
IN THE
RUINS

Designer's Note -

In The Ruins is an answer to certain ongoing developments in the Role Playing Game hobby. There are a few core ideas that will determine whether or not you'll enjoy playing In The Ruins so it's best to put those cards on the table right away.

Complexity – The tendency in more contemporary RPGs is to have a streamlined single mechanic that is unitary across all different checks & tests. In those systems you might roll d% to shoot a gun or interrogate a prisoner. In The Ruins follows a different ethos – Different Mechanics For Different Tasks – you'll roll different dice to accomplish different types of tasks in one of several sub-games. Why complexity? Because every character rolling the same dice to accomplish different tasks just makes the game seem boring – like a series of math problems, rather than an interactive, collaborative story.

Quick Start – There are many excellent games that purport to allow you to begin play immediately. Some actually allow you to create a character in minutes so you can leap right into the action. In The Ruins is not like that. You're going to spend significant time building your character starting with their ancestry and moving right up to their emotional & ethical boundaries. You're going to have an extremely elaborate character creation experience. Deep Character Creation Rules – are intended to slow down the process of character creation – to get you to really consider your character as a (fictional) person. Why? Because a story with complex characters who follow complex motivations is more interesting than one with simplistic avatars that lack appreciable qualities beyond numerical statistics.

Balanced Traits – A good deal of thought goes into game designs based around giving each character & every player equivalent abilities that will let them make meaningful contributions to combats. In The Ruins has been created without a thought for this type of balance. Characters are exactly as effective or ineffective as you, as a player, are willing to make them. Combat is not a primary focus & though it comes up quite often, it doesn't need to reward all players equally. Unbalanced Characters Are Good – not because there's a lack of balance in real life – this is a game of fantasy & imagination, it's meant to distance us from the real – no unbalanced characters are good because not all tasks are the same & a character's role in the group & the setting is not primarily based upon their skill at combat.

Prescriptive Alignments – Some alignment systems are better than others and some are simply unavoidably iconic, if vulnerable to scrutiny. In The Ruins uses scales of attitude & behavior to track your character's moral progress. Characters Should Change Alignments – because alignments describe your character's behavior – their identity isn't an alignment, not a pair of axes that determine what they will do – the character does what they are going to do and the alignment describes the consequence.

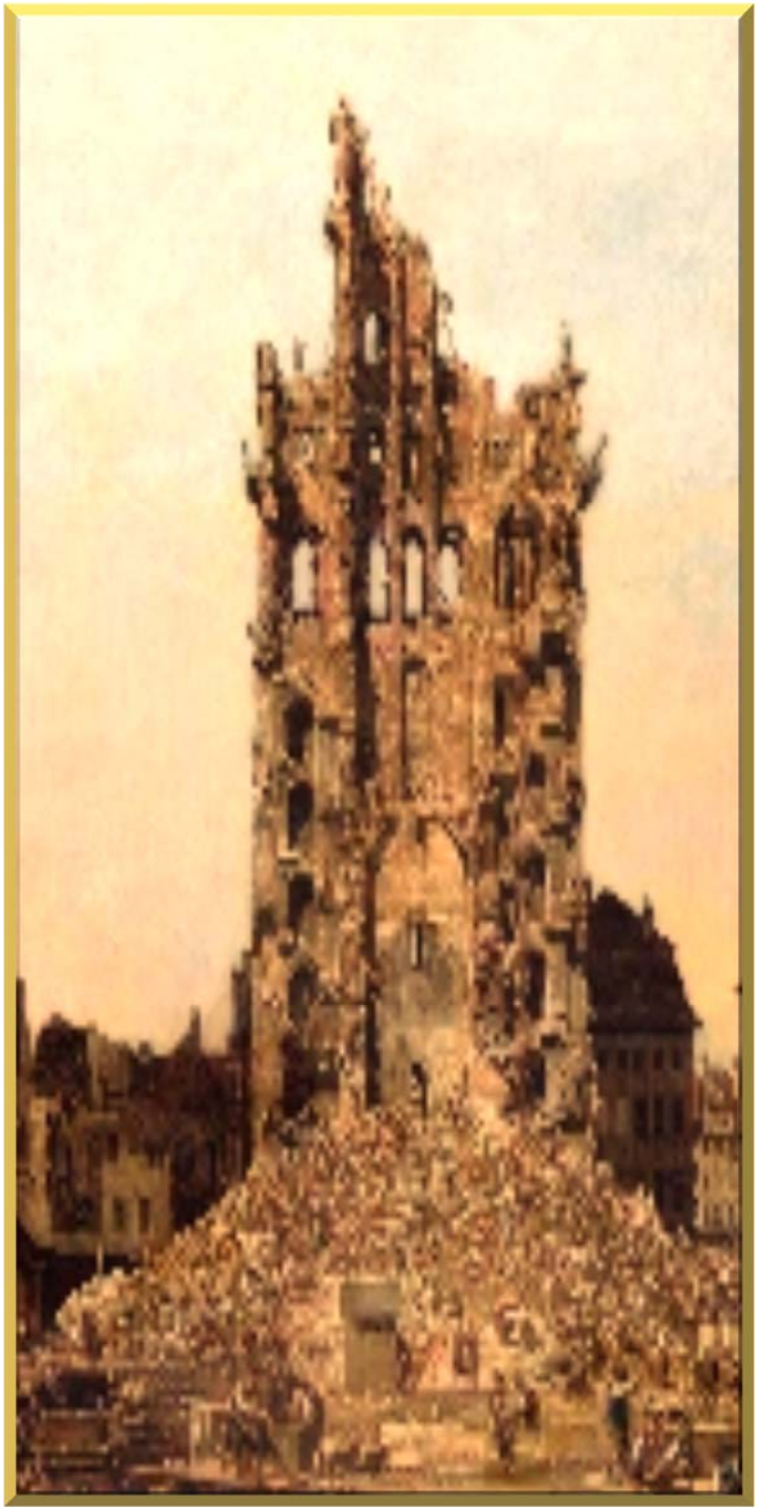
IN THE RUINS

Welcome to the North. In The Ruins is a campaign setting for the Game of the North which can be, it is hoped, adapted to your requirements or easily played as a standalone campaign requiring only minimal knowledge of the Game of the North's mechanics.

For those who've been to the North previously – In The Ruins provides an expansion and a departure. This setting includes new character races and the innovation of character classes. In other Game of the North campaigns the assumption is always that the PCs play Adventurers – those who are seeking fame, fortune & treasure in an unexplored continent. In The Ruins follows the progress of not just adventurers – but a whole array of character types each with their own agendas & intentions.

In The Ruins is also a much more populated setting than what many who've explored the North before will be accustomed to. The Decapolis – the Ten Cities that the campaign focuses upon & which give the region its name are home to many disparate colonies & outposts. Each of these have, within their borders, their own interior conflicts & developments – which in turn intersect with those of the other ten Cities.

These Cities are built into the ruins of a former civilization – one of unbelievable might and sophistication. Here in the Decapolis – the ruins are the primary



geography, the remnants of an unknown ancient culture which rival the mountains and forests for their vast presence on all horizons.

These ruins make the region of the Decapolis both mysterious and rich – for the materials of these ancients are still present and still being uncovered. What lies beneath the colonies & intrigues of the Ten Cities are the fabled & fabulous remnants of a world gone by.

Into this setting And each of these brings with them their own come new explorers, new warriors & priests – adventurers & more. ideas, their own ethics and their own moral sense. As you explore the Ruins you'll be exploring the depths of your character's own soul. In The Ruins puts a special emphasis upon Character Alignment – it is the basis of your character's existence in this campaign and the results of their moral lapses & ethical stands will resonate through the Ten Cities and into the heavens & hells beyond.

New Alignments

In the past you may have tarried with the concepts of Law & Chaos – Good & Evil. These systems largely focus upon aspiration & belief. One hopes to be good or tries to be evil – one hopes that there is order in the universe or fears that there is not.

These alignments are certainly viable in this setting & you are welcome to choose them as normal. What we do here, In The Ruins is to delve deeper – beyond belief & affiliation, we look not at what you think – but what you do. Instead of broad strokes alignments – In The Ruins goes into detail regarding the specific virtues that drive people's actions. Each of these is in turn broken out – described as its own series thoughts & actions. For the ease of reference however – the 10 virtues at play in this campaign are listed here.

Audacity which is opposition to **Nobility**

Ego which is in opposition to **Fairness**

Kindness which opposes **Belligerence**

Civility which opposes **Impulse**

Defiance which is in opposition to **Piety**

Each of these is described in some detail – but becoming acquainted with each may serve you in the future. Note that among these virtues there is opposition – but no good & no evil, no Chaos & no Order – a Pious, Civil & Fair priest may still serve a dark god of murder. A Bold hero may be Audacious, Egotistical and Belligerent and still be good & true.

Chapter 1 - Building Your Character In The Ruins

This setting is like most other Game of the North settings in that it takes place in the North – a lost continent full of fabled & ruined empires. It's also quite different than other campaigns in that it takes place in a heavily populated & contested, urban environment – **The Slatewind Valley**. The Valley is the dominion of 10 competing cities & towns that have only just recently concluded a devastating war.

Your characters are arriving on the scene as these 200 year old cities, all bursting from growth & newfound wealth, edge ever nearer to another war that will re-establish the balance of power.

The cities themselves are all quite different, and can speak for themselves as your character enters & explores the Slatewind Valley.

But to explore - you will need a character. In The Ruins utilizes a more complex & thoroughgoing character design concept. While in other Game of the North settings it is adequate to call yourself a Neutral Elf Adventurer – such a designation is too limited for the nuance & complexity found In The Ruins.

You're going to design a character with a lot of personal detail & sophisticated background information. You'll do so in the following steps:

1 – Race - You'll design your character's race by assigning their 4 grandparents.

2 – Background – You'll put together a family & culture for your character, a history including a whole country that they can call home.

3 – Alignment – In The Ruins there is a highly complex system of ethics at play – religion In The Ruins is a major concern both metaphysically & politically. Your character's alignment will inform a lot of their attitudes about the contending forces In The Ruins.

4 – Class – Your top 3 alignments will indicate which class is most suitable for your character. Your class will determine your access to skills & abilities.

5 – Finalized – You'll put all your statistics & attributes together to create a complete person – your avatar In The Ruins who will see & do incredible things.

Welcome.

Races in the Ruins

This setting takes a different tack on race than other Game of the North settings. Instead of choosing your race & having that be the defining aspect of your character as an adventurer – you will design your character's racial & ethnic background by building the details of their background to create a unique origin. The six races from the Game of the North are all present In The Ruins – but this setting is more human-centric than others. There are 5 human phenotypes present in the slatewind valley and they have their own distinct cultures & language traditions. Orcs, Halflings, Elves, Goblins & Dwarves In The Ruins all adhere to the descriptions found in the Game of the North's main book – or you can use any of the supplemental guides to those races to embellish to your liking. The human ethnicities in this setting take the foreground & each is provided with its own description.

Brizai – The People of Miracles & Hopes

Large people, the most substantial among the human phenotypes in the slatewind, and imposing as well, the Brizai are less numerous than other ethnic groups in the valley but they are distinct & easily recognized, not just for their superficial appearance.

Brizai physiology is notable for producing large people. Most brizai are around six feet in height and not slender by any means, they are pronounced in width & mass, not just height. Barrel like torsos & columnar legs, it's not uncommon for brizai to go shirtless, or partly uncovered to show off their large, muscular bodies. This is a peculiar phenomenon that flies in the face of the standards of some of the other cultures & so brizai people have come to have a whole notoriety based upon indecency & rampant sexuality. Very few brizai feel themselves to be as permissive or oversexed as others see them & many take offense at the characterization.

Brizai culture is highly ordered around rules of propriety but that propriety is strangely internal & profoundly hierarchical. More than any other people the brizai stratify their social tiers – in the form of rigid castes. There are shades of layer & systemic hierarchies within the castes – but the principle distinction is between **High & Low Brizai**. The distinction is as lopsided as one might expect from such telling names. High brizai caste members are considered fully human, they are expected to be the lord over low caste brizai, and to be served completely by them, who are not usually considered human themselves. At least by the high brizai. Low brizai consider themselves human, but the high brizai as godlike masters – beings so idealized & perfect that they must be served. Service often connotes broad extremes with low caste brizai considered little more than appliances. Very powerful & significant brizai lords may have servants o the low caste who are there merely to be walked upon – so that the high caste master will not have to touch the earth with his feet.

Naturally the experience of the brizai in the slatewind is an evolving beast. The old caste structure brought up from the south is changing. In some places it's being overthrown, in others it's being more intensely applied. There isn't a consensus & while this characteristic of the brizai is objectionable to many other people, it is also sometimes praised. City by city the norms change & the brizai do as well. There have been a few, very controversial & notable cross-caste marriages in the valley & some cities, like **Elan** & **Bitter** have overthrown this system & banned the practice of heritable caste. Other cities have expanded the practice & linked it to other characteristics – such as at **Zenith** where money & influence determine caste.

Brizai traditions outside of their most notable feature consist of maritime & martial & commercial innovations. Brizai warfare is linked inextricably to the cannon & the pistol, both of which are their perennial symbols. Sailing by compass is a brizai innovation as well & there are perhaps a half dozen common navigational aids that have been popularized by the brizai. Brizai concepts of usury, insurance & numerous related financial instruments & vehicles are also heavily in use throughout the valley & undergoing adoption by many throughout the ten cities.

Brizai castes have no physical distinctions – that is, a low caste brizai and a high caste brizai could be identical, the differences are in their names & only those fluent in the brizai language can really understand the differences based upon names. A low name is a low name and a high name is a high name – brizai makes the distinction but it's one lost in translation. That said, all nouns in that language are gendered as high or low rather than male or female or neuter. This carries over to professions & crafts – so a boat is a high occupation but weaving is a low occupation.

Besides being tall & large brizai have distinctive appearances. Gold & copper & silver colored hair predominate. Light colored eyes are the norm & skin tone is ruddy & fair with many brizai showing distinct chirality – that is they have a slight different coloration on their right & left sides.

Khin – The People of Sophisticated Cruelty

Khin are, as a people – urban, clannish, pious, modest, martial & plain. Indeed, these are the enshrined virtues of Khin culture & they are said to be the essential core of Khin identity. In **The One Prayer** recitation of the sacramental modes reifies these cultural preferences: *In the city we seek our own as our own seek our gods. Let the gods who are God not find us without our veils or masks, and let us defend the masks of our fathers against those whose gods are false. All that need be said is this, that there is one God who has three faces and his people he calls by name but must not see, he leads them to their cities & arms them against the dissolute masses.*

The Khin are prominent in the Slatewind's northern edge – they comprise the governing elite the city of **Shield** which is the center of their fanatical cult of the Triune Faced God. In **Able** & **Saedu** the Khin presence is significant & severe – as the orthodox khinish culture casts a long shadow in those cities though they are not governed by a quorum of the Khin.

Khin orthodoxy is based on devotion to the **Triune Faced God**, so much so that Khin is sometimes used as the appellation for the followers of those gods – though they may have another ethnicity or race entirely. The Triune Faced God is a rather cruel deity who wears three faces – and has three names **Ushro** – the divine, **Hrururush –** the cruel & **Shiddush –** the commanding**.** These gods are worshipped separately in the orthodox **Tricadic** form of Khinish worship – but there is a rising tide of **Singlist** worshippers who follow only one of the three & regard the others as heretical, or as insignificant. Most people considered Khin by birth & blood fall into the latter class & most who are called Khin by virtue of their worship follow a tricadic church.

In the faith of the Khin the Triune god created all people with its first, divine face as Ushro. When people proved to be intractably wicked the god became furious & cruel, becoming Hrururush – who loves only suffering. The people carried out his horrific will & in exchange the face of Shiddush came into being, the face of a perfect courtier who balances power & wrath. It was by pacifying this face & following its vigorous manners that the people finally were allowed to flourish.

Belying the evangelical nature of the Tricadic faith, The One Prayer serves as a kind of mantra indicating right action – it is more or less strictly followed in different communities – with some Khin never going in public without veils & masks and others only giving the slightest service to the sacrament – covering their faces with an open hand as a mode of greeting. The patterns are complex & the rituals are often idiosyncratically applied from one clan to another.

The clans of the Khin are elaborate webs of social, economic & familial relationships that function like small enclaves within the broader societies that they inhabit. Khin clans are led by various organizing principles, often by a patriarch of some kind – but sometimes by a council or even a king. The clans have sophisticated relationships with one another that supersede all other alliances. According to Khinish culture one is expected to follow the will of ones clan over that of their parents or their children. There are dozens of Khin clans in the slatewind. The five ruling kings of Shield lead the mightiest of these but between these four less than a tenth of all the Khin descended people are accounted for.

Khinish clans have an unlimited capacity for adopting outsiders, just as the singlist variant of the Triune Faced God's faith does – which means many people considered Khin & embedded within the layered depths of one of their clans may not be ethnically Khin at all, may not even be human – but will be considered, even by the members of other clans, to be khinish "in all the ways that matter."

As a religion & a culture first there's not much to be said of khinish physiological ethnic cues. In the Slatewind ethnically khinish people are stereotypically thought of as dark haired, dark eyed, dark skinned & tall.

Plioshr – The People of Hills & Hounds

The Plioshr are traditionalist nomads who ride huge dogs & herd equivalently huge rams. They have colonized the central plains & hills where their system of Kinbands – groups linked by oaths & blood – govern the lands in between places. The Plioshr don't specifically lay claim to any lands or landmarks as a rule, rather they claim territories & swathes of the region & trade between their kinbands is for rights to one or another of these bands of territory. Travel through Plioshr controlled territories is oftentimes the best bargain that a city-born traveler can get, given that the Plioshr kinbands keep the territories safe & don't offer much trouble to those who traverse their territories peacefully. Contending with the Plioshr or attempting to herd animals within their territory without permission usually does draw retribution – but the Plioshr, for their nomadic ways & lack of property – are part of the larger society & they regard the folk of the Slatewind's cities as cousins & neighbors. Individual kinbands among the Plioshr have different relationships with different governments – in fact the different kinbands all tend to have different governing principles themselves. Some, most in fact, are matriarchal – with a council of widows guiding the kinband's path, usually with an eye toward tradition & continuity but with a separate council of young men who are meant to invent game-like quest tasks for the newer generations of the kinband – so that they have a unifying bonding experience generationally. These bond-journeys are called the **Spring Rides** – as they take place every fifth spring.

Plioshr culture – that is – the cultural elements that unite all the Plioshr are relatively distinct. Plioshr peoples practice a lot of ritual scarification, tattooing & piercing – they lack for many material arts beyond jewelry making & textiles & so most of their arts are decorative- especially decorative of the individual. The requirement for another person to properly apply body-paints & tattoos is further emphasis of another Plioshr trait – which is the refusal of the individual. Plioshr find solitude taboo, to the point where not only do their arts require at least two people, but simple tasks – like dressing are contrived to require another person. Plioshr traditional garments fasten in the back, requiring someone else to help put them on and take them off, as an example. Plioshr usually go around with another member of their kinband & are almost always seen holding hands. One rarely, if ever, will encounter a solitary Plioshr out on the plains. Those who travel into the urban world though, are often on a private quest – a kind of psychological endurance test that the kinbands occasionally call upon their most treasured youth to perform, almost always in pursuit of some significant prize.

The Plioshr gods are sometimes considered as a single pantheon – **The Little Family**. A celestial kinband that serves as a model for the proper course of relations. At the head is **Amrenweets,** the Mother who is served by her children **Silofpishen**, the daughter – who breeds & trains the dogs & **Habradan** , the son who breeds & herds the rams. The mother is guide to the children & the children are guide to the beasts – and every Plioshr is called to be one of these, or more in their lives. The rites & observations are simple – they blow ram horns, wear woolen cloaks, howl at the moons & observe their movements – considering the moons to be the errant subordinates – either children, pups or kids – symbols of the next generation of dog, human & ram.

Plioshr people have distinct features that identify them to others. Usually shorter than other human groups, they are quite long lived & over the course of their lives the greying of hair that other people display occurs, but is also accompanied by the lightening of skin – and both hair & skin lighten in patterns – so that after middle age most Plioshr show some kind of stripe or spot pattern in their hair & bare skin. Young Plioshr are uniformly tan, though with a sallow undertone – a result of the weak light in the overcast valley. Most Plioshr ears have distinctively long lobes that dangle into slight points.

Quet – The Plain & Simple Folk

Simple, civilized folk, the Quet are numerous & virtually anonymous -their way is to blend into the background to do small things & from the many hands bring great work into being. Quet culture is based around the concept of permanence. A person, short-lived & impermanent, is only a part of the larger continuity of existence. Buildings, cities & languages are the permanent, enduring aspects of life and an individual can only hope to participate in & thereby enrich those permanent structures. In some cases, this permanence is associated with a particularly vibrant family or social group, but more often it is associated with the intangible & thus incorruptible. Quet ideologies have a strange tendency to regard the present as insignificant, and often somewhat sordid or even dirty – though never quite evil. The present, the moment, is a necessary humiliation, one that is engaged in with humor but is deigned undeserving of dignity.

The overall philosophy tends to emphasize patience & hard work – so these are the things that are notable in quet culture. It is the basis of the entire polity of **Termus** – the main stronghold of quet culture in the slatewind & it is the foundational force behind the **Tricadic** faith, which is largely a quet innovation.

Quet living is in dense structures with many people. It is understood that the only structure that a person should live in is one that is in its own way permanent – so the houses of quet people tend to be monstrous edifices of stone which are carved with many reliefs & sculptures. These buildings are meant to house people over a long course of time & they are known to dominate the landscape. Indeed architecture is among the great sciences of the quet, as a people, one that other cultures have intermittently attempted to emulate.

The quet diet has a growing following throughout the slatewind as it conforms most closely to what is available readily. Fish & corn & chicken as well as a variety of legumes are all prepared using a good deal of seasoning & cooked, mainly by baking. Quet bakery is also quite famous – their traditions in regard to pastry are adopted over the whole slatewind – using a combination of honey, cornmeal, spices & fruits there are hundreds of specialist pies & cakes that are becoming beloved local institutions. The whole culinary ouvre of the quet is called the **19 Staples** – referring to the 19 essential items that make cooking in this way possible.

The quet language is notable for its complex writing system that incorporates verb tenses & noun declensions that are reserved only for writing and which aren't pronounceable (or at least aren't normally pronounced). There are different written forms for more temporary media – so a quet inscription into stone is written quite differently than a sentence written with a stylus on paper & neither is the same as a statement being spoken aloud – though all could carry the same approximate meaning – the medium does affect the meaning significantly.

In appearance quet people are notably shorter than other human phenotypes. They are also known for their big, inviting smiles, friendly, open faces & a preponderance for attitudes that correspond to these features. A person with quet ancestry is often told out by their hirsute arms & shoulders, which in some cases can resemble sparse fur – though most quet aren't able to grow much if any facial hair. A bearded quet is remarkable. The most notorious physiological aspect of the quet people is their relative longevity – barring calamity, most quet live well into their second century. They age at a reduced rate, but still age – so a quet who is 150 years old has been old for about 60 years.

Saayang – The People of Seasons & Moments

The Saayang are quite populous, they live in the most regions of the realm & they have significant positions of authority in many of them. They vie with the Khin for dominance in **Saedu's** 7 towns, five of which the Saayang founded & they master the shrines & palaces of **Red Banks**. In **Zenith** Saayang run banks & lenders ensure the wealth of the wealthy city.

Saayang are sworn to their gods but devotion to them is very informal. The gods demand houses with great sophistication & ostentation, but they demand no special fealty beyond the construction of a fine home. Saayang churches are consequently rich houses for celebration & events. They are not places of great cult devotion & traditional spiritual devotion takes place, if it occurs at all, in the home. The Saayang regard each of their deities as children of the heavens & they identify them all with celestial phenomena – each of their gods then has their own season & hour. **Maasiip the Kind** who is the Sun is provident. **Seriit the True** who is the White Moon commands truth & sees through lies. **Retuun the Meek** is the Blue Moon who runs away from dangers & seeks the comforts of home. **Tergiit the Trustworthy** who is the Northern Stars that tell of what will come. **Ailise the Cruel** Who is the winter & the Night Sky & the dark of the earth – the being of death & murder. **Gaaliist the Hungry –** Who is the green moon that eats up the sky & the other moons (eclipses) and who promises wealth & plenty.

Saayang culture has many norms & practices that are now considered mainstream in the slatewind – partly owing to their dominance as a cultural group & partly owing to the portability of those customs. Saayang culture is vaguely egalitarian – it lacks any kind of caste structure but social hierarchies do exist. These hierarchies are not strict & people rise & fall within their affinity groups easily. Money is important but considered an aspect of life & not its primary pursuit, so well regarded saayang may be very poor as well. Materialism is expected but it is focused on quality over quantity & gift giving is a very important element of social bonding. Gifts based holidays occur twice each year in the height of winter & summer. Property, in the sense of a house or farm, is always owned by a group, a consortium of some kind, either a family or a company. Companies are a saayang invention, and those that exist often have symbols & charters that have some saayang origin.

Saayang writing is straightforward. It lacks tenses & makes heavy use of pictograms & glyphs so it is simple to use & can be used to write any language – though to be considered well written something must have a good deal of artistic talent devoted to the forming of the characters & glyphs. In its spoken form saayang is tonal & uses many idiomatic abstractions – the simile being a major component of conversation. One might say *It's as regular as the sun rising in the east as it is for you to be in a bad mood* to note someone's ill temper.

Physically the saayang people are known for the effect that the seasons have upon them. Saayang born in the winter are very light complected & have light hair & pale eyes, they are thicker & more heavily built than one would anticipate, based upon their parents or siblings. Meantime, those born in the spring have quicker growing hair & nails, they are known for having luminous features – brighter eyes, usually green or a very vibrant brown & for being shorter than average. Summer-born saayang are darker complected & have lighter hair & almost always dark blue or dark green eyes. Saayang born in the autumn have a tendency toward ashen skin, pale but with an underlying color, freckles & auburn hair & eyes. Some Saayang are affected by their birth being in the day or the night – but these are subtle & peculiar iterations of the main distinctions & it's thought that only other saayang can sense these variations.

For the purposes of understanding your character's bloodlines & backgrounds you will go back two generations to determine your grandparents. Every character chooses 4 options from the list of available races.

Dwarf	**Goblin**	**Orc**
Elf	**Halfling**	***Human**

There are 5 human phenotypes to choose from & you should assign each of your human grandparents one of the 5 ethnicities.

Khin	**Brizai**	**Saayang**
Plioshr	**Quet**	

Each grandparent so assigned grants you a modification to one of the 6 statistics – these modifiers are all applied & summed & if you have more than one grandparent of the same race or ethnicity the modifier is applied for every such grandparent. For instance – if you've got 3 Halfling grandparents you would improve your CHA by 3, your DEX by 6 and reduce your CON by 3. These base statistics are modified further along in your character's creation.

Grandparent Race - Phenotype	Statistics					
	CHA	CON	DEX	INT	STR	WIS
Human - Brizai		**1**	**1**		**1**	
Dwarf		2	-1		1	1
Elf	**2**	**-1**	**1**	**1**		
Goblin	-1		2	2		
Halfling	**1**	**-1**	**2**			
Human - Khin		1	1			1
Orc		**2**		**-1**	**2**	
Human - Plioshr			1	1	1	
Human - Quet	**1**			**1**		**1**
Human - Saayang	1			1	1	

Each grandparent assigned also adds a skill to your character – an ability gained through your upbringing. A second grandparent of that same type adds the second skill & a third grandparent adds the ability of that race. With the example of the character with 3 Halfling grandparents – the character gains the Pick Pockets Skill, the Hide in Shadow Skill & the Hidden Riddler Ability. If the 4th grandparent in that example were a Goblin, the statistical modifiers would also be applied: -1 CHA, +2 DEX, +2 INT & the character would gain the Trickery skill as well.

Grandparent Race - Phenotype	Skills		Ability
	Skill 1	Skill 2	
Human - Brizai	**Performance**	**Poisons**	**High or Low**
Dwarf	Building	Siege	Hold to the Rock
Elf	**Hear Noise**	**Move Quietly**	**Ethereal Drift**
Goblin	Trickery	Poisons	Bloody Tantrum
Halfling	**Pick Pockets**	**Hide in Shadows**	**Hidden Riddler**
Human - Khin	Theurgy	Instrument	Pious Devotion
Orc	**Navigate**	**Forage**	**A Dream Once**
Human - Plioshr	Joke	Navigate	Riding Dog
Human - Quet	**Judge Alignment**	**Composition**	**Simplicity**
Human - Saayang	Gift	Languages	Heirloom Possession

Each of your racial backgrounds adds an additional language roll – record all the languages you have access to through your racial backgrounds. You automatically know one of these which you must choose – you may know the others. When your character's statistics are compiled, after assigning a class & adding your racial modifiers – you will make a d20 INT check for each language recorded. On a successful check you know the language in question. The example of the character with 3 Halfling & 1 Goblin forebears would choose between Plioshr, Brizai, Khin & Hobtalk as their native language & then would roll for the other 3.

Grandparent Race - Phenotype	Language Rolls Language 1	Language 2	Language 3	Language 4
Human - Brizai	**Brizai**	**Khin**	**Plioshr**	**Diasp**
Dwarf	Cavern	Ocean	Snow	
Elf	**Arboran**	**Confirii**	**Dessiduirri**	
Goblin	Hobtalk	Om-Ge	Kalamni	Wozish
Halfling	**Plioshr**	**Brizai**	**Khin**	**Saayang**
Human - Khin	Khin	Plioshr	Diasp	Dess
Orc	**Orkii**	**Wozish**		
Human - Plioshr	Plioshr	Brizai	Saayang	Khin
Human - Quet	**Quet**	**Saayang**	**Brizai**	**Khin**
Human - Saayang	Saayang	Brizai	Khin	Diasp

Once you have configured your character's racial backgrounds you will wish to assign or roll on the different background tables to establish your character's unique backstory & foundations.

Family
Birth Order
Siblings
Push
Pull
Politics
Religions
Lore
Threats
Amusements
Details

Family Background

If you have one grandparent of a particular race – roll a d4 for each. If you have 2 Grandparents from the same race roll a d6 – if you've got 3 roll a d8 and if all 4 are members of the same race roll a d10. Increase the die type by one step for any human grandparents as human backgrounds are more varied.

	Dwarf Family		Elf Family		Goblin Family		Halfling Family		Orc Family
1	Orphan	1	Changeling	1	Changeling	1	Changeling	1	Wild
2	Outcast	2	Outcast	2	Outcast	2	Orphan	2	Foundling
3	Displaced	3	Orphan	3	Refugee	3	Foundling	3	Beast Raised
4	Pioneer	4	Displaced	4	Indigent	4	House Spirits	4	Orphan
5	Nuclear Family	5	Family Sept	5	Warren Born	5	Town Spirits	5	Invader
6	Clan Member	6	Clan Sept	6	Swarm Born	6	Human Shadow	6	Refugee
7	Dwarven Hearth	7	Elven Aristocracy	7	Spontaneous Generation	7	Elf Shadow	7	Nomadic Horde
8	Dwarven Guild	8	Fairie Aristocracy	8	Autonomous Sept	8	Goblin Shadow	8	Wilder Clan
9	Dwarven Nobility	9	Elven Nobility	9	Foundling	9	Dwarf Shadow	9	Warlord
10	Dwarven Royalty	10	Elven Royalty	10	Goblin Invention	10	Secret Kingdom	10	Matriarch
	Brizai Family		**Khin Family**		**Plioshr Family**		**Quet Family**		**Saayang Family**
1	Escaped Slave	1	Orphan	1	Foundling	1	Orphan	1	Orphan
2	Manumitted Slave	2	Bastard	2	Orphan	2	Monastic Upbringing	2	Outcast
3	Slave	3	Outcast	3	Shepherd Family	3	Abbey Family	3	Bastard
4	Client	4	Nuclear Family	4	City Family	4	Foreign	4	Intergenerational Family
5	Subordinate	5	Extended Family	5	Shepherd Clan	5	Refugee	5	Intergenerational House
6	Vassal	6	Large Clan	6	City Clan	6	Urban Family	6	Noble Family
7	Oligarch	7	Religious Authority	7	Noble Family	7	Urban Clan	7	Noble House
8	Slaveowner	8	Priestly Family	8	Foreign Family	8	Aristocratic Family	8	Noble Clan
9	Urban Nobility	9	Warrior Family	9	Shepherd Family	9	Aristocratic Clan	9	Regal Family
10	Rural Nobility	10	Landed Family	10	City Family	10	Monastic Upbringing	10	Regal House
11	Rising Noble	11	Clan Head	11	Doglord Family	11	Abbey Family	11	Regal Clan
12	Royal Family	12	Clan Scion	12	Shepherd Family	12	Commune Family	12	Imperial Scion

For example – if you have 3 Halfling grandparents and 1 goblin grandparent – roll a d8 on the Halfling table & a d4 on the goblin table.

Birth Order & Siblings

Roll on the Birth order table & based on those results roll on the second table for each of your generated siblings.

	Birth Order		Siblings
1	Only Child	1	Identical Twin
2	d6 Older Siblings d6 Younger	2	Fraternal Twin
3	d12 Younger Siblings	3	Brother
4	d12 Older Siblings	4	Sister
5	d4 Older Siblings d6 Younger	5	Brother
6	d4 Older Siblings d4 Younger	6	Sister
7	d8 Older Siblings	7	Changeling
8	d8 Younger Siblings	8	Brother
9	d2 Older Siblings d2 Younger Siblings	9	Sister
10	d4 Older Siblings	10	Brother
11	d4 Younger Siblings	11	Sister
12	One Older & One Younger Sibling	12	Sister

Should your species suggest that the family sizes indicated are too small or too large – e.g.: A goblin from a massive warren, or an Elf from a small enclave – you can modify the die sizes up & down to suit your expectations.

Your Family Members

Once you've generated all of your family members you should roll to see if there are circumstances that you have to account for regarding each of your family members. Each member's disposition & location is rolled separately.

	Family Member Circumstance		Family Member Location
1	Dead	1	In the North as well
2	Well	2	Still in the South
3	Struggling with Money	3	Missing
4	Struggling with Love	4	Lost at Sea
5	Struggling with Health	5	Back Home
6	Lucky with Money	6	Traveling
7	Lucky with Love	7	With their parents
8	Lucky with Health	8	Back Home
9	Murdered	9	Following you North
10	Adventuring Abroad	10	Journeying Elsewhere
11	Imprisoned	11	Back Home
12	Important	12	On Tour

*For characters from the **Slatewind Valley** – this is a good place to stop & get ready to move on to the next step. Those characters who are migrants from the settled south should continue on:*

What Pushed You North

The Journey to a lost continent is not taken lightly, and though you are settling in the Slatewind Valley – a well settled land with more than a century of local history – it remains a place far from other civilized lands and is surrounded on all sides by a vast, empty wilderness. You must have had your reasons for leaving. Here you'll put together those push factors & along the way begin to paint a picture of what your homeland is like. Roll 3d10 and consult the table.

You may be fleeing more than one thing & you may roll on the table as often as you like – but for best results you should roll once for each race or culture that you have gained from your grandparents. In the example of a character with 3 Halfling & 1 Goblin grandparents you would roll twice. Imagining that you rolled for those two backgrounds and found you were fleeing betrothal – you could say that you were fleeing a betrothal to a goblin mate assigned by your goblin grandparent – and also fleeing Ridicule, assuming you roll that – from your Halfling family – all mocking your goblin heritage.

It is possible that these circumstances could be resolved and that you would be free to return home. For every push-factor you can roll a d20 and score the result based upon that die roll. A roll of 1 would indicate that the factor is fleeting, or trivial. In the case of persecution, for instance, the persecution may be light or intermittent, or the persecutors' power may be fleeting. A 20 result would indicate that the factor is very profound. For instance a 20 result on Displaced by Upheaval could indicate that the land of your birth is in precipitous decline, that there are political revolutions & civil wars that will render the land desolate & lost for many generations.

The ratings assigned may fluctuate over time, and if you are interested in this aspect of your character's life you can request news from home or send help back in order to modify events back home.

What Are You Leaving	
3	Fleeing Persecution
4	Displaced by War
5	Displaced by Famine
6	Displaced by Genocide
7	Displaced by Floods
8	Displaced by Draught
9	Displaced by Plague
10	Fleeing Authorities
11	Fleeing Enemies
12	Fleeing your Family
13	Fleeing Creditors
14	Fleeing Betrothal
15	Fleeing Holy Orders
16	Fleeing Assassins
17	Fleeing Ridicule
18	Fleeing Humiliation
19	Fleeing Imprisonment
20	Fleeing Apocalypse
21	Fleeing Poverty
22	Fleeing Enslavement
23	Fleeing Prosecution
24	Displaced by Upheaval
25	Displaced by Calamity
26	Displaced by Monsters
27	Displaced by Collapse
28	Fleeing Pogroms
29	Fleeing Boredom
30	Fleeing Dishonor

What Called You North

What Are You Seeking	
3	Seeking Adventure
4	Seeking Fortune
5	Seeking Glory
6	Seeking Antiquities
7	Seeking Freedom
8	Seeking a Home
9	Seeking Territory
10	Seeking Autonomy
11	Seeking Wealth
12	Seeking a Treasure
13	Hoping for Better
14	Hoping for Wealth
15	Hoping for New Start
16	Hoping for Plenty
17	Hoping for Success
18	In Search of Fame
19	In Search of Ease
20	Seeking a Free Ride
21	In Search of Paradise
22	In Search of Relics
23	Seeking Knowledge
24	Seeking Wisdom
25	Seeking Enlightenment
26	In Search of Secrets
27	In Search of Someone
28	Looking for Revenge
29	Looking for a Destiny
30	Following a Prophecy

It's not enough that you are leaving something behind, you could go anywhere to escape your fate. You must have chosen to go to the fabled North for a reason. The North offers a lot, it offers almost anything that you can imagine – so it's important that you have some vague sketch of a goal at the very least. A well defined or earnestly sought goal may give your character a sense of identity that will help you with what is to come, the assignment of a class through a query based upon your personality. Who you are begins to come into shape when you start to create your character's goals.

You should have at least one goal – one thing that you are seeking but you should have no more than 3. You'll want to note these goals & embellish them with some amount of detail – because accomplishing any of these goals will have a significant reward for your character.

The goals are sometimes vague but this intended to evoke a feeling for you as you design your character rather than a specific target. In such cases you'll need to draw the actual goal into focus. The Hoping for Success goal could mean virtually anything – but it does force you to define what success means to your character. Success may mean accomplishing a great goal – such as finding a fortune, marrying well, winning the favor of a god or simply never going hungry. In all of these cases you've set a bar for success – but your character still remains oriented toward success.

What is the Situation Back Home

Your homeland's peculiarities & details are still important to your development of a character. Whether they fled their home as outcasts or departed from a civilization at the edge of collapse – aspects of these characteristics come along with you – they are the morals that you adopt or decline – but your character, whether they are giants of spirit or impoverished of character – their identity remains at least in some part a reaction to your native culture. Roll d% at least once on the tables below.

Naturally you can ignore all of these tables & make your own background & history. If you've got a sense of your character going forward – without making any rolls – you're very welcome to create a complete background of your own.

What was your home like?							
1	Brutal Hierarchy	26	Subsistence Agriculture	51	Emphasizes Sport	76	Teetotaling
2	Religious Castes	27	Abundant Agriculture	52	Horse Racing	77	Ascetic Preferences
3	Feudal States	28	Agricultural Trade	53	Degenerate Gamblers	78	Relentless Haggling
4	City State	29	Trading Villages	54	Substance Abuse	79	Antagonistic Ideals
5	Vibrant Democracy	30	Fishing Villages	55	Hunting Traditions	80	Dietary Taboos
6	Troubled Republic	31	Subsistence Gatherers	56	Culinary Traditions	81	Strict Vegetarians
7	Religious Hierarchy	32	Trapping & Hunting	57	Cosmopolitanism	82	Strident Barbarism
8	Imperial State	33	Herding	58	Isolationism	83	Race-based Conflicts
9	Warlord Territories	34	Autarchous Communes	59	Higher Learning	84	Reinforced Ignorance
10	Perennial Warfare	35	Slave Economy	60	Religious Doctrines	85	Atheist Ideology
11	Inconsequential Backwater	36	Brutal Serfdom	61	Animal Cruelty	86	Genocidal Episodes
12	Overcrowded City	37	Aggressive Usurers	62	Distinctive Costume	87	Enforced Stoicism
13	Bustling Villages	38	Industrial Villages	63	Celebratory Culture	88	Matriarchs Dominate
14	Social Mobility	39	Industrial Cities	64	Cherish Children	89	Patriarchs Dominate
15	Robust Traditions	40	Large Metropolises	65	Revere Ancestors	90	Empowered Youth
16	Antiquated Ethics	41	Merchants & Shipping	66	Divination Obsessed	91	Excessive Vitriol
17	Monstrous Overlords	42	Welfare State	67	Fascination with Elites	92	Money Obsessed
18	Demonic Influences	43	Wealthy Oligarchs	68	Pet Lovers	93	Sword Fighting
19	Dragon Lords	44	Communal Lodges	69	Ostentatious Displays	94	Tournaments
20	Secret Chiefs	45	Mining & Timber	70	Mysterious Cults	95	Romantic Traditions
21	Revolutionary State	46	Maritime Industries	71	Martial Tradition	96	Cult of Seduction
22	Destroyed Civilization	47	Overdeveloped	72	Highly Cultured	97	Monster Worship
23	Clan Sodalities	48	Sprawling Commerce	73	Clan Totems	98	Grotesque Aesthetics
24	Succession Struggle	49	Market Trading	74	Economic Mobility	99	Art Loving
25	Violent Intrigues	50	Reckless Speculation	75	Tolerates Violence	100	Gang Warfare

What was your home like?							
1	Sport Obsessed	26	Nomadic Attacks	51	Animal Loving	76	Bushmeat
2	War Against Monsters	27	Underground Cities	52	Eats Insects & Worms	77	Widespread Starvation
3	Theater Enthusiasm	28	Rains of Fire	53	Remote & Inhospitable	78	Giant Insect Plagues
4	Comedy is Celebrated	29	Diseased Nobility	54	Vice Lord Rulers	79	Intense Violence
5	Ruled by Dragons	30	Werewolf Infested	55	Post Apocalyptic	80	Puppet Enthusiasts
6	Conquered by Demons	31	Ruined by Telepathy	56	Forest Dwellers	81	Bike Riding
7	Civil Wars	32	Invasion of Dinosaurs	57	Xenophobic	82	Archery Contests
8	Flower Themes	33	Terrible Weather	58	Mathematically Clever	83	Revolutionary Violence
9	Mask Wearing	34	Anarchy Reigns	59	Civil Service Tests	84	Complex Machines
10	Clothing Obsessed	35	Vampire Rulers	60	Enforced Illiteracy	85	Religious Focus
11	Fashionable	36	Angels on Earth	61	Angelic Magistrates	86	Cosmopolitan
12	Stern & Militaristic	37	Falling Stars Nightly	62	Luxurious Clothes	87	Metropolitan
13	Aggressive Geopolitically	38	Persistent Lightning	63	Compulsory Orphans	88	Drowned by Floods
14	Murderous Hierarchy	39	Smoke Filled Cities	64	Military Junta	89	Political Parties
15	Literary Culture	40	Mushroom Forests	65	Ghost Rulers	90	Chariot Racing
16	Narcotic Abuse	41	Blimps	66	Chasms & Earthquakes	91	Gladiatorial Fights
17	Alcohol Centered	42	Panopticon Seers	67	Attacked by Gods	92	Animal Husbandry
18	Huge Meals	43	Mad Kings at War	68	Skilled Astronomers	93	Jungle Dwellers
19	Numerous Holidays	44	Warrior Cults	69	Love Commerce	94	No Society at All
20	No Celebrations	45	Desolate Post-Industrial	70	Zombie Slaves	95	Grimly Apocalyptic
21	Military Parades	46	Clockwork People	71	Engineering Geniuses	96	Blood Magic
22	Musical Culture	47	Hygienic Practices	72	Strict Eugenics	97	Demonic Slaves
23	Maritime Tradition	48	Caste System	73	Rule by Barbarians	98	Jewelry & Gold
24	Consanguine Royals	49	Gift Based Hierarchy	74	Subtle & Elegant	99	Underground Living
25	Merciless Creditors	50	Hunting for Sport Only	75	Gaudy Excess	100	Intensive Mining

Religions of Your Home

Religions needn't be considered if you wish to play an agnostic or atheistic character, although even in those cases it may be useful to consider the religion(s) of your homeland.

Different language-groups & races follow different religious traditions. Based upon your ancestry you may wish to follow one of the pantheons, with the understanding that these pantheons play a large role In The Ruins.

Nordagh peoples follow the caste-based pantheon of masters & slaves commonly called the **Brizai** pantheon.
Oss peoples commonly follow the anthropomorphic gods of the cult of the **Saayang** pantheon
Sundus peoples frequently worship the triune-faced god of the **Khin** godhead.
Vesten peoples are often followers of the nomadic gods of the **Plioshr** pantheon
Hoej peoples follow the religious dictates of the large pantheon of small gods known as the **Quet** pantheon.
Non-Humans follow their own pantheons, save for Orcs who are obligatory atheists. No gods exist to whom Orcs owe worship.

