her. Even if for a mere few hours, I had loved her, and she had loved me. Then, the fool that I was, simply left that love behind. I had been selfish. Thoughtless. Now a wonderful and beautiful life had ended, and I was the cause.

I wept through the night. I wept for her, for Brienne. I wept for every one of the women I had known, each name was burned into my heart.

As the sun rose, and the land around me was suffused with a soft pink glow, I heard the voice of My Lady.

You have learned a difficult lesson little Ferret. A life lost for your own desires. No wonder you are empty, for no joy can fill one who only seeks to take from others. This pain will never leave you; it will haunt you until your last day. I weep with you.

My heart was frozen. Cold and dead.

I can offer you comfort, little Ferret. Become one of my Beloved, my champion among champions. Live a new life, one where you mend hearts and steal away despair. Bring those who are sorrowful joy, and the lonely companionship. Accept my offer and serve me, defend the lost so they may never know the pain you now feel.

I felt a hand delicately touch my shoulder and my heart filled with unimaginable warmth. I could hear the birds singing to greet the new day. I wanted to join them.

"I will," I whispered, "I will serve you my Lady. Until my last day I will serve you."

I buried Brienne and prayed for Astendar to protect her. That was my first act of being one of Astendar's Chosen.

THOSE WHO EMBRACE ASTENDAR

In my experience, most Passions have little in the way of organized followers. To be certain, there are Questors of each Passion, but rarely a collective of Namegivers who act in a Passion's Name. Astendar is no different. Yet...

I know of a group of Windling actors and entertainers, who perform in my Lady's Name. They call themselves Flight of Fancies, and they bring joy to Namegivers and Astendar alike.

They put on plays, sing and dance, and enact amazing aerial acrobatics. They only charge one copper piece per audience member, but for the smiles that they bring to the people they could charge a king's ransom and it would still be cheap.

I can speak with some authority that the Flight of Fancies is most assuredly one of the more entertaining troupes I have had the chance to see. Though I think the author misrepresents their value in coin.

~Landon Ryll, Questor of Mynbruje

I think this Ferret is a skill for both the Flight of Fancies and the House of Silk and Flowers. I wonder how much they paid him to sing their praises.

~Jurok, Ork merchant of Kratas

Jurok, you are a petty little man.

~Jett, Troubadour and Swordmaster of Bartertown

If you get the opportunity to attend one of their performances, you will be entertained beyond measure. They are truly blessed by Astendar.

Then, in Jerris, there is a business of lovely men and women who also act in the Name of my Lady. It is the House of Silk and Flowers. Many might consider the House of Silk and Flowers to be a place of ill-repute, but they would be wrong.

Yes, of course a person could seek carnal and hedonistic pleasures within, but that is only one aspect of what the House offers.

The House hires some of the best cooks from throughout Barsaive. If a fine meal is what brings you joy, you will find no better. I myself have many times enjoyed some of the most delicate and flavorful red finned bullhead I ever tasted, prepared by the notable t'skrang cook, V'Sarris. If you ever visit the House of Silk and Flowers, make sure to ask for that dish, you will not be disappointed.

If you desire good conversation, each man and woman employed by the House is well educated and capable of the most stirring discussions. I have spent many hours just listening to some of the most fascinating exchanges while sipping a fine Travarian brandy.

Some of the most skilled and well-known musicians often stay at the House. Not only do they entertain the patrons, but often they teach those who desire to learn the beauty of music. The last time I was visiting the House, I had the opportunity to play a duet with the Ork Troubadour, Golthet. A challenge to be sure, but I was smiling like a child the entire time!

All of this and more can be found within the House of Silk and Flowers. It is a bright beacon shining out to the folk of the dark, ash-covered city of Jerris.

ASTENDAR AND HER FAMILY

Every Passion relates and interacts differently with the others. Of all the Passions, Astendar has the best relations with her brothers and sisters.

Both Garlen and my Lady work hand in hand as regards family. Some might ignorantly mock and suggest that Astendar merely is involved with the creation of family. They show their short-sightedness with such an obtuse proposition. Besides physical and romantic love, there is familial love. These bonds are just as important to my Lady as two Namegivers entwined among bedsheets. It is that familial love that both Astendar and Garlen foster and protect.

Astendar and Floranuus each seek to bring Namegivers elation and joy. While Floranuus encourages groups of Namegivers to celebrate life, Astendar simply prefers more personal and intimate expressions of the same. I have met a few of Floranuus' questors who simply encourage celebration for celebration's sake, not considering how each individual might give something of themselves to be enjoyed by others during such an event. Regardless of the how, both Passions rejoice in a lust for life.

The Green Father and Astendar adore the unfettered majesty that is the natural world. I wonder at times if the questors of Jaspree notice the individual wonders around them or only the whole. If not, they are missing the true artistry of the Green Father. Awe-inspiring mountains, singing brooks, the grace of a stalking lion, all of these and more bring smiles to Astendar and Jaspree.

Compassion and love often exist together, and so do my Lady and Mynbruje often work together. Still, they often argue too. Mynbruje can be harsh in his judgements and quests for the truth, and Astendar dislikes to see everything in shades of black and white. Within every family, there are disagreements, and between Astendar and Mynbruje, the subject of Vestrial often brings conflict. Where Mynbruje is often at odds with the Grand Deceiver, my Lady can see the beauty in some of her elaborate deceptions. She still hopes her

sister Vestrial will return to her old and more gleeful self, for Vestrial always made Astendar laugh.

How sweet.

~Klannet, Illusionist and Questor of Vestrial

Foolish ideas. There can be no mercy for Vestrial or any of the Mad Passions. Their crimes against Namegivers are too many to count.

~Landon Ryll, Questor of Mynbruje

Poor Ryll, I never knew you had problems with numbers.

~Klannet, Illusionist and Questor of Vestrial

Finally, both Raggok and Dis are the two for which my Lady knows little love.

Raggok, the Vengeful One, encourages hate and destruction. He is Astendar's antithesis and she calls her Chosen to battle his ploys often. Astendar inspires and exalts in creation of art, beauty, and love. Raggok is practically spiteful in his desire to wreck that which my Lady's followers create. His rage seems to rise at the sight of bliss, and several times I have seen his questors act to rend a work of art simply because it exists. While I have attempted to persuade these questors to change their stance, too often I was forced to use my blade to end our argument.

As for Dis, his penchant for oppression and the mediocrity of bureaucracy serves to leech away the joy and beauty of life. The blandness and apathy that his questors push upon Namegivers is disheartening to nearly every one of their victims. Whenever I have encountered evidence of their actions, I shed a tear and say a prayer to Astendar before I begin my work. An enemy of my Lady to be certain.

FINAL THOUGHT

Every Passion affects and changes our interactions with the world around us, and with the Namegivers we encounter each day. They each have their own goals and agendas, which sometimes benefit us, and other times do not. Astendar enjoins us to not only celebrate beauty, but to create and share it with others. To live and love, and to give back the joys of life we all experience. Who wouldn't wish to follow and dance with her?





SPREADING THE WEALTH

Unlike many questors, Melnon of Chorrolis did not leave a journal, nor would he sit for an interview. Instead, he left us his most prized possession: the ledgers of Alisar of Avern's Crossing, in which she had transcribed her every business dealing and left copious notes explaining her thoughts. Amongst the bookkeeping entries—which offered previously unavailable insights into the workings of a questor of Chorrolis—the librarians found many notations that may help others understand the ethos of Chorrolis's questors. Many Namegivers are quick to dismiss followers of Chorrolis as nothing more than silver-hungry merchants and traders. The pages of Alisar's ledger show a philosophy of peace through trade and interdependence among the various cities and regions in Barsaive.

~Jessup, Scholar of the Passions of the city of Travar

3 CHARASSA 1475 TH

31 2 paid to Saalaman, the elven moneylender. My remaining debt with him is 32,749. I have renegotiated the terms of the debt. He extended an additional loan of 3,000 but has increased the rate of interest by half a percent. He is taking advantage of my current situation, and I admire his cleverness.

Somehow, he discovered bandits waylaid one of my caravans. The bandits killed the guards, slaughtered both Namegivers and horses, and stole the contents of caravan's lockbox. What disturbs me most is that the bandits burnt the bolts of silk, satin, and cotton. The lockbox contained only a few hundred tav, but the bolts of cloth were worth thousands. Could they not see the value in the cloth?

Once again, my investments along the North Reach are for naught. I have sent three messages to Throalic authorities demanding they increase patrols along the nearby roads. Do they not understand these roads are the arteries and veins of commerce? If travelers and merchants cannot move along them, then we are not united. Barsaive is nothing but disparate cities in a world of savages and monsters.

If the crown, or nearby villages, cannot or will not defend the trade routes, then I am forced to take matters into my own hands. I have two options at this point: One, I use the loan from Saalaman to pay a group of adepts to stop these

bandits; or two, I attempt to bribe the bandits. I shall sleep on it. I've never made a wise decision when I was this angry.

How many adepts owe their fortunes to questors of Chorrolis who need guards for their caravans and mercenaries to keep the roads open and the skies clear of bandits?

~Davin the Gluttonous

1 TEAYU 1479 TH

I negotiated the purchase of three new wagons with Ernan today. The proud ork knew exactly how much I needed those wagons, and she took advantage of me. Good for her. I overpaid by 12 percent. Afterwards we got into a debate on the meaning of wealth as she counted the stacks of silver with a self-satisfied smile.

Ernan believes wealth means a hoard of silver. She thinks Chorrolis demands I stack tavs to the ceiling of a vault protected by dozens of guards, powerful magic, and insidious traps. How much would I waste hiring an army of Wizards and Swordmasters to protect that vault? Adepts would never stop trying to sneak though the defenses and plunder it.

It's a foolish notion. Coins are useless if they aren't moving from one hand to the next. Money sitting in a vault does nothing. It doesn't bring me more. It must be invested and passed along to other hands. As it passes through the hands of merchant and buyer, laborer and farmer, it brings more back to me. Commerce binds Namegivers together, and without commerce we are islands of limited and short-sighted self-interest.

Perhaps I could sell everything and put it all into one giant hoard. Could I sell every wagon, every store, every warehouse, and every parcel of land? Who would buy all of it? Who would have enough money? Is there enough silver in Barsaive to buy everything that I own?

I wanted to explain to Ernan that my own pockets are presently and sadly empty. In fact, I am so indebted to money lenders that half of every coin I see goes to a money lender. How unhappy would my creditors be if I paid off all my debts right now? They would never see the thousands in interest I would pay them.

Ernan would be surprised to know that, wouldn't she? The great questor of Chorrolis has barely enough coin to buy a round of drinks at the Ne'er Empty. Yet, with a snap of my fingers, I could buy that tavern and hire every adept in it

to guard my caravans. That is the paradox of coin and wealth. And why would the good lady Rizia charge me for a drink? My caravans are responsible for bringing in her best wines and ales.

My pockets may be empty, but my wealth grows. Wealth is not measured in tavs—or silver plundered from ancient tombs. Wealth is measured in land owned, horses, caravans, wagons and their contents. I own the farmer's field, and he pays me rent in the form of wheat. I sell that wheat to the brewer who makes the beer. I buy some of the kegs and transport them across Barsaive. Where my caravans sell a keg, they buy a bolt of fabric. At the next town, they sell the fabric and buy a case of wine. Each transaction brings me silver, but I invest the silver in more wagons. Thus, more caravans set out bringing more silver to invest. The cycle continues.

Alisar was the poorest questor of Chorrolis in Barsaive. She could barely rub two coins together on a given day, but I swear she owned every single caravan that passed through. She was always purchasing more land, more wagons, and every horse in the land. She could not stop herself.

~Betreatrix of Travar

17 RUA 1481 TH

150 paid to the town of Avern's Crossing for improvement of the roads.

What fools these council members are! How many more times will they come to me begging for a loan? Since I've moved here, they have not stopped coming to me on bended knee because they want to erect a statue of some sell sword or ancient magician who saved the town. No, I will not fund an artist's mosaic of the battle of Avern's Crossing. Such a waste!

On the other hand, the council has discovered I will happily donate bags of silver to help repair a road washed out by a flood. Avern's Crossing's roads would be nothing more than a series of holes and ditches if it weren't for Chorrolis's blessings. Chorrolis travels the roads following the heartbeat of commerce.

I think they've begun to take advantage of me as well. Good for them! They have started to plan for my charity. They spend the silver gathered from tariffs erecting foolish monuments to their pride, and once the money is gone, they knock on my door when the roads become a series of ever-deepening pits threatening to shatter wagon wheels and break horses' ankles.

Perhaps I can make use of these civic projects that are so important to the councilors of Avern's Crossing. A new tavern? Yes, just across from the statue they've commissioned. Nobles and merchants will turn out their pockets to get the best view of this marble monstrosity.

22 MAWAG 1481 TH

After my additional investment, the statue of Avern is complete. It's a hideous marble sculpture with gold accents and jeweled eyes. Visitors from surrounding villages are already filling the inns and taverns and remarking on the glory of Avern's champion.

Once again, I am wrong about art.

The wind pushes all airships, but the wise captain knows how to use them best. My ship soars above them all. The bazaars can barely keep up with the increased demand, and my caravans are rushing back to Avern's Crossing to bring fabric, exotic foods, and more to meet that demand. Prices are rising.

And my rents rise with them.

This statue is a lesson from Chorrolis. Don't chase the coin. Let people bring the coin to you.

1 SOLLUS 1483 TH

500 to council member Charana.

Each month I pay this petty dwarf her bribe, and then I flip through this ledger and ask myself if these bribes are worth it. Most Namegivers are happy to trade in promises. Charana wants no promises. She wants coin. I wonder if she has a scale where she measures each one to make sure that I'm not giving her shaved coins. I admit that I admire Charana. She is plain spoken and guileless but never naïve. She's punctual as well, knocking on my door just after dinner on the first of every month.

Bribes are the cost of doing business. Just as the teamster needs to grease the axles of the wagon so the wheels turn without squeaking, so must I grease the palms of council members and sheriffs to make sure commerce proceeds unimpaired.

While Charana wants her silver, other council members have their own vices. Some enjoy Theran art, and others require intoxicants and stimulants. I am happy to provide for anyone's tastes.

Well, almost anyone's. Some ask whether I have any morals at all. Of course I do. I cannot abide slavery. The worst Namegiver I ever met was a former citizen of the Theran Empire Named Penrald the Traitor. As much as he disliked his old home, he kept his taste for owning slaves, especially young

maidens. I was appalled when he begged me to smuggle a young elf slave for him. I agreed only after he filled my pockets with enough coin to buy a town.

I told myself that his silver was as good as anyone's. It was a shame the sheriff began to personally inspect each and every wagon just before the caravan containing the slave arrived. He was cross with me. I had neglected to pay him his usual bribe that month.

I guess it slipped my mind.

I tried to dissuade him, but the sheriff checked every inch and found the compartment where the caravan master had hidden the slave girl. The caravan master told the sheriff everything. I protected the caravan master. It wasn't his fault. Nor was it Penrald's fault the sheriff discovered the hidden compartment. I returned Penrald's silver. I hired the elf girl as a stable hand until she could decide for herself where her talents lie. Poor Penrald met his end though. The punishment for slavery is hanging.

18 RAQUAS 1485 TH

Once again, I've reminded Saalaman of his debt. He is two months past due and now action must be taken.

Broken promises. Nothing hurts a business more than broken promises. This situation frustrates me more than it should I admit. A loan is a promise, and with as many times as I've borrowed from and repaid silver to Saalaman, I'd expect him of all people to understand the importance of repaying a debt on time. Yet, he makes excuses.

I must make an example of him. I could hire a bruiser to send the message with violence. Yet if I did, he would be unable to collect on the debts owed to him. His borrowers would see him as weak, and no one repays a weak moneylender. Violence isn't the solution to my problem with Saalaman.

The best solution is more subtle. What he owes, I will take from him piece by piece. I will take the debts owed to him. They will be my debts now. How can he argue? I will collect on each. His debtors will spread the word that Saalaman cannot be trusted with managing his own money, and I will make sure no one borrows one solitary silver from Saalaman the moneylender ever again.

As for Saalaman, Chorrolis will ensure he will never be able to hold on to another coin again. They will slide through his fingers like water.

Is this a reference to the Bane of Chorrolis? If so, it might be the only proof we have to substantiate the rumors. According to what little information we have gathered, some questors of Chorrolis can curse a Namegiver. For the rest of their lives, that individual will spend their money as quickly as they earn it. It is truly insidious. According to one rumor that I heard, a Namegiver was unable to hold on to their silver long enough to buy food and starved.

~Jessup, Scholar of the Passions

2 STRASSA 1489 TH

2,598 lost to thieves over the course of the year 1488.

Thieves. How many ways can they steal from me? As much as I despise them, I equally understand their motives. They are hungry for something that they cannot have. Perhaps that's food to fill a hungry stomach. Perhaps they are grasping for the luxury afforded to the owners of artifacts and art. These are desires that Chorrolis puts in their hearts and thoughts, but something perverts that desire. Desire I understand. Chorrolis puts that desire into a



Namegiver's heart, and those willing to put in the work can fulfill that desire. Chorrolis inspires his followers to improve themselves and the world around them. The thief takes a shortcut and doesn't earn what he desires.

Among the money lost to thieves are 163 tav that had their edges shaved. The fool who shaves the edges of coins should be fed to Horrors! I cannot abide the Namegiver who would do that. When the coin is struck, it's not just an ounce of silver. It becomes the symbol of the vitality of the kingdom. Merchants and farmers trust that coin when we trade them for goods. Shaving the edge of a coin does more than devalue the coin. It is theft from every hand the devalued coin passes through.

Chorrolis teaches us that we should look for advantages in our dealings. *Honest* advantages. We earn those advantages through luck, the blessing of the Passions, and hard work. A thief nullifies that work and rubs the honest Namegiver's face in the sweat spent earning the desires that Chorrolis put in our hearts.

Worse than a thief or a Namegiver who shaves a coin is the magician who can make coins appear from thin air. I've only met one who could do it. Before I settled in Avern's Crossing, I watched a magician wave his hands and pull a fist of coins from nothing. I spoke to the man and begged him to tell me the secret of the trick. He claimed it was true magic and not sleight of hand. I watched him for several days and when I was sure it wasn't a trick, I had him killed.

I'm not proud of that, but Chorrolis gave me no choice. A man who can create coin without work is more dangerous than any thief. I remember the look on his face as I demanded to know if anyone else knew the secrets of the spell. I asked and asked, but he gave no Names. I still hear rumors of magicians capable of creating coins, but so far, they've only been rumors.

Avern's Crossing has the harshest punishment for theft of any town in Barsaive. I am proud of that fact. I spent years whispering in the ears of council members, slipping them a few extra coins to make sure they enforce those punishments. Every time we drive a thief from Avern's Crossing, Chorrolis blesses us. I've heard rumors of distant lands where they execute thieves. Is that too harsh? Perhaps not.

Alisar is deadly serious. No thief in their right mind would risk stealing so much as a drink in Avern's Crossing. Last time I passed through, the town was cutting the left hand off of thieves. I passed through quickly and kept both hands and my pockets empty.

~Name withheld

7 VELTOM 1493 TH

Another payment of 75 for my mausoleum.

"A great woman must leave behind a great legacy and a monument to her life."

That's what the caretaker of the cemetery believes. He said I should leave behind a mausoleum that will inspire others to follow Chorrolis. He was taking advantage of me. I know it. He sold me the idea and then overcharged me for the entire thing. Chorrolis would be proud of him.

What comes of my wealth when I die? That's a bigger question. The question haunts my nights as I age. I have no family. My devotion to Chorrolis hasn't left time to find a husband or have children.

Will everything I've built crumble to nothing? Perhaps I *should* build a tomb. It could be a grand edifice, filled with the treasures of my life. I could hire the greatest magicians to enchant the rooms to keep out unworthy treasure seekers. Artisans would design ingenious traps that would snare the foolish.

Perhaps I could liquidate everything and bury it deep in the earth. So deep that neither dwarf nor dragon could find it. All that wealth, hidden away forever, a quiet monument to my glory.

I could leave my business to a worthy successor, but while so many profess their love for Chorrolis, only a rare few become one of his questors. Adepts seem to pop up like weeds. Sometimes, I think Wizards and Swordmasters outnumber farmers.

In the almost two decades since Alisar's death, rumors about her wealth have spread as far as Troubadors can carry them. What we know is very little. Towards the end of her life, Alisar closed many of her business dealings and built a hoard of wealth. She certainly didn't carry it with her to the afterlife.

~Exter, leader of the Cold Water Adventuring Company

17 MAWAG 1494 TH

220,750 to purchase the rights to the Garvin's trade routes.

Garvin was foolish enough to take out a loan from me. It was a loan I knew he couldn't pay back. When he couldn't repay me, I forgave the debt and he gave me part of his trade route. As his business struggled, I owned more of it. Garvin let personal matters interfere with his business, and eventually,

he decided to settle down. Now, I own the whole thing. With the purchase of Garvin's trade routes, I now own a piece of every bolt of fabric in Barsaive.

Where do I look now? Zat'zong's caravans and shipping routes? Those routes cover a significant section of the Coil River. Would she be willing to sell me a small stake? A stake that I can grow until I can rip the whole thing away. The possibility that I could own it tempts me every day. Greed. Desire. I've found that it's almost impossible to separate these two. They are like two trees that grow together.

The Coil River is one of the most profitable trade routes in Barsaive. I already pay for the privilege of using Zat'zong's ships to carry my bolts of cloth to markets, and she charges an ever-growing premium for that privilege. She must be in debt, much as I am, and that could make her open to a partnership and vulnerable.

I don't want to simply sail my bolts of cloth aboard Zat'zong's ships. I want to own those ships and a piece of everything that they carry. With those ships under my control, I could build a monopoly, and I would own a piece of every bolt of cloth. Such a greedy thought.

Fools might argue that Chorrolis is the personification of greed, but he is not the Passion of *greed*. He is the Passion of *desire*. And wealth. A greedy Namegiver takes without thought to anything more than the acquisition of something new. Chorrolis blesses us with the drive to build through the acquisition of wealth and the use of wealth—not simply hoarding it. With Chorrolis as my guide, I will build up Barsaive through trade and connect each region.

I just think it's right and proper that I help myself as well.

Having read the full ledger, one cannot help but notice that Alisar repeatedly obfuscates her personal greed with the belief that she and other questors of Chorrolis have only a single goal: to raise Barsaive from savagery to greater heights. Their personal fortunes are nothing but a side effect of their good work and all of Barsaive is the true recipient of all their toil. I wonder what Alisar really thought. Was she a hypocrite grabbing for more coin or was she an altruistic Namegiver?

~Jessup, Scholar of the Passions





A SHIELD FOR EVERY MIND

The following essay was compiled by Colm, one of the Library's associate scholars. He spoke with the questor who provided this information over dinner at a tavern in the Floating City. Colm's description of the encounter is surprising and—frankly—disturbing. He said that Izenik spoke with little inflection, his words proceeding at times in a monotonous, almost hypnotic drone, and Colm admits there are parts of his notes he does not remember transcribing.

Most interesting is the attitude Izenik had about slavery. Questors of Dis are perhaps best known as the fiercest proponents of that vile practice to be found in Barsaive. While Izenik didn't condemn slavery, his views indicate there is, apparently, more variety to the followers of the Mad Passions than common wisdom would indicate.

~Esrae Whisperhand, archivist and scribe for the Great Library of Throal

Call me Izenik, it is the closest to truth I can offer. My patron matters more than I do. I know that they call Dis mad now. I have been called mad often enough for following her, but her touch is not something I can deny. That touch is where peace lies, where a Namegiver can let go of heavy responsibilities and tormenting dreams and take refuge in simple repetition. I would not call it boredom so much as respite, that drowsy numbness where cares drop away. Where you know each task and where it fits, and what must be done now, as before. Some use work, especially the bureaucracy of paperwork, to numb themselves into a state where her touch can take over. Here is a form you have done before, and here is the form to be done once more, and all is known and familiar and safe and can be done without thought.

He says this like it is a good thing, but while Erendis liked bureaucracy for its own sake, Dis has warped that until it becomes no more than one more thing that drains passion and creates confusion and bewilderment in its place.

~Colm, associate scholar of the Great Library

Some instead use it to bring that peace to those around them, spreading the exhaustion and weariness that is Dis's gift to the Namegivers. The exhaustion and weariness in turn generate numbness and confusion. Just as great exhaustion creates a state much like drunkenness—with the mind slowed and muddled—so the touch of Dis can slow and muddle the mind. A

mind that is slow to think and slow to decide defaults to the familiar. In the same way, a mind that is muddled or confused will cling to any rule that is given it. It makes it easier to give in and no longer feel or reason, and that in turn advances Dis's wishes for a world that no longer feels anything.

And he makes his muddled thinking very obvious when he includes long tangled sentences and no sense.

~Colm

Grey as the robes we wear, grey as the dreamless sleep of weariness, Dis winds herself around me, and I desire to sleep forever in her embrace. As yet, I am too weary to sleep, and so I take up the burden of this heavy body and proceed, step by slow step, to forge my way forward and complete my duties. Listen then, and I will tell you of her.

She first came to me when I lost a beloved friend to sky raiders. I grieved long, and no other Passion helped me except Dis, who numbed my grief enough that I could go on through life and gave me the strength of apathy to endure the well-meant sympathy that only drove my pain and grief deeper into me. I was grateful and leaned on her strength. That strength wound into me, following the path left by grief and touched all that I did and all that I saw.

For in those days I saw my friend everywhere we had shared memories, and I didn't have the strength to break away from that painful rut. Dis gave me that strength, and I learned to walk away and go to new places, though they all look alike to me these days, filled with the same people who still hold the same pain and belief. I tell those that I think can be saved of the relief that Dis can bring, and sometimes I see a look in their eyes that tells me that Dis has touched their hearts.

ON THE PHILOSOPHY OF DIS

It is common knowledge that Erendis broke in the Scourge and became only Dis, sometimes called mad. There are people in this world who refuse to acknowledge that the peace and strength she gives are needed, and fight against it. In their words, which are many, frequent, and passionate, as is all too common with wilfully ignorant fools, we see the seeds of common belief that Dis is a destroyer of lives and her touch is a dread to be avoided at any cost.

What is less commonly known is that Dis, and by extension those of us who follow her, is devoted to removing pain, grief, and sorrow from the world so that no others break under the same strain that broke her and distilling the despair and confusion that accompanies them down to a pinpoint of truth. The Horrors that broke her taught a lesson that she seeks to pass on to all who would accept it.

It is known that the Horrors feed on pain and fear. To be numb is to deprive them of that food and starves them into distance and silence. It shields the

numbed one from the torture that the Horrors wish to inflict. That the price for this is the equal removal of joy, love, and hope, is inconsequential.

She takes the intolerable situation and makes it bearable, she numbs away pain so that the follower can continue under the worst circumstances, and she gives the power of apathy to those who would otherwise be powerless. If you have nothing to care for, and nothing you hold precious, you cannot be threatened or blackmailed, or even persuaded against your will. It strengthens you to endure and hold the shield wall against fear. Fear relies on there being hope, for without the hope that disaster can be averted, there can only be resignation and apathy.

To those who would stand against her, she gifts the confusion, pain, and despair she removed from her followers in a silent reminder of why her presence is necessary to the world. Some of those to whom she gives that gift understand and return to her to have their new burdens eased by her touch. Others persist in their mistaken beliefs and misconceptions of Dis. These beliefs are not helped by the matching misconceptions of some who follow her.

ON MISCONCEPTIONS SURROUNDING DIS

Some of her followers have not yet sufficiently purged themselves of emotion and take delight in evoking despair or confusion in others, or destroying hope, or in enslaving them, as if physical chains create the right mind-set to bind your whole self into Dis's service.

While it is true that many slaves do turn to Dis, they must do so out of choice rather than being forced into it. They embrace her numbness physically and mentally in order to endure the whips and hunger, or the endless meaningless toil that is their daily life. Slavery may be an apt physical representation of the bonds and chains that Dis winds around the mind and spirit, but like all representations, it is only a crude echo of the reality.

All peoples are bound by one thing or another, some in the iron chains of slavery, some in the silken chains of love and hope, some in the velvet ropes of duty. The touch of Dis breaks all of these chains and then remakes them in her own image and style. In this manner, she takes the weight of the chains on her own shoulders and in turn requires only that you do as she desires. In truth, it is a desire to surrender the aching burden of responsibility and do only what another requires that brings many to Dis in the end, either in person or through philosophies of thought. If the world is such and so, then the world will always be such and so. It is unchanging and unchangeable, and one need not stir to try to change, no matter the deeds or events that happen.

If children die, what of it? It is the way of the world. If a person is enslaved, what of it? It is the way of the world. If a powerful man taunts and bullies those less powerful merely for his pleasure, what of it? It is the way of the world. And so through Dis the way of the world continues to sow the seeds that keep it as it is. One may offer platitudes to soothe others back into their rightful numbness but that is all.

At its worst, slavery actually works against Dis's true desire, by creating more pain and passion than it dissolves in the struggle between the so-called freedom that other Passions lure people in with and the honesty that Dis offers. Yet for now, this misconception spawns more organizations and more recognition than the truth does, for too many prefer gloating at another's downfall and delight in another's pain to avail themselves of the sorrowful release of purging themselves of feeling, or the leaden weights of the weariness that follows the touch of Dis with every true embrace.

In addition, some who feel that first brush of despair turn that despair on themselves. Instead of wrapping themselves in the numbness that Dis offers they plunge past it and retreat into a mental solitude filled with despair, self-loathing, and fear of failure, never to return. To outward appearances the touch of Dis may have succeeded, for they surrender easily to another's will, but they have not forged themselves into a shield. Instead, they have made themselves into a whip to flagellate their minds and hearts. In doing so, they make themselves into delicacies of dark feelings for the Horrors which is the opposite of what Dis wishes.

THE IRON LEGACY

One such organization spawned by followers with this misconception about slavery is the Iron Legacy. It began with one person's hatred of orks and after being fed through the distorted lens of a misconceived passion for Dis, it became an organization devoted to destruction. They attacked and captured orks and their lands, chained them with chains forged to create despair, and tried to force them to accept that despair and confusion into their very hearts. They mistake feeling bad for an absence of feeling, as if positive feelings are the only ones that count.

Dis knows better. Where the Iron Legacy failed is in embroiling themselves in feelings at all. They try to force on others what they themselves refuse to embrace and so, as is natural, they fail, and all comes tumbling down around them. It is this kind of encounter which emphasizes Dis's supposed madness to the rest of the world and destroys any chance that Dis will have her way and draw everyone down into the sweet numbness that no longer feels or cares for anything or anyone. If they truly wished to follow Dis, they would be first in line for surrender rather than holding themselves above it.

ON THE ROLE OF DIS IN DAILY LIFE

Dis is primarily popular among the Therans as well as bureaucrats and those non-Therans involved in the slave trade. They use paperwork to encourage patience among those who are not slaves, which easily slides over into apathy where Dis is involved. Extensive paperwork that requires multiple forms for all actions and activities actually reduces the number of actions undertaken by each person and ideally reduces responses to the routine and the repetitive. It also encourages people to simplify all their other responses until they see and respond only to that which they have been taught and expect

to see, rather than the reality in front of them, which might require thought and emotion. Excessive paperwork also allows followers of Dis to take control in any situation, as a person accustomed to paperwork will respond to being asked for it by focusing on navigating the bureaucracy rather than the original task that they intended to complete. As Dis strives to shield us from emotion, so also may paperwork be used as shield and defence.

IN WHICH SLAVERS ARE GIVEN A GLIMPSE OF TRUE BONDS

Once there was and was not, a village built around a mine. Slavers thought to take hostages there, to bind the villagers to work for free, giving the mine's production to the slavers instead of keeping it for themselves. There was also in the village, come just the day before, a questor of Dis, in faded robes as grey as road-dust. He had asked for no more than a meal and a night's shelter, and though the villagers trod warily around him, they granted him that much. When the slavers arrived with the dawn and herded all within the village into one place and demanded hostages, the questor was the first to step forward.

The slavers either did not notice, or did not heed, the warning of the grey robes. They wound chains around the questor's wrists and ankles as he stood unresisting, then grasped his arms and dragged him forward to stand in full view of the villagers. The slavers then demanded another victim to hold hostage against defiance. The villagers drew breath to explain that this hostage was no villager, but a visitor, without tie or kin there, but the questor lifted his head and smiled. There was no joy in that smile, nor satisfaction, only a cold light about the eyes, as grey as his robes. The villagers fell silent again, as the slavers shook the questor and made threats, but the questor simply swept his gaze across the slavers that held and surrounded him, and confusion washed over their faces.

The confusion brushed the villagers too and muddled their memory so that no two tales of that day were ever quite the same. Some said that the chains came to life, others that the slavers took new chains and bound themselves. But when the confusion cleared, the result was plain for all to see. The questor stood unbound, and the slavers behind him, chained one to the other in a long line. The questor inclined his hooded head to the villagers, informed them that the slavers would bother them no more, then picked up the end of the chain and led the line of would-be slavers away.

This tale is known as "Chains Reversed." It is part demonstration of how Dis deals with bonds, and part fable showing how questors of Dis can bring those who misunderstand into the true fold. It also counsels on the wisdom of the villagers in fulfilling the questors requests, for had the questor been turned away, the villagers would have fallen beneath the slavers' chains.

This is the "Stranger" variation of the legend. Other common versions include the "Vengeance" variation in which the questor is hunting the slaver group for a crime he feels they have committed and sets up the situation as a trap for them, the "Protection" variation, in which the questor leads the slaver group until they try to enslave someone or somewhere already affiliated with the questor, and the "Rivalry" variation, in which it isn't a village involved, but another slaver group, each trying to enslave the other.

The last variant is most commonly considered the version closest to the original deeds that spawned the legend, as it fits far better with the obvious aims and other activities of Dis's followers than the flawed heroics they like to present to the world. However, one recovered fragment from before the Scourge seems to indicate that the questor was the town's newly appointed clerk and includes aspects of both heroic Vengeance and Protection.

~Colm

PAPERWORK AS DEFENCE AND POTENTIAL RECRUITMENT

Once there was a man who tried to round up a group of questors of Dis so that he could destroy them. To his surprise, the first that he encountered seemed perfectly willing to go with him, so long as the required forms were filled out. The initial form seemed simple enough, but then he got halfway down the page and discovered that a second form needed to be completed in order to provide a reference required by the first form, but the first questor calmly directed him to where he could find that second form, and the directions were easy enough to follow.

Unfortunately, at least for the man, if not for the questors, the second form required another two forms completed, and each of those two forms required even more forms, and every form was longer and more complicated than its predecessor. As with the length, each and every form had to be acquired at a different office, and each of the multiplying forms sent the man on a longer and more complex route to find those offices, in the correct bureaucratic sequence, in order to complete the ever-encroaching requirements.

By the fifth form, the man was confused and bewildered. By the tenth form, he was utterly lost. By the twelfth, he was angry, but when he demanded an answer, the questors politely informed him that he would get his answer; just as soon as he made a written request by filling in this brief form... and the whole encircling chain of events began again until he was numbed by exhaustion and repetition and took himself away without either the completed form or the questors he originally came for.

This lesson, Chains of Paper, advises new questors in how to use the paperwork that Dis finds so useful as both a weapon and a protection. It also demonstrates how easy it is to divert a man's attention from one task onto another—that of bureaucracy—and suggests one method of providing that initial numbness and exhaustion.

Building on that initial numbness rather than letting the man retreat and recover would obviously be a better option but sometimes one must balance survival against recruitment and the practicalities of survival win out.

This is one of many similar tales that pretend to boast of Dis's "heroics" in saving their own skins from someone who rightly sought to destroy them. It also shows just how much their insistence on paperwork and the red tape of bureaucracy can insinuate itself into every part of dealing with them.

Initial apparent surrender and co-operation is simply an insidious way of inserting and asserting their own power over people. Provide the correct paperwork and all will be well. All would indeed be well if they had not created paperwork designed to obstruct, delay, and otherwise be too hard to complete. They do this deliberately in an attempt to cause the person trying to comply with the forms to be overwhelmed and give up any chance of achieving what the person needed in the first place. All those who have to deal with Dis and her followers should pay heed to that.

~Colm

RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER PASSIONS

Dis's desire to destroy passion and emotion rather than create it sets her at odds with all of the other Passions, even the Mad Passions. To this end, she often instructs her followers to target questors of her siblings to lessen their impact and weaken their influence on the Namegivers she seeks to aid. The approach for different questors is tailored to try and catch them at a natural extension of their own aspect where possible, so that she has something to build on. For example, a follower of Astendar may be caught during the exhaustion that follows a sleepless night of composition, Chorrolis's merchants lured with the profitability of a good slave, or one of Vestrial's followers tangled in their own confusion.

