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# EARTHDOWN

## PLAYER'S GUIDE



EARTHDOWN SAVAGE WORLDS EDITION RULEBOOK

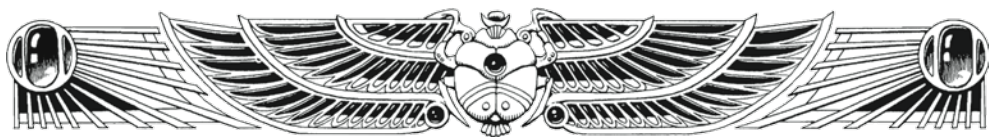


# PLAYER'S GUIDE



EARTHDAWN SAVAGE WORLDS EDITION RULEBOOK





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SAVAGE WORLDS EDITION

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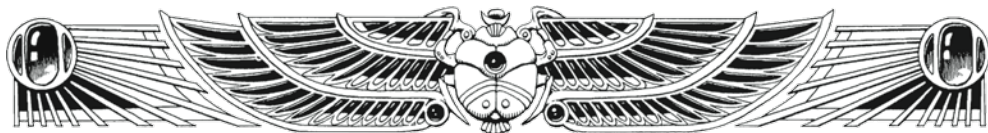
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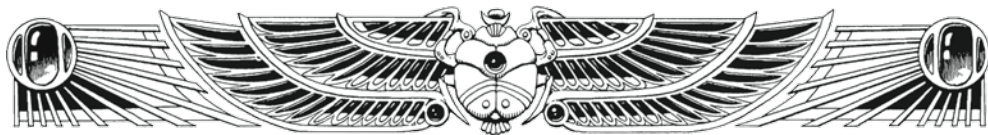






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# PROLOGUE: INHERITANCE

*When the Scourge ended, we were determined to reclaim our heritage.*

*But we were not yet ready to pay the price.*

—Tolan Oddear, Historian of Landis

*Yes, it is a fine axe, and tempered in many battles, my friend. Its head has even tasted the blood of a Horror. How did I gain possession of such a fine weapon? Well, fill my mug with more of that fine dwarf stout and I'll gladly tell you the tale. 'Twas during an expedition to the lost city of Jalendale. I shall never forget it. We set out on a cold, wet day, much like today—the elven magician, myself, and the warrior who wielded this mighty axe, the troll called Lorm...*

I ran up the steep, rocky slope, breathing in steaming gasps. Over the din of rain pelting the nearby rocks, I could hear the ork scorchers below.

I stumbled and rolled down a few lengths then regained my feet, strands of moss now clinging to my matted red beard. As I fumbled to put my helmet back on my head, arrows hissed past, striking rocks upslope.

Fear gave my legs new strength and I quickly crested the hill, diving for cover behind the boulder I had seen my companions use earlier.

Glancing up, I saw Lorm's wart-covered green fist holding his huge axe a finger's width away from Mestoph's face. The hair tufts in Lorm's large ears twitched and his nostrils dilated. His rough tongue rimmed his left tusk, and his yellow eyes glared from the slits formed by his pockmarked eyelids. Lorm was one unhappy troll.

"Where's all the gold? Where's this lost city? *Where is Jalendale?*"

Mestoph shook his long white hair away from his face, revealing an ugly sneer. He stared at Lorm with the orb of magical amber that served as his left eye.

I wheezed over to Lorm, reached up and tapped him near his belt.

"Wouldn't you rather kill some scorchers?"

"No thanks, dwarf."

"Then perhaps you would consider killing some scorchers before killing me?" Mestoph asked.

Lorm blinked at the elf's question, then pulled his axe away from our magician. Mestoph slumped away from Lorm into a puddle, rain dripping from his aquiline features. Noticing that Lorm and Mestoph had leaned their packs against the boulder, I took mine off too. As feeling returned to my shoulders I looked downhill.

The ork scorchers had taken cover about halfway up our hill. Apparently they were concerned about what sort of defense we would concoct and wanted to consider the possibilities before charging up the last open stretch of hill. They were giving us more credit than we deserved.

I took a step toward Mestoph, and the elf fixed me with his amber eye.

"I swear the maps put Jalendale here, or close to here."

"Well that's great. How about whipping up a spell to take care of a few angry scorchers?"

"I am afraid my 'destroy angry ork' selection is limited."

"Then how about something from your 'take action to make angry troll happy' collection?"

Mestoph nodded. He squatted and crabbed along the ground, careful to stay behind the boulder as he gathered a few pebbles and began to weave a spell.

Lorm and I had seen this one before. I drew my short sword. Lorm grabbed his axe with both hands.

Suddenly the sky above us darkened and within minutes we were enveloped by a blackness so deep we could barely make out the stones at our feet.

This was midnight dark, copper-cavern-no-lamp dark. This was Mestoph's darkness.

I crouched and waited. A few moments later we were back to the murky-storm light. A quick glance told me Mestoph had cast the darkness on the pebbles, then



tossed the pebbles down the hill at the orks. Confused shouts now came from three large bubbles of darkness where the orks had stood.

Lorm and I scrambled down the hill and waited at the edge of the darkness. An ork stumbled out. Lorm smashed him and the scorcher fell back into the darkness, leaving a trail of red on the rocky slope.

Apparently unable to coordinate their movements in the darkness, the orks kept wandering out haphazardly. Lorm and I took care of as many as we could. As soon as four orks made it out of the darkness at the same time, Lorm and I rushed back up the hill.

The plan now called for Mestoph to take care of the most determined ork pursuer or two with a different spell. Nothing happened.

Lorm strode on ahead while the orks gained on me. They say never look behind you when you're in a close chase because it slows you down. I looked. The orks were maybe fifteen of their strides back, swinging their swords across their bodies as they pumped their arms in time with their legs. They looked angrier than Lorm had looked. Two of them stopped to draw their bows.

I heard Lorm yell, a peculiar fading yell. The lead ork made an extra effort, and I promptly did the same. I reached the crest at top speed and dived for the cover of the boulder. I remember thinking, "That doesn't look like Mestoph's darkness spell," then falling.

Darkness again surrounded me as I fell, interrupted by an occasional flash of blue light ahead of me. Then I hit something, more gently than I expected, and my descent stopped. A blue glow enveloped me, then I was falling again, but not too fast.

Another hit. Another blue glow. Another fall.

Soon I realized I was inside some type of shaft carved into the hill, and the blue glows were coming from runes carved into the shaft's walls about every three body lengths. I passed about a dozen levels of runes before landing on the rocks at the bottom of the shaft.

As I checked for broken bones, a flame sputtered, died, then another sputter turned into a warm yellow glow. Mestoph had lit a torch. While Lorm just sat there, looking a bit dazed, Mestoph walked over and handed me the torch. He took another from his pack, but this one took some time to light because it was damper than the first.

The torch popped and hissed as it caught, illuminating my pack lying a few feet away. Lorm was already picking his up.



Mestoph cleared his throat. "An illusion hid this shaft until one of my spell castings revealed it. Rather surprising."

"Mestoph, take a look at this," Lorm said, pointing to the section of wall near his pack. Mestoph walked over and leaned toward the wall, holding his torch just above his head.

After a moment of exploring the wall with his fingers, he shivered, pulling his hand back. He took a deep breath. His fingers went back to the wall.

The wall was covered with curving lines just slightly thicker than my fingernail. They were carved into the rock to different depths, some as deep as a finger length. Pacing around the shaft wall, I saw that the lines covered nearly every inch of its surface, except for occasional palm-sized blank spots. I counted out seventy paces to circle the shaft. The curlicues rose perhaps five or six dwarf-lengths from the floor of the shaft. The lines were deepest near three pitted, metal triangles hanging above a pillared entrance We had found Kaer Jalendale.

Stone doors four dwarf-lengths tall lay cracked on the ground. Apparently, we were not the first to discover the city.





## PROLOGUE: INHERITANCE

Mestoph pointed at the triangles.

"Those metal triangles look like they contain orichalcum. They must have been the wards protecting the town."

Lorm ran his axe across the wall. The rasp was just loud enough to hear above the splatter of rain overhead. "And this?"

"I think a Horror etched all this. Every single line has an astral image. I think these designs sapped the magic from the wards. But carving these lines would take a year at the very least, and probably closer to five."

"A Horror spent five years breaking into Jalendale?" My voice rose in pitch as I spoke. I thought of something carving a few lines, stepping back, then carving a bit more, scratching lines a jeweler would be lucky to make as precisely. Something carving day after day, year after year, just waiting to get into the town. My desire for treasure was lessening.

"Did they know?" Lorm asked.

"The citizens? Probably not at first, not until the first ward failed. And by then it would have been too late to do anything."

Lorm took a long look through the doorway. I decided to check out my short sword. Mestoph laughed, a quick, high-pitched sound.

"We can wait for the monster out here or look for treasure inside." Mestoph spun in a half turn, then walked over the broken gates. I took a swig of water and thought a bit. I suppose only a desperate dwarf thinks on water. Lorm hurled a stone as far up the shaft as he could, then followed Mestoph inside. I made my most gallant "after you" bow, then crunched over the broken rock just behind our troll.

The town smelled dry, musty, like leaves during a parched autumn. I thanked the Passions for the dry part. Mestoph's map showed a Jalendale built along dwarf lines. The large central marketplace housed the guild building, the courts and jail, and the Passions' temple. Eight streets radiated out from the market to the edge of town, bisected by evenly spaced cross streets, giving Jalendale's road grid the appearance of a spider web.

Give humans and orks a couple of centuries, however, and they can foul up any dwarf plan. My first clue was the rope ladders and hemp-and-slat bridges above us. Jalendale's population must have been larger than planned, and the settlement had expanded up rather than out.

A few buildings were even hewn from the rock of the cavern ceiling and used as supports to suspend thick cables and ropes. These ropes, in turn, held platforms and precarious dwellings.

Other shacks stood on platforms resting on pillars set atop the roofs of Jalendale's original buildings. An incomprehensible series of ropes, rods, and beams connected the entire construction.

I found a nightpost with a light quartz that still responded to touch, and Lorm fashioned a lantern from the quartz, some rope, and one of his sacks. It gave off better light than the torches, but Mestoph and I kept ours lit. Light frightens some things, but fire hurts more of them.

Mestoph tried to lead us to the guild building. We started down the main avenue, but an array of pillars and cables supporting the city overhead blocked our passage before we had walked even fifty paces from the gate.

Blocking the main avenue seemed downright ork-stupid. Then I realized that once the gate was sealed, it wouldn't matter if they blocked the avenue this far from the market. Nobody would be coming through the gate until the day the Horror came along, that is. The walls all around the jumble showed more of the scrolling lines, even more intricate than the writing outside the gate.

Mestoph tried another street. It was blocked by shanties. His next choice got us closer to the marketplace before a thicket of stone spikes closed it off. A few of the spikes penetrated the walls of nearby buildings.

As we backtracked, Lorm wandered from one side of the avenue to the other, peering into buildings. I squinted in the glare of the light quartz as he walked over to me. Lorm shifted the lantern to his other hand, then whispered, "Where are all the bodies?"

"Maybe the Horror ate them all."

"Even all the bones?" Lorm blinked his eyes.

"Maybe it's a very tidy Horror. Maybe it stacked all the bones in a corner somewhere."

"Thief, take a look at these."

I heard the strain in Mestoph's voice. He was standing at the mouth of an alley. Five cracked crystalline shells lay next to a heap of pottery shards. I took a few steps toward them.

A sharp odor stung my nose as I held my torch close enough to one of the empty shells to see the gray-streaked ooze.





The shells were cysts. Whoever was in charge had just awakened a welcoming committee.

The shadowmants attacked us when we were nearly halfway to the center of Jalendale. I heard a fluttering sound and looked up just as two dark shapes swooped at Lorm.

Blunt heads fanned out into pairs of sleek, featherless wings. Bodies tapered to scorpionlike tails that curved along the underside of the creatures. Crystal-line-pointed stingers tipped the tails.

Lorm roared, swinging the light over his head like a sling, and the creatures rose out of sight on silent wings.

As I drew my sword, four more of the creatures plunged from the darkness above. Mestoph performed a nimble dive-and-roll to avoid three dark shapes, and I heard him begin a spell.

I had my sword out and up, hoping to impale a swooping shadowmant. But the dark form in front of me furiously beat its wings, halting its forward motion in time to avoid my blade. I parried its tail strike, the stinger coming within an inch of my face.

I stabbed upward without looking and struck something soft. The shadowmant fluttered back a few paces, then came at me again. I blindly thrust my sword again, then felt a thud of its stinger against my cuirbouilli breastplate.

The shadowmant dove at me again. I swung my blade and the creature wobbled back. I crouched low, and when I heard the flutter I struck, driving as hard as I could with my legs and arms.

I felt a weight on my blade writhe for a moment, then become still, and I began congratulating myself just as Lorm howled.

I spun to see a shadowmant flopping at his feet, an axe embedded in its dark flesh. Another fluttered over the troll, its stinger lodged in Lorm's neck. I ran and hacked the tail off and the shadowmant careened away.

Lorm dropped his axe and fell to his knees, head to the ground, left hand opening and closing spasmodically, right hand clutched to his neck.

I pulled out a poultice.

"Don't touch me, wormbeard!"

I stepped back, hands to my shoulders, palms facing out, fingers apart. Lorm needed the poultice, but I could wait until he felt less like pulling off my arms.

Three shadowmants lay on the ground. Mestoph eyed two dark shapes circling above his head. He spoke and the shadowmants spiraled up and away from us.

Lorm nodded to me. Mestoph walked toward us, but when he saw what I was doing, he turned away. The elf made a big display of studying his map.

I drew one of Lorm's knives, testing it on a plucked beard hair to make sure it was sharp. I tried to cut a small slit near Lorm's wound.

"Ahhoww!"

"Sorry. If troll skin were a little less tough, this would be easier."

"If dwarf hands didn't shake, it would be easier."

I finally managed a clean cut. I applied pressure around the wound with both hands, then tried to suck the wound clean. I felt his neck buzz as he spoke.

"Have you ever seen a Horror?"

I pulled away, remembering to spit. I didn't know whether the bitter taste was the poison or the troll blood.

"No. You?" I went back to the wound.

"Years ago my father's captain received a mindplea from some Caucavic kin. We launched our ship, flew all damn night, arrived exhausted. We found all the adults dead, lying all about the place in different stages of rot. The children were alive, except for the babies who died from neglect."

I spit a second and third time. Lorm kept talking.

"I was scouting for survivors when I saw the Horror. It was like a slug, mottled yellow and white. It was only half my size, around a corner and two steps away."

"You mean twice your size?" I started shaking the vial containing the poultice. It began to warm.

"No, half. I caught myself thinking, this can't be what killed all these people. It didn't make sense. I took a step toward it. That was as far as I got. Glittering silver lines appeared where its eyes might have been, and I stopped dead. It looked at me, then turned away, moving slower than I could ever walk. I couldn't move until it was out of sight."

I took the poultice from the vial. Warm and moist, it smelled of basil. I carefully placed it into the wound. Lorm flinched very little.

"We took the children back home with us. As time passed, the Horror touched each of them, one by one. One's voice became painful to hear, another congealed mead when she got too close. One by one, we threw the children out of the hold. A couple left before we had the chance."

"Can you sit up?" I helped the troll as best I could by getting a good grip on his shirt near his shoulder blades.



# PROLOGUE: INHERITANCE

"I remember thinking that the Horror had gotten two holds."

"Can you stand?"

"Not yet. I always wondered what would have happened if I could have taken that second step."

"Probably it would have blown you to flaming bits. Come on, let's try the standing thing now."

I put my back to his hip, planted my feet and pushed. Lorm pushed back, sliding up my back to a standing position. He leaned forward, hands on his knees, gasping for breath.

"Sure your poultice is going to work?"

"Should. I chose these carefully."

"Doesn't feel right yet. Just like this place. This whole place feels wrong. The smell."

"Smells likes leaves to me."

"Dry leaves. It's pouring outside. It's desert dry in here."

"Maybe," I stopped talking. None of my maybes sounded good. I finished with a weak, "You should be fine."

Lorm took a step. He winced, a funny expression on a wart-covered old troll. One tusk poked through his familiar, lopsided grin.



"Maybe. Thanks for your help, Ragnar."

I blinked. The three of us had met in Throal. Somewhere on the road to Jalendale they lost "Ragnar." I became "dwarf," sometimes "thief." It struck me that a person's name was the only thing you could steal by refusing to use it.

"If the short and the tall are ready to go?" I matched Mestoph's mocking bow up with one of my own.

Mestoph led us, which is to say he walked a few steps ahead of us. Each time we found the way blocked, Mestoph would then stand and contemplate the next direction to try, and thus we lurched through the maze of Jalendale.

While Mestoph pondered, Lorm and I poked around in nearby buildings. The shops were in ruins. Not the buildings themselves, just the items inside. A porcelain shop with every plate pulverized, every vessel shattered. A goldsmith's every case shattered, every flattening hammer bent, every foil knife broken in two. I saw not one undamaged piece of furniture, not one whole item of merchandise.

Lorm spent less time searching than sitting down. He was still breathing, so the poultice must have had some effect. Ragged breaths said it was not yet enough.

Following Mestoph's latest direction, we came to a crossroads that led to the marketplace. The intersecting road was gone, replaced by a trench some twenty-five paces wide and, well, much deeper.

As Mestoph and I approached the trench, lights winked on in the square across the way. New lights appeared with each heartbeat, revealing a massive shadow. Mestoph and I gazed at the marketplace. A huge, irregular structure stood where Mestoph's map showed three buildings. Built like a primitive mound, stones of all sizes formed its walls and roof. Soon the open plaza shimmered with the sheen of iridescent blues, purples, and silver-whites.

"Cadaver men!"

Until Lorm's shout I had been unaware that I was staring at the plaza. Mestoph had three steps on me by the time I turned around and saw eight shapes walking toward us.

Lorm had taken cover in an empty shop. He sat inside the doorway, axe lying on the ground beside him.

Mestoph stopped running and crouched in a defensive posture, walking crab-style toward the nearest building. Apparently he'd decided he wasn't going make it past the cadaver men. My heart and legs thought





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it was worth a try, but my mind told me to stick with Mestoph. I sidled along with him. My sword only shook a little.

The cadaver men had been orks once. Two still had their ornamental gold tusk-caps. Their braided black hair was dusty and their mummified flesh creaked more than the leather armor they wore. The two with the tusk-caps carried swords and had backpacks slung over their shoulders. Six more staggered along with spears in one hand, rope or wood in the other.

They smelled of pepper and rot, as if a chef had tried to conceal the smell of a bad piece of meat.

They walked right past us.

Let me say that again, in case you missed it. Eight cadaver men had us pinned, and they walked right past us. They walked to the edge of the trench. They dropped two coils of rope. The rope twitched, then snaked its way through the air to the other side of the trench.

Mestoph inhaled sharply. His face was contorted in pain. Little by little, he regained control of his expression. His features calmed.

"The Horror is close."

Lorm joined us. We watched the cadaver men as they moved away from the trench one by one. One lone cadaver man pounded in a final stake. He finished his task with a ringing strike, then gathered his tools and rejoined his companions.

The eight cadaver men blocked the road we had taken coming in, and I knew they would stand there forever. Lorm wrung the haft of his axe as if it were a wet cloth.

"Ragnar, when a Horror asks you to visit him, is it foolish to say no?"

Mestoph stared blankly at the bridge. His amber eye went milky, as if the color of his hair had somehow bled through. His eyebrows furrowed, then shot up high on his forehead. He started toward the bridge.

"If he wanted us dead, the cadaver men would have attacked. He wants something from us he cannot get if we are dead."

"So he kills us after we do his bidding," I said.

Mestoph stopped for a second, legs apart, arms raised. "We can try to outthink him, out-wait him, or out-fight him. I know which is my best chance." He turned and began walking again.

Lorm took one wobbly step, steadied himself, and followed Mestoph. So did I.

Hundreds of carvings like those by the gate covered the plaza. Our boots made a scratching sound as we walked, as if we were sliding across invisible sand. Each step was like a knife-edge gliding along the soles of my feet, feather-soft yet sharp.

We made our way toward the mound in the center of the plaza. It seemed the only place to go. I could see a pointed archway. Inside the mound was a cool darkness.

I blinked, then it was next to Mestoph.

Twice as tall as me, it wore high boots the color of burnished brass. Six-fingered gauntlets curved into moving tendrils the size of my little finger. Each tendril ended in a clear, sharp gem, each with an edge finer than a knife-blade. A brass breastplate of at least a finger's width covered its torso, and gritty, dun-colored smoke seemed to flow from the breastplate to form its neck and limbs.

The face froze me in my tracks. The whitish-gray color of mushrooms and tree-rot, it looked like a skull built entirely of worms. The worms squirmed in a pattern most active around its eye sockets. A single worm protruded from the center of each socket.

Two droplets of blood burst from Lorm's wound, drawn by magic to the Horror. They exploded with a white flash and sizzle on its armor. The Horror flinched and the worms of its face twitched and rolled a bit faster.

It opened its mouth to speak, revealing the writhing mass of its tongue. When it spoke my lungs burned and my mouth dried.

"The one who brings me the small orichalcum shield lives. The others..."

The Horror swept his hand past me. One of the gems on his finger-tendrils touched my face and bones in my legs snapped. Blinding pain accompanied popping sounds as muscle disconnected.

I fell forward. Several of my ribs twisted and snapped. I screamed, I blubbered, I tried to crawl away, but I could not control the spasms of my body.

I spit up a mouthful of vomit, bitter bile spilling over my lips and matting my beard. My legs jerked wildly. I could not even beg.

Then the pain stopped. My body was mine again, impossibly whole. The Horror stood over me, watching me carefully.

I ran. I ran in a blind panic toward the mound. I slammed into a wall, bounced and fell. I got up, slammed into the wall again, still screaming.

# PROLOGUE: INHERITANCE

Lorm reached out of the mound to pull me the few feet sideways to the door. I lunged inside.

I do not know how long I sat rocking myself. I remember Lorm persuading me to drink something, and Mestoph asking me questions.

"I think our dwarf is with us again."

Mestoph knelt beside me, then handed me one of his flasks. I took a sip of wine, passed it back to him.

"You have been out for some time. Welcome to your new home."

"Where are we?"

"We are in the biggest mausoleum I have ever seen."

The sweep of Mestoph's arm took in the entire building. Atop eight pillars sat light quartz illuminating perhaps forty box-frames, each nearly fifty arm-lengths high. Each frame was like a gigantic library shelf, filled with bodies rather than books. Most were wrapped in burial shrouds, a few in robes or armor.

The place smelled overwhelmingly of cloves, with just a hint of dry rot.

Mestoph rose, gesturing to me to follow. As I walked behind him I noticed a couple of new books in his backpack. In the middle of the mausoleum, eight altars surrounded two sloped, square pits, each pit deepest in the center.

One altar stood on each side of each square. Each altar was carved with troughs leading to the pits. The troughs fed into notches running to the center of each pit, each holding a brilliant golden shield. The light struck the shields and flowed and dazzled in a way impossible even for pure gold. Orichalcum.

Mestoph brushed a lock of hair away from his ear.

"The shields are magical protections. The magic was strengthened by the blood of the citizens."

"They killed themselves?"

"Sacrificed, almost down to the last man. Last few in here took poison. The larger shield protects this tomb from being entered or harmed by the 'destroyer of our brethren' or his 'unliving servants.' The smaller prevents the 'destroyer of our brethren' from moving more than a few hundred yards away from it."

"Destroyer of our brethren?"

"I think they enchanted eight of their citizens, left them outside this tomb. Their deaths triggered the magic in the shield."

"Those are the cadaver men?"

"Yes, but they would have been alive then."

I thought about the citizens of Jalendale. A Horror gnawing his way through the town's defenses.

No magic strong enough to stop him from coming in. But they had one desperate way of preventing the abomination from harming another town.

"They left plenty of loot." Lorm nodded toward a wall. I could see the gleam of neatly stacked gold. Items in chests and bins, weapons laid out in a panoply. It all looked attractive. But not as attractive as I thought it would.

"Pick something light."

Lorm held up a gleaming dagger. Its pommel was carved into a wolf's head and its blade gleamed with the same fire as the shields.

"Our plan requires speed."

I walked toward the treasure. Lorm directed me to a small pile. "Mestoph separated out some of the more promising items."

I started sorting through the loot. I rejected a sword with five matching emeralds in its hilt, but paused to consider a helmet that was as clear as glass and lighter than was as clear as glass and lighter than ten coins.

"Those bracers probably have defensive magic," Lorm said, pointing to finely hammered copper bracers adorned with jade and lapis lazuli.

"Might as well take something that will help you get out of here."

I fingered the bracers, then took the helmet. Lorm grinned.

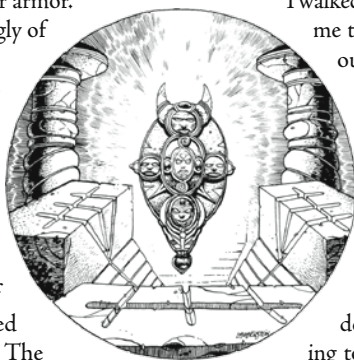
I tried it on. Fit was a little big, but the helmet felt cool and somehow reassuring. I stashed my old helmet in my pack.

Mestoph was reading one of the books when we walked over. Lorm nodded in his direction.

"While you were worthless, Mestoph read. He's already reversed the levitation magic in the shaft. It should now push us up and out."

"How do we get past the Horror?"

"Mestoph starts working on a spell. I take the shield outside. When creepy comes for the shield, I whack him long enough for the spell to finish. You run out and throw the shield back in here, out of his reach."





# EARTHDOWN PLAYER'S GUIDE

Elfie throws the spell. While creepy recovers, we head out of town. Got it?"

"I have my doubts about running out there to get the shield. And serious doubts about you whacking creepy long enough for Mestoph to take a breath, let alone finish a spell."

Lorm swung his axe in a lazy arc, stopping the axe in mid-swing. He loosened his grip, letting the haft slide down until his right hand rested just below the axe-head. His left hand tested the edge.

"This is my axe. My grandfather made it for my father. He told my father the axe was destined to blood a Horror, perhaps slay one."

"Sure, once the Horror kills you, he can use your axe to whack his friends."

A page rustled.

"You are unduly pessimistic, dwarf."

"Name's Ragnar."

Mestoph closed his book and regarded me with that amber eye.

"Ragnar. The good people of Jalendale did not die in vain. They left detailed records behind, and so we know this Horror is somewhat vulnerable to life magic. Are we ready?"

Lorm nodded vigorously. I shrugged.

Mestoph reopened his book. Lorm set his axe down. He drew his newly acquired wolf-handled dagger and carefully cut his left forearm three times.

He sheathed the dagger.

The troll picked up his axe and began to apply his own blood to the blade.

I walked back to the pit and got the smaller shield. When I returned I saw Lorm had spread a generous coating of blood on his axe. He looked up.

"Just in case things go wrong, I want you to know the poultice finally worked. You chose well."

"What could possibly go wrong, Lorm?"

The troll snorted. I handed him the shield.

We watched Mestoph work his way through the spell. The elf spoke softly, his fingers moving in time with his words.

His right eye was closed. His left eye swirled with light. He began to speak more slowly.

"That's the signal."

Lorm took four steps out, then dropped the shield and stood on it. "Here's your cursed shield!"

The Horror appeared a yard from Lorm, its tongue flailing like a snake on fire. Lorm stepped toward it,

swinging his axe. The weapon found the Horror's breastplate, and the blood on the axe flared into white fire. The Horror hissed and screeched. Lorm roared.

I finally remembered to get the shield. I scrambled for it, picked it up as Lorm rang another blow off the Horror's armor. I carried it back into the tomb. Once inside I saw Mestoph fling his arms up and heard him shout three elvish words.

Thousands of droplets of water appeared, then coalesced into dozens of spinning blades. The blades flew around Lorm, striking the Horror. The screech turned into a scream.

The blades tore wisps of dun-colored smoke from his legs and arms and sliced a tendril off its left hand. They rang and sizzled against its breastplate.

The Horror spun around. Two of the blades caught him in the side of his head, sending shreds of white worm through the air.

Mestoph was already running, and so I followed his lead. Lorm took one last swipe then brought up the rear.

"Follow me! I found more maps in the tomb and I think I can get us to a clear avenue!"

We crossed the bridge and turned left. We ran past a plaza with four brass poles, through dusty alleys, down a road with shops with blue doors, then turned right at a dry fountain with lion-head spouts onto a broad avenue.

Mestoph's laugh boomed down the dead streets of Jalendale. The magician slowed to a walk. I caught up. Lorm was huffing half a dozen paces behind.

Lorm bellowed. "Whacked him pretty good, I'd say."

The Horror appeared next to Mestoph. His left eye-worm twitched uncontrollably as he reached out to touch the magician.

Mestoph tried to dodge, but the elf reacted too slowly. A sucking, tearing sound came from within him and he began screaming. Then his hair whipped up and forward and his screams suddenly grew strangely muffled.

I screamed too, a dry, pitiful noise. I was staring at Mestoph's eyes and mouth, which were on the side of his face.

The Horror had torn the skin loose from muscle and was shifting it around the elf's body.

Mestoph's blood did not flow so much as gush toward the Horror, transforming into burning white ribbons that wrapped around the entity. The Horror's triumphant screams drowned out our own.



# PROLOGUE: INHERITANCE

The Mestoph-lump collapsed to the ground. The left side of the Horror's face was a smoking, ruined mass. It pointed at Lorm. "Get me the shield."

Lorm started to run. He took five fast steps, then stopped and turned around. His eyes shone with a silvery web. The Horror hissed.

"Once Horror touched, never free. Get me the shield!"

I tried to tackle the troll as he started to move, but he batted me aside. The Horror turned his gaze on me.

"Nothing more from you."

I was frozen to the ground. The Horror stared at me with his one good eye. His seared tongue wiggled back and forth, as if it were tasting my fear and anguish.

Apparently the Horror's momentary distraction provided Lorm a brief second of self-control, because he suddenly flung himself at the entity, the wolf's-head dagger flashing in his outstretched hand.

The Horror snapped its head around and Lorm crumpled to the ground with a strangled cry. Blisters boiled up on the troll's green skin, releasing rivulets of blood as they burst.

"Nooooo!"

I do not remember whether that was my scream, or the Horror's. The entity tried to reach the troll, but the blood now pooling on the ground sparked when it approached. The Horror staggered back and began to hiss rhythmically.

I struggled to gain control of my legs, then knelt by Lorm. His cloudy yellow eyes met mine for a split second then darted toward the axe at his side.

I grabbed for the weapon, but could barely lift the damn thing. Finally I worked the blade around the pool of troll blood. Lorm's breathing rose and fell in time with the Horror's hiss.

When I charged, the Horror looked up but did not move; its hiss just grew a little louder. The axe wobbled

a bit at the top of its arc and my resolve wavered, then I crashed the weapon onto the thing's head.

I felt a jolt, heard a brittle crunch and smelled the odor of rotted wood.

The Horror lurched back. I held onto the axe, which jerked free as the Horror moved. The creature had no working eyes. But it kept hissing.

I could no longer lift the axe. I looked over at Lorm, saw he was dead.

I clutched the axe to me. The hiss told me to leave it. I turned around. This hiss told me to stay.

I took a step. The hiss grew louder, almost strident. Another step. Then another. The hiss grew weaker, thinner. Then I could no longer hear it.

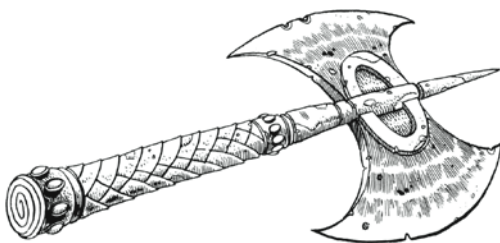
I found my way back to the shaft. Struggling to climb up to the first blue rune, I was dimly aware of the cadaver men entering the chamber, climbing after me. I heard them scabble at the wall.

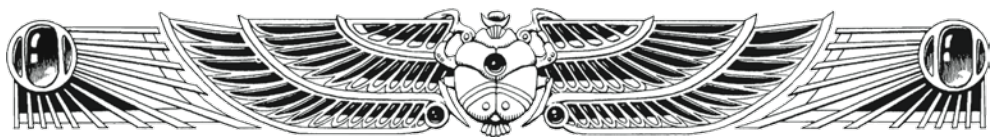
I reached the rune. A warm sensation lifted me, then hurtled me upward. I passed from rune to rune, gathering a little more speed with each.

I shot out of the shaft, over the unsuspecting sentries the scorchers had posted. They might have pursued me if the cadaver men had not appeared to keep them busy.

I walked as far as I could, reaching the village of Twin Chin well into the next morning. There I stopped and slept for days. I do not think I let go of Lorm's axe that whole time.

*...Many years have passed since that night, and I have survived my share of adventures. But one task remained unfinished, one I believed I would take to my grave undone. Tonight I walked into this tavern and saw you and heard your tales, the stories of your adventures. Now I have hope that it will be completed. Take this axe. It is Lorm's axe. His grandfather made it for his father. It has blooded a Horror. Perhaps now it shall slay one.*





# CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

*The heroes of today are the legends of tomorrow.*  
—King Varulus III of Throal

## WE LIVE IN AN AGE OF LEGEND

After centuries of hiding beneath the earth, humanity has ventured out into the sunlight to reclaim the world. Trolls, dwarfs, elves, orks, and humans live side by side with exotic races: the lizard-like t'skrang, the small, winged windlings, and the earthen obsidimen. Creatures both magical and mundane dwell once more in the forests and jungles. Arcane energies offer power to those willing to learn the ways of magic.

Once, long ago, the land grew lush and green. Thriving forests sheltered plants and animals, and people grew and prospered off the land's bounty. Then the Horrors came, and drowned the world in darkness. The world's flow of magic rose, and at its height dread creatures from the darkest depths of astral space crossed into our world, leaving suffering and destruction in their wake. The world's inhabitants named these fell creatures the Horrors. They laid our world waste in a terrible time now known as the Scourge. The lush forests died. Bustling towns vanished. Beautiful grasslands and majestic mountains became blasted, barren terrain, home to the Horrors' twisted mockery of life.

The Horrors lusted to destroy all life, but they did not succeed. Before their coming, the magicians of the Theran Empire warned the world, and the people of the Earth took shelter under it. They built fantastic underground cities called kaers and citadels; their children and their children's children grew up within these earthen enclaves, never seeing the light of the sun. For four hundred years the Horrors roamed the land, devouring all they touched while the people hid in terror, until the slow ebb of the world's magic forced these loathsome creatures to retreat to the astral pit that spawned them. The Horrors departed before the magicians and wise men had believed they would; the wary people emerged

slowly from their kaers, facing the world half in hope that the Scourge had truly ended and half in fear that the Horrors lingered. Though most of the Horrors left this world, many remain, inflicting cruel anguish and suffering on other living creatures. As humanity struggles to remake the shattered world, they must combat the remaining Horrors who seek to prolong the destruction and despair of the Scourge.

Now heroes travel the land, rediscovering its lost legends and exploring its changed face. For the world has changed, almost beyond recognition. Many people died during the Scourge; the Horrors breached some kaers and citadels and destroyed their inhabitants. Other kaers remain sealed, from unknowable disaster or simple fear; their contents await discovery by bold explorers. Should they find any folk still living within, these brave adventurers may lead such fear-darkened souls out to live again in the light.

The dwarven kingdom of Throal lies at the center of the province of Barsaive, the largest inhabited province in the known world. The dwarfs seek to unite Barsaive's far-flung cities and people under one crown and one banner, the better to repel the advances of the Theran Empire that ruled Barsaive before the Scourge. The Therans returned to the province shortly after the Scourge ended, seeking to bend it again to their yoke, but the people of Barsaive rejected the Therans' iron rule and rallied behind the dwarfs of Throal. Beaten for the moment, the Therans gather strength and wait to strike again. As Barsaive's heroes search for lost treasures and battle fantastic creatures, they must also fight the Therans, who plot to rob Barsaive of its newfound freedom and make its people pawns of their vast Empire.

In the Age of Legend, heroes band together to fight the Horrors and reclaim the wounded world for those



# CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION



born in it. As they explore the altered land, searching for legendary cities and treasures, they become the legends that will light the coming days. As with those who went before them, tales of their deeds will live forever in men's hearts. From many paths, the heroes come to join in common cause. Those who seek honor and glory come from many backgrounds, and battle evil to redeem the world with a multitude of gifts. These bands of heroes follow the Adept's Way and may include an Illusionist, a spellcaster who combines deception and reality to confuse those around him; a Swordmaster, one trained in the art of fighting with bladed weapons; or a Beastmaster, able to train and command the beasts of the earth and sky. The world holds countless heroes, but all share one trait: a willingness to fight to reclaim the world from that which threatens it. Through noble deeds and sacrifice, the heroes of the world will forge its future.

## THE WORLD OF EARTHDAWN

EARTHDAWN is a roleplaying game designed for one Game Master and at least one player. This book is one of a series—the EARTHDAWN Savage Worlds Edition—designed to be used with the SAVAGE WORLDS Roleplaying Game system (available from [www.peginc.com](http://www.peginc.com)). At a minimum, this book requires use of the *Savage Worlds Core Rulebook* (the Deluxe or Explorer's Edition). Unless specifically stated, references to the *Player's Guide*, *Game Master's Guide*, or other rulebooks and supplements are made solely to the EARTHDAWN Savage Worlds Edition. References to the EARTHDAWN game within this and other books in this series, are also made solely to the EARTHDAWN Savage Worlds Edition. While you can use materials from other editions of the EARTHDAWN Roleplaying Game, there will be a varying degree of conversion required, which lies outside the scope of this book.

Like many other roleplaying games, EARTHDAWN has an open-ended style of play. That is, the game has no definitive ending, no preset time limit or number of turns of play, and no single goal that, when achieved, marks the end of the game. Unlike other types of games, however, there is no winner or loser. The object of the game is to have fun while exercising your imagination. When this happens, everybody wins.





The world of EARTHDAWN is one of legend. Its people and places are larger than life, the stuff of song and saga. Heroes fight the monsters of this and other worlds; their bold exploits light a beacon of hope for the future, as word of their deeds spreads across the troubled, fearful land. EARTHDAWN is a world of high adventure, high magic, and terrible danger. Those dangers lurk not only within long-forgotten kaers, but also within the minds of people forever corrupted by the Horrors. To rebuild its heart and soul as well as its outward aspect after the devastation of the Scourge, the world needs heroes. The players of EARTHDAWN, by creating their characters and playing the game, provide these heroes.

In contrast to many other roleplaying games, characters in EARTHDAWN do not simply survive each adventure and become a little smarter or a little richer. EARTHDAWN adds another dimension to roleplaying; its characters become heroic figures, accomplishing deeds so impressive that generation after generation will honor their memory in song and story. The world of EARTHDAWN brims over with legends, heart-stirring tales of famous adventurers told by the fireside to while away the night. EARTHDAWN Player Characters can become the figures in those legends. As they build their characters' legends through play, they create the fireside tales that their descendants will tell about them. Gaining this heroic stature through daring deeds is as important a part of playing EARTHDAWN as any lesser gain in riches or experience.

For those with experience in roleplaying, some of the following explanations will sound familiar. Those readers might want to skip ahead to **Chapter 2: History** (p. 19) and dive right into the history and background of EARTHDAWN. The opening **Prologue: Inheritance** (p. 5) provided atmosphere and a taste of the language and style of EARTHDAWN. The sections following cover other aspects of the game, beginning with **Game Concepts** (p. 17).

For those who are new to roleplaying, the following text introduces the concept. This introduction will not answer all your questions, because most roleplaying games are more easily learned from other players than from reading a book. This brief overview will give you the idea behind roleplaying; to learn more, find others who are familiar with roleplaying games and learn by playing. Together you can explore the

world of EARTHDAWN, and discover the fun of roleplaying in the Age of Legend.

## WHAT IS A ROLEPLAYING GAME

Everyone has read a book or seen a movie where the protagonist does something so utterly wrong that the reader or viewer wants to shout a warning to the character. But no warning from the audience can keep that character from doing what the plot demands, no matter how much trouble it lands him in. The readers and viewers can't change the character's behavior; we're just along for the ride. A roleplaying game turns this situation on its ear. In a roleplaying game the players control the actions, or play the roles, of their characters and respond as they wish to the events of the plot. If the player doesn't want his character to go through a door, the character won't. If the player thinks his character can talk him or herself out of a tight situation rather than resorting to that trusty pistol, he can talk away. The plot of a roleplaying game stays flexible, always changing based on the decisions the players make for their characters.

In roleplaying, stories (the adventures) evolve much as they do in a movie or book, but within the flexible story line created by the Game Master. The story outlines what might happen at certain times in reaction to other events. The story remains an outline, with few concrete events, until the players become involved. When that happens, the adventure becomes a drama as riveting as that great movie you saw last week or that book you stayed up all night to finish.

Though the players all contribute to the story, creating it as they play, the Game Master creates the overall outline and controls events. The Game Master keeps track of what happens and when, describes events as they occur so that the players (as characters) can react to them, keeps track of other characters in the game (referred to as Game Master Characters), and uses the game system to resolve the players' attempts to take action. The Game Master describes the world as the characters see it, functioning as their eyes, ears, and other senses.

Game Mastering takes both skill and practice to master, but the thrill of creating an adventure that engages the other players, tests both their gaming skills and the characters' skills in the game world, and captures the players' imaginations makes the Game Master's job worthwhile. RedBrick publishes



# CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

game supplements and adventures to aid the Game Master, but talented Game Masters always adapt the game universe to suit their own style.

A roleplaying game offers its players a level of challenge and personal involvement unmatched by any

other type of game. Because the players and Game Master create the adventures they play, what happens in the course of a roleplaying game is limited only by the players' imaginations.

## GAME CONCEPTS

*The magic of the world follows rules. Understand them and use them, as others will surely use them against you.*

—Cors BlackOrk, Wizard of the Crystal Raiders

This section explains the key concepts and terms used in EARTHDAWN. Some are terms common to most roleplaying games, others are unique to EARTHDAWN. Whether you are an experienced gamer or new to roleplaying, once you understand how these concepts operate in EARTHDAWN, the rest of the rules will fall easily into place.

The explanations provided here also appear in other appropriate sections. The first time a term appears in this section, it is set in **bold type**.

## PLAYING EARTHDAWN

EARTHDAWN is a roleplaying game that provides all the excitement of an adventure story. Roleplaying games require one or more **players** and a **Game Master**. The players control the main characters of the story, the protagonists of a plot whose outcome is uncertain. The Game Master directs the action of the story and controls the bad guys, the props, the setting, and everything else the players may encounter. The game is not a contest between the good guys (the players) and the bad guys (the Game Master), however. The Game Master may control all the bad guys, but he or she is actually in sympathy with the heroes. Players and Game Master must work together to build and experience a tense, exciting adventure.

**Characters** represent the players in the EARTHDAWN game. As a player, you control a character. Everything you know about your character will be noted on the character sheet. This is where you record your character's abilities, possessions, physical appearance, and other facts about him or her. During the course of the game, the Game Master will describe events or situations to you; using your character sheet as a guide, you tell the Game Master what your character would do in a given situation.

The Game Master will probably ask you to roll some dice, and the resulting numbers will represent your character's attempted action and consequences. The Game Master uses the rules of the game to interpret the dice rolls and the outcome of your character's action.

## ADEPTS

The world of EARTHDAWN is filled with magic. The most talented characters, including yours, are initiated in the use of magic. Such characters are called **Adepts** (p.50). Some Adepts train to cast spells, some train to use weapons, others to work with animals. The form of magical training chosen by your character is his or her **Discipline** (p.40). This training focuses the magical energies of your character into special abilities called **Adept Edges** (p.157).





## MAGIC

Some characters possess the ability to cast spells. Known as **magicians** (p.205), these characters can learn a Pattern for a spell, then reduce that Pattern to its minimum complexity. They can store that Spell Pattern in a spell matrix and draw astral energy through it to form **Spell Threads** (p.205). Magicians have a limited number of Spell Threads they can use. For all intents and purposes, these function as Power Points (refer to the *Savage Worlds Core Rulebook*). If the character wishes to cast the spell without Spell Threads, he can do so through a process known as **Raw Magic** (p.205), which can cause damage to the magician—sometimes with fatal consequences.

## BLOOD MAGIC

Characters in EARTHDAWN have access to a special type of magic known as **Blood Magic** (p.204). Blood Magic requires the character to sacrifice a small amount of his or her own blood in order to power the magic. Because this magic is powered by self-sacrifice, it is sometimes known as **Life Magic**. Blood Magic is very powerful, and often endures as long as a year and a day. Characters use Blood Magic to increase the power and potential for success when using abilities. Blood Magic also allows characters to use certain powerful charms and to seal oaths. By its nature, Blood Magic is inherently dangerous.

## KARMA

The high level of magic running through the world of EARTHDAWN allows **Adepts** to use raw magical energy, called **Karma** (p.40), to enhance their abilities. Adepts spend **Karma Points** to use their magical Adept Edges.

## NAMES

The **Names** of people, places, and things affect how they interact with the universe. The universe gave certain races the ability to Name themselves and others, allowing them to better interact with magic and the life forces of the universe. All major races of Barsaive are **Namegivers**. In the world of EARTHDAWN, a character's Name becomes more than a simple label; a Name represents that person's very being (p.197). This holds true for the Names of specific places, items, and creatures. Even the Horrors bear names, for they also interact with the

universe. See **Chapter 6: Magic** (p.194) for more information on Names and Namegivers.

## THE HORRORS

For hundreds of years, the world of EARTHDAWN suffered under a reign of terror perpetrated by beings known collectively as the **Horrors**. Though the world always had magic, the level of ambient magic gradually increased, and so did the activity of the Horrors. Magic eventually reached a level that allowed the Horrors to routinely breach the extra-dimensional barriers between their world and the world of EARTHDAWN. The time during which the Horrors freely roamed the world, causing terror and destruction, is known by many names, the most common being the **Scourge**. During the Scourge, entire cities and nations fell to the Horrors' power. Some individuals and communities embraced dark magics to defend themselves, some becoming little better than that which they feared. Now the Scourge is over, many Horrors remain, but their power is enough diminished that civilization has begun to rebuild. Most people still tremble inside the walls they built to protect themselves and their families, afraid to venture out into the strange, changed world. The few brave enough to face it are the heroes of EARTHDAWN. The Game Master has access to the game statistics of several Horrors and their constructs in the *Game Master's Guide*. More detailed information on Horrors and their terrible abilities can be found in the upcoming *Horrors of Barsaive* sourcebook.

## THE PASSIONS

The **Passions** represent the spiritual beliefs of the people of Barsaive. The Passions are the physical embodiment of the life forces of the universe, the living manifestations of emotion. Each of the twelve Passions in the pantheon embody a number of emotions and passions that lie at the source of everything the Namegiver races do and believe. **Questors** embrace the emotions and ideals of a particular Passion, representing their patron Passion in both word and deed. Questors serve to bridge the gap between their patron and the denizens of the world. See **Chapter 9: Religion** (p.259) for more information on the Passions of Barsaive. Questors and their abilities are detailed in the upcoming *Player's Companion*.







# CHAPTER 2: HISTORY

*Though we must be thankful for the here and now, we must always remember what was. Some things must never be allowed to happen again.*

—King Varulus III of Throal, 1438 TH

*The following is abridged from a speaking by the ork Troubadour Storymaster, Jallo Redbeard, to a group of scholar students in the Great Library of Throal, 1505 TH.*

Regardless of what one believes of the Therans, the story of the lands we now call Barsaive would not be complete unless we started with them. Without the Therans Barsaive might have ended up as nothing more than the scores of warring tribes and city-states that dotted the land a thousand years ago. Though the Therans brought us oppression, deceit, slavery, and inhumanity, they also gave us culture, politics, commerce, and a glimpse of the power that unity can bring.

What we know of the origins of the Therans comes from their mouths and their writings. It is their tale, their legend, that we recount here. How much is truth, how much is lie, and how much falls between may never be known while the halls of Thera still stand. Despite that, it is a tale worth telling, the story of the creation of an empire.

## THE MARTYR SCHOLAR

The saga of Thera begins nearly one century before the founding of the dwarven kingdom of Throal. The elf Elianar Messias, who will one day be revered or cursed as the Father of Thera and the Martyr Scholar, is an honored follower of the elven Spiritual Path. In addition, Messias is an important advisor to High Queen Failla of the Elven Court at Wyrn Wood, the center of elven culture. Messias has a falling-out with Failla over the desire of the elven nation of Shosara to loosen the cultural shackles that bind it to the Court. Messias believes the elves of Shosara should be allowed to develop their national

culture as they see fit. Failla disagrees: the Court is the center of elven culture and all elven nations must emulate her. Failla will allow no exception.

Failla declares Shosara “separated” from the elven Court, an act of such gravity it threatens to fracture that nation. Messias adamantly opposes Failla and her *Declaration of Separation* and is banished for his challenge. Queen Failla casts him from the Court for one hundred years, and orders that he may return after that period only if he “has learned the value of heritage and a quiet tongue.” Messias never returns.

As part of his banishment, he is dispatched to a small monastery set in the foothills of what are known today as the Delaris Mountains in southeastern Barsaive. There, along with a cadre of scholars dedicated to Mynbruje, the Passion of Knowledge, Messias works to recover, translate, and transcribe volumes of books and scrolls recently recovered from a nearby mountain cavern. The scholars believe this cache of knowledge to be thousands upon thousands of years old, dating from early in the time when the magical aura of our world still lay dormant, before it rose to become the vibrant energy of our own time. What little learned men had deciphered of the works prior to Messias’ arrival indicated that the documents spoke of an even older time, when the world’s aura was as strong as it is now.

Messias focuses on a group of six books barely kept intact by the magic and climate of the cavern where they are stored. The six are a set, matched in size and style, even down to the odd, blood-inscribed rune on each of their covers. Messias can tell just by looking at them that they contain powerful, probably dangerous, information. He also believes them to be a warning, though against what he does not know. He devotes his life to untangling their



secrets. In the end those secrets eagerly take the life he has offered.

Late one evening some years later, his fellows discover his body twisted and wracked with his dying agonies. Messiah has torn his eyes from his head and then thrust his clenched fists and their bloody contents into the fire raging in the hearth of his quarters. He has also left a brief note nearby. It says:

*These are the Books of Harrow.  
They are our doom and our salvation.  
Learn from them, or we will all perish.*

That night, something horrid stalks the corridors of the monastery and six of Messiah's brethren die terribly. The next morning, an elder elven scholar named Kearos Navarim takes the six *Books of Harrow*, three of his fellow scholars, and ample provisions, and sets out on a long journey to the land of his birth far to the south and west of Barsaive. In that place, in the protection that he knows he can find there, he intends to continue Messiah's work and unlock the secrets of the *Books of Harrow*. He and the others settle on an island in the midst of the great Selestrean Sea and found a place of learning called Nehr'sham, or "center of the mind."

This place marks the beginning of Thera, the beginning of the learning that would reveal the Horrors to us, and the beginning of the great war of the mind to save us all.

## THE ETERNAL LIBRARY

Word of Nehr'sham and of its Great Project to translate the *Books of Harrow* spreads quickly throughout the lands of the world. The island soon becomes a gathering point for magicians, Adepts, and scholars of all types and races. Nehr'sham grows rapidly from its humble beginnings into a small city. Though Navarim nominally leads the burgeoning city, he keeps around him a tight circle of scholarly and magical advisors who administer the city's needs. Navarim himself concentrates on unlocking the secrets of the Books of Harrow.

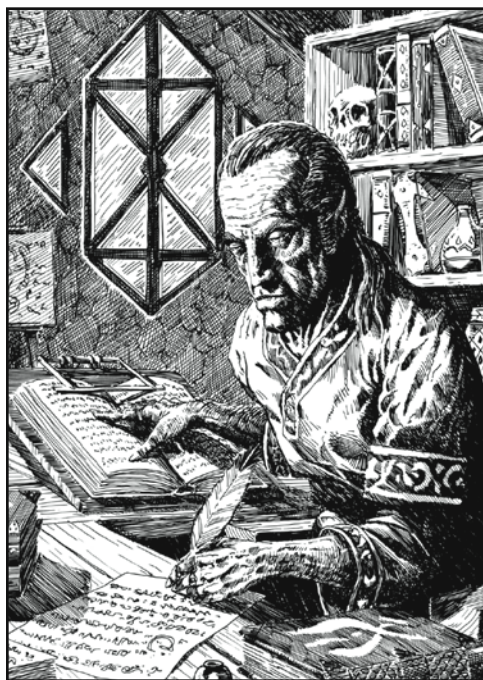
Realizing that more books like the *Books of Harrow* must have survived elsewhere, Navarim sends scholars and Adepts out from the island to find these books and bring them back to Nehr'sham. To hold these tomes and scrolls the city's overseers arrange

for the construction of what will become known as the Eternal Library. Magically protected and controlled, it will be a place where these and other ancient works can be kept and studied in safety for both the works and the reader.

Ironically, as the first stones for the Eternal Library are laid, thousands of miles to the northeast dwarven miners are taking up permanent residence in the giant mines and caverns that will someday compose Thera's greatest rival: the dwarven kingdom of Throal. The Throal Calendar, by which Barsaive will one day mark its time, counts forward from that day.

## THE FIRST HORRORS

As the Eternal Library nears completion, one hundred and fifty years after the founding of Nehr'sham, the first signs of the Horrors begin to appear in the world. In the city of Majallan, in the human-dominated lands of Landis, dark wraithlike spirits stalk the streets, driving men to violence against each other. For a year in the city of Draoglin, in the ancient dwarven kingdom of Scythia, every dwarven child shrivels and dies before reaching its first month of life, its essence devoured by something





unseen. And across the entire land that will one day be Barsaive, hordes of twisted, insect-like creatures are found nesting in isolated urban and rural areas. In southern Barsaive their infestation is so great that sworn enemies find themselves working side by side to destroy the creatures. This time, known as The Burning, is the closest Barsaive comes to unification prior to the arrival of the Therans. Hopes of unity collapse, however, in the face of the tragic famine that grips Barsaive in the following years.

To the aged Navarim and his followers, the dreadful tidings from Majallan, Scythia, and the city-states of southern Barsaive portend the beginning of something terrible. What these awful signs warn of becomes frighteningly clear shortly thereafter. Navarim's brilliant student and assistant, the dwarf Jaron, breaks through to understanding and completes the translation of the first of the six *Books of Harrow*. This book, named simply *The First Book of Harrow*, speaks of terrible days ahead, of the coming of the Horrors, their nearly unstoppable power, and the possible ruination of the world.

The Horrors, the book says, are terrible spirits dwelling in the darkest corners of the netherworlds.

When the magical aura of this world reaches a certain strength, the Horrors will be able to build mystical bridges between this world and the twisted realm where they dwell. And then the Horrors will come. Terrible and powerful, they are beyond reason. They seek only to consume. Some desire anything physical: rocks, trees, it matters not. Others want flesh, blood, and living creatures. The more powerful live on pain, terror, and the dark emotions those experiences arouse in their victims.

The Horrors will come, the book says, and little can be done to stop them.

## Thera is Born

Word of the *First Book of Harrow* spreads quickly. The city around Nehr'esham begins to swell just as quickly until it covers the entire island. It is soon renamed Thera, meaning "foundation." In time, the island becomes a center of trade and commerce as well as the center of learning and thought in the eastern Selestrean Sea.

The growth of Thera does not come without its price, however. Unable to support the enormous tasks of physical labor required to keep up with the swelling population and commerce, the Therans must import workers from other lands. Thera slavery begins with these laborers. The great Thera merchant houses that arrange for the transport of the workers maintain "control" over the workers they import. Financial arrangements must be made with the merchant house for the use of the workers. Soon, "control" of workers becomes commonplace as the powerful and influential arrange to import workers specifically as servants and minor laborers. Within seventy years from the arrival of the first work-ship, "control" becomes ownership and true slavery is as common on Thera as the ocean breeze.

Within a year of the translation of the *First Book*, Navarim dispatches copies to all the leaders in all the lands he has ever heard of in an effort to warn them. Few listen.

Meanwhile, work on deciphering the other *Books of Harrow* continues in the hopes of finding some way to stop or defend against the Horrors. Early on, Navarim establishes the School of Shadows as the center for this effort and charges it to find ways of defeating the Horrors. From that School groups of Adepts and magicians travel across the known world





to confront the burgeoning Horrors and learn what they can from those confrontations.

At the same time, Thera's leading citizens create a more formal organization to govern the island. Navarim, named the Elder of Thera, presides over a body of advisors and administrators known as The Twelve. This body controls and manages the various areas of Thera and her growing influence. In one of their first acts, The Twelve establish a military force to defend Thera against increasing bandit and pirate raids.

The research conducted at the School of Shadows proves to have more uses than at first expected. Thera scholars and magicians discover insights and understandings into the ways and makings of magic that have far-reaching ancillary results. Their research opens up to the Therans the ability to work the powerful elemental magic contained in the True Forms of air, earth, fire, water, and wood. Using that knowledge, the Therans build their stunning cities, none of which could exist without the aid of magic. They also create their airships, vessels of all kinds that fly through the air. Their research also gives them knowledge of magical warding and protection, illusion and healing, the transformation and manipulation of physical objects, and insight into the deepest reaches of the netherworlds. Thera becomes an island, a nation, and eventually an empire built on magic.

## THE THERANS AND BARSATIVE

As Thera grows, the land that will someday become Barsaive exists in ignorance. Unnamed, the area is home to independent tribes and isolated city-states. Little trade exists between these powers, the only real contact coming through intermittent attacks on rich Thera by the poorer city-states. Occasional efforts by the Elven Court at Wyrms Wood to bring the area under their control fail. Though rulers of a great empire, the elves of Wyrms Wood do not see enough worth conquering in Barsaive to exert the necessary political and military pressure. Their failure ultimately leaves Barsaive vulnerable to Thera domination.

In the Throal year 212 TH, the Therans finally arrive in Barsaive. They first make contact with the humans of Landis near the city of Vivane and what will someday become Sky Point. From there,

Thera representatives and ambassadors travel across Barsaive making contact and trade alliances with every group they can find. This land, they discover, abounds with the natural and magical elements and materials the Therans covet. The Thera envoys promise a glittering future through trade to Barsaive's city-states and tribes; dazzled by the prospect of Thera riches, the local leaders sign agreements without reading between the lines.

The arrival of the first Thera trading fleet in 216 TH comes as a great surprise to Barsaive's local powers. They had signed treaties and agreements with the Thera envoys, but without any real understanding of the implications. The sight of dozens of Thera airships drifting slowly through the air over their palaces, castles, and tents is a literal and symbolic blow to them. A new power has come to Barsaive now, and it is second to none.

## BIRTH OF AN EMPIRE

The Therans enjoy their growing power. The island itself, its central citadel, the Eternal Library, and other great works of architecture and culture are renowned across the world. Thera's position in the heavily traveled Selestean Sea makes her an ideal port of trade and commerce. For mystical thought and pure magical power, Thera has no equal. The potency of her magicians and the skill of her Adepts are envied the world over. She needs little else to seal her position in the world. Nevertheless, Fate gives it to her.

Nearly 400 years after the founding of Nehr'esham, in the Throal year 341 TH, Kearos Navarim dies of old age. His body is sealed in amber and placed in the great plaza of the citadel at the heart of Thera, next to the cenotaph of his friend Elianar Messias. Word spreads quickly that Navarim died while putting the finishing touches on the culmination of the Great Project and the researches of the School of Shadows. The rumors are correct.

Five years after Navarim's death, his successor as Elder of Thera, the human Meach Vara Lingam, announces to the world that though the scholars have found nothing beyond a keen blade and an iron will to defeat the coming Horrors, they have discovered something to protect against them. Lingam unveils to the world Kearos Navarim's crowning and final work, the *Rites of Protection and Passage*.





## rites of protection and passage

Despite Lingam's brave words, the *Rites of Protection and Passage* does not offer any truly effective methods of protecting against the Horrors, but it does present the theoretical means by which that protection can be discovered. In his four-volume work, Navarim concluded that isolation from the Horrors is the only true means of protection against them. Because of their individual power and sheer overwhelming numbers, direct confrontation with the Horrors would ultimately prove suicidal.

To hide from the Horrors, Navarim proposed to construct great underground fortresses. Dubbed kaers, these dwellings would protect their occupants against the Horrors on the theory that strong enough walls will keep out even the most physically powerful Horror. The natural, solid, earthen walls of the kaer would also provide protection against those Horrors that travel through astral space or by means as yet unguessed. However, Navarim warned an earthen barrier might not be enough to withstand every Horror.

Navarim's book also offered other means of protection. Cities could be shielded under domes woven of True Air. Kaers could be built beneath the sea and protected by True Water, and so on. Navarim believed that the underground kaer would offer the strongest defense, though even it might be breached. To shore up the kaers' defenses, Navarim offered additional protections to defend against the Horrors on a primal level. Navarim believed that magicians could learn to create wards and runes that would "call" to a Horror through magic. Once the Horror examined the rune, its mind would become caught in the magical web and mathematical maze of the rune's construction. Because the Horror comes from a place deep in the mystical netherworlds, a Horror must always devote some degree of its concentration to keeping itself in this world. A rune entrapping its mind would break the Horror's concentration and force the thing either to retreat or lose its grasp in this world and be flung back to the pit from whence it came.

Unfortunately for Thera and her sister lands, only the theory for these runes and wards exists. Navarim believed they could be devised and had charged the School of Shadows with their creation just prior

to his death. In the meantime, he recommended that kaers be built wherever possible in preparation for the day when the infestation of Horrors would become so overpowering that they would render the surface of the world all but uninhabitable. This would occur, Navarim believed, in just over 800 years.

The School of Shadows continues to work on mastery of the runes, intending to make them available to all once their secrets are unlocked. And unlock them they do, but instead of sharing them, Thera closely guards the secrets of the runes. Soon she will use them as a bargaining tool to extend the Theran sphere of influence.

The immediate reaction to Navarim's work is mixed. Many dismiss its conclusions outright, while others look upon it with almost religious reverence. Most, though, cannot take seriously a threat 800 years in the future. They read Navarim's words and vow to prepare later.

## ORICHALCUM WARS

Thera, however, does not wait. The mighty, magic-rich island needs significant and perhaps extravagant protection against the Horrors. To this end its leaders begin to collect vast quantities of the magical metal orichalcum. The Therans begin striking favorable trade agreements in order to obtain large quantities of the rare material. No one can guess what manner of protection the Therans wish to build that requires so much of that metal, but as long as they pay well for it, no one much cares.

For those who do not know, orichalcum can only occur from the natural mixing of certain other earthen materials that combine in the presence of True Earth. Though not a part of orichalcum, True Earth is always found in the same area as that rare ore. Orichalcum must usually be mined, but occasionally nodes of it are found close enough to the surface of the land to be gathered by hand.

Orichalcum trade with Thera proves profitable for the rest of the world, despite the hue and cry of some deprived local magicians. It is so profitable that shipments become the target of bandits and raiders. Sixty years after Thera has begun its extensive importation of orichalcum, the trolls of the Twilight Peaks, called the crystal raiders, lead their ramshackle airships in a stunning long-distance raid



against Shosaran orichalcum stores being prepared for shipment overland to Thera. Other raids quickly follow suit as the crystal raiders hone their skill of raiding by air.

Rather than band together for protection against the raiders, the lords and leaders of various lands take the raid as a signal to start their own plundering. The provinces of Ustrect and Cara Fahd simultaneously attack Landis; Throal is nearly overrun by marauding bands of orks known as ork scorchers, the Elven Court in Wyrn Wood fights Scythan dwarfs and their human allies in a series of terrible battles. The wars last more than 40 years. Nations switch sides with a shift of the wind, migratory tribes become little more than mercenaries, and nobility plot against and betray their own kin. Only in Shosara and Throal are the rightful rulers not at least temporarily deposed. For the first 30 years, orichalcum and elemental mining and gathering operations are declared off-limits by unspoken agreement; each side needs the mines, and no one would profit from their destruction.

The ork kingdom of Cara Fahd changes hands when Landis retakes the area around a lava field ripe with True Fire. In retaliation, the retreating ork commander, Cathon Grimeye, unleashes every bound or trapped fire elemental present in the field. No ork survives, most of the vanguard of the Landis army is destroyed, and the mines are severely damaged. This action sets the stage for the final, brutal years of the war.

## Theran Navy and Empire

As long as the flow of orichalcum and other magical elements remains steady, the Therans care little about the war. As the Orichalcum Wars rage on, more and more Theran mining vessels sail over Barsaive. These barges rarely touch down, instead mining and gathering True Air from the clouds around the highest mountain peaks. Using new techniques known only to them, the Theran miners are very successful. That success makes them targets.

The crystal raiders, having set off the Orichalcum Wars, sit back and watch them rage. Because the furious fighting has halted nearly all mining in the area, they make only the occasional supply raid. The Theran air barges, however, offer them a target they cannot resist.



The raiders strike quickly and often, plundering and looting the air barges. Thera warns that they will not tolerate further interference with the air mining operations. The Therans begin protecting the air barges with warships, military airships. At first these ships are vedettes, air barges expanded and armored for war. The raiders thumb their noses at the Theran war vessels; they continue attacking the convoys, using their faster, more maneuverable airships to escape back to the Twilight Peaks with their booty.

The Therans then begin protecting the mining convoys with kilas, sleek, stone-hulled vessels built specifically for war. Despite mounting losses, the raiders step up their attacks. The final straw for the Therans comes after they lose a massive fleet of air barges, vedettes, and kilas to the raiders. Sixty days later the Therans reveal their true power.

As morning comes, the clan-moots of the crystal raiders awaken to the sounds of alarm across the Twilight Peaks. Drifting across the great plain to the southeast of the mountains, not far from Vivane, is the largest airship anyone has ever conceived of, let alone seen. Devoid of a true ship's hull and sail, the vessel is a massive shard of rock nearly a thousand feet long propelled by magic in defiance of the laws of nature. The Therans call this terrible machine of war a behemoth.

The crystal raiders are astounded by the sight, but swarm to their airships and move to attack. The Theran airship commander dispatches a messenger spirit to the raiders, telling them to surrender or be obliterated. Proud and defiant, the raiders destroy the spirit.



## CHAPTER 2: HISTORY

Moving to attack, the raiders encounter a thunderous rain of weapons fire from the Theran ship. Siege engines, mounted onto the ship's stone hull and guided by magic, catapult giant arrows of metal and wood at the attackers. Bolts of mystic energy lash from the airship as well, as Theran mages focus their powers against the raiders. The raiders scatter under the onslaught, straight into the waiting guns of kilas hidden in the clouds overhead.

The battle continues for hours until the Theran behemoth finally reaches the edge of the Twilight Peaks. Then, it turns its terrible destructive power away from the remaining raider airships and directs it against their homes. The siege engines pound the moot-homes, magics tear into the raider families who attempt to defend the surface buildings and caverns, and elementals unleashed from the Theran ship ravage what little defense remains.

Stunned at the massacre they are witnessing, the raiders surrender. They are taken prisoner aboard the stone airship, to be brought back to Thera as slaves in chains. The Theran forces burn their airships, though they do not bother to destroy the few remaining survivors in the Twilight Peaks. With what will become known as the Battle of Sky Point, the Therans prove they are a power to be reckoned with. No longer content to simply conduct trade and commerce subject to the whims of local lords, the Therans use Sky Point to show the world what awaits those foolish enough to interfere with Theran desires and aims.

One hundred days later, in the nine hundredth and forty-third year of Throal, the then-human Elder of Thera, Thom Edro, proclaims the Theran Empire. Thera declares the lands of Barsaive a Theran province, promising all those who swear loyalty to her protection from the ravages of the Orichalcum Wars, as well as first rights to new enchantments to defend against the Horrors. To enforce their power, the new Empire places a permanent Theran military presence at Sky Point and founds the provincial capital of Parlainth in the northwest corner of the land. Dozens of smaller city-states and kingdoms quickly submit to Thera. More powerful kingdoms submit more slowly, but visits from the Theran Navy prove persuasive.

A leading citizen of Thera, the human Kern Fallo, is named the first Overlord of Barsaive. Though

Thera controls the province, Fallo sees the practical value of local administration and calls upon the dwarfs of nearby Throal to assist him. Throal, unwillingly allied to Thera out of need for the Theran enchantments against the Horrors, agrees.

Through this administration, Throal mediates between the Therans and Barsaive. The dwarfs provide a buffer between the governments of Barsaive and their Theran overlords, defusing much of the tension between them. Also through this administration, Throal spreads and promotes the dwarven tongue as the trading language of Barsaive. For the first time in its history, citizens of various Barsaive regions can communicate with relative ease.

### JARON AND THE SPHINX

When Thom Edro establishes the Theran Empire, he installs himself as its First Governor. Many know it is only a matter of time before Edro secures the backing to proclaim himself Emperor. Other grumblings surface as well, rumors that Edro is using unnatural magics to extend his life and those of loyal human and ork followers. Of course dwarven Adepts had long ago developed life-extending magics for themselves...but this is different.





Magic had extended the life of the dwarven scholar-magician Jaron as well, though it left him less energetic than previously. He fears that Edro is turning Thera into a mockery of the teaching of Elianar Messias, called the Martyr Scholar. Each time Jaron voices his objections, another of his followers vanishes. He realizes that despite his deciphering of the First Book of Harrow, the expanding Theran Empire no longer considers him an asset.

The night after the disappearance of Jaron's closest apprentice, a great working begins in the open park across the harbor from Thera's central citadel. Three Great Form earth elementals tear rock, stone, and True Earth up from the very foundations of the island and begin to sculpt them under Jaron's watchful eye. Theran imperial guardsmen and magicians rush to the area, but a powerful shield surrounding the park holds them back. They gape in wonder as a giant stone sphinx takes form. Its head is sculpted turning downward and seemingly asleep.

As the sphinx is completed, just before daybreak, Jaron turns to address the masses gathered in the park. He speaks to them of the teachings of the Martyr Scholar and the dreams of Kearos Navarim. He also speaks of the dangers of power and the dark path he fears Thera is beginning to walk. He has constructed the sphinx, he tells them, to watch over Thera and her governors. It will remain in the park as the guardian of the beliefs of the past and an eternal reminder to the future. As Jaron falls silent, the shield protecting the park dissolves. The three earth elementals gather Jaron within themselves and together the four merge with the sphinx. The crowds rush forward, and the sphinx slowly opens its stone eyes, which blaze from within with a blue-white light. The sphinx lifts its head to stare out across the main harbor directly at the central citadel and the heart of Thera. From that moment on, it remains in that position.

Theran magicians examine the sphinx's construction, but its magical weavings baffle them. None can penetrate it enough to even glimpse the sphinx's True Pattern, much less learn enough to gain power over it. Because they cannot predict what may happen, they fear trying to manipulate or unmake it. To this day, the great sphinx sits staring out over the harbor of Thera as a reminder to all who come and to all who rule there. The leader of Thera remains the First Governor. None has dared call himself Emperor.

## Thera and the Dragons

Thera's domination of the cultures of the Selestrean basin and neighboring areas is not total. Kingdoms and peoples continue to search for their own solutions to the problem of the Horrors because success means greater independence from Thera's increasingly oppressive rule. They sponsor eager scholars and brave adventurers to seek out dragons, for the creatures are known to have survived the last Scourge (as the invasion of the Horrors has come to be known) remarkably intact. However, many dragons have no desire to share their secrets, greatly reducing the population of eager scholars. Some dragons, through bribery or entreaty, share the method of creating the dragon lair, which scholars believe protected them. A rare few actually contact kingdoms on their own, offering to help for their own dragon reasons.

The leaders of Thera see the dragon actions as a challenge to their power and position. Proposed responses spark fierce debate; Edro has no desire to antagonize the dragons at a time when Thera should be using all its power to prepare for the coming Scourge. But the factions that profit most from the trade in magical elements mount effective pressure. The Theran Navy organizes strikes against three powerful and influential great dragons. The first two succeed in killing the target dragons and destroying their lairs, though the action costs the Therans one of their mighty stone behemoths for the first time. The third strike, against the great dragon Icewing, fails. The Therans find only his lair, largely empty of anything of value and power.

Theran ambassadors pass firmly worded communiqués through discreet channels; they refuse to tolerate dragon interference in Theran domestic policy. The dragons appear to retreat; Theran merchants and guild Adepts do a booming business as new orders for Theran protective enchantments flood in.

Then, one sunset, sailors and dock merchants spot a dragon atop the head of the sphinx. As the Therans hesitate between staring and fleeing, the dragon flies off. The next morning twelve citizens are found dead. Two are provisioners to the navy, one an earth-element smith, one a clerk to the treasurer, two guild Adepts, one a moneylender, and five are principal contractors for protective enchantments. Each of the twelve had agitated for or profited from, the action against the dragons.





Over the next two weeks the dragons strike twice more. Two dozen more leading Therans die. Theran diplomatic channels convey a second message: Therans are to leave dragons strictly alone. No further Theran raids will be planned or executed. The dragons apparently take the Therans' message to heart and cease to disclose what they know of the Horrors and the coming Scourge.

## RACE TO THE SHELTERS

As the Scourge draws nearer, the kingdoms and cultures of the world prepare for the mass invasion of the Horrors. Some build small underground villages with protective wards woven from the roots of the plants above. The dwarfs of Throal hollow out most of an entire mountain, the largest in the kingdom, to build their kaer. Other cities become fantastic citadels, with hand-written runic phrases carefully inscribed on every bit of masonry in the city. With each new report of a Horror, work becomes more frantic, ever more urgent. Fear and panic result in such a heavy spread of rumors that it becomes difficult to sort out the truth. Contact between cities, between kingdoms, becomes erratic. Some cities become so fearful that they isolate themselves years before the actual Scourge begins.

Throughout this time the most reliable communications come from, or through, Thera. The Theran Empire literally holds together the fabric of civilization until most of their client states are prepared. Thera's demands for slaves greatly increase during this period. Life is cheap, so the demands are met. Rulers sometimes sell an entire town into slavery in order to obtain the Runes of Warding to protect two or three other towns. Throal and Landis balk at the increased demand for slaves and work furiously to pay Thera's dear price with raw elements.

## THE ELVEN SCHISM

Some reject Thera outright. Queen Alachia of Wyrm Wood, High Queen of all the Elves, despises the Therans for their use of slavery and for their political opposition to her rule. She commands that no elven nation, and no elf, follow the Theran ways of protection. She presents an alternative in which elven elementalists will use wood magics to weave the living plants of a forest into a kaer. The Horrors, she believes, will be unable to pass through living wood.

Elven scholars outside Wyrm Wood, and it is said even some within, are aghast at the proposal. They believe that though the Theran method is not fool-proof, it would provide effective protection against the Horrors. These magicians and scholars doubt that any wooden kaer could possibly withstand the savage physical punishment the Horrors would inflict upon it. Alachia, however, stands resolute. She vows that any elf who follows the Theran way will be forever separated from all of elven culture. This threat, far from cowering the other elven nations, shatters the great cultural elven empire Alachia commanded, presumably forever.

Word comes first from the elves of the far-away Northern Kingdoms. As the elves most distant from the Court at Wyrm Wood, they feel the least amount of true loyalty to its ways. Though little is known of those Northern Kingdoms in Barsaive, their rejection of Alachia represents a severe blow to her power. Before she can react, Alachia receives word from other elven nations and city-states that they refuse to follow her. They wish the Court well, but they will not follow Alachia to what they believe to be certain death.

Queen Alachia, in the end, does not formally declare these nations separate. Their refusal has bereft the Elven Court of much of its power, making any such declaration an empty gesture. Instead Alachia chooses to wait until after the Scourge when her continued existence can prove her wisdom. At her command, the elves of Wyrm Wood begin the construction of the wooden kaer that will be their downfall.

## THE SCOURGE

Scholars now place the beginning of the Scourge in the one thousand and eighth year of the Throal Calendar. The Therans count that date as the year TE 565. Both use the same indicator for the beginning of the Scourge: the sealing up of Thera. As a center and focus of magical power, Thera is beset by the Horrors earlier and with greater severity than the rest of the world. Thera's last words to her subject nations are wishes of luck and safety, and an affirmation of her power. Then, the great Dome of True Air and Fire that surrounds the island ignites and seals Thera off from the world.

Though some other groups had previously sealed themselves off, the rest of the world sees the sealing







of Thera as the last great sign that the Scourge is beginning. Horrors appear with increasing frequency and are becoming more than a match for local militia, constabulary, and brave adventurers.

Within 20 years of the sealing of Thera, the rising tide of Horrors cuts off virtually all communication between kingdoms. Even astral space becomes too polluted to access, and magicians the world over learn the true benefits of the spell matrices devised by the Therans. Mindless herds of destructive Horrors roam the land, consuming every scrap of life they can find. Other, more intelligent Horrors probe existing defenses, and batter their way through weaker ones. Still others infiltrate society and slip with the people into their kaers. They wait and reveal themselves, violently or subtly, after the kaer has been sealed.

## THROAL AND PARLAINTH

In Barsaive, the great powers of Throal and Parlainth, the Theran provincial capital, brace themselves against the Horrors and remain open and accessible for as long as they can. Both provide shelter for refugees until the last possible moment. Throal's kaer, though of Theran design, includes additional mystical dwarven craftsmanship. Parlainth intends to use a radical method of isolation: its magicians will cast a great spell to shift Parlainth from this

world to another in the netherworlds, one out of reach of the Horrors. To further keep the city safe, part of the spell will reach out across Barsaive and wipe the memory of Parlainth from the mind of every living person. With no memory of Parlainth, no one will betray either its existence or its disappearance to the Horrors. (The tale of Parlainth holds both great deeds and great tragedy, and is best fully told elsewhere.) Ironically, at the last minute, the Theran Overlord of Barsaive loses faith in the plan he sponsored and flees to Throal with his staff. Parlainth seals itself off, disappears, and leaves the memory of Barsaive for nearly 400 years. Supposedly safe in Throal, the Theran Overlord and much of his staff are killed when a portion of the Throal kaer collapses only a few months after Throal has sealed itself up.

In the years just before the Scourge, the dwarfs of Throal do not remain idle. Years of administering Barsaive under Theran domination have taught them much. They know that during the projected time of the Scourge, six hundred years, much of society and culture will wither within the kaers. The Theran plan prepared for every aspect of physical survival; they provided for magical plant nurturing, air and waste recirculation, and breeding cycles. However, the Therans had neglected the less tangible things.

To this end, the dwarfs created the *Book of Tomorrow*. In this book they set down the history of Barsaive and Thera, the great tales of the day and others past. They wrote out the dwarven language in its entirety so that children in the kaers could learn to speak, read, and write a common tongue. The book told them how to rebuild their homes and lands once the Horrors had gone. The book told them how to use arts and crafts as a continuing sign that one was free from the influence of a Horror, for the dwarfs had learned that a person Horror-tainted could not create things of art and beauty. And most important it told the dwarfs how to tell when the dark days of the Scourge were over.

Finally, in the year 1050 TH, Throal sealed itself off and prepared for the worst. Throal's leaders were virtually certain that some Horrors had entered the kaer with the refugees, and knew they would soon reveal themselves. Though the story has been lost to the mists of time, the strength of the dwarfs enabled them to discover and defeat one Horror



## CHAPTER 2: HISTORY

before it could ravage the kaer. The time of the Scourge brought suffering and hardship, but the people of Throal endured through their physical strength and will to survive.

During that time, other things change in Throal as well. The dwarfs as a people, and their friends inside with them, look forward to the future. Discussions begin about what the world will be like after the Scourge. In the court of King Varulus II, dwarven common sense links with imagination to provide a new vision of the world.

Philosophers, soldiers, priests, scholars, craftsmen, and nobles argue for years until a rough consensus emerges. For the first time the rights of an individual are argued and defined. The dwarfs write down these rights and the logic that bred them in the *Council Compact* of 1270 TH. This document will serve as a guide to forming the new dwarven society and that of their neighbors in the years after the Scourge. In broad terms, it defines individual rights, property rights, and the role of law. For example, the section on individual rights contains the following passage:

*We have shown that rights to property are a necessary good for an orderly society. What of the issue of slavery, the ownership of another person?*

*Persons can certainly be considered property. But who owns a person? Our common sense dictates that the spirit born into the body owns the body. That spirit contains its movement, its thoughts, its actions. The spirit makes active use of the body it owns. Our language supports this view—an evil spirit who inhabits and controls a body is said to have “possessed” the body; this possession is seen as unnatural. The evil spirit has stolen the body from its rightful owner.*

*Slavery removes the control of an individual's body from its natural spirit to the slaveowner. This transfer is made without compensation to the spirit, the true owner of the body. Involuntary servitude also steals the body. It is a crime.*

The *Council Compact* is a rigorously thought-out statement of principles. Its goal is to develop a fair, orderly society to aid the conduct of commerce. The *Compact* embodies common sense, and can serve as a shared belief among all people. During the time in the kaer, the *Compact* circulates among

dwarven nobles who accept it without reservation. Those who believe in the *Compact* decide that the world following the Scourge will be different from the one that had existed before—and very different from the one the Therans expect.

### BLOOD WOOD

In 1262 TH, the wooden kaer of the Elven Court begins to fail. The loss of protection is slow, but inexorable. Panic strikes within the kaer as the elves desperately seek alternative means of protection. They haven't enough time to construct underground kaers, nor do they have sufficient reserves of True Air or Earth. Desperation and depression set in as the Horrors begin to break through. The elves create roving militia squads to respond quickly to breaks in the kaer barriers as elementalists strive to repair the existing breaks and shore up other weakening sections.

Then the elves of the Wood make a startling and ultimately terrifying discovery. Of those Horrors that break through, those most intelligent, most devious, and most difficult to destroy all but ignore elves who are already mad or in extreme, constant pain. The advisors to Queen Alachia are quick to realize that these Horrors need to inflict madness and pain themselves in order to feed. Existing madness and pain are not enough for them. A horrible seed begins to grow in the heart of the Wyrms Wood, a plan for protection so terrible that its implementation will be as heinous as anything the Horrors themselves can inflict.

Finally, with the Horrors on the verge of complete penetration of the elven kaer, the elves enact their desperate plan. Elementalists perform a twisted blood ritual that forces a physical change upon the surviving elves of Wyrms Wood. Thorns begin to grow out of their skin, ripping and tearing, leaving the elf in constant, excruciating, overpowering pain. The initial Ritual of the Thorns kills many of the elves in Wyrms Wood, but those who survive learn to live with the pain and even draw upon it for strength. For the Horrors, nothing they want remains in Wyrms Wood. Some of the more bestial Horrors continue to attack and attempt to break through, but the more diabolical ones who feed on pain and suffering leave to find their nurture elsewhere. The Blood Elves of what has become





the Blood Wood have found a way to survive, but at a terrible price.

## THE TIME OF HIDING

Centuries pass as the people within the kaers and citadels huddle in fear and gradually learn to cope, all the while longing for the touch of sunlight and the taste of clean air. The inhabitants of many kaers will not live to see the sun again. Horrors batter or guile their way into more kaers than anyone even in their darkest thoughts believed possible. Whole cities are lost to the Horrors, entire societies and civilizations gone forever.

In Barsaive, the greatest loss may be the city of Parlainth, though none would remember her grandeur until many years after the end of the Scourge. We now know that sometime during the Scourge, Horrors somehow entered Parlainth. All anyone knows for certain comes from the tale of J'role, the Honorable Thief, and his companions. By the time they found the magical Longing Ring, learned its secrets, and used it to return forgotten Parlainth to this world, all the city's inhabitants were dead or gone. Searchers found few bodies; unknown Horrors had left the city desolate. In the years following the Scourge, Parlainth became a center of adventure and danger as brave souls from all over Barsaive came there to find her lost treasures and unlock her dark secrets. But even after the Scourge, terrible things still walk the streets of Parlainth and hide in her darkest corners, and most of her secrets remain hidden to this day.

Those kaers that hold copies of the *Throal Book of Tomorrow* know the magic ritual that will tell them when they may safely reenter the world. Those lacking this ritual must guess and hope. The magic itself is basic: a simple ball of True Earth is enchanted and placed over a dish of True Water. The magics of the ritual keep the ball suspended over the water. As the strength of the world's magical aura wanes, and the Horrors are forced to retreat, the ball of True Earth descends until it finally touches the True Water and the two mix and neutralize each other.

All across Barsaive, the people in the kaers watch the ball descend. Slowly, ever so slowly, it drops toward the water. Finally, in 1415 TH, the ball stops falling, hanging an inch above the water. Shocked scholars and magicians watch in wonder and dread.

It is too soon by hundreds of years for the Scourge to have abated. And why had the ball stopped? No one knew the answer then, and no one knows to this day. We only know that for some reason on that day the mystical aura of our world stabilized and has remained constant from that point forward.

A few years pass and the people in the kaers begin to believe that the ball will not descend any further. The doors of the kaers begin to open into a bright, sunlit world ravaged by the Horrors. Most, though not all, of the Horrors are gone.

## THE RETURN

Throal begins the first, tentative return to the outside world just prior to the cessation of the ball's drop. Thoal scholars and magicians believe that the strength of the world's magical aura may have dropped enough that most of the more powerful Horrors have already begun to flee. They doubt the accuracy of the Theran calculations of the Scourge's length, believing the Therans to have erred conservatively so that they might enter the new world first, and dominate it.

In 1409 TH the first scouting party sent outside Thoal is destroyed within hours. Each year after that Thoal sends out another scouting party, none of whom at first return. In 1412 TH the scouting party led by the female troll Vaare Longfang returns alive and intact. She reports that the Horrors are still present, but they are fewer and less active. Thoal's leaders decide to launch a greater expedition to learn the extent of the Horrors' ravaging. They outfit a troll airship, give it magical protection and an elite crew, and offer Vaare Longfang command.

## THE EARTHDOWN

In 1416 TH, just after the world's aura has apparently stabilized, the expedition sets sail in the refitted airship, christened the *Earthdown*. Its mission lasts almost a year. The battle-scarred *Earthdown* returns to Thoal with an exhausted but exhilarated crew. Vaare has charted most of Barsaive and found it predominately free of the Horrors. Those that remain have retreated into pockets of higher magic where they find it easier to exist. Few live in the open. A jubilant Thoal prepares to emerge into the world.

In 1418 TH, Vaare again takes command of the *Earthdown*, to begin contacting the nations of





## CHAPTER 2: HISTORY

Barsaive and inform them that the worst is over. The mission proceeds slowly, for the people of the kaers and citadels assume the troll and her crew are some trick of the Horrors. After one year, only two kaers of twenty-one visited have opened their doors. King Varulus alters Vaare's mission, and orders her to take the *Earthdawn* to the largest kingdoms first.

The ship sails for Landis, but never arrives. Horrors attack and take control of the vessel, and the crew disappears. The haunted hulk of the *Earthdawn* sails through parts of Barsaive, but usually vanishes from sight shortly after being spotted.

### THROAL OPENS

Despite this loss, King Varulus III orders the doors of Throal opened in the summer of 1420 TH. Patrols and magical surveillance remain high, to guard against unknown Horrors. No one leaves Throal for nearly sixteen months. Varulus then issues a proclamation granting land to those who farm, mine, forest, or otherwise make productive use of it. A trickle of brave souls turns into a flood of opportunists. Despite setbacks and encounters with some remaining Horrors, the resettlement of the Throal Mountains begins.

Over the next few years, merchants organize expeditions to re-establish trade routes with nearby communities. They find some kaers whose people refuse to open their doors; at those places they leave a small

tent camp to wait patiently for the kaer to open. The traders find other kaers and citadels whose defenses have been breached; they mark these as dangerous and to be avoided. Many others open their doors; the merchants give them copies of the *Council Compact* and ask them to join the new world Throal envisions. As the merchants make more and more contacts, they expand their efforts deeper into Barsaive and into the areas held exclusively by humans, trolls, t'skrang, orks, and other races.

They move quickly, for they know that the Therans will return to Barsaive as soon as they can.

### CONFLICT OF DESTINIES

Thera herself does not move as quickly as feared. Little word comes to Barsaive concerning the condition of the island or its immediate resources, but Thera's unexpected absence leads many to believe that Thera did not escape the Scourge as unbruised as her leaders had hoped. The first Theran vessels do not arrive in Barsaive until 1449 TH, 50 years after Thera is believed to have opened herself to the new world.

The Theran emissaries meet with little welcome. The time of the Scourge and the few years immediately after have given the people of Barsaive the opportunity to live free of the Theran yoke, and they like the taste of freedom. The Theran emissaries, unprepared for anything but respect and cooperation, threaten Barsaive with violence. In answer, local Barsaivians burn the three Theran vedettes anchored at Sky Point and put their crews to the sword.

Theran First Governor Nikodus names Fallan Pavelis as the new Overlord of Barsaive. He orders Pavelis to reestablish Theran supremacy in Barsaive, for the Therans believe that the land is still their province. Pavelis chooses the strong hand over the soft voice. Theran vedettes conduct slaving runs over isolated villages. Shipborne troops attack coastal cities and seize "forgotten tribute." Ork mercenaries in Theran pay conduct bandit raids against kingdoms that resist Thera. Human tribal leaders are assassinated and replaced with more amenable rulers.

Besieged, the people of Barsaive turn to Throal for help. The dwarven kingdom has all but promised rebellion with the *Council Compact*; surely the dwarfs will counter the Therans and end the Empire's domination.





In Throal, though all believe that the Therans must be stopped, the dwarfs realize bitterly how little they can do on their own. Throal has not the strength to defeat a combined force of Theran air and ground forces, nor does any other single power in Barsaive. Together, though, the combined will and might of all the peoples of Barsaive may prevail.

King Varulus III sends messengers and emissaries to the rulers of Barsaive. Together, his message says, Barsaive must either stand free or else fall into oppression and slavery. Though his words stir the hearts of many, the sight of Theran airships attacking and raiding at will stills their actions.

An act by the Therans themselves finally turns the tide. The First Governor has learned of the *Council Compact*, receiving a copy from Pavelis. Enraged by its contents, Nikodus sends a damning message to his Overlord of Barsaive. The message tells Pavelis that the dwarven logic of commerce and ownership outlined in the *Compact* makes it clear that every man, woman, and child in Barsaive owes their survival from the Horrors to Thera and the First Governor personally. This blood debt makes all the people of Barsaive the personal slaves of the First Governor, and his to do with as he wishes. He instructs Pavelis to begin the systematic destruction of all Barsaive cities not vital to elemental trade or gathering. The first target will be Throal.

As the First Governor shifts troops to Barsaive and Pavelis gathers them into the largest Theran armada ever assembled, Barsaive loyalists within the Overlord's palace in Sky Point obtain a copy of the message. They duplicate it and distribute it across Barsaive. The message raises anger strong enough to banish fear; the peoples of Barsaive no longer question that they must and will fight.

His army assembled, Pavelis moves on Throal. Though the dwarven kingdom is unprepared to fight the kind of war Thera brings to them, the rest of Barsaive is not. Goaded by such heroes as the human J'role and the t'skrang Westhrall, Barsaive comes to the aid of Throal. Sky Raiders duplicate their ancestors' successes of the Orichalcum Wars and attack Theran ships. T'skrang riverboats run blockades and intercept supplies. Ork cavalry and elven bowmen assault supply convoys and base camps, then vanish

into the night. Windling thieves infiltrate Theran command ships and camps and learn valuable information, leaving behind nasty magical surprises.

Harassed and battered continuously from all sides, Pavelis takes a desperate gamble to settle the issue before Nikodus' patience runs out. He masses his forces for a frontal assault on Throal, but the hit-and-run fighters of Barsaive cut down half the armada and destroy its supplies.

Facing disaster, the armada breaks and the Therans withdraw to Sky Point.

## THE NEW WORLD

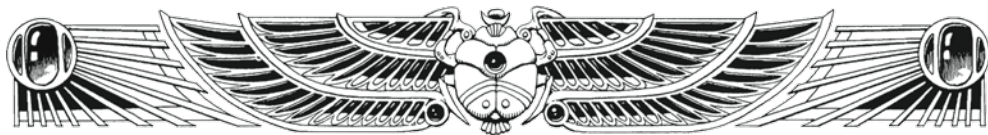
The world after the Scourge is truly new, in ways the sages and scholars did not conceive. Our world's magical aura does not diminish as all our learning tells us it should, but remains strong. We see this as proof of our survival; the world goes on holding a steady course into the future.

The realms of Throal and Thera struggle to survive. In the south of Barsaive the crystal raiders build airships for future raids on the lowlands. Ork scorchers roam the land mounted on their fierce chargers, finding danger and adventure where they can. The elves of Blood Wood have survived the Horrors in their own way, a dark way that has riven the community of elves. Windlings thrive in the places where nature borders civilization. T'skrang live along the great Serpent River, trading, pirating, and engaging in occasional raids. Obsidimen roam Barsaive, durable, earth-bound beings in demand anywhere that war or danger threaten.

And danger lies just off the trade roads, along with the lure of the treasure amassed and hidden away by now-forgotten people. The Horrors have receded, but they still hold fast in the darker parts of the world. Some wait within conquered citadels, curled upon the sprawling wealth of the vanquished. Others roam the world, their magic weakened but still powerful enough to wreak havoc in their paths.

In 1506 TH, the world looks vastly different from the one those founders saw when they looked south across the plain. Only the brave dare explore this world. Only heroes can carve the future from ruins of the past.





# CHAPTER 3: CHARACTERS

## CREATE YOUR CHARACTER

*A man is born. A hero is made.*

—Ragnar, Warrior Adept

Creating a character for your *EARTHDAWN* game follows the same steps as outlined in the *Savage Worlds Core Rulebook*, with certain notable exceptions.

### 1) Discipline

*EARTHDAWN* characters are granted a bonus Professional Edge upon creation. This Discipline Edge and what it does for your character is explained later in this chapter (see **Disciplines**, p.40) and in more detail in **Chapter 4: Adepts** (p.50).

### 2) Race

Though many races are available in the *Earthdawn* world, only the most common races found in the province of Barsaive are detailed in this book. The available races are described later in this chapter (see **Major Races of Barsaive**, p.34) and in more detail in the upcoming *Denizens of Barsaive* sourcebooks.

### 3) Traits

As described in the *Savage Worlds Core Rulebook*, assign your character's attributes and skills. Each attribute begins with a d4, possibly modified by race. The five attributes are Agility, Smarts, Spirit, Strength, and Vigor.

Characters distribute 5 points among their attributes, each point raising the attribute by 1 die. No attribute may be raised above d12, unless specified in the character's racial description.

Characters also have 15 points with which to purchase skills. Raising a skill by 1 die costs 1 point, unless the skill is raised to a die that is higher than the attribute to which it is linked. If it is raised higher,

then it costs 2 points per die. Skills from the *Savage Worlds Core Rulebook* are available, except Piloting.

In addition, characters know a number of languages equal to half of their Smarts die. The first two languages a character must learn are Throalic (Common) and his racial language (for dwarfs, this is Throalic). See the Languages sidebar (p.34) for more language options.

### Derived Statistics

**Charisma** indicates your character's personal magnetism. This number is added to Persuasion and Streetwise rolls. The character's Charisma is 0 unless modified by Edges or Hindrances.

**Pace** is equal to 6" unless stated differently in the character's racial description or modified by Edges or Hindrances.

**Parry** is equal to 2 plus half the character's Fighting die. Various other factors can affect the Parry score, such as equipment, Edges, and so on.

**Toughness** is 2 plus half the character's Vigor die. Edges, racial descriptions, and armor can also modify a character's Toughness.

Adept characters start play with **Karma Points** equal to their Spirit die (p.40).

### 4) Edges and Hindrances

Characters begin play at Novice Rank with 2 free Adept Edges (p.157), as well as their free Discipline Edge. Characters also have the option of taking up to 1 Major Hindrance and 2 Minor Hindrances (refer to the *Savage Worlds Core Rulebook*). Taking a Major Hindrance grants the character 2 points. Each Minor Hindrance taken grants the character 1 point.





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For 2 points you can do the following:

- Raise an attribute by one die type
- Choose an Edge (including an Adept Edge,

p. 157)

For 1 point you can do the following:

- Gain another skill point
- Gain an additional 100 silver pieces to your

starting funds (p. 45)

The following Edges and Hindrances are modified from those in the *Savage Worlds Core Rulebook*:

Edge/Hindrance	Notes
Doubting Thomas	Unavailable
Rich	360 silver pieces starting; 5,000 sp annually
Filthy Rich	600 silver pieces starting; 15,000 sp annually
New Power	Grants new spell
Power Points	Unavailable
Rapid Recharge	Regains 1 Thread every 30 minutes
Improved Rapid Recharge	Regains 1 Thread every 15 minutes
Soul Drain	Regains Threads rather than Power Points
Ace	Unavailable
Holy/Unholy Warrior	Unavailable
Gadgeteer	Unavailable
Mentalist	Unavailable
Power Surge	Recovers Threads instead of Power Points

## LANGUAGES

The dwarf tongue, Throalic, is the most commonly spoken language of Barsaive. A majority of humans are descendants of the ancient human kingdom of Landis, making Landisian the most likely tongue for any human character (the other human cultures will be explored in upcoming EARTHDAWN sourcebooks):

Throalic (Common)	Elven ( <i>Sperethiel</i> )
Human (Landisian)	Human (Cathan)
Human (Dinganni)	Human (Galeb Klek)
Human (Scavian)	Human (Vorst)
Obsidiman	Ork ( <i>Or'zet</i> )
Theran	Troll
T'skrang	Windling

## 5) Gear

Characters are now free to purchase starting equipment. Characters begin with 120 silver pieces, unless modified by an Edge or Hindrance (see **Equip Your Character**, p. 45).

## 6) Background

Add the finishing touches to your character (see **Flesh Out Your Character**, p. 45).

## MAJOR RACES OF BARSAIVE

*Many of my people say the other races are too big, take up too much space, and use up too much air. Theirs is a short-sighted view—they fail to see the irony. After all, what a boring place the world would be if there was no one to make fun of!*

—Seethian, windling

Many different species and races of sentient beings populate the world of EARTHDAWN. This section describes the most numerous races in the region of Barsaive. They vary in size and shape, color and culture, and together bring the game world to life. These races are all Namegivers. Your character will belong to one of the major races of Barsaive.

In this fantasy world, the word “race” means the same as and replaces “species.” Besides the human race there are elves, trolls, and even more exotic races such as the obsidimen and the t'skrang. The descriptions

in this section provide basic information about each of the races populating the world of EARTHDAWN.

These descriptions contain broad generalizations. Though we may say that orks are slow-thinking but quick-tempered, you may choose to play your character differently, creating an ork who is quick-thinking and quick-tempered. Players are always free to customize their characters. When roleplaying, remember that other races (particularly GM Characters) may treat your character as though he or she is merely a stereotype of the description

given here. You may even be able to take advantage of their misconceptions.

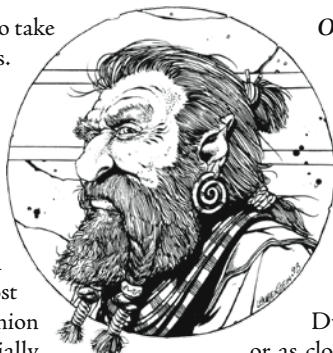
## Kinship Between the Species

The elves possess fragmentary records claiming that dwarfs, elves, humans, orks, and trolls are profoundly similar members of a single, as-yet-unnamed species. Most scholars no longer accept this opinion as valid. Theran scholars, especially those in the school of Darok Thanalea, believe that the current high level of magic increases the differences between the races.

## DWARF

Dwarfs are of stocky build, with an average height of 4 feet and weight of 120 pounds. Their skin tone ranges from pinkish white to dark ebony. Some reports seem to indicate possible other skin colorations, but these variations are more likely the result of ritual tattoos begun during the time dwarven groups began to seal themselves off from the Horrors. Dwarf hair grows quickly and in abundance, particularly the hair on their heads. Dwarfs are broad-chested, tough, and strong for their size, though slow runners, as their legs are disproportionately short for even their squat bodies. Dwarf ears usually come to a gentle point on the tip, though less pronounced than elven ears. Dwarfs reach physical maturity sometime after ten years of life, whose span will average 100 years. Some individuals have recorded life spans of 150 years or greater.

Dwarfs organize themselves into families, tribes, and nations. Though their social instincts comfortably embrace the idea of kingdoms and nations, a dwarf's first loyalty is to family and tribe. A gift for large-scale organization and unshakable loyalties come naturally to dwarfs, as they are aggressive, quick to latch onto a single solution, and quite stubborn. Even other dwarfs admit that members of their race often seem curt and lacking in social graces.



*Old King Varulus was a wise ruler. Young Varulus seems a bit hasty in his policies. We need to trade with all in Barsaive, that much is true. But just because I trade with the t'skrang doesn't mean I want one of their damned lizard tongues in my cask of ale.*  
—Counselor Holliz of Throal

Dwarfs prefer to live underground or as close to the earth as possible. While not adverse to travel and life above ground, they often develop a “home sickness” for subterranean life. Dwarfs generally refuse to travel on riding animals, as they are ungainly riders. They also dislike traveling over open water, out of sight of land.

♦ **Infravision:** Dwarven eyes are accustomed to the dark of the mountains. They ignore attack penalties for Dim and Dark lighting.

♦ **Slow:** Dwarves have a Pace of 5”.

♦ **Tough:** Dwarves are stout and tough. They start with a d6 Vigor, instead of a d4.

## ELF

Elves grow to an average height of 6 feet 3 inches, and weigh an average 150 pounds. Elven facial features appear completely symmetrical, often flawless, and many of the other races of Barsaive find elves attractive. Elven skin color varies wildly by tribe and region, but the most common are pure white, pink, tan, brown, and midnight black. Elves with skin of a pale green or iridescent, pearly color called cetharel exist, but remain rare. Elves produce sparse body hair, but grow luxuriant facial and head hair, often in uncommon colors. In addition to white, blond, brown, and black, naturally occurring violet, blue, and even metallic colors have been seen.



Elves have elongated, sharply pointed ears and move with unmatched grace, but the slight build that makes that gracefulness possible also makes them vulnerable to injury. They have long legs for their height. Elves reach physical maturity in their twenties, and enjoy a natural life span of 300

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years. Some records show individuals living up to 400 years. Legends speak of some elves rumored to live even longer.

Elves give their primary loyalty to their family, rather than the tribe or nation, and consider blood ties the most binding relationship of their lives. Elves prefer to establish and live in small communities, and elven cities generally consist of a loose confederation of villages grouped into neighborhoods. Elves may also live in human or dwarf settlements, but rarely feel anything more than a congenial friendship for such a settlement.

*Our great Queen's bright, terrible beauty shines like a beacon. Her whole court reflects that beauty, and reflects the choices made by the elves of Blood Wood. I think we must soon choose again, this time for ourselves. I think we should choose a different path.*

—Elementalist Furnithann,  
in a letter to his friend, the  
Nethermancer Mestoph

Elves prefer living in wilderness areas. They construct dwellings and other structures from living plants, integrating their community with the surrounding natural world. They find underground settings uncomfortable, and may experience a kind of claustrophobia in human or dwarf settlements if unable to visit a wilderness area two or three times a year.

♦ **Agile:** Elves are graceful and agile. They start with a d6 in Agility, instead of a d4.

♦ **Low Light Vision:** Elven eyes amplify light like a cat's, allowing them to see in the dark. Elves ignore attack penalties for Dim and Dark lighting.

♦ **Slight:** Elves are slight in build, suffering a -1 Toughness penalty.

♦ **Stealthy:** Elves are naturally quiet, gaining a free d6 in the Stealth skill.

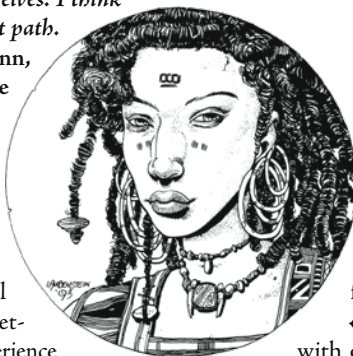
## HUMAN

Humans average 5 feet 7 inches in height and weigh an average of 150 pounds. They produce less body hair than most races, but more than elves. Skin tone ranges from ebony to tan and pinkish-white.

Their ears are small and rounded. Humans reach physical maturity in their teens and live a natural life span of 75 years, though individuals have been known to live 100 years or longer.

Humans feel a natural loyalty to their families. Inclined to form social groups, humans easily transfer this loyalty to tribes, cities, or kingdoms, though they do not adapt to large-scale society as well as dwarfs. This reluctance to pledge allegiance to a government does not prevent them from quickly adapting dwarven advances into their own cultures.

*Thera and the kingdom of Throal.  
Those are the giants straddling this land.  
Our best strategy is to keep to ourselves,  
choose only if we must, and then choose  
Throal. Dwarf condescension is easier to  
shrug off than Theran shackles.*  
—Adviser Kaj Ther of Landis



Humans prefer to live in roofed dwellings, clustered with others of their kind. They have adopted the dwarven invention of the city, though many human cities spring up in too haphazard a fashion for dwarven tastes. Most humans find elven communities unsettling.

♦ **Versatile:** Humans begin play with one free Edge of their choice, as well as the Versatility Adept Edge (p.192).

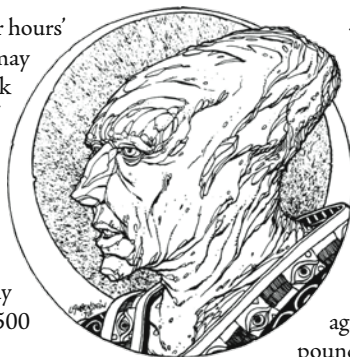
## OBSIDIMAN

Obsidimen are tall, reaching an average height of 7 feet 3 inches. Seen from a distance they seem squat, because their massive average weight of 900 pounds offsets their height. Their craggy skin and bodily tissue incorporate the properties of stone, and the most common coloration is black or gray. Their blood is blue-gray. The skin of a few obsidimen, usually those of high-ranking families, shows veins of semi-precious stone such as tourmaline. Obsidimen are mostly hairless, with internal ears completely covered by a thin layer of skin.

Obsidimen mature physically by the end of their first century of life. Natural life span has yet to be determined, because as they age, obsidimen spend more time attached to their Liferock, the



largest source of stone within four hours' walk of their birthplace. They may remain attached to the Liferock for decades, showing no signs of being aware of their surroundings, then emerge again in a time of crisis. In one indication of obsidimen lifespan, dwarven records show that individual obsidimen have traveled and lived away from their Liferock for at least 500 years after reaching maturity.