The individual gods of each of these pantheons are described with some detail – and you can choose to follow any one of these or the pantheon they belong to – or the **Tricadic Pantheon** of all the gods. The pantheon presented in this book comprises all of the deities at work In The Ruins – but by no means is a complete image of all the gods worshipped by these peoples – you may absolutely create your own religion or doctrine within this framework or outside it. Feel free to use the Religions section in the Game of the North rulebook if you are inclined to create your own faiths & practices.

The religious practices of the gods In The Ruins are detailed with some specificity in the Pantheon chapter, you may use this section to create a background that suits your character best.

Lore from Back Home

Everyone carries with them a few pieces of background information, trivia & anecdotes. You can choose a matter of intellectual curiosity that you have a firm grasp on – or you can roll on the table here to see what types of esoteric information are regularly considered in your homeland.

Use this table & a number of d10's to give yourself an idea of a type of information your character is knowledgeable about. E.g.: A result of 1,2,3,4,5 & 6 on the dice would mean you know of ancient southern artists who's passions wickedly warred. Which you could summarize as Ancient Southern Art & Art Criticism or Ancient Southern War Traditions.

Randomized Lores						
Roll	**When**	**Where**	**Who**	**Why**	**How**	**What**
1	Ancient	The North	Leadership	Love	Magically	Food
2	Modern	The South	Artists	Hate	Technically	Drink
3	Contemporary	Underground	Entertainers	Passions	Methodically	Travel
4	Recent	The Heavens	A Guild	Attraction	Wickedly	Magic
5	Futuristic	The Moons	Militaries	Boredom	Peacefully	War
6	Antiquated	A Town	A Race	Manipulations	Kindly	Construction
7	Current	The Mind	Vagrants	Unknowable	Cruelly	Art
8	Obsolete	A City	Aristocrats	Mysterious	Heroically	Clothing
9	Fashionable	The Poles	Professionals	Revenge	Artistically	Design
10	Up & Coming	A Building	Adventurers	Salvation	Stylishly	Games

Threats You're Accustomed To

The dangers of your homeland may follow you, or you may have left them behind. You can roll randomly to determine which of these sample dangers was most profound in your homeland. You can also roll an additional d20 for every threat you generate to determine how aggressive or dangerous that that threat was to you or your people on a scale of 1-20.

Homeland Threats	
1	Undead
2	Goblins
3	Orcs
4	Humans
5	Elfs
6	Dwarfs
7	Dragons
8	Elementals
9	Demons
10	Angels
11	Nothing
12	Gods
13	Barbarians
14	Criminals
15	Vampires
16	Werewolves
17	Fairies
18	Weather
19	Animals
20	Gangs

Dangers of the type created here can be mashed together – for instance if you roll both Undead & Dwarfs you could say that there is an influx of dwarven skeletons bubbling up from underground, constantly menacing the people of your homeland. Or you can make them discrete entities – saying that your home is threatened by a dwarf clan that has come to dominance but which is opposed by an army of undead – meanwhile you and your people, trapped in the middle of this mess are endangered on all sides.

Knowing your threats can give you help & some amount of advantage in dealing with related problems in the North. If, for instance, you've grown up menaced by Werewolves – you may be more aware of their presence in your adventures than those with no experience of them.

Amusements of Home

What do you do for fun? It's probably dictated in no small part by where you are from. In a place dominated by sports & competitive teams you may be a player or a spectator or a journalist that writes about the sport. Similar games players & musicians are from cultures where those amusements are at least tolerated, if not encouraged. You can decide what kinds of fun your character likes to have, or you can roll up some type of amusements that your culture & background tend to suggest. You can also roll on this table twice, if you want your character to be a contrarian. You can say that one result is the popular pursuit and the other is the less popular, unfashionable fun that your character prefers.

Homeland Amusements	
1	Theater
2	Puppetry
3	Music
4	Sport
5	Debate
6	Combat
7	Celebration
8	Commerce
9	Fiction
10	Religion
11	Hunting
12	Travel

Finishing Up

You could consider your character almost a friend. Someone you know a lot about at this point. You've created their family, their ethnic background, their home, their politics, religion & their good & bad times. You've got a better sense of your character than anyone. You'll want to record your information so that you can take the next steps. Feel free, of course, to embellish far beyond what you've rolled. Think of everything up to this point as a storytelling component. You'll use this information to examine your character's heart & understand their motivations – because the next step is to determine what class your character belongs to. You'll figure this out by taking a short (or long, if you prefer) personality test. You should answer as your character would answer, since you know them best, you'll be able to do this with ease.

What Kind of Person Are You?

In The Ruins uses a system of 10 virtues to define alignment. You can intuitively select your top three non-opposed alignments right away – or you can take a brief quiz – (or a much longer quiz) to determine what character class is best suited to your character's attitudes & morals.

The 10 Alignments

Audacity ← opposes → Nobility

Belligerence ← opposes → Kindness

Civility ← opposes → Impulse

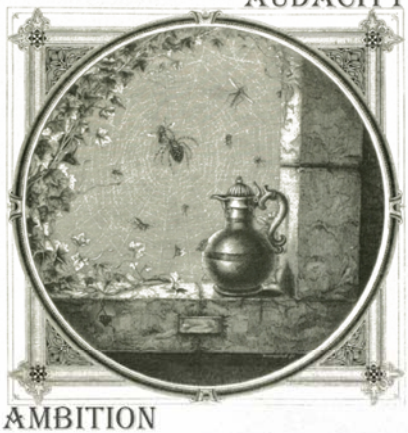
Defiance ← opposes → Piety

Ego ← opposes → Fairness

Each of these is broken down & detailed a bit on the following pages. The simple broad strokes test is below – answer each of the questions either true or false to determine which of the virtues you favor. Record your top 3 scores and consult the chart at the end of this section.

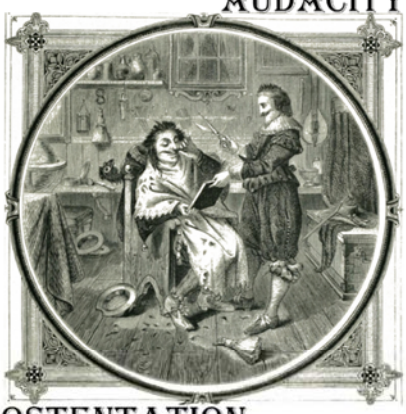
FALSE	Question	TRUE
Nobility	Discretion is the better part of valor	Audacity
Nobility	Saving myself comes before saving others	Audacity
Nobility	My enemies will never receive my mercy	Audacity
Nobility	I owe no help to the helpless	Audacity
Civility	I am not bound by any laws	Defiance
Civility	Never compromise, even in the face of apocalypse	Defiance
Civility	Nature prevails over all the petty works of man	Defiance
Civility	Manners are for the meek & useless	Defiance
Ego	I want no more than my fair share	Fairness
Ego	I would never cheat	Fairness
Ego	It's wrong to use unearned advantages	Fairness
Ego	I pay my debts, on time	Fairness
Belligerence	Violence is a last resort	Kindness
Belligerence	They turn to violence because they are desperate	Kindness
Belligerence	Compassion, well applied, can defeat hate & fear	Kindness
Belligerence	Killing for any reason is wrong	Kindness
Impulse	There is a great power tht works in the universe	Piety
Impulse	Nature must have an author - a creator	Piety
Impulse	All will be judged for their hearts & deeds one day	Piety
Impulse	Ritual & Prayer are essential to happiness	Piety

AUDACITY



AMBITION

AUDACITY



OSTENTATION

AUDACITY



PASSION

AUDACITY IS THE DEFIANCE OF SOCIAL NORMS. IT IS THE PURSUIT OF THE SELF'S FRUITION AT THE COST OF ALL VIRTUE.

AUDACITY IN ONE'S CHARACTER TENDS TO PROMOTE A PERSON IN THE ESTEEM OF CRIMINALS.

OSTENTATION IS THE AGGRESSIVE DISPLAY OF ALL TYPES OF EXCESS.
AMBITION IS THE DRIVE TO PREVAIL OVER OTHERS.
PASSION INDICATES THE RECKLESS PURSUIT OF SELFISH WISHES.

NOBILITY



RESPONSIBILITY

NOBILITY



SINCERITY

NOBILITY IS THE LARGESSE OWED BY THE MIGHTY TO THE WEAK.

IT IS VIRTUOUSLY PERFORMED DUTY.

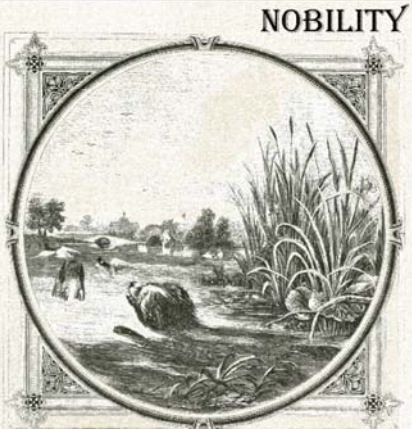
NOBILITY OF CHARACTER FREQUENTLY LEADS TO POSITIONS OF LEADERSHIP.

SINCERITY MEANS THE UNITY OF THOUGHT & ACTION. SAYING WHAT YOU WILL DO AND DOING WHAT YOU SAY.

RESPONSIBILITY IS THE WILLINGNESS TO TAKE ON DUTIES AND TO SEE THEM THROUGH

VALOR IS CONSPICUOUS BRAVERY.

NOBILITY



VALOR

BELLIGERENCE



MALICE

BELLIGERENCE IS THE MARTIAL VIRTUE.
THE KILLER INSTINCT
THAT GRANTS DOMINION.

BELLIGERENT CHARACTERS ALMOST
UNIVERSALLY ENGAGE IN FIGHTING
AT A HIGHER LEVEL THAN OTHERS.

HOSTILITY MEANS BEING INNATELY
OPPOSED TO OTHERS.

CRUELTY MEANS TAKING PLEASURE
IN THE PAIN OTHERS ENDURE.

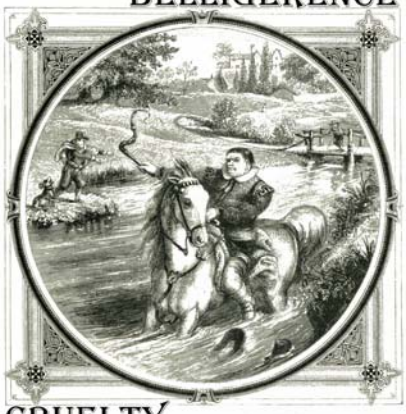
MALICE IS MEDITATED CONTEMPT
FOR ALL THINGS.

BELLIGERENCE



HOSTILITY

BELLIGERENCE



CRUELTY

KINDNESS



COMPASSION

KINDNESS IS THE MOST STRAIGHTFORWARD
OF VIRTUES, IT ENCOMPASSES SIMPLY
TREATING OTHERS NICELY.

KIND CHARACTERS ARE GENERATIVE
& OFTEN HAVE SKILLS AT MAKING THINGS.

GENTLENESS IS USING SENSITIVITY
IN YOUR DEEDS.

COMPASSION IS LOOKING OUT FOR
THOSE WHO ARE VULNERABLE.

LOVE IS BEING OPEN TO
THE KINDNESS OF OTHERS.

KINDNESS



LOVE

KINDNESS



GENTLENESS

CIVILITY



HUMILITY

CIVILITY



INTEGRITY

CIVILITY IS THE VIRTUE OF THE CITY.
IT IS THE SKILL OF GRACIOUSLY
INTERACTING WITH OTHERS.
CIVILITY TENDS TO GRANT A
CERTAIN AMOUNT OF MAGICAL
AFFINITY, GIVEN THE PRACTICE
ONE HAS WITH RITUAL.

HUMILITY IS THE VIRTUE OF KNOWING ONE'S
STRENGTHS AND NEEDING NOT PROVE THEM.

TACT INDICATES A TALENT FOR MAKING
OTHERS FEEL AT EASE.

INTEGRITY IS THE VIRTUE OF HONESTY IN
MATERIAL DEALINGS.

CIVILITY



TACT

IMPULSE



DISGUST

IMPULSE



RUDENESS

IMPULSE IS SUCCUMBING TO PHYSIOLOGY
IN DEFIANCE OF CIVILIZATION.
IMPULSIVE CHARACTERS ARE OFTEN
AT ODDS WITH THE LAWS OF SOCIETY.

IMPULSIVE CHARACTERS PREFER
NATURAL SETTINGS

INGRATITUDE IS THE KNACK FOR TAKING AND
NOT GIVING THANKS OR RECIPROCITY.

DISGUST IS THE INNATE CONTEMPT
ONE HAS FOR THE PHYSICAL OTHER.

RUDENESS IS INDIFFERENCE
TO MANNERS OR FEELINGS.

IMPULSE



INGRATITUDE

DEFIANCE IS THE REJECTION OF AUTHORITY.
IT IS THE VIRTUE OF OPPOSITION &
PERSONAL AUTONOMY.

DEFIANT CHARACTERS MUST TEND TO BE
INTELLECTUALLY UNCONVENTIONAL.

DOUBT IS THE VIRTUE OF DISBELIEF,
THE REFUSAL TO BE DECEIVED.

CYNICISM MEANS A CHARACTER
IS UNMOVED BY RECKLESS FANTASY.

SUSPICION IS THE SKILL OF
ANTICIPATING WICKED MOTIVES.

DEFIANCE



DOUBT

DEFIANCE



CYNICISM

DEFIANCE



SUSPICION

PIETY IS THE VIRTUE OF REVERENCE.
IT IS THE ACCEPTANCE THAT THERE IS A
POWER IN THE WORLD THAT IS UNKNOWABLE.

PIETY CONFERS A SENSE OF THE
DIVINE TO CHARACTERS AND PIOUS
CHARACTERS TEND TO RELIGIOUS CALLINGS.

HOPE IS THE ANTICIPATION
THAT THE BEST IS TO COME YET.

WONDER IS THE SENSE THAT THE
WORLD CAN SURPRISE WITH AMAZEMENT.

FAITH REFERS TO THE CHARACTER'S
BELIEF IN SPITE OF OPPOSITION.

PIETY



HOPE

PIETY



WONDER

PIETY



FAITH

EGO



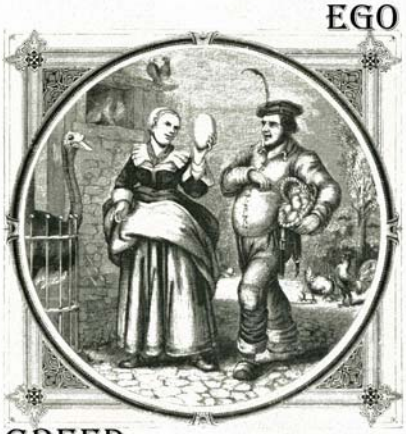
CORRUPTION

EGO



DIGNITY

EGO



GREED

EGO IS THE VIRTUE OF PRIDE.
IT MOTIVATES THOSE IN
NEED OF VALIDATION.

EGOTISTICAL CHARACTERS TEND TO HAVE
LUCK WITH MONEY AND FIND
MORE THAN THEIR SHARE.

VANITY IS THE SKILL OF LOVING
THE SELF FOREMOST.

CORRUPTION IS THE KNACK
FOR CHEATING PEOPLE.

GREED IS THE OVERARCHING
WANT FOR THINGS.

FAIRNESS



TOLERANCE

FAIRNESS



LOYALTY

FAIRNESS



TRUST

FAIRNESS IS EQUANIMITY OF CHARACTER,
A WILLINGNESS TO ABIDE
BY RULES AND SEEK EQUALITY.

CHARACTERS WHO ARE FAIR TEND
TO BE INSTRUMENTS OF THE LAW.

TRUST IS THE VIRTUE OF BELIEVING
IN OTHERS, GRANTING THEM
THE BENEFIT OF THE DOUBT.

LOYALTY MEANS ONE IS THEMSELVES
WORTHY OF TRUST.

TOLERANCE REGARDS ONE'S ACCEPTANCE
THAT OTHERS ARE EQUAL TO THEMSELVES.

The Long Test

TRUE	QUESTIONS	FALSE
BEL	A battle is better than a bribe	EGO
CIV	Adversity is overcome with plans not dreams	PIE
KIN	All benefit from kindness	DEF
FAI	Authorities are usually trustworthy	EGO
PIE	Beauty often comes from ugly beginnings	IMP
DEF	Betrayal is to be expected	FAI
BEL	Better to make others suffer than to prosper	AUD
EGO	Better to rule in hell than serve in heaven	NOB
CIV	Bribery is wrong always	EGO
DEF	Decency is subjective	IMP
KIN	Desperation is the cause of evil acts	DEF
PIE	Enlightenment comes before family	FAI
PIE	Even the most deplorable may be redeemed	IMP
DEF	Everyone has something to hide	FAI
KIN	Everyone needs love	BEL
NOB	Frivolity & joy are for children	PIE
BEL	God loves man kills	PIE
KIN	I am always careful with others' hearts	NOB
PIE	I am insignificant in the grander scheme	AUD
BEL	I am not bound by any pledge	CIV
PIE	I am not worthy of the universe's beauty	IMP
CIV	I am stoic in the face of the unbelievable	PIE
BEL	I amuse myself with torture	EGO
FAI	I appreciate other races	BEL
BEL	I bite the hand that feeds	IMP
KIN	I can help those most in need	CIV
IMP	I deserve the most	EGO
BEL	I disdain the opinions of others	AUD
EGO	I don't reveal my true intentiions	AUD
AUD	I don't talk about people, they talk about me	DEF
KIN	I give to beggars	EGO
BEL	I fight for satisfaction not wealth	EGO
FAI	I trust fortifications above my sword	NOB
BEL	I will never bow to anyone, all are inferior	CIV
NOB	I would confront a wicked leader	CIV
BEL	I would die to kill my foe	AUD
KIN	I would do anything for love	EGO
FAI	I would humiliate myself to help a friend	EGO
KIN	I would lie to spare someones feelings	CIV
IMP	I would never beg	EGO
FAI	I would never betray another	BEL
NOB	I would not lie to save my life	CIV
NOB	I would sacrifice myself for an ugly person	IMP
KIN	I would show mercy to my worst enemy	NOB
BEL	I would sooner fight than apologize	CIV
NOB	I would stand guard instead of attacking	CIV
EGO	I'd rather have money than spend it	AUD
EGO	I'd risk cheating someone deadly to me	AUD
DEF	I'm not surprised by any depravity	IMP
IMP	I'm repulsed by unattractive people	KIN
BEL	Innocence is the first casualty of war	PIE

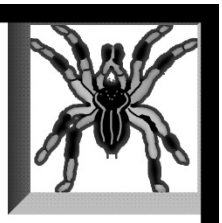
TRUE	QUESTIONS	FALSE
AUD	Looking good is better than being good	NOB
IMP	Love makes people stupid	KIN
PIE	Miracles happen all the time	DEF
EGO	Money speaks louder than any pledge	NOB
DEF	Most friends plot against me	FAI
AUD	My allegiance is to myself first	NOB
FAI	My duty to family is greater than to my lord	NOB
KIN	My lover comes before my leader	FAI
CIV	My needs are less than the needs of many	EGO
CIV	My own senses are imperfect	DEF
CIV	No god could be concerned with me	PIE
PIE	No one is worthy of trust but god	FAI
PIE	No quarter should be granted infidels	FAI
DEF	Nothing is offered without a price	IMP
NOB	One must be gracious to hosts	IMP
CIV	One must recognize one's superiors	EGO
CIV	One must show gratitude	IMP
CIV	One should follow local customs	IMP
NOB	One should voice their doubts in god	PIE
NOB	Only the bold receive their share	PIE
IMP	Others best get out of my way	KIN
FAI	Others can have their moment in the sun	AUD
AUD	Others will follow my lead	DEF
KIN	People need to be understood	BEL
BEL	Pigs exist to be slaughtered	IMP
IMP	Politics repulse me	EGO
FAI	Ruling by fear is futile	BEL
FAI	Scheming to rise in status is wrong	AUD
AUD	Self sacrifice is folly	NOB
EGO	Show me a hero I'll show you a liar	NOB
PIE	Simple prayers are good, silent are best	AUD
KIN	Some need more kindness than others	FAI
KIN	Some people are just helpless	FAI
BEL	Speak softly and kill with a big knife	IMP
FAI	Stealing from other races doesn't count	EGO
KIN	Stealing from the poor is beneath me	EGO
AUD	The best clothes are worth every coin	DEF
FAI	The customs of others are as valid as mine	NOB
AUD	There's always a way out of any jam	DEF
PIE	Things are ordered by an unseen power	DEF
PIE	Things will improve	DEF
FAI	True friends are loyal no matter what	AUD
KIN	True love comes before other duties	NOB
CIV	Truth is absolute	DEF
KIN	Violence is a last resort	BEL
BEL	Violence is needed to save the world	PIE
AUD	When in doubt - overcompensate	DEF
AUD	You can always avoid confrontation	DEF
CIV	You can't judge a book by its cover	DEF
NOB	Insults are acts of aggression	IMP
KIN	It's alright to seduce a married person	CIV
CIV	Its best to be truthful	IMP
PIE	Its better to hold out and hope than flee	AUD
KIN	Jealousy has no hold over me	DEF

Tally your answers & note the top 3 non-opposed results.

AUD	PIE	FAI	**Apostle**
AUD	DEF	KIN	**Burglar**
AUD	PIE	EGO	**Charlatan**
AUD	BEL	FAI	**Contender**
AUD	DEF	BEL	**Enforcer**
AUD	KIN	EGO	**Forger**
AUD	IMP	DEF	**Fugitive**
AUD	DEF	FAI	**Gambler**
AUD	IMP	EGO	**Highwayman**
AUD	IMP	BEL	**Marauder**
AUD	CIV	KIN	**Mesmerist**
AUD	CIV	EGO	**Mountebank**
AUD	KIN	FAI	**Musician**
AUD	PIE	KIN	**Mystic**
AUD	IMP	FAI	**Saboteur**
AUD	CIV	FAI	**Seer**
AUD	IMP	PIE	**Shaman**
AUD	PIE	BEL	**Sicarius**
AUD	IMP	KIN	**Smuggler**
AUD	CIV	BEL	**Sorcerer**
AUD	CIV	PIE	**Swindler**
AUD	DEF	EGO	**Thief**
AUD	BEL	EGO	**Latriconium**
AUD	CIV	DEF	**Diabolist**
CIV	DEF	EGO	**Alchemist**
CIV	KIN	FAI	**Cenobite**
CIV	PIE	FAI	**Chronicler**
CIV	BEL	FAI	**Executioner**
CIV	PIE	EGO	**Fakir**
CIV	KIN	EGO	**Hakim**
CIV	PIE	KIN	**Healer**
CIV	DEF	BEL	**Insurgent**
CIV	BEL	EGO	**Mercenary**
CIV	DEF	KIN	**Intellectual**
CIV	PIE	BEL	**Sohei**
CIV	DEF	FAI	**Vaidya**
DEF	KIN	EGO	**Artist**
DEF	BEL	FAI	**Bodyguard**
DEF	BEL	EGO	**Strategos**
DEF	KIN	FAI	**Geometer**
IMP	PIE	FAI	**Autochthon**
IMP	PIE	EGO	**Bruja**
IMP	KIN	EGO	**Herbalist**
IMP	PIE	KIN	**Stylite**
IMP	BEL	EGO	**Hunter**
IMP	DEF	BEL	**Bandit**
IMP	BEL	FAI	**Harbinger**
IMP	DEF	KIN	**Sannayasi**
IMP	KIN	FAI	**Shepherd**
IMP	PIE	BEL	**Skald**
IMP	DEF	FAI	**Utopian**
IMP	DEF	EGO	**Wanderer**
NOB	CIV	PIE	**Bishop**
NOB	CIV	KIN	**Bodhisattva**
NOB	PIE	BEL	**Samurai**
NOB	IMP	KIN	**Aristocrat**
NOB	CIV	FAI	**Diviner**
NOB	BEL	FAI	**Duelist**
NOB	IMP	PIE	**Explorer**
NOB	DEF	BEL	**Gallowglass**
NOB	IMP	DEF	**Hero**
NOB	PIE	EGO	**Imam**
NOB	DEF	EGO	**Imposter**
NOB	KIN	FAI	**Innocent**
NOB	KIN	EGO	**Inventor**
NOB	DEF	FAI	**Pretender**
NOB	CIV	BEL	**Knight**
NOB	CIV	DEF	**Magician**
NOB	PIE	FAI	**Paladin**
NOB	IMP	EGO	**Pioneer**
NOB	PIE	KIN	**Poet**
NOB	IMP	FAI	**Ranger**
NOB	DEF	KIN	**Tribune**
NOB	IMP	BEL	**Viking**
NOB	CIV	EGO	**Warlock**
NOB	BEL	EGO	**Warlord**
PIE	BEL	EGO	**Assassin**
PIE	KIN	FAI	**Confessor**
PIE	BEL	FAI	**Inquisitor**
PIE	KIN	EGO	**Muezzin**



The Alchemist



A seeker after enlightenment who pursues bodily perfection through understanding the metaphysical aspect of material reality.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+5
CON	d6+9
DEX	d6+1
INT	d6+7
STR	d6+3
WIS	d6+3

Saving Throws	
Breath	19
Devices	18
Paralysis	18
Death	18
Spells	17

Adventuring Skills	
Alchemy	3
Investigate	3
Languages	3
Medicine	2
Poisoning	2
Sorcery	2
Theurgy	1

Hit Dice d8
Starting HP d8+2
Melee Bonus: +1
Ranged Bonus: +2

Damage Bonus: +0
AC Bonus: +2
Initiative: DEX+d6
Movement: STR+2

Language Rolls: 2
Parley Dice: d6 / d6
Gear Rolls: 12

Ability List

Artisan Healer Mental Fortitude

Endurance Animal Languages Tinkering

Philosopher Stone: Alchemists seek to perfect the self & in pursuit of this they have gained insights into the transmutation of materials and may do so with their bodies through intense concentration & devotion. An Alchemist can convert a quantity of silver into gold at a 9:1 ratio at a rate of 1 coin per minute.

Civility Defiance Ego



The Apostle

Up & coming follower of a religious or philisophical order who travels forth to spread knowledge of this system of belief.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+5
CON	d6+3
DEX	d6+5
INT	d6+4
STR	d6+0
WIS	d6+8

Saving Throws	
Breath	17
Devices	16
Paralysis	19
Death	16
Spells	15

Adventuring Skills	
Composition	3
Gift	3
Judge Alignment	3
Languages	2
Navigate	2
Theurgy	2
Vocals	1

Hit Dice d8
Starting HP d8+2
Melee Bonus: +2
Ranged Bonus: +1

Damage Bonus: +0
AC Bonus: +1
Initiative: DEX+d8
Movement: STR+4

Language Rolls: 2
Parley Dice: d6 / d6
Gear Rolls: 12

Ability List

Communion **Mental Fortitude** **Prayers**

Resourcefulness **Traceless Passing** **Traveler**

Conversion: Apostles who are very persausive can convert someone from another religion into the Apostle's own. This requires that the apostle achieve the maximum disposition of *Trusting* through social tests.

Audacity Piety Fairness



The Alchemist from the South

Alchemy is the nascent anti-science of hidden potentials. No two alchemists can reliably replicate one another's methods – thus it is a magical art & there is no innate truth to it. Truth or not, the alchemist is able to manipulate the humors & tempers of the living person to create cures & alterations as well as to facilitate the transmutation of one material into another.

Southern Alchemists tend to follow the traditions of their home countries. Traditions hold that there are between 3 and 12 separate & distinct humors – elements that comprise all extant things & that these can be drawn out and infused – dissolved or concentrated.

In some lands an alchemist is seen as a sage – a wise & sensible professional capable of miracles – while other places place them as charlatans & rogues.

The Alchemist in the Slatewind

The Alchemy of the Slatewind follows one of the two great traditions. The schools of the **Quet** -which practice a curative & aspirational trend based upon the perfection of the self through deeds transmuted into flesh & the schools of the **Brizai** which are far less rigorous & more experimental & which focus on the mutation of inanimate things. The schools of the **Quet** are commonest in the city of **Termus** where many varieties prevail & compete – each offering a separate dogma aimed at self-perfection. The **Brizai** schools of alchemy tend to be based around a single mentor or teacher- often a wanderer. The **Brizai** alchemists regard one another with grave suspicion & keep secrets & share them only with a trusted inner circle.

The Apostle from the South

Apostles are those who's religious creed compels them to tell of their gods & lore – they may be called on a mission to The North in search of converts. Such a mission is likely more difficult in the Slatewind than elsewhere as the nascent pantheon of many gods has a firm hold upon the psyche of the people. Still, a new voice crying out may be heard over the steady din of the marketplace of belief.

The Apostle in the Slatewind

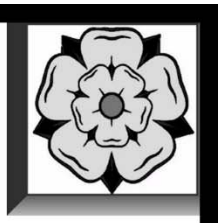
Those called by gods are many in the Slatewind. The 30 gods of the formative pantheon of **Elan** all have their own special appeal. Some of these faiths & churches are more prone to proselytizing than others though – and those that are most fervently in search of new believers are the Triune god of the **Khin** – which is one deity with 3 faces – **Hrururush**, **Ushro** & **Shiddush** – who emphasize the cruelty of the world & the requirement for piety & right action in the face of such danger. The **Quet** deities do not ask for followers & those faithful to them aren't particularly focused on evangelism – nevertheless the peculiarity & ease of those god's demands make them a popular oddity that many in the Slatewind enjoy at least a dalliance with. Of all the deities that have evolved a sincere following though – **Ultist** -the Dying & Living saint of Elves compels the most ambitious missions among its faithful – for they see in it the opportunity to rescue their god & to overthrow the dominion of the human cities that have imprisoned it.

The **Pliosher** gods & the **Saayang** spirits are the least likely to ask for their servants to gather new followers, their traditions are principally heritable & gained through blood or location rather than doctrine.





The Aristocrat



As adventurers they are often a member of a deposed or lost house - Aristocrats are the nominal owners of lands & are fit to receive the loyalty of vassals & the fealty of peasants.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+5
CON	d6+3
DEX	d6+5
INT	d6+4
STR	d6+6
WIS	d6+4

Saving Throws	
Breath	19
Devices	18
Paralysis	17
Death	18
Spells	19

Adventuring Skills	
Building	3
Composition	3
Gift	3
Hear Noise	2
Instrument	2
Joke	2
Siege	1

Hit Dice d8
Starting HP d8+2
Melee Bonus: +1
Ranged Bonus: +2

Damage Bonus: +2
AC Bonus: +2
Initiative: DEX+d4
Movement: STR+6

Language Rolls: 1
Parley Dice: d6 / d6
Gear Rolls: 11

Ability List

Claimant **Riches** **Protector**

Ethereal Beauty **Vanguard** **Sociability**

Class: Other aristocrats recognize you as one of their own & respond with a great deal more intensity to your presence. When you meet another member of a ruling class (of any variety - senators & kings work the same) roll a die (any die). On an odd result add that die's value to your roll to determine their initial disposition, on an even result deduct that value. Should the result come out favorable - you are recognized as part of their hereditary clan & receive favors & benefits befitting kinship. If the result is negative, you find yourself in the presence of a rival. You are still afforded hospitality & gentility but you arouse their animosity - which may result in hostilities, albeit, never at that moment.

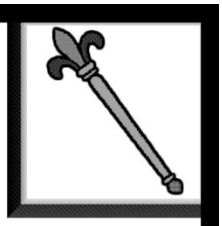
Nobility Impulse Kindness







The Artist



Creator of artworks and deviser of amusements. Often consumed by an overriding inner vision.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+8
CON	d6+9
DEX	d6+0
INT	d6+5
STR	d6+4
WIS	d6+1

Saving Throws	
Breath	19
Devices	16
Paralysis	18
Death	16
Spells	17

Adventuring Skills	
Building	3
Composition	3
Gift	3
Joke	2
Pick Pockets	2
Sorcery	2
Trickery	1

Hit Dice d8
Starting HP d8+2
Melee Bonus: +1
Ranged Bonus: +2

Damage Bonus: +0
AC Bonus: +2
Initiative: DEX+d6
Movement: STR+4

Language Rolls: 1
Parley Dice: d6 / d6
Gear Rolls: 11

Ability List

Artisan **Forgery** **Ethereal Beauty**

Domesticity **Sociability** **Resourcefulness**

Unconventional: Artists follow their own paths even while they are the darlings of society. By modifying their appearance & equipment through the use of the Composition skill an artist can increase their social dice by 1 size each. This isn't without risks & any negative social interaction you have has worse than normal effect - e.g.: characters who would be *Suspicious* become instead - *Mistrustful*.

Defiance Kindness Ego



The Aristocrat from the South

Aristocracy exists in many forms & the rulers of the south have infrequent need to abandon their places of strength & authority. Those who do venture to The North are most likely deposed or members of a fallen house. An aristocrat in refuge or exile can make a reliably safe base for themselves in the Slatewind & even find a position in one of the Ten Cities with relative ease as many newly made lords seek a veneer of legitimacy which can be gained by employing or marrying a bona fide southern aristocrat.

The Aristocrat in the Slatewind

Hardly numerous and almost entirely new, the aristocrats who are born to wealth & privilege in the Slatewind are born to families with barely 8 generations of provenance. The few minor aristocratic houses in the Slatewind still vie with one another & sometimes with greater competence than others. The mysterious oligarchs of **Sword of the West** operate a variety of courts & host many events while the administrative bureaus of **Elan** have steady need for those with authority to lead. **Shield** & **Zenith** & **Red Bank** & **Diya** all have ruling classes, some with longstanding family lines while Bitter has overthrown its monarchs & put to the sword or exile all those who would be rulers. **Termus** lacks a coherent government of any sort & ownership there is a highly fraught issue – so an Aristocrat from there is likely to have dealt with more trouble than comfort. Lastly **Saedu's** 7 towns all have their own mechanisms of control & abundant opportunities for the wealthy elite to emerge.

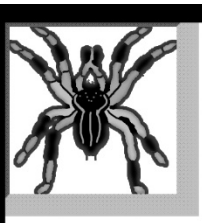
The Artist from the South

An artist is an artist & those from the south work in whatever media is most common or most uncommon in their homeland. Few artists are likely to be bound by longstanding traditions when the call for originality sings out so loudly. Southern artists are quite likely to have ventured north purely in pursuit of new inspirations.

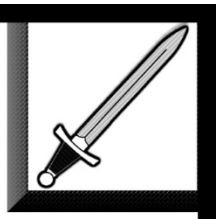
The Artist in the Slatewind

The Slatewind's traditions of art are broken down by location & ethnicity. The larger cities have more use for decorative forms while those who live in the rustic, ruined hinterlands may have a thriving business supplying functional accoutrements.

The **Brizai** artistic traditions focus on charcoal drawing, mosaic representations & monumental sculpture. Most of their arts are secular & there is a large market for projects based around personal vanity where Brizai culture is dominant. The **Quet** have a tradition of admiring the ephemeral, sand mandalas & impromptu drawings & poems are their main works – though there is also an impressive tradition of woodcarving that has emerged only recently. **Plioshr** artists work primiarily in textiles & fibers with an emphasis on weaving. **Saayang** arts are the most diverse with painting, sculpture, calligraphy & metalsmithing all having their own longstanding guilds-based traditions. **Elf** arts are inscrutable to most – given the longevity of elves they work on a scale of decades, not hours, and what may seem to be a bit of raw material may to an elf be a work in progress. **Dwarf** arts are focused on carving – in stone or wood & in the making of metal goods that are highly functional & extremely ornate. **Goblin** art is… difficult, to admire or to reproduce – the media of preference is frequently suspect. **Halflings** when not following the traditions of their host peoples work primarily in pastry & **Orcs** don't make art but tools and they are notorious for utilizing everything at hand to fashion yet more tools.



The Assassin



The most murderous member of a guild or a gang, the Assassin kills when there is money or influence at stake.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+3
CON	d6+6
DEX	d6+4
INT	d6+6
STR	d6+4
WIS	d6+0

Saving Throws	
Breath	19
Devices	15
Paralysis	16
Death	15
Spells	16

Adventuring Skills	
Hear Noise	3
Hide in Shadow	3
Move Quietly	3
Open Doors	2
Poisoning	2
Scale Walls	2
Trickery	1

Hit Dice d8
Starting HP d8+2
Melee Bonus: +2
Ranged Bonus: +1

Damage Bonus: +1
AC Bonus: +2
Initiative: DEX+d6
Movement: STR+2

Language Rolls: 2
Parley Dice: d4 / d4
Gear Rolls: 12

Ability List

Disguise **Predation** **Traceless Passing**

Horrific **Destruction** **Weaponry**

Murder: Once per session an assassin can pick a target, this target increases the effects of all the assassin's attacks by one die type. Damage rolled is one die type higher, poisons & other status effects are likewise a die larger.

Piety Belligerence Ego







The Autochthon



An indigene foundling who has existed in the wilds as a wild person, removed completely from civilized culture an Autochthon sometimes adopts the habits of those beasts that have nurtured them.

Statistics

CHA	d6+1
CON	d6+3
DEX	d6+8
INT	d6+4
STR	d6+0
WIS	d6+9

Saving Throws

Breath	19
Devices	16
Paralysis	18
Death	16
Spells	16

Adventuring Skills

Detect Traps	3
Forage	3
Hear Noise	3
Hide in Shadow	2
Move Quietly	2
Navigate	2
Vocals	1

Hit Dice d8
Starting HP d8+2
Melee Bonus: +1
Ranged Bonus: +2

Damage Bonus: +1
AC Bonus: +1
Initiative: DEX+d8
Movement: STR+4

Language Rolls: 2
Parley Dice: d6 / d6
Gear Rolls: 12

Ability List

Animal Languages **Resourcefulness** **Rampage**

Horrific **Traveler** **Shamanism**

Wild: Pick an animal, this animal is the creature that raised the autochthon & the autochthon has an innate & persistent relationship with all representatives of that species. The autochthon improves any social tests against such animals by 2 die sizes each & can engage an animal of that type as a follower.

Impulse Piety Fairness



The Assassin from the South

The byzantine webs of southern society are very prone to spawning entire assassin cults, though it's just as likely that an assassin from the south is little more than a desperate person with a knife & nothing to lose. You've got a huge swathe of leeway in designing a background for a migrant assassin – including whether or not you've headed North in pursuit of some mark.

The Assassin in the Slatewind

The mysterious lords of **Sword of the West** foster an entire guild of assassins. These aren't well-trained or elite killers exactly – but rather, those most loyal, most callous & hateful. When someone of especially cruel temperament is found the Assassins of Sword sometimes recruit, though the details of their sect are kept secret from outsiders – it is known that they have exotic & painful initiations which none who've endured them will speak of. Some **Elves** & **Orcs** particularly those of the expanse of **Able** translate their hunting prowess into skill at hunting people – they may have a taste for ruthless violence or a lack of sentimentality & a need for money. Among the **Quet** peoples there is a traditional clan of assassins who are equal parts myth & fact. It is said that these mysterious avengers exist at the edges of the peaceful societies of the Quet to inflict terror on those outsiders who threaten the peace of their fellows. Whether such a cult operates in the Slatewind can't be said with certainty – but the city of **Termus** remains peaceful and the cult of the many small gods goes unharmed – so some tend to believe that the Quet majority of that city have some type of guardian watching over them.

The Autochthon from the South

Possibly the rarest type of traveler from the south – if you choose this path you've been raised by some kind of animal & been subsequently transported to the North – atavism & all. You might consider an upbringing by some type of cetacean or pinniped or another different marine animal.

The Autochthon in the Slatewind

Zoology of the Slatewind is a complex tapestry comprised of a few very distinct biomes – each of which is a potential launching off point for the raised-by-X character. In the mountains to the west & east there are abundant packs of wolves as well as solitary bears & smilodons. These biomes also have many eyries of falcons as well as innumerable packs of boar & sheep.

The lowlands of the northwest are home to the wooly rams & dog packs of the **Plioshr** nomads as well as a few bands of wild horses and the altogether more exotic animals native to the locale – such as **Wanders** & **Hikamru**. Wolves aren't out of the question here but are more prey than predator to the riding dogs of the Plioshr. Otherwise burrowing animals are common – gophers, badgers & their allies can be found in abundance.

The interior hills around **Bitter** & **Zenith** are both havens for mountain tigers, bears & goats are regular as are **Feral Robots**, **Spinemen** & **Pony Snails.**

River valleys and the northern shore are good places to be raised by beavers, otters & seals.

Cities are often infested with all sorts of vermin – rats, cats, dogs & a wide array of squirrels, monkeys, gibbons & bats can all be found in the cities of the Slatewind.

The Forests are home to all of the creatures mentioned already as well as a great number of plant-animal hybrids & animate fungus creatures.





The Bandit

Constituting many different sorts of brigand, bandits are traveling warriors who attack in force in pursuit of mayhem and plunder.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+0
CON	d6+5
DEX	d6+9
INT	d6+0
STR	d6+7
WIS	d6+5

Saving Throws	
Breath	19
Devices	19
Paralysis	16
Death	19
Spells	18

Adventuring Skills	
Detect Traps	3
Hear Noise	3
Hide in Shadow	3
Move Quietly	2
Navigate	2
Scale Walls	2
Trickery	1

Hit Dice d8
Starting HP d8+2
Melee Bonus: +2
Ranged Bonus: +3

Damage Bonus: +2
AC Bonus: +1
Initiative: DEX+d6
Movement: STR+4

Language Rolls: 1
Parley Dice: d4 / d4
Gear Rolls: 10

Ability List

Destruction **Rampage** **Horrific**

Endurance **Weaponry** **Traceless Passing**

Villain: A bandit can prevail where goodness fails. Whenever attacking first in a combat or striking against an innocent or noncombatant - the bandit always gets a bonus of +2 to their To-Hit rolls.

Impulse Defiance Belligerence







The Bishop

Leader of a local sect of a well established religion, the Bishop commands respect & obedience from their coreligionists as well as a healthy tithe.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+2
CON	d6+5
DEX	d6+1
INT	d6+10
STR	d6+5
WIS	d6+2

Saving Throws	
Breath	19
Devices	18
Paralysis	17
Death	18
Spells	16

Adventuring Skills	
Gift	3
Hear Noise	3
Instrument	3
Investigate	2
Judge Alignment	2
Theurgy	2
Vocals	1

Hit Dice d10
Starting HP d10+3
Melee Bonus: +1
Ranged Bonus: +1

Damage Bonus: +1
AC Bonus: +2
Initiative: DEX+d6
Movement: STR+2

Language Rolls: 3
Parley Dice: d6 / d6
Gear Rolls: 13

Ability List

Claimant **Protector** **Prayers**

Communion **Scholarship** **Riches**

Vicar: A bishop reduces the level of all *benedictions* & *invocations* that they cast by one level - so that a prayer of level 5, for example, is cast using only 4 points of prayers.

Nobility Civility Piety



The Bandit from the South

Bandits cross borders & spread danger far & wide without a thought of authority. Boundaries mean little to those who transgress them as a matter of course & so arriving in the North is hardly a noteworthy feat for a bandit. Many sorts of bandits find themselves at sea & some of them may be driven from the waters as hunts for pirates, raiders & brigands tend to push people into the margins who aren't capable of competently fighting off whole societies.

The Bandit in the Slatewind

Banditry has a complex presence in the Slatewind. Some places welcome bandits & even laud them as adversaries of oppressive social orders – Bitter, in particular falls into this category. Other cities raise intense resistance to any organized or disorganized gang that may threaten it. Shield is the most aggressive but even Termus will go to some lengths to at least drive off bandits operating in the vicinity. Operating along the riversides & the lakefront are good prospects for bandits since escape is easy and commerce worth preying upon is abundant. Bandits tend to fall under the banner of **Gatesfow** – the larger criminal hierarchy that runs like a current beneath the Slatewind. In many instances the Gatesfow use Bandits as their special operatives in the further countryside as well as as heavy enforcers in their urban conflicts with authorities & with less dominant criminal syndicates.

The Bishop from the South

While a bishop of any religion may well head to the Slatewind, possibly in search of establishing a mission or even a church of some size & substance – most bishops choosing the migration are likely to be assigned to this position by hierarchs above them in whatever order of divinity they follow. It's likely that a bishop of the south has been sent to inspect, improve, uplift or in some way supervise the role of their god's church in the Slatewind. This is likely to present some amount of culture-shock as the syncretisation of the many southern gods into a singular, inclusive pantheon is at least confusing & most likely heretical.

The Bishop in the Slatewind

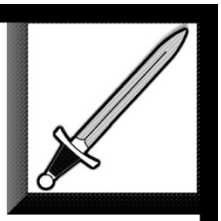
Though the nascent pantheon of 30 gods has been founded as a proper religion in the Slatewind, many of the churches that contributed to this larger body still hold their deities above the others & many only grudgingly acknowledge the existence of the further expanded divinity. **Tricadic** bishops are the heads of either a single shrine or church of a single god within the pantheon – or all the gods within the pantheon & the greater cycle of divinity as a whole. **Singlist** Bishops are the leaders of fractious cults bound up in the worship of one single god or possibly one culture-pantheon. The Tricadic vs. Singlist conflict lies at the heart of the last war & the victory of the Tricadic was a barely achieved thing – the wounds are still fresh on both sides but neither is, at this moment, eager to seek war again.