Lochost is a particularly common target for Dis and her followers as he embodies the very opposite of what she represents and stirs up trouble among the slaves that she has claimed. The most skilled and relentless questors of Dis strive to lure Lochost's questors with false inspirations. They spread suggestions that freedom from thought, fear, pain, or other emotions is better than freedom to love, laugh, create, or otherwise feel. Those that fall for the suggestions find themselves locked into Dis's emptiness rather than launched into Lochost's open sky.

It is a shame that so many Namegivers fear the embrace of Dis. Her misguided siblings believe the best way to shake off the darkness of the Scourge is to be even more passionate. Dis has learned the truth, and only wishes to share that truth, saving us from another Scourge by taking away the very thing on which the Horrors feed. Only in her embrace is that possible.





ELATION'S FLAME

The following document is a transcription of a conversation with a most unusual questor of Floranuus. Servants of the Passion of Revelry, Energy, Victory, and Motion are usually very expansive. They are hard to miss in any room as they'll go out of their way to talk faster, laugh louder and act more manically than everyone else present. Not this particular questor, however. In fact, despite his gaudy clothes, you'd be hard pressed to find someone more deadpan and serious. Yet, in his own way, he's indisputably one of the merriest, funniest souls I've ever met. And he had a lot to say about his Passion.

~Mandel of Arancia, Traveled Scholar and honorary lecturer at the Great Library

I am Talhost Torchbearer of clan Blackbark. For the last two decades I have been walking the lands of Barsaive, keeping the sagas of old alive through my poems and songs. Such is the ancestral task of the Troubadour, made no less relevant now that the terror of the Scourge is receding. For indeed, how are we to write the stories of the future, if we can't preserve the tales of the past?

Ha! I can't even keep a straight face anymore. See, that's the kind of thing I would have told you twenty years ago. Indeed, I used to take myself and my discipline very seriously—too much so, in fact. We trolls have a saying: *Abor'a'kaf*, "life is a struggle". I was raised in this mindset: I could only think in terms of hardships to overcome and would allow no action of mine to be driven by foolish notions of enjoyment or happiness. A moment spent seeking 'fun' was a moment lost for loftier pursuits. Eventually I realized the importance of living a life filled with merriment and wonder, and to share this merriment and wonder with others as well.

You have asked me to tell you about Floranuus, the Passion of Joy, Energy and Motion, of whom I am a questor. Allow me to begin by telling you a story. A story I like to call:

HOW GRIMTRUTH WAS GRANTED A MIRACLE

There was once a troll who had a bleak outlook on life. They called him Grimtruth, for he'd only see the worst in every situation. Most people kept him at arms' length. Not so much because they didn't like him, but because they

knew he was blind to their affection. In fact, Grimtruth the troll had only one true friend. It took that friend's passing for Grimtruth to realize how much his friend had meant to him, leaving the troll devastated. For all his pessimistic views, he had never experienced real sadness and despair until that moment.

The night after the burial, a mournful Grimtruth stayed alone near the campfire, inconsolable, his empty eyes fixated on the crackling flames. He was beginning to doze off when the fire twisted into the shape of a face.

The apparition spoke. "I sensed your despair from miles away, troll Grimtruth. Is there anything I can do to cheer you up?"

Grimtruth recognized the apparition as the Passion Floranuus, but his grief ran so deep he felt even the Passion of Revelry would be powerless to make it go away. "Alas, my lord, my best friend—my only friend—is dead, and nothing could make me feel joy again."

But Floranuus would have none of it. "I understand why they call you Grimtruth, friend. But I will prove you wrong."

All night long, Floranuus tried to overcome Grimtruth's sorrow. The Passion had fire spirits dance around the campfire and the stars play celestial music. He conjured illusions that felt more tangible than reality itself. Animals came out of the wood to perform comedy routines that would have put Barsaive's greatest jester to shame. But the troll's sadness would not go away.

Grimtruth gave the Passion a sad smile. "I'm afraid none of your tricks will work, my lord. Please, leave me be."

But Floranuus is not one to give up. "I have one last trick. If it fails, I'll concede defeat and leave you alone. But if it succeeds, you'll become my questor and spread the gift of joy across the land." The Passion smiled: "Look at the eastern horizon, my friend."

Grimtruth did as he was instructed, expecting another illusion. At first, he saw nothing, but then it began. It was something so simple, and yet so magical—miraculous, even—that his darkest thoughts were swept away. The hint of a smile appeared on the corner of his mouth, as tears started to roll down his cheeks.

On the eastern horizon, the sun was rising.

I am reminded of a saying we have in my native Creana: "the sun shines brighter when the night has been dark."

~Taraneh

OF TADDEO THE WINDLING

As a Troubadour, it is my belief that all stories are fundamentally true. Oh, the facts may be fabricated, the protagonists fictional. But the feelings they convey are always real. As for the story I just told you, I can attest to its veracity. See, I wasn't always Talhost Torchbearer. When I left the Twilight Peaks, I was known as Talhost Grimtruth.

And so, having told you the story of how I became a questor of Floranuus, I shall tell you more about the friend I lost. His Name was Taddeo.

Taddeo was a windling and Wind-dancer, and as you know, I am a troll and Troubadour. He always liked how that sounded, the alliterations. That's how he was, always finding amusement and amazement in tiny details or far-fetched coincidences. Me, I found this habit of his annoying. Just to give you an idea of the kind of stick-in-the-mud I used to be. I even used to dress in typical mountain troll fashion, consisting mainly in grey and brown trappings. A far cry from the bright and colorful garments you see me wearing with pride today!

His Name is Thalost Torchbearer the troll Troubadour? He has truly mastered the art of alliteration!

~Aerniss Felenbrass, elf Troubadour

That friendship would grow between the two of us was nothing short of a wonder in itself. Windlings and trolls rarely get along, but when friendships do appear between our races they tend to grow very strong indeed, and such it was in our case.

Taddeo was not a questor of Floranuus himself, but the Passion was a major influence on the way he saw the world and lived his life. In many ways, he set me on the path I now tread.

Taddeo and I were originally part of the same group of adepts Named the Truthseekers. I won't tell you about the adventures we had with that group; you can read about them in the journals we've left to the Great Library or come to my next recital where I may recount one or two of our daring exploits. That is not the topic of the day. Today I shall tell you all I know about Floranuus.

FLORANUUS'S FIERY FORMS

Ever watched the night sky and saw a shooting star? Ever felt the blissful touch of hope as it crossed the firmament? You may have just caught a glimpse

of Floranuus, traveling across the world bringing delight to the hearts of Namegivers.

Fire is Floranuus's element. He always appeared to me as a fluttering silhouette that resembles a windling in size, shape and mannerisms. I've always found this form fitting, and not only because it reminds me of my dear friend. Other questors I've met have seen him adopt human, t'skrang, or even troll frames. But these forms have always had one thing in common: they always display a contagious zest and are engulfed in a joyous, sparkling fire. But not the scorching flames that burn and sear and singe, no. Floranuus is the fire that crackles merrily in your hearth, the warm caress of the sun, the bright aura of your torchlight. He is the fire that stands against a cold night and lights your way when all seems lost. His touch doesn't burn—although I have been told it will harm Horrors.

When Floranuus speaks, his voice is a delightful cacophony of music, song, and chirping. You find yourself tapping your feet and clapping your hands or snapping your fingers without realizing it. As you listen to Floranuus, all the troubles and worries that weighed on your heart are lifted, and when he departs, you are left ready to take on any obstacle with renewed courage and motivation.

I believe there is deeper wisdom to be found in old idioms and sayings. Isn't it common to say, about a lively person, that she has an "inner fire"? That inner fire, that energy, propels us to go places and do things. It is our life force. It is Floranuus.

This conversation reminds me of another. You see, back when I was part of the Truthseekers, one of our members was a Wizard. True to the teachings of his discipline, he spent much of his time doing research and calculations, hoping to find the answers to life in dusty old books and formulas. He once shared with me an interesting idea: the universe had once been a cold, empty void. Until one day, there had been a spark, and that initial spark had given life to the void, spawning the countless stars and our world.

Of course, he couldn't say what had caused the spark in the first place, but he believed he had evidence to support his claims. Being an elf, that Wizard had lived a long time, much of it spent observing the sky above us. It was his belief the universe was not still, but in perpetual motion, a cosmic movement started by this original combustion.

I don't necessarily believe his theories—they seem a bit far-fetched to me—but I must confess a newfound fondness for them. For this spark of life that put the whole universe in motion, what can it be if not Floranuus?

FLORANUUS'S IDEALS

I often hear that Floranuus is first and foremost the Passion of festivities, of carousing. While revelry is certainly one of the most enjoyable of his domains, it is only a small part of what he embodies. But let's talk more about that particular aspect later.

Floranuus is, simply put, the Passion of Elation. Elation can take many forms, depending on the situation and the Namegiver. In fact, Floranuus often follows other Passions, complementing their own gifts. Astendar may have blessed a song with harmony and a painting with beauty, but it is thanks to Floranuus that it leaves a smile on your face. Thystonius may give a warrior the strength to defeat a mighty foe, but it is Floranuus who gives the victory a sweet taste. While Upandal will give your house sturdy walls, Floranuus gives you felicity as you call it your home.

By that logic, any kind of achievement, even motivated by another Passion, becomes an act of devotion to Floranuus. It makes you wonder just how powerful he truly is.

~Dara'san, T'skrang Illusionist

All these moments, these sparks of joy, can easily be overlooked and discarded, as I once did. I remember questioning how Taddeo managed to approach every situation, no matter how perilous, with a smile and a laugh. He'd usually tell me, "Talhost, old soul, life is too short to not relish every moment of it." Only later, when I became a questor of Floranuus, did I understand the great truth these words contained.

Nothing can be sadder, when Death finally welcomes us to her realm, as to realize we have not enjoyed our life enough. We live in a harsh world and in dire times, so every opportunity for happiness should be seized and cherished. The role of a questor of Floranuus is to make sure they are.

THE RECRUITMENT OF NEW QUESTORS

It is the curse of Namegivers that Floranuus's gifts never seem to last. Floranuus is feisty and restless, never staying in the same place long, always moving forward. People can find themselves abandoned when he leaves as unexpectedly as he arrived. He is fire, and as such he is volatile and fickle. The truth is, like fire, Floranuus's blessings must be kept going. And this is one of

the missions Floranuus entrusts to his questors.

Floranuus doesn't understand what it means to be disillusioned, depressed, or even gloomy. He's the embodiment of mirth and energy, after all, so negative feelings are completely foreign to him. But he's aware they exist in Namegivers and will do all he can to vanquish them. So, while he's incapable of comprehending these feelings himself, he will try to recruit questors among people who possess intimate knowledge of them. People like me.

If you ask a questor of Floranuus of her life before meeting the Passion, she'll often reveal how sad and glum she used to be. Floranuus knows that if he can make such a person happy and positive again, that person will then know how to reach others who are similarly downhearted.

This is very true, and very important. A questor of Garlen may heal your body, but a questor of Floranuus will know the right words to soothe the wounds of your soul. I have heard rumors that the most powerful ones, the ones truly favored by their Passion, are able to cure victims of Horror-taint by teaching them how to feel joy again.

~Idoya, Windling Elementalist

MEDDLING AND ITS PERILS

One of the most controversial 'talents' of the questors of Floranuus is our ability to stick our nose in people's problems. We can't help it. If we sense someone is cast down or discouraged, we have to intervene to bring back some brightness in their life—often whether they want it or not. Some people find it profoundly annoying. But they eventually forgive us, as they understand we bear them no ill will, and our only goal is their happiness.

This also means we can sometimes put ourselves in danger by trying to interfere in conflicts that are considered deadly serious by the parties involved. Strangely, people are rarely receptive to jokes and mummery when weapons are drawn and fangs are bared! As a result, inexperienced questors have been hurt or even killed for trying to cheer up the wrong person at the wrong moment. It is a fine line to walk.

On the other hand, ending a conflict and bringing reconciliation between feuding parties is one of the greatest acts of devotion a questor of Floranuus might hope to achieve.

~Ks'drelpa, T'skrang Swordmaster

This allows me to talk about the essential distinction between questors of Floranuus and questors of Vestrial. People sometimes put us in the same bag. Aren't we all mummers and jesters? But Vestrial's followers are tricksters. Their jokes amuse only themselves and their Passion and are intended to deceive and hurt. We questors of Floranuus strive to entertain our audience, to make them smile and laugh. If you meet a questor of Floranuus whose jokes seem cruel and mean, something is very wrong, and that person is probably not what he claims to be.

THE POWER OF OPTIMISM

The world we live in can be a dreary, disheartening place. Horrors still lurk in the wilderness. The Therans would enslave us all. Scorchers prey on travelers and merchants alike while the *tro'o'astia*—the crystal raiders—target airships. On the Serpent, t'skrang houses build their armadas. Iopos schemes in the north, planning who knows what. It's easy to get the feeling no place is safe, nor will ever be. It's easy to abandon hope and embrace despair.

Despair is Floranuus's greatest enemy. Despair is death—not the death of the body, which cannot be avoided, but the death of the soul. Despair deprives Namegivers of their energy, of their emotions, of their will to live. Floranuus's merry fire is replaced with a cold emptiness. As far as Floranuus is concerned, this is a fate worse than death of the body, and he will do whatever he can to prevent it. This has put him at odds with some of the Mad Passions, especially Dis and Raggok, who push Namegivers to reject emotion and embrace bitterness.

To fight against despair, one of the Passion's most powerful weapons is optimism. The idea that, as sure as day follows night, things will eventually get better. Today may be bleak, but tomorrow? Tomorrow is full of possibilities. If you can believe that, then nothing will ever cast you down, and nothing will ever stop you. If you can believe that your tomorrow won't be the same as today, then you are already pushing despair away. You are already winning.

It is, of course, a never-ending battle. We Namegivers are not Passions ourselves, we are creatures of many emotions and moods, and the world keeps reminding us of how imperiled we are. But Floranuus is determined to

prevent despair from having the last word, even for a short moment. As long as the spark of optimism exists, Floranuus's fire will find a way to spread. As questors, it is therefore our role to keep laughing in the face of danger and see the silver lining in every cloud, no matter how foreboding.

But, of course, not all questors are dashing adventurers exploring Barsaive's darkest corners. Most of our work is done in small communities and villages. I like to say our role is to make the most routine events memorable—magical, even. There's no such thing as an achievement not worth celebrating with dances, songs and games. We are here for births and weddings, for elections and successions, for when merchants leave and when explorers return. For funerals as well, although I'll talk more about this particular duty later.

All these moments should not be lost in time, they should become heartwarming memories, glowing embers that will allow people to move through harder days. Without these memories—may they be joyous or bittersweet—it is all too easy for despair to set in.

THE IMPORTANCE OF PARTIES

I said earlier that celebrations are only a small part of what Floranuus is about, but they are an essential part. Taddeo loved parties. Anywhere we'd go, anything we'd do, the windling would look for reasons to celebrate—and trust me when I say he could always find at least one. As Grimtruth, I often found this obsession for carousing excessive; there is a time for revelry, and a time for quiet contemplation. As Torchbearer the questor, however, I have come to realize there's not nearly enough festivities at any given time. Any event should be an occasion for gathering friends and strangers alike for the simple purpose of having fun. I am reminded of another saying of my people: *De'abor'abora*. "While we live, let us live." Or, to phrase it differently, live life to its fullest while it lasts.

Of course, for most mountain trolls, the saying is mostly an excuse to go on bloodthirsty raids against merchant vessels. Although I'm sure it's alright by Floranuus as long as it makes them happy.

My apologies for this outburst, this is a touchy subject for me.

~Korum, obsidiman merchant of Travar

In fact, I've come to believe that even funerals should be a celebration. Of course, losing a friend or a parent is difficult; it is perfectly acceptable to feel sadness and bereavement. Living, unfortunately, means outliving others. And



it never gets easier. But there's a time for mourning, and a time to sing. The departed's life was a fire burning bright. If you allow it, that fire becomes part of you, it lives through you, pushes you forward. Celebrating the departed's life allows their inner fire to burn one last time, for all to see, and by doing so that fire will spread.

Think about it this way: when your time comes, don't you want to pass a bit of the energy that once drove you to the ones you love, to help them move through their own struggles? This cannot happen if we only acknowledge the pain of the departed's death and ignore the joys his life brought us. This is also something Taddeo taught me. In his own words, "When someone dies you have to laugh, else you're burying them twice". Looking back, I wish I had been capable of following his advice when he left us. I know better now.

I'm still not very good at parties, to tell you the truth. I don't really enjoy partaking in them, except when it comes to drinking. I am, after all, a troll. Drinking is a serious matter to my people. But I take pleasure in organizing them, and in watching others delight in them. Festivities are a success when the participants forget their worries, even if only for a day, an hour, or a single moment. When people dance and laugh and love, when they accept they have the sacred right to enjoy themselves, then I have fulfilled my duty as a questor of Floranuus.

Ha! Here I am, talking about duty again. I guess I haven't changed that much since my days as Grimtruth. But now what I consider my duty is to make people happy, and I believe there is no higher calling than that.

I think Taddeo would be proud of me. It's a bit of his fire that burns within my heart, after all.





THE HEALER'S PATH

This treatise of the life of a questor of Garlen was reluctantly provided by Ras Algethi, a mild-mannered Dwarf Weaponsmith who sought no fame or notice as to his works. His companions, however, interrupted us constantly with tales of their exploits. It didn't take a great deal of understanding or time to realize why Ras kept with this motley group. They needed his healing arts and repair skills far more than he needed their derring-do and blatant disregard for the destruction of property left in their wake. It is a testament to the devotion of Garlen's questors how deeply they take the oath of caring for all. We may sometimes take Garlen and her followers for granted, but the document that follows is not to be.

~Thais Bastron, Wizard of the city of Tansiarda

It makes sense you talk with a Weaponsmith about the healing arts of Garlen. Her hearth stokes my fire, brings my comrades together, and makes friends of strangers. It makes a family home, keeps all within her gaze warm and comforted. This does not mean that any other Discipline or non-adept cannot feel the need to repair that which is broken in people or the land. You may one day seek a Purifier who also quests for Garlen. Their insights would be superior to my own.

Anyone can heal, and nearly anything can be mended or made whole again. But to truly protect and nurture the repair of not just the body, but the mind, and make that which was broken stronger than before, that is Garlen's secret.

Wrapping a cut so it no longer bleeds, providing the proper dose of a salve for a wound, you could follow those directions were I blind and had to tell you to do these things on my behalf. That is not healing.

Healing is not just knowing which things to mix to make an antidote for a spider's poison or knowing that to first apply the antidote the poison must be removed from the area of infection. Healing is also knowing that while the antidote is being mixed the victim is suffering and may lose the battle with the poison.

As with all injuries and wounds, things that need healing stem from a place of breakage. A heart is strained, a family is away from each other, a bone is broken, or a limb is rendered unusable. Healing addresses something that doesn't function properly. Understanding how it should work, and how to restore it, perhaps better than before, is the nature of the healing art.

Garlen provides the wisdom and perception to see what is damaged, and what can and cannot be healed. Sometimes the damage is too severe, and the repair would cause too much pain for someone to bear. In those instances, by Garlen's wisdom, we understand we cannot heal everything. We simply provide as much comfort as we can and relieve the burden of the suffering, so that they may be welcomed to Garlen's embrace.

BEING CALLED TO HEAL

As I said, anyone can heal. But not everyone feels Garlen's call. Some people notice a cut on someone else's arm or a slight injury and shrug it off thinking to themselves that the person will be okay. It's just a small nick, a miniscule injury. Nothing to worry about, they'll be fine. They're tough.

But Garlen's questors see every scrape, bruise, limp, or sore muscle as a place to start improving a person's well-being. For every pain and inconvenience not only taxes the body and impairs day-to-day life, it also grinds away at the soul and mental faculties. If left untreated a minor limp affects more than just the leg, it begins to affect the hip, and then the back, and eventually the mind of the injured. Soon all they can do is think about their pain, and that prevents them from thinking about anything or anyone else.

This then affects their family and the community. They feel more like a burden to others, and then begin to feel unworthy of belonging, of contributing, of functioning within the community. And this all comes, as I said, from a limp! It is how we questors of Garlen see things. Not just injuries to the body, we see the injuries to communities made up of those wounded bodies and damaged souls. Tell me you haven't seen the effect of a Horror's influence ravage a community and destroy their trust? Seen it myself, I have. Repairing that damage will take a long time and consistent community effort.

Garlen called to me at a young age when I was exploring the countryside near my village. I had stumbled upon a fox who had recently captured a rabbit. The fox was not acting in a normal fashion of just feasting upon its kill. It was tearing the rabbit apart while it was still alive, keeping the rabbit in agony.

Seeing the swath of blood on the ground, I knew the rabbit wouldn't survive. This was the way of nature; the rabbit had to die in order to feed the fox. Knowing I could not save the rabbit from its demise, I accepted that it should at least be put out of its misery. I startled the fox, making it skitter away a few feet. I raced to the rabbit, saw its chest heaving like a boiling pot, more rapidly than I had ever seen. I used a soothing tone in my voice, sang it a lullaby, and placed a calm hand on its head while its heart ceased to beat.

I backed away and the fox returned to its kill. I then noticed a small creature on the back of the fox—a rat atop its shoulders. As the fox approached, the air

smelled differently, and the fox ran at me while the rat jumped off its back. I tussled with the fox until I subdued and captured him. It was not his fault. What grown fox would take on a Namegiver? Not a sane one, no matter how hungry it was.

The rat was feasting on the carcass of the rabbit. The rat was the cause of the fox's confusion and belligerent behavior and controlled the fox in its act toward the rabbit. The rat was now mine to deal with. I dispatched it but took it back to my village where the elder told me it was a leech rat, which has a special gland that allows healers to do many things.

Garlen had worked her charm on me. In aiding the rabbit, and not killing the fox because he was not acting in his nature, then by dispatching the rat, I had shown Garlen that I was on her path already. Sympathy for the dying. Compassion for the confused, and no mercy for those who inflict pain for their own use. And the prize was the path I now walk and the wisdom of one of the Passions.

I have followed Garlen from that day and now quest for her to show others her teachings. For don't we all prosper from mercy and understanding?

HOW WE HEAL, HOW WE LEARN

You say I speak like no other dwarf you've met. I am not sure how to accept this. No matter. I know that every soul walking around is unique, no two alike. But any malady you or I or simple townfolk acquire acts differently among us yet still the same. Do you see?

No? I will explain.

Many diseases and illnesses are noticed when the patient develops a fever. This is how we know someone has taken ill. We also know that only a few illnesses develop this way. We have learned these things over time. It is not the work of Dis. It is an illness. Is it something to fear? Sometimes. Sometimes not. A fever in winter, after playing in the snow? Perhaps a mild illness, brought on in such play. A fever after entering into the Mist Swamps? Something to be taken seriously.

Fever is but one way we notice illness. There are many others. Skin symptoms, discoloration in the eyes, swelling of the throat, even a simple cough. Don't let this lead you to only assess illness by a fever.

~Casen Teren of Haven

This is how maladies act the same. Or, rather, how the body acts the same regardless of Namegiver to fight off the malady. Be it bee sting, parasite, or infection.

But to treat each illness the same is foolhardy. This is why Garlen is wise. She teaches us observation. Does the throat swell while the fever takes hold? Does the skin go pallid, or perspire? Each illness takes on different, subtle traits. Distinguishing it from the rest. Like each dagger or sword I've ever seen. Though they each be the same weapon to you—a dagger is a dagger you'd say—each weapon, by its nicks and striations in the metal, is unique to me. As is each illness I've come across.

I've treated a village full of quaking fever, but the next quaking fever victim I saw was years later and by subtle differences in the patient and the nature of quaking fever, it was difficult to determine what the ailment was, though I did discern it in time. Thankfully, quaking fever is not deadly, and I was able to lessen the victim's suffering.

My companions and I have been all over Barsaive, in kaers, palaces, and places I dare not mention. But while they seek legends of glory and sacrifice, I seek knowledge of plague and pestilence from before or during the Scourge. Ways to protect us all from things that creep in slowly, the sicknesses that take hold and won't leave. Treatments that worked then, and how and why they worked. A nice ancient sword is wonderful to find and a treasure to be restored and a legend to tell, and I will not turn one away. I have many in my collection I am restoring now. But I collect many kinds of weapons to thwart not only the horrors and their ilk, but poisons and sicknesses that creep in and do just as much damage.

Followers of Garlen continue to learn, observe, and research wherever we go. If we find a local remedy from a village where they boil tree bark we study the tree, the water, and how long it must be boiled, and the repulsive smell it makes. We make notes in case that tree is found elsewhere in Barsaive. We take these tools with us wherever we go. We strive to cure all wounds and stave off all maladies. For isn't it the greatest good that we all live as best we can every day?

For all things that make us less of what we are—the horrors, disease, strife—make life more difficult and steal from us our entire potential. And not just us as individuals. All of us, collectively as Barsaivians, as townfolk, as members of an army, as cousins, brothers, sisters, I could go on. For one of us to feel they don't belong, that they don't have a place in this world, that they cannot contribute to the people they share the land with, is to rob all of us of what that person could accomplish.

I knew a man, a human who was interested in politics. He had ideas of creating a political system distant from Throal's monarchy that could not

be corrupted, but he was left doing menial, degrading work because of a diminishment of spirit. He felt he had no place, his community and family did not receive his ideas well. They shunned him for being different and scoffed at his awkward ways of thought. These actions by those who claimed to love him, and claimed to make him part of their group, left him feeling unwanted. So why, he said, should he try to better their world? They certainly never bettered his. Alas, I could not heal his heart, or mend his mind from his self-destructive thoughts.

Had I been able to heal this rift between him and those around him, perhaps his ideas of a better aspect of the world would have spread into other areas and we might all be the better for it. And his is but one tale among countless others. If I could have eased his suffering... well, there's no telling.

THE HEALING NATURE OF FIRE

Did you know that fire can heal? Oh yes, it burns if you get too close, but it has more power to heal and bring comfort than any other element.

Of course, you think I mean to lead you down the path of the Weaponsmith when I say that without the fire burning its hottest I cannot mend a sword or a shield. But fire has provided safety since long before we had shelters. With its shining light, fire keeps the darkness of night at bay, but it also drives the darkness of fear from the minds of those who see it.

Fire keeps us warm when we are cold, cooks our food and nourishes us, and keeps away those beasts scared of what it can do to their hides. We know this and use fire's power to keep the monsters at bay both in the wild, and at home. Something about the dance of the flames can hold court over the most troubled mind and provide it a sense of calm. This is the essence of Garlen's hearth: in the nature of fire to be light, heat, and for keeping the evils away.

And since we have been using fire to cook, and to warm ourselves, for a weapon, and for scaring away that which frightens us, we have been using fire to join with each other to become one people. As the work is done, and the meal is finished, do we not sit around, warming ourselves and talk of matters close to our hearts? Do we not chat while we are comfortable and not saddled with finding our next meal?

One cannot heal when one is restless mentally, emotionally, or physically. Likewise, a community of people cannot heal under the same duress. A person or a community must be at ease to begin to heal. Otherwise it will take longer for them to feel they are back to normal and can resume their place in the world.

Make no mistake, fire can destroy a home quicker than anything else. Consume it and raze it to the ground. But Garlen is in the control of the hearth

and its fire. Garlen is in the ability to bring together people who need and seek its comfort, even after tragedy and pain.

And do not forget, fire can also be used to stop severe bleeding by sealing tight the flesh and cauterizing the wound. It's not pretty, and the injured does tend to scream quite loudly. They'll live with a scar, but they're alive and will have a tale to tell about how it came to be.

~Warwick, Elementalist

And sometimes Garlen is in the act of ridding a community of objects that brought them unease and distrust by disposing of them in a bonfire. A community that needs to unleash pent up anger and frustration for what had been done to them—tearing down and burning their oppressors' symbols, rendering boards of a destroyed building as kindling—this is a cleansing that Garlen welcomes in her hearth. Fire can destroy an unwanted past. Metal chains may not burn to ash, but a slave throwing his bonds into the fire is an act of healing. It begins to heal the wounds deep in the mind. Once the mind and soul are unburdened, the body can grow. Likewise, once the body is whole, the mind and spirit can thrive.

Keep your home fire burning my friend; Garlen is in your embers.

HEALING THE MAD PASSIONS

As Garlen has taught me, anyone can heal. And at some point, all will need healing. The earth herself was in good health for ages before the Scourge. Now she needs healing in its aftermath.

No one is free from being hurt or needing a healer's touch. The Mad Passions are no exception. But they are so powerful, you say. Only the Horrors in their overwhelming numbers could have driven the Passions mad, you say.

But that is how water becomes a river. Each drop of water comes together to form a stream, then more water turns it into a river that sweeps immovable things out of its path or wears them down. The Horrors and the Scourge were such a river.

The Passions did not lose themselves when faced with just one Horror. No. It happened slowly, over time, with many acts of depravity and pain. Eventually the Passions lost their way, swept up by the river of what the Scourge brought to the world. As though the Passions succumbed to a disease. A disease none yet knows how to cure or treat.

But, my friend, all things come to those who strive for making things better than they were before. I am not the only questor of Garlen. There are many of us. And between us we will heal the land, its people, and its ideals. We will teach. We will talk. We will mend, and heal, and strengthen.

I am but a branch of the tree of Garlen's wisdom and practice. I will take what she teaches, connected to her and reaching out to others. As will other Questors, forming their own branches. And like that tree, upon those branches are seeds. I plant seeds with every community, every person I heal in some way. One act of kindness begets another. One person unburdened, repays that lightness of spirit to their community.

It is a monumental task to stop the flow of a river that has been moving for years, made its mark on the land. But look to the beavers. They do it, one branch at a time.

My actions alone cannot heal the Mad Passions. Nor mine with the combined acts of a dozen questors. The only way to heal the Mad Passions is by acting together as all branches of a dam do. As a people committed to be the best of ourselves, and as one community dedicated to helping all. Every act of healing, and every aid given the afflicted, is another branch added to the dam. Well-placed acts of healing, proper wisdom and knowledge, will one day teach everyone how and why we heal, damming the river.

Go and do good works for yourself, your family, your neighbors, and for every stranger you meet, with Garlen's guidance of course, and then the Mad Passions can heal.

I will explain what this questor did not. Not only can anyone heal, but each of us should heal everyone we meet, in any way we can, every day. Every act of kindness, every hurt soothed, every emotion turned to positive efforts, is one less way for the Mad Passions to stay mad.

~Emalison of Urupa

ON THE DISCIPLINES AND HEALING

You ask if I am sincere when I say anyone can heal. I am. Even the most cunning and fiercest warrior can learn to heal. To cause injury on purpose is one thing. To cause by accident is another. Do words not hurt when spoken in haste and anger? Would a fierce warrior not apologize to a fellow warrior whose pride and prowess he insulted? Once words are said in anger, and those words give offense, or wound the spirit, they cannot be taken back. Their



damage is done. But apologies can be made, amends can be made, actions can be taken to repair that slight. Even by a Warrior. Deeds do more to heal than words, when words did the damage.

Healing begins with healing ourselves. We must know what makes us, ourselves, whole and repaired. Be it words, or splints on a broken bone, or song, or rest. Drinking and telling tales, music and dance, are as good for the soul of the weary as medicine is to the sick. And the regaling and singing take place around the hearth in a tavern. Garlen's work at its finest. Enlivening souls, raising spirits, and bringing a community together.

All aspects of life can be used to heal. If someone is hurting because their beloved is far away, would Garlen not teach me to suggest sending a messenger with a letter of kind words? Healing the mind, quieting it of doubt, and making

the thoughts clear and strong is also as important as healing the body. These can be important lessons shared around a hearth, between tasks on a farm, or walking in the woods. Certainly, a community that commits itself to improving everyone's health will thrive and grow stronger, clearer in purpose.

Healing a community after a storm has washed away crops, or a predator has taken livestock, is as important as healing one sick child in the Kingdom of Throal. And a community goes by many names: trollmoot, clan, village, and on and on. Each is a family. A family is more than the blood shared between parent and child or between siblings. A family is in how it operates. Does not a wolf pack operate like a family? Protecting and teaching their young, keeping them from becoming prey and strengthening the bond of the pack? When the pack comes across a stray, they adopt them and bring them into the fold. There is no blood bond there.

I consider my companions my family. I have spent more time with them than I have with my long-gone parents. Even though my twin brother accompanies me, my traveling companions and I have been through thick and thin together. There is no greater bond than the loyalty and companionship we share. I dare anyone to tell me we are not a family. We learn, we love, we grow, and we survive all perils like any family.

~Bomani Niu of Kratas

So, when I speak of Garlen and her work from the hearth of the house, to the community, I speak of the function of a family: to safeguard the young, the weak, those who cannot defend themselves and need the guidance and strength to one day be whole and complete beings. Nurturing or restoring those beings to the best of themselves.

So, Beastmasters, Sky Raiders, Wizards, anyone can heal. In fact, one in my own party, a Warrior, is beginning to walk Garlen's path. Time will tell. After all, Garlen is about family as much as she is about making sure no one suffers. To those that will combat evil, and destroy those who inflict undue pain, I say dispatch evil quickly, do not let it linger or suffer, for it will not show you mercy given the chance. Heal the sick, protect the wounded, and comfort the dying. Wouldn't you want the same on your deathbed?





SERVING THE GREEN FATHER

I found Jobar Ryll in the village of Pine Grove, just three days south of Lake Vors. Jobar is a dwarf, and not only a questor of Jaspree but a Warrior as well. I could see how each of the villagers respected and admired this grizzled dwarf, and I was curious as to what led him to be in such a respected position.

~Theodor Willit, Researcher and Scribe for the Great Library of Throal

You say to begin now? You are ready then scribe? Very well, I shall begin. You have asked me to answer your questions, and so I shall, but I warn you that not every seed planted grows to a beautiful flower. Do you understand? No? I shall speak plainly then. I know you have expectations and those expectations may not come to fruition.

NEW GROWTH

So many people think that Questors of Jaspree either live in the jungles and forests chasing hunters away from the animals, or spend their time viciously protecting a patch of land from those that would despoil it. They are not completely wrong, but they are not completely right either. Each Questor of Jaspree finds their own path to live the Ideals of the Green Father.

I was not always a Warrior, just as you were not always a scribe. When I was younger, I lived in a village much like this one we are in. I was the son of a farmer, and each member of my family were farmers. Jaspree is very close to those that tend the land, and every morning before heading to the fields, we would say a prayer to Jaspree. We grew wheat and, come the harvest, we would share our wheat with the rest of the village, thereby doing our part to ensure the village thrived and grew. Without the wheat, the village might starve and wither as the plants do when there is a drought.

So, you see, from my very first days my life's weave was intertwined with Jaspree. The Green Father was a part of my daily life, even though in those early days I had not yet heard his call to service.

The life of a farmer is not easy, but it is satisfying. Still, there are dangers that threaten that way of life. Packs of wolves that might threaten the flock, or bandits who seek to take what they want. Our village was no different, and on many occasions, we had suffered our fair share of bandit and scorcher raids.

My father and grandfather, along with other men from the village, would often deal with these threats, but I was never allowed to see how they had. I was too young. I would ask my grandfather to tell me of the battles they fought, but he would simply smile and tell me "Jaspree provided."

I found myself called to the Warrior Discipline. I wanted to be like my grandfather, or my father, protecting the people of my village. I would imagine great battles I would have, with ferocious orks, or dashing bandit kings. The thrill I felt as I imagined these things led me to leave my home and seek the life of the Warrior. I promised my grandfather I would return someday and use my strength to protect the village as he had. He smiled sadly, hugged me, and whispered in my ear, "Jaspree provides." I assumed I had his blessing and left to seek my fortune.

I thrived as I embraced the shield and sword. I made each battle my own, reveling in the excitement of surviving one more fight even as I mourned for those who fell to my weapon. I never killed for enjoyment, nor simply because I was able to. I only ended a life when there was no choice to do otherwise.

But even as a Warrior, Jaspree pulled at my heart. After a battle, I would find myself listening to the sounds of nature and feel a sense of calm. When I passed through farming villages, I would remember the prayers my family would offer.

As I grew older, and more skilled in my Discipline, I began to see myself differently. I had killed many times, because I had no choice. It was either the enemy or myself and, as I have said before, I took no joy from it. The tiger does not hunt and kill for sport or out of malice. It kills to survive, and only when it must. A Warrior is no different from those noble children of the Green Father we call beasts. Yet I am a Namegiver, not a beast. Were my choices in which battles to fight the correct ones? Was there a different path I should follow?

THE CALL

I began my life as a farmer, then took to the path of the Warrior. Now, in my later years, I felt something missing, and found my heart being pulled back to the days of my simple worship of Jaspree. Several questors I have spoken to over the years have told me that they heard a call. I am no different. My call came as I traveled from Lake Ban to Throal one day.

I had entered a village much like this one, much like my home village, and was seeking a bed for the night. The people who watched me as I waited to greet the village elder reminded me of the folk from my own home. Simple, weathered folk who worked the land to survive. I felt a tinge of homesickness and smiled at each of them that eyed me with caution and unease.