*Listen to the rocks of the earth. Those around you want to hurry, for they listen to the waters of their blood and the fire of their hearts. You are hewn from living rock. Listen to the rocks of the earth. The call of those around you is the call of the volcano. The fire of other hearts burns hot enough to melt your world around you. Listen to the rocks of the earth.*

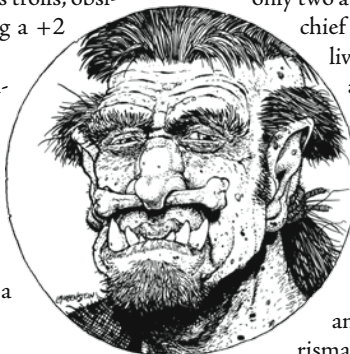
—Saying from *The Liferock*  
(dwarf translation)

Obsidimen feel loyalty to their Liferock and all others formed from it. These loyalties loosely resemble human or ork loyalties to a tribe. Obsidimen do not form villages or cities, though they do erect ceremonial structures on or near their Liferock. Obsidimen prefer to live outdoors, exposed to the sky. Obsidimen can live underground for short periods, but those who spend too many months in a dwarven city without traveling outside to the open sky fall into a hibernation-like state. Once carried outdoors again, the obsidimen will awaken in two to five days.

♦ **Dense:** Though not as large as trolls, obsidimen are much heavier, gaining a +2 bonus to Toughness.

♦ **Ponderous:** Though large, obsidimen are slow to act. Their Agility requires two points per step to raise during character generation and the character must dedicate two Advances to raising the attribute during game play.

♦ **Very Slow:** Obsidimen have a Pace of 4".



♦ **Strong:** Obsidimen have immense physical strength. They start with a d8 Strength attribute instead of a d4, and may raise it to a d12+2 via normal advancement; the Expert and Master advantages may raise it to a d12+4.

## ORK

Orks have a powerful build, averaging 6 feet 3 inches in height and 225 pounds in weight. Large lower canines protrude over their upper lip and their body hair has a coarse texture, almost always colored black or gray. Some orks appear nearly hairless, and head hair usually grows in sparsely but with the thickness of fine wire. Common skin colors include olive green, beige, pinkish-white, tan, and ebony.

Their ears are pointed, and about a quarter of the population show elongated ears. Natural life span for an ork averages 40 years, though some live 60 years or more. Orks reach their physical maturity in their early teens.

*Dwarfs pay well, but I don't like their attitude. Of course, I don't like most peoples' attitudes.*

—Kraeg Yelloweye, Cavalryman in service to the kingdom of Throal

Orks recognize only a loose concept of family, giving greatest loyalty to their tribe. Social organization within the tribe varies considerably, as orks often adopt social structures of the other races with whom they interact. Isolated tribes usually contain only two authority figures, however, the war-chief and the shaman. Most ork tribes live as nomads and willingly inhabit any kind of dwelling. They live in tents when with their own tribes.

♦ **Brawny:** Orks possess powerful builds, gaining a +1 bonus to Toughness.

♦ **Gruff:** Orks have little regard for tact, often coming across as gruff and bullying to other races, and so subtract 2 from their Charisma when engaging with non-orks.

♦ **Low Light Vision:** Ork eyes amplify light like a cat's, allowing them to see in the dark. Orks ignore attack penalties for Dim and Dark lighting.

♦ **Strong:** Orks are physically strong. They start with a d6 Strength attribute instead of a d4.



## TROLL

The average troll height is 8 feet 6 inches, and average weight is 500 pounds or more. Skin colors range from olive to mahogany-brown. Troll skin has a rough texture, increased by the ridges, spines, or plating resulting from deposits of *trolthelia*, a substance similar to the material in rhinoceros horn. Body hair is sparse except on the chest, and head hair grows considerably thicker and longer than human hair. Lower canines protrude from the mouths of a slight majority of trolls. The nose is broader than the human nose. Trolls exhibit fierce, aggressive personalities. The average natural life span is 50 years, though some trolls have lived into their seventies. Trolls reach physical maturity in their early teens.

*Take no back talk from anyone, not even an obsidiman. Stand for your word and make them stand for theirs. I generally make an exception for windlings. They fly like blazes, and their tongues move just as fast. Open confrontation just encourages them. It is best to wait until they sleep, then pop their puny heads off.*

—Larus Baldurion, crystal raider captain, making his traditional speech to a new crew

Trolls are fiercely loyal to their family or clan. Multiple clans can organize through the ritual of the trollmoot, gatherings of several clans whose leaders swear the loyalty of their clans to one another, but such unified action remains rare. Troll clans often war among themselves when other enemies are lacking. Trolls prefer to live in caves, ice caverns, or other natural geographic features. They find dwarven or elven settlements

more comfortable than human or ork communities, and have been known to camp around obsidimen connected to a Liferock.

Trolls find the serenity of the obsidimen calming and deeply moving. Their regard for the obsidimen mountains often prompts trolls to choose those sites for trollmoots.

♦ **Cumbersome:** Though large, trolls are less than graceful. Their Agility requires two points per step to raise during character generation and the character must dedicate two Advances to raising the attribute during game play.

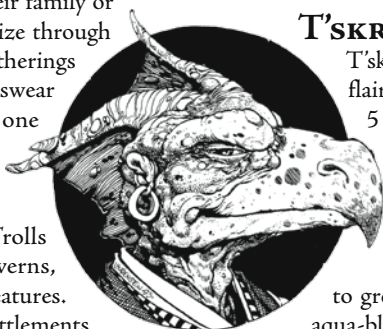
♦ **Honorable:** Trolls are known for their strong sense of honor. This acts as a Code of Honor (Hindrance); when a troll promises to do something, honor dictates he follows through.

♦ **Imposing:** Though not always true, the troll reputation of being barbaric raiders—though more likely their imposing stature, large horns, and tusks—means they aren't readily accepted by most non-troll races, who treat them as Outsiders (Hindrance).

♦ **Infravision:** Troll eyes are accustomed to the darkness of caves. They ignore attack penalties for Dim and Dark lighting.

♦ **Large-boned:** Though not quite as heavy as obsidimen, trolls are larger and gain a +2 bonus to Toughness.

♦ **Strong:** Trolls have immense physical strength. They start with a d8 Strength attribute instead of a d4, and may raise it to a d12+2 via normal advancement; the Expert and Master advantages may raise it to a d12+4.



## T'SKRANG

T'skrang are reptilian beings with a flair for the dramatic. They average 5 feet 9 inches tall, and their tails add another 6 feet of length.

T'skrang weigh an average of 200 pounds, of which nearly 40 is the tail. T'skrang skin color ranges from verdant green to green-yellow or green-blue, with aqua-blue and even sunset-red variants.

# CHAPTER 3: CHARACTERS

T'skrang have cauliflower-shaped ears set into the sides of their heads.

The t'skrang mature physically by the age of 10, and often live 80 or more years. The t'skrang talent for tale-telling casts doubt on their claims of a 181-year-old t'skrang, particularly because careful dwarven observations place the oldest known t'skrang at a mere 115. T'skrang scholars blame this variance on faulty dwarven calculations, which of course the dwarfs vigorously deny.

*The name of our people? Well, my Theran friend, there are many stories that tell that tale. For the true one, you must listen very carefully to the sound inside your helmet.*

*What? Oh, that's just my tail. Listen carefully, for the truth will soon be revealed.*

—From the transcript of the trial of the pirate Theormaz

T'skrang give primary loyalty to their families, though like humans, they can transfer this loyalty to tribes and nations. Some individuals pledge their loyalty to other races' societies, but pirate federations are the closest thing to a nation the t'skrang have built for themselves. Females lead t'skrang society, which is matriarchal in most aspects. T'skrang prefer to live in roofed dwellings along bodies of water, and submerge portions of their homes. T'skrang love to swim and immerse themselves in water, becoming sulky and irritable if unable to do so at least once a week.

T'skrang consider members of the other Namegiver races rather dull and boring. In turn, most other Namegiver races consider T'skrang overly flamboyant and somewhat frivolous. All races agree that each holds a unique and necessary place in the society of Barsaive, and so agree to disagree.

- ♦ **Exotic:** Though not always true, the t'skrang reputation of being river pirates—though more likely their exotic reptilian appearance—means they aren't readily accepted by most non-t'skrang races, who treat them as Outsiders (Hindrance).

- ♦ **Semi-Aquatic:** T'skrang can hold their breath for long periods of time. They gain a Fatigue level

every 15 minutes until Incapacitated, whereupon they must make a Vigor roll every minute to avoid drowning. Once back in air, lost Fatigue is recovered at one level per 15 minutes.

- ♦ **Swimmer:** T'skrang are born to swim and get a free d6 in the Swimming skill.

- ♦ **Tail Attack:** The long t'skrang tail allows them to tail slap in combat for Str+d6 damage as a 1" reach melee weapon.

## WINDLING

Windlings are small, winged creatures. They average 18 inches in height and weigh an average of 13 pounds. They fly using two double-wings, similar to a dragonfly's, made of a tough, iridescent membrane. A windling's skin color matches the brightest-colored elements of the environment in which it lives:

icy white in a snowcap, the yellow and orange of meadow flowers, the glazed blue of the ceramic roof-tiles of the city of Vewbane. Skin coloration only changes after a windling has lived in the same place for two or three months. Then, in the space of three nights, the windling's skin changes to match its current surroundings.

Windlings grow very little body hair, though their head hair can be luxurious. Their ears come to a sharper point even than elven ears. Windlings mature physically over 30 years, reaching a natural life span of 170 years. Their appearance does not age during this time.

*Whoooooooooooooooooooo!*

—Poorht the Thief, as he fled for his life after stealing Captain Larus Baldurion's dagger

Windling society can best be described as haphazard. Windlings often speak of a class of nobles who rule them. Though they will obey a direct order from a noble, the social hierarchy stops there. Windlings acting on orders from their queen cannot wield authority over other windlings by virtue of these orders, but may persuade other windlings to seek out the queen to determine for themselves that the orders are legitimate.





# EARTHDOWN PLAYER'S GUIDE

Windlings are happiest when living outdoors, taking shelter under or inside whatever nature can provide and windling magic make comfortable. Windlings can tolerate cities, but consider them a colossal waste of time and effort.

- ♦ **Astral Sight:** Once per day, windlings can use the Astral Sight Adept Edge (p. 167) as if they had spent a Karma Point on it. Windling Adepts may use this Edge when they want at the cost of 1 Karma Point per use.

- ♦ **Flight:** Windlings can fly, but not for long periods of time. They gain a Fatigue level every 15 minutes of flying until Incapacitated, whereupon they must make a Vigor roll every minute to avoid falling to the ground (possibly taking falling damage). Lost Fatigue is recovered at one level per 15 minutes of

rest. Windlings have a Flying Pace of 6" (it costs 2" of Pace to gain 1" of height).

- ♦ **Little Legs:** Windlings walking Pace is only 3".
- ♦ **Mystical:** Windlings are inherently mystical creatures. They start with a d6 in Spirit, instead of a d4.
- ♦ **Nimble:** Windlings begin with a d8 in Agility and may raise it to a d12+2 via normal advancement; the Expert and Master Edges may raise it to a d12+4.
- ♦ **Puny:** Windlings' Strength attribute requires two points per step to raise during character generation and the character must dedicate two Advances to raising the attribute during game play.
- ♦ **Small:** When they are active and moving, subtract 2 from attack rolls directed at the windling.
- ♦ **Tiny:** Windlings' tiny size gives them a -2 Toughness penalty.

## DISCIPLINES

*My discipline is more than simply my vocation, it is what I am. All that I am is because of my chosen discipline. It guides me through my life on this world.*

—Jerreck, Wizard of Lowilla

All characters in EARTHDOWN are Adepts, people able to use magic to power special abilities. In order to become an Adept, a character must choose a Professional Edge during character creation. **This Edge is free and becomes the character's Discipline**—also referred to in the rules as the character's **Discipline Edge**. In one sense, your character's Discipline is his profession, but it involves much more than that. A character's Discipline provides a metaphor for how he or she sees the world. For example, a Troubadour sees the world as a grand stage on which he can perform, while a Warrior sees the world as a vast battlefield on which he can fight for the causes he supports.

Though this Discipline Edge is free, the character must still meet the requirements for the Edge in order to choose it. This section lists and describes the available Discipline Edges (more information on each Discipline can be found in **Chapter 4: Adepts**, p. 50). Note that Disciplines are shown in Proper Case throughout these rules. For example, a warrior is anyone capable of wielding a weapon, while a Warrior is an Adept not just capable of using a weapon, but also able to use magic Adept Edges to surpass normal Namegiver limitations.

## GAME TERMS

Information in the following categories describes each Discipline and how to use it in the game.

### Karma Points

Each Discipline includes a free **Karma Ritual** Edge that allows characters of that Discipline to gain Karma Points. Each Discipline's Karma Ritual is a unique Edge. **Karma Points** are a special form of Bennies that are used to activate Adept Edges. Unless specifically noted in the Edge description, Karma Points cannot be used in place of Bennies (nor vice versa). For example, Karma Points cannot be used to reroll Soak rolls (though they could be used on an Adept Edge that allows the same thing).

The Karma Ritual Edge can only be used by a character with a Discipline Edge. Typical Karma Rituals associated with each Discipline appear with the descriptions of each Discipline. Players are encouraged to create unique Karma Rituals for their characters. The character must perform a Karma Ritual to receive Karma Points. The player does not need to make any rolls to perform the Karma Ritual—he or she always succeeds. Though they may vary in the details, each ritual generally

# CHAPTER 3: CHARACTERS

takes 30 minutes to complete. **Your character may perform his Karma Ritual only once per day.** On completing the ritual, the character rolls his Spirit die only (like damage rolls, no Wild die or Bennies, but the roll can Ace), gaining Karma Points equal to the result. A character can only have a maximum of 20 Karma Points at any one time, unless he has an Edge that increases it, like the Greater Karma Adept Edge (p. 179). Characters start play with Karma Points equal to their Spirit die.

## DISCIPLINE EDGES

The following descriptions are a new type of Professional Edge, known as Discipline Edges. **EARTHDAWN** characters are granted one of these Discipline Edges for free upon character creation. Because these are free Edges, they do not grant any bonuses to skills. Though these Professional Edges don't grant any specific game bonuses, they serve as an induction to the character's Discipline, as well as the requirements for new Adept Edges unique to these Disciplines.

## MULTIDISCIPLINING

While characters are not allowed to buy a new Discipline Edge to pick up a second Discipline during character creation, players are allowed to buy a new Edge to learn new Disciplines during the course of their **EARTHDAWN** campaign. However, picking up a second—or even third—Discipline is not as easy as simply purchasing a new Discipline Edge, even if you meet the requirements.

Each Discipline has its own rites of initiation and rituals of advancement, which must be administered by an experienced member of the Discipline in question (who must be at least 1 Rank above the character). This means that not only must the player be able to afford the new Discipline Edge, he must also find an appropriate trainer through roleplaying.

Some information on Multidisciplining and The Adept's Way is presented in **Chapter 4: Adepts** (p. 50). Game rules for Multidisciplining, Initiation, and Advancement Rituals will appear in the upcoming *Player's Companion*.

## Air Sailor Adept

**Requirements:** Agility d6+, Boating d6+

The Air Sailor Discipline is a variant of the Sky Raider Discipline. Air Sailors learn slightly different abilities, but basically consider themselves a less violent, less barbaric version of the stereotypical sky raiders. Many trading companies use air sailors as crew on their airships, as do the Therans.

♦ **Karma Ritual:** To begin his Karma Ritual, an Air Sailor must sit alone under the open sky in silent meditation for several minutes, picturing in his mind's eye his ship sailing through the clouds at the start of a long journey. The Air Sailor envisions a journey he hopes one day to make, for 30 minutes imagining scenes of this journey, including the risks and perils, and how his training and skill might help make the journey a safe one. The ritual is complete when the imagined journey ends.



## Archer Adept

**Requirements:** Agility d6+, Shooting d6+

An Archer learns the art of the bow. This Discipline stresses accuracy, and, to a lesser extent, speed. Most Archers show great perceptive powers, often noticing things that others miss.

♦ **Karma Ritual:** An Archer spends the first several minutes of the ritual oiling and stringing his bow. The Archer then meditates with the bow in front of him and all of his arrows fanned out beside him on the ground. At the end of the ritual, the Archer fires three arrows at a target, forming a rough triangle no more than a foot wide, then firing a fourth arrow into the center of the triangle. The ritual is complete as soon as the arrow strikes its target.



## Beastmaster Adept

**Requirements:** Beast Master

Beastmasters have a skill for working with animals. Many Beastmasters feel uncomfortable in large cities or towns, and prefer to live in the wild, far away from other people.

Beastmaster abilities often resemble animal powers. Edges of this Discipline can influence aquatic creatures, flying creatures, burrowing creatures, and surface dwellers. They work against enchanted creatures, such as the pegasus, as well as they do against an ordinary house-cat. Many do not work against people or other intelligent life. Most Beastmaster powers do not affect the undead, demonic creatures, elementals, or creatures that are constructs of the Horrors.

♦ **Karma Ritual:** The Beastmaster walks off a large circle, at least 20 yards in diameter, around the spot on which he or she last slept. The Beastmaster sits in the center of the circle and makes a silent, meditative call to the animals of the area. At the end of the ritual, at least one local animal approaches (but does not enter) the circle. The Beastmaster motions for one animal to enter the circle. The ritual is completed as soon as the animal enters the circle. If the Beastmaster performs this ritual in an area devoid of animals, this lack of response reduces the Karma available to the Beastmaster through this ritual to 2 less Karma Points than he or she would otherwise be allowed.



return to the target. Using only his almost psychic connection with his mount, the Cavalryman urges his mount to charge the target as soon as he closes to about 100 yards. Still blindfolded, the Cavalryman strikes the target to end the ritual.

♦ **Mount:** A Cavalryman begins the game with a riding horse or a similar mount appropriate to his race (p.84).

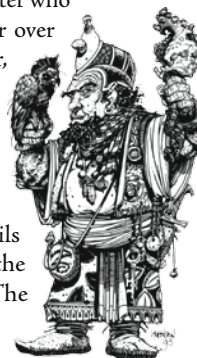


## Elementalist Adept

**Requirements:** Arcane Background (Elementalist) (p. 205), Knowledge (Arcana) d6+

An Elementalist is a spellcaster who learns about and gains power over the five magical elements: air, earth, fire, water, and wood.

♦ **Karma Ritual:** To perform a Karma Ritual, the Elementalist draws a triangle on the ground. Sitting in the triangle, the Elementalist boils a pot of water, singing to the fire to encourage its heat. The Elementalist extinguishes the fire, then adds earth to the pot. When the mud cools, the Elementalist covers his or her face with it like war paint, then sings to the wind, calling a small breeze. As the wind dries the mud, much of the mud cracks and blows away, leaving behind a series of intricate, swirling patterns. The ritual is complete as soon as the design is done.



## Cavalryman Adept

**Requirements:** Beast Bond, Riding d6+

Cavalrymen are fierce, mounted warriors. They train with their mounts and form an empathic bond with them. A Cavalryman often respects his mount more than other characters or people, excepting other Cavalrymen. This Discipline emphasizes motion and empathy for the characters' mounts.

♦ **Karma Ritual:** To perform his Karma Ritual, a Cavalryman plants a target in the ground, then rides his mount to a distance of several minutes away. When he reaches the proper distance, the Cavalryman blindfolds himself, and directs his mount to

## Illusionist Adept

**Requirements:** Arcane Background (Illusionist) (p. 205), Knowledge (Arcana) d6+

Illusionists cast spells that work through deception. Some Illusionist spells have real effects, however, because Illusionists learned long ago that if everything they did was an illusion, people caught on. Now they balance real magic, illusions, and sheer trickery or sleight of hand.



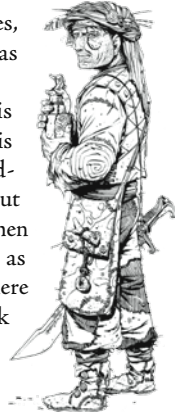
# CHAPTER 3: CHARACTERS

♦ **Karma Ritual:** Illusionists do not use the same Karma Ritual every time. Instead, their ritual simply requires them to incorporate certain elements every time: a lot of flashy, showy spells; tricks or snappy patter; and an assistant. The Illusionist must do his or her best to convince the assistant that the ritual is deadly serious and must conform to a precise formula. The ritual is complete at the end of half an hour.



travel guides in many large cities, working for individuals as well as trading companies.

♦ **Karma Ritual:** To begin his Karma Ritual, a Scout allows his companions to lead him, blindfolded, deep into the forest, about one-half hour's walk. The Scout then meditates for 10 to 15 minutes as he visualizes the route back to where he began. When he walks back and finds his starting point, the ritual is completed.



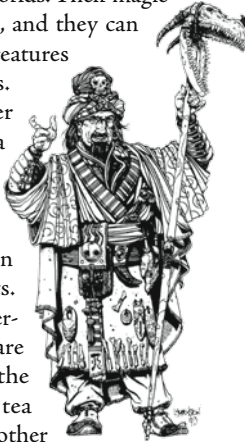
## Nethermancer Adept

**Requirements:** Arcane Background (Nethermancer) (p.205), Knowledge (Arcana) d6+

Nethermancers are spellcasters who specialize in the magic of the netherworlds. Their magic focuses on other planes, and they can access the spirits and creatures that inhabit those planes.

Most people consider Nethermancers to be a little "off" in an eerie sort of way, and most followers of this Discipline are unlikely to win many popularity contests.

♦ **Karma Ritual:** Nethermantic Karma Rituals are quiet affairs in which the Nethermancer drinks tea with a spirit servant or other otherworldly creature and talks of life beyond this world. The ritual ends as the Nethermancer drains the last drop from his second cup of tea.



## Sky Raider Adept

**Requirements:** Boating d6+, Fighting d6+

Sky Raiders form a potent force in Barsaive. Their sky ships raid all over the kingdom, most frequently targeting Therans or their vassals. Sky Raiders are proud, and show great loyalty to other Sky Raiders, unless that raider belongs to an enemy clan or moot.

♦ **Karma Ritual:** To perform his Karma Ritual, the Sky Raider spends several minutes in silent meditation beneath the open sky. The Sky Raider then begins to strike his or her shield with a weapon, slowly at first, perhaps two beats a minute. The striking accelerates until the Sky Raider is beating the shield at a furious rate. The drumming continues for 30 minutes. The ritual ends as soon as the sound from the last drumbeat dies away.



## Scout Adept

**Requirements:** Notice d6+, Stealth d4+, Tracking d6+

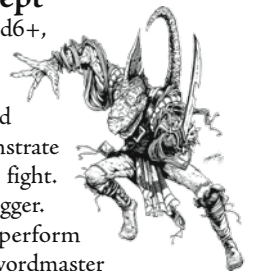
Scouts fill a unique role in adventuring groups in Barsaive. They work well with companions but better on their own, out ahead checking for the safest route. Scouts often accept employment as

## Swordmaster Adept

**Requirements:** Agility d6+, Fighting d6+, Taunt d4+

Swordmasters learn the value of a well-handled sword, training to demonstrate quickness and flash in a fight. Swordmasters often swagger.

♦ **Karma Ritual:** To perform his Karma Ritual, the Swordmaster



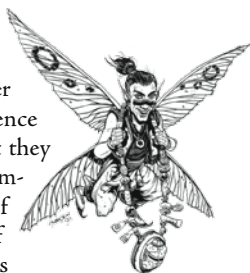
fences against imaginary opponents. He fights the first few duels as a series of silent, simple exercises. In the final duel of the ritual, the Swordmaster provides sound effects, acrobatic moves, and even swashbuckling dialogue. The ritual is completed when the last foe falls.

## Thief Adept

**Requirements:** Lockpicking d6+, Stealth d4+, Streetwise d4+

Thieves learn early to be self-reliant and how to steal. They draw power from their self-confidence and the knowledge that they must depend only on themselves. The abundance of rumors governing thief guilds means such groups do, in fact, exist, but the proof or disproof of their reality remains a secret.

♦ **Karma Ritual:** To perform his Karma Ritual, a Thief must sit by himself in a darkened area and concentrate on the knowledge that he is alone in the world and must rely first and foremost only on himself. With this firmly established in his heart and mind, the Thief then mimes picking a lock. The ritual ends as soon as the Thief successfully picks the lock.

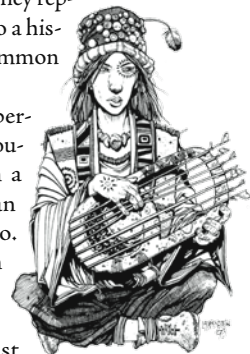


## Troubadour Adept

**Requirements:** Smarts d6+, Persuasion d6+

Troubadours serve as entertainers, storytellers, actors, and songsmiths. They represent the closest thing to a historian or scholar that common people usually see.

♦ **Karma Ritual:** To perform a Karma Ritual, Troubadours must perform a ballad or skit before an audience of at least two. The Troubadour can juggle, joke, tell tall tales, or sing serious legends. The Troubadour must finish the performance with



a story, ending the story with the phrase, "There it ends, for such is the truth of the thing." This completes the ritual.

## Warrior Adept

**Requirements:** Fighting d8+

Warriors are fighters trained to use magic to enhance their techniques. They often join other Warriors in groups called orders, living in seclusion in self-sufficient settlements similar to monastic orders.

♦ **Karma Ritual:** To perform his Karma Ritual, a Warrior sits cross-legged, holding a weapon above his knees. After a few minutes of meditation, he levitates slightly above the ground. The Warrior then performs a series of four exercises called the earth defense, the water defense, the fire attack, and the air attack. The ritual ends as soon as the Warrior completes the final move of the air attack.

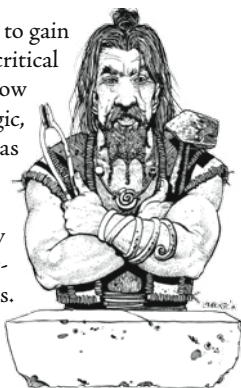


## Weaponsmith Adept

**Requirements:** Knowledge (Smithing) d6+, Repair d6+

A Weaponsmith trains to gain an iron will and a very critical eye. Weaponsmiths borrow a bit from elemental magic, and a bit from wizardry as well. Weaponsmiths help identify and create legendary weapons. Nearly every community in Barsaive values Weaponsmiths.

♦ **Karma Ritual:** To perform his Karma Ritual, the Weaponsmith beats a thin strip of metal in a hot fire or forge. From this he fashions the metal into a blade, arrowhead, or spear tip, but tempers the metal too soon, making it brittle. He then shatters the defective piece. The ritual ends the instant the piece breaks.



# CHAPTER 3: CHARACTERS

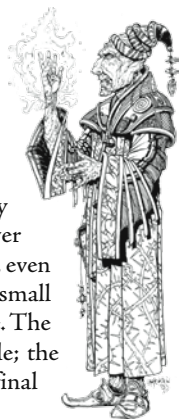
## Wizard Adept

**Requirements:** Arcane Background (Wizard) (p. 205), Knowledge (Arcana) d6+

Wizards are spellcasters well-trained in the theoretical aspects of magic. Those who follow other spellcasting Disciplines sometimes disparage Wizards as “book magicians,” but very few have the guts to call a Wizard that to his or her face.

♦ **Karma Ritual:** To perform a Karma Ritual, the Wizard draws a circle at least two yards in diameter, then inscribes a triangle within the circle. Making any corrections necessary for accuracy in drawing the circle, the Wizard then draws

another circle inside the triangle. Then a triangle within that circle, and so on. Soon the Wizard will be forced to create figures smaller than hand and stylus can possibly draw. He must use the power of magic to continue to draw, even when the results become too small to be seen with the naked eye. The sequence ends with a triangle; the ritual is complete once the final triangle is drawn.



## EQUIP YOUR CHARACTER

Your character needs equipment to adventure across Barsaive. Characters begin play with 120 silver pieces with which to purchase gear. Equipment available in *EARTHDAWN* is found in **Chapter 8: Gear** (p. 240).

Only two restrictions apply to purchasing gear. First, your character must be able to pay the entire

cost of the item(s) with his or her starting money. You cannot purchase equipment on credit, nor can you borrow money from other characters to make your purchases. Second, the Game Master must approve the equipment. As long as the Game Master okays your choices, you can buy any equipment you like.

## FLESH OUT YOUR CHARACTER

Now you know how your character fits into the game, but what kind of person is he or she? The following suggestions will help you flesh out your character and create a unique individual.

### PERSONALITY

An individual's personality defines how that person interacts with the world. Is he stubborn? Cynical? Cunning? Spiteful? Trustworthy? Larcenous? Altruistic? Characters run by both players and Game Masters can be defined the same way. The easiest way to define your character's personality is to assign him or her a number of personality traits. Personality traits are simply labels for the way a character acts and interacts with the world.

### Personality Traits

The Personality Traits List on p.44 shows examples of positive, neutral, and negative traits, which should help players and Game Masters begin forming their characters' personalities.

Choose one or two traits from the list, or make up one or two of your own. Make sure your Game Master approves them. If you find, later on, that you want to round your character out even further by adding another or several more traits, work with your Game Master to determine what caused your character to change.

### Personality and Discipline

Your character's Discipline can be an important element in his personality. As mentioned above and in the Disciplines section, choosing a character's Discipline is one of the most important decisions that a player makes. A character's Discipline provides a framework through which the character sees the world. An Archer might interpret a particular event in a completely different way than a Nethermancer or a Swordmaster.

**Chapter 4: Adepts** (p.50) provides guidelines for how characters of each Discipline interact with the world.



## PERSONALITY TRAITS LIST

Aggressive	Cowardly	Greedy	Loner	Reactionary
Aloof	Creative	Gullible	Loyal	Realistic
Altruistic	Cruel	Honorable	Lustful	Reasonable
Ambitious	Cunning	Humorless	Malcontent	Rebellious
Amoral	Curious	Idealistic	Manipulative	Reserved
Apprehensive	Cynical	Immature	Militant	Resourceful
Argumentative	Depraved	Immoral	Miserly	Rude
Astute	Dignified	Insightful	Mocking	Sadistic
Attentive	Disciplined	Insulting	Moral	Sarcastic
Bloodthirsty	Dishonest	Intellectual	Naive	Selfish
Bold	Drunkard	Intense	Obsessive	Sensitive
Charismatic	Easy-going	Intimidating	Opinionated	Sentimental
Chivalrous	Eloquent	Intolerant	Optimistic	Shrewd
Cold	Energetic	Introverted	Overbearing	Spontaneous
Compassionate	Extroverted	Intuitive	Paranoid	Superstitious
Compassionless	Fanatical	Irrational	Passionate	Suspicious
Condescending	Follower	Jealous	Patient	Sympathetic
Confident	Forgiving	Judgmental	Persuasive	Treacherous
Conniving	Friendly	Kind	Pragmatic	Vengeful
Conservative	Generous	Lazy	Protective	Witty
Courageous	Good-humored	Liar	Proud	
Courteous	Gracious	Logical	Rational	

One way to further strengthen the effect of your Discipline on your character is to select personality traits that fit with his Discipline. That is, the traits are more a representation of the character's Discipline than of his or her personality. Many of the Discipline descriptions use personality traits to create the "feel" of the Discipline. For example, the Discipline description describes Cavalrymen as "Fierce mounted warriors". Many people consider Nethermancers eerie and Sky Raiders proud. These simple examples demonstrate how personality traits can help define characters of a given Discipline.

Using these examples as a guide, select one or two traits that define your character's behavior as an Adept of his Discipline. For example, Archers are known to be perceptive individuals who stress accuracy both in their combat styles and in their lives. If your character is an Archer, you might choose Attentive and Deliberate as his personality traits. Roleplaying these traits allows you to express your Archer's desire for accuracy in all aspects of his life.

## CHARACTER HISTORY

Once you establish your character's personality, decide what made him or her that way. An easy way to do that is by answering the sorts of questions authors and readers might ask about a character in a story.

You may decide this information is not all that important that is certainly acceptable. However, the more of these questions you answer, the better handle you will have on your character. Besides, this gives you a chance to answer these questions in ways you never would, or could, in real life.

### What is your character's sex?

Whether your character is male or female can make a difference. T'skrang females hold most of the political power in their communities. In dwarf, human, ork, and elven lands, power is usually distributed fairly evenly between men and women. Trolls perpetuate a male-dominated society. Obsidimen and windlings tend to think most gender roles are pretty silly.

# CHAPTER 3: CHARACTERS

## How large (or small) is your character?

Are you of average size for your race? Stout? Tall? Skinny? Could anybody but another obsidiman tell a skinny obsidiman when he saw one?

## What color is your character's hair, eyes, and skin?

The "norms" appear in **Major Races of Barsaive** (p. 34), but the standard should not limit your choices. Personal appearance and style is finally beginning to be accepted again. During the Scourge, conformity was important. If everyone acted and dressed in a similar way, then people could be reasonably sure that the guy with the flame-red eyes wasn't just making a fashion statement. Life is better now; personal freedom and freedom of expression are on the rise. Of course, some guys with flame-red eyes are still not doing it just to match the rubies on their dagger handles. What color is your character's hair? How does he or she wear it? What color are your character's eyes? Skin? Does he or she have any markings or decorative tattoos? What is your character's general appearance? What would be someone's first impression of your character? Does the character dress stylishly or conservatively? Does the character follow the dwarven modes of fashion now popular in Barsaive or reject them for something different? Is your character attractive? Intimidating? Approachable? Does your character slouch, walk gracefully, or march as if always on patrol?

## Where was your character born?

Your character's race can be the determining factor of where he or she was born. Troll clans tend to live in mountain ranges, while elves come from forests and jungles. T'skrang are native to the Serpent River area. Most dwarfs come from the kingdom of Throal. Humans and arks grow up nearly everywhere, as do obsidimen. Is your elf from a village or town near Blood Wood, or from a forest in the southern part of Barsaive? Is your troll a Sky Raider from the Crystal Peaks or from one of the other mountain ranges? Does your character even remember where he was born? Some ork scorcher tribes roam all over the land, never staying in one place for more than two or three months. Which area of forest does your windling come from? Take a look at the map of Barsaive (p. 278) and **Chapter 10: Barsaive** (p. 270) for specific ideas.

## How old is your character?

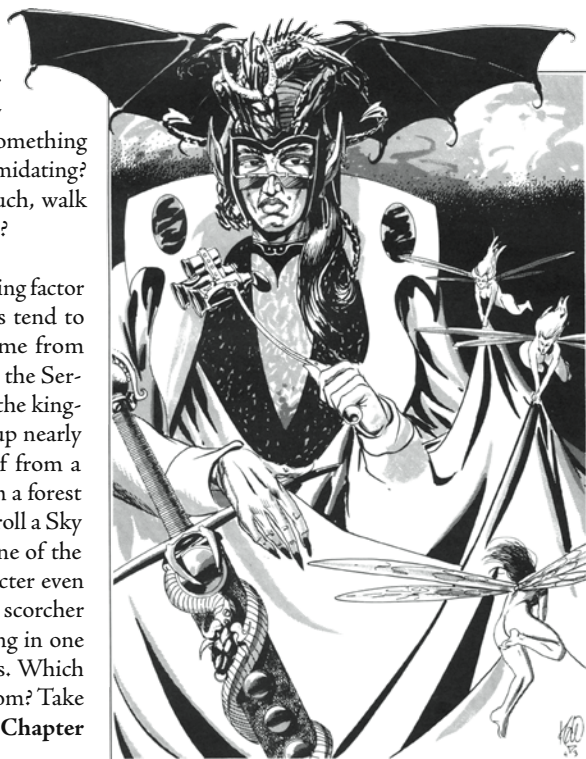
The Scourge ended a hundred years ago, though somewhat sooner in a few areas. Are you young enough that the Scourge seems like ancient history? Are you old enough to remember living in a sealed kaer or citadel?

## Does your character have a family?

What is your character's family like? Does he have any siblings? Are his mother and father still alive? What do they think of their child's lifestyle? What about the rest of the family? Are they poor, middle-income, wealthy? Are they pillars of the community, or are they working to knock those pillars down? Has your character begun his own family? If not, does he or she want to start one? Does the rest of your character's family want him to settle down and start one?

## What are your character's spiritual beliefs?

**Chapter 9: Religion** (p. 259) describes the Passions that most citizens of Barsaive worship. Your character could be an atheist, but in the world of





Barsaive, where the Passions walk the earth, such an attitude would seem mighty weird. Does your character worship any of the Passions? Does your character lean more toward one Passion than the others? Are there one or more Passions your character wants nothing to do with?

#### **What is your character's moral code?**

Under what conditions will your character kill? Steal? Lie? Does he or she adhere to a personal code of ethics about violence? Sex? The Horrors? Would your character ever make a deal with a Horror? Even if he was certain he could get away

with it? What special qualities does your character possess? Can your character put a deal together that even dwarfs would envy? Does he or she have a knack for spotting unusual jewelry? Does your character see the quest through, no matter what it takes? Does he get along with members of other races? What is it your character simply cannot do? Does gold slip through your character's fingers? Does your character find it impossible to pass up a chance to get that really interesting magic item? Does your character freeze during the first moments of a romantic encounter? Does your character panic

## **HIDDEN AND SURFACE TRAITS**

**Optional Rule:** Most characters act in a manner that fits with their chosen personality traits. That is, their personality traits really describe how they act; they have few or no secrets to hide. For players and Game Masters who want to add a little more depth to their characters, we recommend the following option. EARTHDAWN characters can have two types of personality traits: **surface** and **hidden**.

The **surface traits** are a character's public face, what everyone but his most intimate companions sees him to be. For some characters, the surface trait is a vital part of their personality. They act and think in that manner most of the time. For other characters, however, the surface trait serves as a facade, a mask worn to conceal their real nature or their hidden traits. The character's **hidden traits** should only rarely come to the surface. These secret traits provide the character's true motivation, define the character's view of the world, and determine how the character goes about achieving his or her long-term goals. Hidden traits will also color a character's interaction with others.

Game Masters who decide to use this option should allow their players to give their characters at least one surface trait and one hidden trait. While multiple traits certainly create more believable characters, they create greater roleplaying challenges. The demands of certain traits may begin to conflict with other traits. It's hard enough being a real human being and trying to work through these conflicts without worrying about acting them out for the character, too.

*Jill decides to give her windling a surface trait of compassionate, which it demonstrates by living out the tenets of the Beastmaster Discipline. Everyone who meets this character recognizes the importance of respecting all living creatures and follows the windling's shining example. Jill chooses to make her windling secretly sensitive, as easily hurt by careless comments and thoughtless remarks as by deliberate cruelty and malevolent ill-will. The character's serene and friendly demeanor rarely gives away what it feels inside.*

## **Balancing Hidden and Surface Traits**

Though the hidden trait may technically be the dominant trait, subtly guiding your character through life, it must remain hidden. Game Masters who notice a character frequently performing overt actions based on his or her hidden trait should warn the player that the hidden traits are threatening to become the surface traits.

If the character continues to express the "hidden" traits openly, the Game Master can rule that the character's original surface traits no longer exist, and that the hidden traits are now the surface traits. The character loses a number of surface traits equal to the number of hidden traits that have come to the surface. At this point, the player must decide whether to choose new hidden traits for the character or to simply accept the new surface traits as the whole of the character's personality.





# CHAPTER 3: CHARACTERS

under stress? Does your character speak his mind at all the wrong times?

## What does your character love?

Throal? Living in the Caucavic Mountains? The smell of ginger tea? Ale and good tavern talk? The bustle of a busy market? Finding just the right way to finish off a spell? A clever comment? Another person?

## What does your character hate?

The Therans? Those stuck-up dwarfs? Nethermancers who do icky things to animals? Gate guards who ask personal questions? Kings who think they can order you around? Slow service? Assassins who just haven't got the sense to leave you alone? Game designers who ask lots of questions?

## What is your character's name?

Your character's name is very important. In the world of EARTHDAWN, the names of people, places, and things have meaning and power. If your character often stares at others with a stem, cold look, he might be named Icestare or Shivereyes. Was your character born with the same name he uses now? Is his current name a nickname? If so, who gave it to him?

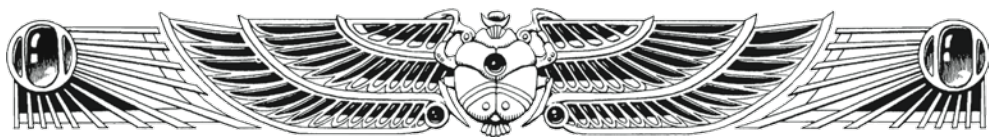
Jill names her windling Beastmaster Geeble, and decides that she is female. Born near the Liaj Jungle, Geeble spent most of her formative years in that area with her family and other members of a small windling community. Because a dragon is said to lair in the Liaj, many people speculate about the windling's relationship to that powerful creature. The only thing unusual about Geeble is her name. Her physical appearance is absolutely average for her race and age, which is 40. People rarely give her a second glance, but as soon as she commands their attention, they wonder how they managed to miss noticing this incredibly charismatic individual. People who encounter Geeble out of her natural setting—any undeveloped area of Barsaive—consider her a rather flighty, nervous creature. Communities of any size have that effect on the windling. Anyone meeting her even a day's walk away from a settlement meets an entirely different person. When surrounded by nature rather than buildings, Geeble's natural, innocent curiosity about everything around her rises to the surface. The tenets of her Discipline



shine through every aspect of her life, usually prompting others by example to show a deep respect to all animals. She also sees the whimsical side of her Discipline, and often uses her abilities to amuse and amaze children by establishing a rapport with their pets. Only her closest companions realize that Geeble is a very sensitive person. Though easily hurt by disparaging, careless remarks, unreasoning prejudice, and people's genuine lack of concern for their fellow beings, Geeble hides all the small hurts she feels. Only mistreatment of animals through ignorance or deliberate cruelty can provoke her to physical retaliation, and she never fails to somehow punish those responsible. Geeble manages her finances very badly through a combination of her dislike of cities and her innate belief that nature will provide. She always allows others to handle her supply needs, and good-naturedly assumes that she often gets cheated to some degree. She loves her lifestyle too well to change her philosophy about money.

Congratulations! You've completed your character. Finish filling out your character sheet.

Your character stands ready to become a hero of the world of EARTHDAWN.



# CHAPTER 4: ADEPTS

*A hero is just a villain with more people on his side.*  
—Valatra the Troubadour

This chapter describes the most common Disciplines found in Barsaive, dissecting the philosophical

views that allow them to tap into the raw magic of the universe and power their amazing abilities.

## ON THE COMPILATION OF THE ADEPT'S WAY

This text, *The Adept's Way*, is the latest offering from the Great Library of Throal in our continuing series exploring the nature of Barsaive through the eyes and voices of its people. This volume attempts to answer the vital question, “What is the nature of the Adept's Way?”, through personal testimonies of Adepts who follow the most common Disciplines practiced in Barsaive. Indeed, we can only answer that question through personal accounts, for the true meaning of following a Discipline in present-day Barsaive is different for every Adept. *The Adept's Way* is a collection of essays written or dictated by Adepts of each of the fifteen Disciplines most commonly practiced in Barsaive, in which the author describes how he sees his Discipline: its meaning, its demands, its symbols and rituals, and so on. Because we recognize that this book offers only one point of view for each Discipline, we encourage other Adepts to read these passages and offer their own comments and insights. The Master of the Hall of Records and the staff of the Great Library have also added comments where appropriate.

### CONCERNING DISCIPLINES EXCLUDED FROM THIS VOLUME

When Barsaivians speak of Adepts, they usually mean a person who follows the most common Disciplines: the Air Sailor, Archer, Beastmaster, Cavalryman, and all the others in this book. Other Adepts practice other Disciplines in our land with equal devotion, however. One's practice of the Adept's Way is tied tightly to one's view of the world, and so

there may be as many Disciplines as there are ways of seeing. Indeed, our assiduous research here at the library shows that each of the Namegiver races except for humans has developed Disciplines peculiar to Adepts of that race: the Traveled Scholar among dwarfs, the Woodsman among elves, the Purifier among obsidimen, the Liberator among orks, the Outcast Warrior among trolls, the Boatman among t'skrang, and the Wind-dancer, Windmaster, and Windscout among windlings. Many Adepts view these racially oriented Disciplines as less significant than others, but no justification for that opinion can be found. All of these—and an infinite number that we have yet to discover—are true Disciplines whose practitioners adhere to the same ideals as do followers of the core Disciplines discussed in this volume. Unfortunately, a discussion of racially specific and less common Disciplines lies beyond the scope of this volume.

### THE LEGEND OF THE FIRST HEROES

As a conclusion to this introduction, I leave the reader with one version of the legend of the First Heroes, which tells of the origins of the Adept's Way. Much as each race has a distinct version of the origins of life, each Discipline tells a traditional version of the origins of the Adept's Way.

For this story we must travel back to the beginning of time. The world had not yet been Named, for it had just been formed, created of Upandal's forge. In fact, it was still cooling, making it a hot



# CHAPTER 4: ADEPTS



and uncomfortable place for the races we now call the Namegivers. I phrase it so, for at this time our ancestors had not learned the secrets of Namegiving. They had not learned magic. They had not learned to make clothing, or grow food, or produce weapons for the hunt, or even to speak to one another. These poor folk had been created by an accident of some sort: some say our ancestors were born of Lochost's tears or the blood of Thystonius.

At any rate, they suffered terribly. Their unclothed feet burned when they walked on the still-fiery ground. Their bellies ached with hunger. Their mouths cracked with thirst. Garlen wished with all of her being to nurture these new and pathetic creatures, but the other Passions refused her wishes. The other Passions were divided and had argued themselves to a standstill. Some felt that these new creatures marred the perfection of Upandal's creation. Others found the sufferings of these new beings interesting, and proposed that their condition merited further study. The Passions debated long and hard and came to no conclusion.

But among each of the eight races there was a brave hero. Each hero had tried to make life better

for his or her race, but none had succeeded. Then these eight heroes gathered together and swore an oath to cooperate until, as a group, they discovered the secrets of living. Because they had tried to find the secrets of living in their world and had failed, the eight heroes knew they must try elsewhere. The eight heroes hatched a plan; they would sneak into the hall of the Passions in the sky and steal from their treasure vaults the secrets of living.

The eight heroes began by stealing the stars from the sky. From these they built a ladder, which they used to climb to the Passions' hall. Now the Passions knew that the eight heroes planned to invade their hall, so they prepared eleven ingenious trap rooms, one designed by each Passion. Garlen did not prepare a trap, for she was on the side of the Namegivers-to-be.

As soon as the heroes passed safely through the traps (for which Garlen rejoiced), they divided their group to accomplish separate tasks. The human, elf, dwarf, and windling heroes made their way to the vault where the secrets of living were stored. The others traveled to the debating room where the Passions still argued. The obsidiman, troll, ork, and



# EARTHDOWN PLAYER'S GUIDE

t'skrang heroes distracted the Passions while the first group gathered up the secrets of living.

As the eight attempted to flee the hall, they were seized by the Passion who has now become Dis. As the Passions debated how to slay the eight heroes for their effrontery, Garlen interceded and freed the heroes to return to their races with their stolen prize. The eight gave the secrets of living to all the races: the secret of the bow, of the plough, of the corn seed, of working metal, of defense against monsters, of taming beasts, of Namegiving, and many more secrets besides. The people on Upandal's world now knew how to live and how to survive in order to pass these secrets onto their sons and daughters.

When the Passions beheld the actions of the eight heroes and saw that they acted out of generosity rather than treachery, they were greatly moved. They summoned the eight heroes back to their hall, this time as honored guests. They announced that they were so impressed by the heroes' abilities, virtue and courage that they would reward the heroes with the Passions' final secret, that of the Adept's Way. They revealed to the eight heroes the secret of plucking fantastic abilities from the air, of performing great deeds of heroism, and of teaching these things to others. The eight heroes who stole the secrets of living from the Passions became the first Adepts.

—Merrox, Master of the Hall of Records, 1506 TH

## TO LIVE LIFE AS AN ADEPT

*This introductory essay by Ilkith Fandor, Troubadour and Weaponsmith Adept, speaks of matters pertaining to all Disciplines. As an Adept of multiple Disciplines, and having used his versatility to learn abilities of still other Disciplines, Fandor (in the Library's judgment) possesses unique qualifications to address the common elements of all Adepts' lives. At my request, his essay also includes a brief discussion of multiple Disciplines, which seemed logically to belong in this opening document.*

—Presented for the edification of the reader by Derrat, Wizard of Yistaine, 1506 TH

I embark upon the writing of this manuscript with a heart full of awe, at the honor of my commission from the Great Library of Throal and the grave responsibility that honor places squarely on my shoulders. To increase the store of knowledge available to us all is an act of virtue, particularly now that we must struggle to piece together knowledge lost during the Scourge. And yet, if my part in this endeavor is to be worth the ink and parchment spent on it, I must address fully and accurately a truth that for centuries has resisted being defined in general terms. A common perspective and philosophy does exist for all Adepts in Barsaive, and yet the key to understanding our common experience is the intimate, individual bond between each Namegiver and the magical fabric of the world. Each Adept's experience is unique; there is no single way of practicing any Discipline. The Adept becomes inextricably interwoven with his Discipline, so that no clear boundary remains between his inner nature and the outer world. To be an Adept is the profoundest

possible expression of identity, yet it also demands submission to tradition and the most basic patterns of our existence. Like anything truly magical, the heart of the Adept's Way is paradox.

My qualifications for this task are as follows. Though my home now lies in Throal, I have lived in many places. I am an Adept, and that identity



is as much a part of me as my heart or my lungs. I practice two Disciplines, the Troubadour and the Weaponsmith, and so know first-hand the peculiar challenges of fully embracing seemingly disparate ways of magical thought. I have also used my race's unique ability to learn the abilities of other Disciplines, and so understand at least the rudiments of many other Adepts' ways. In all these many ways, I know the shared experiences of all Adepts as well as I know my own mind and soul. I believe I can say some truth of what makes an Adept, how we balance our separate selves with the established traditions of our Disciplines, and what happens when we bend those traditions too far.

*Ilkith's view of the Adept's Way, though learned from experience, is still only one person's view. The careful reader should think on Ilkith's words, not merely accept them as established fact.*

—Merrox, Master of the Hall of Records

## ON DISCIPLINE AND IDENTITY

When a Namegiver becomes an Adept, he steps onto a path that will change him forever. The Adept acquires new and wondrous abilities that make ordinary folk gasp with amazement or quail in fear, but this external change is the least part of the Adept's transformation. Many young Adepts embark upon a Discipline thinking simply to learn these abilities, but they soon find they cannot wield these powers without first changing their hearts and minds. The Adept's Way is much more than a collection of mysterious powers. It is a way of thinking, of seeing, of connecting to others and to the world. The powers that the uninitiated so admire and envy are a mere incidental benefit of the Disciplines we follow. Using our abilities connects us in the deepest way with our inner patterns—and it is the connection, not the ability, that is the heart of life as an Adept. To a practitioner of the Warrior Discipline, striking an opponent with a

weapon is more than a way to bring that opponent to heel. It is the ultimate declaration of his deepest magical self. In successfully using an ability of his Discipline, he briefly becomes one with the eternal truths of creation.

An outside observer may see followers of different Disciplines using what appears to be the same ability; rest assured that each Adept experiences those abilities in utterly different ways. When a Warrior strikes an opponent with a weapon, he is infused with a primal understanding of force as a means of triumph over others. If I strike an opponent through my Weaponsmith Discipline, I experience a revelation about the nature of the sword I am wielding and all swords in general. My opponent may see no meaningful distinction between my hitting him and a Warrior hitting him, but the Warrior and the Weaponsmith experience the act in vastly different ways.

## ON INDIVIDUALITY AND THE ADEPT'S WAY

Being an Adept involves more than simply adhering to a clear and obvious list of rules. There is no one way to be a Weaponsmith, a Troubadour, or any other kind of Adept. Instead, the Adept must be true to a personal vision of his Discipline. The legends of the great Weaponsmiths and Troubadours inspire me, but I am not bound to mimic their behavior. I must forge my own path, or I am no true Adept. I must find my path within myself, remaking my chosen Discipline to fit my own heart and soul.

Of course, this vision of one's Discipline does not come from nothing, nor is it infinitely mutable. No sane person can believe it is possible to be a pacifist Warrior, or a Beastmaster who loathes animals. Indeed, no pacifist or animal-hater would ever seek out those Disciplines. Nor can the Adept change his vision of his Discipline on a whim, or for expediency. How we see our Disciplines shapes who we are, and determines how we act. If a Cavalryman has always thought of his Discipline as a union





between himself and his mount, he cannot easily abandon his horse in the heat of combat. But a Cavalryman who understands his Discipline by dominating his mount and forcing it to do his will might treat any mount as expendable and suffer no penalty. Of course, such a Cavalryman will not easily inspire extraordinary loyalty from any mount. One's self-chosen definition of the Adept's Way always has costs as well as benefits.

Training a Namegiver to tread the Adept's path means teaching the student to think like an Adept, and so an Adept's teacher has an incalculable influence on the student's vision of his Discipline, especially when the student first begins learning the way. Many of my own deepest beliefs about my place in this world and in my Discipline were given to me by the teachers who initiated me. Like students of any Discipline, I took all of my master's pronouncements as distilled and unquestionable truth for a time; and though I have found my own truths beyond those first lessons, the early principles taught to me form the foundation upon which all my later understanding of both my Disciplines rests to this day.

Other pieces of our individual lives are vital as well. Childhood stories about the great Adepts of Barsaive's past, seeing or hearing of the deeds performed by an Adept in a neighboring village, proverbs and parables about the workings of our magical world all help to form one's ideas of how the followers of a particular Discipline should act. Without those early thoughts and yearnings, I would not have followed the path that brought me to where I am. And as it has been with me, so it is with all the other Adepts of Barsaive. We all understand our

Disciplines through the frame of what we bring to them, as well as through what they are.

## ON BECOMING AN INITIATE

To become a successful initiate requires two qualities that rarely appear together in Namegiver souls: openness to new experience, and the ability to dedicate oneself to a specific way of living. I have tried and failed to teach more than one prospective initiate who simply could not grasp the combination of questioning and acceptance necessary to embark upon the Adept's path. A certain degree of physical soundness also seems necessary, possibly because one needs strength to deal with the magical energies of abilities. Whatever the reason, those whose True Patterns are marred by serious illness or infirmity cannot become Adepts. Taking the physical and mental requirements together, I estimate that only one of every twenty Namegivers has the wherewithal to step onto the path of the Adept's Way. Even fewer actually succeed in following their chosen Discipline.

Teaching can take time, but initiation is swift. Whether learning a whole new Discipline or learning a new ability within a Discipline, Adepts learn through sudden, dazzling flashes of insight as magic floods into their True Patterns. This relative ease of learning is one of the prime advantages Adepts enjoy over those who do not walk the Adept's Way. Many of the abilities an Adept displays can be learned through mundane means, but such lessons are learned slowly and painstakingly by comparison. The path of the Adept blends practical and magical insight, hastening the learning process by teaching the spirit as well as the mind and body.

In many cases, initiation rituals subject the would-be Adept to sudden shocks—physical, mental, or both—in order to stimulate profound insight. I have known Adepts who have used such varied ritual devices as intoxicating or noxious substances, dream exploration, the playing of ecstatic music, fasting, meditation, mind-bending riddles and even physical torture. All of these new experiences are intended to open the initiate to new ways of perceiving the world. Through his new perception, the initiate's mind and spirit can connect to the heart of his Discipline, and this connection becomes a permanent part of the new Adept's True Pattern.

## DISCIPLINE RANKS

In EARTHDOWN, Adepts are sometimes referred to by their Discipline Rank: Initiate, Novice, Journeyman, etc. These equate to SAVAGE WORLDS character Ranks, as follows:

Earthdown Rank	Savage Worlds Rank
Initiate	Novice
Novice	Seasoned
Journeyman	Veteran
Warden	Heroic
Master	Legendary







## CHAPTER 4: ADEPTS

### ON INITIATING OTHER ADEPTS

Each of us leaves his own mark on the Disciplines we practice by initiating other would-be Adepts. Though the practitioners of some Disciplines jealously guard their secrets, most Adepts see teaching others as a way of perpetuating their own spirits beyond death. I am forever marked by the teachings of my masters, to which I have added the accumulated wisdom of my own experience. When I pass my knowledge on to prospective Weaponsmiths and Troubadours, I give them a part of myself and a part of my master as well—and also a part of my master's master, my master's master's master, and so on. In this way, the True Pattern of each Adept is bound to the True Pattern of the original practitioner of his Discipline, though the name of that ancient worthy may now be lost in the fog of time.

One must choose carefully whom to teach, and whom to initiate. No Adept wishes to stain his inner vision by initiating an unsuitable candidate. In these days of adventure and exploration, one

rarely ventures into a new place without drawing a crowd of eager young bravos wishing to be taught the Adept's Way. Most of these I reject after a few moments of conversation because they do not truly wish to learn my Disciplines, but rather any Discipline. I wish to teach those who are born to be Troubadours or Weaponsmiths, who truly love the song or the anvil. Those whose heads are filled with dreams of gold or other petty goals must find other masters to train them.

Adepts of other Disciplines who wish to learn mine are often no more suitable initiates than raw village youths. Many think only of a particularly useful ability they wish to acquire, and forget that they must first learn a new vision of the world. For others, the vision of their current Discipline is utterly incompatible with any possible vision of the Discipline they wish to learn. In my own case, I spent many months persuading my second master to teach the methodical, demanding Discipline of the Weaponsmith to what she perceived as a

### DISCIPLINE VIOLATION

Adepts who suffer from a Discipline violation cannot gain any Karma until they have atoned.

Because an Adept's power depends upon him acting in accordance with his mystical world view, mentally straying too far from that world view causes the Adept to lose his usual complete control of his abilities. This phenomenon, known as a Discipline crisis, usually occurs when an Adept knowingly and freely behaves in a manner contrary to his personal vision of his Discipline. In the wake of such actions, Adepts often feel that their abilities are slipping away. Sometimes they simply feel as if they have lost their edge.

Game Masters enforcing Discipline violation rules should make sure that characters' personal visions include prohibitions that will make a difference in play. Keep in mind that a personal vision is an Adept's core belief, not just a list of minor habits. A Warrior who vows never to harm a helpless foe is taking on a real restriction; a Wizard who has sworn never to eat carrots is obviously the creation of a player seeking to avoid any serious limitations.

### Discipline Violation Table

Severity	Duration of Crisis
Trivial	Not applicable
Mild	10 rounds
Serious	1 hour
Severe	1 day
Heinous	Until Deed of Atonement accomplished

When the Game Master feels that a player character has violated his or her personal vision or the basic tenets of his Discipline, the Game Master must determine the severity of the violation, and should tell the player that the penalty is in force; Adepts always recognize a Discipline crisis.

The penalty does not begin immediately after the violation, but manifests the next time the character tries to gain Karma. However, because Adepts instinctively know when they have violated their personal visions, they immediately become anxious, feel guilty, suffer slight nausea, and so on. If players do not acknowledge that their characters have violated their personal visions, the Game Master should take the initiative and state that the characters are experiencing feelings of this kind.



The duration depends on the severity of the violation. Use the Discipline Violation Table as a guideline.

The intent of the rule is to add depth to the world of EARTHDOWN, not to serve as a mechanism for Game Masters to impose their idea of roleplaying on players. In keeping with the spirit of the rule, Game Masters should not penalize player characters for Trivial violations such as making a statement contrary to the character's personal vision. Also, if a character has little or no choice but to violate his or her vision, the Game Master should take that into consideration.

*Somok Nightsails—an unforgiving and uncompromising Sky Raider—mumbles an apology to someone he bumps into on the street, thus committing a Trivial violation of his personal vision. Later, he bumps into a known enemy while wearing a disguise; he again mutters an apology, committing a Mild violation. The memory of the incident rankles for a while, dulling his overall performance. Some days later, he steals something by stealth, seriously violating his personal vision of his Discipline. Nightsails now begins to feel a gnawing sensation of guilt, dulling his performance further. Months afterward, Nightsails backs down in the face of a challenge from a known enemy. This act is a Severe violation; he has betrayed*

*his beliefs, and finds it hard to concentrate. For a full day, he can hardly function as a Sky Raider. The next day he refuses a challenge from his most despised foe, committing a Heinous violation. This incident comes to dominate his every thought and keeps him from sleeping at night.*

## Deeds of Atonement

If a character commits a Heinous violation of a personal vision, the resulting Discipline violation remains in effect until the Adept makes a successful attempt to redeem his or her mistake through a Deed of Atonement. The Deed should involve inconvenience, embarrassment, and risk appropriate to the violation. The player should create an appropriate Deed of Atonement for his character's violation, and the Game Master must decide if the chosen Deed is sufficient to end the Discipline violation.

*To make up for backing down from his sworn foe, Somoks' Deed of Atonement requires him to seek out his enemy and confront him in a fight to the death.*

When Adepts with multiple Disciplines violate one of their personal visions, the Karma penalty applies only to abilities of the Discipline pertaining to that vision.

callow, carefree Troubadour. Only after I proved my dedication through a prolonged, mundane apprenticeship in my master's shop did she permit me the honor of initiation. For a young adventurer already pursuing an exciting and profitable career, such as I was then, this humbling was a high price to pay. But my knowledge of the way of the Weaponsmith has been well worth that cost in the decades since.

Experience also has taught me that most Adepts are as cautious as was my second master when approached by humans who wish to employ their versatility to learn a ability or two of another Discipline. My race is blessed with a natural affinity for flexible thinking, allowing us to learn enough of the bare rudiments of any vision to wield any ability, but many Adepts, especially those of other

races, view our adaptability as unseemly. To convince an Adept to teach him a single ability or two, a human must often pass a moral test or perform some onerous service.

## ON THE PHENOMENON OF THE DISCIPLINE CRISIS

An Adept who fails an attempt to use an ability because he has somehow violated his own concept of his Discipline is said to be experiencing a Discipline crisis. To activate his magical abilities under normal circumstances, an Adept must concentrate fully on his vision of his Discipline, creating a moment of intense concentration during which he channels magical energy through his True Pattern. This energy allows the Adept to perform the



great abilities that distinguish him from ordinary folk. When an Adept experiences doubts about his vision of his path, he finds it difficult to achieve the state of mind necessary to successfully connect to his True Pattern.

I speak not of a momentary failure of confidence such as any Namegiver may feel, but of profound doubts arising through actions that are clearly at odds with an Adept's vision of his Discipline. For example, a Warrior who defines her way as courage in the face of adversity may find it impossible to use her abilities after fleeing a battlefield. A Thief who holds selfishness as the hallmark of his Discipline may fail at thieving after performing an altruistic deed. A Discipline crisis may strike even when the Adept has rationalized a transgression to fit his view of his Discipline, because the heart and spirit, rather than the mind, truly decide the meaning of such actions. The severity of a Discipline crisis depends on the degree to which the Adept has parted from his vision. Most often, the crisis is minor and manifests as a lack of Adept Edge use in a tight spot. In rare and extreme cases, however, an Adept may lose all of his abilities until he somehow makes amends for breaking with his self-chosen code.

## ON THE ACQUISITION OF MULTIPLE DISCIPLINES

The Adept who wishes to follow multiple paths simultaneously undergoes a continual challenge. In order to pursue more than one Discipline, one must not only persuade a master to perform the necessary second initiation, but must also acquire the knack of seeing the world through multiple prisms of thought. The new Discipline chosen cannot be completely at odds with the vision the Adept has already developed for his current Discipline. If the visions are too different, the would-be initiate cannot acquire the new Discipline, no matter how much effort he devotes to the task.

I once knew a Swordmaster who defined his Discipline as the art of poking holes in high-flown ideals with his wit and the point of his blade. He sought to become a Beastmaster, and tried to learn the Discipline from an Adept who taught his students to show the deepest respect for all living

things. My sardonic friend found himself incapable of this degree of seriousness, and so failed to learn the Beastmaster Discipline. Yet I have known other Adepts who practiced both those Disciplines simultaneously, succeeding where my friend could not because they learned different visions of these paths.

The compatibility of Disciplines has no hard and fast rules; it depends upon the individual.

Nor may the vision of a new Discipline merely imitate one's existing code of conduct. To learn a new Discipline, one must radically readjust one's way of viewing the world. I once tried and failed to learn the Discipline of the Elementalist, thinking I could simply adapt my knowledge of metalworking to the crafting of all of the basic elements through magic. This method did not aid me; I was trying to shape the vision for my convenience rather than allowing the vision to change me. One must prepare to be altered by the process of initiation; otherwise, the necessary insight will not come.

## ON THE PRACTICE OF MULTIPLE DISCIPLINES

An Adept who walks multiple paths does not meld his different visions into one. Rather, he switches back and forth between ways of thinking, as one might don and doff a cloak. Often when I find myself facing a decision, I step back and look at the situation from two points of view. The Troubadour side of me may wish to do one thing, while the mind of the Weaponsmith reaches a completely different conclusion. These divisions of viewpoint are difficult to reconcile, to say the least.

Adepts of multiple Disciplines often seem peculiar or outright crazy to others, for we seem to speak with different voices. This effect can be quite literal and dramatic; I have known individuals who adopt completely different personalities, ways of speaking, and body language from moment to moment, depending on which Discipline they are currently employing. I suspect, however, that most of these persons are intentionally exaggerating the effects of multiple Disciplines in order to confuse their foes or entertain their friends.





## THE WAY OF THE NOBLE AIR SAILOR

*The following essay comes from Adelo Nock, a human Air Sailor of the city of Travar. Though born in a town some two days' ride from Jerris, he has lived in Travar most of his life (when not hurtling through the air on ships). Retired from active service for some years, Adelo is best known for his brilliant performance as a novice Air Sailor during the Theran War.*

🌀 —Presented for the edification of the reader by Derrat, Wizard of Yistaine, 1506 TH

The Name's Adelo Nock, sir. Been an Air Sailor ever since I first climbed down from my mother's lap. Air sailin's the best Discipline there is, bar none. What other Discipline gives you the freedom of the skies? What other Discipline lets you see the whole world without borders or separations, the way the Universe first made it? What other Discipline lets you sail through the stars at night like a boat through water, or brings you so close to a sunset you'd swear you can reach out and touch it? And don't talk to me about Sky Raiders, sir. They don't even deserve mention. They take from people. We Air Sailors, we give. We give our expertise, our fighting skill when needed. We give people a way to see the world from above, to see the parts of it outside of their own villages and towns. We give people freedom to travel, faster and farther than they'd ever get in boats or caravans. We help bring people together and help trading folk earn a livelihood. And yet, for all that, too many Barsaivians know nothing of the Air Sailor. High time to set the record straight!

This world of ours is a glorious place, and we Air Sailors get the best view of it. Have you ever stood on the decks of a galley watching the storm clouds gather on the horizon, or seen the sun set beneath your feet as the stars spark to life around your ears? Have you ever looked across the land and seen the whole long length of the Serpent River winding through the plains and lush jungle? I've even stared out into the Wastes once, for as long as I could bear it. An eerie land, the Wastes; compelling somehow, in a way that gets under your skin. You couldn't pay

me to set a foot upon that wretched bit of earth, but I'd not trade the sight of it for any amount of gold. I'd never have seen the Wastes if I hadn't become an Air Sailor.

*Some Air Sailors only ply the skies over one region, or between major trading cities.*

*It's a rare Air Sailor who doesn't work for another to earn his place among the clouds—who owns his own ships and sails freely where he wishes.*

—Shaguiss Plumm,  
Trader of Bartertown



Of all the Adepts in Barsaive, none gets as little attention as the Air Sailor. I'll tell you the reason, sir—most folk think the Air Sailor's close kin to the Sky Raider, one rung up on the rope ladder from thieving ork scorchers. Not a grain of truth to that, sir! You might as well tell a man he's no different from a burden beast. Let me tell you, in all my years of sailing I've yet to meet a Sky Raider that I'd trust as I trust any of my mates. Both the Air Sailor and the Sky Raider have a freedom not granted to those who can't take to the air; the difference between us is how we use it. A Sky Raider uses his freedom to plunder; an Air Sailor uses it to help the earthbound folk below. We share nothing with raiders save the sky itself.

A Sky Raider, you understand, can sometimes be as clever as an Air Sailor in planning his raids. He can even be courageous, in a brutal sort of way. But he feels no sense of duty to anything save his own wants. I'll tell you a story, and you'll see what I mean.

Me and a mate of mine sailed with a party of seventeen merchants—years ago, this was—and had the misfortune to meet a terrible, cloud-like



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Horror that Air Sailors call Windrider. (Other folk may know this Horror by another name, but that's not my lookout. My concern was only to defeat it.) Me and my mate were the only Air Sailors aboard, and the few survivors besides ourselves owe us their skins. Windrider appeared suddenlike, out of airy nothing like the poet says, and engulfed our poor ship in its foul smoky self. Any who stayed too long in its billows had the skin stripped from his bones. The rest of the sailors—not followers of the Discipline, mind you, but those we call airmen—started to panic. They saw the blood of their mates flowin' over the decks, heard the screaming, and started screaming themselves as they stabbed at the Horror with swords and belt knives. As if stabbin' a cloud would do any good!

Well, me and my fellow Air Sailor, Nestran Fryee, soon saw it was up to us to save the ship. Tying a rope around his waist, Nestran Fryee leaped from the deck, using his Wind Catcher ability to guide his fall away from Windrider. Over and over he did this, taunting the Horror until it came after him. While he jumped and swung, I held the wheel, piloting the ship high into the frigid air around the peaks of the Delaris Mountains. When I got close enough, I rammed the airship into the ice-covered stone, trapping the Horror. Then Nestran—who almost didn't survive his final leap—helped me to herd the livin' off the ship and onto the snow. From previous journeys along this route, we knew where a cave was, deep enough to shelter us but too shallow to hold Horrors or fierce beasts. Once there, I lit a signal fire and the next passing airship picked us up. Cunning, courageous, and looking out for others; that's the nature of the Air Sailor.

I reckon that someday soon, the Namegivers will take back all of our skies from the winged Horrors that still plague us, and I'll be doing my part to help reach that goal. Catch any Sky Raider doing that, except to save his own miserable hide!

Any one of us who forgets his duty pays a price. An Air Sailor can't simply ride the currents of the world, taking in whatever happens to pass by. Each of us has a higher duty to his fellow sailors, to his ship, to the grounders who look up toward him. That last—our duty to the people below—is the most important of all. Every Air Sailor in Barsaive has a wider and truer view of the world than folks

with their feet planted on the ground, and with the gift of that view comes a responsibility. We're the first to see the Theran armada on its way to crush free Barsaivians, or the slave caravans swooping down on unsuspecting villages and snatching their unsavory cargo, or the flood or fire heading for the luckless town in its path. An Air Sailor who wants to use this view of the world to reach down and scoop up profits for himself belongs with the Sky Raiders, not with us!

### LEARNING THE WAYS OF THE SKY

An Air Sailor is first shaped in childhood, by learning obedience to his wiser elders and the true value of honor. Cleverness and courage are needed as well, but without honor and obedience they're nothing much. Some learn responsibility later in life and make fine Air Sailors when they do, but for most, as we Air Sailors say, the keel shapes as it was drawn.

Likewise, an Air Sailor must learn early on that he owes the world compensation for giving him life's necessities. A child who learns only to take most likely won't grow up to be a giver. Nor will he grow up curious, wanting to know the world for the sake of knowing. Such a one might as well be a Sky Raider, or else stay out of the skies entirely.

*My sailing career is as long and successful as Adelo's and I was not groomed to be anything more than a khamorro, a deck scrubber.*

*Nobody had taught me a sense of adventure and wonder—I learned it on my own!*

*Jik'harra and flair made me an Air Sailor, not blind obedience. Had I obeyed my "wiser" elders, I'd never have learned to fly at all!*

*—K'tslade, k'stulaami Air Sailor of the House of the Spirit Wind*

### Proving Your Worth

Once grown to the age of independence, the Air Sailor-to-be must find himself an established crew to learn from. We Air Sailors aren't so clannish as Sky Raiders, and so grounders with dreams of flying often come to us. Some Air Sailors I know take most of their recruits from among their own kin, reckoning them more likely to make good, but most





of us have open minds about who has what it takes to serve the Discipline. I remember one youngling I took on—her mam was a famous Thief, her dad she couldn't name—who made a top-rigging Air Sailor. An unlikely background for a Discipline of such responsibility, but she had the stuff and she wanted to fly. Just goes to show, eh?

As soon as an Adept takes a pledge from a recruit, the real testing begins. Recruits live among the airmen, doing all the scutwork and whatever else they're told to prove their desire is true and their will is strong. Plenty of the best recruits have done a stint in a militia or town watch and so they take orders pretty well.

The point of the testing is to drive the new recruit relentlessly for weeks, months, or however long it takes, until he reaches a breaking point. That's where he makes his choice; to uphold the pledge of loyalty he made as a fresh, new recruit, even though it burns in his throat, or to spit it back out laced with venom. The recruit who keeps his pledge for duty's sake alone is the one who'll make a master Air Sailor. And once the recruit becomes a novice—the first step on the road to true mastery of the Discipline—he draws comfort from knowing that every other Air Sailor passed through the same stormy air.

I'll not talk about the tests themselves, because they vary so much from Air Sailor to Air Sailor that it'd only be a waste of your ink and paper. All you need to know is that the testing is as difficult as possible.

Once the recruit becomes a novice, life gets a bit easier—though it's never soft, not by a long stretch! The novice trains every day in the art of handling an airship, defensive fighting, and using weapons designed for the attack, all according to a schedule set by the master sailor. At least, that's how the best Air Sailors do it. A regular pattern to one's days teaches the importance of order and gives the novice a little much-needed time to himself to absorb what's been thrown at him.

I know of some Air Sailors who train their novices at all hours of the day and night, thinking to teach them to be always ready for dangers that may approach from any side. These Air Sailors are the mad folk who actually enjoyed their time as a recruit. They believe that living in a constant frenzy is the best way to handle the sudden storms and squalls

of the sailor's life. Truly, though, that brand of Air Sailor burns twice as brightly for only half as long. Foolish, if you ask me.

*In my own town, we can tell a young recruit by the glazed look in her eyes as she carries bundles, runs errands, makes ship repairs, cleans and performs a dozen other tasks at all hours of the day and night. No one speaks to her except to bark orders, which she must follow without so much as a pause to catch her breath.*

*I have heard that harsh punishment rewards the slightest deviation, though I have never seen it myself. I am glad to know that the test period is brief; my conscience rests more easily*  
—Jorge Werwisle, Merchant of Urupa

After a novice reaches a certain level of competence at the basic skills, he becomes a journeyman. Just as the novice learned quickness, dexterity, and steadiness of body, so the journeyman hones those skills of the wit. As a journeyman, I held responsibility for whole groups of other sailors; I had to see what needed doing and tell them to do it, and I also planned strategies for any necessary attacks and the ship's defense. Among my other duties, it was also my task to see that those in my charge followed the wind of their strengths and to keep them from the tempests of their weaknesses.

Young, inexperienced Air Sailors began seeking me out and asking to train with me. I took them on, and judged where fair weather and foul lay for each of them. All these things taught me to use the abilities of my Discipline that rely more on wit than raw power. A mind as quick and graceful as a changeable spring gale is a journeyman's best tool—and weapon, if need be.

*I have had the good fortune to acquire embroidered sails from Adelo Nock. The patterns and styles that spring from the mind and fingers of a traveled Air Sailor far surpass any other beauties I have seen.*

—Jorge Werwisle, Merchant of Urupa

It was also as a journeyman that I truly learned to appreciate my mates. A journeyman looks out over the deck of the ship and sees what needs doing, but







he knows he can't meet all the needs of the ship himself. Instead, he does his own bit and makes sure others do theirs. An experienced Air Sailor finally sees past his own immediate tasks. The look on the face of a fellow who sees himself as part of a larger whole for the first time is the same expression he had the first time he saw his hometown from the air. Instead of feeling small and insignificant like some folk might think, he feels more important and more useful than he ever has in his life because he can see the rigging ropes tying himself to his mates. You see a little bit of yourself in those who train with you, and a bit of your own teachers in yourself. And once you see that, you truly understand that to leave your mates means abandoning a piece of your own spirit.

An Air Sailor joins the ranks of the wardens when he successfully defeats a superior enemy using both agile wit and physical skill. Let me tell you, a warden is one of the slyest opponents you'll ever face. He'll use your own wits against you, tie you up in the ropes of your own cleverness. I once faced a ship whose crew served a Theran warden! The scoundrel used my own plan against me, and I didn't know a thing was amiss until he sprung my own trap around my ears. Lucky to get out alive, I was—but that's a tale for another time. Most wardens work with trading companies, and if you ask me, the best of them come out of Travar.

A true master Air Sailor like myself deserves the deepest respect. There are only a few of us still around, what with time and age taking their toll, and so many dying in the Theran War. There's a few wardens I know who'd make fit masters, though good candidates seem fewer these days than when I was young. A master has a different life than any other Air Sailor; he serves only during the greatest of conflicts, and spends most of his time training young upstarts who pass the recruit's tests. Many master Air Sailors own ships or even shipbuilding companies like my own Dawn Flier shipyards. To keep my mind sharp and my body swift, I still accompany my share of airships on journeys across Barsaive. With my experience, there's many a hazard I can help the young ones avoid. As my age grants me a bit more time to do with as I like, like many a master I embroider airship sails. The handiwork of master Air Sailors adorns many of the greatest ships in the skies.

## Non-Adepts as Air Sailors

Now of course, there's sailors and sailors. A true Air Sailor is always an Adept, but many sailors among an airship's crew learn the craft of sailing without following the Discipline. These, we call just plain sailors, more often airmen. Sailors not of the Discipline rarely serve their ships in the top ranks.

Not that those who learn the craft of air sailing aren't good folk, because they certainly are—some of them are amazingly skilled. Most of them can sail a ship, jump the rigging, and decipher the moldiest, most illegible maps I have ever laid eyes on just as well as their Adept fellows. What they can't do is use the Discipline's magical abilities. They serve well as far as they can, but they simply can't go far enough.

## ON THE RACES THE SKY CHOOSES

The only Namegivers who rarely become Air Sailors—as far as I know, that is—are obsidimen. The rock-men are too tied to the earth to find sailing amid the clouds comfortable—at least, that's my thinking. Just as well, if you ask me—building a ship sturdy enough to safely carry them might be far easier charted than sailed. One of those fellows falling onto the deck would likely break right through to the hull!

Windlings make some of the best Air Sailors around. They fly as easily as other Namegivers breathe and have an affinity for the skies that no other Namegivers share. And in a world full of hulking brutes like myself (at least, we must look that way to our small brothers and sisters) windlings must rely on their wits from the moment of birth. Good training for an Air Sailor, sir! The famous Pihgram Tor is one of the best windling Air Sailors I know, though I've never been fortunate enough to serve with her. That woman can survive any danger, and her ships are second to none in Barsaive.

Elves with a longing to fly often find their calling as Air Sailors. Sky Raiders won't take them—probably think they're too delicate for the life. I think elves just aren't thickheaded enough for sky raiding. They see the grace and beauty of the natural world so clearly that they've got to be Air Sailors if they want to tread the decks. I don't understand much of what the elves call the Wheel of Life, though my good friend Nestran tried many a time to explain



it, but I do know that elves who follow the Path of Warriors are the least likely to take up air sailing. From what Nestran told me, that Path is somehow bound to the element of Earth, so I'd guess none of them want to stray too far from it. Followers of the Path of Scholars, who live to sharpen their wits, far more often find homes among us, as do the followers of the Path of Travelers, whose guiding element is Air.

Just to make sure the record's kept straight about elves being Air Sailors, you must understand that I learned all I know on the subject from Nestran Fryee. But I may have gotten my facts mixed, seeing as I rarely understood even half of what Nestran used to natter on about. If you want to know the absolute truth, you'd best ask one who knows about elves and their Paths firsthand. The important thing to be said is that I'd not hesitate to have Nestran or another elf like him serving beside me this very day. If he hasn't ascended to his folk's Citadel of the Shining Ones, then the place is surely empty, for no more loyal friend than Nestran ever lived!

Dwarfs feel a bit funny about life in the skies. They're as fond of earth and stone as of their own kin, and lots of them don't like losing touch with it. Those dwarfs who take up the Discipline, though, nearly always make a go of it. Not a lot of nonsense to a dwarf. He takes orders well when he has to and can always see what needs to be done. And you couldn't ask for a tougher fighter. Stubborn, that's what they are—too stubborn to give in even when they're bleeding half to death. Sometimes, though, that stubbornness works against them. Once a dwarf's set his mind to a plan of action, it takes a gale-force wind to move him a finger's-width from it. The dexterity of mind an Air Sailor needs isn't always a dwarf's strong suit.

T'skrang Air Sailors take a joy in the Discipline that the rest of us can only envy. Got a bit of a trouble with vertigo, though. If they could fix that

small problem, more of them might become Air Sailors. And a good thing too, say I, sir; a skilled boatman would be a rare pleasure to teach. He knows half the skills of air sailing already! The winged t'skrang, the ones who call themselves *k'stulaami*, love to fly more than anything else, but their single-minded devotion to flight gets in the way of their good sense sometimes.

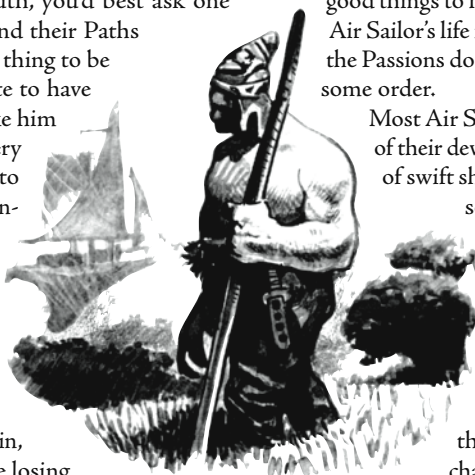
## Of Air Sailors and the Passions

Air Sailors are a devout lot. You try hanging high above the ground in a raging storm, bound to your airship only by a safety rope tied beneath your arms while you try to patch a lightning burn in the hull and see if the Passions don't seem like good things to have watching over you! An Air Sailor's life is both beauty and fear, and the Passions do a lot toward giving that life some order.

Most Air Sailors give the largest share of their devotion to Floranuus, Passion of swift ships and good cheer. I know some crews of Air Sailors who all follow Floranuus together; they believe that kind of devotion most appeals to the Passion of good fellowship. Some Air Sailors show their love of Floranuus by throwing wild parties every chance they get, drinking wine and ale, playing knife games, hull

jumping and such. I've known many a windling Air Sailor to pull out her bottle of keesris at any opportunity to "make Floranuus merry." Myself, I'm all for a good time, but some followers of Floranuus take it a bit too far. Bad for discipline, it is. After all, how well can an Air Sailor sail or fight if he's reeling from a pounding head brought on by too much elven brandy?

The Passion Chorrolis has his followers among Air Sailors also, mostly those who work for traders. That Passion will aid any Namegiver looking to make his fortune, though Chorrolis isn't always too choosy about how they do it. Were the Passion more inclined to favor honest work over all else I might have followed him myself—though



Chorrolis has watched well over my shipbuilding company, and I thank him for that. Some followers of Chorrolis, sad to say, are a bit too concerned with their own welfare and not enough with the good of those around them.

If you ask me, Air Sailors who follow Chorrolis need to guard against greed especially well, lest it tempt them from their duty.

## Of Those Who Serve Thera

Much as I regret to say it, some Air Sailors throw in their lot with Theran scum. Most of us have more honor than to serve Theran masters, but a few get sucked in by Theran grandeur and Imperial authority. They forget their duty to others, preferring to trade with Thera and get rich. They want to float to the top any way they can, even on the backs of others.

Then there are the poor fools who fall in love with the Theran airships. I've heard tales of young Air Sailors setting off for Sky Point in hopes of working in the Theran armada just because they want to fly a stone ship. Once they get to Sky Point, the poor idiots mostly find themselves bought or brutalized. Some folk tell me that Theran sympathizers approach young recruits to our Discipline who hail from poor villages and city slums, spinning tales of the Theran riches they'll get in return for good service.

I knew such a poor young fool once. Job Geden was his Name—a young, idealistic human from Travar. I took him on with high hopes and he didn't disappoint me. He worked hard, obeyed orders, and took to the Discipline like a bird to the air. Before the year's end, I made him my personal aide and right-hand man.

Then Job came to me one night seeming nerved up about something. He offered me a pint of ale and asked, as if he cared nothing for the answer, what I thought of the Therans. "Not much," I said, and spat.

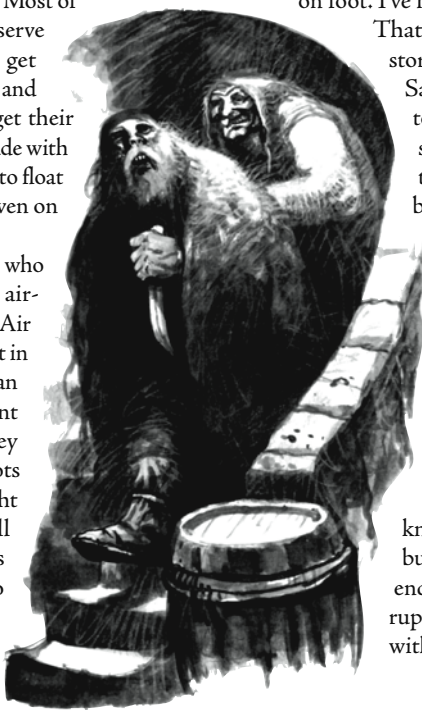
He turned a bit red but held his ground, telling me he'd heard Theran airships were a wonder to behold. "Really?" I asked. "Where might you have heard that?"

Well, that question ran all the sails straight up the masts. He started talking a blue streak, telling me all about the amazing Theran airships. Suddenly, as if he knew he'd said too much, he hushed right up and said he was going to bed. He never turned up for work the next morning. Three days later, I heard word he'd been sighted heading for Sky Point on foot. I've heard nothing of him since.

That's why I don't believe all the stories of prosperous Theran Air Sailors. The Therans are known to be a close-fisted lot, and Barsaivian Air Sailors who serve them most likely end up little better than the slaves they help to capture. Not that their wretchedness helps excuse the choice they made. Any Air Sailor who follows Theran ways, whether Theran or Barsaivian-born, is no true Air Sailor. I confess to a grudging admiration for their tenacity and cleverness in a battle, and the Passions know Theran ships are marvels, but none of that makes a difference. Theran Air Sailors are corrupt, and we have nothing to do with them.

*Despite Adelo's statements to the contrary, the Theran navy includes many Air Sailors among its members. Theran Air Sailors may not embody all the qualities Adelo ascribes to those of his Discipline, yet one must agree that they are true Air Sailors. This fact should serve as a lesson to those who accept any narrowly-defined vision of the Disciplines practiced in Barsaive. Many variations of each Discipline exist in this world, and no single Adept's vision is the only true one.*

◉—Merrox, Master of the Hall of Records







## GAME INFORMATION

### Roleplaying Hints

One important aspect of roleplaying the Air Sailor is the difference these Adepts see between themselves and Sky Raiders. No matter what an Air Sailor's race, he believes his Discipline requires him to somehow better himself and others. This concern for the greater good of Barsaive, or at least the people around him, separates the Air Sailor character from the Sky Raider he despises. The Air Sailor sees himself as more refined, craftier, smarter, and serving a higher purpose.

Many Air Sailors have elaborate long-term plans: to own a ship, free the lands around Sky Point from Theran domination, and so on. That plan becomes that character's driving goal. Because the notion of duty is drummed into Air Sailors during their testing period, the fulfillment of one's duty becomes one of the would-be Air Sailor's deepest desires. Once an Air Sailor recognizes the duty he wants to fulfill and realizes that he is part of an organization that encourages him to achieve his goal, the Air Sailor never stops planning how to do his duty and meet his goal.

All characters in this Discipline adhere to an unspoken code of conduct. No Air Sailor disparages another Air Sailor in public, though they may criticize other Air Sailors as much as they like when talking among themselves. An Air Sailor is expected to behave in a manner beyond reproach in front of outsiders. A sailor speaking in an unacceptable manner might be drowned out by his peers as they try to hide his indiscretion, or he might hear his own voice ringing uncomfortably loud as his companions fall silent to shame him. The offending party's mates

might even loudly defend him in public and then deal out appropriate punishment after the crew returns to the ship.

Air Sailors have a strong sense of obligation to their shipmates, whether current or former. Air Sailors often use the expression "never leave your mates," but none of them are ever told this outright; rather, all Air Sailors are subtly encouraged to embrace the idea of togetherness. Fellow Air Sailors may remind them to wait for a mate before leaving for a bar, or tell them to be aware of where their mates are aboard ship during maneuvers. Part of this camaraderie is a general feeling of obligation toward any other sailor who needs aid on a mission or personal quest.

Finally, the Air Sailor should never resort to brute force when cunning will win the day. An Air Sailor is expected to out-think his opponents, not just overpower them. "Good thinking!" is a common form of praise, and adjectives such as sly, cunning and shrewd are high compliments coming from an Air Sailor.

### Discipline Violations

The informal code of the Air Sailor forms the basis for his or her actions, depending on the character's personal vision. An Air Sailor who fails to follow the Discipline's unspoken code risks suffering a Discipline crisis because the code is integral to the world view of almost all Air Sailors. An Air Sailor who chooses to flout the expectations of his fellow Air Sailors does not grasp his abilities as firmly as they do, and can even threaten the cohesion of his entire crew.



## ON THE PATH OF THE ARCHER

*The Library of Throal commissioned the following document for inclusion in this volume. In his zeal to deal directly with his subject, the author has neglected a salient point—his own identity. The writer of this essay is Oaken Aveldel, an elven Archer of great repute throughout Barsaive. He is best known for hitting the Impossible Rope at the Chasm of Sar-Fane, and for slaying the Horror known as Plan Crumbler with only two shots from his bow. The first shot put an arrow into the bony armor surrounding the creature's skull. The second shot hit the end of the first arrow, driving it home deep into the monster's brain.*

*I know of no one better fitted to discuss the Archer's Discipline than he. I assiduously pursued Aveldel for this project, and am honored to introduce his submission here.*

Ⓜ—Presented for the edification of the reader by Derrat, Wizard of Yistaine, 1506 TH

The aim of this document: to allow the reader to understand the Way of the Archer. The strategy: to hit the heart of the matter. Therefore, I shall immediately aim for the central point. After loosing this first volley of words, I shall determine whether or not secondary targets remain to be hit. If so, I shall strike them in the order of their importance.

### ON DIVIDING THE WORLD

The world is made up of two things, and two things only: missiles and targets. Most people, objects, and ideas belong in one of these categories. Anything outside of these categories does not matter. The Archer's challenge: to determine what is a missile and what is a target.

Scenario the first: You are in the Hall of Records at the Library of Throal. You are speaking to a shuffler of papers. The shuffler appears to be wasting your time. You wish to obtain a certain document concerning the location of a certain item; the details are unimportant. The shuffler repeatedly refuses to tell you where the document is or whether he will give it to you. Instead, he continually veers away from the direct path to your target. He describes, among other things, a book he is preparing. He asks you to contribute to the

book, a point he circles around and then weaves back to again and again.

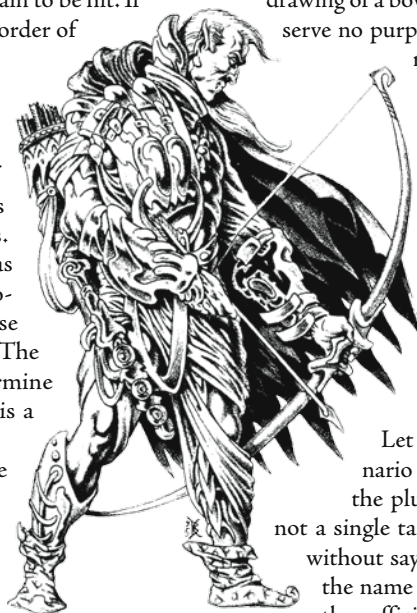
Question: Can the way of the Archer win you victory in this scenario?

If you say no, you are no Archer. True, the literal drawing of a bow and firing of an arrow would serve no purpose here. Throalic authorities

react poorly to one shooting their officials. But the physical motion of firing an arrow is merely one of many actions that defines the Archer's way. All other actions an Archer takes should be inspired by the process of aiming and firing missiles. This way of seeing the world is the key to success in all matters, whether of business, art, love or war.

Let us divide the actors of this scenario into missiles and targets. Note the plural; in most matters there is not a single target, but several. And it goes without saying that no Archer worthy of the name equips himself with less than the sufficient number of missiles.

We shall find the targets first. In identifying targets, one must also determine their order of importance. It does little good to attack a cadaver man when you may shoot at the Horror controlling the thing. In the scenario heretofore described, our primary target is the document. An Archer must always remember the identity of the primary target. Do not be distracted when a new target appears,





nor forget the primary target if it drops out of sight. Our document may not be visible, but it is nonetheless our primary target because victory demands that we obtain it.

Secondary target: the paper shuffler. Often, an Archer must knock down a secondary target in order to reach the primary target. This condition applies in our scenario: the paper shuffler has access to the document and we do not. Therefore, we must hit the secondary target in order to draw a bead on the primary target.

Now let us consider our missiles. Every possible way in which we may hit the target—getting the desired document from the paper shuffler—is a potential missile. We must determine what missiles are in our quiver and which of them is the ideal one with which to hit the target.

Consider the missile of threat: we might offer to hurt the shuffler should he not swiftly comply with our request. But the shuffler is not stupid, nor as prone to mental wandering as he might seem. He knows we are not prepared to back up our threat and shoot him down. Therefore, if we employ this missile, he will call our bluff. The paper shuffler will then have the upper hand, and our primary target will be further away. Clearly, threat is not the proper missile for this task.

Consider the missile of bribery: we might present the shuffler with silver in exchange for the document. In order to be certain that this missile will strike home, we must use the art of seeing. We must carefully observe the shuffler, to see whether coin has any luster for him. In this case, however, we realize that what he lusts for is not money. Therefore, bribery will not serve.

Consider the missile of acquiescence: the paper shuffler most desires a piece of us. He wants us to write a document for him that he may put in his book. His meandering words contain a hidden determination: he too has a target firmly in mind, and his possession of what we want is his missile. Using the art of seeing, we can determine that cooperation with his aims is the most effective missile for us—the superior means of striking our target. Therefore, we agree to write what the paper shuffler wants in exchange for what we desire. We have perhaps lost some dignity, and definitely some time. But we have hit both our targets, and that is

all that matters in the end. Let others seek public honor, glamour, reputation. The Archer does not need such things. His legend rests on hitting the target. Nothing matters save for the bull's-eye.

Note that I have spoken in a single, concrete example rather than describing the way of the Archer in general terms. For the Archer, generalities do not exist. Only specifics matter—singular objects and beings at whom the Archer must fire.

## ON THE ART OF SEEING

The way of the Archer is the art of seeing through the fog in order to spot the simple facts hidden within complexity. The Archer sees from a distance. He scans the landscape for hidden details: flashes of light, movement, colors out of place, anything that may signal the presence of an enemy. He is distant, dispassionate, calculating. This state of mind is as true when the missile is actual as when it is metaphorical.

The art of seeing is best experienced through the True Shot ability. Scenario the second: You, the Archer, have selected your target. Said target is charging toward you riding a massive thundra beast and carrying an enormous battle-axe. If the target reaches you, either the beast's trampling feet or the metal blade of the axe will claim your life. The target is charging over a dusty plain, and the hooves of the thundra are raising a cloud of dust that obscures your view. It is also moving in a pattern dictated by slight undulations in the ground. Your task: to swiftly strike a partly obscured, unpredictably moving target.

You attempt to draw a bead, but the shot is too difficult. So you pour Karma into your pattern. It whirls through your pattern from one part of your identity to the other until it hits the place where your inmost self is woven inextricably to the idea of truth. Karma fires through this connection into your eyes, enhancing your vision. Your eyes can now pierce the dust cloud. Even so, you can see that your shot will not hit home before the target reaches you.

So you pour more energy through your pattern. Beast and rider seem to slow, though your ears tell you their advance is as rapid as ever. You increase the flow of magical energy into your pattern until your eye freezes the target. Before you can think to issue the command to your arms, they have loosed







your shot. Your arrow hits the thundra beast—for hitting the rider would remove but one threat of the two—directly between the eyes. The beast rolls, pitching its rider off. Dismounted and badly jarred by his fall, he is an easy target for your next shot.

At the moment your arrow hits home, you are most fully alive. You feel this way because you are truly seeing. This kind of sight, that reveals life-and-death truth, is a thing most Namegivers never experience. It is sad for them that they cannot share or even understand such stunning moments of insight. The Archer reveres truth, because the Archer has felt truth course through his very being.

## CONCERNING THE ENEMY

The Archer's foe is whatever obscures sight. Darkness is a foe. Camouflage is a foe. Fog, glaring sunlight, heavy rains: all these are our enemies.

The Archer's greatest enemy is illusions and those who wield them. I have heard tales of Adepts who are both Illusionists and Archers, but thankfully, they seem rare. I have never met such a person and would not care to. I cannot imagine what corruption of the way of the Archer is required to allow an Illusionist to follow that way. It is simply wrong to alter the truth of any situation with deceptive magics.

Barsaive requires more honesty, more things that truly are as they seem. An illusion is nothing more than a lie writ large, given form by magic. I have never met an Illusionist I liked. Many of them have tried to win my regard, but I cannot stomach what they do. Most other Archers I know share my feelings in this matter.

Ultimately, the art of seeing allows us to tell truth from untruth. I am proud to belong to a tradition of Namegivers who speak plainly and always strike the heart of the matter. I do not dissemble, misdirect, or misinform, no matter what price I may pay for my candor.

## UNDERSTANDING THE ARC

The arc is woven into the thought of every Archer. The arc is the path the arrow follows on its way to the target. Whenever an Archer looks at a person, thing or place—the target—he measures with his eye, judging the arc. The Archer thinks in straight lines. Because we have little patience for circuitous

discussion, courtly manners, or meaningless pleasantries, we have earned a reputation for bluntness and impatience. Some choose to dislike us for this, but that is no matter.

Thinking in arcs is most useful, both in combat and otherwise. Scenario the third: You are one of a group of Adepts hired to find the murderer of a Bartertown merchant. Your fellows are a Wizard, a Thief and a Troubadour. You meet for the first time to plan your attack on the problem you are being paid to solve. The Wizard wishes to expound extensively on the symbolic meaning of murder, then walk randomly through the town sensing the auras of passersby in hopes of spying an aura that he feels might belong to a killer. The Thief wishes to investigate the victim rather than the murderer, in order to discover the killer's reasons for his act. Reasoning—predictably—that profit is the likeliest motive, she wishes to begin with the victim's treasure vault. The Troubadour proposes to wander through the town singing the mournful tale of the dead man in hopes of saddening or shaming the killer into confessing his terrible deed. What do you do?

You point out that each idea proposes a wandering and winding—and therefore foolish—strategy. You attempt to explain the importance of arcs and connections. You propose starting at one end of the line and finding where the line leads. You draw arcs from one thing to another until the killer appears as your target. You begin at the beginning: the body. You see what connections it shows you. You find Threads of gold silk clenched in the dead merchant's hand, so you follow the arc of the silk and see where it leads. The directed mind is the Archer's greatest weapon. Finding the path of the Archer means seeing the straight lines hidden in the tangles and following them.

The secrets of the arc lie in the ability of Arrow Weaving. To practice it, you must know how to find the shortest magical connections between you and the thing to which you weave your Thread.

Scenario the fourth: You have acquired a magical treasure, a great bow recovered from the Western Catacombs of Parlainth. You have learned its Name: Death Spiral. Now you seek to weave a Thread to it—to connect yourself to Death Spiral. To do this you must find the arc—the straightest line—that



ties your own identity to the idea of death and of a spiral.

The first is elementary: your arrows mete out death to the enemy. The second requires more thought. How do you best connect to the idea of a spiral? After some time, you hit upon the connection. You realize that others witless enough to cross you are embarking on a downward spiral to defeat, as surely as you have them in your aim. By finding the arc between yourself and this idea, you have woven the Thread to Death Spiral.

The idea of the arc is the center of an Archer's target when he learns new abilities. Though learning any new ability requires a skillful teacher, the primary burden lies on the student. He must understand the ability as it relates to his own experience. Only that way will he find the arc, the straightest line, connecting his own pattern and the new ability he seeks to add to that pattern.

Scenario the fifth: You seek to learn the Flame Arrow ability. Your teacher lays out its rudiments for you. Then, as is customary, the teacher bids you farewell, collecting her fee for her service.

The teacher does not linger to discover whether you pick up the ability. Doing so is your problem now, not hers. You must rely on your eye, your ability to see the arc between you and Flame Arrow. You retreat to a secluded glen to think and to see. You empty yourself of all extraneous thoughts, concentrating only on the matter at hand. Slowly, a vision appears in your mind's eye. Not an illusion, mind you, but an acutely detailed and accurate memory.

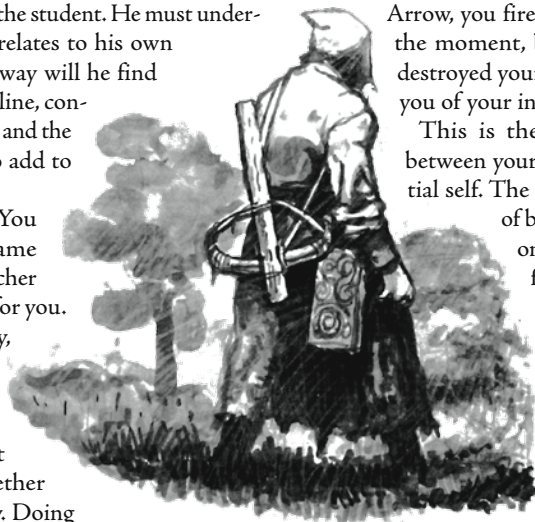
In this memory, you are a child back in your home village: a village in the hinterland, a peaceful and quiet place. In this place, elves, humans, orks, and dwarfs live together in harmony. You associate this place with your earliest, most golden memories. It also carries a cruel and shadowed memory of the black day when the raiders came. You remember the tears obscuring your vision. You remember the

flaming arrows hitting the roofs of the thatched huts. You remember the running, the chaos, the destruction of your home.

You remember the anger that filled your small, childish body. That anger now returns to fill your adult body—the body of an Archer. You shoot the anger through your true pattern like an arrow snapping from your bow. Your anger flies toward its mark, hitting all of what your teacher told you of Flame Arrow. Your head reels with new knowledge. Flame Arrow is now a part of you, connected to your ancient anger. You will use that anger to direct the ability at your foes. From this day forward,

whenever you strike out with Flame Arrow, you fire not only at your foe of the moment, but at the raiders who destroyed your first home and robbed you of your innocence.

This is the way to find the arc between your ability and your essential self. The Archer is often accused of being an unfeeling Adept, one who sees things only from a remove and reduces other Namegivers to no more than targets. This belief could not be further from the mark. To find an Archer's deepest emotions, look to his pattern, to the lines between his memories and his abilities.



## OF THE BOW AND THE CROSSBOW

Question: Are all Archers alike?

To answer this question, follow the arcs. Does it make sense that all Archers should resemble one another? Have you not met laughing Warriors and mournful Warriors, reckless Sky Raiders and cautious Sky Raiders, Thieves who hoard and Thieves who spend? So it is with Archers. Though we are all tied to the same pattern, we are as individual as the followers of any other Discipline. Only those blind and ignorant fools who accuse of us being without emotion also believe we are all the same. Just as one



who knows how to look can see the differences between every arrow, even those produced by the same fletcher, so every Archer has his own ways of seeing the arc between himself and his Discipline.

Certain common divisions, however, do exist between Archers. The central difference lies between devotees of the bow and adherents of the crossbow. When an Archer fires a missile at a target, the Archer sees the arc between weapon and foe, thus forging a mystical connection between the Archer and his chosen weapon. In a sense, we see through our weapons as other Namegivers see through their eyes. An Archer's choice of weapon reveals something about him, and throughout his life that choice continues to shape and mold him.

I wield the longbow, and have had the honor of fighting beside many practitioners of the crossbow. This is what I have seen: crossbow men tend to be earthy and practical. We of the bow possess a mystical bent, a taste for metaphor. The crossbow man works by pragmatic logic, the bow man by intuition.

As a man of the bow, I am tied to the wood of my bow and to the individual craftsmanship needed to make it. Through the eyes of my bow I feel a bond to nature, the world of the forest and jungle. I am connected to the tree from which the wood of my bow was born, and so am at home in the woodlands. Among trees and vines and creepers, I can pick out furtive movements and see hidden dangers. I am connected to the skilled, solitary artisan who carved my bow. Many, like me, carve their bows themselves. Therefore, I am self-reliant, accustomed to solving problems by my own instincts. Within my bow, as within my chest, beats the heart of a loner. We bow men are serious by nature, and when we act heroically it is often for such abstract motives as a desire for justice or the dictates of personal honor.

The crossbow man is tied to both wood and metal. He is tied to levers and cranks. Because the weapon he sees through is the product of mechanical ingenuity, he sees the world as pieces interlocking to achieve a desired effect. Moreover, the crossbow man's weapon is the result of cooperation between woodworker and metalsmith. Neither the wood nor metal in his weapon is worth anything on its own; they must smoothly combine to form a useful whole. The Archer therefore sees the ideal man as one who works easily with others for the achievement

of a mutual goal. His diplomatic instincts are more acute than those of the bow man; he often acts as the steady head in a party of squabbling adventurers.

The man of the crossbow is at home in the cities, where his weapon was forged. In the blackness of night in a maze of buildings, he can pick friend from foe. Neither rooftop sniper nor alley brigand can hide from his penetrating sight. A crossbow man is likelier than a bow man to have laugh lines around his eyes, is easier in his demeanor and quicker to tell a joke. Tied to metal and through it earth, the crossbow man pays more attention to his next meal and the weight of his purse than airy bow men such as myself. Some say that a crossbow man, when called upon to support a cause, will ask if it is just—but only after asking if it pays well.

Of course, these statements are generalities on which no Archer would wholly base his actions or judgment. One who truly knows how to see always scans the horizon for exceptions.

## REGARDING THE SNIPER

Every Archer possesses the capacity for sudden, decisive violence. He always searches for targets for his hungry arrows. In the mind of the Archer, the arrows in his quiver are like peeping baby birds, anxious to be loosed at the foe and drink of his blood. A true Archer keeps the violence within him in check. He only fires at the right moment for the scenario in which he finds himself. In our true patterns, this savage part of our natures is connected to our eyes, and so they must maintain this restraint. Our eyes, always alert to discern target from missile or foe from friend, serve us as our consciences. Without our capacity to see and judge truly, we become less than beasts.

Sadly, the gift of judgment does not always accompany the art of sight. As with any Discipline, the way of the Archer is cursed with its share of villains. We refuse to honor such scoundrels with the name of our way, and so we call them snipers. A bow man bad at heart is cutting and cold, driven by lust for reputation or power. Truth compels me to admit that even I feel a chilling thrill whenever I draw a bead on a living, breathing foe. It is a moment of true power over an unknowing opponent, knowing that with a mere flick of the wrist I can cast him into oblivion.