Some gods lend themselves more to a hierarchical construction featuring a bishop than others in particular the **Saayang** cults each have their own large scale bureaucracy with many different tiers of bishop & priest. The two **Goblin** gods **Mikmak** & **Bickbuck** are quite frequently represented by a clerical goblin claiming to be a bishop – and just as likely caught up in a rivalry with several other goblins all claiming the same.





The Bodyguard



Dedicated to protecting the life of a single person or a related group, the Bodyguard will sacrifice themselves for their charge.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+1
CON	d6+6
DEX	d6+7
INT	d6+0
STR	d6+7
WIS	d6+6

Saving Throws	
Breath	19
Devices	17
Paralysis	17
Death	17
Spells	17

Adventuring Skills	
Detect Traps	3
Gift	3
Hear Noise	3
Judge Alignment	2
Move Quietly	2
Scale Walls	2
Trickery	1

Hit Dice d8
Starting HP d8+2
Melee Bonus: +2
Ranged Bonus: +2

Damage Bonus: +1
AC Bonus: +1
Initiative: DEX+d8
Movement: STR+2

Language Rolls: 1
Parley Dice: d6 / d6
Gear Rolls: 11

Ability List

Guardian **Heightened Senses** **Mental Fortitude**

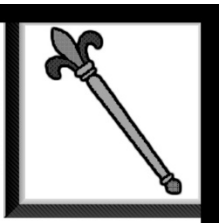
Overlooked **Protector** **Sociability**

Yojinbo: Bodyguards can select one other character, the Bodyguard & the character thereafter pool their HP and the pair of them use these HP in concert. If the HP pool is reduced to zero the Bodyguard suffers the defeated effect while the subject of their protection resets to their normal HP maximum. If the guarded subject is killed therefter, the Bodyguard loses any future use of this ability.

Defiance Belligerence Fairness







The Bodhisattva

An ascended member of a faith who, by grace of their extreme virtue have become a conduit between the mundane and divine.

Statistics

CHA	d6+7
CON	d6+3
DEX	d6+1
INT	d6+9
STR	d6+6
WIS	d6+2

Saving Throws

Breath	19
Devices	18
Paralysis	18
Death	18
Spells	19

Adventuring Skills

Composition	3
Hear Noise	3
Joke	3
Judge Alignment	2
Languages	2
Move Quietly	2
Theurgy	1

Hit Dice d8
Starting HP d8+2
Melee Bonus: +1
Ranged Bonus: +1

Damage Bonus: +1
AC Bonus: +2
Initiative: DEX+d4
Movement: STR+4

Language Rolls: 2
Parley Dice: d8 / d6
Gear Rolls: 12

Ability List

Circles **Resistance** **Prayers**

Healer **Song** **Ritual**

Sainthood: Once in their life a Bodhsattva can perform a miracle. This miracle takes the form of a single spell of any type that is cast without components or any other modifications so that it's unadjusted level is no more than 10. This spell can be cast only once in the lifetime of the Bodhisattva.

Nobility Civility Kindness



The Bodhisattva from the South

Living embodiments of specific, highly regarded virtues can emerge everywhere & where they emerge they are not always beloved. Sometimes the perfect hold up a mirror to the imperfect & are driven away for their troubles. Bodhisattvas from the South are likely to have been driven out of their lands for demonstrating the wickedness of the societies that have produced them.

Other instances may be exemplars of behaviors that lead to migration, recolonization & travel. Such bodhisattvas journey as part of their creed rather than as a consequence of their goodness.

The Bodhisattva in the Slatewind

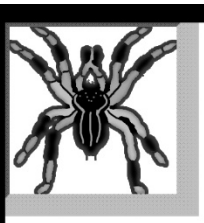
The gods of the Slatewind reflect the moral systems that the entire setting is constructed around. Each of the 30 gods has its own potential bodhisattvas – some born to temples & beatified from birth – some rising up into their virtue, some unknown & unrecognized. Typically, the bodhisattvas of the virtues of the **Quet** gods are assigned from birth – those of the **Saayang** gods are promoted from exemplars who pursue holiness sincerely. The **Brizai** gods, when they empower holy people are both highly selective & tend to appear from seemingly nowhere to endow the unlikeliest of people with their holy instructions. **Plioshr** bodhisattvas are hereditary, families within the nomadic culture uphold & carry forward the faith of the Plioshr gods & among them are the holy paragons. **Khin** gods are most jealous of their powers & they imbue only a very few with the authority of their holy strength – these very few are intensely respected in their culture. The gods of the **goblins** & **halflings** folk will endow their followers through seemingly random chance & only the **Dwarf** gods seem to have a plan – their bodhisattvas are musically inclined & tend to be great artists. Thus far the only bodhisattva of **Ultist** – the **Elf** god is Ultist itself.

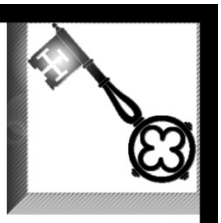
The Bodyguard from the South

Often the bodyguard from the south doesn't choose to go North – rather they follow their charge or are assigned to protect some other character who has decided to pursue life in the old frontier. Some bodyguards, those who've failed in their mission may go north to avoid shame or even reprisals -= their journeys & travails are not enough to shake the old habit of protection from them – so they seek new bodies to guard instead of a new vocation.

The Bodyguard in the Slatewind

The **Saayang** have a great tradition of bodyguards – often the second son of any family is promoted to this position within the family – a protector of the household & their clients & holdings. The **Brizai** bodyguard is a cultural hero & icon – a stalwart servant who grants protection to their employer from against their slaves, one who battles the many in proof of their strength. The **Khin** culture doesn't make any great stir about bodyguards beyond anticipating that they are necessary & universal. The **Plioshr** don't have any traditions involving a specific class of person who protects another beyond the simple sense that their people must always protect one another. Among the **Quet** very few folk take up specifically martial vocations but among those bodyguard is one considered virtuous. **Dwarves** have not special role for those called to protect a single individual. **Goblins** of the Slatewind don't commonly trust their lives to other goblins but they certainly see the value of a bodyguard kept employed against their kind. **Orcs** who become bodyguards often do so out of a sense of loyalty & closeness rather than for financial reasons – seeing the calling as being one of honor rather than financial gain.





The Bruja

Practitioner of a nameless ancient religion bound up in the primordial elements of the natural world. The Bruja is a mystic who draws suspicion & often scorn.

Statistics

CHA	d6+3
CON	d6+6
DEX	d6+5
INT	d6+6
STR	d6+0
WIS	d6+4

Saving Throws

Breath	19
Devices	16
Paralysis	17
Death	16
Spells	16

Adventuring Skills

Alchemy	3
Building	3
Detect Traps	3
Forage	2
Hide in Shadow	2
Poisoning	2
Theurgy	1

Hit Dice d8
Starting HP d8+2
Melee Bonus: +1
Ranged Bonus: +2

Damage Bonus: +1
AC Bonus: +2
Initiative: DEX+d6
Movement: STR+4

Language Rolls: 2
Parley Dice: d4 / d4
Gear Rolls: 12

Ability List

Animal Languages **Prayers** **Resourcefulness**

Rugged **Shamanism** **Wayfinding**

Witchery: The bruja has command over the undifferentiated realms of nameless power. Bruja characters gain one *curse* spell per HD that they are able to cast once per session each. These spells have a maximum level equal to the Bruja's HD.

Impulse Piety Ego







The Burglar

A robber who uses stealth & skill to steal rather than brute force or aggression to make off with the possessions of others.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+9
CON	d6+5
DEX	d6+2
INT	d6+3
STR	d6+4
WIS	d6+4

Saving Throws	
Breath	18
Devices	18
Paralysis	19
Death	18
Spells	17

Adventuring Skills	
Composition	3
Detect Traps	3
Gift	3
Hide in Shadow	2
Move Quietly	2
Navigate	2
Scale Walls	1

Hit Dice d8
Starting HP d8+2
Melee Bonus: +2
Ranged Bonus: +2

Damage Bonus: +0
AC Bonus: +1
Initiative: DEX+d6
Movement: STR+6

Language Rolls: 1
Parley Dice: d6 / d6
Gear Rolls: 10

Ability List

Artisan **Overlooked** **Heightened Senses**

Destruction **Traceless Passing** **Signaling**

Infiltration: A burglar may, once per session, choose to lower all of the difficulties of any skill rolls they make for a single scene, all by 1 die size.

Audacity Defiance Kindness



The Bruja from the South

Virtually every culture has its own subcultural mysticism, black magic of the household & hinterlands that are passed down from elders to apprentice. This has been the structure of a universal & ancient – perhaps the most ancient – magical tradition. The globe spanning nature of household curses, blessings & animal speech are all bound up in the mysteries of households & kin groups and such establishments tend to migrate in one of two ways – first through large scale displacement – e.g.: a family fleeing pogroms in the south, or through excommunication – that is, when one is discarded from the household, family or coven that raised the.

The Bruja in the Slatewind

Specific household traditions vary between the multiple cultures of the Slatewind. Among the **Plioshr** the Bruja are almost universally men & outcasts as well. They settle as hermits outside the clan but serve & are served by the clan as well. The **Khin's** Bruja are archetypal of the profession itself – women of a family who don't marry but who serve as patrons & mystic guardians of the family or neighborhood, they pass their lore & learning on to girls that they see as having the right disposition. **Saayang** Brujas are commonplace, to the point that most families are considered to have at least one – an elder who keeps alive the family's superstition & lore. The **Brizai** pattern largely follows that of the Khin – always a woman and always alone -but their traditions hold that the Bruja must also be a widow – and they consider the magic performed by their Bruja to be the work of the ghost of the dead husband(s). Quet peoples don't have much in the way of folk traditions – as these are usually magnified into full blown religious belief, nevertheless there are, among them, a quantity of people who wander the cities & alleys looking for injured animals – totem creatures – that they rehabilitate. Non-human Bruja are commonly called Witches. Among Elves, they are vanishingly rare. Dwarves tend to drive them out of their socieites for superstitious reasons. Goblins have a hard time recognizing a variety of magical callings as distinct from one another while almost all Orcs are very near to being a Bruja automatically. Halflings have the most disturbing tradition here – where their Bruja are uniformly the outcasts of their communities who live outside & alone & who lure passersby & especially lost children to their caves.

The Burglar from the South

Breaking & entering is a time honored tradition & a favorite pastime of many, many adventurers. Burglars are, as a rule, not governed by rules & those of the south may be of any conceivable type.

The Burglar in the Slatewind

Burglars are less bound by cultural traditions than they are by geographic ones within the Slatewind. None of the human cultures and only a few of the nonhuman ones regard burglars as anything but a terrible nuisance at best. **Goblins** and **Halflings** both se burglars as utilitarian & skilled professionals, so long as they aren't the victims. **Sword of the West** has a very sophisticated & far reaching underworld & the lords of that city are leaders of legions of criminals, of which burglars are the most elite. In **Red Banks** & in **Diya** there are professional guilds of burglars, though they are based not around a criminal enterprise – but merely the abstract mentality & practical skills of the burglar bent toward the exploitation & exploration of the abundant & treasure laden ruins that lie near both of those cities.



The Cavalier

A politically sophisticated & very wealthy knight who relies upon elaborate systems of patronage & loyalty.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+5
CON	d6+5
DEX	d6+0
INT	d6+8
STR	d6+6
WIS	d6+0

Saving Throws	
Breath	19
Devices	16
Paralysis	17
Death	16
Spells	16

Adventuring Skills	
Composition	3
Gift	3
Joke	3
Languages	2
Move Quietly	2
Sorcery	2
Vocals	1

Hit Dice d10
Starting HP d10+3
Melee Bonus: +1
Ranged Bonus: +1

Damage Bonus: +1
AC Bonus: +2
Initiative: DEX+d6
Movement: STR+4

Language Rolls: 2
Parley Dice: d6 / d6
Gear Rolls: 12

Ability List

Artisan **Riches** **Jinx**

Glammer **Sociability** **Scholarship**

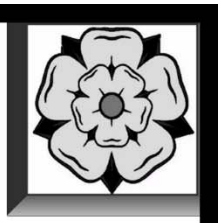
Loyalty: Cavaliers can command the loyalty of those with greater authority than themselves. A Cavalier can rely upon the beneficience of their benefactor, allowing them to intermittently get away with murder. A Cavalier can deny wrongdoing to a social superior and be believed once per session, likewise they can implicate another for that wrongdoing & be believed.

Nobility Piety Kindness





The Cenobite



Cenobites are monks & nuns who carry out the simple works of civilization, keeping records & maintaining the continuity of their culture while living in communities of other cenobites.

Statistics

CHA	d6+8
CON	d6+1
DEX	d6+4
INT	d6+8
STR	d6+1
WIS	d6+7

Saving Throws

Breath	19
Devices	16
Paralysis	19
Death	16
Spells	19

Adventuring Skills

Alchemy	3
Building	3
Composition	3
Gift	2
Instrument	2
Open Doors	2
Poisoning	1

Hit Dice d6
Starting HP d6+1
Melee Bonus: +1
Ranged Bonus: +1

Damage Bonus: +0
AC Bonus: +1
Initiative: DEX+d6
Movement: STR+4

Language Rolls: 2
Parley Dice: d8 / d8
Gear Rolls: 12

Ability List

Artisan **Mental Fortitude** **Resourcefulness**

Disguise **Tinkering** **Spellbook**

Aesceticism: A cenobite character can forgo access to & use of any of their inventory slots for Xp. Once you've calculated your maximum inventory (usually CON), you can forgo ever being able to equip or have any items in each of your inventory spots (effectively lowering your encumbrance rate) at a rate of 200 Xp per permanently sacrificed inventory spot.

Civility Kindness Fairness



The Cavalier from the South

Virtually every culture has its own subcultural mysticism, black magic of the household & hinterlands that are passed down from elders to apprentice. This has been the structure of a universal & ancient – perhaps the most ancient – magical tradition. The globe spanning nature of household curses, blessings & animal speech are all bound up in the mysteries of households & kin groups and such establishments tend to migrate in one of two ways – first through large scale displacement – e.g.: a family fleeing pogroms in the south, or through excommunication – that is, when one is discarded from the household, family or coven that raised the.

The Cavalier in the Slatewind

Cavaliers fall into one of two categories – those linked to Houses – that is, families, clans & bloodlines, and those linked to locations – courts, governments & so on. A cavalier linked to the land is going to most likely be from Saedu – which is governed by a variety of lords all in contention, Shield – in which location they are military officers. Political operatives in what remains of Elan are a hybrid of connections while those of Red Banks & Sword of the West are almost entirely hereditarily gained positions of authority. The Cavaliers of Bitter are all in exile owing to that city's revolution & they tend to seek accommodation in cities that once profited from & helped their class. Termus' cavalier class is largely ceremonial rather than authoritative – they lack an established hierarchy to rule over & in the end are all single-generation cultural icons rather than serious political contenders. Among the Elves the Cavalier is a ruler – a member of an aristocratic knighthood. Dwarves & Orcs & Goblins have little use for this type of ceremonial honor-guard but Halflings are known to organize much of their sub-cultural political identity around specific cavaliers who function as liaisons with the authorities of the big folk.

The Cenobite from the South

Members of ascetic orders exist anywhere religions have propagated. Often, cenobites are the surplus children of nobles or wealthy elites who's patrimony would be spread thin among too many offspring. Sometimes a cenobite is a kind of holy or enlightened pauper, one who seeks succor from a religion where civil society offers little or none.

The Cenobite in the Slatewind

The premier residence for cenobites in the Slatewind Valley is **Termus** – a city governed by an abbot & managed by their subordinates – all of whom are cenobites. Monastic tradition among the **Quet** & the authority that is vested in such offices by the Quet ethos has produced a society run by selfless public servants whose mission is dictated by silent & helpful gods. The Quet divinities are a focus for the performance of civic ritual & the acts of devotion required by cenobites mesh well with the establishment & propagation of an efficient civil order. The Gods of the **Khin**, or god- as the Khin's divinities are a triune being, the god with 3 faces do receive supplicants whose purity is established through self-denial & in some instances self-mortification – followers of these gods tend to live in seclusion & to experience their roles of humility, suffering & penance in remote isolation. The **Saayang** gods accept their aged priests & servants into a sort of monasticism which is hard to distinguish from retirement – however, these old priests, when they join the cloistered orders – take on new roles & tasks & often these are taken on as a way of expiating the sins of the churches that they once served – as such, the late-life cenobites of the Saayang faiths will tend to be unrecognizable as members of a particular cult- since their behavior is peculiarly at odds with what is prescribed by their divinity.





The Charlatan



Decieving cheat, the Charlatan misdirects individuals & audencies with false prophecies & fraudulent fortunes. Sometimes the Charlatan will pursue misdirection out of some larger conspiracy rather than pure greed.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+7
CON	d6+6
DEX	d6+2
INT	d6+6
STR	d6+0
WIS	d6+3

Saving Throws	
Breath	17
Devices	16
Paralysis	18
Death	16
Spells	15

Adventuring Skills	
Instrument	3
Joke	3
Languages	3
Move Quietly	2
Pick Pockets	2
Trickery	2
Vocals	1

Hit Dice d8
Starting HP d8+2
Melee Bonus: +2
Ranged Bonus: +1

Damage Bonus: +0
AC Bonus: +2
Initiative: DEX+d6
Movement: STR+4

Language Rolls: 2
Parley Dice: d4 / d4
Gear Rolls: 12

Ability List

Disguise **Glammer** **Forgery**

Ethereal Beauty **Sociability** **Mentalism**

Phrenology: Charlatans can use trickery & wit to persuade others that they have a psychological or physiological ailment. When the charlatan uses this technique on an NPC who is at least *Neutral* the NPC must save vs. Spells or suffer a d6 Fear effect and a d4 sickened effect.

Audacity Piety Ego







The Chronicler



A recordkeeper who notes the mundane details of daily life, including the time of the setting sun, the weather, the heights of rivers, the births & deaths of people & of nations, kings & religions.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+3
CON	d6+3
DEX	d6+4
INT	d6+9
STR	d6+0
WIS	d6+7

Saving Throws	
Breath	19
Devices	16
Paralysis	19
Death	16
Spells	16

Adventuring Skills	
Composition	3
Gift	3
Judge Alignment	3
Languages	2
Numeracy	2
Theurgy	2
Vocals	1

Hit Dice d8
Starting HP d8+2
Melee Bonus: +1
Ranged Bonus: +1

Damage Bonus: +0
AC Bonus: +1
Initiative: DEX+d8
Movement: STR+2

Language Rolls: 3
Parley Dice: d8 / d6
Gear Rolls: 13

Ability List

Communion **Scholarship** **Resistance**

Prayers **Survival** **Song**

Recollections: Chroniclers are able to recollect important information at will. Once per game session the chronicler may make a d20 INT check, on a successful check they remember something pertient & valuable about the situation they face at the moment - it may be something that has not been heretofore revealed at the table.

Civility Piety Fairness



The Chronicler from the South

Usually a chronicler lacks a sense of adventure or the desire to seek it, but intermittently there is one who is intrepid & who will travel far into unknown territories to create a record of foreign people & the events that shape their lives. Chroniclers from the south are researchers & almost tourists, strangers in a strange land seeking to mitigate all the strangeness.

The Chronicler in the Slatewind

The Censors of **Zenith** & the Aediles of **Shield** are the two pre-eminent bureaucracies within the Slatewind. The Censors take census, not just of people but of trees, crops, birds & insects – they make meticulous records of all produce & production for the purposes of the **Gaalist** church's actuarial guide, a periodical tome that helps the church to underwrite its usury. The Censors have numerous field agents, often traveling incognito. Shield's Aediles are notably less fussy or predatory – their reocrds-keeping is more in the line of natural history – though heavily shaded with considerations of defense. The city's great bureaucratic offices are associated with the god Shiddush, the priests of whom govern the overwrought structure of Shield's civic culture. The Aediles are tasked with recording the details of the lands – gaining information & recording it in their burgeoning library, which is at present, merely an impressively sized storeroom full of scraps of knowledge, neither organized nor indexed – collating all of this disparate information is considered among the world's impossible tasks.

The Charlatan from the South

No society is free of con artists & mountebanks. A charlatan driven from their home following exposure as a humbug could do far worse than to start their career anew in the North. The Slatewind provides an excellent opportunity for a defamed charlatan, or perhaps a young & enterprising apprentice seeking to engage in their own tricky business. The primary difficulty such a character may experience is the rather crowded field, as carpet-bagging hucksters are all too commonly found in the Slatewind's settlements.

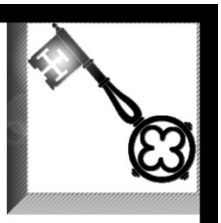
The Charlatan in the Slatewind

The Slatewind's numerous churches & many religious offices are rarely united but their contempt for profane parody of their practices is unanimous. The charlatan begins their career in the slatewind with many enemies. Their allies are often not gained through truthful interactions either, and so their friends aren't really friends are they? The charlatan in the slatewind stands alone & as such is most likely either afflicted by an unwholesome mental condition, or persuaded by their own deceptions. Principal among the latter are the followers of **Ultist.** The Elf-God is not considered divine by most of the rest of the pantheon, and is deemed, by most priests, to be the pre-eminent charlatan of the times – a trickster & mountebank with persuasive delusions of grandeur & conquest. Many despise the Ultist, but many fear what it could mean if its claims proved true. Of course, some see Ultist not as an inspiring figure of divinity, but as an inspiring figure of trickery. Many charlatans simply follow the Ultist's example – up to the point of being eternally persecuted by the city of **Zenith** – searching out credulous rubes to bilk using the honeyed words of the evangelists.





The Confessor



Specialist clergy to whom it is given the task of ascribing pennance for misdeeds committed by the faithful & to accuse those who's faith has lapsed.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+6
CON	d6+3
DEX	d6+3
INT	d6+7
STR	d6+1
WIS	d6+5

Saving Throws	
Breath	19
Devices	14
Paralysis	19
Death	14
Spells	16

Adventuring Skills	
Composition	3
Hear Noise	3
Hide in Shadow	3
Judge Alignment	2
Languages	2
Move Quietly	2
Theurgy	1

Hit Dice d8
Starting HP d8+2
Melee Bonus: +1
Ranged Bonus: +1

Damage Bonus: +0
AC Bonus: +1
Initiative: DEX+d8
Movement: STR+4

Language Rolls: 2
Parley Dice: d8 / d6
Gear Rolls: 12

Ability List

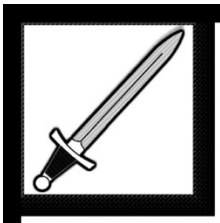
Claimant **Mental Fortitude** **Destruction**

Communion **Resistance** **Prayers**

Absolution: Confessors can remove the sins of others so long as they are part of the same religion. By unburdening themselves to the confessor, any character can reset their prayer score to zero, reciveing forgiveness for any sins they may have committed. Similarly, they may remove the prayers of the unworthy by takign an action & provoking a Save vs. Spells in one target. If the target fails – they loose any prayer points they have gained through *supplications*. This ability is useable once per session. Confessors can't absolve themselves.

Piety Kindness Fairness







The Contender



A flamboyant warrior who fights for adulation & a love of contests. Newly entered into the professional lists, the Competitor may become a Gladiator or Athlete or any other type of competitor.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+5
CON	d6+1
DEX	d6+9
INT	d6+0
STR	d6+4
WIS	d6+8

Saving Throws	
Breath	18
Devices	17
Paralysis	18
Death	17
Spells	18

Adventuring Skills	
Detect Traps	3
Hear Noise	3
Hide in Shadow	3
Investigate	2
Navigate	2
Pick Pockets	2
Scale Walls	1

Hit Dice d6
Starting HP d6+1
Melee Bonus: +3
Ranged Bonus: +1

Damage Bonus: +1
AC Bonus: +1
Initiative: DEX+d6
Movement: STR+4

Language Rolls: 1
Parley Dice: d6 / d6
Gear Rolls: 11

Ability List

Predation **Disguise** **Heightened Senses**

Endurance **Survival** **Traveler**

Underdog: Contenders can achieve much more than most would credit. Once per session a contender can choose to automatically succede a To-Hit roll against a target that has more HP than they do.

Audacity Belligerence Fairness



The Confessor from the South

Any given religion has its own litany of sins & their requisite penances. A confessor may pursue heretics from their home in the hope of absolving them, or they may have been driven from their home during a time of reformation or rising fundamentalism. In general though, a confessor holds their religion & their religious following very closely & will be driven by the dictates of their god & faith.

The Confessor in the Slatewind

Amrenweets, the Plioshr goddess of family & unity has her own contingent of Confessors, known as the **Guides**, these priests seek to reconcile family divisions & broker peace between feuding contingents, they are known to handle restitution fairly & to practice a method of restorative justice. The guides are more famous than their minimal numbers would imply. More commonly one might encounter the self-styled confessors of **Ailise** – these are devotees of the goddess of spite who take it upon themselves to exact vengeance upon the wicked & to terrify the masses into compliance. These confessors have no hierarchy to answer to, no religion to speak of, rather it is a spiritual bond they share with the goddess who guides their heinous actions through visions & dreams. Beyond these two most notable outliers, most of the churches in the slatewind's pantheon have some variant of the confessor – one who hears & witnesses the wrongdoing of the faithful & who tries to set them right through mindful religious practice.

The Contender from the South

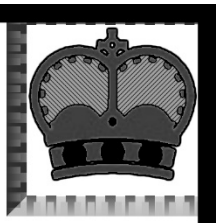
The settled, easy south makes a poor home for the truly intent contender. The north is too ripe a fruit not to be snatched by those with much to prove for themselves. The slatewind in particular makes an excellent home for a contender – as it is wild & dangerous, but populous enough that word of ones' deeds is sure to spread.

The Contender in the Slatewind

The Great Games at **Duskystone Island** is a pre-eminent event of the slatewind valley. The ten provinces & their capitols all send as many champions as they can muster to these sporadically held contests. The Great Games are a fundamental cornerstone of the slatewind's cultural identity. They serve to moderate conflicts between cities, to enhance the bonds between people & to create a beloved spectacle for all the land's people. Contenders at the games (and its numerous qualifying rounds & imitators) find themselves with a surefeit of opportunities to contest with others & to make a name for themselves. Whether the slatewind provides a fertile ground for contenders to flourish, or whether the innumerable contenders in the slatewind have created this reputation is an open question – suffice to say every city & culture has its own contenders.

Further exposition regarding contenders & especially the Great Games can be found in **The Contest for Champions** – the first supplemental adventure guide for the **In the Ruins** setting.





The Diabolist

Highly accomplished magicians whose powers are linked to prehistoric traditions and mysterious insights granted from otherworldly mentors.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+6
CON	d6+5
DEX	d6+3
INT	d6+5
STR	d6+3
WIS	d6+6

Saving Throws	
Breath	18
Devices	19
Paralysis	19
Death	19
Spells	17

Adventuring Skills	
Alchemy	3
Forage	3
Gift	3
Medicine	2
Poisoning	2
Sorcery	2
Trickery	1

Hit Dice d8
Starting HP d8+2
Melee Bonus: +2
Ranged Bonus: +2

Damage Bonus: +0
AC Bonus: +1
Initiative: DEX+d6
Movement: STR+4

Language Rolls: 2
Parley Dice: d6 / d6
Gear Rolls: 11

Ability List

Horrific **Spellbook** **Shamanism**

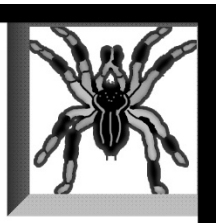
Resourcefulness **Wizardry** **Tinkering**

Mentor: Diabolists are bound to one demon, all of the summoning spells they are able to learn or cast relate to the manifestation of that demon, but all those spells are considered two levels lower for the purpose of casting the summoning.

Audacity Civility Defiance







The Diviner

Prophetic seer not affiliated with a religion. Diviners are gifted at seeing the future, the past and remote corners of the present.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+3
CON	d6+4
DEX	d6+4
INT	d6+6
STR	d6+5
WIS	d6+7

Saving Throws	
Breath	19
Devices	18
Paralysis	18
Death	18
Spells	18

Adventuring Skills	
Detect Traps	3
Hear Noise	3
Hide in Shadow	3
Judge Alignment	2
Move Quietly	2
Sorcery	2
Theurgy	1

Hit Dice d8
Starting HP d8+2
Melee Bonus: +1
Ranged Bonus: +1

Damage Bonus: +1
AC Bonus: +2
Initiative: DEX+d6
Movement: STR+2

Language Rolls: 2
Parley Dice: d8 / d6
Gear Rolls: 13

Ability List

Circles **Lucky** **Jinx**

Divination **Riches** **Prayers**

Weather Eye: Diviners can sense the weather's changes & can always predict the weather in their location accurately for up to a week.

Nobility Civility Fairness



The Diabolist from the South

Wherever people have magical ambition there are those who seek the easy path & sinister tutelage of the diabolical spirits from beyond the sky. Diabolists are often the subject of much persecution and so fleeing to the north is often the only sensible choice a cornered diabolist can make, should they wish to continue in their infernal arts. Not that the slatewind is particularly accommodating to diabolists, even in the north a pupil of demons ought to err on the side of discretion.

The Diabolist in the Slatewind

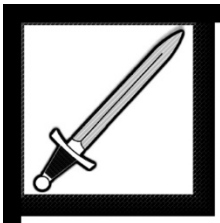
Though several of the gods in the slatewind pantheon may seem diabolical, even wicked – they're still gods & their power derives from this. Demons are another matter and those who truck with them do so in the face of the divine's acrimony. Why the gods should hold hostility for demons or vice-versa is an academic matter of some obscurity, suffice to say that a diabolist in the slatewind is unwelcome in strongholds of religious sentiment. Demons are capricious and not always loathsome, or even *evil* in a mortal sense (though many are all of these). The demons that have invested their energies into the Slatewind tend to be from the Black or the White moons – the bifurcated land of Intensity & Secrecy. The hierarchy of demons from these realms is in conflict the **Samnite Prince** & its opposite the **Fuliginous Shogun** hold sway over legions of partisans in their endless conflict. These demons encompass different, inscrutable values that have little relationship with mortal norms. Both parties see the slatewind as the opening of a new front in their ongoing war – and a diabolist aligned with one must be wary of diabolists with contrary affiliations – as their patrons will likely goad them into seemingly pointless conflict. Variants of the **Lantern Book** & the **Shadow Tome** can be found, sometimes in innocuous circumstances – since the magic within them only seems to speak to those already inclined toward their most accomplished use.

The Diviner from the South

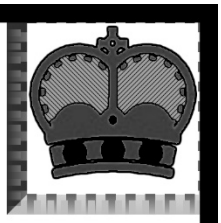
A fortuneteller or medium from the south must have foreseen a proper reason for journeying to the north, surely there is some portent that has directed the character to the valley.

The Diviner in the Slatewind

Diviners in the slatewind are neither hindered nor sanctioned by any of the churches. Indeed most diviners take on the role of a hedge-wizard or cunning-man. Someone in the world who has powerful intuitions concerning the world's workings. Different cultures tend to uphold different qualities within their diviners. **Plioshr** nomads have a special regard for those who can predict weather while **Saayang** peoples are commonly interested in auspicious portents foretelling good fortune. **Brizai** culture favors those who divine the proper placement of wells & the anticipatory migrations of birds. A diviner who is particularly skillful will find many open doors & easy access to leaders – and among these the fashions for fortunetelling vary. In **Sword of the West** the rolling of bones is preferred while at **Zenith** they clamor for card readings, meantime in **Red Banks** the style is for palmistry.



The Duelist



A warrior for hire or combative athlete, Duelists may fight for right, for money or for fame.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+1
CON	d6+4
DEX	d6+7
INT	d6+1
STR	d6+9
WIS	d6+5

Saving Throws	
Breath	19
Devices	17
Paralysis	16
Death	17
Spells	18

Adventuring Skills	
Composition	3
Gift	3
Instrument	3
Investigate	2
Joke	2
Trickery	2
Vocals	1

Hit Dice d8
Starting HP d8+2
Melee Bonus: +2
Ranged Bonus: +1

Damage Bonus: +2
AC Bonus: +2
Initiative: DEX+d6
Movement: STR+2

Language Rolls: 1
Parley Dice: d6 / d6
Gear Rolls: 12

Ability List

Claimant **Ritual** **Lucky**

Defender **Vanguard** **Scholarship**

Laws of Honor: A duelist can instigate a duel to resolve any type of legal dispute. These need not be fatal, but all who participate agree to abide by the results of the duel. Duels are brief combats between only two individuals with rules set out by both parties prior to the fight.

Nobility Belligerence Fairness









The Executioner

The final instrument of authority is the Executioner, who kills helpless captives in aid of a larger vision of society.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+3
CON	d6+1
DEX	d6+8
INT	d6+5
STR	d6+4
WIS	d6+7

Saving Throws	
Breath	19
Devices	17
Paralysis	18
Death	17
Spells	19

Adventuring Skills	
Alchemy	3
Building	3
Composition	3
Judge Alignment	2
Poisoning	2
Theurgy	2
Vocals	1

Hit Dice d6
Starting HP d6+1
Melee Bonus: +2
Ranged Bonus: +1

Damage Bonus: +1
AC Bonus: +1
Initiative: DEX+d6
Movement: STR+2

Language Rolls: 2
Parley Dice: d8 / d6
Gear Rolls: 12

Ability List

Claimant **Communion** **Destruction**

Horrific **Predation** **Weaponry**

Misericord: Executioners have an aptitude for landing a final, merciful blow. Whenever you attack a recumbent or incapacitated target you deal triple your normal damage.

Civility Belligerence Fairness



The Duelist from the South

Depending upon one's home culture a duelist may be a practitioner of law, a vicious gladiator or a masterful artist – all of these are possible flavors of the same basic set of disciplines. It may be that as a duelist you've come to the north to seek out a specific rival, or you may have come in search of work, having heard that the courts of the north rely upon martial tests more than they do rules of evidence.

The Duelist in the Slatewind

Among the **Saayang** the duelist is considered a legal expert. Presenting as a professional, the duelist decides matters of law by dueling another professional of the same vocation. There are a few schools of such legalistic dueling – all govern the use of a paired sword & dagger. These schools are colorfully named **Falcon at Rest, Southern Horizon Cloud, Falling Star School** – these are the preeminent colleges & each of these operate out of **Sword of the West**. While dueling for law is a Saayang tradition it hasn't caught up with all of the slatewind – though it is growing. The **Khin** have little use for duelists as they prefer to have matters of law decided by evidence & their entertainments to be less competitive. Among the **Halflings** duels – particularly those involving fist-fights – are seen as a good method for avoiding larger feuds & they have their own styles of pugilism specialized for their minute physiology. **Dwarf** duelists are uncommon but they are notable for their preference for pistols & hatchets over swords & their tendency to do battle over matters of family honor rather than law. **Brizai** duelists are far closer to gladiators or even street fighters than others – most come from the lower caste & battle one another for the amusement of the patrician classes. **Quet** duelists are notorious everywhere for their idiosyncratic methods (no schools of Quet dueling exist, all are self-taught) and for their inscrutable aims (most Quet duelists simply seek to prove themselves superior to their contemporaries) & their choice of arms (the Quet traditionally duel with ash staves only).

The Executioner from the South

Perhaps a community requires an executioner and so has sent south for a professional. Or perhaps you're nothing more than a vicious murderer who is seeking sanction for their malice by heading north, where you have heard that there is a need for hangmen & headsmen.

The Executioner in the Slatewind

The most prolific executioners in the Slatewind are the **Plioshr** for whom all sorts of property crimes involving herds & mounts are capital offenses. Their usual method is to pick a child from an early age & to ostracize & humiliate that child until they have developed a proper hatred for people. Then they train that child to carry out the strangling execution without bias or pity – for to the Plioshr executioner all are equal & equally hated. The **Khin** use execution often but their methods are frequently indistinguishable from torture and a specialist is hardly needed. Those places where the **Quet** dominate do not execute those who have offended the law, rather, they are maimed – but professionals are required for this & their executioners are very similar to surgeons. Among the **Dwarves** execution is a community activity – they favor stoning. **Brizai** culture accommodates two different classes of executioner – the hangman– for the lower castes & the drowner for the upper castes – those trained to perform these executions are taught to never spill blood during the act, an important idea in Brizai psychology.



The Explorer

One who seeks out the unknown places of the world to discover, document and traverse always in search of new frontiers.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+0
CON	d6+5
DEX	d6+5
INT	d6+5
STR	d6+5
WIS	d6+4

Saving Throws	
Breath	19
Devices	18
Paralysis	16
Death	18
Spells	16

Adventuring Skills	
Forage	3
Gift	3
Hear Noise	3
Investigate	2
Languages	2
Navigate	2
Scale Walls	1

Hit Dice d10
Starting HP d10+3
Melee Bonus: +1
Ranged Bonus: +2

Damage Bonus: +2
AC Bonus: +2
Initiative: DEX+d6
Movement: STR+4

Language Rolls: 2
Parley Dice: d4 / d4
Gear Rolls: 12

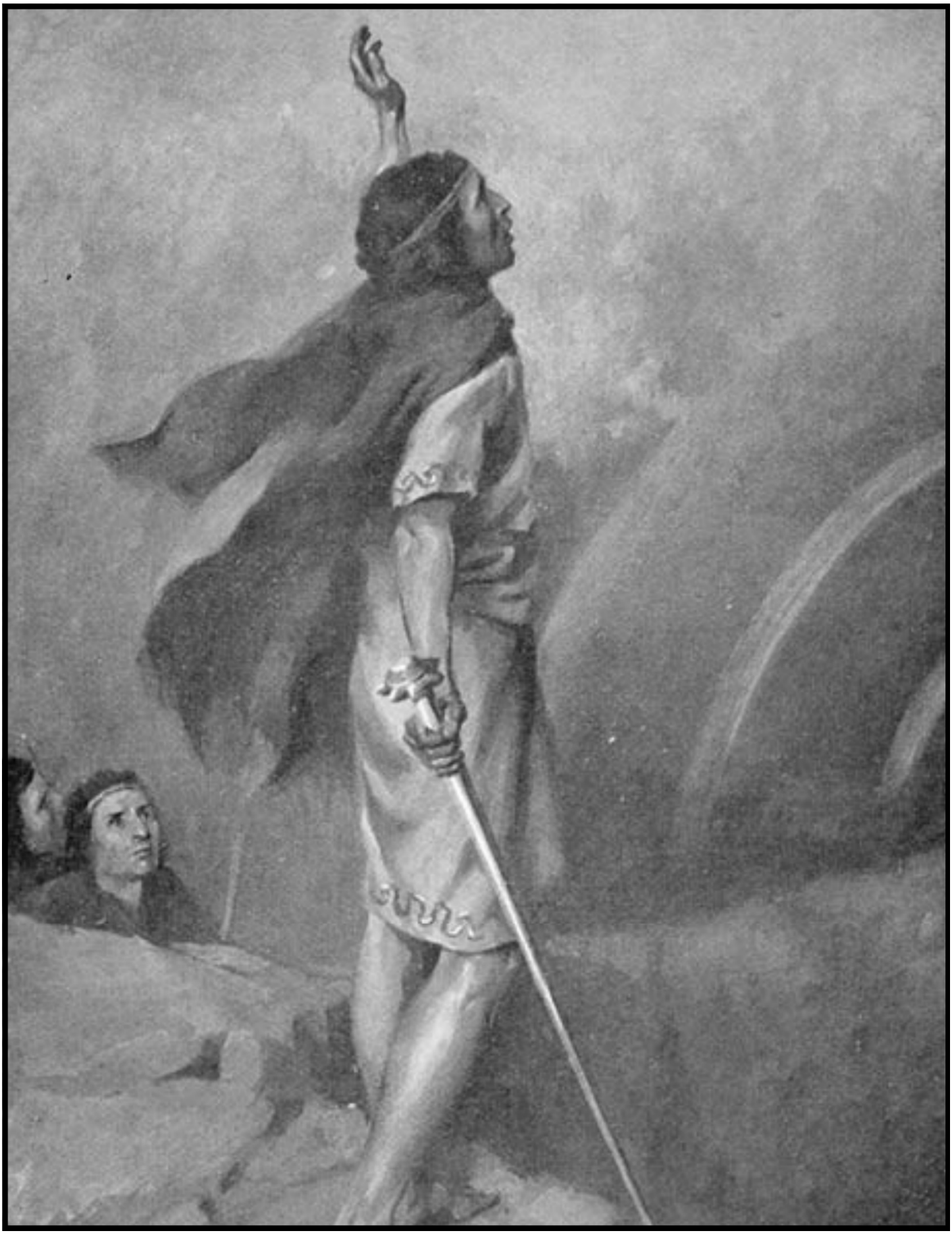
Ability List

Heightened Senses **Traceless Passing** **Survival**

Resourcefulness **Wayfinding** **Traveler**

Expedition: When you pack for your, or your group's expedition you halve the encumbrance values for all food & water carried by everyone within the group.

Nobility Impulse Piety







The Fakir



One who uses magic to manipulate beleivers & to receive money & adulation or to promote a lifestyle of purity or abstinence of some variety. Often considered holy, some actually are.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+5
CON	d6+6
DEX	d6+1
INT	d6+11
STR	d6+0
WIS	d6+2

Saving Throws	
Breath	19
Devices	16
Paralysis	18
Death	16
Spells	16

Adventuring Skills	
Alchemy	3
Composition	3
Detect Traps	3
Hear Noise	2
Instrument	2
Medicine	2
Poisoning	1

Hit Dice d8	Damage Bonus: +0	
Starting HP d8+2	AC Bonus: +2	Language Rolls: 3
Melee Bonus: +1	Initiative: DEX+d6	Parley Dice: d6 / d6
Ranged Bonus: +1	Movement: STR+2	Gear Rolls: 13

Ability List

Healer **Spellbook** **Scholarship**

Heightened Senses **Wizardry** **Tinkering**

Unsettle: Your demonstrations & performances are tinged with a sense of the unreal & bizarre. Whenever you cause an effect on a target that requires a saving throw - on a failed save the target also suffers a d4 Fear effect. If the effect already causes a fear effect, you cause a d4 sickened effect instead.

Civility Piety Ego



The Explorer from the South

Usually an explorer from the south is arriving as part of a larger company of similarly equipped adventurers. These are daring folk who have been sent by their homelands to explore an unknown territory. Not all explorers are state agents however, some operate as part of a private industry & some are merely curious individuals who've decided to take a long journey far from familiar places.

The Explorer in the Slatewind

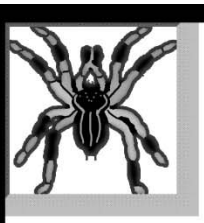
The Slatewind valley is settled. People crowd upon its plains & along its creeks & rivers. It is a well charted place. That said – it has been settled before, many times before. There are traces of civilizations & the ruins of empires to be found everywhere and no-one knows what these could be or where they are from or what lies within them. The slatewind valley is settled & it is surveyed but it is very far from explored. There are innumerable unbeaten paths that call to the intrepid soul to seek out what is hidden. The records houses at **Termus** in the Stupa of **Tulat Ku** pays a premium to anyone who adds to the collection of esoteric miscellany from unknown ancient folk, while valuable items from out of the ruins will draw a high price from just about anyone. Value is a subjective term & what one seeks may well be the garbage of antiquity - assuming one explores for profit. Many seek simply to seek, they revel in the ruins & in learning that which is unknown. Explorers are highly individualistic & their motivations are usually not analogous to the motivations of other explorers.

The Fakir from the South

What's customary for one culture is exotic and possibly repulsive to another. A character accustomed to eating the tripe of animals or who is conditioned from youth to handle fire could find themselves a lucrative vocation demonstrating their outlandish customs in the north. A fakir from the south could be an all-around average person brought up in an idiosyncratic culture.

The Fakir in the Slatewind

Slatewind Fakirs are abundant. Not only because there are innumerable bizarre customs on display from the myriad immigrant folk of the south – but because there is an actual market for their performances throughout the valley. **Termus** has its own square devoted to the performance of weird practices – **Grinner Square** on the city's west side. **Elan** has a similar bazaar and there is a circuit of itinerant performers – nail-walkers, fire-sleepers, starvation-artists, gluttons & knife-swallowers, geeks & oddities all of whom travel the towns of **Saedu.** Only **Red Banks** doesn't welcome the occasional Fakir – as the cleverness & cynicism that the city is famed for tends to defeat the gimmicks of any would be trickster & only the boldest & most confident of Fakirs will tempt the judgment of the **Withering Parliament** – a gathering of the city's own intellectual class which judges (usually quite mercilessly) all extraordinary claims made.