As I prepared to provide an example of my skill in carving runes, to show I was not tainted by a Horror, the village elder asked me to leave. I was taken aback. Never had a village refused me shelter before. Most folk would see my muscles and callused hands and smile. They would bargain a straw bed for my aid in bringing in part of the harvest or carrying some heavy load to a market. I asked for the reason, and the elder shook his head. He demanded I leave before sundown and to not return.

Despite the rude fashion in how the elder chose to approach me, I left the village and looked for a place to set up camp for the night. It had been perhaps an hour since I had left the village, when a lad of no more than fourteen years came running up behind me. The boy begged for my help. He explained how a group of bandits had been extorting the village for several weeks, and the elder refused to stand up to them.

The boy finished his tale and offered me a handful of copper. "If it's coin you need, take this."

I could see the desperate hope in his eyes. Hope that I would rush into the fight, act as his avenger. I looked at the boy and recognized myself in him. He had no doubt heard tales of heroes in armor fighting evil, perhaps the same ones I had heard at his age. I looked past him and saw the wheat bending in the breeze, remembering the harvests of my youth. I could almost feel the sheaves in my hands as I would bind them and toss them into our family's cart.

I told the lad to keep his coin and began walking back towards the village.

I reached the outskirts and could hear the raucous laughter and raised voices of the bandits. I walked past several villagers who were cowering, and I could see a glimmer of hope in their eyes as they watched me go by. I came to the center of the village, and saw the bandits gathered underneath a large apple tree. They were well on their way to getting drunk and were sprawled upon the ground. There were ten of them, and my Warrior's eye took immediate note of their positions, determining the most efficient path to take if I chose to begin killing them.

The leader of the bandits was leaning against the tree, and he smiled as I approached. He warned me to turn and leave, or else I would end up in a shallow grave. I stopped and looked him in the eye. My hand was on the hilt of my sword. It would have been simple to slaughter these men.

Then I saw the village elder who had turned me away. His fear was obvious, and I understood why he had refused me hospitality. I could kill the bandits, but innocent villagers might be hurt or killed during the fight.

The village needed salvation, but I was at a loss. My talents as a Warrior, the violence and death I offered, were not the solution.

The bandit leader took my hesitation for fear and laughed, swinging his blade in a way meant to intimidate me.

And then, again, a wave of memory overcame me. The sound of wheat in the breeze. The smell of fresh earth. The songs of farmers bringing in the harvest.

I realized the answer and smiled.

"Jaspree provides."

I was speaking, but it was my grandfather's voice I heard.

Killing crows does not stop another flock from coming to ruin the fields, but a scarecrow can discourage the crows from ever coming.

My hand left my sword and raised into the air. The apple tree shuddered. As the bandit turned to see what was happening, the tree bent towards him. A thick branch wrapped around him, lifting him into the air. The others backed away in fear. I began to laugh. The bandits turned to me, their faces contorted with fear. I told them to leave and never return or I would bring the wrath of the Green Father down on them. Then I pointed out beyond the tree, and the tree threw the bandit leader out and away in the direction I was pointing. The bandits ran for their lives, and the village was safe.

Jaspree provided many things that day. The village needed aid, and he brought them a savior. To the bandits, he provided a sorely needed lesson. And to me, he provided answers to the questions I had been asking about my place in the world, and the path to follow.

After that day I traveled from village to village, bringing Jaspree's gifts to each community. In some I helped with crops or tended sick animals. In others I brought my Warrior abilities to bear protecting them from outside threats. Doing so is like tending the fields of my childhood, but instead of wheat, I tend the spirits and lives of good Namegivers. Discouraging bandits is like pulling weeds, and as I help these people, they grow and thrive like a healthy crop.

Soon my travels became a regular route. I would visit the same villages year after year, getting to know the families in each and bringing the promise of Jaspree's aid and protection to each and every one.

THE FIRST QUESTOR AND THE FIRST SEED

I would like to share with you a story that I learned from my grandfather, and that I often share with the children of the villages I tend to. I think it illustrates not only the call of the questor, but why we are obligated to protect and tend to those under our care.

In the first days of the land, there were no questors. No Namegivers chosen to live the ideals of a Passion and act in their interests. The Namegivers were still growing and learning who they were and what they could become.

One day, Jaspree was looking upon the First Seed, the source of all life, though whether it was beast or plant I cannot say. Jaspree realized that with

so much to care for and protect, he would not always be present to ensure the First Seed was kept safe. The Green Father looked upon the diverse Namegiver races and decided that he would choose one to act as the protector of the First Seed, a guardian who lived by his ideals.

For many years, Jaspree traveled the land. Sometimes in the form of a beast, sometimes in the form of one of the Namegiver races. He searched for one who lived in harmony with the land and the beasts. Then one day he found one.

His Name was Yorin, and he was human. He lived among the trees and tended to the green. He shared his bounty and home with many beasts, caring for them and learning from them. The Green Father saw this and was greatly pleased.

Jaspree came to Yorin and showed him the First Seed, "Yorin, this is the First Seed. It is the origin of all life and is part of the pattern of the land. I charge you with guarding and protecting this, and to that end I will grant you powers to aid in the performance of this duty."

Yorin took the offered gift and promised to do as the Green Father charged him to do. Jaspree smiled briefly, but then grew incredibly serious.

"Be wary though Yorin," Jaspree growled, "I expect you to live by my edicts: Protect the land and the beasts, guide the people in how to live with the land and the beasts, stand against those that would despoil such. Should you fail to do so, no longer will you have these powers or my favor."

Yorin bowed his head to Jaspree, "I will live as you decree, Green Father, and I will care and protect the First Seed as you ask."

Jaspree nodded solemnly and then shifted form into a great eagle and flew away.

So was the first questor chosen. Some may claim this to not be true, but it is from the inspiration of Jaspree that all of the other Passions saw wisdom and began to choose their own questors. The Green Father has always fostered and encouraged growth, and so it is.

Ridiculous! How this fellow can make the claim of Jaspree conceiving of the first questor, I can't even comprehend. The truth is that Mynbruje created the first questor. The need for justice led him to create his questors, so that they might bring his wisdom and compassion among the Namegivers.

~Landon Ryll, Questor of Mynbruje

Really? That is what you focus on, Ryll? Which Passion came up with questors first? What about this First Seed? Can you conceive of how powerful and dangerous a pattern item for the whole of creation it would be if it is real? It boggles the mind.

~Jett, Troubadour and Swordmaster of Bartertown

For many years, Yorin guarded the First Seed, but eventually he entered his final years. By then several other Namegivers had been called to serve Jaspre, and each came to him to honor his service. Among those that came, Yorin noticed a young elven girl and felt the power of Jaspre call out to him. He summoned the young elf and asked her Name.

"I am Lynelle," she answered in a soft voice, "I am only recently one of Jaspre's chosen questors, and I am honored to be here with you Elder One."

"It is I who should be honored young Lynelle," said Yorin, "My end is coming, and the Green Father has chosen you to replace me as the guardian of the First Seed."

Lynelle fell to her knees, stunned by what Yorin had said. "Why has he chosen me?" she asked, "I am young and new to this path."

"Why should he not choose you?" Yorin replied, "Is it not the tiny seed that grows into the mighty tree? You will grow into a mighty Questor, and Jaspre has decreed this to be. Now, attend to me Lynelle. There is much for you to learn before you take stewardship of the First Seed."

With that began the tradition of how the guardians of the First Seed are chosen. They are always young and newly called to Jaspre, the seeds that will grow into mighty trees.

WHY JASPREE IS IMPORTANT

Jaspre is the fertile field that provides the wheat which Namegivers turn into the bread to fill their bellies. Jaspre is the water that flows in every river, stream, and lake that brings life to all; whether it is plant, animal, or Namegiver. Jaspre is the beast which gives the hunter purpose and provides meat for the hungry and hide for clothing.

All these things and more show that without Jaspre we could not live as we do. Jaspre is the very breath of the land, and his joy its heartbeat. Jaspre has given us the gifts that provide sustenance and the necessities we require to survive and grow.

However, the Green Father does not simply give these things over to us. He expects us to work with nature, not simply taking but tending. He expects that when we take what he offers, we give something in return, taking part in the cycle of life. When we hunt a beast, it should be for sustenance, not sport. When we take lumber from the forest, we should take what is needed and no more. We must let the forests grow, for those in the future. As he charged Yorin in the story, respect is what he asks of us in return for his gifts, and respect should be given.

JASPREE IS EVERYWHERE

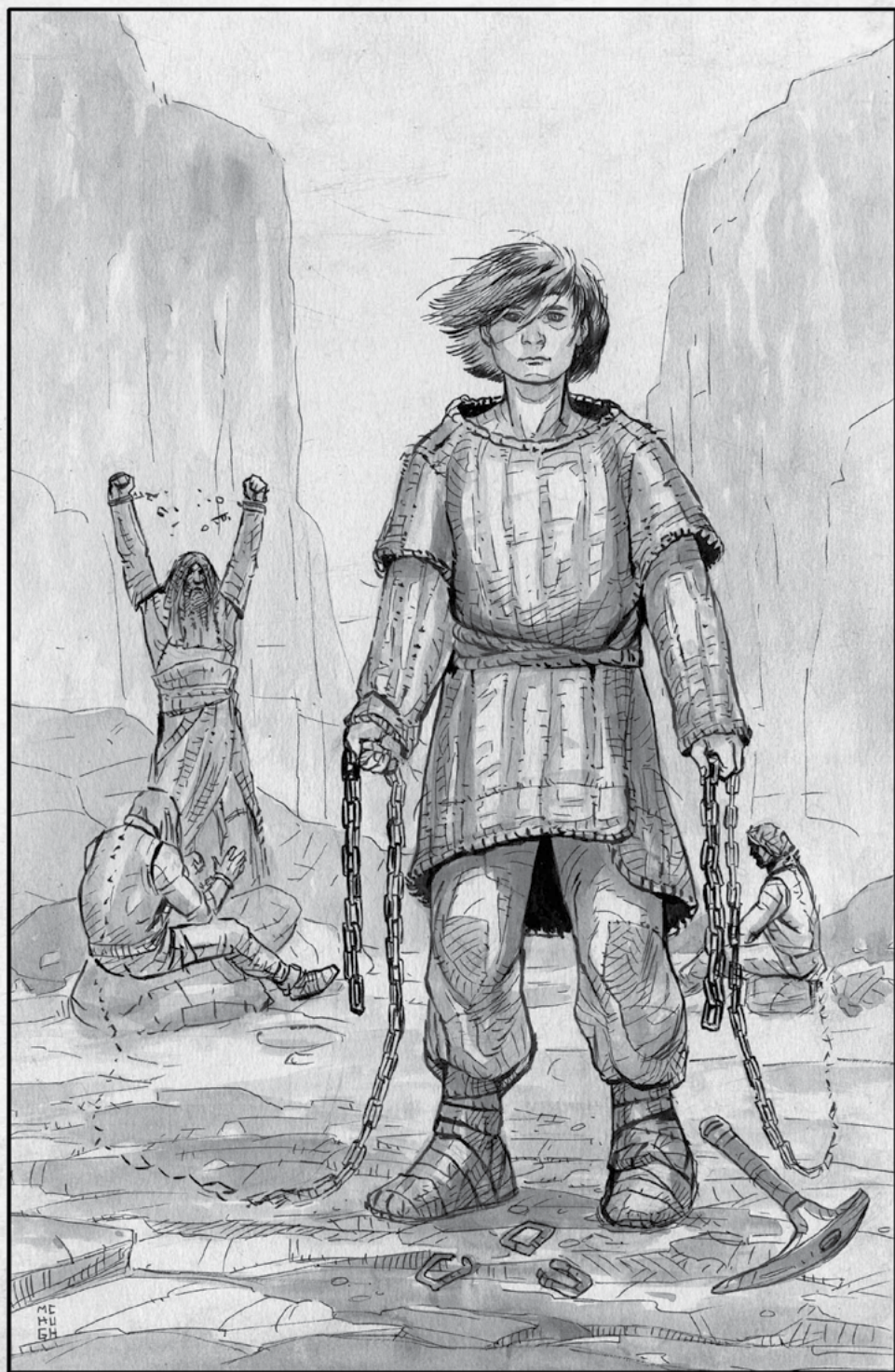
As his questor I work to tend to folk as needed. This is the path Jaspree has set me on, and I am fulfilled to act in his service. I am still a Warrior, just as much as I am a questor. I have found a balance in using my knowledge of battle to better choose how to best protect the people of Barsaive, and still maintain the delicate balance Jaspree requires.



Even as I travel and help the villages I have promised to protect, there are other questors of Jaspree who follow their own paths. I know one who lives in Throal, deep within the mountains, helping provide food to the populace by raising edible fungi. I know yet another who works with the miners of True Fire near Death's Sea. She helps ensure that the native wildlife is unharmed, and that the miners do not end up victims to an angry Fire Eagle. Many more live and travel all over Barsaive, following their own call from the Green Father. We all act in accordance with his call and are dedicated to the edicts he gave Yorin, the first questor.

I hope this has provided you the insight you desired, and I will ask Jaspree to make your path clear of thorns and roots that trip. For now, I must take my leave. I still have several families to check in on before I travel to the next village.

Be well scholar. Remember that Jaspree provides.





THE LADY OF CHAINS

I, everyone, knew of the Lady of Chains, but no one believed she was real. She was a rumor. She was a whisper. She was a story that slavers told each other around the campfire. No one wanted her to be real. If she were real... if she were real everything that we knew about Lochost, the Passion of Freedom, would fall to pieces. When she arrived at the Great Library and placed this journal into my keeping, the Lady of Chains became an undeniable reality. What follows is not the full journal, but those excerpts that I feel shed light onto the Lady's motivations and reveal the truth and reality of something nearly inexplicable.

~Jessup, Scholar of the Passions of the city of Travar

Are we chosen, or do we choose? Do we wrap ourselves in the bindings of Lochost, or does Lochost bind us to him? It's a question that I've shared with other questors around campfires or while savoring a glass of thick dwarven mead.

I used to lie awake at night wondering why Lochost chose me. Most of his questors are former slaves, who escaped through Lochost's grace, and now dedicate their lives to freeing slaves and ending the scourge of slavery. I, on the other hand, was born into wealth. My father was a merchant prince whose caravans traveled across Barsaive carrying food, lumber, metals, and sundries to distant cities and returned carrying mountains of silver. My mother's only concern was matching her gown to my father's tunic and rearing her children. My family enjoyed freedom that very few could attain or understand. We were free from hunger, protected from danger, and no walls barred us from travel.

Despite my father's immense wealth, he did not consider himself above getting his hands dirty, and in my youth, I watched him help his paid laborers unpack the wagons or carry crates from airships. Frequently, he would travel with a caravan. He said he had to see the world in order to understand what it needed and where he could find potential profits. He would risk the dangers of travel—disease, bandits, roving Horrors, and worse—so he could visit cities and towns along his caravan's routes.

THE FIRST BONDS OF SLAVERY

Once I was old enough, my father took me along on his yearly pilgrimage. My mother argued against it, but she could not dissuade him. He would not allow his daughter to waste her life in leisure. Leading up to that first journey, my father taught me how to run his business: how to gauge the value of wheat, how much to pay a laborer, how to know when a horse was going lame, how

to bargain with the cooper for the price of repairs on a wagon. I watched, I learned, and eventually he sent me to do these tasks alone.

My father thought our trip would be quiet and uneventful. I rode a docile gelding named Ezmeralda and my father took the reins of the lead wagon. We were in Barsaive's northern reaches—near Kratas—when we met a group of heavily armed men who called themselves the Wardens of the Lost. They said they were escorting a large group of Namegivers to new homes in the south, but the Wardens weren't fooling anyone. One only had to look to see the fear in the refugee's eyes.

At least this much of the story rings true to my ears. The Wardens are infamous for attacking and enslaving entire villages. I have personally seen their handy work: burnt villages, dead guards, and the burning corpses of those who weren't worth the effort to march to the Theran slave markets.

~Estelle, Elven Troubadour

The face of one dirty elf child still haunts me, shackled to my nightmares. She was so thin that I wondered how she could walk. The others had sad, weepy eyes, but they were too dehydrated to cry. Their lips were cracked, and their clothes hung from their bodies like ripped sheets. I cried when I saw them.

I want to believe that I cried for them, but I cried for myself. I cried out of fear of one day being like them—weak, starving, poor, afraid, and at the mercy of a terrifying world. I had no empathy for them. I only had the selfish desire to never be like them.

Our caravan had only a few guards. Enough that the Wardens wouldn't risk attacking us, but not enough to free the Namegivers they were "escorting south." Outnumbered against a group as dangerous as the Wardens, and my father, a clever man, did the one thing that would save everyone. He bargained with the slavers. He offered to escort the "refugees" to a safe haven, relieve the fine warriors of their burden, and pay them for their heroic rescue of the helpless. He threw open the caravan's coffers and even gave wagons and horses to the Wardens. My father didn't even barter. He just gave the Wardens anything and everything they asked for to secure the freedom of their captives.

I was so proud of him.

When I told him that, he just looked at me with sad eyes, and replied, "All I've done is encourage them to kidnap more Namegivers and given them the money to buy better arms and stronger shackles." I'll never forget those words. They are heavy iron chains around my heart.

That night, I overheard my father talking to the caravan's foreman, a tall, thick ork named Kek, whom my father trusted in all things. He complained to Kek about the slavers and how he wished something could be done to stop the Wardens and end their pillaging and kidnapping. Kek replied with the

brutal truth for which his people were known, "Only Death stops a slaver." My father suggested that perhaps Death should find those slavers quickly, and Kek replied he would make sure it happened.

The thoughts of those Namegivers followed me like ghosts. The only time those terrors left me was when I spent my days helping the refugees. Once the caravan returned home, I helped others near my hometown, and I spent my family's money on food for the hungry and shelter for the homeless.

Eventually, I found the courage to speak with the Namegivers that my father had rescued. I talked to them, begged them for stories in exchange for money. I needed to know more to unshackle my mind. I was looking for something that made sense. Why didn't they fight back? Could they have fought back? They told me the Wardens had attacked their village and killed anyone who did fight; then, they marched south. The Wardens gave them enough food to stay alive. They marched for days, and the young and the old dropped of exhaustion.

At first my family tolerated my charity. I found in myself a drive to do something more than be the daughter of a wealthy merchant family. I pulled at the bonds of family and home, straining to assist others. Charity was tolerated but refusing to take up my father's business was not acceptable.

When Markel arrived, my world opened.

THE RAID ON VARTAN

Markel was everything a questor of Lochost should be. He was handsome, with sparkling eyes and windswept hair. His dark tan told of his years on the road, and he proudly showed the scars on his arms from his battles with Theran slavers. He could recite the Name of every person he had rescued. He told masterful stories that entertained, but also opened the mind and broke down barriers. Nothing in this world could constrain Markel. At first, I was just one more girl trying to get his attention, no different from the tavern girls and young women in town who hoped to share his bed.

So, I ignored him. I returned to my charitable work and arguing with my parents about my place in the family. Markel found me in the small gardens near the tents where the escaped slaves were living. My hands were muddy to my elbows and my face drenched in sweat from the back-breaking labor. He sat down on the ground next to me and started planting as well. As he planted, he started telling me about Lochost.

Markel was a teacher, but also a martyr. I won't waste time scribing every detail of my apprenticeship nor detail each and every raid. Those are stories that can be heard from any questor of Lochost. Markel's death, however, teaches a unique lesson.

Markel tied himself to a single belief: freedom could never be given, only earned. While other questors of Lochost attacked the caravans carrying slaves to the Theran Empire or freed a handful of slaves from their owners, Markel taught freed slaves to fight for themselves and rescue others. He trained them

to use sword, shield, and spear. This philosophy led to the raid on Vartan. It was the culmination of everything Markel believed.

I was aghast when Jessup first showed this journal to me. I heard of the Lady of Chains and heard the rumors that she was a questor of Lochost. No other questor believes that. Regardless of the claims made in this journal, it is still not true. Markel was one of the best of us and this woman's lie that Markel was her mentor sullies the memory of one the bravest of Lochost's Questors.

~Sevda, Questor of Lochost

Vartan, one of the largest slave markets in the Empire, was a week's journey by foot across Rugaria's border with Barsaive. Raiders brought their captives to Vartan for quick sales, and Therans came to Vartan to buy and trade for fresh Namegivers to work their farms and labor in their mills. Markel's plan was simple and stupid. He would hire airships to carry as many weapons and as much armor as he could buy across the border along with a few skilled adepts. Then we would free the slaves, hand out weapons, and let the slaves overtake the town. Once the slaves had defeated their captors, Markel and I would lead the slaves back across the border to freedom.

Lochost blessed our endeavor from the start. Namegivers throughout Barsaive were happy to assist us. They donated silver and weapons. Adepts begged to join us. The Reluctant Protectors of Travar, a company of Sky Raiders with two airships, offered to fly us across the border for free. We loaded their ships with so many crates of weapons and armor that we feared the airships couldn't take off, but their airships proved more than capable. They whisked us to Vartan through clear skies. Markel was singing as the ships set down.

WHAT CHAINS HAVE I FORGED

I remember seeing the joy in Markel's face as he shattered the chains holding the pens closed. The Namegivers inside flooded out like a dam had burst and spilled into Vartan. The Reluctant Heroes were passing them swords, clubs, and maces as they passed. I could hear Markel shouting over the throngs of freed slaves. As they pushed past me, I could see a bright burning rage in the faces of the elves, humans, orks, and obsidimen. I'd never seen such hate. It roiled like a hot cauldron, and Markel and I had unleashed it.

Once we broke their chains, they became unbound from their morality. We armed that rage and they flooded Vartan with violence. Isn't that what Markel and I wanted? With the weapons we'd given them, they could fight for themselves. But we hadn't just given them weapons, we gave them permission to kill and to take out all their fury in a frenzy of blood and fire.

I didn't see the start of it. I walked through the ankle-deep mud of the pens. The slavers had packed Namegivers in so tightly they couldn't move, couldn't breathe, and emptied their bowels standing because the slavers had

packed them together so tightly. I saw corpses, too. Old Namegivers who were crushed in the mass of beings and others who had suffocated lay face up in the mud. The shock of death still etched on their faces.

I knelt down to roll over a young human. I couldn't tell if they were male or female. The child may have been dead for days, or the mob may have trampled them as they rushed out of the pens. I just saw the crushed head and the broken body. I could feel chains around me, pulling me down, tying that corpse to me. I brushed back the hair from the corpse's face and the scalp peeled off in my hands. It was a girl. I wiped the grime from her face and realized that she wasn't much older than I was when my father saved those Namegivers from the Wardens.

The face of my father spilled into my mind. I could hear his voice, like thunder before an approaching storm, and his words fell like rain. "Let me relieve you of your burden and reward you for bravery." Then the clatter of coins. He had saved so many with handfuls of silver. Why couldn't I, questor of Lochost, save a single girl? I fell into the mud on my knees and cried. I wept until the sun rose on the new day.

Markel found me in the pens. His face was pale with fear. He grabbed my hands and dragged me into the streets of Vartan. The houses and shops were on fire. Slave traders, slave owners, and raiders hung from makeshift gallows—the eaves of houses or trees that the fires had scorched bare. I watched former slaves pile the corpses of dead townspeople. I looked into charred homes and saw blackened corpses clutching each other. Their faces held the same terrible expression as the dead girl in the pens. These faces became rusty shackles around my ankles.

These were the faces of Namegivers who'd enslaved and killed so many others. Were the merchants who sold slaves guiltier than the marauders who put the chains around the necks of innocents? Were the farmers who depended on the labor of slaves less guilty? I stood in the square and turned as Markel tried to pull me forward, but I saw the faces. I saw what happened when the oppressed rise against their masters. Their repressed rage had exploded, and Markel and I had set the fuse.

Markel had no idea what to do. Neither did I. The Reluctant Heroes saw the carnage and offered to carry the wounded to a safe harbor. I don't know how many people they carried aboard their air ships. I just remember the blood. The slick smears from elves, windlings, t'skrang, and humans drying on my hands.

Markel and I led those who could walk towards Barsaive. I watched the Namegivers we'd freed. The same beings that had turned against their captors and murdered them all were now my responsibility to protect. I listened to them talk and laugh. I heard how proud they were. They boasted of killing slavers and burning their homes. They showed off wounds. Their pride swelled in their chests. I was horrified at first at how proud they were of their violence, but I continued to listen, and they pulled me into their circle around

the fire. They thanked me for my courage, but I felt a weight in my chest pulling me down as their stories soared.

Two days into the journey, our fortunes turned. Markel believed that we would move so fast that the Theran armies wouldn't know we were there, but we marched those Namegivers straight into a Theran legion who'd been on patrol nearby.

They thought that the presence of Markel and I was a blessing from Lochost and believing Lochost would protect them, the freed slaves charged the Theran legion wildly swinging the weapons Markel and I had given them. I stood and watched and whispered to Lochost to protect them, but Lochost had given them freedom. What they did with it was now up to them. Untrained, starving ex-slaves against the might of a Theran legion. We stood no chance. They stood no chance. Markel charged in with the freed slaves. I watched for a moment and then I ran.

I can still hear Markel shouting over the battle. I didn't look back. I couldn't.

THE CHAINS RATTLE

I believed in Markel's ideals. I wanted so badly to imitate him. I wanted to move through life unfettered by anything except a connection to Lochost, but all I found were chains, shackles, and ropes. Where Markel was free, I labored under the weight of a thousand bonds—my family, Markel, the Namegivers that we had failed to save, Lochost, my own beliefs. I begged Lochost to free me. I begged and cried and wandered through villages. I tried to imitate Markel. I tried to free slaves. I led raids against slavers' camps. I stood on the street and lectured to passersby. I tried to enlighten others to unburden themselves of ignorance and embrace wisdom. My mistakes compounded my mistakes.

I sat staring at the emptiness of the night sky and the stars following their strange paths, locked in movements unseen and unknown. This world bound them in invisible chains and they whirled around us. They were as trapped as I felt. Yet, I felt old bonds slipping loose. I was no longer the girl on the caravan watching her father buy the freedom of slaves. I was not Markel's apprentice anymore.



In that moment of clarity and Lochost's grace, I remembered Kek, the ork foreman of my father's caravan. "Only Death stops a slaver," he'd told my father. I saw a new need. So long as slavers walk the Theran Empire and raid Barsaive, slavery will exist.

Kek was wrong. I could teach them not to be slavers. That epiphany shattered my perspective, and Lochost taught me something new. Lochost showed me how to stop slavery forever. It's easy. If there are no slavers, there will be no slaves.

THE BINDINGS OF INSTRUCTION

Lochost is a teacher and frees people from ignorance. Lochost lifts Namegivers free of their bonds. No one with their head down, staring at their feet, will ever see anything except the next step in front of them. We teach people to look beyond that next step. Lochost is the midwife of new ideas. It was time for me to move on and become a teacher myself, like Markel taught me.

My lessons are for a rare few—slavers and slave masters. I teach one lesson: empathy. I do not lecture because empathy is not learned from spoken words. Nor can I simply show them empathy in the faces and actions of Namegivers throughout cities of the Theran Empire and the towns of Barsaive. Empathy is something that each Namegiver must feel for themselves. So, I teach feelings. Although Lochost teaches us to be free of bonds, empathy is the greatest bond. It holds us together. Those who have severed that bond become lost. My methodology is razor sharp, and my students always remember their lessons.

The lessons take time. Empathy is not learned in a single sitting or even a single day. I need them to be still. So, I bind them in the heavy chains of their beliefs, the belief of their own superiority over those weaker than themselves. I speak to them softly and offer them an option. They may stay and learn, or they may be set free.

I use many tools, but the best tool is a blade. A blade is sharp enough to cut through any bonds. Once free of their old bonds, the slaver can forge new bonds of empathy to their fellow Namegivers. I work slowly. Breaking a bond is slow, methodical work. I peel away the veneer of lies and expose the truth beneath. The truth is undeniable.

I have to cut slowly to make sure the chains are broken, and the slavers can free themselves of their old beliefs. As I work, I can feel new bonds being established, especially the bond of empathy for their fellow Namegivers. Sometimes I need to cut a little. Sometimes, I must cut away so much that I fear for their lives.

I feel such joy when they can feel empathy again.





THE EMPATHY AND BALANCE OF JUSTICE

This treatise on the followers of Mynbruje was cobbled together over a period of months after many conversations with Estiur Timegdis, an Elf Swordmaster who spends his days traveling the lands in search of wrongs to right. At every encounter I witnessed of him meeting people and hearing their problems, he was sympathetic and compassionate. Not once did he raise his voice nor seem perturbed by the sometimes-trivial problems brought before him. (Though I suppose what seems trivial to an outsider is of considerable importance to those involved.)

~Thais Bastron, Wizard of the city of Tansiarda

This wasn't what I intended to do—questing for Mynbruje. I didn't know the Passion of Justice until I found myself in his service. So, when you ask how I came to be his questor, I cannot easily describe it. It was like being pushed off of a very high cliff and learning to fly yet having no wings.

At a young age, I was no different than anyone else in my village. I knew what hard work was but sought leisure and play with my friends as all young ones do. As we grew each of us would tell the others what we envisioned we wanted to be, trying to determine our place in the world and set our paths. I merely wanted to be of some importance. I never wished to be king, or provide a village's food from a farm, or anything like that. I naively wanted to be someone who mattered. I did not seek fame then, nor do I now.

One day I witnessed an evil most foul. Fouler than any most people would consider their worst nightmare. What that Horror did—through its conduit of a human—to those children... I will not repeat it in detail as it will certainly appall or sicken you and you'll no doubt call me a liar.

But I witnessed the aftermath and it ruptured something in me. Destroyed my sense of the world. Fractured me to my core. That event changed the course of my life. I thought I had seen the most despicable evil ever possible to be wrought on people. I was wrong. The more I looked at our village and the world around me, the more my perception of its idyllic nature changed. I now saw every act, every dialogue in a new way.

I met Estiur some years ago and in the course of our discussion, I asked the details of the incident that changed his life. It is more despicable than anything you could imagine or invent. Since then I have been at his side, never doubting his commitment or purpose.

I may not quest for Mynbruje, but I stand with Estiur. His cause is righteous, and his deeds are more important than any legend you will hear.

~Andros the Second

I could no longer see anything as being harmless. I asked my parents, whose protection and love I enjoyed all my youth, why I could no longer accept things as they are. Why I could not see anything but imbalance, and signs of injustice. I could see fairness, but it was elusive and in far less supply.

They told me that Mynbruje was behind my new insights. My father had once seen an impromptu trial held in a neighboring village where a questor adjudicated a dispute. He noted how the questor deliberated and found an equitable solution, and my father never forgot this, for he kept that lesson of fairness and used it in every barter since. My parents told me I had that which we all possess—a sense of fairness—but Mynbruje provided me a more developed sense of it.

From that day, I sought Mynbruje's teachings. I followed his path while learning to walk as a Swordmaster. There is no injustice too great or too small I will not investigate. One injustice unpunished leads to many more, which leads to lawlessness. For cannot an avalanche be caused by a simple snowball?

HOW EMPATHY OUTWEIGHS ALL

One must feel for those who suffer, correct? Our hearts ache to help those who have unfortunately been in the path of natural disasters, no? A flood kills our neighbor's livestock and we aid them. The winds tear down huts, and we pitch in to rebuild. When we feel for those in need, those affected by the actions that render their lives and livelihoods marred, and understand what they feel and need, that is empathy.

We believe empathy innate, that we feel these things from our first days. But what is needier than an infant? An infant is dependent on everyone for its needs. It will eventually be taught to care and provide for others in the course of its life. But an infant raised without being shown what it is to care for another the way they were cared for produces a selfish and ungrateful person.

And that is why empathy is the most important part of seeking just measures and just decisions.

Without empathy, everyone would be selfish, and all gatherings of Namegivers would descend into lawlessness and chaos. Everyone would be seeking to fulfill their own needs and not the needs of the community. But with empathy toward someone or some group other than yourself, you understand how your actions and words affect them, and not just you.

I will tell you a story from long ago about a boy without empathy. He would cross over a fence to take apples from a tree in a farmer's field. Every time he snuck over, he took more apples than he needed.

He just thought of his own infatuation with the fruit. No concern for the tree, nor the farmer, nor the birds nesting in its branches.

The farmer used the apples to provide for his own family, selling or trading them to people in his village. And the parts of the apple he could not sell or eat, he used to fertilize his garden and feed his hogs.

But as the boy took more for himself, the farmer ran short. He could not trade fewer apples for the same amount of food, and his family went hungry. Did the boy care? No. He was fed, and not concerned he was hurting a family, and an entire community.

The farmer shared his crop with his community, and this act of sharing brought him happiness. It brought his village happiness as they all enjoyed the sense of sharing amongst themselves, enjoying what each had to contribute.

But the boy never contributed anything. He merely thought of his own desires.

Now, theft in the service of survival is one thing. Had the boy been unable to find any other food, and only took what he absolutely needed so as not to deprive anyone else of their share? That might be understandable. I'm sure the farmer wouldn't want the boy to starve.

And had the boy asked for an apple each day, the outcome would have been different. The farmer could have felt the boy's need for food, and helped ease his suffering by sharing the burden, rather than having it forced on him through theft. There would have been a mutual benefit, and a reduction in suffering.

In a just world, perhaps, someone in the position to educate the boy would have told him he can plant the seeds and grow his own tree, thus leaving the farmer's tree alone after a single theft. In a just world, perhaps, he would have been instructed to ask the farmer, and perhaps contribute labor to the farm to earn his apple each day until his own tree bore fruit.

Once you can feel for all, know why they do the things they do, you can decide how to be just in your actions. How justly would you have treated the boy were you the farmer?

COMPASSIONATE JUSTICE

Justice is not always about deciding and delivering the harshest punishments. The most severe crime is to deal in death, is it not? Most would think so. Then why is the most severe punishment to do the same? No lesson can be learned from this punishment.

True justice is found by learning the causes and understanding the effects of actions of a perpetrator on the community around them. It is learning not only the how of someone's crimes, it is learning the why, and the decisions that individual made leading to those actions, and how those actions impact an individual or community.

When Namegivers make choices that inflict pain, suffering, or injury on others, those actions need to be punished. But punishment should be directed so that the perpetrator, and others, may learn the error of their actions. Questors of Mynbruje prefer teaching and educating, instilling empathy and understanding as part of the punishment. We punish thusly, because you took this action.

Don't get me wrong. The most vile and evil beings, as determined by their actions, need to be eradicated and their blight removed from the lands. I



speak, of course, of the Horrors—whose evil is beyond repair or skepticism—and those who willingly collaborate in the Horrors' plans. Inflicting absolute pain, perpetuating unspeakable cruelty, is irredeemable. For those beings who cannot be redeemed, eternal imprisonment or death are acceptable punishments.

A person may even think of harm or feel ill-will toward another, but that is not a crime. But when your actions interfere with someone else to their detriment? That is when Mynbruje teaches his questors to seek fairness and the truth of the matter at hand.

Justice, therefore, seeks the essence of what is fair. Fairness lends itself to being determined by circumstance and subject, but strives for equality, not retribution. "You stole from me; therefore, I must steal from you," is not fairness. That is an equally wrong action masquerading as fairness. It may be equal, but both actions are wrong.

You might think equal retribution would teach the offender empathy toward the person they wronged, and this may be the case. But sometimes the victim learns the wrong lesson: to do first whatever was done to them.

An eye for an eye leads to all being blind, rather than seeing clearly.
~Krolan Broadshoulders

If both parties are wronged, justice is seeking to balance the wrongdoing or correct the harm to both as equally as possible. Each party sees they have not gained an advantage, nor been made to suffer more than the other. They empathize with the other party, seeing they made out no better than themselves. If the victim can have a say in the punishment, then this can lead to more fairly correcting the wrong they suffered.

If one party causes harm or suffering of any nature—whether political, financial, physical, and so forth—then balance can be found in restoring order to the victim and preventing the offender from repeating their action. Teaching them what the impact was to the victim's life and livelihood helps them empathize. They should understand that if someone did to them what they did to their victim, they would seek punishment as well.

Taking the life of someone who killed needlessly is not justice, especially if they are made to wait for punishment. Justice must be timely to properly impart the lesson. If you catch a murderer thirty years after the crime was committed, they have had plenty of time to believe they got away with it, and have perhaps gotten away with more crimes as well. The sting of punishment,

whether imprisonment or other measures, has little impact. The longer the punishment takes to be delivered, the more the lesson in justice will not be learned. Time lessens the impact of the crime, but it also lessens the impact of punishment.

In one instance he says eradicating evil beings is a need, and in the next mentions never to kill a killer. Must be a fine line to walk. Nuance and irony are fighting on his path.

~Saltarello of Travar

Punishment—especially through imprisonment—must be swift. But the taking of the killer's life should be a last resort. If executed, they will never see the impact their actions had on the community. The repercussions. Every life lost is a role unfulfilled. Every life lost is a family member. Whether they had killed a child, a laborer, a farmer, a soldier, there is now a burden to fill that victim's role in the community. Some roles can never be replaced. Some knowledge can never be passed along from a life cut short. Who that person was can never be duplicated.