This power offers a mighty temptation. More than one fresh-faced young Namegiver whom I trained in the Archer's way has become intoxicated by this temptation. To these cruel individuals, all others become potential targets and nothing more. Their ability to slay their targets from a distance is all that matters to them.

For any reader of this document who is a sniper or feels the temptation to become one, I have but one message: the sniper can also become a target.

## GAME INFORMATION

### Roleplaying Hints

An Adept of the Archer Discipline has learned the art of seeing; he or she can divide the world into missiles and targets and forge a mystical connection between an arrow or bolt, the target, and the space between them. A character might take this basic outline to extremes, believing that the target-and-missile analogy applies to every situation. Or she might be a no-nonsense type who doesn't let the mystical talk get in the way of picking off enemies.

The character's vision is also influenced by the circumstances of her life before she became an Adept. An Archer raised in an ork cavalry, for example, will likely espouse a fiercer, less refined version of the viewpoint expressed by Oaken Aveldel earlier in this chapter. A t'skrang Archer

trained to protect riverboats from pirates might take the metaphorical aspect of the Discipline less seriously, while to a blood elf the philosophy of the Discipline might be the most important thing about it.

### Discipline Violations

Archers most often suffer Discipline crises when they stray from clear thinking and straight lines. An Archer who dithers, goes off on tangents too often, somehow over-complicates matters, or forgets her overall goal and heads toward a random dead end in the story line is ripe for a Discipline crisis. Alternatively, an Archer who loses her weapon—especially through negligence—might experience a Discipline crisis the next time she attempts to use the recovered bow or its replacement.

Like followers of most combat-oriented Disciplines, Archers place a great deal of metaphorical importance on their weapons. Every Archer's training stresses the importance of properly choosing targets; if an Archer accidentally hits an ally or innocent noncombatant in battle, she might suffer a Discipline crisis for the remainder of the fight. In particularly egregious cases, where the Archer's carelessness or thoughtlessness allows innocents to die, the Archer might need to perform a Deed of Atonement to recover the full use of her Karma.



## KEEPER OF THE BEASTS

*We are fortunate to have received the following treatise on the Discipline of the Beastmaster from an elven follower of that Discipline Named Esteyria. Other essays on this subject, delivered to us over the years, tended to deal only with the superiority of wild creatures as companions and teachers without revealing anything of the deeper motivations of the Adepts who follow this path. Non-elven readers should take note that, because Esteyria sees her Discipline in the context of the elves' unique spiritual paths, her description of the Beastmaster Discipline is somewhat unusual. The exact date of this manuscript is unknown, but many of the references in it indicate that it was transcribed within the past ten years.*

⌘—Presented for the edification of the reader by Derrat, Wizard of Yistaine, 1506 TH

### ON BECOMING A BEASTMASTER

As a Follower of *Mes ti'Meraerthsa*, the Path of Warriors, I might easily have chosen to become a Swordmaster or a Thief. Many of my kind do. Thankfully, I am *Dae mistishsa* and so do not see the choices of life as rigidly as

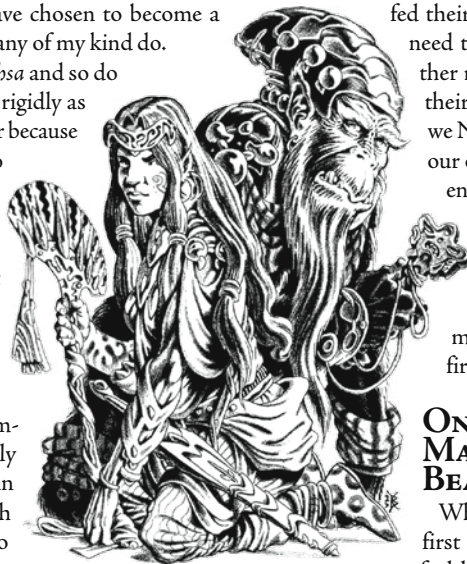
some. I became a Beastmaster because

that Discipline allows me to know intimately the truest and greatest conflict, that between Namegivers and our own spirits. I speak not of war, or of combat where one is victorious and the other either dead or nursing her wounds. I speak of the mastery of self that commands others as forcefully as and to better effect than prowess with a weapon. Such mastery is no easy thing to accomplish; we must fight our own poor judgment and impatience every step of the way to attain it.

The beasts of our world teach us the first lesson of self-mastery: that our strength of will avails us nothing if we use it only to force our wishes upon others. If a carter whips his horse to make it go, the horse will buck and strain against its harness but will not move forward so much as a handspan. The carter must master his annoyance, speak gently to the animal, and remind it that it wants to do as he commands.

Beasts do not disobey us for the pleasure of it; only Namegivers are such willful beings. The beasts, having no such flaw, survived the Scourge much better than we. The Namegiver races fell prey to the

Horrors because they could so easily tempt us into a battle of wills, and our fruitless struggles fed their evil. The Horrors have no need to torture animals who neither resist, bargain, nor plead for their own desires to be met. But we Namegivers, intent on getting our own way, can be tricked. We enter into impious bargains to achieve our desires at any cost. In the end, however, we cannot master the world. We can only master ourselves. This is the first lesson of the Beastmaster.



### ON LEARNING MASTERY FROM BEASTS

When a Beastmaster takes the first steps on her path, she may feel little more than a fondness

for beasts and a desire to spend time with them. The true teaching comes from the beasts themselves and is interpreted for the student by a beast-master Adept. Such a teacher can be found wherever animals are trained, and the student who seeks truly will always find someone to set him on the correct path.

The Beastmaster must first discover and learn to see through the first veil. Those who are truly called to the Discipline will discover the veil simply by adopting and observing an animal companion. Many readers might believe that city life gives them an advantage in this, because companion animals such as donkeys, horses, and dogs abound there. In truth, however, it



is difficult to learn of the first veil from a tame beast. A city-dwelling Beastmaster should choose as her companion an untamed city cat, rat, or bird in order to learn the lessons of its independent spirit. Would-be Adepts who find wild-spirited companions in the untamed lands of Barsaive usually travel with a better guide through the first veil.

The first veil separates Namegivers from beasts, and all living things from the Horrors. Once you perceive the veil, and then see through it, the mist over the world clears and lets you see your surroundings truly for the first time. When you gaze at your faithful steed and see not merely a burdened beast, but a spirit shining at you from its eyes with the clarity of starlight—when a beast's soul reaches out and touches yours—you have achieved your first glimpse through the veil.

Some Beastmasters find their way through the first veil without a teacher's guidance, though only under unusual circumstances. An ork Beastmaster of my acquaintance, M'rok Grimshock, followed the Cavalryman Discipline before undergoing the transformation that led him to the Beastmaster's path. Though a true friend to his mount, he knew nothing of the ways of other animals. He did not even like them much; they made him uneasy.

During one brutal battle, Grimshock's mount fell beneath him, sending them both tumbling into a steep ravine. His companions, unaware of his fate, gave him up for dead when the fighting ended. All night, Grimshock sat beside his gravely injured mount, until at dawn the steed passed from this life. Grimshock, overcome with grief, stormed the deaf heavens with tears and cries in memory of his slain companion.

When the beasts in the ravine heard his heartfelt mourning, they gathered around the stricken ork. Perhaps it was Grimshock's strength of will or the depth of the bond he still felt for his dead mount, but the beasts responded to something in Grimshock—rather than slay him and devour both bodies, the beasts mourned with the Cavalryman. In the dawn of that sad day, Grimshock broke through the veil. He saw the animals' hearts, and they comforted him. Later that day, Grimshock returned to his fellows on the back of a huge, brown bear.

From that time forward, Grimshock studied the ways of the Beastmaster, and has become legendary throughout Barsaive. (In Grimshock's version of the

tale, he tamed and rode a brithan. Knowing the nature of those beasts, even I cannot believe that story!)

## On the Virtues of Strength and Patience

Once the Beastmaster sees through the first veil, she can begin reaching the minds of the beasts. Many people believe that training an animal means forcing your will upon it, but this is not so. A Beastmaster must possess a strong will, but only because no animal will bond with a weakling. Weakness is dangerous, for a weak animal swiftly succumbs to peril. A Beastmaster must prove to the creatures she trains that she is strong and knows what needs doing. She does this not by forcing the beast to follow her, but by clearly showing the creature the direction she intends to go. All creatures know when to follow a leader. Show them that you are such, and the beasts cannot help but fall in line.

Consider the wolf and the cougar. One hunts alone, the other follows the leader of its pack. Yet both recognize the weakness of their prey, and that is why they attack. And both will come at the call of a strong Beastmaster; a weak and undisciplined Beastmaster, they abandon. They can see strength and weakness at a glance, and know the difference between them.

A Beastmaster must also have patience, for it takes time to build the trust that truly commands an animal. You cannot simply flash them an empty smile full of charm and hope to win them over. Animals know nothing of flattery. They see what is before them and respond to it. A Beastmaster must therefore also know her own flaws and how best to overcome or hide them. If you stink, beasts do not politely hold their breath and stay near you. If you speak loudly and foolishly, they do not listen patiently while you babble. If you are drunk, they do not carry you back to your pallet to sleep it off. The beasts of the world will not bear your flaws; they react to those they see and ignore what you do not flaunt at them.

Patience lets a Beastmaster bond with many creatures by learning how each expects to be treated. Patience builds trust and shows a beast your worth. Patience is the soul of self-mastery. Only if you prove your worthiness to a creature can you teach that creature. After all, a trained beast gives us far more than we give it. We train them to work for our needs, not for theirs. If we want the beast we train to give





of its best for a far lesser return, we must be worthy of such a gift. Therefore, after we have taught the horse the way in which we need it to carry us, we must then recognize what it needs in return, and fill that need as best we can. A Beastmaster who does this receives the willing service of a companion who will never betray her.

One who has acquired an animal companion and pierced the first veil is a novice, known to other Beastmasters as a *tyro*. A *tyro* does whatever is needed to deepen her understanding of many beasts' ways, often earning her daily bread taming and training work-beasts for others. In addition to animal ways, this work teaches the *tyro* more of the ways of her fellow Namegivers by requiring her to discover whether they are deserving of a beast's labor or not. Turning a trained beast over to a neglectful or abusive master violates the trust between beast and *tyro*; it is the worst deceit of which a novice Beastmaster can be guilty. Such a betrayal, whether knowing or unknowing, can only serve to impede the Beastmaster's growth in her Discipline.

When a *tyro* has learned to understand many different creatures, she tests herself by forging a bond between creatures that are natural enemies, using their mutual trust of her to bring them together. If she succeeds in this, she becomes a journeyman, or *par*. I achieved that station by calling upon creatures of land and sea to save a troll child stranded on a friend's raft from floating away. I persuaded several giant salmon to push the raft downriver to a ford, where a family of bears waded into the shoulder-high waters and stopped the raft's descent. None of the bears so much as glanced at the salmon, though great salmon are a bear's favorite delicacy.

Once a Beastmaster becomes a *par*, she tests her own skills against the strength of the beasts of the land. Such tests are often solitary, including such acts as attending the birth of wild animals, or joining a pack of animals and being accepted as one of them. Some *pars* begin working with only magical beasts. A

*par* must set herself the most exacting tests possible, and repeat them until she can meet their challenges. A Beastmaster who does this may rightly claim the status of warden. Though it is the *par* herself who determines when she has become a warden, rather than a teacher, she may only claim this status when inner truth tells her that she merits it. A Beastmaster who deceives herself or others about her true standing may as well renounce her Discipline, for she will never progress any further.

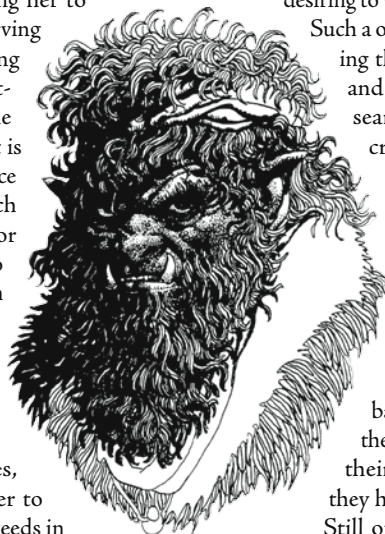
## Of the Many Kinds of Beastmasters

Some Beastmasters feel drawn to all types of beasts, desiring to work with and learn from them all.

Such a one loves nothing more than learning the ways of an unfamiliar animal, and often travels across the land in search of more and more different creatures with whom to bond. I have known such many-minded Beastmasters to spend years wandering through wild lands, seeking fantastical animals who exist only in rumor or legend. Barsaive owes these devoted Beastmasters a debt beyond price, for it is they who bring back tales of the unusual creatures they have encountered and share with their fellow Namegivers the secrets they have uncovered.

Still other Beastmasters are drawn to magical beasts. I have known *pars* and wardens who so thrive on challenge that they work only with magically endowed creatures, finding all others too biddable for their liking. It is indeed a much greater challenge to prove oneself a worthy leader to an animal capable of wielding magic! Some magical Beastmasters believe that the secret to all beasts' survival of the Scourge lies in the creatures with magical skills. Indeed, some claim that certain beasts developed magical abilities because of the Scourge!

I have also met certain Beastmasters who call themselves Scouts. These, more than any, wish to learn from the beasts in order to help themselves, rather than to learn self-mastery. More than one young Scout has come to me for training, seeking the gift of





knowledge so that they may borrow the sharp nose of the wolf or walk the silent tread of the cat. Too often, regrettably, their interest stops there. They are quick to pick up certain abilities, and if they had the proper devotion to their Discipline, they could become able Beastmasters.

To the everlasting sorrow of every true Beastmaster, some of our number enslave the beasts who trust them. Such folk most often work only for profit and know nothing of self-mastery. Because the bonds formed between these Beastmasters and their animals are flawed and weak, such enslaved beasts often break free from their captivity or perish in the attempt. Such tragedies only serve to hide the secrets of the beasts deeper from us, because they teach the beasts to run from the Namegiver races. The Beastmaster who forsakes her duty to treat the creatures of the land with respect in return for power or coin can scarcely be called a Beastmaster, save that she has certain abilities of our Discipline. Those of us who live by higher ideals know it is a sin to abuse our Discipline's magic and so dishonor the noble creatures who survived the Scourge. We who follow the true path shun the lesser Beastmaster, and no honorable teacher will train one. Just as stronger animals leave the weak and sickly to heal or die alone, so we leave the Beastmaster who exploits her animals to suffer the pangs of her own conscience.

I have often heard the tale of such a lesser Beastmaster, Named Kreg Shuerslan, who lived in Bartertown. Each year he paid others to capture animals from the wilds and bring them to his stable. There he whittled away at their hearts and minds, forcing his will upon them with lash and stick, preparing them for service in the mines or on farms or as pack animals for adventurers. Drunk with his own power, he enslaved all creatures on whom he could lay his brutal hands: even those creatures who should never have felt the hands of a Namegiver master.

One day, a mysterious stranger offered Kreg unheard-of wealth to tame a fleet of espagras as battle mounts. The espagra is a dangerous creature, able to wield magic in its wrath. But Kreg, sure that he could break any creature's will, gathered many hearty souls together for his espagra-hunting expedition. One of their number was a windling Troubadour, brought along to commemorate the event with a song. As Kreg strode out of town with much fanfare, he

bragged that all of Bartertown would fall at his feet when he returned with his tame espagras.

*Anyone who believes that t'skrang lack patience has never sailed a riverboat, nor tried to sell spices to orks, who lack any decent palate.*

—Sylviril, Captain of the *Nemorth*

A year and a day later, the windling Troubadour returned to Bartertown alone. She landed atop a statue in an open square, unslung her harp from her back, and began to sing the song of Kreg's expedition. She called it the *Song of the Great Espagra*. It told of a foolish Beastmaster battered to death by the great espagra, who then carried the Beastmaster's broken body straight toward the sun and dropped it in the path of his fleeing retainers. I have always liked that story.

## On the Beastmaster's Faith in Jaspree

Though a Beastmaster certainly may follow other Passions, all those I have met give the first loyalty of their hearts to Jaspree. No other Passion is closer to the spirit of the Beastmaster. Half beast and half Namegiver, Jaspree watches over her beast-children, aiding them and speaking directly to their hearts. This last is what all true Beastmasters strive to do, and Jaspree shows us the way. Someday, when we Namegivers are ready, the Passion will impart this knowledge to us so that all may know what we who master the beasts seek to discover.

We Beastmasters know that Jaspree loves all living things, but some followers of this Passion sadly believe otherwise. Certain Questors of Jaspree value plants over animals, and of these misguided folk the Beastmaster must be wary. I once encountered such a solitary Questor in a peaceful forest glen, wherein I had settled to carry out my Karma Ritual.

The Questor happened upon me, realized what I was doing, and cursed me for drawing in beasts to destroy her forest. As she raved, she flung herself at me and began beating me about the head and shoulders. As soon as I recovered from the shock of her attack, I fled.

Since then, I have avoided places where I can see no beasts, rather than run across such a Questor again and perhaps be forced to hurt her in my defense.





## ON AVOIDING THE TAINT OF THE HORRORS

The Beastmaster, by nature, spends a great deal of time with the beasts of the wilds. Traveling the untamed lands in search of new creatures is exciting, but also full of hazards. A Beastmaster must not allow her interest in strange animals to overshadow caution when approaching such beasts, lest she be entrapped by a Horror using some animal-like construct as a lure.

A Beastmaster is a great prize for a Horror; if these abominations from other-where can pervert our Discipline's magic, they may use the Beastmaster's abilities to create bestial servants. Such tainted animals can be the Horror's eyes and ears to far-off villages and towns; they may run mad under the Horror's touch and maim or kill all in their path. If a Horror uses the Beastmaster's bond to taint a magical beast, the beast's powers are turned to the Horror's will, causing untold destruction.

Worse than this, however, is the corruption of the very fabric of nature by a Horror-tainted Beastmaster. Through a Beastmaster's mind and heart, a Horror can manipulate the first veil, warping it so that the Beastmaster sees only the brutality that that Horror wants the Beastmaster to absorb. The Beastmaster's tainted sight in turn taints the veil, so that the darkness of it forever destroys the possibility of trust between beast and Namegiver.

Sometimes, though less often, the Horror will cloud the veil, showing the beasts in a dimmed light so that the Beastmaster will overestimate her power over them. Many Beastmasters die under this foul influence, however, and few Horrors will slay quickly if they can torment a soul for years.

Those town and village folk who dwell in safer lands often fear the "touch of the wild" that the Beastmaster brings, and so we often must prove ourselves untainted by the Horrors. Simply working harmoniously with our creature companions does not always allay these fears, as many folk are unaccustomed to Beastmasters and our ways. Art is a better way to prove one's purity, and gives the artist much joy besides.

Some Beastmasters engage in body painting, and a true master of this art can achieve a masterpiece that rivals even the loveliest embroidered creations. Others of us practice sculpture of stone or wood. I am a woodcarver, and know no greater joy than to vividly render the form of a living beast in unliving wood. I was once asked to carve a statuette of a gazelle for King Varulus III, as much to test my purity as to enrich His Majesty with the beauty of my work.

## On the Beastmaster's Duty Since the Scourge

Some who call themselves scholars tell us that the ferocity we see so often in the beasts of Barsaive





nowadays is a permanent change, wrought by the ravages of the Horrors. These same bookish folk would have us believe we can do nothing to reverse the change.

Such convictions are an appalling display of misguided ignorance. If the Scourge had so greatly changed the beasts of Barsaive from friend to enemy, no Adepts could follow the way of the Beastmaster, nor could we still learn from our animal companions. Jaspree would never so utterly forsake her children, both beast and Namegiver, as to leave a permanent gulf of fear between us. If the mistrust between beast and Namegiver truly cannot be bridged, there is greater reason than ever to lament the Scourge and fear the lingering presence of the Horrors. Indeed, the presence of so many generations of Beastmasters in Barsaive only reaffirms my belief that Jaspree has called us to bridge the gap created by the Scourge and strengthen the too-often weakened bond between the Namegiving races and the creatures of the land.

*I urge the reader to keep in mind the often maudlin temperament of Beastmasters when considering this final paragraph.*

*Many of Barsaive's beasts are dangerous, and Beastmaster sentimentality should not lull anyone into thinking otherwise.*

—Melim, Assistant Scribe and  
Copyst of the Hall of Records

## GAME INFORMATION

### Roleplaying Hints

The Beastmaster needs to strike a balance between her appreciation for animals and her own status as a Namegiver. The Beastmaster delights in the company of animals, but cannot simply shun her fellow Namegiver races. The player must emphasize the Beastmaster's aloofness without making her anti-social. Beastmasters run quite a gamut of personalities, from those who view animals with sentimental affection to those who see them as enigmas to be deciphered. Beastmasters also express varying views as to the superiority or inferiority of Namegivers versus beasts.

How the Beastmaster character behaves toward her animal companions when she is not seeking adventure can offer an opportunity for great insight into

her personal vision of her Discipline. What animals does she work with? How does she spend her time? What is she learning from the animals, and what is she teaching them? Though encounters that answer these questions may be brief, playing out a few of these everyday interactions can enrich the character immeasurably.

Game Masters should look for ways to encourage this kind of roleplaying, even during adventures that might not otherwise focus on the Beastmaster and/or his creatures. If a Beastmaster character regularly travels with one or more animals, the Game Master should not conveniently forget these beasts when the character enters an inn or goes into combat. The player may want to control the beasts' actions, but ideally those decisions should come from the Game Master. After all, animals are independent beings who may often react predictably, but should not be taken for granted. Even the most gifted Beastmaster cannot always accurately predict or dictate the actions of her animal companions.

A Beastmaster's personal vision should encompass at least some elements of the Discipline's higher ideals. A character who acts like the "lesser Beastmaster" described in the fiction may suffer fewer Discipline crises, but will also have more difficulty finding a Beastmaster willing to train her. She may even have greater difficulty working with her animals, because of the lack of mutual respect and trust between the character and her beasts.

### Discipline Violations

No matter how a Beastmaster sees the world or her Discipline, she must honor her commitment to never bring deceit into her relationship with an animal. A Beastmaster who bases her relationship with her animals on falsehood has severed a vital link with her Discipline and will suffer a Discipline violation.

A character who tricks her animals into sacrificing their lives or sells them into slavery for cruel masters can no longer rely on the power of her bond with animals or the strength of her will to draw upon a Beastmaster's karmic energy. Such a character might restore the broken bond, however, by performing a Deed of Atonement. She might admit to other Beastmasters what she has done, rescue animals she has sold into slavery, or nurse an animal injured on her behalf or as a result of her deceit.



## THE DARING AND DAUNTLESS CAVALRYMAN

*This treatise on the Cavalryman Discipline I transcribed from the words of Jenna Kinkeeper, a human from the hinterlands. For all the hours we spoke together, she leaned against and petted her fine black horse, Caliph—whom she insisted on introducing at the start, as one might introduce a fellow Namegiver. This, more than anything else, gave me insight as to how Cavalrymen regard their animals.*

⊕—Presented for the edification of the reader by Derrat, Wizard of Yistaine, 1506 TH

A Cavalryman lives for her mount, and her mount lives for her. We ride in the teeth of the wind; we eat, sleep, and wake part of another's existence. We are closer than mother and daughter, wife and husband; our fates are entwined in a way no one else can truly understand. Only when a mount chooses you and you accept can you truly understand what it is to live joyously in this world.

I have been a Cavalryman since the moment I drew breath, though it took me my first fifteen years to realize it. Throughout my life I have ridden with Cavalrymen of all races and know we are among the bravest and most loyal souls roaming this battered land. Were we not, our mounts would not love us so—nor would we know the unequaled joy of their friendship.

### THE WORLD OF THE CAVALRYMAN

An ancient saying among Cavalrymen goes, “every foal is born of a mare, and every mare was once a foal.” Aged Cavalrymen often speak thus to their young charges about what it is to be an Adept. Though such sayings do little to ease the joyous bewilderment of a youth who has just experienced her first Ceremony of Joining, the truth of these pearls of wisdom cannot be denied. No one can become a Cavalryman unless she possesses a natural empathy with animals and a need for motion that goes gut-deep. But the bond between rider and mount grows with learning, and

as it grows it colors the Cavalryman's view of the world. Caliph and I have known our bonding for eleven turns of the seasons now, ever since she was a spindly-legged foal who chose me as her rider, and I see the world as much through her eyes as through my own.



### On the Bond Between Mount and Rider

We Cavalrymen see the world the Scourge has left us in a way few others can. The Air Sailor in her flying ship, perhaps, might understand what we mean when we say that the world is meant to be traveled. Life is meant for movement, for discovery, for the rhythm of hooves fading into the distance as a rider and her horse canter over the horizon. Floating a-horseback across the land, your senses sharp and alive, you touch the world with eye and ear and nose and skin, yet feel gloriously apart. Time has stopped for you and your mount, and it seems your ride will never end.

Why stay in one place for any length of time, when you can feel the wind tugging at your hair like a playful child as you bend over your mount's neck? Why stand still, when your horse's heart and yours blend together like your hair with her mane, together in perfect agreement as the world flows by around you? Even now, I can feel the tugging at my heart. Caliph and I would go and race the wind, had I not so much more yet to tell. But Caliph knows my mind, and will wait for me.



Though I cannot scent the wind as Caliph can, and she cannot grasp a pen in her hoof, we each understand something of the world as each of us experiences it. Scent, sound, and sight combine in our experience of the world, making it far more brilliant and vivid...we sense the world from two different and sometimes confusing perspectives at once. Experienced Cavalrymen learn to deal with this, and find it as easy as riding and shooting a bow at the same time. Our mount's perceptions join with our own just below the surface of our thoughts; we need only open our hearts to see through different eyes.

*Though Jenna barely makes mention of it, the reader should be aware that many Cavalrymen choose mounts other than horses. It is true that most humans, elves, t'skrang, and orks choose horses as their partners, but few horses can comfortably carry a troll rider, while windlings ride mounts better suited to their tiny size. Also, many orks, especially among the scorcher tribes, choose massive thundra beasts as partners. It is a minor point to be sure, but one worthy of making if this treatise is to be considered any form of authoritative information about the Cavalryman Discipline.*

—Merrox, Master of the Hall of Records

## On the Limits of Relationships with Others

Our universe is a wild and uncertain place, like a hurricane surrounding an island of perfect trust and understanding. This island is the partnership between horse and rider. Outside stands the rest of the chaotic, chancy, often dangerous world; within, all is peace and pure intimacy. Though a Cavalryman can make friends and take lovers like any other Namegivers, no tie ever becomes as important to us as the bond between rider and mount.

Now you know, scholar-scribe, why so few Cavalrymen marry; very few husbands or wives are willing to play second-best saddle to a horse! Only another Cavalryman truly understands how we feel, and so many of us seek companionship in the arms of others of our kind. That way, we need not feel torn between the affection of lover for lover and

our overriding loyalty to our mounts. Both Adepts know and accept the limits of their lover's bond.

A Cavalryman makes close and true friends, others by whose side we can rid our battle-scarred world of Horrors and other unimaginable evils. Though we can fight and laugh and sleep side by side with others of our own, two-legged kind, no one can touch our inmost souls save our mounts.

Most of us find the prospect of going through life without a partner whose heart and mind are as open to us as our own souls a terrifying—even horrifying—thought. The constant flow of affection between horse and rider simply outshines all other attachments, and Cavalrymen would have it no other way. So the next time a Cavalryman suddenly loses interest in your latest Theran joke, don't believe him contemptuous or arrogant. He feels no such thing toward you; you are simply less interesting to him than his horse.

## ON LIFE IN A CAVALRY

Though the love between each horse and her rider sustains a Cavalryman throughout her life, few of us live only in the company of our steeds. Almost all Cavalrymen join regiments, troops or other cavalry bands. The ork scorcherers are particularly well known for their crack cavalries whose diverse members can act as one better than any other group in Barsaive. Certainly no Theran whip elicits such unity among them. We join our fellow Cavalrymen because we and our horses wish to. Horses are herd animals, and enjoy each other's company as much as do Barsaive's Namegiver races.

Most cavalry troops are led by a "captain's pair," the rider and mount who command the greatest respect from the greatest number. The captain's pair chooses aides, who each command a number of cavalry pairs beneath them. The manner of choosing leadership and position within the ranks varies greatly from band to band, but both horses and riders have a say in such decisions, and the abilities of each pair when working together are given great weight. Often, Cavalrymen advance through individual challenges, in which two pairs compete in races, battles and other tests of skill. Most battles are fought with blunted weapons, though I have heard that ork scorcherers prefer challenges to the death.





Though Cavalrymen rarely practice a second Discipline, many devote themselves to a specific aspect of our Discipline. Many cavalries are made up almost solely of those we call soldiers, who devote themselves to the arts of war. Certain bands, most notably the windling Aisling Cavalry, so justly famed for their amazing speed and endurance, serve as messengers and couriers. Messenger cavalries tend to be much smaller than soldiering troops and usually include a number of what we call horsemen, Cavalrymen who pursue riding skills to the near exclusion of all else. A few Cavalrymen also become Beastmasters. Such pairs have an unmatched ability to work together, and so can make their way safely through almost any territory.

### On Daily Practices

A Cavalryman's life revolves around her horse, and the horse's around the Cavalryman. Nothing is as important to a Cavalryman as caring for her mount, and she will see to her mount's comfort even before breaking her fast. The Cavalryman feeds her horse, brushes and curries it, then checks its legs for splints and its hooves for signs of thrush, stone bruises or other problems. A Cavalryman can often sense if her mount is in pain or gravely ill; some troubles can be insidious, and so it pays to be cautious. A mount's legs and hooves must be well cared for, because a horse whose leg or hoof is seriously injured may never recover. To lose a mount is the worst nightmare a Cavalryman can imagine. I know; I have lived through that agony.

Unless a cavalry band is on active service, each pair spends the day rehearsing battle moves, riding maneuvers and other important skills. Cavalrymen on active duty do whatever is required of them; patrolling the outskirts of cities or towns, watching for trouble in city streets, carrying messages, or even fighting—though battle has become rarer since the end of the Theran War. In all such activities, the Cavalryman must give constant attention to strengthening the link between the spirits of rider and horse.

At the end of the day, when mount and rider retire to rest, they often sleep together. All Cavalrymen sleep beside their mounts when traveling, and many Cavalrymen prefer to sleep in the stables of an inn rather than leave their mount alone in a strange place.



Sleeping with my horse comforts both my body and my mind; my steed's warmth and strength enfold me, and the musky scent of horse lulls me to sleep in my soft hay-nest as surely as any lullaby.

### On Becoming a Cavalryman

With every new foal born, a new Joining can begin. As they travel, Cavalrymen keep a constant watch for riding animals near to giving birth. When they spot a likely mount, they often arrange to stay near the pregnant animal until the birth of the offspring, and



spend much of the time while they wait searching for Cavalrymen candidates. When the foal is born, the Cavalryman spends a day with the newborn animal, stroking its rough coat and whispering tales of glory and valor in its ears, all the while concentrating her thoughts on the potential Adepts she identified earlier. If no one responds to this call, we accept that this youngling was not meant to be a mount and move on. If someone responds to the miracle of this birth, they will approach the foal before another sun sets. If the foal seems as drawn to the Adept candidate as the candidate to the foal, and even if the potential Adept does not realize why she has come, the Cavalryman then offers to train the foal as a mount for the candidate. If the candidate accepts this offer, she immediately becomes an apprentice Cavalryman, or else pledges to return in two or three years when the mount has matured. The dispute as to which method produces the better Adept goes on as fiercely among us as ever, though never so bitterly as disputes among adherents of some other Disciplines.

Most Cavalrymen I know believe that any new bond that is truly forged will be strong enough to bring horse and rider together at the proper time, regardless of how many months or years they spend apart. Riders of this gait see separation as good and necessary, so that each member of the pair-to-be can know himself better before becoming so intimately bound up with another. Other Cavalrymen believe just as strongly that the apprentice rider and foal should not be parted once they have bonded, however tentatively. They say that continuous company and shared experiences strengthen the bond between horse and rider, and make them truly one as no other kind of training can.

Regardless of the method, the official Rite of Joining cannot be performed until the foal has lived thirty months. Though every cavalry has its own ways of performing this sacred ritual, its core remains the same from band to band. From the pair's teacher and mount, the newly bonded horse and rider each receive a mark of joining. Though derived by custom from the mark worn by the teaching pair, it is always different enough so that each mark is as unique as the pair it binds. The mark may be branded on the new pair with fire, or tattooed, or the teacher may cut the flesh and rub dirt into the cut to form a

raised scar. I have heard that ork scorchers favor the last method. Once adorned with this symbol of the Cavalryman's bond, the rider leaps onto his mount's back for the first time. As the two gallop together in joy, the rider silently Names their partnership. This Naming cements the budding heart-bond between the two of them. No Cavalryman tells another this Name, and to ask it is a deadly insult.

## On Bonding More Than Once

Death is part of life in Barsaive, more so now than in the times before the Scourge came to trouble us. Often, the dangers of our world leave one member of a bonded pair—most often the Cavalryman—to grieve for her slain companion. The survivor of a pair sundered by death, whether horse or rider, may bond again, though no Cavalryman can bond with more than one mount at a time. Such a thing would be a travesty; it would be like a king owing his whole loyalty to more than one realm, or a husband giving all his heart to more than one wife.

None among us has discovered precisely why, but it is far rarer for a horse to bond again than for a rider to do so. All too often, a horse whose rider dies simply refuses to eat or drink, disappearing into the wilderness to die rather than going on without his bondmate.

Of all the Namegiver races, humans like myself recover most swiftly from the worst depths of our grief to form another bond. Some claim this is so because humans are more versatile than others; I believe we are simply stronger of mind. Trolls are the least likely to find another mount, partly because their notions of honor are tangled with the pair-bond and partly because it is no easy task to find a mount suitable to their size. Regardless, no Cavalryman of any race ever completely sets aside her sense of loss.

We always remember our mounts, and miss them as a mother misses her departed children. Some Cavalrymen never recover from the shock of losing a mount, particularly if they feel somehow to blame for the horse's death. Such unending despair is a hazard of our Discipline. Because a Cavalryman's horse lives at most to the age of twenty-two years or so, and other mounts often less, all Cavalrymen know they will face a mount's death at least once in their lives. To know this and still enter the Discipline is a true feat of courage.





## Of the Rite of the Hero

The end that Cavalrymen dread more than a mount's clean death in battle or the gentle passing that comes with age is a broken leg. Not even magical healing can make the bone as strong as it once was, and no horse cares to live on three legs. A horse that can never gallop again knows only a life of agony. We Cavalrymen have a duty to our mounts if they are injured so grievously that life will become unbearable for them. If in battle or accident a horse suffers a crippling, but not fatal wound, the Cavalryman must perform the Rite of the Hero. To leave your mount alive and suffering rather than face this awful and solemn responsibility is the single greatest shame that can befall a Cavalryman. Horses can sense such shame, and an Adept who so disgraces herself will never find another horse willing to accept her after such a betrayal. I have heard the few scattered stories of Zena of Throal, a dwarf Cavalryman who redeemed herself in the eyes of the mountain ponies through a series of heroic trials, but this ancient tale cannot possibly have any truth in it.

The rite is simple and stark, as befits such a somber occasion. The Adept cradles her wounded mount's head in her lap, and they meditate together on their bond-Name and all that it has grown to encompass. When both feel ready, the Cavalryman slices her mount's neck, then touches her dying mount's blood to the marks of their joining. As the mount dies, the joining brand fades (though it never fades entirely). I performed this rite for my first mount, Dancer, who gave his life fighting shadowmants in the Thunder Mountains. I felt the bond between us slip slowly, torturously, out of my grasp, as a lifeline slips out of the weakening grip of a drowning sailor. The quick shock of death in battle is as nothing by comparison. Yet it was my duty to face this pain, and I dispatched my mount to the comfort of death as I had sworn to do. Any true Cavalryman would do as much, no matter what it cost her.

## Of Honor Braids

This braid I wear honors the memory of my departed mount. Pay special respect to any Cavalryman you see wearing such an honor braid, for he has suffered a trial beyond any that you have ever experienced. Three sections of hair taken from the mount's tail are intertwined with three sections of

the rider's hair to make an honor braid, and no rider will ever unbraid it.

Sometimes, but only in the most dire circumstances, a Cavalryman will sacrifice her honor braid by cutting it off and casting it into a fire. By doing this before or during a great quest or battle, the Cavalryman may gain extra strength to face the challenge. Yet this act causes the Adept such anguish that it is only done as a sign that a Cavalryman will give more than her life for the cause at hand. A dishonored Adept may not wear an honor braid, and as a symbol of her disgrace it is shorn from her head.

## ON TRAINING A CAVALRYMAN

Every teacher of young Cavalrymen has her own way of training, but all teachers I know of teach the fledgling Adept to ride first without bridle and saddle. Those things come later. Even after training, most Cavalrymen I know eschew such ungainly items as saddles and bridles; all the straps and reins and such that other riders find so indispensable only interfere with the bond between rider and horse. There is no need for a guiding rein when you need only open your heart to tell the horse where to go; the subtle pressure of thigh or knee to withers or flank is all we need to direct our mount. No Cavalryman's mount will ever suffer a bit between her teeth—and woe to the fingers of whoever attempts to put one in her mouth!

In the beginning, training exercises increase the heart-bond between horse and rider. Games of hide and seek, in which the rider must sense where her horse has gone, are a favorite method of mine. In teaching the two younglings to work together as a team, many teachers blindfold rider and then horse in turn, so that each learns to rely on the senses of the other while in motion. Beginning with simple circles on lead ropes, the young Adept learns to use legs, seat, and hands in conjunction with her mind to guide her mount, while the mount learns to send her own thoughts back to the Adept. It is a delicate and wondrous time of learning for both!

Most Cavalrymen and their mounts benefit from the bond partly because we complement each other. Both Caliph and my lost Dancer are high-spirited and almost reckless, whereas I am serious-minded and calculating. Our differences cause disagreements at times—as Caliph's snorts testify—but we balance each other's weaknesses admirably.





# EARTHDOWN PLAYER'S GUIDE

Once the bond between them is firm, the pair learns more difficult riding and fighting techniques. Fighting skills vary from region to region, race to race, and regiment to regiment. Both horse and rider are always taught to fight; the Adept with any one of a number of weapons, and the horse with hooves, teeth, and body. If fierceness can be lyrical, it is so when a Cavalryman and his mount engage in battle. They move together as one, using their weapons in a dance of deadly grace.

*No fighting Cavalryman should discount stirrups. Having a leather strap against which to brace your feet helps a rider stay on his mount's back in the thick of battle, where a sharp plunge or a quick turn at the wrong moment can toss you right onto someone's sword. I tie a simple girth-band around my mount's belly, and the stirrups dangle from that. Peloquin fights better too—he doesn't worry so much about throwing me to my death.*  
—Gether of the Red Plains Riders

After a time, the novice Adept can truly enter the ranks of our Discipline by performing a certain Karma Ritual. She plants a target in the earth, then gallops away from it in random patterns for several minutes.

Then she blindfolds herself and must return to the target, seeing her way solely through her mount's eyes. A new pair who completes this ritual is welcomed by their fellows into the proud circle of the Cavalryman Discipline. Moving to higher and higher accomplishments almost always requires an Adept to prove an even stronger hearth-bond between horse and rider, because that tie is the linchpin around which all else revolves.

## OF SOLDIERS AND HORSEMEN

Certain Cavalrymen choose to set aside certain facets of the Discipline in order to hone other skills to the finest possible point. Many Cavalrymen feel

such limited focus is unwise, but plenty take up the most common specialties of soldier and horseman.

The soldier and his mount study the arts of warfare to the exclusion of all else. A well-trained soldier pair is one of the most deadly foes an enemy will ever face. Because battle fills their souls and leaves no time for other learning, the soldier pair may fall short in riding skills not used in battle. The partners also risk succumbing to battle lust, each feeding off the other's frenzy. Such berserkers can endanger friend and foe alike until the battle fever fades.

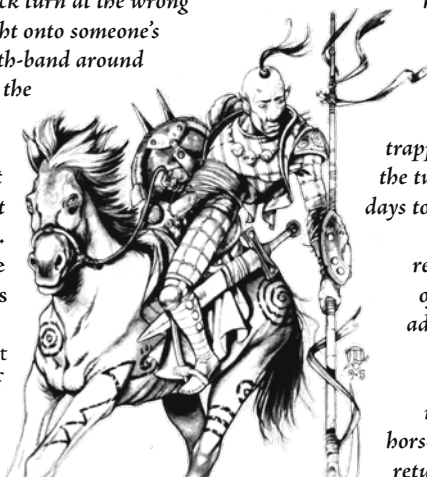
*Well-loved tales told around many a cavalry's campfires concern the ork Vanock the Calloused and his great horse, The Wind. In all versions I*

*have heard, Vanock and The*

*Wind were two of the first beings to emerge from the earth toward the end of the Scourge. Tired of living trapped within their kaer's walls, the two agreed to journey for nine days toward each of the four winds.*

*If they survived, they would report to the kaer that the end of the Scourge had come. The adventures of Vanock and The Wind during their journeys have spawned legends more numerous than the hairs of a horse's mane. But in the end they return triumphant to their kaer.*

—Merrox, Master of the Hall of Records



As the soldier eschews certain particularly tricky riding skills, so the horseman forgoes the arts of war in order to ride with the greatest skill possible. A horseman and her mount can certainly defend themselves, but the consummate skill with which they move almost as one being sets these pairs apart from other Cavalrymen. Horsemen often take on a second Discipline, almost always that of Scout. These horsemen pairs love to travel and explore; more than to all other heroes, Barsaivians owe to horsemen-Scouts our ever-growing knowledge of our land. They have been where others both long and fear to go, and have brought their knowledge back as a gift.



## CHAPTER 4: ADEPTS

### GAME INFORMATION

#### Roleplaying Hints

Cavalrymen are a restless lot, driven by the need to move and act. A Cavalryman will never walk when he can gallop; he charges into every situation, faces foes head on, and takes life by the throat.

Unlike most Adepts, whose Disciplines require only that they concentrate on their own abilities, the Cavalryman is intimately bound to his mount. Even when physically separated, the two of them maintain the empathic bond without which no Cavalryman is truly complete. A Cavalryman's bond with his mount is central to his life, affecting him mentally, emotionally, and physically. Because his mount is more important to him than any other being, other Adepts included, the Cavalryman tends to keep a certain emotional distance from other people. For this reason, other Namegivers often see Cavalrymen as rude, brusque, or even a little brainless.

Often, a Cavalryman's true brilliance and heroism shines only while working in tandem with his mount. A mounted Cavalryman can draw on the strength, will, and senses of two beings; these gifted Adepts are known for such feats as leading charges straight into the heart of a Horror's lair, or galloping through a wretched, trackless wilderness full of Theran soldiers to deliver a crucial message. The Cavalryman who seems shy and taciturn away from his mount often startles his companions by making a dramatic personality change when working with his riding beast.

Though a Cavalryman does not find it particularly difficult to work with other Namegivers, he often seems a bit odd to all but the Beastmasters, who understand at least a little of these Adepts' unique partnership with their mounts.

#### Discipline Violations

Because the tie between a Cavalryman and his mount is so central to the Discipline, anything that diminishes its importance may trigger a Discipline crisis. A Cavalryman who neglects his mount, for example, may be committing a Discipline violation ranging from Mild to Heinous, depending upon the severity of the neglect. An Adept who forgets to properly feed and brush down his mount before tending to his own needs might suffer a Mild Discipline violation. If he continued such neglect for a week, the

Discipline violation would become Severe; more than a week's neglect would constitute a Heinous violation and trigger a Discipline crisis redeemable only by a Deed of Atonement.

A Cavalryman may also trigger a Discipline crisis by valuing another Namegiver over his mount. An infatuation or other distraction with another Namegiver can weaken or even shatter the Adept's empathic bond with his mount and harmony with his Discipline. When determining the severity of such a lapse, the Game Master should use his own judgment. For example, a Cavalryman who becomes utterly absorbed in a single conversation with another Namegiver has probably committed a Trivial violation. A Mild Discipline violation might result if the Adept spends a single, impassioned night totally focused on his new amour.

Should a relationship with another Namegiver become important enough to the Cavalryman that he puts his mount's welfare below it—say, risking his mount's life to save his lover's—he may suffer a Severe Discipline violation. If such a relationship takes precedence for a month or more over the Adept's bond with his mount, his conduct constitutes a Heinous violation. Such an Adept risks the permanent dissolution of his empathic bond and the total loss of his status as a Cavalryman, though a Deed of Atonement might still restore him to harmony with his Discipline.

#### Death of a Mount

A Cavalryman who does not perform the Rite of the Hero for his mortally wounded mount (described in the fiction) is guilty of a Heinous Discipline violation. Only a Deed of Atonement, such as an epic quest to honor his fallen mount, will make such an Adept acceptable to another mount.

#### Effects of Honor Braids

For each honor braid an Adept wears, he gains a +1 bonus to his Diplomacy rolls when dealing with other Cavalrymen. An Adept who cuts off and burns an honor braid to gain power for some heroic purpose (saving a kaer, fighting a Horror, and so on) gains a number of Karma Points equal to his level at the time of that mount's death. These Karma Points must be used in the adventure or quest that prompted the Cavalryman to burn the honor braid. The Adept





cannot make another honor braid to replace the one he has sacrificed until and unless his new mount dies honorably.

## Race-Specific Mounts

The *Player's Guide* (p.42) notes that a Cavalryman begins the game with a riding horse, but troll and windling Cavalrymen clearly would find horses unsuitable mounts. Some dwarfs might also find a horse difficult to ride easily. The following guidelines suggest alternative mounts for dwarf, troll, and windling Cavalrymen. Statistics for these mounts can be found in the *Game Master's Guide*.

### Dwarfs

Most dwarfs are too short to comfortably ride a normal-sized riding horse. Some dwarf Cavalrymen ride smaller horses and ponies; some use other animals as mounts, such as the troajin and the huttawa. Dwarf Cavalrymen may begin the game with one of these two mounts, or a small horse or pony.

**Troajin:** Troajins are tiger-like animals native to Barsaive's jungle and mountain country. An average troajin stands approximately four feet at the shoulder and is eight feet long, a combination of a five-foot body and a three-foot tail. Wild troajins are fiercely territorial and defend themselves with sharp claws and teeth. In addition to serving as mounts, tame troajins also often become animal companions of Beastmasters. A trained troajin costs 100 silver pieces, and can be purchased in many large cities.

**Huttawa:** A huttawa's body resembles that of a lion or tiger, but it has an eagle-like head with a large beak and birdlike eyes. Four feet tall at the shoulder and six feet long, huttawas are a favored mount of dwarf Cavalrymen, and also often help pull caravan wagons belonging to trading companies based in Throal and Bartertown. Though not overly bright, huttawas are easy to train. Trained huttawas are sold in many Barsaivian cities for an average price of 95 silver pieces.

### Trolls

Because of their vast size and weight, troll Cavalrymen can rarely find horses large and strong enough to support them. Some troll Cavalrymen ride large war horses, but most ride an unusually strong and sturdy breed of horse called a granlain. Troll Cavalrymen begin the game with this type of mount.

**Granlain:** Granlains are unusually large, strong horses that often serve as draft animals. They stand seven feet tall at the shoulder and commonly reach ten feet in length. Granlains are stubborn animals, and trolls are often the only Namegivers strong enough to deal with these massive, willful beasts. Granlains are not common; wild ones live only in the plains and foothills near the Twilight Peaks. Despite their rarity, the difficulty of handling them reduces their sale value. A granlain costs an average of 115 silver pieces.

### Windlings

Too small to ride normal horses or thundra beasts, windling Cavalrymen most often ride small lizard-like mounts known as kues or large birds called zoaks. Some windling Cavalrymen may ride dogs or small wolves. Windling Cavalrymen can begin the game with any of these mounts, but Game Masters should be prepared to adjust circumstances or statistics to maintain game balance if a Player Character chooses the flight-capable zoak as a mount.

**Kue:** The kue resembles a cross between a lizard and cat, with a reptilian body and feline mannerisms and facial features. Like cats, kues possess excellent night vision, and sometimes serve windling communities as watch animals. A kue has long, slender legs rather than the short, squat legs typical of most lizards. They are about two feet tall at the shoulder and three to four feet long, and have horns on their heads and tails. Kues are native to Barsaive's jungles and forests, and make ideal mounts for *harresa-tis*, the windling Cavalryman and Warriors who protect windling communities and villages. Kues are sold only in larger cities and those towns lying near the Servos and Laj jungles. They typically cost anywhere from 90 to 110 silver pieces.

**Zoak:** The zoak looks like a cross between a large bird and a bat, with feathers on its body and head and a leathery neck, wings, and tail. The creature's feathered legs each end in four eagle-like talons. Zoaks measure roughly four feet from beak to tail-tip. The zoak's neck is long and flexible, similar in appearance to the crakbill's, but with vertebrae instead of pure muscle. These jungle and forest animals are favored by windling air cavalries, and also often serve as companions for Beastmasters. Because they prove difficult to train, zoaks are rarely offered for sale. Merchants in a few large cities, notably Urupa and Travar, trade and sell zoaks for an average price of 115 silver pieces.





## THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ELEMENTALIST

*As a practitioner of the Discipline of Wizardry, I took particular interest in the essays of those whose Disciplines have the most in common with my own. Or perhaps I should say, those I believed to have the most in common. I have since learned, as the following essay from Jedran the troll will attest, that the differences in world-view between the Wizard and the Elementalist, Illusionist, and Nethermancer are far more striking than I had expected.*

Ⓜ—Presented for the edification of the reader by Derrat, Wizard of Yistaine, 1506 TH

As a cranky old troll with a bad back, I've little patience for wasting time with flowery words. You want frills and lace about the world, about magic, go to an Illusionist. They'll tell you whatever you want them to hear and do it up in all colors of the rainbow. Me, I'm for plain speaking. I've been an Elementalist for more years than my old back cares to remember, and I see straight to the core truths in things. Almost can't help it, these days. Don't ask me what I see in you, scholar. You won't like it.

Most people, even trolls, don't take enough time to look to the heart of matters. When you boil all the world down to what's what, every single thing in it is made up of the five elements. Oh, but I'm flesh and blood, you're thinking—or stone, for any obsidimen feeling left out of this lecture—and what in Scarrin's Horns does wood, air, fire, water and earth have to do with flesh and blood? Plenty.

You have water in your blood, earth in air in your lungs, fire in your heart, and wood in your spine. Not literally, of course, but it's there just the same. If you were an Elementalist, you'd understand that. But you're not. So bend your ears my way, scholar, because old Jedran's going to tell you what it's like to know the elements in your heart and mind as well as your bones.

### HOW THE ELEMENTALIST SEES THE WORLD

Most folk see the world as a blurred jumble of sights and sounds, tastes and smells. They sense a hundred thousand things in a hundred thousand ways and

label them all "different," without understanding that there really isn't all that much difference between any of them. Elementalists see the world much more clearly. When we look at plants and people, stones and flowers, we see the five elements of the Universe.

Everything in this world of ours is created from the five elements. Everything.

Now, some things are made up of only one element, some of two, some of all five, but every blessed thing holds its own piece of the Universe's building blocks. Even the foul Horrors that came near to destroying our world contain something of the elements, twisted though that something is! Don't give me that shocked look, scholar. Don't like the notion that Namegivers share anything with Horror? Well, get used to it, because it's true. No sense hiding from truth just because it's unpleasant. If you try, it'll come back to bite you.

When an Elementalist like me looks at the world, he sees the elements in action. When we smell flowers or gaze at a rock formation, we're not just resting our eyes on something pleasing. We're watching how the air moves the pollen, or contemplating the pattern of the stone's growth through the years. Lots of times, we're communing with an elemental spirit, which most Namegivers can't see. No matter what, we're practicing our Discipline.

Do you see what I'm getting at, scholar? Elementalists move through a world of fundamentals. We can't escape the truths of life and death that the elements spell out, and we don't care to try. Leave that





to Illusionists and other ostrich-headed folk. If they want to cover their world and their senses in layer after layer of pretense, muffling themselves and others in blankets of deception, they're welcome to it. But to Elementalists, who strive to strip away all sorts of eyewash, the whole idea is repugnant. We won't drown ourselves in drink or get caught up in a magician's tricks. Where's the pleasure in tricking your senses or in shutting them down? How can you see and know the world that way, hmmm?

Elementalists have no need for trickery. Reality is complicated enough, and we love the puzzles it sets us. Go ahead—ask one of your fellow librarians in the Hall of Records to give you every treatise in the library on the nature of reality written by Elementalists. You'll give him heart failure with a demand like that! Certain aspiring Elementalists I know have spent several months on their rumps in the Great Library poring over scrolls and tomes on the nature of a single element. Our curiosity about the world and the nature of reality colors our dealings with elemental spirits, those peculiar beings that live just the other side of most people's "reality." I'll speak more of them later—but not until I'm sure you've got at least some of the essentials.

I can't say life as an Elementalist is easy. But we know just how important we are to Barsaive and we won't leave our task to be done by anyone else. Because Elementalists are the only Namegivers who are always aware of reality's true nature, we are also the only ones who can do anything with the five elements from which the entire world is built (and the only ones who can keep an eye on them). We're the ones who deal with the elemental spirits, most of whom care little for Namegivers or anything that distracts them from striving for more power for their own element. We do these things for a vital purpose: maintaining the balance between elements in our world. No Namegiver could exist without the presence of all five elements, and the nature of reality will warp if we ever let the balance veer too much in any one direction.

And another thing. During the Scourge, kaers with copies of the *Book of Tomorrow* knew to place a ball of True Earth over a bowl of True Water, so that when the two touched and turned to mud they'd know the level of magic in the world had fallen low enough to end the Scourge. Well, we all know the level of magic has held steady at just above that mark, and even we

Elementalists don't completely understand why. But because the balance of elements must hold the key to answering this question, every Elementalist takes it as his duty to learn more about elemental balance and its meaning for Barsaive.

We practice our Discipline nearly every waking moment, and we must regularly speak with the elemental spirits. Not an easy thing, scholar, to switch from communicating with spirits to talking with other Namegivers. I'm telling you now why Elementalists seem so odd to ignorant folk. When we talk to the air, stick our hands in the fire, or blurt out bits of what sounds like nonsense, our actions make perfect sense to us in our dual awareness of spirit and flesh. Just as orichalcum is the inanimate manifestation of the elements in balance, so are we its living manifestation.

We use the symbol of the five-pointed star, which represents a perfect balance among the five elements, to remind ourselves to honor all the elements to keep our world safe. So that we are consciously aware of the importance of balance (it is always prominent in our hearts), we use the five-pointed star in many of our rituals, speak of it in our proverbs, even embroider it on our robes. Watch for Elementalists wearing and using distorted or misshapen stars, though. They may signal a Horror's taint.

## ON THE NEED FOR BALANCE

Our world requires the elements to remain in balance, lest the nature of reality change. Some of my fellows tell me that the balance of the five elements somehow affects the ebb and flow of magic. If so, the key to lessening or even preventing another Scourge may well belong to a lock within the Elementalist's grasp. Now there's a notion, eh, scholar? Keeping a balance among the five elements sometimes gets difficult. In order to work our magic best, we need the aid of different elemental spirits, and each of them wants us to favor its element in exchange for its help! I've lost count of how many times an air elemental has demanded that I not cast any earth spells for a year and a day, or a wood elemental insisted that I cease casting fire spells. But if I agree to these demands, I stop balancing my use of elemental magics. And then I'm in sore trouble.

Whenever an Elementalist favors weaving the spells of any one element, or stops weaving one element's spells, the balance within his own spirit tips out of





whack. If the imbalance becomes critical enough, the Adept may even lose the knack of using certain elements in his spells! An Adept who favors or ignores one element too much will suffer the consequences. I knew a young windling Adept who favored air spells above all others, and rarely honored fire magic. Soon, the poor little wisp of a thing could only think clearly while in flight, and he lost all the energy and passion that fire brings to life. He was constantly exhausted and depressed, and ceased to care much about anything. Lucky for him, he managed to re-balance himself over a period of several months, but the effort cost him most of his remaining strength.

Now that you bring it to mind, there is one curious exception to all that. Elementalists who openly acknowledge favoritism toward a certain element don't suffer for it as others of us do, though they have their own peculiarities. I'll speak more of that later.

I can tell by your face that you don't understand why an unbalanced Elementalist is so bad for anyone except the poor fool himself. Well, I'll tell you. We have a saying: "As the Elementalist goes, so goes the world." Ever hear of the Great Mountain, or the Great Tree? Those are symbols we commonly use to describe and represent the world. As a troll, I prefer the Great Mountain, though elves and humans and the lizard-men prefer the Tree symbol. I'll give you both, as I can't guess what ragtag assortment of folk will end up reading this. Don't want anyone to feel left out, after all, though I doubt most of you bookish types and paper shufflers will understand half of what I've said. The Great Mountain has its stony roots in the earth, its slopes bear wood and the water of a thousand cold streams, its peak is air, and its heart is fire. The Great Tree also has roots of earth, a trunk of wood, branches of fire, and leaves of smoke—that's air, for the ignorant—and the water of life runs through every vein of it.

All the elements are there, scholar—all of them, in perfect balance, make up the fabric of reality. Throw off that balance and you've got trouble worse than a Horror breathing its foul stench on the back of your neck! And because we Elementalists live so close to the heart of reality, and strengthen or weaken the elements by our actions, an unbalanced Elementalist means an unbalanced part of the Great Mountain.

I've seen it happen myself. Some silly fool of a novice Elementalist came close to washing Urupa into the

Aras Sea because he didn't know enough about what he was doing. An elf, he was, who loved water best of all the elements. He also loved greenery, and thought it a crying shame that all Barsaive wasn't covered in trees and underbrush and whatnot.

He happened to be traveling in the arid lands between Urupa and the Thunder Mountains, the part just before you run into the lush delta country, and he decided to grow an oak forest for some local villagers because it would be pretty. Pretty, of all things! So he cast water spell after water spell, drawing on the water of the Serpent River and far-away Lake Ban. He got armies of delighted water elementals to make rainstorm after rainstorm for him, until the land near the village was awash in water. The oak seedlings sprouted, sure enough—but he'd thrown the balance of elements in the region so far off kilter that the storms wouldn't stop. The river and lake waters grew higher and higher, and the terrible floods all but drowned the delta near Urupa. There was water up to my waist in most of the city's streets that year.

Silly fool drowned most of the village's crops, too, which consisted of local plants that thrived on the meager water they customarily received. And what did he leave them with? A fine stand of completely inedible young oak trees! You see the trouble caused by imbalance?

## OF ELEMENTAL SPIRITS

Contrary to the belief of any number of ignoramuses wandering around Barsaive, elemental spirits are not simple-minded, easily bullied serfs who come running at the beck and call of any wet-behind-the-ears novice Elementalist. Elemental spirits are extraordinarily independent beings, and I've never met a single one who thought itself inferior to Namegivers. Truth be told, I've had more than a few arguments with spirits who claim that we Namegivers are confused and pathetic creatures whose patterns are all mucked up in a wild mishmash of elements we don't understand. The antics of certain of my children lend weight to such assertions, but I see both viewpoints as mistaken. We Namegivers are not superior to elemental spirits just because we're complicated beings, nor are they superior to us by virtue of their simplicity.

The second mistake most often made about elemental spirits is the variety in existence. There are a lot more than the five or six everyone may think they





know—hundreds of them share our world with us. The most common are spirits of earth, air, fire, water and wood, but I've also met flower spirits, mud spirits and hearth spirits, to name just a few. And I've read or heard of hundreds more.

Elementalists treat with these spirits, even making friends of them on occasion. Dealing with them successfully, though, is much more difficult than most of you ignorant folk realize. We can see straight to the heart of reality, but we don't live there. Elemental spirits do. The reality they understand and the one we understand are two different places, and sometimes that gets in the way. Many a time, a simple misunderstanding by an Elementalist or a spirit sends the spirit off in a snit before we've even finished talking to it.

Each type of element, and each spirit, has its own peculiarities. An Elementalist needs to keep firmly in mind that most elemental spirits want to aid us in our magical workings, because our efforts often extend the spirit's influence in the world. Even a hint of arrogance in our behavior, however, makes these proud beings angry. They've a sense of personal honor touchier than a troll's and that's saying something! So we hammer it into every apprentice's brain that he must respect the spirits, no matter how they act in return! "He did it first" is no excuse for making an elemental spirit your enemy, and possibly upsetting the balance into the bargain.

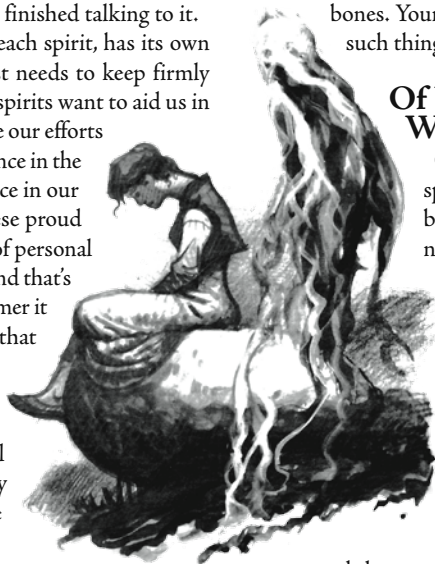
Elemental spirits want us to increase their particular element because the amount of a given element in existence gives the spirits of that element more power. Fortunately, some powerful spirits with a larger view of things act as a counterweight to the narrower-sighted ones, striving to keep the elements in balance as the others strive to dominate through their own element. You're looking confused, scholar, but that's my best explanation. Seems perfectly clear to me. And because you said you didn't want this becoming a magical-theory tome, I suggest you ferret out *Of Elemental Balance*. Nice piece of work, that.

No Elementalist worth his salt, sweat, breath, or passion goes long without weaving the power of the

elements into spells. Each element has its own nature, which the Elementalist must know in his bones if he's to use the magic at all. We learn to know each element by channeling its energy through our own bodies, because the body remembers better than the mind!

(And my apprentices wonder why my old back hurts so much! Humph.)

Remember too, that many spells are woven of two or more elements. To wield them properly, the Elementalist must understand each element involved. When I cast Plant Talk, I know that the element of wood is present in the plant's strength, and that the element of air is present in the plant's and my own speech. Both send their energies through my old bones. Youngsters are too likely to forget such things.



## Of Working With Earth

Catching the attention of earth spirits requires deep meditation, because these beings communicate at the roots of our own awareness. They also think slowly, compared to most Namegivers save obsidimen. Achieving that slowness of mind is a difficult trick for young Adepts especially, because they're so easily distracted. Urgent needs are hardest to convey to the earth spirit, because urgency

and slowness just don't mix. In truth, many

Namegivers find it difficult to think at all while in deep trance, though obsidimen have a real knack for it.

When casting with earth, the Elementalist must draw upon heart and bone. Your mind must be as implacable and unchanging as earth while you weave the element through your body. If you falter or change your intent while wielding earth spells, the focus of your spell may well shift away from you like dust in the wind.

## Of Working With Air

Air spirits are light-minded, intelligent, and as changeable as spring breezes. One minute they love you like a brother, the next they're convinced you



mean to betray them. Patience and clear speaking are needed when dealing with these spirits, as is a sense of humor. Air spirits also enjoy strange jokes, and often practice them on their Elementalist friends. Windlings have what might be considered an affinity for air spirits, being of like temperament.

Funny enough, air is the element of communication when used in spells. Casting an air spell is like holding a conversation; you've got to know exactly what you want to say, but you've also got to listen sharp and respond to what you hear. The Adept must hearken to his own senses and the movements of air through his body in order to weave this element in magic. If you try to grab hold of the air and force its power—shouting, we call it—you'll lose the focus of the spell.

*Ah, but a windling is not so fickle.*  
—Keorht, windling Elementalist

## Of Working With Fire

Fire spirits are almost as changeable as air spirits, though less suspicious. The same fire spirit may have far different concerns and even show a far different temperament from one meeting to the next. As spirits made of light, they see farther and faster than other kinds of spirits, and often allow or deny the Elementalist whatever aid he wishes far more quickly. I've never known an Elementalist who successfully lied to or tricked a fire spirit, and I wouldn't care to try.

Passion, hunger, and truth revealed are the first words that come to my mind when I think of the element of fire. I remember what fire's wild energy feels like, and my heart beats harder and faster in anticipation. Intoxicating, that's what it is. Makes you feel warm all over, like a good strong ale. Fire spells are not for the weak-willed, which is why they're a favorite of mine. To wield this element, be single-minded and passionate about what you want. Otherwise, the fire will escape and burn whoever is in its path. I've seen some fools so drunk by the power of fire at their fingertips that they lose control of it and harm themselves or their friends. Luckily, such lapses are rare.

## Of Working With Water

Spirits of water are less like each other than any other kind of spirit. I've dealt with no small number

of them over the years, and I still wonder what sort of a creature I'm going to encounter every time. The only constant I've ever noticed among water spirits is their unwavering confidence. Other Elementlists of my acquaintance tell me that water elementals hold back more and bargain more shrewdly than other elementals. They seem to particularly love t'skrang, for obvious reasons.

Every Elementalist must find his own way to wield this ever-shifting element. An old t'skrang colleague of mine speaks of the "everchanging-changelessness" of water spells, and I think she's got the right of it. Water is a paradox, always changing but always the same. The best advice I can give for casting water spells is to work from your heart, open yourself to the water flowing through your veins, and to flow with whatever emotions or thoughts fill your empty self with each casting. Look within, and find your own answer.

## Of Working With Wood

Wood spirits vary from tree to tree. I prefer oak spirits because their solid strength reminds me of my own people, but that's my bias. Wood elementals are the most bound to the world of we Namegivers, and so bespeaking one isn't all that different from talking to an elf or a t'skrang or a human. Wood spirits drive the hardest bargains, though. They're as unyielding as their element can be. Unless an Elementalist can prove that his actions will somehow aid the wood elemental, it is almost impossible to get help from the pesky thing without promising to do it a service. I know one young Elementalist, desperate for a wood spirit's aid, who spent the next year and a day planting acorns and other nuts! And yes, wood spirits do seem to prefer working with elves. As to blood elves and wood elementals, some claim the wood spirits prefer these twisted excuses for Namegivers. Others say most wood and other elementals refuse to deal with the thorn-pierced ones.

Wood is the stuff of growth and life. When an Elementalist stands near young saplings in the spring, he should feel their exuberant growth as surely as he feels his heartbeat. When casting spells with wood, remember growth and the goodness of change. An Adept who has grown too comfortable with unchanging patterns of thought or action soon loses his touch for casting spells relying on this element.





## OF THE PLACE OF ORICHALCUM IN THE BALANCE

Orichalcum holds special significance for we Elementalists. This magical substance symbolizes the world in perfect balance. Not for us the worry of you other folk over how much coin a piece of orichalcum or a True element can bring you— we see such things as objects for study, not gain.

My children roll their eyes and argue with me every time I bury pieces of orichalcum in the earth or within the bole of a tree, or otherwise “lose” them. I pay them no heed. By such acts, I am honoring one of the elements without which orichalcum could not exist. This practice, which we call “orichalcum tithing,” brings us goodwill from the spirits of the element to which we tithe.

*These so-called orichalcum spirits and orichalcum Adepts are the stuff of children's tales. No substantial scholarly information about them exists, and that leads me to doubt their existence. Readers, learn a lesson here. Do not embrace every word that is written.*

—Merrox, Master of the Hall of Records

Though I have never met one, some Adepts are said to attain such amazing skill and understanding in the Discipline that they can bespeak orichalcum spirits. Tremendously powerful, these spirits rarely deign to communicate with any Namegiver.

The so-called “orichalcum Adept” is honored above all other Elementalists, even those of higher skill. They are said to wear an orichalcum pentagram as a mark of their status. As to their specific abilities, none save the orichalcum Adepts know what they are.

## ON TRAINING AND ELEMENTALIST

Though we Elementalists tend to be close-mouthed about the details of our Discipline, we always keep an eye out for new recruits. Unlike certain other Disciplines, the Elementalist Discipline doesn't tend to attract hordes of would-be practitioners eager to learn our ways so they can accomplish feats of daring. The Discipline is too subtle for that sort of nonsense. Instead, we watch non-Adepts for signs

that they respect the elements or are sensitive to their workings. I found my latest apprentice, a young innkeeper's daughter, when she insisted I not travel onward because a fierce storm was coming. She said this even though the skies were as clear as a mountain spring. Much to my surprise, the innkeeper actually heeded his daughter's warning, setting his children to close the shutters and lock the animals in the barn. He told me the child had a knack for predicting storms, and I knew right then she was an Elementalist born.

Having set his sights on a potential apprentice, the Elementalist talks to him or her to find out how the apprentice-to-be sees the world and his own affinity for the elements. Weather-sense or some such isn't enough by itself; an apprentice must be able to learn the Discipline. Often, an Adept places the would-be apprentice where one or another of the elements clearly holds sway; they go walking in a rainstorm together, or stand near a bonfire. The Adept then asks his companion what he sees and feels. If the answers are promising, the Adept formally asks the candidate if he wishes to become an apprentice. My young apprentice heard unintelligible whispers and felt a cold breeze in her hair when a storm was coming, so I knew she was well-suited to the Discipline.

The apprentice starts learning at once, thrown into a physically and mentally exhausting array of experiences that will help her sense and understand how the elements work in the world. Along with this, the Adept discusses with the apprentice the nature of reality. Gradually, the apprentice learns to see the world through new eyes. She comes to understand the balance between the elements, and how to manipulate them to her advantage without doing the world harm. She also learns about the elemental spirits and the grave consequences of “twisting the pentagram,” or purposely working to pull the elements permanently out of line.

Once an apprentice demonstrates sufficient knowledge and ability, her most difficult training begins. As we say, “True learning comes by doing.” Elementalists learn a number of techniques and spells that are theirs alone, and so I cannot discuss such things in this essay. Not my secrets to reveal, are they? I can tell you that rituals play a particularly important part in the Elementalist Discipline.





## ON THE SIGNIFICANCE OF RITUAL

Ritual is a private, personal, and very important aspect of any Elementalists' existence. Only ritual can truly open our eyes and minds, and only continued practice of rituals lets us maintain our unique ability to touch both our own world and the realm of the spirits. Rituals are the lenses that allow us to shift our vision from one world to another.

In his Karma Ritual, each Adept brings each of the elements into his heart and sinews. Boiling water on a fire, mixing the water and earth to make mud, painting the mud on our faces with a wooden stick, and letting the wind dry the mud in patterns, allows us to experience each element in turn. Often, the patterns made by the wind in the drying mud show us patterns of power to embroider on our robes. I have also heard of Adepts whose Karma Ritual warned them of a temporary but grave imbalance in the local elements, which they were able to keep from becoming permanent. If ever the breeze blows out my fire, or the water in my pot boils over and burns my hand, I will know trouble is nigh.

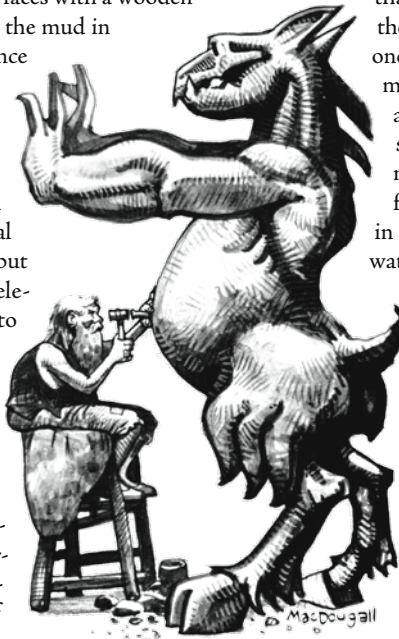
Elementalists conduct numerous rituals. The simplest to perform (but often the most difficult to set up) are the rituals of advancement. Adepts attempting to reach the more advanced and esoteric levels of their Discipline have the greatest trouble, because of the sheer complexity of the task they must accomplish. These Elementalists must demonstrate their power in front of an elder Adept and several spirits that increase in number as the Elementalists rises in power and ability. But the more elemental spirits are present, the more chances there are for disputes among them that can keep the ritual from happening. Innumerable Elementalists have been stymied by feuding elemental spirits, or their own short-sighted treatment of one. Other difficulties include convincing enough spirits to attend the ritual without too

much fuss, and inevitably at least one of them will demand that the Elementalists perform a service for them in exchange. Most Elementalists consider these services part of the Discipline, of course. As long as the elemental does not demand something that might throw off the balance of the elements, these services are of as much value to the Adept as to the spirit.

## OF THOSE WHO FOLLOW ONE ELEMENT

Given what I've said about the importance of elemental balance, it may surprise readers to learn that some Elementalists confine their studies and workings to only one of the five elements. Granted, most of us frown on such a choice as possibly irresponsible, but it seems that Elementalists who narrow their paths in this way follow, rather than cause, shifts in elemental power. For example, water Elementalists seem to crop up by the dozens when water becomes scant. Some of us wonder how long it will be before these single-element practitioners pull the balance awry, but even I have to admit we've discovered no evidence that they'll cause that kind of harm. Why not, I can't imagine—but then, the world has a few secrets from us all.

One who chooses a single element can still cast spells using other elements and can still bespeak the spirits of those elements. However, they lose a certain amount of ability in working with elements other than their chosen preference. In that one, they excel. Though an Elementalists of any race can choose any element, obsidi-men tend to prefer earth, windlings air, elves wood and t'skrang water. Orks, humans, and trolls rarely favor one element over another, though certain Sky Raider clans are thick with air Elementalists. Troll stories say these air Elementalists helped several kaers of Sky Raiders to keep their skills sharp during the Scourge, when the raiders were forced underground along with the rest of us.





## ON THOSE ADEPTS KNOWN AS ENCHANTERS

Certain Elementalists follow the path of the enchanter, focusing on manipulating elements physically and magically. Enchanters create magical items whose power and beauty are second to none. They have unsurpassed skill at creating items from one or more True elements, infusing such objects with elemental energies. A number of the magical items in Barsaive were made by enchanters, a fair lot of them humans. Every Namegiver race has its enchanters, but humans seem to like this path best of all. They love things, humans do, especially adornments. Perhaps that explains their enchantment with enchanters! (You're not laughing, scholar. Didn't you like my joke?) Many enchanters also learn the Weaponsmith Discipline, and can create amazingly powerful weapons. Almost all the most famous magical weapons are the work of such Adepts.

## GAME INFORMATION

### Roleplaying Hints

An Elementalist's most important function is to form a living bridge between the "real" world and the realm of elemental spirits that most Namegivers never see. The Elementalist must connect with the denizens of both worlds, while simultaneously maintaining enough emotional and intellectual distance to keep impartial watch over the real world's elemental balance.

This difficult balancing act sometimes causes the Elementalist to behave in ways others find odd, and he or she always seems to be slightly distracted or perhaps entranced. Also, because Elementalists tend to see their Discipline as a way of getting at essential truths, very few of them care to spend time and effort on unnecessary words or flowery phrasing. They often speak and act with a frankness and openness that other people may find blunt, rude, or refreshingly honest.

Elementalists who specialize in one particular element tend to have personality quirks similar to those of the elemental spirits they favor. Of all Elementalists, specialists are most likely to behave in ways other Namegivers find inexplicable.

### Discipline Violations

Elementalists must remain in tune with the elements. They must respect nature in all its forms,

and place the balance of the elements before other considerations when they act. These two constraints apply even to elemental specialists; they may favor one element over the others, but never to the extent that the overall balance is threatened. An Elementalist who does not acknowledge the importance of each of the elements in his life (meditating to the rhythms of the rain, adding fuel to a fire and staring into its depths, and so on) or who does not regularly talk to the elemental spirits risks losing touch with elemental balance. To keep in touch with the elements and elemental spirits, Elementalists must regularly perform rituals that allow them to make those connections. If an Elementalist fails to do this, he suffers a Discipline crisis.

Elementalists may also bring on Discipline crises by purposely harming the elemental balance, purposely polluting or harming a given element, or overusing or underusing a particular element. The severity of the violation depends on the nature of the specific offense. Neglecting to properly put out a campfire, for example, is a Mild violation; if this same fire burns out of control and destroys a woods, that destruction becomes a Severe violation. Setting a fire specifically to destroy the forest is a Heinous violation. Neglecting to cast air spells or speak to air spirits for a month might constitute a Mild violation, whereas purposely ignoring that element would be a Severe violation. It would also certainly anger the air spirits, and the Elementalist might have to win back their favor with an orichalcum tithe (see **Making Orichalcum Tithes**, following). Offending or ignoring an element for a long time may cause a Discipline crisis.

### Making Orichalcum Tithes

If he wishes, an Elementalist can tithe to a particular elemental spirit by placing an orichalcum coin within the element in question (throwing the coin off a cliff, placing it in a lake, burying it in the earth, and so on). If the Elementalist is out of favor with the spirit or is suffering a Serious to Severe Discipline violation, the tithe may restore the Elementalist to the spirit's good graces, serving as a Deed of Atonement. In other cases, the tithe grants the Elementalist an additional +2 bonus to his Spellcasting rolls for spells that involve the element to which he has tithed. This bonus lasts for up to one month for every coin tithed.



## AN ILLUSIONIST REVEALS THE TRUTH

*The following are the words of Illianstra, Illusionist from the city of Urupa. Her first explanations of her Discipline troubled me, but as she spoke further I realized that her heart is as sound and true as any Wizard's. Many of my fellows who believe otherwise—as many do, for prejudice between magicians is shockingly common—would do well to read this text and revise their opinions a little.*

⊕—Presented for the edification of the reader by Derrat, Wizard of Yistaine, 1506 TH

So you've come to see what secrets you can pry loose from my wagging tongue?

Well, you won't be disappointed!

Illusionists know the greatest secret of all: the secret of truth. To know what illusion is, you must first know what's real. Understand? Your eyes tell me you believe the lies told about Illusionists. That's no matter. Remember, every lie has its seed of truth—though more in some than others—and the truth itself often lies. Puzzled? Consider an onion—or no, an apple—no, a—oh, here, look.

*[Editor's note: At this point Illianstra waved her hands dramatically, produced flashes of light from her palms, and created a vision of Barsaive floating in the air before us.]*

This is our world as we see it. Well, as you see it. But that's not the point. Look closer. See, there and there and there? That darkness lurking in the hills, those shadows washing out of forgotten kaers? Those are the Horrors. You don't think about them; most Barsaivians don't. They'd not know a Horror if it walked up and pinched them on the cheeks. Why? Because they've gotten too used to trusting their senses to tell them the "truth" of what they see. And that, my friend, is utter nonsense. In fact, it's dangerous nonsense.

When we lived in the kaers, no one dared trust something as faulty as their own senses. No kaer allowed any one person to decide what was true, and therefore how to live, because the Horrors can so easily fool our senses. Illusionists reminded the

people of Barsaive how easily they could be gulled, and kept them vigilant.

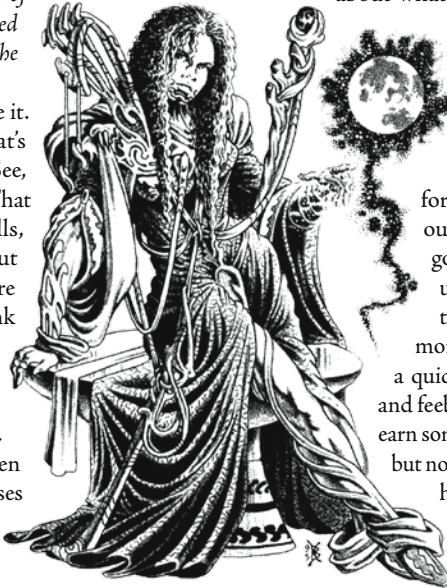
Some say our Discipline began in the kaers—maybe so. I've read ancient tales of Illusionists entertaining the people in the kaers, creating great plays for them with magic. Men and women alike fainted at the sight of phantasmal dragons rushing toward them, jaws dripping with flame, or cheered at the spectacle of the hero slaying the Horror and saving the kaer from destruction. But the tales also say that the people picked apart the Illusionist's work for days afterward, uncovering its inner workings through consensus about what was real and what was not.

That is the true purpose of my Discipline: not merely to entertain, but to instruct.

We still teach what is real and what is fantasy, though we often receive scant thanks for it. Our illusions and glammers surround us wherever we go, casting bold images before us. Some fools call us charlatans, and claim we do nothing more than use our magic to make a quick bit of silver off the gullible and feeble-minded. Not so! Oh, we do earn something for our "performances," but not nearly as much as some would have you believe. Most of us do what we do because it must be done. We will not cease trying to teach you people how to see, though you

despise us for it.

I suppose our methods do paint a picture of deception. It's true we often use illusion to hide our faces and pass ourselves off as something we are not. But we are not common thieves! If coin changes hands because of







our illusions, or if others are foolish enough to pay far too much money for spells in which they put far too much stock, is that our fault? Are we to blame? No! We do these things so that others will learn to look closely at all things magical. Magic can be beneficial, but can also pose grave danger. We left the kaers, but we have not left behind all the dangers from which they sheltered us. Horrors still roam the land at will, and we Illusionists fear that our fellow Namegivers may have forgotten how subtle these monsters truly are. So when we work illusions that may cause pain or cost someone money, we do so for the greater benefit of all. Through our actions we try to teach others to see as we do, to realize that all of our world is but a thin veil hiding reality in the illusory folds of Truth.

You hear my words with skepticism, as well you should. Questioning face value is a sign of a healthy mind. Also, I admit that some of my kind are more than a little self-serving. There is the seed of truth in your doubting! But I challenge you to find even one Illusionist who has ever deliberately used his craft to harm another Namegiver. You won't find one. If our magic causes harm, it is only the harm that other people allow to fall on themselves! If you believe harm should befall you from an Illusionist's spells, then it certainly will. If not, our magical workings will not disturb even a hair on your head.

I know that to most people this attitude makes it look as if we Illusionists shift responsibility for our own actions to others, but I don't intend it so. I have spoken the truth as I know it. But then, the heart of Illusionist teaching tells us that truth isn't always what it seems.

*I seriously hope this serious flaw in perception is not common to other Illusionists.*

*Do all of these men and women believe themselves blameless for the harm their spells can do because nothing happens unless the victim wills it to or believes it will? Interesting—and frightening.*

—Merrox, Master of the Hall of Records

## THE TALE OF ODU FRATAN

For your better understanding of the worth and power of illusion, I offer this tale. When I was much younger, I came to live for a time in a small village at

the western edge of the Liaj Jungle. The little town was always on the verge of collapse, and I used my Adept abilities constantly to keep the people from despair. I learned that the town had begun as a way-station for the caravans that folk were sure would soon begin to pass through with the re-opening of the high roads, but no one came when it became common knowledge that travel through the Liaj was nothing short of suicide. Without the coin and goods that the caravans would bring, the town withered. The villagers scraped a livelihood however they could, and the going had been much harder than they had expected.

Not long after I arrived, Odu Fratan pulled his wagon into town. A tall, strapping human with scraggly hair and a livid scar down his right arm, Fratan doled out food and other sorely needed supplies from the covered back of the wagon. He asked for nothing in return, save that the people listen to his counsel and abide by his advice while he stayed in the town. He claimed his stay would be brief, as he had business in the jungle. No one bothered to ask him the nature of his business.

I didn't much care for Fratan. Most of the townspeople thought me wary of him because he had done what I couldn't: brought them food and other necessities of life. But I knew he was an evil man, for I could practically smell the mark on him. I also knew no one would believe me if I simply said, "Don't listen to this evil man, he'll harm you." So I watched his comings and goings, and waited for a chance to show them the truth.

Odu Fratan made a trip into the jungle once every month, and each time was gone for a week or more. During one of those weeks, I convinced my neighbors to at least give me a chance to show them that Odu was up to no good. If I was wrong, I said, I'd move on and never bother them again.

I was ready the night Odu returned. I made a simple glamour that wouldn't fool anyone close up, but would do the trick perfectly in the moonlight at a distance. My illusion was a handspan larger than a human, rising out of a shadow at the edge of the town. Covered with spikes, it oozed a malignant purple glow. As I sensed Odu Fratan cresting the rise, I began speaking to the shadowy form. "Yes, master, I have delivered them all to you," I said, in the shiveriest voice I could manage. "This is the last."

So saying, out of the shadow I worked another, more lifelike illusion of a young girl. Sweat beaded





## CHAPTER 4: ADEPTS

my brow, and I felt a trickle of blood dribbling from my nose as I strained to hold both illusions together. Then I made the shadowy form grab the little girl and devour her in a gulp.

Shaking with fatigue, I bowed to the thing I'd made and said, "The town is yours, master. Give me the power you promised me." Suddenly Odu charged at me, screaming and howling for blood. "They were mine," he screeched. "My master promised that if I delivered them to him, my power would reign eternal!"

The town Archer shot Odu Fratan through the eye before he reached me. Our "benefactor" was the tool of a Horror, and I alone had sniffed out its taint. With the help of my illusions, he was unmasked before he could harm anyone. Only my illusions could have done it. That is the power of my Discipline.

### ON THE LIFE OF AN ILLUSIONIST

How do I spend my time? Studying, traveling and performing, and having the occasional adventure. Adventures usually prove quite enlightening, and so I go wherever they take me. I pity those magicians who spend all their time with their beaky noses shoved into the spines of moldering texts. Oh, they may understand the theory right enough, but how can anyone truly know what magic is who hasn't hastily whipped off a spell to save herself from certain doom? You can't know the truth without living in the wide world, as the saying goes. And that's as near to an absolute truth as you'll ever hear, so take heed.

I suppose I'm as much a "typical" Illusionist as any, which is to say I'm about as much like another Illusionist as a windling is like a troll. So in that sense, it's nonsense to speak of "the life of an Illusionist." But if it will help people to understand the truth of my Discipline, I'll gladly describe a day in my life to you.

Mornings come early for followers of my Discipline, just as they do for most magically minded individuals I know. Before I even rise from my bed, I spend a few minutes looking around for illusions or changes; after all, you never know what this lovely, changeable world will throw at you next. If I'm satisfied that nothing much has changed, I perform my morning ablutions. Never you mind the details; let's just say I like to be clean and to wear my hair knotted above my head, as it is now. I can see you admire it, and I thank you.

My morning meal varies, depending on where I am. I'll try just about anything once, adding new flavors,

smells, and textures to my repertoire in case I want to use them for illusions. Those three things are the hardest to create, you know. Sight and sound are incredibly simple; most people believe anything that comes through their eyes or ears. But the tongue, nose and skin are touchier, likely to pick up even the smallest mistakes. So I like to eat a lot of different things to see how they feel to these three senses. While I'm eating, I try to puzzle out a little more of the truth of the world. Not easy to do, but I have my training to fall back on. I'll describe that later on, when it will make a little more sense to readers. I spend an hour or so every morning taking in the world around me and seeing if it all makes sense according to the rules I understand.

*Illianstra's practice of eating new foods in order to master illusions of taste, smell and touch is an excellent example of something few people consider in relationship to this Discipline. The idea that an Illusionist might need to experience something before she can devise an illusion of it is a new idea to me. My own understanding of such things is now more complete, for which I am indebted to Illianstra.*

—Merrox, Master of the Hall of Records

If I plan to travel, I spend a little time packing up and plotting a trail that won't involve hiking over mountains or through swamps (two geographical nightmares that seem to exist solely to confound travelers). If I plan to stay in one place for awhile, I poke around and find someone to talk to. Oftener than not, I discover someone who needs to look a little harder at the world around him. I can't explain how I know them when I see them—we Illusionists simply sense these things. My Discipline demands that I help such people, and so I begin by working a few uncomplicated spells on him to see how he reacts.

Sometimes I take a little coin from him if he seems to need an extra effort on my part. As soon as he realizes that I may be gulling him, or that something unusual is happening, I know I've succeeded in opening his eyes to the truth. Off I go, casting a few illusion spells to cover my tracks. After all, I'm no help to others if I'm running from an angry mob of good-hearted but simple-minded citizens eager to avenge a harmless bit of foolery!



If I don't run across someone who needs a truth lesson—a rare occurrence—I practice my spells somewhere out of sight, usually in my room. This practice-time allows me to perfect the little spells I use every day, and to work on the more difficult ones I use more rarely. It also allows me to study the difference between the “real” spells I know how to cast and the illusory ones. It's fascinating how these two types of spells work together, and the differences between them. That very distinction probably holds more than a few clues about the nature of the world we inhabit.

That's also part of my training, so it seems like a good time to tackle that subject.

## ON TRAINING AND TEACHING

Some people, especially other magicians, seem to go out of their way to claim that Illusionists have no formal training. That is simply not true, and represents one of the many falsehoods often repeated about the Discipline by those who ought to know better.

The School of Illusion—a fancy Name for our Discipline, isn't it? Quite imposing—includes three kinds of Illusionists: students, teachers, and phantasms. I am a student, and so spend much time traveling across Barsaive to discover the truth for myself. I and my fellow students return home from time to time lest our travels lead us too far from the path, and during these respites from travel we spend most of our time with our teachers.

Our teachers do not lead us by the hand, as they do in some other Disciplines. They rarely tell a student anything as fact, instead confronting us with problems and questions that can guide us to a new level of awareness. All teachers encourage free thinking and a ready exchange of all ideas, no matter how strange or radical. Teachers are often called guides, because they guide the flow of our thoughts where they are naturally inclined, gently prompting us to recognize the truth of our lessons within the frame of our individual world-view rather than forcing us to see our lessons in a specific light as do many teachers of other Disciplines.

Teachers choose their Illusionist apprentices long before the candidates themselves realize they have been singled out. Illusionists seek out would-be Adepts who naturally possess a keener eye for what is real than most, and then test the chosen apprentice with illusions designed to distract or terrify her. My teacher chose several particularly horrifying waking nightmares with which to plague me, and I spent several days in numbed terror before I understood what I was seeing. My friends and family all became terrifying monsters; I still see them leering in my dreams from time to time if I have been badly upset. After three days, I began to notice small clues that hinted

at the falseness of what I saw, and at last I managed to track down the illusions' source. When I confronted the woman who wished to be my teacher, she congratulated me. Then my training began in earnest. I believe that this is a common way for teacher and student to meet.

Training is a never-ending series of tests and illusions that can drive many a student to complete distraction. In fact, they are meant to do precisely that. The best metal requires the hottest fire, and only stringent training will make a worthwhile Illusionist. Teachers often place their students in the middle of incredibly vivid, lifelike illusions, then giggle hysterically as the student blunders around in search of a way out.

This is the essence of training with an Illusionist. You no longer accept things as real simply because you see or hear or smell them. Instead, you test and test and test again absolutely everything before you accept its reality. Of course, one must also become very thorough and very fast at testing reality. Most Illusionists excel at making accurate judgments based on small details. Without swift and accurate analysis, an Illusionist's life would become a never-ending series of tiny, cautious steps in the face of possible peril. What can you possibly hope to accomplish by living that way?

Teaching our Discipline is every bit as demanding as learning it. The teacher must be several steps ahead of







the pupil in order to create illusions and cast spells that the student will find nearly impossible to disbelieve. Most Illusionist teachers are far more advanced than their pupils. An only slightly experienced Swordmaster may very well be able to instruct a beginner, but not so an Illusionist. A student rarely learns anything of value from a teacher hardly above her own level of ability; most of the time, the difference is far greater. As you might guess, good teachers are in great demand. The best ones often have lists a year and a day long of students waiting for their attention. An Illusionist who finds a good teacher should do everything possible to stay in his or her good graces. If you find a ghost master, so much the better; they can teach some truly extraordinary things!

Teaching is time-consuming, and a teacher rarely has time for much adventuring while instructing a pupil. Most teachers take long breaks between students in order to accomplish deeds by which they can advance in the Discipline themselves. Some Illusionists prefer to give up adventuring for a few years while they teach, and then travel for a full year or more.

The beings we call phantasms are mysterious, so much so that some Illusionists do not believe they exist. I am not one of these. I know phantasms exist—I have seen one. According to Illusionist tradition, phantasms are members of our Discipline who have passed beyond the constraints of bodily perception and can see the truth in everything around them. They wander throughout our world, far beyond the borders of Barsaive and even the once-mighty Theran Empire to the south. They offer perhaps the only real hope we have of ever discovering the true nature of the Horrors.

*Might phantasms be Illusionists of sufficient understanding to perceive the place we Wizards Name the Realm of Ideas? From that realm, we believe the ideas of all things come. Readers interested in exploring this possibility may wish to peruse “The Way of Mind and Symbol”, an essay that appears later in this volume.*

☞—Derrat, Wizard of Yistaine

I know they are real because one of them, a woman all shimmering and silvery, rescued me from the clutches of a particularly vile Horror last year. People keep telling me she was an avatar of Garlen, but I know the truth. I could see the tell-tale play of illusion magic

in her silvery hair and the hem of her dress. I know the truth.

## On the Rituals of Advancement

All Disciplines have unique methods for determining when an Adept is ready to proceed to the next level of their training, and we Illusionists are no different. The way in which we mark advancement, however, is different indeed. In most other Disciplines, an Adept is given some kind of test to determine his readiness to learn more, and these tests are the same (or nearly so) for all. Staggering under the weight of tradition, these tests admit no changes, great or slight, to better suit them to the individual practitioner. Illusionists see the folly in this way of testing. Why test different students the same way? We tailor our rituals for advancement to each teacher and student, and so more truly measure progress. More than one teacher may use the same form of ritual but each student learns from that ritual in a different way. So for me to speak of this ritual or that ritual would do your book no good, and certainly won't serve truth. The most I can give you is a few hints and loose patterns.

Most advancement rituals test the student's perception, requiring her to discern reality and truth from illusion and falsehood. In one of my earliest rituals, I faced two threats—one real, one illusory—and had to choose which to defend against. (I passed that test with my usual flair, of course.) Magical duels to the first blood sometimes serve as advancement rites, with elegant illusions cloaking the damaging real spells as they fly toward their target. In truth, the only limit to an Illusionist's advancement ritual is the inventiveness of the teacher—and those of my Discipline are nothing if not inventive! Prospective Illusionists, take heed; expect everything and nothing, and you won't be surprised.

I personally know no one who has advanced beyond my level of skill and power, though such people certainly exist. What manner of ritual they undergo to advance so far, I can't guess, but I imagine it must be quite hazardous. It would have to be, wouldn't it, to test the discerning eye of so powerful a mage? Rumor has it that the highest levels of advancement require rituals that can only be performed by a phantasm or even a dragon. A seed of truth doubtless lives in these tales, but how much of the plant is an outright lie I cannot tell.





## CONCERNING CHARLATANS

The charlatan is the Illusionist everyone despises, especially those of us who care about our Discipline. Any real Illusionist will warn you away from these despicable liars. Shortly after Barsaive's people left the kaers, certain Illusionists allowed the acquisition of silver to concern them more than teaching the world to see the truth. These Adepts and their dishonorable descendants continue to travel across Barsaive, bilking the gullible out of their fortunes and working "miracles" for fantastic sums of money. I am not speaking of a harmless play-illusion for which one might charge a few copper or a couple of silver coins. I speak of frauds that reduce good folk to beggars, at the very least parting them from their coin without teaching them a thing.

A charlatan possesses little or no knowledge of real magic. All his spells and abilities are illusory, save those that affect himself alone. Charlatans show exceptional skill at creating illusions, but once those illusions are dispelled or disbelieved he cannot defend himself or do any harm to his angry audience.

Some charlatans have good hearts and do what they do out of simple laziness. They feel little desire to understand the truth, and prefer enrichment to enlightenment. The ignorant tend to tar all Illusionists with the charlatan's brush, but as much as I protest that injustice, I urge readers of this discourse to remember that charlatans exist. Not all of them have rotted wood for hearts, though—many are much like any other Namegiver trying to keep herself in food and shelter by any means she can. So judge them with charity, and the Passion of Justice will smile on you for it.

## GAME INFORMATION

### Roleplaying Hints

For an Illusionist character, nothing is as it appears. An Illusionist's abilities allow her to alter reality to suit her whims, and she assumes that other powers existing in the world do the same. An Illusionist is therefore far less likely than others to take things at face value, and enjoys investigating oddities in order to understand them. Of course, every Illusionist knows enough to accept as real those things that present an imminent and obvious threat (say, by eating one of her companions). An Illusionist may

spend one or two brief moments inspecting the threat for flaws that might indicate its falsity, but she will not simply stand there disbelieving in the thing while it does her grievous injury.

Illusionists are entertainers at heart. They love delighting crowds with their abilities and spells, and often perform without being asked. They regard their entertainments as filling two vital needs: providing amusement to lighten Barsaive's dark hours, and giving the common folk a badly needed lesson in how to perceive the truth. Most Illusionists, however, see truth as being far more subtle and elusive than the world perceived through the senses. They believe that their illusions demonstrate how to seek the truth by proving how easily the senses can be befuddled. The person who cannot conceive of any truth aside from those things he or she can directly perceive gives many Illusionists a reason for living; the Illusionist tricks such individuals specifically to teach them that reality is not always what it seems. Illusionists often go out of their way to explain their motives to onlookers; if sufficient silver is not forthcoming or the crowd does not seem suitably impressed by the illusory display, many Illusionists resort to sermonizing on this subject in hopes of shaming people into paying up.

### Discipline Violations

An Illusionist violates her Discipline if she relies too heavily on "real" magic, or abandons the search for the truth behind the world's facade. With regard to "real" and illusory magic, the Illusionist should cast approximately two illusions for every real spell. An Illusionist who sets aside this stricture for a day has committed a Trivial violation of her Discipline; after three days, she has committed a Mild violation.

For every additional three days, casting more "real" than illusion spells increases the severity of the violation by one degree. An Illusionist who casts more real magic than illusions for nine days commits a Severe violation, and suffers a correspondingly severe Discipline crisis.

Discipline crises also strike the Illusionist who begins to take the world around her at face value. An Illusionist who accepts everything she sees as truth for a week is guilty of a Trivial Discipline violation; every week in which she continues such behavior increases the violation by one level.



## WALKERS IN SHADOW

*The following treatise is the work of the noted t'skrang Nethermancer T'shan, until recently a resident of Throal. Sadly, V'ruda had not completed the document at the time of his banishment from our kingdom, thus leaving several tantalizing hints unexplored. I have noted such omissions as they occur in the text. Though the Hall of Records adopts no official position on the veracity of the charges against V'ruda, I will permit myself to observe that future scholars will bemoan the incompleteness of this account long after all have forgotten the complicated web of accusations and counter-accusations that occasioned his departure from our kingdom.*

Ⓜ—Presented for the edification of the reader by Derrat, Wizard of Yistaine, 1506 TH

Many speak ill of the path I walk, the path of the Nethermancer. My colleagues and I are regarded with distaste, unease, even violent prejudice. As is the case in any such discrimination, its roots lie in ignorance. Simply because we inquire into the worlds beyond our own, we are suspected of consorting with Horrors and treated as pariahs.

Of course, nothing could be further from the truth. Our explorations serve only to protect our fellow Namegivers from the ravages of the Horrors and their constructs, including the undead.

Do the spells and abilities we wield carry a dark tang to them, a stench of the grave? Perhaps to the clouded mind, to the Namegiver who gives credence only to his untutored feelings and flees from the blandishments of reason. But any who care to think carefully on the matter recognize the Nethermancer as a bulwark, the last line of defense between this fragile world of life and the encroaching worlds of horror and death.

I consider the invitation to contribute to this esteemed anthology an opportunity to correct many of the misapprehensions and downright calumnies that surround the way of the Nethermancer. I am confident that, should you read this with a mind even half open, any misgivings you might have toward my Discipline shall be allayed utterly.

### ON THE CONTINUUM THAT IS LIFE AND DEATH

People fear Nethermancers because they fear death, and Nethermancers are symbolically bound to the concept of death. But Nethermancers do not fear death, for we know it intimately.

We know that it is not an impassable barrier, a wall between something that is good and something that is bad.

Death is but a doorway, a threshold into another way of being. Life is

not superior to death, nor is death superior to life.

Both have their struggles, their pleasures, and their terrors. Only a fool looks upon death as anything

more than another phase in the building of one's legend.

Sadly, the land of the living is awash in fools who forever dread their mortality. But mortality is as much a part of us as our eyes or our toes. Those who

fear death fear themselves. And if we Nethermancers are thought of as harshly mocking or haughty, it is only because others have not accepted the inevitable fact of death as we have. For with acceptance, we give up our fears.

Fear is not an emotion worthy of a Nethermancer. The true follower of the path learns discretion, certainly—we are not known as a foolhardy group. But every day we contemplate the worst that can happen to us and accept its possibility. To conquer fear is to gain power. Fear is something that is useful to us, when found in others. The Nethermancer







learns to foster fear, to manipulate it. If your heart contains fear, we will grab hold of it and use it to lead you about like a dog on a rope. And you shall deserve such treatment, for fear is the hallmark of the inferior mind. You need not be a Nethermancer to conquer your fears. But in my experience, you must be able to see that life and death are not separate things. They are different ends of the same path, separated by no more than a gentle stream. Learn this lesson and gain power.

*Bravo for brother V'ruda! If only more of the ignorant masses would read these words, they would realize how wrong-headed and groundless are their fears of us.*  
—Elron, Nethermancer of Rhegion

## ON THE NATURE OF THE SPIRIT

As I have mentioned, the superstitious and willfully ignorant associate my learned craft with death and the undead. However, the Nethermancer concerns himself not so much with life and with death, as with the spirit, or soul. All Nethermancer abilities emanate from an understanding of the spirit. And the majority of Nethermancer spells work through the spirit, either the spirit of the spellcaster or of his target. Granted, sometimes the spiritual aspect of a nethermantic spell like Shift Skin may not be immediately apparent to the uninitiated. But it is my fervent hope that by the end of your perusal of this document, you will at least begin to understand the subtle spiritual resonances that accompany this and other gruesome-seeming effects in the Nethermancer's arsenal. Soon you will be able to look upon the spontaneous wrenching and tearing of the epidermal surface occasioned by the Shift Skin spell and think not, "How thoroughly appalling!" but, "Ah, what a profound lesson in the metaphysics of the soul!"

The metaphysics of the soul—this is the Nethermancer's field of expertise. You might then ask, what is the soul? This, dear reader, is the question all Nethermancers spend their lives seeking to answer. For the spirit is an elusive thing, one that forever evades precise definition and explication. We grope tentatively toward knowledge of it. This in itself should tell you something very important about Nethermancers. Unlike other Disciplines I could

name, Nethermancers do not claim to possess definitive answers to the questions posed by existence. The Nethermancer learns that all certainty is but self-delusion, for the most important single element of any Namegiver's being—his spirit—remains an enigma. It is not knowing the correct answers that really matters, for there is no single truth. Rather, the superior being knows the correct questions and strives to answer them, and that is more than enough.

This is not to say that we are entirely ignorant about the spirit. Generation upon generation of Nethermancers has examined its nature. Though many of the conclusions we have reached are altogether too subtle for a general audience to grasp, I will attempt to elucidate a few of the general principles for you.

*The t'skrang expresses the true heart of the Nethermantic Way here. Understand the never-ending quest and you understand the Nethermancer.*  
—Yllom, Nethermancer of Throal

The spirit can be defined as the essential essence of a being. The spirit is connected to the body, and provides its basic impetus, much as a fire engine provides the impetus for the riverboats of my people. Without an engine, the boat does not run. Without a spirit, thought and emotion end, and the body eventually dies. The spirit is the vessel that contains a being's identity, its Name, which gives birth to all thoughts, memories, emotions. Though the body cannot truly live on without a spirit (I'll touch upon apparent exceptions in due course), the spirit almost always persists after the decease of the body, for the true pattern of any Namegiver is connected more to the spirit than the physical body. When the body dies, a severance occurs in the pattern, and a vestigial fragment of the pattern remains connected to the corpse. However, the remainder of the true pattern persists with the spirit—or, as some claim, is the spirit. (The question of whether the true pattern and spirit are in fact one and the same has raged among Nethermancers since legendary times. It is essentially a matter of semantics.)

At any rate, it is knowledge of spirits that enables us to understand and influence spirits—both of the living and the unliving—the ability that most





strongly characterizes the Nethermancer. We must first of all understand our own spirits before we can learn to engage in dealings, consensual or otherwise, with other spirits, disincorporate or otherwise. A Nethermancer is therefore a contemplative individual, one given to great introspection. Solitude is the Nethermancer's friend. Though I have met talkative and loquacious colleagues in my day, most of us are quiet and restrained. Indeed, our fearsome reputation is quite at odds with our sedate behavior, a fact which occasions many delightfully droll comments at Nethermancer gatherings.

The fact that we are considered sinister embitters some of us, but most of my colleagues are acute connoisseurs of irony, and treat the absurd general dislike of our Discipline with sardonic humor. I remember one interesting occasion when a windling spy was found secreted in an empty ale barrel at a symposium of Nethermancers I attended in Iopos. We were able to wring much amusement from a series of experiments designed to acquaint the irritating interloper with—but I digress.

## ON THE MIGRATION OF THE SPIRIT AFTER DEATH

The relationship between true pattern and spirit brings us naturally to the question of the fate of the spirit after death. Where does it go? This is another of the profound questions that guides the Nethermancer. Simply put, the spirit goes to many places, some unknown, for there appears to be no single destination for a spirit that has passed over the life/death threshold.

Some have proposed that an orderly determination of the migration of spirits after death once existed. These individuals believe that the fate of a spirit can be predicted based on certain observable factors concerning the being's life. They believe that the souls of those who live virtuous lives travel to a variety of different paradisaical realms on the other side of astral space. Such realms are described in great detail in early legends, though the accounts differ greatly from one another. Needless to say, the definitions of virtue required for admittance vary just as widely from tale to tale. Some of my brethren take these tales literally, claiming that all of these blissful afterlives truly existed, in harmony with one another. The assignment of particular

souls to particular paradises depended upon the culture of a Namegiver's birth, or on the Passion with whom the Namegiver chose to identify. Other Nethermancers argue that these legends are unreliable as factual accounts and contend that they refer to a single afterlife realm capable of altering itself to fit the desires of each soul it contained. I have personally encountered evidence that would, frustratingly enough, seem to confirm both theories simultaneously!

*[Here T'shan includes a marginal note which, if I decipher his hand correctly, reads: Include story of the Seven Stairways? It is a great loss to scholarship that this must remain but a tantalizing hint.—Derrat]*

The same legends also describe a similarly elaborate web of hells that awaited the souls of those who had committed misdeeds in life. Again, Nethermancers differ as to whether these actually existed in a vast jumble of separate realities, or if the truth must be considered lost, transmuted to legend by the drift of memory and fantasy. Yet a third theory may also explain the variety of hells in old legends: this theory holds that these references describe the home realm of the Horrors themselves. This seems convincing to me. Perhaps those whose true patterns became twisted by their own foul deeds came to mystically resemble the Horrors and were drawn to their realm after death.