The Forger

A criminal crafter who creates false versions of valuable items including coins, documents, artworks and relics, often passing themselves off as someone they are not.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+12
CON	d6+4
DEX	d6+2
INT	d6+5
STR	d6+1
WIS	d6+3

Saving Throws	
Breath	18
Devices	16
Paralysis	19
Death	16
Spells	18

Adventuring Skills	
Alchemy	3
Building	3
Composition	3
Detect Traps	2
Hide in Shadow	2
Move Quietly	2
Trickery	1

Hit Dice d6
Starting HP d6+1
Melee Bonus: +2
Ranged Bonus: +1

Damage Bonus: +0
AC Bonus: +2
Initiative: DEX+d4
Movement: STR+6

Language Rolls: 1
Parley Dice: d6 / d6
Gear Rolls: 11

Ability List

Artisan **Overlooked** **Forgery**

Disguise **Traceless Passing** **Riches**

Passable: Forgers begin the game with triple the number of coins normally indicated, having infused the metals of their coins with common materials & having minted fraudulent coins from the cut.

Audacity Kindness Ego







The Fugitive

One who is hiding out from pursuing authorities. Fugitives may be fleeing slavery, incarceration, family life or religious callings.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+4
CON	d6+5
DEX	d6+7
INT	d6+0
STR	d6+3
WIS	d6+8

Saving Throws	
Breath	19
Devices	19
Paralysis	18
Death	19
Spells	17

Adventuring Skills	
Hide in Shadow	3
Languages	3
Move Quietly	3
Numeracy	2
Sorcery	2
Theurgy	2
Vocals	1

Hit Dice d8
Starting HP d8+2
Melee Bonus: +2
Ranged Bonus: +3

Damage Bonus: +1
AC Bonus: +1
Initiative: DEX+d6
Movement: STR+6

Language Rolls: 1
Parley Dice: d4 / d4
Gear Rolls: 10

Ability List

Circles **Mental Fortitude** **Mentalism**

Predation **Signaling** **Traceless Passing**

Escape: A fugitive is good at one thing at least, escaping capture. You can choose, once per session, to break free of any bond that holds you automatically without a check.

Audacity Impulse Defiance



The Forger from the South

Driven away after being caught? Simply making use of falsified documents to elude some other fate? A forger may even know their own reasons for leaving the south – their way forward in the slatewind is more or less a matter of preference – after all, a forger writes his own ticket.

The Forger in the Slatewind

The officiousness at **Shield**, the rigor at **Diya,** the assessments at **Zenith** – there is a trail of money & paper that wends throughout the slatewind – between lending receipts, religious indulgences, false relics of the ancients & the odd coin or two there is no shortage of materials that people seek to have altered. More still will happily be tricked by materials too good to be true as, all the forgers know, what's real isn't all that believable. This axiom is well known in **Able** where the once notorious forger **Inimitable Gilmer Feetz** resides. The master of the mint at Able, the old scoundrel has gone pro – advising & overseeing the coining of all the slatewind's cash. The coins minted at Able are the hardest to foil or reproduce – based upon the weight, the shape & the inscriptions. This isn't to say that there isn't other currency one could falsify – but the coin of Able is regarded as the most reliable – and all for the work of one forger.

The Fugitive from the South

One cannot escape their own guilt - that follows a person through life. One can escape the consequences though, and that's generally accepted as a pretty good deal. A fugitive from the south is someone who comes with nothing, having left behind their crimes and their punishment – Slatewind Valley may be a clean slate, or it may offer the chance to continue your sordid behavior.

The Fugitive in the Slatewind

One type of fugitive is more abundant than all other varieties in the valley & that is **Brizai** slaves. The caste structure of the Khin peoples declares that about 2 of every 3 Khin people are unfit to govern their own lives & must be made to serve the final third. This state of affairs is accepted by few but enforced by many. After all the **Plioshr** consider their dogs their brothers – people just like them – and the **Saayang** are by no means lavish with their bestowing of dignity to other humans, considering them somehow short of being fully human. So who is to say that the Brizai can't consider some people to be property instead of people? This attitude is uncommon but it is becoming more accepted – particularly as it becomes more lucrative. The usurers at **Zenith** are especially amenable to the idea as it allows them to gather value even from defaulted loans – and there are many in the slatewind who are fleeing their creditors lest they face servitude. Naturally there are fugitives who are fleeing a more just form of justice – escaped prisoners are a universal misfortune.

The Gallowglass

Warriors of another realm, far travelers who's mystical talents & codes of honor are unique, even alien. Such warriors make excellent hired soldiers.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+0
CON	d6+8
DEX	d6+4
INT	d6+1
STR	d6+12
WIS	d6+1

Saving Throws	
Breath	19
Devices	19
Paralysis	15
Death	19
Spells	17

Adventuring Skills	
Detect Traps	3
Hear Noise	3
Joke	3
Judge Alignment	2
Poisoning	2
Scale Walls	2
Siege	1

Hit Dice d10
Starting HP d10+3
Melee Bonus: +2
Ranged Bonus: +2

Damage Bonus: +2
AC Bonus: +2
Initiative: DEX+d6
Movement: STR+2

Language Rolls: 1
Parley Dice: d4 / d4
Gear Rolls: 11

Ability List

Destruction **Spellbook** **Rampage**

Guardian **Wizardry** **Vanguard**

Exotic: Intermittently a Gallowglass may encounter other outlanders or foreigners - when they do, make a d20 INT check - on a succcessful check the Gallowglass has a passing familiarity with that culture & speaks a bit of the language. They improve both social dice by a size whenever they have this experience of a foreign culture.

Nobility Defiance Belligerence





The Gambler

Gamblers seek to profit without work, they play at odds & know many tricks for multiplying their fortunes through games of chance.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+5
CON	d6+6
DEX	d6+5
INT	d6+0
STR	d6+3
WIS	d6+9

Saving Throws	
Breath	18
Devices	18
Paralysis	19
Death	18
Spells	16

Adventuring Skills	
Numeracy	3
Detect Traps	3
Hide in Shadow	3
Medicine	2
Move Quietly	2
Poisoning	2
Scale Walls	1

Hit Dice d8
Starting HP d8+2
Melee Bonus: +2
Ranged Bonus: +2

Damage Bonus: +0
AC Bonus: +1
Initiative: DEX+d8
Movement: STR+4

Language Rolls: 1
Parley Dice: d6 / d6
Gear Rolls: 11

Ability List

Divination **Jinx** **Lucky**

Riches **Signaling** **Sociability**

Raise the Stakes: You can increase the difficulty of a test voluntarily by raising the difficulty die by one step. If you succede at this check you receive 100 Xp.

Audacity Defiance Fairness



The Gallowglass from the South

Virtually all Gallowglasses are from the south, by definition these warriors are foreigners. A Gallowglass is a mercenary soldier with an altogether foreign code. Their talents, skills & ritualistic practice begins at peculiar and usually veers deep into alien. They are sought after in the slatewind because of their lack of recognizable ethics and because they do not have exploitable connections to others in the region.

The Gallowglass in the Slatewind

There aren't native Gallowglasses – that would be a paradox. However, there is a unique cohort of warriors – alien warriors – who operate in the slatewind. **The Infernal Band of Able** is a legion drawn from the Carmine Moon – transported to earth through magical means. The Infernal Band is comprised of part-demons, half-fiends & a variety of alien beings. This band carved out the expanse & made it habitable & the city of Able would scarcely exist without their efforts. But this was more than a hundred years ago. Most of the band has been disbanded and the few that remain do so out of fear of the fate that awaits them back in their homeland. In the intervening decades some of these beings have taken to training & indoctrinating all who come to them, expanding the band & creating a second generation. These are the Gallowglasses of the slatewind, students of the Infernal Band & its final Captain **Ritheloth the Doubly Unkind** – a two headed demon who trains up the reckless to become the greatest of warriors.

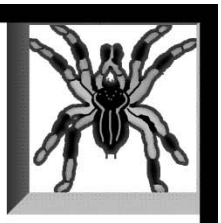
The Gambler from the South

Risk & reward are universal. Staking much to earn much & playing at chances is something found in all cultures and all times. A gambler who travels north may be eluding creditors, may be evading a collection on their own losses and may have even come to the north on a bet.

The Gambler in the Slatewind

These are the games of chance most played in the slatewind. In **Termus** gambling is on fights between beasts – usually fish & spiders. In **Sword of the West** gamblers can wager on the rolls of dice with a variety of games being played, all using dice. **Zenith** favors cards – with whist & bridge being the favorites. At **Able** one can gamble on races – of dogs, horses & people. The casino at **Bitter** is for spinners of wheels and players of the numerous lotteries. **Red Bank** has its boat regattas and boxing matches while at **Shield** one tends to bet on the sword fights. At **Diya** there is a wagering system based upon the prayers sung by the muezzin. At **Saedu** they gamble on all of these and more still. The most accomplished gamblers are considered to be the ones that wager the most – not those who win most often. The preeminent activity upon which all gambling is focused in the slatewind are the **Great Games at Duskystone Island.**





The Geometer

Scholar of angles and measures who is a master of construction and planning with interesting insights into geometry.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+6
CON	d6+6
DEX	d6+3
INT	d6+3
STR	d6+4
WIS	d6+6

Saving Throws	
Breath	19
Devices	16
Paralysis	19
Death	16
Spells	17

Adventuring Skills	
Building	3
Composition	3
Detect Traps	3
Hide in Shadow	2
Investigate	2
Numeracy	2
Siege	1

Hit Dice d8
Starting HP d8+2
Melee Bonus: +1
Ranged Bonus: +2

Damage Bonus: +0
AC Bonus: +1
Initiative: DEX+d8
Movement: STR+4

Language Rolls: 1
Parley Dice: d8 / d6
Gear Rolls: 11

Ability List

Artisan **Circles** **Heightened Senses**

Mental Fortitude **Scholarship** **Tinkering**

Calculating: Geometers are able to discern angles & to utilize them to their advantage. You increase your movement speed by your HD & you improve your ranged to-hit score by +1 per turn you spend calculating optimal velocities. You can spend a number of turns on this task equal to twice your HD.

Defiance Kindness Fairness







The Hakim

Polymath physicians whose practice of medicine is supported by wealthy patrons & who in turn spread their methods far & wide in an ongoing battle against disease.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+10
CON	d6+4
DEX	d6+1
INT	d6+10
STR	d6+1
WIS	d6+2

Saving Throws	
Breath	19
Devices	16
Paralysis	19
Death	16
Spells	19

Adventuring Skills	
Alchemy	3
Alchemy	3
Composition	3
Gift	2
Investigate	2
Medicine	2
Poisoning	1

Hit Dice d6
Starting HP d6+1
Melee Bonus: +1
Ranged Bonus: +1

Damage Bonus: +0
AC Bonus: +2
Initiative: DEX+d4
Movement: STR+4

Language Rolls: 2
Parley Dice: d8 / d6
Gear Rolls: 12

Ability List

Domesticity **Riches** **Heightened Senses**

Healer **Tinkering** **Ritual**

Diagnosis: You can make a d20 INT check when examining a patient. If you succede, there is no chance of consuming your healing items in treating those ailments. You reroll any result of 1 on the check to apply healing.

Civility Kindness Ego



The Geometer from the South

Sacred architecture is a peculiar thing. Not all cultures practice it through practice. In many cases it's a highly specialized art that only a few are involved in, often in secret. Many of the great cities of the south have a geometer to thank for their construction whether the people of the cities know it or not. What with the whole south being settled & built, an ambitious geometer would naturally turn their attention north, where the possibility of constructing a magnum opus is more present.

The Geometer in the Slatewind

Termus, more than any other place in the slatewind & possibly the world, has a place for geometers. The **Quet** people generally have a favorable view of the sacred geometries, in the flow of energy through space & its power over mood, disposition & health. This fashion in Termus has grown & is beginning to appear elsewhere – particularly in **Red Banks** a subdivision of which is currently under construction by **Venerated Cartographer Metrisha** – a highly regarded student of the Termus school. Quet design holds that places must be homes to the space that resides within – a cryptic sort of statement but one that is repeated often. The density & comfort of the designs in the Termus school is regarded as a great benefit – given the condensed nature of the cities of the slatewind.

The Hakim from the South

Private physicians are commonly well respected & highly paid individuals. One wouldn't likely pursue adventure without needing to. A hakim from the south may be journeying with their benefactor as part of a large retinue of professional servants – or the character may be fleeing disgrace or animosity gained through failing to heal someone of significance.

The Hakim in the Slatewind

There is an abundance of quackery & deception in the slatewind. The intermittent conflicts between cities, the open door to southern adventurers, the frontier openness of the place – all of these allow the lowest, meanest of tricksters to pass themselves off as proper doctors. In this milieu then, a true physician, one who is highly trained, skilled & an expert at healing – such an individual is in great demand. A character from the north who begins as an hakim is likely beginning their professional career after having completed their education. Such education is usually in the form of an apprenticeship. Each of the cities of the Slatewind have their own hospitals, their own healing traditions – but those of Termus & Saedu are considered the best, while those of **Diya** and **Red Banks** & **Bitter** are seen as exceptionally substandard in all but specialist cases. **Blessed Phsycian Mingo** of **Old Woman Province** is regarded as one of the best hakims and is noted in particular for being a superior dentist, willing to accept any apt student for the right price.

The Harbinger

A messenger & herald, the harbinger is fleet of foot & usually afforded some amount of amnesty even in enemy lands – for they bear tidings of generals & kings.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+1
CON	d6+1
DEX	d6+12
INT	d6+0
STR	d6+4
WIS	d6+9

Saving Throws	
Breath	19
Devices	17
Paralysis	17
Death	17
Spells	19

Adventuring Skills	
Alchemy	3
Gift	3
Hear Noise	3
Hide in Shadow	2
Scale Walls	2
Trickery	2
Vocals	1

Hit Dice d6
Starting HP d6+1
Melee Bonus: +2
Ranged Bonus: +2

Damage Bonus: +2
AC Bonus: +1
Initiative: DEX+d6
Movement: STR+4

Language Rolls: 1
Parley Dice: d6 / d6
Gear Rolls: 11

Ability List

Defender **Healer** **Lucky**

Ritual Song **Vanguard**

Messenger: Harbingers are bearers of news & tidings. So long as the harbinger actually delivers information & news of any kind they may ignore zones of control or borders of any kind as they are welcome wherever they go as a herald. This ability doesn't work on monsters or any sort of beings who lack language or culture.

Impulse Belligerence Fairness



The Healer

A gifted individual who is capable of administering to wounds of the body, the mind & the spirit. The healer is an all purpose physician.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+7
CON	d6+2
DEX	d6+1
INT	d6+12
STR	d6+1
WIS	d6+2

Saving Throws	
Breath	19
Devices	16
Paralysis	19
Death	16
Spells	17

Adventuring Skills	
Composition	3
Gift	3
Instrument	3
Investigate	2
Judge Alignment	2
Scale Walls	2
Vocals	1

Hit Dice d8
Starting HP d8+2
Melee Bonus: +1
Ranged Bonus: +1

Damage Bonus: +0
AC Bonus: +1
Initiative: DEX+d6
Movement: STR+4

Language Rolls: 3
Parley Dice: d8 / d6
Gear Rolls: 12

Ability List

Artisan **Healer** **Endurance**

Communion **Song** **Mentalism**

Homeostasis: Once per session the Healer can make d20 statistical check, if the check is successful the healer can remove one status condition from a target. CHA - remove Fear, CON - remove Sickness, DEX - remove Defeat, INT - remove Poisoned, STR - remove Victorious, WIS - remove Maddened.

Civility Piety Kindness



The Harbinger from the South

A really worthwhile way to play a harbinger from the south would be to have a messenger in search of one of the other players, or some notable NPC. A harbinger from the south is most certainly in the slatewind on business and may seek to return home as swiftly as possible. It is possible, of course, that a harbinger finds themselves in need of work and so migrates to the north in search of it, but such a prosaic basis for your character's entry to the story is needless to elaborate upon.

The Harbinger in the Slatewind

One difficulty that all the harbingers of the region face is the lack of any relatable cultural touchstone among the **Saayang**. The Saayang culture lacks for any analogous professional messenger and among those people the sentiments that are presented by a messenger are always held to be that messenger's own sentiments, or else why would they convey them? This reasoning has led to more than one harbinger being detained by angry recipients or expelled by the same. Which is to say being fleet of foot is more important for a harbinger in the Slatewind than elsewhere and that cautious harbingers are the most successful – for one never knows if the recipient of some threat is willing to regard the threat on its own or regard the messenger as threatening. Among the **Khin** & the **Brizai** the harbinger is held as a sacrosanct & holy personage – someone it is taboo to harm – so slatewind harbingers have that going for them at least. There are not academies or training schools – or even professional services employing harbingers, rather, they are appointed by the elites whom they serve, usually through systems of patronage & nepotism.

The Healer from the South

Less a professional vocation & more a personal calling – one who is, in their heart, motivated to heal but not in any way licensed, trained or bound to any institution might make their way north in search of the freedom of the frontier, where someone can declare themselves a healer & get down to that business without having to traverse bureaucracies.

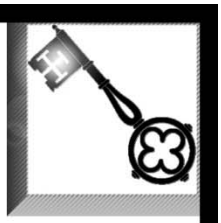
The Healer in the Slatewind

A healer tends to be one who uses traditional medicines, family recipes & folk wisdom. Given that there is a great array of healing traditions in the slatewind. **Halfling** healers focus on diet & they have devised a variety of soups & stews meant to excite the different humors. **Dwarf** healers use crystals to draw out toxins. **Elf** healers rely on herbal poultices & teas. **Goblin** healers utilize leeches & surgery & **Orc** healers rely on sweats & chills to drive out ailments. And then on to the web of complex human traditions. Among the **Saayang** there is a practice of massage & of acupuncture for healing. The **Quet** manipulate a variety of pressure points & use innumerable herbal medicines. **Khin** traditions make use of animal products, the rarer the better. **Brizai** healers are surgeons & dentists & aren't shy with scalpels. **Plioshr** medical practice tends toward the veterinary but there are several traditional cures they use incorporating dog licks & ram dung. The best healers are those who adopt different practices from different traditions for the best results, the worst are those who are dogmatic in following their traditions.





The Herbalist



One who finds supernatural aid in the substance of plants is an Herbalist. Good at foraging the Herbalist knows what to look for.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+8
CON	d6+4
DEX	d6+5
INT	d6+5
STR	d6+1
WIS	d6+4

Saving Throws	
Breath	19
Devices	16
Paralysis	18
Death	16
Spells	19

Adventuring Skills	
Alchemy	3
Detect Traps	3
Forage	3
Gift	2
Medicine	2
Poisoning	2
Scale Walls	1

Hit Dice d6
Starting HP d6+1
Melee Bonus: +1
Ranged Bonus: +2

Damage Bonus: +1
AC Bonus: +2
Initiative: DEX+d4
Movement: STR+6

Language Rolls: 1
Parley Dice: d6 / d6
Gear Rolls: 11

Ability List

Heightened Senses **Resourcefulness** **Shamanism**

Signaling **Survival** **Wayfinding**

Therevada: You can make a d20 INT check in the wilds or a d12 INT check if using a previously cultivated plot. If you are successful you are able to gather medicinal herbs that allow you to create a number of healing poitions equal to your HD. These potions restore d6 HP but are all single use items. You can make this check once per session.

Impulse Kindness Ego





The Hero

The Hero is outside of civilization and above culture. Heroes exist according to their own moral guidance in defiance of others.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+0
CON	d6+8
DEX	d6+5
INT	d6+1
STR	d6+8
WIS	d6+5

Saving Throws	
Breath	19
Devices	19
Paralysis	16
Death	19
Spells	17

Adventuring Skills	
Hear Noise	3
Instrument	3
Joke	3
Navigate	2
Scale Walls	2
Siege	2
Vocals	1

Hit Dice d10
Starting HP d10+3
Melee Bonus: +1
Ranged Bonus: +3

Damage Bonus: +2
AC Bonus: +2
Initiative: DEX+d6
Movement: STR+4

Language Rolls: 1
Parley Dice: d4 / d4
Gear Rolls: 11

Ability List

Defender **Endurance** **Guardian**

Protector **Sociability** **Song**

Valiant: Heroes prevail where angels fear to tread. Once per session a hero can use their turn to *recover*. Recovery restores half the Heroes maximum HP & allows an immediate saving throw against any status conditions they currently have applied.

Nobility Impulse Defiance



The Herbalist from the South

Bridging the gap between healer & alchemist & naturalist – an herbalist finds uses for plants & is skillful at nurturing same. An herbalist from the south is likely in search of new herbs to add to their repertoire – or they are a devotee of a specific plant, the apple-tree for example – and wherever they go they are committed to spreading that plant – possibly in order to make way for later settlement. This latter variant is common among elves, who are likely to live long enough to see their work's fruition.

The Herbalist in the Slatewind

Classification of the indigenous plants of the slatewind is no small feat & it's one that the **Aediles at Shield** have taken up with aplomb. They are known to employ hundreds of naturalists throughout the slatewind who are tasked with seeking out and classifying the different plant species that they encounter. This project has taken on a larger life of its own as, over the decades, the collectors of plant specimens have banded together into their own coterie – a union of similarly engaged researchers who have gathered together information regarding the best utility of the various native plants as well as seed samples, preserved cuttings and whole libraries of illustration – all with the interest of training up subsequent generations of herbalists. This union has no headquarters as it is principally operated by nomadic **Plioshr** & **Orc** researchers, though they do have an annual convention in the foothills near **Diya**, a good place for a would-be herbalist to find themselves an instructor.

The Hero from the South

Tell me, then, who is yonder huge hero so great and goodly? I have seen men taller by a head, but none so comely and so royal. Surely he must be a king. A hero is known. Recognized as such and only truly challenged by other heroes or villains. Or monsters. Or far journeys into the unknown. Why has a hero come to the north? Certainly for heroic reasons.

The Hero in the Slatewind

Naturally, what constitutes a hero is a highly subjective notion. Culturally there are different concepts of heroism. **Quet** traditions hold with a canny trickster hero, always overmatched but always clever and capable of outwitting opponents. This figure is frequently depicted as, of all things, a goose, in traditional Quet folktale. **Khinish** traditions hold with the devout hero, a priest or prophet who calls down the wrath of the gods, this figure has one foot in the divine and the other in the mortal world – they are never part of society – rather a bridge between the divine & profane. **Plioshr** heroes are frequently seen as villains by outsiders – they steal. A lot. This comes from the Plioshr tradition of being persecuted outsiders, so their culture heroes are those who provide for the tribe at the enemy's expense. **Saayang** heroes are part of a lineage of warrior-poets, all obedient, all dutiful all bound for early, romantic deaths. **Brizai** heroes are masculine - even the heroic women are said to have sprouted beards in the middle of their legends, they are strong & reckless, usually to a fault. **Elven** heroes are peculiar to mortal thinking – their folklore holds with the romantic & creative soul – who loved the stars so much he conceived of a means of flying to them, destroying his own home in the doing. **Dwarf** heroes are paragons of the household, they are most commonly female & they are known for their defense of the home against invaders. **Orc** heroes are the best hunters, the best climbers, runners & so on. **Goblin** heroes approximate serial killers & **Halfling** heroes are something like hobo – legends – notorious pie-thieves and bean chefs.

The Highwayman

A Robber & Brigand who preys upon the unwary rich while they travel abroad.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+7
CON	d6+4
DEX	d6+7
INT	d6+2
STR	d6+0
WIS	d6+7

Saving Throws	
Breath	19
Devices	18
Paralysis	18
Death	18
Spells	18

Adventuring Skills	
Detect Traps	3
Forage	3
Hear Noise	3
Hide in Shadow	2
Move Quietly	2
Poisoning	2
Scale Walls	1

Hit Dice d6
Starting HP d6+1
Melee Bonus: +2
Ranged Bonus: +2

Damage Bonus: +1
AC Bonus: +2
Initiative: DEX+d4
Movement: STR+6

Language Rolls: 1
Parley Dice: d4 / d4
Gear Rolls: 11

Ability List

Animal Languages **Heightened Senses** **Predation**

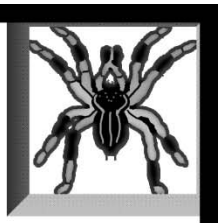
Resourcefulness **Traceless Passing** **Wayfinding**

Stand & Deliver: Out on the roads at night you are in your element. You can use your social dice to perform an intimidation maneuver on those who you have surprised or otherwise have the drop on. Use your social dice to make an attack roll. If the result is favorable the subject of this attack will surrender their arms & offer money. Those you rob are extremely unlikely to continue in their submission if the encounter turns violent.

Audacity Impulse Ego







The Hunter

A stalker & killer of wild animals, hunters come in a large variety - from whalers to fishers to big-game trophy hunters, cities even hire rat & dog hunters to deal with vermin.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+3
CON	d6+4
DEX	d6+9
INT	d6+2
STR	d6+4
WIS	d6+4

Saving Throws	
Breath	19
Devices	17
Paralysis	16
Death	17
Spells	19

Adventuring Skills	
Detect Traps	3
Detect Traps	3
Forage	3
Hide in Shadow	2
Move Quietly	2
Navigate	2
Poisoning	1

Hit Dice d6
Starting HP d6+1
Melee Bonus: +2
Ranged Bonus: +2

Damage Bonus: +2
AC Bonus: +2
Initiative: DEX+d4
Movement: STR+4

Language Rolls: 1
Parley Dice: d4 / d4
Gear Rolls: 11

Ability List

Animal Languages **Shamanism** **Ritual**

Resourcefulness **Weaponry** **Wayfinding**

Tracker: Hunters sense creatures & traps on a roll of 1 or 2 on their search die & can use their search die to find traces & to track animals & other creatures.

Impulse Belligerence Ego



The Highwayman from the South

This occupation makes a lot of sense in the heavily settled south. Highway robbery does best in a place with highways. One who's journeyed from the south to the ruined north is probably fleeing some infamy. It's possible that such a character has been edged out by a more aggressive operator, driven away by assiduous authorities, or perhaps is just motivated by the reckless joy found only at the vast frontier.

The Highwayman in the Slatewind

Robbing people along the road tends to require roads. The best roads in the slatewind lie along the northern shore between **Termus, Saedu** & **Sword of the West** – the spur connecting **Shield** to this highway is a poor choice as the armies of Shield aggressively hunt down wrongdoers. An easier road to prey upon people is the highway from **Able** to **Diya** which is long, passes through unsettled territories & is poorly guarded – but the field is full & competition between highway robbers is high – gang wars & turf disputes happen all the time. And besides that, most well-to-do travelers upon that highway go heavily guarded. Finally the highway from **Bitter** to **Elan** – carries a lot of traffic – huge caravans of raw materials, timber, metals, stone – all travel upon this road in massive wagon trains. Hijacking could pay off, provided a buyer is lined up – otherwise there's not much in the way of currency traveling that route.

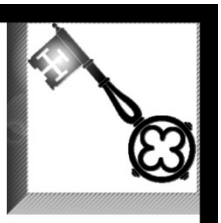
The Hunter from the South

Hunting as a way of life, that is, hunting for survival, has largely fallen by the wayside in the south. There are, naturally, some civilizations that still utilize this method for getting food – but it's more or less a pastime for elites at this point. Kings & princes hunt, often in ceremonial fashion to demonstrate their warrior prowess – never mind that they have never held a pike. Those who do hunt for sport might want to make the journey to the north just to have a chance at hunting the exotic & deadly species that prevail there. There is no shortage of legendry concerning the north's exotic megafauna – and so an ambitious hunter would have to journey north, if only to find the most dangerous game.

The Hunter in the Slatewind

Enough of the slatewind is wilderness that some settlements get by entirely on hunting & foraging. The land is wild & plentiful & hunters, especially good hunters, are what keep these settlements going. In more urban & developed areas hunters are still valued – not just for brining in meat, but for killing dangerous predators. There are dozens of species of predatory beast that have no fear of people & a willingness to enter into towns & even large cities to hunt. **Orcs** are famed for their hunting ability and even the most accomplished of human or elven hunters will be passed over for a mediocre orc hunter by a paying customer. Each city has bounties for specific types of creatures – **Bawambs** in **Sword of the West, Masheddnas** in **Red Banks, Bappeli-appeli-nop** at **Bitter**. Which is to say nothing of the greater beasts. Monster-animals of legend that spread ruin & danger – such as the **Red Herald** or the **Irailaren-Guwol.** Naturally game animals are present throughout – feral **Wanders** & wild **Aurochs** & **Megatherium** are all in demand.





The Imam

An official within a religious hierarchy. Priests frequently must surrender claims to family and heirs as part of their religious calling.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+3
CON	d6+9
DEX	d6+0
INT	d6+7
STR	d6+5
WIS	d6+0

Saving Throws	
Breath	19
Devices	16
Paralysis	16
Death	16
Spells	15

Adventuring Skills	
Composition	3
Gift	3
Investigate	3
Judge Alignment	2
Numeracy	2
Theurgy	2
Vocals	1

Hit Dice d10
Starting HP d10+3
Melee Bonus: +1
Ranged Bonus: +1

Damage Bonus: +1
AC Bonus: +3
Initiative: DEX+d6
Movement: STR+2

Language Rolls: 2
Parley Dice: d4 / d4
Gear Rolls: 13

Ability List

Prayers **Scholarship** **Spellbook**

Resistance **Communion** **Wizardry**

Instruction: An imam is able to train others up in their faith. You can work with another character to train them so that they gain have access to the *Prayers* ability. This ability costs them 2,000 Xp minus 100 Xp per month that you spend training them.

Nobility Piety Ego





The Imposter

Someone who is not who they pretend to be. Imposters assume an identity that is not their own and may assume many more besides.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+3
CON	d6+12
DEX	d6+0
INT	d6+3
STR	d6+8
WIS	d6+1

Saving Throws	
Breath	19
Devices	18
Paralysis	16
Death	18
Spells	16

Adventuring Skills	
Alchemy	3
Hide in Shadow	3
Joke	3
Languages	2
Move Quietly	2
Pick Pockets	2
Poisoning	1

Hit Dice d10
Starting HP d10+3
Melee Bonus: +1
Ranged Bonus: +2

Damage Bonus: +1
AC Bonus: +3
Initiative: DEX+d6
Movement: STR+2

Language Rolls: 1
Parley Dice: d4 / d4
Gear Rolls: 12

Ability List

Disguise **Ethereal Beauty** **Forgery**

Glammer **Lucky** **Traceless Passing**

Pauper Prince: When an imposter joins the game, the Referee must pick an NPC from their setting - thereafter the imposter is commonly mistaken for that person & the imposter is able to casually pass themselves as that character without making checks.

Nobility Defiance Ego



The Imam from the South

As a religious authority & scholar an Imam tends to have a reasonably comfortable & profitable place in society. Those who travel far from home & the seat of their religious authority must do so for pressing reasons. Most typically this is the result of the Imam's heterodox or heretical writings getting them into trouble. Most Imams from the south have journeyed to the north to avoid martyrdom. Very few Imams function as evangelists – missions of conversion aren't typically undertaken by them.

The Imam in the Slatewind

The **Dwarf** pantheon, with its esoteric near-gods requires a great deal of intellectual justification, given the many layers of abstraction involved in their veneration. Given that, dwarves have the most scholarly religionists & their philosophical debates tend to be longwinded, rambling manifestos aimed at opposing competing views rather than edifying the masses. Expect a deep dive into uncanny realms of ontological spirals. **Khinish Trinitarianism** tends to oppose, in a fundamental sense, the very existence of a pantheon – in order to get along with the rest of the slatewind there are countless imams all working to persuade the fundamentalist Trinistarians to go with the polytheistic flow. There are, naturally, abundant contrarian imams trying to push Trinitary, or even variants of monotheism – usually for their own glorification. An Imam in the slatewind must look into their hearts and determine if they are working to expand the cause of peace & understanding unselfishly, or if they are pursuing a demagogue's path in search of their own personal advancement. Beyond the Khinish doctrinal conflicts there are a few religious callings that demand scholarship & philosophy. Though they have a tradition of deep thought the **Quet** gods have never had their own scholastic branch – until now of course. The syncretism of the slatewind is alloying disparate traditions all the time & a successful imam is one who recognizes this and tries to get in on the ground floor of a new era of religious thought.

The Imposter from the South

This is someone who has come north to pretend to be someone else. There's no shortage of stories that could explain this situation but there's also no broad arc that can encompass all of these stories. You've come north to pose as someone you are not – why? That's for you to know.

The Imposter in the Slatewind

The above holds true for native-grown imposters. While there must be some reason for a person to pose as another it's not entirely clear. The best explanation may be that they are a spy. Posing as a part of one community to report to another – there's likely dozens of such agents in all ten cities. As a pure con artist in it for the money, there's no place like the frontier to make up a new identity, or better yet, steal one. Of course there are a few notable traditions in the realm of imposture. First, there are those who wish to go among other species – elf & dwarf imitators – and human & orc imitators for that matter. Some people only see a home for themselves in another community, another culture – and so they adopt it by faking their way in. Other times, an imposter is a sophisticated professional – an actor cum spy. There's few groups that actively train & advance these techniques – the **Gatesfow** criminal syndicate & the nameless orders of **Sword of the West**.



The Innocent

Young promising heir to a noble or wealthy legacy. The Innocent is sometimes a child, but may be quite aged as well, so long as they are unmarried & childless.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+6
CON	d6+4
DEX	d6+3
INT	d6+4
STR	d6+6
WIS	d6+5

Saving Throws	
Breath	19
Devices	16
Paralysis	18
Death	16
Spells	18

Adventuring Skills	
Composition	3
Gift	3
Instrument	3
Investigate	2
Languages	2
Theurgy	2
Vocals	1

Hit Dice d8
Starting HP d8+2
Melee Bonus: +1
Ranged Bonus: +1

Damage Bonus: +1
AC Bonus: +2
Initiative: DEX+d6
Movement: STR+4

Language Rolls: 1
Parley Dice: d8 / d6
Gear Rolls: 12

Ability List

Communion **Lucky** **Glammer**

Ethereal Beauty **Sociability** **Scholarship**

Harmless: Innocents can withdraw from combats - even with monsters or animals - without being forced to engage. An innocent may pursue combat if they wish, but they cannot be targetted by the referee in advance of making their own attacks.

Nobility Kindness Fairness







The Inquisitor

The investigative branch of a church which is usually turned inward in search of heresy, heterodoxy or simple blasphemy.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+1
CON	d6+3
DEX	d6+7
INT	d6+4
STR	d6+4
WIS	d6+5

Saving Throws	
Breath	19
Devices	15
Paralysis	17
Death	15
Spells	16

Adventuring Skills	
Composition	3
Detect Traps	3
Hear Noise	3
Hide in Shadow	2
Investigate	2
Judge Alignment	2
Theurgy	1

Hit Dice d8
Starting HP d8+2
Melee Bonus: +2
Ranged Bonus: +1

Damage Bonus: +1
AC Bonus: +1
Initiative: DEX+d8
Movement: STR+2

Language Rolls: 2
Parley Dice: d6 / d6
Gear Rolls: 12

Ability List

Claimant **Prayers** **Destruction**

Communion **Ruin** **Resistance**

Discernment: When encountering another member of their faith or pantheon the Inquistor can demand that that individual answer any question put to them as honestly as they possibly can. If they lie the inquisitor will know without fail.

Piety Belligerence Fairness



The Innocent from the South

Not all cultures have an analogue to the Innocent so sometimes a person who is by disposition & avocation an innocent will not find a home for themselves – and such people may find their way north – to lands that accommodate all who wish to make their home there.

The Innocent in the Slatewind

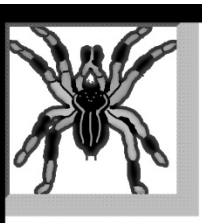
Saayang culture & **Elven** culture both have a strong tradition regarding figures who fall into this category more or less. Youths who are untroubled by danger and motivated only by the purest & best emotions. Commonly they die young. In elf culture these figures are related to natural spirits – dryads, unicorns & naiads. Spirts of nature who are untouched by mortal thought. Among the Saayang this position is more associated with social evasion – people who avoid financial or romantic or political involvement altogether, who are, in effect, sacred children. The concept of the Innocent also works well as a way of describing those sheltered folk from deep in the bush who come to wider world from out of pure isolation. This sort of individual is more often encountered as a romantic myth than a true person – but you can find flower-child **Plioshr** & **Orc** individuals often trying and failing utterly to incorporate into society.

The Inquisitor from the South

What heresies lurk in the north? What witches are tolerated? How far from the orthodoxy have these provincial churches fallen? This is for you to find out. An inquisitor from the south is most often an agent of their church sent north to investigate heresy. Particularly common are Sundus based Trinitarian churches of the south sending their agents north to see how far (pretty far) their followers have fallen into the trap of polytheism.

The Inquisitor in the Slatewind

The **Khinish Trinitary** faith again leads the pack in terms of religious intolerance – the churches of **Hrururush** at **Saedu** keep their own inquisitorial staff, as do the Aediles of Shield who follow **Shiddush.** In the former case the inquisition has, for political reasons, largely abandoned the practice of seeking out heretics. Rather they are now occupied in the rooting out of **Witches**. The **Hrushite Inquisition** is largely focused on rooting out the isolated & wicked demon summoners & mad alchemists who've used the frontier as a hideout. The **Shiddirite Inquisition** has gone in full reverse & is now engaged in documenting & intermittently trying **Trinitary** fundamentalists. Beyond the internal conflicts of this one specific religion in the slatewind – there are vanishingly few groups that could realistically accommodate their own inquisition – most notably there is a species of atheist inquisitors amongst the elves of the slatewind. Elves traditionally don't follow any gods & so the recent innovation of an elven divinity **The Ultist**, has rankled some of the more staid elf communities & they've gone out of their way to see their religious brethren put down.





The Insurgent

Urban guerillas who act against the status quo & seek to undermine the fabric of an oppressive culture.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+2
CON	d6+5
DEX	d6+5
INT	d6+5
STR	d6+7
WIS	d6+3

Saving Throws	
Breath	19
Devices	19
Paralysis	17
Death	19
Spells	18

Adventuring Skills	
Detect Traps	3
Hide in Shadow	3
Investigate	3
Joke	2
Open Doors	2
Theurgy	2
Trickery	1

Hit Dice d8
Starting HP d8+2
Melee Bonus: +2
Ranged Bonus: +2

Damage Bonus: +1
AC Bonus: +1
Initiative: DEX+d6
Movement: STR+2

Language Rolls: 2
Parley Dice: d6 / d6
Gear Rolls: 11

Ability List

Claimant **Resistance** **Jinx**

Destruction **Weaponry** **Ruin**

Rebellion: Insurgents have their damage dice increased by one size against any target that is an authority, an official or a member of any hierarchy that the insurgent opposes.

Civility Defiance Belligerence







The Intellectual

A clever sort who disseminates knoweldge but also hoards it, often the cleverest person in a room, Intellectuals have thoughtful sensibilities that pierce through nonsense easily.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+7
CON	d6+5
DEX	d6+1
INT	d6+8
STR	d6+4
WIS	d6+3

Saving Throws	
Breath	19
Devices	18
Paralysis	19
Death	18
Spells	18

Adventuring Skills	
Alchemy	3
Building	3
Investigate	3
Medicine	2
Numeracy	2
Poisoning	2
Siege	1

Hit Dice d8
Starting HP d8+2
Melee Bonus: +1
Ranged Bonus: +2

Damage Bonus: +0
AC Bonus: +1
Initiative: DEX+d6
Movement: STR+4

Language Rolls: 2
Parley Dice: d8 / d6
Gear Rolls: 11

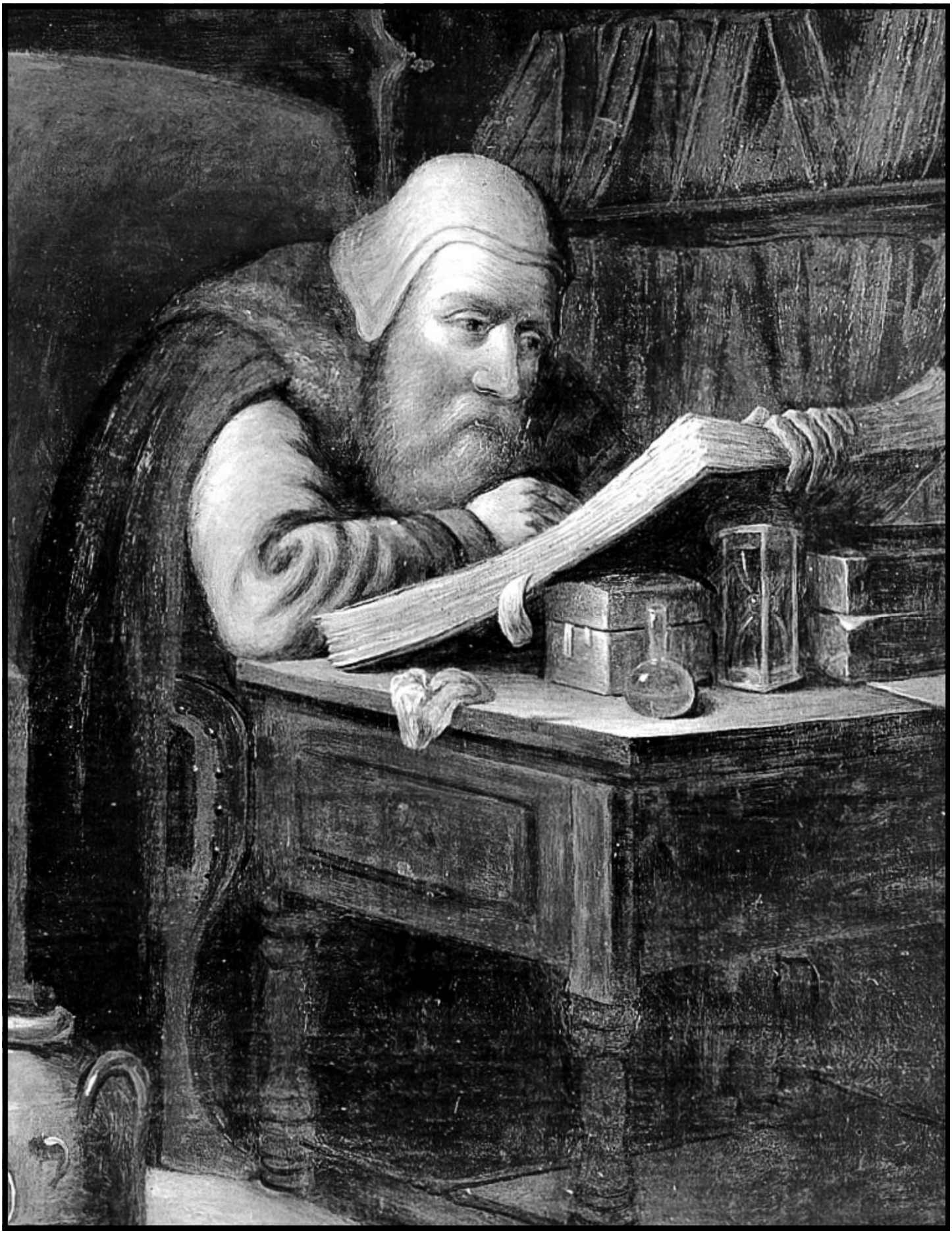
Ability List

Artisan **Spellbook** **Shamanism**

Mentalism **Wizardry** **Tinkering**

Reason: You can reason your way through most challenges. Once per session you can make a d20 INT roll, if this roll is successful you form an insight that replicates any one skill. You gain this skill at a value equal to the amount by which you succeded on the INT check -e.g.: if you roll a 12 and have INT 18 - you gain the skill at rating 6. This lasts for one scene only.

Civility Defiance Kindness



The Insurgent from the South

A few of the settlements of the slatewind valley still hold allegiances with their southern patrons – some of these may have sent home for some good old-fashioned partisan hill-fighters. More likely, an insurgent arriving in the north has lost the fight in the south & devoid of hope of ever repelling the invaders – they've moved north – fortunately –there are insurgencies to fight in the slatewind.

The Insurgent in the Slatewind

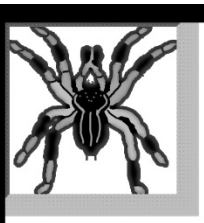
Insurgents fight occupations & the current occupations in the region are in the forests of **The Expanse**, in the city of **Able** & in the territories around **Elan.** In the expanse the **Elves** fight the human coalition that has conquered them based out of **Zenith**. **Able** has become a client city of Zenith as well, following a long & hard war. There are plenty in Able that don't see that war as yet being lost & they fight the occupation & the native puppet regime both. The region of **Salt** – the province which Elan is the master of, has never truly been won – it's controlled by **Orc** khans, bandit lords & coalitions of monsters – all of whom make life difficult for the city, which is itself home to plenty of insurgents following its defeat by the coalition led by Zenith that conquered it. Beyond that of course there are the former bosses of **Bitter**, the deposed & dispossessed ownership class from that city who have enough allies & money to wage a war in exile against their former subjects. Plenty of lost causes to keep on fighting for in the north.

The Intellectual from the South

Someone who thinks a lot about thinking, who knows a lot is going to be well aware of all they do not know. A proper, true intellectual is someone who makes an effort to learn – and there's an abundance of knowledge to be gained in the north. The slatewind makes a fine base for any enterprising scholar as it lies in the midst of compelling ruins & offers amenities enough that all but the most fragile of scholars will be able to survive in comfort among the subjects of their inquiry.