Killing the killer might set an example, yes. But only for those who cry for their own pain to end. They suffer, so they would like the killer to suffer in return. But this attitude reeks of selfishness, not empathy. They see only the action, not the reasons for the action—and all actions have reasons. Sometimes the reasons don't make sense to the common person, but at some point, the reasons made sense to the offender. Those reasons need to be understood before true justice can be served to the offender.

Punishment meted out vindictively is not justice. It is violence for violence's sake. Just to be cruel. Inflicting pain on someone else because one can is also not justice. It is akin to flogging a carcass. If the punished don't understand why, they will never learn anything about the effect of their actions.

The lesson must be taught to all those who perform an unjust action and cause an imbalance in the community. They must see that every action, both good and bad, has repercussions and they must be made to see the impact their actions have. This lesson may take quite some time.

Should a thief who is caught have his hand removed? That hand may have taken from one, but it might still feed another. So perhaps his hand might need to be tied behind his back for some time, to reflect upon how crippled he made his victim. But his victim will return to their former level of prosperity, one hopes. As will the thief regain the use of his hand, with a new understanding. A lesson learned.

One never fully appreciates what one has until some part of you is taken away or reduced in function. If you woke up blind one day, would you not cherish more the sights you had already seen?

IN SAVING A LIFE

All of nature is in balance. There is life and growth, and then there is death and decay. These are in equal measure. We are all a part of this. So, our actions should be part of nature's balance. Is it just to take a life? Is it just to save a life? Both occur in, and are part of, nature and yet there are greater circumstances to consider.

Is it just to take the life of a child? Certainly not. For they have yet to experience life's wonders. We mourn more for the loss of the young than the loss of the old. The elder has lived and felt the guiding hands of the Passions. We lay them to rest knowing they used their time here. A child has yet to determine their fate, set upon their path, or feel a Passion's influence.

Which is why there is no greater feeling I can get, than to quest for Mynbruje in the service of a child. When you know you have protected them, saved them from harm by another, righted their injustice and ceased their oppression, you have saved the person that child will grow to become. You have instilled in them what fairness is, and they will now know to carry that with them every day they walk their path. And you have set it so deeply, they will never lose that sense of justice.

What is to be done about the offender, the person who committed the crime against the child? Just measures and the teaching of their wrongs, swiftly and without impedance.

What is to be done about the child victim? Everything possible! Making sure they are not bodily harmed, and if they are, healing them. Making sure they are mentally and emotionally healthy and having the child understand their part as the victim. And ensuring that they are safe from any further harm, by the offender or anyone else.

Saving a child's life saves the future. It saves their adulthood, and old age. And those save the rest of us, and the rest of ours. If you protect the child and their future, then you save us all from more suffering and injustice. Redeem that child and teach them the nature of empathy, truth, compassion, insight, and balance and each child that is saved and instructed in such a way will save us all in every part of the world. It is that simple.

What could possibly feel better?

ON THE IMBALANCE OF IMPORTANCE

When one sets something, or someone, or some group as more important, they cause an imbalance. Your life is no more valuable than mine, and mine certainly no more valuable than, say, the king himself.

I ask you to consider the Therans. They have set up an imbalance in their way of life. They have servants, not of the free, nor employed with wages. They have slaves. Those made to serve by the lash or by debt. This is the end result of believing one more important than another.

Their justice is set up on the same imbalance as the rest of their warped ideals. It isn't truly just. It is divided unequally and favors the takers. In Thera there are the takers and those who are taken from.

Throal has returned our way of life to its natural balance. No one holds anyone else as property. Slavery has been stopped and each person, each community, is set upon its own path to determine a place in the world. We grant each person command of their own destiny. But that freedom comes with a responsibility: the responsibility to be a member of a mature and amicable society.

Sure, Throal doesn't have slavery, but there is still imbalance. Look at the dahnat, the wedshel, and the Estates. And what about the latest troubles where Throal is not helping the rest of Barsaive as they once did? Isn't that an imbalance as well?

This questor needs to travel Barsaive more.

~Hijrahs Roons of Jerris

Those who put themselves above others, who decide they are the only one who can render judgement or punishment, are making an imbalance of self-importance. As I said, no one is more important than any other.

It is why questors of Mynbruje dress simply. We are not made to be or look more important than anyone else. Our actions, and our decisions carry so much respect we cannot add to that by a silk scarf, or jewels affixed to a headdress. We let our justice be important. We right wrongs and restore the balance in communities and between people. These are more important than the frivolous notion of dressing as if we are attending the king's wedding every day.

JUSTICE AND THE LAW

Too many confuse justice with the law. Through Mynbruje, we know better. Do not misunderstand! We have respect for the law, and it can be a wonderful tool for maintaining balance in a community.

The law can protect the powerless from the powerful. Those with power do not always pay attention to those without, instead focusing on those with similar, or greater, power. Peers and threats, someone capable of doing to them what they can do to others.

In a just society, the law gives power to the powerless. It establishes the rules and responsibilities for the community and makes sure those who have power do not abuse it to bring suffering to those who do not.

But the law can be an imperfect tool. Laws that are supposedly fair and even toward all stand on a shaky foundation. The law can be twisted and abused by those with power to their own ends, providing justification for the harm they bring on others. "It is legal," they say, "Therefore, it is right."

A judge who adjudicates disputes without taking to heart Mynbruje's lessons on empathy and circumstance can be as much a hindrance to justice as the offender who flees punishment.

THE TRUTH

Justice is compassionate to both victim and perpetrator. Justice is fairness in punishment for the crime committed, with a compassionate hand for the victims as well as the perpetrators. Balance is the key.

But we are defined by our actions, not our words or our intentions.

Predator and prey are part of nature, but only for survival. A Namegiver who gratifies themselves by preying on others is a monster to me. And those monsters will be dealt with, whether it takes a short time or a long time to find them. I will learn the truth about them and deliver justice as swiftly as I can. I will remind them of their crime while their punishment is delivered. I will see if empathy can be conveyed and understood. If no empathy exists, they are one with the Horrors.

Words are fleeting wind,
Actions reveal our true selves.
Justice is watching





THE MONSTER INSIDE

Of the twelve Passions worshipped in Barsaive, none is as feared as Raggok, the Mad Passion of bitterness, vengeance and corruption. Researchers at the Great Library provided a copy of the confession of Militsa Faran, better remembered as the Bartertown Butcher. Shortly after the First Theran War, the Butcher killed no less than 36 people in especially gruesome and cruel manners. The Butcher was eventually caught and executed, but not before giving a full confession of her crimes, revealing she was actually a questor of Raggok, or Rashomon as she insisted calling it.

I must warn the reader that her testimony is quite disturbing. In fact, the questor of Mynbruje who received Faran's confession killed himself shortly thereafter, presumably as his sense of justice had become warped by her words.

~Mandel of Arancia, Traveled Scholar and honorary lecturer at the Great Library

You seem surprised. I imagine after hearing about all the things I've done, you came here expecting to find some sort of hideous monster, raving mad in their cell with blood on their hands. I am sorry to disappoint you. I am a mere human woman. Militsa Faran is my Name.

I hear what people are saying outside. That I am the servant of a Mad Passion. I think you misunderstand. It is the world that has gone mad, and Rashomon is the last stronghold of sanity that remains.

You think it's preposterous? Then listen to my story, and then you will know I am speaking the truth.

I was born in Kaer Tristis, far in the north and the west, on the western foothills of the Scol mountains. Our kaer had remained shut long after your kingdom had opened its gates. By that time, of the hundreds of families that took shelter in Kaer Tristis on the eve of the Scourge, only a dozen remained. Generation after generation, our elders had followed the teachings of the Book of Tomorrow to the letter. So much, in fact, that when the ritual to predict the end of the Scourge failed—the ball of True Earth stopping an inch above the bowl of True Water—they found themselves incapable of deciding what to do next.

So, they chose to do nothing but wait. Weeks turned to months, months turned to years. With each passing day one certainty grew: we were going to remain trapped in that subterranean tomb forever. I was just a child back

then, but I remember the despair, the hopelessness that had settled in the dusty stone halls.

Growing up in these empty corridors, me and the other kids swore an oath. Our families had abandoned hope, but we wouldn't. We would leave the kaer and see for ourselves what kind of world waited on the surface.

I was barely a teenager when Rashomon appeared to me. He took the form of an emaciated troll with twisting horns, his ram-like features hidden under a tattered cloak the color of raw flesh. He said nothing, just smiled at me from the other end of a corridor. I knew who he was, and that he had chosen me to be his questor.

His appearance was quite different from the descriptions in the old songs, yet I was not scared. I remember thinking he merely reflected the shriveling state of the kaer's inhabitants. But I knew that Rashomon embodied Endurance, Perseverance, Leadership; those were the qualities we needed to leave Kaer Tristis behind. Yes, from that day on it was all clear to me: Rashomon would lead us to the world above. The elders would have us die in the dark, but we were going to seize our destiny, for good or ill.

Like the other Mad Passions, Raggok has not so much become the antithesis of the values he once stood for as the embodiment of these very values, corrupted to an unhealthy extreme. In his own twisted way, Raggok still embodies Endurance and Perseverance, but in defiance of all other life, and in rejection of all other bonds.

~Korum, obsidiman merchant of Travar

Of course, when the time came to make our move, the elders tried to prevent us from leaving the kaer, but their half-hearted efforts amounted to nothing. Seven left Kaer Tristis, five of them adepts: the ork Warrior 'Sweet' Krilu; his sister Tansu, an Archer; Ankene, a dwarf Elementalist; the Troubadour Haddar, another ork; and myself, the Scout and leader of our party. Our other companions were the human Ilhan and the troll Sirvat Rockjaw.

I'll never forget the moment we stepped out of the kaer for the first time, seeing with our own eyes the sky and stars we had read so much about.

This feeling of awe and wonder wouldn't last. We thought we were ready for the world of the surface, but soon learned much had changed from what was described in the ancient books and songs. As we began our journey towards the plains we could see to the south, barren rocks and treacherous crevices gave way to poisonous marshes and thickets. Wild animals, mockeries of the creatures we had read about in the kaer's bestiaries, harassed us at

every step. But we soldiered on nevertheless. I promised my companions that Rashomon was walking at our side, strengthening our resolve. Whatever this world would throw at us, we would prevail. We would survive.

MUDSHOAL

After one week, the first tensions were creeping in among our group. One source of animosity was Haddar's growing infatuation for Tansu. Many times, the Troubadour's unrequited courting of the Archer came close to triggering her brother's *gahad*.

Nine days after the beginning of our journey, we spotted plumes of smoke on the horizon. We had found a village on the edge of the swamps, simply Named Mudshoal. The place was little more than a small collection of huts, and its inhabitants, dwarfs and humans for the most part, appeared sickly and haggard. They eyed us with suspicion as we approached, clearly not used to meeting other people in these parts. After some bartering, made awkward by the fact our language and theirs had descended into different dialects, we managed to make them understand that we meant them no harm, we were only travelers looking for a place to rest. They agreed to let us use one of their huts for the night.

That night, the people of Mudshoal drugged us with incense and took us deep into the swamp. The gaunt villagers were Horror marked, and we were being sacrificed to their master. We should have been more cautious, but we were so happy to have found other Namegivers.

Naive fools! I learned a valuable lesson that night: if you're going to endure, you must expect the worst from others.

Feeling sick and dazed, I forced my eyes open just as the Horror, which I can only describe as a putrid ball of living sludge, emerged from the water, propelling itself forward with dozens of long, black tentacles. Fortunately, the corrupted villagers had not taken away our weapons, probably thinking their drug would keep us unconscious until it was too late.

Calling upon Rashomon's resilience to give me strength, I managed to evade the Horror's grasp and wake the others. After an arduous fight, we eventually killed the foul creature. But victory had a sour aftertaste: we were all badly hurt, and 'Sweet' Krilu, who had charged the Horror to keep it away from his sister, had paid the ultimate price. As for Sirvat, our troll companion, she was nowhere to be seen.

Despite our wounds and fatigue, we found our way back to Mudshoal, where the villagers were holding some sort of feast. For a moment we believed they were celebrating the fact their master and tormentor had been slain...

then we saw Sirvat's roasted carcass and realized the gruesome fate of our missing friend.

Rage overcame us, and we fell on the filthy degenerates like spirits of vengeance. We slaughtered every last one of them. Many were felled by Tansu's arrows, the pain of her grief fueling her *gahad*.

You should never be afraid of pain. On the contrary—embrace it! Pain makes you stronger. Pain gives you the resolve to persevere and achieve your goals.

When the morning came, Mudshoal was nothing but ash and cinders. We took the time to give a proper funeral for our fallen friends and left that forsaken place behind.

A PASSION'S LESSONS

After Mudshoal, I began to feel Rashomon's presence more and more often. Sometimes I would catch glimpses of the Passion from the corner of my eye, a gaunt silhouette walking among our group. His appearance reminded me of Sirvat now, as if he was wearing her charred and desiccated flesh.

Despite Rashomon's ghastly appearance, I found comfort in the fact my Passion was walking beside me. The morale of my companions, on the other hand, had noticeably soured. Ankene and Ilhan, in particular, had a hard time coming to terms with the events of that fateful night. But strangely, what haunted them was their own savagery. I on the other hand had no problem with it.

Kill or be killed, such is the world we live in.

We continued south for a few more days, until reaching the edge of the Liaj jungle. Having had our fill of marshes, we decided to turn east, along the northern foothills of the Tylon mountains. We eventually came across several farmers' hamlets, only stopping briefly to buy supplies, lying about where we were coming from. Their inhabitants seemed healthier and friendlier than the cursed villagers of Mudshoal, but we would never let our guard down again.

From those farmers we learned the Scourge was considered over, although some Horrors still lurked in remote areas, which we had experienced firsthand. We also learned the Kingdom of Throal had reopened its doors and had been waging war against the Theran empire. That sounded like as good a place to go as any.

Rashomon had been visiting me in my sleep, talking to me in his low, raspy voice. I understood that before Mudshoal, I had not been fully prepared to receive his teachings. I had to experience the ugliness of the world firsthand. Now I was ready to fully become his student. And he would teach me much indeed.

I put his lessons into practice for the first time five days after crossing an incredibly foul-smelling river Named the Opthia. By that time, the arable plains had been replaced by the yellow grass of Barsaive's central savannah, and the white peaks of Throal's mountains were now clearly visible on the eastern horizon, like sharp blades ripping through the sky. Since Mudshoal we had followed a strict rule of non-interference, staying clear of the locals' affairs and keeping our interactions with them to a minimum. This, however, was about to be put to the test.

HALOKE

Around midday, we spotted smoke a short distance to the north. Despite our rule, we decided to investigate. We discovered what had been the village of Haloke. A few hours earlier, raiders had ridden through the village, pillaging, burning and killing anything on their path. Several women and children had been abducted, ostensibly to be kept as playthings or sold as slaves. The people of Haloke were farmers and herders, not warriors. The survivors of the assault had no means to strike back. But we could. We felt the people of Haloke deserved to be avenged. We offered to find the raiders and punish them. But I already knew we'd have to do more than that.

Following the raiders across the savannah proved easy. Fearing no retribution, the raiders had made no effort to camouflage their tracks. We eventually reached their camp. They had established themselves in the middle of a weathered stone circle on the outskirts of the Servos jungle. There were roughly twenty of them, and twice as many captives. The raiders' outfits identified them as deserters from Throal's army.

I see you are shocked by the idea that former soldiers of Throal could turn to brigandry and slavery. How adorable. You'd be surprised what so-called civilized people are capable of when they have nothing left to lose.

Respectability. Loyalty. Kindness. These are only masks we wear as long as society rewards us for it.

Anyway, they may have had us outnumbered, but our hardships had made us more cunning. We devised a plan to thin their ranks. At nightfall, we eliminated the guards posted around the stone circle, silently taking their place to not raise suspicion. Pretending to have spotted something in the dark, we lured several more raiders away from the campfire. The instant they realized the deception, we slit their throats and attacked the rest. Taken by surprise, they were unable to mount a proper defense. It was over in a matter of minutes.

Only one raider survived our assault: a bulky dwarf with a dirty blond beard and an ugly scar across the forehead. He tried to escape, taking one of

the women hostage. As the others were still fighting within the stone circle, I ran after him myself. My vision in the dark was limited, and I would definitely lose him if I allowed him to reach the cover of the jungle. I managed to put an arrow in his leg. He produced a dagger and tried to bargain his life against his prisoner's. Without blinking, I put a second arrow into the woman's heart.

When you can no longer ensure your own survival, you become a burden to be discarded.

Although Raggok being the master of the undead, he might still find a use for you as a Cadaverman.

~Ks'drelpa, t'skrang Swordmaster

The dwarf looked at me, dumbfounded, having clearly not expected me to do such a thing. For a second, he left his guard open, which was more than enough for me to knock him out. I had plans for him, plans for which I needed him alive.

Again, you seem aghast. Was I supposed to just let him run away? Chances are he would have killed that woman anyway. I simply took that option out of his hands. You call me dishonorable, but any tactic, any deception is acceptable if it allows you to win. Honor is a luxury only the dead can afford. Nothing matters but your own survival.

At sunrise, we brought the abducted women and children back to Haloke, where we were celebrated as heroes. Then I pushed our prisoner forward and tied him to a pole on what had been the village's central square. Some of the villagers wanted to bring him to Throal to be judged. Others, especially the captives we had freed, were looking at him with hatred in their eyes. It was easy for me to fan the embers of their pain and suffering, giving them the resolve to abandon their scruples and take the matter into their own hands.

A bright-eyed girl grabbed a sharp stone and flung it at the dwarf, hitting him above the eye. One of the liberated women followed suit. Soon the mob, as if in a frenzy, were all throwing rocks at the raider. Screaming at the top of their lungs all the while.

You think it was cruel of me, to leave him to be punished in that manner, reduced to a bloody pulp at the hands of a vengeful populace? You're right. To endure, one must learn cruelty.

Killing all the brigands ourselves wouldn't have taught them their own strength. Never again would they allow themselves to be victims. Having tasted blood, they let out the fierceness within. They had experienced the

sweet power of vengeance. Haddar the Troubadour agreed with me on that, and that made me think he, at least, was starting to see the world as it was.

BETRAYAL

The same couldn't be said of my other companions, however. Since we had left the Kaer, they had followed my leadership without question, but now they contested my plans and challenged my decisions. With each new manifestation of dissent, I felt a bitter taste in my throat. After all I'd done for them, they were now doubting me? Even Ankene, my oldest friend, was now looking at me with distrust and contempt in her eyes.

I already knew my staging of the raider's public execution had disgusted her, but Rashomon helped me realize what I had been missing: she must have seen me kill the captive woman. With that realization came another: she was the one turning the rest of the group against me. Any love I may have felt for her in our childhood was gone. All that remained was the bitterness of her betrayal.

I took the matter into my own hands during our evening rest. We needed water—fortunately, a small affluent of the Servos was running nearby. As our Elementalist, Ankene went there by herself to purify the water and refill our flasks.

While Tansu, Ilhan and Haddar were making camp, I silently went after the dwarf. She was still casting her spell when I slit her throat. I then pushed her body into the river. A crocodile soon approached, attracted by the scent of blood. I immediately began screaming and stabbed the beast until I was covered in its blood. My remaining companions rushed to help, but by the time they arrived the crocodile had already savaged the Elementalist's body. I told my friends the creature had attacked Ankene. They believed me, never suspecting part of the blood staining my dagger and clothes had been hers.

Reading this account, Faran appears unconcerned by her actions. In truth, she was probably hating herself. People corrupted by Raggok are often in immense pain. This self-loathing then becomes a drive to hurt others.

~J'role, the Honorable Thief

While the murder of Ankene had reduced the risks of a coup, I began to realize it was only a matter of time before the others would start suspecting me. I couldn't trust them anymore. Where there had been friends, there were

now enemies. But I knew that among them, Ilhan was the greatest threat. He and Ankene had always been the most upright of our band, as I had witnessed after the incident in Mudshoal. His ill-placed integrity made me sick. There was no place for it in this world, it would only get us killed. But I knew I had an ally in this matter.

Remember how Haddar lusted after Tansu? Well during our travels, Tansu had begun a relationship with Ilhan. Few things make the heart sour like being spurned by one you love in favor of another you considered a friend. Haddar could barely hide his jealousy and acrimony for the one who had, in his eyes, stolen Tansu from him.

So strong were the pain and hatred he radiated that I felt he was ready to take the next step and embrace the teachings of Rashomon. He only needed a little push, which I gladly provided.

A few days before reaching Bartertown, we made camp in an abandoned building. That night, I told Haddar one of Rashomon's stories about perseverance, and how there's nothing in this world you cannot achieve, provided you are ready to fight for it.

It was enough to plant the idea that if the ork wanted Tansu for himself, all he had to do was get rid of Ilhan. Over the next days, I saw his feelings for Ilhan turn into a cold, calculated determination: his heart and mind were set.

He intended to kill the human in his sleep, but instead he found the lovers sleeping next to each other. Overcome by a jealous rage, he unleashed the fury of his *gahad*. I'll be honest, his feral screams startled me.

I rushed to the scene and found him covered in blood after savagely murdering both his rival and the one he loved. Rashomon stood beside him, a mirthless smile on his ram-like, bug-infested face. I think, in that moment, Haddar, whose eyes had widened in terror, could see him too. Such a pity he decided to take his own life shortly afterwards.

THE LAST

Of the seven who had left Kaer Tristis, only I, Rashomon's chosen, remained. I arrived in Bartertown two days later.

You wonder why I killed all these people? You still don't understand, do you? The truth is, I only killed a few of them myself. At first, I killed to ensure my own survival. But I also killed a father to give his children a taste of grief. I tortured a lover to make him realize how his feelings for another made him weak.

But many of the Butcher's murders were not my doing, although I encouraged them. I helped a ruined merchant, allowing his bitterness to drive him to vengeance. I armed the lost girls of Butter Lane, slaves in all but name,

and turned them against their procurers. I gave a grieving widow proof that her husband's associate had killed him out of greed, and the means to avenge him herself. I put a group of friends at each other's throats, so they would realize the futility of friendship.

Execute me, if that makes you feel safer; your laws mean nothing to me. Nor do I want your forgiveness, as I regret nothing. I did what I did to remind these weak, complacent people how to be strong. How to endure. How to survive.

They will never be afraid of pain again as they now understand pain can be a tool, pain can be a weapon. I have planted the seed of Rashomon's teachings in dozens of hearts. I have made them understand, accept and embrace the painful reality.

The Scourge has left us a world made for monsters. The only way for us to thrive in it is to become monsters ourselves.

Your rules and civilized society are just smoke and mirrors, used to delude you from this bitter truth.







THE NATURE OF STRUGGLE

This conversation on the nature of Thystonius was gathered in conversation with Tamryn of Haven, a Questor of Thystonius and Warrior of ability and repute. Some may recall Tamryn for his victories at the Games that followed the coronation of King Kovar. As a beribboned champion thrice over as well as a veteran of the Battle of Sky Point, Tamryn seems uniquely qualified to speak on the Passion of Valor and Physical Conflict. That my assistant and I came across him at the Silver Hart tavern, and had coin enough to keep his attention, was a stroke of luck for this publication.

~Dreas Kwinn, Traveled Scholar and Scribe

Ale for answers, hmm? I've heard of this sort of thing before, scribe. I'll play that game! Thystonius smile on you, scholar, and take a seat. Oh, I've seen that look before! You think you don't need Thystonius's smile, that's it, isn't it? A bookish sort like you, just wandering and writing, wielding a quill, not a sword?

Pfah, I say! How is it you wander, if not through exertion and bravery? Are you claiming you never get sore feet, but press on? That your pack, full as it is with scrolls and books, never feels heavy on your shoulders? That you never get tired or cold, yet keep walking, regardless? That you've never had a river to cross or a mountain to climb? That neither beasts nor brigands have ever been a threat on your journeys? Don't you lie to me, scholar, nor belittle yourself. I see the scratches on that walking stick of yours, and the scars on your hands. You've fought. Wandering takes courage. Wandering is a contest, you against the whole world. Thystonius likes those odds and favors those who take that risk.

So, come on, then. Keep the ale coming, and let's have this talk, one brave Namegiver to another.

OF VALOR, CONFLICT, AND WAR

Everyone's heard of "The War of Tears," right? There were two groups of soldiers, all nervous about a fight the next day. Then Thystonius visited both camps and promised them immortality as heroes, so when the sun rose, both bands of fighters went out and gave it their all, right? Thystonius tricked them, I've heard people say, lured them on to bleed and die. That's not how I see it. It happened, or something like it, I don't doubt. It's not the truth of the story I dispute, it's the point. Some folks find it off-putting. Some think Thystonius arranged it to enjoy the bloodshed, so no one honors him but those who are

just as bloodthirsty. But Thystonius isn't only about war and soldiers, my friend! He's about courage, about rising up to meet a challenge, about having the grit to do what must be done.

Every sailor who's ever desperately pulled a rope in an ugly storm has called on him. Every laborer with a too-heavy sack of grain to haul yet hefts it anyways. Every drunk challenging a whole tavern to arm wrestle, and every drunk who's sat down to take that challenge. Everyone who's ever tried to break a steed, who's taken up a pick-axe to tear down a mountain, or who's squared off against some ork riding a wave of *gahad*... they've all looked to Thystonius for help, whether they knew it or not. He's not about the slaughter, friend. He's about the struggle. The effort. Thystonius smiles on us all at some time or another. And some of us smile back.

Now, that said? Heh, aye, he likes a good scrap, too. Thystonius challenges us to fight our wars, yes, and to fight them boldly and well. He longs for bravery on both sides of any fight. He wants us to wage war at our best, at our boldest. If only one side shows up with a belly for battle, if no one on the other side is mentally and physically prepared to defend themselves, you don't get much of a contest, do you? You get a slaughter! No, no, that's not for us, not for him. Thystonius wants a challenge. A proper battle. Something to look back on later, and boast of surviving, boast of taking part in, boast of thriving within! He's not one for murder, scribe, you be sure to write that. Not massacre, not pillage, not depredation. The fight's the thing, not the death or defilement that follows.

ONE QUESTOR'S VISION

How I see him, personally? After following him all this time? Thystonius is like a father to me, or a big brother, an idol I'm always trying to catch up to. He's stern, he's demanding, he's a bit better than me and lets me know it. He wants my very best from me, but—and this is important, scribe—but that's because he knows my very best can always get better. It's Thystonius who urges me to leap higher, to run faster, to lift more. He's the blood in my muscles, the air in my chest, the fire inside me that tells me to do more work. It's Thystonius that'll see me rise before the dawn tomorrow morning, to go out back of this very inn and sling those logs around to make myself strong, to swing an axe and turn them to kindling when other men would rest, and to sprint rings around this place before half these folks even rise for breakfast. Thystonius urges me to be the best Warrior I can be, to be the best *Namegiver* I can be, and Thystonius tells me to make my "best" better every day.

I met him once, face to face. I know, I know! Everyone claims it, but on my heart, this is true. This isn't just the cups talking, scribe, this is truth. My own truth. I was just a lad, growing up in Haven. My mother'd dragged the two of us there after father died, and she made us a living cooking meals, mending trousers, looking after the men and women drifting through there. I grew up

among rough folk, and while I hadn't yet started proper training, I'd always had a Warrior's heart.

I was taking a shortcut home after running a message across town, and came up to Shinman's Alley, this narrow little thing. I wanted down the alley, but there he was, standing there, blocking me, all broad shoulders and big arms, clenched fists, body covered in the scars that told tales of survival. Thystonius himself, I'm sure of it. He was twice my size, then, but I was growing tall and strong, and I felt big and bold enough not to back down. I knew—at that age, we all think we know so much—that I could take on any tired old Warrior, or at least let him know he'd been in a fight. You remember being that age, don't you? You remember feeling that way? Bold as brass by the time we start shaving, aren't we?

Well, that was the start of it. Right there, in that little wedge of space beside Shinman's place, he gave me a shove and I gave him one right back instead of turning tail. By the time the dust settled he'd thrown me through two walls and we'd toppled an outhouse on some poor bastard, but in the end that scarred old man smiled down at me in the muck and the mud. He offered me a hand that lifted me up like I was light as a feather, he gave me a clap on the arm—my sword arm, right here, that put steel through Grandius the Seven-Eyed, the arm that took the head off Red Garth o' Chains, the arm that choked out Jaerth of Bartertown to take my third ribbon from the Games—and he walked off down Shinman's Alley. As he strode away, I realized that in the scuffle, I'd gotten past him. I was where I'd wanted to be, where I'd tried to get to when neither of us had stepped aside for the other.

I had stood up to him, so he helped me back to my feet after knocking me down. That's Thystonius, scribe. That's him, all in a nutshell. If you're brave enough to give him your best, he will see you through what comes afterwards.

Or, here, let's try to put it another way, aye? I'm sure you know the shinsticker plant from your travels. Sometimes called the nipthorn, but other times I've heard them called valor's weed. You know why? Remember how they work. If you brush up against one, the damned things cling like mad, burrs get all scuffed up against your pants or your cloak, then the stickers get you when you try to brush them off. You remember how to beat them, though? Aye, you grab ahold! If you go for a seed pod and just squeeze it, right in your open palm, they'll fold, they'll break, and not a thing will stick to you or hurt you.

That's life with Thystonius on your side. You've got to grab ahold, not shy away! Stand fast, get a good grip, go ahead with living. Try to cringe from it or step around life, and it'll muck with you every time. Put your head down and charge, and life will usually get battered into shape.

ON THE ORGANIZED FAITH OF THYSTONIUS

Organizations? We don't tend to organize, no, not his truest followers. There's a priesthood, I've heard, those who tend the shrines, that sort of thing,

but I can't imagine many of them are true questors, not with all the sweeping and dusting. We can be a quarrelsome lot, and with so many of us given to action rather than thought, it's likely for the best we don't see one another for long. We're at our best working independently, spurring on other people towards courage and contest, instead of always butting heads and racing one another to lead every charge.

When proper questors do gather, though? Oh, scribe, let me tell you, things get done. The tides of battles turn, kaers are reopened to the light of day, Horrors fall. We are a dynamic lot, and when a few of us get to egging the others on, we build momentum like an avalanche.

I know there's a group of dwarves back in Throal who mob up from time to time, but they—Throal being Throal—manage to rein things in by sticking to a proper military-style organization. I'm not a member, but I've broken bread and spilled blood with them, and I tell you plainly, they're a force to behold. I've seen units of Warriors, adepts to a man, hold a shield wall no better than that lot. Thystonius brings out the bravest and best of us, and in dwarves, that's plenty brave.

Tamryn might not realize it, but there are more than one of those war-bands. A group of Thystonian questors from the Throalic Army fought at Sky Point, yes, but they're hardly the only such group.

~Naeve Two-scars, Swordmistress

Oh! Hah, yes. And then there's the Dark Clouds, speaking of bravery, a proper mob of scorchers from Cara Fahd. Most of them are questors of Thystonius, too, and more than half are adepts to boot. They take their name and their sigil, a brooding stormcloud, from their parent tribe, the Thunderers. If those Throalic lads are an unbreakable wall, the Clouds are the unstoppable force.

ON HOW THYSTONIUS AFFECTS YOU AS AN ADEPT

Another ale, another story. A deal's a deal. Now, I'm a Warrior, so it's not as though following Thystonius is some great burden. I'm not given to skulking about like a Thief or Scout, nor trickery like some Illusionist. We Warriors are often a direct lot and being a questor as well hasn't done me much harm. I'm more abrupt than most Warriors, though, and I suppose it's fair to say I'm a bit less thoughtful than some.



Indeed?

~Darion the Grey, Wizard

I don't mind, though, and Thystonius still hasn't steered me wrong. Take this, then. When I was just a lad, maybe five years after meeting him back in Haven, still fairly new to sword and shield, aye? Not yet a Journeyman, even, but out journeying, nonetheless. My companions and I were hunting slavers. Former bandits and mercenaries, desperate sorts taking on desperate work by preying on those weaker than themselves, snatching up caravans of Namegivers to sell off. We were there to put a stop to it, free who we could, that sort of thing. One fight got especially bad, when they laid an ambush for us.

The Theran-paid scum had archers—and even an Archer or two—and crossbowmen pinning us down from atop a high ridgeline. Things were bleak. I'd just seen a fine Wizard die with a bolt in his neck, my comrades were fighting halfway across the camp and I was split off from them. I was out of spears to throw, my sword was lodged out of reach in some slaver's breastplate, my shield had been splintered by a troll bastard with an axe, and there I was: pinned down in a ditch with just my dagger and two dozen slaves chained together, wrist-to-wrist, for help. Eventually the slavers would send a few shooters to one side or the other, and our cover would be worthless. We were doomed. There's no fancy Warrior trick for that. No strategy. No ancient book with a famous general's advice.

And not just that, but no other Passion could have helped, either. Astendar didn't shower us with a creative, beautiful, way out of that muddy, bloody, ditch. Chorrolis couldn't bribe us a way out of there. Floranuus could not have blessed us with the speed we needed to outrun arrows and bolts. Garlen did not grant us healing or succor. Jaspre's plants and animals didn't save us. Though we were doing Lochost's work, we had no way to break any chains,

the lot of slaves were stuck, tight as could be, hampered and bound together. Mynbruje did not appear, offering us justice in the blink of an eye. Upandal granted us no aid, we had no walls to take cover behind, no keep to protect us, no shelter but that little gully.

We had only one way to survive: to charge. To go forward, to go up. To clamber out of that little trough instead of lying face-down in shallow waters gone red with Namegiver blood. We had to stand and rush them, as one. All of us, together, and dragging along or carrying those who died first. Forward, fast as we could, knowing we couldn't possibly all survive it, but that, if we ran hard and fought harder, their little knot of bowmen couldn't possibly survive us when we reached them.

No other Passion gave us what we needed, no questor happened by to rescue us. We had to rescue ourselves. I gave my fighting knife to an orkish girl, to bolster her courage, then I roared and charged with my bare hands as my only weapons. I took a bolt, here, just near my navel, but it was worth it when I heard that bastard's neck snap under my hands. The slaves followed, did their part, and we won the day. Thystonius smiled on us for our courage, and that courage carried us.

Notice how the brute doesn't mention, or didn't notice, how many of those unarmed, unarmored, slaves died in the charge?

~Allicar Vistan, Questor of Chorrolis

He noticed, he just doesn't like talking about it. I was there. I still carry that knife.

~Naeve Two-Scars, Swordmistress

ON RELATIONS WITH OTHER PASSIONS AND THEIR QUESTORS

There are Namegivers aplenty who don't get along with me, and don't get along with questors of Thystonius. Like I said, our courage can be off-putting, our willingness to fight, to stand up for what we know is right, and to encourage others to push themselves. We can clash within our own ranks, given half a chance, is it any surprise we clash with other Passions' followers?

Still, there are questors I get on with better than some. I've liked more followers of Floranuus than not, which they tend to find strange since I've met most of them in competitions, but it's true. They're kindred souls, in a way, doers more than thinkers, and I appreciate that. Belladon, the She-Bear of Bartertown, who I wrestled at the Games? She's of Floranuus. Took me in the foot-race, aye, but I beat her in the ring. She's a good one, Belladon is, and so are most of her ilk.

Lochost's lot are brave enough, too, at least not the bookish ones—no offense intended. They've got fire in them, and rebel souls, and Thystonius likes that. Plenty of Namegivers expect me to look down on Garlen's shepherds, but it's just not in me. All the best mothers have a bit of steel in them, especially when their children are threatened, don't they? They're gentle souls at the best of times, but I've seen Garlen's questors show their own brand of courage too many times to count. I don't belittle them, and neither should wiser men than me.

I'll admit it, though, I plain don't much care for Chorrolis' type. They're only good for carrying someone else's money and hiding behind a greasy smile while they take it. It takes guts to hunt behemoths, blood bees, and brithans—but not bargains! His followers tend to be a soft sort, both inside and out. Speaking of softies, I've never run across a follower of Astendar who had proper calluses. They don't offend me like Chorrolis' lot, but they don't impress me much, either, and I've told a few of them so. Upandal's questors are far from soft, but they're too fond of plans and schedules for my liking, and I'm too aware of the need for action for them to like me much, either. Upandal inspires terrific smiths and the like, but not much boldness or fast action. We questors might still respect and appreciate one another, but we certainly don't always get along.

Of the Mad Passions and their followers, I'll speak only of Vestrial, and then only to speak ill. There is no courage in murder. There is no strength to be found in poison and black cloaks and knives in the dark. Vestrial's followers are madmen and cowards, but not to be underestimated. Root them out and fight them if they let you, but always have a friend watching your back when you try. Cowards' blades still pierce bold hearts, given the chance.