At any rate, these explanations now are of mere historical interest. At some point in history, the orderly transmission of souls to proper destinations was permanently disrupted and remains so to this day. This may have happened during an earlier Scourge, or it may have happened when Death itself was buried beneath the volcanic fury of the sea that now bears his name. We can no longer predict where a Namegiver's soul will go when his body dies.

Some spirits continue to wander Barsaive (and presumably other earthly regions) after the deaths of their bodies. (Though they maintain only insubstantial forms, it is possible to interact with them via the use of certain of our spells and abilities.) These souls may remain here for various reasons. Some wish to finish some task uncompleted in life, from the building of a bridge to the guarding of an ancient manuscript. Others may be unreconciled to the manner and timing of their deaths and wish to exact vengeance on the living being they deem



responsible. Still others may simply be unaware of the fact that they're dead; not surprisingly, death can interfere with correct perception of one's circumstances. (Are you sure you didn't meet with a fatal accident today?) There also exist those unfortunate souls shackled to this plane by the foul magics of Horrors and their allies. Here I speak of the ranks of the undead.

Still other spirits migrate into astral space, where the metaphysical pollution found there transforms some into quite fearsome entities. Other astral spirits, particularly those that once belonged to strong and worthy Adepts in life, may in fact continue their battles against the Horrors in their ghostly forms. Both twisted and heroic spirits can be contacted by Nethermancers, particularly by those powerful and courageous enough to enter astral space.

However, this still leaves many spirits unaccounted for. There are vast numbers of dead individuals—particularly those long dead—who can no longer be contacted. The fate of this majority of dead remains one of the ultimate mysteries. Perhaps, somehow, they have entered the forgotten paradises of legend. Or perhaps they have been swallowed by the home of the Horrors.

## ON THE STATE THAT IS UNDEATH

If life and death are separated by a stream that represents the shift from one state to another, the undead are beings who straddle that stream. They are forever arrested in the moment of death, neither truly living nor truly dead. They are greatly feared for this very reason. Even the lowliest cadaver man engenders fear far out of proportion to any actual threat it poses. For example, to anyone with a whit of combat experience, the cadaver man poses a threat only if it achieves a great stroke of luck. Yet the

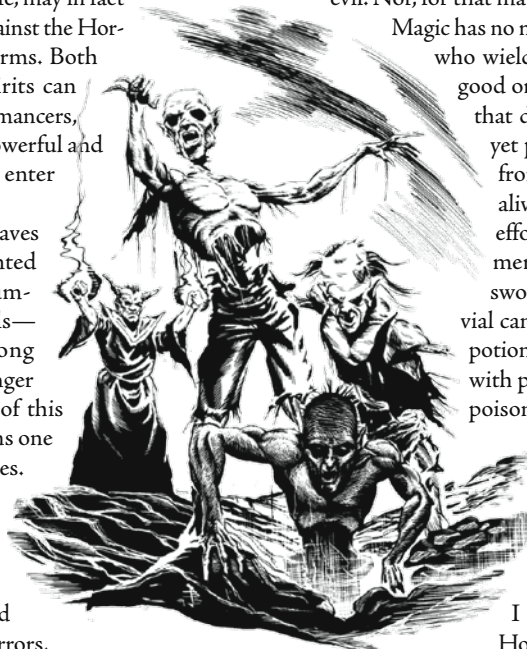
cadaver man inspires primal terror. This is because it and other undead creatures are thought to be “unnatural.” If you believe that magic is unnatural and that any state that cannot be achieved without resort to the arcane arts is somehow sinister and terrifying, you are likely to fear the undead. But this makes you a benighted idiot, for magic is the best representation of what is natural. It suffuses the world and permeates all of us. It is as much a part of us as the air we breathe. No magic, even the magic we Nethermancers use, even that which exists on the threshold between life and death, is inherently evil. Nor, for that matter, is it inherently good.

Magic has no mind, no morality—those who wield it make the choices for good or evil. I can use the spells that disturb you so much and yet protect you and your kin from the Horrors. If you are alive and well because of my efforts, how can you call the mere tools I used evil? Is a sword evil in and of itself? A vial can be used to hold healing potions or poison—if it is filled with poison, is it the vial or the poisoner who does wrong?

I have created undead beings myself. Does this shock you? No doubt it does. But wait, do you know what I did with my undead servants?

I sent them to fight the Horror called Shezkseti, and

saved more than a dozen villagers it had penned up for future torture. My creations were victims it had already slain, relatives and loved ones of those I rescued. They fought against that Horror with passion and fury. Though they were torn to bloody shreds by the Horror's claws, I am confident that they suffered their second, more infinitely painful deaths with equanimity. For they knew that their sacrifice fulfilled a vital goal. And their sacrifice gave meaning to their lives. Yes, I used the same tactic favored by the Horrors themselves. I threw that tactic in their faces, cut them with their





# CHAPTER 4: ADEPTS

own blades. If you call me a monster because of this, I can only laugh at your contemptible stupidity.

Perhaps those of you still reading are interested in the technical aspects of undeath. The zombie offers an interesting example. When the spirit departs the body, it takes most of a Namegiver's true pattern with it. But it leaves a small part of the pattern behind, the part that connects the subject's soul and mental faculties to its body and physical abilities. Various spells, Horror abilities, and magical treasures can attach a spiritual pattern to this part to reanimate the dead. Most often, the worker of the magic will be reattaching the being's original spiritual pattern. It is often the case that the crude force of the required arcane energies warps and degrades the spiritual pattern. This is why most cadaver men are but drooling engines of destruction; the fine details of their mortal existence have been melted into a clump of vague intelligence and malice. It is possible, however, to restore a relatively intact personality to a cadaver man. A prime example of this would be the subjects of the legendary Twiceborn, Queen of Parlainth's dead.

## ON THE WORKINGS OF NETHERMAGIC

I describe the manufacture of cadaver men in detail not simply out of arrogant pedantry. It is also a prime example of the practical application of our craft. The Nethermancer consciously manipulates patterns, reaching out and shaping the patterns of others to achieve our effects. If you find the Nethermancer's gaze unpleasantly penetrating, it is because we know the magical materials of which you are made.

Here I do not speak of pattern magic, of finding the pattern items which relate to you and thereby gaining power over you. This area is not specifically the province of the Nethermancer. I speak instead of abilities which affect the things held in common by all patterns. We can manipulate your pattern not because we have access to knowledge of its unique

characteristics, but because we know of the parts that comprise all patterns. All of us have a consciousness, which is partly generated by the body (by the brain, to be precise) and partly by the spirit. All intelligent beings have a point in their pattern where the body and spirit connect to form the mind. All of us have other common connections in our patterns, fusing together all of the separate things that make up a whole being. Many of our magical spells operate by subverting the magical energy of patterns, moving it around to achieve desired effects.

Further examples will illuminate my point.

*[The examples exist here only in point form. V'ruda evidently intended to flesh these out later in the process.—Derrat]*

Spirit Grip: taps into pattern of spirits, leaking from severed junction: death/life pattern break—question of malevolence?

Undead Struggle: tendril fires from own TP to TP of undead, hitting warped spirit/body juncture

Bone Dance: access through spirit/body juncture, disconnects subject's spirit to body flow, repl. by nethmr's willpower

Experience Death: in through severed s/b juncture, momentary connection of nethmr's memory sense juncture to brain/pattern juncture



## ON COSMOLOGY AND OTHER

### DIMENSIONS

*[To our great frustration, this aspect of the Nethermancer's way exists only as a title with no body of text.—Derrat]*

## ON UNDERSTANDING THE HORRORS

As I have described in the preceding passage, finally sealing off our dimension from the Horrors will only be possible once we have answered the Eight Questions of Jsona Var. Until that time, we must rely instead on countermeasures to fight the Horrors after they have crossed the threshold to our



world. And if these measures are to be effective, they must be based on knowledge. Nethermancers are oft accused of all manner of vile acts because we dare to investigate the very nature of the Horrors. Though such investigations bring temptations that have felled more than one Nethermancer, on the whole our efforts have been a boon to all Namegivers. We have learned advanced techniques for dampening the Karma abilities of Horrors, for mimicking their forms and actions, for restraining them where they stand. Yet we have received little credit for this from the mindless wad of Barsaivian citizenry. I am told that the residents of Thera are more advanced in this regard, that they understand the true importance of the Nethermancer to the survival of our races. But here we receive only abuse for our efforts. It should be little wonder that we regard the uninformed masses as essentially moronic.

Here is one final secret many may not wish to hear: just as the line between life and death is largely illusory, no real line exists between the behavior of Namegivers and the behavior of Horrors. To understand them, you must realize that the emotions we often consider evil—fear, jealousy, rage, hatred, confusion, despair—are their food. They need these things to survive, as we need meat and bread. (The question of how they survive in their own realm during times of low magic is one that has puzzled Nethermancers for centuries.) They elicit these emotions in us in order to live, just as we grow crops or hunt for game. We feel no guilt when we slaughter a thundra for its meat. Likewise, the Horror feels nothing but appetite and anticipation when it marks a Namegiver and begins to elicit in him the dark and delicious emotions it so craves.

Take the worst thing you have every heard of a Horror doing, and I will show you a Namegiver who did the same. These bizarre beasts from beyond have no monopoly on acts of atrocity. We Namegivers have been slaughtering one another since the days of legend. The Horrors do what they do in order to feed. Yet when we strike out at one another, we do not necessarily need to do so to survive. We have killed one another in the name of kings, in the name of Passions, in the name of racial hatreds, in the name of stupid and petty ancestral squabbles. We continue to believe

that we are fundamentally better than the Horrors, when, if anything, we are worse.

This is why, when you proclaim that the struggle against the Horrors is a fundamental fight between good and evil, the Nethermancer laughs. The laugh of the Nethermancer is long and loud, and inside that laugh is the rattle of bones. The rattle of a mountain of bones, bones of the innocent, a mountain built by Namegivers as well as Horrors. It is true that we must fight them and we must slay them. They might need us for food, but we have no need to be eaten. But this is no battle of ultimate morality. It is simply another jungle struggle between predator and prey, a battle the Nethermancers will help win. And after the Namegivers win, we will go back to slaying one another as if nothing had happened. And beneath the clatter of sword against shield shall be the laughter of the Nethermancer. You shall shiver, wonder briefly what it is all about, then shrug and return to your killing.

*I have refrained from comment in this document, thinking that my uneasiness about it was a result of my own prejudices and not the information contained within.*

*After considerable thought and multiple readings, I have concluded that my unease is entirely justified. The view of the Nethermancer Discipline as portrayed in this document is frightening. The author has not done as he promised in the introduction and has perhaps worsened my own beliefs about Adepts who follow this most dangerous and suspicious Discipline.*

—Merrox, Master of the Hall of Records

## GAME INFORMATION

### Roleplaying Hints

When creating a Nethermancer character, players should bear in mind that they have chosen a Discipline that most other Barsaivians view with suspicion and even outright fear. Because of the Nethermancer's fearsome reputation as one who meddles in matters related to Horrors and the undead, many who choose this path already consider themselves outcasts or otherwise alienated



from their society. Deciding exactly how your character came to choose this unpopular Discipline should tell you something important about him. A Nethermancer may have been singled out for abuse by other youngsters during childhood, or been affected by the misfortunes of parents unfairly suspected of consorting with Horrors. Some Nethermancers may be members of racial or cultural minorities within their home villages (for example, an ork child growing up in a village inhabited mostly by humans) and may have suffered prejudice because of it. Still others may simply have been different from their peers for as long as they can remember, always absorbed by death and decay and fascinated by the legends describing the Horrors and the terror they spread from their earliest days.

Of course, not all Nethermancers need have been outcasts in their early lives. Some may seek vengeance against the Horrors, and believe that using the Horrors' own tools against them is the swiftest and surest path to victory. Others manage to hide their fascination with the dark matters of the Nethermancer's craft until the chance for initiation presents itself.

Few Nethermancers live quiet lives in ordinary villages. Though most villages can boast at least one Adept of some Discipline to serve as an adviser, few Barsaivians wish to have an expert in death magic act as a mentor to their children. Consequently, most would-be Nethermancers leave home in search of masters to perform their initiation. This circumstance adds to most Namegivers' dislike of Nethermancers; they fear these Adepts will lure their sons and daughters away from them forever with dark promises of forbidden knowledge.

Not surprisingly, most Nethermancers disdain the average Namegiver as much as the Namegiver disdains those who follow this path. Those initiates who do not already show a healthy disrespect for the masses soon learn it from their masters, who often couch their contempt in a sardonic, mocking sense of humor. Nethermancers tend to laugh at things others consider tragic, and display little compassion for any behavior they consider foolish.

They save their sharpest scorn for those who fear their abilities and knowledge.

Most Nethermancers are masters of moral relativism, holding to few absolute rules of behavior. They spend considerable time examining their own souls, but rarely feel self-doubt. The Nethermancer uses his own judgment in any situation to determine the best course of action. For example, the Nethermancer Discipline teaches that knowledge itself is neither good nor evil; it can only be put to good or evil uses. Also, Nethermancers define "good" as a long-term result; because they view death as a change of state rather than a permanent end, they give less weight to the possible deaths of Namegivers than others might. For example, if a Nethermancer had a chance to seal up an astral passageway between this world and the dimension of the Horrors at the cost of a few dozen lives, he would consider those lives a fair price.

### Discipline Violations

Because Nethermancers are taught never to regret mistakes, but only to learn from them, a Nethermancer who begins to doubt the worthiness of his actions has violated his Discipline and risks suffering a Discipline crisis. Much of the Nethermancer's magic depends on his self-assurance; guilt feelings create a mental block that makes it harder to use his abilities successfully. Mourning the dead may also block the Nethermancer's ability to concentrate on his arts, because the Nethermancer is taught that life and death are merely different ends of the same road. To believe and behave otherwise can also lead to Discipline crises.

The most important taboo for Nethermancers, however, is giving in to fear. The Discipline teaches them to regard fear as a tool, a means to manipulate others; for them to feel it and be swayed by it is a shameful impediment to their own success. Nethermancers overcome by fear of any sort are likely to suffer Severe or Heinous Discipline crises until they confront and defeat the source of that fear. Such confrontations serve as Deeds of Atonement.



## ON THE WAY OF THE SCOUT

*The following account was drawn from a conversation between the windling Scout Teelan Jupray and my fellow scholar Jerriv Forrim, scribe and scholar of the Library of Throal. Though I might have preferred otherwise, Jerriv had already edited this work when he presented it to me. Such is the way of the archivist.*

☞—Presented for the edification of the reader by Derrat, Wizard of Yistaine, 1506 TH

### ONE WITH THE WORLD

No one understands us—sad, but true. How many times have I heard people describe Scouts as “half-Warrior, half-Thief,” and leave it at that? Such a simplistic analysis. There is so much more to my Discipline than that. However frustrating it may be, I have no choice but to accept the fact that an amazing number of misconceptions surround the Discipline of the Scout.

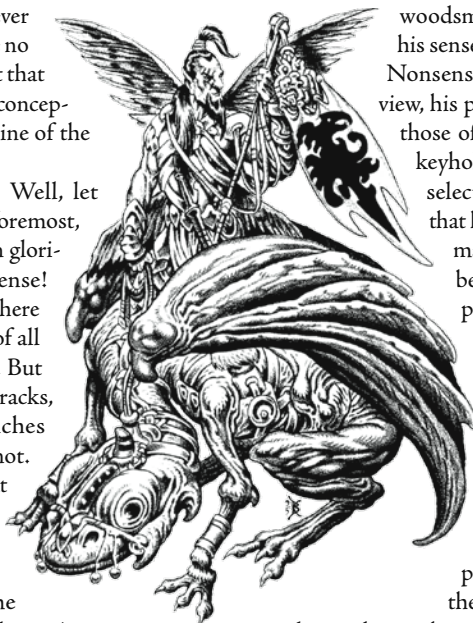
What misconceptions? Well, let me name some. First and foremost, that we are little more than glorified trackers. What nonsense! Anyone can learn to track; there is no magic in it. Hunters of all sorts learn the basic skills. But does the ability to follow tracks, spoor, and broken branches make one a Scout? It does not. Other misconceptions? That because we share certain abilities with Warriors and Thieves, we practice those abilities in the same way as those other Disciplines. Again, a sad mistake, I assure you. In truth, all of our abilities—those that lead to us being labeled “trackers,” “warriors” and “thieves”—spring from one, well, I hesitate to class it as a “skill” or an “ability.” It is both of these and so much more.

Let me explain.

To be a Scout means to be one with the world. We—I and my fellows—open our senses to the world around us. All of our senses, and all of the world. That is the part of our Discipline that non-Scouts never seem to understand. Think of a tracker for a moment. The tracker follows his quarry through the woods and forests using his eyes and, to a lesser

degree, his ears. He sees broken branches, disturbed foliage, footprints, and maybe the spoor of his quarry. Sometimes he can hear the passage of that quarry through the woods—the cracking of a twig, even the creature’s breathing. This proud woodsman believes he has “opened his senses” to the world around him. Nonsense! From a Scout’s point of view, his perceptions are as limited as those of a child peeking through a keyhole. Think on it: the tracker selects the senses and the clues that he believes are important. He may notice broken branches, because those clues are “appropriate” for the task of tracking. Anything “inappropriate” is ignored or discarded. (Please appreciate that I am not demeaning the tracker. Not seriously, at least. By opening two senses, he is more in tune with his world than most people, who stumble through the world guided by one sense only...and even that is used imperfectly.)

But I digress. How does a true Scout react in the same situation? The Scout opens all his senses, not simply those he has selected as “appropriate” to the situation, and expands his awareness to include everything around him. How can you know in advance what will and will not be important in a given situation, I ask you? The Scout sees the same things as the tracker, but he sees more. He sees the broken branch ahead, but he also sees, beyond that, the change in coloration of the undergrowth that indicates the ground is growing softer. He hears what might be stealthy movement to his right, but he also hears—again, to his right—the soft murmur of the





wind and the twittering of songbirds. He feels the stirring of the air around him, and the faintest of vibrations through the springy ground beneath his feet. He smells the sweet scent of flaxflower fruit on the breeze, mixed with the sharp tang of human sweat. He chews a blade of grass he picks from the ground at his feet, and tastes the bitterness of peat. The Scout opens himself up to the forest around him, and he becomes the forest.

How are these perceptions relevant? Think on it a moment. A broken branch implies his quarry is ahead of him, yet he knows that the ground softens ahead and to the right—in fact, it becomes a peat bog, the grass stem tells him that. Will his quarry risk becoming stuck in a bog? No—it will almost certainly turn to the left. What of the noise to the right, then, the sound the tracker interpreted as stealthy movement? The wind, no doubt, for the songbirds to his right would surely have fallen silent with the passage of a large beast. The Scout also knows that a human is in the vicinity—possibly tracking the same quarry—and hence will be careful to identify his target before letting fly with his weapon. Do you understand now? That is the difference between a Scout and a simple tracker.

Can you imagine the sheer joy a Scout finds in this oneness with his surroundings? Only another Scout can understand the joy—the transcendence—of running or flying through a dappled woodland, passing as silently as a ghost, leaving no trace behind of your passage. Practicing the Discipline of the Scout allows the Adept to grasp the halcyon days of legend, when peace and tranquillity lay upon the world. When we walk in the forest, we are a part of it—as much as the trees that shelter us, and the birds that sing for us, and the animals that watch us without fear. So too are we a part of the rolling plains, or the harsh and rugged uplands, or even the arid deserts. Wherever there is life, there we are at home.

By opening our senses to our environment, we Scouts accept the world around us. We do not try to change it. We view it as it is and we work within the constraints this places on us. The environment “accepts” a Scout, just as the Scout “accepts” the environment. Why? I know not why. Perhaps a sage or Wizard could tell you. I only know that it is true. Because we are as one, the environment around us reacts as though we belong wherever we are. Think

on it. How else could a Scout move silently through the wilderness, or through the alleys of a city, come to that? A woodsman or tracker might learn the art of parting branches so leaves do not rustle, of treading lightly so no twigs break underfoot. But there is more to moving silently than that. What good does it do to stir no twig if all the birds and animals of the forest around you proclaim your presence—either with their cries or with their silence? The best tracker or woodsman is still an interloper in the environment through which he passes, and the world knows this. When a Scout moves silently, he is one with the world around him. He senses the lay of the land, the interconnections between branches, the direction of the wind. But more importantly, the world around him senses him and accepts him as part of itself.

*Adepts from other Disciplines can learn these techniques to some degree, but never will they attain the level of proficiency enjoyed by a true Scout. For though the windling gives the subject short shrift, the Scout's enhanced perceptions are supported by magic, and one who has not dedicated himself to the Discipline must do without this significant boon.*  
—Jol Dennequen, Wizard of Iopos

*I have heard tell that some Scouts go to great lengths to avoid traveling in the Wastes. Why, they will not say. My suspicion is that their powerful bond with the world puts them at risk within the Wastes, at the very least. Becoming one with such corruption must be a painful and disconcerting experience.*

—Merrox, Master of the Hall of Records

## A DISCOURSE ON OTHER ENVIRONMENTS

Do not allow yourself to accept the common misconception that a Scout is at home only in the wilderness, far from the works of Namegivers. We are as much at home and at ease in the heart of a teeming city as we are in the midst of an unexplored forest. Think on it a moment. We become one with our environment by opening our senses to it. Will the same technique not work as well in an environment constructed by Namegivers? Of course it will!



The clues in a city are very different from those of the wilderness—the tone of voice and the unspoken communications of passers-by, the patterns of traffic on streets, the condition of the buildings and roads in different neighborhoods, and the like. Yet the technique of opening oneself to those clues is exactly the same. If one can be aware of the scent of ripening goldenrod on the rolling plains, one can also be aware of the cookfires and braziers of a town and extract from them their meaning.

The Scout's unique ability to “belong” is as strong in a city or town as it is in the wilderness, as well. (In fact, thinking on how “belonging” occurs in a town will go some distance toward explaining how it happens in the countryside as well.)

How do you recognize someone as a stranger to your village, town or city? Perhaps you note that you have never seen their face before, but that is rarely a sufficient clue. In all but the smallest of villages, residents encounter “strangers”—those whom they have never met before. Yet they still recognize these strangers as local residents, rather than “outsiders.”

The major clues come from the individual's actions—the way he carries himself, the way he communicates, the way he reacts. An individual who does not belong where he is communicates his outsider status with every movement. Making his way through the town, he becomes lost and hesitates while he regains his bearings. Unfamiliar sights and sounds startle him. He senses that he is apart—different—from the locals who surround him, and he communicates that feeling to those with eyes to see the clues in the very lines of his body. It is these clues that identify strangers among us.

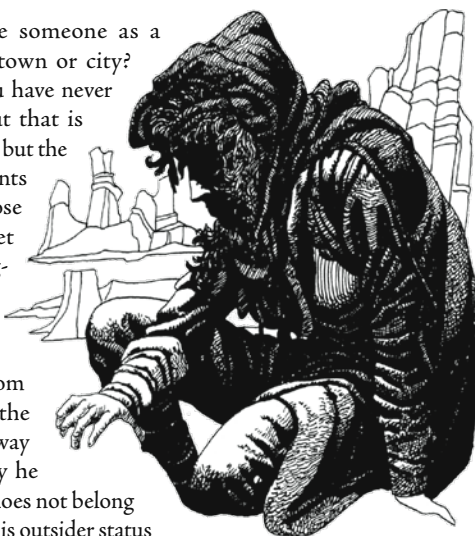
Do we notice someone who is totally at home in the environment of our town or village? Of course not—he does not give off any such clues.

In this way, Scouts fit into the masses of Namegivers in a city or a town. If the birds of the forest believe that we belong, how difficult would it be to convince the people of an unfamiliar town of the same thing?

## On Specialists

There are two main specialties within the Discipline of the Scout, quite naturally based on the environments in which the Scout operates. Those who develop to a fine edge their ability to work in the wilderness are called explorers. Those who focus on locales where Namegivers dwell are called infiltrators.

The difference between the two “specialties” lies only in the concrete, tangible abilities each type of Adept learns. The underlying aptitude for opening the senses to the world around them remains the same.



*I once had reason to  
hire a Scout to serve  
me as an infiltrator.  
Through intermediaries,  
I made arrangements  
for the best candidate—  
an ork, as it turned  
out—to meet with me  
at the noon bell in my  
audience chamber. The  
noon bell rang, and  
the candidate failed to  
appear. I waited, as  
the time-candle burned  
away. Beside me, my  
three hand servants  
stood, shifting from foot  
to foot as they sensed my  
growing anger. Finally,  
just as I was about to give  
up, one of my “hand servants” stepped forward  
and introduced himself as the Scout I was to  
meet! Needless to say, I hired him on the spot.*  
—Tannis Denairastas of Iopos

Adepts of one specialty often look with some degree of scorn on those who follow the other. Infiltrators, for example, consider the environment chosen by explorers to be woefully simplistic and infinitely less challenging than that in which they themselves excel. (After all, these specialists would argue, Namegivers have much the same instincts as the beasts of the wild—but they also have intellect, and no small degree of suspicion and paranoia! To





## CHAPTER 4: ADEPTS

move unnoticed among Namegivers, to them, offers a much greater challenge.)

In contrast, explorers hold themselves as more worthy because they deal with nature, with the “true world.” Infiltrators, these Scouts contend, deal with a false and arbitrary model of nature, and so are closing themselves off from the broadness and richness of the greater world around them. Those Scouts such as I, who have chosen no specialty within our Discipline, typically stay out of such arguments!

*It is possible to subdivide Scouts further based on the type of wilderness where they operate.*

*In other words, those who hone their arts in the forest, or in the desert, or in the rugged foothills form subgroups. To me, this distinction seems unimportant, though there are those who strongly disagree with this opinion.*

—Merrox, Master of the Hall of Records

### ON COMBAT AND OTHER SKILLS

Many Scouts are as skilled in the use of melee weapons as a Warrior, while others can pick a lock or disarm a trap as proficiently as a Thief. How then, do Scouts excel at certain skills usually viewed as skills of other Disciplines?

Though the outcomes of the use of these skills may appear the same as for other Disciplines, the way a Scout uses them is very different, for the use of these skills stems from the Scout’s world view. As I understand it—and any Warriors reading my words must forgive my ignorance—Warriors excel at combat by learning forms and styles of attack and honing their reactions and their instincts, until they can react to a foe’s move instinctively. Thieves learn to pick locks or disarm traps by studying the mechanisms by which locks and traps function and practicing specific techniques for defeating those mechanisms.

When a Scout is faced with such tasks—single combat, for example, or opening a locked door—we approach it with a different mental outlook. As when we are moving silently through the wilderness, we open our senses—all our senses—to the clues presented to us. From these clues, we can build up a mental picture of the strengths and weaknesses of the obstacle before us, whether it be a swordsman

or a lock. When it comes time to act, we focus all our attention and energy on the weaknesses we have detected.

### On Training

Scouts learn much of their chosen Discipline by simply living the precepts of the path. Though this method of learning is quite natural and effective, many outside the path fail to understand it. They imagine that our instruction involves specific skills and techniques—“stealth,” for example, or perhaps “spoor identification.” Well, a Scout’s training may contain some of that. But the most important facet of training is helping the initiate develop the Scout’s world view, the ability to perceive unhampered by his unconscious limitations. In other words, to help the initiate strip away his preconceived ideas of the world and “see” it as it truly is. All else springs from this.

Most Namegiver races emphasize sight over all other senses. The first thing that a would-be Scout must learn is to eliminate this unnecessary reliance on a single sense. All senses are of equal importance in the grand scheme. Certainly, on specific occasions, one sense may offer the most vital information, but to focus exclusively and invariably on one sense is to limit yourself severely. One of the most important lessons I teach to initiates involves temporarily removing their sense of sight. So many students I have led through the woods blindfolded, forcing them to reach out with their other senses to avoid a painful collision or a jarring tumble!

The vast majority of the training I provide has the same goal—extending and broadening perception. Unlike the training of a Swordmaster, for example, I often simply walk with a student through a new environment—through the forest, or in the mountains, or in the midst of a bustling city—and help direct his attention and sharpen his focus with questions. Quite a contrast to the way most people envision a Scout’s training, I am sure!

Certainly, sometimes I help a student work on specific, tangible skills. But such task-oriented training can come only after the student has sufficiently extended his perceptions. For teaching a student how to exploit the weakness in a swordsman’s style before the student can accurately identify that weakness—well, there are less complicated forms of suicide, but few less sure.





## SCOUTS AND THE PASSIONS

Individual Scouts can revere any and all Passions. Among those members of my Discipline I number as friends, however, Lochost, Mynbruje, and, to a certain degree, Jaspree enjoy especial regard. Lochost may, at first glance, seem an odd choice for a Scout, but think on it a moment.

Lochost's primary ideal is freedom, and "freedom" can mean freedom from past beliefs and prejudices as easily as physical freedom. The very nature of the Scout Discipline requires this kind of mental and spiritual freedom. A would-be Scout constrained by old ways of thought cannot truly open himself to the world around him.

*Many Scouts I have encountered take the physical aspect of freedom very seriously as well.*

—Jol Dennequen, Wizard of Iopos

Two of the ideals of Mynbruje are compassion and empathy. Scouts who seek to move without notice through towns and villages must demonstrate great compassion and empathy, making this Passion a logical choice for reverence. Still other Scouts seem to follow Jaspree almost as a consequence of their work in the wilderness, for one cannot become one with the wilderness without coming to love the wilderness to some degree.

*A Scout who worked predominantly as an infiltrator presented the same argument to me, but he was explaining why he followed the precepts of Garlen.*

—Jol Dennequen, Wizard of Iopos

## GAME INFORMATION

### Roleplaying Hints

Scouts are a curious lot, always interested in discovering what lies beyond the next hill. They enjoy using their abilities to blend in with the world around them. The simple precept "tread lightly" governs most of their actions; the Scout who can achieve her goals with the least disruption to the world is truly living in accordance with her Discipline.

Justly proud of their abilities, most Scouts consider themselves innately superior to others who, as they put it, "blunder blindly through the world." In many cases, this sense of superiority prevents Scouts from becoming lone wolves; though they rarely acknowledge it to those outside their Discipline, Scouts rather enjoy having an audience of people who marvel at their ability to move through city streets or trackless wilds as though they had always lived there. Though Scouts are talented fighters, most of them avoid combat if they can. The saying, "Violence is the last resort of the incompetent," finds a place in many a Scout's personal vision. Many Scouts join merchant caravans or adventuring parties specifically seeking a chance to lead their charges through danger while avoiding direct conflict.

### Discipline Violations

Depending on a Scout's individual personal vision, one who fails to "tread lightly" on the world may violate her Discipline and trigger a Discipline crisis. Scouts who forget their true place in the world and begin acting like Warriors or Thieves usually find it impossible to open their senses fully to the environment around them, and without this intimate contact they cannot weave their magic effectively. A Discipline crisis is a particularly harrowing experience for a Scout. She feels cut off from the world around her, as blind and deaf to the subtle cues of the environment as the ordinary "stumblers." This effect is largely psychosomatic; the Scout finds the knowledge that she has violated her personal vision so distracting that she can no longer pay attention to the cues of her senses.

As a Deed of Atonement, a Scout must usually find a way to set right any harm to the world that she caused. For example, an individual who has somehow damaged the lands through which she is traveling might devote herself to repairing that damage. A Scout who used her Thief-like skills to steal something might feel driven to return the item. In cases where the Scout cannot undo what she has done, she might set herself a particularly challenging version of her Karma Ritual: one that requires all the skills of the Scout Discipline, and where failure means genuine personal risk.



## THE FIERCE AND HONORABLE WAY OF THE SKY RAIDER

*The following text was transcribed from a conversation human Sky Raider known as Merienne Blays. Readers will note a predominance of words from the troll language used throughout this text. This tradition has its roots in the origins of the Sky Raider Discipline, which was first practiced by trolls. Over time, the trolls shared their Discipline with those of other Namegiver races. With the knowledge of the Sky Raider Discipline came many terms and ideas so integral to the troll race that no adequate translation was possible. Where appropriate in this text, I and my fellow scholars have attempted to explain, or at least describe, such words. In this endeavor I am especially indebted to Thom Edrull, whose work on the Denizans of Barsaive series granted him such a vast expertise in such matters.*

—Presented for the edification of the reader by Derrat, Wizard of Yistaine, 1506 TH

### OF A LIFE IN THE SKIES

You look askance at me, my dwarf friend. Why? Because I, a human and a female, claim to be a Sky Raider? I admit, the term Sky Raider brings the image of a large, burly male troll to the minds of most Namegivers. But there is more to being a Sky Raider than race or gender, much more. The true Sky Raider is marked by his attitude—a zest for life and for challenge and for adventure. To be a Sky Raider is to be, well, the trollish word my instructor used is *galan'kaharr*; I can think of no direct translation in the dwarf tongue.



and oneself alone. It is that freedom we seek when we take to the skies in our ships. It is that freedom we pursue when we wander abroad with the earth far below our feet.

That freedom is an integral part of troll culture—of highland troll culture, at least. It is the troll way to fling oneself wholeheartedly into life, to leave moderation for the races with weaker blood running sluggishly through their veins. This is why so many trolls become Sky Raiders, and why so many Sky Raiders are trolls. Members of other races who turn to the Sky Raider Discipline share this attitude. It is this world view that attracts them.

*A partial translation for galan'kaharr might be "agent"—one who acts, rather than one who is acted upon. This translation captures the core meaning but does no justice to the far-reaching emotional resonance of the original troll word.*

—Merrox, Master of the Hall of Records

*Say what you will. Only a troll can truly understand the path of the Sky Raider.*

*Only a troll knows the true meaning of galan'kaharr—and only a troll can truly live it.*

—Zurc of the Stoneclaws

To be a Sky Raider is to be free—to be completely independent, to follow one's own desires wherever they may lead, to be responsible to oneself

It should come as no surprise, then, that many who follow the way of the Sky Raider also embrace other aspects of troll culture and incorporate them into our personal vision. Honor is of great importance—of overwhelming importance, in fact—to Sky Raiders of any race, as it is to highland trolls.





Personal honor—that which the trolls call *katorr*—is predominant, though a modified version of *kat'ral* is also important. While a highland troll will defend the *kat'ral* of his clan or family, a Sky Raider of any race will defend the “group honor” of her crew, her colleagues, or the adventuring group to which she belongs.

Honor, for a Sky Raider, is inextricably linked with the idea of remaining *galan'kaharr*. Anyone who constrains a Sky Raider's freedom to act is slighting her honor—both *katorr* and *kat'ral*. There is nothing so demeaning to a Sky Raider as surrendering her freedom of action. We must remain free to follow our own judgment and to take complete and total responsibility for our own lives. Otherwise, where is the value of continued breath? One might as well lie down in one's grave, even before breath has finally stilled. To forsake responsibility is to turn away from life itself.

*This is worthy of emphasis. Kat'ral is generally defined as clan or family honor.*

*Sky Raiders often redefine their clan or family based on shared intent or goals rather than simple blood ties. Thus, a Sky Raider considers the crewmates who sail with her on a drakkar to be her family.*

—Thom Edrull, Archivist and Scribe of the Hall of Records

*Actually, that freedom can be taken away—by various magics that control the mind and the will. To be treated as a puppet is the ultimate insult against *katorr* and *kat'ral*—an insult most commonly answered with homicidal rage.*

—Merrox, Master of the Hall of Records

## A Discourse on Responsibility

The central tenet of a Sky Raider's life is individual responsibility. I am responsible for all that befalls me during my life—I and I alone. Certainly, circumstances beyond my control may seem to put restrictions on my freedom; an unforeseen storm might ground my ship, for example. Yet, even in the midst of the storm, I have the freedom to respond as I choose. Do I vainly curse the storm and despair? Or do I embrace the challenge and the danger, and

pit my skills against the forces of Nature? It is my choice as to how I respond, and that freedom can never be taken from me.

People outside my Discipline often seem to believe that Sky Raiders are chaos incarnate, walking examples of anarchy. How can anyone trust an individual who puts personal freedom above all else, these people ask. Think it through, my dwarf friend, please. Individual freedom and personal responsibility do not preclude enlightened self-interest. Quite the opposite, in fact. As I see it, we—Sky Raiders such as myself—are less motivated by broad ideologies and belief systems than members of other Disciplines. We approach all decisions on the basis of individual responsibility.

Many people seem to believe that Sky Raiders possess an almost instinctive rejection of restrictions and guidelines and flout the laws of civilized societies at every turn. Not true! People who break all laws without thinking are as shortsighted as those who blindly follow all laws and restrictions. Sky Raiders typically examine each case on its own merits. If we believe a law or constraint is worthwhile, we will abide by it. If we believe it to be foolish or inappropriate, we will ignore it. In both cases, we take complete and personal responsibility for our decision.

If I break a law, I am ready to take responsibility for that action. When I made my decision, I took into account the possible consequences, and I will face those consequences undismayed. That is one of the characteristics of individual responsibility. The central touchstone of my actions is my personal judgment. Do you understand me a little better now?

## On Working With Others

It has been said—and is widely believed, in some circles—that Sky Raiders are incapable of cooperating with other Namegivers. How foolish that would be if it were true! Enlightened self-interest frequently makes cooperation necessary—no, essential. I recognize and respect my abilities and skill. But I also recognize that my individual abilities are sometimes insufficient to achieve a goal I have deemed worthy. To achieve that goal, I must work alongside others, whose abilities and skills complement mine.



I personally choose to believe that all those around me share my own views on individual responsibility and choice. Perhaps I am wrong to make this assumption, but so far the course I have set through life has proven to be a good one. Always I assume that those with whom I deal are honorable and responsible for their own actions—unless they prove otherwise. I deal in good faith with anyone, until the time I learn they are dealing in bad faith. Then I will re-examine the situation. Sometimes I just walk away from the honorless toad. Other times I may decide that retribution or—education—is in order. To use more colloquial terms, I will give a storm wolf one bite— but only one!

*The reader must be aware that this is Merienne Blays' personal approach. Some Sky Raiders may share her course; others may chart a different route.*

☉—Merrox,  
Master of the  
Hall of Records

Honor—both *katorr* and *kat'ral*—require that a Sky Raider be true to her word. Her oath, once given, is binding. Honor is all that we have when we enter this world, and all we take with us when we leave it. To lessen that honor—by forswearing ourselves, for example—is to diminish who we are. Of course, most Sky Raiders are wise enough to know that the best way of keeping our word is not to give it lightly.

*An interesting contrast is it not? A contrast and a contradiction. Conventional wisdom holds that Sky Raiders are capriciousness personified. Yet it also holds that a Sky Raider's word, once given, is binding...*

☉—Thom Edrull, Archivist and  
Scribe of the Hall of Records

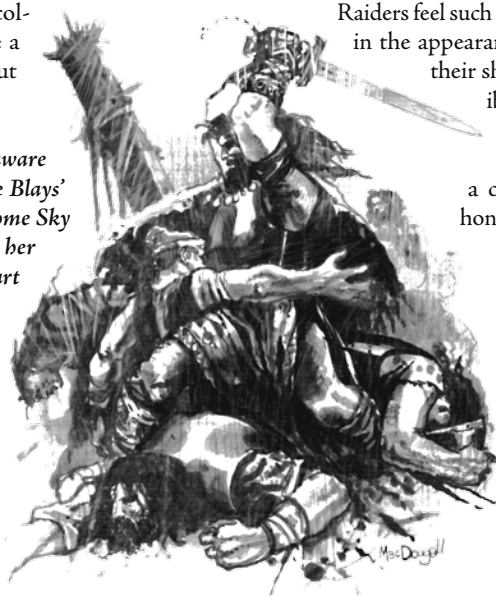
## On Loyalty to Ship and Crew

Not all Sky Raiders have ships or belong to a drakkar crew. After all, there are many more Sky Raiders than there are berths aboard the airships of Barsaive. Thus, a Sky Raider must earn his position on a drakkar crew. Once a Sky Raider is granted a berth, her definition of *kat'ral* changes. She defines her crewmates as members of her "clan," whether or not they are related to her by blood. But she also defines the ship itself as part of her clan. A slight against a Sky Raider's ship is a slight against her own honor, both *katorr* and *kat'ral*. She will—she must—redress any such insult! This is why Sky Raiders feel such seemingly inordinate pride in the appearance and skyworthiness of their ship. Their drakkar is a visible manifestation of their own honor. A dirty, ill-maintained ship reflects a crew that lacks personal honor.

*This is true even when the drakkar is owned by a troll Sky Raider's home moot. To receive a berth as a crew member is a great honor, and one that is not bestowed lightly.*  
—Chag Skat

Once a Sky Raider has become part of a drakkar's crew, she will give her life to protect her ship. For losing that ship—whether or not through fault of her own—is the greatest of all dishonors. A Sky Raider who has joined a ship's company and then loses that ship is dispossessed and disgraced.

[Many Sky Raiders who travel with adventuring groups view their fellow adventurers as crewmates for the purposes of *kat'ral*. The Name and the pattern of the adventuring group take the place of the ship in the Sky Raider's world view. Slight against the group are taken as personal insults. Once a Sky Raider has joined a group, to lose that group—for whatever reason—leaves her "dispossessed and disgraced," as Blays describes above.—Thom Edrull]





## On Raiding

Why do Sky Raiders raid? A common question. Some claim that Sky Raiders are heartless, soulless raptors who will kill and destroy to take from another. But we do not view ourselves this way. (I, at least, do not view myself this way.) As we are responsible for our own fortunes, so too are our foes responsible for theirs. In essence, we believe that others are worthy of possessing something—land, food, wealth, even life itself—only if they can defend that possession.

Our raids grant our foes the opportunity to prove they are worthy. If our foes fight well but fall, we respect them. If they defeat us and drive us off, we respect them. Only if they fail to fight do we fail to respect them. Our foes do us honor when they fight to repel our raids. To simply surrender—to give up without a fight—is to abdicate their own honor and do us a mortal insult in the process!

That is why we do not hate other moots or clans who raid ours. We defend what we have to the death; we kill those who assail us. But we do not hate them, even as we slay them. If we go down to defeat, it is our responsibility. Our failure—our death—weighs on us, not on those who attacked us.

*A typically troll view of the world, I must remark. Something about the Discipline of the Sky Raider carries with it a troll approach to life. Humans, even dwarfs who follow this Discipline seem, in many ways, to become like smaller versions of trolls.*

—Thom Edrull, Archivist and Scribe to the Hall of Records

the patron of rebellion, change and freedom. Lochost strives ever against enslavement—whether physical enslavement as practiced by the hated Therans, or mental and emotional enslavement represented by the restrictive societies of the lowlands.

To be enslaved—physically or otherwise—is, for a Sky Raider, a fate worse than death. There is no more heinous crime against us than to deny us the ability to be *galan'kaharr*. Do you understand that, my friend? Better to kill us then to enslave our bodies or our souls.

## ON TRAINING

Trolls generally enter the Sky Raider Discipline through their trollmoot. Many highland moots have their own drakkars, and young trolls who wish to follow the Discipline of the Sky Raider will dedicate themselves early on to earning a berth aboard these vessels. Trolls from outside a moot are sometimes invited to join the Discipline, though only those who have already proven themselves in combat and shown the honor and sense of responsibility that distinguish Sky Raiders. Such *newots*, even once they have been accepted into the Discipline, must still prove themselves worthy of a berth aboard the moot's vessel, of course.

*The word no'a'ul is a troll designation—not necessarily insulting, but not overly respectful either—for members of other Namegiver races (except for obsidimen, of course, who are referred to as ago'al—rock brothers).*

—Thom Edrull, Archivist and Scribe to the Hall of Records

## Of Sky Raiders and the Passions

Ask one outside our Discipline which Passion Sky Raiders revere above all others, and the answer will almost universally be Thystonius. This Passion receives due reverence from many Sky Raiders because personal honor and valor—ideals of Thystonius—are closely held in many of our hearts. Our zest for living, our love of the opportunity to prove ourselves against threats and challenges—these things echo the precepts of Thystonius.

Yet think on it. From what I have told you, what other Passion would find a place in our hearts? If you ventured Lochost, you are right. For Lochost is

And what of *no'a'ul* such as myself? The usual avenues for joining the Sky Raider Discipline are denied to us. We are part of no trollmoot, and no troll Sky Raider would deign to seek out *no'a'ul* candidates for membership in the Discipline. In all but the most exceptional of cases, we must seek out an instructor and convince him or her to accept us as student and would-be Adept. It is true, my friend, that few *no'a'ul* become Sky Raiders. How could it be otherwise? So few outside the troll race understand what it is to be a Sky Raider. Why would someone seek to follow a Discipline that he cannot fully understand?







## CHAPTER 4: ADEPTS

Yet there are those—I among them—who feel the stirrings of personal honor and responsibility in their souls when they are children, who understood—imperfectly, it is true, and without knowing the correct word—the concept of *galan'kaharr*. These few sometimes learn enough of the Discipline to understand that only within its ways can they find true soul-mates, fellows who share their view of the world. These would-be Sky Raiders usually have little choice but to trek to the highlands and locate a trollmoot where Sky Raiders are trained. Then they must find an instructor and impress him with their desire to join the Discipline.

How? Almost invariably by combat, of course.

I myself located my mentor among the members of a moot in the Twilight Peaks. A large and grizzled troll, he was, renowned for his ferocity in combat and his unshakable sense of honor. I told him what I wished from him—indoctrination in the Sky Raider Discipline—and he laughed in my face. So I challenged him to single combat then and there. He refused my challenge! (This was the most insulting action he could possibly have taken, of course.) So I hurled myself at his throat, disdaining the weapons that hung on my belt, and I tried my level best to slay him.

The outcome was preordained, of course. It took me a fortnight to recover from the drubbing I received. Throughout my convalescence, however, I bore my wounds with a stoicism that must have impressed him. When I could walk and wield a weapon again, he came to me and asked me if I would undertake a challenge. I accepted immediately, without asking the nature of that challenge. (I understand now that this was the turning point in our relationship. Had I asked to know the challenge before I accepted, I do not believe he would have offered me training.)

My challenge was to stage a raid—alone!—against a neighboring earthbound clan. I was to assault their moothome and return with a trophy: a weapon taken from the hand of one of the moothome's guards! Only when I returned with that trophy—and return I did, my friend, bloody and scarred but triumphant—did my mentor agree to undertake my training.

### Concerning Ongoing Training

In the years since, I have enjoyed the honor of training Sky Raiders of lower skill and experience than myself. (The greatest honor has come when trolls—not fellow *no'a'ul* like myself—have come to me requesting instruction!) The principle that I have followed—which I learned from my first instructor—is that the responsibility for learning lies with the student, not with the instructor. The student must decide what specific skills she needs to learn, and then the student petitions her instructor for the training she requires. While I may provide guidance if specifically asked, it is not my place to decide how a student's training is to proceed.

I believe wholeheartedly that the greatest service I can provide to a student is to teach by example. When the drakkar on which I serve undertakes a raid, I will invite my student to fight alongside me in the fray. When we labor to maintain the ship, she works alongside me. When my duty leads me to handle the rigging or take the tiller, my student will be beside me there as well. The greatest lesson I can offer her is to show how a true Sky Raider faces the challenges of life.

Not all elders follow this scheme, of course. My friend E'Tal Goldeneye tells me that his first instructor, who recruited him into the Discipline, was the harshest of taskmasters, ordering E'Tal around as though he was a hand servant. This elder constantly set him to undertake menial tasks and exhausting exercises and punished him for even the slightest flaw in his performance.

For months E'Tal labored under his harsh discipline, striving to prove himself worthy to be declared a member of the Discipline. On the day that E'Tal finally refused his teacher's orders and declared that this servitude was unacceptable, the elder smiled and said, "You have passed the test. Now you are a true Sky Raider!"

### GAME INFORMATION

#### Roleplaying Hints

Responsibility and honor, both personal and clan, represent a Sky Raider's primary motivation. Most often, the two are intertwined; a Sky Raider behaves honorably by taking complete and final





responsibility for his own life and destiny. No Sky Raider willingly does anything that might tarnish his personal vision of his own honor (though he rarely cares whether others view his actions as honorable or dishonorable). And once a Sky Raider gives his oath on any matter, he will not break it.

Sky Raiders see honor and individual responsibility as two sides of the same coin, so he rarely shows compassion for the troubles of others, unless those others are clearly striving against their misfortunes with all their strength. Those who blame their lot in life on fate or circumstance, rather than taking personal responsibility for their condition, are dishonorable by definition and therefore unworthy of sympathy or aid.

Likewise, a Sky Raider will refrain from interfering if his companion seems about to break his own oath. Responsibility is an individual matter, and the companion must choose for himself whether or not to be an "honorless toad." (Of course, the Sky Raider will probably never trust that companion again.) On the other hand, a Sky Raider who sees the "weak" or "underprivileged" fighting to better themselves, or to free themselves from the yoke of an oppressor, may well devote himself wholeheartedly to their cause.

Some Sky Raiders view Adepts of other Disciplines with scorn, because in their opinion they have chosen to follow a "lesser" path. Other Sky Raiders offer Adepts of other Disciplines an

indulgent understanding and sympathy; they may have made a "lesser" choice, but in taking responsibility for their own path they have demonstrated a basic understanding of honor.

## Discipline Violations

To place responsibility for his actions or his life in the hands of others or to blame his actions or condition on circumstances is among the worst violations of his Discipline that a Sky Raider can commit. Relinquishing personal responsibility or doing anything to besmirch his honor will trigger a Discipline crisis, usually at least a Serious one. For many Sky Raiders, the worst possible violation of personal honor is to break an oath. To do so often constitutes a Heinous violation of the character's Discipline, depending on the circumstances under which the act took place.

Most Sky Raiders can easily think up an appropriate Deed of Atonement; very often they simply do something to fix the problem immediately, and damn the consequences. To make up for turning aside from a challenge, for example, the Sky Raider must track down the challenger and settle the matter.

A Sky Raider who relinquishes his personal responsibility must somehow take the reins of his life back into his own hands, and often chooses to do so in a direct, blatant, and violent way.



## THE DANCE OF THE SWORDMASTER

*The following entry was supplied by the Swordmaster Elizabetta of Kaer Adelaide, who won the bragging rights at the most recent Swordmaster Grand Tourney for her inspired and impeccably timed double thrust against Kavar the Unimpressed. Her brilliant riposte in response to his cleverly worded attack against her wit actually threw off Kavar's timing and allowed Elizabetta to cut away the fasteners of his shirt in one clean stroke.*

*The Royal Library was honored by the Swordmaster's cooperation with our project, for she supplied one of the most entertaining and informative treatises we received.*

Ⓜ—Presented for the edification of the reader by Derrat, Wizard of Yistaine, 1506 TH

### THE WORLD OF THE SWORDMASTER

It's all part of the dance! Live or die, it's all part of the dance when you're a Swordmaster. That is the first lesson I learned at the knee of my master. Other masters may claim it is all part of the tale, or song, or grand mischief—but no matter the wording, the meaning remains the same. This is not to say that the crafting of words is not as important as the tempering of your blade—far from it! Yet, basic truths remain the same no matter what frippery decorates them.

Jealous Warriors may scoff at our witty repartee and shake their heads at the elaborate spins of our bodies and flourishes of our swords. The besotted miscreants will never understand what it is to live in a world made more vibrant by one's very presence in it! It is no wonder that most Warriors dismiss us as overblown, vainglorious blowhards. What the rheumy eyes of these lesser creatures perceive as flaws, we know to be the greatest merits of all. Allow me to elaborate for a moment on our philosophy.

For as long as I have danced in the footsteps of the Discipline, I have known that slaying an opponent, whether it be the foulest gore-spattered Horror or merely some backstabbing rogue in a dark alley, is a necessary evil. You wonder how one who makes his living by the sword can view its results as evil? Ah, but should you ask that question you have missed

the point entirely. For though the act of killing may be as base as a one-course meal of birch broth, the

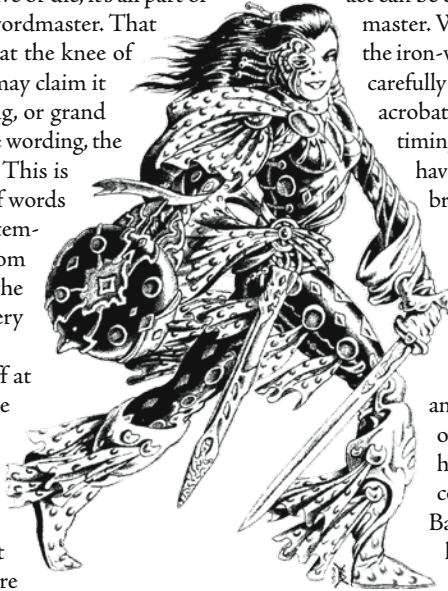
act can be elevated to an art by a Swordmaster. We are the chefs of the sword, the iron-wielding elite of the blade! We carefully add our ingredients: a dash of acrobatics, a dollop of wit, a trace of timing, and a pinch of élan, until we have transformed that lowly birch broth into a nine-course feast!

Our swords are extensions of our bodies and our souls, but by themselves they mean little. For competing bravely in a tournament, exchanging witty repartee and pirouetting leaps with one's opponents, is pointless if one hunches silently in the meanest corner of the inn that evening. Battles, as with life itself, only hold meaning when shared with others. Even mean competition can be elevated

in the sharing, but what about when the battle itself is glorious?

Well, then, such an encounter—whether it was won or lost—adds to the world's glory. Just as all Namegivers create art to ward off Horror-taint, so too does creating glory from a tainted act serve to ward off the evil surrounding us. The Swordmaster's craft is a golden shield we hold forth to protect our world, and what could be more heroic than that? Merely to think on it sets my t'skrang heart to singing!

You can see that our swords are more truly weapons of wit than of war. The Troubadour practices







an honorable profession, but those Adepts only tell the tale, whereas we Swordmasters create the tales we tell. And so every situation in the Swordmaster's life is a tableau fraught with possibilities for swash-buckling adventure, torrid romance, and great acts of heroism. Even such a mundane act as entering an inn can be made grand if one possesses style, and no Namegiver in water, earth, or air knows more of style than the Swordmasters.

This love of style makes us Swordmasters continually aware of how we appear to others—from the Passions themselves to the cows chewing cud by the trail. Though each of us cultivates our own unique style (but then, “style is always singular, never plural!” as Lilting Phineous was wont to say), all Swordmasters concern themselves equally with everything from the smallest details of appearance to the largest sweeps of our swords. Clothing, stance, walk, words, gestures, sighs—all are necessary accouterments to draw to us the eyes of our audience. We must always strive to make the world more glorious, more virtuous, more true, by our presence in it.

This belief also explains why Swordmasters so often allow worthy opponents whom they have fought and bested, even many times over, to live to see another sunrise, to hear another poem, to woo another lover. We trade not in killing, but in theater! We are artists sworn to craft our paintings with our bodies, hearts and minds. We live to create, not to destroy.

Though our art may begin with the sword, it does not end there. If this world of ours is to grow ever more glorious in this new time, then we must not fall into the trap of becoming what we fear. We must rise above our own penchant for evil, great and small, while we remain ever-vigilant to the multitude of threats to our fair world. It is an existence to be envied, is it not?

*Elizabetta speaks an important truth here, for the skilled arm of a Swordmaster is like a pot of boiling water. Remove it from the fire of practice and it becomes cold.*

—Jontar, Swordmaster of Opar

## LIFE AS A SWORDMASTER

If life is a dance, then the Swordmaster is most certainly the belle of the ball. Just as our opulent

finery and actions draw the attention of others to us, so does the world continually draw our attention to opportunities for saving a life or puncturing the so-called wit of a bore lacking his fair share of manners. Likewise, when faced with a dramatic situation in which our presence might prove invaluable in some way, most Swordmasters find it impossible to keep from interceding.

Many times this need to speak against injustices, to berate the morally bankrupt or leap to the aid of the weak, ends in our employing the skills for which we are named. Yet, on other occasions, we are drawn to less military solutions. I recall the time I first set eyes on young Captain Fettalan, with his dark cloak and iridescent green scales ... what adventures can begin with a single sweep of the tail!

But before I get carried away in that Tale of a Tail (and I must that admit Captain Fettalan, who is an excellent Troubadour, tells it far better than I), I should remark that it is a measure of the Swordmaster's perspicacity, our keen perception, that enables us to identify injustices that others might not so easily recognize. True, some disgruntled souls claim that we create dramatic situations from thin air, but they would not—and could not—claim such beliefs if those unfortunate ones could even briefly see the world through our eyes.

For those of you who sadly lack the required skills of heart, mind and body to become Swordmasters, let me assure you that we are just as compelled to act once we witness an injustice as we are to recognize such a need in the first place!

Thus, life for a Swordmaster is a series of daring escapades. When we are not throwing ourselves into the midst of adventure, we are girding for our next such encounter, or exchanging stories of previous exploits. Yet throughout all of this, we spend time learning and rehearsing the dance. The physical, mental, and emotional skills required of a Swordmaster are such that daily practice is a necessity we cannot long forego, lest the skills we have fought so long and hard to attain begin to dull.

## On Finding One's Path

Swordmasters throughout the ages have woven their Threads to many of the legendary swords in our world. Though all magic interests a Swordmaster, most of us wend our ways through life keeping at





## CHAPTER 4: ADEPTS

least half an eye on the quest to find and then bind our patterns to our perfect sword.

*The importance of a Swordmaster's blade can be stated in the simple words of the ancient maxim, "the sword makes the man."*

—Ruldo of Urupa

I know that many non-Swordmasters find this idea hard to fathom, but most Swordmasters believe that somewhere in the world there exists a magical sword that he alone (at least in this era) was meant to wield. Finding a soul sword and learning all its most intimate secrets—and then working with the weapon to create an even greater legend—is the most important quest of all Swordmasters.

You may ask how we can tell that we have found the sword. I have not found mine yet, but I have been told many times that I will recognize it the moment I see it—perhaps even the moment I first hear its Name. It is undeniable that the most famous Swordmasters have been known as much for their swords as for themselves, and that both sword and master together weave themselves into legend.

### ON THE ART OF TRAINING

Long, hard, dusty, sweaty hours of labor are just as much a part of the Swordmaster's life as are velvety words and leaping glory, and very few Namegivers possess the particular combination of skills that makes it possible for them to even consider taking up the sword and following our Discipline. Learning if one's true way lies on the Glorious Road is made doubly difficult by the vast number of youths who dream of joining our ranks.

I can tell you from copious personal experience that an experienced Swordmaster often faces challenges issued by youngsters who believe they have what it takes to become an apprentice. Of course, all too many of these younglings see only the glittering, glib ease and effortlessness with which Swordmasters seem to move through life. They have no idea of the grime behind the glitter, of the constant sacrifices and effort needed to achieve such results. And so dismissing the most callow aspirants seldom requires much effort.

Even the masses of promising hopefuls contain few Swordmasters. This is one of the reasons most Swordmasters require that their apprentices promise

to teach at least as many pupils during their lifetimes as years the apprentice spends under his master's training. Swordmasters rarely train more than one pupil at a time, for training an apprentice requires far too much of an instructor's energy and attention to successfully divide the effort between multiple students. Fortunately, once a new Swordmaster begins his training ("earns his sword," in the vernacular) the frequently held tournaments and contests, as well as his own efforts to train new apprentices, admirably supplement any additional training his master provides.

### Taking Up the Gauntlet

What is it that prompts a Swordmaster to take on a particular pupil? It varies from Adept to Adept, but most aspirants to the Discipline would undoubtedly be surprised to learn that quick wit and a certain feistiness of spirit might be considered of greater importance than raw physical skill. This is not to say that Swordmasters will accept candidates who lack dexterity. Far from it! It is rather to say that the physical skills required in a potential apprentice are more common—and easier to teach—than the vigor, the innate sense of style and imagination that attracts a master's attention.

Such élan is nigh impossible to fake, and it shows itself in different ways with different candidates. This may be why some masters instruct a would-be apprentice to seek out a particular Swordmaster to challenge. We all favor a particular style, and most of us can recognize the true gift even if it runs counter to our own preferences. Thus, though I willingly teach particularly acrobatic youths who are equally eager to enter into a duel of wits as one of many weapons, another master may favor the youth with brilliant sword strokes who continually plays to the audience. Of course, the recruit need not best the Swordmaster in a duel to be accepted as an apprentice, else we would soon have no more Swordmasters!

If the would-be apprentice manages to impress the Swordmaster with his potential, the Swordmaster may "throw down his gauntlet" (a glove or other token) and offer his services as a trainer. By "taking up the gauntlet," the apprentice begins his new life as a swordman. Older Adepts often ask each other when they "took up the gauntlet," and a certain kinship often springs up among those who began their training in



the same year. (It is tradition that when an Adept discovers a compatriot of the same gauntlet year, he buys him a drink in honor of their brotherhood.)

## The Tripled Blades

Once accepted as an apprentice Swordmaster, the recruit begins training. Most begin learning the art only after three years of apprenticeship, though this basic training time varies widely. More talented or experienced recruits may reach this stage after a few months, while others train for up to six years, which for us is the maximum length of apprenticeship.

Different masters favor different training styles. And though every Swordmaster uses unique variations in training his apprentices, almost all fall under one of the following three training philosophies, known as the Tripled Blades.

## Flattery

It is often said that imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, and Swordmasters who favor this style of training take this saying to heart. An Adept trained in this manner learns his Discipline by imitating the verbal and physical stylings of his master. The recruit must learn to successfully imitate everything about his teacher, from how to dress and turn a phrase, to the type of sword and the parry-thrust combinations his master favors.

Adepts trained in this manner are often among the most avid tournament goers, as they usually build their own styles by combining skills and ideas learned directly from other Swordmasters.

## The Foil

The foil style of training may well be the most common of all forms. Here, recruits are taught to use their budding skills as a foil on which their master can build. The apprentice becomes the master's constant companion and uses his master's verbal cues and physical ripostes as pegs on which to hang his own skills of word and weapon. Likewise, he learns to provide openings that allow his teacher to wield his own skills more admirably. The foil style of training often

produces Adepts with skills and habits reminiscent of, but still distinct from, their masters'.

## Contention

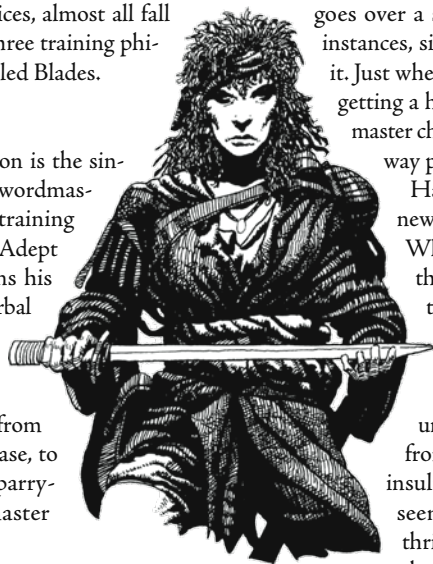
The final approach of the basic training styles is undoubtedly the least common. Swordmasters who favor the contention training style tend to be stern teachers, punishing students who make errors with harsh behavior. Though this style is frowned on by some Swordmasters as stunting the vigor of recruits, it has been known to produce some very impressive young Swordmasters.

In the contention style of training, the master continually challenges his pupil. The Swordmaster goes over a skill a few times or, in some instances, simply tells the recruit to learn it. Just when the apprentice believes he is getting a handle on the skill or idea, the master challenges him in the most brutal way possible.

Has the recruit just learned a new leap and parry combination? Why then, the master leaps at the pupil, sword in hand, just as the poor apprentice is finishing supper. Has the recruit recently begun to show a more biting wit? If so, he will undoubtedly soon be recovering from a blazing string of scathing insults. Though this method may seem harsh, certain apprentices thrive on the constant challenge, their anger and fear only tempering their resolve to become full-fledged

Swordmasters.

Regardless of specific training styles, the apprentice learns much of philosophy, style and etiquette during the course of training—even while slaving away at the exacting dances, thrusts, and parries that are the more blatant tools of the Discipline. Apprentices must learn to wield each of the three blades ("eyes to pierce, tongue to lash and sword to slash") with equal facility. Such skills are practiced everywhere once the recruit begins his apprenticeship, but it is at the tournaments and contests that Swordmasters can truly stretch their budding skills and hone those they have begun to master.







*Swordmasters trained in the method of contention are superior to all others. Such challenges temper the skills of an apprentice in a way nothing else can.*

—Elvorka of Jerris

## Of Tournaments and Tales

On hills and in dales, along riverbanks and in town commons, Swordmasters regularly hold loosely organized tournaments. (A tournament must have at least nine competitors to qualify as a tournament, and not merely a challenge.) At least a dozen specific tournaments take place each year in Barsaive, the largest and most famous being the Grand Tourney, held at midsummer just outside of Bartertown. Swordmasters from across the continent travel to Bartertown each summer to compete in the various contests held at this most prestigious event.

Tournaments offer Swordmasters a number of different opportunities. Perhaps most importantly, tournaments provide a place where Adepts can meet with others who share our unique view of the world. The vast majority of Swordmasters are garrulous, social beings who adore being the center of attention. One must rarely wait more than an hour into a tournament before witnessing the first extravagant stories and daring leaps from balconies. Tournaments are often spectacular fun for other Namegivers observing the competition, but be warned! It is all too easy to be caught up in any one of a number of unofficial contests of all types which we Swordmasters use to continually test ourselves and each other.

Official events at tournaments usually include a few swordless competitions testing agility (long and high jumps) and wit (challenges of repartee), but most events revolve around sword fights that test all the Swordmasters' skills. These events fulfill the second major purpose of tournaments by enabling Swordmasters to rise through the skills of the Discipline. Save for those lucky enough to find a ghost master, almost all Swordmasters rise in power and skill in this manner.

Rising through the lower ranks of our Discipline merely requires that the Adept display proficiency in the proper skills over the course of the tournament. Reaching the upper levels requires the Adept to overcome far greater difficulties. In these cases, the Swordmaster must prove himself capable of

defeating multiple opponents of his current skill level in dramatic combat. Often, the Adept begins the contest at some sort of a disadvantage (for example, having one hand tied behind his back) or with an additional task (rescuing a "captive") he must accomplish during the fight. When attempting to attain the very highest levels of knowledge, the odds against a single candidate can be truly overwhelming. I had the great good fortune to witness the troll Swordmaster, Aldaric the Unbowed, successfully defeat eighty opponents in the course of a single battle to reach his next level of training. And Aldaric began the competition at the bottom of a well!

Unfortunately for our Discipline, favoritism sometimes creeps into tournaments to give unfair advantage to Swordmasters attempting to reach the higher levels of our Discipline. Ideally, a somewhat experienced Swordmaster or better should be truly brilliant with his weapon, regardless of the other skills he possesses. Still, the more influential masters who decide close matches occasionally allow less physically Adept, but more popular, swordsmen to advance without obtaining the proper level of skill. Ah, well, I suppose it is not surprising that such favoritism occurs in a Discipline so full of vainglorious sods as ours.

## Bragging Rights

Each tournament has its own peculiar traditions and customs. However, I have never heard of a tournament that does not bestow bragging rights on one of its contestants. Quite simply, whomever the tournament judges deem to have performed the single most memorable accomplishment at the tournament that year wins the tournament's bragging rights. The action need not occur during the course of an official contest, though it most often does. For example, the right witticism delivered with impeccable timing at the inn has been known to win bragging rights for the swordman who spoke it.

A Swordmaster with bragging rights gains a certain amount of esteem from any Adepts who participated in the tournament. Additionally, etiquette demands that an Adept who holds bragging rights be allowed first stab at a quest or task or in the event that a dispute occurs between two Adepts. Bragging rights last until the next time that tournament is held. Of course, the larger and more prestigious the



tournament, the greater the honor of possessing its bragging rights. (I might humbly remind the reader that the Grand Tourney is the most prestigious!)

## ON SPECIALISTS

Certain Swordmasters emphasize one or two aspects of the Discipline over all others. These Adepts are known as specialists. Though a number of different Swordmaster specialists roam the length of Barsaive, the two most common are undoubtedly the gallant and the bladesman.

## On the Gallant

Swordmasters who use our Discipline's particular abilities to build romantic, dashing reputations are called gallants. They focus their energies almost exclusively on aiding members of the opposite sex. Such aid might take the form of a quest or defense of another's honor, but some gallants seem even more interested in being admired than admiring.

These particular Adepts tend toward handsomeness of form and feature, but a surprising number are actually quite plain. In fact, their tremendous charisma serves these Adepts far better than their physical appearances. Even in the thick of the deadliest of battles, the gallant Swordmaster remains acutely aware of his image.

When it comes to wit, most gallants excel at flirtatious or amorous banter.

I knew one such Adept who flattered and cajoled his way straight into the Theran headquarters in Vivane to challenge the current military leader to a duel. In fact, fewer than eight Theran and several Throalic women are said to have fainted away when the handsome elven gallant, Named Julian, received a scratch on his shoulder.

## On the Bladesman

The bladesman specialist is less concerned with words and wit than most Swordmasters. Indeed, some bladesmen can actually be characterized as rather quiet, both in battle and in repose. Bladesmen Swordmasters communicate their intentions with their swords, and the results can be truly breathtaking—even to other Swordmasters. Hour after hour, day after day, the bladesman practices a dizzying array of acrobatic and swashbuckling skills.

These Swordmasters are true masters of the dance and devote themselves utterly to it, often at the expense of their relationships with others of their Discipline. Undoubtedly, this explains the difficulties bladesmen sometimes encounter when attempting to rise to a higher skill level. They simply lack the usual political contacts, thus they receive no favors. As a result, most bladesmen Swordmasters must rely exclusively on their fighting skills to reach the higher secrets of the Discipline.

*Bladesmen may achieve admirable prowess with their blades, but they lack the sense of drama, joy, and life a gallant possesses. Therefore, they cannot contribute as much to their fellow citizens and will always be inferior to gallants.*

—Devereaux of Throal

*Such chauvinism is typical of that wordy breed known as the gallant swordsman. As all Namegivers rightly know, actions speak louder than words. The most precious, gilded phrases will always pale next to the glorious exploits of a bladesman Swordmaster. For this reason, he will always be more important than his verbose cousin, the gallant Swordmaster.*

—B'Nar of Bellan





## CHAPTER 4: ADEPTS

### GAME INFORMATION

#### Roleplaying Hints

In many ways, Swordmasters resemble the glamorous swashbucklers of song and story. Unlike a Warrior, a Swordmaster does not focus on defeating the enemy (though she would certainly prefer to); instead, the act of fighting is the way in which she embodies her Discipline. Killing is not the main goal of battle, it is merely a possible outcome. The Swordmaster need not risk her life foolishly, but must attempt to fight any battle with panache. A Swordmaster who deliberately prolongs a battle in order to make it more exciting and beautiful is acting in accordance with her Discipline. Battle is her art, and she practices it with joy.

A Swordmaster is extraordinarily comfortable with her body and her mind, and almost never sits quietly in the background. Clever catch phrases, witty insults, and humorous asides are as natural to a Swordmaster as the elegant embellishments of the art of swordplay. Players who wish to play the glib swashbuckler but cannot always come up with the proper “zinger” on the spur of the moment should come up with or find a few such witticisms and heroic lines before and between game sessions; detective/adventure films from the 1940s and 1950s and any serial/pulp movies offer good sources. Sitting a little straighter and talking a little louder than usual can also help a player get “in character.”

#### Discipline Violations

Many Namegivers believe the simplest way to get from point A to point B is a straight line, but the Swordmaster adamantly denies this notion. To the Swordmaster, how an action is accomplished is at least as important as the result of that action. Simplicity and straightforwardness are alien values to this Discipline; flair, elegance, and verve must accompany the Swordmaster's every act.

A Swordmaster must even turn the essentially negative and destructive action of killing an opponent in battle into something glorious. A Swordmaster who kills an opponent simply because he opened his guard is not acting in accordance with his Discipline, and such a violation may cause a Discipline crisis.

A Swordmaster who fails to take advantage of a slight opening in a difficult battle has most likely committed a Trivial violation, whereas an Adept who wins an easy battle against an outmatched foe without making the slightest attempt to embellish the fight with words or deeds has committed a Serious or even Severe violation and will suffer a correspondingly severe Discipline crisis.

A Swordmaster who sneaks up behind an unarmed opponent and silently slits his throat with a knife has committed a Heinous violation, and must complete a Deed of Atonement to end her Discipline crisis.

If a Swordmaster Player Character goes through an entire gaming session during which battles take place and fails to perform at least one or two extraneous but interesting combat maneuvers, the character may suffer a Discipline violation ranging from Mild to Serious. If she continues to avoid the proper degree of flamboyance in combat, she may trigger a Severe or even Heinous Discipline violation, with all the attendant penalties.

#### Bragging Rights Bonuses

A Swordmaster who wins bragging rights for a particular tournament gains a +2 bonus to Persuasion rolls when dealing with anyone who attended that tournament. This bonus remains in effect for as long as the Swordmaster maintains her bragging rights, up to a limit of one year and one day. In addition, bragging rights give a Swordmaster the right to accept or turn down quests or heroic deeds before the opportunity is offered to any other of the Swordmasters at that tournament.

#### Soul Swords

A Swordmaster wielding her soul sword—the sword that is the character's perfect complement—may spend an additional Karma Point on any action taken with that sword. The Game Master and player should keep in mind, however, that finding the soul sword and learning its secrets should only take place as part of an epic quest. Very few Swordmasters ever find their soul swords, let alone rewrite legends with them. Those who do are true heroes.





## THE GIFT OF THEFT

*The following document is a distillation of several interviews held with Kosooti, noted windling Thief. As windlings are unwilling to commit any important thoughts to paper—a most misguided belief, I must say—the interviews were conducted by Obon Awles, an apprentice librarian under my tutelage here at the Hall of Records. Our scribe has endeavored to preserve the distinctive stylings of Kosooti's speech. Incidentally, if any readers happen to have a means of contacting Kosooti, Obon would like it known that he greatly desires the return of a certain medallion, a family heirloom of great sentimental value.*

Ⓜ—Presented for the edification of the reader by Derrat, Wizard of Yistaine, 1506 TH

To steal! This is the greatest thrill in all of existence! To take something that is not meant to be taken, to laugh in the face of foolish rules and laws—all else pales in comparison. Do not let silly sayings about the virtue of hard work and honesty confuse you. Pilfered fruit tastes the sweetest, and the gem stolen from the turban of an enraged troll merchant shines brighter than one gained through toil and sweat!

The Way of the Thief is the original Way of the Adept. All Disciplines have stolen their ways from the way of the Thief. For is not the Way of the Adept the way of magically taking from the world abilities that would otherwise be learned only through years of perspiration and effort? We merely pluck these magical abilities from the air, with the swiftness and ease of a stealthy child plucking peaches from the trees of a neighboring village. All of us who tread the Adept's Way are Thieves.

Though some of the others would hotly deny this, they have lost touch with their origins and think they are better than we. Let them believe what they will. Their self-delusion is one property I have no interest in taking from them. But listen up, scribe, and I will give you a gift; the gift of insight.

You look at me with suspicion, stuffy dwarfling. I pick your thoughts as I might pick your pocket.

You believe that Thieves do not give, they only take. What you do not understand is that the act of taking is the greatest gift of all. Allow me to explain.

### ON THE TYRANNY OF POSSESSION

Look at you, stuffy dwarfling. You sit before me, decked out in what passes for gaudy finery among your dowdy kind—a colorful hat, with dyed peacock feather; a modest yet no doubt

expensive tunic of velvet, one that cries out, "Quality"; fine leggings, exquisite leather boots; a medallion of rubies and gold that would choke a dragon. Even the pen you write with is of the finest ivory, intricately carved by a master artisan of my people. Well, mark my words, stuffy one: your finery is not armor—it is a cage. Your possessions trap you, weigh you down, stunt the growth of your soul. You have become your possessions, for every one of your hopes has become wrapped up in what you own. No! Do not attempt to deny it. There is no shame in this attitude—well, perhaps there is, but it is a shame shared

by many denizens of Barsaive. Many Namegivers must claim this common failing; they believe that they are what they own. Fine goods and possessions are thought to attract lovers, win friends, and prove one's value in the world. What





lamentable folly! It is your thoughts, your actions, your dreams, your memories that define you and create true worth.

So when the Thief steals your money, she takes not only your possessions or your coin. She takes your delusion and so gives you truth. Those who do not understand this gift brand us as scoundrels, it is true. Why, some poor benighted souls actually believe that stealing is evil! We who follow the Discipline of the Thief simply shrug at such quaint notions, for a true Thief does not expect gratitude for her gifts. She gives for the joy of it.

## ON FORGING ALLIANCES

Because we are misunderstood by so many, false beliefs about Thieves abound in Barsaive. But perhaps the most absurd untruth contends that Thieves lead sad and lonely lives, deprived by their Discipline of the companionship of others. What foolishness! Why, I could stack my friends and allies up against those of any other Namegiver and not come up wanting, I assure you.

Yes, it is true that those Thieves who follow the path of selfishness—of which I shall speak more—shield themselves from the love of others and draw strength from their solitude. But many more of us are as gregarious as a whushah fly in blooming season—and most delightful company, as you surely must agree!

We are fully capable of sustaining profitable alliances with others, of keeping our word, and of tying our vital Threads to Namegivers we love and esteem. I myself have ritually bound myself to the destiny of an adventuring band known as The Seven Equals. Our number contains exemplars of many different races and Disciplines, and they all trust me with their lives, as I trust them with mine.

Just because a Thief lives to steal, does not mean she must steal from everyone. Myself, I prefer to steal from the too-haughty Therans, from drooling Horrors and their corrupt servants, and from the long dead, who shall scarcely miss their coins and jewels. And, of course, from those in great spiritual need of the gift of theft.

Still, many wrong-thinking Namegivers continue to believe that we Thieves have less self-control than others who walk magical pathways. But I can as easily resist the urge to steal the hard-won silver

of my comrades as can a Warrior resist the urge to stab his brother, or a Wizard refrain from casting a mind-ripping hex on his mother.

Like other Adepts, we choose our targets with care. It would be stupid to betray my fellows through petty theft: together we have done many great deeds and built a legend greater than any of us could have done alone. Thieves are not stupid. Not the live ones, anyway.

It is true that some adventuring bands are reluctant to recruit Thieves as companions. This is their great loss. For the way of the Thief provides many abilities beyond the mere lifting of purses and pilfering of coppers, abilities that have proved vital to many a legendary endeavor.

Think on it. What good is finding a chest inside a deep and musty kaer if there is no one to seduce its lock, to steal into the heart of the mechanism and coax it open? And what adventuring band has never needed someone to stalk soundlessly into an enemy camp for an unnoted reconnoiter? What crime is it to steal from a hidden, ancient blade the secret of its location and spare one's comrades from its thirst for blood? And how often do activities of adventurers lead them into intrigue and the machinations of the powerful?

In such situations, can one begrudge the Thief her ability to don the garb of others and rob the foe of treasured confidences? And the usefulness of an unexpected dagger thrust between the shoulder blades of a vengeful Nethermancer should be beyond question to any thinking adventurer.

Yes, the Thief is to be coveted as an ally: better to draw us to your bosom than cast us out. Unless, of course, you wish us to feel justified in liberating your goods from you.

Likewise, the wise Thief values the abilities of trusted associates more than any purloined bauble. I can swing a scabbard with more than passable facility, but prefer to leave such matters up to the true experts, Warriors and Swordmasters. Likewise, I am glad to have spellcasters to rely upon when magical obstacles obscure my path. This is mere common sense, which all assume any adventurer—save the Thief—possesses as a matter of course. Mere prejudice prevents every Namegiver from seeing that the Thief's sense of reason is no more clouded than that of any other Adept.



And so, despite the fact that our actions alone keep this world from sinking into a mire of greed, where only the rich have money and the poor have nothing, Namegivers in many quarters think ill of us. This is inconvenient at times, but it also becomes part of the challenge. And thievery would contain no thrill were it an easy pursuit.

*Thrill or no thrill, the suspicion with which other Namegivers greet us can be very saddening at times. Still, their reaction seems natural considering the secrecy and caution we must observe—and so I cannot really fault them for it.*

—Klerkonius of Urupa

## FINDING A MASTER

How does the young Namegiver who wishes to pursue the path of the Thief find a mentor? Unlike a Weaponsmith or Troubadour, a Thief is not wise to announce her Discipline to all who approach, for outside of Kratas few villages welcome Thieves. And so finding a mentor becomes the first test of the would-be Thief. He must be perceptive enough to spot a true Thief when she passes through his field of vision. He must be stealthy enough to approach her and charming enough to “steal her heart,” to convince her that he deserves the ultimate gift. He must show that he is free of greed, that the larceny in his heart is as pure as a Throalic silver ingot.

When a Thief tutors a student, she does not simply reveal the truth. She forces the student to “steal” it from her. She speaks in riddles, offers puzzles, deliberately misleads. Only the novice clever enough to see through the deceptions and discern the secrets of thievery abilities wins initiation.

But the Discipline of the Thief is not a mere intellectual matter, a series of puzzles to be solved in the comfort of one’s kitchen.

Thievery is a practical craft, one best practiced in the field. And the true initiation of a Thief takes place in the course of a crime: the master sends the student to steal something from a target greatly in need of the gift of theft. If the student is truly Thief material, the vaunted abilities of our way manifest themselves as the need for them arises. If the student is not—well, capture is one of the hazards that failed Thieves face.

Many initiates in other Disciplines would quail at the thought of a master who is not reliable. But our masters deceive us so that we may learn to see what is hidden and to reveal to us a higher truth: that we can rely upon no others save ourselves in this world.

Our magic does not work without a daring heart and a solitary mind. Picking a pocket is not a team effort, for one cat walks more quietly than many. Though alliances with others are not forbidden to our Discipline, ultimately the Thief is alone, an outsider. There are those, lamentably, who take this concept too far, as I shall explain in a moment. But all Thieves must take this idea to their bosoms in one way or another.

## ON STEALING MAGIC FROM THE WORLD

When the student Thief finds the pathway of the Thief, she is stealing the directions to its entrance from her master. Likewise, when she learns a new ability or ascends to a higher level of our Discipline, she steals magic from the world. Magic is everywhere around us, but many are blind to it. They cannot see that it is there for the taking. Others see the magic, but lack the boldness to reach out and grab it for themselves. And the act requires boldness, as well as a keen mind. For like any hoarder of goods, the world holds tightly to its magic. The Thief must seduce, trick, and swindle the world into surrendering its glories.







## CHAPTER 4: ADEPTS

When a Thief wishes to advance and learn new secrets of our Discipline, she must first find another Thief of a higher level of ability than herself. This second Thief serves as the tester and sets a task to test the Thief's readiness for advancement. My last advancement was quite an ordeal, yes indeed. My difficulties began as I sought a Thief of greater capability than my own, for few exist. Then I had to persuade that Thief, one Ventioner, not to split me in two with an axe. (This desire of hers stemmed from a minor misunderstanding involving her young husband, a scarf of silk, and a pair of piglets—I won't go into the details here.)

At any rate, she assigned me to steal the left upper canine tooth of a Horror known only as the Pulse. This scar that runs down my side, from my neck to below my knee, is the result of that assignment. I understand that a number of Horror-marked Cavalrymen seek the tooth even as we speak. But that is none of my affair, for tradition demands that the material fruit of the advancement ritual goes to the master who created the assignment. Therefore, the Pulse must deal with Ventioner if it wants its rotting tooth back.

When an Adept learns a new ability, the magic of the world becomes the wronged party. One ability of the Thief's way enables us to spot traps. When I wished to learn this magical ability, I sought out a master familiar with its secret. He told me many contradictory things about the practice of the ability, leaving me to puzzle through the thicket of his words.

Then he sent me to the old Festival of Wonders tower outside Bartertown, a structure known for the fiendish traps hidden throughout it. I penetrated the tower and, concentrating on the riddles the master had told me, soon found my mind flooded with new understanding.

I stood before a section of wall and suddenly knew it to be a trap. I sent magic swirling through my pattern and snatched that moment in time, permanently stealing it. Now whenever I am near a trap, that magic I have stolen from the world does my bidding and warns me of the danger that I face. Many times before and since I have stolen such insights from the world and added them to my pattern.

### ON OTHER THIEVES

The path of the Thief I have laid out for you is not the only one. True, most Thieves seek out material treasures—gems, gold coins, rare finery and such. But other types of Thieves seek other booty. The Thief of knowledge, also known as the spy, believes that information is worth more than gold. Curiosity, and the need to throw light on secrets and spread the truth of a situation throughout the world—or at least to well-heeled clients—drives the Thief of knowledge. The Thief of love, the romancer, uses her skills of disguise and deception to seduce her targets. Instead of a trail of empty vaults, she leaves behind a legion of broken hearts.

*Though the spy and the romancer set their sights on different prizes, both bestow the gift of theft on other Namegivers. The spy steals secrets, thereby freeing her target from suspicions and fears that secrets breed. The romancer, meanwhile, steals sentiment rather than love, giving her victim new, clearer insight into his or her own heart and the hearts of others, and teaches the recipient of her gift to protect that most precious possession of all—love.*

—Valencias of Iopos

### ON THE WAY OF SELFISHNESS

Still other Thieves follow a dark path, the path of selfishness. They have forgotten the legacy of the first heroes and the true heritage of our path. These Thieves connect their patterns to the tradition of thievery by devoting themselves to pure selfishness. They believe that a Thief can only prosper through suspicion of others and that cooperation and compassion weakens their abilities and renders them vulnerable. To me, stealing something the owner values too much is an act of charity, a service not only to its possessor but to the community. But to Thieves who walk the path of selfishness, any care at all for the fate of the victim is a destructive distraction. They can maintain no allies and pledge to truly love none but themselves. Needless to say, Thieves traveling this path are quick to betray one another.

I have met numerous Thieves set upon the path of selfishness in my travels, and though I have no way



of knowing for certain, I fear their ranks increase each season. I have attempted to understand these Thieves who shun society, but it is a thankless task. They are reticent in the extreme, unwilling to speak at any length about themselves or their journey in the Discipline. But I spent many coins plying these types with strong drink and eventually gleaned from them their stories. The things I heard made my hair stand on end! Their masters taught them not through riddles, but through pain! Their initiations were literally by fire, as their masters thrust their arms and legs into open flames. By this, their masters intended to teach them not to trust anyone. Myself, I would have taken this as a lesson in the importance of carefully choosing one's master. A revealing lie is much more appropriate than—but you know my prejudices already, do you not, stuffy dwarf?

I believe that the Thief who walks the selfishness way robs herself most of all. For she can never feel camaraderie with others. She can never relax; she must always fear a knock at the door or a knife in the back. She can never join with others for mutual benefit.

I, who walk the way of the gift of theft, form alliances easily. I have been a valued member of many an adventuring troupe in my day. And though I stole a few baubles from them from time to time, these thefts were mere pranks. I would never dream of taking anything truly worthwhile from a companion, such as a magical treasure to which a friend had woven a Thread. But the Thief of the selfishness way would do so without hesitation—would fear losing her edge, in fact, if she failed to betray her supposed friends.

The selfishness Thief also feels no need to return her winnings to the world. She loves her loot as fervently as any merchant and keeps it close to her chest. When she loses her treasure or has it stolen from her—and I must confess a particular

joy in stealing from my misguided brethren—she mourns for it as anyone else would mourn for a slain comrade. Without true friends, the selfishness Thief pours her love into gold and gemstones. Though booty cannot keep one warm at night or rescue one in times of trouble, these Thieves still prefer booty to the friendship of others—for being a true friend means admitting you need others. And that is the last thing a selfishness Thief can afford to do.



*The true Thief has no space in his heart for compassion, sentiment, or beautiful-sounding ideals. Such things only blind the mind's eye and slow the hand. This may sound "rough and unforgiving," but such is our world.*  
—Blagstern of Kratas

In my opinion, the Thief on the path of selfishness lives a poor life, but these Thieves with tangled hearts continue to spread their rough and unforgiving vision throughout Barsaive, burning it into the flesh of their initiates. If I could steal from them their confusion, their selfish ways,

I would do so. That would truly be a gift: to them and to our land.

## GAME INFORMATION

### Roleplaying Hints

The Thief sees the world as a ripe target for robbery, but different types of Thieves see their stealing in different lights. Many see their Discipline as heroic. They remember that the first heroes of the Namegiver races were Thieves who taught the Passions a lesson in compassion. Thieves who see their Discipline this way are followers of the spendthrift path, or the trickster's path. Trickster Thieves may easily work in groups such as the typical party of Player Characters. Like all Thieves, they rely on their own abilities before depending on other people,



but they do not feel that self-reliance precludes cooperation with others.

Trickster Thief characters probably had reputations as rebels, pranksters, or charming nêr-do-wells even in childhood. Though the average trickster Thief has gotten into trouble constantly from a very early age, he causes the kind of spectacular but largely harmless trouble that others find forgivable. A trickster Thief is usually a charming rogue, envied for his ability to flout the rules most citizens dare not break. Though trickster Thieves are as stealthy as any other Thief when necessary, they enjoy drawing attention to themselves when not at work. Ping from the EARTHDAWN novel *Dark Shadows of Yesterday* is one such character.

The solitary Thief, by contrast—such as the character Garlthik from the EARTHDAWN novel *The Longing Ring*—cares little for mythology or metaphor. He sees the world in personal terms, as both his mark and his enemy. In order to prosper, the solitary Thief must reject even the appearance of dependence on others and draw strength and solace from himself alone. This attitude makes it difficult for a solitary Thief to fit in with the average adventuring band. Solitary Thieves want loot, and lots of it. They often judge their own value by the amount of money they've stolen; unlike spendthrifts, solitary Thieves hold tight to their ill-gotten gains.

Most solitary Thieves had troubled childhoods, and may have been shunned from a young age. They probably courted grave trouble as youngsters by getting into serious fights and committing vandalism and serious thefts. Often sullen, distant and disaffected, many a solitary Thief has burned his bridges back home and is no longer welcome in the community that raised him. They present a

truculent and threatening face to the world, often using body language alone to warn other people off. Others fade into a crowd, appearing nondescript to evade notice.

## Discipline Violations

Masters of trickster Thieves teach their students that the act of stealing matters more than any stolen item. A trickster Thief violates his Discipline and may experience a Discipline crisis when seized by greed or the desire to hoard ill-gotten gains. Because trickster Thieves are expected to act with bravado and defy authority, a trickster Thief who obeys a stupid law or turns down a chance at a spectacular heist may undergo a Discipline crisis. Trickster Thieves are also expected to spread word of their exploits far and wide as a lesson to others on the follies of loving objects too well, and so those who remain silent rather than bragging are also violating their Discipline.

Solitary Thieves violate their Discipline and suffer Discipline crises when they begin to doubt themselves, or after performing a compassionate or cooperative act toward others. They especially despise feelings of dependence on others, and lose their edge whenever they engage in any kind of mutually dependent relationship. Solitary Thieves may also suffer Discipline crises if someone loots their hoards of swag; to allow one's possessions to be taken may be a Discipline violation ranging from Mild to Heinous, depending on the loss to the Thief. In some Cases, these Thieves cannot regain full use of their abilities until they pursue the bandits and recover their goods. This act serves as a perverse Deed of Atonement.





## WHY THE TROUBADOUR SINGS

*This manuscript was written by one Vaerin Morningstar, a Troubadour who hails from Jerris. How it found a home in our library remains a puzzle to me, but that small concern is not sufficient to prevent me from including the essay in this book, as it captures the essence of the Troubadour Discipline in a way few other works do.*

—Presented for the edification of the reader by Derrat, Wizard of Yistaine, 1506 TH

### OF OUR PLACE IN THE WORLD

Storytellers, singers, joyfellows, entertainers, dispensers of gloom, dispensers of glee, members of the “liar’s trade,” quick with a quip and yarn; song-spinners, always distracted from the serious aspects of life by an unfinished rhyme or a recalcitrant melody—this is how many view our Discipline. How little they know! But listen to my tale, that you might see the truth.

A Troubadour was singing in the common room of an inn when a dusty Warrior entered. Exhausted from an adventure, the Warrior held his peace while he quaffed an ale or five, listening to the light and joyful ditties of the Troubadour. Finally, emboldened by drink, he strode up to the storyteller and laughed in her face.

“You think yourself so grand and important, don’t you, my pretty?” he slurred. “You put on such airs. Yet what do you do that has import in the grand scheme of things? You sing.”

The Troubadour set aside her lute, and nodded agreement.

“Yes, my large-thewed friend, that I do. I sing. And you?”

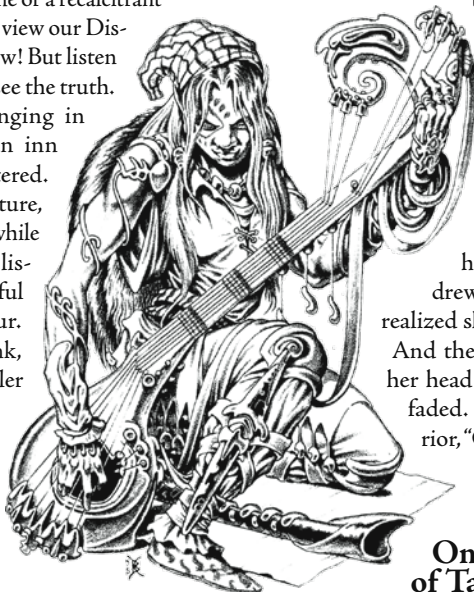
The Warrior puffed out his chest. “I fight for a cause I believe in,” he boasted. “I fight for the greater glory of Barsaive. I fight to rebuild her to her past glory, to eradicate the stain of the Scourge. And what do you do? You sing.”

“That I do,” the Troubadour agreed, her smile unfaded. “And you—you have sworn to clear the whole of Barsaive of the Scourge’s taint single-handedly? A mighty task you’ve set yourself.”

“Not single-handedly,” the Warrior corrected scornfully. “I am a hero. I will inspire others to follow in my footsteps, and the Passions will render the actions of those who follow me to my account as well. And what do you do? You sing. How can there be anything of less account than that?”

“Let me weave you a tale,” the Troubadour said, her smile unfaded. She picked up her lute and began to sing. And such a tale she told, of bravery and valor and sacrifice and honor. And it was only as she drew to a close that the Warrior realized she told his tale.

And then the Troubadour cocked her head to one side, and her smile faded. And she said to the Warrior, “On reflection, I see you are right. My words are of no account.”



### On the Importance of Tales

Do you take my meaning, my friends? We of the word and the melody are an integral part of the rebuilding of Barsaive—and, for that matter, a part of anything that is considered noteworthy in our world. The Warrior in my little tale was right to some degree, of course. The value of a hero is not measured solely by his own feats and achievements. Important though they may be, they are perforce limited, for even the greatest hero can be in only one place at a time. So how else do we mark the measure of a hero? By his effect on others—on those who follow him and strive to mimic the ideal he represents. Some of those who follow in the hero’s footsteps may become heroes in their own

right, and others will follow them in turn. And so the effects of the hero's deeds spread, like the branching boughs of a great tree. And from the seed of the hero's deeds, an entire forest may spring.

And where is our place in this, we of the word and the melody? Why, we are the means by which a hero's name becomes known throughout the world. Our songs and our tales expand a hero's fame. We nurture and spread his legend, just as the wind carries the seeds of the thundra flower. A hero on his own may perform great deeds. But unless his legend is told and retold, those deeds will die with him. If Troubadours tell and retell that legend, those deeds will live forever. Is that of no account? I leave it for you to decide.

## On Entertainment

There are two facets to the Discipline of the Troubadour—apparently distinct, yet interconnected. The first facet is the face we most often show to the world—the face of the entertainer. In this guise, we offer diversion. We help people forget their troubles and bring joy, relief and release. Living in our world is hard, both on the body and on the soul. And just as the body needs rest after a day of work, so does the soul need relief



*This knowledge—that thoughts of better times to come ease days of sorrow—is not the sole province of the Troubadour. How often do we hear ordinary farmers and herdsmen singing songs of spring and summer around the fire while the storms of winter batter at the door?*

—Merrox, Master of the Hall of Records

That relief can be found in a light tale, a bawdy song, a ditty of nonsense words that brings a smile and a laugh to those who hear it. Many ordinary folk consider this relief the greatest gift that those of

my Discipline can bestow. My fellow Troubadours and I know differently, for entertainment is more than laughter.

Relief and release for the soul can be found in emotions other than joy and lightheartedness. That is why we of the word and the melody recall dark tales as well, tales that evoke sadness, fear, anger. These other emotions we deliver, as we deliver joy. There is heart-ease in laughter, but also in tears. And heart-ease is the goal of entertainment, whether that entertainment be tragedy or comedy.

I have heard it argued that, when the world turns dark and doom stalks our footsteps, entertainment is valueless, frivolous. Only those actions that contribute directly to survival are important. But can anyone argue thus who has actually faced disaster? In such situations, despair is the greatest enemy of all—and the enemy that the Troubadour fights the hardest.

*Dear Merrox, you miss the true importance of the soul-soothing balm called entertainment. Stories and songs may help us to forget our troubles, forget the snow falling, but the most important stories and songs enable us to laugh at and speak of those things that would be too painful for us to acknowledge otherwise.*

—Vinslo of Araden

We provide hope, we of the word and the melody. Or, more correctly, with our tales and songs we remind those around us of the value of hope. We inspire them with tales of past victories. We give them courage with tales of people who, beset by gloom, remained defiant and undismayed. We sing of sun on the grass, the laughter of children, the whispering of the winds through the forests, the dance of a stream that flows down from the mountains, the touch of parent or child or lover. Why? To remind people that life is worth living, a truth that is easily forgotten under the shadow of danger.



This facet of our art underwent its greatest trial during the Scourge, before the kaers were opened once more to the sun and the sky. How easy it would have been for the Namegiver races to have abandoned hope! Whole generations were born within the wombs of stone, knowing they would live and die without walking free under the endless sky. Whole generations knew that they, and their children, and even their children's children, would be confined—imprisoned!—within cells of rock.

With our songs and tales and quips and jests, we kept alive the knowledge that an entire world existed beyond the walls and wards of the kaer. We kept alive the knowledge that this outside world was good. Children who had never seen a tree—and never would!—still sang old songs like *The Bough and the Leaf*. Through songs and tales, they knew the brilliant green of ironbough leaves, they knew the heart-stopping gold of the flaxflower, they heard in their souls the song of nesting warblers and skywings. They knew they would have only those songs and tales, and knew the same was true for their children. Yet they knew that someday, children of their blood would walk again beneath the skies and among the trees. And that knowledge filled them with hope and enabled them to endure. Such is the value of entertainment!

## On the Persistence of Memory

In the second facet of our Discipline, we Troubadours serve as the memory and the conscience of our kaers, towns, villages—our society. We are repositories of wisdom. We recall the twists and turns of the past, from which the course of the future may sometimes be plotted. To a certain degree, Troubadours become the soul of our society, its very identity.

How can I make this claim? Think on it, my friends. Whence does your sense of self spring, your sense of identity? It arises from the pattern of your days, does it not? You remember your thoughts and actions, your hopes and fears of yesterday, and you feel confident that tomorrow you will recall your thoughts and actions of today.

If each day were distinct in and of itself, with no connection to the past or the future, if you could not remember your actions of yesterday and knew that tomorrow you would not recall your actions

of today—what of your sense of self? Would you have a sense of identity? Would you know who you are? I think not. And thus with a society. We Troubadours recall the thoughts and actions of yesteryear. We are society's memory, we ensure that the pattern of its days continues.

Let us approach this another way. Adepts of other Disciplines—Weaponsmiths, as an example—conserve the knowledge and skills needed to create weapons by remembering and passing on the traditions and abilities of their Discipline. We Troubadours conserve the knowledge of a society's identity. We preserve self-knowledge for a society, as memory does for an individual. We are a society's memory, my fellows and I.

*Vaerin Morningstar does not stress this point enough. Though the art of letters is more widespread than it was before the Scourge, many in Throal cannot so much as write their own names. Yet, thanks to the Troubadours, these illiterates know of their origins and the birth of their land.*

*The importance of this knowledge cannot be overstated. Only our memories of the past will inspire us to remain free of the Theran yoke.*

*And who, were it not for the Troubadours, would be trustees of that knowledge?*

—Merrox, Master of the Hall of Records

Be aware that this arrangement contains weaknesses as well as strengths, for whoever controls the Troubadours controls the memory of society. Whoever controls the Troubadours controls the truth and holds in his hands the very identity and soul of that society. This is why those of the word and the melody so often seem aloof from the societies we serve.

We must remain independent of petty political concerns, just as an individual's conscience must remain untainted by his will and his fears.

## The Joy of the Troubadour

Heavy is our responsibility, and great our importance in society. Yet do not think that this weight of import makes our day-to-day life joyless and burdensome. Quite the contrary, my friend! For





magic flows through us. It lifts us above the petty concerns of the world and ennobles us.

Consider, if you would, the expression “weaving a tale.” This is more than a figure of speech. For a Troubadour feels the magic that surrounds him as Threads, as the warp and the weft in woven fabric. Those Threads connect her to the people who hear her songs and tales. As we work our art, those Threads are woven together into the great tapestry that is society. We feel our part in this great tapestry. We feel our influence spreading out from us, as the Threads of our words connect more and more people to each other. When we weave a tale, we are greater than ourselves. We are limited not by our physical dimensions, but only by the bounds of the tapestry itself. How can I convey the wonder to one who has not experienced it?

Perhaps this example will serve. Have you, esteemed reader, ever been in a crowd—a crowd that suddenly became a mob, inflamed with a single intent? Did you not feel that you were part of something larger than yourself, something greater than the sum of the individuals who made up the mob?

If so, then you have felt a dark reflection of what a Troubadour experiences when she tells a tale or sings a song. (Intoxicating, was it not? Intoxicating and, to a degree, addictive. A Troubadour often must struggle to maintain her sense of self in the tapestry she weaves.)

## Troubadours and the Passions

Troubadours revere two Passions above all: Astendar and Mynbruje. We honor Astendar in her guise as the Passion of Music. We believe that inspiration for new songs and melodies springs from the heart and soul of Astendar. Our ability to create and channel emotions with our music is but a pale reflection of Astendar’s powers.

As we honor Astendar for her patronage of entertainment, so we revere Mynbruje as patron of Knowledge and Truth. We serve as the repositories of wisdom among the Namegivers, as Mynbruje serves among the Passions.

## ON TRAINING

Troubadours must master two distinct skills that form the center of our Discipline. In only one of these does magic play a significant role. (I understand that this is true for other Disciplines as well, now that I think on it.)

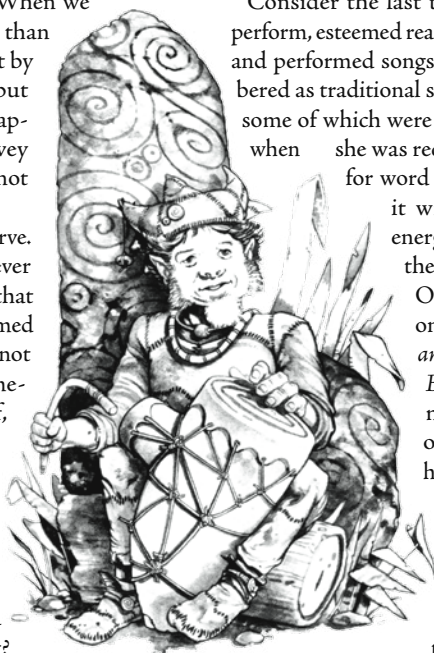
Consider the last time you saw a Troubadour perform, esteemed reader. No doubt she recited tales and performed songs, some of which you remembered as traditional stories of your childhood, and some of which were completely new to you. Even when she was reciting a poem you knew word for word as a child, did she not infuse

it with a fresh spirit, with the energy and enthusiasm that mark the work of a good Troubadour?

Of course! And when she retold one of the ancient odes—*Jaron and the Sphinx*, perhaps, or the *Ballad of Nioku*—did she not match word for word every other performance you have heard of the piece, reciting every line of the one hundred score written? Again, of course!

And therein are reflected the two types of skill required of a Troubadour: the natural talent for performance, and the aptitude for simple learning. Both are essential for a true Troubadour. Anyone with tenacity and keenness of memory could learn *Jaron and the Sphinx*, but if told without the talent for performance, who would listen? Similarly, someone who does not follow the way of the Troubadour could conceivably entertain and amuse with his performance, but without the knowledge of the ancient odes and songs he could never be more than a clever tale-spinner.

Simple learning must be practiced and perfected alone (or, at the very most, in the presence of a single instructor), but performing can only be practiced





in the presence of others outside the Discipline (in other words, an audience). My training, by way of example, began with the former.

I had the fortune of being able to read and write, so my instructor began my indoctrination by banishing me to a room with a written copy of the ballad called *Bellae, the Minstrel's Daughter*. He told me that he would undertake my training as a Troubadour only if I proved my dedication to my supposed calling by memorizing the entire ballad—its entire twenty score and eight lines—word for word. Only when I could recite it to him without a single error would he consider beginning my training. I did not realize it at the time, but memorizing the ballad constituted the beginning of my training. *Bellae, the Minstrel's Daughter* is a staple of the repertoire of any true Troubadour.

*In the regions where Vaerin was trained, perhaps among more civilized peoples, only the basest of joyfellows would waste time memorizing doggerel like Bellae, the Minstrel's Daughter.*

—Gelteraine of Throal

Only after I had memorized the ballad to my instructor's satisfaction did he deign to teach me the techniques of performance. For that, of course, we needed an audience, which we found at a nearby wine house. My instructor began the evening by reciting in their entirety *Follow the Plow* and *The Farmer's Wife is Milking*, much to the amusement of the wine-house patrons. He had instructed me to pay close attention to the techniques he used—the vocal stylings, the rhythmic patterns, the emphasis applied to the verse meter.

*Though it is a great advantage, one may lack the ability to read and write and still become a Troubadour. Because the art of the Troubadour is, by and large, an oral tradition, learning material from the written page provides little benefit—other than freeing the instructor for other activities!*

—Beldeaux of Ar Kham

When it came time for me to perform *Bellae*, I was to experiment with those techniques myself, while

staying ever mindful of the audience's reaction to my offering. It was then, at that simple wine house, that I first truly felt the magic that is the way of the Troubadour. All my subsequent training has followed the same pattern. When my instructor decided that I was ready to advance to the next level of ability of the Discipline, he would send me away with another staple of the Troubadour's art: the *Ballad of Nioku*, perhaps, or the epic *Battle of Sky Point*. Once I had learned the material, he would have me recite it for others under his watchful eye.

*An interestingly self-centered and limiting interpretation. The reader is advised to keep Vaerin's prejudices in mind when reading the following passages. Most people outside the Discipline—and many within it, for that matter—consider sages and map makers "true" Troubadours—and rightly so!*

—Merrox, Master of the Hall of Records

## ON SPECIALISTS

I have limited my discourse to what I consider the true art of the Troubadour. But there are some who claim membership in the Discipline who practice what I judge to be a degraded form of the art. Though I consider them less worthy than my true fellows, any discussion of the Discipline would be incomplete without at least a mention of these Adepts. To my mind—and those of my instructor and mentors in the art, of course—the Discipline of the Troubadour contains two facets: knowledge and performance. The true art of the Troubadour involves both. How, then, is one to view the sage? Some among those considered wise classify sages as a kind of "specialty" within the Discipline of Troubadour. Granted, a sage has the same factual knowledge as a true Troubadour.