The Intellectual in the Slatewind

There are a dozen intellectual traditions, scholarly callings for each individual culture. Most of these tend to fall into some specific category – religious intellectuals are imams, scientists & alchemists & other technical experts exist as well. An intellectual, as considered here, is someone who is more a polymath – concerned with the broader context of knowledge generally & involved in synthesizing disparate traditions into singular theories. Which is all to say an intellectual from the Slatewind is someone who has a lot to do. The most obvious places for intellectuals to train are at **Termus** & **Shield.** Termus, because the Quet religions & culture that dominate there are traditionally neutral & circumspect. Many of the high priests of the various quet deities are openly agnostic – for example. There is a tradition of questioning that has developed into a method – a system of (so called) **36 Unanswerable Questions.** Those who follow this school are called, in the quet language **Zho-Xen-Zho** – the disbelievers. At shield, intellectualism has a much more prosaic bent. The **Aediles** gather knowledge & the categorization of information falls to their allies the **Curates** – who tend to have very specific interests. Each curate tends to invest themselves into a single subject – often quite obscure – something like *early-century blade morphology* is a reasonable example of the sorts of specialization found there. Beyond these groups – there is of course nothing preventing a clever individual from seeking a life of the mind without organizational support.





The Inventor

One who invents. A clever individual with proclivities involving mechanics, chemistry and various types of surgery.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+8
CON	d6+7
DEX	d6+0
INT	d6+6
STR	d6+6
WIS	d6+0

Saving Throws	
Breath	19
Devices	16
Paralysis	17
Death	16
Spells	18

Adventuring Skills	
Alchemy	3
Building	3
Detect Traps	3
Investigate	2
Numeracy	2
Open Doors	2
Siege	1

Hit Dice d8	Damage Bonus: +1	
Starting HP d8+2	AC Bonus: +3	Language Rolls: 1
Melee Bonus: +1	Initiative: DEX+d4	Parley Dice: d6 / d6
Ranged Bonus: +1	Movement: STR+4	Gear Rolls: 12

Ability List

Artisan	Survival	Scholarship
Mentalism	Traveler	Tinkering

Science: Your inventions are repeatable & scientific - you can apply Tinkering effects that normally apply only to yourself to other people.

Nobility Kindness Ego







The Khan

Leaders of warbands are Khans. Often striving for nobility & legitimacy in the world, Khans tend to contend with one another and see civilizations themselves as adversaries.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+3
CON	d6+7
DEX	d6+4
INT	d6+3
STR	d6+9
WIS	d6+0

Saving Throws	
Breath	19
Devices	17
Paralysis	15
Death	17
Spells	18

Adventuring Skills	
Building	3
Composition	3
Investigate	3
Navigate	2
Scale Walls	2
Siege	2
Vocals	1

Hit Dice d8
Starting HP d8+2
Melee Bonus: +2
Ranged Bonus: +1

Damage Bonus: +2
AC Bonus: +3
Initiative: DEX+d4
Movement: STR+2

Language Rolls: 1
Parley Dice: d4 / d4
Gear Rolls: 12

Ability List

Artisan Claimant Destruction

Rampage Rugged Vanguard

Horde: Khans lead tribes of warriors, frequently nomads. You double the number of followers you'd normally be allowed through a high charisma or enhancements gained through Xp.

Nobility Belligerence Ego



The Inventor from the South

What the mind conceives becomes reality. No inventor doesn't believe this on some level. Why travel north? Why not? A really satisfactory method for playing a southern inventor is to have them suffering from the after-effects of some invention that stranded them in the slatewind valley. Wrecked blimp? Malfunctioning teleporter? Broken time machine? All of these make a nice fish out of water style PC.

The Inventor in the Slatewind

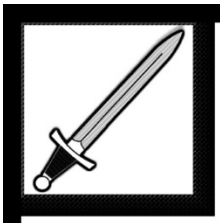
The inventor is a singular type – someone who sees a problem and works steadily to create a solution. There is no school that teaches invention – it's you learn as you go along – one could say it's something you make up, or invent. The only group that truly embraces invention, that adopts new ideas fluidly & naturally are **Goblins** – though goblin thought sometimes tends to reverse the inventor's Raison d'être. Saying instead- where there is no problem – create new ones. The slatewind certainly can accommodate invention. The recent wars were fought using strange & new techniques – notably employed were rockets, cannon, war-kites & airships – and every city is looking for solutions to these new problems. Or new problems to defeat those solutions.

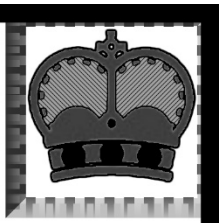
The Khan from the South

What's a khan without a horde to drive before them? A khan from the south may just find out. Really, a khan is a khan – in their heart – with a horde or not. You may have come north because you know in your heart that you are a conqueror – and this is place to begin your conquests.

The Khan in the Slatewind

Khan is a term that most in slatewind regard as referring to an **Orc** specifically. Most of the valley's orc bands, when they assemble for war, tend to follow a leader who non-orkii speakers call a Khan. This person is known by Orcs merely as Leader. Functionally this distinction is meaningless, for what orcs consider a leader outsiders consider a khan – a leader of warriors without a land of their own – nomads gone conquering. There are a few dozen war bands of orcs & **Plioshr** in the southern provinces – most aren't particularly large or dangerous. Those that have proven very dangerous tend to have built a place for themselves. Most notably the city of **Diya** which has its own governance & politics, but which is the protectorate of **Khan Ishma'al** a warlord who conquered the city & who regards it as his property. His warband is rather large & it stayed out of the last war – meaning it is currently the strongest of the military forces in the valley. Subordinates within the horde are called khans as well – and they are of every type & class – so long as they're able to rise in the ranks through skill at war & personal relationships – there's no shortage of opportunities in the **Horde of Diya**.





The Knight

Titled, landless nobles, Knights owe fealty to royals who do own land. Often knights are tasked with seizing yet more territory.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+2
CON	d6+3
DEX	d6+5
INT	d6+6
STR	d6+9
WIS	d6+2

Saving Throws	
Breath	19
Devices	19
Paralysis	16
Death	19
Spells	19

Adventuring Skills	
Building	3
Composition	3
Gift	3
Hear Noise	2
Scale Walls	2
Siege	2
Vocals	1

Hit Dice d8
Starting HP d8+2
Melee Bonus: +2
Ranged Bonus: +1

Damage Bonus: +2
AC Bonus: +2
Initiative: DEX+d4
Movement: STR+2

Language Rolls: 2
Parley Dice: d6 / d6
Gear Rolls: 12

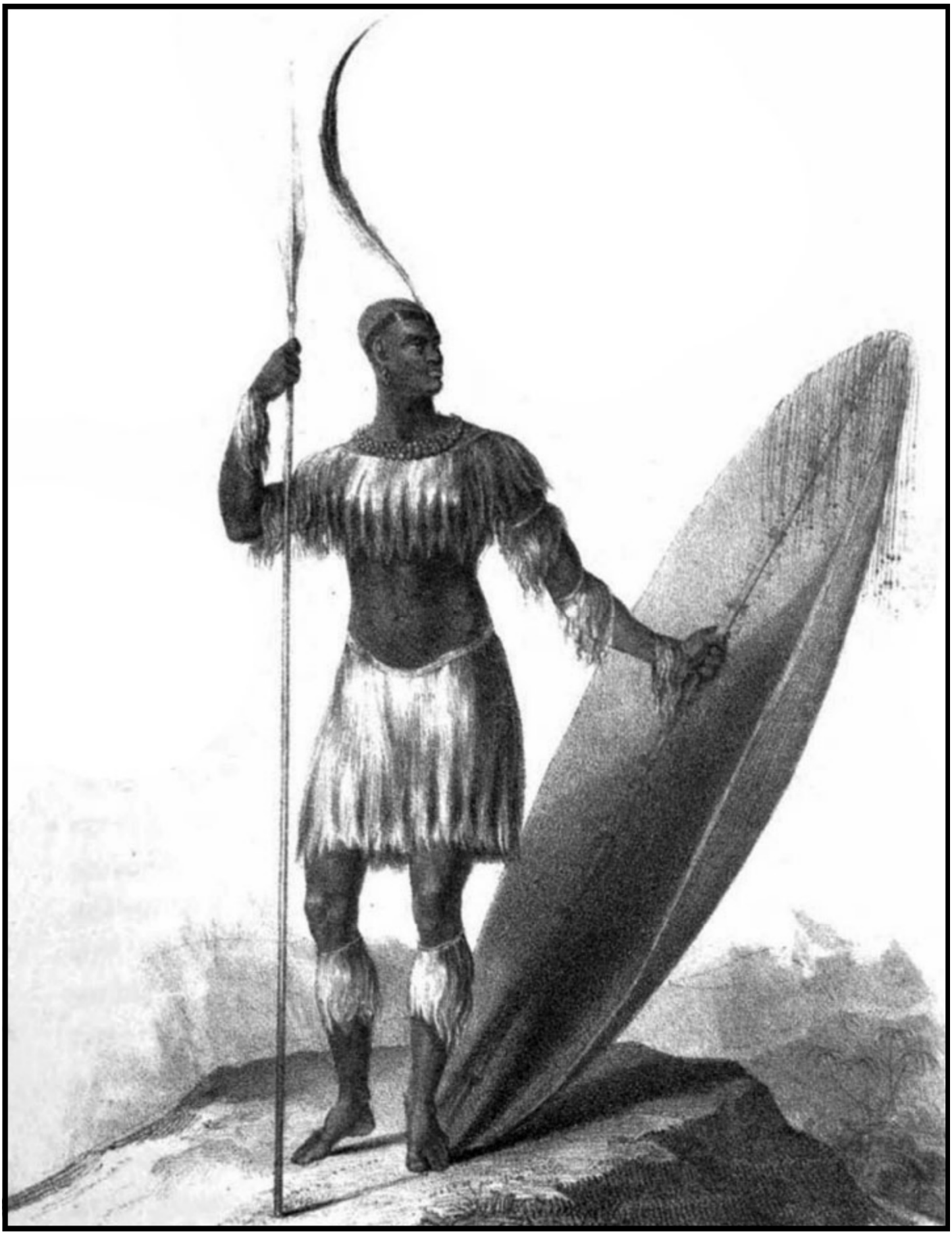
Ability List

Defender **Protector** **Riches**

Guardian **Claimant** **Vanguard**

Bravery: Knights reduce all fear effects they suffer by 2 die sizes and by 1 size for their allies facing the same effects.

Nobility Civility Belligerence







The Latrocinium

A seditious type of bandit, the Latrocinium or Lotrocininia is interested principally in spreading danger & chaos in the world.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+7
CON	d6+4
DEX	d6+6
INT	d6+2
STR	d6+4
WIS	d6+3

Saving Throws	
Breath	18
Devices	17
Paralysis	17
Death	17
Spells	18

Adventuring Skills	
Detect Traps	3
Forage	3
Hide in Shadow	3
Move Quietly	2
Open Doors	2
Siege	2
Trickery	1

Hit Dice d6
Starting HP d6+1
Melee Bonus: +3
Ranged Bonus: +1

Damage Bonus: +1
AC Bonus: +2
Initiative: DEX+d4
Movement: STR+4

Language Rolls: 1
Parley Dice: d4 / d4
Gear Rolls: 11

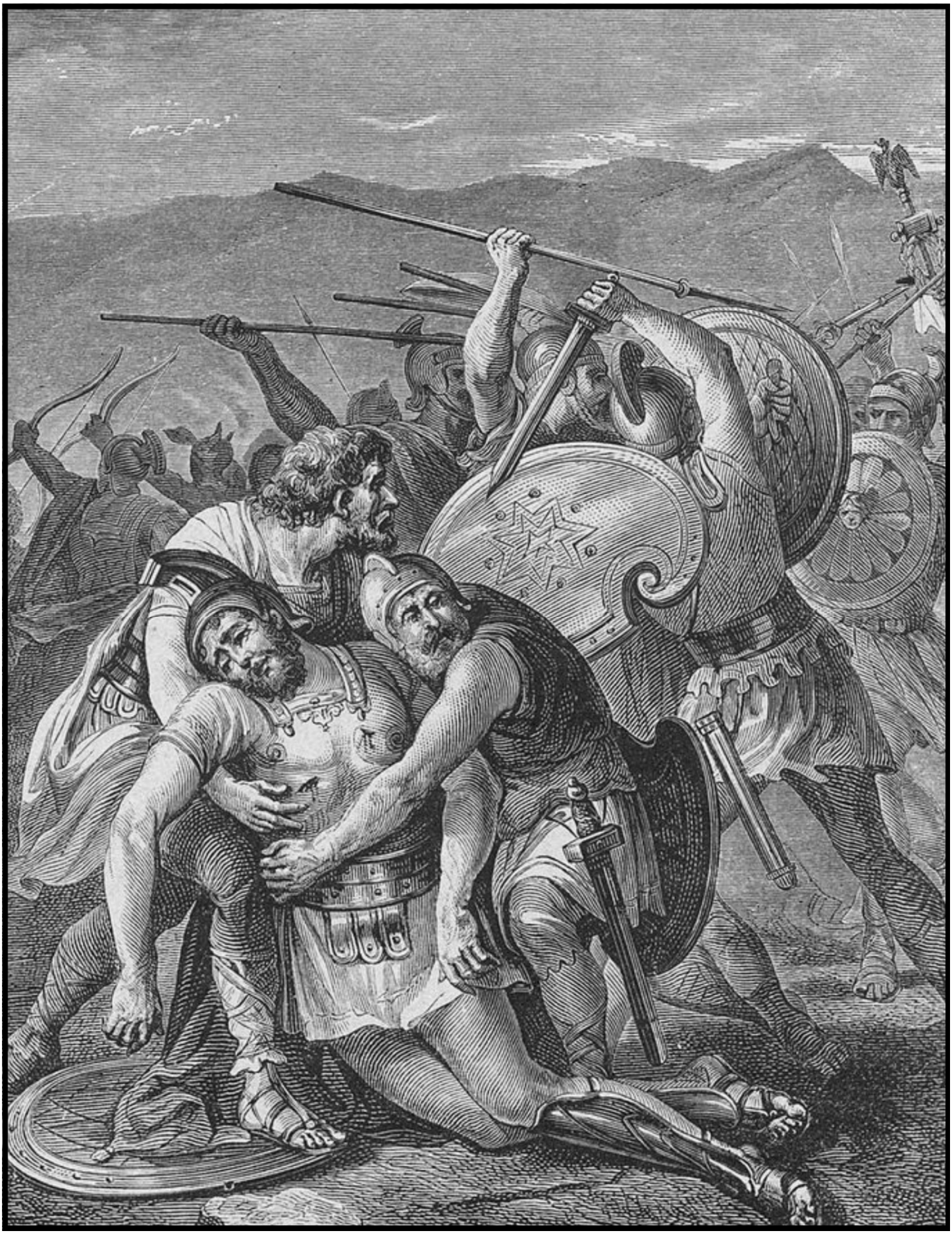
Ability List

Destruction **Ruin** **Rugged**

Rampage **Weaponry** **Traveler**

Revolt: In the countryside the latroconum can count upon the downtrodden peasantry for support & aid. Once per session the latriconium may recruit d6 followers per HD from any rural settlement to help their cause. These allies remain at the latroconum's side until death.

Audacity Belligerence Ego



The Knight from the South

Most often a knight who comes from the south to adventure in the north does so at the request of a patron. Such a character is most likely on a quest which you should invent as part of your character's inception..

The Knight in the Slatewind

Knightly orders, that is, classes of landed warriors, are not uncommon in the slatewind. Most knights aren't affiliated with any specific religion or ethos, rather they are appointed by their cities to govern swathes of land & the people who occupy them. They are offered this opportunity because they are able to protect that land & those people - or at least they appear to have that power. A few cities don't invest knights at all. **Termus** has n no knights, the lands surrounding the city – the whole province of **Division** – is commonly held by citizens. **Bitter** has no knights either – though there has been an effort to create some approximate variant following their successful revolution, during which most of the knights in Crone mountain province were killed. The other cities all invest knights & more commonly, co-opt the intermittent armed landlord by offering them positions within their city's ruling bodies. **Shield** has its militant orders, of which a four could be described as knighthoods – each in service to one of the city's 4 kings. The Raccoon, Cat, Coyote & Bear orders are more or less similar in terms of their codes of conduct – demanding a more efficient, brutal form of chivalry that offers no quarter to enemies but refuses any harm to those under protection. The main code of these knightly orders is – protect the subjects, and subjugate the adversary. **Sword of the West** has innumerable knights each controlling some indistinct, but somehow indispensable particle of land upon the **Sullen Plain.**

The Latriconium from the South

A specialist bandit, one who advocates for the little people, a Latriconium from the south may wish to find their way north to join in the infamous conflict at **Bitter**. The successful peasant rebellion there has set new precedents in the world & idealistic fighters have been drawn there, hoping to make a difference.

The Latriconium in the Slatewind

The nobility is indistinguishable from an organized criminal syndicate. That's the motivating ethos behind the Latriconia of **Bitter**. Driven to exhaustion at the point of a sword, the workers at the mines of **Crone Mountain** finally seized their tools and used them to execute their bosses. This peasant rebellion was aided, guided & some say orchestrated by some freethinkers & revolutionaries who'd been behind similar uprisings in **Salt Province**. These rabble-rousers – bandits, thieves, pirates – all by a kinder name (it's said) were first formed at **Red Bank** – agent provocateurs with no real social conscience. The deposed lords of Bitter will spin any number of conspiratorial theories concerning how they were at last betrayed by their once loyal subjects. The Latriconia though – those peasant rebels who fought, and finally defeated their masters – they'll tell you otherwise. They'll say that the lords are fat, lazy & soft. That they lacked commitment & that they, finally, lost the support of their most capable sycophants – and without them? Well, the whole edifice came tumbling down. Now this ethos is spreading. The idea that there should be no masters is a growing belief & Latriconia are springing up everywhere oppression is felt. Just as quickly they're driven down by oppressors, but at this moment, there stands a hope.







The Magician

A practitioner of magic. Magicians are the elite among spellcasters known for their sophisticated, highly idiomatic manners.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+2
CON	d6+8
DEX	d6+1
INT	d6+6
STR	d6+8
WIS	d6+3

Saving Throws	
Breath	19
Devices	19
Paralysis	17
Death	19
Spells	17

Adventuring Skills	
Alchemy	3
Composition	3
Languages	3
Medicine	2
Numeracy	2
Sorcery	2
Trickery	1

Hit Dice d10
Starting HP d10+3
Melee Bonus: +1
Ranged Bonus: +2

Damage Bonus: +1
AC Bonus: +2
Initiative: DEX+d6
Movement: STR+2

Language Rolls: 2
Parley Dice: d6 / d6
Gear Rolls: 12

Ability List

Circles **Signaling** **Ritual**

Mentalism **Spellbook** **Wizardry**

Magical: Magicians decrease all the spell levels of all spells of one school or seed by one level. All the spells of that type are easier for the magician to cast.

Nobility Civility Defiance







The Marauder

One who pursues destructive ruin as a way of life. Marauders are pure juggernauts of dolorous energy.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+4
CON	d6+0
DEX	d6+11
INT	d6+0
STR	d6+4
WIS	d6+7

Saving Throws	
Breath	19
Devices	19
Paralysis	17
Death	19
Spells	19

Adventuring Skills	
Detect Traps	3
Forage	3
Hide in Shadow	3
Instrument	2
Open Doors	2
Scale Walls	2
Siege	1

Hit Dice d6
Starting HP d6+1
Melee Bonus: +3
Ranged Bonus: +2

Damage Bonus: +2
AC Bonus: +1
Initiative: DEX+d4
Movement: STR+6

Language Rolls: 1
Parley Dice: d4 / d4
Gear Rolls: 10

Ability List

Destruction **Endurance** **Rampage**

Ruin **Traveler** **Weaponry**

Juggernaut: A marauder deals additional damage on attacks based upon the damage they've endured themselves. For every 5 points the marauder's HP is reduced below its maximum they increase any damage they deal by 1 point.

Audacity Impulse Belligerence



The Magician from the South

No two people come to their power as magicians in quite the same way. To provide a path or framework – this is denying the will of the magician to become what they wish to become. Why do some come north? Because they will it. That is enough.

The Magician in the Slatewind

A magician is formed of will & focused effort. They are not taught, they do not study in colleges or symposia. There is no practiced path forward into this heady realm of pure magic. A magician is by needs an iconoclast and no two follow the same crooked route to their power. With all that understood there is no reason that a few magicians shouldn't combine their efforts, or band together into a guild. There's nothing preventing this – but so far no such organization has taken root in the slatewind. Magicians have idiosyncratic relationships with their foundational cultures as well. Some regard their birth to parents as a premature emergence, an insignificant portion of their experience that preceded their actual birth – into Self & Power. Some have a soft spot for their people, the culture that brought them forward. The cities of the slatewind don't tend to have accommodating attitudes towards magicians. They are too weird, too powerful to be left unchecked. Those that can't be in some way shackled- they are feared. For this reason, most magicians go either unnoticed – hidden in their communities through magic or discretion. Others revel in their power & they leave behind the trappings of civilization that would hinder them with nonsensical ideas about decency & conscience. The latter sort of magician can often enough find a stronghold for themselves in the ruins – out in the wastelands & wreckage where the deep wisdom of the ancients yet resides. The slatewind valley is a rich mine for any magician, in terms of mystical resources. Power flows still under the earth, through the machinery of the ancients. There are layers of hidden power that have yet to be counted, all there, in the ruins.

The Marauder from the South

In general, not much more than a lunatic, the plunder-minded aggressor is not welcome anywhere and those who are known in civilized lands are best served by escaping to the anonymity of the north, where their reputation will not instantly make them unwelcome.

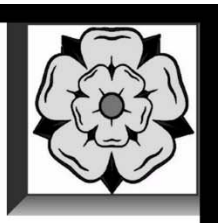
The Marauder in the Slatewind

There is no shortage of murderous thugs in the slatewind. Commonly they attach themselves to extant orders, so as to hide their more belligerent, wicked natures. Marauders can find battlefields littered with simple soldiers and pious paladins – unsuspecting of the terrible wrath ready to be loosed upon them. While no organized society will lightly tolerate a marauder within their polity – there are a few places a marauder can find a place. In the **Khanate of Diya,** posing as a resistor in **Bitter's** uprising. As a warrior of **Shield** or, unfortunately for all, as an officer or soldier of **Zenith** – a city whose military has a reputation for excessive brutality & aggressive plunder. Naturally, living in the wilds & raiding the small outlying communities of the slatewind makes a fine way of life for most marauders, until there is someone willing to stop them. Always some brave fool thinks thy can match the wrath of the marauder, and always that fool sets free the whirlwind & truly experiences the inimical hate of the most brutal of people.





The Mercenary



Generalist warrior for hire. Mercenaries are versatile combatants who distinguish themselves in many theaters of war.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+5
CON	d6+4
DEX	d6+5
INT	d6+7
STR	d6+4
WIS	d6+2

Saving Throws	
Breath	19
Devices	17
Paralysis	17
Death	17
Spells	19

Adventuring Skills	
Composition	3
Gift	3
Joke	3
Judge Alignment	2
Languages	2
Numeracy	2
Scale Walls	1

Hit Dice d6
Starting HP d6+1
Melee Bonus: +2
Ranged Bonus: +1

Damage Bonus: +1
AC Bonus: +2
Initiative: DEX+d4
Movement: STR+2

Language Rolls: 2
Parley Dice: d6 / d6
Gear Rolls: 12

Ability List

Claimant	Endurance	Predation
Vanguard	Guardian	Traveler

Professional: Mercenaries are commonly able to find work as warriors or guards. Any time you are engaged in a battle of any kind you are able to find someone who is willing to compensate you for your trouble. You can make a d20 WIS check in civilization to find someone willing to pay you a bounty of 10 Sp per HD worth of enemies that you have vanquished. You can only attempt this roll once per conflict & you must have prevailed in that conflict.

Civility	Belligerence	Ego







The Mesmerist

Cunning manipulators with a seductive power Mesmerists act upon the powerful & rich in order to manipulate events in their favor usually through sham displays of more impressive powers.

Statistics

CHA	d6+11
CON	d6+0
DEX	d6+3
INT	d6+8
STR	d6+1
WIS	d6+5

Saving Throws

Breath	18
Devices	18
Paralysis	19
Death	18
Spells	19

Adventuring Skills

Gift	3
Investigate	3
Joke	3
Judge Alignment	2
Pick Pockets	2
Sorcery	2
Trickery	1

Hit Dice d6
Starting HP d6+1
Melee Bonus: +2
Ranged Bonus: +1

Damage Bonus: +0
AC Bonus: +1
Initiative: DEX+d4
Movement: STR+6

Language Rolls: 2
Parley Dice: d8 / d6
Gear Rolls: 11

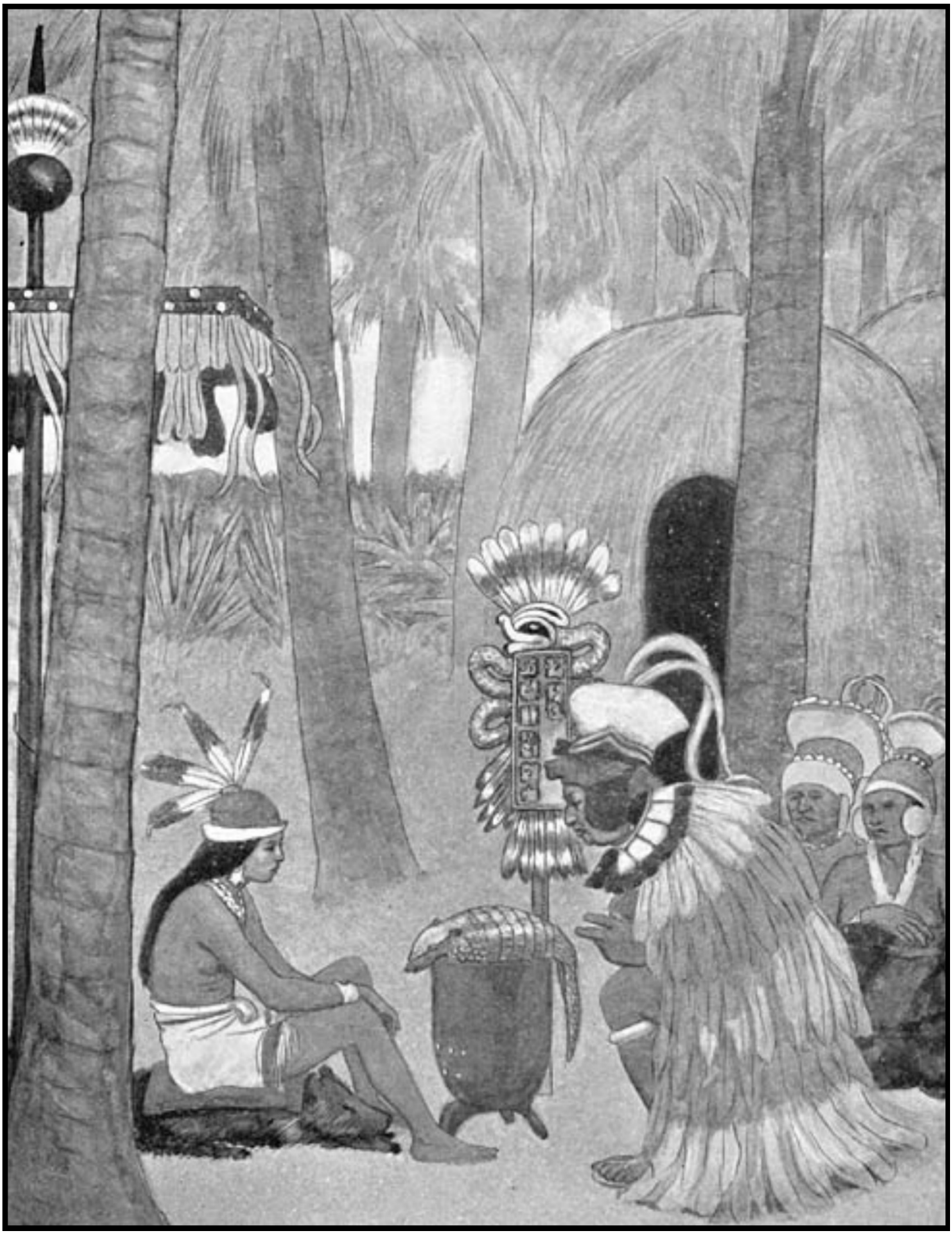
Ability List

Disguise **Glammer** **Forgery**

Domesticity **Sociability** **Mentalism**

Svengali: A mesmerist can take on a protégé - this follower is persuaded by the mesmerist & their mind-tricks to excel in all matters & to obey the mesmerist as well. When a mesmerist gains a follower they are automatically promoted to professional status with corresponding statistics.

Audacity Civility Kindness



The Mercenary from the South

A mercenary goes where the wars are. A mercenary traveling to the slatewind valley is either late or early. The last war, between the cities left **Elan** a ruin and **Bitter** a revolutionary stronghold. The next war is always brewing though, like a storm on the horizon.

The Mercenary in the Slatewind

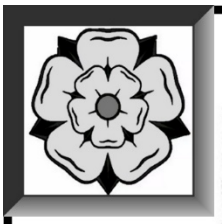
Following the fall of Elan, the local militia fell out of the chain of command. Having stood against the constant attack by the other cities during the **Thousand Day Siege,** the militia's members found themselves in a far more frustrating position than they ever did in war. They'd been defeated, not at last by their enemies, but by their lords, the armistice & the end of the hostilities gave up everything that they had fought & sacrificed for. And having spent the better part of 5 years doing nothing but fight – these veterans had little to do but to carry on fighting – this time, not for any hopeful cause or deeply held conviction. Not for any home that would abandon them. Instead they fight for a living. The **Thousand Days** is a mercenary legion, mainly comprised of Elan's disaffected & displaced veterans, but not exclusively. The Thousand Days are employed throughout the slatewind – as garrisons, bodyguards & even front line fighters – wherever someone with money needs someone to fight for them – the Thousand Days are often called. Not the only mercenary company in the valley – they're the biggest and the most well regarded. The Thousand Days is based out of a fort in the forests east of Elan.

The Mesmerist from the South

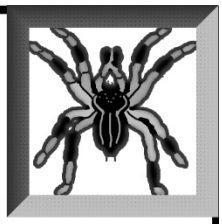
While capable of therapeutic hypnotism – or even recreational, entertainment style mental trickery – many mesmerists find themselves overwhelmed by the power they have over others – they allow their darkest motivations to guide them and then – well there is trouble & when there is trouble, people flee to the north.

The Mesmerist in the Slatewind

Mesmerism has a few actual traditions, schools of thought & academies for training. These aren't numerous – indeed in the Slatewind valley there are only two of note. The **Winerous Wonder Works of Wicker Woast** is the first that anyone ever thinks of – Wicker's advertising is, after all, quite good. This school, and it is not a particularly reputable, or even credible institution is *somewhere* in **Sword of the West** & it is *probably* operated by a goblin? Most people can't remember being there- even those who've matriculated say that what they learned at the 5Ws was learned in a dream. And not a very pleasant one. **Spbol Inwick's Finishing Academy** operating out of the river port of **Red Bank** has a less dubious reputation – though its students have been known to pursue careers that aren't altogether admirable. This school is run by the Halfling mystic Spbol Inwick exclusively for ladies. The school is said to make women into ladies & ladies into queens. A few students have gone on, in fact, to become queens – through highly questionable means. Still – the school's endowment has not suffered for all of its highly successful students – and the reunion gala is still the high point of the socialite's season.



The Mountebank



A raconteuer and trickster, commonly a thief as well. Mountebanks are clever decievers but not purely limited to con artistry.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+9
CON	d6+4
DEX	d6+3
INT	d6+7
STR	d6+0
WIS	d6+5

Saving Throws	
Breath	18
Devices	18
Paralysis	19
Death	18
Spells	18

Adventuring Skills	
Investigate	3
Judge Alignment	3
Move Quietly	3
Pick Pockets	2
Poisoning	2
Trickery	2
Vocals	1

Hit Dice d6
Starting HP d6+1
Melee Bonus: +2
Ranged Bonus: +1

Damage Bonus: +0
AC Bonus: +2
Initiative: DEX+d4
Movement: STR+4

Language Rolls: 2
Parley Dice: d6 / d6
Gear Rolls: 12

Ability List

Disguise **Forgery** **Glammer**

Jinx **Sociability** **Tinkering**

Scoundrel: Mountebanks frequently find themselves, if not welcome, then easily tolerated at court & other officious domains. As a Mountebank you have a patron, a well meaning & affectionate aristocrat of some type who can offer you assistance & who is loyal to a fault.

Audacity Civility Ego



The Muezzin

The caller to prayer. Muezzins are religious singers who perform essential sacramental duties through musical performance.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+8
CON	d6+6
DEX	d6+0
INT	d6+9
STR	d6+1
WIS	d6+0

Saving Throws	
Breath	19
Devices	14
Paralysis	18
Death	14
Spells	16

Adventuring Skills	
Composition	3
Hear Noise	3
Investigate	3
Move Quietly	2
Numeracy	2
Theurgy	2
Vocals	1

Hit Dice d8
Starting HP d8+2
Melee Bonus: +1
Ranged Bonus: +1

Damage Bonus: +0
AC Bonus: +2
Initiative: DEX+d6
Movement: STR+4

Language Rolls: 2
Parley Dice: d6 / d6
Gear Rolls: 12

Ability List

Communion **Protector** **Prayers**

Mental Fortitude **Song** **Signaling**

Call to Prayer: Muezzins observe the motion of the sun & moon & stars to accurately determine the proper time for prayers. Make a d20 INT check, on a successful check you have determined the proper time for prayer, anyone who prays during this period (to a god or pantheon you are affiliated with) gains an improved level of prayer - *Supplications* have their level increased by 2 & *Benedictions* & *Invocations* have their levels reduced by 1. This can only be used once per session.

Piety Kindness Ego



The Mountebank from the South

While some of the innumerable criminal low lives mentioned throughout this book are fixed upon swindling & psychological power games – the mountebank is another breed entirely – they're purely invested in the thrill of the deception. Excitement, as a motivation, tends to drive people to the northern frontiers & that is the best explanation for why a mountebank may have journeyed from the south.

The Mountebank in the Slatewind

In theory mountebanks of the slatewind fall under the banner of the **Gatesfow** – the criminal fraternity that works behind the scenes throughout the land. Practically, the mountebank, as a species of criminal, is the least likely to join with any structured hierarchy. The Mountebank, as a rule is a highly individualistic, solitary operator – someone who prefers to thwart authority rather than succumb to its commands. This libertine scofflaw ethos likewise means that there aren't likely any two mountebanks with equivalent goals or motivations. Which is to say – as a character in the slatewind, a mountebank is always without peer, though, rarely without friends or companions.

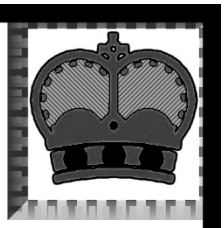
The Muezzin from the South

Some religions do not engage in prayers at all. Of those that do, not all have regularly scheduled prayer times. Of those that do, not all have a specialist herald – singer to announce when those times are occurring. If you're a muezzin from the south all of these need to be incorporated into your religion's design when creating it.

The Muezzin in the Slatewind

The **Dwarves** whose religious doctrines are based upon sound & music have a long & storied tradition of muezzins – often traveling in groups. Dwarven religion is not innately scheduled in terms of its prayers & meditations – so the arrival of a troupe of muezzins at one hall or town indicates a time where religion is asserting itself more into dwarven life. **Khinish** doctrines require specific prayers to be said at specific times – usually during sacral intervals where a member of the community is being advanced in some way in the faith – by passing a rite of adolescence, being born or being married. The muezzin, in these situations leads the faithful in a song that is also a prayer – usually in the form of a longwinded chant. The masterminds of the polytheistic union at **Elan** adopted the dwarf & khin habits to create a specialized litany that correlates to all the deities of the nascent pantheon. They assigned hours & days to each of the gods & then trained up a school of muezzins – **The Chant of All as All** – to lead in the veneration of all gods together through the performance of 31 distinct prayers – one for each god and a final one for all the gods together. The Muezzins of the Chant have assigned one god to each given day of a month with some months offering a specialist prayer for all the gods as one. This standardization has created calendrical cycles that are beginning to be observed throughout the slatewind – with specific gods associated with specific days of each month – often correlating with individual feast days. The practice is fairly new – still only a few decades old – so there are a few divisions among the Chant in terms of planning out the month's prayers & songs.







The Musician

One who plays music on an instrument which may include vocal performance. Musicians are best in groups but one alone is adequate.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+10
CON	d6+1
DEX	d6+5
INT	d6+3
STR	d6+1
WIS	d6+8

Saving Throws	
Breath	18
Devices	16
Paralysis	19
Death	16
Spells	18

Adventuring Skills	
Composition	3
Hear Noise	3
Instrument	3
Joke	2
Languages	2
Move Quietly	2
Vocals	1

Hit Dice d6
Starting HP d6+1
Melee Bonus: +2
Ranged Bonus: +1

Damage Bonus: +0
AC Bonus: +1
Initiative: DEX+d6
Movement: STR+6

Language Rolls: 1
Parley Dice: d8 / d6
Gear Rolls: 11

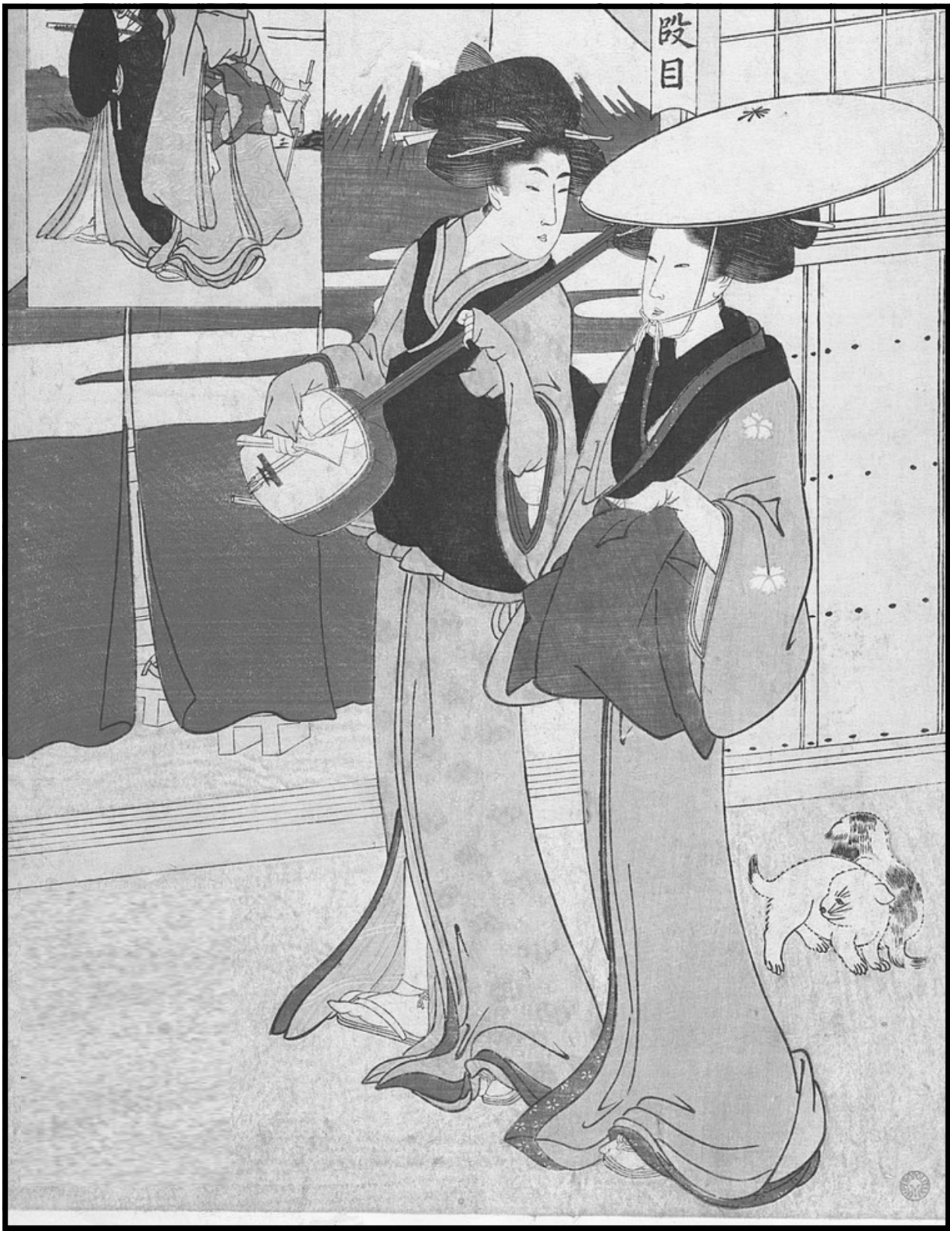
Ability List

Communion **Domesticity** **Ethereal Beauty**

Scholarship **Signaling** **Song**

Welcome: Musicians can find welcome in virtually any camp. A musician can make a social test against any group of people & if they receive a result of Curious or better they are welcomed into the group & granted shelter, food & rest. This hospitality lasts until they prove unsavory or dangerous.

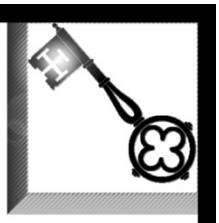
Audacity Kindness Fairness


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The Mystic



The recipient of mystical knowledge from out of the heavens, a Mystic is touched by the divine & often descends into madness as a result.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+9
CON	d6+2
DEX	d6+2
INT	d6+7
STR	d6+1
WIS	d6+3

Saving Throws	
Breath	17
Devices	16
Paralysis	19
Death	16
Spells	16

Adventuring Skills	
Detect Traps	3
Hear Noise	3
Hide in Shadow	3
Languages	2
Move Quietly	2
Sorcery	2
Theurgy	1

Hit Dice d8
Starting HP d8+2
Melee Bonus: +2
Ranged Bonus: +1

Damage Bonus: +0
AC Bonus: +1
Initiative: DEX+d6
Movement: STR+6

Language Rolls: 2
Parley Dice: d6 / d6
Gear Rolls: 11

Ability List

Disguise **Ritual** **Prayers**

Overlooked **Spellbook** **Wizardry**

Enochian: Mystics understand the inomprehensible language of the angels - a sound few are able to interpret as anything but ambient noise. In a holy place - usually a temple, but not always, a mystic overhears the words of the angels. Roll a die - on an odd result hte angels speak of Woe & on an even result of Weal. If they speak of Woe the Mystic reduces their die rolls by the number rolled on the die (any die will do) but increases their HP by that number for the remaineder of the session. If they speak Weal, the Mystic improves their rolls by the amount rolled on the die but reduce their HP by the amount - which has the potential to kill the mystic - but overhearing the words of the angels is not lightly undertaken.

Audacity Piety Kindness



The Musician from the South

Music is a highly subjective business. Some cultures may have no taste for melody, some may have no regard for harmony. Brevity comes into style some places while long, overarching performances are preferred elsewhere. And that's before considering the kinds of instruments your culture will employ. Give some thought to the nature of your musical training, instrumental talents & the types of music you think you'll perform.

The Musician in the Slatewind

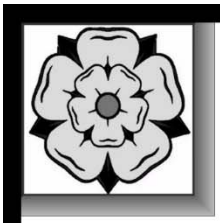
Music has a lot of importance to **dwarves** – in the slatewind they reverence their divine sounds through the use of call & response singing drum & fife corps (in execution it's prettier than it seems on paper). **Plioshr** music is rooted in vocalization – singing accompanied by a variety of percussion implements to keep up complex rhythms in long jams that sometimes go on for days. **Elf** music is almost entirely instrumental – meandering & symphonic – it makes use, principally of woodwinds. **Khin** musical traditions are rooted in religious observation & the use of blaring trumpets, flogged kettle drums & non-melodic falsetto singing are quite distinct. **Brizai** music is likewise distinct- it is focused on the *song* as a form. Pieces no longer than ten minutes – usually with a story sung to fiddle music – all very easy to dance to are the Brizai cultural repertoire. **Saayang** music is long-form but highly structured – it makes heavy use of harmonies played out on a huge array of fiddles & bells & pipes with highly specialist players of soprano & alto & tenor variants of each being given their own turns making the archetypal performance of Saayang music several hours long & performed by a few dozen musicians. **Quet** music is lyrical & involves accompanying whistles, handclaps & humming – the only instruments tradition to them are hand drums to keep the steady, easy beat which is usually chanted over by poets. There is not traditional **Orc** music at all. Orcs who are musicians tend to be devotees and lovers of another group's traditions. **Goblin** music is metallic & hard to listen to & very often incorporates highly personalized, mechanical instruments, some of which are dangerous to be near. **Halfling** music is syncretic & widely regarded as among the best in the Slatewind – as the various Halfling communities have adopted variants & pieces of all the rest of their contemporary's music, bringing it together in a unique fashion

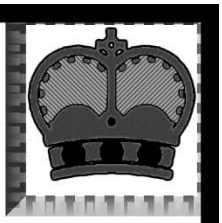
The Mystic from the South

A foretelling – a vision? What brought you north? This is a very personal question, one you can invent as you please.