FINAL THOUGHTS

I leave prayer for temples. I leave books for scholars. I leave other questors their planning, their hymnals, their dancing, their frolicking in grassy meadows or spoon-feeding gruel to children. I bear most of them no ill will. I respect them for their own style of devotion, but I know I need nothing from them, as Thystonius needs nothing from the other Passions.

But those other Passions do need something from Thystonius, just like their questors need from me and my ilk: courage! Thystonius blesses us with the willingness to face challenges, to take on the worst this world has to offer. Without courage there can be no justice, no victory, no protecting the meek and helpless. A coward can't defend animals, can't run a merchant caravan, doesn't dare to truly love, or create, or show passion. A coward can't free themselves, much less free anybody else. Courage makes all the rest of it possible. Courage keeps the Therans and Horrors at bay. Courage gives us all a chance.

There is Thystonius in all of us, in every Name-giver that dares leave their bed in the morning. And we should all—even you, scribe, and even those other Questors—be thankful for that.





A TIME TO BUILD

Through Astendar's favor, I have been blessed with an unfaltering memory for conversations and can recall even inconsequential details. I had crossed paths with Dygmar, an elf questor of Upandal, after he had spent time campaigning with mercenaries in southwest Barsaive, Vivane, and Rugaria. I spent many weeks traveling with him, but the following encounter with Zelia, another questor of Upandal, offers lessons on the often-contradictory nature of the Passions. I have recorded the encounter as accurately as my gift allows, and any embellishments I have added are not meant to deceive the reader but to offer greater insight into what I saw and heard.

~Arzu, windling and scribe of the Great Library

Dygmar and I approached Villtown along a paved road; each stone was laid with care and nearly as smooth as river rock. We'd traveled out of our way to meet Zelia, Dygmar's mentor. When I'd met Dygmar, he was nothing like I'd expected from a Questor of Upandal. His skills ran so contrary to the perceived nature of what Upandal's questors should be that I often found myself wondering if he were deceiving me.

Upandal's questors travel from city to town and even remote villages, bringing honest, fulfilling labor with them. As with the other Passions, Upandal calls many to aid him. Some of his questors construct noble palaces and civic buildings—great, soaring structures that leave visitors in awe. Others build taverns that survive decades and offer warm food and strong drink to weary travelers. Upandal also calls on his questors to build fortifications to protect towns from marauding armies and old Horrors. Wherever skilled labor is needed, a questor of Upandal may arrive to provide uncanny expertise in the construction.

Dygmar built neither palaces nor fortifications. Dygmar built the siege engines that tore down fortifications. The elf was a paradox, and I hoped to understand him and his idiosyncrasies. After weeks of travel, I had yet to fully unravel the elf's complexities.

I had taken the opportunity to stretch my wings, so I saw the quarry long before Dygmar. Ahead of us I saw Zelia, who stood with her arms crossed across her broad chest, admiring the massive stone block that would be the cornerstone of Villtown's new mill. She ran her hands along the face of the stone feeling for imperfections and then felt the edge. She had chosen the

stone herself, cut it herself, polished it herself, and now awaited the laborers that would help her move it from the quarry to Villtown. It measured a perfect one yard tall by one yard wide and two yards long. Even Zelia was impressed with the accuracy of her measurements.

Around her, the laborers of Villtown worked in the quarry cutting more stone. Their hammers and chisels followed the natural faults in the granite. After the laborers excavated the stones, she would teach them how to make them smooth. Each stone would lie upon the other and give the new mill the strength to stand for a hundred years.

The cornerstone—always the first stone laid—would begin the foundation of the mill. As much as Zelia might admire a soaring arch or the complexity of the domes in a great city, nothing pleased her as much as laying the cornerstone. All of the other beauties of architecture, great towers, and incredible palaces began with the cornerstone.

The mill would grind grain, and the laborers she taught in her short visit to Villtown would pass on the lessons to new apprentices. She watched the laborers and felt a growing pride, knowing this mill would be the cornerstone for the growth of Villtown from a small village into something greater.

Zelia pulled the drawings for the mill from her satchel and spread them open across the cornerstone and then set two small stones at opposite corners to hold the drawings open. She closed her eyes and imagined the sturdy mill, the water driving the wheel, and sounds of grain being ground.

"May my hammer strike true, and Upandal bless this building," she said and placed both hands on the stone.

"You love stone more than the dwarves, Master Mason," a loud, joyful voice rang out interrupting Zelia's commune with the stone.

"Dygmar?" Zelia frowned at the smiling elf. "Shouldn't you be in the west razing towns and overseeing the bloodshed of innocent Namegivers?"

"It's already fall, my friend, and the campaign season has come to a close," Dygmar replied. "The armies have disbanded or made camp for the winter. Nothing to do now but wait for spring. I am headed to the Great Library."

Zelia motioned to me. "Have you forgotten all the courtesies of civilization?" she chided.

"My apologies! This is Arzu, one of the Great Library's many scribes. She was chronicling the battles along the border." With a wink to me he added, "Once she learned I was a questor of Upandal, she has followed me ever since."

"Blessings of the builder upon you," Zelia intoned the traditional greeting of Upandal's followers.

"May your art forever inspire," I replied and alighted upon the ground so that I could bow to the Master Mason.

Dygmar watched the workmen cutting the stone with hammer and chisel. "Will you work through the winter?"

"If horses could pull the blocks through the snow, I would."

"Only you would choose a quarry so far away from the village!" Dygmar scoffed.

"I didn't choose where the best stone lay, nor would I use anything but the best." Zelia glared at the elf feeling her honor impugned by the mere suggestion she would settle for anything less.

Dygmar's body seemed all out of proportion with his legs and arms too long for his torso, but he moved with unexpected grace. He climbed on top of Zelia's cornerstone and ran his hands over the smooth stone. Zelia watched the elf touch the stone with the eye of a man seeing a rival touch his lover.

Questors come from a variety of backgrounds, and Upandal's questors are more varied than most. Some specialize in creating sculpture and art, while others build fortifications and defense for cities. Dygmar was unusual but no less devoted to the ideals of Upandal.

~Rashak, Master Carpenter

"Of all the Namegivers in the world, why Upandal would choose a degenerate like you as one of his questors will forever vex me." Zelia's declaration was as much for Dygmar as it was for the sky and earth.

"I vex you, Master Mason?" Dygmar laughed. "I vex you because...?"

Zelia interrupted, "Because you have built nothing but death. You are responsible for the spilled blood of hundreds and the destruction of dozens of towns. You..." Zelia huffed and her cheeks flushed with anger.

"Upandal does not call all of us to build fountains and taverns," Dygmar's voice had taken on a steely edge. "Nor do we all have the luxury of working with fine craftspeople and the best stone in Barsaive."

Dygmar hopped off the stone block and stood eye to eye with the human. Their bodies wound tight. Neither of them had noticed the laborers in the quarry had stopped their work and were now watching them.

"One day," Zelia fumed, "I will build a wall so strong and thick that your siege engines will never shatter it and so tall that no catapult can throw a stone over it."

Dygmar replied, "Then I shall tunnel under it, and watch as all your work—and bluster—comes crashing down."

Zelia responded with a wide arching punch that struck Dygmar on the cheek and sent him to the ground. She pulled back her foot to kick the elf, but Dygmar, light and graceful, rolled away and hopped to his feet. His hand went to the sword at his side and his eyes narrowed. Zelia's hand fell to her waist and the heavy metal hammer there.

Zelia's laborers closed in on them. Dygmar let go of his weapon and raised his hands in surrender. "Must it always end in a fight between us?"

"Only because you haven't grown up. After all these years, after I taught you how to listen to Upandal's call. After so much. I thought you would have stopped building siege engines and undermining walls, but no, you use Upandal's gifts to attack towns you could have protected."

"I don't want to fight, Zelia," Dygmar rubbed his cheek. "We've fought and argued every time we've met since I left your apprenticeship."

Zelia crossed her arms and stood as stoic as the stone block beside her. "We argued when you were an apprentice, too!"

Dygmar laughed and shook his head. "Let me stand you a drink or two in town."

"When the work's done, I'll join you."

"Upandal would never forgive me if I left you in the quarry while I sat in a tavern." Dygmar took off his sword belt and jacket and laid them atop the mill's cornerstone. "Show me where the work needs to be done."

WORDS WITH THE MASTER MASON

I passed the afternoon watching Zelia, Dygmar, and the other laborers continue cutting stone. Once focused on a task, the tension between the master and her former apprentice vanished. While Zelia directly managed the stoneworkers, Dygmar supervised moving the rough-cut blocks from the quarry walls to the more open working area.

The attitude of Villtown's workers towards the elf started off cool, but as the questor lent his muscle and sweat to the task at hand, their feelings changed. I was struck with how easily Dygmar fell in with the townsfolk, and, once he proved himself, how readily they accepted his advice and guidance.

This was construction of a different sort. While Villtown's residents already shared some bonds, Dygmar was building them up, making them stronger. When I shared my observation with Zelia, she stood silently for several moments, watching Dygmar show a pair of young dwarfs a way to rig a rope harness and pulleys.

"You're not wrong. Most folk don't think about that part of it. They look at the four walls and roof, or the palisade we erect around their village, and think dirt and wood and stone are all we care about."

She gestured toward the blocks around us. "It all depends on the foundation, and foundations aren't just stone and brick. They're hearts and souls as well. The connections built between neighbors through honest sweat and labor. They lay their own cornerstone, their own foundation."

One of the other masons called to her, and she walked over to answer a question. When she was done, she came back over toward me. "You look at the materials you have, work out how they best fit together." She walked around another of the large foundation blocks. "You draw up your plans, try to work out all the variables." She hefted her hammer and placed a chisel along one edge of the stone.

"Sometimes..." Zelia fell silent as she chipped away at the granite. After a couple of minutes, she set her tools aside and took a measurement. "Sometimes it all lines up." She smiled.

"Upandal builds more than structures. He builds communities. Like the plans for a house, each member of a community has their part to play. Lives, aligned in purpose. When they do their appointed task, you get a sturdy foundation, a solid wall."

Her gaze lifted over to where Dygmar was sharing a laugh with some of the laborers. "Sometimes, despite your plans, you don't end up with a sound



structure." This last was said quietly, and I'm not sure I was meant to hear it. She appeared lost in thought, or memory.

Whatever had gripped her, she quickly shook it off. She gave me a rueful smile, and then turned to direct work on another stone. I let her be.

CONFLICT RENEWED

The Plough and Horse overflowed with the laughter and revelry of Zelia's craftsmen. They raised a drink to the questor, and she paid for the first round before sitting down at the table with Dygmar who pressed the cold pint to his still-sore cheek.

"You can still put in an honest day's work," Zelia needled the elf, "but you take shortcuts and hurry the work. You picked up some bad habits."

Dygmar sighed and set his drink down, "Quality workmanship isn't as important as getting the job done when arrows are falling from the sky."

Zelia shook her head and took a long drink from her beer. "Trying to worry me?"

"Not at all! Truthfully, I stay as far from the fighting as I can. Upandal didn't ask me to take up the sword or throw magic at the enemy."

Zelia glared at her former apprentice. "No, Upandal asked you to build." Zelia waved her hand, motioning to the tavern. "Upandal asked you to build places like this."

"An ale house?"

"How dare you call it an 'ale house!'" Zelia spit the words "ale house" with such fury that they were like verbal punches, "You have the same eyes Upandal gave me.

"Don't belittle the Plough and Horse. This 'ale house' was the first tavern built on this stretch of road. It drew travelers, tired from their long journeys and gave them a place to rest their heads and their horses. As this 'ale house' became prosperous, Namegivers put down roots nearby.

"Those Namegivers started farms and built a town here. They baked the bread and grew the vegetables served in the stew. Folk come here and share their triumphs and disappointments. They raise drinks to celebrate a good harvest or the birth of a child. This 'ale house' is the center of their world. Without it, civilization would never have grown here. Instead, Villtown would just be another patch of weeds at the crossroads."

Dygmar slammed his mug down on the table, spattering ale over the polished oak. "You've done nothing but push me since I arrived. You sit there smug and proud of your mill, your tiny ale house, and act like it's the whole world. I've listened. I've heard your talk. It's the same speech you gave me

Questors of Upandal have an uncanny sense of place. They can look at a structure and see not only its aesthetics and purpose but also see how it connects to the broader world around them. They see that an ale house is the center of a community or how a theatre not only brings joy to a town but also binds it together. Other questors can see when a building is a blight on a community destroying the lives of the Namegivers who live nearby.

~Adelia, Scholar and Scribe of the Mundane and Magic

when I was an apprentice and the same speech you gave when I left. ‘The world needs builders not destroyers’ you said.”

I was shocked. I’d never seen the elf so furious. He was gripping the mug so tightly his knuckles were white. If he’d one iota less self-control, he’d have shattered it across Zelia’s face.

“You haven’t a damned clue what you’re talking about!” Dygmar held onto his mug as if it was the only thing restraining him from flying into a fit of rage. “Do you think battles happen in open fields? That soldiers stride into battle and great heroes emerge, slaying their enemies with wide swings of their mighty swords? That adepts fight with grace and magic? And at the end of the day, a victor is declared by the Passions themselves? Is that what you think?”

Dygmar slammed his hands on the table, spilling his ale. “Hardly. War is fought around towns and cities. Namegivers die scaling the walls, dodging arrows and boulders the defenders drop on them. We hope to end the siege quickly. It’s better for everyone. That’s why I’m there.

“The attacking force builds siege lines and surround a city. Then it waits. The wait is interminable. It wearies the soul and starves the mind and body of the attacker and defender. Outside the wall, life is misery.

“You learn not to pick the grubs and worms out of your rations. They aren’t tasty, but they provide fuel for weary bodies. Men become ill and die soaked in vomit and waste. Inside the walls, it’s worse. People starve. The only food they have is the food they’ve prepared for the siege. Nothing else. If their wells become contaminated, they’ll die of disease.

“Defender or attacker, both lose more people to disease than to arrows or magicians’ spells.”

Dygmar had the attention of everyone in the room. Their voices lowered, and they watched him from the corner of their eyes, clearly uncomfortable. Dygmar’s voice fell to a quiet rumble that carried across the entire tavern.

“I doubt you really have any idea what I’m talking about,” Dygmar continued. He wasn’t talking to the people in the room but made sure that

The only thing that protects a town under siege is the stubbornness of the town's protectors. You witness terrible things inside the walls. Death comes in so many terrible varieties—disease, famine, and much worse—that I'd rather face an army on the open field than ever defend a besieged city again. When I was defending the town of Matill, the siege went on for nearly two years. By the end, I saw Namegivers so hungry they were eating each other.

~Larrent, Archer

they all heard him. "You sit here in safety, far from the battles. You surround yourself with the best masons, carpenters, and laborers in the region. You work slow, and you work to an exacting detail. You have the *luxury* of time to build *anything*. And then you dare, you *dare*, criticize my work."

"Now, just you wait..." Zelia started.

Dygmar interrupted, glaring at the human. "I build the weapons that *end* sieges. My towers aren't graceful, but they get men over the wall. They lack the embellishments of Myckandir's mansion, but every soul is protected as they clamber to the top and storm across to push back the bastards who'd enslave all of Barsaive.

"I don't have the fortune to work with craftsmen or travel far and wide to find the finest stone or order timbers from a distant city. I work with what's at hand. The forest near the town provides the timber. If it's good timber, then we build siege towers. If it's bad timber, we *still* build siege towers and reinforce them best we can.

"When we can't build towers, we undermine the walls. We dig through dense earth and pray to Upandal the tunnels don't collapse. It's back breaking work and the only thing you smell is the burning oil of the lanterns and the sweat of the people around you. You never get used to heat underground. It's a sweltering, crushing heat that doesn't let you breathe except in short gasps.

"When a tunnel collapses," Dygmar tipped over his mug and spilled his ale, "the earth swallows everyone. You don't dig them out. By the time you get to them, they've suffocated if they haven't been crushed by the falling earth. You leave them there, already buried, and you start a new tunnel."

Dygmar paused and watched the ale spread across the table until it dripped onto the tavern's stone floor.

Finally, Dygmar spoke again in a hushed tone only Zelia and I could hear. "I've never seen you yell at the man who built the blacksmith's forge. The same forge used to beat hot iron into swords and daggers. How many men has the smith killed?"

"How many?" Dygmar demanded.

Dygmur stood, the sound of his stool grinding across the floor shattering the silence. He paused for a moment, watching Zelia. When she didn't look up to meet his gaze, he snorted, tossed a handful of silver on the table, and turned to leave.

As she was lowering her mug, her gaze met mine. Whatever emotion had been on her face was quickly masked by a frown, and she ignored me the rest of the evening.





VESTRIAL REVEALED

The following was found left at the foot of my bed one morning. The author is unknown. While the manner of its delivery was highly disturbing, it does provide insight into Vestrial and his questors. Regarding any future donations, please have them delivered to the Great Library.

~Theodor Willit, Researcher and Scribe for the Great Library of Throal

I have learned that the scholars of the Great Library have you searching out those who follow the Passions so as to provide insight into the lives we lead and why. Yet none have come to speak of Vestrial; The Grand Schemer, Lord of Murder, Master of Secrets. I can only assume it is because you have not found one of us... yet. Fortunately, I have found you.

THE ROLE VESTRIAL PLAYS

Many fail to understand the importance of Vestrial in their daily lives. They believe him to be a dark, menacing, and evil force. They think that the Grand Schemer is the enemy of all good Namegivers, but they are wrong.

Vestrial has many titles, and all of them rightfully deserved. They speak to the varied aspects and ideals that she embodies. Like any other Passion, these aspects and ideals are a vital part of what it means to be a Namegiver.

As long as Namegivers keep secrets from each other, as long as they hide from their shameful desires, Vestrial lurks behind them all. People always seem to think that what is hidden will stay hidden, but the truth is that what is hidden will always be found. The Master of Secrets does not only gather secrets, he shares them as well.

Vestrial is as important to Namegivers as any of her siblings, perhaps even more so as she gives them focus for their own designs.

DEDICATION TO VESTRIAL

In looking through some of the other writings, I have noted this is something asked about when it comes to the Passions and those that follow them. Are there groups or the like that gather to do the desires of Vestrial? The answer is simple, yes. The better question that should be asked is do they know that they serve Vestrial? For some, yes. Others, no. I shall try to explain.

Any who seek to keep secrets are doing what the Master of Secrets desires, even if they don't believe they do. Namegivers that work together to develop and enact elaborate plans to trick or mislead other Namegivers, they serve Vestrial as well, for she is the Grand Schemer. In almost every case, they do

so without realization. There are those of us, however, that seek to act in her Name knowing full well we do so.

We who follow the path Vestrial has laid out are everywhere, not merely among the shadows. Yet, you will likely never know that we are, and that is our strength. Vestrial is always behind us, waiting. We act with precision, and careful planning. Each act is not only a testament to Vestrial, but a scheme of intricate detail. The average Namegiver is unwitting in their behavior, unaware of how he manipulates them. We, his chosen, listen to his whispers and act knowing we honor him.

Even the scholars of the Great Library of Throal are an organization who serve the Master of Secrets, for I know there is knowledge you choose to hide away from the public. Even you have your hidden shames and sly deceptions. What of those books which speak of the Horrors? You may claim that such knowledge is dangerous but were everyone to know and understand then they could better defend themselves. Of course, then they wouldn't need the protection Throal offers.

WELKYN AND THE CHAKTA BIRDS

Vestrial has many stories and legends that surround him. Some are true, some are false. I have always found humor in watching people try to determine what is really true about the Grand Schemer. There is one I will share with you that is older than the Scourge and is a particular favorite of mine.

There once was a powerful and wealthy merchant by the Name of Welkyn, who traveled from one side of Barsaive to the other and back again, buying and selling goods. Everywhere he went, he would always leave with more coin than he arrived with, and his customers would often wonder how they had been convinced to part with their money. He was feared by other merchants for his skill and ruthlessness when making deals. None could out negotiate Welkyn, and he knew it. He was truly favored by Chorrolis.

One day as he traveled, a flock of chakta birds alighted near his camp. Instead of inviting them in, and offering some bread, he angrily shooed them away. He was tired from traveling all day, and the chakta would be a distraction he did not need. Now, any seasoned traveler knows not to be rude to chakta birds, for they do not react to such behavior well. The flock angrily began to fly around the merchant's camp and would have attacked him if another larger chakta bird had not flown in and called the others away.

The larger chakta bird led the flock to a tree not far from the merchant's camp and began to talk to them.

"Mighty and wise chakta," the large bird began, for he knew that they loved flattery, "I see that you have been treated badly by the merchant, and that you desire his comeuppance, but I have a better way than simply pecking him to death."

One of the chakta spoke up, "We would be interested in hearing this idea of yours, but first will you not introduce yourself?"

The larger chakta bowed its head, "I beg your pardon, and apologize. I am the Passion Vestrial, and I have come to help you."

The chakta looked upon Vestrial and considered his words. The chakta do not fear the Grand Schemer like the Namegivers do. "What do you offer us as a solution for the slight this merchant has given us, Passion?" spoke the lead chakta.

"The merchant is rude, yes, and it is amazing that he can stand under the weight of his ego. But to deal with his slight upon you I would suggest bruising his ego rather than his flesh." said Vestrial, "If you grant me a moment to offer my plan, I would be honored to do so."

The birds nodded in unison, and Vestrial continued, "Follow me to the village where this blustering merchant was born. Talk to the people who knew him before he became a wealthy man of power. Learn what shames he carries, then bring those secrets he seeks to hide to those he deals with. Let those whom he bargains with learn what you have to share. Once his hidden shames come to light he will learn the price of hubris and no longer will he be able to afford to be rude and dismissive."

The flock began to squawk their laughter, and they took to the air following Vestrial as he led them across the plains of Barsaive to the village of Welkyn's birth.

There they spoke to everyone and learned all of the secret shames that Welkyn had escaped by leaving the village and becoming the powerful merchant outside and far away from the village. With each piece of gossip the flock laughed louder and louder until the skies were filled with the sound of their menacing joy.

Then the birds took to the air, separating and each heading to one of the cities of Barsaive. As each arrived in a city, they would tell every person they found of the secrets Welkyn had thought he had hidden away. Soon, everyone knew the things that made Welkyn ashamed, and the chakta birds were pleased.

Then one day Welkyn arrived in a town to sell his goods and add to his growing wealth. Above him the flock flew, watching and waiting. As he entered the town, the people began to laugh and point. Confused, but undeterred, Welkyn set up his stall and laid out his goods. While folk would come to look at his merchandise, none would haggle with him. Whenever he would attempt to convince them to buy they would look at him and begin laughing. Above, the flock circled, enjoying the sight.

Soon enough Welkyn learned that no matter where he went, he had become a laughingstock, and none would take him seriously. The flock saw this and eventually alighted in front of him.

"What do you want, birds?" asked Welkyn, defeated and broken, "Have you come to mock me as well?"

The lead chakta bird cocked its head and stared at the merchant, "No, Welkyn the Fool. We do not seek to mock, for your fellow Namegivers do that

already. We come to tell you that it is because of your rudeness and ego that you now find yourself unable to earn even a single copper coin."

Welkyn cried out, "How could you have known my shame?"

Vestrial, still in the form of a chakta bird, alighted at the feet of the merchant, "Foolish man. You sought to hide your shames and convince others that you were more than what you truly are: mortal and flawed. The proud should always remember that." With that, Vestrial shifted her form from that of a chakta bird to resemble instead Welkyn, but sickly and weak.

Welkyn dropped to his knees and begged Vestrial to forgive him, and to give him back the life he had made for himself. Vestrial laughed cruelly, "No Welkyn, for the rest of your days you will live in shame. You are petty and small, and even these chakta birds are more noble than you." With that Vestrial faded away, and the flock of chakta birds took to the air laughing at the weeping man lying in the dirt below.

The moral of this story? Secrets, when revealed, can bring down even the powerful. Vestrial delights in seeing the proud fall because of what they try to hide.

Fascinating, I have heard this tale before, but the merchant was able to redeem himself and atone for his behavior. This telling is far grimmer. I can't believe it is the true version.

~Chalindria, Troubadour of Glenwood Deep

HOW I CAME TO VESTRIAL

I have read some of the other chapters of this book you scholars plan, and I know that you prefer a few words about how the questor found his or her path to their Passion. Thus, I will share my story.

I was a young troll, of a highland clan. My father was a smith for the moot but was originally of a lowland clan. He had been brought into the moot because he was a skilled smith, but he was still a lowland troll. One day, the chieftain of the clan came to my father demanding a new sword. He was in consideration by another clan's First Wife for marriage to one of that clan's daughters. The new sword would add to the impression of his strength, helping to ensure his being chosen. The First Wife of the neighbor clan would arrive soon, in a matter of days, and the sword would need to be finished by then.

My father was more than happy to make one, but he needed some time, as he was currently working on some farming implements for others. The chieftain took the tools that my father had been working on and threw them into the forge, then forced my father back against the wall to keep him from trying to pull them out before the damage could be done. The chieftain laughed and told my father that when he could prove that he was strong enough to be

a chieftain, he could make decisions as to what is more important. Until then, he should do what he is told and make the sword.

The blow to his honor was obvious, and that evening when he came to the meal, even I could see how that event had shaken him. My mother saw as well yet kept silent. I felt shame. I could feel that not only the insult to my father's *katorr*, but how my parents chose to handle it, began to make my rage and disgust boil within as my honor was deeply slighted. Even more, I began to see the weakness in my parents.

That night as I lay in bed I struggled with how to address the situation, for neither of my parents seemed as if they would. As sleep began to overtake me, I heard a voice. It spoke of strength, of how I might address the insult to my *katorr*. I knew then the touch of the Grand Schemer, and I felt a strength flow through me.

As the time of the new moon approached, I left the village with a string of wineskins and climbed out among the rocky scabble searching for the bushes of the remis berry. The voice whispered in my ear and guided me, down and through the dangerous terrain of the mountains. For days I climbed and sought the white berries, eventually reaching the lower parts of the mountains. It was under the dark of the new moon when I finally found them. Oh, and what a bounty there was.

The bushes were large and full of the berries, plump and bright white like a freshly cleaned skull. I gathered the berries throughout the night and into the morning. Then after I slept, I spent the next night following the instructions of the whispering voice and prepared the berries into a thick solution, filling each wineskin near to bursting. Yet my search was not complete. I listened for, and followed, the whispers and came to find the last item I needed. A flower with black petals, surrounded by bones and rotting corpses of small animals. The black mercy.

Days later, I returned to the village in the dark of night. I took the wineskins and poured the mixture into every source of water I could find, letting the poison mix well. I took the black mercy flower and carefully ground its pollen into dust. I muttered a prayer to Vestrial and slipped quietly into the chieftain's tent. As he slept, I covered his tunic in the powder I had created. When he woke, and put on the tunic, he would breathe in the dust and suffer the effects. Then, I waited.

Hours later, the village woke, and every troll, young and old, woke and drank the water to clear their throats and assuage the thirst that comes after a night's sleep. I continued to watch and wait.

Then the pain filled them, their muscles cramping and twisting. Each one collapsed, paralyzed and feeling the cold grasp of Death reaching out for them. I looked in on the chieftain, where he lay slumped on the floor, his eyes glazed with whatever euphoric visions filled them.

I walked out and found my father, and I dragged his stiff body into the center of the village. I lifted him, filled with the strength given me by the Lord of Murder, and placed him leaning against a post. Then I did the same with my

mother and the chieftain. I had the three of them posed, looking at each other and I stood in the center.

I told them that the death of our village, brought about by me alone, assuaged the insult that the three of them had brought upon my honor. I told them that by midday as all of the village lay dead, the chieftain would awake as the only survivor. When the First Wife arrived that day, he would be worthless in their eyes, allowing his entire clan to be killed while he slept. He would face the rite of severance and be declared an outcast.

I could see the fear in their eyes as they realized what I had done. I went to my father's forge and brought out the sword he had made for the chieftain. I laid it at the side of the unconscious troll and whispered into his ear, "You will never know who brought you low, for you never even bothered to recognize me. The secret of my Name, and how I claimed justice for the dishonor you brought me will be mine. I leave knowing that your own Name will struck from the memory of every moot."

I left the village smiling and praising Vestrial. I was hers now, and her alone.

SERVING VESTRIAL

I, like any Questor, have a special relationship with my Passion. I live as he demands and desires. I lie when deception would serve his schemes and tell the truth when it does as well. I learn the hidden secrets of Namegivers so that I might share them with Vestrial, and when necessary reveal them to others in order to further the plans Vestrial chooses to share with me. I may not know what he seeks to accomplish, but I am proud to serve his ends.

And what of murder? Yes, she is known as the Lord of Murder, but is that truly a bad thing? Does embodying the Ideal of murder make her evil? I say no.

Murder, when you think about it, is vitally important to all Namegivers. Any crime is, really. Without terrible crimes there is no purpose to law. No justice. Without Vestrial's bloody dagger, there is no reason for Mynbruje's scales. Without his poisonous touch, Garlen has nothing to heal. Even Raggok the Vengeful One cannot seek true vengeance without the concept of violent death to drive the point home. Those that work to kill others for either profit or some misguided belief, they serve the Lord of Murder no matter what they might think.

It is astounding the amount of ego this Namegiver has. I can barely contain the disgust I feel reading these words. How dare she imply that Vestrial is the reason Mynbruje exists.

~Landon Ryll, Questor of Mynbruje

All of the schemes that Vestrial imagines are like beautiful and dark paintings, and I am the brush she uses to paint each stroke. I, and every other questor of hers, are the instruments of her desires. It is a great honor to serve and be her questor.

He grants each of us the ability to see the hidden desires of any Namegiver we should encounter. We are also able to learn the hidden shames of those same Namegivers. With these gifts we can raise up or strike low any we encounter, changing their destinies as we see fit. With these gifts, we are capable of making kings of paupers or crushing kingdoms due to a few well-placed words in the right ears. And if he asks us to kill, what of it? I have never met a Namegiver who did not harbor secret thoughts of murder. To deny this is to deny a hidden truth. I myself though, I kill when it would please him to have a life ended.

How can any doubt the importance of Vestrial and her chosen? How can any think that it is anything less than an honor to serve Vestrial?

I hope you have gained a better understanding of what it is to follow Vestrial, and how even we questors of the Grand Schemer are equal to those questors of the other Passions.

Should we be feared? Of course. Yet, while we may not know every scheme Vestrial weaves, we can trust that she smiles as we scheme as well. Your lives would be less than they are were we not there, shaping the mystery of what you see and hear. Vestrial knows your secrets and she whispers them in our ears. Cross us at your own peril.







GAME INFORMATION

This chapter provides a basic overview of the role of Passions in Barsaive, along with game rules and advice on questor characters. The in-character essays presented earlier in this book give insight into the mindset, beliefs, and traditions of questors of different Passions. They should serve as a starting point for fleshing out questor characters in the world of **Earthdawn**.

PASSIONS IN BARSAIVE

The Passions are a basic fact of life for the people of Barsaive. They represent important ideals of Namegiver life and culture and are recognized as powerful and influential spiritual beings. While few meet Passions in the flesh, people honor them and seek their blessings, especially for events tied to their ideals.

In one respect, worship and belief in the Passions is similar to religious practices in our world. Tales of the Passions are told to children, shared in village celebrations, and adapted into epic works of art for nobles. They form a cultural touchstone and the foundation of rites, rituals, and superstitions.

On the other hand, Passion worship is not really a religion. There are stories and legends about the Passions, but no sacred texts. Many questors will happily discuss their Passion's ideals, but they strive to personally live them rather than proselytize. While the ideals each Passion embodies are widely recognized, the ways a person pursues those ideals is highly personal, and questors of the same Passion may not fully agree with each other.

Most settlements will have a site (or sites) dedicated to the Passions. This might be a specific structure shared by the community, a place set aside in a common area (e.g. a chapel in the town hall), or personal shrines in homes. Even with a public space, some have their own dedicated spot to honor the Passions. Food, incense, or other symbolic offerings are presented at these places to ask the Passions' blessings.

Festivals and holidays often arise from important spiritual observances. A farming community in Northeastern Barsaive honors Jaspree with rituals to bless the coming planting on the first new moon of spring. They tell a legend of Jaspree giving Namegivers the knowledge of agriculture, and a parable of a questor visiting two villages, one which welcomed her and received a bountiful crop, and another that spurned her and met with famine. The rituals and stories told emphasize the community's values through the lens of the Passion's ideals.

Folk practices develop in connection to these stories. When preparing their bread every morning, a small portion of the dough is made into a “questor’s loaf” and set aside to represent the generosity described in the story. These loaves are given to those in need and scattered to feed wildlife as a symbol of the bond between Namegiver and nature.

The larger the community, the more likely practices vary. This is especially true in towns and cities where Namegivers of different backgrounds come together. This results in noticeable differences between groups, whether geographically or by social class. For example, a neighborhood of trolls in Travar has a festival honoring Thystonius that goes back to their emergence from a mountain kaer. This tradition gives them a cultural identity within the city that stands out from their neighbors.

There are also syncretic practices, where one group’s beliefs and traditions are blended with another’s, forming something new. Shortly after the Scourge, a tribe of orks settled on the edge of a woodland that was home to an elf kaer. The two communities blended and now the town’s rituals are a blend of elf refinement and lively ork celebrations.

Shrines dedicated to the Passions can also be found outside towns and cities. The land of Barsaive is dotted with ruins and some of these are abandoned temples. They serve as shelter for explorers, lairs for creatures, bases for cults, etc. They can play a significant role in an adventure, or just a bit of background color. Old trail or trade route markers might serve as shrines to Floranuus, where travelers can ask the Passion of movement to help speed them to their destination.

During character creation, players should give some thought to their relationship with the various Passions. They were raised with certain traditions, which of them do they still practice? Consider the different ideals each Passion represents. A character from a nomadic group has a different relationship with Upandal than a dwarf raised in one of Throal’s inner cities. The nomads, who don’t really have permanent structures, view the ideals of building and construction more metaphorically than the dwarf’s experience of practical civic buildings.

Gamemasters should give their characters the same consideration. Spiritual practices provide more dimensions to individuals and communities. Perhaps the t’skrang running the mercantile exchange has a coin on a chain around her neck she rubs when negotiating a trade, calling on Chorrolis. There might be an annual event where a town’s young unmarried men and women meet to find their future spouses in a celebration of Astendar and Garlen.

One last aspect to consider is a character’s relationship with the Mad Passions. While they have been mad since the early days of the Scourge, the stories remain. Erendis as the embodiment of civic responsibility, Rashomon as rulership, and Vestrial as the joyful prankster are still present in Barsaive’s oral traditions. A community might forgo any mention of them at all, or mourn them as departed loved ones, depending on their cultural relationship with the pre-Scourge versions.

True Nature of the Passions

The opening chapter of this book presents some speculation about the nature of the Passions but doesn't provide any concrete answers. This is intentional. The Passions are powerful and mysterious beings, and even the great dragons treat them with caution.

For most campaigns, the truth about the Passions isn't especially relevant. More important are the powers and abilities of questors; they are the primary way most people in Barsaive interact with the Passions. Adepts are more likely to encounter a Passion, especially as they ascend to higher Circles, but even those encounters should be special.

If a campaign—especially a high Circle one—develops a focus on the Passions, the gamemaster should feel free to develop the ideas presented in this book as they wish or come up with something else if it makes for a good story.

QUESTOR CHARACTERS

Questors are Namegivers who pledged themselves to following and promoting the ideals of a particular Passion. For most people in Barsaive, questors are the primary way they interact with Passions. Most questors are not adepts and spend their time in service to Namegiver communities, often practicing a craft or trade that supports the spread of their patron's ideals, but not always.

Each Passion embodies multiple related ideals. The essays here only present the point of view of the questors who wrote them. Different questors may give greater or lesser emphasis to different ideals, which can lead to differences of opinion and conflict between questors. These disagreements are usually friendly, at least broadly speaking, but individual questors might develop rivalries or outright antipathy (the essay about Upandal provides an example). Most recognize if a questor is wielding the power of their patron, they must be doing something the Passion approves of.

Many questor powers, whether they harm or help, are less effective on adepts than non-adepts. The reason isn't clear. One belief is because adepts have their own magical powers, they don't need as much help from the Passions. Another theory is the focus and dedication required to practice a Discipline reduces the effectiveness of a Passion's power.

Becoming a Questor

Any Namegiver can become a questor. Adhering to a Passion's ideals is the only thing all questors have in common. Similar to a Discipline, being a questor is a dedicated pursuit an individual undertakes in their life. Unlike

a Discipline, a questor does not need the magical aptitude required to be an adept. They simply behave in line with their chosen Passion's ideals and are rewarded by their patron.

If a player wishes their character to become a questor, they declare their intention (which must be approved by the gamemaster) and start devoting their character's life to a single Passion, living that Passion's ideals, and helping spread their patron's influence across Barsaive. In return, the character gains access to the Questor devotion (p. 179). Their Questor devotion rank serves as a measure of devotion and helps determine what powers and benefits their patron provides.

Starting Play as a Questor

Nothing prevents a player character from starting the game as a questor, or from playing a non-adept questor. We recommended, however, you don't take this approach until both the player and gamemaster are more familiar with the system and how to appropriately gauge challenges and conflicts.