A sage knows the correct wording of epics such as the *Battle of Sky Point*, and she understands the historical subtext and poetic allusions it contains. Thus, one could argue that sages serve as repositories of knowledge. Yet to my mind, the fact that they do not perform the odes they know places them outside the definition of the Troubadour. Sages are scholars, after all, and the art of the Troubadour encompasses more than simple scholarship.





*I feel obliged to make reference to the legendary Troubadour Shantaya Nightstar at this point. Shantaya followed the map maker specialty and was an outstanding example of what I would call a true Troubadour. As for her audience, I would argue that all of Barsaive was hers to entertain and inspire.*

—Merrox, Master of the Hall of Records

Map makers represent an even more doubtful case. Again, they are scholars first and foremost, concentrating on the physical landscape as I and my fellows concentrate on the landscape of the mind and the heart. Though the map maker exhibits skill beyond simple scholarship, he exercises his practice in solitude in the same way as does the Weaponsmith. This also sets the map maker apart from the true Troubadour.

Therein, in essence, lies the distinction between the true Troubadour and the Discipline's lesser reflections. A Troubadour without an audience is not a true Troubadour.

## GAME INFORMATION

### Roleplaying Hints

A Troubadour feels an irresistible responsibility to entertain, and also to act as a conservator of truth. Therefore, no Troubadour worthy of the name will turn aside from a chance to perform. A Troubadour loves being the center of attention; her performances delight the audience, stroke her ego (which is often quite healthy!), and let her feel the exhilarating flow of magic when she "weaves" a song or tale.

At heart, every Troubadour feels an insatiable curiosity about the world and an intense desire to share what she has learned with those around her. No Troubadour misses a chance to learn a new tale, song or epic. Upon arriving in a new town, a Troubadour immediately seeks out the tales and songs native to the area. An ambitious Troubadour particularly likes to tell tales no one has heard before, and often seeks out travelers or adventurers to learn the stories of their exploits. Troubadours recognize their own significant role in the spreading of legends and take great pride in that role. As they travel across Barsaive, Troubadours carry with them the knowledge of different peoples and places. By spreading such knowledge far afield, they "weave" the scattered peoples of Barsaive together into a single, unified tapestry.

### Discipline Violations

A Troubadour's duty to conserve knowledge and share it through entertainment lies at the heart of the Discipline, and every Troubadour understands her vital role as a weaver of life's tapestry. A Troubadour who violates her Discipline by turning aside from that role knows that her entire world will suffer because of it; the guilt she feels in letting down not only herself, but all of Barsaive, erodes the edge of her concentration and triggers a Discipline crisis. The severity of the Discipline crisis depends on what the Troubadour has actually done (or left undone). The seriousness of the penalty is up to the Game Master. Appropriate Deeds of Atonement for Heinous violations usually involve somehow "mending" the tear in the "tapestry of society" caused by the Troubadour's irresponsibility.





## THE BATTLEFIELD PATH

*The author of the following document is Bola, the obsidian Warrior who recently led a successful mission against the Howling Scarf slaver band on behalf of the kingdom of Throal. Bola's late arrival delayed the completion of this compendium—obsidimen rush for no one—but the account provides valuable insight into the way of the Warrior.*

*To truly understand this account, you must also note what Bola chooses not to say.*

Ⓐ—Presented for the edification of the reader by Derrat, Wizard of Yistaine, 1506 TH

Words. You ask me to explain the way of the Warrior in words. I say this is not possible, for the way of the Warrior is the way of action. It is bringing your sword down on the enemy's shield. It is raising your own shield to meet the enemy's thrust. The way of the Warrior is not a way of thinking. It is not a way of talking. It is a way of action.

### THE BATTLEFIELD

Life is a battlefield. At any moment, countless wars are waged. Some of these wars have yet to come to physical blows. All of them will. For today's Barsaive is a place where the sword and the battle-axe eventually solve all arguments. And so I shall speak of actions. I shall tell you of the great Warrior of my people: Berahnt, of the age of legends.

Berahnt had won renown for his deeds. But one day Berahnt grew weary. He had seen too much blood spilled. He no longer thirsted for victory. He wanted only rest. And so Berahnt left his old comrades, left the battlefields and journeyed to a place known as the Land of Green in search of peace.

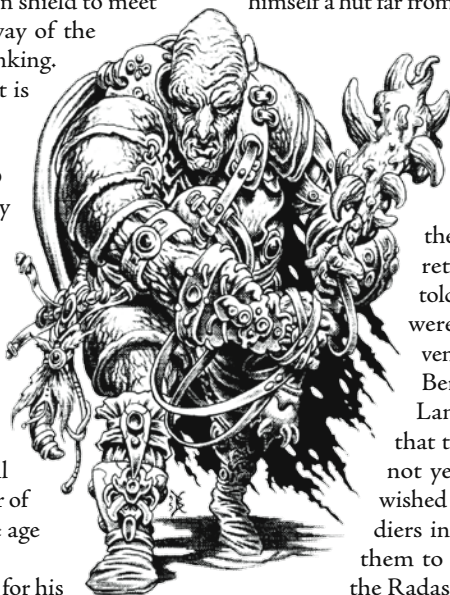
Now the Land of Green was inhabited by tribes of humans. Unknown to Berahnt, these humans were at war with one another, struggling for control of a watering hole known as Garlen's Bounty. The watering hole was large and provided more than enough water for both tribes. But each fought to possess it entirely, for neither could bear to see the other prosper. However, Garlen's Bounty

was easy to overrun and nearly impossible to defend. And so neither side could hold the site. Berahnt sought only to while away his final days in solitude and contemplation, and so he built himself a hut far from the watering hole. But soon

humans of the first tribe, the Sadar, came upon his hut. Though he did them no harm, they attacked him. He easily defeated them, severely injuring their soldiers and driving them off. The wounded Sadar returned to their elders and told their tale. The Sadar elders were clever. Instead of seeking vengeance, they decided to win Berahnt to their side. For the Land of Green was so isolated that the way of the Warrior had not yet reached them, and they wished Berahnt to initiate their soldiers into the Discipline and lead them to victory against their foes, the Radas.

Meanwhile, the Radas too stumbled upon Berahnt's hut and set upon the Warrior without cause. And like their enemies, they learned a painful lesson and were driven off. Then they reported to their elders, who came to the same conclusion as those of the Sadar village.

As the Passions would have it, ambassadors from both the Sadar and Radas appeared before Berahnt at the same time. Both petitioned for the knowledge that would enable them to destroy their foes forever. Berahnt refused both requests. Instead, he attempted to broker a peace between the two tribes, but they would have none of it. Both ambassadors left, swearing vengeance upon Berahnt.





In the months that followed, Radas and Sadar raiding parties came to bring Berahnt to heel, destroying his peace again and again. Each time Berahnt drove them off, and each time he hoped that they would cease their pointless assaults against him. But finally he realized they would never yield. So Berahnt went to Garlen's Bounty, which was then possessed by the Radas. He killed each and every Radas there. The Sadar then rejoiced and attacked Berahnt, believing they would finally win their goal. But Berahnt slew each and every Sadar as well, and Garlen's Bounty ran red with the blood of the slain. Sickened, Berahnt returned to his hut, where he whiled away the rest of his days in peace.

The lesson of this story should be obvious. But for those who are not Warriors, it is this. No one despises battle more than the Warrior, who has done his share of fighting and smelled the stink of death in his nose too many times. But too many times the only solution to a problem is war, for too often Namegivers thirst for violence instead of reason. And when those times come, it is the Warrior who prevails.

*The story also contains another important lesson. The Warrior never provokes a battle, but the Warrior always ends a battle.*

—Mot of Haven

## THE SHIELD

Two tools are of paramount importance to any Warrior. These are the shield and the sword. All Warriors must know how to use them and must respect their importance. The following story, from the Age of Dragons, teaches this.

Once there lived two comrades-in-arms—a cavalier of a rich dwarf kingdom and her squire, an ork Warrior. The dwarf, a Swordmaster called Avani, had once held the ork, Kodan, as a slave. But the dwarf had freed him many years before, for Kodan had saved his mistress's life on more than one occasion. Together they walked the way of the hero. As their legend reached its greatest height, their path took them, bound and shackled as prisoners, to the court of the dragon known as All-Wings. For it was a time when dragons ruled the land, and other Namegivers built legends at their peril.

The mighty All-Wings reared up above the two prisoners and announced that they must die for their crimes against dragonkind. The Swordmaster attempted to mollify All-Wings with silky words. The Warrior remained silent.

The dragon let the Swordmaster talk until she was exhausted and could speak no more. Then All-Wings smiled. It is not good when a dragon smiles.

"I have decided, in my unquestioned mercy, to make a gesture to the unsealed peoples," All-Wings said. "I shall slay only one of you. I shall permit the other to return to your lands to warn of the dangers of such effrontery as you have shown."

Avani and Kodan looked at one another with dismay. They had pledged their loyalty to one another, and neither wished to live at the other's expense.

The dragon observed this and said, "You seem disappointed. To further show my beneficence, I shall award the survivor a great treasure. In fact, your choice of treasure shall determine who shall live and who shall die. Which of you will make the correct choice?"

"I offer to one of you a shield—a shield I shall peel from my own back," the dragon said. "It shall be called All-Protector."

And All-Wings pulled a gigantic scale from his shoulder and tossed it on the ground in front of the Swordmaster and the Warrior, where it lay dripping with ichor.

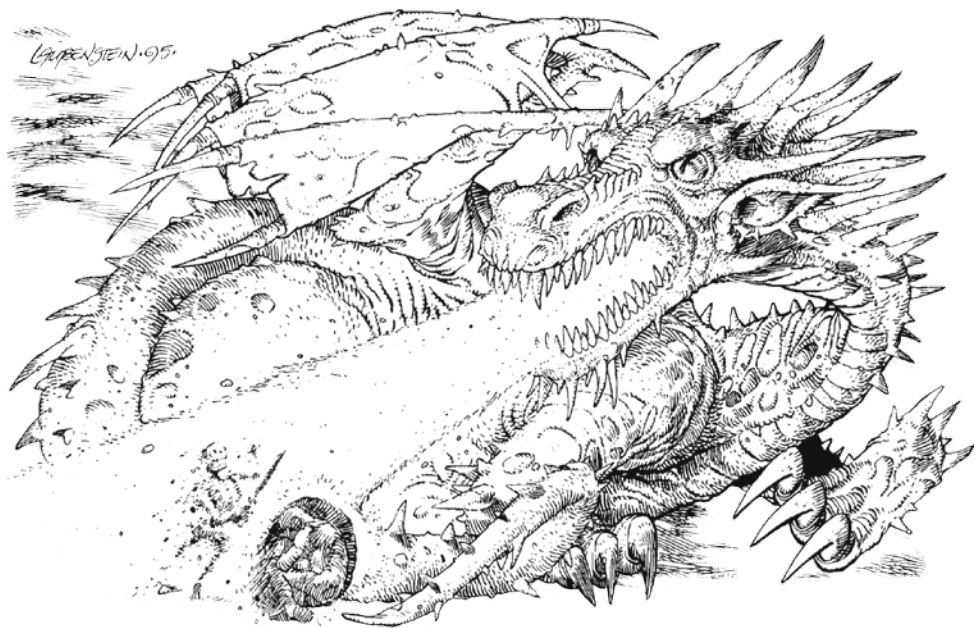
"And I offer the other a mighty sword, plucked from my own mouth," All-Wings said. "It shall be called All-Biter. Which of you wishes which prize? Whoever chooses wisely shall live."

And All-Wings drew from her mouth one of her vast and rotting incisors, which pulsed with a great magical aura. Kodan nodded to Avani. He would allow her to make the choice, for he felt he owed her his life. "As a Swordmaster, the choice is obvious," Avani said. "I shall take All-Biter."

"It is foolish to take a sword when you can take a shield," the dragon said. "If one lunges and misses, one is not harmed. But if one is struck and has no shield, one is doomed."

And with that, All-Wings blew her gross and corrupt breath upon Avani, and the breath tore the meat from the dwarf's bones. Then All-Wings ordered Kodan's bonds removed so he





could step forward and claim his prize, the shield All-Protector.

"As we agreed, you shall now go forth and warn the world of my wrath," the dragon said.

"I made no such agreement," the Warrior replied. And Kodan stepped forward, seizing both All-Protector and All-Biter.

The dragon blew its foul breath upon Kodan, but All-Protector absorbed and deflected it. Kodan plunged All-Biter deep into All-Wings' left eye, and the great dragon was slain. Kodan himself was killed as well, crushed beneath the foul lizard's horrendous bulk.

This story teaches wisdom and honor. It teaches wisdom because, indeed, it is better to avoid a strike than to strike. The sword takes life, but the shield preserves it. Thus the shield is of greater importance than the sword. It teaches honor because Kodan's pledge of loyalty was worth more to him than his own life. No Warrior wishes to die. But if one has a choice between losing life and losing honor, the Warrior chooses to keep his honor. For the time all of us have upon this world, even we obsidimen, is short compared to the length of legend. It is better to be remembered as honorable than to be forgotten as a coward.

But do not mistake foolishness for bravery. A Warrior must know which battles his honor depends on, and which it does not. Most battles are foolish and without meaning. These include battles over coin, battles that arise from hot tempers, and battles fueled by a desire to prove prowess. Those who die in foolish battles die foolishly and are remembered as fools. But when a battle holds true meaning, when the stakes are heroic—retreat is not a choice. The true Warrior knows this and is prepared always to face the consequences.

*For a man of action, Bola seems quite verbose. A Warrior need only remember this ancient proverb. "A hero who dies for a foolish cause dies a fool. A fool who dies for a heroic cause dies a hero."*

—Elgor of Throal

## THE SWORD

When a Warrior speaks of the shield and the sword, he speaks of symbols. In this case, the word "sword" is a symbol for all weapons, be they spear, axe, dagger, spear, club or hammer. Here is a story of the importance of the sword, or the weapon, to the Warrior.





On the deck of the sky ship *Darting Moon*, the elven Warrior Uvenia faced Haracha, the brigand queen. Uvenia had been hired by the merchants of the kingdom of Cara Fahd to harass and bedevil the unruly Sky Raiders whenever they raided the kingdom.

Uvenia's forces had done much harm to the Sky Raiders, and now the brigands reveled in their opportunity for vengeance. The Warrior stood on the ship's deck, disarmed, stripped of her armor, shackled at the ankles. Blood ran down her forehead and into her eyes. Haracha laughed and unsheathed her cutlass.

"You do not laugh at us now, do you, elf?" the massive troll sneered.

"I do not laugh at my enemies, for laughter implies overconfidence," Uvenia replied.

"You certainly have no need to be confident now," laughed Haracha, "for I have a blade, and you have none." Uvenia readied herself for death. For while Sky Raiders may show loyalty to their own kind, they do not love honor as we do. But Haracha surprised her.

"But I will show you my queenly mercy and give you a weapon," Haracha said. "Which weapon do you choose?" Uvenia replied that she would have the same weapon that Haracha intended to use.

"Ah, but a cutlass is a weapon for a real fighter, for a Sky Raider," scoffed Haracha. "I am afraid that a mere Warrior would cut herself on it. No, it would not be safe for you." Uvenia looked about the deck at the brigands.

She spotted a cudgel and asked for that. Haracha refused. She asked for a dagger. Haracha refused. She asked for a staff. Haracha refused. Uvenia realized the pirate was merely toying with her, seeking to draw out her humiliation. Finally Uvenia said, "I request as my weapon the pearled pin that holds your hair in place."

The brigands laughed. Haracha, laughing, pulled the hairpin from her hair. "Yes, this puny weapon is the most that a mere Warrior can handle."

In that moment, as Haracha's unbraided hair obscured her vision, Uvenia threw herself forward and knocked the brigand queen to the deck. She seized the hairpin and held it over Haracha's right eye.

"Unlock these shackles," Uvenia commanded.

In the end, with Haracha's life still in her hands, she forced the Sky Raiders to agree to never again set foot within the bounds of Cara Fahd.

This story teaches us that the Warrior must not forget that she, herself, is her best weapon. This is why the Warrior attaches no special significance to any single sword or axe or spear. For we Warriors cannot depend on objects for our victories. We must depend on ourselves.

If a sword is dropped on the battlefield, pick up another and go on. If an axe is shattered, mourn it not. If no proper weapon is available, use a chair or a flagon or a rock. The Warrior assesses the situation and adapts to it. The Warrior needs no flying ship, no charging mount, no particular blade. For weapons do not make the Warrior. The Warrior makes a weapon of whatever is at hand.

*This is the first lesson I learned, and the first that I teach to all who would seek to become a Warrior. The Warrior's wits are his greatest weapon. Learn this lesson and none will ever defeat you.*

—Val of the Serpent

## THE ENEMY

The Warrior's path commands him to battle others and defeat them. Many times this means slaying the enemy. But the Warrior has no love of bloodshed. If the Warrior can win without killing, he will do so. But victory without death is often difficult. For in battle, the Warrior must put the enemy down and defeat him. And many enemies will not surrender as long as life flows through them. And so the Warrior must not hesitate to kill when victory demands it. Anyone foolish enough to oppose a Warrior assumes the risks of battle. They may well die beneath our blades. But the Warrior does not slay unless forced to. A Warrior will not stoop to deliver a killing blow to an unconscious foe, especially when other enemies remain standing. We Warriors are fighters, not butchers. Generals may order the slaughter of the fallen, but they are unwise if they expect Warriors to take part.

The Warrior does not harbor hate in his heart. The Warrior has honor in his heart. Hate may propel the inferior Namegiver into battle against the foe. But hate is a dangerous distraction to the





# EARTHDOWN PLAYER'S GUIDE

Warrior. When we strike, we do so with efficiency and caution. Our minds must remain clear. When we are paid to battle an enemy, we do so—and we prevail. But the Warrior bears no grudges. The enemy of the moment is the Warrior's only concern. Last week's enemy is a diversion; next week's enemy is a diversion. Only the enemy of the moment matters. I shall tell a tale to drive home my point.

In the aftermath of the Orichalcum Wars, a great force of mounted raiders known as the Green Horse Riders roamed the land. Made up of remnants of the many armies shattered by the Thera Navy in the last days of that conflict, the Riders had gathered together under the leadership of the dwarf Chesero and resorted to brigandage. The kingdom of Throal hired the mercenary order known as the Down-Striped Band to break the Green Horse Riders and end their unlawful actions against traveling caravans. The Warrior Burnica led the Down-Striped Band.

Now, Burnica happened to be the younger half-brother of Chesero. Chesero had left home many years before, soon after the mysterious death of his stepfather—Burnica's father. Therefore, many suspected Chesero of the crime. As a young dwarf, Burnica had sworn cruel vengeance upon his half-brother. But his initiation into the way of the Warrior required him to surrender all of his old hatreds. These went into the fire to make way for the clarity of mind and purpose of the true Warrior.

Many years passed, and Burnica distinguished himself as a leader and a true traveler upon our battlefield path. But now fate, acting through the kingdom of Throal, made Chesero his foe once more. And so Burnica undertook his Karma Rituals with renewed purpose, hoping to prevent his old feelings from clouding his mind. For Chesero was not the traitorous kin, not the slayer of Burnica's father. He was simply the enemy.

Three battles the Down-Striped Band fought with the Green Horse Raiders. The Down-Striped Band tasted defeat in the first two engagements, for the maneuverability and speed of the Cavalrymen proved decisive. Finally, during the third battle, the Warriors boxed the Raiders inside a canyon. After the Warriors decimated the front ranks of the riders, the Green Horse Raiders began to surrender. Soon Chesero replaced his banner with

the white flag of surrender. Chesero rode forth, humbled. Burnica prepared for his half-brother to lay his spear at his feet in a gesture of submission. Instead, Chesero threw an axe at Burnica and broke through the ranks of the Down-Striped Band to escape through the canyon mouth. His threats against Burnica hung in the air behind him as he vanished in the distance.

Seven years later, Burnica found himself leading a small band of fighters in the place now called the Badlands. He was charged with the task of finding and destroying a nest of Horrors. As the fighters drew nearer to the nest, they spotted another small group beset by the creatures. Most of these fighters had been slain already. And so Burnica and his band moved into to relieve them, even after he saw that their leader was Chesero.

Finally, the Horrors were slain, and Chesero, weary and wounded, collapsed against a rocky cliff face.

"Ah, my half-brother, you have come to slay me at last," Chesero said when he recognized Burnica.

"Perhaps it is fitting. For I did indeed slay your father, for what now seems to have been a trivial slight. I have no wish to die, but I have no breath left and cannot defend myself. Stab me square in the heart, so I shall expire quickly."

To this Burnica replied, "I shall not slay you, for you are not my enemy. Fate may once again will that you be my enemy. If that day comes, I shall slay you without hesitation. But today, Chesero, you are not my foe."

*This "enemy of the moment" gibberish is all very fine, but I have heard of many Warriors who bore grudges long after battle. In the Caucavic mountains, in fact, Warriors often battle one another to avenge losses suffered by their sires, grandsires, and even great grandsires.*

—Damris the Unforgiving

## LOYALTY

To a Warrior, loyalty is as valuable as honor. Indeed, loyalty and honor cannot be separated. Some Warriors serve as soldiers in standing armies, such as those of Throal and Thera. Such Warriors pledge their loyalties to the monarch they serve.



They believe in the aims and ideals of the kingdoms they protect. To betray those ideals is to betray themselves and the Warrior's way. Many more Warriors serve in mercenary companies, traveling throughout Barsaive in search of work. Others wait for employers to seek them out. The mercenary Warrior pledges his loyalty to the employer who pays him best. Once purchased, the mercenary Warrior's loyalty is as unswerving as that of any other Warrior.

The mercenary Warrior will never break a signed contract, for he views the contract as a sacred trust. However, the mercenary Warrior knows the pitfalls of the poorly drafted contract. He relies on the well-crafted contract, which enables a Warrior to refuse orders that force him to act dishonorably. And should the employer fail to uphold his side of the bargain, the loyalty he purchased is no longer due. Only a fool would breach a contract with a mercenary Warrior, for a mercenary quickly will turn all of his attention to the recovery of moneys owed to him. History is full of petty rulers deposed by mercenary Warriors they sought to cheat. Still other Warriors join small adventuring bands. Whether fighting or searching for treasure, the Warrior can prove a valuable comrade. The Warrior is adaptable; his abilities serve him as well in a ruined kaer as on the battlefield.

Whatever version of the path the Warrior treads, his loyalty to his comrades in arms must be unquestioned. The debt of obligation to them overrides any other duty. But if betrayed, the Warrior must avenge his honor. The Warrior does not hate the traitor, for no crime justifies poisoning the heart with rancor. Nevertheless, the Warrior must hunt down the traitor and end his life. For a traitor continues to betray others until brought to heel. When betrayed, a Warrior has a duty to the world to remove the transgressor from its bosom.

## TRAINING

Advancement on the battlefield path is not a matter of books or libraries. It is learned through action. It is learned in the sinews and marrow of the body. The aptitude of the true Warrior reveals itself only through the rehearsal of the arts of war. Few youngsters in our violent world do not learn to play with toy shields and swords. The potential

Warrior soon feels the pull of the weapon and shield in her hands, even when they are but playthings. One day, the youngster simply knows that she is a Warrior. Then it is only a matter of time.

Typically the Warrior-to-be seeks out an "order" of Warriors, whether it be a mercenary order or a standing army. She applies as a squire. Masters of the order, instructed in the rudiments of each beginning ability, test the squire. Those who truly have the aptitude are sent out to drill in these procedures. And drill, and drill. Typically, the student drills for many months before achieving her goal: an abrupt flash of understanding that is the soldier's initiation.

For some, this point never comes; they are not cut out for the Warrior path. Others progress and continue to learn new abilities as they build their legends. Each time, they must seek a master of the ability, who explains the ability's fundamentals. Then the Warrior goes to the drilling ground and attempts to put these fundamentals into practice. Training becomes simply a matter of doing, and doing, and doing, until the Warrior's pattern connects to the pattern of the magical ability. Then the Warrior has mastered it, and that is that.

*It is as the great Warrior Kwai the Patient once said. "Only after one has swung a sword a thousand times does one begin to learn how to swing a sword."*

—Trebor of the Dragon Mountains

## GAME INFORMATION

### Roleplaying Hints

A Warrior tends to be honest, taciturn, and occasionally impatient. He speaks plainly and openly, and expects others to do the same. He admires doers and regards with suspicion those who talk too much. He believes in getting things done in the simplest, most straightforward manner possible. Though an expert in the art of war, the average Warrior does not love combat; instead, he sees fighting as a nasty job that needs doing and takes pride in his ability to do it well. Bloodthirsty thoughts or behavior are improper; the true Warrior views his enemy dispassionately and fights with his mind unclouded by rage or hatred. A Warrior







values loyalty, to both comrades and employers. Unlike many other Adepts, who seek out people different from them, many Warriors would like nothing more than to spend all their time in the company of other Warriors. Some of them live apart from the rest of society in small "soldier" orders composed entirely of Adepts and structured like a military unit. Roving mercenary bands also call their groupings "orders," even though they have no permanent settlements. The tight discipline and camaraderie of all these orders makes them feared opponents on the battlefield.

Members of mercenary orders are known for undying loyalty to their employers, unless an employer is foolish enough to cheat them of pay or treat them badly. If ill-used, mercenary orders will retaliate. Soldiers value loyalty as much as their mercenary cousins, but tend to give it to the kingdom or empire they serve. They are more likely to put up with poor conditions or pay shortages if they can be convinced that their suffering is temporary and serving a greater cause.

A soldier's sense of honor means that he is willing to die defending his nation's interests, but no true Warrior will stupidly sacrifice himself to avenge a

slight or insult to that nation or kingdom. Warrior characters who belong to adventuring bands feel intense loyalty toward members of their group, even those members they may personally dislike. To promote the group's interests, the Warrior does his best to keep everyone working together by attempting to smooth over differences and settle disputes.

## Discipline Violations

Many different actions violate the Warrior Discipline and may trigger a Discipline crisis. A Warrior who betrays the interests of his group or creates disunity within it; who acts out of personal vengeance or hatred instead of against the current enemy of his group; who reneges on a promise sworn to on his Warrior's honor or on a signed contract; who becomes paralyzed by indecision; or who cold-bloodedly murders a defenseless opponent will suffer a Mild to Serious Discipline violation. A Warrior who fails to eliminate a traitor to his group has committed a Heinous Discipline violation; taking down the traitor counts as a Deed of Atonement to end an otherwise permanent Discipline crisis.



## THE VALUE OF STRONG ARMS AND STRONGER MINDS

*The following text was prepared by Dermatt of Haven, a well-known and highly respected Weaponsmith. His account is one of the most straightforward, informative pieces I received for the book and provides an excellent introduction to the way of the Weaponsmith. Dermatt also requested I extend an invitation to all readers to stop by his Forge when in Haven.*

Ⓜ—Presented for the edification of the reader by Derratt, Wizard of Yistaine, 1506 TH

So, Merrox is putting together another one of his books, is he? All about Adepts this time. Well, I'm glad to see you've decided to give a Weaponsmith a chance to speak up. Of all the Adepts, we're probably the least understood. "Weaponsmiths? Oh, those fellows that pound steel and make weapons and armor, right?" Well, we do make weapons and armor, the best you'll find. But we do so much more. Weaponsmiths live in the world, not just on it. During our travels we speak with the people of Barsaive. We learn of their hopes, dreams and disappointments.

We Weaponsmiths stick together like Adepts of no other Discipline, for the bonds of our Forges are as strong as those of any family. Weaponsmiths are a tightly knit group, able to rely on each other for damn near anything. If a Weaponsmith shows up at his Forge in need, his fellow Adepts will do whatever they can to help him out. Much of our camaraderie and closeness stems from our shared dedication to our work. Just look around—I'll wager a week's work you can't find a group of Adepts who, as a whole, are as dedicated as we. A Weaponsmith says something is going to get done, it gets done. Take my word for it.

You seek proof? Look at this. It's called a heartblade. I've been working on mine for near to six years now and haven't come close to finishing it.

Everything I am—heart, soul and mind—has gone into making this. At some point in his life, just about every Weaponsmith gets the desire to make a heartblade. It represents the ultimate combination of art and technique, for a heartblade is as individual as its maker and as important to the Weaponsmith as his eyes or hands. Heartblades are proof of what we are, of the strength of our Discipline.

The same dedication that makes us single-minded enough to create heartblades also provided us with the strength to resist the bane of our time.

Horrors hate Weaponsmiths, because we know better than any other Adepts how to strengthen our resolve against them. So if you go after Horrors, you best bring a few of us along with you.

But dedication is only one of the unique characteristics of Weaponsmiths. We're also close to the people. Our Forges serve as

meeting places, schools for apprentices, and common areas for people of all types.

They come in, talk to us while we work, watch us shape metal into objects both lethal and beautiful. They tell us things, sometimes ask us to deliver messages to other people, for some of us travel quite a bit.

In these ways, Weaponsmiths become the ties that bind people together. Perhaps this is why ours has become the most enduring Discipline. Some even claim the way of the Weaponsmith was the first Discipline, and that all the other Disciplines grew from it. That may be—seems like every Discipline comes back to us, at any rate.





So remember that. Any group of Adepts that heads off looking for legend better bring a Weaponsmith along just in case you need a weapon identified, or a blade fixed, or something remembered, or a Horror faced down—because nobody's better at any of that than a Weaponsmith.

*Though I do not wish to contradict the esteemed author of this text, I feel I must. To imply that Weaponsmiths alone bear the dedication needed to fight off the Horrors is simply absurd.*

—Merrox, Master of the Hall of Records

## ON BECOMING A WEAPONSMITH

We Weaponsmiths form guilds known as Forges. Our Forges provide us with places to meet and work and also a steady supply of new recruits. Unlike the Disciplines of the Swordmaster or Warrior, you won't find too many young ones that want to run off and become Weaponsmiths. More often than not, they sort of slide into the Discipline. Usually, candidates start off working for us to make a little spending money. Some discover they enjoy the labor and stay for a while. Those who don't sometimes go off to become Adepts of other Disciplines or find work more suited to them—work a little easier on the back and arms, usually.

Those who stay at the Forge, though, are rewarded handsomely. For Weaponsmiths watch over all who work for them, and anyone who stays at the Forge for more than a few months is recognized as Adept material. These we introduce to more advanced forms of metal-working, watching as they work the iron to see whether or not they fall in tune with the metal. If they do, some member of the forge “adopts” the worker and begins his apprenticeship.

Apprenticeship to a Weaponsmith is long and hard. The apprentice spends his days laboring at the bellows and anvil, hammering out horseshoes, shovel blades, and other simple pieces of ironwork. The mentor watches every step of the apprentice's work, quick to criticize but slow to praise. An apprentice may spend a week learning how to form nails, constantly banging on tiny pieces of metal until they all come out just the right shape and size, with as little metal wasted as possible. Such tiring and tedious

chores strengthen the resolve and attentiveness of the would-be Adept, forging the dedication and iron will for which Weaponsmiths are known.

Such training may seem harsh, but it is our way. The working of metal is a learned gift, not a birth-right, and poorly done work insults both the metal itself and the mentor who trains the apprentice.

While the apprentice spends his days laboring over the forge and anvil, he spends his nights in deep study. The Weaponsmith must be well versed in all aspects of metalwork, including the history of the art. Apprentices study Weaponsmiths of the distant past, as well as the weapons those Adepts created and the methods they used. This study forms the seed from which the Weaponsmith's well of knowledge will one day spring, the index of a mental encyclopedia.

This is why I can say, without fear of boasting, that Weaponsmiths know more about weapon history than anyone else. If it can be known, a Weaponsmith somewhere knows it. Mark my words on this.

*Such practice speaks well of the pragmatism and selflessness the Way of the Weaponsmith instills in its followers. The problem of an ill-matched student and teacher is rarely overcome so easily in other Disciplines.*

—Dorbulius of Throal

A Weaponsmith's apprenticeship lasts from six to eight months, depending on the aptitude of the apprentice and that of his master. In cases where apprentice and mentor are ill-suited to one another, the training can take much longer. If such an ill match forms, other members of the Forge may step in and assign the mentor a new apprentice and the apprentice a new mentor. There is no shame in this: talent has little to do with personality, which can play a major role in the instruction of apprentices. I myself have had more than one apprentice with whom I could not work. All were reassigned to different mentors, and all have turned out to be fine Weaponsmiths. I'm as proud of them as I would have been had I trained them myself.

After an apprentice has learned the requirements of the initiation phase, he appears before the Forge elders. The elders make all major decisions concerning the Forge and are responsible for judging new recruits and approving the advancement of the





## CHAPTER 4: ADEPTS

Forge's members. The elders are elected by all at the Forge, who usually base their votes on the skill and level-headedness of the elders. Most Weaponsmiths are considered elder material after reaching a certain level of experience, though some are chosen sooner or later. (I was chosen as an elder five years ago, which has earned me no end of honor.) Anyway, the apprentice must present the elders with a weapon he has forged himself. Typically, apprentices keep this simple, hammering out a nice little dagger or some such piece.

As I said before, though, the way of the Weaponsmith involves much more than pounding on iron and shaping blades. Apprentices also must display something else they've learned, perhaps by reciting the history of an ancient weapon or demonstrating some proficiency in wielding the weapon the apprentice has forged. Smiths need to be well-rounded, and no one becomes an Adept without showing he can make his way in the world if he must.

Advancing through the Weaponsmith Discipline can be a grueling task, even for those with iron wills. Every time one of our Discipline wishes to advance to the next level of abilities, he must first travel to a Forge and prove that he is worthy. Those wishing to advance spend a week at the Forge, studying under the more experienced Weaponsmiths. At the end of their study, they go before the Forge elders and demonstrate at least three abilities of their current skill level. If the candidate's proficiency satisfies the elders, they teach the Weaponsmith the next secrets of the Discipline and send him back out into the world.

When an Adept comes to a Forge seeking admittance to the greater secrets of our Discipline, the elders test the Adept's mental acuity and grasp of history as much as his physical abilities and knowledge of metalworking. After the Weaponsmith has some

experience, the focus of testing shifts from the working of metal to the knowledge that must accompany that ability. For example, the elders begin testing the Adept's knowledge of weapon history, often basing the test on one of the weapons each Forge keeps in its safe house. The Forge usually holds some knowledge of these weapons, having catalogued and documented a few of their pertinent facts through their own abilities and the labor of various Adepts who have tested, but all still keep some secrets. During advancement testing, Forge elders offer one such weapon to candidates and instruct them to study the weapon for a specific period—usually a week to

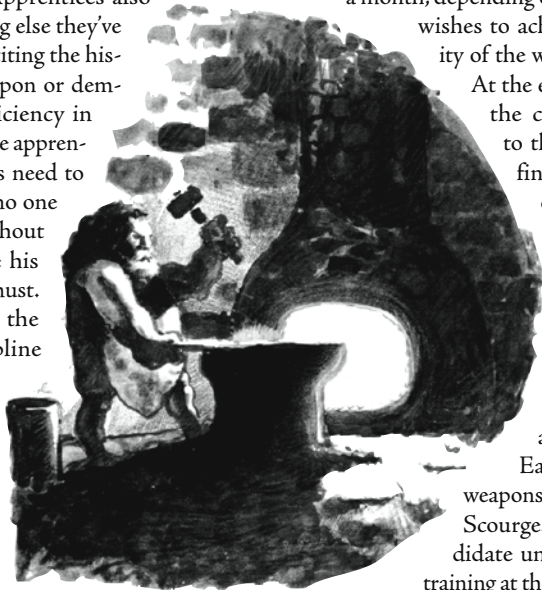
a month, depending on the secrets the Adept wishes to achieve and the complexity of the weapon being examined.

At the end of the time allotted, the candidate must return to the elders and relate his findings. The elders then decide whether the candidate displays sufficient knowledge for advancement. Adepts attempting to attain the more esoteric secrets of the Discipline must undertake a most daunting task.

Each Forge keeps a list of weapons lost before or during the Scourge. The advancement candidate undergoes forty hours of training at the Forge and then sets out to rediscover one of these weapons. Often,

the weapon is related to a weapon that the Adept has studied before, providing the Weaponsmith a good idea of where to start his search. Once the Adept finds the weapon, he must restore it to its former glory and present the weapon to the Forge elders.

Weaponsmiths rarely search out ghost masters to continue their training, for most of us feel uneasy seeking from the dead the knowledge those who have passed on gained during life. But in times of need, Weaponsmiths will summon ghost masters. Generally, the ritual of the ghost master is only available to those in genuine need of such extreme measures. Those Weaponsmiths who may





be traveling far from a Forge will often be taught the ritual as well, so that they may continue to advance despite their distance from their Forge. In all instances, ghost masters train Adepts using the methods and trials of advancement of living Weaponsmith mentors.

*The Weaponsmith Dermatt's confessed aversion to dealing with the dead stems from ignorance. Thank the Passions not all members of the Discipline suffer from such shortsightedness.*

—D'Elko, Nethermancer of Kratas

## BEING A WEAPONSMITH

Few things in life provide more gratification than helping others. And helping others is one of the things that Weaponsmiths do best. No, we don't heal wounds or cure infection or ease the pain of childbirth and death for our fellow Namegivers, but we do make their daily lives simpler and more comfortable by employing our abilities. Oh, other Disciplines might claim that they do the same, but I can't say as they'd be telling the whole truth.

When was the last time that the average man in a village needed the services of a Swordmaster or the spells of a mage? Not often I'd wager, but every time I go into a village I can be sure that someone is going to need a little of my time and help. It may be hard to explain to a young would-be Archer or Sky Raider, but sometimes digging in and helping out the common folk scrabbling to make a living on the surface of Barsaive can be infinitely more important than running off to kill Horrors. This desire to help our fellow Namegivers inspires many of our Discipline to wander far and wide. We go where we are needed, traveling from village to city to village again, always looking to bring our abilities where they can do the most good.

Weaponsmiths have stood in front of barred city gates, staring down ork scorcher thinking to plunder the shops within. Weaponsmiths have traveled to isolated towns to destroy Horrors that nested among the helpless. And still other smiths have spent days riding just to fix a wheel of a wagon that provides one family's livelihood. This is not to say that we Weaponsmiths spend all of our time pursuing opportunities to practice charity.

We must earn a living, and so we do charge for our services when those that we help can afford to pay. And we love knowledge, so we spend some time looking for items of legend and digging around for secret writings that might shed light on the nature of our world. So you can say that Weaponsmiths combine in perfect balance the common decency of the people of Barsaive and the iron determination that saved us from the Scourge. We're the backbone of the world, and we travel far and wide spreading our strength.

*Dermatt's words ring true. If only more Adepts were more concerned with aiding their fellow Namegivers than performing glorious deeds, our world would be a much better place.*

—Stokila of Vivane

## WEAPONSMITHS AND OTHER ADEPTS

I'll not waste your time here. No prattling gossip or mudslinging about how all the other Disciplines are pale imitations of my own—I'm sure you've heard more than enough such drivel from the other Adepts you've talked to. No, I get on all right with most other Adepts. Warriors are generally civil enough, though they sometimes seem a bit full of themselves, looking down their noses at us and such. At least until we start pointing out all the little flaws in their armor and fix them up a bit, or until a sword is broken. Then they show up all smiles and flowers and praise just flows out of their mouth like water from a spring.

Wizards, Elementalists, Illusionists, and Nethermancers are a different bunch. They show some of the dedication of the Weaponsmith, but at the same time they're a bit in the clouds if you take my meaning. Lots of book learning, but most of them lack what I'd call "dirt under the nails." Oh, you'll find a few willing to get into the thick of things, but most spellslingers would just as soon stand at a distance and toss spells at the baddies, safely out of sword's reach. Not a bad way to handle things, really, but it lacks a personal touch.

The Nethermancers are a pretty good lot, even if they've gotten a bit of a bad reputation from all the time they spend mucking about with dead things. In fact, the way I see it, one must be damned





dedicated to be a Nethermancer, what with all the persecution they have to endure. And if there's one thing Weaponsmiths respect, it's determination.

Troubadours have a lot more in common with Weaponsmiths than they'd like to admit, as Adepts of both Disciplines spend a lot of time carrying information from one place to another and telling stories to the people of Barsaive. Still, many differences separate us as well. Most Troubadours don't have our resolve, for one. Then again, who does? I find Thieves a hard lot to stomach, sometimes. They don't share the Weaponsmith's sense of community, and they certainly don't respect good honest labor. No, they'd rather run around snatching goodies from everyone else and feeding off the work of others. Still, I've met some good ones, and more than once a Thief has saved my hide when I couldn't get around a trap or out of a fix. Quick hands, but no real strength—moral or physical. Keep the Thief where you can see him, and you should be fine.

So that's about it. Now maybe people will understand us a little better and we'll get the respect we deserve. Who knows, maybe in the next couple of years we'll even see a rise in the number of Weaponsmiths and a drop in the number of Swordmasters.

## GAME INFORMATION

### Roleplaying Hints

No matter what their individual idiosyncrasies, all Weaponsmiths are completely committed to everything they do. From Steel Thought to Weapon History to Show Armor Flaw, a Weaponsmith's abilities show his determination to improve himself, better understand the world and the people in it, and accomplish the task he has set himself. A Weaponsmith does not understand failure; if he says he will do something, he will do it however he can. If he cannot accomplish the task one way, he tries another, and another, and another until he succeeds. A Weaponsmith may request aid if he feels he needs it; he will do everything in his power to carry out his intentions.

"The word of a Weaponsmith" is proverbial in Barsaive, because a Weaponsmith's word is so rarely broken. Weaponsmiths often make their promises in Forges, and such promises are as important to

the Weaponsmith as a blood promise would be to anyone else in Barsaive. Though a Weaponsmith suffers no loss of health and does not earn unhealing Wounds should he break his oath (as with a blood promise), any Weaponsmith who betrays his oath risks being turned out of his Forge until he proves himself worthy again.

### Discipline Violations

Like members of other Disciplines, Weaponsmiths can commit Discipline violations ranging from Trivial to Heinous in order to gain that little extra edge or stay alive. Most Trivial offenses are things that certain Weaponsmith characters may feel are wrong, but that do not violate the Discipline as a whole: occasionally lying to an acquaintance, holding back information from a friend or falling short of one's own expectations.

Mild violations include consistent rudeness toward those showing you hospitality, recurring disrespect toward Forge Elders, intentional destruction of another's work, neglecting or improperly using any weapon on a regular basis (poor maintenance, using a sword as a pry-bar), refusing to provide services in exchange for room and board of a week or more or failure to fulfill promises or guarantees more than three times in a week.

Insulting a Forge Elder more than once, or in public, intentionally harming another Weaponsmith, taking unfair advantage of your position in the community, intentionally destroying a weapon, failing to share knowledge of legendary or pre-Scourge weapons with one's Forge, abandoning companions in need, and displaying cowardice in the face of an enemy are Serious violations, and confer a corresponding Discipline crisis. Allowing Horrors to wreak havoc unchecked if your character can do something about it may be a Serious violation. If Verjigorm is in the area and the Weaponsmith goes for help instead of attacking the Horror himself, he should not incur the penalty.

Severe violations include keeping important knowledge from other Weaponsmiths with the intent of causing harm, stealing from a Forge, continually showing cowardice in the face of opposition, and damaging a weapon of legendary importance. Heinous violations include betraying a Forge to enemies, becoming corrupted by a Horror, killing





another Weaponsmith, or destroying a weapon of legendary quality or pre-Scourge significance.

## The Heartblade

Crafting a heartblade is arguably the single most important task any Weaponsmith ever sets for himself. The heartblade represents the fusion of a Weaponsmith with his Discipline, the culmination of his learning. In the heartblade, the Weaponsmith creates a powerful pattern item of his own.

Weaponsmiths spend many, many years working on their heartblades, striving to make them as perfect as possible. A Weaponsmith may begin crafting his heartblade only when given permission to do so by his elders. This permission is only granted to those who perform exceptionally well in their advancement trials.

As soon as an Adept shows above-average skill during his testing, the elders choose an instructor to guide the Weaponsmith through the three weeks of training necessary to learn the basics of forging the heartblade. From then on, whenever the Adept trains for successive advancements, he spends another three weeks learning more about forging the heartblade.

Creating a heartblade involves eight distinct steps. First, the Weaponsmith must craft the hilt, a lengthy process during which the Adept must imagine how the blade will fit the grip and how all the pieces of the blade will work together. Next, the Weaponsmith embellishes the pommel, beginning by finding just the right item to install in the pommel. The item must represent the Weaponsmith and his art. Gems are a common choice, as are small iron ornaments the Weaponsmith crafts himself. The Adept affixes the item to the end of the hilt and fashions the pommel around it.

In the third step, the Weaponsmith creates the guard. The guard may be simple or ornate, though Weaponsmiths usually give their heartblades

complex guards, with quillons curving out every which way from the hilt of the weapon. The fourth step is finding the ore for the blade, which must come from within a lost kaer. Generally, weaponmasters take the material from ancient weapons.

Purifying the metal for the blade is the fifth step. This time-consuming process is also the most crucial, for if the Weaponsmith fails during this step, the heartblade is ruined and he must begin the process anew. For the sixth step, the Adept forges the blade. Most Weaponsmiths consider this step the simplest in the creation process, as they have nearly achieved mastery of blade forging by the time they craft their heartblade.

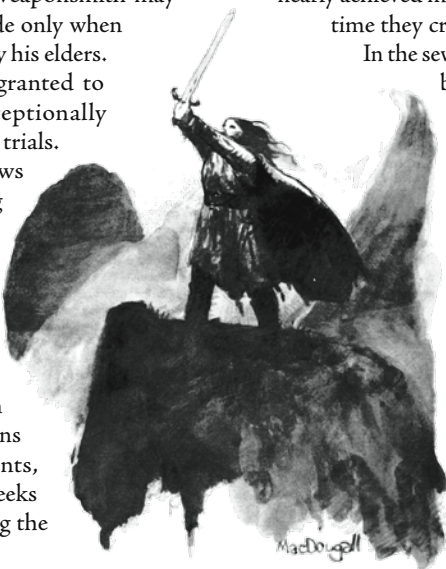
In the seventh step, the Adept joins the blade to the hilt and performs any necessary re-balancing. During the eighth and final step, the Weaponsmith sharpens the blade and adds any final decorations. Then he performs a Blood Magic ritual to tie the item's pattern to his own. The weaponmaster must repeat this ritual every year in order to keep the weapon attached to his pattern.

As soon as the heartblade is completed, the Weaponsmith achieves a deeper understanding of his art and himself.

It is said that Weaponsmiths carrying heartblades are among the greatest Adepts to walk the earth.

## Forging the Heartblade

A heartblade provides numerous advantages when complete, but requires several years of hard work to craft. Each of the eight distinct steps of creating the heartblade must be performed in its proper order, and the Weaponsmith Adept may only perform two steps per Rank. A character who begins creating his heartblade at Seasoned will not finish it until he has reached Legendary status (character who reach Legendary status can perform an unlimited amount of steps, if necessary). A character must





have the Forge Blade Adept Edge (p. 178) in order to create a heartblade.

Each time a character who has begun creating his heartblade advances a Rank, he or she can make a Repair roll, but only if the character has spent at least 1 hour a day (characters can make up this time if they miss a day) working on the blade while at his current Rank. If the roll fails, the character may try one more time. If he fails a second time, he must wait until he increases his Rank before trying again (with the exception of Legendary Rank, in which case he has an unlimited amount of tries, but only one attempt per month). Only after a character has made a successful roll for the current step of the heartblade's creation may he begin the next step.

If the Adept manages to complete all eight steps, he may perform a blood ritual to tie the blade's pattern to his own for all time. At this time, the Weaponsmith may add a +1 bonus to up to eight of his skills, one of which must be Repair. This bonus is permanent. The character suffers a permanent -1 penalty to Toughness rolls as the price of gaining his heartblade.

Once the blood ritual is complete, the heartblade is a Core Pattern Item for the Weaponsmith, with all the advantages and disadvantages that entails. Weaponsmiths are incredibly careful with their heartblades, for if they fall into the wrong hands, they can serve as a channel for terrible magic directed at the Weaponsmith. Note that the heartblade is one of the few exceptions to the rules for Pattern Items (see **Chapter 6: Magic**, p. 194).

## The Forge

Every major city of Barsaive contains at least one Forge, and all but the most minor or distant villages

count Weaponsmiths among their number. Forges consist of no fewer than five Weaponsmiths, with two elders for every five members. Thus, a Forge of ten members would include six Adepts and four elders. An elder is responsible for training Adepts, recruiting new apprentices and managing the daily operations of the Forge. Unlike most Adepts, Weaponsmiths understand the business applications of their skills; most Forges make a profit from the skills of their members.

Forges generally try not to compete with each other, though in the larger cities with more than a single Forge, this can be a difficult task. To avoid fighting for patrons, Forges near other Forges specialize in the creation, repair and enhancement of specific weapon types or other items.

Any Weaponsmith can expect to receive free room and board at a Forge for as long as he chooses to stay, but is expected to work for at least a few hours each day to help offset the cost of his keep.

Weaponsmiths need not belong to a Forge, but most are members of the Forge where they served their apprenticeships. Joining a Forge has its benefits, most notably a 30 percent discount on any goods purchased from the Forge, but it also demands a price. Members are expected to deposit no less than 5 percent of their yearly earnings into the Forge's coffers. Though a Forge does not offer discounted training costs for members of the Forge, members do receive priority treatment and will receive training ahead of those who are not members of the Forge.



## THE WAY OF MIND AND SYMBOL

*In its original form, the following document was an address to the Throalic Court, delivered in 1504 by the ork Wizard Ajmar the Admirable as part of his application for the post of Court Spellcaster. For this anthology, I asked Ajmar to expand his presentation wherever he felt additional text would clarify his comments.*

☞—Presented for the edification of the reader by Derrat, Wizard of Yistaine, 1506 TH

The way of the Wizard is not only the most advanced of the spellcasting Disciplines, it is by far the most complex and subtle of all the Adept's Ways. The wise monarch seeking the counsel of a practitioner of the arcane arts should therefore listen first and longest to a walker of the Wizard's path. In order to master the Discipline of Wizardry, an Adept must develop a superior intellect and acute powers of analysis. Clearly, these faculties also make a Wizard—such as my humble self—eminently suitable for the post of adviser. Indeed, a Wizard's mental acuity makes him a fit purveyor of advice on every topic imaginable. For it is the Wizard's task to understand all things in the world, to fit them into categories, and rank them in a system of correspondences. From these correspondences flow not only the magical powers on which the Wizard draws, but a complete vision of the Universe by which to comprehend people, creatures and objects of all sorts. If I may beg the Court's indulgence, I shall now develop my argument to support what I have said, giving evidence to establish the truth of my claims.

### ON SYMBOLS AND SPELLCASTING

The Wizard-in-training must first understand that things in this world are more than they seem. Every word, every action, everything that can be observed with the Namegiver's eye, these things all have higher meanings. The Wizard learns to perform wondrous

supernatural acts by discerning these higher meanings. Acquiring this understanding is known among teachers and students of the Wizardly way as the process of symbolization.

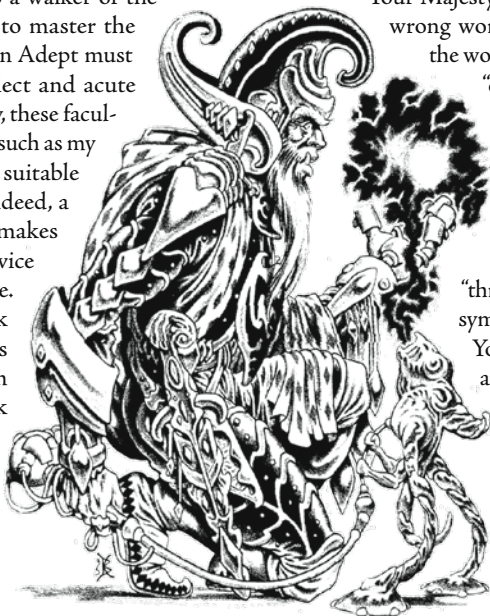
Let us use as an example the chair you sit upon,

Your Majesty. "Chair" seems utterly the wrong word for that object, even as the word leaves my lips. The word "chair" drops to the floor, flopping about like a fish out of water, refusing to enter your ears. That is because the proper word for the thing upon which you sit is "throne." A "throne" is no mere chair; it is a symbol. It represents kingship.

Your throne is an example of an object that carries a Great Meaning. A chair means nothing; a throne means something. Likewise, Your Serene Majesty is also a symbol. The name "Varulus" does not refer merely to a dwarf. It refers to one who symbolizes kingship, and also

symbolizes all dwarfs.

Symbols have power because they are connected to the Realm of Ideas, upon which I shall expound further in a moment. Because it is a symbol, Your Majesty's throne has more magical power than a mere chair. You have more magical power than an ordinary dwarf. The Wizard's art lies in tapping these powers; a Wizard gains power by learning to mystically manipulate these symbols. Any thing important enough to stand as a symbol holds power that can be reached and used by the magical abilities and spells of the Wizard.







## CHAPTER 4: ADEPTS

Unlike other Disciplines, whose adherents feel the tenets of their crafts in their bones, the Discipline of the Wizard requires the Adept to clearly understand the principles of his way in his mind. He must be a thinker, with a brain as sharp and cutting as a knife. He must learn to separate truth from falsehood, importance from triviality. The mind is the most important gift given to we Namegivers by the Passions; the Wizard takes this extraordinarily valuable tool and uses it to its fullest. With his mind, he remakes the world.

Most Namegivers use a mere fraction of the mind's abilities. To become a Wizard, a student must awaken his sleeping intellect until it is afire with the stunning possibilities of thought, the limitless vistas of the imagination. For practitioners of the lesser Disciplines, the first moments of initiation may come in a sudden flash of mystical awareness. Our way is not so easy. Only the trained mind is prepared for the ultimate insights of the Wizardly path. The prospective Wizard must build a mental foundation for the profound perceptions to come. Achieving this requires extensive study. The Wizard therefore spends the early years of his life wrestling with dusty tome after dusty tome, immersing himself in the works of the great Wizards of Barsaive's past.

[Author's note: I used the word "tomes" here as a symbol for all transmitted learning. Many young Wizards, particularly in Barsaive's misbegotten hinterlands, are nowadays forced to learn the great works as part of an oral tradition. Books require the painstaking labor of large numbers of scribes. Because they are expensive and time-consuming to produce, they are rare at the best of times. The Scourge has made them even harder to find, and so many small villages cannot lay hands on anything close to the entire corpus of texts necessary for the Wizard-in-training. To compensate for this dreadful lack, tutors of the Wizardly arts have taken to memorizing vast portions of the books missing from their own collections and then reciting them to their students. Though this way of teaching is unfortunately necessary, I fear that many subtle but essential points are lost by its practice. The hinterlands of Barsaive continue to produce large numbers of half-taught, bumpkin mages who learn by hearsay rather than by reading the eminent works of the past for themselves. While this kind of slow erosion is perhaps acceptable for Nethermancers, Elementalists, and Illusionists, it is most regrettable that

the noble tradition of the Wizard should be degraded in this manner.]

I shall not tire the Court with the complete list of these basic texts, particularly since Wizards often disagree as to which are truly essential. I would say a dozen plus one books are essential to the learning of the Wizard, including Thystrio's *Elucidations of Metaphor and Meaning*, Comborian's *Pathways to Profundity*, Clessio and Tornovir's *Categories of Ritual and Thinking*, and *The Substance of Desire* by the Countess of Nevermore.

### ON THE IDEA AND ITS MEANING

Though these profound manuscripts teach their lessons from different perspectives, all speak of the importance of the Idea. In order to understand how the Wizard remakes reality according to his desires, one must understand this concept. All things in this world are connected to an Idea. Your walking stick, Your Majesty, shares the Idea of the walking stick in common with all other walking sticks. Your throne shares the Idea of the throne with all the thrones of all the monarchs that have ever existed or will exist. But where do these Ideas come from? The Wizard knows that the Idea of the throne, the Idea of the walking stick, was not created by Namegivers. There is a place, a real place deep in the heart of astral space, a place that even the Horrors cannot reach, in which all Ideas exist. Were it possible to travel to this Realm of Ideas, one would find there The Walking Stick—the original, mystical emanation upon which all walking sticks in our own reality are modeled.

Anything you can think of has such a model in the Realm of Ideas. If it did not, you would not be able to think of it. Whenever a new object or being is created in this world, that creation merely reflects events in the Realm of Ideas, which on occasion spontaneously generates new things. (I have chosen the term "thing" specifically for its vagueness; an Idea might be a type of being, an object, or even an abstract concept.)

When the t'skrang race developed—with the Passion Upandal's aid—the peculiar engine that propels their riverboats, their actions reflected the appearance of a new thing called The Engine in the Realm of Ideas. If The Engine had not appeared there, the t'skrang would not have thought to try to make such objects here in this world. The Idea must exist first.





Are the Passions subservient to the Realm of Ideas? This question has puzzled Wizards for centuries. I conclude that the Passions are themselves Ideas, the exemplars of our primal emotions. They are special examples of—

[Author's Note: At this point in my discourse, it became evident that my untutored audience was no longer devoting their full attention to me. To attract their wandering gazes, I was forced to resort to a visually spectacular parlor trick. That particular and satisfying combination of spells will illustrate for the reader what may seem to be an abstract point.

His majesty's court jester, a prancing and drooling ork of the type that brings discredit to our race, had begun capering about the hall, distracting those I sought to address. Not unprepared for such an eventuality, I reached into one of my matrices and cast a Wall Walker spell on the idiot. He looked at me questioningly; no obvious effect had occurred. I then fired a Flame Flash at his feet. Startled and fearful, he did what I had hoped he would; he instinctively jumped for the wall, which he climbed with the bug-like scabble of a long-legged spider. Further startled, he then pushed himself off of the wall he had climbed, landing on his generous posterior with a wail of protest.

*I then extemporized in the following vein:]*

What you have just seen, Your Majesty and notables of the Court, serves as a practical example of the manipulation of Ideas. In this instance, I used my intellect and the abilities of spellcasting to draw upon the power of the Idea of the Spider.

According to chapter seven of *Alloron's Correspondence and Continuum*, one of the primary things the spider symbolizes is the act of climbing. I used magic to bring that manifestation of the Idea of the Spider into this world, loaning to our dear jester an essential characteristic of the spider. Then I drew power from the Idea of the Flame, specifically the destruction it symbolizes. By weaving Threads to it, I turned a symbol in my thoughts into physical reality, producing the jet of fiery matter that impelled our jester to participate in my humble demonstration.

This incident affords me an excellent opportunity to distinguish between the symbol and the Idea. The Idea is perfect, ultimate, untouchable. We cannot directly perceive an Idea, for we cannot travel to the Realm of Ideas. The best we can do is to think of

an Idea. The thought that thereby appears in our minds is the symbol.

*I feel it necessary to remind the reader that the theory of the Realm of Ideas has, in the past, been subject to much conjecture. Many magicians, my fellow Wizards among them, have criticized the theory as nothing more than a simple way of explaining the true nature of magic, which no one truly understands.*

♁—Derratt, Wizard of Yistaine

The symbol is the connection between our lowly, imperfect selves, and the primacy of the Idea. The symbol is what the Idea means to us. In this case, the spider meant climbing to me, and therefore served as a symbol of climbing. Flame meant destruction for my purposes, and therefore became destruction's symbol. I cannot master the Idea, but I can use the symbol to borrow a fraction of its power. Through the symbol, I can conjure up the ability to climb, or foster destruction.

Such spells as I have just cast are but minor manifestations of the Wizard's capabilities. He conquers reality by understanding it, and then gives his desires form and solidity. It is our world he changes, not the Realm of Ideas.

Of course, I realize that the vaunted post of Court Spellcaster to the Royal Family of Throal is not to be won by the mere vulgar display of magical power. Incidentally, I shall be more than happy to repay the treasury for the cost of replacing that scorched tile.

## UNDERSTANDING THROUGH IDEAS AND SYMBOLS

*[Author's Note: Having gained their attention once more, I returned to the matter of my prepared speech.]*

The adviser you seek, Your Majesty, must be able to do more than cast simple spells. He must be able to look at a complex matter and divine from it its core elements. As a Wizard, my training prepares me eminently for such reasoning. Once the Wizard learns that any situation can be reduced to the connection between symbols and Ideas, he can look beyond the surface confusion to detect the order beneath.

The Wizard builds his perceptions on the wise words of his predecessors in the Discipline. He





looks to history, to precedent. This is why a Wizard must never stop learning, must never tire in his quest to unearth the buried knowledge of the past. With the correct background knowledge and a solid grasp of the catalogue of symbols, the Wizard can look at any event or potential event and choose the correct course of—

*[Author's Note: At this point, His Most Benevolent Highness interrupted me and asked me to address my powers of critical reflection to a particular practical matter. I dare not paraphrase my liege's most incisive words, but in short he demanded that I advise him on the status of Bartertown. He said that there was great debate among his chamberlains as to the fate of this scruffy urchin of a city, huddled impertinently outside the gates of his great kingdom. He said that he had already taken a decision on it, but wished me to express my views in order to determine if they were congruent with his. After several moments of intense rumination, this is what I said:]*

Let us look at Bartertown, Your Highness, and divine which symbols and Ideas are involved in this matter. Only when we know these things can we make an informed decision. First of all, Bartertown is a manifestation of the Idea of the City. What is a city? First of all, it is a coming together of Namegivers for a common purpose and a collective livelihood. Therefore, the City symbolizes Unity and Cooperation. These are positive symbols, I am sure you will agree. But not all cities are good places. Kratas, for example, combines the Idea of the City with the Idea of the Thief, and this latter Idea exerts a baleful influence over the first. Kratas is a gathering-together like any city, but for the purposes of conspiracy. If Kratas was on your doorstep, I would recommend that you attempt to extinguish it.

But Bartertown bears its second symbol in its name: barter. Bartertown is therefore connected to the Idea of Trade. What is trade? It is exchange, the free transfer of goods from one willing partner to the next. Trade is another form of cooperation, and thus Bartertown is doubly woven to the Idea of Cooperation.

This symbol augurs extremely well for your own aims, Your Majesty. For is not the kingdom of Throal also a symbol of Unity and Cooperation? You seek to bring our province together, to unite it under the rule of justice and compassion.

Bartertown may seem untidy and unruly; it may offend the sense of order that your dwarf heritage leads you to value; but in truth, Bartertown is a manifestation of the highest order. It can be a tool by which you may bind our land in your benevolent compact. Bartertown can aid you in this by adding to Unity and Cooperation a third and most vital Idea: Freedom.

Know this, Your Majesty: Unity without Freedom is the yoke of oppression. To avoid the tragic folly of the Therans who once ruled here, you must always take care that your decisions connect to the Idea of Freedom as well as to the Idea of Unity. Bartertown means freedom. It has sprouted unbidden from the soil of our new Barsaive, but it is a wildflower rather than a weed. To limit its growth is to doom your own noble vision—the very vision that brought me to this Court to offer you my service. As long as you are connected to the Ideas of Freedom, Cooperation, and Unity, I shall bind myself to you should you have me.

*[Author's Note: At this point King Varulus announced that I might consider myself the official Court Spellcaster of Throal. His words seemed to take many of his courtiers by surprise; one of them began to choke and required the attention of the Court Healer. In the ensuing confusion, the rest of my discourse was forgotten. I present the remainder of it here, for the first time.]*

## ON CORRESPONDENCES AND ANTIPATHIES

Few Wizards travel without at least an abridged copy of Vomons's *Concordance of Correspondences* or M'chuda's *Cyclopedia of Symbology*. These basic texts contain lists of the most commonly encountered Ideas and the symbols that relate to them. Most Wizards have committed many of these to memory, but there are always moments when the ability to connect with an obscure Idea is a matter of life and death. My own well-thumbed copy of Vomons's text has helped me make decisions time after time that have saved not only my own life, but the lives of others.

The following tale will serve as an example of how Correspondences and Antipathies work in the world. Some years ago, I was trapped with my adventuring companions in a small village kaer in





the lowlands south of Lake Vors. Moments after we entered the kaer, I saw that Idea of the Kaer had been connected to another, very strange Idea. The kaer's walls were of worked and polished metal. The design of the place was maze-like. And when the last of our party had stepped inside the kaer, a mammoth door of stone slammed down behind us, blocking our exit. With no choice but to go further into this oddly altered place, we soon found ourselves in a trap sickening in its depravity.

First, another stone door sealed all of us in another inner chamber of worked and polished metal. Then a trap door opened beneath our Beastmaster and sucked her out of sight with a hideous whooshing sound.

We pounded furiously on the floor in an attempt to reopen the trap door and follow her. We had Threaded ourselves together in a group pattern in order to symbolize our unity, and we had sworn never to allow our party to become separated. But this terrible trap-kaer set all our efforts at naught. We could not reopen the trap door, and our Beastmaster seemed lost to us.

As we pounded and shouted, one of the metal walls began to sink into the floor. Behind it was yet another wall, of a mysterious clear substance that I have yet to match to a governing Idea. Through that clear wall we could see our comrade, sitting in a daze in a chamber much like the one we were in. Seeing us, she rushed over to the wall. We hammered at it from both sides, to no avail. Clearly one of the symbols of the clear wall was Invulnerability.

Portions of the walls in the Beastmaster's room then shifted, revealing an array of spouts that gushed forth streams of water. The second chamber was a drowning trap, fiendishly made so that we could only look on helplessly as our comrade met a slow and awful death. Our Archer made a quick mathematical determination, and told us that it

would take but three minutes for the chamber to fill entirely with water. After that, our Beastmaster had only as much life as she had lung power.

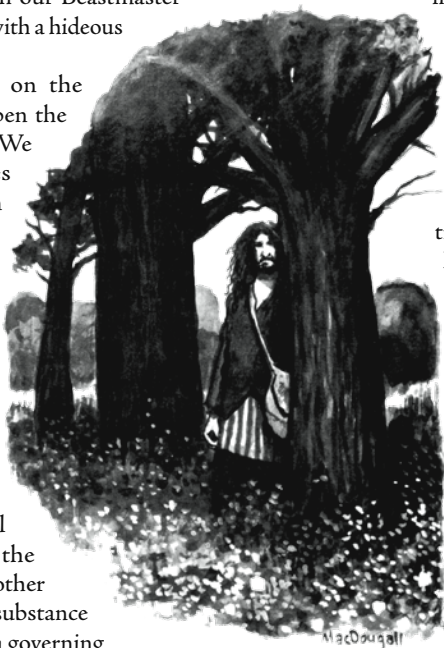
I immediately went to work, rifling through my sack for the notes I had taken some weeks earlier in the course of a rare opportunity to consult the dread book titled *Horrors*, a volume reluctantly compiled and jealously guarded by the librarians of the Great Library of Throal. Something about the nature of this place rang a faint bell in my memory. Lo and behold, I found—after much page-shuffling—my notes on an entry regard-

ing the Great Horror named Artificer. Reading quickly, I learned that Artificer travels throughout Barsaive, searching out places likely to attract adventurers. It then remakes these places, filling them with deadly traps of devious construction. I knew that this trap-kaer was connected not only to the Idea of the Kaer, but to the Idea of the Horror, and through it to the Idea of the Machine.

I concentrated fully on my task, blocking out the horrified shrieks of my companions as the water rose higher and higher in the other chamber. I grabbed my copy of *Vomon* and riffled to the entry on the Idea of the Machine.

*Vomon* lists symbols that relate to an Idea—called Correspondences—and also Ideas and Symbols that are the opposites of these Correspondences. The latter are called Antipathies. One of the Antipathies for the Machine was the Idea of Air. The text explained that one of the symbols of Air is Rust, which is the enemy of Metal, and therefore of the Machine. Air, I thought frantically, Air! How can I connect to this symbol for Air?

By this time, the water had reached the top of the chamber. My companions were either weeping or screaming in despair. The Beastmaster had filled





her lungs with air and was now gazing sadly at us, waiting for the inevitable moment when her lips would burst open and let the brine come rushing in. I was already hard at work, reattuning my matrix to insert the spell I needed. With no time to spare as the moments slipped past, I wove the Threads and cast a Compression Bubble spell around my dear companion. (Compression Bubble usually harms the target, but I knew that any damage to my durable colleague would be minor compared to drowning.) A large bubble of air appeared around her, allowing her to breathe.

My companions exulted, shouting in delight at this victory. And as their tears turned from sorrowful drops to joyous ones, the waters began to recede—as I knew they would. The text on Artificer revealed that it derived its mystical power from the suffering caused by its traps. From this, I deduced that the traps themselves were triggered by negative emotions, such as trepidation and despair. My Compression Bubble spell bought our dying Beastmaster a momentary respite, which boosted my companions' flagging morale. Their sudden, intense joy canceled out the emotional energy powering the trap, thus saving our partner.

The rest of our escape from Artificer's kaer is a tale for another day. You can see from my story, though, how the Wizard solves problems. First, he consults all of his texts at hand. Then he seeks Correspondences and Antipathies. Finally, he uses his powers of deduction to arrive at the correct conclusion, and takes the appropriate action.

Like many of my kind, I also use these means for petty matters, such as deciding which type of rope to purchase or what kind of breakfast to order at a tavern. From the simple to the dramatic, symbols and Ideas govern every aspect of a Wizard's life.

## ON BRANCHES FROM THE PATH

*[Author's Note: The following is condensed from a longer closing address, which of course was made redundant by my liege's immediate acceptance of my application. Please excuse its sudden ending.]*

I assure you that I follow the approved and accredited Wizard's way. In the wake of the Scourge, several new and questionable approaches to the Discipline have unfortunately arisen out of a deplorable drop in standards.

Of late, I have encountered many who claim to be so-called instinctive Wizards. These scruffy excuses for spellcasters would not be caught dead with a collection of books on hand. They learned their abilities and spells by word of mouth, from other hedge Wizards. Though they carry in their heads badly jumbled memories of the system of Ideas and symbols, and a wholly inadequate list of Correspondences and Antipathies, they claim they can nonetheless achieve true mastery of the Wizard's Discipline through experience. They simply invent their own Correspondences and Antipathies based on the skimpy evidence of their own lives!

It is a wonder to me that any of them survive past the initiation, but somehow they do. These "instinctive" Wizards often display a frank and earthy sensibility that lacks in the dignity with which a Wizard should carry himself. There are also those who follow the path of mastery, which in my view goes beyond dignity into a dangerous kind of pride. These Wizards see themselves as more than borrowers of the power of Ideas; they believe they can control and dominate emanations from the Realm of Ideas. They believe the world is theirs to manipulate as they will, and see Wizardry as no more than a route to power. Theraan Wizards often choose this path; in the days before the Scourge, they planted this lamentable tradition in our own fair province, and it plagues us to this day.

The Wizard who desires mastery holds himself above all persons and all things. He uses his overweening confidence to force symbols to do his will. This path is a hazardous one, for Ideas are more powerful than individuals. The so-called mastery Wizard should fear the day when Ideas will have the last laugh.

## GAME INFORMATION

### Roleplaying Hints

Ajmar the Astonishing, whose account of the Wizard's Way begins this chapter, exemplifies the aspect of the Wizard's Discipline known as the way of the mind. Players wishing to play such Wizards can emulate some of Ajmar's character traits: wordiness, pomposity and a tendency to quote inscrutable occult classics.



Mind Wizards trust the written word over oral tradition, and feel insecure without a couple of books in their backpacks. They take the magical concepts of Idea and symbol literally, and many of them have memorized large chunks of books central to that tradition. Before making decisions, they consult their concordances for references to the Ideas involved, and philosophize about their ultimate meanings. They value thought and reflection over all other things, and believe that the superior intellect always wins in the end. Though humble mind Wizards do exist, many of them believe their Discipline is superior to all others and act accordingly. Most mind Wizards are smart enough to underplay this belief in the presence of practitioners of other Disciplines, but they often have more trouble concealing their contempt for other types of Wizards.

Some Wizards, particularly in the hinterlands, learn the Wizard Discipline based on the knowledge their masters possess rather than from tomes and texts. Idea and symbol are still central to their way of thinking about magic, but they rely more on their own experiences than on the writings of others. Instinctive Wizards learn to work magic by deciding what each Idea and symbol means to them personally. They tend to think and act with less arrogance than mind Wizards; many of them have a wry sense of humor and feel humbled in the face of the wonders of the world. They often speak with rustic accents and act with solid rural common sense. Proverbs and other bits of folk wisdom pepper their conversations. They can be quick to dismiss the benefits of book learning, or may display a reverse snobbery toward city folk.

Mastery Wizards resemble mind Wizards, except that they believe they can dominate the world of Ideas and symbols. This type of Wizard is more suitable for Game Master Characters, because

mastery Wizards make enjoyably loathsome enemies. A mastery Wizard's attitude toward the world goes beyond pride into sheer megalomania. They believe that with the right knowledge, they can control any situation. They see everyone they meet as a potential follower or a potential enemy, and show equal contempt for both.

## Discipline Violations

A mind Wizard violates his Discipline if he does something blatantly stupid and will likely suffer a Discipline crisis. These Wizards believe so strongly in their own intellectual powers that they go into shock when they suffer an outrageous failure while performing a mental task. Attacks on their dignity may also trigger a Discipline crisis; if seriously insulted, a mind Wizard loses his composure and cannot focus as well on using his abilities. In fact, any intense and prolonged emotional response may be a Discipline crisis because mind Wizards think themselves above such intellectual lapses, which they consider the exclusive realm of ordinary people. If a situation occurs in game play that causes a mind Wizard to become emotionally unstable, he may have committed a Heinous Discipline violation, and must then embark on a Deed of Atonement to regain his former abilities.

Because the instinctive Wizard relies on personal experience to understand his Discipline, he may suffer a Discipline crisis in any unfamiliar situation. Some may also suffer Discipline crises in situations that are out of sync with their rural roots.

Mastery Wizards may experience Discipline crises when their careful plans go awry or they land in situations they cannot control. They turn petulant and even hysterical when someone else is in command of their destiny, and these feelings make it impossible for them to concentrate.





# CHAPTER 5: EDGES

*What is it that makes me such a great performer? Well, you might say that it's practice, or luck, or even magic. In fact, it's all those, and more.*

—Millat, Troubadour Adept

This chapter outlines new **Adept Edges** available only to **EARTHDAWN** characters. These abilities are magical in nature, representing the Adept's ability to tap into the raw power of astral space and manipulate reality to suit his or her needs. Many of these Edges require Karma, as noted in their description.

While there are lot of Edges described in this chapter, they are divided across 15 Disciplines. The New Edges Table summarizes the different Edges available to Adepts, by Discipline and Rank. Adept Edges are presented in alphabetical order and fully described following the New Edges Table (p.165).

NEW EDGES TABLE		
Edge	Requirements	Effect
<b>ANY ADEPT</b>		
<i>Novice Adept Edges</i>		
Durability	N, any Adept	You can spend Karma to make Soak rolls
Karma Ritual	N, any Adept	Ability to gain Karma Points
Thread Weaving	N, any Adept	Ability to weave magical Threads to magical weapons and items, unlocking their powers
Versatility	N, any human Adept	Ability to ignore Discipline requirements when choosing a new Edge
<i>Heroic Adept Edges</i>		
Greater Karma	H, any Adept	Increase maximum Karma Points by 10
<b>AIR SAILOR ADEPT</b>		
<i>Novice Adept Edges</i>		
Endure Cold	N, Air Sailor Adept	Subtract 1 from Vigor roll for every 40 deg. below freezing, rather than every 20 deg.
<i>Seasoned Adept Edges</i>		
Defense	S, Air Sailor Adept	Gain temporary bonus to armor
Strength of the Sky	S, Air Sailor Adept	+2 bonus to Strength rolls while on airships
Superb Sailing	S, Air Sailor Adept	+4 to Boating roll
Wind Catcher	S, Air Sailor or Sky Raider Adept	Use magic to slow your descent while falling
<b>ARCHER ADEPT</b>		
<i>Novice Adept Edges</i>		
Called Shot	N, Archer Adept	Impress onlookers with a difficult shot
Direction Arrow	N, Archer Adept	Track a target by causing your fired arrow to point the way
Mystic Aim	N, Archer Adept	+4 bonus to Shooting roll against a single target for a single attack



# EARTHDOWN PLAYER'S GUIDE

## NEW EDGES TABLE

Edge	Requirements	Effect
Sprint	N, Archer or Scout Adept	Double your Pace
<i>Seasoned Adept Edges</i>		
Call Arrow	S, Archer Adept	Return fired arrows to your quiver
Eagle Eye	S, Archer Adept, True Shot, Mystic Aim	Reduce ranged penalties
Flame Arrow	S, Archer Adept, Mystic Aim	+2 bonus to damage roll
Impressive Shot	S, Archer Adept, Persuasion d8+	Intimidate a target by firing an arrow close to him, but not hitting
Quick Shot	S, Archer Adept	Make additional ranged attacks per round
Screaming Arrow	S, Archer Adept, Stopping Aim	Cause the target to become Shaken
Stopping Aim	S, Archer Adept, True Shot	Cause an opponent to be unable to move
True Shot	S, Archer Adept, Mystic Aim	Continue to spend Karma on your attack roll, until you hit the target
<i>Veteran Adept Edges</i>		
Blind Fire	V, Archer Adept	Cause your missile to curve around walls and over barriers to strike your foes
Create Arrow	V, Archer Adept, Call Arrow	Cause an arrow to manifest for a single shot
Dominate Arrow	V, Archer Adept, Call Arrow	Control the flight path of an enemy arrow
<i>Heroic Adept Edges</i>		
Armor-Defeating Hit	H, Archer, Sky Raider, Swordmaster, or Warrior Adept, Fighting/Shooting d10+	Adds 1 AP per Rank to the Adept's damage roll
Bank Shot	H, Archer Adept	Ricochet missile weapons to your target
Multi-Shot	H, Archer Adept, Quick Shot	Make multiple ranged attacks
Trace Missile	H, Archer Adept	Trace the path of a fired missile
<i>Legendary Adept Edges</i>		
Wind Bow	L, Archer Adept, Create Arrow, Flame Arrow	Create a bow out of shimmering elemental winds
<b>BEASTMASTER ADEPT</b>		
<i>Novice Adept Edges</i>		
Borrow Sense	N, Beastmaster Adept	Gain temporary bonus to your Notice rolls
Cat's Paw	N, Beastmaster Adept	+4 bonus to Stealth roll when attempting to move silently
Claw Shape	N, Beastmaster Adept	Ability to transform a hand into an animal claw for attacks
Frighten Animal Servants	N, Beastmaster Adept	Cause an animal to become Shaken
Lizard Leap	N, Beastmaster Adept	+2 bonus to Strength roll when jumping
Poison Resistance	N, Beastmaster Adept	+2 bonus to a Vigor roll to resist poison
Tracking	N, Beastmaster or Scout Adept	+4 to Tracking roll
<i>Seasoned Adept Edges</i>		
Animal Leadership	S, Beastmaster Adept	Befriend and lead a pack of animals
Animal Possession	S, Beastmaster Adept	Temporarily possess animals
Chameleon	S, Beastmaster or Scout Adept	+4 bonus to Stealth roll when attempting to hide
Creature Analysis	S, Beastmaster or Scout Adept	Analyze the attributes of a creature
Dominate Beast	S, Beastmaster Adept	Temporarily gain control of an animal
Echo Location	S, Beastmaster Adept, Borrow Sense	Ignore attack penalties from Dim or Dark lighting

# CHAPTER 5: EDGES

## NEW EDGES TABLE

Edge	Requirements	Effect
Lion Heart	S, Beastmaster Adept	+2 bonus to Fear check
<i>Veteran Adept Edges</i>		
Claw Frenzy	V, Beastmaster Adept, Claw Shape	Gain additional attacks from Claw Shape
<i>Heroic Adept Edges</i>		
Howl	H, Beastmaster Adept	Cause a target to make a Fear check or flee
Venom	H, Beastmaster Adept, Borrow Sense, Chameleon, Echo Location	Ability to spray poison from your mouth
<b>CAVALRYMAN ADEPT</b>		
<i>Novice Adept Edges</i>		
Blood Share	N, Cavalryman Adept	Transfer wounds between you and your mount
Charge	N, Cavalryman Adept	Additional +2 damage when charging
Durability (Mount)	N, Cavalryman Adept, Durability	You can spend Karma so your mount can make a Soak roll
Empathic Command	N, Cavalryman Adept	Command your mount with emotions and mental images
Sure Mount	N, Cavalryman Adept	+4 bonus to rolls for your mount when resisting effects that affect its mind
Tame Mount	N, Cavalryman Adept, Persuasion d8+	Improve a character's attitude toward you
Trick Riding	N, Cavalryman Adept	+4 bonus to Riding roll
<i>Seasoned Adept Edges</i>		
Armor Mount	S, Cavalryman Adept, Durability (Mount)	Temporarily increase the Toughness of your mount
Fearsome Charge	S, Cavalryman Adept	Charge directly at your target and cause it to become Shaken
Heal Animal Servant	S, Cavalryman Adept, Durability (Mount)	Heal 1 wound on your mount
Mount Attack	S, Cavalryman Adept	+2 to mount's damage roll
Rally	S, Cavalryman Adept	Grant a +1 bonus to allies to recover from being Shaken, and allow the allies to act even on a failed roll
Trample	S, Cavalryman Adept	Grant your mount an extra attack
Wheeling Attack	S, Cavalryman Adept	Your mount does not suffer the usual penalties while running
<i>Veteran Adept Edges</i>		
Call Mount	V, Cavalryman Adept	Magically call your mount to you
<i>Heroic Adept Edges</i>		
Multi-Charge	H, Cavalryman Adept, Wheeling Attack	Gain extra attacks while charging
Spirit Mount	H, Cavalryman Adept	Summon a ghostly mount for yourself
<b>ELEMENTALIST ADEPT</b>		
<i>Novice Adept Edges</i>		
Air Speaking	N, Elementalist Adept	Silently speak with others who have this Edge
Cold Purify	N, Elementalist Adept	Neutralize the effects of poison
Elemental Tongues	N, Elementalist Adept	Gain the ability to communicate with elementals





## NEW EDGES TABLE

Edge	Requirements	Effect
Reshape Object	N, Elementalist Adept	Change the shape of an object
Temperature	N, Elementalist Adept	Increase or decrease temperature in room
<i>Seasoned Adept Edges</i>		
Earth Armor	S, Elementalist Adept, Moving Earth	Encase yourself in earth, gaining 2 points of armor
Enhanced Matrix	S; Elementalist, Illusionist, Nethermancer, or Wizard Adept	Increase maximum Spell Threads by 5
Metal Ward	S, Elementalist Adept	Reduce damage from bladed weapons that damage you
Moving Earth	S, Elementalist Adept, Unshakable Earth	Create a wave of earth to ride upon
Plant Shelter	S, Elementalist Adept	Create a shelter from plants
Unshakable Earth	S, Elementalist Adept	+4 bonus to Strength roll if pushed
<i>Veteran Adept Edges</i>		
Bargain with Summoned Creature	V, Elementalist or Nethermancer Adept	Bargain with a creature you have summoned
Summon	V, Elementalist or Nethermancer Adept	Summon a being from another plane of existence
Summoning Circle	V, Elementalist or Nethermancer Adept, Summon	Create a magical circle to trap summoned beings
<i>Heroic Adept Edges</i>		
Elemental Hold	H, Elementalist Adept; Elemental Tongues	Prevent an elemental from taking any action
<b>ILLUSIONIST ADEPT</b>		
<i>Novice Adept Edges</i>		
Dead Fall	N, Illusionist Adept	Use minor illusion magic to feign death
Disguise Self	N, Illusionist Adept	Use minor illusion magic to disguise yourself
Fast Hand	N, Illusionist Adept	Ability to switch 2 palm-sized objects
Glamour	N, Illusionist Adept	Able to create simple illusions
Memorize Image	N, Illusionist Adept	Recall an image you earlier saw to strengthen your illusion
Mimic Voice	N, Illusionist or Troubadour Adept	Imitate a voice you have previously heard
Safe Thought	N, Illusionist Adept	Hide your thoughts and emotions from magical scrying
<i>Seasoned Adept Edges</i>		
Animate Object	S, Illusionist Adept	Animate objects
Detect Falsehood	S, Illusionist Adept, Notice d6+	+4 bonus to Notice rolls made to detect lies
Enhanced Matrix	S; Elementalist, Illusionist, Nethermancer, or Wizard Adept	Increase maximum Spell Threads by 5
False Sight	S, Illusionist Adept, Glamour	Your illusions become more difficult to disbelieve
Hypnotize	S, Illusionist or Troubadour Adept, Persuasion d8+	Hypnotize a target and implant subconscious programming
Mind Wave	S, Illusionist Adept	Cause a target to become Shaken
True Sight	S, Illusionist Adept, Notice d8+	+4 bonus to Notice rolls to disbelieve illusions



# CHAPTER 5: EDGES

NEW EDGES TABLE

Edge	Requirements	Effect
<b>NETHERMANCER ADEPT</b>		
<i>Novice Adept Edges</i>		
Lifesight	N, Nethermancer Adept	See a character's life force
Orbiting Spy	N, Nethermancer Adept	Summon a small spirit to gain extra Notice roll attempts
<i>Seasoned Adept Edges</i>		
Enhanced Matrix	S; Elementalist, Illusionist, Nethermancer, or Wizard Adept	Increase maximum Spell Threads by 5
Otherworldly Control	S, Nethermancer Adept	Reroll a failed Fear check
Spirit Dodge	S, Nethermancer Adept	Summon a spirit that helps protect you during combat
Spirit Hold	S, Nethermancer Adept	Cause a spirit to be unable to take any action except speech
Spirit Talk	S, Nethermancer Adept	Able to converse with spirits
<i>Veteran Adept Edges</i>		
Bargain with Summoned Creature	V, Elementalist or Nethermancer Adept	Bargain with a creature you have summoned
Summon	V, Elementalist or Nethermancer Adept	Summon a being from another plane of existence
Summoning Circle	V, Elementalist or Nethermancer Adept, Summon	Create a magical circle to trap summoned beings
<i>Heroic Adept Edges</i>		
Frighten	H, Nethermancer Adept	Cause a target to make a Fear check
Netherwalk	H, Nethermancer Adept	Allows spirit to travel through astral space
<i>Legendary Adept Edges</i>		
Soul Shatter	L, Nethermancer Adept	Cause your target to suffer a wound
<b>SCOUT ADEPT</b>		
<i>Novice Adept Edges</i>		
Climbing	N, Scout Adept, Climbing d6+	+4 bonus to Climbing roll
Enhance Senses	N, Scout Adept	+4 bonus to Notice rolls
Safe Path	N, Scout Adept	Communicate with elemental spirits to find the safest route
Silent Walk	N, Scout or Thief Adept	+2 bonus to Stealth roll when attempting to move silently
Sprint	N, Archer or Scout Adept	Double your Pace
Tracking	N, Beastmaster or Scout Adept	+4 to Tracking roll
<i>Seasoned Adept Edges</i>		
Chameleon	S, Beastmaster or Scout Adept	+4 bonus to Stealth roll when attempting to hide
Creature Analysis	S, Beastmaster or Scout Adept	Analyze the attributes of a creature
<b>SKY RAIDER ADEPT</b>		
<i>Novice Adept Edges</i>		
Battle Bellow	N, Sky Raider Adept	Grant +1 bonus to allies' Trait rolls
Fire Blood	N, Sky Raider Adept	+1 bonus to Soak rolls
Great Leap	N, Sky Raider Adept	+2 bonus to Strength roll when jumping



## NEW EDGES TABLE

Edge	Requirements	Effect
Shield Charge	N, Sky Raider Adept	+4 bonus to Push roll with a shield
<i>Seasoned Adept Edges</i>		
Battle Shout	S, Sky Raider Adept	Impose –2 penalty to opponents' Trait rolls
Thunder Axe	S, Sky Raider Adept	Knock opponents prone when you hit them with an axe or warhammer
Wind Catcher	S, Air Sailor or Sky Raider Adept	Use magic to slow your descent while falling
<i>Heroic Adept Edges</i>		
Armor-Defeating Hit	H, Archer, Sky Raider, Swordmaster, or Warrior Adept, Fighting/Shooting d10+	Adds 1 AP per Rank to the Adept's damage roll
<b>SWORDMASTER ADEPT</b>		
<i>Novice Adept Edges</i>		
Anticipate Blow	N, Swordmaster Adept	–2 penalty to target's attacks against you
Avoid Blow	N, Swordmaster or Warrior Adept	Dodge attacks
Heartening Laugh	N, Swordmaster Adept	Grant allies a +2 bonus to their Fear checks
Maneuver	N, Swordmaster Adept	Sacrifice attacks to be harder to hit, gaining bonuses to strike anyone who attempted to hit you but missed, in the following round
Winning Smile	N, Swordmaster Adept	+4 bonus to Persuasion rolls against a target for 24 hours
<i>Seasoned Adept Edges</i>		
Cobra Strike	S, Swordmaster Adept	+1 bonus to attack any opponent who has a lower initiative than you
Keen Weapon	S, Swordmaster Adept	+1 damage bonus with bladed weapons
Riposte	S, Swordmaster Adept, Maneuver	Ability to block and counterattack unarmed and melee attacks made against you
<i>Heroic Adept Edges</i>		
Armor-Defeating Hit	H, Archer, Sky Raider, Swordmaster, or Warrior Adept, Fighting/Shooting d10+	Adds 1 AP per Rank to the Adept's damage roll
Ethereal Weapon	H, Swordmaster Adept	Transform your sword into an ethereal weapon that bypasses armor
<b>THIEF ADEPT</b>		
<i>Novice Adept Edges</i>		
Conceal Weapon	N, Thief Adept, Stealth d6+	+4 bonus to your Stealth roll when hiding a weapon on your person
Fence	N, Thief Adept, Persuasion d6+	Get a better deal when selling stolen goods
Gold Sense	N, Thief Adept, Notice d6+	Ability to sense the location of nearby gold
Lip Reading	N, Thief Adept, Notice d6+	Read lips
Lock Sense	N, Thief Adept, Notice d6+	+4 bonus to Notice roll when attempting to find a trap in a lock
Quickblade	N, Thief Adept	Bonus to initiative when wielding light, one-handed bladed melee weapons
Sense Poison	N, Thief Adept	Ability to detect poison
Silent Walk	N, Scout or Thief Adept	+2 bonus to Stealth roll when attempting to move silently
Slough Blame	N, Thief Adept	Shift suspicion from yourself to another





# CHAPTER 5: EDGES

**NEW EDGES TABLE**

Edge	Requirements	Effect
Surprise Strike	N, Thief Adept	+1 bonus to damage rolls against Surprised opponents
<i>Seasoned Adept Edges</i>		
Detect Trap	S, Thief Adept, Lock Sense, Notice d6+	+4 bonus to Notice rolls to detect traps
Detect Weapon	S, Thief Adept, Notice d6+	+4 bonus to Notice rolls made to detect concealed weapons
<b>TROUBADOUR ADEPT</b>		
<i>Novice Adept Edges</i>		
Bardic Voice	N, Troubadour Adept, Persuasion d4+	Charm a group of listeners into not taking any hostile action against you
Blood Guilt Weapon	N, Troubadour Adept	Determine the guilt or innocence of a suspect by using murder weapon to pass judgment
Emotion Song	N, Troubadour Adept, Persuasion d8+	Influence a crowd's emotions and opinions about a subject through a song
Empathic Sense	N, Troubadour Adept	Sense others' emotions
Engaging Banter	N, Troubadour Adept	Cause an opponent to become Shaken from your mindless chatter
First Impression	N, Troubadour Adept	+4 bonus to Persuasion rolls against someone you just meet
Graceful Exit	N, Troubadour Adept	Ability to slip away from a battle unmolested
Kiss	N, Troubadour Adept	+4 bonus to Persuasion rolls
Mimic Voice	N, Illusionist or Troubadour Adept	Perfectly imitate a voice you have previously heard
Song of Deflection	N, Troubadour Adept	–2 penalty to opponent's attack roll
Thought Link	N, Troubadour Adept, Empathic Link	You can create a telepathic link between yourself and a target
Truth Skit	N, Troubadour Adept	Discern the truth of a past event by replaying it as a skit
Weapon History	N, Troubadour, Weaponsmith, or Wizard Adept	Gain Key Knowledges of a magical item, weapon, or piece of armor
<i>Seasoned Adept Edges</i>		
Blade Juggle	S, Troubadour Adept	Creates a barrier of bladed weapons that damages opponents who attack but miss you
Hypnotize	S, Illusionist or Troubadour Adept, Persuasion d8+	Hypnotize a target and implant subconscious programming
Tale	S, Troubadour Adept, Kiss	+4 bonus to a Persuasion roll
<i>Heroic Adept Edges</i>		
Incite Mob	H, Troubadour Adept, Emotion Song, Persuasion d8+	Incite a mob into taking a course of action
<b>WARRIOR ADEPT</b>		
<i>Novice Adept Edges</i>		
Acrobatic Strike	N, Warrior Adept	+1 bonus to Fighting and damage roll
Air Dance	N, Warrior Adept	Increase initiative



# EARTHDOWN PLAYER'S GUIDE

## NEW EDGES TABLE

Edge	Requirements	Effect
Avoid Blow	N, Swordmaster or Warrior Adept	Dodge attacks
Down Strike	N, Warrior Adept	+4 damage when attacking from above
Gliding Stride	N, Warrior Adept	Ability to float and hover in midair
Swift Kick	N, Warrior Adept	Gain an additional attack against opponents that have a lower initiative than you
Wood Skin	N, Warrior Adept, Durability	Gain 1 point of armor
<i>Seasoned Adept Edges</i>		
Life Check	S, Warrior Adept	Spend Karma to reroll an Incapacitation roll
Spirit Strike	S, Warrior Adept	Strike targets that are in astral space
Unmount	S, Warrior Adept	Possibly knock opponents from their mounts on a successful melee attack
Vitality	S, Warrior Adept, Durability	Increase the duration of your "Golden Hour" if injured
<i>Veteran Adept Edges</i>		
Body Blade	V, Warrior Adept	Turn a limb into a bladed weapon
Death Stand	V, Warrior Adept, Life Check	Able to spend Karma to stay alive, but for the cost of your life once you run out of Karma or the combat ends
Stone Skin	V, Warrior Adept, Durability, Earth Skin, Wood Skin	Gain 4 points of armor
<i>Heroic Adept Edges</i>		
Armor-Defeating Hit	H, Archer, Sky Raider, Swordmaster, or Warrior Adept, Fighting/Shooting d10+	Adds 1 AP per Rank to the Adept's damage roll
Earth Skin	H, Warrior Adept, Durability, Wood Skin	Gain 2 points of Armor
Multi-Strike	H, Warrior Adept	Make additional multi or unarmed attacks
Vital Strike	H, Warrior Adept	Halve called shot penalties
<b>WEAPONSMITH ADEPT</b>		
<i>Novice Adept Edges</i>		
Forge Armor	N, Weaponsmith Adept, Repair d8+	Permanently increase the Armor bonus of a suit of armor or shield
Forge Blade	N, Weaponsmith Adept, Repair d6+	Permanently increase the damage bonus of a weapon
Sense Magic Weapon	N, Weaponsmith Adept	Ability to determine if an object is magical
Steel Thought	N, Weaponsmith Adept	+4 bonus against Fear and effects that affect your mind
Weapon History	N, Troubadour, Weaponsmith, or Wizard Adept	Gain Key Knowledges of a magical item, weapon, or piece of armor
<i>Seasoned Adept Edges</i>		
Improve Armor	S, Weaponsmith Adept, Forge Armor, Repair d8+	Temporarily increase the Armor bonus from a piece of armor or shield
Improve Blade	S, Weaponsmith Adept, Forge Blade, Repair d8+	Temporarily increase the damage bonus of a weapon
Show Armor Flaw	S, Weaponsmith Adept, Spot Armor Flaw, Notice d8+	Both you and your allies gain a +2 bonus to attacks against opponent for the round

# CHAPTER 5: EDGES

NEW EDGES TABLE

Edge	Requirements	Effect
Soften Blade	S, Weaponsmith Adept	–2 penalty to opponent's damage roll
Spot Armor Flaw	S, Weaponsmith Adept, Notice d8+	+2 bonus to attack target for the round
Temper Other	S, Weaponsmith Adept, Durability, Temper Self	+1 bonus to an ally's Toughness for 24 hours
Temper Self	S, Weaponsmith Adept, Durability	+1 bonus to your Toughness for 24 hours
<i>Veteran Adept Edges</i>		
Create Orichalcum	V, Weaponsmith Adept, Improve Armor, Improve Blade, Knowledge (Smithing) d8+	Ability to create the magical metal orichalcum
<i>Heroic Adept Edges</i>		
Warp Missile	H, Weaponsmith Adept	Reduce the damage of a missile attack
<b>WIZARD ADEPT</b>		
<i>Novice Adept Edges</i>		
Astral Sight	N, Wizard Adept	See into astral space
Evidence Analysis	N, Wizard Adept	Determine past events by examining the evidence
Weapon History	N, Troubadour, Weaponsmith, or Wizard Adept	Gain Key Knowledges of a magical item, weapon, or piece of armor
<i>Seasoned Adept Edges</i>		
Arcane Mutterings	S, Wizard Adept	Cause a target to become Shaken
Casting Triangle	S, Wizard Adept, Willforce	+4 bonus to your Spellcasting roll while within a drawn triangle
Enhanced Matrix	S; Elementalist, Illusionist, Nethermancer, or Wizard Adept	Increase maximum Spell Threads by 5
Willforce	S, Wizard Adept	Gain a +2 bonus to damage for a single spell

## ADEPT EDGES

Adept Edges are magical abilities available only to Adepts. These Edges each require the use of at least 1 Karma Point in order to be used. Some Edges allow the use of more than 1 Karma Point, as noted in their description.

Because Adept Edges are fueled by magic, many of their effects are similar to Spells and Powers.

Unless otherwise noted, using an Adept Edge is a free action. If a character has enough Karma Points, he can use several at the same time in conjunction with each other.

### Stacking Edges

Because of the magical nature of Adept Edges and their Karma Point requirement for use, bonuses to the same Trait from other Edges the character may have do stack.

### Free Adept Edges

Characters gain 2 free Adept Edges at character creation (Novice; see p. 33) and 2 free Adept Edges per Rank gained thereafter (Seasoned, Veteran, Heroic, Legendary).

### Buying Edges

Additional Adept Edges (other than free Adept Edges) are purchased the same way as normal Edges, using standard character Advances (see the *Savage Worlds Core rulebook*).

## EDGE DESCRIPTIONS

### Acrobatic Strike

**Requirements:** Novice, Warrior Adept

As long as they are able to move freely, characters use the Acrobatic Strike Edge to make impossibly





graceful, leaping, spinning attacks. The character gains a +1 bonus to his Fighting roll, with a +1 bonus to the damage roll for one or more raises.

## Air Dance

**Requirements:** Novice, Warrior Adept

The Air Dance Edge allows a character to walk on air, about an inch or two above the surface of the ground. Air Dance does not allow a character to stand suspended in midair nor does it allow him to avoid hazardous terrain. Air Dance makes it possible for a character to perform quick, gliding movements and rapid attacks. Whenever the character uses this Edge, his initiative card value increases by 1 (a four becomes a five, a Jack becomes a Queen, and so on) for each Karma Point spent. Characters using this Edge with the exact same initiative (suit and value) as their opponent, act first.

## Air Speaking

**Requirements:** Novice, Elementalist Adept

The Air Speaking Edge allows characters to communicate with others who have the Elementalist Edge without actually vocalizing the words. The character moves his lips slightly but makes no actual sound. Other characters with the Elementalist Edge hear Air Speaking as normal conversation. Each use of this Edge lasts for 10 minutes per Rank.

## Animal Leadership

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Beastmaster Adept

The Animal Leadership Edge allows a character to lead an animal or group of animals. All of the targets must have animal-level Smarts. The character makes a Spirit roll with a -1 penalty for each animal involved. If the roll is successful, the animals treat the character as the pack leader for 2d6 hours. During this time, the animals obediently follow the character's lead. They attack if the leader attacks, run if he runs. The leader cannot command the animals to perform an action, however, for this Edge does not give him the ability to communicate with the animals he leads—he can only lead by example.

## Animate Object

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Illusionist Adept

The character may use more than one Karma Point when using this Edge. The Animate Object

Edge allows the character to imbue inanimate objects with mobility and a semblance of life. The character must select target(s) within 16". Each such animated object can be directed to attack whomever or whatever the character designates. An animated object can be of any non-magical material. The character may animate one object of -1 Size or smaller or a corresponding number of larger objects as follows: An object of Size +0 counts as two -1 Size objects or smaller, a +1 to +5 Size object as four, a +6 Size object as eight, a +7 to +9 Size object as 16, and a +10 Size object as 32. The character can target up to a number of -1 Size objects equal to how many Karma Points the character spends when using this Edge. The character can change the designated target or targets as a free action. This Edge cannot affect objects carried or worn by a creature. The objects remain animated for a number of rounds based on the character's Rank: Seasoned 5 rounds, Veteran 10 rounds, Heroic 15 rounds, Legendary 20 rounds. A typical Size 0 animated object has the following statistics:

### ANIMATED OBJECT

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d6 (A), Spirit d4, Strength d6, Vigor d8

**Skills:** Fighting d6, Notice d10

**Pace:** 5; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 8 (2) plus modifier

### Special Abilities

• **Armor:** +2.

• **Construct:** +2 to recover from being Shaken; called shots do no extra damage; does not suffer from disease or poison.

• **Fearless:** Animated objects are immune to fear and Intimidation, but may be smart enough to react to fear-causing situations appropriately.

• **Size:** Animated objects have Toughness modifiers based on their Size.

## Animal Possession

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Beastmaster Adept

The Animal Possession Edge allows a character to place his or her spirit into the body of an animal. The target must have animal-level Smarts. The character must remain in contact with the target for an entire round. Only animals are affected by this Edge. At the end of the round, the character makes an opposed Spirit roll against the animal. If the character makes a successful roll, his spirit takes



# CHAPTER 5: EDGES

possession of the animal's body and the animal's spirit goes into the character's body. The character now controls the animal's body, but not vice versa. While using Animal Possession, the character's physical form slumps into a coma-like state. He retains his own intelligence while in the animal body, but cannot perform any actions of which the animal is not normally capable. The character's control lasts for a number of hours equal to his Spirit roll. When the possession ends or the animal and character touch, both spirits return to their proper bodies. If either the animal's or the character's body is killed, the spirits and bodies will both die.

## Anticipate Blow

**Requirements:** Novice, Swordmaster Adept

The Anticipate Blow Edge allows a character to better defend against an incoming attack. The character selects one target when using this Edge. The target suffers a -2 penalty when making attacks against the character for the duration of the round.

## Arcane Mutterings

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Wizard Adept

The Arcane Mutterings Edge allows a character to confuse others by uttering dire and largely incomprehensible warnings. Arcane Mutterings has no effect when used against targets actively engaged in

combat, but unengaged combatants can be targeted. To use this Edge, the character must select a target within 5" and make an opposed Spirit roll. If successful, the target becomes Shaken.

## Armor-Defeating Hit

**Requirements:** Heroic, Archer, Sky Raider, Swordmaster, or Warrior Adept, Fighting or Shooting d10+

The Armor-Defeating Hit Edge adds 1 AP to the character's damage roll, +1 AP on a raise. If the character meets only one of the Fighting or Shooting requirements, they only benefit from this Edge for damage rolls resulting from their Fighting or Shooting skills, respectively.

## Armor Mount

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Cavalryman Adept, Durability (Mount)

By using Armor Mount, the character can increase the natural toughness of his mount. To use this Edge, the character must spend 1 Karma Point, granting his mount a +4 bonus to its Toughness for a number of rounds depending on the character's Rank: Seasoned 5 rounds, Veteran 10 rounds, Heroic 15 rounds, Legendary 20 rounds. Armor Mount can only be used on the character's own mount.

## Astral Sight

**Requirements:** Novice, Wizard Adept

The character may use more than 1 Karma Point when using this Edge. The Astral Sight Edge allows a character to see into the astral plane and see all objects and characters within range. Astral Sight has a range equal to the number of Karma Points spent  $\times 5''$  and lasts for up to one hour. The character may end the effect at any time.

## Avoid Blow

**Requirements:** Novice, Swordmaster or Warrior Adept

The Avoid Blow Edge allows a character to dodge attacks. While in combat, if the character would normally be struck by a melee attack, he makes an Agility roll opposed by the opponent's Fighting roll. If successful, he avoids the attack. If failed, he is not only hit by the attack, but is also knocked prone.



## Bank Shot

**Requirements:** Heroic, Archer Adept

The Bank Shot Edge allows a character to ricochet missiles and thrown weapons off obstacles on the way to their target. A character need not have line of sight to the target in the round during which he uses Bank Shot, but must have had line of sight to the target during his last action. The character points out the objects off which he intends to ricochet his shots, then makes a Shooting or Throwing roll as usual. Each bank the shot takes imposes a -1 penalty to the attack roll. A bank shot destroys arrows and bolts used to make the shot. Though the bank shot might nick and scratch daggers and other throwing weapons, these remain usable.

## Bardic Voice

**Requirements:** Novice, Troubadour Adept, Persuasion d4+

The Bardic Voice Edge allows a character to use his rich voice and persuasive magic to charm a small group of people. He or she makes a Persuasion roll with a -1 penalty for each person in the group beyond the first. If successful, the character impresses the group enough that they listen with some interest to what he says. They will not follow him, but they may cooperate with his suggestions as long as they do not threaten the group. On a raise, the character has charmed the group. He may then command the charmed group for a number of minutes equal to his Persuasion roll. He cannot command the group to take any greater risks than he himself is willing to take during the same period, however. For example, a character could not command the group to attack a camp of ork scorchers unless he genuinely intended to participate personally in the attack.

## Bargain with Summoned Creature

**Requirements:** Veteran, Elementalist or Nethermancer Adept

The Bargain with Summoned Creature Edge allows a character to bargain with a creature or entity he has previously summoned. Use of this Edge is possible only on creatures or entities summoned by the character himself. The most typical use of the Edge is to persuade a summoned creature or entity to perform some task or favor. The

character makes a Persuasion roll, applying modifiers depending on the nature of the request:

Fair: +0

Disadvantageous: -2

The Game Master determines what the creature feels is fair or disadvantageous. The effects of this Edge last for 2d6 hours. After this time, the summoned creature is free to do as it wishes. It is for this reason that most characters who use this Edge make sure the summoned creature is able to complete its part of the bargain before the duration expires. The strange and alien motivations of many summoned creatures can result in disastrous consequences if the creatures are left to their own devices. This duration is also the maximum duration for the deal. Failure of the Persuasion roll does not mean that the creature will necessarily be hostile, only that it will refuse to do the bargainer's bidding. The character may attempt to use this Edge again, but at the cost of another Karma Point.