The Mystic in the Slatewind

The divinely inspired diviner has only a few specific examples in the slatewind's cosmology. The Goblin pantheon – of **Bick Buck** & **Mick Mack** both have priestly surgeons who operate upon the brains of orphaned goblins in order to create mystical, visionary savants. Sometimes they survive the operation & become mystics in fact. **Plioshr** religious practice allows for a hermit or Wildman – someone who is overcome by spiritual forces & speaks the untrue-as-yet. They're known as **Wlmni**. **Quet & Saayang** cultural & religious practice do have an opening for seers – but neither encourages much divine madness. Of the main human faiths the **Brizai** produce the largest number of individuals who could be called mystics. Almost all of them are destitute members of the lower castes of that culture. Naturally, in a world of abundant supernatural phenomena – it's not unlikely that any one god might single someone out to touch their mind directly.





The Paladin

A valiant warrior in service to the church, paladins are the guards & the protectors of the faithful & the militant servants of church hierarchies. In theocratic states they are the officers of the military.

Statistics

CHA	d6+1
CON	d6+6
DEX	d6+3
INT	d6+5
STR	d6+5
WIS	d6+5

Saving Throws

Breath	19
Devices	16
Paralysis	17
Death	16
Spells	15

Adventuring Skills

Composition	3
Forage	3
Hear Noise	3
Languages	2
Medicine	2
Move Quietly	2
Theurgy	1

Hit Dice d10
Starting HP d10+3
Melee Bonus: +1
Ranged Bonus: +1

Damage Bonus: +1
AC Bonus: +2
Initiative: DEX+d8
Movement: STR+2

Language Rolls: 2
Parley Dice: d6 / d6
Gear Rolls: 13

Ability List

Artisan **Prayers** **Mental Fortitude**

Circles **Survival** **Scholarship**

Godliness: As a paragon of the church's dogma the paladin sets an example. You improve your AC & HP by an amount equal to your HD so long as you have greater than 1 spell levels acquired through prayers of *supplication*.

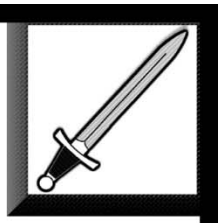
Nobility Piety Fairness







The Pioneer



Those of a culture who are internal outcasts, sent abroad to find a new way and establish new colonies.

Statistics

CHA	d6+3
CON	d6+7
DEX	d6+5
INT	d6+3
STR	d6+5
WIS	d6+4

Saving Throws

Breath	19
Devices	18
Paralysis	16
Death	18
Spells	18

Adventuring Skills

Building	3
Detect Traps	3
Forage	3
Investigate	2
Navigate	2
Scale Walls	2
Theurgy	1

Hit Dice d8
Starting HP d8+2
Melee Bonus: +1
Ranged Bonus: +2

Damage Bonus: +2
AC Bonus: +3
Initiative: DEX+d4
Movement: STR+4

Language Rolls: 1
Parley Dice: d4 / d4
Gear Rolls: 12

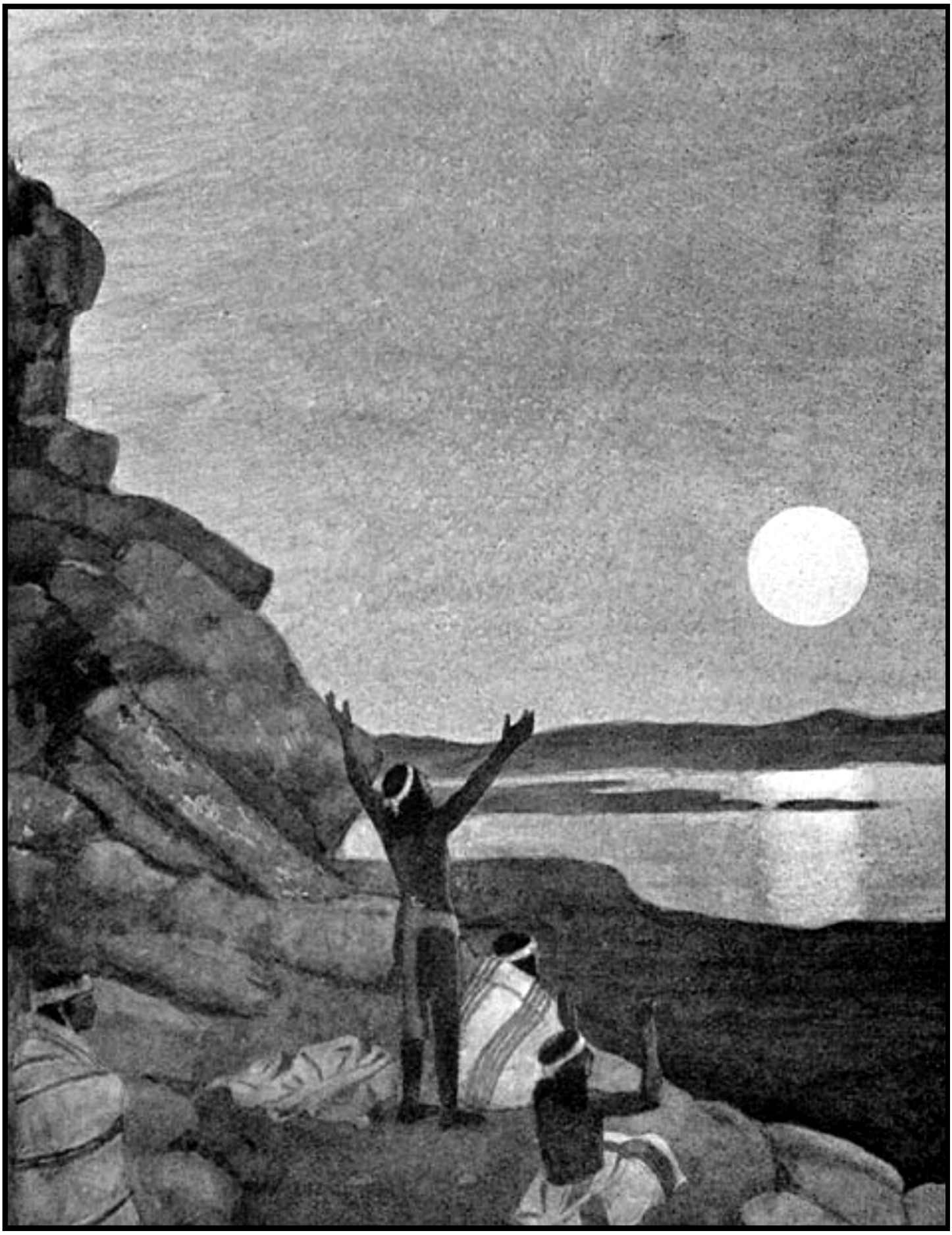
Ability List

Domesticity **Heightened Senses** **Protector**

Rugged **Signaling** **Wayfinding**

Founder: Pioneers have an eye for those locales that would make fine settlements. You can found a settlment in the wilds & use cajoling, advertising & other types of outreach to sell off portions of this valiant dream. In unoccupied portions of the map you may make a d20 CON check. On a successful check you have pioneered a settlement location that has arable soil & plentiful water. You can sell off information about this location for 10 Sp per lot with a maximum of 100 lots per settlement. If you roll a 1 on this CON check, previoulsy untapped but valuable resources are found in the location.

Nobility Impulse Ego



The Paladin from the South

Most religions have some type of warrior caste – members of the church who take up arms in defense of the faith. In theocratic states this carries prestige – while in secular societies such a person is regarded less as a hero & more as a dangerous zealot.

The Paladin in the Slatewind

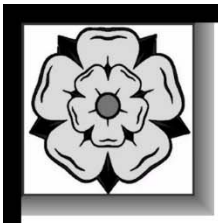
In these days of polyglot religious syncretism the paladins of old are anathema. Many of those who were paladins of a **Singlist** faith were eradicated during the last war & at the fall of **Elan.** That war was enough to persuade most that the time for holy wars had ended & the remaining holy warriors, those who'd endured the worst of internecine warfare chose to band together instead of dying separately (at one another's hands). The **Peace of Elan** is an order of religiously devoted warriors – paladins – who've designed to prevent another war by strongly enforcing the doctrine of polytheism that was fought so hard against in the last war. Having lost the war, Elan won the peace – the polytheist mission prevailed and all those warriors who fought one another have chosen to band together to protect in turn one another's religious convictions. It's an imperfect solution – it still involves conflict & death – but it has brought about a lasting peace. The paladins of the Peace of Elan are into their second generation now – and there are a few who are convicted polytheists – where their predecessors merely respected the faiths of their fellows – this second generation & the incoming third – are actual practitioners of the new religious orthodoxy. The Peace is run as a hierarchical military order without overt reference to any specific deity – in that respect, as a divine knighthood, the Peace is distinct – for it won't allow that any god be held higher than any other, at least officially.

The Pioneer from the South

Not quite a day late and not quite a dollar short – more a few hours late and missing about two dimes – you're a pioneer lighting out in the territories – not the wilderness, not the unknown – just the unclaimed. As a pioneer you're staking your claim on a new continent – somewhere a person can be free of all that you're leaving behind – you're an archetypal **Game of the North** character – you've just chosen to settle in an atypical Game of the North setting. One interesting complication of these foreign based pioneers is that they may be planting new ethnicities, new cultures throughout the land – new gods & new ways brought into the mix who could revise everyone's expectations of the future.

The Pioneer in the Slatewind

Many are the Slatewind's pioneers. Those folk who gather up their people and set out to make a home for themselves – there are many, likely tens of thousands throughout the slatewind. These folk are moving the boundary stones of the cities further and further afield, they're creating new provinces at the bounds of the old ones & they're setting down in parts that aren't well known – adding all new lands to the mix. The wild grabs are over though – at least in the slatewind. There are huge swathes of land claimed by barons & lords & civic affinity groups & churches & syndicates. That which isn't claimed is off the beaten path – which suits most pioneers just fine. After all, the great cities at **Red Banks** & **Sword of the West** were aught by pioneer colonies a pair of centuries ago – so who is to say what the patrimony of the current slate of pioneers might be.





The Pretender



Member of a line of deposed leaders, the pretender has a claim upon some noble title but is kept from it by greater forces than they can muster themselves.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+1
CON	d6+9
DEX	d6+3
INT	d6+1
STR	d6+8
WIS	d6+6

Saving Throws	
Breath	19
Devices	18
Paralysis	17
Death	18
Spells	16

Adventuring Skills	
Joke	3
Judge Alignment	3
Navigate	3
Numeracy	2
Sorcery	2
Theurgy	2
Vocals	1

Hit Dice d10
Starting HP d10+3
Melee Bonus: +1
Ranged Bonus: +2

Damage Bonus: +1
AC Bonus: +2
Initiative: DEX+d8
Movement: STR+2

Language Rolls: 1
Parley Dice: d6 / d6
Gear Rolls: 12

Ability List

Artisan	Scholarship	Forgery
Divination	Spellbook	Wizardry

Legitimacy: Your claims are more authentic than those who hold power now & your position is difficult to argue against. You always have adherents within the buraucracy who will assist you and offer you aid in opposition to their current masters. You can seek out members of anyone in a political class who is automatically Friendly toward you. This works once per session.

Nobility	Defiance	Fairness







The Ranger

Far traveler of the woods & plains, rangers are wardens & authorities in the woods, they are the protectors of ecology.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+1
CON	d6+4
DEX	d6+8
INT	d6+1
STR	d6+5
WIS	d6+9

Saving Throws	
Breath	19
Devices	18
Paralysis	17
Death	18
Spells	18

Adventuring Skills	
Detect Traps	3
Forage	3
Hide in Shadow	3
Medicine	2
Move Quietly	2
Navigate	2
Trickery	1

Hit Dice d8
Starting HP d8+2
Melee Bonus: +1
Ranged Bonus: +2

Damage Bonus: +2
AC Bonus: +2
Initiative: DEX+d6
Movement: STR+4

Language Rolls: 1
Parley Dice: d6 / d6
Gear Rolls: 12

Ability List

Animal Languages **Shamanism** **Traceless Passing**

Traveler **Wayfinding** **Weaponry**

Forestry: A ranger improves their AC, Movement and To-Hit scores all by 2 while in a forest.

Nobility Impulse Fairness



The Pretender from the South

Always a compelling presence – a character from abroad who makes impressive claims about their ownership over land & people. The southern pretender is perhaps the most obvious variant of this type of character – a count or prince of some unknown place claiming that the land beneath everyone's feet, by divine right, belongs to them. Naturaly, these sorts of claims are more likely to be disregarded by the iconoclasts of the north – but a pretender who's crossed the oceans is certainly up to the task of persuading them.

The Pretender in the Slatewind

Locally born pretenders are most likely the result & the consequence of the recent wars. Orphaned princelings seeking to reclaim that which was taken – humbled aristocrats who wish to stand and vie with the new powers that be – powers that overthrew the pretender's ancestors. You'll find quite a bit of this in **Sword of the West** where rulership & lines of lineage & ownership are convoluted & frequently disrupted. There's no shortage either, of pretenders who make bold claims over the liberated lands of **Crone Mountain** & the rebel city of **Bitter.** Just as commonly though there's the odd fellow claiming to own the whole slatewind and demanding that all regard them as imperial majesty. Whether the claims are true or not is irrelevant to their power to persuade either enemies or allies & the more persuasive you are to allies, the more seriously others will take your claims – and the more endangered you are by the status quo.

The Ranger from the South

One who travels far without a destination. One who ranges. It's hard to range further than the north. Among the southern people there aren't specific classes of people, no specific race that comprises most of the rangers – for all the rangers are unique & have their own reasons for traversing the world.

The Ranger in the Slatewind

The slatewind valley is huge. It's a vast territory of largely unclaimed wilderness punctuated by the intermittent metropolis. It's got a great array of different landforms – forests, swamps, mountains, wide rolling plains & storm riven coasts. A character at home in the wilderness will do fine – a character who wants to take in all that the natural world has to offer will flourish. The ranger, archetypically, makes their way in the forest, and the woods around Able – the province called **Woodlands** is a magnificent old-growth forest that is home to any number of forest trackers, hunters & freedom fighters – it has developed its own league of defenders – the **Woodswatch** – who fight a guerrilla war against the traitorous government of Able & the occupational armies of **Zenith**. Out on the plains of the prince of **Salt** there are wandering hunters who intermittently band together in **Sagamores** – periodical hunting parties that stick together, when their dispositions coincide. Outside **Red Bank** the impenetrable wilderness is a haven to any number of animist cults, forest survivalists & nonconformists – all of whom seek to go their own way far from the trappings of society. Finally, the ruins, those eponymous constructs of the slatewind – often vast complexes that shame the great cities of the present – they are havens in their own way – wildernesses of antiquity that yield to the right kind of knowledge.



The Saboteur



Spies & commandos who utilize cunning & deception to inflict destruction upon enemy fortifications, supply lines & morale.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+5
CON	d6+1
DEX	d6+10
INT	d6+0
STR	d6+0
WIS	d6+12

Saving Throws	
Breath	19
Devices	18
Paralysis	19
Death	18
Spells	18

Adventuring Skills	
Building	3
Hide in Shadow	3
Navigate	3
Open Doors	2
Scale Walls	2
Siege	2
Trickery	1

Hit Dice d6	Damage Bonus: +1	
Starting HP d6+1	AC Bonus: +1	Language Rolls: 1
Melee Bonus: +2	Initiative: DEX+d6	Parley Dice: d6 / d6
Ranged Bonus: +2	Movement: STR+6	Gear Rolls: 11

Ability List

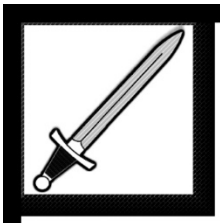
Destruction **Lucky** **Horrific**

Heightened Senses **Traveler** **Ruin**

Targets: Anywhere you go that civilization of any type has touched you have targets - a list, in your mind at least, of locations that could be destroyed which will sew chaos & spread disorder. You have this information for any settlement of more than 300 people.

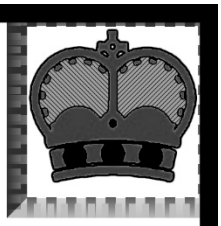
Audacity Impulse Fairness







The Samurai



A devout warrior who upholds the cultural, religious hierarchies within which the society functions, and which upholds the traditions of the culture to an exacting degree.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+0
CON	d6+5
DEX	d6+4
INT	d6+5
STR	d6+9
WIS	d6+0

Saving Throws	
Breath	19
Devices	17
Paralysis	15
Death	17
Spells	16

Adventuring Skills	
Detect Traps	3
Investigate	3
Judge Alignment	3
Languages	2
Navigate	2
Siege	2
Theurgy	1

Hit Dice d10
Starting HP d10+3
Melee Bonus: +2
Ranged Bonus: +1

Damage Bonus: +2
AC Bonus: +2
Initiative: DEX+d6
Movement: STR+2

Language Rolls: 2
Parley Dice: d4 / d4
Gear Rolls: 12

Ability List

Claimant **Prayers** **Horrific**

Destruction **Vanguard** **Rampage**

Horse Archer: Samurai are highly adept archers & highly capable of accurate shots even from horseback. A Samurai increases their ranged To-Hit by 2 when on horseback & they increase the damage die of any bow they use by 1 size in all cases.

Nobility Piety Belligerence



The Saboteur from the South

What drives someone to the furthest points of the world so that they may cause destruction? This is something in your own mind – in your heart, an idea that you have to destroy… something.

The Saboteur in the Slatewind

The revolutionaries at **Bitter** have saboteurs & work against the reactionary saboteurs hired by their displaced lords. In most situations a saboteur is fighting an asymmetrical conflict against a superior force- their only options are to wreck the infrastructure & ruin their enemy's access to resources – so destroying mines & dams & trapping roads & wrecking bridges – these are the types of a thing a single motivated individual can accomplish to thwart a superior force. Given that, there are underdogs in any conflict & each war produces its own share of fighters who want to keep the battle going. The elves of **Woodland** & the displaced of **Able** have corps of saboteurs who work to break the back of **Zenith's** oppression. All of which assumes a political motivation for the saboteur – not mentioned yet is the person who simply enjoys destruction – destruction on a large scale involving fire & death. A barn-burning pyromaniac is probably a more accomplished saboteur than any number of sappers & commandos – if only because their sabotage & destruction isn't focused on accomplishing any strategic aim. As a lover of pure chaos for its own sake, it is unfortunately a fact of life that this ethos is wired into the minds of **Goblins**, and that one could even regard the saboteur as the typical goblin – the rank & file profession of choice for the chaotic fairy folk.

The Samurai from the South

Samurai is a very specific type of warrior- a mounted, and by implication wealthy – combatant who is trained at length to shoot a bow from horseback. This type of warfare isn't particularly rare – but making a specialist elite troop type is a fairly specific variant.

The Samurai in the Slatewind

Lords & nobles who are trained in war can be found throughout the slatewind – but they're more commonly aristocrats or knights. The riding archer archetype that typifies the samurai is a highly specific set of skills & qualities that hasn't been brought from the south. Rather this is a homegrown phenomenon. Most of the samurai, the original ones from the slatewind, were out of **Sword of the West**, **Saedu** & **Termus** – their sort of warfare & their social role being created from a synergy of **Quet, Saayang** & **Khin** cultural cues. This amalgam of mannered noble, wealthy landlord & mounted warrior then became something of a sensation & soon every city was seeking to field their own samurai troops. In the last war these different regiments of samurai fared well against the soldiers and knights of the other cities but no group of samurai performed as well as **Elan**'s own contingent – comprised of **Plioshr** dog-riders & **Orc** elk-riders. These latter two are now seen as the paragon of the samurai ideal – and though the exotic manners that the idiomatic warriors were known for has been retained – the correlation to wealth & nobility has been broken entirely.



The Sannyasi

One who renounces all gods & masters - seeking instead an anarchic peace in the wilds.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+5
CON	d6+5
DEX	d6+5
INT	d6+3
STR	d6+4
WIS	d6+5

Saving Throws	
Breath	19
Devices	18
Paralysis	18
Death	18
Spells	18

Adventuring Skills	
Building	3
Forage	3
Hear Noise	3
Move Quietly	2
Navigate	2
Scale Walls	2
Theurgy	1

Hit Dice d8
Starting HP d8+2
Melee Bonus: +1
Ranged Bonus: +3

Damage Bonus: +1
AC Bonus: +1
Initiative: DEX+d6
Movement: STR+6

Language Rolls: 1
Parley Dice: d6 / d6
Gear Rolls: 10

Ability List

Heightened Senses **Shamanism** **Resourcefulness**

Overlooked **Wayfinding** **Song**

Refusal: By forgoing any benefit of title or religion you are invigorated. You improve all of your statistics by 1 - to a maximum of 18 (earning 100 xp per point over 18 you would have gained). This effect remains so long as you refuse all titles of nobility, take on no followers & never succumb to the powers of the gods. If you are ever subject to a Prayer - either willingly or unwillingly, your spirit is broken & you lose this benefit. Similiarly you cannot take on any followers or have pets or own property.

Impulse Defiance Kindness



The Seer

One who is gifted with visions of the future and of the next world by dint of divine influence. Chosen by gods.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+7
CON	d6+1
DEX	d6+6
INT	d6+5
STR	d6+0
WIS	d6+10

Saving Throws	
Breath	18
Devices	18
Paralysis	19
Death	18
Spells	18

Adventuring Skills	
Detect Traps	3
Judge Alignment	3
Languages	3
Numeracy	2
Sorcery	2
Theurgy	2
Vocals	1

Hit Dice d6
Starting HP d6+1
Melee Bonus: +2
Ranged Bonus: +1

Damage Bonus: +0
AC Bonus: +1
Initiative: DEX+d6
Movement: STR+4

Language Rolls: 2
Parley Dice: d8 / d6
Gear Rolls: 12

Ability List

Divination **Endurance** **Heightened Senses**

Jinx **Lucky** **Vanguard**

Destiny: A seer can vaguely see the destiny of those around them forming & crystalizing into a goldne path toward perfection. Destiny follows like a nimbus of power & it only alights upon members of groups - each of whom may be the one to see the destiny accomplished. You & your party members all may be the subject of a great destiny - though the effects of this destiny remain amorphous most of the time - it sometimes indicates one person with greater focus. Every session you pick yourself or one ally - that character improves all of their rolls for the session by 1.

Audacity Civility Fairness



The Sannayasi from the South

Decrying the very existence of gods, masters & hierarchies of any kind – a sannayasi isn't likely to make their way in the settled south. If you determine that civilization is your enemy – it's best for all concerned if you try to leave civilization behind. Fortunately for you there's an entire continent devoid of the trappings of power that you can explore.

The Sannayasi in the Slatewind

Apart from being an atheist anarchist, the Sannayasi has a strange relationship with other people, one complicated by the inevitable conflicts of belief & preference for order that civilized folk can't seem to shake, no matter how good an example the sannayasi exhibits. Fortunately – there is a programmatic path, a middle way between the pure atavism of life apart from gods & people & the humiliation of joining same. This path has been developed over centuries by the **Quet** people & it is a part of their cultural tradition. The sannayasi among the quet is seen as a noble figure who refuses to bow and thus deserves pain. The relationship between pain & refusal to conform is likened to a person dying of hunger & the traditions among the Quet say that there is a hunger in people for the nourishment of structure and the sannayasi is one who fasts, denying themselves that structure to become more pure. Whether this is the attitude of all those who follow this vocation is highly unlikely – but a quet is likely to understand, intuitively, what a sannayasi is about – most others will regard them with disdain & a little fear. The other group in the slatewind, in the world in fact, that understands the sannayasi are the **Orcs**, who have almost no religious feeling, who resist prayers & who are more likely to topple civilizations than to join them. A non-orc sannayasi is likely to be seen by orcs as either someone trying to emulate their ways, or someone who's at last come to their senses.

The Seer from the South

A deities voice of warning – the seer is not gifted so much as singled out – to be a voice in the wilderness warning of what is to come. Those who traverse the ocean do so, sometimes, in an attempt to flee the deity's constant demands – whether they succeed or not is uncertain.

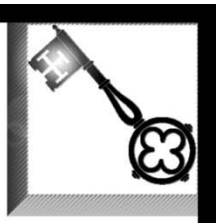
The Seer in the Slatewind

The voice of **Echoes** is the dwarf god most associated with caution & foreknowledge of a dangerous future. Dwarves who are touched by Echo are regarded much like the dwarves regard their mineshaft canaries – tragic, but necessary & something to be regarded with utmost vigilance. The **Quet** deity **Ispi Que** is concerned overall with visions & abiding insights & virtually all of its followers have some ability to foretell what is to come. The main temple to the god at **Diya** hosts the **Dreaming Parlor** – a large room dedicated to sleep & the visions that come from it – it's a shambolic & peaceful place intermittently marred by the screams of the dreamers who've entered into the nightmare of what could be. These are the divinely called seers, there are those whose access to future knowledge & distant vision isn't linked closely to any one god but rather the divine sphere itself – where time exists as a flat vista, a scene watched & understood from above wherin all that will happen is happening simultaneous to all that has happened. The seer, intermittently, gains this divine vision, glimpsing the world itself from this higher spatial dimension – and thus they gain knowledge-though this knowledge is very difficult to distinguish from the whole, confounding image of the world without time.





The Shaman



Devotee of a particular mystic totem, the Shaman is an agent for that totemic presence in the world.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+4
CON	d6+2
DEX	d6+7
INT	d6+4
STR	d6+0
WIS	d6+7

Saving Throws	
Breath	19
Devices	18
Paralysis	18
Death	18
Spells	16

Adventuring Skills	
Detect Traps	3
Hear Noise	3
Hide in Shadow	3
Poisoning	2
Scale Walls	2
Sorcery	2
Theurgy	1

Hit Dice d8
Starting HP d8+2
Melee Bonus: +2
Ranged Bonus: +2

Damage Bonus: +1
AC Bonus: +1
Initiative: DEX+d6
Movement: STR+6

Language Rolls: 2
Parley Dice: d4 / d4
Gear Rolls: 11

Ability List

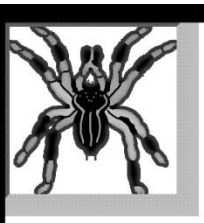
Animal Languages **Artisan** **Communion**

Ritual **Shamanism** **Survival**

Totem: A shaman chooses a totem animal or monster - that creature never attacks the Shaman unprovoked. In addition, the Shaman has that creature as an ally spirit - which takes the form of a ghostly version of the creature in question. The Shaman can manifest the creature physically on their turn & thereafter the creature joins the initiative on its own turns & acts on the Shaman's behalf. The ghost-totem has the statistics for the totem creature but with maximum HP per HD. It is otherwise not especially different from other examples of the same animal. The shaman can lose the totem's loyalty through abuse or neglect.

Audacity Impulse Piety







The Shepherd

Opposed to the Nomad who pursues animals, the shepherd leads them, usually with care and attention for wild predators

Statistics	
CHA	d6+6
CON	d6+1
DEX	d6+8
INT	d6+3
STR	d6+1
WIS	d6+9

Saving Throws	
Breath	19
Devices	16
Paralysis	19
Death	16
Spells	19

Adventuring Skills	
Forage	3
Instrument	3
Medicine	3
Move Quietly	2
Navigate	2
Numeracy	2
Scale Walls	1

Hit Dice d6
Starting HP d6+1
Melee Bonus: +1
Ranged Bonus: +2

Damage Bonus: +1
AC Bonus: +1
Initiative: DEX+d6
Movement: STR+6

Language Rolls: 1
Parley Dice: d8 / d6
Gear Rolls: 11

Ability List

Endurance **Survival** **Rugged**

Resourcefulness **Wayfinding** **Traveler**

Wary: Shepherds are watchful protectors - they increase the range at which they are surprised by 1 & they have a result on their search die with 1 higher value - e.g.: Normally finding hidden doors on a roll of 1 - the Shepherd finds them on a roll of 1-2.

Impulse Kindness Fairness



The Shaman from the South

Distinct from the adherents of a religion, the shaman is an adherent of a totem – an exemplary spirit-being whose aspect is linked to some aspect of the world. This type of relationship transcends space & so a shaman might be a devotee of a totem that isn't present in their native biome. Such a shaman would, by needs, seek out the realms of that creature – coming to the slatewind to engage in the communion with some spirit-being native to the valley.

The Shaman in the Slatewind

The **Plioshr** have abundant shaman in their cultural retinue. Their closeness to their animals – the rams they herd & the dogs they ride as well as to the grass – upon which their culture is based – these bring about a sympathetic, harmonic relationship between their human souls & the spirits of beasts & places. As such they are the pre-eminent shamans – and those who seek shamanic advice will venture to the **Expanse** or the **Sullen Plain** to seek a Plioshr shaman's guidance. **Orcs** are similarly shamanistic in their general practice – though this role, among orcs, is not so much a communal or tribal connection – but a highly personal, individualistic connection to a specific aspect of the natural world. Different creatures in the world have their own totemic paragons that call out to be followed. **Minister of Bats** – the **Bawamb** totem is quite prominent as is its opposite **Golden Escape**, the paragon of **Wanders**. There are a dozen totemic avatars for the different species of tree in the **Woodland**, and upon the grasses there are yet dozens more for the distinct species that make up the grasslands. In the cities there are shaman of the rats & the pigeons & the innumerable creatures that reside alongside people – many of them present in the **Verminous Court** – a strange & corrupt sodality of the vexatious spirits of pests & pestilence. Finally there are the spirits of birds – and these are numerous & their paragons the totems of the far-flying migratory animals are often said to be ruled by **Intemperate Cacophony** – the goose totem.

The Shepherd from the South

A humble profession but one that provides its own rewards. Exercise & rest, vigilance & toughness – a shepherd is the leader of a herd but also the caretaker & protector. Herds need space & open land – which is shorter & shorter in supply in the south – so a shepherd, one really called to the profession, might wish to find a greener pasture in the unsettled north.

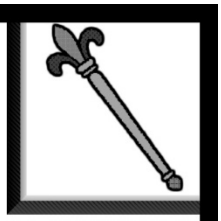
The Shepherd in the Slatewind

The **Plioshr** don't' herd sheep, but rather, rams – their immense wooly rams that provide textiles, meat, milk & hides – the entire basis of traditional plioshr material & psychic culture. The median plioshr is a shepherd and often enough plioshr away from their tribes & kin will take up that profession to work for others, it is a traditional set of skills & disciplines that has served them for time immemorial. Not that all the shepherds in the slatewind are plioshr. **Orcs** are often caught up the business of herding – though their herds are more regularly larger creatures such as bison & aurochs. There are herders of ducks among the **Saayang** who use them for fishing & for eggs & meat & feathers for quills & these qualify as shepherds. The **Halfling** populations throughout the land herd actual sheep, goats & sometimes smaller herd creatures such as lemmings & rabbits. **Crone Mountain**, the big eastern range that has **Bitter** as its capitol is served by hundreds of shepherds & shepherd clans residing up the mountain slopes – these herd sheep & goats but also native creatures of the northern mountains – alpacas & llamas & wooly mountain camels.





The Sicarius



A religious lay-person whipped into a vitriolic frenzy of acrimonious belief which includes great hostility for the unfaithful.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+4
CON	d6+2
DEX	d6+6
INT	d6+4
STR	d6+4
WIS	d6+3

Saving Throws	
Breath	17
Devices	17
Paralysis	17
Death	17
Spells	16

Adventuring Skills	
Hear Noise	3
Investigate	3
Judge Alignment	3
Open Doors	2
Scale Walls	2
Theurgy	2
Vocals	1

Hit Dice d8
Starting HP d8+2
Melee Bonus: +3
Ranged Bonus: +1

Damage Bonus: +1
AC Bonus: +1
Initiative: DEX+d6
Movement: STR+4

Language Rolls: 2
Parley Dice: d4 / d4
Gear Rolls: 11

Ability List

Communion **Destruction** **Mental Fortitude**

Prayers **Ritual** **Vanguard**

Orthodox: A sicarius is incensed by heretical & heterodox displays that run counter to their religious views. When facing such affronts a sicarius increases the damage die rolled against targets by 1 step & deals double damage against any icons or symbols of an opposed faith. If the sicarius belongs to a pantheon - the effect applies to all followers of gods other than the specific god that the sicarius follows.

Audacity Piety Belligerence





The Skald



Skalds sing the battle hymns of war bands and drum the marches of soldiers. They immortalize the deeds of their fellows in song.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+0
CON	d6+2
DEX	d6+9
INT	d6+4
STR	d6+4
WIS	d6+4

Saving Throws	
Breath	19
Devices	17
Paralysis	16
Death	17
Spells	17

Adventuring Skills	
Vocals	3
Instrument	3
Navigate	3
Pick Pockets	2
Theurgy	2
Trickery	2
Composition	1

Hit Dice d8
Starting HP d8+2
Melee Bonus: +2
Ranged Bonus: +2

Damage Bonus: +2
AC Bonus: +1
Initiative: DEX+d6
Movement: STR+4

Language Rolls: 2
Parley Dice: d4 / d4
Gear Rolls: 11

Ability List

Artisan **Scholarship** **Defender**

Claimant **Vanguard** **Song**

Stirring Songs: Skalds sing of ancient ages & great heroes, they tell the tales of the best among people & these songs inspire valor in their fellows. You can use your turn to sing a song and until your next turn, characters who are familiar with the song & have heard it before will gain benefits. When you sing the song make a d20 CHA check, on a successful check you add the amount by which you have succeded as HP to all those who know the song (this applies to enemies & allies as well). This restores lost HP & adds bonus HP to those who are already at their maximum. Bonus HP depart when you cease your singing but healing is permanent.

Impulse Piety Belligerence



The Sicarius from the South

Since the sicarius is a religious fanatic, often a violent one without a sense of proportional justice, empathy or tolerance – it's not uncommon for one to be driven from their home – often at spearpoint. Perhaps searching for those who will tolerate their uncompromising devotion to their religion, the sicarius often has no choice but to go north.

The Sicarius in the Slatewind

An enemy in the midst of the slatewind's recent compromise – the last war was stirred up by many forces, but the flames of war were stoked to a firestorm by sicarius' on all sides. Religious fundamentalism leading to violence was once the common course taken by true believers & opportunistic demagogues alike. In the wake of the war – these sentiments are far out of fashion. There are still those who espouse violent doctrines of religious isolation – but they are scorned & often persecuted. Unfortunately this situation tends to snowball into perceived martyrdoms which only stokes the violence further. This turn of events is amplified by the nascence of the polytheistic **Chant of All as All** which has drawn its own militant zealots. Far from cancelling one another out – extremist sects on all sides have been known to battle in the streets, commonly in an effort to incite violence amongst those of the mainstream.

The Skald from the South

Warsingers & balladeers, the voice of the warrior caste – skalds are a peculiar breed, not common to all cultures, but prevalent enough that they are distinctive & known outside their native milieu. Those skalds who venture to the north are likely part of the camp of a larger force – possibly diminished over the long journey to the slatewind – possibly having grown in size & power. No crew or raiding party need carry the skald along north – but this is the likeliest story.

The Skald in the Slatewind

The Skalding tradition is powerful among the musically invested **Dwarves**, naturally, and they make ready use of the musical heralds & poetic accompanists in their war bands & exploratory adventures. The Brizai culture is replete with skalds – often called bards who in turn have their own traditions, schools & rivalries. The many schools of music & story in **Brizai** culture are strangely exempt from, or at least, outside of the normal caste structure of the Brizai. However, these schools are traditionally focused on entertaining one of the castes – either lower or higher – but the best of the bards are able to switch the context of their tellings & music so that it suits the prejudices of the upper and lower castes. This dichotomy is most prevalent in the **Lorratic Eddas** – a collection of oms regarding the origins of Brizai peoples. In the lower Lorratic Eddas the Brizai are rescued from oppression & servitude under the elves by their own heroes while in the upper Lorratic Eddas the elves teach a portion of their wisdom to the Brizai, granting them a place in the world and a portion of its rule. From this division spring all the rest of the divisions amongst the Brizai – with the upper castes holding the elves as precursors and near deities, while the lower castes consider elves to be alien & terrible demons – at least in their lore. These songs as a part of the repertory of Brizai culture both serve as inspiration to the people & an oral history that binds their castes together. Outside of Brizai & Dwarf culture there are numerous chanters & singers in the different cultural batteries of the folk of the slatewind, though most particulars are difficult to detail, given that they are newly evolved & forming around the fresh societies being built in the valley.





The Smuggler



A Smuggler is one who transports materials & people undetected by authorities.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+9
CON	d6+0
DEX	d6+7
INT	d6+3
STR	d6+1
WIS	d6+7

Saving Throws	
Breath	19
Devices	18
Paralysis	19
Death	18
Spells	19

Adventuring Skills	
Detect Traps	3
Hide in Shadow	3
Move Quietly	3
Pick Pockets	2
Poisoning	2
Scale Walls	2
Trickery	1

Hit Dice d6
Starting HP d6+1
Melee Bonus: +2
Ranged Bonus: +2

Damage Bonus: +1
AC Bonus: +1
Initiative: DEX+d4
Movement: STR+8

Language Rolls: 1
Parley Dice: d6 / d6
Gear Rolls: 10

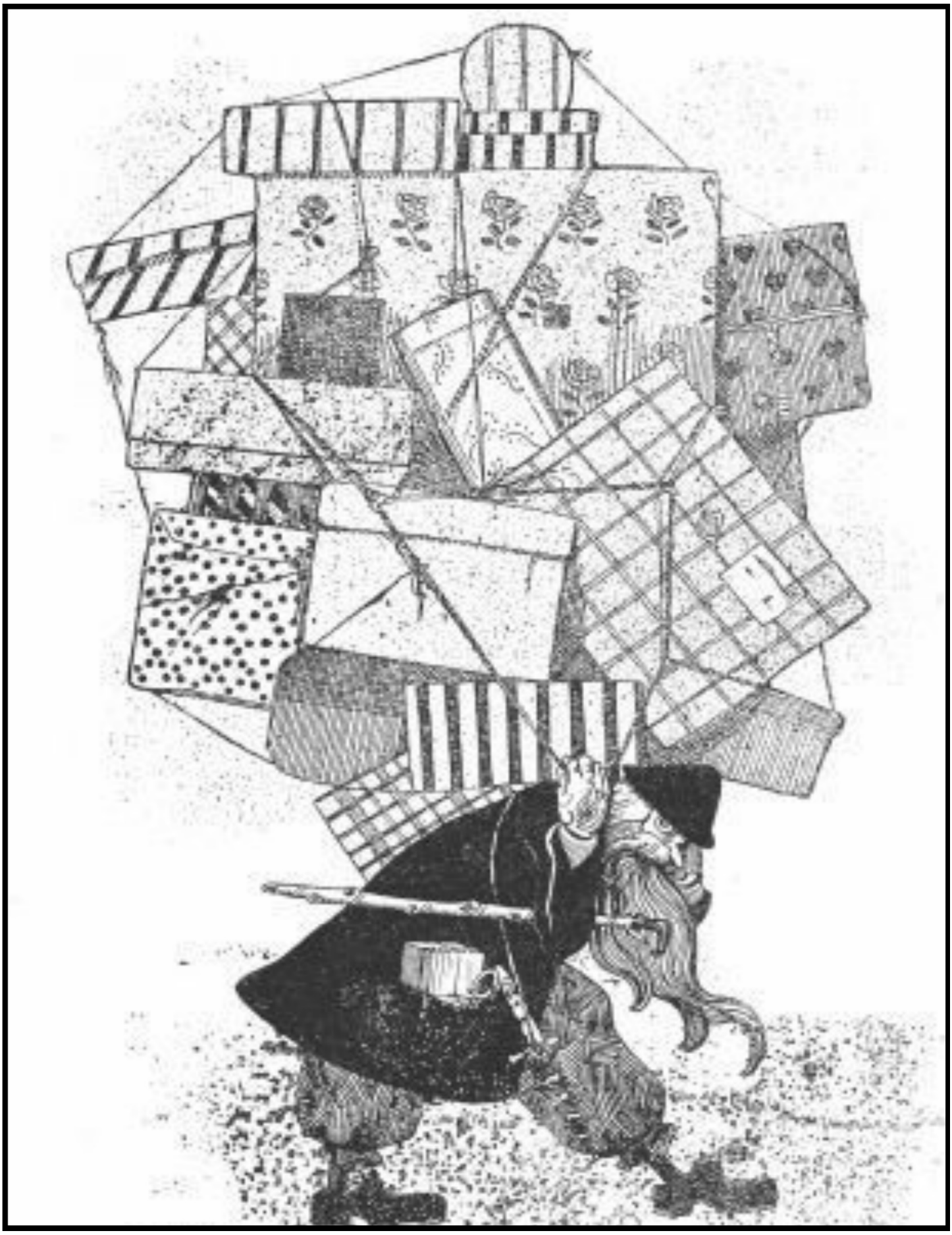
Ability List

Glammer **Guardian** **Healer**

Horrific **Jinx** **Sociability**

Caches: When a character begins as a smuggler they must generate 5x the normal quantity of starting gear & each of these 5 iterations is called a cache. Whenever a smuggler arrives at a new location the smuggler rolls a d20 INT check. On a successful check they recall the hidden locale of one of the caches - determined randomly. Each cache also contains d100 Sp. In addition, the smuggler is adept at concealing items on their person. The smuggler can always retain a light weapon as a holdout, even if appearing to others to be disarmed.

Audacity Impulse Kindness







The Sohei



Guardian of a church and specifically the pilgrims of a church, Sohei are militant religionists who guard the holy places and people of their faith.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+2
CON	d6+2
DEX	d6+5
INT	d6+9
STR	d6+4
WIS	d6+2

Saving Throws	
Breath	19
Devices	17
Paralysis	17
Death	17
Spells	17

Adventuring Skills	
Building	3
Detect Traps	3
Judge Alignment	3
Navigate	2
Scale Walls	2
Siege	2
Theurgy	1

Hit Dice d8
Starting HP d8+2
Melee Bonus: +2
Ranged Bonus: +1

Damage Bonus: +1
AC Bonus: +1
Initiative: DEX+d6
Movement: STR+2

Language Rolls: 3
Parley Dice: d6 / d6
Gear Rolls: 12

Ability List

Guardian **Rugged** **Traveler**

Protector **Defender** **Wayfinding**

Way of Battle: The sohei has had access to esoteric manuals on the proper course of combat. These texts describe a variety of conflicts which may aid the Sohei. When rolling inititative in a conflict the Sohei also makes a d20 WIS check. On a successful check note the difference between the die roll & the character's wisdom score. For the encounter the Sohei may deduct points from this pool and apply them to any of these statistics: To-Hit, AC, Initiative, Movement Speed. These bonus points only persist for one encounter.

Civility Piety Belligerence



The Smuggler from the South

Journeying to the north as a smuggler tends to suggest that a character is brining some sort of contraband from the south to the north. What is forbidden is highly changeable & determined by individual cities. **Elan** forbids the introduction of religious materials from singlist or monotheistic faiths. **Bitter** condemns the traffic in slaves & certain types of soporific drugs. **Shield** is vigilant against the importation of proscrpted arms & armor. **Termus** is a port city & bans very little beyond extremely dangerous items such as bombs & magical artifacts that approximate bombs. **Saedu** & **Sword of the West** are watchful against certain unsavory, unwanted people – so smuggling spies & criminals is a possible point of entry for a southern smuggler. **Red Bank** is opposed to the introduction of many types of drugs & many types of magical gear but the specific prohibitions change almost seasonally. **Zenith**, famously, does not ban anything at all – but taxes on all types of liquor & drugs are very high – so many smugglers serve to bypass tax & to supply the **Slanderer's Garden** – the name for the local black market.

The Smuggler in the Slatewind

Smugglers are part of the criminal ecosystem of the slatewind known as **Gatesfow** - which profits from the various black markets & the supplying thereof. Gatesfow is itself an organization that a smuggler, often enough, has reason to bypass – so the truest of smugglers are those independents that are at odds with both the tax officials & the criminal underworld. There are rumors of underground trade networks operated by coteries of smugglers – and a few know of the **Twilight Highway** and its various points of entry into the different cities of the slatewind. It is known to originate in **Red Bank**, where the riverfront, riddled with underground inlets, hidden caves & densely forested coves allows all sorts of illicit traffic. The **Governors Sodality** of Red Banks chooses to profit from or exploit or suppress the Highway's commerce based upon the complex political movements that guide that city's chaotic legislative conditions.

The Sohei from the South

A sohei traveling from the south is most commonly associated with a group of pilgrims as a protector. Pilgrims from the south may be worshippers of any of the gods commonly worshipped in the slatewind valley. Many of the gods that are highly regarded in the slatewind are far less significant in the south – some aren't worshipped at all – so pilgrims from the south are likely to be overzealous enthusiasts who really do need a specialist's protection

The Sohei in the Slatewind

Walking the 30 steps to Heavenly Sagacity – this is the name for the journey of devotion to each of the religious centers of the slatewind. This tradition is recent & part of the **Chant of All as All** – as such the pilgrimage begins at **Elan** and progresses to **Bitter,** along the north coast from **Termus** to **Sword of the West**, south to **Diya** then to **Red Bank** and back to Elan. The journey is arduous & only a few people so far have braved the danger – the first few scores of people to attempt the trip have had a modest rate of success. As such, the **Chant** has begun to arm & train a school of guardians – the Sohei – to defend & guide pilgrims on their journey.