In the early stages of an adept's career, the mental dedication required to follow a Discipline makes it difficult to simultaneously pursue a questor's path. It is possible, especially with a Discipline philosophy highly complementary to a Passion's ideals, but from a game mechanics perspective the character is likely to end up spread thin. They may have more powers and abilities to choose from, but their ranks are not likely to be as high as companions who focused on a single path.

Non-adept questors do not have the range of powers available to adepts, especially when it comes to combat abilities. These characters need to supplement their questor devotions with a broader selection of skills than a typical adept player character possesses, and advancing these skills requires significantly more time than an adept. It can be done, but the starting assumptions for the game must take these differences into account.

Choosing a Patron Passion

While characters can choose to become questors of any Passion, gamemasters should consider the potential problems inherent in following any of the three Mad Passions—Dis, Raggok, or Vestrial. While being a questor of one of these Passions offers excellent roleplaying challenges, most Barsaivians fear and revile the Mad Passions and those associated with them. Even in the Theran Empire, those who worship Dis, Passion of bureaucracy and slavery, are only tolerated. Questors of Mad Passions can find ordinary tasks difficult, as most people are unwilling to deal with them.

Another issue is those who devote their lives to the Mad Passions usually oppose the ideals and goals of the heroes of Earthdawn. A questor of a Mad Passion could not easily join an adventuring group. The gamemaster should consider limiting questors of the Mad Passions to the role of antagonists. The questor powers and Acts of Devotion given for the Mad Passions are provided so gamemasters can create these questors as villains and other opposition.

Questor characters may pursue healing one or more of the Mad Passions, which might make an appropriate campaign goal. Such a task would require years of adventuring to gain the abilities and knowledge needed to accomplish this task. Only the most powerful questors dare involve themselves directly in the affairs of the Passions.

Adepts vs Questors

While there are some superficial similarities between a Discipline's progression and a questor's advancement, there are two notable differences. First, while a Discipline's power derives from the adept's internal dedication to a mystical worldview, a questor's power is granted by an outside entity (the Passion). Second, questors are more flexible than Disciplines.

An adept's progression is a fairly rigid affair with all followers of a Discipline sharing common elements in their training, even as they approach it with different perspectives. Questors, on the other hand, are granted devotions by their patron, in service of the entity's ideals and needs. This results in more flexibility in the form their powers can take. Practically, this means the lists of devotions and questor powers are not exhaustive, instead being the most common devotions available. There may be talents, skills, or knacks appropriate for questors of a given Passion which aren't listed here.

Additionally, the Passion might have a specific goal requiring a questor to have access to a unique or special devotion. Through communion with their patron, the questor can learn of the task and be granted the devotion to aid in their mission. The Passions are powerful, mysterious beings, and the rules for devotions and questor advancement in this book are not intended to limit them, or the stories involving them.

If you wish to expand the devotions and devotion abilities available to questors, there are a few things to keep in mind. First, a questor should not get an ability much sooner than it becomes available to an adept. Second, there are some talents and knacks that aren't well suited to questors, as questors are generally focused on communities and the Namegivers in them. Third, elementally-themed abilities should be rare. Finally, any modifications or additions should be tied into a given Passion's ideals.

DEVOTIONS

In the world of **Earthdawn**, questors are granted magical powers by their patron. These powers are called *devotions*. As questors perform acts in service of their patron, and aligned with their chosen Passion's ideals, the Passion rewards them with greater power. The Questor devotion (p. 179) grants visions to the questor by their patron Passion, allowing them to serve their patron's interests. Player characters purchase ranks in the Questor devotion as a Journeyman tier talent.

The Questor devotion also grants access to additional powers. For each rank attained in their Questor devotion, a questor may learn one new devotion, sometimes called *granted devotions*. Ranks in granted devotions cannot have a rank greater than the character's Questor rank. Some devotions are only granted to questors when they have demonstrated sufficient dedication to their patron's ideals, requiring the questor to have achieved Adherent or Exemplar status (see **Advancing Devotions**, below).

Advancing Devotions

As questors follow the ideals and goals of their patron, their connection to the Passion grows stronger. This allows the questor to use Legend Points to purchase higher ranks in the Questor devotion, advance granted devotions, and learn new granted devotions.

Advancing or learning devotions requires the questor to commune with their patron using the Questor devotion as described on page 179. No test is required, the character simply spends the Legend Points and increases the devotion rank. Only one devotion may be purchased or increased per day, and a devotion cannot be increased more than one rank at a time.

Like adepts, questors are broadly divided into tiers of power: Follower, Adherent, and Exemplar. These tiers correspond to the character's rank in the Questor devotion, as indicated on the **Questor Devotion Cost Table**. Aside from the Legend Cost and time required, there are no restrictions on advancing the Questor devotion rank within the same tier.

Moving from one tier to another (e.g., Follower to Adherent) requires the questor to undertake and complete a specific task on behalf of their Passion (called a *quest*). Examples are provided in the description for each Passion, but the quest should be aligned with the Passion's ideals and be achievable. It might be a smaller piece of a larger goal. For example, "restoring the Badlands" is probably beyond the ability of any individual questor, but "cleanse the ruins of Hunter's Run and keep it free of taint for a month" might be a suitable quest.

Quests are plot hooks, forming the basis of story arcs within the campaign. The questor is given these goals by their patron, but the gamemaster should work with the player to develop an appropriate task and the achievements for it to be considered complete. Completing a quest involves multiple acts of devotion (p. 137). Once the quest is complete, the questor can increase their Questor devotion rank at the next opportunity.

To learn a new granted devotion, the questor simply needs to have a free slot available and spend the required time and Legend Points. Some granted devotions require the questor to achieve a minimum tier; these powers are only given to questors who have demonstrated a certain level of dedication. A questor may choose a granted devotion from a previous tier if they wish. For example, an Adherent could choose a Follower devotion if they desired.

The Legend Point cost of a granted devotion is based on when it becomes available, even if the questor picks it up later. For example, a Follower-tier devotion always costs the same as a Novice talent, even if the questor gains it as their granted devotion at Questor rank 6.

Granted devotions are given to the questor by their patron, rather than learned in the traditional sense. If, for some reason, the gamemaster does not want a questor to have a particular devotion, the Passion does not provide it. However, the gamemaster should communicate and work with the player, explaining why the devotion is unavailable (whether for game balance or story reasons), and working out a compromise or alternate solution.

Questor Devotion Cost Table

<i>Questor Rank</i>	<i>Tier</i>	<i>Granted Devotion Cost</i>
1-4	Follower	As Novice talent
5-8	Adherent	As Journeyman talent
9-12	Exemplar	As Warden talent

Questor Devotion Benefits

As a questor advances their Questor devotion, they gain additional benefits, including Devotion abilities (p. 136), Defense increases, and potential bonuses to Initiative, Mystic Armor, and/or Recovery tests. Each Passion provides different benefits to their questors, listed under *Questor Descriptions* starting on page 139.

These bonuses do not stack with similar benefits provided by Disciplines. As with characters who follow multiple Disciplines (*Player's Guide*, p. 458), only the highest bonus to a given trait applies. For example, a Sixth Circle Swordmaster has a +2 Social Defense. If they are also a rank 4 questor of Astendar, they have a +1 Social Defense. The adept questor only gets +2 Social Defense, the highest single bonus.

Devotion Abilities

In each tier, a questor gains a Devotion ability. Examples are provided for each Passion, but the player may work with the gamemaster to develop an appropriate Devotion ability. Devotion abilities are similar to an adept's Karma abilities, allowing questors to spend a Devotion Point (see below) on certain actions. One notable difference from Karma abilities is a questor may spend a Devotion Point on *any* qualifying test within Questor rank $\times 2$ yards, including other characters. The target gains the questor's Devotion Die as a bonus to the test.

Each Devotion ability can be used once per round. If a questor has two Devotion abilities that could apply to a given test, they can only use one on the test, spending one Devotion Point. Adept questors can use a Karma ability and a Devotion ability on the same test, allowing them to spend both Karma and Devotion.

High Rank Questors

Questors beyond Exemplar tier might exist but are the subject of rumor and legend. The devotions they might wield, and the goals they pursue, would be the stuff of epic campaigns, and beyond the scope of this book. Like high Circle adepts, they are very rare and their presence (if they even exist) has the potential to alter the course of nations.

Even outside their Passion-backed powers, higher rank questors (particularly Exemplars) are apt to be *weird*. Questors are dedicated to a particular set of emotional ideals, and the need to demonstrate their commitment to their patron can lead to behavior some might consider eccentric, if not obsessive or even offensive.

DEVOTION POINTS

In pursuit of their Passion's ideals, questors must act in ways that reflect their chosen path. For example, a questor of Garlen is expected to heal those in need, while a questor of Chorrolis should encourage commerce and trade. By acting in ways that embody the ideals of their patron, a questor keeps those ideals alive in people's hearts and minds and increases the bond they have with their Passion. The stronger the bond, the more of their patron's power they can channel. In game terms, that power is measured with *Devotion Points*.

Devotion Points are accumulated and spent from a pool. Similar to an adept's Karma, they can be spent to add a die to certain tasks, including granted devotions. The maximum number of Devotion Points a questor can have is equal to their Questor rank $\times 10$. There are three notable differences between Karma and Devotion Points.

First, Devotion Points do not automatically refresh in full each day, they must be earned by the questor performing acts of devotion (see below).

Second, some of the more powerful devotions require the questor to spend a Devotion Point to activate the power. If the questor does not have any Devotion Points, they cannot use those abilities. Third, questors (through certain devotions and abilities) can give their Devotion Points to other people, inspiring them and infusing them with the power of their Passion.

Acts of Devotion

Acts of devotion are actions that imitate or exemplify the ideals of a Passion. When a questor performs an act of devotion, they are rewarded with Devotion Points. The gamemaster determines the scale of the character's act based on the examples provided for the Passion in this chapter. Acts of devotion fall into one of four categories.

Minor: The questor performs an act or uses an ability to further their patron's cause or ideals in some way. The reward may seem small, but a questor who regularly acts in accordance with their Passion's ideals can accumulate points rapidly. Each minor act awards one Devotion Point. The gamemaster is encouraged to reward variety rather than quantity with minor acts, perhaps limiting the number of times a given act can award a Devotion Point to once per day.

Major: The questor performs an act that takes time or effort, and might inconvenience them in some way, but does not involve any personal danger. Each major act awards five Devotion Points.

Zealous: The questor performs an act that personifies their Passion while putting them at risk. The risk doesn't need to be physical, as long as it involves some hazard to the questor's life, influence, or power. For example, a questor of Chorrolis might put up capital for an investment that, if lost, would ruin them. A zealous act awards ten Devotion Points.

Quest: As mentioned under *Advancing Devotions*, p. 134, quests are special acts of devotion given to the questor by their Passion. These sacred missions can be given at any time but are required when a questor is advancing from Follower to Adherent, or Adherent to Exemplar. There are no hard and fast rules for how long a quest takes, but they often involve multiple major or zealous acts of devotion to accomplish a specific goal. Acts of devotion performed in pursuit of a quest award Devotion Points as normal and can be used to help complete the quest. When the quest is complete the questor's Devotion Point pool is filled.

Players should feel free to create acts of devotion beyond the examples provided for each Passion. Any act that demonstrates the ideals of a questor's patron Passion is appropriate, but the gamemaster is the final judge of how many Devotion Points any act of devotion is worth.

Devotion Award Table

<i>Act of Devotion</i>	<i>Award</i>
Minor	1 Devotion Points
Major	5 Devotion Points
Zealous	10 Devotion Points
Quest	Fills devotion pool

Falling Out of Favor

Questors can hold onto their Devotion Points indefinitely, but must behave in accordance with their Passion's ideals, accepting opportunities to perform acts of devotion. If a questor fails to imitate the nature of their patron when they have the chance, they may fall out of favor.

Passing up a single chance to perform an act of devotion will not, on its own, bring disfavor on the questor. But if a questor consistently ignores opportunities to behave in line with their Passion, or even act against those ideals, they lose their patron's support.

The Passions are intelligent beings, not robots. While their ways are mysterious, they recognize Namegivers can stumble in their path, or sometimes fail to live up to their ideals, however honestly felt. If a questor is in danger of falling out of favor, their patron warns them or offers guidance. If the questor ignores the warning, the Passion acts.

When out of favor, the questor still earns Devotion Points for acts of devotion, but is unable to spend Devotion Points, either to add a Devotion die to a test or activate powers which require Devotion. In addition, the questor cannot increase the rank of their Questor devotion or any granted devotions.

To return to favor, the questor must reconcile with their Passion. In game terms, this is represented by performing acts of devotion and earning Devotion Points. The acts and number of Devotion Points required should be based on how badly the questor has strayed from the path. As a general guideline, the questor should earn two to three times the Devotion Points that were passed up, but for particularly egregious offenses, the questor may need to undertake and complete a specific quest.

A fallen questor might choose to follow a different Passion. If this happens, the questor loses all ranks in their Questor devotion and granted devotions (including the Legend Points spent to acquire them) and starts over as a questor of their new Passion. This rarely happens, but the Mad Passions are known to court questors who have fallen out of favor with their original patron.

For players, a questor's relationship with their Passion should have a strong roleplaying component, and not simply be a way for them to gain more power for their character. Even if their Devotion Point pool is full, a questor should still perform acts of devotion. They may not gain a mechanical reward, but these acts reinforce their dedication to their Passion's ideals. If the only time they perform acts of devotion is when they need Devotion Points, their patron will notice and may start withholding that power.

Gamemasters should also remember a questor and their patron have a relationship, though it might be a distant one. Passions are

powerful but can't be everywhere at once. Indeed, one of the main reasons they empower questors is to spread and encourage their ideals among Namegivers. If a questor isn't going to do their job, why should the Passion give them power?

One thing that is almost certain to draw a Passion's attention is a questor who behaves in a manner contrary to their ideals. Examples might include a questor of Mynbruje who knowingly covers up the truth of a crime, a questor of Astendar who destroys works of art, or a questor of Jasprey who helps an armed force sack and burn farmland.

Falling out of favor should not be used as a club. Small offenses (passing up the occasional minor act of devotion, for example) aren't likely to draw much attention, but persistent patterns of behavior will. The Passion might punish the character, but it shouldn't feel like the gamemaster is punishing the player.

QUESTOR DESCRIPTIONS

Key for progression tables: Init = Initiative, MA = Mystic Armor, MD = Mystic Defense, PD = Physical Defense, Recov = Recovery Test, SD = Social Defense

Astendar

Ideals: Love, Art, Music

Example Acts of Devotion

- *Minor:* Spend at least one hour dedicated to creating a work of art.
- *Major:* Deliver a love letter across a distance no less than five days' journey.
- *Zealous:* Become involved in a romantic affair that might end in bodily harm to the questor, either as a party or facilitator to the romance.
- *Quest:* Find the perfect spouse for a king, queen, or other person of high social rank.

Follower	Adherent	Exemplar
Devotion Die Step 3 (d4)	Devotion Die Step 4 (d6)	Devotion Die Step 5 (d8)
Rank 1 Devotion Ability	Rank 5 Devotion Ability	Rank 9 Devotion Ability
Rank 2	Rank 6 +2 SD	Rank 10 +3 SD
Rank 3 +1 SD	Rank 7 +1 MA	Rank 11 +1 Recovery Test
Rank 4	Rank 8 +1 MD	Rank 12 +2 MD, +2 MA

Follower Devotions: Acting, Artist, Conversation, Emotion Song, Empathic Sense, Entertainer, First Impression, Impressive Display, Passion's Empowerment, Winning Smile

Adherent Devotions: Assess Intentions, Astendar's Muse, Astendar's Voice, Diplomacy, Enchanted Gift, Lasting Impression, Passion's Insight, Passion's Inspiration

Exemplar Devotions: Bardic Voice, Disarming Smile, Fertility's Season, Live in Bloom, Silence Influence, Thought Link

Example Devotion Abilities

- The questor can spend a Devotion Point on an Interaction test.
- The questor can spend a Devotion Point on a test creating art, whether physical, a performance, etc.
- The questor can spend a Devotion Point on a test if the goal is to create or further a romance.
- The questor can spend a Devotion Point on a test to protect the acting character's romantic partner.
- The questor can spend a Devotion Point on a test to know or learn about art.

Chorrolis

Ideals: Wealth, Trade, Envy, Desire

Example Acts of Devotion

- *Minor:* Conduct trade involving goods valued at 50 silver pieces or more.
- *Major:* Spend considerable time pursuing a rumor describing potential profit.
- *Zealous:* Secure a loan with outrageous interest rates and serious late-payment penalties in an attempt to make an extraordinary profit.
- *Quest:* Obtain a rare and legendary object through negotiation or trade, or close a trade deal involving the item.

Follower	Adherent	Exemplar
Devotion Die Step 3 (d4)	Devotion Die Step 4 (d6)	Devotion Die Step 5 (d8)
Rank 1 Devotion Ability	Rank 5 Devotion Ability	Rank 9 Devotion Ability
Rank 2	Rank 6 +2 SD	Rank 10 +3 SD
Rank 3 +1 SD	Rank 7 +1 MA	Rank 11 +1 Recovery Test
Rank 4	Rank 8 +1 MD	Rank 12 +2 MD, +1 Init

Follower Devotions: Bribery, Conversation, Etiquette, Evaluate, First Impression, Haggle, Lip Reading, Passion's Empowerment, Pidgin, Streetwise

Adherent Devotions: Assess Intentions, Diplomacy, Heart's Wish, Incite Obsession, Passion's Inspiration, Psychometry, Resist Taunt, True Sight

Exemplar Devotions: Enchanted Gift, Grip of Chorrolis, Let's Make a Deal, Safe Thought, Touching the Past, Undermine

Example Devotion Abilities

- The questor can spend a Devotion Point on a test involving a transaction.
- The questor can spend a Devotion Point on an Interaction test.
- The questor can spend a Devotion Point on a test to learn information about economics, including new trade routes, sources of raw materials, find a particular artisan, etc.
- The questor can spend a Devotion Point on a test to acquire something desirable.
- The questor can spend a Devotion Point on a test supporting a new and risky economic venture.

Dis (Mad Passion)

Ideals: Confusion, Unnecessary Work, Complex Bureaucratic Hierarchies, Slavery and Mastery

Example Acts of Devotion

- *Minor:* Impose one's will on another sapient being.
- *Major:* Create an obscure method of controlling information and workflow that offers no practical value.
- *Zealous:* Drive a prominent Namegiver to recognize the futility of existence.
- *Quest:* Set up a slave-trading network.

Follower	Adherent	Exemplar
Devotion Die Step 3 (d4)	Devotion Die Step 4 (d6)	Devotion Die Step 5 (d8)
Rank 1 Devotion Ability	Rank 5 Devotion Ability	Rank 9 Devotion Ability
Rank 2	Rank 6 +2 MD	Rank 10 +3 MD
Rank 3 +1 MD	Rank 7 +1 MA	Rank 11 +1 Recovery Test
Rank 4	Rank 8 +1 SD	Rank 12 +2 SD, +1 MA

Follower Devotions: Conversation, Detail Oriented, Etiquette, Frighten, Passion's Empowerment, Passion's Insight, Project Management, Research, Resist Influence, Steel Thought

Adherent Devotions: Desolate, Leadership, Living Death, Passion's Inspiration, Poisoned Influence, Resist Taunt, Silence Influence, Steely Stare

Exemplar Devotions: Chains of Obedience, Challenge of Dis, Compel, Enchanted Gift, Submit, Undermine

Example Devotion Abilities

- The questor can spend a Devotion Point on an Interaction test.
- The questor can spend a Devotion Point on a test to dominate a target.
- The questor can spend a Devotion Point on a test interacting with bureaucracy.
- The questor can spend a Devotion Point on a subordinate's Action test.
- The questor can spend a Devotion Point on another's Sustained Action test, but it takes twice as long to complete.

Florannus

Ideals: Revelry, Energy, Victory, Motion

Example Acts of Devotion

- *Minor:* Participate in or organize a race or other physical competition.
- *Major:* Organize a celebration with at least 100 or more guests that requires at least one week of work.
- *Zealous:* Raise your side's flag within enemy territory at the turning point of a battle.
- *Quest:* End a war between two enemy communities or nations.

Follower		Adherent		Exemplar	
Devotion Die Step 3 (d4)		Devotion Die Step 4 (d6)		Devotion Die Step 5 (d8)	
Rank 1	Devotion Ability	Rank 5	Devotion Ability	Rank 9	Devotion Ability
Rank 2		Rank 6	+2 PD	Rank 10	+3 PD
Rank 3	+1 PD	Rank 7	+1 Init	Rank 11	+1 Recovery Test
Rank 4		Rank 8	+1 SD	Rank 12	+2 SD, +2 Init

Follower Devotions: Acrobatic Defense, Avoid Blow, Durability 5, First Impression, Great Leap, Heartening Laugh, Passion's Empowerment, Sprint, Wind Catcher, Winning Smile

Adherent Devotions: Encouraging Oratory, Gliding Stride, Inspired Might, Leadership, Lion Heart, Passion's Inspiration, Stride of Florannus, Telling the Tale

Exemplar Devotions: Energy in Motion, Gift of Life, Inspired Endurance, Invigorate, Rally, Passion's Comfort

Example Devotion Abilities

- The questor can spend a Devotion Point on a test involving athletics (this does not include Attack or Damage tests).
- The questor can spend a Devotion Point on a Recovery test.
- The questor can spend a Devotion Point on an Interaction test
- The questor can spend a Devotion Point on an Initiative test.
- The questor can spend a Devotion Point on the next Action test by an ally following a successful Action test from a different ally.

Garlen

Ideals: Hearth and Healing

Example Acts of Devotion

- *Minor:* Heal someone suffering from a physical injury.
- *Major:* Provide extended care for someone suffering from a serious illness.
- *Zealous:* Protect a home from attackers.
- *Quest:* Find the cure for a terminal illness.

Follower		Adherent		Exemplar	
Devotion Die Step 3 (d4)		Devotion Die Step 4 (d6)		Devotion Die Step 5 (d8)	
Rank 1	Devotion Ability	Rank 5	Devotion Ability	Rank 9	Devotion Ability
Rank 2		Rank 6	+2 MD	Rank 10	+3 MD
Rank 3	+1 MD	Rank 7	+1 MA	Rank 11	+1 Recovery Test
Rank 4		Rank 8	+1 SD	Rank 12	+2 SD, +2 MA

Follower Devotions: Alchemy, Conversation, Empathic Sense, Etiquette, Garlen's Relief, Passion's Comfort, Passion's Empowerment, Physician, Resist Influence, Seal Home

Adherent Devotions: Diplomacy, Garlen's Touch, Leadership, Lifesight, Passion's Insight, Passion's Inspiration, Shield the Innocent, Silence Influence

Exemplar Devotions: Bloom and Flourish, Gift of Life, Disarming Smile, Fertility's Season, Garlen's Solace, Thought Link

Example Devotion Abilities

- The questor can spend a Devotion Point on an Interaction test
- The questor can spend a Devotion Point on a Recovery test.
- The questor can spend a Devotion Point on a test to help heal a target (not including Recovery tests).
- The questor can spend a Devotion Point on a test that protects the occupants within their home.

- The questor can spend a Devotion Point on a test that promotes harmony in a community (does not include Interaction tests).

Jaspre

Ideals: Growth, Care of the Land, Love of the Wilderness

Questors of Jaspre can affect creatures with their devotions.

Example Acts of Devotion

- *Minor:* Plant seeds over a one-acre area.
- *Major:* Nurture a farm or forest area for one week or more.
- *Zealous:* Protect a farm, forest area, or herd of animals from casual or deliberate harm.
- *Quest:* Undo the effects of the Scourge to a considerable patch of land.

Follower		Adherent		Exemplar	
Devotion Die Step 3 (d4)		Devotion Die Step 4 (d6)		Devotion Die Step 5 (d8)	
Rank 1	Devotion Ability	Rank 5	Devotion Ability	Rank 9	Devotion Ability
Rank 2		Rank 6	+1 PD	Rank 10	+2 PD
Rank 3	+1 MD	Rank 7	+1 Recovery test	Rank 11	+1 Initiative
Rank 4		Rank 8	+2 MD	Rank 12	+2 SD, +2 Recov

Follower Devotions: Animal Bond, Awareness, Creature Analysis, Danger Sense, Dominate Beast, Friend of the Land, Passion's Empowerment, Stealthy Stride, Tracking, Wilderness Survival

Adherent Devotions: Animal Talk, Awaken the Wood, Beast Summons, Bloom and Flourish, Call Animal Companion, Heal Animal Companion, Passion's Inspiration, Safe Path

Exemplar Devotions: Animal Leadership, Empathic Command, Fertility's Season, Jaspre's Solace, Plant Talk, Shield the Innocent

Example Devotion Abilities

- The questor can spend a Devotion Point on a test made by a friendly creature.
- The questor can spend a Devotion Point on a non-harmful test made against a creature.
- The questor can spend a Devotion Point a test which encourages growth.
- The questor can spend a Devotion Point on a test that protects the land.

- The questor can spend a Devotion Point on a test that promotes responsible use of nature.

Lochost

Ideals: Rebellion, Change, Freedom

Example Acts of Devotion

- *Minor:* Organize or encourage a group of at least 10 Namegivers in an effort to change their circumstances (union meeting, public protest, a group of slaves).
- *Major:* Change the leadership or organization of an established group of Namegivers, such as a mercenary company.
- *Zealous:* Free an entire camp of slaves.
- *Quest:* Convince a nation's leader to outlaw slavery.

Follower		Adherent		Exemplar	
Devotion Die Step 3 (d4)		Devotion Die Step 4 (d6)		Devotion Die Step 5 (d8)	
Rank 1	Devotion Ability	Rank 5	Devotion Ability	Rank 9	Devotion Ability
Rank 2		Rank 6	+1 PD	Rank 10	+2 PD
Rank 3	+1 SD	Rank 7	+1 Recovery test	Rank 11	+1 Initiative
Rank 4		Rank 8	+2 SD	Rank 12	+1 MD, +2 Recov

Follower Devotions: Battle Shout, Break Shackles, First Impression, Graceful Exit, Heartening Laugh, Passion's Comfort, Passion's Empowerment, Passion's Insight, Resist Influence, Silence Influence

Adherent Devotions: Assess Intentions, Defiant Shout, Encouraging Oratory, Inspired Might, Leadership, Lion Heart, Open Mind, Passion's Inspiration

Exemplar Devotions: Diplomacy, Enchanted Gift, Incite Rebellion, Intimidating Bellow, Rally, Safe Thought

Example Devotion Abilities

- The questor can spend a Devotion Point on an Interaction test.
- The questor can spend a Devotion Point on a test to resist mental or social influence, such as fear.
- The questor can spend a Devotion Point on a test to escape.
- The questor can spend a Devotion Point on a test directly supporting granting freedom.
- The questor can spend a Devotion Point on a test directly supporting affecting a change in leadership.

Mynbruje

Ideals: Justice, Compassion, Empathy, Truth

Example Acts of Devotion

- *Minor:* Spend at least one hour listening to people's troubles and offer comfort and wisdom.
- *Major:* Reveal a falsehood.
- *Zealous:* Prove a criminal's guilt or a suspect's innocence with regard to a serious crime (e.g., murder, treason).
- *Quest:* Uncover and expose a conspiracy to murder a king or other high-ranking official.

Follower		Adherent		Exemplar	
Devotion Die Step 3 (d4)		Devotion Die Step 4 (d6)		Devotion Die Step 5 (d8)	
Rank 1	Devotion Ability	Rank 5	Devotion Ability	Rank 9	Devotion Ability
Rank 2		Rank 6	+2 MD	Rank 10	+3 MD
Rank 3	+1 MD	Rank 7	+1 MA	Rank 11	+2 MA
Rank 4		Rank 8	+1 SD	Rank 12	+2 SD, +3 MA

Follower Devotions: Awareness, Book Memory, Conversation, Empathic Sense, Passion's Empowerment, Passion's Insight, Photographic Memory, Remember Conversation, Research, True Sight

Adherent Devotions: Assess Intentions, Astral Sight, Diplomacy, Evidence Analysis, Mynbruje's Eye, Passion's Inspiration, Psychometry, Silence Influence

Exemplar Devotions: Eidetic Memory, Open Mind, Passion's Comfort, Resist Influence, Resist Taunt, Touching the Past

Example Devotion Abilities

- The questor can spend a Devotion Point on an Interaction test.
- The questor can spend a Devotion Point on a Knowledge test.
- The questor can spend a Devotion Point on a test to uncover information, either research or for an investigation.
- The questor can spend a Devotion Point on a test to discover a truth.
- The questor can spend a Devotion Point on a test to render aid to someone in need.

Raggok (Mad Passion)

Ideals: Vengeance, Bitterness, Jealousy

Questors of Raggok can affect undead with their devotions.

Example Acts of Devotion

- *Minor*: Cause someone pain in combat—this act of devotion is rewarded for one battle against one opponent, not each successful attack.
- *Major*: Deliberately torture a victim.
- *Zealous*: Kill someone in the name of revenge. The revenge may satisfy the questor's need for vengeance or fulfil a contract paid for by someone else.
- *Quest*: Make an entire community suffer for the deeds of their ancestors.

Follower		Adherent		Exemplar	
Devotion Die Step 3 (d4)		Devotion Die Step 4 (d6)		Devotion Die Step 5 (d8)	
Rank 1	Devotion Ability	Rank 5	Devotion Ability	Rank 9	Devotion Ability
Rank 2		Rank 6	+1 PD	Rank 10	+2 PD
Rank 3	+1 MD	Rank 7	+1 Recovery Test	Rank 11	+1 MA
Rank 4		Rank 8	+2 MD	Rank 12	+3 MD, +2 Recov

Follower Devotions: Battle Shout, Cold Reminder, Durability 5, Enchanted Gift, Frighten, Grave Commands, Passion's Empowerment, Resist Influence, Surprise Strike, Torment

Adherent Devotions: Grave Empowerment, Incite Obsession, Incite Rage, Inspired Might, Intimidating Bellow, Passion's Inspiration, Poisoned Influence, Steely Stare

Exemplar Devotions: Inspired Endurance, Resist Pain, Taste of Power, Undermine, Vicious Wound, Vital Strike

Example Devotion Abilities

- The questor can spend a Devotion Point on an undead target's Action test.
- The questor can spend a Devotion Point on a test which causes pain (this does not include Damage tests).
- The questor can spend a Devotion Point on a test made in raw anger.
- The questor can spend a Devotion Point on a test directly related to an act of vengeance.
- The questor can spend a Devotion Point on a Damage test.

Thystonius

Ideals: Physical Competition, Valor

Example Acts of Devotion

- *Minor:* Engage in a test of physical prowess; combat, leaping over a particularly wide chasm, and so on.
- *Major:* Lead soldiers into battle.
- *Zealous:* Fight a powerful opponent until one or both combatants cannot continue.
- *Quest:* Bring victory to a nation or other large social group involved in a war or similar conflict.

Follower		Adherent		Exemplar	
Devotion Die Step 3 (d4)		Devotion Die Step 4 (d6)		Devotion Die Step 5 (d8)	
Rank 1	Devotion Ability	Rank 5	Devotion Ability	Rank 9	Devotion Ability
Rank 2		Rank 6	+2 PD	Rank 10	+3 PD
Rank 3	+1 PD	Rank 7	+1 Recovery Test	Rank 11	+1 Initiative
Rank 4		Rank 8	+2 SD	Rank 12	+1 MD, +2 Recov

Follower Devotions: Avoid Blow, Durability 5, Inspired Might, Invigorate, Melee Weapons, Passion's Comfort, Passion's Empowerment, Resist Influence, Tactics, Wound Balance

Adherent Devotions: Armor of Thystonius, Battle Bellow, Encouraging Oratory, Inspired Endurance, Inspired Tenacity, Leadership, Lion Heart, Passion's Inspiration

Exemplar Devotions: Buttress Armor, Energy in Motion, Gift of Life, Hone Weapon, Rally, Vital Strike

Example Devotion Abilities

- The questor can spend a Devotion Point on a Recovery test.
- The questor can spend a Devotion Point on a Damage test.
- The questor can spend a Devotion Point on an Initiative test.
- The questor can spend a Devotion Point on an Attack test.
- The questor can spend a Devotion Point on a test to inspire or lead (this includes Tactics).

Upandal

Ideals: Building, Construction, Planning

Example Acts of Devotion

- *Minor:* Spend at least one hour creating a new tool, weapon, or design, or improving an existing one.

- *Major*: Help build a building, castle, or other structure that requires at least one week of work.
- *Zealous*: Protect a beautiful crafted object—a mechanical jewelry box, an ornate tower, and so on—from those who would destroy it.
- *Quest*: Create a legendary item.

Follower		Adherent		Exemplar	
Devotion Die Step 3 (d4)		Devotion Die Step 4 (d6)		Devotion Die Step 5 (d8)	
Rank 1	Devotion Ability	Rank 5	Devotion Ability	Rank 9	Devotion Ability
Rank 2		Rank 6	+2 MD	Rank 10	+3 MD
Rank 3	+1 MD	Rank 7	+1 MA	Rank 11	+1 Recovery Test
Rank 4		Rank 8	+1 SD	Rank 12	+2 SD, +2 MA

Follower Devotions: Artisan, Book Memory, Craftsman, Etiquette, Evaluate, Jury-Rig, Passion's Empowerment, Project Management, Research, Upandal's Armory

Adherent Devotions: Buttress Armor, Danger Sense, Detail Oriented, Evidence Analysis, Fortify, Hone Weapon, Passion's Inspiration, Psychometry

Exemplar Devotions: Leadership, Perfect Focus, Resist Influence, Silence Influence, Touching the Past, Upandal's Palisade

Example Devotion Abilities

- The questor can spend a Devotion Point on a test to create something physical and practical.
- The questor can spend a Devotion Point on a test related to a project they are overseeing.
- The questor can spend a Devotion Point on a test to know or learn information about an item or structure.
- The questor can spend a Devotion Point on a test that supports a larger preparation.
- The questor can spend a Devotion Point on a test to design something new.

Vestrial (Mad Passion)

Ideals: Manipulation, Deceit

Example Acts of Devotion

- *Minor:* Lie to someone about a matter important to the person and has an effect on their life.
- *Major:* Manipulate someone into doing something illegal, immoral, or otherwise wrong they would not willingly do.
- *Zealous:* Create a lie that leads to someone's death, though the questor need not be present when the death occurs. The person who dies must have allies who seek to avenge their death.
- *Quest:* Create a conspiracy to murder a king or other high-ranking official.

Follower		Adherent		Exemplar	
Devotion Die Step 3 (d4)		Devotion Die Step 4 (d6)		Devotion Die Step 5 (d8)	
Rank 1	Devotion Ability	Rank 5	Devotion Ability	Rank 9	Devotion Ability
Rank 2		Rank 6	+2 SD	Rank 10	+3 SD
Rank 3	+1 SD	Rank 7	+1 Initiative	Rank 11	+1 MA
Rank 4		Rank 8	+1 PD	Rank 12	+1 MD, +2 Init

Follower Devotions: Air Speaking, Conceal Object, Disguise Self, Forgery, Heart's Wish, Mimic Voice, Passion's Empowerment, Resist Influence, Stealthy Stride, Silence Influence

Adherent Devotions: Assess Intentions, Enchanted Gift, Fast Hand, Incite Obsession, Passion's Insight, Passion's Inspiration, Poisoned Influence, Slough Blame

Exemplar Devotions: Impossible Hide, Let's Make a Deal, Open Mind, Taste of Power, Undermine, Vestrial's Tongue

Example Devotion Abilities

- The questor can spend a Devotion Point on an Interaction test.
- The questor can spend a Devotion Point on a test to deceive.
- The questor can spend a Devotion Point on an Initiative test.
- The questor can spend a Devotion Point on a test to escape.
- The questor can spend a Devotion Point on a test to manipulate someone against their best interests.

DEVOTION DESCRIPTIONS

The following list provides game rules for devotions known by questors of the different Passions. Like talents and skills, devotions usually add the devotion rank to an Attribute Step to determine the devotion's Step. Devotions also use different types of Actions (Standard, Simple, and so on) as explained in the *Player's Guide*, and some devotions cost Strain. Any references to "rank" in the rules mean the questor's rank in that devotion unless specified otherwise.

If a questor needs to spend a Devotion Point to activate a devotion, it is indicated with the *Devotion Required* entry. Spending a Devotion Point to activate a power removes the point from the questor's devotion pool but does not add a die to the test. The questor may, if they wish (and have the point available), spend an additional Devotion Point to add a die to the test.

Questors can only affect Namegivers with their devotions, unless indicated otherwise by the description. There are two exceptions to this: Jasprey can also affect creatures and Raggok can also affect undead.