## Battle Bellow

**Requirements:** Novice, Sky Raider Adept

The Battle Bellow Edge allows a character to inspire his allies' Trait rolls. The character can target any number of allies within 2d6". The character then makes a Spirit roll with a -1 penalty for each target beyond the first. If successful, each target gains a +1 bonus to all Trait rolls until the end of the round.





# CHAPTER 5: EDGES

## Battle Shout

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Sky Raider Adept

The Battle Shout Edge allows a character to intimidate foes. The character can target any number of creatures within 2d6". The character must then make a Spirit roll with a -1 penalty for each target beyond the first. If successful, each target suffers a -2 penalty to all Trait rolls for the duration of the round.

## Blade Juggle

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Troubadour Adept

The Blade Juggle Edge allows a character to create a whirling, flashing barrier of knives, daggers, or other bladed weapons. The character enhances the effect with sparkling illusory lights. Using this Edge requires a full round. The character must make an opposed Agility roll against the highest damage die among all of the weapons he is juggling. The character also suffers a -1 penalty for each weapon he is juggling beyond the first. If successful, he gains a number of Armor points equal to the number of weapons he is juggling. In addition, an attacker that makes a melee or unarmed attack against the character but misses has his attack deflected by the spinning weapons, and one of the juggled blades (chosen randomly) spins away from the juggling character to strike the attacker. The juggling character deals damage normally. If a character fails the Agility roll, all the blades fall to the ground, scattering d4-1" in random directions. The character can maintain the juggling each round, but doing so requires all of his concentration. If he stops, he must use the Edge again to resume (thus requiring another Karma Point).

## Blind Fire

**Requirements:** Veteran, Archer Adept

A character uses Blind Fire with a missile weapon to hit a target that he or she could see during a previous round but that is now out of line of sight. An open pathway to the target must exist, though it need not be a straight line. The target benefits from cover if the weapon's path must pass through the cover, but the weapon's path will try to avoid the cover if possible. An ork who jumps behind a wall, for example, does not benefit from the cover of the wall; the magic of Blind Fire simply arcs



the weapon's path over the wall to the ork. An ork who hides in a guardhouse with the door slammed shut behind him gains the benefit of cover. The weapon's path must go through the arrow slits of the guardhouse to hit the ork. When using this Edge, the character suffers only half the normal penalties from Cover and ignores Light Cover completely.

## Blood Guilt Weapon

**Requirements:** Novice, Troubadour Adept

Blood Guilt Weapon uses the blood from a crime victim to test the innocence or guilt of a suspect. To perform the test, the character puts a few drops of the victim's blood onto his weapon before accusing the suspect of one specific crime against the victim. The drops of blood flare into points of flame, red at first, changing to white within seconds. The flame produces no heat and dies after 1 round. During the round in which the flames burn, the tester attacks the suspect. The attack hits the suspect only if the following two conditions hold:

1. The character makes a successful Fighting roll.
2. The suspect is actually guilty of the crime of which he or she has been accused.

If either condition fails, the weapon does not strike its target. Examples include an arrow veering away from its target, or a sword coming to a clanging halt a fraction of an inch from a suspect's neck. If the weapon strikes, it deals damage as normal.

## Blood Share

**Requirements:** Novice, Cavalryman Adept

The Blood Share Edge allows a character to transfer damage between his mount and himself. First, the character makes a small cut somewhere on himself and on his mount, then touches the two cuts together. For each Karma Point spent, the character can transfer 1 wound from either himself to his mount, or vice versa.

## Body Blade

**Requirements:** Veteran, Warrior Adept

The Body Blade Edge changes one of a character's limbs in a way that permits its use as a weapon. The limb transforms into a bladed weapon for one attack that deals Str+d8 damage (like a long sword) on a successful attack. After the attack, the limb reverts back to normal.

## Borrow Sense

**Requirements:** Novice, Beastmaster Adept

Using the Borrow Sense Edge, a character temporarily takes one of an animal's five senses of touch, taste, hearing, smell, or sight for use as his own. The animal loses that sense for the duration of that borrowing. For this reason, only animals loyal to the character or those under the effect of a spell or ability submit to Borrow Sense. The effect lasts for up to 10 minutes. During this time, the character rolls the animal's Notice die instead of his own if it is higher, or gains a +1 bonus to his Notice roll if it is not.

## Call Arrow

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Archer Adept

The Call Arrow Edge allows a character to retrieve fired arrows by spending 1 regular action to call back arrows he has fired. The Edge works on any arrows the character fired that remain within 20' of him or her. The called arrows fly toward the character, tumbling and rotating into proper position, then drop into the quiver. Call Arrow only retrieves the arrows; the character cannot also tie or attach the called arrows to another object in an attempt to retrieve that object. Call Arrow also extracts arrows from targets and returns them to the character. To use this Edge, the character makes a Spirit roll; the result is the maximum number of



arrows returned. If the character fired fewer arrows than that number, he or she simply gets back all the arrows she fired.

## Called Shot

**Requirements:** Novice, Archer Adept

A character can use the Called Shot Edge to impress onlookers with a display of targeting accuracy. The character announces his attack aloud, naming his target and roughly where the shot will strike. The character makes a Shooting roll as normal. A successful roll means the shot hit in approximately the called spot. Opponents who see this display are suitably impressed. The shot improves the targets' attitude by one step, or two with a raise. Failure, on the other hand, decreases the targets' attitude by one step, or two if a 1 is rolled on the Shooting die (regardless of the Wild Die). The affected characters must understand the language the character is speaking in order to be affected by a successful Called Shot. Called Shot can only impress opponents; the Edge does not increase the damage from an attack.

## Call Mount

**Requirements:** Veteran, Cavalryman Adept

The Call Mount Edge allows a character to magically call his mount to him. The maximum range of the call is 50'. The character can extend this range by another 50' for each additional Karma Point spent. Using this Edge costs an action. The mount instantly appears beneath the character, with the character fully mounted. There must be enough space for the mount to fit, otherwise the Edge does not work.

## Casting Triangle

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Wizard Adept, Willforce

To create a casting triangle, the character must spend a round conjuring a luminescent triangle around himself, each side no more than three feet long. A Casting Triangle only affects the character who created the triangle. While in the Casting Triangle, the character gains a +4 bonus to all Spellcasting rolls. The Casting Triangle lasts until the character leaves the triangle. Re-entering the triangle does not bring back the bonus—a new Casting Triangle must be made.

## Cat's Paw

**Requirements:** Novice, Beastmaster Adept

The Cat's Paw Edge permits a character to move quietly, granting a +4 bonus to the character's Stealth roll when attempting to move quietly.



## Chameleon

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Beastmaster or Scout Adept

The Chameleon Edge allows a character to blend into the background, making him or her very difficult to detect, granting a +4 bonus to the character's Stealth roll when attempting to hide.

## Charge

**Requirements:** Novice, Cavalryman Adept

With the Charge Edge, the character is able to deal more damage when charging while mounted. If the character can charge at least 6" before making an attack, he adds 2 to his damage total that round, in addition to the usual +4 to which he is entitled (+6 total).

## Claw Frenzy

**Requirements:** Veteran, Beastmaster Adept, Claw Shape

Using the Claw Frenzy Edge, a character can make more attacks using Claw Shape. When using Claw Shape, the character with this Edge may spend additional Karma Points to gain additional unarmed attacks. For each Karma Point spent, the character gains one additional attack. This Karma Point is added to the result of the attack roll. The character may spend a number of Karma in this manner equal to half his Spirit die, +1 per Rank (+1 Novice, +2 Seasoned, and so on). Claw Shape must be used for the damage roll. If the character has no Karma remaining after making the attack to fuel Claw Shape, then the attack automatically fails and the Karma Point is still lost.

## Claw Shape

**Requirements:** Novice, Beastmaster Adept

The Claw Shape Edge temporarily changes a character's dominant hand into a fearsome clawed weapon, which deals Str+d6 damage. The claw reverts back to its normal shape after the attack.

## Climbing

**Requirements:** Novice, Scout Adept, Climbing d6+

The character gains a +4 bonus to his Climbing roll.



## Cobra Strike

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Swordmaster Adept

The Cobra Strike Edge allows a character to make incredibly quick attacks in the first round of combat. For the first round of combat, the character gains a +1 bonus on any Trait roll to attack any opponent who has a lower initiative than him for each Karma Point spent on this Edge. He may spend up to 2 Karma Points per Rank (2 at Novice, 4 at Seasoned, and so on).

## Cold Purify

**Requirements:** Novice, Elemental Adept

The Cold Purify Edge stops the effects of poison. Using this Edge requires access to ice, snow, or chilled water. The character packs the ice (or cold material) around a poisoned character's wound. After one minute of concentration, the character makes a Spirit roll. If successful, the victim's life is saved and the poison no longer has any effect—paralyzed victims can move and those rendered unconscious wake. The character may spend additional Karma Points when using this Edge, gaining a +1 bonus to his Spirit roll for each Karma Point spent.

## Conceal Weapon

**Requirements:** Novice, Thief Adept, Stealth d6+

A character can use the Conceal Weapon Edge to use sleight of hand and illusion to hide weapons somewhere on his or her body. Whenever the character attempts to hide a weapon on his person, he may make a Stealth roll with a +4 bonus. The result becomes the target number for any character's Notice roll to detect the hidden weapon.

## Create Arrow

**Requirements:** Veteran, Archer Adept, Call Arrow

Create Arrow allows a character to magically create arrows, taking an entire round to do so. At the end of the round, the character makes a Spirit roll to determine how many arrows can be created. The arrows are created one at a time, as they are fired by the character. The arrows vanish after hitting (or missing) their target.

## Create Orichalcum

**Requirements:** Veteran, Weaponsmith Adept, Improve Armor, Improve Blade, Knowledge (Smithing) d8+

Using Blood Magic and the proper mix of the five elements—air, earth, fire, water, and wood—the character can create the magical metal orichalcum. The combined value of the elements must equal or exceed the worth of the orichalcum to be created. To create the orichalcum, the character makes a Knowledge (Smithing) roll, with a –1 penalty for each 1,000 silver pieces worth of orichalcum. For example, creating 5,000 silver pieces worth of orichalcum imposes a –5 penalty. If the roll succeeds, the orichalcum is created. If the roll fails, the ingredients are destroyed during the process and no orichalcum is made. Each attempt takes 24 hours, regardless of the amount of orichalcum being created.

## Creature Analysis

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Beastmaster, or Scout Adept

The Creature Analysis Edge allows a character to use scholarship and divination magic to gain information about a creature he is observing. The character spends an entire round observing the target, then makes a Notice roll. If successful, the player may ask the Game Master a specific question about the creature, +1 additional question per raise. For the purposes of this Edge, the question asked must be one that would reveal one of the target's game statistics or abilities. The Game Master should cheerfully disallow questions comparing more than one statistic, such as "Which is higher, its Spirit or Strength die?"

## Dead Fall

**Requirements:** Novice, Illusionist Adept

A character uses the Dead Fall Edge to feign death. Any character viewing him must make a Notice roll against the character's Spirit in order to be able to tell he is not really dead. If they fail their roll, the character uses minor illusion magic to exaggerate the appearance of any wound, poison, or disease effect to persuade observers that he is really dead. The effect lasts for 1d6 minutes, or until the character breaks the illusion by moving.



## CHAPTER 5: EDGES

### Death Stand

**Requirements:** Veteran, Warrior Adept, Life Check

When the character becomes Incapacitated, but before the player makes a Vigor roll, the player may declare that the character is making a Death Stand. Death Stand allows the player to spend as many Karma Points as he wishes for the Vigor roll. He must choose how many points he will spend before rolling any dice. The character rolls one Vigor die per Karma Point spent. At the end of each round after the player announces his character will use Death Stand, the player may again spend as many Karma Points as he wishes. The character dies at the end of the combat or when he runs out of Karma Points. This death cannot be avoided by using magic items, like a death cheat blood charm (p.232).

### Defense

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Air Sailor Adept

The character gains 1 point of Armor for a number of rounds equal to his Vigor die. If the character is aboard an airship that is in flight, he gains 2 points of Armor instead.

### Detect Falsehood

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Illusionist Adept, Notice d6+

The Detect Falsehood Edge is a magical form of insight that a character can use to detect exaggerations, half truths, or outright fabrications. The character gains a +4 bonus to his Notice roll when attempting to detect lies.

### Detect Trap

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Thief Adept, Lock Sense, Notice d6+

The character gains a +4 bonus to his Notice roll to detect traps.

### Detect Weapon

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Thief Adept, Notice d6+

The character gains a +4 bonus to his Notice roll to detect concealed weapons.

### Direction Arrow

**Requirements:** Novice, Archer Adept

Using the Direction Arrow Edge, a character can locate another character or an object. The character must first possess a piece of clothing, or a piece of wall from a building, or something else directly connected to the person or object he seeks. The character fires an arrow straight up into the air. The arrow rises to its full height, then plummets to the earth. When it hits the ground, it shatters and sparks into a three-foot-long flaming arrow. The character makes a Spirit roll. If successful, the arrow points in the correct direction. The person or object must be within a number of miles equal to the character's roll. For example, a character who rolls a 4 could look for a person who is up to 4 miles away. Attempts to use Direction Arrow on a character in another plane always fail.

### Disguise Self

**Requirements:** Novice, Illusionist Adept

The Disguise Self Edge allows a character to use illusion magic to disguise herself as any human-like being, within the limits of the ability. The disguised being can weigh up to twice the character's weight, but not less than half. The character may not vary his Size more than one category either larger or smaller. To disguise himself, the character makes a Spirit roll. The effect lasts for a number of hours equal to the roll. It requires a Notice roll at -2 to see through the disguise if someone is familiar with the specific person mimicked; the penalty increases to -4 with a raise. If unfamiliar, the penalties are -4 and -6 respectively.

### Dominate Arrow

**Requirements:** Veteran, Archer Adept, Call Arrow

The Dominate Arrow Edge allows a character to control the flight path of an arrow fired by another character or an opponent. The target must be within 10'. The target fires a missile weapon. The character makes an opposed Spirit roll as a free action against the target's Shooting roll. If successful, the character is able to direct the arrow's flight. If the result is lower, he or she fails to control the arrow. On a raise, the character might also direct the arrow to hit a new target (of his choosing) if another target is within range, using his Spirit roll as the attack roll.





## Dominate Beast

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Beastmaster Adept

The Dominate Beast Edge allows a character to temporarily subdue and control any animal, either wild or trained. The target must have animal-level Smarts. The character makes an opposed Spirit roll. If successful, the player can establish dominance over the animal for a number of minutes equal to his Spirit roll. An animal under the effect of Dominate Beast will not take any hostile action against the character using the Edge. The character may command the creature to perform one simple task that requires less time than the duration of Dominate Beast. The task cannot pose more danger to the animal than to the character. In order to maintain control of the animal, the player must use a move action each round.

## Down Strike

**Requirements:** Novice, Warrior Adept

The Down Strike Edge allows a character to inflict greater-than-normal damage on a target in combat. The character must use the Gliding Stride Edge (p.178) or otherwise position himself at least 1" above his opponent's head. The character screams like a bird of prey as he drops onto his target. If he hits his opponent, the character gains a +4 bonus to his damage roll.

## Durability (Mount)

**Requirements:** Novice, Cavalryman Adept, Durability

The Durability (Mount) Edge is a variation of the Durability Edge. Rather than this Edge benefiting himself, it instead allows his mount to make a Soak roll.

## Durability

**Requirements:** Novice, any Adept

Adepts are inherently stronger than their mundane counterparts. Durability allows a character to spend a Karma Point as a free action to make a Soak roll, instead of using his regular Bennies. The character can use this Edge a number of times per attack equal to his Rank.

## Eagle Eye

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Archer Adept, True Shot, Mystic Aim

A character uses the Eagle Eye Edge to aim at distant targets. When using this ability, ranged penalties are halved for the subject (-1 at Medium and -2 at Long). The character may opt to spend 1 additional Karma Point. If he does so, all range increments for the subject are doubled in addition (12/24/48 becomes 24/48/96, for example). The effects last until the end of the round.

## Earth Armor

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Elementalist Adept, Moving Earth

Earth Armor allows a character to wrap himself in the power of the living earth as a form of protection, granting him 2 points of Armor. The effects of the armor last for 1 hour. It can be dispelled by the character as a free action at any time.

## Earth Skin

**Requirements:** Heroic, Warrior Adept, Durability, Wood Skin

The Earth Skin Edge increases a character's resistance to physical damage by causing his skin, and portions of the muscles and ligaments, to become tougher. When using this Edge, the character's skin takes on the appearance of hardened earth, granting him 2 points of Armor. The duration of this Edge lasts for a number of hours equal to the number of Karma Points spent. The character can end the effects at any time as a free action. The effects of Earth Skin do not stack with the effects of Wood Skin.

## Echo Location

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Beastmaster Adept, Borrow Sense

Echo Location allows a character to locate objects and characters by sound. The Edge works well for spotting things in the dark; the character ignores attack penalties for Dim and Dark lighting. The effects last for 1d6 rounds.





## Elemental Hold

**Requirements:** Heroic, Elementalist Adept, Elemental Tongues

The Elemental Hold Edge allows a character to prevent an elemental from moving or taking any action other than communicating. The character must use a standard action, targeting any elemental within 20" and making an opposed Spirit roll. The character must be able to speak the elemental's language in order to target it, or otherwise be able to communicate in a way it understands. If successful, it is held for 2d6 rounds, or until it takes any damage. The character must concentrate to hold the elemental; he cannot move, cast spells, or take any action other than communication or Edges and actions that rely solely on communication.

## Elemental Tongues

**Requirements:** Novice, Elementalist Adept

This Edge grants the character the ability to speak and understand the language of elementals.

## Emotion Song

**Requirements:** Novice, Troubadour Adept, Persuasion d8+

The Emotion Song Edge uses a character's powerful voice to sing songs that arouse an audience to a basic emotion such as fear, love, hate, happiness, anger, and joy. The audience directs the basic emotion at the subject of the song; if the character sings about a king, the audience feels the emotion about the king. To perform Emotion Song requires at least half an hour. At the end of each half-hour the character makes a Persuasion roll with modifiers based on how many levels of attitude the character attempts to change:

Levels	Modifier
1	-1
2	-2
3	-3
4	-4

For example, attempting to change a crowd's attitude toward a subject from Helpful to Hostile would suffer a -4 penalty. Consecutive uses of Emotion Song create a cumulative effect, so a character could take his time, gradually changing an audience's attitude one stage at a time. The effects of the song last 1d6 days. If a character fails a Persuasion roll,

he or she must immediately stop performing—the crowd has grown weary of the performance and the character may not use Emotion Song again until the following morning.

## Empathic Command

**Requirements:** Novice, Cavalryman Adept

The Empathic Command Edge allows a character to command a mount through emotion and mental images. The character need not speak the commands, but must be in contact with the mount to use Empathic Command. The Edge will not affect any other animal except his mount.

## Empathic Sense

**Requirements:** Novice, Troubadour Adept

The Empathic Sense Edge allows a character to sense the feelings or emotions of another character. In order to use Empathic Sense, the character must "attune" the ability to a target character. This attuning remains in effect for a year and a day, or until the character changes the attunement. A character may attune to one character per Rank (1 at Novice, 2 at Seasoned, 3 at Veteran, 4 at Heroic, and 5 at Legendary). To attune with a target character, the character must spend three minutes of quiet



meditation with that character. To use Empathic Sense, the character makes a Spirit roll. Success gives the character a vague sense of the location of an attuned character, within a 90-degree arc, but does not reveal distance. Empathic Sense is effective up to 5 miles.

## Endure Cold

**Requirements:** Novice, Air Sailor Adept

The Endure Cold Edge allows characters to withstand damage caused by ice or cold temperatures. The character subtracts 1 from his Vigor roll for every 40 degrees below freezing, rather than every 20 degrees. This effect lasts for 1d6 hours.

## Engaging Banter

**Requirements:** Novice, Troubadour Adept

The Engaging Banter Edge allows a character to use his charming style and a touch of magical suggestion to distract an opponent. The target character must be able to understand what the character is saying in order for the Edge to work. The character makes an opposed Smarts roll with the target. On a success, the target becomes Shaken.

## Enhance Senses

**Requirements:** Novice, Scout Adept

The character gains a +4 bonus to Notice rolls for 1d6 rounds.

## Enhanced Matrix

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Elementalist, Illusionist, Nethermancer, or Wizard Adept

The character's Threads increase by 5 (see **Spell Threads**, p.199). This Edge may be taken once per Rank, from Seasoned and higher.

## Ethereal Weapon

**Requirements:** Heroic, Swordmaster Adept

Ethereal Weapon allows a character to make his or her weapon become incorporeal. The weapon glows with a turbulent haze of red, green, or blue, and is able to pass through physical obstacles, including armor, becoming solid as soon as it strikes a living target. When using this Edge, the character makes a Fighting roll as normal but ignores all Armor (except Mystic Armor, p.247) on a successful hit.

## Evidence Analysis

**Requirements:** Novice, Wizard Adept

A character uses the Evidence Analysis Edge to examine physical evidence. This examination consists of equal parts observation, logic, and divination. A character might be able to examine a bed, for example, and determine that its occupant had not slept well, or he might be able to identify a weapon as a murder weapon. As a general rule, Evidence Analysis can only answer questions regarding what happened to an object or place or how something happened to an object or place. The character makes a Notice roll with the following modifiers:

Event Occurred Ago	Modifier
24 hours or fewer	+0
1 to 11 days	-1
12+ days	-2

If the activity occurred in the previous 24 hours, the character using the Edge can get a general impression of when the event happened (i.e., morning, afternoon, or evening). This Edge cannot help the character answer the questions of "who" or "why."

## False Sight

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Illusionist Adept, Glamour

The False Sight Edge allows a character to intensify his illusions, making them more difficult for observing characters to penetrate. A character can use False Sight only on illusions he creates himself, not on those cast by other characters. Whenever the character casts an illusionism spell, he may opt to use this Edge. If he does, then targets suffer a -2 penalty to their Notice rolls when attempting to disbelieve the illusion (see **Sensing Illusions**, p.215).

## Fast Hand

**Requirements:** Novice, Illusionist Adept

The Fast Hand Edge lets a character move items from one place to another or to switch items between one character and another without being observed. The action is masked by magic, making the task much easier. All target items and characters must be within 1" of the character using the ability. The target items must be -2 Size or smaller.



## Fearsome Charge

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Cavalryman Adept

The Fearsome Charge Edge allows a character to intimidate an opponent when making a charging attack. Only a mounted character may use Fearsome Charge. A character using this Edge transforms when he is charging. His eyes grow larger or glow, his teeth become pointed or the canines become longer, and his hair stands away from his head in a wild tangle. As he bears down on him, the character makes an Intimidation Test of Wills against his opponent (see the *Savage Worlds Core Rulebook*) with a +2 bonus.

## Fence

**Requirements:** Novice, Thief Adept, Persuasion d6+

The Fence Edge helps a character get a better price for stolen or illegal goods. Shady merchants usually buy stolen or illegal goods for a base 10 percent of their normal cost (see **Chapter 8: Gear**, p. 240). If the character can make a successful opposed Persuasion roll, it raises the price that the merchant will pay by 5%, or 10% with a raise. The character may continue to make additional attempts until he fails. If that happens, the merchant lowers the last negotiated price by 5%, and negotiations are over. The merchant never offers less than 10% of the cost, so the character has nothing to lose by making the first attempt. The maximum number of attempts that a character can make for any transaction is equal to his Persuasion skill, beginning with 1 at d4. The Fence Edge can be used for only one transaction per day against any one character.

## Fire Blood

**Requirements:** Novice, Sky Raider Adept

The Fire Blood Edge grants a +1 bonus to the character's Soak roll. This bonus increases by +1 for each Karma Point spent. He may spend 1 Karma Point per Rank.

## First Impression

**Requirements:** Novice, Troubadour Adept

The character receives a +4 bonus to Persuasion rolls if used on a target the first time he meets him or her.

## Flame Arrow

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Archer Adept, Mystic Aim

The Flame Arrow Edge allows a character to create a flaming arrow from a normal one, transforming his arrow into a missile of fire. This process destroys the arrow once it is fired. If the character hits with this attack, he adds 2 to the damage roll. The character gains an additional +1 damage bonus for each raise on the attack roll. Targets struck by the flame arrow may catch fire (see the *Savage Worlds Core Rulebook*).







## Forge Armor

**Requirements:** Novice, Weaponsmith Adept, Repair d8+

With the Forge Armor Edge, a character can improve the armor bonus of armor and shields. To use this Edge, the character must spend at least 1 month working on the armor or shield at a blacksmith's forge. At the end of that time, he makes a Repair roll. If successful, the armor gains +1 Armor. A character may use Forge Armor on a single suit of armor or shield a maximum number of times based on his Repair die, starting with 1 at d4 (5 at d12). Any one suit of armor or shield can have a maximum Armor bonus of +3. Every failed use of this Edge imposes a permanent -1 penalty to the item's Armor bonus. Characters with this Edge often charge others for their time. The base rate to forge special armor or shields is 50 silver pieces per week. This charge is in addition to the actual cost of the item.

## Forge Blade

**Requirements:** Novice, Weaponsmith Adept, Repair d6+

With the Forge Blade Edge, a character can improve the damage of any melee weapon. To use this Edge, the character must spend at least 1 week working on the weapon at a blacksmith's forge. At the end of that time, he makes a Repair roll. If successful, the weapon gains a +1 damage bonus. A character may use Forge Blade on a single weapon a number of times based on his Repair die, starting with 1 at d4 (5 at d12). Any one weapon can have a maximum damage bonus of +3. Every failed use of this Edge imposes a permanent -1 penalty to the weapon's damage bonus. Characters with this Edge often charge others for their time. The base rate to forge a weapon is 50 silver pieces per week. This charge is in addition to the actual cost of the item. Despite its name, the Forge Blade Edge may be used to improve any melee weapon, not just bladed weapons.

## Frighten

**Requirements:** Heroic, Nethermancer Adept

The Frighten Edge allows a character to scare another character. Stepping in front of his target, the character stares silently at the target character

for 1 entire round. For the Edge to have effect, the character must see the eyes of his target or else the target must be able to see the character's eyes. At the end of the round, the target must make a Fear check against a Terrifying trigger. If the target fails, the character may choose to spend 1 additional Karma Point to add a +2 bonus to the Fright Table roll (refer to the *Savage Worlds Core Rulebook*). The character cannot use this Edge against the same target more than once.

## Frighten Animal Servants

**Requirements:** Novice, Beastmaster Adept

The Frighten Animal Servants Edge allows a character to terrorize servant animals. The targets must have animal-level Smarts. The ability focuses magic through the animals' master, making him the source of the animals' fear. The character makes an opposed Spirit roll with the target, with a -1 modifier for each animal he targets beyond the first. If successful, the animals become Shaken.

## Glamour

**Requirements:** Novice, Illusionist Adept

The character can create simple illusions. The illusions cannot be larger than human-sized, and cannot appear or move further than 4" from the character. The number of illusions the Illusionist can create depends on the character's Rank: Novice 1 illusion, Seasoned 5, Veteran 10, Heroic 15, Legendary 20 illusions. The illusions are for show only; they have no effect on their surroundings. Like normal illusions, a target can disbelieve these illusions by making an opposed Smarts roll against the illusionist's Spirit roll (see **Sensing Illusions**, p.215). The character can use False Sight in conjunction with this Edge.

## Gliding Stride

**Requirements:** Novice, Warrior Adept

Gliding Stride is a movement Edge that allows the character to move in a graceful glide through the air. For each use of this Edge, the character uses a move action and makes an Agility roll. Success gives the maximum horizontal distance in inches the character can move in 1 round using this Edge (e.g. 5" for an Agility roll of 5), though the character cannot move further horizontally than his normal





movement. This movement allows him to avoid difficult terrain and any other effect from the surface. The effects of Gliding Stride last for 1d6 rounds.

Gliding Stride suspends a character in midair, but cannot suspend him higher than a number of inches above the ground equal to the character's Agility die (e.g., 6" for d6 Agility). If the character is suspended farther (say he stepped off a cliff), he falls to the ground, but only takes the damage he would have suffered from falling a distance equal to the difference between the Gliding Stride suspension limit and the actual height. If a character using Gliding Stride stands still at more than 1" above the ground, he slowly sinks toward the ground. The character loses 1" of altitude each round that he remains stationary until he lands on the ground. A character may also use this Edge to move vertically. For each 1" the character moves vertically, he must move 2" horizontally.

## Gold Sense

**Requirements:** Novice, Thief Adept, Notice d6+

The Gold Sense Edge allows the character to sense gold or other natural precious metals. This Edge does not allow characters to sense orichalcum or other magical metals, however. If the character already knows that other members of his group have precious metal on their persons, he may eliminate this metal from the search. Gold Sense locates the largest amount of precious metal in a range equal to a Notice roll  $\times$  60". The minimum amount of a precious metal that can be detected with Gold Sense is 5 pounds. Success gives the character the general direction of and distance to the metal. Because this Edge is a sense, the parameters are vague: directions are given in terms of left/right, back/forward, and above/below, relative to the character. Distances are to the nearest 60" increment. A character using Gold Sense might judge, for example, that a large cache of precious metal lies above him and to his left, fewer than 60" away.

## Graceful Exit

**Requirements:** Novice, Troubadour Adept

A character can escape combat by making an enchanted Graceful Exit. The character makes a Spirit roll with a -1 penalty for each opponent he is engaged with in the battle. Each targeted opponent

must understand what the character says or else Graceful Exit has no effect. If successful, the character must move away from the combat; he may not take any other action but that. Opponents bedazzled by the Graceful Exit can take no action against the character using the Edge for 1d6 rounds. Graceful Exit protects only the character using it; his or her associates must fend for themselves. If the character returns to the combat after making a Graceful Exit, the targets affected by this Edge become enraged, gaining a +2 bonus to all Trait rolls against the character for the remainder of the battle.

## Greater Karma

**Requirements:** Heroic, any Adept

The character's maximum Karma Points increase by 10 points (p.40).

## Great Leap

**Requirements:** Novice, Sky Raider Adept

The character adds a +2 bonus to his Strength roll when made to jump. In addition, he gains an addition 1" of distance for each raise.

## Heal Animal Servant

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Cavalryman Adept, Durability (Mount)

Heal Animal Servant allows the character to heal his mount's damage. Using this Edge automatically heals 1 wound on the character's mount.

## Heartening Laugh

**Requirements:** Novice, Swordmaster Adept

The Heartening Laugh Edge allows a character to support friendly characters against fear. The character must use an action directing a booming, mocking laugh at one opponent and making a Spirit roll. If successful, all allies within 20" gain a +2 bonus to Fear checks for a number of rounds equal to his Spirit roll.

## Howl

**Requirements:** Heroic, Beastmaster Adept

A character using the Howl Edge can make other characters and creatures flee by imitating the aggression sounds of any creature he has trained. The Howl Edge also works against sentient creatures. The character can target any creature within 10".



The target must make a Fear check against a Terrifying trigger. If the target fails, the character may choose to spend 1 additional Karma Point to add a +2 bonus to the Fright Table roll (refer to the *Savage Worlds Core Rulebook*). The character cannot use this Edge against the same target more than once.

## Hypnotize

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Illusionist or Troubadour Adept, Persuasion d8+

The Hypnotize Edge allows a character to mesmerize another character, making the target very susceptible to suggestion through Persuasion rolls. A character can hypnotize any single target within 6". The character must speak to use this Edge. The target cannot be involved in physical conflict and must be able to understand the hypnotist. The character using the Edge must use an action in order to attempt to hypnotize a target. The character makes an opposed Spirit roll. If successful, the target becomes hypnotized. While under the influence of the Hypnotize Edge, the target remains placid

unless attacked. The character has 10 minutes to make post-hypnotic suggestions. During this time, the character can make Persuasion rolls against the target, using successful rolls to persuade the target to perform desired actions. The target character will perform any actions to which he or she agreed while under the effects of the Hypnotize Edge, as long as they can be completed within a number of hours of the hypnosis session equal to the character's Spirit roll.

## Impressive Shot

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Archer Adept, Persuasion d8+

With Impressive Shot, a character makes opponents think twice about attacking him. The character uses this Edge in conjunction with a ranged attack. The attack must not harm an opponent, but is typically aimed to hit very close to the target—go through a target's shirt sleeve, knock a mug from the target's hand, or otherwise demonstrate the character's ability with missile or throwing weapons (though the attack is still rolled as normal). After making the attack roll, the character makes a Persuasion roll instead of calculating damage. Success means the target will not act against the character using the Edge unless attacked by him or his allies. The effect lasts for 1d6 rounds.

## Improve Armor

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Weaponsmith Adept, Forge Armor, Repair d8+

The Improve Armor Edge allows a character to add a temporary Armor bonus to a piece of armor or a shield. To perform Improve Armor, the character needs a fire the size of a large campfire. Within the time limit of half an hour, he quickly runs through a mock forging of the armor or shield to be improved. The character then makes a Repair roll. If successful, the armor gains a +2 Armor bonus for a number of hours equal to the character's Repair roll. Multiple uses of this Edge do not stack.

## Improve Blade

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Weaponsmith Adept, Forge Blade, Repair d8+

The Improve Blade Edge allows a character to add a temporary bonus to the damage of a weapon.





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To perform Improve Blade, the character needs a fire the size of a large campfire. Within the time limit of half an hour, he quickly runs through a mock forging of the weapon to be improved. The character then makes a Repair roll. If successful, the weapons gains a +2 damage bonus for a number of hours equal to the character's Repair roll. Multiple uses of this Edge do not stack.

## Incite Mob

**Requirements:** Heroic, Troubadour Adept, Emotion Song, Persuasion d8+

The Incite Mob Edge allows a character to motivate a group to act against a specific target. The character must spend at least 1 minute shouting and encouraging a large group of sentient beings to act. The character must state a target, a grievance, and propose an action for the mob to take. The action may be peaceful or violent, constructive or destructive. The character makes a Persuasion roll with the following modifiers:

Mob Size	Modifier
1–50	–1
51–100	–2
101–150	–3
151–200	–4
201+	–5

The mob follows the inciter's course of action for a number of hours equal to the character's character Persuasion roll. Once motivated, the mob becomes largely uncontrollable. A character can only control the mob by making a second, equally successful Persuasion roll.

## Karma Ritual

**Requirements:** Novice, any Adept

The character is able to perform a Karma Ritual in order to gain Karma Points. Karma Points are required for Adepts to use Edges. A character can perform a Karma Ritual once per day. Once completed, the character rolls his or her Spirit die (no Wild Die, rolls can Ace), gaining the amount rolled as Karma Points. A character's maximum Karma Points is capped at 20 unless he has an Edge that increases it, like the Greater Karma Adept Edge (p. 179). For more information about Karma, see **Karma Points** (p.40).

## Keen Weapon

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Swordmaster Adept

The character gains a +1 bonus to damage with a bladed melee weapon for the duration of the round. This bonus increases by +1 for each Karma Point spent. The character may spend 1 Karma Point per Rank.

## Kiss

**Requirements:** Novice, Troubadour Adept

With this Edge, the character can deliver a most passionate kiss to a member of the preferred sex. The kiss adds a +4 bonus equal to Persuasion rolls made against the recipient for 5 minutes. If the recipient resists the kiss, the character must first succeed at a touch attack.

## Life Check

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Warrior Adept

The Life Check Edge gives the character a chance to save himself from death. When the character makes an Incapacitated roll of 1 or less, he can immediately spend 1 Karma Point and reroll. If the character again rolls a 1 or less, he does not get to use Life Check again that round. The character may make a maximum number of Life Check attempts equal to his Rank (Seasoned 2, Veteran 3, Heroic 4, Legendary 5).

## Lifesight

**Requirements:** Novice, Nethermancer Adept

The Lifesight Edge gives a character the ability to see the strength and composition of a character's life force. The character learns qualitative information, not quantitative. A strong, healthy life force appears as a strong but delicate latticework of light and opalescent force. Weaker life forces are dimmer, and parts of the latticework may be warped or broken. The life force of a character near death shows almost no visible latticework, just a few disconnected bright spots, one or more of which is fading. Lifesight has a range of 5". A character can use Lifesight to view a target's life force through solid, non-living objects. For example, a character could see the life forces of people hiding behind a wall, but not someone hiding in a hollow tree. Once seen by Lifesight, the life forces remain visible as long as the targets stay in range.



## Lion Heart

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Beastmaster Adept

The Lion Heart Edge allows the character to better resist fear effects. The character gains a +2 bonus to a Fear check, +1 for each additional Karma Point spent. The character may spend 1 Karma Point per Rank.

## Lip Reading

**Requirements:** Novice, Thief Adept, Notice d6+

The Lip Reading Edge gives a character a discreet method of eavesdropping on a conversation. The character must be able to see a speaker's lips and understand his language in order to use Lip Reading. The character must succeed at a Notice roll in order to be able to understand what the target is saying. A different roll is required for each target.

## Lizard Leap

**Requirements:** Novice, Beastmaster Adept

The character adds a +2 bonus to his Strength roll when made to jump. In addition, he gains an addition 1" of distance for each raise.

## Lock Sense

**Requirements:** Novice, Thief Adept, Notice d6+

The character gains a +4 bonus to Notice rolls when attempting to find traps located in a lock.

## Maneuver

**Requirements:** Novice, Swordmaster Adept

When using the Maneuver Edge, the character sacrifices his attack to try to avoid attacks made against him. The character must direct the Maneuver Edge against one opponent. Use of this Edge takes a full round. The character makes an Agility

roll, adding 1 to his Parry if successful, +1 per raise, for the remainder of the round. If the character avoids his opponent's attack during the round in which he uses this Edge, he adds 1 to his attack and damage rolls, +1 to attack and damage for each raise on his Agility roll, against his opponent during the following round—but only if that opponent made at least one attack against him while he was using Maneuver.

## Memorize Image

**Requirements:** Novice, Illusionist Adept

The Memorize Image Edge stores an image in a character's mind. The character can later recall the image to form the central image for an illusion. A character memorizes an image while watching a person or event. The character makes a Smarts roll. If successful, any creature attempting to later disbelieve an illusion of the image created by the character suffers a penalty of -2. The character can memorize a number of different images depending upon his Smarts die, starting with one image at d4, two images at d6, and so on.

## Metal Ward

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Elementalist Adept

The Metal Ward Edge reduces damage from attacks made using any form of metal, including weapons, spikes in pit traps, and so on, by granting the character a +4 bonus to his Armor for the duration of the round, applicable only to damage from metal.

## Mimic Voice

**Requirements:** Novice, Illusionist or Troubadour Adept

The Mimic Voice Edge gives a character the ability to mimic any voice he or she hears. A character uses the Mimic Voice Edge both to learn the voice and to mimic it. When a character hears a voice he wants to mimic, he makes a Smarts roll. A successful roll means the character can mimic the voice any time during the next 24 hours.

## Mind Wave

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Illusionist Adept

The Mind Wave Edge allows a character to confuse and confound a target. To use this Edge, the



character must select a target within 3" and make an opposed Spirit roll. If successful, the target becomes Shaken.

## Mount Attack

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Cavalryman Adept

The character's mount gains a +2 bonus to damage for one attack this round.

## Moving Earth

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Elementalist Adept, Unshakable Earth

A character uses Moving Earth to animate a section of earth. To do so, the character must declare how many Karma Points he is spending. He may spend any amount of Karma when using this Edge. The section of animated earth is 2" by 2" in size and 1 to 2 feet thick. The character can use the section as a "magic carpet" on which he and other passengers can ride. The carpet has a Pace of 12 and lasts for a number of rounds equal to the number of Karma Points spent. The moving earth has a carrying capacity of 250 pounds times the number of Karma Points spent. Moving Earth can also act as a living shield between its riders and attackers, granting an Armor bonus equal to the number of Karma Points spent.

## Multi-Charge

**Requirements:** Heroic, Cavalryman Adept, Wheeling Attack

When using this Edge, the character can spend a maximum number of Karma Points equal to his Rank. When using a Charge, the character may attack a number of opponents within reach equal to the number of Karma Points spent, but only one attack per opponent.

## Multi-Shot

**Requirements:** Heroic, Archer Adept, Quick Shot

The Multi-Shot Edge permits a character to make multiple ranged attacks per round, without a multi-action penalty. The character makes an Agility roll. If successful, he may spend a number of Karma Points equal to his Agility roll. For each Karma Point spent, he may make one ranged attack.

## Multi-Strike

**Requirements:** Heroic, Warrior Adept

The Multi-Strike Edge permits a character to make additional melee weapon or unarmed attacks per round without a multi-action penalty. The character makes an Agility roll. If successful, he may spend a number of Karma Points equal to his Agility roll. For each Karma Point spent, he may make one melee or unarmed attack.

## Mystic Aim

**Requirements:** Novice, Archer Adept

The Mystic Aim Edge allows a character to draw a steady aim on a target when using a ranged weapon. The character spends an entire round aiming at a target within line-of-sight, then makes an Agility roll. If successful, a small, visible mark appears on the target and the character adds a +4 bonus to his Shooting roll against the target or until the target moves out of line-of-sight. The mark created is unique to the character using the Edge. The mark may appear as plain white dots or as a symbol from the character's town or village.

## Netherwalk

**Requirements:** Heroic, Nethermancer Adept

A character can use Netherwalk to send his spirit forth to walk through nearby astral space. The character can remain in astral space for up to 1 hour. The character must return his spirit to his body after the ability has expired, but he can only end the Netherwalk when his spirit is at his body. While in astral space, the character can pass through many physical barriers that exist only in this world.

A character using Netherwalk suffers damage each minute his spirit is in astral space. His normal Toughness is used to resist this, but only Mystic Armor provides protection (see p.247). The amount of danger he is in depends on the classification of the area of astral space in which the character is moving, per the table below. The pollution in astral space has a good side to it, however, in that it obscures the character from the view of the Horrors or other astral entities. This obscuration is also dependent on the classification of the region where the character is located. The pollution in astral space acts as a penalty to a Horror's Notice roll to detect the character's presence.







The table below gives the Notice modifier based on the character's astral location. The classifications of Safe, Open, Tainted, and Corrupt regions are described in **Chapter 6: Magic** (p. 194).

Region Type	Damage/Minute	Notice Modifier
Safe	2d4	-1
Open	2d6	-2
Tainted	2d8	-3
Corrupt	2d10	-4

## Orbiting Spy

**Requirements:** Novice, Nethermancer Adept

The Orbiting Spy Edge allows a character to summon a spirit to watch over the character and to serve as a lookout. To conjure the spirit, the character spends an entire round in concentration. The conjured spirit remains for 1d6 hours. It may

be dismissed by the character at any time as a free action. The spy spirit hovers over the character at a height ranging from 1" to 60", traveling in a circular pattern centered on the character. The character determines how high or low the spirit hovers. Conjured spies cannot affect nor be affected by the physical world. Orbiting Spies are immune to most spells, except those which disrupt or dispel magic. Conjured spy spirits are on constant alert. Whenever the character is entitled to a Notice roll, he may make an additional roll for the spirit using his own die. The spy spirit suffers no penalty modifiers to its roll.

## Otherworldly Control

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Nethermancer Adept

Any time the character fails a Fear check, he may reroll one time for each use of this power.

## Plant Shelter

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Elementalist Adept

Using the Plant Shelter Edge, a character makes the plant life in a 10" diameter area grow rapidly enough to form a shelter. The character sings to the plants to gain their cooperation, mystically urging them to grow into a shelter according to his instructions. The shelter has a Toughness of 8 and is susceptible only to Cutting damage. When constructing the shelter, the character makes a Spirit roll. If successful, the shelter can hold up to 5 adults. Every raise increases this number by 2. Horses, obsidimen, trolls, and other large beasts count as two adults. Children, and windlings count as half an adult. The shelter takes 15 minutes to make and remains in place for a number of hours equal to the Adept's Rank, after which the plants return to their original state.

## Poison Resistance

**Requirements:** Novice, Beastmaster Adept

The Poison Resistance Edge allows a character to better resist poisons. The character gains a +4 bonus to his Vigor roll when resisting poison.

## Quickblade

**Requirements:** Novice, Thief Adept

A character with the Quickblade Edge is faster than normal when using blades. Whenever the character enters combat wielding only light one-handed

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bladed weapons, he may use this Edge to gain a +2 bonus to his initiative (so a 4 becomes a 6, a 9 becomes a Jack, etc.). Characters using this Edge with the exact same initiative (suit and value) as their opponent, act first.

## Quick Shot

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Archer Adept

The Quick Shot Edge permits a character to make additional ranged attacks. The character must make an Agility roll. If successful, the character may make one additional ranged attack with no multi-action penalty.

## Rally

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Cavalryman Adept

The Rally Edge allows a character to inspire his companions in the midst of battle. Rally must be used during combat and it can affect any number of allies within 10". Targets affected by Rally make a Spirit roll to recover from being Shaken per normal, with a +1 bonus. If they succeed, even without a raise, the allies can take an action as normal.

## Reshape Object

**Requirements:** Novice, Elementalist Adept

The Reshape Object Edge allows a character to change the shape, but not the mass, of an object. The character touches the object and makes a Spirit roll. If successful, the character can reshape the object. The character can reshape a number of pounds of material equal to  $20 \times$  the result of his Spirit roll. Reshape Object is permanent. This ability does not work against living beings, undead, or constructs.

## Riposte

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Swordmaster Adept, Maneuver

With the Riposte Edge, the character can attempt to make a counterattack against a melee attack. Whenever the character is hit by a melee or unarmed attack, he may use this Edge as a reaction, immediately making an opposed Fighting roll against his opponent's attack roll. If successful, the character deflects the attack and may strike his opponent if he achieves a raise on his Fighting roll, dealing damage normally. If the character's opponent also has Riposte, he may use it to riposte the

riposte! The character may use Riposte a maximum number of times per attack equal to his Rank.

## Safe Path

**Requirements:** Novice, Scout Adept

The Safe Path Edge allows a character to determine the safest path through unfamiliar territory by contacting an elemental spirit. (The character does not conjure the elemental, only establishes mental contact with it.) Sometimes the elemental animates a part of the landscape nearby, making its conversation audible to other characters. The character makes a Spirit roll. The result is the number of miles of safe pathway the elemental can predict. The elemental tells the character which is the safest path to take and what possible elemental dangers and/or natural beasts might lie ahead. For example, a roll of 7 means the elemental can direct the character along the safest route for the next 7 miles. If an obstacle lurks at mile 11, or even 8, the elemental will not be able to give your character even a hint about it. Keep in mind that what an elemental considers dangerous is probably vastly different than what poses danger to an adventurer. An elemental's knowledge of an area is also limited by its type. Earth elementals probably know nothing of flying or swimming dangers, but may be able to describe exactly the kinds of arms and armor nearby groups carry. Even that information cannot indicate the intentions of these other groups.

## Safe Thought

**Requirements:** Novice, Illusionist Adept

The Safe Thought Edge allows the character to hide his thoughts and attitude from telepathic probes or other types of divination magic. When using this Edge, the character becomes immune to any attempts to magically read his thoughts or mood for 1d6 hours.

## Screaming Arrow

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Archer Adept, Stopping Aim

The Screaming Arrow Edge allows a character to intimidate a target by shooting a (literally) "screaming" arrow at him. A character fires the screaming arrow at one target character with a standard attack roll. If successful, the arrow travels in a tight spiral,

shrieking toward its target. The arrow never damages the target. Instead, the character makes an Intimidation Test of Wills (see the *Savage Worlds Core Rulebook*) against his opponent with a +2 bonus.

## Sense Magic Weapon

**Requirements:** Novice, Weaponsmith Adept

The Sense Magic Weapon Edge allows a character to determine if a weapon (or other item) is magical simply by handling it. Of course, this can be dangerous. Because the character must touch the weapon to use this Edge, he or she immediately activates any magical effects triggered by touch. To use this Edge, the character must spend a standard action. The character knows whether or not the weapon is magical upon doing so. This Edge does not provide the character with any information regarding the magical properties of the weapon, just that it is magical.

## Sense Poison

**Requirements:** Novice, Thief Adept

With Sense Poison, the character can determine whether a creature, object, or area has been poisoned or is poisonous. The character can determine the exact type of poison with a successful Notice roll. This Edge can penetrate barriers, but 1 foot of stone, 1 inch of common metal, a thin sheet of lead, or 3 feet of wood or dirt blocks it.

## Shield Charge

**Requirements:** Novice, Sky Raider Adept

The character gains a +4 bonus to his Push roll with a shield.

## Show Armor Flaw

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Weaponsmith Adept, Spot Armor Flaw, Notice d8+

The Show Armor Flaw Edge allows a character to identify flaws in an opponent's armor and defenses, causing the flaws to show with a soft orange glow that pulses in time to the character's heartbeat; if the Adept dies, the armor flaw marks disappear. The character uses a regular action to make a Notice roll against an opponent. If successful, the flaws in the target's armor begin to glow. Attacks made against the target gain a +2 AP bonus to their damage rolls for the remainder of the round.

## Silent Walk

**Requirements:** Novice, Scout or Thief Adept

The Silent Walk Edge magically masks the character's movement, granting a +4 bonus to his Stealth roll when attempting to move quietly. This bonus increases by +2 for each additional Karma Point spent, to a maximum of 1 Karma Point per Rank.

## Slough Blame

**Requirements:** Novice, Thief Adept

The Slough Blame Edge allows a character to temporarily divert suspicion and blame from one character to another. The character using the Edge must concoct a plausible explanation that shifts blame to another character, then make a Persuasion roll with the following modifier:

Plausible: +0

Somewhat Plausible: -1

Implausible: -2

## Soften Blade

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Weaponsmith Adept

The Soften Blade Edge allows a character to reduce the effectiveness of an opponent's bladed melee weapon. The character makes an opposed Spirit roll against the opponent's Fighting roll. If successful, the opponent receives a -4 penalty to his damage roll for a number of rounds equal to the Adept's Spirit die.

## Song of Deflection

**Requirements:** Novice, Troubadour Adept

The Song of Deflection Edge allows the character to magically deflect attacks directed at him. The character sings or hums a little song to himself while the Edge is in effect. Opponents who target the Adept suffer a -2 penalty to their attack rolls. The effect lasts until the Adept stops singing or for a maximum number of rounds equal to the Adept's Spirit die.

## Soul Shatter

**Requirements:** Legendary, Nethermancer Adept

Soul Shatter pits the character's spirit against the spirit of the target character. Only one may win this contest. The character must make a successful touch attack against his intended target. After touching the target, the character makes an



opposed Spirit roll. If successful, the target's soul begins to break apart, piece by piece. The target must make a successful Vigor roll or suffer a wound. This Edge cannot be used against undead, plants, or constructs.

## Spirit Dodge

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Nethermancer Adept

Using the Spirit Dodge Edge, the character conjures a spirit that protects him in combat. The summoned spirit remains for 1d6 hours or until dismissed. The character can only ever have one summoned spirit at a time, and he can never summon one for another creature or object. While the spirit resides within the character, whenever the character is struck by a physical attack, he may spend 1 Karma Point and make an Agility roll against his opponent's attack roll as a free action. If successful, the attack misses.

## Spirit Hold

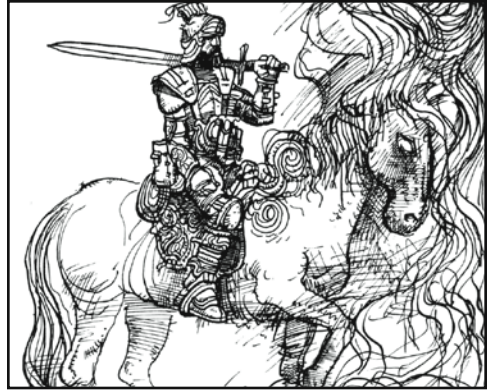
**Requirements:** Seasoned, Nethermancer Adept

The Spirit Hold Edge allows a character to prevent a ghost or spirit from moving or taking any action other than communicating. The character must use a standard action to use this Edge. The character can target any spirit within 20". The character must be able to communicate with the undead in order to target it. The character then makes an opposed Spirit roll. If successful, the spirit is held for 2d6 rounds or until it takes any damage. The character must concentrate to hold the undead; he cannot move, cast spells, or take any action other than communication or Edges and actions that rely solely on communication.

## Spirit Mount

**Requirements:** Heroic, Cavalryman Adept

The Spirit Mount Edge allows a character to conjure a mount to ride. Using this Edge conjures a spirit mount "whose eyes are fire and whose skin is all summer lightning and fog." Spirit mounts usually take the form of horses or unicorns, but sages have recorded other shapes. Spirit mounts can walk or gallop on air when unburdened, but cannot carry riders in the air. They can sink one foot into the earth, allowing the mount and character to pass through corridors too short for a standard horse and



rider. No one but the conjuring character may ride the spirit mount; the spirit mount dissolves rather than obey the commands of another. A spirit mount remains in this world for 3d6 minutes.

### SPIRIT MOUNT

**Attributes:** Agility d10, Smarts d4 (A), Spirit d10, Strength d12, Vigor d8

**Skills:** Fighting d6, Notice d6

**Pace:** 10; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 8

#### Special Abilities

- **Fleet-Footed:** Spirit Mounts roll a d10 when running instead of a d6.
- **Kick:** Str.
- **Size:** +2. Spirit mounts weigh between 800 and 1000 pounds.

## Spirit Strike

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Warrior Adept

The Spirit Strike Edge allows a character to strike at opponents from astral space by sensing their presence. The character makes a Notice roll to locate the target in astral space. If he is successful, he may attack the target normally for the remainder of the round. The character's weapon disappears from view as it enters astral space and then re-emerges trailing cold green wisps of mist. Defensive Edges like Avoid Blow and Riposte cannot be used against attacks made with Spirit Strike.

## Spirit Talk

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Nethermancer Adept

The Spirit Talk Edge allows a character to talk to incorporeal undead, including those who do not speak his language and those who do not normally communicate verbally.

## Spot Armor Flaw

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Weaponsmith Adept, Notice d8+

The Spot Armor Flaw Edge allows a character to identify flaws in an opponent's armor and defenses. The character makes a Notice roll. If successful, he gains a +2 AP bonus to his damage rolls against the target for the remainder of the round.

## Sprint

**Requirements:** Novice, Archer or Scout Adept

The Sprint Edge allows a character to temporarily increase his movement rate by making an Agility roll. With a success, the character's Pace is doubled. With a raise, running becomes a free action, so he may ignore the usual -2 running penalty.

## Steel Thought

**Requirements:** Novice, Weaponsmith Adept

The Steel Thought Edge allows a character to increase his resilience to spells that affect his mind. The character firms his resolve, figuratively forging his thoughts into tougher, more resilient patterns. The character gains a +4 bonus on any Trait roll to resist any spell or effect that affects his mind, including Fear checks.

## Stone Skin

**Requirements:** Veteran, Warrior Adept, Durability, Earth Skin, Wood Skin

The Stone Skin Edge increases a character's resistance to physical damage by causing the character's skin, and portions of the muscles and ligaments, to become tougher. When using this Edge, the character's skin takes on the appearance of hardened earth, granting him 4 points of Armor. The duration of this Edge lasts a number of hours equal to how many Karma Points the character spends. The character can also end the effects at any time as a free action. The effects of Stone Skin do not stack with the effects from Wood Skin or Earth Skin.

## Stopping Aim

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Archer Adept, True Shot

The Stopping Aim Edge allows a character to stop an opponent dead in his tracks. This Edge can only be used with a bow or crossbow. The character

spends an entire round action aiming at a target within line of sight. On the following round, the target must make an Agility roll, or a small mark appears on the target, and the target stops dead in his tracks for fear of being skewered by the arrow. The target remains paralyzed until the character moves his aim or until the target takes any damage. While paralyzed, the target is aware and breathes normally but cannot take any actions, even speech. Each round on its turn, the target may attempt a Spirit roll to end the effect.

## Strength of the Sky

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Air Sailor Adept

This Edge gives the character a +2 bonus to Strength rolls for 1 hour when aboard an airborne airship.

## Summon

**Requirements:** Veteran, Elementalist or Nether-mancer Adept

A character uses this Edge to summon a being from outside the character's plane of existence. If the character has only the Elementalist Edge, then the being must be an elemental. Each use of the Summon Edge requires a 1-hour ritual. At the end of the hour, the character makes a Spirit





roll. If successful, the Edge summons the being from its plane to the character's plane. Note that the Summon Edge only brings the creature to the character's plane; the character will most likely need other magic to successfully negotiate with or control the being.

## Summoning Circle

**Requirements:** Veteran, Elementalist or Nether-mancer Adept, Summon

The Summoning Circle Edge creates a protective circle into which a character summons a creature or being. To create the circle, the character draws a circle on the ground where he intends to perform the summoning. The circle must be big enough to hold the creature to be summoned. Once the circle is drawn, the character declares how many Karma Points he intends to spend on the circle. A summoning circle lasts for a number of hours equal to the character's Smarts die. The circle's creator may dispel the circle at any time by touching the circle and symbolically "cutting" it. After the character draws the circle, he can summon the creature using Summon or other means. Creatures summoned into the circle cannot escape from the circle without first destroying it. To destroy the circle, the summoned creature must make a Spirit roll with a negative modifier of -1 for each Karma Point used when creating the circle.

## Superb Sailing

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Air Sailor Adept

The character gains a +4 bonus to his Boating roll.

## Sure Mount

**Requirements:** Novice, Cavalryman Adept

The Sure Mount Edge helps a character maintain control of his mount. Any time the mount must make a roll to resist fear or an effect that affects the mount's mind, the character may use this Edge and grant the mount a +4 bonus to its roll.

## Surprise Strike

**Requirements:** Novice, Thief Adept

The Surprise Strike Edge allows characters to take advantage of the element of surprise. The character gains a +2 bonus to damage against Surprised targets.

## Swift Kick

**Requirements:** Novice, Warrior Adept

The Swift Kick Edge grants the character an additional unarmed attack with no multi-action penalty if his initiative is higher than his opponent. T'skrang may make this attack with their tails.

## Tale

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Troubadour Adept, Kiss

The character gains a +4 bonus to Persuasion rolls made against the recipient by spinning a fanciful and thoroughly entertaining tale. Tale may be used in combination with Kiss. The effect of this ability lasts 5 minutes.

## Tame Mount

**Requirements:** Novice, Cavalryman Adept, Persuasion d8+

Tame Mount allows a character to tame a mount or creature. The creature must have animal-level Smarts. The character must touch the beast to be tamed. A successful Persuasion roll improves the creature's attitude by one step, two steps with a raise. Failure, on the other hand, decreases the creature's attitude by a step, or two if a 1 is rolled on the Persuasion die (regardless of the Wild Die). Most creatures won't change their reaction more than one or two levels during a single exchange, but that's entirely up to the Game Master and the situation. Once the creature's attitude has been raised to Friendly, the tamer may then ride the mount. No one else may ride the mount until the creature is trained. The mount is automatically Hostile to anyone else who tries to ride it.

## Temperature

**Requirements:** Novice, Elementalist Adept

The Temperature Edge allows a character to control the temperature within a room or small shelter, up to 3" by 3" by 2" in size. For each Karma Point spent, the character can raise or lower the temperature by 15 degrees Fahrenheit by using a full round action. The effects of Temperature last for 1d6 hours. The character may cancel the effect any time he is in or adjacent to the room.





## Temper Other

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Weaponsmith Adept, Durability, Temper Self

The Temper Other Edge toughens another person and makes him more resistant to physical attacks. The character draws icy ether from astral space and rolls the chilling substance over the target. This ritual requires half an hour of intense meditation. At the end of the half-hour, the target makes a Vigor roll. If successful, the target gains a +2 bonus to its Toughness for 24 hours. The target gains an additional +1 bonus to its Toughness for each raise. If the target fails the Vigor roll, he or she automatically suffers a wound.

## Temper Self

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Weaponsmith Adept, Durability

The Temper Self Edge toughens the Adept to become more resistant to physical attacks. The character draws icy ether from astral space and rolls the chilling substance over himself. This ritual requires 30 minutes of intense meditation. At the end of the half hour, the character must make a Vigor roll. If successful, the character gains a +2 bonus to his Toughness for 24 hours from the end of the ritual. The target gains an additional +1 bonus to its Toughness for each raise. If the character fails, the character automatically suffers a wound.

## Thought Link

**Requirements:** Novice, Troubadour Adept, Empathic Link

Thought Link allows a character to establish a telepathic link between himself and one other willing person. Using this Edge establishes a link that permits the characters to communicate telepathically. The communication is silent and requires no more effort than forming the words in one's mind. The recipient of the thought hears and feels the words. Thoughts come across as words and a buzzing, ticklish pressure. Though the pressure is not painful, it has been known to cause a peculiar expression on the face of someone not expecting it. Each use of Thought Link lasts for 10 minutes.

## Thread Weaving

**Requires:** Novice, any Adept

Characters use the Thread Weaving Edge to create and weave magical Threads to Thread Items (see **Chapter 6: Magic**, p. 194). A character can have a maximum number of Threads active based on his character Rank: Novice 3, Seasoned 6, Veteran 9, Heroic 12, Legendary 15. Each Discipline has a unique variation of the Thread Weaving Edge, as listed below.

Discipline	Thread Weaving Edge
Air Sailor	Sky Weaving
Archer	Arrow Weaving
Beastmaster	Beast Weaving
Cavalryman	Rider Weaving
Elementalist	Elementalism
Illusionist	Illusionism
Nethermancer	Nethermancy
Sky Raider	Sky Weaving
Swordmaster	Blade Weaving
Thief	Thief Weaving
Troubadour	Story Weaving
Warrior	War Weaving
Weaponsmith	Thread Smithing
Wizard	Wizardry

Record the appropriate Thread Weaving Edge on the character sheet. For example, the Character Sheet for an Archer Adept would list Arrow Weaving. The Thread Weaving Edge also gives characters a limited version of the Astral Sight Adept Edge (p. 167). The astral sight provided by Thread Weaving allows characters only enough vision to see Threads and Patterns (see **Chapter 6: Magic**, p. 194, for more information on Threads, Thread Weaving, and True Patterns).

## Thunder Axe

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Sky Raider Adept

The Thunder Axe Edge stuns opponents. A character must be using an axe or a warhammer as his weapon to use this Edge. After making a successful attack, the target must make an opposed Strength roll against the damage roll of the attack or be knocked prone.

## Trace Missile

**Requirements:** Heroic, Archer Adept

The Trace Missile Edge allows a character to trace the path of a missile weapon that has hit its target

# CHAPTER 5: EDGES

simply by looking at the weapon. The character makes a Notice roll. A success traces the flight path back to the shooter, marking his or her forehead with a symbol similar to the kind created by the Mystic Aim and Stopping Aim Edges. This symbol lasts for 1d6 rounds or until the character attacks the shooter. This Edge can only be used to trace one missile in any given round.

## Tracking

**Requirements:** Notice, Beastmaster or Scout Adept

The character gains a +4 bonus to his Tracking rolls.

## Trample

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Cavalryman Adept

Trample grants the character's mount an additional attack with no multi-action penalty.

## Trick Riding

**Requirements:** Novice, Cavalryman Adept

The Trick Riding Edge allows a character to perform acrobatics on his mount, allowing him to defend himself and his mount from attacks. Trick Riding may also be used to jump fences, chasms, flames, or other obstacles. Whenever the character uses this Edge, he gains a +4 bonus to his Riding roll for the remainder of the round.

## True Sight

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Illusionist Adept, Notice d8+

The character gains a +4 bonus on his Notice roll to disbelieve illusions (see p.215).

## True Shot

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Archer Adept, Mystic Aim

The True Shot Edge allows a character to make a very accurate ranged attack. When utilizing this Edge, the character makes a normal ranged attack. The character must declare that he is using this Edge before rolling the attack. If the character misses, he must spend an additional Karma Point. This adds 1 to his attack roll. The character must continue to spend Karma Points, one at a time, until the attack hits or until the character can spend no

more points. Once the attack hits, the character cannot spend additional Karma Points.

## Truth Skit

**Requirements:** Novice, Troubadour Adept

With the help of other participants, Truth Skit allows a character to recreate an event from the past. All participants must volunteer to be part of the Truth Skit and must have been part of the original scene. Truth Skit recreates a scene that occurred no more than 7 years in the past. The character plays the parts of all of the people who were in the original event but who are not present now. Each round of the skit replays one round of the original event. For each round replayed, the character makes a Spirit roll. A success means the participants must say what they said in the original scene and must mimic the actions they originally took. The truth skit lasts 1d4 rounds per Karma Point spent.

## Unshakable Earth

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Elementalist Adept

The Unshakable Earth Edge makes a character more resistant to being moved or knocked down by allowing him to attach himself to the ground, actually blending with parts of the earth. The Unshakable Earth Edge can only be used on natural ground, earthen, or stone surfaces. The character gains a +4 bonus to his Strength roll if Pushed.

## Unmount

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Warrior Adept

Whenever the character hits a mounted opponent, the target must make an opposed Strength roll against the damage roll of the attack. If the target fails, it falls prone.

## Venom

**Requirements:** Heroic, Beastmaster Adept, Borrow Sense, Chameleon, Echo Location

The Venom Edge allows a character to create a fine spray of contact poison. Venom cannot be used with any manufactured weapon, only an unarmed attack. The character must make a successful ranged touch attack. The type of poison the character can emit depends on how many Karma Points he spends, according to the Venom Table on p.192.

## VENOM TABLE

Type	Failure	Success	Raise	Karma Points
Venomous	Death in 2d6 minutes	1 wound and Exhaustion	Exhaustion	3
Paralysis	Paralyzed for 2d6 minutes	Paralyzed for 2d6 rounds	Fatigue	2
Knockout	Knocked out for 2d6 hours	Knocked out for 2d6 minutes	Fatigue	1

## Versatility

**Requirements:** Novice, any human Adept

Versatility is a human racial Edge, available to all human Adepts (p. 36), allowing them to learn Edges from any Discipline. The character may ignore the Adept requirements when choosing new Edges, but must satisfy any other prerequisites the Edge may have. The character may know a limited number of Versatility Edges, based upon his Rank (Novice 2 total, Seasoned 4 total, Veteran 6 total, and so on). Versatility Edges must be purchased like normal Edges.

## Vitality

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Warrior Adept,

Durability

Using this Edge adds 1d6 hours to the character's Golden Hour (refer to the *Savage Worlds Core Rulebook*).

## Vital Strike

**Requirements:** Heroic, Warrior Adept

Using this Edge halves the character's penalties for Called Shots.

## Warp Missile

**Requirements:** Heroic, Weaponsmith Adept

The Warp Missile Edge allows a character to reduce the effectiveness of an opponent's missile weapon. As a free action, the character may use this Edge by making a Spirit roll opposed by the target's Shooting or Throwing roll. If successful, the damage of the attack is reduced by 1d6, plus another 1d6 for each raise.

## Weapon History

**Requirements:** Novice, Troubadour, Weaponsmith, or Wizard Adept

The Weapon History Edge allows a character to learn the history of an item or weapon, either enchanted or mundane. The character must carry

the weapon on his person for at least a week, studying it carefully for at least one hour each night. The character must spend the Karma Point to use this Edge at the start of the week. During this time, he cannot regain this lost point. At the end of seven nights of study, the character makes a Smarts roll. If successful, he gains 1 Key Knowledge. Each raise earns 1 additional Key Knowledge.

The Weapon History Edge can be used multiple times on the same weapon, each time after a week of study. As a character learns pieces of a weapon's history, he also learns the Pattern Knowledge of the weapon. The character may use this knowledge to weave a Thread to the weapon. The character may tell other characters the Pattern Knowledge, and they also may use it to weave a Thread to the weapon. The maximum Thread Rank a character can weave to a weapon equals the number of Key Knowledges he has learned (see **Chapter 6: Magic**, p. 194, for more information on Threads and Pattern Knowledge).

## Wheeling Attack

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Cavalryman Adept

When using Wheeling Attack, the character does not suffer the usual -2 running penalty to attacks if the mount runs.

## Willforce

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Wizard Adept

The character adds 2 to damage from a single spell when using this Edge.

## Wind Bow

**Requirements:** Legendary, Archer Adept, Create Arrow, Flame Arrow

Wind Bow allows a character to manipulate the forces of the wind to act as a bow for a single round. The wind bow is a whirling, shimmering collection of elemental force. This energy propels the arrow with terrific power. The character can fire arrows



made for any type of bow or arrows made using the Create Arrow Adept Edge (p.172) with a Wind Bow. The character makes a normal Shooting roll. Each raise adds 1 to the damage roll. Wind Bow can be used in conjunction with other Adept Edges, such as Quick Shot and True Shot. At the end of the round in which it is summoned, the Wind Bow disappears.

## Wind Catcher

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Air Sailor or Sky Raider Adept

This Edge gives a character a chance to control his fall from a height. The character can safely control his descent up to a distance of 3d6". When he has traveled this far, he falls as normal from whatever height he is currently at, but may use Wind Catcher again. The character can direct his descent, though his landing point cannot be farther from his natural landing site than the distance he fell. For example, a character who falls 30" could use the Wind Catcher Edge to land up to 30" away from where he would have landed unassisted. Elite Sky Raiders use the Wind Catcher Edge to make precise assaults on enemy positions.

## Winning Smile

**Requirements:** Novice, Swordmaster Adept

The Winning Smile Edge causes a character to appear more attractive to members of the opposite sex. The target must be able to see your smile in order for this Edge to work. The character makes opposed Persuasion rolls. If the character

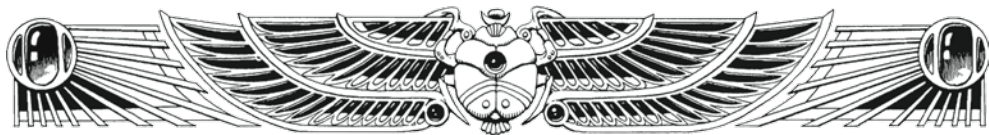


is successful, the target finds the character's appearance very pleasing for the next 24 hours. The character gains a +4 bonus to further Persuasion rolls.

## Wood Skin

**Requirements:** Novice, Warrior Adept, Durability

The Wood Skin Edge increases a character's resistance to physical damage by causing the character's skin, and portions of the muscles and ligaments, to become tougher. When using this Edge, the character's skin takes on the appearance of hardened wood, granting him 1 point of Armor for a duration of 24 hours. The character can end the effect at any time as a free action.



# CHAPTER 6: MAGIC

*Magic is the key to our civilization and the source of our greatest challenge. Without magic, our world would be far more primitive, but at least we wouldn't have faced the Scourge.*

—Mestoph, Nethermancer Adept

Magic is at the heart of the EARTHDawn game. It is the source of the characters' abilities and it is the Horrors' path to the world. Magic is a part of everyday life in EARTHDawn. It is used to light villages and towns at night, as well as to battle the remnants of the Horrors. Heroes use magic to become legends, while the Horrors and those who serve them use it to spread their corruption and evil over the world. As the history of Barsaive and the rest of the world is played out, magic will play the central role.

This chapter describes how magic came to the world of EARTHDawn, the theory behind how it works, and how characters can manipulate it to their advantage. It also provides the basics on two of the three different types of magic, Thread Magic and Blood Magic.

**Thread Magic** tells players how to find and learn to use unique magical treasures called Thread Items scattered across Barsaive, which will increase their status as heroes. **Blood Magic** is a special use of magic that allows characters to strengthen their magic-wielding powers.

We devote a separate chapter to the third type of magic, **Spell Magic**, which allows magicians to shape and power spells by drawing magical energy from astral space to the physical plane.

## THE CYCLE OF MAGIC

Over the course of time, the magic level of the world of EARTHDawn grows and subsides, at times imbuing the denizens of the world with magical abilities, at other times not. The positive side of this magical cycle is that for periods of up to 5,000 years, the world is magically active.





On the negative side, the surge of magical energy enables dreadful creatures from astral space to cross into the physical world. These creatures are collectively known as the Horrors. At the peak of the magical energy cycle, the Horrors cross into the physical world, laying waste to the land in an orgy of destruction known as the Scourge. Sages across Barsaive theorize that this cresting of the magic cycle has occurred at least one other time in the past, bringing an earlier Scourge. According to the few documents remaining from that time, the

level of magic dropped steadily after the Scourge ended, eventually disappearing altogether. After the most recent Scourge, however, the magic level ebbed but did not disappear.

Magic scholars in Barsaive projected that by the end of the Scourge, the world's magic level would have reached a certain point, then continued to drop. In fact, the Scourge ended earlier than predicted, and instead of steadily ebbing away, the magic level simply stopped dropping and then remained steady. The magic level has remained stable and relatively high for the past 80 years. Many scholars have devoted their lives to unraveling this mystery. Others believe that the workings of magic and the Universe are beyond our ken, and we shouldn't even attempt to comprehend its deeper ways. Though debate over the ambient magical energy of the world rages on, one thing remains true: the magic level of the world has stabilized, and it is possible that this age of magic will endure for all time.

## ASTRAL SPACE

Any discussion of magic must include an explanation of astral space. Essentially, astral space is another dimension of our own world. It exists on a different plane than the physical one on which we exist, but the two planes are inextricably linked. Indeed, they are interdependent, for astral space cannot exist without our world, nor can ours exist without the astral. The biggest difference between the way our world looks to us and the way it appears astrally is that, when viewed from astral space, we perceive the glow emanating from all living beings—a glow that represents their life energy. Living beings include not only people and animals, but also plant life, elemental air, earth, fire, water, and wood, and the magical energy of the world.

The current high level of magic makes incredible feats of magic possible, but the only way to access that magical energy is via astral space. The people and creatures who use magic do so by drawing energy from astral space into the physical world. As the magic level rises, beings can actively perceive astral space, an ability known as astral perception. Astral perception and the nature of astral space are more fully described below.



Only through astral perception can magical energy be manipulated. A being must be able to perceive magical energy in order to manipulate it, and magical energy is only visible in astral space. All the abilities available to characters in EARTHDAWN are magical in nature and allow Adepts to manipulate magical energy. For example, an Adept's use of Karma is just another method of magical manipulation, accomplished through a character's force of will.

## NATURE OF ASTRAL SPACE

During the approximately 400 years of time known as the Scourge, the Horrors from the depths of astral space roamed the physical world, leaving it ravaged and scarred, populated by twisted creatures, a pale reflection of its former splendor. Because the Horrors are astral in nature, the harm they did to the physical plane was reflected in astral space. During the Scourge, the Horrors corrupted the very nature of astral space. Under most normal conditions (depending on what is normal for astral space), the astral plane is imbued with magical energy that appears as misty, swirling streams of energy, similar to wisps of smoke. The Scourge polluted that magical energy, poisoning the very fabric of astral space itself. The view of the astral is now obscured by black, inky swirls, a residue of the Horrors' corruptive influence. This pollution can cause serious damage to magicians and Adepts unless they use magical energies with great care.

## ASTRAL SENSING

Astral perception is a dangerous activity in the world of EARTHDAWN. To fully perceive astral space, a character (or being) must concentrate on forming an image of himself in astral space, essentially creating a huge projection guaranteed to attract any Horror's notice. Fortunately, abilities characters use for astral "perception" allow a limited type of astral viewing called astral sensing.

Astral sensing allows a viewer to sense the magical energies, the astral imprints and images of people, places, and things present in astral space, but does not force him to see astral space itself. Essentially, astral sensing allows characters and beings to view the auras of magical beings and items. A character who has an astral form can be noticed by creatures

## Classifications of Astral Space

Astral space suffered more than the physical plane during the Scourge. Much like what happened to the Badlands in Barsaive (p.275), astral space itself has been warped by the Horrors.

The four classifications of astral space are Safe, Open, Tainted, and Corrupt.

**Safe:** Safe regions of astral space are those areas the Horrors were unable to touch or corrupt. For example, because the entire city of Throal and the surrounding area was sealed off from the rest of the world during the Scourge, the astral space connected to Throal was not invaded by the Horrors and so remains pure.

**Open:** Open regions are those areas where Horrors passed through, but used little magic. In these places they caused little pain and suffering and left the countryside mostly intact; what they did destroy has been rebuilt since the end of the Scourge. Most of Barsaive fits into this classification.

**Tainted:** Tainted regions are those areas where the Horrors caused considerable destruction and pain. Though Horrors may no longer be active in the area, the region once suffered terribly under the Horrors' influence. Some areas of the cities of Parlainth and Haven fall under this classification.

**Corrupt:** Corrupt regions are areas currently inhabited by a Horror. A Horror can affect a region varying in size from a few hundred yards to hundreds of square miles, depending on its power. The Badlands, the Wastes, and some areas of Parlainth are Corrupt.

who inhabit astral space, as well as by others actively perceiving astral space, making the character vulnerable to astral attacks. Its polluted nature makes astral space a very unnerving sight for most viewers and magicians perceiving astral space can become quickly disoriented.

Many tales tell of those who attempted to view astral space directly and ended up either insane or dead at the hands of the Horrors. The presence of the Horrors alone discourages most characters from even attempting astral perception.



## MAGIC IN OUR WORLD

*The following is from the Writings of Jaron, a magical treatise dated 435 TH. Both the Eternal Library of Thera and the Great Library of Throal still consider this work the definitive explanation of magic.*

When discussing the workings of magic, one must first consider the role that magic plays in our lives. Magic is a part of all things, animate and inanimate. Its energies permeate us and everything around us.

My fellow scholars call this age of powerful, ever-present magic the Age of Magical Thought. They contend that magic is such a fundamental part of our daily existence that it pervades our every thought and action. Building on that principle, they argue that as the magic of our world affects our thoughts and actions, so too do our actions and thoughts affect

the magic of our world. This basic tenet explains the existence of heroes. As those adventuring men and women we call heroes learn to use magic to perform their valiant deeds, their understanding of magic grows. As their understanding of magic grows, they learn to use ever more powerful magics to reach their goals. And as ordinary people hear of and admire their deeds as actions worthy of heroes, these heroes continue to behave more like other, legendary heroes. Magic affects our actions and thoughts, and our thoughts and actions affect magic.

The workings of magic in our world are diverse and complex. I endeavor to explain them here to the best of my understanding, in the hope that my attempt leads others to an even greater understanding of magic than my own.

## MAGICAL THEORY

To fully understand the use of magic in our world, it is necessary to explore the theoretical foundation of how magic interacts with the world. Understanding magical theory requires a grasp of six key ideas. These are Patterns, Names and Namegiving, True Patterns, Pattern Knowledge, Pattern Items, and Threads. These concepts apply mostly to heroes finding and using magical treasure. Quests for magical items may be the main objective of most adventures, and heroes can use the information given here about Patterns, Names and Namegiving, True Patterns, Pattern Knowledge, and Pattern Items to increase their chances for success in their quests. Each of these concepts is described below.

### PATTERNS

Our world is alive with magical energy, which is ordered into patterns. Because magic permeates everything in the physical world, all people, places, and things have patterns. These patterns allow all things to exist in our magical world, and make it possible for magic to affect or interact with any person, place, or thing. Any being that wants to use magical energy to use magical abilities must form a tiny part of the magical energy of the world into a pattern. This pattern holds the true form of a magical ability. For example, a pattern may represent the true

form of an ability, defining its form, structure, and use, much like a formula. When the Adept uses his ability, he is expressing and using the ability's pattern.

Everything in the world—people, places, and things—can be connected to magical energy through its patterns. However, patterns of people, places, and things are static in nature. Left to themselves, they do not change over time. A pattern only changes by interacting with the magical energies of the world in important ways. When the pattern of a person, place, or thing interacts with magic in an important way, the pattern grows in complexity and power.

### NAMES AND NAMING

The act of Naming is important in our world because it focuses the world's magical forces into a True Pattern. From that moment on the Named person, place, or thing is important in the world. Naming only occurs in conjunction with the interaction of magic and a person, place, or thing. Magic can be introduced deliberately, through an ability or ritual (such as the Forge Weapon Edge, or a child's coming-of-age Naming ritual), or accidentally. The use of powerful magics near a person, place, or thing might spontaneously Name something (the site of a major battle, the grove of trees where a great hero died, and so on).



For example, you may have a name for the stand of common trees behind your home such as “the grove” or “those trees out back,” but there is nothing important about those trees. The stand has its own pattern and, like everything in the world, is inherently magical. But this inherent magic is so weak you do not notice it.

Say that one terrible night a pack of malevolent shadowhounds chases the wounded hero Samaran into that grove of trees. There, despite all the courage, bravery, and strength he can muster, Samaran is slain. The death of a great hero is a sufficiently powerful enough event to focus the forces of magic and give the nameless grove of trees a Name. The no-longer-ordinary stand of trees becomes Samaran’s Demise. It now has a Name, and therefore a True Pattern.

What qualifies an ordinary thing or person for a Name? Association with magic or with some important event confers a Name upon the nameless. The following information describes those things most likely to be Named.

## People

As intelligent, aware beings who are Namegivers, people must always have a Name. After all, how can one give a Name without having one? By definition, all Namegivers have Names.

People can be Named, and re-Named, at various stages of their lives. Different cultures Name at different times. In many cultures, Naming occurs just after birth, usually as part of a spiritual ritual. Some cultures allow a child to choose a new Name for him or herself upon reaching majority, including such Naming in a coming-of-age ceremony. In other cultures, a person can choose to be re-Named at any time as a symbol of a new beginning or a new stage of life.

Naming a person forms his or her True Pattern. If that same person is re-Named, his or her True Pattern changes; the power of the magical energy

focused on him alters much of what he previously was. This change is more than symbolic; because a person’s abilities are made up of Threads that weave those abilities to his True Pattern. If the True Pattern changes, those Threads disappear, and with them, the individual’s ability to use those abilities. The person also loses the teachings of his chosen Discipline, as well as any special abilities or protection it brought him. The re-Named person can begin again, and learn an entirely new Discipline (or relearn the old one) but who and what the person was is gone forever. He or she has a new Name, and has become a new person.

Because re-Naming changes virtually everything about the person, few people choose to be re-Named. Legends tell of spells and abilities that allow people to be re-Named without losing what they were, but these remain merely tales.

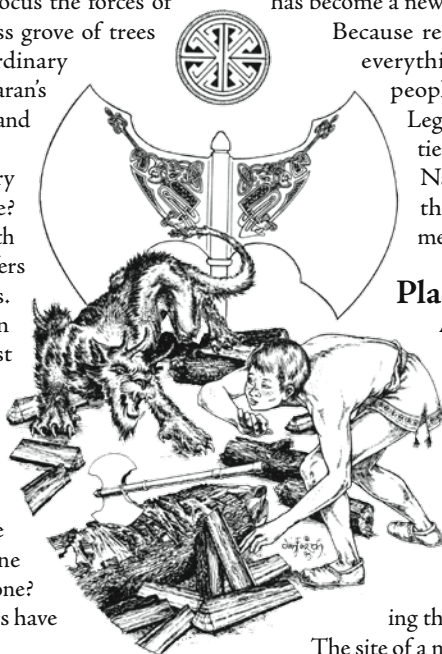
## Places

A place is usually named for its association with an important event or powerful magics. Many cultures have specific Named places for birth and death (usually different places, but not always) to keep from having scores of individually Named places scattered all over town serving the same purpose.

The site of a major battle might be Named, as might the place of a subsequent surrender or treaty signing. A husband and wife might Name the place where they first met. The site of weddings is often Named, for the same reasons as the places of birth and death.

A place where people regularly work powerful magics is often Named. The Naming of such a place contributes to its power, making any magical workings there even stronger. A magician often Names his inner sanctum or workplace for this reason.

Places where powerful magics were used, even if only once, also can be Named, though they rarely are. Such a place might be the site of a great battle





# CHAPTER 6: MAGIC

fought with magic or simply the spot on which a magician stood to cast a powerful spell. Only the highest-ranked spells are powerful enough to create a Name, and only dragons and very powerful magicians can cast them.

A great temptation exists to Name places in honor of a powerful individual or creature. But because Naming a place for its association to a person builds an echo of that individual's True Pattern into the True Pattern of the place, such Naming is discouraged. An item taken from that place could be used as a Pattern Item against that person.

## Things

Important items and objects are commonly Named when created. Creation of a magical item demands a Name; Naming focuses the magical forces to create the item's True Pattern. Without its Name, the legendary weapon Fireheart would be a simple broadsword, and Ork-Cleaver nothing more than a well-made dwarven axe. Non-magical items can also be Named, usually by a person who wants to link personal items more strongly to himself. For example, an ordinary person aspiring to become a Warrior might Name his weapon: this is a heroic thing to do, and the self-confidence such an act would inspire might spur the person to perform heroic deeds. This kind of minor Naming also poses a disadvantage; the item automatically becomes a Pattern Item for that individual.

## TRUE PATTERNS

As stated above, everything in the world has a pattern that defines its form, structure, and use. The patterns of important people, places, and things are known as **True Patterns**. A True Pattern can be viewed as a blueprint for what it represents. True Patterns not only define physical nature (like a builder's plan for a house), but metaphysical nature

as well: how a person, place, or thing is formed by and interacts with the magical world. A person's True Pattern defines that person's abilities, knowledge, psychology, and history. All that the person is makes up his True Pattern. The same holds true for places or things; everything that defines that place or thing from the moment of its creation up to the present moment is woven into its True Pattern.

Only Named things have a True Pattern. Unnamed things have a pattern (everything in existence does), but these patterns are less complex and powerful than a True Pattern. Naming gives a pattern its power.

A True Pattern identifies an entity, place, or object as an individual, something separate from others of its type. True Patterns consist of three intertwined parts:

- The Name associated with the Pattern; usually what we would refer to as a proper noun.
- A history of that Pattern; interactions with magic, significant events, important behaviors.
- Rules or ways in which the Pattern uses, is affected by, or interacts with magic.

A True Pattern designates a specific person, place, or thing, along with its history and ways of interacting with magic. A person, place, or thing can have only one True Pattern. For example, dwarven magicians tell their apprentices that a True Pattern is the sum of an individual's

important interactions with magic, behaviors that affect an individual's use of magic, and a record of events that led to his or her use of magic. The True Pattern defines everything magically important about the individual, what the individual has done/can do that is important to magic, what magic has done/can do that is important to the individual.

Because True Patterns represent things that interact with magic, they change over time. The True Pattern of a person, place, or thing is dynamic, changing as it continues to interact with the magical energies of the world.





Because a True Pattern contains the information that defines the person, place, or thing, a skillful magician or Adept can use the knowledge gained from that True Pattern to his or her advantage. Knowledge of a True Pattern brings insights into the person, place, or thing to whom the True Pattern belongs. And knowledge, some say, is a form of power. But before a person can use a True Pattern to affect another person, place, or thing, he must first learn its Pattern Knowledge.

## PATTERN KNOWLEDGE

**Pattern Knowledge** is the specific knowledge contained in a True Pattern. This includes its Name, all events in the True Pattern's history, and how it has interacted with magic. The Pattern Knowledge of a True Pattern is made up of Key Knowledges. Each Key Knowledge represents one specific piece of information about the True Pattern. Together, all the Key Knowledges of a True Pattern form its Pattern Knowledge. Only rarely can an entire Pattern Knowledge of a True Pattern be learned; most True Patterns have too many Key Knowledges to be learned in the course of a single lifetime.

Key Knowledges can take many forms. For example, the Key Knowledges of a certain place might include the Name of the place, the Name of the last person to die in that place, and the date the place was built. The Key Knowledges of a person might include his place of birth, his strong hatred for another person or persons, and the Name of his favorite weapon.

## PATTERN ITEMS

People and places with True Patterns may become associated with items that reflect the knowledge stored in their patterns. Usually personal possessions or items directly associated with the person or place. These items are called **Pattern Items**. Objects cannot have Pattern Items associated with their True Pattern; an object is its own Pattern Item.

Study and examination of the magics present in a Pattern Item yields insights into the True Pattern that influenced it. Think of a Pattern Item as a keyhole through which the True Pattern can be viewed. Though restricted, such a view can enable a magician or Adept to grasp the Key Knowledges of a True Pattern.

Proximity to or association with the True Pattern infuses an item with the magics needed to make it a Pattern Item. Because magic itself does this, the magician or Adept rarely controls which items become Pattern Items. Because a Pattern Item contains a bit of a True Pattern's Pattern Knowledge, anyone trying to affect the True Pattern must have a Pattern Item in order to weave a Thread between two True Patterns. The Pattern Item serves as a material source of Key Knowledge.

There are three classes of Pattern Items: Minor, Major, and Core Pattern Items. Each is described below.

## Minor Pattern Items

The weakest of the three types, **Minor Pattern Items** are also the most difficult to use to find Key Knowledges because their link to the True Pattern is the most tenuous. A Minor Pattern Item has no distinctive physical appearance. The proper magical inquiry will reveal its magical properties, but it has no increased resistance to damage or any other special properties. Minor Pattern Items are usually spontaneously created by the whims of magic, objects that gain a True Pattern through constant proximity to the use of magic. They often seem to be peripheral elements; personal possessions, minor features of a place, and so on. A magician's walking stick might become a Minor Pattern Item, as might a stone from a tavern where a Questor of Garlen regularly performs healing for travelers and townsfolk. Minor Pattern Items tend to be physically important to the person or place, but rarely have any other importance.

## Major Pattern Items

**Major Pattern Items** have a stronger connection to the True Pattern. The stronger, more direct magical link between the True Pattern and the Pattern Item makes them easier to use to gain knowledge about the True Pattern. Major Pattern Items are also more resistant to damage than that same item would be if it lacked magical energy. For example, books serving as Pattern Items might singe but not burn, or vials might only crack under conditions that would normally shatter them. Though it takes more effort to destroy them, Major Pattern Items are not indestructible. Major Pattern Items must almost





always be deliberately created. They only spontaneously occur in connection with significant events or magics. A Minor Pattern Item can transform into a Major Pattern Item if that item grows in significance in relation to its True Pattern, provided that the Minor Pattern Item has existed for at least one season (three months) prior to the transformation and that it remains in contact with or in proximity to the True Pattern. Major Pattern Items are almost always items of psychological importance to the person or place; a favorite weapon, a coat of arms signifying a great hall, and so on.

## Core Pattern Items

**Core Pattern Items** have the strongest connection to the True Pattern. Like Major Pattern Items, they are rarely created spontaneously, but their creation invariably marks a significant event or turning point in the life of the person or place. Magical energy is most concentrated in Core Pattern Items, and they prove the most easily and effectively used for accessing a Key Knowledge of the True Pattern. Core Pattern Items are as durable as Major Pattern Items, but have two additional magical advantages. The first is the aura of luck that seems to surround them. If it is possible to save a Core Pattern Item from destruction, events often seem to arrange themselves in a way that saves the item. Fate and Lady Luck are on its side.

In its second advantage, if a Core Pattern Item is destroyed, the True Pattern it reflects will act upon the magical energies in the world to recreate the item. Recreating the item takes anywhere from a few days to a year and a day, averaging three to seven months. A Core Pattern Item may appear anywhere after the magical world recreates it. Major Pattern Items can transform into Core Pattern Items, but only if the item continually grows in importance to the person or place and has existed for at least a year and a day. Core Pattern Items have intrinsic spiritual significance for the person or place, representing who or

what they are in every respect. For example, a king's crown could be a Core Pattern Item for the king to whom it belongs.

Troubadours sing many stories of unusual Pattern Items, items that seem to have little connection with the person or place they represent. The Troubadours sing about these items because they are the exception rather than the rule. Most Pattern Items are common, familiar objects transformed because of their importance to a person or place.

## THREADS

The magical energy flowing through our world can be separated into strands called **Threads**. These Threads can then be “woven” and used to better perform specific tasks. For example, Adepts use Threads to activate magical items’ special powers and capabilities. (In this case, knowledge of an item’s history is key to the actual weaving of the Threads. Without that knowledge, an Adept cannot weave the Thread that will give the item power, and the item remains inert. But that discussion belongs elsewhere.) The use of Threads in this manner, to give power to complex spells and magical items, is called, appropriately enough, Thread Magic.

Threads are created from the magical energies of astral space using the mystical ability of Thread Weaving (p. 190). Each Discipline has its own variation of this Edge that reflects the unique nature of that Discipline. Threads woven into existing Patterns, whether the Pattern of a magical item or the Pattern of an ability, power and strengthen that Pattern. The magical energy fed into the Pattern through the woven Thread enhances the Pattern and increases its potential. For example, each ability a hero possesses has a Pattern that is part of his or her True Pattern. As the hero becomes more experienced or more legendary, he weaves more Threads to the Edge, increasing that Edge’s potential. As each Edge Pattern is strengthened, the hero’s True Pattern becomes stronger and more durable.

## THREAD MAGIC

Thread Magic is the process by which a Thread of magical energy is woven into an existing True Pattern, thereby strengthening and enhancing that Pattern. Adepts of great power can weave Threads

to any True Pattern, such as those possessed by any Named person, place, or thing. These rules only cover weaving Threads to magical items.







Most magic items in EARTHDOWN are unique, produced by a conjunction of magical energy and emotion that imbues the item with magical powers. These powers reflect the events that created it. These powers are not enchanted into the item; they simply come into being when the item is involved in some significant event. It is important to remember that in EARTHDOWN, magic is life and life itself is magic. This means that because of magic, all the world is alive in one way or another. The forces of magic and life also interact with each other, sometimes in distinct and sometimes subtle ways. This interaction is described in the concepts of Patterns, True Patterns, Pattern Items, and Threads.

The greater the legend of an item, the more significant events it has been a part of, the greater its powers. The person wielding or using such an item rarely sees the full force of that power manifest. Because it takes time for the forces of magic to empower an item, we provide a selection of pre-generated magic items. These items possess magical abilities and the power to enhance the user's abilities, though those abilities will not manifest until the character who acquires that item can empower it with a Thread of magic (see the *Game Master's Guide* for more information).

Not all magical items are created by unique circumstance. Some are created by more traditional means. These items all have similar capabilities (within their kind) because they were specifically enchanted with those powers. However, because each item has a unique history after its construction, the information needed to empower each item may differ.

## USING MAGIC ITEMS

Magic Thread Items, by virtue of their creation (coincidence or design) all have True Patterns. The True Pattern reflects all of an item's history and all of its potential. A magic item cannot manifest its powers until a character weaves a magic Thread to it. Magicians find Thread Weaving relatively easy, since they are intimately familiar with the Pattern of the spell they are casting and know how to connect the empowering Threads. A character who discovers a magic item is not so lucky. The item's True Pattern is a mystery of history, facts, and magic intricately braided together. Before the Adept can use the item

he must unravel some of the mystery of that item. He does that in part by using his own mystical abilities, and in part by old-fashioned, mundane research.

Each ability or power of a magic item has a specific Rank. Each ability or power is also associated with a specific piece of information, or Key Knowledge, that must be learned before that power can be used. The magical Thread that empowers the particular ability can only be woven once the appropriate Key Knowledge, that little bit of insight into the item's True Pattern, has been learned. For example, a magic item may have three Ranks of powers, Ranks 1, 2, and 3. It can have more or less depending on the power and history of the item (see the *Game Master's Guide* for more information). Each Rank provides a unique power and is tied to a Key Knowledge that the character must know to unlock that power. Each Key Knowledge must be learned (and used) in succession. The Rank 3 Key Knowledge cannot be learned and used before the Rank 2, and so on.

Each character must perform the following steps to empower a magic item's abilities. Each step is outlined in detail here and in the *Game Master's Guide*.

1. Obtain the Key Knowledge for this Rank.
  - a. First, use the Weapon History Edge to learn the general nature of the Key Knowledge.
  - b. Research the specifics of the Key Knowledge.
2. Weave the Thread.
  - a. If you have the Thread Weaving Edge, make a Spirit roll with a modifier based on the Rank of the Thread (see **Weaving the Thread**, p.203)
3. Use the item (but use it wisely).

## OBTAINING THE KEY KNOWLEDGE

A character who uses his or her Weapon History Edge (p.192) discovers the basic information of a particular Key Knowledge at a specific Rank. This basic Key Knowledge is known as the Test Knowledge. This is the general nature of the Key Knowledge, but not the specific information.

For example, the Test Knowledge might be that the character has to learn the Name of the item's creator. He does not learn the Name by making a roll, only that he must discover it before he can weave a Thread at that Rank. The specific information, such as the Name itself is known as the Research Knowledge, and must be discovered by conventional means.



To learn the Test Knowledge, the character uses the Weapon History Edge with any applicable modifiers (listed with individual Thread Items). If successful, the character learns the Test Knowledge of the next Rank.

*Thom Hammerblade is using his Weapon History Edge to study a magic sword he found during his last adventure. After a week of study, he makes his Smarts roll with the sword's Key Knowledge modifier of -2 and is successful. The character now knows what he must learn before he can weave the Threads for the first Rank, and must research it (see Research below, and the information presented in the Game Master's Guide).*

## Rank 1 Information

A successful use of Weapon History at the first Rank of the item reveals to the character the Rank 1 Test Knowledge, the item's total number of Thread Ranks, and the number of Deeds associated with that item (see the Game Master's Guide).

## Additional Ranks

Once a character weaves a Thread to an item, he or she can continue to weave a new, stronger Thread at each Rank beyond the first. This new Thread replaces the old Thread, but maintains the powers and abilities of the old Thread. This new Thread cannot be woven until the character learns the appropriate Test and Research Knowledges. A character must use Weapon History to learn the Key Knowledge for each consecutive Rank as he reaches it.

## Research

Once the character learns the Test Knowledge, he must learn the specific information that will allow him to weave a Thread. Learning this information can occur as part of an adventure and should be integrated into a story, or can be something that takes place between adventures. In either case, research is something the character does during the course of a story. It cannot be resolved with a simple die roll, but must happen through adventuring and roleplaying. The character must seek out the source of that information and somehow discover what he needs to know. The process could be simple and quick, or



complex and arduous, depending on the nature of the item, the information to be learned, and the Game Master's mood. More about handling research and research-based adventures is presented specifically in the Game Master's Guide.

## WEAVING THE THREAD

Once the character learns the Research Knowledge, he will become aware that he can now weave the Thread to empower the item at the appropriate Rank. In order to attempt to weave the Thread, the character must have the Thread Weaving Edge. To weave the Thread, the character must succeed at a Spirit roll with the following modifiers.

Thread Rank	Modifier
1-3	+0
4-6	-1
7-9	-2
10-12	-3
13-15	-4

If the Thread Weaving roll succeeds, the character attaches the Thread to the item's True Pattern and the item's ability at that Rank is empowered. When increasing the Rank of an existing Thread, the new Thread replaces the existing Thread.

A character can make a number of Thread Weaving attempts equal to half his Spirit die on any single item (for example, 3 times if d6). If he fails all of his rolls he cannot try again until he increases his Spirit die, after which he can try a number of times equal to half his Spirit die again.

*Jjerreck makes a Thread Weaving roll to increase the Thread Rank he has woven to Drea's Magic Pouch from 2 to 3. His Spirit is d8, so he has four attempts to increase his Thread Rank. Alas, he fails four times. His Rank 2 Thread remains in place, however, and once his Spirit die improves he can try again to increase the Thread Rank attached to the pouch, following the same steps.*

## Deeds

Sometimes it is possible to perform a specific Deed before a Thread Rank can be increased. Whether an item requires any Deeds is learned at Rank 1, but the Key Knowledge of the Deed can only be learned at the Rank with which the Deed is associated. Deeds must be researched in the same way as Research Knowledge.

Some Deeds are voluntary. Deeds are usually symbolically or directly associated with the history of the item and the magical forces at work in its empowering (see the *Game Master's Guide*).

## LIMITS ON THREADS

At any one time, a character can have a maximum number of Thread Ranks active depending upon his Rank (see the Thread Weaving Edge, p. 190). This number is also the maximum Rank to which he can increase any of his Threads.

*Jjerreck is a Seasoned Wild Card. Until he increases his Rank, Jjerreck can have a maximum of 6 Threads of up to Thread Rank 6 active among all of his Thread Items at a time.*

## LOSING THREADS

All the Threads a character currently has active are lost when that character dies. When a character loses an item to which he has woven a Thread, the Thread remains active until someone else weaves a Thread to that item and effectively disconnects the character's Thread.

# BLOOD MAGIC

Blood Magic is a special type of magic that draws its power from small sacrifices, usually a small amount of blood.

## USING BLOOD MAGIC

The most common use of Blood Magic is to power a spell or ritual. The use of Blood Magic

can also make some magical items more powerful. The sacrifice strengthens the Thread link between the character and the item, allowing the character to use the item's known abilities more fully. Blood Magic also allows characters to use certain powerful charms and to seal oaths.

## DURATION OF BLOOD MAGIC

Though each type of Blood Magic functions differently, all share one feature. Nearly all uses of Blood Magic last for a year and a day. Some magical scholars and theorists suggest that the seemingly standard duration springs from the common factor of blood sacrifice in the various uses of this specific type of magic. Other learned sources contend that the stable magic level affects Blood Magic in this unique way. Records in the Throal libraries indicate that the use of Blood Magic was less common before the Scourge, but these pre-Scourge sources do not refer to a standard or common duration for Blood Magic.







# CHAPTER 7: SPELLS

*The way of the magician is both power and danger. A spell, like any other thing of power, is often a two-edged sword.*

—Mestoph, Nethermancer

All Adepts use magic to power their abilities. Many characters use their ability to wield magic to find, learn about, and use fantastic magical items and weapons. A few specialize in the use of arcane magics called spell magic. Characters that specialize in spell magic are known as magicians. These characters learn to create the patterns of spells and channel pure magical energy through those patterns to affect the physical world.

The following sections contain the rules for spellcasting in *EARTHDAWN* as well as the spells available to magicians in the world of *EARTHDAWN*. To learn these spells, a character must be an Adept of the appropriate Discipline.

## BEING A MAGICIAN

There are four types of Adepts that cast spells: Elementalists, Illusionists, Nethermancers, and Wizards. When a player chooses one of these Discipline Edges during character creation (p. 33), he automatically gains the Arcane Background for that Discipline. Arcane Backgrounds are unique to each magician Discipline:

**Arcane Background (Elementalist, Illusionist, Nethermancer, or Wizard)**

**Arcane Skill:** Spellcasting (Smarts)

**Starting Threads:** 10

**Starting Spells:** 3

## SPELL THREADS

*EARTHDAWN* magicians power their spells with energy from astral space. Magicians must weave part of their magical power to a magical pattern in astral space prior to casting. This magical power is

called a Spell Thread. In order to prevent the polluted nature of astral space causing them damage (or worse, attract the attention of a Horror), magicians attune their Spell Threads to a magical pattern kept within astral space, known as a spell matrix.

As magicians grow in power, their spell matrix can contain more Spell Threads. When they first begin play, the maximum Threads that their matrix holds is 10 (see **Being a Magician**, above). Magicians draw astral energy through this matrix, the eldritch forces directed by their Spell Threads. The matrix filters out the raw and corrupted power of astral space, allowing the magician to cast the spell unharmed.

Each spell has a certain number of Spell Threads that must be expended in order to cast it. Once a Spell Thread is used, it becomes inert until it has time to reattune itself to the magician's spell matrix.

Spell Threads reattune and reactivate at a rate of 1 Thread per hour.

## RAW MAGIC

*EARTHDAWN* magicians can cast a spell even if they do not have the required number of Spell Threads. This is known as Raw Magic. Instead of being filtered through a magician's spell matrix, the raw energy is filtered through the magician.

When casting a spell with Raw Magic, refer to the No Power Points situational rule in the *Savage Worlds Core Rulebook*. A magician who suffers Backlash takes 2d6 damage per the No Power Points rule, but also takes additional damage based on the local astral space classification, as if he or she were using the Netherwalk Adept Edge (p. 183).



## STARTING SPELLS

New magician characters start play with 3 Novice spells in their personal grimoire, chosen from those available to their magician Discipline.

## LEARNING NEW SPELLS

Magicians in EARTHDAWN learn new spells by discovering them in grimoires. A magician can know a maximum number of spells equal to his Smarts die (e.g., d8=8) plus 2 per Rank (Novice+2, Seasoned+4, Veteran +6, Heroic +8, Legendary +10).

## SPELL DAMAGE AND ARMOR

Mystic Armor (p. 247) provides protection against all spells. Physical Armor provides protection against spells with a ♡ in their names (add the character's physical and Mystic Armor together, if he or she is wearing both types of protection).

## SPELL DAMAGE AND RAISES

Some spells inflict more damage on a raise. Spells with a ⌘ in their names inflict +1d6 bonus damage (which may Ace) if the magician gets one or more raises on his Spellcasting roll.

## ELEMENTALISM SPELLS

*Masters of "flash and bang?" The subtleties of my art are obviously beyond your perceptive capabilities.*

—Cadriel, Elementalist

Elementalists use their magic to manipulate the magical elements. Their spells most often affect one or more of the elements, but can also affect the weather and nature. Through their spells, they are able to speak with the elemental spirits that inhabit the world.

## NOVICE SPELL DESCRIPTIONS

### Boil Water

Rank: Novice

Threads: 2

Range: Touch

Duration: 3 minutes

The Elementalist touches a vessel containing water, tapping it very quickly as if the vessel were very hot. The enchanted vessel immediately begins to heat the water it contains, bringing a quart of water to boil



# CHAPTER 7: SPELLS

each round. A gallon of water would take 4 rounds to reach the boiling point. *Boil water* can only be cast on inanimate objects.

## Crunch Climb

**Rank:** Novice      **Threads:** 1+  
**Range:** Touch      **Duration:** 5 minutes

The Elementalist casts the spell as the target starts to climb. This spell increases the target's Climbing skill by one die type for a standard success, or by two with a raise. The affected skill can exceed d12; each step over d12 adds 1 to the target's Skill total. For example, a raise on someone who already has a d12 Climbing skill grants him d12+2 for the duration of the spell. The spell may affect an additional target for each additional spell Thread used, to a maximum number of targets equal to the caster's Spellcasting die. All targets share the same effect.

## Earth Blend

**Rank:** Novice      **Threads:** 1  
**Range:** Touch      **Duration:** 5 minutes

This spell makes a character blend completely with his surroundings, making it more difficult for someone else to spot him. The Elementalist throws a stone, rubs some dirt, or touches a pebble to the spell target. The Elementalist and the target must both be standing on stone or earth for the spell to work. Targets attempting to spot the character suffer a -1 modifier to their Notice rolls.

## Earth Darts

**Rank:** Novice      **Threads:** 1 per dart  
**Range:** 8/16/32      **Duration:** Instant

The Elementalist flings a handful of dirt into the air while casting this spell. The dirt changes into crystalline darts that fly at the foe when the spell is cast. A separate Spellcasting roll is required for each dart to hit its target. An *earth dart* inflicts 2d6 damage.