The Soldier

Soldiers are the mainstay of all armies, militaries & civil militias. They are trained to work in groups & to step into the place of a fallen officer.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+4
CON	d6+5
DEX	d6+6
INT	d6+0
STR	d6+7
WIS	d6+4

Saving Throws	
Breath	18
Devices	19
Paralysis	17
Death	19
Spells	17

Adventuring Skills	
Forage	3
Hide in Shadow	3
Medicine	3
Move Quietly	2
Open Doors	2
Scale Walls	2
Siege	1

Hit Dice d8
Starting HP d8+2
Melee Bonus: +3
Ranged Bonus: +2

Damage Bonus: +1
AC Bonus: +1
Initiative: DEX+d6
Movement: STR+4

Language Rolls: 1
Parley Dice: d4 / d4
Gear Rolls: 10

Ability List

Defender **Healer** **Horrific**

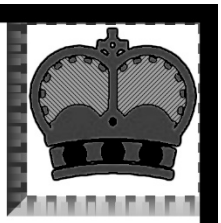
Ritual **Rugged** **Weaponry**

Doughty: Soldiers are tough by nature & practiced at comat. A soldier character doesn't roll HP - instead they always get the maximum possible HP per Hit Die.

Audacity Defiance Belligerence







The Sorcerer

A magic practitioner focused on combative arts & born without the noble blood that often accompanies magical ability.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+6
CON	d6+0
DEX	d6+7
INT	d6+5
STR	d6+4
WIS	d6+5

Saving Throws	
Breath	18
Devices	19
Paralysis	18
Death	19
Spells	19

Adventuring Skills	
Detect Traps	3
Forage	3
Hear Noise	3
Hide in Shadow	2
Judge Alignment	2
Navigate	2
Sorcery	1

Hit Dice d6
Starting HP d6+1
Melee Bonus: +3
Ranged Bonus: +1

Damage Bonus: +1
AC Bonus: +1
Initiative: DEX+d4
Movement: STR+4

Language Rolls: 2
Parley Dice: d6 / d6
Gear Rolls: 11

Ability List

Circles **Guardian** **Wizardry**

Divination **Spellbook** **Predation**

Autodidact: Having learned the ways of magic without any guidance a sorcerer is more untamed than more conventional magicians. Damage dice for all sorcerer *Curses* are increased by one size for free but the Sorcerer must choose one type of magic besides curses that they cannot ever use.

Audacity Civility Belligerence



The Soldier from the South

The soldier is common to virtually every single culture of the south. Many who travel north do so following some sort of humiliation – either the defeat of their nation, their unit or their cause – which impels the soldier to journey to new lands where ignominy of defeat cannot follow.

The Soldier in the Slatewind

Soldiers in the slatewind likely belong to one of the ten cities – though some may be affiliated with other smaller militias aligned with small settlements. Soldiers, as player-characters may have been discharged or cashiered out of service, in particular, there are many ex-soldier veterans of the most recent war – many of whom are struggling to find a place in the new order. The majority of currently serving soldiers are aligned to the more militant cities – particularly **Zenith, Shield** & **Diya** – though all cities save **Termus** have their soldiers. As an identity, a soldier is a warrior who follows a leader – and there are dozens of organized hierarchies in the slatewind that a soldier could be allied to. Criminal soldiers in **Gatesfow**, civil soldiers of a city, religious soldiers of a church or the **Tricadic Union**, followers of a knight or a khan or even henchmen hired on by a mercenary commander. Soldier is among the most versatile titles.

The Sorcerer from the South

Unfettered by traditions, schooling or any guiding mentor, the sorcerer is a figure of some infamy in their place of origin. People are uncomfortable with the idea of such power being invested into a rootless, unrestrained nobody. Those sorcerers who aren't powerful enough to dominate their home territories may venture far afield in search of a place of freedom where they can gather strength.

The Sorcerer in the Slatewind

Known, often, as **Witches**, sorcerers in the slatewind stand on uncertain footing. Some of the cultures that comprise the tapestry of the slatewind are rather permissive & accepting of undirected magical puissance – the **Elves** above most others. Many more profoundly resent the danger that a witch represents - the chaos inherent in magic. This is particularly the case so far as the **Khinish** gods are concerned & in the lands where they are dominant there is little toleration for freelance sorcery. Sorcerers, who openly flaunt their magically acquired superiority have few enough safe havens – though the most dangerous adversary to a sorcerer in the slatewind is absolutely other sorcerers – jealous of their power and willing to engage in the most diabolical ploys to maintain their private power. The **Governors Sodality** at **Red Bank** represents, perhaps, the premier battleground for such conflicts – as the governors of Red Bank are individually powerful individuals, many of whom are sorcerers – who compete openly for dominance. These conflicts sew a remarkable amount of chaos – as one governor may come into power by erasing all memory of their predecessor from their follower's minds, while another may magically usurp their competitor's loyalties and a third may use magic to possess & control all the others – these contests can spill into other cities & some speculate that this sort of metaphysical warfare was somehow at the root of the last war.





The Strategos



Would be commander of armies, the Strategos may not yet be a master of the earth but that aim is never out of sight & those who follow their lead are seldom disappointed.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+3
CON	d6+9
DEX	d6+4
INT	d6+2
STR	d6+7
WIS	d6+1

Saving Throws	
Breath	19
Devices	17
Paralysis	16
Death	17
Spells	17

Adventuring Skills	
Building	3
Gift	3
Languages	3
Navigate	2
Open Doors	2
Siege	2
Vocals	1

Hit Dice d8
Starting HP d8+2
Melee Bonus: +2
Ranged Bonus: +2

Damage Bonus: +1
AC Bonus: +2
Initiative: DEX+d6
Movement: STR+2

Language Rolls: 1
Parley Dice: d4 / d4
Gear Rolls: 11

Ability List

Claimant **Guardian** **Riches**

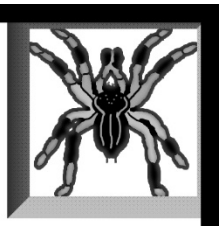
Song **Traveler** **Vanguard**

Tactics: Following the tactical doctrines of combat the strategos knows best how to face enemies. So long as the Strategos isn't surprised they increase the die size by one step of all their party's initiative rolls & grant all of their allies a bonus of 2 spaces to their movement speed. This only applies to combats that the Strategos actually participates in.

Defiance Belligerence Ego







The Stylite

One who withdraws from civilized life in pursuit of a life of spiritual advancement in isolation, commonly by living at the top of something very high.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+5
CON	d6+2
DEX	d6+5
INT	d6+7
STR	d6+1
WIS	d6+4

Saving Throws	
Breath	19
Devices	16
Paralysis	18
Death	16
Spells	17

Adventuring Skills	
Forage	3
Move Quietly	3
Navigate	3
Numeracy	2
Scale Walls	2
Sorcery	2
Theurgy	1

Hit Dice d8
Starting HP d8+2
Melee Bonus: +1
Ranged Bonus: +2

Damage Bonus: +1
AC Bonus: +1
Initiative: DEX+d6
Movement: STR+6

Language Rolls: 2
Parley Dice: d6 / d6
Gear Rolls: 11

Ability List

Animal Languages **Protector** **Overlooked**

Artisan **Shamanism** **Resourcefulness**

Unassailable: Stylites who make a successful scale walls attempt to climb something high during their turn cannot be targeted by any attacks. This effect applies so long as there is anything at all that the stylite could concievably climb, even bare walls or smooth columns. So long as they are higher up, a stylite is above the fray, so to speak.

Impulse Piety Kindness



The Strategos from the South

All armies have leaders, though the strategos isn't always an officer, a general or a leader – they are the organizers of wars & often enough looked at as the masters of the forces they advise. The recent wars called to planners, tacticians & generals from across the world – so terrible was its fame. Some from the south may come, fleeing their own infamy & nursing the wounds of their own lost causes.

The Strategos in the Slatewind

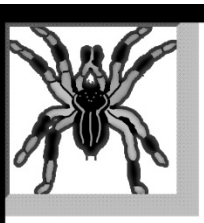
The slatewind valley is a fertile source for strategic minds. Given the wars now passed & the threat of wars yet to come – there is a need, in the ten cities for thinkers who plan ahead to prosecute those wars successfully. The last war had many great strategists, none of whom truly succeeded at their task, for of the ten cities only one was finally conquered. There are rumors though – that the greatest of strategists were those at **Termus** – the city above the fray. It is suggested that the **Eventual Circle** – a group of game-players & tactics enthusiasts kept that city out of the fray by cleverly manipulating the situation at **Crone Mountain** & by inciting the wary lords of **Sword of the West** to attack **Saedu** – sending Termus most obvious rivals into pointless conflict. **Shield's** generals & leaders are knights, soldiers & similar, but they have their own corps of military planners – **Bureau Seven** – which is notable for its logistical planners.

The Stylite from the South

Withdrawing from the world & indeed, trying to rise above it is its own peculiar calling – one that draws strange folk to it. The Stylite from the south is no less inscrutable for being from the lands settled of old. As with others of a religious bent, the slatewind offers the opportunity to exalt deities that might otherwise be insignificant.

The Stylite in the Slatewind

The ruins of the old cultures make interesting opportunities for stylites. The towers of the ancients are massive structures, inexplicably huge, they create the opportunity for entire communities totally disconnected from the ground. The densest collection of such towers is in **Termus**, which has its own city of towers rising from out of the estuary where the river **split** meets the sea. Called **Celestial Gateway** - this region of shattered glass & twisted steel is a vertical city in its own right – a place where the most devout may gather in isolated communion. Other cities – built on the ruins of earlier habitation have their own towers and their own stylites, though none are so famed as those at Termus. **Zenith** & **Able** have a variant version of the withdrawing ascetic – those who take to the trees to mourn & emulate **Ultist**, the elf-god who remains living eternal at the heart of Zenith – a martyr & totem & symbol all at once.



The Thief



One who steals, principally by stealth & cunning but who is not averse to a bit of murderous intimidation.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+7
CON	d6+9
DEX	d6+2
INT	d6+2
STR	d6+3
WIS	d6+4

Saving Throws	
Breath	18
Devices	18
Paralysis	18
Death	18
Spells	16

Adventuring Skills	
Detect Traps	3
Hear Noise	3
Hide in Shadow	3
Move Quietly	2
Open Doors	2
Pick Pockets	2
Scale Walls	1

Hit Dice d8
Starting HP d8+2
Melee Bonus: +2
Ranged Bonus: +2

Damage Bonus: +0
AC Bonus: +2
Initiative: DEX+d6
Movement: STR+4

Language Rolls: 1
Parley Dice: d4 / d4
Gear Rolls: 11

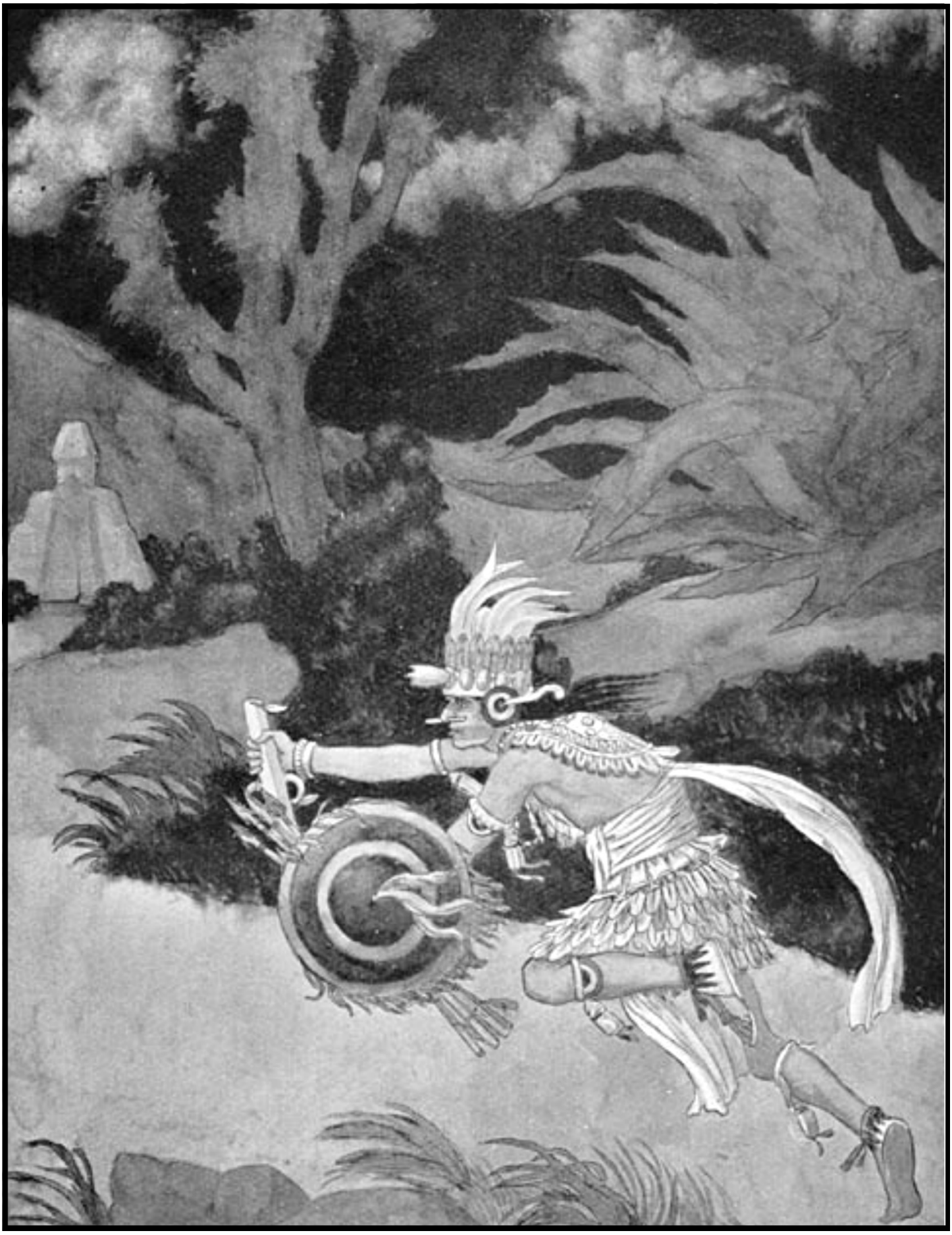
Ability List

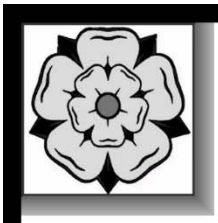
Heightened Senses **Riches** **Overlooked**

Lucky **Traceless Passing** **Signaling**

Skilled: Thieves are better able than others to make use of the skills of adventurers. You can pick two additional skills beyond those you gain through being a thief or your race - you gain these at a rating of 2.

Audacity Defiance Ego





The Tribune



Defender of their society's underclasses, Tribunes are connsumately civilized. They are the peer-leaders of the hoi polloi.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+5
CON	d6+8
DEX	d6+0
INT	d6+4
STR	d6+9
WIS	d6+1

Saving Throws	
Breath	19
Devices	18
Paralysis	17
Death	18
Spells	17

Adventuring Skills	
Building	3
Building	3
Gift	3
Judge Alignment	2
Scale Walls	2
Siege	2
Vocals	1

Hit Dice d10
Starting HP d10+3
Melee Bonus: +1
Ranged Bonus: +2

Damage Bonus: +1
AC Bonus: +2
Initiative: DEX+d6
Movement: STR+4

Language Rolls: 1
Parley Dice: d6 / d6
Gear Rolls: 11

Ability List

Claimant **Mental Fortitude** **Guardian**

Communion **Sociability** **Protector**

Uplift: A tribune grants a voice to the voiceless & makes those who are weak feel as if they are strong. Anyone with fewer HD than the tribue allied to the tribune gains a free HD. This grants an added maneuver to any PC allies & it may promote any NPC allies to a higher rank - e.g.: from Follower to Expert. Those with more HD than the Tribue are unaffected by this ability.

Nobility Defiance Kindness



The Thief from the South

One who steals may not have much of a home – stealing to survive can create its own infamy, a shame that might not follow beyond the ocean. Others may have heard of the treasures of the ruins & attend to the slatewind's ruins in search of plunder stolen from history instead of the living.

The Thief in the Slatewind

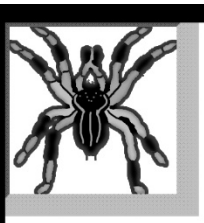
Gatesfow, the tyranny of criminals gives thieves license to operate throughout the slatewind. Running crosswise to their dominion, trying to operate alone, outside their protection – that's an easy road to death. Thieves in Gatesfow are branded, bonded, managed & guided. Gatesfow has many handlers & fixers – not all run their territories the same way & a thief might be run to the ground or worked near to death by a handler who has become disdainful or championed and raised up by a well-meaning boss. It's not exactly a cut-throat business – Gatesfow bosses don't execute their failing minions, they let the city's do that. As is the case everywhere, people will kill to protect their things – so a thief is always beset on all sides – it's not an easy life, but it beats working.

The Tribune from the South

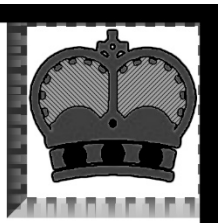
Given the successful worker revolt that has taken place at **Bitter** – there is no shortage of outside agents & hopeful revolutionaries who have come to join the cause. That is a pull factor for southern tribunes. A push factor is likely the danger that this class of people consistently face – as the voice in the streets for the powerless, tribunes are ceaselessly targeted by the powerful, the wealthy & their sycophants.

The Tribune in the Slatewind

The **Brizai** culture with its distinct & highly stratified castes makes for a ready breeding ground for tribunes – whether they call themselves this or not, the tribunes in **Zenith, Able** & **Red Banks** are almost to a one members of the Brizai low castes. In other cities there are tribunes who simply represent the requests of the working men & women who keep cities going and are seen as a necessary, if evil aspect of urban life by the city's elites throughout the slatewind. In **Bitter,** and all of **Crone Mountain**, the tribunician fortunes are on the rise. With the end of the hegemony of landlords & usurers – Bitter has become something of a worker's paradise. The tribunes of bitter – organizers who led the ultimately successful rebellion – have become the organizing coterie behind the city's new phase of development. This highly democratic process has pitted competing visions of a future, utopian society against one another. At the moment these disagreements are quite a source for tension, though open conflict has yet to emerge it has threatened more than once – particularly between the **Three Family Village** & the **Singing Horse** contingents – a pair of visionary committees that both seek to reshape the very fabric of society.



The Trickster



A member of an oppressed or abused class who upholds his cohort's traditions in spite of & in violation of the oppression of outsiders.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+6
CON	d6+2
DEX	d6+3
INT	d6+9
STR	d6+0
WIS	d6+5

Saving Throws	
Breath	17
Devices	18
Paralysis	19
Death	18
Spells	16

Adventuring Skills	
Hear Noise	3
Hide in Shadow	3
Joke	3
Move Quietly	2
Poisoning	2
Trickery	2
Vocals	1

Hit Dice d8
Starting HP d8+2
Melee Bonus: +2
Ranged Bonus: +1

Damage Bonus: +0
AC Bonus: +1
Initiative: DEX+d6
Movement: STR+4

Language Rolls: 3
Parley Dice: d6 / d6
Gear Rolls: 12

Ability List

Communion **Mentalism** **Heightened Senses**

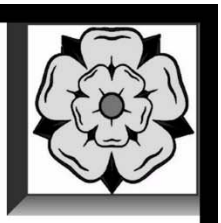
Glammer **Sociability** **Shamanism**

Elusive: The Trickster avoids trouble by pinning blame on others. Whenever you wish you can assign one other character - a PC or NPC - the butt of your tricks. Those who catch you using your skills against them will blame your patsy so long as there is any plausible chance that they could have comitted the offense - i.e.: they must be present at the scene, or have been present when the crime was perpetrated. Should your patsy be eliminated you gain another.

Audacity Civility Piety







The Utopian

Utopians wander the world in search of a paradise of their own design. They need only a place to found their cities of dreams.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+1
CON	d6+6
DEX	d6+8
INT	d6+0
STR	d6+3
WIS	d6+10

Saving Throws	
Breath	19
Devices	18
Paralysis	18
Death	18
Spells	17

Adventuring Skills	
Building	3
Detect Traps	3
Forage	3
Languages	2
Navigate	2
Scale Walls	2
Siege	1

Hit Dice d8
Starting HP d8+2
Melee Bonus: +1
Ranged Bonus: +3

Damage Bonus: +1
AC Bonus: +1
Initiative: DEX+d8
Movement: STR+4

Language Rolls: 1
Parley Dice: d6 / d6
Gear Rolls: 11

Ability List

Resourcefulness **Shamanism** **Survival**

Traveler **Vanguard** **Wayfinding**

Perfection: A utopian character has some greater hope for a better world & this vivid realm of the imaginaton fosters a blithe hopefulness that keeps terror at bay. Utopians reduce all defeated & frightened effects by 2 die sizes - but they have all maddened effects die size increased by one.

Impulse Defiance Fairness



The Trickster from the South

The trickster is an interesting, compelling figure throughout the world. Often a symbol of the lower-classes' resentments over their masters, the trickster is more a paragon of the indigent, the layabout & the scoundrel – one who does as they please & escapes prosecution or danger through cunning colored by farce. A comical figure & a useful one – the best tricksters of the south have left home & left behind their worries & cares and all those who chased them off are left laughing at the comedy of their quarry escaping, boldly, brashly & a bit foolishly.

The Trickster in the Slatewind

Trickster, as a cultural phenomenon exists in the **Brizai, Quet** & **Plioshr** canons. To the Plioshr, the trickster is a clever groundhog who thwarts & subverts the plans of the capricious gods. Groundhog, known more properly as **Land Monster** in this context – is a comedic foil, in stories & tales of the plioshr. Land Monster is a hero for the plioshr, especially in times of trouble, as he is said to carry it with him and turn it about on those who would harm him. This archetype is the ideal to which the trickster in the slatewind casually tries to live up to. Among the quet the trickster is a proper profession – one who laughs at the gods & is idle in the workplace & who eludes consequence. Such a person is expected to exist – one who does not justify themselves to others – a sentiment so common to the quet that others often hold that this is the translation in their language of the word quet. Brizai cultural norms, being stratified, have whole classes of submissives & underlings. In brizai reckoning the trickster is one who subverts their master's will to get some advantage – while never actually changing the status quo. This, it should be noted, is part of the trickster's trickery – that they upend things but only for a short while – the trickster is part of, not an opponent after all, of the status quo.

The Utopian from the South

Those who dream of better places & unknown countries without trouble are best described as fools, but the bravest fools are utopians – ones who set about to actually find those places. A southern utopian is a brave, hopeful fool, one who might not even be disappointed. Of course, this depends on the utopians actual ethos – given that there are radicals of all types in this category. Religious fundamentalists & anti-theistic crusaders are both utopians, of a type. Racial segregationists & radical integrationists, labor anarchists & usurious libertines – all of these might count as utopians – so knowing what vision sent you north is necessary.

The Utopian in the Slatewind

The **Three Family Village** & **Singing Horse** are the most notable utopian ideals in the slatewind. The former identify as one of the animals from a famous story – the ox, who plows the soil, the cock who plucks treasures from the earth or the dog, who searches in the forest for provender. These are the idealist mascots of the farm-worker, the mine-worker & the forestry-worker respectively. In the ethos of the 3 family village they are all that is needed, the farmer- or boss – is a parasite who works them without giving anything in return. Singing Horse attempts to add the horse – as a symbolic mascot of the soldier to the family – but there is a lot of contention between these groups. These are the main dreams that affect utopians in revolutionary **Bitter**. Other utopian visions prevail as well – the **Tricadic** faith being championed at **Elan** seeks to unite all religions while the **Singlist** religionists found everywhere want to abolish all the gods but one. Anywhere the impossible is being brought about – there you'll find utopians – they have dreams & the will to see them made real.





The Vaidya



A practioner of a holistic experience of the self & of life devoid of the esoteric influence of god. The Vaidya is a lay physician & a philosopher of natural sciences.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+3
CON	d6+6
DEX	d6+4
INT	d6+5
STR	d6+3
WIS	d6+8

Saving Throws	
Breath	19
Devices	18
Paralysis	19
Death	18
Spells	17

Adventuring Skills	
Alchemy	3
Joke	3
Languages	3
Medicine	2
Numeracy	2
Sorcery	2
Theurgy	1

Hit Dice d8
Starting HP d8+2
Melee Bonus: +1
Ranged Bonus: +2

Damage Bonus: +0
AC Bonus: +1
Initiative: DEX+d8
Movement: STR+2

Language Rolls: 2
Parley Dice: d8 / d6
Gear Rolls: 12

Ability List

Resistance **Spellbook** **Tinkering**

Scholarship **Divination** **Wizardry**

Prophylactic: Having encounterd any disease or sickness causing agent - a Vaidya is able to put together a prophylactic treatment against that sickness (i.e.: anything that inflicts the sickened status). Thereafter that particular source of sickness cannot affect the Vaidya or those under their are. Only one prophylactic treatment is available to a character at a time.

Civility Defiance Fairness







The Viking

A mixture of conqueror, pirate, merchant & explorer, the Viking journeys far in search of wealth & adventure & tends to respect few boundaries not established by force of arms.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+0
CON	d6+3
DEX	d6+9
INT	d6+1
STR	d6+9
WIS	d6+4

Saving Throws	
Breath	19
Devices	19
Paralysis	15
Death	19
Spells	19

Adventuring Skills	
Forage	3
Gift	3
Hear Noise	3
Hide in Shadow	2
Languages	2
Navigate	2
Scale Walls	1

Hit Dice d8
Starting HP d8+2
Melee Bonus: +2
Ranged Bonus: +2

Damage Bonus: +3
AC Bonus: +2
Initiative: DEX+d4
Movement: STR+4

Language Rolls: 1
Parley Dice: d4 / d4
Gear Rolls: 11

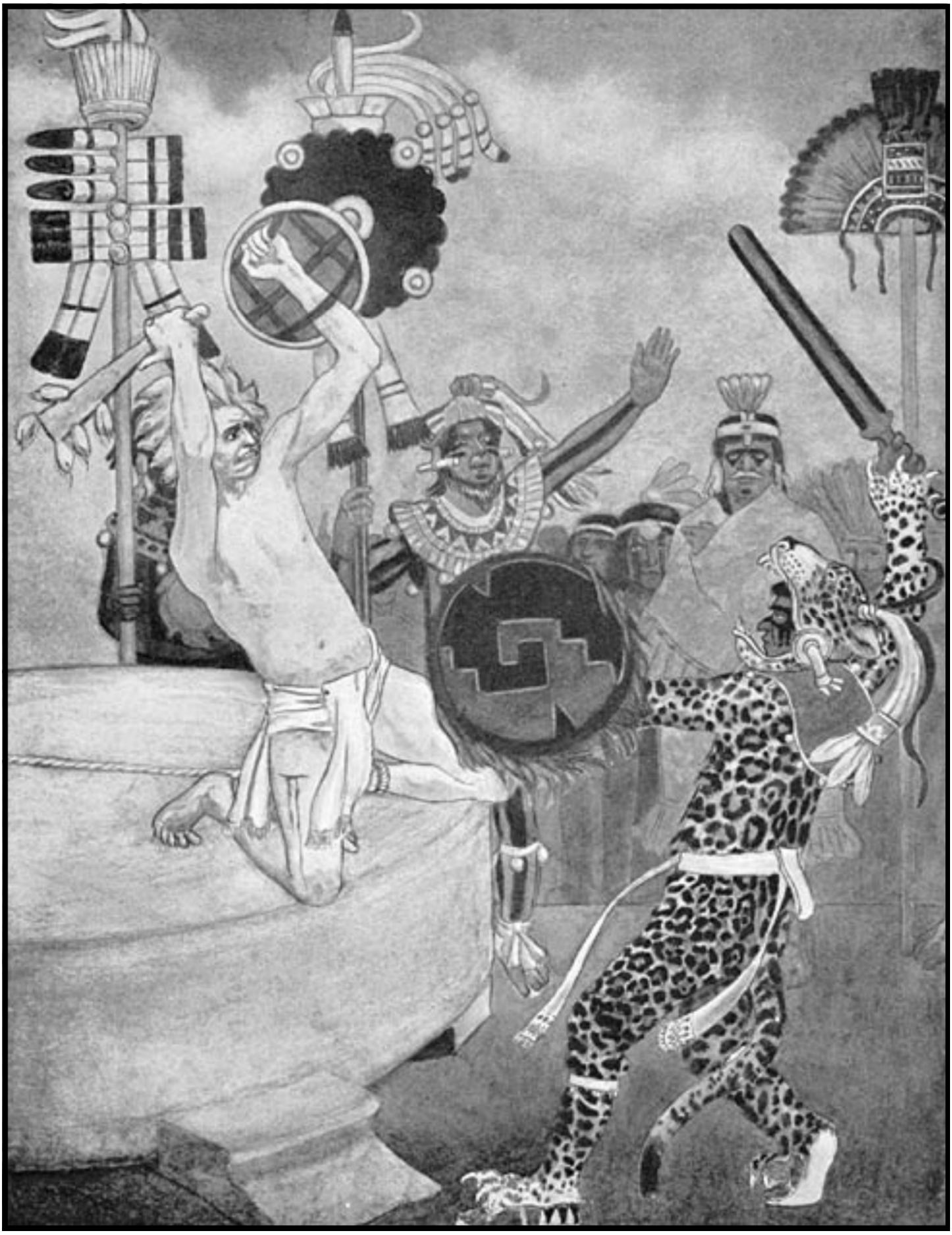
Ability List

Endurance **Heightened Senses** **Rampage**

Shamanism **Traveler** **Vanguard**

Plunder: A viking locates hidden treasure (even if none is expected to exist) whenever they roll a 1 on their search die. Spontaneously generated treasure is created by the referee when this effect is applied.

Nobility Impulse Belligerence



The Vaidya from the South

The godless doctor, a medico without faith or thought of the will of gods who heals nonetheless. Some cultures regard all health as a gift from their god & any cures not prescribed by a holy arbiter are considered suspect at least and probably wicked. A Vaidya could be fleeing persecution of the sciences to the less structured, less strict north. They could also be merely on their way to a place that offers the option to get

The Vaidya in the Slatewind

Slatewind society doesn't have much tolerance for avid atheists. There are few havens for this type of thinking but a Vaidya of some skill can get a lot of cover for their outré attitudes provided they keep people healthy. Especially important people. Vaidya, as a trained discipline has grown in the slatewind as the preeminent practitioner of this science **Inimical to Death Physician Tyrone** (who once saved the twin sons of a king of **Shield** through the transplantation of their hearts) has achieved fame & fortune. The physician operates a large practice on the eastern periphery of **Termus** and has many students studying at this academy, the stated mission of which is to *defeat death itself*. As a philosophy this is fairly antagonistic to the celestial order & there are inquiries & trials in absentia held throughout the slatewind against the physician's apostasy. And yet, the school draws many students & many more patients – especially amongst the rich & powerful, and so the school is well protected – though the Physician is restricted to its grounds for safety.

The Viking from the South

There is no clear path via waterway from the southern continent to the slatewind valley. The **Gray Sea** is quite large though, and a character of the south may have made their way to any number of civilizations there before migrating across its expanse to arrive on the north coast. Otherwise – a Viking arrives like anyone else, with the same types of hope & the same types of driving forces pushing them away.

The Viking in the Slatewind

Viking is a complex idea, a combination of explorer, conqueror, pirate, merchant & settler – in the end the viking is an ambitious person with a boat. Vikings in the slatewind have their own havens & ports all along the valley's rivers & especially along the **Gray Sea** – where there are caves & hidden estuaries to hide boats when not out raiding. Raiding is, perhaps the least of a slatewind viking's efforts. Trade & commerce – especially along the north coast is troubled by conflicts between cities & a viking, willing to run blockades & to navigate upriver can make a fine living – provided a bit of fighting & killing aren't outside their ethical horizons. Vikings along the rivers are extremely common – a problem for a lot of the inland cities to deal with as they can harass small communities, rob them blind & capture their citizens – only to sell the lot at the next city down river. The lack of unity, among the urban centers of the valley means that there are a lot of interstitial spaces for the viking to exploit. Interestingly, viking isn't a culturally specific identity – **Goblin** & **Halfling** vikings are just as common as any sort of human viking – it is as if the profession appeared where a void existed, ready & fully formed.

The Wanderer

Disinterested in lingering or making a home of any type, a Wanderer is an aimless, carefree drifter.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+3
CON	d6+9
DEX	d6+5
INT	d6+2
STR	d6+3
WIS	d6+5

Saving Throws	
Breath	19
Devices	18
Paralysis	17
Death	18
Spells	17

Adventuring Skills	
Forage	3
Instrument	3
Investigate	3
Joke	2
Navigate	2
Pick Pockets	2
Scale Walls	1

Hit Dice d8
Starting HP d8+2
Melee Bonus: +1
Ranged Bonus: +3

Damage Bonus: +1
AC Bonus: +2
Initiative: DEX+d6
Movement: STR+4

Language Rolls: 1
Parley Dice: d4 / d4
Gear Rolls: 11

Ability List

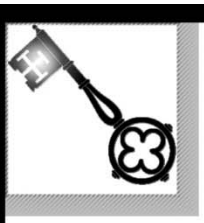
Endurance **Ritual** **Signaling**

Song **Traveler** **Rugged**

Hobo: Wanderers know the secret signs of their kind & can find safe lodgings, free food & a gathering of other wanderers wherever they go. When you enter a new area make a d12 WIS check, on a successful check you find a safe place to sleep. You can make a d20 attempt instead, and on a successful check locate a gathering of wanderers who are friendly to you & who will share hospitality & information.

Impulse Defiance Ego







The Warlock

Having taken the black sacraments the Warlock has attained a magical power that is unearned & blasphemous. Commonly linked to a single line of nobility & familial wealth.

Statistics	
CHA	d6+5
CON	d6+7
DEX	d6+1
INT	d6+8
STR	d6+5
WIS	d6+2

Saving Throws	
Breath	19
Devices	18
Paralysis	17
Death	18
Spells	18

Adventuring Skills	
Alchemy	3
Gift	3
Judge Alignment	3
Languages	2
Poisoning	2
Sorcery	2
Trickery	1

Hit Dice d8
Starting HP d8+2
Melee Bonus: +1
Ranged Bonus: +1

Damage Bonus: +1
AC Bonus: +3
Initiative: DEX+d4
Movement: STR+2

Language Rolls: 2
Parley Dice: d6 / d6
Gear Rolls: 13

Ability List

Communion **Prayers** **Mentalism**

Destruction **Spellbook** **Wizardry**

Diabolical: Having gained power through profane means the Warlock's prayers are not spoken to any gods - rather they are used to beseech the wicked powers of the netherworld. A warlock who gainst the Prayers ability can use spell levels gained through supplications to cast wizard spells as if they were alloted those daily casting abilities, though they must have formulated the spell in the first place using a spellbook. E.g.: A warlock who uses a level 4 Supplication can thereafter cast a 4th level wizard spell - though they may not have purchased the Wizardry ability that would normally allow them to cast a spell of that level.

Nobility Civility Ego



The Wanderer from the South

Why, among all the classes is a wanderer known for wandering while all the rest are wanderers known for something else – some further quality? The wanderer wanders well, wanders best. Without any fixed home, no visible means of support – the wanderer hasn't come to the slatewind, hasn't arrived – rather, the slatewind is on the way to the next place that is on the way to the next place – the wanderer never arrives anywhere, they're just passing through.

The Wanderer in the Slatewind

Slatewind born wanderers can fall into a few cultural norms- **Plioshr** nomads, **Orc** hunters, sailors on the sea or the rivers from **Saayang** or **Brizai** clans. A wanderer could be a **Tricadic** pilgrim – on their way to visit each of the 30 temples. A wanderer could be someone who is trying to leave the slatewind, to travel far from it, who finds their orbit constantly being drawn back in – or they could have a deep interest in the valley itself, wanting to visit each & every part of it. These are journeys through the wilderness & along city streets, voyages of a thousand days or one – a wanderer wanders, but it's up to them to determine what that means.

The Warlock from the South

There's no culturally specific route to becoming a warlock. This is a highly individual path & anyone who pursues it is themselves, first, and whatever descriptors applied to them after. An individual, willing to tempt perdition by toying with the powers of the netherworld likely doesn't have any home that would claim them either.

The Warlock in the Slatewind

Warlocks fall under the category of **Witch** in most ecumenical circles. However, their native ability – that ability to subvert liturgical practice for profane, even diabolical purposes – that has made them a danger in the slatewind overall. **Anti-Bishop Arnem Hoell** – once a leader of the church at **Zenith** – proved not to be a practicing member of any faith – but rather a warlock faking divine communion & thereby damning not only himself but all of his congregants. Some still maintain that the Anti-Bishop's sinister work was partly the cause of the last war, others hold that the worship of **Jegl** wasn't clearly distinct from the worship of demons anyway and that the people of **Zenith** didn't need coaxing down the path of war & death. All the same, **Tricadic** religious leaders have assiduously worked to root out false practitioners of liturgical magic throughout the valley – so Arnem Hoell isn't well regarded by other warlocks even, given that he has set them up for persecution. A warlock regularly associates with a guiding spirit, a patron from the celestial hells on one of the 4 moons. These correspond to the colors of the moons – White moon & black moon hells are benign & malignant respectively. Blue moon hells are linked to deep thought, the dreams of gods & other inscrutable ideas. Red moon hell is a place of devouring, hunger & passion. Green moon hell is a place of stagnation, constancy & imprisonment.

Finishing Up

Once you've gotten your character class sorted out you'll need to apply all of the abilities, skills & modifiers that are associated with the class & record them. You'll also need to apply the modifiers based upon your character's race. Your statistics can't exceed 18 – so if your modifiers improve a statistic past 18 – round it down to 18 and make note of the excess. In The Ruins you won't add or improve your derived statistics such as To-Hit based upon a high attribute. Instead you'll improve those qualities exclusively through the use of Xp. The rate at which you improve those characteristics is improved depending on your statistics. High stats will make improving these traits easier.

If you've got a statistic that would have exceeded 18 make a note of the excess – you'll translate the difference to Xp. Each point of excess beyond 18 becomes 100 Xp. For instance if your combined Race & Class gives you a statistic of 21 – you would make the stat 18 and then receive 300 extra Xp.

You spend Xp to improve your abilities. Each statistic governs a different array of improvable attributes.

Charisma – allows you to improve your social dice & gain & promote followers. You can improve your social dice by one step so long as your CHA statistic is 10 or higher. If your CHA is 13 you could improve one of your social dice by 1 size for 800 Xp for example.

Constitution – helps you to improve your character's raw durability. You can increase the size of the die used for rolling your HP, i.e.: Your Hit Die a step at a time. You can also increase the number of dice you roll or increase the static bonus to HP that you receive per HD. As with other Game of the North campaigns you gain a new Maneuver with each HD.

Charisma

Rating	Improve Social Dice	Gain Follower	Promote Follower
10	1,200 Xp	2,500 Xp	2,500 Xp
10-12	1,000 Xp	1,200 Xp	1,200 Xp
13-15	800 Xp	800 Xp	800 Xp
16-17	500 Xp	500 Xp	500 Xp
18	250 Xp	250 Xp	250 Xp
Max	**2d12 / 2d12**	**5**	**Professional**
Start	**By Class**	**0**	**Follower**

Constitution

Rating	Increase HD Number	Improve HD Size	+1 HP/HD
>10	4,000 Xp	15,000 Xp	1,200 Xp
10-12	2,000 Xp	10,000 Xp	1,000 Xp
13-15	1,500 Xp	8,000 Xp	800 Xp
16-17	1,000 Xp	5,000 Xp	500 Xp
18	750 Xp	2,500 Xp	250 Xp
Max	**20**	**2d12**	**+10**
Start	**1**	**By Class**	**By Class**

Dexterity – Is used to improve your character's AC, Ranged Attack Bonus & their Speed. These are all easier to improve for those with higher Dexterity scores.

Dexterity

Rating	Improve AC	Improve Ranged Attack	Improve Speed
>10	2,000 Xp	2,000 Xp	1,200 Xp
10-12	1,500 Xp	1,500 Xp	1,000 Xp
13-15	1,000 Xp	1,000 Xp	800 Xp
16-17	750 Xp	750 Xp	500 Xp
18	500 Xp	500 Xp	250 Xp
Max	**+10**	**+10**	**30**
Start	**By Class**	**By Class**	**By Class**

Intelligence – Helps you to improve your character's skills & to gain class abilities. You also learn languages more easily with a higher INT score. Each time you wish to improve a skill by 1 rank you must spend the amount of Xp indicated by your DEX statistic.

Gaining individual abilities has a theoretical cap of 10 but no one class offers even that many abilities. It is possible to drift beyond the bounds of your character's class's abilities, through extraordinary circumstances.

Intelligence			
Rating	Improve Skill	Add Language	Gain Ability
10	500 Xp	3000 Xp	2,000 Xp
10-12	400 Xp	2000 Xp	1,500 Xp
13-15	300 Xp	1000 Xp	1,000 Xp
16-17	200 Xp	500 Xp	750 Xp
18	100 Xp	250 Xp	500 Xp
Max	**12**	**100**	**10**
Start	**By Class**	**By Class**	**0**

Strength			
Rating	Improve Melee Attack	Improve Damage Die	+1 Damage per die
>10	2,000 Xp	4,000 Xp	2,000 Xp
10-12	1,500 Xp	3,000 Xp	1,500 Xp
13-15	1,000 Xp	2,000 Xp	1,000 Xp
16-17	750 Xp	1,000 Xp	750 Xp
18	500 Xp	500 Xp	500 Xp
Max	**+10**	**2d12**	**+10**
Start	**By Class**	**d6**	**By Class**

Strength – Higher strength makes it easier to improve your characters combat abilities. Specifically you may spend Xp to increase your character's melee attack modifier & to improve the size of the damage dice you use. In The Ruins attacks deal damage based more upon skill than on weapon size or power. As a baseline all attacks deal d6 damage with an additional modifier based upon class & improvable through the application of Xp.

Wisdom – A character's wisdom can help improve their perceptiveness, their luck & their quickness at facing combat. You can improve your Search Die by reducing it in size, lower your saving throws & Increasing your Initiative die size.

Wisdom			
Rating	Improve Saves	Improve Search Die	Improve Initiative
>10	4,000	4,000	2,000
10-12	3,000	3,000	1,500
13-15	2,000	2,000	1,000
16-17	1,000	1,000	750
18	500	500	500
Max	**-19**	**d4**	**2d12**
Start	**By Class**	**d12**	**By Class**

Final Touches

You'll want to generate your character's starting equipment using either the Game of the North or The Book of Ten Trillion Things. Your character class indicates the number of gear rolls you start your adventure with. Once you've got your equipment sorted you'll be in a better position to determine your character's appearance.

You can decide these characteristics for yourself or, if you prefer, you can generate them semi-randomly based upon your character's background & phenotype.

For your height & weight – add the number of inches indicated by each of your grandparents to a d12 roll & add the 4 pounds entries to a d20 roll.

You can use the appearance tables in the Game of the North rulebook to generate your character's coloring & add specific notes to their appearance. You should split your rolls on those tables between all of the possibilities based on your heritage.

Grandparent	Each Adds:	
	Height	Weight
Dwarf	+10"	+80#
Elf	+16"	+40#
Goblin	+d10"	+d%#
Halfling	+8"	+20#
Hoej	+15"	+50#
Nordagh	+18"	+60#
Orc	+22"	+70#
Oss	+16"	+30#
Sundus	+19"	+35#
Vesten	+18"	+40#

Putting it All Together

When you've completed designing your character you'll have a fairly strong biography established – going back at least two generations & including your attitudes, ethics & personal history down to the esoteric subjects that interest you.

Get ready to meet the rest of your party & engage in thrilling adventures In The Ruins of lost & fantastic civilizations!

Page 1 - Your People

Character _____

Player _____

Grandparent 1 _____

Grandparent 2 _____

Grandparent 3 _____

Grandparent 4 _____

Family Background _____

_____

Parents _____

_____

CHA	CON	DEX	INT	STR	WIS

Skills _____

Abilities _____

Languages _____

_____

Siblings

Birth Order	Where Are They Now?
1 _____	_____
2 _____	_____
3 _____	_____
4 _____	_____
5 _____	_____
6 _____	_____
7 _____	_____
8 _____	_____
9 _____	_____
10 _____	_____
11 _____	_____
12 _____	_____
13 _____	_____

Page 2 - Your Migration

Character _____

Player _____

Homeland

Name - _____

People - _____

Races Population Culture Attitudes

Religion - _____

Gods Pantheons Role Seriousness

Languages - _____

Spoken Written Archaic Classical

What's Bad - _____

What's Good - _____

What's Fun?

What's Dangerous?

What Do You Know?