Talents, Skills, and Devotions

While the basic rules mechanics are the same, and some devotions duplicate or share the same name as existing talents and skills, devotions are bought and raised separately, and fulfill no requirements for the purposes of advancing a character's Circle, purchasing knacks, or similar restrictions. Karma may not normally be spent on devotions, though if an adept questor has a relevant Karma ability, the devotion may qualify as a test that allows the use of Karma. For example, a Third Circle Illusionist has the ability to spend Karma on Interaction tests. If they have a granted devotion that acts as an Interaction test, they may spend Karma.

In the same way, a questor cannot normally spend Devotion on talents, even if the talent is available as one of their devotions. As with talents, an exception exists for actions meeting the requirements of one of the questor's devotion abilities.

Overseen Projects

Some devotions allow a questor to oversee a project involving multiple people. If the questor is not a target of an overseen project devotion, they can oversee up to their Questor rank in such projects at the same time, allowing the questor to use more than one Sustained action at the same time, so long as all are overseen project devotions. If the questor is a target of an overseen project devotion, it is the only project they can oversee.

Acrobatic Defense**Step:** Rank+DEX**Action:** Simple**Strain:** 1**Devotion Required:** No

As the talent, *Player's Guide*, p. 124. This devotion can be used against any valid target, not just Namegivers.

Acting**Step:** Rank+CHA**Action:** Sustained**Strain:** 0**Devotion Required:** No

As the skill, *Player's Guide*, p. 191.

Air Speaking**Step:** Rank+PER**Action:** Simple**Strain:** 1**Devotion Required:** No

As the talent, *Player's Guide*, p. 125.

Alchemy**Step:** Rank+PER**Action:** Sustained**Strain:** 0**Devotion Required:** No

As the skill, *Player's Guide*, p. 191. Questors of Garlen can only use this devotion to gather ingredients for blood magic charms and healing aids, create blood magic charms and healing aids, and perform analysis.

Animal Bond**Step:** Rank+CHA**Action:** Standard**Strain:** 0**Devotion Required:** No

As the talent, *Player's Guide*, p. 125.

Animal Leadership**Step:** Rank+CHA**Action:** Standard**Strain:** 0**Devotion Required:** No

As the talent, *Earthdawn Companion*, p. 46.

Animal Talk**Step:** Rank+PER**Action:** Standard**Strain:** 0**Devotion Required:** No

As the talent, *Player's Guide*, p. 127.

Armor of Thystonius**Step:** Rank+CHA**Action:** Standard**Strain:** 1+ (Special)**Devotion Required:** Yes

The questor bellows encouragement at their allies within rank \times 2 yards, filling them with the spirit of Thystonius. The questor spends 1 Strain per ally, up to rank allies and makes an Armor of Thystonius (6) test. Targets gain

+1 Physical Armor per success. For adepts, this lasts until the end of the next round. For non-adepts, this lasts for rank rounds.

Artisan

Step: Rank+CHA

Action: Sustained

Strain: 0

Devotion Required: No

As the skill, *Player's Guide*, p. 193.

Artist

Step: Rank+CHA

Action: Sustained

Strain: 0

Devotion Required: No

As the skill, *Player's Guide*, p. 193.

Assess Intentions

Step: Rank+CHA

Action: Sustained (10 minutes)

Strain: 1

Devotion Required: No

As the knack, *Earthdawn Companion*, p. 89.

Astendar's Muse

Step: Rank+CHA

Action: Sustained (10 minutes)

Strain: 0

Devotion Required: Yes

The questor speaks with an artist for at least 10 minutes about their art and channels their Passion for the artist, becoming their muse for an artistic endeavor. The questor makes an Astendar's Muse (6) test if the target wants the questor to be their muse, or against the target's Social Defense if they are unaware or unwilling. If successful, the target becomes obsessed with the burgeoning piece of art and the questor by extension. For each success, non-adepts gain a +2 bonus and adepts gain a +1 bonus to all tests directly related to completing the work. Their focus on the art distracts the target from other tasks, resulting in a -1 penalty to tests unrelated to producing the work.

If the target has not completed the work after rank weeks, the target begins to unravel, their art becoming all-consuming and their ability to function "normally" in society degrading. The exact details depend on the questor, target, and the interactions between them during this time. Targets can resist this effect but doing so increases the penalty for performing tasks unrelated to the art by -1 per week.

Astendar's Voice

Step: Rank+CHA

Action: Simple

Strain: 1

Devotion Required: No

The questor inspires the target with their Passion's charm and voice and makes an Astendar's Voice (6) test. If successful, adepts gain +1 per success and non-adepts gain +2 per success to a test to create a favorable impression, or advance the cause of the arts or love, whether an Interaction test, or using a talent or skill such as Diplomacy or First Impression. This bonus must be used

by the next sunrise or it is lost. A single target may benefit from this devotion up to rank times in one day (though no test may use more than one bonus).

Astral Sight

Step: Rank+PER

Action: Simple

Strain: 1

Devotion Required: No

As the talent, *Player's Guide*, p. 129. This devotion can sense any astral presence, not just Namegivers.

Avoid Blow

Step: Rank+DEX

Action: Free

Strain: 1

Devotion Required: No

As the talent, *Player's Guide*, p. 129. This devotion can be used in response to any appropriate attack, not just those from Namegivers.

Awaken the Wood

Step: Rank+WIL

Action: Standard

Strain: 1

Devotion Required: No

The questor animates a plant within rank \times 2 yards with their Passion's energy, causing it to obey the questor's rudimentary instructions. The questor makes an Awaken the Wood (6) test. If successful, the questor issues a simple instruction which is followed for one minute per success. The plant is not intelligent and cannot discern between Namegivers, only questor and not questor. If the plant is currently under another's influence, the Difficulty is equal to the Mystic Defense or Action Step of the other party, whichever is most appropriate. This devotion affects up to rank \times 2 cubic yards of plants, whether it is one or all the plants in the area. Only the parts of a plant in the affected area respond, thus a partially affected plant cannot move its entire form but will move the affected parts.

This devotion is most commonly used to move plants to new locations or have them grow in a particular fashion. However, it can also be used to interfere with opponents. This could create an area that is difficult to traverse (halving Movement Rate), harass anyone within (inflicting Harried), or attempting to knockdown. If this kind of interaction requires a test, use the Awaken the Wood Step as the Action Step against an appropriate Defense (typically Physical). Affected plants cannot inflict damage but can make life difficult.

Alternately, the animated plants can be used to aid, eliminating movement penalties due to plant growth, creating shelter or cover, assisting in climbing, etc. If the plants are assisting in the form of a bonus (e.g. assisting climbers), make an Awaken the Wood (6) test, with each success providing a +2 bonus.

Awareness**Step:** Rank+PER**Action:** Simple**Strain:** 0**Devotion Required:** No

As the talent, *Player's Guide*, p. 129. This devotion allows the questor to notice anything, not just Namegivers.

Bardic Voice**Step:** Rank**Action:** Free**Strain:** 1**Devotion Required:** No

As the talent, *Earthdawn Companion*, p. 48.

Battle Bellow**Step:** Rank+CHA**Action:** Simple**Strain:** 1**Devotion Required:** No

As the talent, *Player's Guide*, p. 130. This devotion can be used against any valid target, not just Namegivers.

Battle Shout**Step:** Rank+CHA**Action:** Simple**Strain:** 1**Devotion Required:** No

As the talent, *Player's Guide*, p. 131. This devotion can be used against any valid target, not just Namegivers.

Beast Summons**Step:** Rank+CHA**Action:** Standard**Strain:** 2**Devotion Required:** No

As the knack, *Earthdawn Companion*, p. 85.

Bloom and Flourish**Step:** Rank+WIL**Action:** Sustained (10 minutes)**Strain:** 1**Devotion Required:** Yes

The questor calls on their Passion and causes plants to grow at an unnatural rate by making a Bloom and Flourish (6) test. If successful, an area with up to rank × 10 yards radius experiences a week of growth in 10 minutes. The soil also becomes exceptionally fertile, doubling future growth in the affected area for one month per success. This devotion may only affect a particular area once per week and the questor may use this devotion rank times per day. This multiplies only normal growth; if a plant cannot grow in the affected area, it does not grow.

Book Memory**Step:** Rank+WIL**Action:** Standard**Strain:** 0**Devotion Required:** No

As the talent, *Player's Guide*, p. 132.



Break Shackles

Step: Rank+WIL

Action: Standard

Strain: 1

Devotion Required: No

The questor's passion for freedom cannot be contained and is contagious, filling up to rank targets within rank \times 10 yards with the power of Lochost. The questor makes a Break Shackles test against the Mystic Defense or Physical Armor of the material restraining them, whichever is higher. If successful, enough material keeping the targets bound is destroyed to free the target without making it immediately obvious to onlookers. Additional successes grant non-adepts a +2 bonus per additional success to one of the following at the questor's discretion: tests to conceal the targets' freedom for the next rank minutes (any overt actions by any target end this bonus for all targets) or the next Attack test against their captors.

Bribery

Step: Rank + CHA

Action: Standard

Strain: 0

Devotion Required: No

As the skill, *Player's Guide*, p. 194.

Buttress Armor

Step: Rank+CHA

Action: Sustained (1 hour)

Strain: 0

Devotion Required: Yes

Overseen Project. The questor oversees and inspires up to rank targets within rank \times 2 yards with the drive of Upandal to quickly modify non-magical armor to make it more protective. Targets work for 1 hour and the questor makes a Buttress Armor test, using the highest Physical Armor as the Difficulty Number. Each target increases the Physical Armor of one armor per success by +1. This bonus is incompatible with Forge Armor.

The devotion lasts until the next sunrise, at which point the armor is damaged, reducing the original Physical Armor by 1 for each +1 applied to the armor with this devotion.

Call Animal Companion

Step: Rank+WIL

Action: Standard

Strain: 1

Devotion Required: No

As the talent, *Player's Guide*, p. 133.

Chains of Obedience

Step: Rank+CHA

Action: Standard

Strain: 1

Devotion Required: Yes

The questor enchants some chains, causing all those within rank $\times 10$ yards to feel the weight of consequence and fear of change, accept the status quo and authority, even with a sense of grim acceptance, and not be receptive to ideas and actions of change. The questor makes a Chains of Obedience test and compares it to the Social Defense of any target entering the area for rank hours.

If a target is affected, they are more interested in maintaining the status quo and obeying authority. Targets gain a bonus to appropriate tests and suffer a penalty to Social Defense against appropriate tests for rank days. Each success gives adepts +1 to tests and -1 to Social Defense and non-adepts +2 to tests and -2 to Social Defense. These modifiers only apply to tests maintaining the status quo, following instructions from authority, and preventing or fighting change.

This devotion cannot force anyone to do or believe something they are truly opposed to but may open their eyes to seeing things in a new way and cause a gradual shift over time. If an affected target ignores this impulse, they suffer -1 per success to Action tests until they seriously entertain such ideas as the fears in their head drive them to distraction. This devotion can be used once per day.

Karalla, an Exemplar of Dis, sees the efforts from the simpletons of Lochost within Travar to enact some kind of misguided change. She's identified one of their favorite meeting spots because they are not as clever as they think they are and has a simple plan to crush them before it even starts.

The questor acquires a simple length of chain and enchants it with Chains of Obedience (rank 10). She spends three Devotion Points on the test: one to activate the devotion, the second to add a Devotion Die to the test because it is a devotion, and the third from an appropriate Devotion ability (commanding obedience) to add a second Devotion Die. The required Devotion Point does not add a Devotion Die to the test because it pays the cost.

Karalla gets a result of 26 on her Chains of Obedience test (Step 17 with two Step 5 Devotion Dice) and leaves the chain unobtrusively in the meeting

area. For the next 10 hours, anyone who comes within 100 yards of the chain compares the result of 26 against their Social Defense.

Jhall has been excited by the prospect of change and eagerly arrives at the hall. When he enters the area, the result is compared against his Social Defense 8; 4 successes. For the next 10 days, Jhall is considerably more interested in maintaining the status quo, gaining +8 to any tests supporting it or obeying authority and -8 to his Social Defense when someone attempts to convince him to conform and obey. As Jhall is a fairly typical member of the burgeoning movement, things are looking grim for the questors of Lochost unless they can change something soon.

Challenge of Dis

Step: Rank+CHA

Action: Standard

Strain: 1

Devotion Required: Yes

The questor calls a formal challenge to the leader of an opposing group, urging them to let single combat decide an impending battle. The questor can nominate a champion to fight in their place. The questor makes a Challenge of Dis test against the target leader's Social Defense. If successful, the target may accept or ignore the challenge. Both sides may negotiate terms or commence fighting immediately. The talent provides an unspoken connection to immediately communicate each side's intentions.

If the target refuses the challenge, both they and their troops become demoralized and suffer a -2 penalty to all Defenses and tests for each success on the Challenge of Dis test for rank hours.

If the target accepts, the two champions fight. After the fight, the victor makes an Intimidate test against the highest Social Defense of the opposing side, with a bonus equal to the Questor rank, Circle, or equivalent of the defeated opponent. Each success on this test gives members of the opposing side a -2 penalty to all tests made against the victor and their allies for 24 hours.

Anyone attempting to interfere with the challenge immediately causes their side to lose the challenge (regardless of which champion was interfered with) and, in addition to the other penalties for losing, is Harried for 24 hours.

If faced with such a challenge, the questor nominates a subordinate in their place and this satisfies all requirements of the ability.

Cold Reminder

Step: Rank+CHA

Action: Standard

Strain: 0

Devotion Required: Yes

The questor enchants some water, causing it to freeze and all those within rank \times 10 yards to feel the sting of regret and bitterness, reliving betrayals, slights, and moments of failure. The questor makes a Cold Reminder test and compares it to the Social Defense of any target entering the area for rank hours.

If a target is affected, they become embittered and short-tempered, suffering a penalty to tests where the target attempts to better their situation or act friendly, and to Social Defense against tests intended to upset them for rank days. Each success imposes a -1 penalty to Adepts and -2 to non-adepts. If an affected target ignores this impulse, they suffer -1 per success to Action tests until they give in to the bitterness and resentment they feel as it drives them to distraction. This devotion can be used once per day.

Compel

Step: Rank+WIL

Action: Standard

Strain: 1

Devotion Required: No

The questor issues a command to up to rank Namegivers under their control, whether slaves, prisoners, or affected by the Submit devotion. This command is understood even if the targets do not speak the language used. The questor makes a Compel test against the highest Social Defense in the target group, adepts gain +5 Social Defense against this test. If successful, the targets must obey the command and suffer a -1 penalty to Willpower tests for each additional success (this is not cumulative with penalties from Submit).

The command must be phrased as a single, simple sentence. For example, "Tie yourselves up and come with me," or "Attack your friends," represent valid commands. A command such as "Kill them!" is too vague, though "Kill everyone!" would be understood and obeyed. Questors can use Compel to make people do things they would not normally do, even harm loved ones.

If a target is commanded to directly harm themselves or perform an obviously suicidal act, such as remain still while stabbed repeatedly, the target may make a Willpower test against the questor's Compel Step as a Free action at the beginning of each round. If successful, they throw off the effects of the devotion and may act normally. This devotion lasts for rank rounds. If the necessary control for this devotion is gained through Submit and the duration for Submit expires before Compel does, Compel immediately ends.

Conceal Object

Step: Rank+DEX

Action: Standard

Strain: 1

Devotion Required: No

As the talent, *Player's Guide*, p. 135.

Conversation

Step: Rank+CHA

Action: Sustained

Strain: 0

Devotion Required: No

As the talent, *Player's Guide*, p. 136.

Craftsman

Step: Rank+PER

Action: Sustained

Strain: 0

Devotion Required: No

As the skill, *Player's Guide*, p. 195.

Creature Analysis

Step: Rank+PER

Action: Simple

Strain: 1

Devotion Required: No

As the talent, *Player's Guide*, p. 136.

Danger Sense

Step: Rank+DEX

Action: Free

Strain: 1

Devotion Required: No

As the talent, *Player's Guide*, p. 137. This devotion can detect danger from any source, not just Namegivers.

Defiant Shout

Step: Rank+WIL

Action: Simple

Strain: 1

Devotion Required: No

As the knack, *Earthdawn Companion*, p. 84. This devotion can be used on any valid target, not just Namegivers.

Desolate

Step: Rank+CHA

Action: Standard

Strain: 0

Devotion Required: No

The questor fills a single target within rank × 2 yards with feelings of bitterness, desolation, depression, etc., making any actions difficult for the target; the exact mixture of emotions is unique to the questor. The questor makes a Desolate test against the target's Social Defense. For each success the target suffers -2 to all tests for rank rounds. At the beginning of each round the target can make a Willpower test as a Free action against the Desolate Step. If successful, the target throws off the effects.

If the penalties from this devotion exceed the target's Willpower Step, they suffer -1 to Mystic and Social Defenses, as well as Interaction and Willpower tests against the questor for one week. Continued use of this devotion on a target can increase the extended penalty, but by no more than an additional -1 per day. This devotion may be used against multiple targets each day, but only up to rank times per day against a specific target.

Detail Oriented

Step: Rank+WIL

Action: Free

Strain: 0

Devotion Required: Yes

The questor benefits from their attention to detail and obsessive planning. If a test that involved a Sustained action that specifically benefits from planning and attention to detail fails, they can make a Detail Oriented test using the lower of the questor's Detail Oriented Step or the original Action Step. The Difficulty Number is the same, and any bonuses that applied to the original Action Step apply to the Detail Oriented test. This devotion can be used once per test.

Diplomacy**Step:** Rank+CHA**Action:** Standard**Strain:** 0**Devotion Required:** NoAs the talent, *Player's Guide*, p. 138.**Disarming Smile****Step:** Rank+CHA**Action:** Standard**Strain:** 1**Devotion Required:** NoAs the talent, *Earthdawn Companion*, p. 52.**Disguise Self****Step:** Rank+PER**Action:** Standard**Strain:** 0**Devotion Required:** NoAs the talent, *Player's Guide*, p. 138.**Dominate Beast****Step:** Rank+WIL**Action:** Standard**Strain:** 1**Devotion Required:** NoAs the talent, *Player's Guide*, p. 140.**Durability 5****Step:** Rank**Action:** NA**Strain:** 0**Devotion Required:** No

Each rank increases the questor's Unconsciousness and Death Ratings by 5. This devotion does not stack with Durability gained from a Discipline, only the largest bonus applies.

Eidetic Memory**Step:** Rank+WIL**Action:** Simple**Strain:** 1**Devotion Required:** NoAs the talent, *Earthdawn Companion*, p. 54.**Emotion Song****Step:** Rank+CHA**Action:** Sustained (10 minutes)**Strain:** 0**Devotion Required:** NoAs the talent, *Player's Guide*, p. 141.**Empathic Command****Step:** Rank+CHA**Action:** Free**Strain:** 1**Devotion Required:** NoAs the knack, *Earthdawn Companion*, p. 86.

Empathic Sense

Step: Rank+CHA

Action: Standard (see text)

Strain: 1 (see text)

Devotion Required: No

As the talent, *Player's Guide*, p. 142.

Enchanted Gift

Step: Rank+CHA

Action: Standard

Strain: 0

Devotion Required: Yes

The questor creates an item suitable and symbolic to the questor's Passion as a gift to evoke a specific, basic emotion in the recipient, such as fear, love, hate, happiness, etc., which is directed at a specific subject. The questor makes an Enchanted Gift test against the recipient's Social Defense. If successful, the recipient gains a bonus to all social tests which further the emotion towards the subject, and a -1 per success to all tests which are contrary to that emotion for rank days. The bonus for adepts is +1 per success and +2 per success for non-adepts.

Whoever willingly accepts the gift is the recipient and affected by the enchantment, regardless of whether they know of the enchantment or were the intended recipient. However, the enchantment is not activated unless the recipient is specifically asked to receive the gift; for example, "Would you accept a token of appreciation?" Once the enchantment is activated, it is expended. A recipient can only be affected by one such enchantment at a time, and only once per week.

Encouraging Oratory

Step: Rank+CHA

Action: Simple

Strain: 1

Devotion Required: No

The questor inspires friendly characters with words of encouragement and makes an Encouraging Oratory (6) test. For each success, all allies within rank x 10 yards gain +1 to close combat attack tests until the end of the next round.

Energy in Motion

Step: Rank

Action: Simple

Strain: 0

Devotion Required: No

The questor fills a willing target within rank x 2 yards with the glory of their Passion for rank rounds. The target must spend a Recovery Test. Each round, adepts gain one point which can be spent to pay one point of Strain. Non-adepts gain two points each round which can pay Strain costs or heal current damage (this healing not reduced by Wounds). The points disappear at the end of each round if not used. This devotion immediately ends if the target is not engaged in strenuous activity.

Entertainer

Step: Rank+CHA

Action: Sustained

Strain: 0

Devotion Required: No

As the skill, *Player's Guide*, p. 196.

Etiquette

Step: Rank+CHA

Action: Sustained (1 minute)

Strain: 0

Devotion Required: No

As the talent, *Player's Guide*, p. 144.

Evaluate

Step: Rank+PER

Action: Standard

Strain: 0

Devotion Required: No

As the knack, *Earthdawn Companion*, p. 95.

Evidence Analysis

Step: Rank+PER

Action: Sustained

Strain: 1

Devotion Required: No

As the talent, *Player's Guide*, p. 144.

Fast Hand

Step: Rank+DEX

Action: Standard

Strain: 1

Devotion Required: No

As the talent, *Player's Guide*, p. 145.

Fertility's Season

Step: Rank+CHA

Action: Sustained (1 hour)

Strain: 0

Devotion Required: Yes

The questor spends an hour preparing a suitable offering and calls upon their Passion to enchant a symbol of the Passion, imbuing the area within rank miles with their spirit and encouraging growth in the living things there. The questor makes a Fertility's Season (6) test. Each success increases the



conception rate of those affected in the area by 10% for the next month. The target must remain within rank miles of the symbol during this time.

Questors of Garlen can use this devotion on one target with each success increasing the chances by 20%, if conception is possible. With five or more successes, sometimes the Passion itself intervenes and the offspring bears a distinctive mark.

Pregnancies resulting from this devotion proceed more smoothly. Constant usage of this devotion in the same area can have unexpected side effects and consequences. This effect and the population boom which follows causes most questors to limit its use in the same area. This devotion can be used once per week.

Questors of Jasprey affect both Namegivers and animals with this devotion.

First Impression

Step: Rank+CHA

Action: Standard

Strain: 0

Devotion Required: No

As the Talent, *Player's Guide*, p. 147.

Forgery

Step: Rank+DEX

Action: Sustained

Strain: 0

Devotion Required: No

As the skill, *Player's Guide*, p. 197.

Fortify

Step: Rank+WIL

Action: Sustained

Strain: 1

Devotion Required: Yes

The questor touches and imbues a structure with stability and fortitude. This creates a visible effect, though it is different for each questor, such as roots stretching from the questors hand through the structure, a soft glow emanating from the surface, ephemeral buttresses appearing, etc. The questor makes a Fortify (6) test. Each success gives the structure +5 Physical Armor and +10 Death Rating. Any damage done to the structure comes out of this increase first, providing a buffer for the structure.

This devotion can only be used against structures created by Namegivers and lasts for rank minutes. The questor must remain in contact with the structure for the duration of the devotion, or it ends. At the end of the duration, the questor can automatically pay all costs to extend the duration of the existing fortification, or automatically make a new test, refreshing the damage pool. The questor can also end the devotion prematurely by removing their touch from the structure, then reusing the devotion.

Friend of the Land**Step:** Rank+CHA**Action:** Free**Strain:** 1**Devotion Required:** No

The questor fills the area with Jaspree's influence, aiding the questor and their allies in surviving even the harshest areas. The questor makes a Friend of the Land (6) test. Each success adds an additional success to the questor's next Wilderness Survival test by the end of the day, which takes only one hour to perform. Each successful use of this devotion allows the questor to perform an additional Wilderness Survival test that day, up to a maximum of rank additional Wilderness Survival tests. This devotion may be used rank times per day.

Frighten**Step:** Rank+WIL**Action:** Standard**Strain:** 0**Devotion Required:** No

As the talent, *Player's Guide*, p. 149. This devotion can be used on any target, not just Namegivers.

Garlen's Relief**Step:** Rank+CHA**Action:** Sustained (10 min)**Strain:** 0**Devotion Required:** Yes

The questor tends a target's injuries for 10 minutes, comforting them and filling them with a sense of peace and rest, then makes a Garlen's Relief (6) test. If successful, the target heals a Wound, then makes a Recovery test ignoring any Wound penalties.

In addition, each success grants +1 to Recovery tests for adept targets and +2 to Recovery tests for non-adepts (including the one made as a result of this devotion) until the next sunrise. This devotion can be used rank times per day.

Garlen's Solace**Step:** Rank**Action:** Sustained (see text)**Strain:** 0**Devotion Required:** Yes

The questor channels Garlen to perform one of the most dangerous acts of healing: removing corruption from a living target's pattern. This process is excruciating and there is no way to curb the pain as it is entirely spiritual in nature. The questor makes a Garlen's Solace (6) test if the target is willing, or against the target's Mystic Defense if they are unwilling. Each success allows the questor to carve 1 Corruption Point from the target's pattern. Each Corruption Point removed causes the target 1 Permanent Blood Magic Damage, reduces the target's Maximum Karma by 1, and takes one hour. This process also causes the target a Blood Wound regardless of the number of Corruption Points removed due to the trauma of the process. This devotion can be used once per day.

Garlen's Touch**Step:** Rank+CHA**Action:** Standard**Strain:** 0**Devotion Required:** Yes

The questor channels the power of Garlen towards up to rank targets within rank \times 2 yards, filling them with comfort and warmth, soothing their injuries. They make a Garlen's Touch (6) test. If successful, each target spends a Recovery test. Adepts can make either a Recovery test or heal a Wound, either choice heals additional current damage equal to the number of successes.

Non-adepts make a Recovery test with +2 per success and also heal a Wound. This healing is not reduced by Wounds and the targets do not suffer Wound penalties until the end of the next round. Other healing during this time is still reduced by Wounds. This devotion can be used rank times per day.

Gift of Life**Step:** Rank**Action:** Free**Strain:** 0**Devotion Required:** Special

The questor's life force is infused with their Passion's energy. The questor can spend a Devotion Point and gain a Recovery test. These recovery tests may only be used to pay for devotions which require a Recovery test, either for the questor or on behalf of a non-adept target of one of the questor's devotions. This devotion can be used up to rank times per day.

Gliding Stride**Step:** Rank+DEX**Action:** Simple**Strain:** 1**Devotion Required:** No

As the talent, *Player's Guide*, p. 149.

Graceful Exit**Step:** Rank+CHA**Action:** Standard**Strain:** 0**Devotion Required:** No

As the talent, *Player's Guide*, p. 151. This devotion can be used on any valid target, not just Namegivers.

Grave Commands**Step:** Rank+WIL**Action:** Standard (special)**Strain:** 1+**Devotion Required:** No

The questor shares Raggok's affinity for undead and has learned how to control them. The questor targets up to rank undead within rank \times 4 yards, spends 1 Strain per target, and makes a Grave Commands test against the highest Mystic Defense, +1 for each additional target. If successful, the targets are under the questor's control and respond to simple verbal commands, though the questor can use any other means of communication (e.g. Air Speaking, Thought Link) to issue commands. Giving commands is a Simple action.

If another entity such as a different questor, Horror, or Nethermancer is controlling the undead, the Grave Commands test is also against whatever ability the entity is using to exert control, or Willpower Step (whichever is higher and gamemaster's discretion). If successful, the questor wrests control from the entity. The loss is discovered when the entity attempts to contact or command their undead minions and finds them missing. The questor may control up to rank undead at one time. The control lasts until the undead is destroyed or the questor loses control by other means.

Grave Empowerment

Step: Rank+CHA

Action: Simple

Strain: 2

Devotion Required: Yes

The questor empowers up to rank undead within rank \times 2 yards with Raggok's bitterness and desire to cause suffering. The questor makes a Grave Empowerment (6) test and each success gives the targets +2 to Attack and Damage tests until the end of next round. The questor can also spend a Devotion Point on one Attack or Damage test per target.

Great Leap

Step: Rank+DEX

Action: Free

Strain: 1

Devotion Required: No

As the talent, *Player's Guide*, p. 151.

Grip of Chorrolis

Step: Rank+CHA

Action: Standard

Strain: 0

Devotion Required: Yes

The questor enchants a pouch of coins, causing those in the area to become much more interested in financial ventures. The questor makes a Grip of Chorrolis test which is compared to the Social Defense of everyone within rank \times 10 yards for rank hours. If successful, the target is more interested in schemes involving money than normal, from responsible investments to get-rich-quick schemes. The target gains a bonus to appropriate tests and a penalty to Social Defense against appropriate tests for rank days. Each success gives adepts +1 test bonus and -1 Social Defense and non-adepts a +2 test bonus and -2 Social Defense.

These modifiers only apply to instigating financial transactions of any kind, not to helping them succeed. If an affected target ignores this impulse, they suffer -1 per success to Action tests until they seriously entertain such ideas as the schemes in their head drive them to distraction. Continued use of this devotion in the same area and/or on the same targets can have unexpected effects and consequences. This devotion can be used once per day.

Haggle

Step: Rank+CHA

Action: Sustained

Strain: 0

Devotion Required: No

As the talent, *Player's Guide*, p. 152.

Heal Animal Companion

Step: Rank+TOU

Action: Standard

Strain: 0

Devotion Required: No

As the knack, *Earthdawn Companion*, p. 79. The questor can use this devotion on any creature, not just Loyal targets.

Heart's Wish

Step: Rank+PER

Action: Standard

Strain: 0

Devotion Required: No

The questor learns a target's strongest desires by making a Heart's Wish test against their Social Defense. For each success, the questor learns one of the target's desires, starting with the most important at that moment. This may be used once per target per week.

Heartening Laugh

Step: Rank+CHA

Action: Simple

Strain: 1

Devotion Required: No

As the talent, *Player's Guide*, p. 152.

Hone Weapon

Step: Rank+CHA

Action: Sustained (1 hour)

Strain: 0

Devotion Required: Yes

Overseen Project. The questor oversees and inspires up to rank targets within rank \times 2 yards with the drive of their Passion to quickly modify non-magical weapons to make them more dangerous. Targets work for 1 hour and the questor makes a Hone Weapon test, using the highest Damage Step among the weapons being honed as the Difficulty Number.

Each target increases the Damage Step of one weapon or standard container of ammunition per success by +1 (for example, with three successes, three weapons or containers of ammunition are each increased by +1). Subsequent uses of the devotion can further increase the damage bonus by +1 per use, but the total bonus over multiple uses cannot exceed the questor's Hone Weapon rank. The bonus is incompatible with Forge Weapon.

The devotion lasts until the next sunrise. When the duration ends the weapon is damaged, reducing the Damage Step by 1 for each +1 applied to the weapon through this devotion. Ammunition is simply destroyed.

Impossible Hide**Step:** Rank**Action:** Standard**Strain:** 3**Devotion Required:** YesAs the talent, *Earthdawn Companion*, p. 58.**Impressive Display****Step:** Rank**Action:** Simple**Strain:** 1**Devotion Required:** NoAs the talent, *Player's Guide*, p. 154.**Incite Obsession****Step:** Rank+WIL**Action:** Standard**Strain:** 1**Devotion Required:** Yes

The questor causes the target to become obsessed with something, whether it be an item, person, or goal; it is all consuming to the target. The questor makes an Incite Obsession test against the target's Social Defense. Adepts gain +5 Social Defense against this test. If successful, the target gains a bonus to all actions related to attaining their obsession and a -1 penalty per success to all other actions. Adepts gain +1 per success, and non-adepts gain +2 per success. This obsession lasts for rank hours. If the target fails to accomplish their obsession, they suffer a -1 penalty per success to all Action tests for rank days afterwards as their failure haunts them. This devotion may be used once per day, and once per target per month.

Incite Rage**Step:** Rank+CHA**Action:** Standard**Strain:** 3**Devotion Required:** Yes

The questor sends a target into a violent rage by speaking insidious words of evil to them and making an Incite Rage test against the target's Social Defense. If successful, the target's mind is filled with a desperate need to cause carnage for one round per success. The target must use the Aggressive Attack combat option every round, paying any costs as necessary. The target physically attacks the nearest living thing, fighting to the death, regardless of whether it is an ally, and seeking new victims as they fall dead or unconscious.

Each round, adept targets can resist with a Willpower test against the Incite Rage Step, +5 if their opponent is a loyal friend. If successful, this devotion immediately ends.

Incite Rebellion**Step:** Rank+CHA**Action:** Standard**Strain:** 0**Devotion Required:** Yes

The questor enchants an item that can be seen as a subversive symbol, making all those within rank × 10 yards persuasive about changing the status quo and receptive to such ideas and actions. The questor makes an Incite

Rebellion test which is compared to the Social Defense of any target entering the area for rank hours.

Affected targets are more interested in seeing and affecting real change, gaining a bonus to appropriate tests and a penalty to Social Defense against appropriate tests for rank days. For each success, adepts gain +1 to tests and -1 to Social Defense and non-adepts gain +2 to tests and -2 to Social Defense.

These modifiers only apply to tests involving advancing a change in the status quo, including recruiting, organization, action, etc. This devotion cannot force anyone to do or believe something they are truly opposed to but may open their eyes to seeing things in a new way and cause a gradual shift over time.

If an affected target ignores this impulse, they suffer -1 per success to Action tests until they seriously entertain such ideas as the discontent in their head drives them to distraction. This devotion can be used once per day.



Inspired Endurance

Step: Rank+CHA

Action: Standard

Strain: 0

Devotion Required: Yes

The questor fills their allies with the spirit and drive of their Passion, enabling them to persevere far beyond when they would collapse from exhaustion. The questor targets up to rank willing allies and makes an Inspired Endurance (6) test. If successful, each target pays a Recovery Test and is immune to the effects of fatigue for the next 4 hours per success, requiring no rest whatsoever. The target must still rest as usual to make a Recovery test. Sufficient successes allow the targets to operate over a day without rest, however they do not regain Recovery Tests until they rest as usual. This devotion may be used once per day.

Inspired Might

Step: Rank+CHA

Action: Simple

Strain: 1

Devotion Required: No

The questor fills up to rank targets within rank \times 2 yards their Passion's with ferocious power. The questor makes an Inspired Might (6) test. If successful,

the targets gain a bonus to Strength-based tests for feats of strength or doing damage to inanimate objects for rank minutes. Adepts gain +1 per success and non-adepts gain +2 per success.

Intimidating Bellow

Step: Rank+CHA

Action: Simple

Strain: 1

Devotion Required: No

As the knack, *Earthdawn Companion*, p. 83. This devotion can be used on any valid target, not just Namegivers.

Inspired Tenacity

Step: Rank+CHA

Action: Standard

Strain: 1+

Devotion Required: No

The questor fills up to rank willing targets within rank × 2 yards with fervor and tenacity, making them unwilling to back down. The questor pays 1 Strain for each target and makes an Inspired Tenacity (6) test. If successful, each target gains a bonus to Wound Threshold and reduces Wound Penalties by 1 per two successes. Adepts gain +1 per two successes and reduce Wound Penalties by the same amount until the end of the next round. Non-adepts gain +2 per two successes and reduce Wound Penalties by the same amount until the end of rank rounds.

Invigorate

Step: Rank+CHA

Action: Simple

Strain: 1+

Devotion Required: No

The questor fills up to rank targets within rank × 2 yards with their Passion's energy and drive. The questor pays 1 Strain for each target and makes an Invigorate (6) test. If successful, each target gains a bonus to Initiative tests and Movement Rate until the end of the next round. Adepts gain +1 per success and non-adepts gain +2 per success.

Jaspre's Solace

Step: Rank+WIL

Action: Sustained (8 hours)

Strain: 0

Devotion Required: Yes

The questor channels Jaspre during an eight-hour ritual to reduce the corruption in the current location by filtering the astral pollution through their pattern. The questor makes a Jaspre's Solace test against a Difficulty Number determined by the region type. Regardless of success or failure, the questor suffers Warping as though they cast a Fifth Circle spell using raw magic (*Player's Guide*, p. 261), but there is no danger of a Horror mark.

Each success transfers one Corruption Point from the location's pattern to the questor's pattern. The questor must use all available successes. Corruption Points gained through this devotion are temporary and should be tracked separately. One temporary Corruption Point is removed every new

moon. However, temporary Corruption Points can still overload the questor's pattern and cause them to become corrupted (*Gamemaster's Guide*, p. 456).

If the questor's total Corruption Points (including temporary points) exceeds the Corruption Value, they become corrupted and the temporary Corruption Points become normal Corruption Points and are not removed at each new moon. This devotion can be used once per day.

Each location has Corruption Points based on the region type and size. The ranges presented in the table reflect the typical range of Corruption Points in a location up to a half-mile square area. When the Corruption Points in a location are reduced to the range of a lesser region type, the location shifts to the new type over the next 28 days.