## Flameweapon

**Rank:** Novice      **Threads:** 2  
**Range:** Touch      **Duration:** 10 rounds

The Elementalist conjures a small flame as he casts the spell. This flame leaps to cover a weapon touched by the Elementalist, except where the wielder holds

it. The spell increases the weapon's damage by +d4. This increase affects all creatures that can be hurt by flames. While the weapon is affected by the *flameweapon* spell, its temperature is hot but bearable. Targets struck by the *flameweapon* may catch fire (see the *Savage Worlds Core Rulebook*).

## Gills

**Rank:** Novice      **Threads:** 2  
**Range:** Touch      **Duration:** 10 minutes

The Elementalist mimics the mouthings of a fish while casting the spell, then touches the target. The spell allows a character to breathe comfortably underwater. The spell does not prevent a character from breathing air.

## Heat Food

**Rank:** Novice      **Threads:** 1  
**Range:** Touch      **Duration:** 10 minutes

This spell heats up a meal and infuses it with magic that has a beneficial effect on the target. The Elementalist breathes on his hands as if to warm them and his hands begin to glow a gentle red. As the Elementalist touches the meal, the glow transfers to the food, which becomes steaming hot. Eating the meal grants a character a +1 bonus on his or her next Soak roll.

## Ice Spear

**Rank:** Novice      **Threads:** 2  
**Range:** 15/30/60      **Duration:** Instant

Frost forms on the fingers of the Elementalist while he is casting this spell. As the Elementalist casts the spell at a target, *ice spear* forms a weapon that is five feet long. The spears trails frost as it arcs toward the target. The damage of the *ice spear* is 3d6.

## Icy Surface

**Rank:** Novice      **Threads:** 1  
**Range:** Touch      **Duration:** 3 minutes

The Elementalist blows on the surface she wishes to ice while making his Spellcasting roll and the spell immediately covers a 10" by 10" area with ice. The spot the Elementalist blows on is one edge of the area. The Elementalist can choose the shape of the icy surface as long as no dimension exceeds 10". Any character attempting to cross the affected area must succeed at an Agility roll or fall prone.



## Path Home

**Rank:** Novice

**Threads:** 2

**Range:** 30

**Duration:** 20 minutes

The spellcaster closes his eyes, envisioning the last place where he slept. The spell summons a pair of shimmering wings, translucent and sparkling green or gold. The wings have the same movement speed as the caster, and they begin to fly toward the last place the Elementalist slept. Always remaining within 10" of the spellcaster, the wings will slow down or speed up on command. The wings have a Toughness equal to the caster and are destroyed once receiving 1 Wound. The spellcaster cannot direct the flight or change course of the wings.

## Plant Talk

**Rank:** Novice

**Threads:** 1

**Range:** Self

**Duration:** 10 minutes

The Elementalist puts his ear to a plant as he casts this spell. The *plant talk* spell enables him to converse with the spirits who often inhabit such plants rather than with the plants themselves. Plant spirits vary widely in intelligence, but they are a considerable step up from the plants they inhabit. Plant spirits vary in temperament as much as characters do. They may be very willing to talk, for example, or grumpy and taciturn or even sleepy from lying out in the sun so long. Plant spirits are usually aware of events that happen within one to five yards of their roots. Plant spirits only inhabit living plants; they must seek a new plant when their old host dies.

## Purify Water

**Rank:** Novice

**Threads:** 1

**Range:** Touch

**Duration:** Instant

The Elementalist smears a drop of the water to be purified on his lips, then casts the spell. An Elementalist may use this spell to try to purify a beverage that has a large water content, such as wine, juice, beer, or milk. The spell removes all those flavorful "impurities," resulting in pure water.

## Resist Cold

**Rank:** Novice

**Threads:** 1

**Range:** Touch

**Duration:** 6 minutes

The Elementalist conjures frost on his palm. The frost melts away as he touches the target. The target

gains a +1 modifier to his Vigor roll to resist cold for the duration of the spell.

## Resist Fire

**Rank:** Novice

**Threads:** 1

**Range:** Touch

**Duration:** 6 minutes

The Elementalist conjures a small flame on the tip of each index finger. She touches the target on the eyebrows (or ridge above the eyes approximating the position of the eyebrows). A bright flash singes the brows, but does no damage. The spell grants the target 2 Armor points against fire for the duration of the spell.

## Slow Metal Weapon

**Rank:** Novice

**Threads:** 1

**Range:** 30

**Duration:** 8 rounds

The Elementalist mimes a slow-moving attack, targeting any weapon designed to attack with a metal edge or point for attacking that is within range. The spell makes the weapon slow down just before it hits a target, reducing its damage by d6. Only one *slow metal weapon* spell may affect any one weapon at a time.

## Sterilize Object

**Rank:** Novice

**Threads:** 1

**Range:** 5

**Duration:** Instant

The spellcaster rubs his wrists together, sending a white spark from his wrist to the object to be sterilized. The spell cleanses the object of the disease or poison. The spell is effective only against inanimate objects. If used against food, the food becomes thoroughly overcooked, losing flavor and texture. In order to bring himself to eat sterilized food, a character must make a successful Smarts roll.

## Stick Together

**Rank:** Novice

**Threads:** 1

**Range:** 12

**Duration:** 3 minutes

This spell bonds two targets tightly together. The Elementalist mimes putting his hands together and then trying to pull them apart. He points both hands, still stuck together, at two targets. The magician need only make one successful Spellcasting roll. As soon as the two targets touch, they bond together. The Elementalist can also choose to bond two targets already in contact, such as a

# CHAPTER 7: SPELLS

character and the floor. The two targets must be within 2" of each other for the spell to be effective. Bonded characters suffer the same conditions as if they had just been successfully grappled (refer to the *Savage Worlds Core Rulebook*).

## SEASONED SPELL DESCRIPTIONS

### Air Blast

**Rank:** Seasoned      **Threads:** 1  
**Range:** 30      **Duration:** Instant

This spell creates a howling wind to blast a path starting directly in front of the spellcaster. The Elementalist places both hands to his lips then casts the spell by blowing hard and flinging his arms wide. A successful Spellcasting roll creates an air blast path extending 5" to the left, right, up, and down (if possible) from the caster. All characters caught in the blast must make a Strength roll. Failure means the character is knocked prone.

### Behind Eye

**Rank:** Seasoned      **Threads:** 2  
**Range:** Touch      **Duration:** 30 minutes

The Elementalist chants softly while holding a burning candle, torch, or other source of flame, then casts the spell by touching the flame to the back of the target's head. A successful Spellcasting roll produces a single flaming eye in the back of the target character's head. This eye sees with a d8 Notice roll.

### Blizzard Sphere

**Rank:** Seasoned      **Threads:** 2  
**Range:** 50      **Duration:** 3 rounds

The Elementalist conjures a small blizzard to strike his foes. The blizzard fills a sphere 10" across. The Elementalist targets the sphere wherever he wants, within spell range. The Elementalist makes a Spellcasting roll against each target caught within the sphere every round to see who takes damage; if successful, the target suffers 2d6 damage. Once the sphere is successfully cast, it remains stationary. Maintaining the effects of *blizzard sphere* requires the Elementalist's concentration.

### Earth Staff

**Rank:** Seasoned      **Threads:** 1  
**Range:** Touch      **Duration:** 5 minutes

The Elementalist needs a pinch of dirt or a small pebble to cast this spell. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the dirt expands to a five-foot-long staff that the Elementalist can use in melee combat. Each time the Elementalist hits his target with an earth staff, it does Str+d8 damage. Only an Elementalist can use an *earth staff*, though any Elementalist may have created the weapon.

### Fireball

**Rank:** Seasoned      **Threads:** 2  
**Range:** 12/24/48      **Duration:** Instant

The Elementalist needs a source of flame to use the *fireball* spell. As he casts the spell, he places one of his hands to the side of the flame, then moves it over the top in a circular motion. When cast, the *fireball* expands to the size of a beach ball. As the *fireball* reaches the point of impact, it explodes. All characters within 10" suffer 2d10 damage. Characters engulfed by the *fireball* must also make a roll to see if they catch fire (refer to the *Savage Worlds Core Rulebook*).

### Ice Mace and Chain

**Rank:** Seasoned      **Threads:** 2  
**Range:** 5/10/20      **Duration:** 2 rounds

The Elementalist hurls two pebbles, coins, or other small objects at the target character. If the



Spellcasting roll is successful, the two objects become spiked mace-heads joined by an icy chain. The chain and mace-heads wrap around the target, often shattering when they hit. The spell deals 2d8 damage. The target must then succeed at an Agility roll or become restrained. The target suffers a -2 penalty to Pace and skills linked to Agility and Strength. Each following round, an entangled target may make a Strength or Agility roll to break free. Other characters may also attempt to free the ensnared person by making a Strength roll at -2.

## Lighten Load

**Rank:** Seasoned      **Threads:** 1  
**Range:** 5      **Duration:** 7 hours

This spell can lighten the load of an object. A character or group of characters must be lifting the target object or objects. The Elementalist braces and grimaces as if lifting a heavy object, then straightens and smiles as the spell is cast. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the object is reduced in weight equal to the Spellcasting roll result times 50 pounds, down to a minimum of 10 pounds.

## Lightning Shield

**Rank:** Seasoned      **Threads:** 1  
**Range:** Touch      **Duration:** 7 rounds

The Elementalist snaps his fingers to create a spark of electricity, which leaps to the target's shield. Unless an attacker gets a raise on an attack roll, he will hit the shield every time he attacks the wielder. Whenever an attacker strikes the *lightning shield*, he takes a jolt of lightning in return, unless he succeeds at an Agility roll. If he fails, he suffers 2d8 damage.

## Metal Scream

**Rank:** Seasoned      **Threads:** 1  
**Range:** 50      **Duration:** Smarts rounds

The Elementalist grimaces and mouths horrible screams while casting this spell. He may cast the spell upon a number of characters equal to his Spellcasting skill die. He must make a separate Spellcasting roll for each target. The spell makes every piece of metal on a character's body scream with an eerie, shrieking wail. Everyone within ear-shot (excepting the spellcaster) must make a Smarts

roll. Characters that fail must flee out of range of the caster (at least 100") or suffer a -2 penalty on all rolls, due to fear.

## Metal Wings

**Rank:** Seasoned      **Threads:** 2  
**Range:** Touch      **Duration:** 20 minutes

The Elementalist first touches the shoulder blades of the target. While casting, he then spreads his arms to represent the unfolding of wings. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, gleaming silver metal wings appear on the target's back. The wings allow him or her to fly at a Pace of 20. When the winged recipient must make a Strength roll to lift objects, the metal wings add a +2 bonus. The metal wings have a 9-foot wingspan. No being weighing more than 400 pounds (including equipment carried) can use *metal wings* for flight.

## Plant Feast

**Rank:** Seasoned      **Threads:** 3  
**Range:** 12      **Duration:** 1 hour

The Elementalist needs three plants, no matter how scrawny, for this spell, which converts that meager material into a feast. When casting this spell, the character rolls a d12. The result is the number of meals the spell produces. Each meal has the following parts: appetizer, soup, salad, bread, entree, vegetable, and dessert. All meals are identical. The Elementalist can only create items he has tasted within the last year, a good excuse for the Elementalist to eat excessively on occasion while in cities. The food created by this spell must be eaten within the spell's duration. Food that is not eaten vanishes the instant the spell expires.

## Porter

**Rank:** Seasoned      **Threads:** 2  
**Range:** 8      **Duration:** Smarts days

This spell creates a semi-sentient being who will carry equipment for the Elementalist. The magician first makes an earthen mound, molding it into a humanoid shape roughly his own size. The porter travels with its feet still attached to the ground, which ripples under the porter to let it pass. The porter must remain within 15" of the caster or the spell is broken.

The porter's statistics are listed below.



# CHAPTER 7: SPELLS

## PORTER

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d6 (A), Spirit d10, Strength d12, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Notice d8

**Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 5

## Puddle Deep

**Rank:** Seasoned

**Threads:** 1

**Range:** 8

**Duration:** 3 minutes

While casting this spell, the Elementalist spits on his hands and rubs them together. The spell increases the depth of a target puddle within 8" of the caster. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the puddle widens by 1" and deepens by d4", plus another d4" depth on a raise. Characters in the puddle who succeed at a Agility roll either do not fall into the puddle or manage to stay to one side of it. Characters who fall in must climb out. Anything still in the puddle when the spell expires finds itself in the original puddle, with its original depth. The rest of the water disappears. The water created cannot be used to quench thirst or be stored for later use.

## Repair

**Rank:** Seasoned

**Threads:** 1

**Range:** Touch

**Duration:** Instant

*Repair* uses elemental force to mend damage to inanimate objects. The Elementalist takes the object or its pieces, and imagines them whole again. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the object is repaired. The Elementalist must have at least 80 percent of the original object to successfully use this spell.

## Sky Lattice

**Rank:** Seasoned

**Threads:** 3

**Range:** 60

**Duration:** 10 minutes

The *sky lattice* spell creates a shimmering web of air energy that can support up to 4,000 pounds. The

lattice is attached to air and appears within reach of the Elementalist; it need not touch the ground. A *sky lattice* is always one yard wide. The Elementalist can vary the length of the lattice, from 1" up to the spell's full 60". It is also possible to climb the lattice, whose force helps grip a climber to it. An Elementalist can use Blood Magic to extend the duration of *sky lattice* to a year and a day by taking a permanent -1 modifier to any Vigor roll. This modifier vanishes when the spell expires. Crystal raider Elementalists often use this spell to support bases hidden among clouds.

## Stone Cage

**Rank:** Seasoned

**Threads:** 1

**Range:** 30

**Duration:** 10 rounds

The Elementalist creates a stone cage around another character by casting the spell with his fingers locked together to represent bars closing. *Stone cage* may be cast on only one character. The character may not be taller, wider, or longer than 2". If the character exceeds 2" in one of these dimensions, the spell automatically fails. The statistics of the cage are as follows:

### STONE CAGE

**Toughness** 8

**Armor** 3

**Damage Type** Blunt

## Suffocating Paste

**Rank:** Seasoned

**Threads:** 2

**Range:** 12

**Duration:** Smarts rounds

The Elementalist throws a blob of green-yellow paste at the target. A successful Spellcasting roll lets him hit the victim's head or anywhere else the creature breathes. The paste blocks the target's orifices, causing it to begin to suffocate (refer to the rules for drowning in the *Savage Worlds Core Rulebook*). If the paste hits a person's head, he is blinded as well as suffocated. If someone wipes the paste off, it merely flies back to the victim or re-forms. The Elementalist may dispel the paste anytime he wishes, as long as he is within range.

## Throne of Air

**Rank:** Seasoned

**Threads:** 2

**Range:** Self

**Duration:** 10 minutes

The Elementalist casts this spell by taking a sitting position. The *throne of air* forms as a wavery,





turbulent image underneath the magician. The Elementalist can move in the throne: Its Pace is 15. The throne is very agile. The spell has limited vertical movement. It can move above the ground a number of inches equal to the magician's Spellcasting die (e.g. 6" for d6 Agility).

## Uneven Ground

**Rank:** Seasoned      **Threads:** 1  
**Range:** 12      **Duration:** 4 rounds

This spell makes the ground shake and move violently in a radius of 20" around the spellcaster. The Elementalist wobbles as he casts this spell. During this time, all friendly characters should touch the Elementalist to avoid being affected by the spell; the touch can be brief and does not prevent the character from taking another action that round. The magician touches the ground with her hands to cast the spell. Any other character within the spell's area during its duration must succeed at an Agility roll each round or fall prone.

## Weapon Back

**Rank:** Seasoned      **Threads:** 2  
**Range:** 20      **Duration:** Smarts rounds

The spellcaster must first prepare a weapon for *weapon back* to work on it. At dawn each day for a week, the magician places a drop of his blood on the weapon. At the end of the week, he carves a small scar-design on the target (either himself or another character) with the weapon. He then inscribes the same design on the weapon, creating a link between the target and the weapon. An Elementalist may prepare a number of weapons equal to his Spellcasting skill die. Destroying a weapon destroys the link.

To cast *weapon back*, the target touches his scar-design. The link between the target and weapon allows the Elementalist to cast the spell even if he cannot see the weapon. A successful Spellcasting roll moves the weapon toward the character at a Pace of 10" per round. The weapon travels along the ground, scraping lightly. Whenever the weapon would have to make a Trait roll, e.g., for the weapon's Strength to break out of a cabinet or for its Agility to slide along a narrow window sill, the character rolls the die. *Weapon back* can be targeted on characters other than the Elementalist.

In that case the scar-design is placed on the target character, not the Elementalist. When casting the spell, the Elementalist must touch the scar-design on the other character.

## VETERAN SPELL DESCRIPTIONS

### ☞ Blade Fury

**Rank:** Veteran      **Threads:** 2  
**Range:** Touch      **Duration:** 3 rounds

The Elementalist shouts a battle cry and touches the target of the *blade fury* spell. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the target's melee weapon gleams red, and a pale-red double of the weapon hovers next to the original. Whenever the spell recipient hits with his weapon, the double-blade also does damage (effectively doubling the damage of the weapon).

### Catch

**Rank:** Veteran      **Threads:** 1 per target  
**Range:** 50      **Duration:** Instant

This spell allows the magician to catch a falling character or object. If the magician spends 1 Karma Point, he may use this spell as an interrupt even when it is not his turn. One Karma Point must be spent per target. A separate Spellcasting roll must be made for each target. Each successful roll means a target is suspended in the air and then slowly lowered to the ground in a direct vertical line. Elementarists often use this spell to save allies accidentally caught in the effects of *tossing earth*.

### Calm Water

**Rank:** Veteran      **Threads:** 1+  
**Range:** 250      **Duration:** 1 hour

With this spell, the Elementalist can calm the water during a storm, natural or magical. *Calm water* reduces the severity of the waves. The Elementalist must cast the spell from the highest point of the ship. He shouts at the water while casting. Against natural storms, the Spellcasting roll suffers no modifiers; particularly severe storms may have a modifier of -2 or worse. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the magician rolls 1d6 per Thread to determine the number of feet by which the waves are reduced. If the Elementalist faces 25-foot waves, and rolls 13, the ship still faces 12-foot waves. The spell may be cast more than once on the same portion of water.





## CHAPTER 7: SPELLS

### Cloud Summon

**Rank:** Veteran      **Threads:** 3  
**Range:** 1 mile      **Duration:** 1 hour

An Elementalist may cast this spell in order to cast the *death rain* spell (see below), or simply to achieve impressive weather effects. While casting, the Elementalist makes gestures mimicking the swirling pattern of rapidly moving clouds. Then he tosses some water into the air. If the spellcasting roll is successful, the water instantly billows into a wispy bit of cloud, rising rapidly toward the sky.

Summoning clouds with this spell carries a modifier to the Spellcasting roll. Stormy weather suffers a -1, while gale-force storms suffers a -2. After casting, the magician rolls 3d6 to determine how long it takes for the clouds to arrive. Clouds normally take 60 minutes to arrive from a summoning, but this is reduced by a number of minutes equal to the roll (minimum of 5 minutes).

The spell may be cast more than once on the same clouds, hastening their arrival. The effect of the spell centers on the Elementalist's position at the time of casting. The effect does not move with the Elementalist. The range of 1 mile refers to the radius of the ground area that will fall under cloud cover. The spell can summon any type of natural clouds the Elementalist has seen.

### Death Rain

**Rank:** Veteran      **Threads:** 2  
**Range:** 38      **Duration:** 12 rounds

The Elementalist needs cloudy skies to cast this spell. While casting, he must shout the names of all allies in order to protect them from the damaging effects of *death rain*. The spell will attack all unnamed characters, taking them to be enemies. The Elementalist makes a Spellcasting roll for each enemy character within range. All affected characters suffer 4d4 damage each round. The spell effect extends 75" in all directions from the point of casting. Should the Elementalist move, the spell effect stays put. (There is still rain further than 75" above the point of casting, but the rain no longer does damage to enemy characters.) If the Elementalist decides to concentrate on the spell, he can spend 1 Karma Point each round, rolling an extra d6 for the damage. Once the Elementalist breaks concentration, he cannot regain it without recasting the spell.

### Drastic Temperature

**Rank:** Veteran      **Threads:** 2  
**Range:** 50      **Duration:** 3 minutes

The Elementalist causes radical changes in temperature within a sphere 10" in diameter. The sphere cannot be moved once the spell is cast. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the temperature inside the sphere instantly rises above the boiling point of water or drops below the freezing point of water, at the discretion of the Elementalist. Water will freeze or boil on the third round of the spell. Characters passing through the sphere are subject to damage (refer to the *Savage Worlds Core Rulebook*). This spell is normally used to create barriers to discourage opponents from passing a given point.

### Earth Wall

**Rank:** Veteran      **Threads:** 3  
**Range:** 25      **Duration:** 1 hour

With this spell, the magician summons an *earth wall* that he may place along the ground wherever he chooses. The wall is composed of 2-inch by 2-inch sections of enchanted earth. The magician must be standing on the ground to cast this spell, which will summon a number of sections equal to the Elementalist's Rank. The wall may not be placed on a living being; doing so immediately destroys the section of wall. Each wall section has the following characteristics:

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#### EARTH WALL

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<b>Toughness</b> 8	<b>Armor</b> 3
<b>Damage Type</b>	Blunt

### Ease Passage

**Rank:** Veteran      **Threads:** 1  
**Range:** Touch      **Duration:** 6 hours

The Elementalist whispers words of praise to the elements, declaring the spell's target to be a friend of the weather elements. These whispers are automatically translated into the elemental tongue, and the elemental forces yield to the spell's recipient. The spell negates the adverse effects of terrain or vegetation. Loose sand magically compacts, bramble parts to ease passage. Any negative modifiers due to terrain are ignored.





## Flameshaw

**Rank:** Veteran      **Threads:** 4  
**Range:** 50      **Duration:** 1 hour

With this spell, the Elementalist conjures a hulking spirit, but he needs a roaring fire at least the size of a campfire to cast the spell. The lower half of the conjured spirit appears in the shape of a two-person rickshaw, which is pulled by the creature's upper torso. Though the flameshaw has wheels, it does not actually touch the ground. The Elementalist and one passenger may ride in the rickshaw unharmed by the flames, although the ride is a warm one.

The spirit responds to verbal commands from the Elementalist. The flameshaw normally travels about a foot from the ground, but can rise as high as a thousand feet above the ground. The Elementalist may instruct the flameshaw to run over a character. If so, the target must make an Agility roll. If it fails the roll, it suffers Str+d8 damage.

### FLAMESHAW

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d10, Strength d12+2, Vigor d12

**Skills:** Notice d8

**Pace:** 12; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 14 (4)

#### Special Abilities

- **Armor +4:** Fiery hide.
- **Runover:** Str+d8 damage to any character failing to avoid the flameshaw by making an Agility roll.
- **Size +2:** Flameshaws stand 8 feet tall and weigh over 800 lbs.

## Perimeter Alarm

**Rank:** Veteran      **Threads:** 3  
**Range:** 5      **Duration:** 4 hours

*Perimeter alarm* creates an alarm that will detect any creature crossing into a perimeter defined by the spell. The Elementalist walks the perimeter, then stands in the center to cast the spell. If the casting succeeds, use the Notice die of the caster as the Notice roll of the perimeter. Whenever a creature or character crosses the line, the magician makes a Notice roll. A successful roll means the spell detects the trespasser. The Elementalist may set the alarm to ignore creatures under a specified size. The alarm is audible within the perimeter to every person who was within the area when the spell was cast. Any others present will not hear it.



## ☞ Ricochet Attack

**Rank:** Veteran      **Threads:** 1 per target  
**Range:** 10/20/40      **Duration:** Instant

The Elementalist creates a ball of energy filled with glowing, glass-like shards. When the spell is successful, the ball will hit one target, then ricochet among multiple other targets. The magician must declare how many and which targets he intends to hit before each attack. He must make a separate Spellcasting roll per target. The ricocheting ball may attack a single character more than once in an attack. Each hit causes 2d10 damage.

## Silence Metal

**Rank:** Veteran      **Threads:** 3  
**Range:** Touch      **Duration:** 1 hour

This spell silences all noise made by any metal weapons, armor, or other tools the spell target is carrying. To cast the spell, the Elementalist takes a dagger or other metal tool from the recipient. He puts the dagger to his lips, makes a shushing noise, then hands the dagger back. If the Spellcasting roll succeeds, the magician makes a Spirit roll. Success means the metal makes no noise. Failure means the metal makes its normal amount of noise.

## Silver Shadow

**Rank:** Veteran      **Threads:** 3  
**Range:** 50      **Duration:** 1 hour

*Silver shadow* makes all the target's metal objects turn gauzy and insubstantial. If the Spellcasting roll

# CHAPTER 7: SPELLS

is successful, the target's non-magical metal weapons, armor, coins, and tools become useless, silvery shadows unless the target makes an opposed Spirit roll against the caster's Spellcasting roll.

## Storm Manacles

**Rank:** Veteran      **Threads:** 2  
**Range:** 30      **Duration:** 12 rounds

The Elementalist takes a drop of water, working it into a wisp of cloud. If he successfully casts *storm manacles* on a target character, the wisp darkens and grows to become manacles that shackle two of the target's arms or legs. Characters in *storm manacles* are considered entangled, suffering a -2 modifier to all rolls. More important, if the shackled character attempts any hostile action toward the Elementalist or his allies, the manacles zap the shackled character with lightning, dealing 2d12 damage.

## Tossing Earth

**Rank:** Veteran      **Threads:** 3  
**Range:** 50      **Duration:** 1 hour

If the spellcasting is successful, this spell can toss a character wildly into the air. To cast the spell, the Elementalist hurls pebbles, dirt, or stones toward the

area he wishes to affect, making an explosive sound as he does so. The *tossing earth* spell can affect a 20" square area. Any round that any character touches the affected area, including anyone already touching the area when the spell is cast, must make an Agility roll. Failure sends the character shooting 2d6" into the air. The character then suffers falling damage per normal (refer to the *Savage Worlds Core Rulebook*). The character must then make a second Agility roll. Failure means the character falls prone.

## Whirlwind

**Rank:** Veteran      **Threads:** 2  
**Range:** 30      **Duration:** 6 rounds

The Elementalist makes whirling motions with his fingers. A successful Spellcasting roll creates a *whirlwind*, which spins from the Elementalist's hands. The next round, and each round thereafter, the Elementalist may move the whirlwind to strike any and all characters within a radius of 2". The Elementalist makes a Spellcasting roll for each target. Affected targets suffer 2d6 damage and must succeed at a Strength roll or fall prone. This spell requires the Elementalist to concentrate or else it dissipates.

## ILLUSIONISM SPELLS

*What is truth? You think I deceive you with with illusions to confound and aggravate you?  
 No. I am simply teaching you how to cut to the truth of things. Nothing more, nothing less.*  
 —Alachrim, Illusionist

The Illusionist works with deception, spells that create things that are not what they seem. Sometimes he takes the unreal and gives it the appearance of reality. Other times he uses real effects to deceive or throw opponents off guard.

## SENSING ILLUSIONS

Illusionism spells can be quite effective, but it is also possible for opponents to see through or otherwise sense the deception. A character who senses the true nature of an illusion unravels the spell. A character might sense an illusion whenever he acts against or reacts to one. In some cases, a special Sensing check is also indicated. Any roll made against an illusion is automatically a Sensing check. A Sensing check is a Notice roll, with

modifiers outlined below. If the Sensing check is successful, the character senses the illusion and it fades away.

Illusionist's Rank	Modifier
Novice	+0
Seasoned	-2
Veteran	-4
Heroic	-6
Legendary	-8

The effectiveness of an illusion spell depends on the credulity of those the spell is to deceive. For this reason, spells that are pure illusions cannot cause a viewer's death. A character may, however, be knocked into a coma-like state by an illusion when he would otherwise die.

## NOVICE SPELL DESCRIPTIONS

### Alarm

**Rank:** Novice

**Threads:** 1

**Range:** 10

**Duration:** Smarts hours

The Illusionist gives a slight shriek as he attempts to cast the *alarm* spell on an object or a place. The magician makes a Spellcasting roll for any living or sentient being that comes within 2" of the *alarm*. If successful, the *alarm* goes off. It will continue to shout a warning in a loud voice for a full minute. The Illusionist determines the warning, which may consist of as many words as his Smarts die.

### Assuring Touch

**Rank:** Novice

**Threads:** 1

**Range:** Touch

**Duration:** 1 hour

This spell increases the target's resistance to fear-causing attacks. The Illusionist thinks positive thoughts about any subject he chooses, then gently touches the spell's target on the arm, shoulder, or head. The magician must murmur some bromide like "everything is going to be all right" for the spell to take effect. The subject gains a +4 bonus to any roll to resist fear effects.

### Best Face

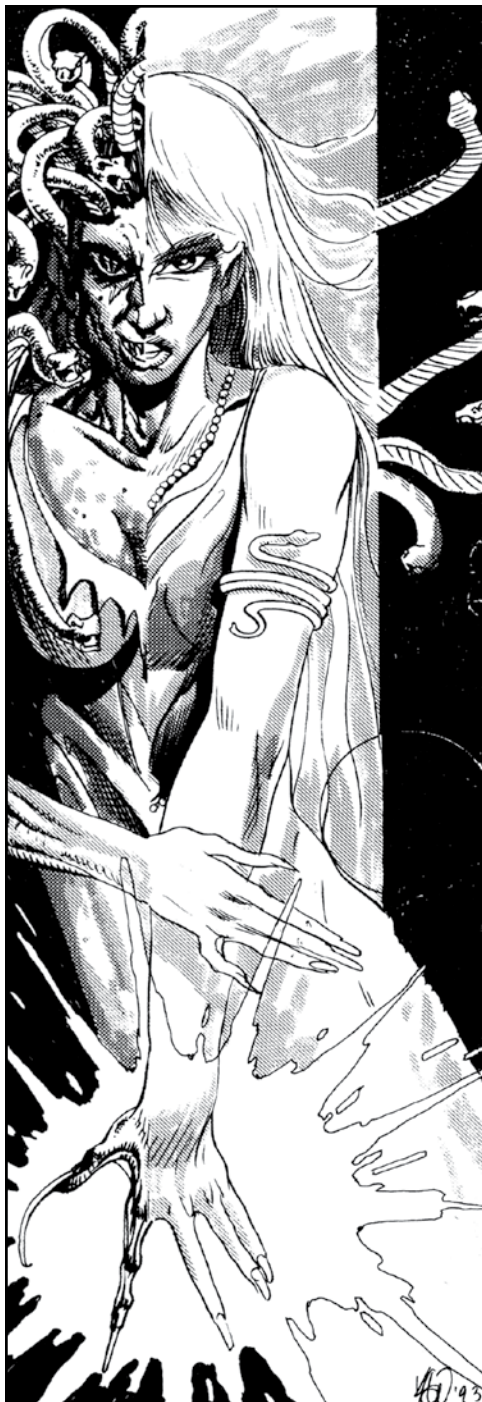
**Rank:** Novice

**Threads:** 1

**Range:** Touch

**Duration:** 1 hour

This spell disguises the Illusionist's identity. While casting the spell, he splashes water or cologne on his face. If the Illusionist is copying a specific face, he must have seen that individual. The Illusionist may cast this spell on himself or others. The spell imposes a -4 penalty to characters' Notice rolls when attempting to see through the false identity. This spell only affects the head and neck of the target, including hair and ears. The rest of the spell target's body is unaffected. The maximum possible difference in size between the recipient's face and the face mimicked is 100 percent in any dimension. This Illusionist must find some other way to disguise any obvious differences. This spell does not change the voice of the target, so the character will have to try to speak with the intonation and mannerisms of the character whose face he has borrowed.





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## Crafty Thought

**Rank:** Novice

**Threads:** 1

**Range:** 10

**Duration:** Smarts rounds

This spell can be used to distract or confuse an opponent. The Illusionist must be talking to the target while casting this spell, which will plant a thought created by the Illusionist in the target's mind. The spell also incorporates the effect of small gestures that might be used to emphasize speech. The thought must be simple and visual. The image cannot be more than ten seconds' worth of action, and the area of the image "seen" no larger than a tavern common room, with no more than four characters acting in the image. The target does not have to act on the thought, but the idea has been planted.

Each round after the first, the Illusionist can make the thought recur simply by deciding to do so. A successful Spellcasting roll means the Illusionist can modify the thought, but the setting must remain the same. Any of the four (or fewer) principal characters in the thought can change their actions.

If the Illusionist fails to cast the spell, the target is entitled to make a Sensing check. If the Sensing check is successful, the target knows the Illusionist was trying to cast a spell upon him.

## Disguise Metal

**Rank:** Novice

**Threads:** 1

**Range:** Touch

**Duration:** 7 minutes

The Illusionist can cast this spell on metal to disguise as any other metal of his choosing. The spell works on up to 100 pounds of metal. The spell does not change the shape of the metal, only its appearance. Disguising a steel sword as mercury, for example, would be useless because the blade would not flow at room temperatures like mercury.

## Displace Image

**Rank:** Novice

**Threads:** 1

**Range:** Touch

**Duration:** 7 minutes

The Illusionist traces the outline of the target, then touches first the "shoulder" of the outline and then the shoulder of the spell target. The outline figure is shrouded in a shimmering blur that drifts 2" away, then reforms into the image of the spell target. The recipient is no longer visible in his actual location, the illusion having displaced his image. Other senses, such as smell and hearing, are not affected by this

illusion. Attacks on the image have no effect, but if the recipient does not mimic the effect of a blow against him, the attacker is entitled to an immediate Disbelief Test.

## ☞ Ephemeral Bolt

**Rank:** Novice

**Threads:** 1

**Range:** 12/24/48

**Duration:** Instant

The *ephemeral bolt* spell creates a wriggling, glowing green bolt that deals 2d6 damage. This damage is illusory damage.

## Innocent Activity

**Rank:** Novice

**Threads:** 3

**Range:** 20

**Duration:** 12 rounds

This spell creates a flowing wave of color over the target, which coalesces into an image of that character performing an innocent-seeming activity. In order to avoid suspicion and possible disbelief, the Illusionist must choose an activity appropriate to the setting. If the recipient of the illusion moves from the spot, the illusion is broken. The subject may perform any action, even an attack, while under the spell of *innocent activity*. Inexplicable phenomena, such as voices, spells, or attacks, grants any other character an immediate Sensing check. If a character senses the illusion, it breaks; if not, the character concocts some other explanation for what happened.

## Light

**Rank:** Novice

**Threads:** 2

**Range:** 20

**Duration:** Smarts×2 minutes

Light is a real spell, not an illusion. The Illusionist briefly taps into the astral plane to release some energy for the light. The *light* spell forms a floating, glowing sphere about the size of an orange, illuminating everything within 6". The Illusionist controls the movement of the *light*, but this requires concentration, preventing him from casting any other spell. He may place the *light* on a character or object if he had a raise on the Spellcasting roll. The Illusionist can no longer move the *light* once he has placed it on a character or object.

An Illusionist can blind a character by casting *light* on his or her eyes. This is more difficult than simply placing the light on the character: when making the Spellcasting roll to blind a target, the magician suffers

a -2 penalty to the roll. Blinded victims suffer a -6 penalty to all Trait rolls that require vision and have their Parry reduced to 2. The magician can use Blood Magic to extend the duration of a *light* spell (but not the duration of a victim's blindness). By gaining a permanent -1 modifier to Vigor rolls, he can extend the duration of the spell to a year and a day. The penalty vanishes after a year and a day.

## Monstrous Mantle

**Rank:** Novice      **Threads:** 2  
**Range:** Touch      **Duration:** 5 rounds

This spell increases the combat prowess of the spell target. While casting the spell, the Illusionist makes snarling and growling sounds, and mimics the attack of a violent monster. He then touches the target. Two helices of light form around the character, rotating to spin out the form of the monster. The illusion is most effective if the Illusionist has fought and suffered damage in a melee with the creature depicted. If the Illusionist has never taken damage from the claws of this type of beast, add 2 to all Sensing checks (p.215). If the Illusionist has never

fought the creature at all, the Sensing check gains an additional +2 bonus. These sensing bonuses are cumulative. If the Illusionist has never even seen the creature, for example, any Sensing checks made against the illusion would get the full bonus of +4. The illusion adds 2 to the spell target's attack and damage rolls, and 2 to his Parry. The illusion does not give the recipient any of the creature's special attack forms or special abilities.

## Pauper's Purse

**Rank:** Novice      **Threads:** 1  
**Range:** 15      **Duration:** Smarts minutes

This spell makes the target appear to have less money than he actually does. The Illusionist touches the target purse, cash box, or other container holding money. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the magician rolls his Spirit. Each point of effect moves 10 coins into an extra-dimensional pocket that is invisible to those without astral perception. The coins are inaccessible until the spell expires or is dispelled.

## Rope Guide

**Rank:** Novice      **Threads:** 2  
**Range:** 5      **Duration:** Smarts minutes

This spell is real, not an illusion. The Illusionist casts the spell on a rope of up to 5' in length. By concentrating, the Illusionist can direct the rope to move at a Pace of 5. If the rope must make an Agility roll (to tie itself off or tie up an opponent in combat), the Illusionist uses his own Agility die. The rope cannot carry any weight while the Illusionist is directing it. He could use *rope guide* to tie the rope around the bars of a window, but characters would still have to do the climbing themselves.

## Tailor

**Rank:** Novice      **Threads:** 2  
**Range:** Touch      **Duration:** Smarts hours

When casting this spell, the Illusionist clenches his teeth as if biting a thread, then touches his target. The spell alters the style, cut, and color of the target's clothes, either improving or worsening his or her appearance. The spell adds a +4 bonus to the character's Persuasion rolls for the duration of the spell.





## ☞✂ True Ephemeral Bolt

**Rank:** Novice      **Threads:** 1  
**Range:** 12/24/48      **Duration:** Instant

This spell is not an illusion. It looks and acts exactly like the *ephemeral bolt* spell. *True ephemeral bolt* packs less punch than its ersatz twin, however, dealing only 2d4 damage. Illusionists find the spell useful against characters who busily disbelieve every spell they cast.

## Unseen Voices

**Rank:** Novice      **Threads:** 1  
**Range:** 10      **Duration:** 15 rounds

This spell creates the illusion of unseen voices to distract a target. The Illusionist casts the spell while quietly muttering to himself. By concentrating, the caster can control what each voice says. The Illusionist need not use the wide range of voices the spell gives him. The voices do not sound like the Illusionist's unless he so desires. If the Illusionist loses concentration, the voices will repeat whatever they said in the last round. This spell does not give the Illusionist any special ability to hear what is being said at the source of the voices. He must be in a position to hear what is being said if he wants to mimic a conversation.

## Weather Cloak

**Rank:** Novice      **Threads:** 1  
**Range:** Touch  
**Duration:** Smarts×10 minutes

The *weather cloak* spell is not an illusion. If successful, the spell creates a shimmering-weave cloak of blue and silver around the target, protecting him or her from the elements and adding +2 bonus to any rolls to resist heat or cold from the weather.

## SEASONED SPELL DESCRIPTIONS

### Clarion Call

**Rank:** Seasoned      **Threads:** 2  
**Range:** 10      **Duration:** Smarts minutes

This spell creates an illusory voice that can persuade characters to do the speaker's will. The Illusionist speaks quietly while casting this spell. A successful Spellcasting roll allows the Illusionist to place the effect at any spot within range. *Clarion call* creates one illusory voice, a voice with considerable authority that automatically translates the

Illusionist's words into a language appropriate for most of his listeners. To determine the success of the illusion, the Illusionist makes a Persuasion roll. Success means the characters act according to the voice's suggestions, as long as the action is not obviously harmful. If the Illusionist gets a raise on the Persuasion roll, that target is fooled into taking the suggested course of action even if it is obviously harmful. The target makes a Sensing check just before any harm is done. If the roll is successful, it destroys the suggestion.

## Dampen Karma

**Rank:** Seasoned      **Threads:** 5  
**Range:** 20      **Duration:** Smarts rounds

This spell reduces the target's ability to use Karma. The Illusionist must spend 1 Karma Point to cast this spell. A successful Spellcasting roll means the target cannot use any Karma for the duration of the spell.

## Eyes Have It

**Rank:** Seasoned      **Threads:** 1  
**Range:** 40      **Duration:** 5 rounds

This spell can be used to temporarily blind an opponent. The Illusionist touches his eyelids with his fingers, then touches his fingers to his clothes. Stylized, mirror-like eyes appear on his clothing. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the target's eyes become a glazed, opaque white and he or she is blinded. Blinded victims suffer a -6 penalty to all Trait rolls that require vision and have their Parry reduced to 2.

## False Floor

**Rank:** Seasoned      **Threads:** 1  
**Range:** 15      **Duration:** Smarts minutes

This spell creates the illusion of a false floor or other trap in a normal section of floor (up to 4" by 4"). While casting, the Illusionist imagines some manner of trap concealed by the floor. Whenever a character comes upon the illusion, he must make a Sensing check. If he fails, he believes that something is wrong with the floor. The Game Master gives information hinting that a trap might be triggered if the character were to cross the section of floor, with disastrous results. If a character crosses anyway, no trap is triggered. *False floor* may also be cast on







sections of wall or a ceiling. The spell is not limited only to flooring.

## Flying Carpet

**Rank:** Seasoned    **Threads:** 2+  
**Range:** Touch    **Duration:** Smarts hours

This spell is not an illusion. It enchants a carpet or other piece of cloth to become a flying platform. If the Illusionist makes a successful Spellcasting roll, he may command the carpet with verbal instructions. The Illusionist may also turn over command of the carpet to another character, but he can only do so once during the spell's duration. The carpet is not very intelligent and can be easily confused. The carpet's load limit is 500 pounds, plus 200 pounds for each additional Thread. The carpet reverts to its normal form when the spell's duration expires. A magician can use Blood Magic to extend the duration of the spell. At a cost of -1 penalty to all Vigor rolls, the carpet will remain animated for a year and a day. The penalty vanishes after the spell expires.

## Impossible Lock

**Rank:** Seasoned    **Threads:** 2  
**Range:** Touch    **Duration:** Smarts hours

While casting this spell, the Illusionist pantomimes failing to open the lock he is touching. A character attempting to pick the lock must make a Sensing check to see through the illusion. Failure means the lock will not open, no matter how well he rolls Lockpicking. A success makes the *impossible lock* fade as soon as it is picked.

## Improved Alarm

**Rank:** Seasoned    **Threads:** 2  
**Range:** 100  
**Duration:** Smarts×2 hours

The Illusionist mimics a whisper to place the *improved alarm* spell on an object or a place. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, any living or sentient being that comes within 2" of the alarm may trigger it. If the Illusionist is within the spell's range, the alarm quietly notifies him that something is amiss. The Illusionist then instructs the alarm to shout its warning or to remain silent. The Illusionist determines the warning, which may consist of as many words as his Smarts die.

## Mind Fog

**Rank:** Seasoned    **Threads:** 3  
**Range:** 10    **Duration:** 5 rounds

This spell makes the target forget what he or she was about to do. While casting the spell, the Illusionist scratches her temple as if trying to remember something. *Mind fog* is cast on a single character. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the target character cannot take any action except defense, until he "remembers" what he wanted to do (once the spell's duration expires).

## ✧ Multi-Missile

**Rank:** Seasoned    **Threads:** 2  
**Range:** Touch  
**Duration:** Smarts rounds or until fired

This spell adds missiles to any single missile weapon. The Illusionist casts this spell on a missile, such as an arrow, bolt, or sling bullet. The spell

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adds d4 missiles to the one shot by the wielder. If the real missile hits, so do all the illusory missiles. If the real missile misses, so do all the duplicates. Each duplicate missile deals an extra 1d4 illusory damage.

## Noble Manner

**Rank:** Seasoned      **Threads:** 2  
**Range:** Touch      **Duration:** Smarts hours

The Illusionist adopts a haughty expression, which slowly softens to a smile while casting this spell. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the recipient gains a +4 bonus to Persuasion rolls as long as he acts as if he were from a superior social station. The recipient may be arrogant, gracious, friendly, condescending, or whatever, but he must behave as if he is from a social class a cut above the listener's station.

## Nobody Here

**Rank:** Seasoned      **Threads:** 3  
**Range:** 10      **Duration:** 5 rounds

This spell hides normally visible characters from another character. The Illusionist concentrates intensely on the thought of "nobody here" while casting the spell. The spell centers on the spot where the Illusionist casts it, radiating out 6". The effect does not move. Characters who exit the circle lose the benefit of the spell, regaining the benefit only by moving back inside the circle. Once the spell is cast, no additional characters may be affected by it. A character who walks into the area of the illusion makes a Notice roll with a -4 modifier. If the character fails, the character's sensory feedback is suppressed. His senses detect any normally visible characters, but the knowledge is suppressed by the spell. The character adds 2 to his Notice roll if any of the characters concealed by the spell manipulate the environment in ways that require explanation, e.g., moving books in plain sight, opening and shutting doors. A target character earns a +4 bonus if a concealed character makes physical contact with the target.

*Nobody here* is dispelled as soon as a concealed character causes damage to the target. Once the spell is sensed or the duration expired, the bamboozled character suddenly realizes what he had seen a few minutes earlier. Illusionists often use this spell to tell off an overbearing employer, escaping before the realization hits their boss.

## Pleasant Visions

**Rank:** Seasoned      **Threads:** 1+  
**Range:** 5      **Duration:** 3 rounds

This spell prevents characters from taking actions because they are distracted by pleasant thoughts and fantasies. While casting this spell, the Illusionist remembers a pleasant scene or experience. *Pleasant visions* may be cast upon one character per Thread. A separate Spellcasting roll must be made for each target. A successful Spellcasting roll fills the targets' heads with pleasant thoughts and sensations. They will not take any action until the pleasant visions are either dispelled or they suffer harm. A character who suffers harm adds a number equal to any damage taken to the result of an automatic Sensing check to disbelieve.

## Stop Right There

**Rank:** Seasoned      **Threads:** 2  
**Range:** 10      **Duration:** 4 rounds

This spell can immobilize a target. When casting the spell, the Illusionist holds up a hand, shouting "Stop!" as loudly as possible. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the target cannot move. The target character regains movement when the spell expires or when suffers any damage.

## Suffocation

**Rank:** Seasoned      **Threads:** 2  
**Range:** 20      **Duration:** Smarts rounds

This spell suffocates its targets. The Illusionist must hold his breath while casting this spell. Once cast, the spell targets everyone within a 2-inch radius. The magician must make a Spellcasting roll for each character within the radius. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the spell begins to suffocate the target(s). For rules regarding suffocation, refer to the rules for drowning in the *Savage Worlds Core Rulebook*. Once targeted, the spell works until disbelieved, the duration expires, or the victim moves out of range.

## Wall of Unfire

**Rank:** Seasoned      **Threads:** 2  
**Range:** 15      **Duration:** Smarts rounds

This spell creates a wall of illusory fire. While casting the spell, the Illusionist makes crackling, hissing noises like a roaring fire. The *wall of unfire*



is 2" by 2". Any character passing through the wall takes 4d6 illusory damage.

## VETERAN SPELL DESCRIPTIONS

### Astral Nightmare

**Rank:** Veteran      **Threads:** 2

**Range:** 25      **Duration:** Smarts rounds

This spell deceives the target into believing he has been transported to astral space. The Illusionist conjures up memories or imaginings of astral space. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the character believes he has been transported to astral space. The Illusionist is in control of the illusion, but the control requires concentration. If the Illusionist ceases concentrating, the illusion fades in a single round. Any effects or creatures that the Illusionist conjures up act using the magician's Smarts die. The Illusionist may reduce the die to simulate smaller effects or creatures.

### ☛ Bouncing Blaster

**Rank:** Veteran      **Threads:** 3

**Range:** 20      **Duration:** Smarts days

An Illusionist seeds the earth with this spell. All of the blasters must be placed within a 20" by 20" square. The Illusionist plants a maximum number of blasters equal to his Smarts die. An Illusionist with a d8 Smarts, for example, could plant up to eight blasters. It takes the Illusionist 10 minutes to plant each blaster. The Illusionist makes a Spellcasting roll against any character who walks within 1" of a blaster. Trailing fierce orange sparks, the blaster shoots 2" into the air, then explodes. Roll 2d6 damage to all characters who are within 4" of the blaster's launch point. This damage is not illusory.

### Chosen Path

**Rank:** Veteran      **Threads:** 2

**Range:** 20      **Duration:** Smarts hours

This spell forces characters to follow a path of the Illusionist's choosing. As he casts the spell, the Illusionist selects a path (a set of doors, a branch in the road), then indicates his choice. When other characters are faced with the same choice, the Illusionist makes a Spellcasting roll. A successful roll forces the targets to make the indicated choice. They may believe they have chosen otherwise, but in reality

they have selected the path previously determined by the Illusionist. The deception will become apparent once they are out of the spell's range or the spell's duration ends.

*An Illusionist stands at a three-way intersection. He chooses left, then casts the chosen path spell. A few hours later a group of merchants walks by. They try to take a right turn, but the spell makes them turn left, even though they all believe they have taken the right-hand turn. Once they are more than 20" from the intersection, they notice that they are not heading in their intended direction.*

### False Enchantment

**Rank:** Veteran      **Threads:** 2

**Range:** Touch      **Duration:** Smarts days

This spell imbues an item with an illusory magical power. The Illusionist cannot activate this power, but other magicians can detect it and be deceived. While casting the spell, the Illusionist imagines the fabulous properties he wishes the object to have. An Illusionist can use Blood Magic to extend the duration of this spell to a year and a day by taking a permanent -1 penalty to all Vigor rolls until the spell expires.

### Form Exchange

**Rank:** Veteran      **Threads:** 3

**Range:** 50      **Duration:** Smarts minutes

*Form exchange* swaps the location and the appearance of the Illusionist and the target character. If the Illusionist's Spellcasting roll succeeds, the Illusionist, looking like the target character, now stands where the target character originally stood. The target character now occupies the Illusionist's position and looks like him. When the spell's duration ends, the characters don't swap back, but the characters both revert back to their original appearance.

### ☛ Illusory Missiles

**Rank:** Veteran      **Threads:** 2

**Range:** 15      **Duration:** Instant

The Illusionist releases a barrage of *illusory missiles*, saturating a circle with a radius of 2". The Illusionist makes the Spellcasting roll against any character caught in the barrage. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the target suffers 2d6 illusory damage.





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## Leaping Lizards

**Rank:** Veteran      **Threads:** 2  
**Range:** 40      **Duration:** Smarts rounds

*Leaping lizards* creates illusory monsters, up to a number equal to the Illusionists Smarts die. The spell can create monsters other than lizards. The creatures' Traits are all equal to the magician's Smarts die, though the Illusionist may choose to reduce some of the Traits for the sake of realism. The Illusionist must stay within range of the creatures or else they are instantly dispelled. The monsters are controlled by the Illusionist.

## Other Place

**Rank:** Veteran      **Threads:** 4  
**Range:** Touch      **Duration:** Smarts days

*Other place* joins two entrances that are no more than 1 mile apart. This spell must be cast twice within 2 hours, first on the destination portal and then on the departure portal. The portals are linked by a warping of space. The warping is real, but this spell takes a number of illusory "shortcuts" that can be broken to disrupt the link. Sensing destroys the links, and dispels both spells. If the Illusionist succeeds at both Spellcasting rolls, characters pass through the entrances, instantly crossing the distance between them.

## Rebel Limb

**Rank:** Veteran      **Threads:** 2  
**Range:** 20      **Duration:** 5 rounds

This spell permits the magician to gain control over one limb of a target. While casting the spell, the Illusionist grabs one of his own limbs, shaking it randomly, then points it at the target character. If he makes a successful Spellcasting roll, the Illusionist takes over one of the target's limbs, choosing which limb it will be. The Illusionist controls the movement of the limb as long as the target is within range. The limb acts with any applicable physical skills, e.g., a sword-arm attack, with the die of its owner.

## Spotlight

**Rank:** Veteran      **Threads:** 2  
**Range:** 20      **Duration:** 5 minutes

With this spell, the Illusionist can cast a *spotlight* over an area with a radius of 4". The Illusionist makes a Spellcasting roll. If successful, the spell creates

*spotlights*, one for each character in the circle, up to a number of *spotlights* equal to the magician's Smarts die. If there are more characters than *spotlights*, the magician gets to choose which targets are affected. The *spotlight* sits 1" above a character's head, brightly illuminating him.

## Twisted Tongues

**Rank:** Veteran      **Threads:** 1+  
**Range:** 30      **Duration:** Smarts minutes

This spell so jumbles a target's speech that no one can understand what he's saying. While casting this spell, the Illusionist mutters nonsense syllables. *Twisted tongues* may affect a number of characters up to the amount of Threads. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the spell reduces the targets' words to nonsense utterances, so that "Kill them all!" translates to "Slig covo bebop buttery!" No one can understand what the character or characters are saying until the illusion is dispelled or the spell expires.

## Vertigo

**Rank:** Veteran      **Threads:** 1  
**Range:** 30      **Duration:** Instant

This spell totally disorients a target. While casting this spell, the Illusionist spins in a tight circle, making himself slightly dizzy. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the target can no longer tell which way is up or down, becoming severely disoriented, becoming Shaken.

## Walk Through

**Rank:** Veteran      **Threads:** 1  
**Range:** Touch      **Duration:** Smarts rounds

This is a real spell mastered by Illusionists during their experiments with unreality. The spell is cast upon a wall, gate, or other obstacle to create a temporary pathway. The opening is not very stable; it writhes, expands, and contracts at random moments. On a success, one character can try to struggle through each round; a successful Agility roll will permit the character to wriggle through. A raise allows one character to move through the opening each round.

## NETHERMANCY SPELLS

*Sir, you look at me as if I were Horror-marked. Do you think me to be the scion of some creature from the netherworlds? Curb your fear. All I desire is a tankard of your finest ale.*

—Caelarion, Nethermancer

Nethermancers deal with the netherworlds and their inhabitants. Their spells often involve spirits and other non-worldly entities. Their spells are also heavily involved with the workings of life and death and the nature of astral space.

## NOVICE SPELL DESCRIPTIONS

### Bone Circle

**Rank:** Novice      **Threads:** 4  
**Range:** Touch      **Duration:** Instant

*Bone circle* is a ritual spell in which the Nethermancer invites a wandering spirit to live within a circle of bones. Casting the spell takes one hour of game time. The Nethermancer needs the bones of a non-sentient animal for the ritual of constructing a bone circle 1" to 10" in diameter and invites a wandering spirit to live within it. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the spirit is summoned.

The spirit that takes up residence is not very bright. It cannot leave the circle, but it can try to prevent other characters from entering. A Nethermancer may have more than one bone circle in existence at any one time.

The game statistics for the bone spirit follow.

#### BONE SPIRIT

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d10, Strength d6, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Fighting d10, Notice d10, Stealth d12

**Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 5

#### **Special Abilities**

- ♦ **Invisible:** The bone spirit is invisible unless it moves.
- ♦ **Claw Swipe:** Str+d4.

### Bone Dance

**Rank:** Novice      **Threads:** 1  
**Range:** 20      **Duration:** 4 rounds

The Nethermancer does a herky-jerky jig while casting this spell, pointing at the target. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, *bone dance* infuses the





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target's skeleton with an independent living force, which then moves the skeleton against the target's will. The Nethermancer can control the target's movements. The Nethermancer must concentrate each round of this spell, directing the target through its dance. The Nethermancer's control can only make the target move in a random fashion. The target wanders d6" in a round but can take no other action.

### Chilling Circle

**Rank:** Novice      **Threads:** 2  
**Range:** 20      **Duration:** Smarts rounds

This spell creates a circle of cold that can damage characters who enter it. The Nethermancer spins in a slow circle, increasing speed as he nears the end of the spellcasting. He stops suddenly, kneeling to touch the center of the circle. A wave of cold ripples out 4" in every direction from the center. The Nethermancer makes a Spellcasting roll for each character inside the circle. Success deals 2d6 damage.

### Command Nightflyer

**Rank:** Novice      **Threads:** 1  
**Range:** 40      **Duration:** Smarts rounds

This spell allows the Nethermancer to converse with and command nocturnal flying creatures, such as owls, bats, and krilworms. The Nethermancer imitates the flying or speaking sound of the animal and then makes a Spellcasting roll. If the roll is successful, the spell allows him to converse with the creature and to utter simple commands.

*Command nightflyer* cannot override a creature's survival instincts or force it to behave against its basic nature. For example, the spell could not force a bat to Scout during daylight hours.

### Detect Undead

**Rank:** Novice      **Threads:** 1  
**Range:** Touch      **Duration:** 10 minutes

This spell permits the spell recipient to *detect undead* creatures. While casting this spell, the Nethermancer must touch the spell target, smearing the recipient's brow with a bit of dust or dirt. Detecting undead requires concentration, but the spell's recipient does not have to concentrate for the duration of the spell, only during the rounds when he is trying to *detect undead*.

If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the recipient makes a Notice roll to detect any undead within range. Success indicates the number of undead within range, but not their exact position.

### Dry and Wet

**Rank:** Novice      **Threads:** 1  
**Range:** 10      **Duration:** Instant

This spell can either dry soaked items or soak dry ones. The Nethermancer gathers saliva in his mouth. If he spits, "wet" is cast. If he swallows, "dry" is cast. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the magician rolls his Spirit. A number of pounds equal to the result can be affected within range.

### Ethereal Darkness

**Rank:** Novice      **Threads:** 1  
**Range:** Touch      **Duration:** 5 rounds

Using this spell, the Nethermancer draws a bit of darkness from another dimension, then commands it to billow and expand. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the darkness fills a sphere 10" in every direction, centering on the character or object touched.

The darkness gives all characters a -5 modifier to all actions requiring sight. Ordinary light does not penetrate *ethereal darkness*. Nethermancers are not affected by *ethereal darkness*. They continue to see as if the spell had never been cast. All Nethermancers are immune to *ethereal darkness*, not just the Nethermancer who cast the spell.

### Experience Death

**Rank:** Novice      **Threads:** 3  
**Range:** Touch      **Duration:** Smarts rounds

The Nethermancer casts this spell on a corpse to see and experience everything the dead character experienced at the time of his death. The Nethermancer touches the spirit world to recreate the events of the character's death. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the last few rounds of the target character's life are played out, equal to the duration of the spell. The Nethermancer senses everything from the point of view of the deceased. Unfortunately, this includes taking any damage that the deceased suffered. The Nethermancer then rolls his Smarts die, the result giving him extra Toughness to resist this damage.





## Fog Ghost

**Rank:** Novice

**Threads:** 2

**Range:** 10

**Duration:** Smarts rounds

With the *fog ghost* spell, the Nethermancer coalesces fog from the surrounding air and coaxes a maleficent spirit to briefly inhabit the fog. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the *fog ghost* appears anywhere the Nethermancer wishes within range. The *fog ghost* attacks the nearest character, and continues to attack whatever character is nearest for each round of its existence. Destroying the fog does not harm the spirit, which simply returns to the netherworld and waits for another chance to harm the living. A *fog ghost* will not attack undead or entities. A *fog ghost* spell cannot be cast in a desert or other very dry environment, nor can it be cast when the temperature is below freezing. Game statistics for the *fog ghost* follow.

### FOG GHOST

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d10, Strength d8, Vigor d8

**Skills:** Fighting d8, Intimidate d10, Notice d8, Stealth d8

**Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6

**Special Abilities**

♦ **Bludgeon:** Str+d6.

♦ **Insubstantial:** Fog ghosts cannot be grappled and called shots deal no extra damage.

## Insect Repellent

**Rank:** Novice

**Threads:** 1

**Range:** Touch

**Duration:** Smarts minutes

This spell permits the Nethermancer to repel insects of all sizes. While casting the spell, he makes a buzzing sound like the sound of flying insects, the buzzing becoming softer as the spell is cast. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, insects must make a successful Spirit roll or else leave the character alone unless attacked.

## Life Circle of One

**Rank:** Novice

**Threads:** 2

**Range:** Touch

**Duration:** Smarts minutes

This spell creates a circle that can resist any undead, Horror, or Horror construct that attempts to enter it. The Nethermancer spits on his fingers, then outlines the circle with his finger. The circle can be no more than 10" in diameter. If the Spellcasting roll

is successful, the circle resists any undead, Horror, or Horror construct who attempts to enter. When an entity attempts to enter or reach into the circle, the Nethermancer makes an opposed Spirit roll to keep the entity at bay.

*Life circle of one* can only repel one creature per round. Numerous enemies can easily swamp the circle if they can manage to surround it. A Nethermancer may cast another *life circle of one* within an existing life circle. This can afford some protection from numerous entities for a few minutes.

## Pocket Guardian

**Rank:** Novice

**Threads:** 3

**Range:** Touch

**Duration:** Smarts days

The *Pocket guardian* spell summons a diminutive spirit to guard items in a character's pouch or pocket. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the spirit resides entirely within the pocket, and cannot leave it. The spirits often appear as small rats or large stinging insects. *Pocket guardians* permit the caster to insert and remove items from a pocket. The spirit will attack any other character who attempts to reach into the protected pocket and will also make as much noise as possible to alert the spellcaster.

### POCKET GUARDIAN

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d4 (A), Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d4

**Skills:** Fighting d8, Notice d12

**Pace:** 4; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 2

**Special Abilities**

♦ **Bite:** Str.

♦ **Noisy:** Creatures within hearing distance gain a +4 bonus to their Notice rolls when the pocket guardian is attempting to get their attention.

♦ **Pocket Prison:** The pocket guardian cannot leave the pocket into which it was summoned.

♦ **Size** -2.

♦ **Small:** Anyone attacking a pocket guardian must subtract 2 from his attack rolls.

## Putrefy

**Rank:** Novice

**Threads:** 1

**Range:** 10

**Duration:** Instant

Nethermancers cast this simple spell by swallowing with a slight grimace, then looking at the food they wish to putrefy. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the food is putrefied. When cast on the diner, all of the food, including the bite



just taken, is putrefied. *Putrefy* works on up to 20 pounds of food.

## Repel Animal

**Rank:** Novice      **Threads:** 1  
**Range:** Touch      **Duration:** Smarts minutes

The Nethermancer draws a circle with a radius of 5" on the ground, touching the center of the circle as she casts the spell. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, any natural animal must succeed at an opposed Spirit roll in order to enter the glowing white circle. Natural animals do not include undead, Horrors, Horror constructs, or intelligent beings.

## Shield Mist

**Rank:** Novice      **Threads:** 2  
**Range:** Touch      **Duration:** Smarts rounds

This spell creates a shield of mist that hardens and moves to deflect blows. While casting the spell, the Nethermancer moves his hands over his form while wisps of mist pour from his fingertips. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the *shield mist* acts as an extra medium shield. This stacks with any shield the character may already be carrying. The Nethermancer decides which side of the body it protects.

## Spirit Grip

**Rank:** Novice      **Threads:** 1  
**Range:** 20      **Duration:** Instant

This spell permits the Nethermancer to draw on the malevolent energy of the spirits of the dead to harm others. A successful Spellcasting roll draws a small portion of their malevolent energy to damage a target. *Spirit grip* causes 2d6 damage.

## Undead Struggle

**Rank:** Novice      **Threads:** 2  
**Range:** 20      **Duration:** Smarts rounds

This risky spell allows the Nethermancer to engage the undead directly in magical combat. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the Nethermancer and the undead are locked in magical combat. Neither may move or take any action other than that required for the spell until the spell expires or until one of the contestants is destroyed. The Nethermancer and the undead must make an opposed Spirit roll. The winner takes no damage; the loser takes damage 2d6+2 damage.

## SEASONED SPELL DESCRIPTIONS

### Animate Skeleton

**Rank:** Seasoned      **Threads:** 6  
**Range:** 10      **Duration:** Smarts hours

The Nethermancer must be in a graveyard or else have a supply of skeletons to use this spell. He may animate a number of skeletons up to his die in Spirit per spell. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the skeletons are animated. If the skeletons move beyond 100" of the Nethermancer, they will crumble into a heap of lifeless bones. The skeletons are usually armed with short swords fashioned from spare bones by the magic of the spell. If the skeleton was originally buried with a better weapon, it uses that weapon. Skeletons can use magic items, but they are weak users of magic.

#### ANIMATED SKELETON

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d4, Spirit d4, Strength d6, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d4, Shooting d6

**Pace:** 7; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7

**Gear:** Varies.



### Special Abilities

- ♦ **Bony Claws:** Str+d4.
- ♦ **Fearless:** Skeletons are immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- ♦ **Undead:** +2 Toughness; +2 to recover from being Shaken; called shots do no extra damage.

## Animate Spirit Object

**Rank:** Seasoned      **Threads:** 3  
**Range:** 20      **Duration:** Smarts minutes

This spell allows a Nethermancer to summon a spirit to inhabit an inanimate object. Such spirits are reasonably intelligent and can follow complex commands. Although the spirits willingly obey their summoners, they are mischievous. If they can possibly create some mischief while still obeying their commands, they will usually do so. When animating the objects, the spirits alter the form of the object to give themselves limbs and sensory organs, although the object retains much of its original shape. If the Nethermancer succeeds with his Spellcasting roll, he summons a spirit to inhabit an inanimate object. When creating the object, the Nethermancer may spend a number of Karma Points equal to his Rank (1 for Novice, 2 for Seasoned, and so on). For each Karma Point spent, he may increase one of the Trait dice below by 1, to a maximum of d12.

### ANIMATED SPIRIT OBJECT

- Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d4 (A), Spirit d4, Strength d10, Vigor d10  
**Skills:** Fighting d10, Notice d6  
**Pace:** 4; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 9 (2)  
**Special Abilities**
- ♦ **Armor:** +2
  - ♦ **Bash:** Str+d6.
  - ♦ **Construct:** +2 to recover from being Shaken; called shots do no extra damage; does not suffer from disease or poison.
  - ♦ **Fearless:** Animated spirit objects are immune to fear and Intimidation.

## Astral Flare

**Rank:** Seasoned      **Threads:** 1  
**Range:** 50      **Duration:** 5 rounds

With this spell, the Nethermancer releases an intense flare of light into the astral plane. The Nethermancer must make a Spellcasting roll for each creature trying to see into the astral plane while the flare is present. If successful, the creature is astrally

blinded and cannot see into the astral plane. The astral blindness lasts for the duration of the spell.

## Astral Horror

**Rank:** Seasoned      **Threads:** 2  
**Range:** 40      **Duration:** Smarts rounds

This spell creates the illusion of an *astral horror* cast around a tiny bit of true spiritual essence. Nethermancers are known for conjuring abominable things from astral space or beyond, and this spell plays on that fact. The *astral horror* appears as a fog ghost (p.226), but is far more lethal. The illusion must stay within spell range of the Nethermancer or else it dissipates. Creatures may make Sensing checks to disbelieve this illusion (see **Sensing Illusions**, p.215). The illusion obeys the mental commands of the Nethermancer. The Nethermancer may perform other actions and still command the illusion.

### ASTRAL HORROR

- Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d10, Strength d10, Vigor d12  
**Skills:** Fighting d10, Intimidate d10, Notice d8, Stealth d8  
**Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 8  
**Special Abilities**
- ♦ **Bludgeon:** Str+d8.
  - ♦ **Illusion:** The astral horror deals only illusory damage.
  - ♦ **Insubstantial:** Astral horrors cannot be grappled and called shots deal no extra damage.

## Blessed Light

**Rank:** Seasoned      **Threads:** 2  
**Range:** 20      **Duration:** Smarts rounds

With this spell, the Nethermancer pierces astral space to gather pure light. The globe hovers about 1" above the Nethermancer, but no higher. The light illuminates 15" to either side. Any entity, including undead, who wishes to enter the lit area must either dispel the spell or make a successful opposed Spirit roll with the Nethermancer. If the roll fails, the entity cannot enter the area. A successful roll extinguishes the *blessed light* spell.

## Circle of Astral Protection

**Rank:** Seasoned      **Threads:** 4  
**Range:** Touch      **Duration:** Smarts minutes

The Nethermancer must walk the circle before casting the spell. If the Spellcasting roll is successful,







the spell creates a *circle of astral protection* with a radius of 5". The circle is black with glowing yellow lines. The Mystic Armor rating (p.227) of any character within the circle, as long as the character was in the circle when the spell was cast, increases by +3 for the duration of the spell.

## Death's Head

**Rank:** Seasoned **Threads:** 2  
**Range:** Touch **Duration:** Smarts rounds

This spell transforms the Nethermancer's head into a gore-spattered skull. The Nethermancer touches his face as he casts the spell. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the Nethermancer may make an opposed Spirit roll to inflict fear on any character he can see for each round of the spell's duration. If he gets a raise, the character must flee out of the Nethermancer's line of sight. A normal success causes the character to suffer a -2 penalty to all Trait rolls for the duration of the spell. The magician can only target any one creature with this spell once per casting.

## Evil Eye

**Rank:** Seasoned **Threads:** 1  
**Range:** 50 **Duration:** Smarts rounds

This spell makes the Nethermancer's pupils shimmer with the appearance of a flickering greenish

flame. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, subtract 2 from all rolls made by the target for the duration of the spell.

## Fog of Fear

**Rank:** Seasoned **Threads:** 4  
**Range:** 20 **Duration:** Smarts rounds

With this spell, the Nethermancer conjures a spherical patch of fog 10" across. The fog is a luminous, wispy gray and slightly cold to the touch. Once placed, the fog cannot be moved. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the Nethermancer makes an opposed Spirit roll for every enemy creature within the fog. If successful, the enemy character must flee out of the Nethermancer's line of sight. Under no circumstances will the characters re-enter the cloud.

## Grave Message

**Rank:** Seasoned **Threads:** 1  
**Range:** 100 miles **Duration:** Smarts rounds

If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the spell permits a Nethermancer to magically send a message to another Nethermancer. The message can be sent to a bone circle or a cemetery in which spirits are active. The modifier of the Spellcasting roll is based on the distance the message must travel.

Distance	Modifier
Less than 1 mile	+0
2-10	-1
11-50	-2
51-100	-3

The message must be sent to a specific location, and be addressed to either a specific Nethermancer or "any Nethermancer who happens by." The message cannot exceed 50 words and is delivered by a quavering spirit voice. The spirit speaks the message once, then the enchantment is broken.

## Pack Bags

**Rank:** Seasoned **Threads:** 1  
**Range:** 15 **Duration:** Instant

The Nethermancer must gather all the items to be packed, then open the chest, satchel, or other container to be packed. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the air fills with swarming, multi-colored points of light, tiny spirits come to pack the bags.

## Pain

**Rank:** Seasoned      **Threads:** 2  
**Range:** 40      **Duration:** Smarts rounds

With this spell, the Nethermancer casts pain on a single character. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the target character becomes shaken for the spell's duration, experiencing *pain* far worse than the damage might suggest. The *pain* immobilizes the target until the spell expires or until the victim successfully recovers. If the target successfully recovers within the duration of the spell, the Nethermancer may make another Spellcasting roll each round of the spell's duration. Another success causes the target to once again become shaken, following the same procedure as above.

## Pass Ward

**Rank:** Seasoned      **Threads:** 2  
**Range:** Touch      **Duration:** Smarts days

The *pass ward* spell places a ward on a specific spot. Whenever someone comes within 2" of the ward, the Nethermancer makes a Spellcasting roll. If the roll succeeds, the ward places a white star on the target character and tells him or her to halt (or gives some other message chosen by the Nethermancer). Unless the character stops or backs away immediately, the ward makes another Spellcasting roll. If the roll is successful, the character suffers 2d10+2 points of damage. The ward can target any number of characters in the same round; if a character enters the warded area, he can be zapped in the same round. The magician can increase the duration of the spell by 1 week for each Karma Point spent when casting the spell (as many as the caster has available).

## Spirit Double

**Rank:** Seasoned      **Threads:** 6  
**Range:** 10      **Duration:** Smarts hours

With this spell, the Nethermancer summons a spirit to act as his double. The spirit appears, assuming a shaggy material form that resembles the Nethermancer and that will last for the duration of the spell. The spirit possesses the same Trait dice of the Nethermancer. It has no magical abilities. The Nethermancer can command the spirit, and the spirit loyally obeys. The magician can only command through voice commands, however, which

means the spirit must be within the sound of his voice to receive the command. Once created, the spirit can travel anywhere its form allows.

## Spirit Servant

**Rank:** Seasoned      **Threads:** 3  
**Range:** Touch      **Duration:** Smarts hours

With this spell, the Nethermancer conjures a *spirit servant*. First he draws a circle on the ground and inscribes it with the name he has chosen for his servant. The circle must lay undisturbed for a full night before the spell can be cast. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the spirit servant loyally serves the Nethermancer. These spirits usually serve as porters, scullery help, or butlers, for they are not good at combat. A *spirit servant* appears as an ethereal humanoid of a gender and race of the Nethermancer's choosing. The *spirit servant* can carry up to 60 pounds and lift up to 115 pounds. The spirits are often quiet, though intelligent and capable of speech. Many Nethermancers become attached to one spirit servant, summoning the same one time and again.

### SPIRIT SERVANT

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d10, Strength d12, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Notice d8

**Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 5

## Target Portal

**Rank:** Seasoned      **Threads:** 3  
**Range:** 600      **Duration:** Smarts rounds

With this spell, the Nethermancer creates a gap in astral space, a pathway between himself and a target character within range. The portal allows him to cast spells at the target. The Nethermancer may cast any spell with a range greater than Touch through this portal.

## Viewpoint

**Rank:** Seasoned      **Threads:** 2  
**Range:** Touch      **Duration:** Smarts hours

The *viewpoint* spell creates a one-way window through a wall or other barrier. The window can be as small as the Nethermancer wishes or as large as 1" by 1". The material of the barrier is unaffected, so a stone wall is still as tough as stone. There is a chance of someone noticing the spell from

# CHAPTER 7: SPELLS

the other side of the wall by making an opposed Notice roll against the magician's Spellcasting roll for the spell.

## Visions of Death

**Rank:** Seasoned    **Threads:** 2  
**Range:** 15    **Duration:** Instant

The Nethermancer calls upon the spirit world to present a very personal horror show to the target character. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the target character, and only the target character, sees a detailed vision of his own death. Though the character knows he is not dying while watching the vision, the fear and horror have a mesmerizing effect. The character can do nothing but see the vision until he makes a successful Spirit roll.

## Wither Limb

**Rank:** Seasoned    **Threads:** 2  
**Range:** 10    **Duration:** Instant

The Nethermancer points at the victim's limb and whispers "wither." If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the Nethermancer does 2d6+4 points of damage. If the victim is shaken (if an extra) or suffers a wound (if a Wild Card) from the damage, his limb shrivels and shrinks to a useless vestige. The character must seek powerful healing magic, such as *reverse withering* (p. 232), to regain use of the limb. The injury stays with the character until the limb is restored.

## VETERAN SPELL DESCRIPTIONS

### ✂ Bone Shatter

**Rank:** Veteran    **Threads:** 1+  
**Range:** 20    **Duration:** Instant

The Nethermancer makes cracking sounds while casting this spell. The Nethermancer may target a number of creatures within range equal to the number of Threads he uses. For example, a character that uses 7 Threads could cast 1 *bone shatter* effect against seven different characters, or 3 effects against one character and 1 each against four more characters. The Nethermancer makes a separate Spellcasting roll for each effect, opposed by the target's Vigor. Each effect deals 3d4 damage.

## Constrict Heart

**Rank:** Veteran    **Threads:** 2  
**Range:** 20    **Duration:** Smarts rounds

While casting this spell, the Nethermancer extends his hand in a grasping motion, facing the victim. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, *constrict heart* surrounds the victim's heart with a squeezing layer of astral force. The spell deals 2d8+2 damage each round. The Nethermancer must concentrate when rolling the dice each round after the first. The victim is immobilized unless the spell breaks or he is able to make a successful Spirit roll.

## Control Being

**Rank:** Veteran    **Threads:** 2  
**Range:** Touch    **Duration:** Spirit minutes

The Nethermancer holds his body perfectly still, eyes closed, while he casts this spell. He casts the spell by opening his eyes and flinging his arms out. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the spell allows the Nethermancer to control the movements of the target's body. The target is still in control of his thoughts and his speech, but the Nethermancer dictates all movement. The Nethermancer must concentrate to make the enchanted target move, but failing to concentrate does not automatically break the spell. If the victim wishes to break free from control, he makes an opposed Spirit roll against the magician.

## Foul Vapors

**Rank:** Veteran    **Threads:** 2  
**Range:** 20    **Duration:** Smarts minutes

The Nethermancer taps the uglier regions of astral space, drawing the *foul vapors* to the physical plane. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the vapors completely fill a sphere within a radius of 25" from the Nethermancer. *Foul vapors* do not move once conjured. The Nethermancer is immune to the *foul vapors*. She may extend this immunity to other characters, up to a number equal to her Spellcasting die. Those considered immune must be declared at the time of the casting. Characters take damage for every round they are caught in the vapors equal to the character's Spirit die+2. They do not have to breathe the vapors to take damage; only contact is necessary.



## Friendly Darkness

**Rank:** Veteran      **Threads:** 1  
**Range:** 50      **Duration:** Smarts rounds

The Nethermancer draws on a bit of darkness from another dimension, then commands it to billow and expand. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the darkness fills an area with a radius of 15" from the target character or object. Enemy characters that cannot see because of the spell suffer a -6 penalty to all Trait rolls that require vision and have their Parry reduced to 2. In addition, the Nethermancer and a number of characters equal to his Spellcasting die gain a +2 bonus to their actions. The Nethermancer can only grant the bonus to one type of action, such as attack rolls, Spellcasting rolls, Vigor rolls, and so on. All characters benefiting from the spell receive the +2 bonus for the same type of action.

## Horror Call

**Rank:** Veteran      **Threads:** 5  
**Range:** Touch      **Duration:** Instant

*Horror call* is Blood Magic, costing the magician a permanent -1 penalty to all Vigor rolls for a year and a day. The Nethermancer must first learn the Name of a Horror he wishes to call. He inscribes a circle 10" in diameter, painting it white and gold, then makes a Spellcasting roll. If he fails, he may try again, suffering another permanent -1 penalty on all Vigor rolls for a year and a day. He may continue to make Spellcasting rolls until he succeeds. If the Nethermancer breaks off the spell before completing it, the magical backlash immediately delivers 3d6+3 damage. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the Horror is summoned into the protective circle.

The Horror remains in the circle until it makes a successful opposed Spirit roll, which it can attempt once per day. Many Horrors will bargain with a Nethermancer, offering great treasure in return for release into this world. They will often pay as promised, but usually return to take back the treasure at a later date. Few Nethermancers teach this spell. A character should wonder about the motives of one who does, as Horrors often make teaching the *horror call* spell to others part of any deal they make with a Nethermancer.

## Soul Armor

**Rank:** Veteran      **Threads:** 2  
**Range:** Touch      **Duration:** Smarts rounds

The Nethermancer touches the target of the spell. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, a glimmering set of blue chain mail seems to cover the recipient and then sink into his or her body. *Soul armor* adds 1d8 to the recipient's Mystic Armor rating (p. 247) for the duration of the spell.

## Restrain Entity

**Rank:** Veteran      **Threads:** 2  
**Range:** 30      **Duration:** Smarts rounds

This spell works on undead, Horrors, or Horror constructs. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, a brilliant circle of red light, limned with gold writing, encircles the creature. The circle is rooted to the spot. Neither it nor the entity can be moved. The undead can still communicate if the Nethermancer wishes to talk to such a foul creature. The creature may attempt to free itself through an opposed Spirit roll.

## Restrain Horror

**Rank:** Veteran      **Threads:** 3  
**Range:** 20      **Duration:** 4 rounds

This is a more powerful version of *restrain entity*. *Restrain Horror* only works against a Horror, not one of its constructs. If the Nethermancer makes a successful Spellcasting roll, the spell will restrain the Horror. *Restrain Horror* has a short duration, so the Nethermancer will also need a backup plan. The Horror may attempt to break free with an opposed Spirit roll with a -4 penalty.

## Reverse Withering

**Rank:** Veteran      **Threads:** 4  
**Range:** Touch      **Duration:** Instant

The Nethermancer touches a limb that has been injured by the *wither limb* spell (p. 231), infusing it with energy from another plane. The withered limb is not instantly restored to full health, but it does become usable—the character suffers a -4 penalty when using the limb. Once the wound associated with the withering is healed, the limb is restored to full strength and the penalty is removed.



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### Shadow Tether

**Rank:** Veteran

**Threads:** 2

**Range:** 50

**Duration:** Smarts rounds

To cast this spell, the Nethermancer must be able to see the targets and their shadows. A Nethermancer may target a number of characters equal to his Spellcasting Skill die. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the spell fixes the targets' shadows to the ground, and holds the characters to their shadows. To break free, the targets must make a successful Strength roll against the magician's Spellcasting roll.

### Spirit Portal

**Rank:** Veteran

**Threads:** 2

**Range:** Touch

**Duration:** Spirit minutes

Spirit Portal must be cast within a Bone Circle built by the Nethermancer. The magician punctures a small hole in astral space, continuing to widen the opening until the spell is complete. If the

Spellcasting roll is successful, the Nethermancer has created a doorway into astral space through which spirits may enter the physical plane or characters enter astral space. The Nethermancer has some control over who uses the spirit portal, but he must be within sight of the portal to contest entry. To prevent a being from crossing the portal, the magician makes an opposed Spirit roll with it. Success will stop the being from crossing.

### Wit Friend

**Rank:** Veteran

**Threads:** 2

**Range:** Touch

**Duration:** Spirit minutes

The Nethermancer summons a spirit, tapping the recipient's head as the spirit slowly glides into the target's mind. Anytime the recipient of this spell fails a mental Skill or Trait roll (except for Spellcasting), the spell gives him a second chance that same round.

## WIZARDRY SPELLS

*My mind is my own, my thoughts incomprehensible to others. Should you wish to understand my wisdom, that will cost you extra.*

—Alianar, Wizard

Wizards are the most scholarly of all magicians, often concerned with the workings of magic. Their spells most often deal with magic and its effects, but they do operate through the interaction of magic with a (usually living) target.

### NOVICE SPELL DESCRIPTIONS

#### Astral Sense

**Rank:** Novice

**Threads:** 1

**Range:** Touch

**Duration:** Smarts rounds

This spell allows a Wizard to sense presences in astral space. These can include people, creatures, magic doors, magic items, and so on. The magician makes a Notice roll for any target within range. The spellcaster can make a Notice roll once each round, enabling him to discover one target each round. Once detected, a target stays detected as long as he remains in range of a spell. When casting this spell, Wizards often take a minute or two to sense members of their group to verify that an astral presence is not coming

from a comrade. Once all members are sensed, the magician knows the next detection is not coming from someone in his group. Making a Notice roll does not prevent the spellcaster from taking another action that round. A magician may attempt to cast spells on a target that he has astrally sensed, even if he cannot otherwise see the target. Wizards use this spell for many different reasons. They use it to determine if an item or object has an astral presence, or to detect the presence of entities or Horrors within nearby astral space.

#### Astral Shield

**Rank:** Novice

**Threads:** 1

**Range:** Touch

**Duration:** Smarts rounds

The magician quickly pantomimes the outline of a shield, then touches his target. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the spell increases the target's armor by 2. This spell does not stack with itself.



## Clean

**Rank:** Novice      **Threads:** 1  
**Range:** Touch      **Duration:** Instant

The Wizard makes wiping motions with his hand, then sprinkles a bit of water on the object or objects to be cleaned. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the magician can clean a number of square yards equal to his Smarts die. Four yards cleans a human quite nicely, three is enough for a dwarf, while six yards are needed for an obsidiman or troll. The *clean* spell removes any visible stain, dirt, or foreign substance from the target objects. If the substance is not visible, the spell will miss it.

## Combat Fury

**Rank:** Novice      **Threads:** 1  
**Range:** Touch      **Duration:** Smarts rounds

The magician rants and gesticulates violently before touching the target of the spell. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the target adds 1 to all attack and damage rolls for the duration of the spell. The target can make only melee weapon or unarmed combat attacks while under the effect of *combat fury*. No missile weapon or throwing weapons attacks are allowed. A character cannot benefit from more than one *combat fury* spell at a time.

## Crushing Will

**Rank:** Novice      **Threads:** 1  
**Range:** 30      **Duration:** Instant

The *crushing will* spell attacks the will of a single character within range. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the target suffers 2d6 damage.

## Dispel Magic

**Rank:** Novice      **Threads:** 1  
**Range:** 60      **Duration:** Instant

*Dispel magic* disrupts the pattern and Threads of a spell. The Wizard suffers a penalty to his Spellcasting roll based on the Rank of the spell:

Spell Rank	Modifier
Novice	+0
Seasoned	-2
Veteran	-4
Heroic	-6
Legendary	-8

If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the spell effect is permanently dispelled.





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## Divine Aura

**Rank:** Novice      **Threads:** 1  
**Range:** 40      **Duration:** Instant

This spell allows the Wizard to divine changes in the aura of living beings. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the Wizard chooses what change in the aura of a living being he wishes to divine. This could be anything from anger to damage or fatigue. He must make a Notice roll to be able to divine the information.

## Dodge Boost

**Rank:** Novice      **Threads:** 1  
**Range:** Touch      **Duration:** Smarts rounds

*Dodge Boost* grants the target the ability to dodge attacks in combat. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the spell adds 2 to the target's Parry. This spell does not stack with itself.

## Flame Flash

**Rank:** Novice      **Threads:** 2  
**Range:** 25      **Duration:** Instant

While casting the spell, the magician makes wild, fanning gestures and crackling, whooshing sounds. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the spell deals 2d8 damage.

## Ignite

**Rank:** Novice      **Threads:** 1  
**Range:** 35      **Duration:** Instant

The Wizard snaps his fingers, and a jet of flame hovers over the target, setting it afire. This spell may be used only on small inanimate objects, such as torches, furniture, and, of course, clothing. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the target object takes fire. If clothes ignite, the fire does d4 damage each round.

## Iron Hand

**Rank:** Novice      **Threads:** 1  
**Range:** 10      **Duration:** Instant

The Wizard has the spell's recipient strike another target with a melee weapon while simultaneously mimicking that character's strike. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the spell increases the recipient's melee weapon damage by +3 on its next attack and only on the same round that the spell is cast or the round following. This effect applies to any

melee weapon used by the recipient. The recipient may benefit from only one *iron hand* spell at any one time.

## ✂ Mind Dagger

**Rank:** Novice      **Threads:** 2  
**Range:** 60      **Duration:** Instant

The spellcaster whips her arm as if throwing a dagger. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the spell deals 2d6 damage.

## Rope Ladder

**Rank:** Novice      **Threads:** 1  
**Range:** Touch      **Duration:** Smarts rounds

The Wizard uncoils the rope as he casts the spell. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the rope moves at a rate of 4" per round to the location of the Wizard's choosing. The rope can hold up to 600 pounds at a time. The magician cannot control the rope precisely enough for it to tie itself off on, say, the bars of a window; it basically goes straight from point A to point B. Climbers using the rope gain a magical boost of a +4 bonus to their Climb rolls, however.

## Vines

**Rank:** Novice      **Threads:** 1  
**Range:** 20      **Duration:** Smarts rounds

*Vines* appear from the undergrowth, grabbing at a single target character. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the target must make an opposed Strength roll against the result or be entangled by the *vines*. Entangled characters are considered grappled (refer to the *Savage Worlds Core Rulebook*). If vegetation is not available for the Wizard to cast this spell, he may toss a handful of seeds on the ground, from which the *vines* erupt. If so, reduce the range of this spell to 5.

## Wake-Up Call

**Rank:** Novice      **Threads:** 1  
**Range:** Touch      **Duration:** Smarts days or until alarm sounds

The Wizard imitates the clanging of a bell as he touches the recipient. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the Wizard determines when the alarm will go off. The Wizard chooses whether the alarm noise (clanging bells) is audible to all characters or only to the target character.

## Wall Walker

**Rank:** Novice      **Threads:** 1  
**Range:** Touch      **Duration:** Smarts minutes

The caster crouches, walking on all fours to mimic a spider, touching the target at the end of the spellcasting. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the spell's recipient now has improved climbing ability, gaining a +4 bonus to Climb rolls for the duration of the spell.

## SEASONED SPELL DESCRIPTIONS

### Ball of String

**Rank:** Seasoned      **Threads:** 2  
**Range:** 80      **Duration:** Instant

This spell allows the Wizard to conjure a ball of string made of mystical energy. The Wizard ties a glowing knot to some object, marking the return spot. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the ball can then be placed into a pouch or pocket. The Wizard makes a Spellcasting roll for each hour. If successful, the ball of string reels out more string and remains untangled. Failure snaps the string, ending the spell. When the character wishes to head back to the return spot, he pulls the string out. As he starts "winding" the ball, a narrow beam of light 2" long appears from the ball. Following the "string" leads the character back to where he started.

### Counterspell

**Rank:** Seasoned      **Threads:** 1+  
**Range:** 50      **Duration:** Instant

This spell allows the Wizard to instantly dispel an unfriendly spell that is cast within range. This spell costs only 1 Thread when targeting Novice or Seasoned spells. Higher-ranked spells require 1 additional Thread per rank. To counter the target spell, the magician must succeed at an opposed Spellcasting roll against the enemy magician who cast the spell. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the targeted spell is instantly dispelled before any effects take place. The Wizard cannot target abilities or natural powers, only spells.

## Dust Devil

**Rank:** Seasoned      **Threads:** 2  
**Range:** 70      **Duration:** Smarts rounds

If the Spellcasting roll is successful, a whirling dust storm emanates from the Wizard's fingertips, billowing 70" in every direction. The spell can affect a number of targets equal to the Wizard's Spellcasting die. This dust storm temporarily blinds a target or targets. Those affected must make an Agility roll at -2 to avert their gaze and avoid the effect (at -4 if the caster got a raise on the attack roll). On a failure, victims are Shaken and -2 to Parry until their next action. If the target rolls a 1 on his Agility die (regardless of the Wild Die), he is Shaken and fully blind until he recovers from being Shaken. Blinded victims suffer a -6 penalty to all Trait rolls that require vision and have their Parry reduced to 2. The Wizard does not suffer any penalty.

## Invigorate

**Rank:** Seasoned      **Threads:** 3  
**Range:** Touch      **Duration:** Instant

The Wizard touches the character on the eyebrows (or the closest equivalent) while casting the spell. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the recipient's "Golden Hour" extends by a number of hours equal to the target's Vigor die.

## Leaps and Bounds

**Rank:** Seasoned      **Threads:** 2  
**Range:** Touch      **Duration:** Smarts rounds

This spell gives the target greatly increased leaping movement. When casting the spell, the magician has the target leap to him, then he touches the character as he lands alongside. The magician may cast the spell on himself as well. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the target can now leap up to 30". The leaping character has a vertical leap of 6".

## Levitate

**Rank:** Seasoned      **Threads:** 2  
**Range:** 20      **Duration:** Smarts rounds

The Wizard raises and lowers his hands while casting this spell that can levitate a number of objects equal to the magician's Spellcasting die. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the *levitate* spell forms a 2" by 2" area in which characters and objects can

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be lifted. A single *levitate* spell can lift up to 2,000 pounds. *Levitate* can only move the objects up and down; side to side movement is not possible. The Wizard may choose to switch the levitation effect to different objects or characters, but these must also be within the levitation area. Once placed, the levitation area cannot be moved. Characters may move at a rate equal to their walking Pace. The Wizard may “bootstrap” *levitate* spells together. For example, he may levitate himself to the top of the first *levitate* spell’s range, then cast another *levitate* spell to continue to move up. As soon as any lower-altitude *levitate* spell ends or is dispelled, all higher *levitate* spells immediately fail.

## Mage Armor

**Rank:** Seasoned **Threads:** 1  
**Range:** Touch **Duration:** Smarts rounds

The magician slams his hand into the armor to be enhanced, while uttering a soft, thudding sound, as if an ineffectual blow had landed. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, add 4 to the target’s Armor. The armor has a faint violet glow that is noticeable in the dark or with astral sight. Only one piece of armor can benefit from one *mage armor* spell at a time.

## ☞✂ Makeshift Missile

**Rank:** Seasoned **Threads:** 1  
**Range:** 25/50/100 **Duration:** 1 round

The Wizard enchants any small object into a wickedly sharp throwing weapon. The object weighs the same as it did before, so the Wizard is advised to keep the object small and throwable. The Wizard makes a Spellcasting roll. He may throw the weapon in the next round or pass it to another character to throw on the following round. If the missile hits the target, it deals 2d6+3 damage.

## Notice Not

**Rank:** Seasoned **Threads:** 1  
**Range:** Touch **Duration:** Smarts rounds

The spellcaster quietly touches the recipient of the spell. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the spell adds a +4 bonus to the target’s Stealth rolls for the duration.

## Quicken Pace

**Rank:** Seasoned **Threads:** 1  
**Range:** Touch **Duration:** Smarts rounds

The Wizard walks quickly in circles, then touches the recipient. The character’s Pace increases by 2, +1 per raise.

## Seeking Sight

**Rank:** Seasoned **Threads:** 1  
**Range:** 30 **Duration:** Smarts rounds

If the Spellcasting roll is successful, glowing circles appear on the target, adding a +1 bonus to all ranged attacks made against it for the duration of the spell. This spell does not stack with itself.

## Shatter Lock

**Rank:** Seasoned **Threads:** 2  
**Range:** 80 **Duration:** Instant

The Wizard makes a cracking sound and then gestures toward a door that is protected by a non-magical lock. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the lock shatters.

## Thorny Retreat

**Rank:** Seasoned **Threads:** 3  
**Range:** 20 **Duration:** Smarts hours

This spell conjures up a barrier of magical thorns. The Wizard pricks his hand with a dagger or other sharp object. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the thorny barrier appears, vibrating and humming. The thorns cover up to ten adjacent sections of ground, each 2” by 2”. Passing through a section of thorns requires an Agility roll with a –4 penalty. Success lets the character through unscathed. Failure halts the character, inflicts d6 damage on him, and reduces his Pace by 2. The Wizard may move through the thorns without hindrance—the thorns roll around him like seaweed in water.

## Trust

**Rank:** Seasoned **Threads:** 1  
**Range:** 10 **Duration:** Smarts hours

This spell inspires trust in the target. The Wizard smiles slightly and nods toward the target character. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the target will not deceive or harm the Wizard (or others with the Wizard) as long as the Wizard (and others with the Wizard) do not deceive or harm him.





## Slow

**Rank:** Seasoned      **Threads:** 1  
**Range:** Touch      **Duration:** Smarts rounds

This spell reduces the target's movement. The magician pantomimes casting a simple spell, taking far longer than normal to cast it. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the target character's Pace is halved (round down). Any Agility-related rolls suffer a -2 penalty. A character can only suffer from one *slow* spell at a time.

## Solo Flight

**Rank:** Seasoned      **Threads:** 4  
**Range:** Touch      **Duration:** Smarts minutes

If the Spellcasting roll is successful, *solo flight* gives the Wizard the ability to fly. He can travel at a Pace of 20. *Solo flight* requires that the Wizard be conscious to stay in the air. An unconscious Wizard drops very nicely, indeed, taking falling damage as normal (see the *Savage Worlds Core Rulebook*).

## VETERAN SPELL DESCRIPTIONS

### Blood Boil

**Rank:** Veteran      **Threads:** 2  
**Range:** 25      **Duration:** Smarts rounds

The caster hurls this spell onto a single opponent, making sounds as if she were pouring boiling oil onto the target. The magician makes a Spellcasting roll each round of the spell's duration. Each successful roll inflicts 2d6 damage. The spell does not work against undead, living plants, stone statues, or other such creatures.

### Compression Bubble

**Rank:** Veteran      **Threads:** 3  
**Range:** 20      **Duration:** Smarts rounds

The Wizard places his hands as if holding an invisible ball to form a compression bubble around one character. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the character suffers 2d8 damage per round and is immobilized until the spell expires.

### Delay Blow

**Rank:** Veteran      **Threads:** 2  
**Range:** Touch      **Duration:** 1 round

The Wizard enchants a melee weapon with this spell. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the effect

of *delay blow* when it hits is equivalent to a second blow being struck at the same time. The weapon deals the same damage twice, but each is treated as a separate damage roll.

## Displace Self

**Rank:** Veteran      **Threads:** 2  
**Range:** Touch      **Duration:** Smarts rounds

The Wizard hops frantically while casting this spell. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, *displace self* senses incoming physical attacks and moves the Wizard out of harm's way. The Wizard moves 1" in a direction of his choice. If that is not enough to evade an attack (for example, a collapsing ceiling), the Wizard must defend normally.

## ☞ Doom Missile

**Rank:** Veteran      **Threads:** 4  
**Range:** 30      **Duration:** Smarts rounds

If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the Wizard rolls 2d8 damage on the round the sizzling arcane strikes the opponent and every round thereafter for the duration of the spell.

## Karma Cancel

**Rank:** Veteran      **Threads:** 3  
**Range:** 25      **Duration:** Smarts rounds

If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the Wizard can cancel any attempt by the target to use Karma by spending 1 of his own Karma Points to do so.

## ☞ Lightning Cloud

**Rank:** Veteran      **Threads:** 4  
**Range:** 100      **Duration:** Smarts minutes

The Wizard conjures a swirling black and purple cloud above his head. The Wizard draws lightning from the cloud, and hurls it at an opponent as the spell is cast. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the Wizard rolls the Effect dice for the damage of the lightning strike. Each Round of the spell's duration, the Wizard may gather a bolt of lightning and hurl it at an opponent within range, making a Spellcasting roll for the attack roll. A success inflicts 2d10 damage.



## Makeshift Weapon

**Rank:** Veteran      **Threads:** 2

**Range:** Touch      **Duration:** Smarts rounds

The Wizard enchants any small object into a slim, extremely keen melee weapon. The object weighs the same as it did before. The weapon deals Str+2d6 damage. The Wizard may cast *makeshift weapon*, then hand it to another character. When the duration expires, the item reverts to its old form.

## ✂️ Razor Orb

**Rank:** Veteran      **Threads:** 2

**Range:** 80      **Duration:** Instant

*Razor orb* is a gleaming, spinning, powerful weapon of green light and force. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the spell deals 2d8 damage. For every raise on the Spellcasting roll, the spell ignores 2 points of armor.

## Sleep

**Rank:** Veteran      **Threads:** 2

**Range:** 50      **Duration:** Instant

The Wizard yawns widely, then casts the spell. *Sleep* can target a number of characters equal to the Wizard's Spellcasting die. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the target characters are put to sleep. Sleeping characters are entitled to Spirit rolls once each round they are asleep. Sleeping targets wake when:

- They take damage.
- The spell expires or is dispelled.
- A sleeping character makes a successful Spirit roll.

## Spell Cage

**Rank:** Veteran      **Threads:** 3

**Range:** 20      **Duration:** Smarts rounds

The Wizard makes a descending whooshing sound, followed by a "clang!", as he casts the spell. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, the spell forms a cage 2"



by 2" by 2" around the target. If the target character is longer than 2" in any dimension, the spell fails. The cage cannot be moved once conjured, and has no door. Any character caught inside suffers a -4 penalty to Spellcasting rolls.

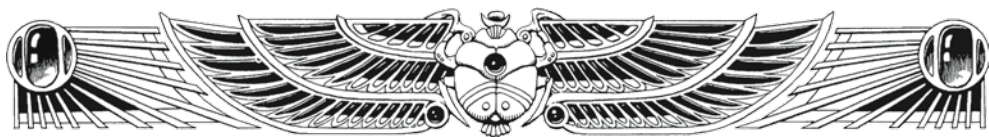
## Wound Mask

**Rank:** Veteran      **Threads:** 4+

**Range:** Touch

**Duration:** Smarts hours or until destroyed

The spell target holds his face perfectly still while the Wizard pushes and prods as if fitting something onto the face. If the Spellcasting roll is successful, a thin copper mask completely covers the target's face. Although there are no eye, nose, or mouth holes in the mask, the recipient has no trouble seeing, breathing, or speaking. Whenever a physical attack strikes the wearer of the mask, it automatically strikes the mask. The mask has a Toughness rating equal to the caster's Spirit die. The mask has an Armor rating equal to the number of Threads above 4 used to cast the spell.



# CHAPTER 8:

# GEAR

*Of course I can help you, sir. Step right up and take a look at these wondrous treasures!*  
—Garrn Devia, Merchant of Bartertown

Your character will need the right equipment to adventure successfully. As your character survives and prospers, his adventures likely will become more demanding and he will need better equipment. In addition to gear such as weapons, armor, and clothing, your character will need to obtain

money, food, lodging, and transport for nearly every adventure.

This section provides descriptions of the most common goods and services available in Barsaive, their prices, any restrictions on their use, and directions for purchasing them.

## PURCHASING GEAR

After players have initially outfitted their characters (see **Equip Your Character**, p. 45) they must purchase any additional goods or services from merchants or other characters.

To determine whether a merchant has the desired item and is willing to sell it, the Game Master first assigns it an **Availability Rating**. The Availability Ratings for EARTHDAWN goods and services are Everyday, Average, Unusual, Rare, and Very Rare.

Most of the equipment listed in this section is of **Average** availability, though many of the magical goods, such as potions and magical clothing, are generally **Unusual** or **Rare**. Only very special items are **Very Rare**, including the most powerful potions. The Game Master determines the Availability Rating of specific goods and services.

To determine whether a merchant has an item on hand, the character makes a Persuasion roll, with a modifier for the item's Availability Rating. A successful roll means the merchant has the item on hand and will sell it to the character.

Availability	Modifier
Everyday	+1
Average	+0
Unusual	-1
Rare	-2
Very Rare	-3

*Farliv is preparing for an adventure and wants to purchase a booster potion. He visits Trelara, a local merchant, and asks for the potion, which the Game Master has decided is an Unusual item. Because the potion is Unusual, he makes the Persuasion roll with a -1 modifier. If the character is successful, the merchant has the potion and will sell it to Farliv.*

## MERCHANT CAMPAIGNS

Using the rarity system allows Game Masters to create rather mundane—but profitable—quests for players. Unusual, Rare, and Very Rare items tend to fetch a higher price from merchants looking to purchase them, and transporting goods from one end of Barsaive (where an item is rated as Everyday) to the remote hinterlands (where it's rated as Rare) can fetch a good price.

A rule of thumb is that a mundane item typically sells for 10% of its listed selling price (while magical items sell for 50%), but Unusual items sell for +10%, Rare for +20%, and Very Rare up to +30%. This is in addition to the Fence Edge. Of course, transporting items can be dangerous business, as merchants (and their guards) must face bandits, ork scorchers, Theran slavers, stray monsters, and even Horrors.





## TAKING EXTRA TIME

Sometimes a merchant will not have an item available when a character wants to buy it, but can procure it if given time. If a character is willing to wait a day or more for an item, add 1 to the character's Persuasion roll for each day he waits, to a maximum of +5.

*Farliv is not planning to leave town for a few days and is willing to wait for Trelara to obtain his booster potion. This makes obtaining the potion easier for Trelara. Farliv gives the merchant two days, changing the modifier on his Persuasion roll to +1.*

When trying to obtain Rare and Very Rare items, the modifier can be changed by a maximum of +3, regardless of how long a character is willing to wait. This limit reflects the rarity of some items in Barsaive.

## QUALITY OF GOODS

Sometimes characters will want to purchase higher-quality goods than the usual fare. Most cities have items of higher quality available, but they are often considerably more expensive. For higher-quality items, increase the price by one-half the normal price, rounded up. For items of the "best" quality, the price should be double the normal price.

*Me'gana wants to buy a decorative broadsword that will impress opponents when she draws it. She visits a weapons shop and finds two broadswords she likes. The first costs 38 silver pieces, and is of "better" quality than a standard broadsword, which*



*costs 25 silver pieces. The second sword is the best the shop has to offer and costs 50 silver pieces. Me'gana chooses the "better" quality weapon and pays 38 silver pieces.*

The guidelines above also apply to services rendered. If, for example, a character wants to hire the best scribe in the city, the scribe charges twice the standard fee.

## CURRENCY

Though people still barter in some remote areas of the province, the vast majority of Barsaivians use the hexagonal coins of Throal or the round coins of Thera to conduct trade.

The practical dwarfs of Throal have matched the weights of their coins to Thera's legal tender, giving both currencies the same value. Though the moneychanger's guild complained bitterly that the equal value of the two currencies deprived them of a fair profit, moneychangers still do a steady business converting old coins reclaimed from kaers or other lost treasure stores.

Moneychangers usually pay 75 percent of the value of old coins, so if your character exchanges 1,000 old Landan silver pieces, he will receive 750 Throal silver pieces in exchange. Legends of cursed coins and false gold and silver make most merchants cautious about taking coin not minted by Thera or Throal.

## COMMON DENOMINATIONS

Barsaive uses an easy-to-follow decimal currency system, with each consecutive denomination worth ten times the previous denomination. Thus, 10 copper pieces equal 1 silver piece, 10 silver pieces

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equal 1 gold piece, and so on. Copper, silver, and gold pieces comprise the main currency of Barsaive, although other currencies are occasionally used. These are described later in this section.

The currency of the peasant and working classes and the most basic monetary denomination, copper coins are used in marketplaces across Barsaive. Throal's hexagonal copper pieces bear a stylized hammer and pick on both sides and weigh half an ounce each. Thera does not mint copper pieces.

Merchants, adventurers, and travelers have made silver pieces the most common coin in Barsaive. Common laborers are often paid in silver pieces, most goods and services are priced in silver pieces, and almost all trade contracts are executed in terms of silver pieces. Thera silver pieces show the profile of a Thera guardsman, and Throalic silver pieces bear a likeness of Tav Korelsted, one of Throal's founders. Each silver piece weighs one-fifth of an ounce.

Gold pieces are the coins of wealthy merchants, well-heeled travelers, and the Throal and Thera governments. Barsaivians rarely use gold in trade, reserving it for transactions involving sums in excess of 1,000 silver pieces. Many kaers and citadels still contain gold, which was a more common currency before the Scourge. Thera gold pieces carry the profile of the First Emperor of the Thera Empire. Throal gold pieces show the Merchant King Braza overlooking the Throal Mountains. Each gold piece weighs one-tenth of an ounce.



## GEMS

In some cities in Barsaive, including the cities of Throal, the inhabitants occasionally use gems to limit the volume of currency in large transactions. Rubies, emeralds, and sapphires comprise the most common gem currencies, though on rare occasions amethysts and diamonds are used. These gems can be of virtually any size and value, generally expressed in silver pieces, or sometimes in gold. The most common values of gems are denominations of 50, 100, 200, 500, and 1,000 silver pieces, though some people use gems of lesser value.

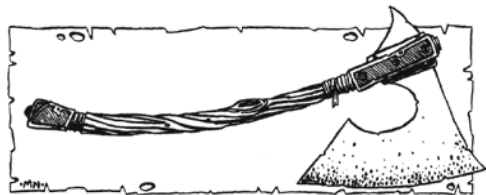
## ELEMENTAL COINS

A third type of currency, so-called elemental coins are rarely used for common trade. Instead, Barsaivians reserve these pieces for special uses such as sealing long-term trade agreements, swearing blood oaths, or formalizing peace treaties between nations.

## WEAPONS

### MELEE WEAPONS

The following are common melee weapons found in Barsaive.



**Battle-axe:** The traditional weapon of the Throal armies, the battle-axe consists of a 2- to 4-foot handle that holds a single or double bell-shaped blade.

**Broadsword:** A broadsword has a blade more than 3 feet long. Typically used as a one-handed

weapon, a Weaponsmith can modify the hilt of any broadsword to make it a two-handed weapon. The blade can be curved or straight, with single or double edges.

**Club:** Any short piece of hard wood or stone, usually thinner at the handle end and thicker at the business end, qualifies as a club. In some cases clubs are merely rough-hewn tree limbs. Most, however, are a bit more finished and feature leather-wrapped handles. Obsidimen, trolls, and some dwarfs prefer clubs carved out of rock. Wooden and stone clubs inflict the same amount of damage.

**Dagger:** A dagger is a small, sharp-bladed weapon with a length of 12 inches.

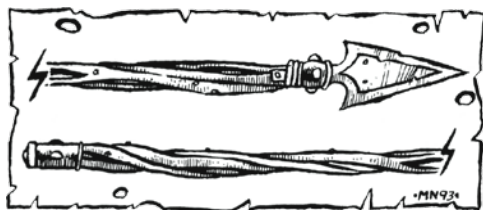
# CHAPTER 8: GEAR

MELEE WEAPONS TABLE

Weapon	Cost	Damage	Weight	Notes
Club	—	Str+d4	3 lbs.	—
Battle-axe	35 sp	Str+d8	6 lbs.	—
Broadsword	25 sp	Str+d8	4 lbs.	—
Dagger	8 cp	Str+d4	1 lb.	—
Dwarf sword	6 sp	Str+d6	2 lbs.	In the hands of dwarves, grants Parry +1
Flail	35 sp	Str+d6	5 lbs.	Ignores Shield Parry and Cover bonus
Handaxe	12 sp	Str+d6	3 lbs.	—
Knife	3 cp	Str+d3	1/2 lb.	—
Lance	150 sp	Str+d8	10 lbs.	AP 2 when charging, Reach 2, only used in mounted combat
Mace	20 sp	Str+d6	6 lbs.	—
Pole-axe	150 sp	Str+d8	12 lbs.	Reach 1, 2 hands
Polearm	175 sp	Str+d8	8 lbs.	Reach 2, requires 2 hands
Quarterstaff	—	Str+d4	4 lbs.	Parry +1, Reach 1, 2 hands
Rapier	70 sp	Str+d4	2 lbs.	Parry +1
Sap	1 sp	Str+d3	2 lbs.	Non-lethal damage
Short sword	16 sp	Str+d6	2 lbs.	—
Spear	3 sp	Str+d6	6 lbs.	Parry +1, Reach 1, 2 hands
Spiked Mace	40 sp	Str+d8	8 lbs.	—
Trispear	25 sp	Str+d8	4 lbs.	AP 1, Reach 1, 2 hands
Troll sword	50 sp	Str+d12	12 lbs.	Parry -1, 2 hands, trolls can wield with 1 hand
Two-handed sword	125 sp	Str+d10	8 lbs.	Parry -1, 2 hands
Warhammer	125 sp	Str+d6	5 lbs.	AP 1 vs. rigid armor (plate mail)
Whip	10 sp	2d4	1 lb.	Non-lethal damage only

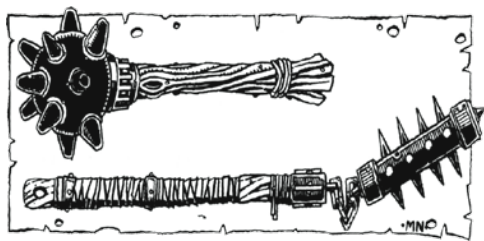
**Flail:** A flail consists of a wooden, leather-covered handle between 2 and 4 feet long, with a hinge or a chain connected to one end. The other end of the chain connects to either a spiked metal ball, a metal-spiked wooden rod, or a plain metal rod.

**Hand-axe:** Small and easy to use, this basic chopping instrument consists of a 1- to 2-foot handle with a single, flat, square- or bell-shaped blade at one end.



**Lance:** A specialized weapon for fighting on horseback, the lance consists of a cone-shaped shaft of wood, between 10 and 15 feet long, which is fitted with a wooden or metal handle. A brace at the end of the handle attaches the lance to the user's armor. Lance weights and lengths vary widely, so make

sure your character's mount can handle the combined weight of both the rider and the lance. While mounted, a lance can be gripped with one hand.



**Mace:** A mace is a club reinforced with a shaped-metal head.

**Spiked Mace:** The spiked mace is a large club with a spiked metal head.

**Pole-axe:** The pole-axe is one of the deadliest weapons available in Barsaive. The handle, usually at least 5 feet long, holds a large single or double bell-shaped or rectangular blade. This huge, heavy weapon takes two hands to use.



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**Pole Arms:** This catch-all term applies to any weapon with a handle more than 4 feet long. Theran slave traders use a simple, deadly 4-foot pole with a sharp metal tip on the end. Guards at the Elven Court of Blood Wood wield pole arms tipped with various blades, hooks and points. All types of pole arms do the same amount of damage, and take two hands to wield. The price for pole arms varies according to the blade configuration; the more elaborate the blade, the more silver the weapon costs.

**Quarterstaff:** Any weapon shaped like a pole and made from hardened wood qualifies as a quarterstaff. Anywhere from 3 to 7 feet long, most quarterstaves are plainly finished. Characters sometimes decorate them with elaborate carvings, and sometimes attach gems and precious metals.

**Rapier:** A rapier is a light and elegant sword favored by the swashbuckling t'skrang pirates of the Serpent River.

**Sap:** A sap is a leather pouch filled with stones or metal pellets. A character can improvise a sap by filling a leather glove with pebbles.

**Spear:** Most often used as a missile weapon, the spear may also serve as a short pole arm in close combat. The 4-foot long weapon requires two hands to wield, and the user can use it to stab or club an opponent. For a more detailed description of a spear, see **Ranged Weapons**, below.

**Dwarf Sword:** A Dwarf sword has a curved, single-edged blade about 2 feet long that is wider than the blade of a typical short sword. Dwarf merchants prefer this weapon above most others.

**Short Sword:** A short sword is a bladed weapon between 2 and 3 feet long. Usually used as a one-handed weapon, some short swords feature hilts designed to allow windlings to wield them with two hands. A short sword's blade can be curved or straight, with single or double edges.

**Troll Sword:** Created specifically for trolls, the troll sword has a blade more than 4 feet long and is balanced for one-handed use by those with exceptional strength. Obsidimen occasionally carry troll swords, and other races sometimes adapt the hilt design to make the sword a two-handed weapon. The blade can be curved or straight, with single or double edges.

**Two-handed Sword:** The largest bladed weapon available in Barsaive, a two-handed sword is just over 4 feet long and balanced specifically for two-handed use. The double-edged blade can be curved, but is most often straight.

**Trispear:** This specialized weapon evolved from a pole arm. Tridents range from 4 to 6 feet long, the 6-foot version used almost exclusively by t'skrang fishermen. Unlike a conventional pole arm, the trident ends in three points instead of the typical single point. The configuration of the points varies; sometimes they form triangles, others are flat. The length and thickness of the points also vary. As with pole arms, the trident takes two hands to wield.

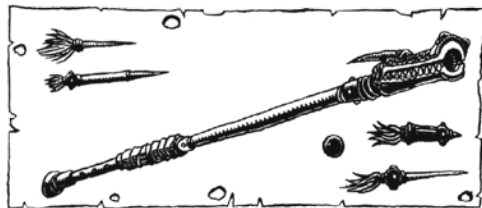
**Warhammer:** The warhammer has an oblong, metal head with a long spike protruding from it. Any character using this weapon should keep in mind that changing the direction of the swing once he has begun is nearly impossible.

**Whip:** A whip is a bundle of braided leather strips, thick at the handle end and tapering at the tip. The whip handle is usually made of wood or bone. Theran slave traders favor this weapon. The whip deals only nonlethal damage.

## RANGED WEAPONS

Missile and throwing weapons are used in ranged combat.

**Throwing Axe:** A throwing axe is the same size as a hand axe, but is specifically designed for throwing. It may have either a single or double blade, which is usually smaller than the blade of a hand axe.



**Blowgun:** A blowgun is a hollow tube of wood or metal, 1 to 3 feet long, used to fire 2-inch needles. The needles are usually made of metal, though wood, stone, and precious gem needles also exist. The needles sometimes include fletching, and can be tipped with poison.

# CHAPTER 8: GEAR

**Bola:** A bola is a leather strap fitted with two metal or stone weights on either end. Some bolas have multiple straps, each tipped with weights and tied together in the center. The straps range from 1 to 3 feet in length. The weights can be of any shape, and many artisans carve them to look like animals. A bola can both entangle and damage the target. To entangle the target, the attacking character must make a successful Throwing roll. To free himself, the target must make a successful Strength roll.

**Short Bow:** The term short bow applies to all bows less than 4 feet long. A single piece of flexible wood forms the bow, which is fitted with a bowstring that is connected to each end and pulled taught. Short bow arrows are 2 feet long, made of wood and fletched with feathers. Both stone and metal arrowheads are used in Barsaive, but the province's finest shots use metal-tipped arrows almost exclusively. You need two hands to use a bow. You can use a short bow while mounted.

**Burning Oil:** Oil can be fashioned into a homemade bomb and used as a throwing weapon. To

make such a weapon, a character must pour oil into a flask, stuff the flask's open end with cloth, set the cloth afire and throw the flask at the target. The container will shatter on striking the target or the ground nearby, spreading flames all around unless the attacking character rolls snake eyes. For more information about damage from fire, see the *Savage Worlds Core Rulebook*.

**Light Crossbow:** This weapon consists of a bow mounted horizontally on a shaft of wood or metal. A hook-and-trigger device built into the shaft holds the bowstring taut and releases it. The shaft is 1 foot long, making the weapon small enough to conceal in a heavy cloak or coat. The arrow, called a bolt, is shorter and thicker than a regular arrow. Usually made from wood with a stone or metal tip, bolts range from 6 to 8 inches in length and have feather fletching.

**Medium Crossbow:** The medium crossbow is a larger version of the light crossbow, with a 2-foot long shaft and 12-inch bolts.

**Dagger:** Though technically a melee weapon, a dagger can also function as a throwing weapon. For

RANGED WEAPONS TABLE

Weapon	Cost	Damage	Weight	Range	RoF	Min Str.	Notes
Arrows/Bolts (20)	10 sp	—	3 lbs.	—	—	—	—
Axe, Throwing	25 sp	Str+d6	2 lbs.	3/6/12	1	—	Some Edges may affect RoF
Blowgun	2 sp	na	1 lb.	3/6/12	1	—	Used to deliver poisons
Bola	10 sp	Str+d4	2 lbs.	3/6/12	1	—	Edges may affect RoF
Crossbow, Light	50 sp	2d4	4 lbs.	12/24/48	1	d6	AP 1, 1 action to reload
Crossbow, Medium	100 sp	2d6	8 lbs.	15/30/60	1	d6	AP 2, 1 action to reload
Dagger, throwing	2 sp	Str+d4	1 lb.	3/6/12	1	—	Edges may affect RoF
Dagger, flight	25 sp	Str+d4	1 lb.	5/10/20	1	—	Edges may affect RoF
Dart	5 cp	Str+d4	1/2 lb.	3/6/12	1	—	Often used to deliver poisons; some Edges may affect RoF
Darts, Blowgun (10)	1 sp	—	—	—	—	—	—
Hawk Hatchet	125 sp	Str+d6	4 lbs.	6/12/24	1	—	Some Edges may affect RoF
Longbow	60 sp	2d6	3 lbs.	15/30/60	1	d8	Some Edges may affect RoF
Net	15 sp	na	6 lbs.	1/2/4	1	d6	Nonlethal damage, entangles target
Shortbow	15 sp	2d6	2 lbs.	12/24/48	1	d6	Some Edges may affect RoF
Sling	3 sp	Str+d4	—	4/8/16	1	—	—
Sling bullets (10)	1 sp	—	5 lbs.	—	—	—	—
Spear	3 sp	Str+d6	6 lbs.	3/6/12	1	d6	—
Troll sling	15 sp	Str+d6	6 lbs.	6/12/24	1	d6	—
Warbow, elven	100 sp	2d8	3 lbs.	16/32/64	1	d8	Edges may affect RoF

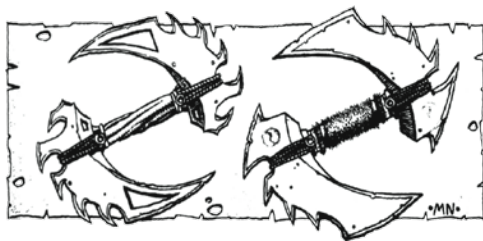
# EARTHDAWN PLAYER'S GUIDE

a complete description of a conventional dagger, see **Melee Weapons**, above.

**Flight Dagger:** The blade of the flight dagger is alloyed with a tiny amount of True Air, which gives the dagger lift and greater range than a throwing dagger.

**Throwing Dagger:** This is a flatter, thinner version of a conventional dagger, specially balanced for throwing.

**Darts:** Darts are any small, balanced throwing weapons less than 6 inches long. Some are simply pointed metal rods, others are elaborate constructions of wood, stone, and precious gems tipped with needle-sharp metal that can be dipped in poison. Many darts also have feathered fletching.



**Hawk Hatchet:** The hawk hatchet is a Z-shaped weapon. Blades shaped like hawk's wings form the top and bottom of the "Z," and a wooden handle forms the diagonal. The wielder throws the hatchet with an overhand snap to send it whirling toward its target, its "wings" providing lift for the flight.

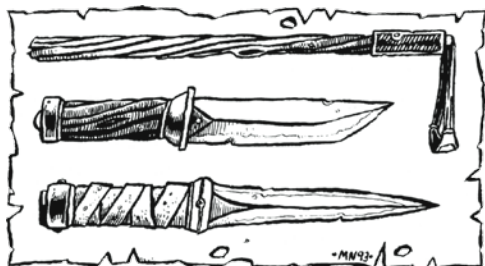
**Longbow:** A variation of the short bow, the longbow ranges from 4 to 8 feet long. Longbow arrows are similar to short bow arrows, but are 2 to 4 feet long. At almost 5 feet in height, a longbow is made up of one solid piece of carefully curved wood. You need two hands to use a bow, regardless of its size. A longbow is too unwieldy to use while you are mounted.

**Net:** Nets are used to entangle an opponent, and can be as simple as a large piece of cloth or as complex as a series of ropes tied together in elaborate patterns. A net can be square or circular, and its size depends on what your character wants to capture. A net designed to catch windlings can fit in a pocket, while the nets used by Theran slave traders can hold ten human-sized people. To use a net in combat, the attacking character must make

a successful Throwing roll. A successful result entangles the target. To free himself, the target must make a successful Strength roll against the result of his captor's Throwing roll.

**Quiver:** A quiver holds arrows or bolts. Most quivers are hard leather cylinders or rectangles strapped over the bowman's back like a backpack. Individuals from the taller races of Barsaive often prefer to hook their quivers to their belts. Some quivers come equipped with a cover to discourage others from stealing arrows.

**Sling:** This catch-all term describes any weapon that flings small objects at speeds and distances greater than the unaided arm can manage. Most slings consist of a strap of leather connected to a pouch that holds the projectile. Most sling users use rocks for ammunition, though a sling can throw any small object. Some merchants sell metal balls to use with a sling, but most customers find them a waste of good silver.



**Troll Sling:** The troll sling is a large sling attached to the end of a staff. Trolls and obsidimen can use a troll sling one-handed, all other races must use two hands.

**Spear:** Generally used as a throwing weapon, a spear is 3 feet long and tipped with stone or metal. A spear can be thrown with one hand.

**Elven Warbow:** The elven warbow is similar to a longbow, but is made with three different woods. The differing tensile strength of each type of wood gives the warbow more power than a conventional longbow. Warbow arrows are between 2 and 4 feet long and fletched with feathers, and are thicker and heavier than conventional longbow arrows. An elven warbow is too unwieldy to use while you are mounted.



## ARMOR AND SHIELDS

Characters in *EARTHDAWN* use armor and shields to protect themselves when engaged in combat.

### Mystic Armor

Some types of armor and some shields have a Mystic Armor rating. This rating is added to the character's Toughness, usually whenever he is damaged by a spell (see **Spell Damage and Armor**, p.206).

### Restrictions

Because the races of Barsaive have different physiques, the cost and weight of armor and shields will vary for each race. Specifically, trolls, t'skrang, and windlings must add a 10 percent fitting fee to the armor and shield prices listed in the description and the Armor and Shields Tables. Multiply the standard weight of armor and shields by 1.25 to determine the weight of armor and shields tailored for trolls. Multiply the standard weight by .2 to determine the weight of armor and shields tailored for windlings.

Obsidimen can only wear "living" armor such as fernweave, blood pebbles, and living crystal armor.

### ARMOR

The following types of armor are available in Barsaive.



**Blood Pebbles:** Blood-pebble armor is a form of living, elemental armor. Hundreds of small elemental stones are embedded in the wearer's skin, drawing power from the magic in his blood. A character wearing this type of armor suffers a -1 penalty to all Vigor rolls. This penalty remains for as long as the character wears the blood pebbles. Implanting or removing blood-pebble armor requires eight hours of work by a trained Weaponsmith. Note that obsidimen can wear blood-pebble armor. This armor does

not come with a helm. Because the weight of the armor is so well distributed over the wearer's body, it is effectively halved (this has been adjusted in the Armor/Shields Table).

**Chain Mail:** Made from interlocking metal rings, chain mail is flexible but slow to bend, which impedes the wearer's movement. Chain mail comes with a chain hood to cover the head and protects the wearer's entire body except the legs below the knees. A full set of chain mail includes a chain hood that acts as a helm.

**Padded Cloth:** Padded cloth armor comprises two layers of quilted raw cotton. It protects the wearer's entire body except for his head, forearms, and legs below the knee. Padded cloth does not come with a helm.

**Living Crystal Armor:** Living crystal armor is made up of small columns of crystal that are embedded inside the wearer's body. The magic in the character's blood causes the crystals to grow until the armor covers the wearer's skin. Implanting the crystal causes a -1 penalty to all Vigor rolls. This penalty does not go away as long as the character wears the living crystal armor. Because the crystal is alive, the wearer can feel through the armor and move within it as if it was his skin. Portions of the armor, particularly the crystal columns, retain their hardness. Living crystal armor protects the wearer's entire body except for the head; attempting to grow crystal on the head causes fatal brain damage. Implanting or removing living crystal armor requires three days of work by a trained Weaponsmith Adept or an Elementalist Adept. Living crystal armor does not come with a helm. Because the weight of the armor is so well distributed over the wearer's body, it is effectively halved (this has been adjusted in the Armor/Shields Table, p.248).



# EARTHDOWN PLAYER'S GUIDE

## ARMOR/SHIELDS TABLE

Armor/Shield	Cost	Armor	Mystic Armor	Weight	Notes
<i>Armor</i>					
Blood Pebbles	300 sp	+2	+2	15 lbs.	Covers torso, arms, legs.
Chainmail	180 sp	+2	+0	40 lbs.	Covers torso, arms, legs
Crystal Plate	12,000 sp	+5	+5	65 lbs.	Covers torso, arms, legs, head
Crystal Ringleet	500 sp	+2	+3	40 lbs.	Covers torso, arms, legs.
Fernweave	125 sp	+1	+4	15 lbs.	Covers torso, arms, legs
Hardened Leather	40 sp	+1	+0	20 lbs.	Covers torso, arms, legs, can't use Forge Armor on this armor
Hide	50 sp	+1	+0	25 lbs.	Covers torso, arms, legs
Leather Armor	10 sp	+1	+0	15 lbs.	Covers torso, arms, legs, no armor bonus against weapons with a damage die over d6, can't use Forge Armor on this armor
Living Crystal	4,100 sp	+3	+5	25 lbs.	Covers torso, arms, legs
Obsidiman Skin	100 sp	+1	+1	30 lbs.	Covers torso, arms, legs
Padded Cloth	2 sp	+1	+0	10 lbs.	Covers torso, arms, legs, no armor bonus against weapons with a damage die over d4, no armor bonus against piercing weapons, can't use Forge Armor on this armor
Padded Leather	20 sp	+1	+0	20 lbs.	Covers torso, arms, legs, no armor bonus against weapons with a damage die over d8, can't use Forge Armor on this armor
Plate Mail	3,000 sp	+3	+0	50 lbs.	Covers torso, arms, legs, head
Ring Mail	110 sp	+2	+0	30 lbs.	Covers torso, arms, legs, piercing weapons gain AP 1 against this armor
<i>Shield</i>					
Body	50 sp	—	+0	25 lbs.	+3 Parry, +2 Armor to ranged shots that hit
Buckler	5 sp	—	+0	5 lbs.	+1 Parry
Crystal Raider	150 sp	—	+2	15 lbs.	+2 Parry, +2 Armor to ranged shots that hit
Ferndask	22 sp	—	+1	10 lbs.	+1 Parry
Footman's	15 sp	—	+0	5 lbs.	+1 Parry, +2 Armor to ranged shots that hit, cannot use while mounted
Rider's	20 sp	—	+0	10 lbs.	+1 Parry, +2 Armor to ranged shots that hit

**Fernweave:** Woven from deep-forest vines and herbs, fernweave is “living” armor that must be watered once every three days. If the armor is not watered, the magical properties of the herbs disappear, along with the Mystic Armor advantage this armor provides. Dormant herbs will revive if watered, even after a lapse of time. Watering fernweave consumes one day's water ration. Fernweave armor does not come with a helm.

**Hide Armor:** This special armor is made by sewing animal hides to leather armor. Hide armor retains the shape of the animal the hide came from, including

its paws and head, which is often worn as a helm. The paws cannot be used as weapons. Common types of hide armor include bear, jaguar, lion, and gorilla armor.

**Leather Armor:** This armor is made from one to three layers of soft leather. The thinner parts of the armor provide freedom of movement for joints and limbs. Leather armor protects the wearer's entire body except for the head, forearms, and legs below the knee. It does not come with a helm.

**Hardened Leather:** Hardened leather armor has been boiled to be made harder than normal leather.

## CHAPTER 8: GEAR

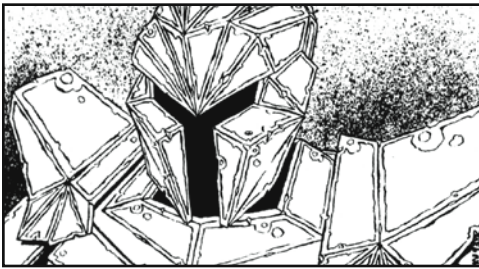
This armor protects the wearer's entire body except for the head, forearms, and legs below the knee. It does not come with a helm.

**Padded Leather:** Padded leather armor combines padded cloth with a covering of leather armor. It protects the wearer's entire body except for the head, forearms, and legs below the knee, and does not come with a helm.

**Obsidiman Skin:** This armor is made from the skin of a slain obsidiman: the negative reaction it elicits in much of Barsaive outweighs its protective value. Obsidimen will attack anyone wearing this armor on sight. Dwarfs and trolls consider wearing this armor a distasteful practice, and react to the wearer with loathing. Obsidiman skin armor does not come with a helm.

**Ring Mail:** Ring mail is leather armor reinforced with metal rings to deflect blows. It protects the wearer's entire body except the head and the legs below the knee. A full set of ring mail includes a helm.

**Crystal Ringlet:** Made from carved, interlocking rings of living crystal, this armor protects the wearer's entire body except the head and the legs below the knee. A full set of crystal ringlet armor includes a helm.



**Crystal Plate Armor:** This form of plate mail is made from living crystal rather than metal. To provide sustenance for the living crystal, the armor is enchanted. The enchantments must be renewed each year, which costs 2,000 silver pieces. Without the enchantment, the armor loses its Mystic Armor bonus and the living crystal becomes dormant. Renewing the enchantment automatically renews the living crystal, even on centuries-old armor. Crystal plate is extremely heavy, and joints sometimes grind against one another. A full set of crystal plate armor includes a helm.

**Plate Mail:** Plate mail is composed of carefully fitted and jointed pieces of steel plate. Though the armor moves smoothly for such a massive and ungainly-looking construct, the plate metal is very heavy. Plate mail protects the wearer's entire body. A full set of plate mail includes a helm.

### SHIELDS

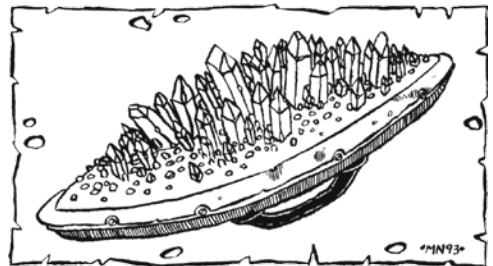
Shields are common across Barsaive. Obsidimen and trolls use shields modified to fit their larger arms. Because of their small size, windlinds do not use shields.

**Buckler:** This small shield straps to the bearer's forearm. Your character may fire a bow while wearing a buckler, but cannot use a melee or throwing weapon with the shielded hand.

**Body Shield:** A wooden frame completely sheathed with metal, these tall shields cover the bearer from the neck to the shins.

**Ferndask:** A ferndask is a buckler made from vines and herbs, similar to fernweave armor. The ferndask is alive and must be watered once every three days or its magical properties will disappear along with the shield's Mystic Armor Rating bonus. The magical herbs of a ferndask become dormant when unwatered but can be revived. Watering the ferndask consumes half a day's water ration. A ferndask shield is denser and heavier than a conventional buckler.

**Crystal Raider Shield:** A crystal raider shield is made from living crystal embedded in a wood or metal frame. The enchantments that sustain the crystal must be renewed each year at a cost of 25 silver pieces. Without the enchantment, the shield loses its Mystic Armor Rating bonus and the living crystal becomes dormant. Renewing the enchantment automatically renews the living crystal, even on a centuries-old shield.





**Footman's Shield:** A footman's shield is made of wood and rimmed and reinforced with metal. Properly used, a footman's shield protects most of the bearer's upper body and can also be used to block some low blows.

**Rider's Shield:** A rider's shield resembles the footman's shield, but is designed to protect a rider on the back of an animal. Cavalrymen use this kind of shield exclusively. Though it protects the rider, it does not protect his mount.

## CLOTHING

Each of the races of Barsaive wears its own style of clothing, and individual clothing choices can vary greatly. Several distinctive items of clothing with special properties are described in the following pages.

The Goods and Services Table contains an extensive list of clothing available in Barsaive, including entire outfits packaged as a single unit. Many Barsaivians frown on those who purchase and wear Theran clothing, because it hurts local trade and strengthens the economic power of the Theran Empire.

## Package Deals

Package deals offer a simpler way of purchasing clothes for your character than sifting through the lists of clothing to find the items you want. Each package deal contains all the items listed in that package. Players are not limited to the clothing available in the package; if you want your character to have additional items, feel free to purchase those items separately.

## DISTINCTIVE ITEMS

The following items of clothing offer Player Characters useful magical protection against some of the hazards of adventuring.

**Cloaksense Brooch:** A cloaksense brooch infuses any cloak it is fastened to with magic. The brooch uses a character's initiative as a magical probe. When a character wearing a cloaksense brooch is in immediate danger of a surprise attack, the player draws an initiative card and compares it against the target's initiative (highest initiative, if the target is a group). If the character gains initiative, the cloaksense brooch warns him of the attacker's presence, foiling the



surprise. Cloaksense only works on attackers within 3" of the target. In a situation where cloaksense might come in handy for a character, the Game Master should ask the player if he wants to use it or not, at which point the character makes his choice. Every time the character uses this brooch, he must make a Vigor roll or gain a level of Fatigue.

**Espagra-scale Cloak:** Espagra-scale cloaks, fashionable among dwarfs, are made from the hide of an espagra and provide the same protection as leather armor. This effect does not add to the protection of any other type of armor a character may be wearing, however. Espagra-scale cloaks are perfectly suited to those social occasions when an individual desires some protection, yet does not wish to look awkward by wearing full armor. An espagra-scale cloak grants a +1 Mystic Armor bonus when worn.

**Dwarf Winternight Cloak:** Dwarf winternight cloaks are made with magically treated cloth. These waterproof garments have a lining with a special ribbed design that produces enough heat when rubbed to keep a traveler warm on the coldest night. These cloaks provide a +2 bonus to Vigor rolls when resisting cold.

**Quiet Fingers:** These gloves muffle the sound of the wearer's hands bouncing or bumping against someone else's property. If a character tries to spot the wearer of these gloves attempting to pick a lock or a pocket, quiet fingers add 1 to the Stealth roll.

## CHAPTER 8: GEAR

Quiet fingers only works when the wearer is using his hands.

**One-size Hat:** This high-quality headgear is made with minor magics that makes the hat fit perfectly to any head. Any one-size hat of the correct basic size tailors itself to fit the individual customer's skull shape. Any race, including obsidimen and t'skrang, can wear a one-size hat.

**Elfweave Robe:** These beautiful garments display a fine, delicate craftsmanship that human and dwarf weavers envy, but cannot yet copy. Most often, elves wear elfweave robes, though some humans also wear them. Though the elves disclaim the rumors attributing magic properties to the robes, courtiers in Throal have long noted that the robes never sit quite right on an ork or dwarf.

### ADVENTURING EQUIPMENT

Adventuring equipment includes backpacks, bedrolls, tents, rope, and other equipment used by adventurers during their travels. Most of the adventuring equipment listed in the Goods and Services Table is basic gear that requires no explanation. Items with specific game functions are described below.

#### Package Deals

As with clothing package deals, the adventuring equipment package deal includes basic equipment most adventurers can reasonably expect to need and use, including a backpack, a bedroll, flint and steel, a torch, a waterskin, and a large sack.

The package deals offer players a simple method of buying adventuring equipment.

#### SPECIALIZED ITEMS

The following specialized items, though not part of the adventuring equipment package deal, are among the most useful additions that a Player Character can purchase.

**Healing Kit:** A healing kit comes in a small shoulder bag and contains bandages, salves, and herbal potions that can speed a character's recovery. When treated with a healing kit, a character adds a +1 bonus to his Healing roll. Multiple uses do not stack. Each healing kit contains enough supplies to treat three people. If a character wishes, he may buy the supplies included in the kit individually, at a lower cost.

**Lanterns:** Lanterns are used for light by the ordinary inhabitants of cities and towns as well as by adventurers. A hooded lantern lights an area roughly 20" in diameter. A bull's-eye lantern focuses the light into a beam that extends for 50". Most lanterns burn oil, but some use light quartz.

**Oil:** Used as fuel for lanterns and torches, oil can also make a deadly weapon for combat. Each flask holds enough oil to fuel a lantern for 8 hours. Characters can hurl flaming flasks of oil at opponents (p.245).

### MAGICAL EQUIPMENT

The magical energies of EARTHDAWN imbue many different types of magical equipment. A few of the most common are described below.

#### BLOOD CHARMS

Blood charms are magical items that draw on the magical power within a character's blood. Frequently used in the days before the Scourge, blood charms have remained popular and enjoy widespread use in Barsaive's burgeoning age of exploration, despite the very real cost they exact from those who wear them.

Characters must attach blood charms directly to their skin; the charm breaks through the skin to

reach the blood they need to activate. Blood charm magic builds slowly; a character must wear a charm for at least 24 hours before he can use it. Because blood charms are a form of Blood Magic, their



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powers have a limited duration. A character must use a blood charm within a year and a day of first placing it on his body, otherwise the charm becomes inert. An inert charm can be removed and replaced with a new charm.

Attaching a blood charm causes the character to take a -1 penalty to all Vigor rolls until the blood charm is used, it is removed, or it becomes inert through disuse. After the charm has been used or removed, the Vigor roll penalty is removed after 24 hours. Note that some blood charms can be reused (noted in their description). This requires 24 hours for the charm to recharge itself from the wearer's blood.

**Absorb Blow:** These charms are usually quartz, veined red from the wearer's blood. Absorb blow absorbs 12 points of damage from the first blow the wearer takes after activating the charm. Using the charm destroys it, leaving only a cracked, blackened piece of stone. A character can activate an absorb blow charm as a free action, and after the Game Master has declared how much damage he would take otherwise. A character cannot use the charm, however, if an attack takes him enough by surprise to prevent him activating the charm.

**Astral-sensitive Eye:** An astral-sensitive eye is a magically treated lump of amber, hollowed out and filled with a gel worm and nourishing fluid, then attached to an eye patch. When worn, the worm burrows into the wearer's eye, destroying it. Though the character's normal vision through the gem is slightly cloudy, that eye can be used once per day to see clearly into astral space as if the character was using the Astral Sight Adept Edge (p. 167) with one Karma Point. The eye never becomes inert unless removed, however, once used it requires 24 hours before it can be used again. While embedded, the wearer's Vigor penalty is permanent. Should the eye be removed, the character gains the One Eye Hindrance (as per the *Savage Worlds Core Rulebook*).

**Death Cheat:** Usually made of turquoise or tourmaline, the charms have a single red spot drawn from the wearer's blood. When the character must make an Incapacitated roll, he may use a death cheat charm for a +6 bonus. Once the wearer has used the charm, it becomes inert, appearing as a translucent stone drained of most of its color. Though the charm has no intrinsic value, nobles or

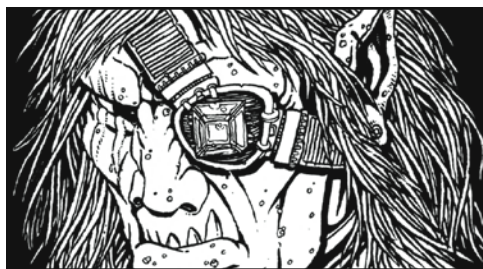
would-be heroes often offer up to 100 silver pieces for a used death cheat charm, wearing them as an unearned badge of honor.

**Desperate Blow:** Charm makers usually fashion desperate blow charms from steel and quartz. The wearer's blood infuses the quartz with red, and one drop of blood is perpetually suspended from the steel. At the wearer's discretion, the desperate blow charm adds a +4 bonus to either an attack roll or damage roll. A desperate blow charm may be reused.

**Desperate Spell:** The charm is made of silver and a small pearl. The wearer's blood leaves brilliant red speckles on the pearl. A desperate spell charm adds a +4 bonus to a Spellcasting roll. A desperate spell charm may be reused.

**Horror-fend:** Charm makers construct Horror-fend charms from gold and silver designed around a piece of elemental earth. Two drops of the wearer's blood travel along the gold, soak into the earth, emerge in the silver, then soak into the earth to start the pattern again. Horror-fend charms offer protection against the Horrors or their constructs. Your character chooses when to use the Horror-fend charm. Using the charm adds 2 to the wearer's physical Armor and Mystic Armor (p.247) and grants a +2 bonus to all Trait rolls made against Horrors or their constructs for 2 combat rounds. A Horror-fend charm may be reused.

**Targeting Eye:** A targeting eye is magically treated piece of quartz hollowed out, filled with a gel worm and nourishing fluid, then attached to an eye patch. When worn, the worm burrows into the wearer's eye, destroying it. Though the character's normal vision through the gem is slightly cloudy, that eye can be used once per day to add a +2 bonus to a ranged attack. The eye never becomes inert unless removed, however, once used it requires 24 hours before it can be used again. While embedded, the







wearer's Vigor penalty is permanent. Should the eye be removed, the character gains the One Eye Hindrance (as per the *Savage Worlds Core Rulebook*).

## COMMON MAGIC ITEMS

**Light Quartz:** Enchanted with magical light, light quartz comes in a wide variety of sizes and colors. The most common pieces, roughly 3 inches in diameter, are used in lanterns. Light quartz was used extensively inside kaers during the Scourge, and these common gems still can be found in most Barsaivian towns and cities.

## HEALING AIDS

Ever since the end of the Scourge, healing aids have boomed in popularity. Demand continues to outstrip supply, driving up the prices from the steady levels of past years. Occasional shortages temporarily drive prices even higher. All of the healing aids described below are potions and are sold in clay or ceramic vials. Each vial holds 1 dose of potion.

**Booster Potion:** A booster potion grants a +2 bonus to any Healing roll applied to the patient. The character must drink the booster potion within the Golden Hour (see the *Savage Worlds Core Rulebook*).

**Cure Disease Potion:** Cure disease potions allow a character to make a Vigor roll with a +2 bonus to be cured of any one disease.

**Healing Potion:** Healing potions heal 1 Wound per dose.

**Kelia's Antidote:** Kelia's antidote suppresses the effects of poison, meaning that a character suffers no ill effects from that poison for 4 hours. If taken before being poisoned, the antidote grants a +2 bonus to the character's Vigor roll when resisting the poison. If taken afterwards, it grants a +2 bonus to Healing rolls to recover from the effects of the poison for 4 hours. Kelia's antidote only suppresses the effect of one dose of the poison (additional antidotes can be taken if the character has been poisoned multiple times or by different poisons).

**Kelix's Poultice:** Kelix's poultice must be applied to the wound where the poison entered. If no wound exists—for example, ingested poison—the character must be intentionally cut and the poultice applied to the wound. The poultice grants the character a +2 bonus to the next Healing roll to recover from the effects of the poison.

**Last-chance Salve:** Last-chance salve can be given to any character who has been dead for no more than an hour. The clear salve glows a gentle blue as it works its magic, a process that takes ten minutes. The character may make a final Vigor roll. If successful, the character revives. If not, the character remains dead. A revived character is Fatigued for 2d6 hours.

**Resist-disease Potion:** Resist-disease potions allow the character to make a Vigor roll with a +2 bonus to avoid contracting a disease. Resist-disease potions can be taken ahead of time and will remain active in the character's system for 4 hours.

## PROVISIONS

Provisions include rations, food, and lodging. A variety of food and accommodations can be obtained across Barsaive in addition to the examples described below. The Game Master determines game information for any items not specifically described here.

## RATIONS

Most adventurers and travelers use rations, generally dried food prepared to last long periods of time without spoiling. The types of rations most common to Barsaive are described below.

**Trail Rations:** Trail rations consist of dried fruit, dried meat, and nuts.

**Dwarf Mine Rations:** Dwarf mine rations consist of nuts and vegetables grown exclusively underground. Hearty and lightweight, these rations have the consistency of gravel, and some claim they have a taste to match. Characters eating dwarf mine rations all day gain a +1 Vigor bonus the next day. Though healthier than other rations, dwarf mine rations can cause strife within mining groups and adventuring parties. After a week of eating such rations, a character must make a Spirit roll each morning to see if he can face eating more.

## DAILY FOOD AND LODGING

Daily food and lodging is available at the numerous inns and taverns of Barsaive's cities, towns, and villages. The costs listed in the Goods and Services Table are fairly standard from city to city.



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## GOODS AND SERVICES TABLE

Item	Cost	Weight
<i>Clothing</i>		
Peasant's garb (shirt, belt, sandals, breeches)	12 cp	4 lbs.
—with robe or dress instead of breeches	3 sp	4 lbs.
Traveler's garb (soft boots, belt, breeches, traveler's cloak)	8 sp	6 lbs.
—with robe or dress instead of breeches	9 sp	6 lbs.
Wealthy traveler's garb (riding boots, belt, three patterned shirts, guild breeches or patterned dress, ornamental brooch)	40 sp	9 lbs.
—with embroidered robe instead of breeches	50 sp	9 lbs.
<i>Distinctive Items</i>		
Belt	5 cp	1 lb.
Boots, soft	1 sp	2 lbs.
Boots, riding	4 sp	3 lbs.
Mountain, riding	8 sp	3 lbs.
Breeches, peasant's	4 cp	2 lbs.
Breeches, merchant's	1 sp	2 lbs.
Breeches, guild member's	7 sp	2 lbs.
Brooch, plain brass	2 sp	6 oz.
Brooch, ornamental	12 sp	12 oz.
Brooch, silver	15 sp	9 oz.
Brooch, gold	120 sp	12 oz.
Cloaksense brooch	350 sp	1 lb.
Cloak, wool	5 sp	3 lbs.
Cloak, satin- or silk-lined	14 sp	3 lbs.
Cloak, fur-trimmed	50 sp	5 lbs.
Cloak, espagra-scale	120 sp	5 lbs.
Cloak, dwarf-winternight	275 sp	4 lbs.
Cloak, Theran	380 sp	4 lbs.
Dress, plain	2 sp	2 lbs.
Dress, patterned	7 sp	2 lbs.
Dress, embroidered	22 sp	2 lbs.
Dress, satin	100 sp	2 lbs.
Dress, ballroom gown	250 sp	3 lbs.
Dress, Theran	560 sp	3 lbs.
Gloves, leather	2 sp	7 oz.
Gloves, quiet fingers	140 sp	7 oz.
Hat, felt	4 cp	8 oz.
Hat, woolen cap	12 cp	8 oz.

## GOODS AND SERVICES TABLE

Item	Cost	Weight
Hat, fine quality	9 sp	8 oz.
Hat, courtier quality	18 sp	8 oz.
Hat, one-size	35 sp	8 oz.
Hooded mask	3 sp	8 oz.
Hosiery, plain	5 cp	6 oz.
Hosiery, silk	20 sp	6 oz.
Jacket, wool	12 sp	2 lbs.
Jacket, silk	90 sp	2 lbs.
Jacket, courtier's	170 sp	2 lbs.
Pin	1 sp	1 oz.
Robe, linen	15 cp	2 lbs.
Robe, embroidered	15 sp	2 lbs.
Robe, elfweave	80 sp	1 lb.
Sandals	2 cp	7 oz.
Shirt, plain	2 cp	1 lb.
Shirt, patterned	1 sp	1 lb.
Shirt, silk	45 sp	1 lb.
Shoes, merchant's	2 sp	1 lb.
Shoes, courtier's	40 sp	1 lb.
Scarf	5 sp	5 oz.
Sword scabbard	5 sp	2 lbs.
Toga	6 cp	3 lbs.
Tunic	4 cp	3 lbs.
<i>Provisions</i>		
Week of trail rations	10 sp	11 lbs.
Week of dwarf mine rations	25 sp	7 lbs.
Simple meal	3 cp	—
Average meal	1 sp	—
Good meal	3 sp	—
Sumptuous feast	50 sp	—
Theran Uyglar	25 sp	—
Mug of average ale	5 cp	—
Mug of good ale	1 sp	—
Mug of dwarf stout ale	2 sp	—
Wine, glass	1 cp	—
Wine, bottle	5 cp	1 lb.
Fine wine, glass	1 sp	—
Fine wine, bottle	5 sp	1 lb.
<i>Lodging</i>		
Flophouse (no bed)	1 cp	—
Cheap inn (public, 1 large bed)	5 cp	—
Cheap inn (private, 1 bed)	1 sp	—
Guild inn (bed and bath)	8 sp	—
Guild inn (room with secure locks)	12 sp	—

# CHAPTER 8: GEAR

GOODS AND SERVICES TABLE		
Item	Cost	Weight
Merchant inn (private, 1 bed)	3 sp	—
Merchant inn (private, with bath)	5 sp	—
Luxury inn (bed and bath)	25 sp	—
Luxury inn (magical amenities)	40 sp	—
Luxury inn (with personal valet)	55 sp + tips	—
<i>Adventuring Equipment</i>		
Adventurer's Kit (backpack, bedroll, flint and steel, torch, waterskin, large sack)	15 sp	10 lbs.
Adventurer's Kit with tent	40 sp	25 lbs.
<i>Specialized Items</i>		
Carving tool	15 sp	1 lb.
Sculpting tool	30 sp	1 lb.
Painting tool	45 sp	2 lbs.
Embroidery/sewing kit	25 sp	1 lb.
Backpack	5 sp	3 lbs.
Bedroll	5 sp	2 lbs.
Belt pouch	8 cp	1 lb.
Blanket	15 sp	3 lbs.
2 candles	7 cp	8 oz.
Chain, light	10 sp	5 lbs.
Chain, heavy	50 sp	10 lbs.
Chalk (5-piece box)	3 cp	8 oz.
Fishhook	1 cp	—
Fishnet (15 sq. feet)	15 sp	10 lbs.
Flint and steel	1 sp	1 lb.
Forge tools	100 sp	20 lbs.
Grappling hook	10 sp	5 lbs.
Healer kit	75 sp	5 lbs.
Healer kit refill	50 sp	—
Iron pot	20 sp	8 lbs.
Lantern, hooded	9 sp	6 lbs.
Lantern, bull's-eye	27 sp	6 lbs.
Lantern, light quartz	75 sp	8 lbs.
Map/scroll case	8 cp	3 lbs.
Whistle	2 sp	1 lb.
Flute	2 sp	1 lb.
Drum	7 sp	5 lbs.
Lute	25 sp	6 lbs.
Horn	70 sp	7 lbs.
Oil (per flask)	6 sp	8 oz.
Paper/parchment (sheet)	1 sp	—

GOODS AND SERVICES TABLE		
Item	Cost	Weight
Piton	9 cp	2 lbs.
Rope, 10 feet	8 sp	5 lbs.
Rope, 25 feet	15 sp	12 lbs.
Rope, 50 feet	25 sp	25 lbs.
Sack, large	2 sp	1 lb.
Sack, small	1 sp	—
Sewing kit	5 sp	—
Tent	30 sp	15 lbs.
Thieves' picks and tools	100 sp	1 lb.
Torch	5 cp	1 lb.
Whetstone	2 cp	1 lb.
Waterskin/Wineskin	2 sp	2 lbs. full; 0 lbs. empty
Writing ink (per vial)	10 sp	8 oz.
<i>Magic Equipment</i>		
Booster potion	50 sp	2 lbs.
Healing potion	300 sp	2 lbs.
Last-chance salve	600 sp	1 lb.
Resist-disease potion	75 sp	2 lbs.
Cure disease potion	500 sp	2 lbs.
Kelix's poultice	50 sp	1 lb.
Kelix's antidote	125 sp	2 lbs.
Light quartz, small	75 sp	2 lbs.
Light quartz, mid-sized	125 sp	6 lbs.
Large quartz (used in kaers)	200 sp	20 lbs.
<i>Blood Charms</i>		
Absorb blow	100 sp	1 lb.
Astral-sensitive eye	325 sp	1 lb.
Death cheat	450 sp	1 lb.
Desperate blow	275 sp	1 lb.
Desperate spell	300 sp	1 lb.
Horror-fend	200 sp	1 lb.
Targeting eye	450 sp	1 lb.
<i>Services</i>		
Armor repair	50 sp	—
Armor decoration	35 sp	—
Messenger, local	5 sp	—
Messenger, city-to-city	30-75 sp	—
Sage	15-100 sp	—
Library access (major city)	25 sp	—
Library access (Throal)	20 sp	—
Transportation, caravan	3-5 per person, per day	—
Transportation, riverboat	5 per person, per day	—



## GOODS AND SERVICES TABLE

Item	Cost	Weight
Weapon repair	55 sp	—
Weapon decoration	45 sp	—
<i>Vehicles</i>		
Cart, small	10 sp	200 lbs.
Cart, large	25 sp	400 lbs.
Wagon, small	30 sp	600 lbs.
Wagon, large	50 sp	800 lbs.
Canoe	15 sp	100 lbs.
Rowboat	20 sp	100 lbs.
Small sailboat	35 sp	—
<i>Animals</i>		
Draft horse	150 sp	—
Riding horse	125 sp	—
War horse	1,500 sp	—
Hunting/guard dog	30 sp	—
War hound	50 sp	—
Elephant	3,000 sp	—
Falcon (trained)	3,500 sp	—
Pack mule	100 sp	—
Thundra beast	4,000 sp	—
Griffin (trained)	7,500 sp	—

## Food

All of the meals described below are full meals capable of sustaining a character for a full day. Prices are listed in the Goods and Services Table.

**Average Meal:** The average meal includes fatty meat, bread, cheese, fruit in season, and a few mugs of average ale to wash it down.

**Good Meal:** A good meal includes fine fish or lean meat, vegetables, three or more types of bread, a bowl of soup, and a few mugs of good ale. Dessert may or may not be included, depending on the establishment.

**Simple Meal:** A simple meal consists of cheese, bread, and fruit when in season. This type of meal emphasizes quantity over quality.

**Sumptuous Feast:** A sumptuous feast includes at least nine courses, including appetizers, soup, ale-tasting with various breads, salad, ale-tasting with different cheeses, a shared entree, a personal entree, ale-tasting with nuts, and dessert. Fine dwarven stout is served throughout the meal, a different variety for each course, with at least three varieties served during each ale-tasting.

**Theran Uyglar:** This rare dessert is a light, custardy parfait traditionally served without a glass. Instead, magic keeps it afloat. The taste changes into a variety of flavors as the dessert is eaten, caramel and sweetmeg being the most common.

## Drinks

Ale and wine are the most common drinks in Barsaive, ranging in quality from average to fine. Prices also vary, ranging from a few copper pieces for a mug to a king's ransom for the best vintages.

## Lodging

Nearly all towns and cities in Barsaive offer lodging of varying quality. The most typical lodging houses are described below. Prices are listed on the Goods and Services Table.

**Flophouses:** Flophouses are the most inexpensive lodging available in Barsaive. These facilities are basically large, common rooms where characters roll up in their own blankets and sleep on the floor. Flophouses offer no services of any kind.



## CHAPTER 8: GEAR

**Cheap Inns:** Cheap inns offer both public and private rooms. Public rooms have one large bed which can accommodate several people. A private room contains a single-occupancy bed. Cheap inns usually offer simple and average meals, and average ale and wine.

**Guild Inns:** Guild inns are run by the dwarf guilds, who originally built these facilities to house journeyman guild members. Over the years, many have begun to serve travelers, who generally have more ready coin than the average journeyman or apprentice. Most rooms at these inns have security locks, resistant to lock picking. These magic locks fit over the door's regular lock on both sides of the door.

**Luxury Inns:** Luxury inns exist only in Barsaive's larger towns and cities. The staff at these establishments pay attention to details and try to fulfill any reasonable customer request. Typical magical amenities include lamps and fireplaces that ignite and douse on command, wine buckets that automatically chill wine to the right temperature, and baths that sense which muscles ache and massage them. For nervous travelers carrying valuables, luxury inns feature safes and safe deposit boxes.

**Merchant Inns:** These inns offer higher quality accommodations than cheap inns, but also cost more. They offer only private rooms, some of which come with private baths. Merchant inns offer all types of food and drink, from simple meals to sumptuous feasts.

### SERVICES

For a price, characters can contract the services of messengers, sages, scribes, weaponsmiths, and armorers. Brief descriptions of services most commonly available are listed below. All are generally available throughout Barsaive, but prices for these services in small towns and villages may range from 10 percent to 25 percent higher than the average cost listed in the Goods and Services Table.

**Armorer:** Armorers repair and forge new armor and shields, and often also sell armor. Armorers will also decorate armor, for example, etching a group symbol on a breast plate or shield.

**Messenger:** Messengers carry messages between clients. Most messengers work only within city limits or a certain area, though some carry messages to other cities and regions in Barsaive. Windlings and obsidimen specialize in messenger service, though individuals of any race can be messengers. City residents use windlings to ensure quick delivery. Obsidimen, though slower, have a better reputation for reliability.

**Sage:** Sages possess immense knowledge in many scholarly areas, especially magic. They can provide

characters with information on history and legends that may help them in their adventures.

**Scribe:** Skilled in writing, scribes pen letters and formal documents for a fee. A talented scribe can also translate a group's adventure log from a pile of disjointed notes into a stirring tale of heroic adventures.

**Library Access:** Many cities in Barsaive have libraries that characters can use to research legends and history. Library access usually includes aid from library assistants, and sometimes the services of a scribe. The most famous library in Barsaive is the Great Library of Throal.



**Weaponsmith:** Weaponsmiths forge and repair all types of weapons, from swords and staves to maces. They can also add decorative markings to a weapon.

### TRANSPORTATION

Many modes of transportation can be found in Barsaive. Characters can arrange for passage aboard a t'skrang riverboat, or in a caravan traveling from city

to city, or even book passage on an airship, though this is difficult to arrange and costs a great deal.

## VEHICLES

Though not commonly available, vehicles are sold in the larger towns and cities in Barsaive. The most common vehicles for sale in Barsaive are listed below. Prices are listed on the Goods and Services Table.



**Canoe:** Canoes are small boats capable of carrying only 1 or 2 characters safely. Propelled by their passengers, canoes are 10 to 15 feet long and 3 feet wide at the center. The ends of a canoe taper to a width of 3 to 4 inches. These craft are used most often for travel along the running streams and rivers near Barsaive's larger mountain ranges.

**Cart:** Small wheeled vehicles used by merchants to transport goods, carts usually measure 4 to 5 feet long and 3 feet wide. Pack mules usually pull carts, but some merchants use also horses. The cost of a cart does not include the animal to draw it.

**Rowboat:** Rowboats are propelled by oars fixed onto their sides. Usually 10 to 12 feet long and 5 feet wide, these boats can carry up to 4 passengers safely. One of the passengers must also work the oars. These craft are often used as fishing boats on Barsaive's calmer streams and rivers.

**Sailboat:** Sailboats are used most often on the Aras Sea. These craft range from 10 to 40 feet long. The smallest sailboats carry only 2 passengers, while the largest may carry crews of up to 20 people. Merchants who travel the Aras Sea, trading at the various cities along its shoreline, use the larger sailboats.

**Wagon:** Wagons are capable of carrying from 2 to 5 passengers. Usually a team of horses pulls a wagon, but mule teams are used with some smaller and slower wagons. The cost of a wagon does not include the team of animals.

## ANIMALS

Animals are used for labor in most areas of Barsaive. The most common animals are listed below. Several of these animals are described in the *Game Master's Guide*, while others can be found in the *Savage Worlds Core Rulebook*. Purchase costs are listed in the Goods and Services Table.

**Dog:** Dogs generally serve as guard and hunting animals. Some are trained specifically for use in war, but only some ork raider tribes and Theran slavers use these animals, usually called war hounds.

**Elephant:** In the region between the Aras Sea and the Death's Sea, elephants haul heavy carts and wagons overland along the trade routes that link the coastal cities. These animals are very rarely seen in the central region of Barsaive.

**Falcon:** Falcons are used as hunting birds in many different areas of Barsaive. In the north, elven hunters use falcons, while in the southeast human hunters commonly use the birds. Beastmaster Adepts favor the falcon above all other animals for pets.

**Griffin:** Some people use griffins as aerial mounts. Before a griffin can be used in this way, however, it must undergo extensive training, which keeps the cost of these animals high.

**Horse:** Used most often as mounts and pack animals, horses also pull carts and wagons within and between Barsaive's cities. The three basic types of horses are as follows:

*Draft Horse:* Draft horses are used as pack animals and to pull carts and wagons. They are generally stronger than riding horses, but are also slower.

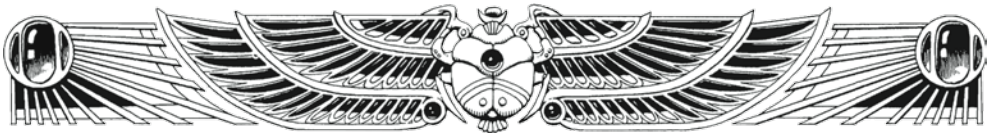
*Riding Horse:* Riding horses are used for personal transportation. These animals are quite strong and fast, but cannot wear barding.

*War Horse:* The largest and strongest of Barsaive's horses, war horses can wear barding and carry a fully equipped cavalryman. Most cavalries, including the ork scorchers, ride war horses.

**Pack Mule:** Pack mules pull carts and wagons. Slow but strong, these animals can travel through terrain that horses and other pack animals cannot.

**Thundra Beast:** Many ork Cavalrymen use these massive beasts as mounts. Resembling a cross between a dinosaur and a rhinoceros, thundra beasts are slow to get going but nearly unstoppable once running.





# CHAPTER 9: RELIGION

*The Passions lie between Namegivers and the universe. They are all the emotions that dwell within us and all the emotions we share with the world.*

—Forthian, Questor of Floranuus

*The following is from Men and the Passions: What Lies Between. Written in 1500 TH by Daron Highwater, Troubadour Adept and Questor of Mynbruje, this text explains the complex relationships between the people of Barsaive and the Passions.*

The Passions shape the spiritual beliefs and customs of Barsaive's people. According to many of Barsaive's finest scholars, the Passions are living embodiments of the life force of the universe, giving shape and form to the collective emotions and ideals of the world such as Love, Wealth, or Growth. As the universe nurtures an Adept to keep the energies of life alive in the world, so the Passions nourish the many people who cannot find the strength or patience to become Adepts or magicians. The Passions serve as intermediaries between these common folk and the awesome power of the universe.

Those who channel the power of the Passions are called Questors. These men and women draw their extraordinary powers from the Passions, rather than directly from the universal life force. The life force of the universe flows through the Passions, who transmit this power to their Questors. These Questors, in turn, bring the Passions to the common folk across the world. Following a Passion gives a Questor the same kind of focus an Adept receives by following the tenets of his Discipline. The Questor's life becomes a living metaphor for the ideals embodied by his chosen Passion; throughout his life, he expresses those ideals in his every word and action. Most Questors fervently and vividly live out this commitment, adding as much color and energy to the world as magicians and Adepts.

Most observers assume that what we know of the Passions holds true for the world outside Barsaive. It would be odd indeed if the universe interacted with

our world in different ways from place to place. Yet ours is an odd world, and perhaps the universe's connection to it does change. The Passions we know in Barsaive may not exist on the other side of the globe; other Passions as yet unknown may take their place. More likely, men and women in distant lands know the same Passions but call them by different names. Whatever the truth, the reader will find in these pages all that we know of the Passions of Barsaive.

## THE NATURE OF PASSIONS

Potent beings, the Passions have powers that dwarf the magical abilities of Adepts and the spells of magicians. Though they exist on the physical plane, the Passions possess abilities that enable them to travel at incredible speeds, sometimes by traveling as winds, sometimes by taking the forms of eagles or hawks. Some can even transport themselves by simple thought.

The Passions physically exist in our world and sometimes interact with it directly as well as through their Questors. For example, many adventurers tell stories of meeting the Passion Thystonium while traveling along the road. Sometimes a group of explorers wandering through a forest or across a dusty plain stumbles across a humble hut or a huge fortress that houses a member of Barsaive's pantheon. The Passions move these homes around with them, setting up residence for a period of time that may last anywhere from a day to a year or more. On occasion, a Passion welcomes a polite knock at his door. Other times, visitors had best keep well away.

Stories and legends hold that the Passions care nothing for Barsaive's political alliances and rivalries, and most of their documented behavior supports this belief. They champion neither the dwarven kingdom of Throal nor the magical empire of Thera because



they believe the conflict between these two mighty states generates the passions and adventures of life that the universe craves. Though they do not intercede in worldly conflicts on their own, they will eagerly support any side that calls to them for help. The Passions bring their powers to these conflicts through the Questors, their human agents. If a Questor sides with you, his Passion supports your cause, and the power the Questor brings can make the difference between victory and defeat.

For years scholars and historians have debated the true appearance of the Passions. If one travels throughout Barsaive and asks people to describe the Passion Thystonius, one will receive a variety of answers. Humans describe a tall man with a flowing black beard and piercing blue eyes. Trolls tell of a troll carrying a warhammer as heavy as a boulder. Dwarfs speak of a massive dwarf, standing fifty feet tall, who makes his home in the Throal mountains. These differences in appearance are not confined to race, but encompass gender and other aspects of physical appearance. For example, many people think of the Passion Garlen as a woman, because she is depicted as female in the

many statues gracing kaers and villages across Barsaive. But if Garlen comes to them in dreams, often during the deepest crises of their lives, they see the Passion as a man.

Most observers believe these varied appearances occur because a Passion tailors its physical form to the individual who sees it, so that the individual can easily recognize the ideals and forces embodied by the Passion and will be receptive to its message. However, all the manifestations of a Passion contain certain identifiable, common elements, described later in this section. Scholars continue to debate whether or not the Passions have a “true” appearance. So far no one has formulated a definitive answer, and many believe the mystery may never be solved. Most people do not care to know, believing that the true forms of the Passions remain hidden for good reason.

## PASSIONS IN CONFLICT

Before the Scourge, the Passions appear to have wasted little energy fighting among themselves. They did not compete for followers, nor did they exhibit jealousy of each other. Instead, they focused their vast power on bringing their particular ideals to the people of the world. The variety of human nature ensured that none lacked followers, and the Passions seem to have existed in mutual harmony. The Scourge changed this, as it altered or destroyed so much else good and beautiful in Barsaive. Those dark times apparently drove three of the twelve Passions mad, and these three now work toward the destruction of the other Passions. No longer content with inspiring fervor and embodying ideals for mortals, these Mad Passions selfishly desire power and influence as mortals might. Fortunately for the world, the Mad Passions also share the mortal characteristic of distrust. Though sometimes the Mad Passions work together to accomplish their goals, more often they work alone or against each other.

The remaining Passions, unaccustomed to either cooperation or competition, have only just begun to respond to the threat posed by the Mad Passions. As far as we know, these beings seldom fight their crazed counterparts directly. Instead, they throw their Questors and followers against those who follow the Mad Passions. The conflict among the Passions has sown strife among their mortal followers; though they seldom fought over their differences in the past, the presence of the Mad Passions has triggered ideological



## CHAPTER 9: RELIGION

skirmishes across the land that may yet lead to a full-scale war. The danger the Mad Passions pose to the world remains uncertain. Some contend the Passions will meet in final battle and wreak destruction across the earth that will dwarf the devastation of the Scourge. Others claim the insanity that possesses the Mad Passions will render them impotent in the long run, and expect them to fade away like the many arrogant, mortal dictators before them. Only time can tell whether the Mad Passions will destroy the world, or simply depart from it.

### QUESTORS

Most people invoke different Passions depending on their current circumstances. For example, a family hiding in their shuttered home as a pack of hungry wolves howls outside might seek the protection of Garlen, the Passion of the Hearth and Healing. If a family member ventures outside with sword in hand to slay the predators, the family might invoke Thystonius, the Passion of Physical Conflict and Valor.

Questors, on the other hand, pledge themselves to one Passion. They dedicate their lives to it, trying to foster its ideals in the lives of all people. The characteristics of Questors vary from Passion to Passion. Some general traits exist among most or all Questors, as discussed below. With the exception of those who follow the Mad Passions, Questors with different patron Passions do not bear each other ill will. Each Passion embodies different ideals and emotions, and their Questors understand that they are all equally significant parts of a whole that comprises the life of Namegivers.

Though the Passions do not directly support political factions or causes, Questors can and often do. For example, many dwarven Questors in Throal call Thystonius their patron Passion. Their Questor order has a military nature, and they use gifts from Thystonius to give the kingdom of Throal military protection. If other Questors of Thystonius chose to attack Throal, such an act would bring Questors of the same Passion into direct conflict with each other. Such a development would gladden Thystonius. Though he would mourn those killed in the conflict, the bravery of his Questors on both sides would bring him great joy.

Patron Passions also bestow abilities on their Questors. Like Adepts, Questors cultivate these abilities by focusing their lives around a certain

behavior—in this case, spreading their Passion's ideals across Barsaive. Some of these abilities, such as Healing, are shared by the Questors of several Passions. Others are unique to one Passion.

Unlike Adepts, Questors enjoy respect throughout the land. Because Adepts draw the immense power of the universe to themselves directly, most common folk distrust them. Many view Adepts, especially magicians, as presumptuous and arrogant. Questors, on the other hand, receive their power by working through the Passions, in whom every inhabitant of Barsaive places trust. The people's warm regard for the Passions includes the Questors, and they therefore enjoy the trust of most people. An old Barsaivian saying perfectly expresses these sentiments: "Hide from magicians, hire Adepts, and say hello to Questors."

Rules for playing Questors will be available in a forthcoming EARTHDAWN sourcebook.

### WORSHIP OF THE PASSIONS

The people of Barsaive hold spiritual beliefs based on their faith in the Passions, but no Barsaivian race or community has established a formal religious institution. None of the Passions has any organized following, though Questors of a particular Passion often form small bands to achieve a common purpose. The Passions apparently have chosen to propagate their ideals through their Questors rather than through institutions or written laws that are vulnerable to error and misinterpretation.

Though the people of Barsaive do not form organized religions centered on the Passions, they do worship the Passions. Most believe in all the Passions, appealing to whatever Passion best meets their current needs.

Some people, including the Questors, worship one Passion over the others. Though they recognize the existence of other Passions, they believe the ideals of their chosen Passion are superior. These worshippers often express their beliefs by stating that they follow the ideals of their chosen Passion. For example, a farmer who worships Jaspre might say, "I follow the ideals of Jaspre." Many Questors make such statements, the most common method of declaring worship.

Unlike Questors, Namegivers rarely declare a belief in only one of the Passions. Most people accept the entire pantheon of Passions and would fear losing a Passion's protection by proclaiming that they did not believe in it.



## PASSION DESCRIPTIONS

The following descriptions reflect the common understanding of the Passions. However, our knowledge of these mysterious and powerful beings is almost certainly neither complete or entirely correct. Each entry begins with a brief description of each Passion's nature and personality, followed by a list of the ideals, typical appearance, and common elements associated with each Passion.

The **Ideals** represent the universal concepts and emotions the Passion embodies; the Passion's **Questors** focus on these qualities. **Typical Appearance** describes the Passion's usual manifestation. **Common Elements** include sights, sounds, textures, and other phenomena that usually accompany any manifestation of the Passion. These common elements often appear in the dreams of an individual thinking about the Passion or the ideals it embodies, and the presence of such common elements may also indicate that the Passion is nearby or easily summoned. **Powers** refers to the unique, personal abilities each Passion possesses. **Questors** describes the typical appearance and behavior of each Passion's Questors.

### ASTENDAR

Astendar is the living muse of romance and the arts. Tales abound of artists paid a visit by Astendar who spent a feverish night alternately working at the easel and making love with the Passion. Such a gift of inspiration is not lightly given, and a visit from Astendar usually marks an individual for greatness. Astendar also takes an interest in lovers, both young and old.

One well-known incident involved a widow and widower who wanted to marry. Their children, however, believed their respective parents too old for romance and discouraged the courtship. Kept locked in their houses by their children, the couple appealed to Astendar for help. The Passion heard their pleas and agreed to aid them if they created a painting together. At first, the couple had no idea how they might do this, for they could not meet or see each other. Driven by their longing to marry, they finally came up with a plan.

The couple hired a Thief they knew to carry a canvas back and forth between their two houses. Every night for many weeks, one of them added to the painting, and the Thief carried it off to the other house just before dawn. As the painting neared completion, the lovers found themselves waiting more and more anxiously every night to see the other's handiwork. Slowly but surely, Astendar's





## CHAPTER 9: RELIGION

painting turned a solid friendship and gentle affection into excitement, anticipation, and deepening love. At long last they finished the picture, astounded by the beauty of their work. The exquisite painting so pleased Astendar that she made the couple young once more. Bolstered by their renewed strength, they broke free of their prisoning homes and ran away together. As for the Thief, he was rewarded with the painting, which he sold for a handsome price.

**Ideals:** Love, Art, Music

**Typical Appearance:** Astendar commonly manifests as a powerfully built male or female of any race, wearing few garments and carrying a musical instrument.

**Common Elements:** Light rain, music, beautiful clothing of intricate textures

**Powers:** Astendar can entrance listeners with music, instill lust or love, restore youth, and transform into the sound of a song and float through the air, leaving the melody in her wake.

**Questors:** Many Questors of Astendar are artists. Sensual pleasures, such as gourmet food, comfortable clothing, or a lingering kiss, fascinate them. Their tendencies to indulge their desires often get them into trouble; regarding their actions as inspired by their Passion, they wrongly assume everyone sees those actions in the same light. However, others frequently view their indulgences as mere decadent enjoyment unchecked by self-control or common sense.

### CHORROLIS

Chorrolis wanders the world, aiding those who want to strike a clever bargain or long for more wealth than they have. He inspires people to rise at dawn and work to improve their lot, and leaves them despairing if they go to bed at night without having succeeded. Despite his status as a Passion and the extraordinary powers he possesses, Chorrolis brims over with jealousy and avarice. He covets anything of value or beauty that someone else owns, and his desire to possess such items often drives him to distraction. Because he scorns simple stealing as the act of a coward, Chorrolis must resort to other methods of acquisition.

Bargaining is his method of choice. He has been known to hound the owner of a desired piece of merchandise for weeks at a time, turning up and offering a deal when the owner least expects it. Because he subtly disguises his appearance, most people do not recognize Chorrolis and eventually take the price he

offers, desperate to be rid of the obsessive merchant following them around. Those who do recognize Chorrolis bide their time before selling, knowing that he will drive up his price to ridiculous heights. The patient trader can make a staggering profit by playing on Chorrolis' desperate desire.

**Ideals:** Wealth, Trade, Jealousy, Desire

**Typical Appearance:** Chorrolis often appears as a corpulent male of any race, either jovial or bitter and depressed. He wears fine clothes, and often carries silver and gold or beautiful and expensive objects around with him.

**Common Elements:** Bags of treasure, caravans, goods for sale, food

**Powers:** Chorrolis can incite greed, encourage cooperation in matters of trade, and travel instantaneously along any road or waterway used as a trade route.

**Questors:** The Questors of Chorrolis are capable, if greedy, merchants. Some work in markets, and others travel across Barsaive in trade caravans. Chorrolis frequently sends them to acquire some bauble or treasure he desires for his collection. Known for their bargaining skills, the Questors of Chorrolis often try to hide their affiliation with the Passion by wearing nondescript clothing, in the hope of snagging bargains from the unwary.

### DIS (MAD PASSION)

Dis is a popular Passion among the Therans and those Barsaivians who make their living from the Theran slave trade. Unlike the other Passions, Dis takes her greatest pleasure in destroying people's passion for life, rather than inspiring it. She bleeds away her worshippers' zest for living and they in turn demoralize those they subjugate. Eventually, the slaves and bureaucrats influenced by this Mad Passion become empty husks, devoid of dreams and feelings. Dis wants to extend this death of the soul throughout the world.

In addition to the slavers, Dis also inspires bureaucrats who create paperwork merely to look busy, rather than out of a need for the records or fondness for their work. Few activities spread boredom more effectively than generating useless records and information, and Dis spends a great deal of her time encouraging people to do just that.

**Ideals:** Confusion, Unnecessary Work, Bureaucracy, Slavery



**Typical Appearance:** Dis manifests as a thin, sickly male or female of any race, who seems to have been deprived of sunlight and exercise for far too long.

**Common Elements:** Papers, papers and more papers, contracts, tomes of ritual, slaves, chains

**Powers:** Dis can remove fervor from those around her and cause confusion in their minds, make people obey her will, and teleport instantaneously to any place she has visited before.

**Questors:** The Questors of Dis wear heavy, gray robes and often affect the gaunt, pale face of their patron deity with make-up or illusion spells. Many of them, especially those controlling a mercantile bureaucracy or slaver operation, live comfortably off the fruits of their labor. Others are miserable people who aspire to nothing more than becoming so bored that they cease to feel.

## FLORANUUS

Floranuus is the perpetual optimist and the motivator of all Namegivers. He burns in the hearts of all who rise eagerly from their beds each morn to meet the new day. He inspires all people toward victory, and stands at the center of all celebrations. As the embodiment of joy, mirth, and excitement, he lacks understanding of despair. He sends his Questors to help the deeply depressed, knowing that they may empathize with such feelings in a way that he cannot.

**Ideals:** Revelry, Energy, Victory, Motion

**Typical Appearance:** Floranuus usually manifests as a humanoid shape composed of fire. However, the manifestation neither gives off heat nor burns any objects it touches.

**Common Elements:** Fire, parties, cheers, swift ships of both air and sea, wine, roads

**Powers:** Floranuus inspires stamina, alters moods from depression to exhilaration, and can travel at breathtaking speed anywhere in the world as a ball of fire.

**Questors:** Wildly optimistic, the Questors of Floranuus strive to infuse everyone around them with their enthusiasm. These men and women see the positive side of every situation, no matter how dire or depressing. These Questors see victory even in the most resounding defeat. "Next time we'll win with the knowledge we have gained," they often say. The Questors of Floranuus wear colorful clothes, particularly favoring bright reds, and travel across the countryside looking for those who have lost hope. They do all they can to revive the spark of joy in souls without hope, often growing reckless in their efforts to light up the world around them as brightly as the flames of their Passion. Though many people consider these Questors



busybodies, none question their benevolent motives or sincerity.

## GARLEN

During the Scourge, all the kaers and citadels called on Garlen for protection, and she remains one of the most widely revered Passions in Barsaive. People of all races call her the mother who cares for all, and Garlen considers all of Barsaive's Namegivers her children.

Garlen and her Questors offer healing to the sick and injured, and comfort to the dying. In a world filled with violence and danger, Garlen watches over those who shun adventuring for the comfort and safety of home, particularly families and children.

**Ideals:** Hearth and Healing

**Typical Appearance:** Garlen usually manifests as a voluptuous woman, her arms spread wide in acceptance and invitation. On occasion, Garlen appears as a kindly, comfortable-looking man.

**Common Elements:** Homes, children, kaers, enclosed spaces, water

**Powers:** Garlen can heal the wounded, comfort the frightened, and travel instantly to any home.

**Questors:** Some call Garlen's Questors the weaklings of the world, claiming that they seek the refuge of the hearth and embrace healing because they fear conflict. Nothing could be further from the truth. Watching over someone you love, daring to love them as they lie dying—these require a quiet strength that runs deeper than the strength required to slay any beast. Most, though not all, of the Questors of Garlen are women. Some believe that Garlen attracts women because she so often appears as one. Others speculate that the act of carrying unborn children within their bodies gives women a greater understanding and appreciation for life, and greater compassion for other living beings. Though Garlen's Questors can be stern, they are unfailingly generous and understanding. Those who mistake their compassion for weakness, however, discover that Garlen's Questors will not hesitate to act against those who would harm them or any they shelter. A famous story tells of five Questors of Garlen who were visiting a village near Sky Point when Theran slave drivers raided the village. Garlen's Questors cut down the Therans to the last man, staining their white robes with the blood of the attackers.





## JASPREE

Countless Namegivers have invoked Jaspree's name during the past hundred years as people across Barsaive have revived farmlands and forests devastated during the Scourge. Moved by his deep love of all growing things, Jaspree has answered the call of his followers. He wanders under the deep shadows cast by towering trees and stops to smell the smallest wildflowers that line Barsaive's well-traveled roads. Thanks to his aid, the world has grown green and rich with life in the years since the end of the Scourge.

**Ideals:** Growth, Care of the Land, Love of the Wilderness

**Typical Appearance:** Jaspree usually manifests as a male or female creature, half animal and half any Namegiver race.

**Common Elements:** Trees, farms, forests, seeds

**Powers:** Jaspree encourages growth in plants, animals and Namegivers; animates plants; speaks with animals; and travels through dirt as if swimming through water.

**Questors:** Many of Jaspree's Questors live in solitude, taking care of small patches of forest. They protect the woodlands from those who would destroy them, for they value the lives of plants far above those of animals or Namegivers. All woodsmen take care not to anger these solitary folk, who will readily kill to protect the growing things they care for. Other, more social Questors belong to farming communities and protect the lives of animals and Namegivers as well as the lives of plants. Though they will harm intruders who try to burn the crops of a village or town, they understand that communities of Namegivers need to sow fields in order to eat, and accept that some forests must die in the process. These Questors see life as an endless cycle of death and rebirth, and accept both as having equal worth. Jaspree's Questors often embark on journeys and adventures to learn more about the plant life of the world, to plant trees and flowers in barren lands, and to protect endangered lands rich in plant life.

## LOCHOST

Lochost is the patron Passion of slaves, rebels, and scholars. The truly educated mind seeks the inspiration to break free from the beliefs of the past and make new discoveries, and so merits the protection of Lochost as surely as any freedom fighter. The slow spread of Theran slavery across Barsaive has stretched Lochost's attention thinner and thinner, and he depends upon

increasing numbers of Questors to do his work. At the sight of the slavery she desires, the Mad Passion Dis often confronts Lochost, and she currently wields greater power than he. The two last fought at a slave camp near the citadel of Tirthon, killing every slave and slaver in their savage combat. Wishing to avoid a repeat of the massacre, Lochost spends a great deal of time distracting Dis as his Questors work to free the enslaved.

**Ideals:** Rebellion, Change, Freedom

**Typical Appearance:** Lochost usually manifests as a male or female child of any race, whose body and features constantly change.

**Common Elements:** Strong wind, uprooted trees, open gates

**Powers:** Lochost inspires rebellion, comforts the imprisoned, unlocks doors and prisons, and can fly through the air by transforming into wind.

**Questors:** Lochost's Questors wear no one type of garment, because their calling requires them to blend in with many different groups. Many serve as political agitators within the kingdom of Throal and other communities throughout Barsaive. However, they are currently working to eradicate the Theran slave trade and the smaller slaving enterprises that have sprung up in Barsaive to support it. The Therans hunt down and kill Lochost's Questors wherever they find them, hoping that such drastic actions will discourage people from following that Passion. For most people, such brutality only strengthens anti-Theran sentiment. As long as Lochost lives, his Questors will risk their lives to foment rebellion in the world's slave camps and mining operations. Disturbed by his inspiring example, the Mad Passion Dis hunts Lochost relentlessly, and few doubt Dis' desire to be the first Passion to claim the life of another.

## MYNBRUJE

Mynbruje stands by the unjustly accused, those the law has passed over, and those misunderstood by their society. He is a busy Passion, for though the Namegivers occupy a special place in the universe, mere mortals are often blind to truth and understanding.

**Ideals:** Justice, Compassion, Empathy, Truth

**Typical Appearance:** Mynbruje usually appears as an old man or woman of any race.

**Common Elements:** Balanced scales, executioner's axe, stars, a comfortable place to rest







**Powers:** Mynbruje can read minds, ease the suffering of others, perceive obscure clues, and travel through the thoughts of Namegivers, leaping from the mind of one to any other within fifty miles.

**Questors:** The Questors of Mynbruje wear simple garments, sometimes peasant garb, to show that they care little for status or prestige. They see truth and justice as the heart of life, and view all else as minor distractions. By asking how a man accused of a crime sees himself and how society sees him, the Questors of Mynbruje seek to restore balance to such matters. If a criminal does not realize he has done something wrong, they try to make him understand the criminality of his actions. If society faults someone for something he did not do, they work to clear his name among his fellows. Mynbruje's Questors often act as official judges in citadels, towns, and villages. Some travel the land, adjudicating disputes they encounter during their journey. The word of a Questor of Mynbruje is considered unimpeachable, and most people will accept his judgment even though he is a stranger. Such Questors often travel with Adepts and magicians, who protect them from thieves seeking to evade judgment.

## RAGGOK (MAD PASSION)

The most terrible of the Mad Passions, Raggok embodies all that is corrupted in the world. He causes the dead to walk the earth, he sows the baseless hatreds that erupt between once-loving husbands and wives, he tortures the insane with disembodied voices. People say he has made countless pacts with Horrors, to aid them in their evil endeavors and receive their aid in kind. Like the Horrors he allegedly serves, Raggok loves to inflict pain and strives to satisfy this perverse desire.

**Ideals:** Vengeance, Bitterness, Jealousy

**Typical Appearance:** Raggok usually manifests as a large man with the head of a ram. Scores of open wounds continuously appear, heal, and reappear on the incarnation's bloody flesh.

**Common Elements:** Skeletons, the undead, swords, wounds, insects, snow and ice

**Powers:** Raggok can call forth painful memories, raise the undead, inspire hatred, and travel through the thoughts of Namegivers, leaping from one mind to any other within 50 miles. As he travels, he evokes painful memories in the minds he passes through.

**Questors:** Questors of Raggok study the undead and the Horrors. This Mad Passion's followers come from both Thera and, unfortunately, Barsaive. Raggok never





lacks followers, as a sizable portion of the population always seems to enjoy terrorizing others. Masters of both mental and physical torture, these Questors constantly indulge their cruel sense of humor at others' expense. Questors of Raggok fall into two camps, divided by their interpretation of their Passion's ideals. One group surrounds itself with all the pleasures of the flesh that wealth can buy, constantly searching for more money and treasure. The other group follows an ascetic way of life, believing that bringing pain to the world should take precedence over their own comfort. Any wealth they accumulate, they use to buy poisons, hire mercenaries to raze villages, and the like. The two groups' styles of dress reflect their different outlooks. The sybaritic Questors dress in expensive and luxurious clothing; the ascetics dress shabbily, preferring to spend their money on spreading pain, suffering, and fear wherever they can.

## THYSTONIUS

Thystonius is the Passion of Physical Conflict and Valor. Most soldiers mistakenly believe him a Passion of war and try to claim him for their own, but Thystonius cares little for killing. He resides in living bones and muscles, not in the corpses of the fallen. He loves the flexing and exertion of bodies competing against the odds—a foot race, an arm wrestle, or a man swimming for his life against the impossible currents of the Serpent River give him infinitely more pleasure than the carnage of battle.

In addition to those who embrace him wholeheartedly, Thystonius rushes to aid those who feel daunted by a physical challenge. The epic poem "*The War of Tears*," recounts two camps of opposing Warriors, both fearful of taking the battlefield the next day. Thystonius entered both camps during the night and spoke to each army, extolling the glories of war and promising the Warriors they would all emerge heroes. Inspired by the Passion's words, both sides joined in vigorous combat the following morn. The Passion kept his promise—the Warriors' heroic deeds were immortalized in the "*The War of Tears*." Nevertheless, Thystonius' habit of encouraging people to throw themselves at each other makes many people uncomfortable.

**Ideals:** Physical Conflict, Valor

**Typical Appearance:** Thystonius usually appears as a tall, muscular man or woman of any race.

**Common Elements:** Weapons, banners and pennants, armor, battlefields

## CHAPTER 9: RELIGION

**Powers:** Thystonius can increase martial abilities and strength, overcome pain, and travel instantaneously within a mile of any physical conflict.

**Questors:** The Questors of Thystonius tend to be good athletes, and often make excellent Warriors. They continually seek challenges and enemies to test themselves against and believe that diving headfirst into physical danger is the only way to fully experience life. They believe that their Passion wants them to challenge other people to do the same, whether their potential opponents are willing or not. Though few would call Thystonius' Questors thugs, they seem incapable of contemplation or introspection. They "think" with their muscles far more often than with their brains, preferring to follow their physical impulses rather than their minds.

### UPANDAL

Upandal is the Passion of Construction. He reinforces the need to build shared by all the Namegiver races of Barsaive, helping them to create order and beauty by building structures as well as giving names. Upandal gives aid where he can, inspiring architects and craftsmen and protecting beautiful cities and towers. On occasion, he presents enchanted tools to craftsmen he deems particularly worthy of his patronage.

**Ideals:** Building, Construction, Planning

**Typical Appearance:** Upandal generally manifests as a craftsman of any race, clad in dirty work clothes.

**Common Elements:** Hammer, building plans, compass, smith's forge

**Powers:** Upandal can make tools quickly; fortify buildings, fortresses and city walls; create temporary bridges and towers; and travel instantaneously between cities or any other large, ornate constructions.

**Questors:** Happy only when involved in a project, Upandal's Questors are usually either building something or collecting money to build something. They view everything they build as an offering to Upandal and believe that each structure enriches the world. In addition to buildings, these Questors enjoy tinkering with objects. They question Thief Adepts about the nature of traps and secret doors, or pester Archer Adepts for instructions on how to make the best bows. Easily distracted by any mechanical object that lies along their path, they frequently must be dragged away from any item of interest that they cannot take

with them. Their analytical minds give Upandal's Questors a penchant for devising war plans and other strategies. Unfortunately, their love of the complex and ornate tends to produce strategies that are aesthetically pleasing on paper, but impractical for battle.

### VESTRIAL (MAD PASSION)

Before the Scourge, Vestrial was the prankster Passion, blending good humor with trickery to puncture the overblown egos of the arrogant. Insanity took hold of him during the Scourge, however, making him as arrogant as the former butts of his jokes. Seeing himself as the sole inheritor of all the world's Passion-worshippers, he creates elaborate plans for world conquest that his Questors enthusiastically carry out. He uses his vast intelligence to spin webs of intrigue that no one save himself can understand. Some believe that Vestrial has woven so many plots and deceits that even he has lost track of the ends he originally desired.

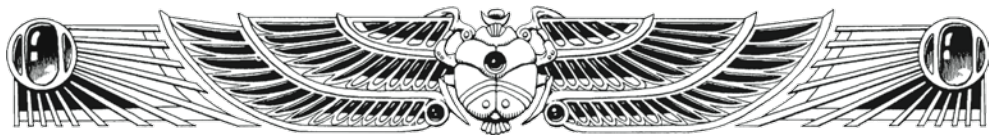
**Ideals:** Manipulation, Deceit

**Typical Appearance:** Vestrial usually manifests as a humanoid form, wearing a dark hood and cloak.

**Common Elements:** Assassin's dagger, ambush, blood

**Powers:** Vestrial can confuse listeners, beguile people with lies, discover a person's true desire, and travel instantaneously within a mile of any place where someone has just uttered a lie.

**Questors:** Vestrial's Questors scurry about the world dressed in the black cloaks of their Passion, carrying out the Mad Passion's schemes. They often have no idea what they are doing or why. Different groups of Questors unknowingly work at cross-purposes, and Vestrial reveals his true intentions only after both groups efforts have gone to waste. Despite this seeming disorganization, Questors of Vestrial should not be taken lightly. For every ten mindless rabble, one intelligent Questor can be found guiding his fellows through brilliant plans. Ten years ago, one such Questor almost assassinated the heir to the throne of Throal. In fact, the precision, subtlety, and effectiveness of such plots have led some to suggest that the buffoonery and incompetence of the most visible Questors actually hides countless unrecognized and brilliant Questors of Vestrial within society at large. Such Questors might masquerade for years as leaders, judges, kings, and traders, waiting for the right moment to strike and take control of Barsaive.



# CHAPTER 10: BARSAIVE

*The trolls raid the dwarfs,  
The dwarfs dislike the elves.  
The elves have no patience with humans,  
And the humans war with each other.  
But everyone hates the Therans.  
—Old Barsaivian proverb*

*The following information is excerpted from the Throalic Encyclopedia, 1505 TH, compiled by the Library of Throal between 1415–1505 TH.*

Barsaive is our land as well as the land of our ancestors. Wondrous discoveries and perilous dangers abound in its vast expanses, which stretch from the Death's Sea to the Blood Wood, from the

Aras Sea to The Wastes. Countless legends speak of Barsaive, yet much of our province remains unexplored and unexplained. Our ancestors call to us across a gulf of centuries, from the time before the Scourge. They tell us that the time has come for the heroes of Barsaive to rediscover the land, for us to rediscover ourselves. Our time is a time of legends, a time of courage, a time of heroes.

## OVERVIEW

The province of Barsaive covers a huge expanse of land. Traveling from its southern boundary to its northern boundary would take a man 40 days on foot, 25 on horseback. Traveling from Barsaive's eastern edge to its western boundary would take him 60 days on foot, 38 on horseback.

Though the exact borders of the province are not clearly defined, most Barsaivians accept the following landmarks as Barsaive's boundary markers. The northern border ends at the Blood Wood, formerly called Wyrn Wood, where the Elven Queen Alachia presides over the Elven Court. The ocean of lava known as the Death's Sea, where legend says that Death himself lies imprisoned, bounds

Barsaive on the south. A blighted area known as The Wastes marks Barsaive's western border. It includes the Poison Forest, a once-lush woodland blasted and corrupted by Horrors during the Scourge. The Aras Sea bounds Barsaive on the east, a saltwater ocean that connects Barsaive to other lands beyond the kingdom of Throal and the Theran Empire.

Though most of Barsaive has recovered from the Scourge, many small mountain ravines and patches of land in the plains and jungles remain barren. Thriving towns and fertile farmland often surround these blighted spots, making their presence all the more peculiar.

## THE LAND

The Scourge wrought terrible changes in the land of Barsaive, leeching forests and farmland of life and destroying cities, towns, and villages. In the century or so since the Scourge ended, few have dared to fully explore Barsaive's vast, untamed

tracts of land, and so much of the information recorded here comes from sources hundreds of years old. Though much of the world has fortunately recovered from the Scourge and returned to its natural state, none yet know for certain





how much of Barsaive remains altered. These ancient accounts of Barsaive, therefore, may not be completely accurate.

## LANDSCAPE

The landscape of Barsaive contains forests and jungles, plains, and hilly and mountainous regions. All three kinds of terrain can be found all over Barsaive. The plains and the hills and mountains both cover roughly a quarter of Barsaive, and jungles and forests cover the remaining half. The few roads that cross this rugged terrain wind up and down hills and around the province's plateaus and mountains, making travel by even these established routes a difficult prospect. Traveling cross-country, off the main roads, poses a multitude of dangers to befall the unwary.

## Plains

The plains of Barsaive stretch between the mountain ranges and jungles that cover most of the province. Low brush and small hills dot this vast expanse of land. Cities and towns have sprung up on the plains since the Scourge, and the countryside between the cities and mountains contains countless peoples, villages, and citadels.

## Hills and Mountains

The hilly uplands of Barsaive stand well above the plains and forests. Smaller mountains rise from the uplands, to be dwarfed in turn by plateaus ranging from two to four times the mountains' height. More massive mountain ranges, most notably the Throal Mountains and the Twilight Peaks, tower over the plateaus. These mountains penetrate the clouds and command an imposing view of the surrounding countryside.

## Jungles and Forests

According to ancient texts, tall, broad-leaved trees covered Barsaive before the Scourge, blocking sunlight from reaching the ground and keeping the forest floors clear of underbrush. The Scourge devastated Barsaive's woodlands, but natural growth enhanced by magic since the opening of the kaers and citadels has restored many of Barsaive's forests. The land teems with tall trees and thick underbrush, whether nourished



by sunlight or not. Magicians and Questors have endlessly debated the precise cause of this magical growth, but no one has yet found an answer. Today, Barsaive's jungles and forests contain a diverse range of trees. The tallest reach a height of 300 feet, rarely growing close enough together for their crowns to touch. Other trees stand 100 to 200 feet high and grow much closer together. These two tallest groups of trees form a canopy that blocks most of the province's forested regions from the view of airships.

Trees that stand 50 to 80 feet high form the most dense layer of Barsaivian forests, their trunks, branches, and foliage creating an almost solid canopy. The shortest trees, growing no higher than 40 feet from the ground, range from thin stands to impenetrable thickets. In areas with sparser growth a person can spot someone up to 160 feet away; in other locales, the foliage grows thickly enough to render invisible an object only feet



away from an observer. Woody-stemmed vines, many with brilliantly colored flowers that bloom year-round, twine around the trees and cover the jungle floors. Countless mosses also thrive in the forests, growing on trees and dead plants.

The forests and jungles also contain clearings, many the sites of ruined cities dating from before the Scourge. The largest and most renowned of these ruins is Parlainth, the former provincial capital of Barsaive, but legends tell of several other such ruins as well.

## Serpent River

The Serpent River passes through all of Barsaive, winding its way from the far north to the Death's Sea in the south. Four miles wide at most points, the Serpent can only be crossed by magical means or in a well-designed ship. The Serpent's banks contain the most fertile soil in Barsaive, and countless villages and towns dot the long, wide river valley.

The reptilian t'skrang, who live in underwater towns and sail the Serpent in their riverboats, control and conduct most of the trade on the river. Many t'skrang have trade agreements with the dwarven kingdom of Throal and work to promote unity among the people along the Serpent. Other t'skrang captains turn pirate, using their ships for raiding.

## Death's Sea

The Death's Sea, an ocean of molten stone, forms Barsaive's southern border. Sand dunes line the shore, and the sea's intense heat prevents anyone except elementals, Horrors, and the magically protected from traveling over it. According to legend, Death itself resides in the sea, where the Passions imprisoned it ages ago. These same stories warn that Death's terrible thirst will one day be quenched when enough blood has been spilled on the earth, turning the ocean of fire to water and freeing Death to roam the land.

## CLIMATE

The Scourge caused Barsaive's temperatures and rainfall to shift drastically and frequently, leaving the landscape devoid of living vegetation. Once the Scourge ended, the land's flora began regenerating

at a phenomenal rate, and the climate stabilized to its current temperate state. The average annual temperature in the province remains moderate, rising to somewhat uncomfortable levels during the warm season and dropping only slightly during the cool season. The higher mountain regions experience cooler temperatures than the rest of the land, though the lower hill areas experience temperatures much like those in the plains and forests.

This stable climate has caused concern and speculation among Barsaive's scholars. The lack of a true "winter" season remains a mystery, and many believe it is the last vestige of the Scourge. However, the present climate has its benefits, as it enables farmers to grow crops year-round. The first six months of the year comprise Barsaive's rainy season. Most of the province receives moderate rainfall of 40 to 60 inches per year, though southern Barsaive receives heavy rains. Most regions experience some precipitation throughout the year, except for areas along the Death's Sea that suffer from constant drought.

## POPULATION

The so-called Namegiver races are scattered across Barsaive, with some members of each race gathered in enclaves and others living in areas of mixed racial populations. The Racial Composition of Barsaive Table lists the approximate distribution of the races throughout Barsaive, based on estimates garnered through years of traveling. As yet, no complete census of Barsaive exists.

## Population Distribution

In terms of population distribution, the province of Barsaive comprises three broad areas. The first,

RACIAL COMPOSITION OF BARSATIVE TABLE	
Race	Percent of Population
Dwarf	32
Ork	19
Human	16
Troll	13
Elf	10
T'skrang	8
Obsidiman	1
Windling	1



## CHAPTER 10: BARSATIVE



the kingdom of Throal in the Throal Mountains, includes that kingdom's recently constructed cities and contains roughly 33 percent of Barsaive's population. On the slopes of the Throal Mountains, outside the gates of Throal, nomadic tribes eke out a living hunting game. Legends contend that some of these primitive peoples worship Mad Passions and Horrors.

The lowlands, which include most of the province's jungles and plains as well as the Serpent River valley, provide a home to about half the population. The highlands include all of Barsaive's mountains and plateaus, except for the Throal Mountains that make up part of the kingdom of Throal. The mountain regions shelter approximately 17 percent of Barsaive's people, including the troll crystal raiders of the Twilight Peaks who pilot magically crafted airships through Barsaive's skies in search of villages to raid and Theran airships to plunder.

Of the people living in the lowlands, about a quarter live in the cities of Haven, Kratas, Iopos, Jeris, and Travar. Outside the cities, the great lowland jungles and plains of Barsaive contain only one fourth of the province's population. Ork scorcherers, nomadic riders who travel the land on massive beasts, roam across the plains in primitive

hunting bands and in organized, mercenary ork cavalries who sell their talents and strength to the highest bidder. Although the Scourge ended nearly one hundred years ago and people may freely travel the land, most prefer to gather in large population centers. As a result, the population distribution of Barsaive remains fairly static.

### GOVERNMENT

Formerly a province of the Theran Empire, Barsaive comprises several self-governing cities and towns, many of which have increasingly come under the influence of the dwarf kingdom of Throal. Perceived as benevolent because the *Council Compact* by which they govern renounces slavery and espouses individual rights, the growing dwarven influence does not trouble most Barsaivians, though some question the dwarven kingdom's motive for gathering power in the province. Despite having lost in their first attempt to take over since the Scourge ended, the Therans insist that Barsaive still belongs to their empire. Throal provides Barsaive's strongest counterweight to renewed domination by the hated Therans.

Though the individual practices of governments in Barsaive's cities, towns and villages may vary, most follow the guidelines of the Throalic *Council*



*Compact.* Written in 1270 TH at the height of the Scourge, the *Compact* set out guidelines for a just and orderly post-Scourge society in which all races could conduct fair and peaceful trade. The widespread use of Throalic currency in Barsaive also illustrates the powerful influence of the kingdom, whose traders spearheaded the recovery of Barsaive when they reopened trade routes following the Scourge. Only a few Barsaivian municipalities continue to use Theran currency.

## AREAS OF INTEREST

Most adventurers will journey through the following cities, towns, and regions of Barsaive during their travels.

### KINGDOM OF THROAL

The dwarf kingdom of Throal lies to the northeast in the massive Throal Mountains, Barsaive's largest mountain range. King Varulus III, the current king of Throal, rules over the five completed underground cities and two still under construction that comprise the kingdom. The subterranean kaers protected Throal's inhabitants and countless refugees during the Scourge, and each of these cities can hold a population of up to 25,000 at need. A full third of Barsaive's population has accepted the dwarf kingdom's open invitation to live in Throal and resides in the cities of Bethabal, Wishon, Tirtarga, Oshane and Yistane. The cities of Hustane and Valvria remain under construction. All of these multi-leveled cities boast large bazaars, as well as some of the finest inns and taverns in Barsaive.

Royal families who have sworn fealty to King Varulus III rule these multiracial settlements, which spearhead the dwarf-led Barsaivian resistance to Theran attempts at occupation. Though most Barsaivians remain as strongly allied to Throal as they did during the Theran War, in which all of Barsaive's peoples united to repel a Theran attack on the dwarven kingdom, some have become suspicious of Throal's growing power. The mountain kingdom may one day itself become the site of battles for control of Barsaive.



## BARTERTOWN

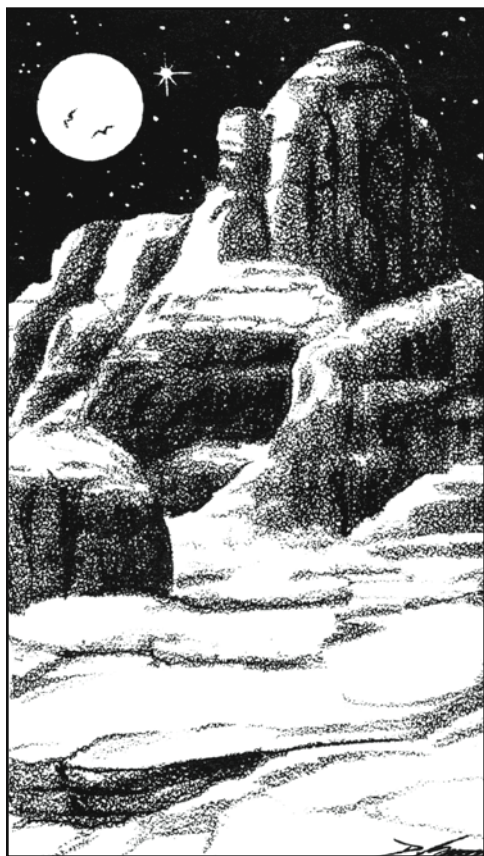
Originally a bazaar, Bartertown has become a sprawling city sitting outside the gates of Throal. Bartertown was founded by merchants who wished to take advantage of Throalic trade policies without becoming a part of the dwarf kingdom. Lacking formal city government to oversee planning, these traders built shops and homes wherever they saw fit, giving the city a haphazard layout. Barsaivians claim that travelers can buy any good or service in Bartertown, if they look long and haggle hard enough.

## PARLAINTH/HAVEN

The ancient ruins of Parlainth, the Theran Empire's provincial capital before the Scourge, grace Barsaive's far northeast corner. Knowledge of the city's existence mysteriously disappeared

from the minds of Barsaive's population during the Scourge, and the city has only recently been rediscovered. Parlainth goes by the name of the Forgotten City, a reference to its many splendors lost to time and the Scourge. The Forgotten City has become a Mecca for adventurers, who seek the mysteries and priceless treasures hidden within its ruins. Even tales of the Horrors and other dreadful creatures that dwell in the city's catacombs have done little to dissuade these treasure seekers.

The small town of Haven lies at the southern edge of Parlainth. A trading village, Haven has become a staging area for explorers seeking Parlainth's treasures, and boasts a variety of goods that almost rivals the selection available in Bartertown. Haven's shops also occasionally offer goods from the nearby Blood Wood, though such items are usually difficult to obtain.



## THE WASTES

Along Barsaive's western border lie The Wastes, an area inhabited by little more than monsters, Horrors, small plants and animals. Scholars believe the Horrors breached a higher percentage of kaers and citadels here than in any other region of Barsaive during the Scourge, and the area's former population never recovered. Many believe The Wastes contain more undiscovered kaers and citadels than any other region of Barsaive because of this lack of population. This also would seem to explain the numerous bands of adventurers who enter The Wastes in search of ancient treasures and magical artifacts, despite the fact that few ever emerge. Low clouds of gray dust continually swirl over The Wastes and extend over the Poison Forest and the city of Jerris.

## THE BADLANDS

East of the molten Death's Sea lies the blighted area known as The Badlands. Before the Scourge, this area contained some of Barsaive's richest farmlands. The Scourge turned the fertile fields into rocky hills and blasted heaths. The rugged terrain precludes all means of transportation save walking. Virtually uninhabited, the area is rumored to be the home of countless Horrors and other terrible creatures. Of the great number of heroes who enter the Badlands, few return from them alive.



## BLOOD WOOD

The massive forest called the Blood Wood lies along Barsaive's northern boundary. Known as the Wyrn Wood before the Scourge, this forest holds the Elven Court ruled by the Elven Queen Alachia. Though the Elven Court was once the center of elven culture, the horrible mutilation to which the elves of the Wood subjected themselves to survive the Horrors caused many elves living outside the Blood Wood to forsake Alachia. They see her and her ilk as abominations, as monstrous as the Horrors themselves, and many scholars share this sentiment. Travelers who have visited the Blood Wood, however, often contend that the elves of the Wood remain a beautiful people, despite the horrible things they did to their bodies in order to survive the Scourge. The inhabitants of the Blood Wood remain capable of intricate magic; the Elven Queen's castle, built on a foundation of six Blood Trees, is still universally recognized as a wonder to behold.

## Iopos

Located in the northwest corner of Barsaive, the city of Iopos is ruled by a powerful family of magicians called the Denairastas, who have held power since before the Scourge. Though their success at bringing the city through the Scourge earned the Denairastas the loyalty of most of Iopos' population, the magicians continue to rule with an iron hand, arresting and often killing dissidents. The Denairastas subject outsiders to the same drastic measures as city residents, and so visitors to Iopos are advised to keep any comments about the city's rulers to themselves. In the years since the opening of the kaers that followed the Scourge, the Denairastas have repeatedly vowed to defeat both Thera and Throal and claim control of Barsaive. Though the magicians currently lack the power to accomplish such a feat, they continue to gather magical and mundane forces.

## JERRIS

The wealthy trading city of Jerris lies along Barsaive's western edge, between the Liaj Jungle on the city's east and the Poison Forest on the city's west. A perpetual cloud of black-gray smoke



hangs over Jerris, floating in from The Wastes that lie just west of the Poison Forest. Many Horrors reportedly roam The Wastes, and rumors claim that the city suffers under a curse. A fiercely competitive group of trading houses act as the de facto rulers of Jerris. Only issues vital to the city's livelihood motivate these traders to suspend their otherwise continuous infighting and treachery.

## KRATAS

Located almost exactly in the geographical center of Barsaive, Kratas is known as the Thieves' City. Almost all mercenary and illegal activities in Barsaive take place in Kratas, and some of Barsaive's most notable thieves and informants make their homes there. Garlthik One-Eye, the legendary ork Thief, controls the city through his gang, the Force of the Eye. A veritable crossroads





of information and stolen goods, adventurers can find almost any type of equipment or service in Kratas, though at a higher price than in any other Barsaivian city.

## TRAVAR

Of all of Barsaive's ancient cities, Travar alone has maintained its pre-Scourge splendor and grace. Its white marble towers and spires overlook the banks of a tributary of the Serpent River in

southeast Barsaive. Travar's location provides excellent trade access to both the t'skrang and the kingdom of Throal, and ensures the city's prosperity. Three magistrates rule Travar, each serving a three-year term. If a magistrate wishes to serve another term, he must win his position in the Founding, a tournament in which champions representing the magistrate and his would-be successors compete. The patron whose champion wins the Founding becomes a magistrate.

## THE THERAN EMPIRE

In the Selestrean Sea southwest of Barsaive lies the isle of Thera, seat of the Theran Empire that held sway over Barsaive in the years before the Scourge. Though the Scourge cost the Therans control of Barsaive, they regained a small area of the province in the years that followed (see **Conflict of Destinies**, p. 31).

The Theran-controlled lands in Barsaive include the city of Vivane, Sky Point, and their surrounding vicinities. Theran territory extends to the southern edge of the Delaris Mountains, the western shores of the Death's Sea, and into the far southwestern portion of the Twilight Peaks. Adventurers often encounter Theran patrols and airships in these regions. The Therans rarely venture beyond the Twilight Peaks, preferring to consolidate their hold on the territories they already control.

For the moment, the Therans seem content to settle for the small portion of southwest Barsaive currently under their control, but rumors place Theran spies in virtually every major Barsaivian city, as well as several of the larger towns and villages. Though the Therans pose little or no immediate threat to Barsaive, few people doubt the Therans' intention to one day reclaim Barsaive as part of their empire.

## SKY POINT

One of the few remaining Theran outposts in Barsaive, Sky Point lies southwest of the city of Vivane. The Eighth Theran Legion quarters at Sky Point, giving the outpost the strongest

Theran presence of any Barsaivian settlement. The outpost consists of a large platform supported by several huge pillars, and many small villages beneath the massive platform supply the Therans with necessities and slave labor. Sky Point also serves as the home port of the Theran Armada, comprising more than 25 airships that include three kilas and two dozen vedettes. Half the vedettes are outfitted for elemental mining and unfit for combat; the remaining craft boast fire-cannons and can carry up to 100 troops. General Crotias commands the Legion's 5,000 soldiers and cavalry. The area around the perimeter of Sky Point is heavily guarded against intruders.

## VIVANE

Once one of Barsaive's most beautiful cities, Vivane now stands as a testament to Theran power. The Barsaivian city nearest to the seat of the Theran Empire, Vivane fell first to the Therans when they returned to reconquer Barsaive almost 60 years ago. With many of its buildings still in ruins, this southwestern city remains a shadow of its former self. Though the Barsaivian magistrate Quarique Oathstone nominally rules the city, all of Barsaive recognizes his true status as a puppet ruler controlled by the Theran Overgovernor Kypros. Kypros often docks his massive airship, *Ascendancy*, at Vivane to remind the city's residents of Theran power.

A support base for the Theran outpost at Sky Point, Vivane is also the only Barsaivian city with a sizable slave population.



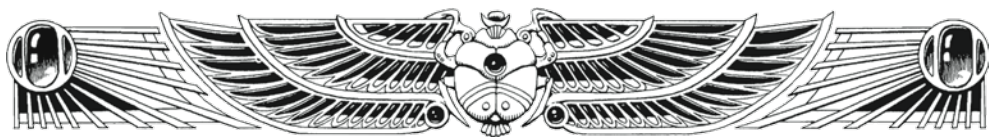




# BARSAIVE PROVINCE MAP







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*Indexes can be quite handy...*

☉—Merrox, Master of the Hall of Records

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