Questors of Jasprey are careful when using this devotion and almost always work in groups to shoulder the burden together. While the spread of corruption outside of a Horror's presence isn't well understood, there is evidence Tainted and Corrupt locations spread their corruption to adjacent areas. Creating an Open location as a bastion within a heavily corrupted area can be done but requires constant maintenance to prevent it from becoming Tainted again.

<i>Region Type</i>	<i>DN</i>	<i>Corruption Points</i>
Safe	20	0 - 1
Open	18	2 - 4
Tainted	16	5 - 11
Corrupt	14	12+

If the questor has a thread tied to a pattern item for the location, they gain additional successes on a successful test: one for a minor pattern item, two for a major pattern item, and three for a core pattern item.

Jury-Rig

Step: Rank+PER

Action: Sustained

Strain: 0

Devotion Required: No

Overseen Project. The questor assembles and directs a willing team of up to rank targets within rank \times 2 yards to repair a damaged structure. The questor makes a Jury-Rig (6) test. Each target repairs 1 damage point per success each round for rank rounds. The questor can be a target if everyone is repairing the same structure. The repairs are sturdy and functional, not attractive and need to be done properly once all the excitement is done.

Lasting Impression

Step: Rank+CHA

Action: Standard

Strain: 0

Devotion Required: No

As the talent, *Player's Guide*, p. 155.

Leadership**Step:** Rank+CHA**Action:** Sustained**Strain:** 0**Devotion Required:** NoAs the talent, *Player's Guide*, p. 156.**Let's Make a Deal****Step:** Rank+CHA**Action:** Standard**Strain:** 0**Devotion Required:** Yes

The questor calls upon Chorrolis to inspire the target with a desire to negotiate an offer they previously turned down. This can include selling a family heirloom, prized possession, convincing a reluctant bodyguard to go on a dangerous journey, or simply separating a notorious miser from their coin.

The questor makes a Let's Make a Deal test against the highest Social Defense among the targets, +1 per additional target. If successful, the targets are willing to make a deal, but it typically starts at least double a reasonable price and goes up as the target attaches more sentimental or practical value to it (with a considerable amount of sentimental value attached to their life and livelihood). Each additional success gives the questor +2 to an ensuing Haggle test. Once engaged, the questor must make the purchase or fall into severe disfavor with Chorrolis.

This devotion has no effect on objects which are truly priceless, such as thread items with a thread from the owner attached, pattern items, etc., or if another emotion of much greater importance to the target takes precedence, such as convincing a parent to abandon their child. This devotion cannot be used for tasks which are clearly suicidal, unless the target is truly willing to face certain death for enough money. This can be used once per week per target; if the devotion fails against a given target, it cannot be used on them for another month.

Let's Make a Deal is exceptionally powerful and can force targets into doing things they do not want to do. There are prohibitions along with this in an attempt to enforce the general idea: this cannot be used to arbitrarily ruin a target or as a creative way to kill them. Chorrolis lends this power to its questors and actually wants to see this be used as a positive force to encourage trade. If a questor abuses this power, Chorrolis will take it away.

Lifesight**Step:** Rank+PER**Action:** Simple**Strain:** 1**Devotion Required:** No

As the talent, *Player's Guide*, p. 156. This devotion can sense any life, not just Namegivers.

Lion Heart

Step: Rank+WIL

Action: Free

Strain: 1

Devotion Required: No

As the talent, *Player's Guide*, p. 157.

Lip Reading

Step: Rank+PER

Action: Standard

Strain: 1

Devotion Required: No

As the knack, *Earthdawn Companion*, p. 83. This devotion can be used on any valid target, not just Namegivers.

Living Death

Step: Rank+WIL

Action: Standard

Strain: 0

Devotion Required: Yes

The questor forces targets under their control, whether slaves, prisoners, subordinates, etc., to perform a menial task tirelessly for hours by giving a one-word command and making a Living Death test against the highest Social Defense in the target group, up to rank targets within rank \times 2 yards. Adepts gain +5 to Social Defense against this devotion. If successful, the targets are compelled to obey the questor. While they are not mindless and cannot be compelled to perform an obviously suicidal action, targets must obey both the letter and the spirit of the command. The command cannot be to fight, as this is not a menial task.

A target may attempt to resist the devotion once per day with a Willpower test against the questor's Living Death Step. If successful, the target must still perform the menial task, but need only follow the letter of the command, not the spirit. For example, a prisoner commanded to dig can do so in a location which actively hinders their captors. Only when the devotion ends or the questor commands them to stop can the affected group cease the activity. This devotion lasts for eight hours plus an additional hour per rank.

Affected targets suffer no ill effects while performing their task but may suffer damage from overexertion. When the duration ends, each target is subject to a Damage test equal to the number of hours over eight they worked. No armor reduces the damage, and the character takes Wounds if appropriate.

Every five days a target is affected by this devotion and do not successfully rebel with a Willpower test, the target suffers a cumulative -1 penalty to Willpower tests and Social Defense. These penalties disappear at a rate of 1 every five days they have not been successfully targeted by this devotion. Successful Willpower tests do not reduce the penalties, just prevent their accumulation.

Love in Bloom**Step:** Rank+CHA**Action:** Standard**Strain:** 0**Devotion Required:** Yes

The questor enchants a flower, causing it to give off a heady aroma, making all those within rank \times 10 yards more courageous and receptive to matters of the heart. The questor makes a Love in Bloom test which is compared to the Social Defense of any target entering the area for rank hours.

Affected targets are more interested in love, relationships, and romance, gaining a bonus to appropriate tests and a penalty to Social Defense against appropriate tests for rank days. For each success, adepts gain +1 to tests and -1 to Social Defense and non-adepts gain +2 to tests and -2 to Social Defense. These modifiers only apply to confessions, affirmations, reconciliations, etc., of love.

This devotion cannot force anyone to do something they are opposed to but may open their eyes to seeing things in a new way. If an affected target ignores these influences, they suffer a -1 penalty per success to all Action tests until they are receptive to the influences, as the thoughts of love and romance drive them to distraction. The modifiers persist for the duration even if the target leaves the area. This devotion can be used once per day.

Melee Weapons**Step:** Rank+DEX**Action:** Standard**Strain:** 0**Devotion Required:** No

As the talent, *Player's Guide*, p. 158. This devotion can be used on any valid target, not just Namegivers.

Mimic Voice**Step:** Rank+CHA**Action:** Simple**Strain:** 0**Devotion Required:** No

As the talent, *Player's Guide*, p. 158. This devotion can be used against any target, not just Namegivers.

Mynbruje's Eye**Step:** Rank+CHA**Action:** Simple**Strain:** 1**Devotion Required:** No

The questor makes a Mynbruje's Eye (6) test on a target within rank \times 2 yards. If successful, the target gains a bonus to a Perception-based test based around examining details, such as Evidence Analysis, Awareness when looking for something specific, Research on a particular topic, Astral Sight for examining a pattern, etc. Adepts gain +1 per success and non-adepts gain +2 per success. This bonus must be used by the next sunrise or it is lost. A single target may benefit from this devotion up to rank times in one day (though no test may use more than one bonus).

Open Mind**Step:** Rank+CHA**Action:** Standard**Strain:** 0**Devotion Required:** Yes

The questor enchants a key, making all those within rank \times 10 yards more persuasive and receptive to new ideas. The questor makes an Open Mind test which is compared to the Social Defense of any targets entering the area for rank hours.

Affected targets are more interested in new ideas and expressing their ideas, gaining a bonus to appropriate tests and a penalty to Social Defense against appropriate tests for rank days. For each success, adepts gain +1 to tests and -1 to Social Defense and non-adepts gain +2 to tests and -2 to Social Defense. These modifiers only apply to topics which a speaker is truly passionate about.

This devotion cannot force anyone to do or believe something they are truly opposed to but may open their eyes to seeing things in a new way and cause a gradual shift over time. If an affected target ignores these influences, they suffer a -1 penalty per success to all Action tests until they are receptive to the influences, as their craving for new ideas drives them to distraction. The modifiers persist for the duration even if the target leaves the area. This devotion can be used once per day.

If used by a questor of Vestrial, the questor can spend a Devotion Point and the affected targets are receptive to any topics, not just those the speaker is passionate about.

Passion's Comfort**Step:** Rank+CHA**Action:** Standard**Strain:** 1**Devotion Required:** No

The questor fills up to rank targets within rank \times 2 yards with their Passion's influence, the exact feeling this evokes depends on the Passion, whether suffusing them with comfort and warmth, or inspiring them to overcome and fight the fear. The questor makes a Passion's Comfort test against the Step of the ability that caused fear, or highest Step if there is more than one such ability. If successful, the ongoing effects end and the targets are immune to further fear effects for rank rounds. This devotion cannot be used proactively.

Passion's Empowerment**Step:** Rank**Action:** Standard**Strain:** 0**Devotion Required:** No

All Passions interfere in Namegiver society, granting temporary gifts to their followers and allies. The questor empowers targets with their devotion and the zeal of their Passion, granting total Devotion Points up to their Passion's Empowerment rank to targets within rank \times 2 yards. These points come from the questor's Devotion Pool and must be spent within one hour. They can be spent on any action inspired by the associated zeal, using the



questor's Devotion Die. If a non-adept uses a Devotion Point, they also gain the questor's Empowerment rank as an additional bonus. Only living Namegivers can benefit from this devotion; questors of Jasprey and Raggok cannot use it to grant Devotion Points to creatures or undead. This devotion cannot be used on the questor, but can be used on other questors, and can be used rank times per day.

A questor of Garlen uses Garlen's Empowerment rank 6. They can grant up to 6 Devotion Points from their pool to anyone within 12 yards. This could be 6 Devotion Points to one target, one to six different targets, 4 to one and 2 to another, etc. The targets can spend these points on actions related to their community which Garlen would approve of and gain the questor's Devotion Die as a bonus on the tests. Non-adept targets gain an additional +6 to the tests.

Passion's Insight

Step: Rank+PER

Action: Standard

Strain: 1

Devotion Required: No

The questor detects the target's strongest emotion and its focus by making a Passion's Insight test against their Social Defense. If successful, the questor learns the strongest emotion and its focus felt by the target a number of times equal to successes for one hour. Typically, this is used by asking leading questions, but can also be used to gauge the response from seeing or learning something. The questor chooses when to use this devotion during the hour. This devotion may be used once per target per day.

Passion's Inspiration

Step: Rank+CHA

Action: Standard

Strain: 1

Devotion Required: No

The questor speaks a few words of inspiration to their allies, invoking their Passion's ideals, and makes a Passion's Inspiration (6) test. Adept targets

gain +1 per success, while non-adept targets gain +2 per success. This bonus is applied to an appropriate action of the target's choice by the next sunrise. Appropriate action tests must be related to the Passion's sphere of influence. The questor can affect up to rank targets within rank \times 2 yards. A target may only be affected by one instance of this devotion at a time; until the current Passion's Inspiration is used or expires, any further uses of this devotion have no effect. Only living Namegivers can benefit from this devotion; questors of Jaspre and Raggok cannot use it on creatures or undead.

Perfect Focus

Step: Rank+WIL

Action: Simple

Strain: 0

Devotion Required: No

As the talent, *Earthdawn Companion*, p. 63.

Photographic Memory

Step: Rank+WIL

Action: Standard

Strain: 0

Devotion Required: No

As the knack, *Earthdawn Companion*, p. 84. The questor uses their Photographic Memory rank in place of Book Memory rank for this devotion.

Physician

Step: Rank+PER

Action: Sustained (30 minutes)

Strain: 0

Devotion Required: No

As the skill, *Player's Guide*, p. 198. This devotion may be used on any target, not just Namegivers.

Pidgin

Step: Rank+CHA

Action: Sustained (10 minutes)

Strain: 0

Devotion Required: Yes

The questor facilitates communication between groups who would not otherwise be able to speak with each other by combining all involved languages into something understood by all affected parties. The questor spends 10 minutes speaking with all parties and makes a Pidgin test against the highest Learning Difficulty of the spoken languages, +1 per target and +1 per additional language. This devotion may affect up to rank targets. If successful, all targets can converse with each other using the pidgin language until the next sunrise but cannot understand anyone unaffected by this devotion (unless they could understand them normally). This devotion may only be used on a given target once per day, whether it succeeds or fails.

Plant Talk

Step: Rank+PER

Action: Standard

Strain: 0

Devotion Required: No

As the talent, *Earthdawn Companion*, p. 63.

Poisoned Influence

Step: Rank+CHA

Action: Sustained

Strain: 0

Devotion Required: No

As the knack, *Earthdawn Companion*, p. 90.

Project Management

Step: Rank+PER

Action: Simple

Strain: 0

Devotion Required: Special

The questor plans and directs a construction project, whether a home, new library, civic work, etc. The questor makes a Project Management (6) test. If successful, the questor gains +2 to tests required for the project to run smoothly and complete on time. Additionally, each success increases the pace of work by 20%. This devotion lasts for up to rank weeks, ending when the project is complete. It may only be used once per project and the questor can only have one instance active at a time. The questor can affect subordinates who are part of the project when the questor joins, spending a Devotion Point to grant this bonus to up to rank targets. If more than one questor is working on the project, they may each benefit from this devotion, but the bonuses do not stack.

Psychometry

Step: Rank+PER

Action: Standard

Strain: 1

Devotion Required: No

As the knack, *Earthdawn Companion*, p. 96.

Questor

Step: Rank+CHA

Action: Sustained [1 hour]

Strain: 0

Devotion Required: No

The first gift received when they become a questor, this devotion allows the questor to commune with their Passion once per day for one hour. This can be used to either reaffirm the questor's connection and devotion or seek guidance from the Passion. Reaffirming their devotion grants the questor Devotion Points equal to their tier (1 for Follower, 2 for Adherent, or 3 for Exemplar). When reaffirming their connection, the questor may also increase the rank of a devotion as described under *Advancing Devotions*, p. 134.

Alternately, the questor can seek guidance of a general or specific nature, such as what the Passion wants the questor to do, or guidance on how to proceed with something related to the Passion's ideals. The questor makes a Questor (10) test modified by the Astral Sensing Table (*Player's Guide*, p. 209); the difficulty for questors of Mad Passions is not modified. The Passion provides some form of insight for each success, whether this reveals the ideal the Passion wishes to see lived out, the direction the questor should travel, a clue the Passion will use to identify the nature of the quest, etc. Alternatively, the Passion may allow the questor to ask one question per success (or success

remaining if insight was provided). These questions must be directly related to the Passion's ideals. This information should be useful but is often cryptic.

The questor's other devotions cannot advance beyond their Questor rank. The questor's maximum Devotion Points is their Questor rank \times 10.

Rally

Step: Rank+CHA

Action: Standard

Strain: 0

Devotion Required: Yes

As the talent, *Earthdawn Companion*, p. 64.

Remember Conversation

Step: Rank+WIL

Action: Standard

Strain: 0

Devotion Required: No

As the knack, *Earthdawn Companion*, p. 84. The questor uses their Remember Conversation rank in place of Book Memory rank for this devotion. This devotion is not limited to Namegivers.

Research

Step: Rank+PER

Action: Sustained

Strain: 0

Devotion Required: No

As the talent, *Player's Guide*, p. 163.

Resist Influence

Step: Rank+WIL

Action: Standard

Strain: 1

Devotion Required: Yes

The questor speaks words of comfort, encouragement, or inspiration to steady a person's spirit. The questor makes a Resist Influence test against the target's Social Defense. If successful, the target gains a bonus to Mystic and Social Defense, and any resistance tests against mind-affecting abilities until the next sunrise. Adepts gain +1 per success and non-adepts gain +2 per success.

Mind-affecting abilities include those which alter the target's state of mind for better or worse. If the target is currently affected by such a devotion (and only a devotion), they gain an immediate resistance test if allowed, or if no resistance test is allowed, the effect is reduced by one success (this cannot reduce it below one success). This devotion may be used rank times per day.

Resist Pain

Step: Rank

Action: NA

Strain: 0

Devotion Required: No

As the talent, *Earthdawn Companion*, p. 64.

Resist Taunt**Step:** Rank+WIL**Action:** Free**Strain:** 1**Devotion Required:** No

As the talent, *Player's Guide*, p. 164. This devotion can be used in response to any appropriate attack, not just those from Namegivers.

Safe Path**Step:** Rank+PER**Action:** Standard**Strain:** 0**Devotion Required:** No

As the talent, *Player's Guide*, p. 165.

Safe Thought**Step:** Rank**Action:** Free**Strain:** 0**Devotion Required:** No

As the talent, *Earthdawn Companion*, p. 64.

Seal Home**Step:** Rank+WIL**Action:** Standard**Strain:** 1**Devotion Required:** Yes

The questor creates a barrier within a building to repel attackers. The barrier's appearance is unique to each questor. This barrier is up to rank × 10 yards in radius but does not extend beyond the walls of the building and must be bound by walls on all sides with exceptions for doorways, windows, and similar openings. For example, if a multi-room home is too large for Seal Home to reach all exterior walls, it protects the whole rooms within its radius. The barrier lasts for rank hours.

The questor makes a Seal Home test against the Mystic Defense of anyone attempting to pass or attack through the barrier (this includes spells and ranged attacks). If successful, the barrier enervates the target, knocking them down and back one yard per success; treat this as falling damage (*Gamemaster's Guide*, p. 168), and the target is Harried for one round per success. Non-Namegivers gain +5 to their Mystic Defense against this test.

If the building is home to a Namegiver within the barrier, the questor gains +5 to Seal Home tests. Each barrier may be used against a target once per round but may be used rank times per round total. The questor may have up to rank instances of this devotion active. If anyone within the barrier protected by it launches an attack through the barrier, the barrier immediately fails. This devotion is not limited to Namegivers.

Shield the Innocent**Step:** Rank+WIL**Action:** Standard**Strain:** 1**Devotion Required:** Yes

The questor creates a rank × 2 yards in radius barrier to repel attackers for one hour. The barrier's appearance is unique to each questor. The questor makes a Shield the Innocent test against the Mystic Defense of anyone attempting to

pass or attack through the barrier (this includes spells and ranged attacks). If successful, the barrier enervates the target, knocking them down and back one yard per success; treat this as falling damage (*Gamemaster's Guide*, p. 168), and the target is Harried for one round per success. Non-Namegivers gain +5 to their Mystic Defense against this test. Each barrier may be used once per round. The questor may have up to rank instances of this devotion active. If anyone within the barrier protected by it launches an attack through the barrier, the barrier immediately fails. When used by questors of Jasprey, it must be in a natural area and creatures do not gain +5 to their Mystic Defense. This devotion is not limited to Namegivers.

Silence Influence

Step: Rank+WIL

Action: Standard

Strain: 1

Devotion Required: No

The questor stops any ongoing devotion or other Passion-derived ability within rank \times 2 yards. The questor makes a Silence Influence test against a Difficulty Number based on the power of the effect (see *Dispelling Magic*, *Player's Guide*, p. 265). If successful, the effect ends immediately. This devotion has no effect on talents, spells, creature or Horror powers, etc.

Slough Blame

Step: Rank+CHA

Action: Standard

Strain: 1

Devotion Required: No

As the talent, *Player's Guide*, p. 167.

Sprint

Step: Rank

Action: Simple

Strain: 1

Devotion Required: No

As the talent, *Player's Guide*, p. 170.

Stealthy Stride

Step: Rank+DEX

Action: Simple

Strain: 0

Devotion Required: No

As the talent, *Player's Guide*, p. 170.

Steel Thought

Step: Rank+WIL

Action: Free

Strain: 1

Devotion Required: No

As the talent, *Player's Guide*, p. 170. This devotion can be used in response to any appropriate attack, not just those from Namegivers.

Steely Stare**Step:** Rank+CHA**Action:** Standard**Strain:** 1**Devotion Required:** No

As the talent, *Player's Guide*, p. 171. This devotion may be used against any valid target, not just Namegivers.

Stride of Floranuus**Step:** Rank+CHA**Action:** Standard**Strain:** 3**Devotion Required:** Yes

The questor fills an expedition they are part of with Floranuus's vigor, quickening the pace, whether by air, land, or water. Floranuus despises the sluggish pace of barges, wagons, and similar vehicles and they cannot benefit from this devotion. The questor makes a Stride of Floranuus (6) test and each success increases the effective speed by 20% for rank hours. The questor can use this devotion once per day but may spend all costs again to renew the bonus as it is about to expire even if the questor is asleep or otherwise occupied. This devotion can affect one vessel, or up to rank Namegivers and their mounts.

Streetwise**Step:** Rank + CHA**Action:** Sustained**Strain:** 0**Devotion Required:** No

As the skill, *Player's Guide*, p. 201.

Submit**Step:** Rank+WIL**Action:** Sustained**Strain:** 2**Devotion Required:** Yes

The questor dominates up to rank Namegivers within rank \times 2 yards, forcing them to bow to the questor's will. The exact form this domination takes is unique to each questor, but it transcends the need for spoken language even if there is a spoken component. The questor makes a Submit test against the highest Social Defense in the target group, adepts gain +5 Social Defense against this test. If successful, all affected targets cease all actions and wait for the questor's command. Additional successes impose a cumulative -1 penalty to Willpower tests.

This devotion lasts for rank rounds. Targets may make a Willpower test against the questor's Submit Step as a Free action at the beginning of each round. If successful, they throw off the effects.

Any hostile actions intended to cause damage beyond "roughing up" the target end this devotion immediately and give the affected target +2 to Action tests against the questor and their allies until the next sunrise. If the Submit duration expires, any abilities which require control must have established control outside of this devotion.

**Surprise Strike****Step:** Rank+STR**Action:** Free**Strain:** 1**Devotion Required:** No

As the talent, *Player's Guide*, p. 172. This devotion may be used against any target, not just Namegivers.

Tactics**Step:** Rank+PER**Action:** Standard**Strain:** 0**Devotion Required:** No

As the talent, *Player's Guide*, p. 172.

Taste of Power**Step:** Rank+CHA**Action:** Sustained (1 minute)**Strain:** 2+**Devotion Required:** No

The questor tempts a target into serving their Passion and committing deeds that meet the Passion's approval by granting access to the questor's devotions. The questor whispers in the target's ear, promising power, explaining the devotion(s) if necessary, hints at further rewards that lay down this path, then pays 2 Strain per devotion and makes a Taste of Power (6) test. If successful, the target gains access to the selected devotions at the same rank as the questor (using the target's attribute Steps) for rank hours. During this time, the questor cannot use these devotions.

Any actions a non-adept target takes during this time which further the Passion's goals gain +1 per success. Any actions contrary to the Passion's goals suffer a -1 penalty per success (this applies to adepts and non-adepts). If the target performs any appropriate Acts of Devotion for the Passion, the questor gains 1 Devotion Point per granted devotion used by the target as well as any Devotion Points the Acts of Devotion would generate.

Telling the Tale**Step:** Rank+CHA**Action:** Sustained**Strain:** 0**Devotion Required:** NoAs the knack, *Earthdawn Companion*, p. 91.**Thought Link****Step:** Rank+PER**Action:** Standard**Strain:** 1**Devotion Required:** NoAs the talent, *Player's Guide*, p. 173.**Torment****Step:** Rank+WIL**Action:** Standard**Strain:** 1**Devotion Cost:** No

The questor speaks to the character, their voice enhanced by Raggok's foul strength, and makes a Torment test against the target's Social Defense. If successful, the target feels excruciating pain and suffers one Wound per success for rank rounds. The exact nature of the pain is unique to each questor, such as countless sharp needles repeatedly driving into their flesh.

At the beginning of each round, the target may make a Willpower test against the Torment Step to suppress the pain. If successful, they work past the worst of the pain and don't suffer from the inflicted Wounds until the end of the round.

This devotion has no effect on creatures that neither feel pain or are otherwise inured against or used to it. This includes most undead (except cadaver men where this sends them into a Frenzy), most Horrors or Horror constructs, and blood elves.

Touching the Past**Step:** Rank+PER**Action:** Standard**Strain:** 0**Devotion Required:** NoAs the knack, *Earthdawn Companion*, p. 96.**Tracking****Step:** Rank+PER**Action:** Standard**Strain:** 0**Devotion Required:** No

As the talent, *Player's Guide*, p. 175. This devotion may be used on any valid target, not just Namegivers.

True Sight**Step:** Rank**Action:** NA**Strain:** 0**Devotion Required:** NoAs the talent, *Player's Guide*, p. 176.

Undermine

Step: Rank+CHA

Action: Simple

Strain: 1

Devotion Required: No

As the talent, *Earthdawn Companion*, p. 70. This devotion may be used on any valid target, not just Namegivers.

Upandal's Armory

Step: Rank+WIL

Action: Sustained (1 hour)

Strain: 0

Devotion Required: Yes

Overseen Project. The questor oversees and inspires up to rank targets within rank \times 2 yards with the drive of Upandal to quickly fashion weapons of any type from rudimentary materials and only the most basic tools. The questor determines the kinds of weapons to be created and the targets work for 1 hour.

The questor makes a Create Weapon test against the highest Damage Step among the weapons as the Difficulty Number. For each success, each target creates one weapon, including one standard container of ammunition for missile weapons. The materials must be somewhat appropriate to the weapons being created, sticks for wood, rocks for metal, etc. The weapons last for one day before returning to their original form, though with the markings of tool work.

Upandal's Palisade

Step: Rank+CHA

Action: Sustained

Strain: 0

Devotion Required: Special

Overseen Project. The questor assembles and directs a willing team of up to rank targets within rank \times 2 yards, filling them with the drive and inspiration of Upandal to build a wall. The questor makes an Upandal's Palisade (6) test. If successful, each target builds 1 point of wall per success in one hour. These points can be spent as follows: 1 point builds a 2-yard wide by 2-yard tall section of 2-inch thick wooden wall or increases the thickness of a 2-yard by 2-yard section of wall by 2 inches; 2 points builds a 2-yard wide by 2-yard tall section of 2-inch thick stone wall. Walls can be stacked to create taller walls. The raw materials for these walls must be available; they are sturdy and functional, but not attractive and cannot support walkways, towers, buttresses, etc. until done properly once all the excitement is over.

If all the necessary materials are unavailable, the questor can spend a Devotion Point to make meager materials and tools sufficient. Stone and wood must still be available as appropriate, but not necessarily as much or all the other requirements (nails, rope, etc.). This wall lasts until the next sunrise before returning to its original form, though with the markings of tool work.

Vestrial's Tongue

Step: Rank+CHA

Action: Simple

Strain: 1

Devotion Required: Special

The questor grants the target a gift for glibness from their Passion. The questor makes a Vestrial's Tongue (6) test. For each success, adepts gain +1 and non-adepts gain +2 to a test to deceive someone, whether an Interaction test, or using a talent such as Engaging Banter or Slough Blame. This bonus must be used by the next sunrise or it is lost.

If the questor does not spend a Devotion Point, the target's deception will inevitably be uncovered at an inopportune time. A single target may benefit from this devotion up to rank times (though no test may use more than one bonus), with the revelations compounding and almost certainly ruining the target.

Vicious Wound

Step: Rank+PER

Action: Simple

Strain: 2

Devotion Required: No

As the talent, *Earthdawn Companion*, p. 70. This devotion may be used against any valid target, not just Namegivers.

Vital Strike

Step: Rank+TOU

Action: Free

Strain: 2

Devotion Required: No

As the talent, *Earthdawn Companion*, p. 71. This devotion may be used against any valid target, not just Namegivers.

Wilderness Survival

Step: Rank+PER

Action: Sustained (2 hours)

Strain: 0

Devotion Required: No

As the talent, *Player's Guide*, p. 179.

Wind Catcher

Step: Rank+WIL

Action: Standard

Strain: 1

Devotion Required: No

As the talent, *Player's Guide*, p. 180.

Winning Smile

Step: Rank+CHA

Action: Standard

Strain: 0

Devotion Required: No

As the talent, *Player's Guide*, p. 180.

Wound Balance

Step: Rank+STR

Action: Free

Strain: 0

Devotion Required: No

As the talent, *Player's Guide*, p. 181.



INDEX

A

Acrobatic Defense	152
Acting	152
Acts of Devotion	137
Adepts vs Questors	133
Advancing Devotions	134
Air Speaking	152
Alchemy	152
Animal Bond	152
Animal Leadership	152
Animal Talk	152
Appearances	10
Armor of Thystonius	152
Artisan	153
Artist	153
A Shield for Every Mind	39
Assess Intentions	153
Astendar	139
Astendar and Her Family	26
Astendar and the Beggar	20
Astendar's Light	22
Astendar's Song	19
Being One of Astendar's Chosen	23
Final Thought	27
For Love and Beauty	19
Those Who Embrace Astendar	25
Astendar's Muse	153
Astendar's Voice	153
Astral Sight	154
Avoid Blow	154
Awaken the Wood	154
Awareness	155

B

Back to the Point	14
Bardic Voice	155
Battle Bellow	155

Battle Shout	155
Beast Summons	155
Becoming a Questor	131
Bloom and Flourish	155
Book Memory	155
Break Shackles	156
Bribery	156
Buttress Armor	156

C

Call Animal Companion	157
Chains of Obedience	157
Challenge of Dis	158
Choosing a Patron Passion	132
Chorrolis	140
1 Sollus 1483 TH	32
1 Teayu 1479 TH	30
2 Strassa 1489 TH	34
3 Charassa 1475 TH	29
7 Veltom 1493 TH	36
17 Mawag 1494 TH	36
17 Rua 1481	31
18 Raquas 1485 TH	33
22 Mawag 1481 TH	32
Closing Thoughts	16
Cold Reminder	158
Compel	159
Conceal Object	159
Conversation	159
Craftsman	159
Creature Analysis	160
Credits	3

D

Danger Sense	160
Defiant Shout	160
Desolate	160

Detail Oriented	160	Floranuus's Ideals	51
Devotion Abilities	136	How Grimtruth Was Granted a Miracle	47
Devotion Award Table	137	Meddling and Its Perils	52
Devotion Descriptions	151	Of Taddeo the Windling	49
Devotion Points	136	The Importance of Parties	54
Devotions	134	The Power of Optimism	53
Diplomacy	161	The Recruitment of New Questors	51
Dis		Forgery	164
In Which Slavers are Given a Glimpse of True		Fortify	164
Bonds	43	Friend of the Land	165
On Misconceptions Surrounding Dis	41	Frighten	165
On the Philosophy of Dis	40		
On the Role of Dis in Daily Life	42	G	
Paperwork as Defence and Potential Recruit-		Game Information	129
ment	44	Garlen	143
Relationships with other Passions	45	Being Called to Heal	58
The Iron Legacy	42	Healing the Mad Passions	62
Disarming Smile	161	How We Heal, How We Learn	59
Disguise Self	161	On the Disciplines and Healing	63
Dis (Mad Passion)	141	The Healer's Path	57
Dominate Beast	161	The Healing Nature of Fire	61
Durability 5	161	Garlen's Relief	165
		Garlen's Solace	165
E		Garlen's Touch	166
Eidetic Memory	161	Gift of Life	166
Emotion Song	161	Gliding Stride	166
Empathic Command	161	Graceful Exit	166
Empathic Sense	162	Grave Commands	166
Enchanted Gift	162	Grave Empowerment	167
Encouraging Oratory	162	Great Leap	167
Energy in Motion	162	Grip of Chorrolis	167
Entertainer	163		
Etiquette	163	H	
Evaluate	163	Haggle	168
Evidence Analysis	163	Heal Animal Companion	168
		Heartening Laugh	168
F		Heart's Wish	168
Falling Out of Favor	138	High Rank Questors	136
Fast Hand	163	Hone Weapon	168
Fertility's Season	163		
Final Thought	27	I	
First Impression	164	Impossible Hide	169
Floranuus	142	Impressive Display	169
Elation's Flame	47	Incite Obsession	169
Floranuus's Fiery Forms	49	Incite Rage	169

Incite Rebellion	169	The Empathy and Balance of Justice	83
Inspired Endurance	170	The Truth	91
Inspired Might	170	Mynbruje's Eye	175
Inspired Tenacity	171		
Intimidating Bellow	171	O	
Invigorate	171	Open Mind	176
		Origin	10
		Other Lands	12
J		Overseen Projects	151
Jaspree	144		
Jaspree Is Everywhere	73	P	
New Growth	67	Passion's Comfort	176
Serving the Green Father	67	Passion's Empowerment	176
The Call	68	Passions in Barsaive	129
The First Questor and the First Seed	70	Passion's Insight	177
Why Jaspree is Important	72	Passion's Inspiration	177
Jaspree's Solace	171	Perfect Focus	178
Jury-Rig	172	Photographic Memory	178
		Physician	178
L		Pidgin	178
Lasting Impression	172	Plant Talk	178
Leadership	173	Poisoned Influence	179
Let's Make a Deal	173	Project Management	179
Lifesight	173	Psychometry	179
Lion Heart	174		
Lip Reading	174	Q	
Living Death	174	Questor	179
Lochostr	145	Questor Characters	131
The Bindings of Instruction	81	Questor Descriptions	139
The Chains Rattle	80	Questor Devotion Benefits	135
The First Bonds of Slavery	75	Questor Devotion Cost Table	135
The Lady of Chains	75		
The Raid on Vartan	77	R	
What Chains Have I Forged?	78	Raggok	
Love in Bloom	175	A Passion's Lessons	96
		Betrayal	99
M		Haloke	97
Melee Weapons	175	Mudshoal	95
Mimic Voice	175	The Last	100
Motives	15	The Monster Inside	93
Mynbruje	146	Raggok (Mad Passion)	146
Compassionate Justice	86	Rally	180
How Empathy Outweighs All	84	Remember Conversation	180
In Saving A Life	89	Research	180
Justice and the Law	91	Resist Influence	180
On the Imbalance of Importance	90		

Resist Pain	180	U	
Resist Taunt	181	Undermine	186
S		Upandal	148
Safe Path	181	A Time to Build	111
Safe Thought	181	Conflict Renewed	116
Seal Home	181	Words with the Master Mason	114
Shield the Innocent	181	Upandal's Armory	186
Silence Influence	182	Upandal's Palisade	186
Slough Blame	182	V	
Spreading the Wealth	29	Vestrial	
Sprint	182	Dedication to Vestrial	121
Starting Play as a Questor	132	How I Came to Vestrial	124
Stealthy Stride	182	Serving Vestrial	126
Steel Thought	182	The Role Vestrial Plays	121
Steely Stare	183	Vestrial Revealed	121
Streetwise	183	Welkyn and the Chakta Birds	122
Stride of Floranuus	183	Vestrial (Mad Passion)	150
Submit	183	Vestrial's Tongue	186
Surprise Strike	184	Vicious Wound	187
T		Vital Strike	187
Table of Contents	2	W	
Tactics	184	Wilderness Survival	187
Talents, Skills, and Devotions	151	Wind Catcher	187
Taste of Power	184	Winning Smile	187
Telling the Tale	185	Wound Balance	187
The Nature of the Passions	9		
Thought Link	185		
Thystonius	148		
Final Thoughts	109		
Of Valor, Conflict, and War	103		
One Questor's Vision	104		
On How Thystonius Affects You as an Adept	106		
On Relations with Other Passions and Their Questors	108		
On the Organized Faith of Thystonius	105		
The Nature of Struggle	103		
Torment	185		
Touching the Past	185		
Tracking	185		
True Nature of the Passions	131		
True Sight	185		

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IN THE PASSIONS' FOOTSTEPS...

THE MYSTERIOUS, POWERFUL BEINGS KNOWN AS THE PASSIONS HAVE WATCHED OVER THE PEOPLE OF BARSAIVE FOR AS LONG AS ANYBODY CAN REMEMBER. THEY EMBODY THE IDEALS THAT MAKE CIVILIZATION POSSIBLE: JUSTICE, FREEDOM, LOVE, AND MORE.

THOSE WHO DEDICATE THEIR LIVES TO PURSUING THE IDEALS OF A SINGLE PASSION SERVE THEIR FELLOW NAMEGIVERS, SUPPORTING THEM AS THEY GO ABOUT THEIR DAILY LIVES. WHETHER ITINERANT OR SETTLED, THEY ARE VALUED MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY, BRINGING THE PASSIONS' POWER AND INSPIRATION TO THE COMMON FOLK. THEY ARE QUESTORS.

BUT EVEN THE PASSIONS AREN'T IMMUNE TO THE DAMAGE CAUSED BY THE HORRORS. THREE OF THEIR NUMBER WENT INSANE DURING THE SCOURGE, AND ARE NOW DARK REFLECTIONS OF THEIR OLD IDEALS. AND THEY HAVE QUESTORS OF THEIR OWN.

QUESTORS OFFERS PLAYERS AND GAMEMASTERS A LOOK AT THOSE DEVOTED TO THE PASSIONS. IT EXPLORES THE IDEALS OF EACH PASSION, AS PRESENTED BY A QUESTOR OF THAT PASSION. IT ALSO PROVIDES RULES FOR QUESTOR CHARACTERS AND THE POWERS AVAILABLE TO THEM, SUITABLE FOR PLAYER CHARACTERS, AS WELL AS THEIR ALLIES AND ENEMIES.

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