What Made You Leave?

Push _____

Pull _____

What Gods Do You Follow?

Deity or Pantheon _____

Customary Prayers _____

Holidays _____

Taboos _____

What Are Your Signs?

Sun Cyan (Blue) Carmine (Red) Verdant (Green) Samnite/Fuligin (White or Black)

Page 3 - Alignments

Character _____

Player _____

Indicate your top 3 with a hash mark

AUD
Audacity

BEL
Belligerence

CIV
Civility

DEF
Defiance

EGO
Ego

NOB
Nobility

KIN
Kindness

IMP
Impulse

PIE
Piety

FAI
Fairness

FALSE	Question	TRUE
Nobility	Discretion is the better part of valor	Audacity
Nobility	Saving myself comes before saving others	Audacity
Nobility	My enemies will never receive my mercy	Audacity
Nobility	I owe no help to the helpless	Audacity
Civility	I am not bound by any laws	Defiance
Civility	Never compromise, even in the face of apocalypse	Defiance
Civility	Nature prevails over all the petty works of man	Defiance
Civility	Manners are for the meek & useless	Defiance
Ego	I want no more than my fair share	Fairness
Ego	I would never cheat	Fairness
Ego	It's wrong to use unearned advantages	Fairness
Ego	I pay my debts, on time	Fairness
Belligerence	Violence is a last resort	Kindness
Belligerence	They turn to violence because they are desperate	Kindness
Belligerence	Compassion, well applied, can defeat hate & fear	Kindness
Belligerence	Killing for any reason is wrong	Kindness
Impulse	There is a great power that works in the universe	Piety
Impulse	Nature must have an author - a creator	Piety
Impulse	All will be judged for their hearts & deeds one day	Piety
Impulse	Ritual & Prayer are essential to happiness	Piety

Page 4 - Class

Character _____

Player _____

Your Class _____

Stats

	Base - Race Mod - Total
CHA	
CON	
DEX	
INT	
STR	
WIS	

Saves

	Base - Stat Mod - Total
Breath	
Death	
Devices	
Paralysis	
Spells	

Hit Die | HP Mod | HP

Skills

	Skill - Base - Stat Mod - Total
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	

Combat Qualities

	Base - Stat Mod - Total
Armor Class	
Melee To-Hit	
Ranged To-Hit	
Initiative	
Damage Bonus	
Movment	

Class Abilities

_____ _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Base - Stat Mod

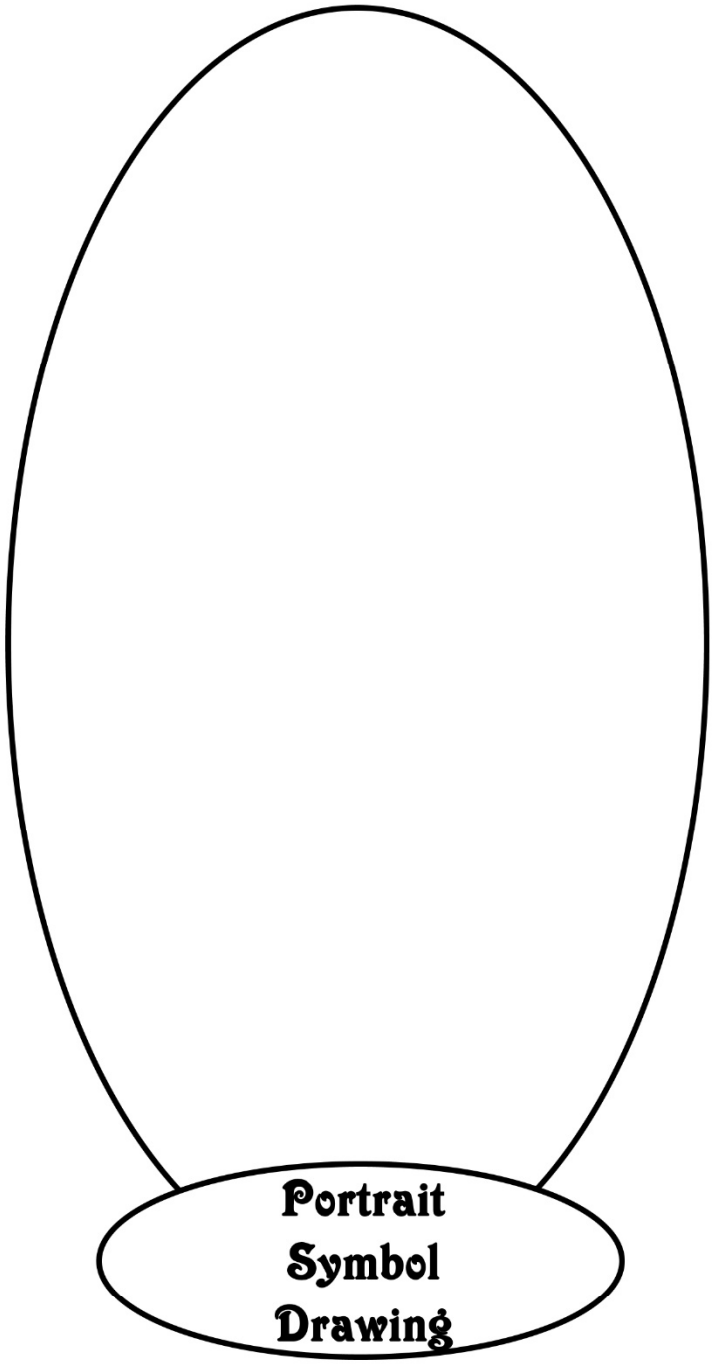
Parley Dice - _____ _____

Language Rolls - _____

Page 5 - Description

Character_____

Player_____



Height_____

Weight_____

Build_____

Hair Color _____

Hair Style_____

Skin Tone_____

Eye Color _____

Age_____

Apparent Age _____

Clothing Style_____

Sayings - Mottoes - Oaths

_____

_____

_____

_____

Distinguishing Characteristics

_____

_____

_____

_____

Page 6 - Possessions

Character _____

Player _____

Base - Stat Mod - Total

Gear Rolls _____ ( )

rolled - imagined - damage - AC modifier - description

Cultural Item?

1 - _____

_____ Enc-

2 - _____

_____ Enc-

3 - _____

_____ Enc-

4 - _____

_____ Enc-

5 - _____

_____ Enc-

6 - _____

_____ Enc-

7 - _____

_____ Enc-

8 - _____

_____ Enc -

9 - _____

_____ Enc -

10 - _____

_____ Enc -

Days of Water

( )

1 Enc. per Day

Days of Food

( )

1 Enc. per Day

Page 7 - Playing

Character _____

Player _____

Stats

CHA

CON

DEX

INT

STR

WIS

Saves

Breath

Death

Device

Paraly.

Spells

Search Die

Parley Dice

Armor Class

Melee Attacks

Weapon 1 _____

To-Hit Modifier _____ Damage _____

Weapon 2 _____

To-Hit Modifier _____ Damage _____

Hit Points

Ranged Attacks

Weapon 1 _____

To-Hit Modifier _____ Damage _____

Weapon 2 _____

To-Hit Modifier _____ Damage _____

Initiative

Maneuvers

_____

_____

_____

Movement

Chapter 2 - Playing the Game

A Note on Boilerplate

A significant effort has been put forth to avoid replicating information that can be found in other books quite easily. The goal is to provide you with new information & mechanical utility without padding the book needlessly. If you are a beginner, or if you don't have access to the Game of the North's main rulebook – I encourage you to make use of any of the free system resource documents for what is colloquially known as the OSR – old school renaissance. These rules make use of the earliest versions of fantasy role playing games (though usually in order to modify & alter them).

How To Play

You play this game by assuming the role of a character in the Slatewind Valley – or by refereeing – that is, by playing all of the characters not played by another player. Referees narrate all of the external action & provide descriptions & furnish stories – the rest of the players play as a character. This game is about telling a story & can be as rules intensive or as narratively focused as you wish. Not that these items exist on a spectrum – rather, think of rules, narration, acting, humor, simulation & socialization as control knobs that you can adjust to your liking.

Otherwise – there are countless sources of information on how to play & how to run an RPG – since these don't always agree – this is left as an exercise for the reader – to determine how best to play the game according to their tastes.

…But Rules?

There are few specific systems at work In the Ruins. These are mechanical rules above and beyond the usual platitudes about having fun & the referee's will is law.

This game uses the following dice d%, d20, d12, d10, d8, d6 & d4 in various combinations.

Attack rolls and saving throws use d20's and only d20s. These rolls are modified by your statistics. A +3 Melee To-Hit bonus means you add +3 to the d20 roll when making an attack.

You want to roll high for attacks and high for saves.

To successfully attack you must equal or exceed the AC of your target (you win ties on attack rolls).

To successfully save vs. an effect you must equal or exceed your relevant saving throw score (you win ties to save)

You also use d20's to roll statistics checks. These are checks to determine if you are successful with one of your 6 main statistics. For instance, if you want to attempt to lift

a big rock, you would make a d20 STR check. You must roll under your attribute (you lose on ties when trying to roll under).

Easier statistics checks require a d12 check. You roll a d12 and try to get under your statistic. This can't fail – in many cases, but you should still roll to get a sense of the magnitude of your success.

Die Steps
d4
d6
d8
2d4
d10
d12
2d6
3d4
2d8
d20
2d10
2d12
3d8
3d10
2d20

You make skill rolls by rolling a die and aiming to roll under your skill's value. You need to roll under the value & you lose on rolls where you tie while trying to roll under.

Skills have a difficulty indicated by which die you'll roll to resolve the check. A Pick Pockets d10 roll, for example is quite difficult. Skill roll difficulty ranges from d12 to d6.

The d10, d8 & d6 are all used for calculating damage. D10's are used for large weapons & d6's for small. A two handed sword deals d10, a broadsword deals d8 and a knife deals d6. The range of damage helps to indicate the solidity & accuracy of the hit.

Damage dice are affected by your Damage Bonus – this is added to any damage roll you make – including that from spells & from setting off traps & the like. Whenever you are rolling damage – you add this value to the die roll.

Intermittently specific rules will indicate that you should improve or decrease a die roll by a die-size. This indicates that the die to be rolled should be modified. For example an ability that increases your damage die type by 2 steps would make it so that a knife (normally d6) would strike harder (potentially) & would use a d10 to resolve damage.

The accompanying chart shows the scale of die-sizes up & down.

Social interaction utilizes a pair of Parley Dice – or Social Dice – these are based on your character's Class & CHA score as well as many other factors. Each of these dice is considered separately – so an affect that improves one of these 2 dice would change only the type of one die. For example if your social dice are listed as d6/d6 and it's indicated that you raise one die by 2 steps you'd have d10/d6.

You can attempt to search or notice things by rolling a Search die and trying for a low number. This roll is never modified though the Referee knows how low your roll must be to discover something hidden. The smaller your die the better.

More specific types of actions require an ability, a statistic or a skill of some kind – so each of these merits its own rules. The abilities are listed below – each of them is self explanatory in terms of what they do & how they alter the above mechanics.

Ability Catalogue

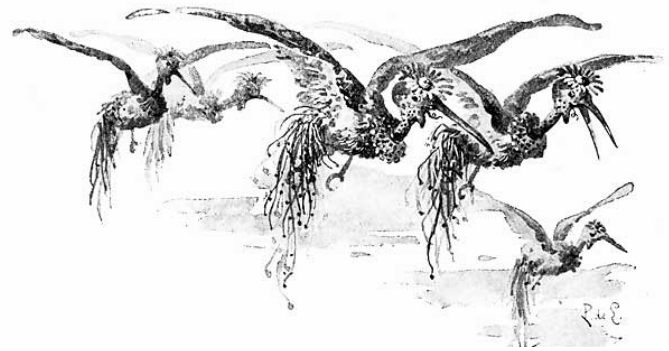
Here is an alphabetical listing of all of the skills, statistics, attributes & abilities available to characters In The Ruins. This catalogue covers all of the variations in rules that an ability tends to imply.

A Dream Once - Orcs have a shared ancestral memory of the first four Orc ancestors. They access these memories through dreams & this is how they learn the essential elements of Orcishness - such as language and hunting. An Orc with this ability is more aware of their dreams than others, they remember their dreams well & have become more capable at the expense of becoming less intellectually capable. When an Orc gains this ability they can increase their HD by 2 but they decrease all of their skills to 1.

AC Bonus - The bonus to your Armor Class, which is the target that must be met or exceeded in order for you to be hit by an attack.

Alchemy - The skill of alchemy allows an adventurer to create pseudo-magical compounds and to harvest such compounds from notable sources. Every potential source has its own difficulty and every alchemical item to be created has its own list of ingredients and creation dice rolls. The specific substances & materials that you can achieve through alchemy is known to the referee & you can gain access to this information through experimentation.

Animal Languages - There are 4 Animal languages that a character can possibly speak and discern– **Bird Languages**, **Hoofed Languages**, **Pawed Languages** and **Crawling Languages**. A character needs to take this ability multiple times to know them all. Different environments produce different dialects, and some animals can speak more than one of these.



Artisan - Skilled artists are abundant in preindustrial cultures and yet the truly gifted are few and far between. Upon gaining this ability you choose a specific craft or art of any sort. You can focus on visual arts, material crafts or even literary or musical endeavors. You can create exceptional quality pieces within this chosen milieu. Anything you craft has its value increased by five times what the normal value would be. You can gain this ability multiple times. Usually you would do so to learn other arts - however, you can take it over again for the same craft - further increasing the value of produced goods by an additional quintupling. The materials costs for your production is a matter to be parsed by you and the Referee when you declare what you wish to make. Likewise the time required is determined at that time.

Bloody Tantrum - Goblins, once they've set their mind upon something, hold on with a relentless, mad intensity. A Goblin with this ability increases the damage die used in their next attack by 1 step each time they miss their target. If the goblin does not hit the target

before they are defeated or killed - this ability deals half the final damage that would have been rolled to the goblin character as their tantrum gets the better of them.

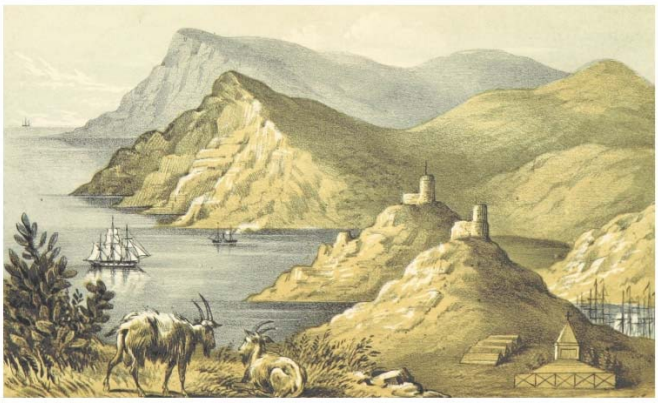
Breath - Your saving throw against Breath attacks is linked to your quickness - a successful save represents a quick escape from an explosive effect.



Building - This skill encompasses the building of structures of any type. Larger and more complex structures require more time and materials. Normally PCs can construct anything given the tools and materials. This skill grants them the ability to optimize their resources & improve the final product. A PC with Construction can reduce the required time & materials by 25% with a successful d8 check. A d6 check reduces the time or the materials required by 25% and a successful d10 check reduces time and materials by 50%.

Charisma - The charisma statistic measures your likeability, your personal magnetism, enthusiasm & presence.

Circles - This is the discipline of learning, weaving & dispelling magical circles used in supernatural defense. There are four types of circle and when you gain this ability you must choose one. Demons, Elementals, Fairies & Undead are all potentially affected by magical circles. Each of the different types requires different materials & lore so resources devoted to one type of magical circle can't be used on another. A magical circle prevents a number of HD of creatures from entering the area circumscribed equal to 1 HD per 50 Sp in expended materials. Circle materials needn't be bought - they can be derived from other sources - commonly the remains of certain monsters and gathered plant matter. Gathering requires the use of the Foraging skill and the Referee awards value in materials based on the results. A Magical Circle can potentially be of any size. It requires 1 hour to create a circle with a diameter of 20 feet or less. Larger circles add an additional hour per 10 feet added to this diameter. Creatures who's HD are not sufficient to traverse the circle may still attempt to do so. They must save or suffer damage. Such monsters take d6 damage per HD you possess. Creatures who's HD exceed the threshold can traverse the circle unhindered.



Claimant - Claimants have asserted some authority over the North and are owed some respect & deference by those of lower standing and lesser ability. When a PC acquires this ability they attract a number of followers equal to 2x their HD. These followers are controlled

by the player and take their actions on the turn following the PC. Followers acquired this way cost the PC nothing. They test for loyalty exactly like any other followers. Whenever any of these followers are killed they are gradually replaced by others at the rate of one per week or one per month - depending on the local population as ruled by the Referee. A player may take Claimant more than once. Each instance grants rank & status in a different milieu and increases the number of followers - though not their quality.

Communion - Characters can commune together under the aegis of an immortal power. The nature of this communion is determined by the nature of the character's religious faith. Devil worshipping characters have black masses and so on. A character who has this ability is able to administer & invoke the communion among the faithful - including any party members who follow the same ethos. When the character leads the communion - which occurs no more often than once per week and usually once per month - the character makes a d20 CHA test. On a successful test those receiving the communion engage in a transcendental & transformative experience which grants them improved camaraderie & physical fortitude. Mechanically this is represented by allowing the participants to re-roll their Hit Dice and taking a higher result if it is rolled. If you take this ability a second time you are able to Commune twice as often and you can choose a different benefit from this list: **Spirit Communion -** Communing PCs get improved initiative- each steps up their initiative by one die. **Love Communion** - Communing PCs gain improved co-operation - All PCs can make a single use of any one maneuver known by another of the communing PCs. **Vile Communion** - Communing PCs are all able to increase a damage die they roll by 2 steps once within the next week.

Composition - In civilized regions the art skill grant you the ability to produce saleable productions which have a value based on the die chosen to perform the skill. D6 productions are fair and fetch 10-20 Sp, d8 artworks go for up to 50 Sp, d10 artworks can be valued up to 100 Sp. The Effects of the Master Crafter ability can apply to artworks. Most artworks take 2-8 weeks to complete. In the wilderness this skill allows a character to produce primitive artworks such as cave paintings or to embellish landmarks to make monuments. The scale of these projects determine the time & the difficulty die required to perform the skill successfully. Finally the Art Skill is useful for generating maps. A successful use of the Art skill allows a character to accurately map locations they have traversed. Composition is the skill of writing words, music, speeches and the like. It is useful for generating persuasive letters & compelling works of art. Less saleable than the visual arts that the Art skill grants, Compositions are more versatile and can be carried and reused. Composed songs & speeches decrease the difficulty die of the Performance skill & can increase the die type used for Parley attempts. Composed stories, particularly those that relate the deeds of PCs can increase a character's fame & prestige, effectively increasing the base Glory, Reputation & Influence scores of a party that the PC is a member of. Such impressive accounts require successful d10 skill tests and many weeks of writing.

Constitution - Your Constitution statistic or CON sets your character's physical coherence - their bodily health & ability to endure disease & wounds.

Damage Bonus - This is the bonus added to damage rolls you make after successfully hitting with an attack.

Death - Saving throws against Death represent the character's ability to avoid certain death - usually in the form of unseen powerful dangers like disease & poison.



Defender - Defenders are practiced at meeting & resisting martial offense. A defender has improved AC based on their equipment. When taking this ability chose the type of gear you defend with. **Shield Defender -** Shields provide +3 AC to a character with this ability instead of +2 and they improve the character's saving throws by 2. **Weapon Defender -** This type of defense emphasizes the use of parries and feints. Weapon -Defenders can voluntarily decrease their attack bonus and apply double that amount to their AC. This trade in offense & defense can be assigned only at the beginning of a Round. **Evasive Defenders -** Forgoing all actions for a turn improves an Evader's AC by an amount equal to the number of spaces they move in a turn. **Armor Defenders** - The AC provided by armor is improved by 1 and any armor worn now deducts 2 points of damage from any attacks that strike the character while they are wearing the armor. A PC can learn all of the defender styles by taking this ability multiple times.

Destruction - Many characters are much, much more hostile and brutal than others. Such characters always add and additional point of damage to all hits that are scored in melee combat. Destructive characters increase all damage dealt by them by one point per die rolled. This ability can be taken multiple times - each time grants one of the following enhancements - **Crush** - Damage dealt by the character to inanimate objects is doubled. **Slash** - The damage dealt by the PC is increased by an additional point per die rolled. This added point of damage cannot be recovered through normal rest - medical or magical intervention is required for the damage to heal at all. **Pierce** - when the character inflicts the added damage to a target they pierce that enemy and harm another - any one nearby enemy takes half of any damage dealt by this destructive PC. You can take this ability up to four times.

Detect Traps - This ability does not reflect a character's supernatural awareness of traps and pitfalls, but rather his or her ability to locate the cunningly disguised deathtraps that populate dungeons and treasure-chests. This ability must be used consciously and declared in advance of any other actions in order to be used. The player never rolls this check – rather, the Referee will consult the player's score and determine if the trap is discovered. Some Traps are concealed with greater cunning than others, necessitating modifications to the roll.

Device - Saves vs. devices are saving throws that help you to avoid fatal traps, magical items & their related abilities & sometimes effects that are based upon the use of an implement or weapon.

Dexterity - Dexterity of DEX is your character's hand-eye coordination, speed & agility

Disguise - The disguise ability grants a PC the knack of impersonation. When a Character gains this ability they acquire another identity that they can assume given a few hours of preparation. This identity is impervious to scrutiny based on seeing through illusions or

perception based magic as the disguise is not itself magical. The second identity has its own class & statistics & functions effectively as a second character for the PC to play. Obviously the two characters cannot exist in the same scene. PCs can take this ability more than once- each time they gain an added identity that they can assume. The character also gains the ability to effectively conceal other's identities as well as to disguise objects as other things - given the right tools and enough time the PC can make a house look like a castle, a knife look like a pastry and a pauper look like a king. These are purely cosmetic alterations and never convey any function beyond deceit.



Divination - Divination is the truly rare ability to see the future in advance & to read portents in the subtle details of the world around you. Characters who gain this ability must choose their preferred method of divination from the following list - **Augury** - divination by observation of the flights of birds; **Haruspex** - divination from examining the entrails of animals; **Palmistry** - divination from reading palms; **Runes** - Divination by the casting of dice or runestones; **Bibliomancy** - Divination through the examination of a book; **Astrology** - divination through the study of the stars. Each type of divination grants different types of insights and a PC can gain this ability multiple times - gaining a different divinatory discipline each time. **Augurs** can sense changes in the weather & the movement of armies. They can make d20 Wisdom checks to anticipate the result of a battle between two individuals or two armies. **Haruspex** can see impending death, misfortune or impending illness. They can in turn avoid these given enough warning. A Haruspex gains bonus HP when performing their sacrifices equal to the HP of the creature sacrificed & they cannot perform another sacrifice until the bonus HP have been depleted. **Palmists** can discern the statistics & particulars of any individual if they make a successful d20 Wisdom check. They learn all the target's statistics, alignment, wealth & affiliations. **Runists** are able to locate objects & persons. When successfully casting their runes by making a d20 Dexterity check, they can determine the cardinal direction & approximate distance of whatever they seek. **Bibliomancers** can discern the results of future events. Bibliomancy requires a d20 INT check - on a successful test any given question concerning the likely outcome of certain actions will be revealed. **Astrologers** can see the influence of outside forces on the actions of others. Given any subject an Astrologer can discern which forces are acting to influence that subject's situation. If the Astrologer knows the birth-date of the subject or any of their moon signs, they can do this without a die roll, without that information a d20 INT check is needed.

Domesticity - at wish to pursue the homely life while abroad are much sought after by adventuring companies for their utility in camp. Characters who possess this quality are good at cooking, fire-making and general

tidiness which greatly improve the comfort of those they travel alongside. PCs who travel with a character who possesses this ability sleep better, eat better and generally enjoy themselves substantially more than those who don't. You can embellish this ability by taking it multiple times. Each added instance of the ability grants you a special dish or technique that is your signature. This signature is always quite excellent. For instance you may brew the best coffee in the province or have a particular technique for keeping clothes clean & creased. You can have any number of these signatures - each adds to your fame & your desirability as a traveling companion.

Endurance - Those of an especially powerful constitution are able to stave off the effects of prolonged adventuring with ease. Shrugging off sleeplessness, hunger and thirst - as well as inclement weather for far longer than their fellows, such characters are penalized at a much more generous rate than others, experiencing the effects of privation at ½ the rate of the other characters. If you take this ability more than once you gain access to some of its embellishments. **Eat Anything** - your survival instinct has migrated to your stomach - which is exceptionally accommodating. You can eat uncooked or rotten matter, dirt, clay, bark and so on - all without consequence. You need never forage for food again. **Sleep Resistance** - You need only half the normal amount of sleep & any effect that causes you to save or fall asleep is harder to apply to you. When forced to sleep you can roll your saving throw twice and take the better result. **Carrying Capacity** - You can carry five more items without regard to your CON & STR stats. You can also layer armor - allowing you to increase your AC beyond the limits of heavy armor. Any two or more armor items worn count as super heavy armor which grants AC 19. **Toughness** - you gain an additional HP for every HD you have earned.

Ethereal Beauty - Though the eye of the beholder is the final arbiter of beauty there are a few who approach an ideal that transcends the petty preferences of individual taste. Such characters are strongly favored by others. You automatically have your initial reactions from strangers improved by one step & you increase one of your Parley dice by one die type.



Ethereal Drift - Once per day you can drift out of mortal existence. You can use this ability when you would take damage. You take no damage instead but are insubstantial & ghostly for the next few minutes - incapable of manipulating objects in the material world. You exist purely as perception & cannot act in this state.

Forage - Foraging is rolled to collect enough food and water to survive for 1 day – so most PCs will need to roll it daily. It is unaffected by any attributes and all players begin with a

value of 1 in this skill. The skill can be raised through Xp expenditure – it increases by 1 point per 200 Xp spent. The referee may rule that no check is possible in certain environments.

Forgery - The skill of making false documents and false coins as well as imitation art pieces & fake holy relics. Forgers are skilled mimics who can copy the style and appearance of another work from paintings to engravings. When you gain this ability you can create false replicas of any object you possess. If you take this ability a second time you can forge versions of items you have seen and if you take the ability a third time you can forge anything you've heard about. Your forgeries are not detectable by most skilled observers - but there is always a chance they will be exposed & you will be found out. None of your forgeries can replicate any supernatural effects that the example item demonstrates. The materials needed to produce forged items cost 1/4 the value of the item being replicated.

Gear Rolls - The number of individual items you may roll for when you begin playing. This is the total number of rolls but your character can only carry items based on their CON score.

Gift - Offering presents well & receiving them correctly in turn is a functional skill that helps one navigate in civilized society. At its most base this represents bribery and corruption, at its highest level it is used to establish chains & systems of patronage & loyalty. You use this skill when you wish to navigate within a bureaucracy without compromising your own time & scruples.

Glammer - The magic of Illusions & fairy trickery. Glammers are created just as described in the Game of the North rulebook – however, when gaining this ability in order to cast a spell you must design the spell first – its level determines the number of times you must purchase this ability in order to cast that spell daily. A 4th level glammer requires that you acquire this ability 4 times. To cast the same spell twice per day – you would need to acquire this ability 8 times.

Guardian - This ability makes you a valiant defender of others. When you gain this ability you improve the AC of anyone in your party by 1. If you wish to take this ability another time you can select a specific benefit from the following: Shield Guardian - if you are using a shield you improve the AC of people in your party by another point. Obdurate Guardian - you improve your fellow party member's saving throws by one. Quick Guardian - you can interrupt the movement of an opponent to interpose yourself between them and one of your allies without using your own movement or turn. Note that you do not actually benefit from your Guardian ability directly. If more than one party member has this ability none of the applied bonuses ever apply more than once to any party member.

HD - HD is the type of die used to determine your character's HP. The larger the die the more combative your class, and the more dice rolled the more capable you are as a character.

Healer - Healing is a complex ability, particularly given how disparate the biology of the various adventuring races are. And yet there are those who are gifted with healing hands and good insights. If you have this ability you can choose to re-roll any result of 1 when using a healing item (normally this result means that the potion or what have you applies maximum healing but is now utterly consumed). You can't override two sequential 1 results - but you could, conceivably, keep using the same item indefinitely if you can avoid rolling poorly. You also maximize the effects of any healing magic you personally

generate - spells that restore HP restore as if you'd rolled the maximum result on the die.

Hear Noise - Apart from the ambient noises common to the wilderness and dungeon environments favored by adventurers – there are telling sounds that indicate the likely intervention of monsters and their allied species. Hearing Noises differs from merely noticing something – that is, a character must pause and attempt to hear a noise. As with other abilities of this ilk, a character's maximum chance is indicated based upon his or her race. Exceeding this maximum can be accomplished at the rate of 10,000 XP per 1 point gain.

Heightened Senses - Honing your senses so that they are above & beyond what is normal may seem almost supernatural - and yet most of the races have innate specialist perceptions that can be acquired & turned on. When you gain this ability you decrease by one the size of your search die. You can take this ability multiple times thereafter - each instance improves a specific sense. **Dark Sight** - you can see normally in anything brighter than starlight. **Scent** - you can track & detect others using your sense of smell. This improves your initiative by 1 die size. **Sense Hidden** - you find secret doors & hidden objects on a 1 or 2 (or more, if you've other merits that increase this range). **Far Sight** - you've got eagle eyes and can see for miles and miles unaided. **Acute Hearing** - you can make out fainter noises - you decrease all hear noise & move quietly checks difficulties by one die type.

Heirloom Possession - Choose one piece of gear from your starting equipment - that item is an heirloom of your family and so long as it is in your possession & used by you only, relevant die rolls made with that piece of gear are improved by 1 step. An heirloom dagger, for instance might be used to deal d8 damage instead of d6 - or it could be used to make a d8 skill check a d6 skill check when used to carve wood.

Hidden Riddler - Innately sociable but frequently misjudged - a Halfling with this ability improves both of their social dice by one step whenever they are hidden from the view of the one with whom they are speaking. This effect relates to all types of social tests that utilize your social dice. This ability also allows a Halfling to make a successful d10 Joke check to neutralize the effect of a previous social test.

Hide in Shadow - From time to time an adventurer likes to take a cue from the many lurking monsters that plague the life of exploration. Hiding in shadows, like the other adventuring mainstays, is not automatic, and is limited by the race of the adventurer. Exceeding the maximum established by racial characteristics requires the expense of 10,000 XP per 1 additional chance.

High or Low - A Brizai born character with this ability chooses either high or low caste. Members of the one caste improve both of their social dice by one step when interacting with members of the same caste but reduce by one step both social dice when dealing with members of the other caste.

Hold to the Rock - Dwarves have an innate kinship to the earth from which they've sprung. A dwarf with this ability cannot be knocked down & has their AC improved by 1 whenever they are standing on the ground. The AC improvement increases to 2 if they are standing on bare rock.

Horrific - Some people are simply terrifying to be near, with this ability you become one of them. When you gain this ability you can use your parley dice aggressively to make Intimidation checks. Depending on other factors that determine which dice you roll -

you can potentially become truly terrifying - a force no sane person will willingly contend with. If you use this ability successfully targets of your intimidation are affected by fear.

Initiative - Initiative is your character's speed & reflexes when it comes to combat. Usually a die type added to your DEX score, initiative determines which turns of a combat round you may act upon.

Instrument - The skill of playing an instrument or using an instrument well. Normally a PC is able to make use of any instrument they have when they generate their starting equipment. If you've got this skill, however, you can play instruments at a higher-professional level. You can roll this skill when you wish to sway a group or earn a living as a performer. This skill also grants the ability to create musical instruments well.

Intelligence - Intelligence or INT is the quality of your character's thought process, the quality of their memory & their ability to plan & reason well.





Investigate - Looking for answers, interpreting evidence & drawing useful conclusions is a skill that professional persons may choose to develop. Investigate allows you to draw inferences from scenes - you can determine what has taken place in a blood spattered room for example. Investigation offers you the ability to track & follow based on sight cues.

Jinx - The motion of the stars in the heavens exerts a strange force over the lives of mortals and immortals alike. Just as some members of the Adventuring kinships are Lucky, there are those who radiate, by virtue of the Stars' influence - unluck. A Jinx applies a suppressing quality to those in close proximity, frequently leading to an unforeseen doom. When a character gains this ability he or she is able to insist that the Referee discard a die roll – counting it as a failure. This ability can be invoked as often as desired, but the Jinx is not all in the players favor. For every instance in which it is invoked, one of the character's fellows (either PC or NPC) will suffer a similar reversal at the whim of the referee.

Joke - Humor cuts through all cultures & languages - the Joke skill is the skill of interacting with those who have different cultures, languages & intentions than you. Practically the Joke skill allows you to use humor to ingratiate yourself with others - mainly by improving relations with those who aren't able or willing to talk to you.

Judge Alignment - It's not a trivial knack, being able to judge the intentions & see the motives of others. Successful checks using this skill grant you knowledge of another's alignment. Reading one of their three alignments is a d8 check, judging 2 is a d10 and judging all 3 is a d12 skill check. These rolls are made easier when you observe the target's behavior, so long as it is in line with their alignments.

Language Rolls - This is the number of d20 INT rolls you are allowed to make to see if you know any of the languages derived from your character's background - it also lets your roll for further languages, should your rolls exceed 4.

Languages - Beyond fluency & literacy language has an esoteric inner layer - Syntax & Context together can convey much information even if the language is unfamiliar. This skill allows you to decipher writing, interpret speech that is unfamiliar & to generate codes & to decipher same.

Lucky - Fortune favors the bold, and woe to the adventure who does not count boldness chief among their qualities. Luck represents the beneficence of the otherwise indifferent universe smiling (if only briefly) upon the character. Luck is simple in its execution – whenever the player wishes he or she can roll the dice again and if the result is better, the ability is used, not to be used again until the stars spin in the night sky once again. If the result is worse, the latter result is kept, but the ability can be called upon again without intervening rest.

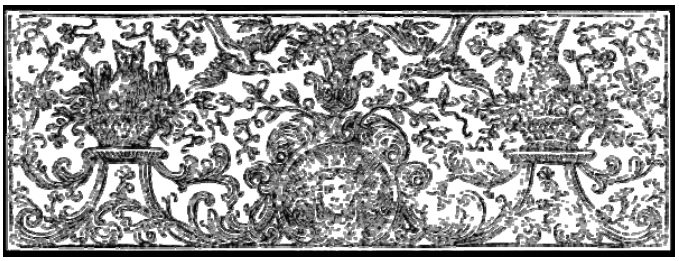
Medicine - Medicines are always valuable & sought after in the world. Like Alchemy & Poisoning this skill confers the ability to create & craft medicinal unguents & potions. You can, supposing you have the requisite materials, concoct medicines. A d6 test of this skill allows you to create a single use medicine. A d8 test allows you to craft a typical healing cure which cures d6 damage and is spent on a roll of 1. Increasing the difficulty to d10 makes the potions you create cure d8 damage. If you roll a d12 test, you can create therapeutic medicines that alleviate other types of ailments beyond damage to hit points.

Melee Bonus - The bonus to To-Hit rolls that you make when making hand-to-hand attacks. This modifier is added to a d20 roll.

Mental Fortitude - Toughness of mind is essential to adventurers who often face unthinkable danger. When you gain this ability you improve your Save vs. Spells by 2. You can thereafter acquire this ability additional times. Each time you select another merit. Illusion Resistance - you see through illusions and are allowed to roll twice on any rolls involving them (but only once per illusion) - taking the better result. You can improve your save or you can improve your attack modifier and so forth - based on your wishes and the nature of the scene. Resolve - You resist fear and are entitled to two rolls whenever you would be afflicted by fear - you choose between the two results, taking the one that you prefer. Indomitable Will - You are entitled to two rolls if you are afflicted by Madness - you choose which of the rolls you would prefer be applied. Base Cunning - You can choose one of your Mental attributes (CHA, INT, WIS) and one of your physical attributes (CON, DEX, STR) - hereafter you can

choose to use that mental statistic instead of the chosen physical attribute when you are called upon to test with the physical attribute. For example if you have a high INT and low DEX you can choose to make INT rolls whenever a DEX check is called for.

Mentalism - Hypnotism, Mind Reading, Mesmerism, Animal Magnetism



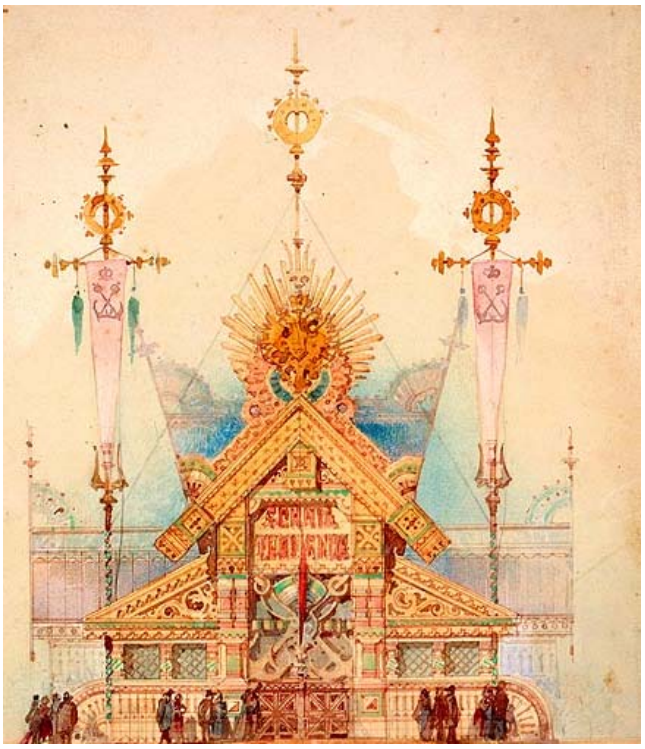
Move Quietly - Surprisingly difficult, as are most enterprises of great utility – Moving Quietly is the difference, often enough, between life and death – between discovery and escape. A character can choose to make an attempt to move quietly and avoid the detection of those who they wish to surprise. Success may mean that a character does not alert a sleeping creature or a distracted band of enemies. As with the other mainstays of the adventurer, the ability to move quietly is capped according to one's racial destiny. Exceeding the value listed as the maximum requires the expense of 10,000 XP per increase of 1.

Movement - The number of spaces (on a map) you may move in a round. For unmapped encounters & theater of the mind your speed is the number of meters you may move in 10 seconds.

Navigate - This is the skill of inferring ones location in the world by multifarious cues. It also confers the ability to plan routes & interpret maps successfully. A d6 test of this skill allows you to orient yourself & identify the cardinal directions. A d8 test allows you to approximate your location in the world & infer the proper route to another location. A d10 test allows you to journey to a location while anticipating ambushes & mitigating the danger of encounters. A d12 test allows you to simply avoid all encounters on your journey.

Numeracy - Skill with words has a corollary proficiency - the skill with numbers. People with this skill are good at instantly sussing out the number of items present (as in a large quantity of coins & jewels) as well as the basic understanding of mathematics which is necessary for properly dividing loot, accounting for expenses & so on. Exceptional skill with Numeracy can be used to make functional assessments of almost any physical phenomena - such as interpreting what the date is based on the position of the moon, or anticipating famine based on assessments of local economics. Creative use of this skill can be quite rewarding.

Open Doors - Most locks succumb to the generous application of force mediated by an appropriate tool. In some cases, a lock is sturdier and can't be overcome by an ax or sledge. In other instances, a party of adventurers may have another reason for overcoming a lock without destroying it – perhaps in the interest of obfuscation or stealth – or perhaps in order to leave the door intact and able to be secured behind them. Opening Locks is, like the other Adventurer's Mainstays capped according to the native powers of the character's race. These maximums are able to be exceeded at the increased cost of 10,000 XP per 1point gain.



Overlooked - An overlooked adventurer is perhaps the safest adventurer. In a world of psychotic, murderous treasure seekers pitted against the monstrous follies of god - those who survive longest are often the most overlooked. Characters with this ability are much less likely to be attacked and will be disregarded as threats by many would be challengers. Monsters & People alike tend not to notice the overlooked character who is preferentially left out of any randomized test to determine which character will be attacked.

Paralysis - Saves against paralysis effects are saving throws against any effect that traps you in one spot, that pins you in some way, or an effect that would change your physiology considerably.

Parley Dice - Also called Social Dice - these are the dice you roll when you wish to interact with NPCs through the Talking Sub-Game & when you need to test an NPC's disposition.

Pick Pockets - Certainly unsavory, picking pockets is a significant tool in the Adventurers' collected mainstays. Picking Pockets is only one application of this proficiency though, which entails other minor tricks of prestidigitation that fall short of actual magical ability. Juggling, sleight of hand and so forth can all be carried out with the same reliable reflexes that help a character to pick the pockets of the unwary. As with all abilities of this stripe, the character's race designates a maximum effectiveness – but this value can be overcome with the liberal expenditure of XP – 1,000 per 1point in excess of the listed racial maximum.

Pious Devotion - Khin religiosity is well known & generational. A khin servant of one of the three faces of their triune faced god gets one free point of supplication prayer each day.

Poisoning - Like Alchemy & Medicine - the Poisoning skill grants the ability to create & use poisons. With a d6 check you're able to positively identify an instance of poisoning. With a d8 check and the proper materials you can create a single use poison which will inflict the poisoned status condition. A d10 check allows you to create a multiple use quantity of said poison - which is finally consumed whenever you roll a 1 on a d6 check - much as one would determine the final use of a healing item. A d12 check of this skill allows for the creation of a particularly virulent poison - which afflicts the Poisoned status condition twice.

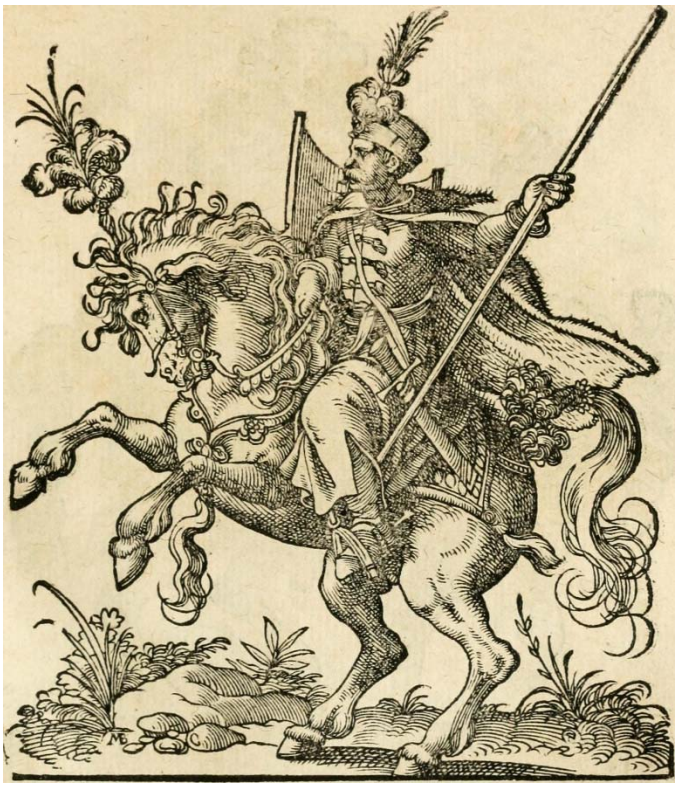
Prayers - The devout, consumed by wonder and fear can call upon the sublime & unreal powers of the heavens & hells to grant boons & forgive sins. This ability functions as described in the Game of the North rulebook. In the Ruins makes outsize use of both the Prayer ability and of religions generally. Within the setting there are contending churches & faiths which your character may choose to join.

Predation - Man is a wolf to man and the other kinds of people are no better. Predation is the ability to hunt & kill in the manner of a

proper predator. When a character has this ability they name a specific target for their hunting and then make a d20 WIS check. If the check is successful the difference between the roll and the stat becomes a pool of bonus points that the character can use against the target of the predation - be it man or beast. For instance if you have a WIS of 10 and roll a 5 on the check - you have 5 points of bonus you can apply against the subject of this ability. You could apply all 5 as bonus damage on an attack roll - or all 5 to your AC to avoid one of the adversary's attacks. You can divide the points up however you like. You cannot use this ability on another target until you abandon or defeat the original target. You can gain this ability a second time - doing so decreases the difficulty of the WIS check - making it a d12 test.

Protector - The devotion to preserving life and order is a rarely encountered quality in the realm of adventurers, most of whom do not settle in one place long enough to make much use of this ability. When a character gains this power though - they choose a location of which they become a protector. As a Protector a PC gains a pool of d6s equal to their HD. While in the realm that they protect the PC can grant one of their d6s to anyone sharing a scene with them inside of their protected range. These bonus dice are replenished intermittently - usually every few game sessions. A character cannot be a protector of more than one locale - but this ability can be taken multiple times. Each time the die type granted as a bonus is increased by one size to a maximum of d12

Rampage - From time to time, a character with a particularly malevolent temperament can be caused to enter a state of fury akin to an angry bull or a vicious tornado. When a character with this ability has been harmed sufficiently, he or she is likely to enter the Rampaging state. This state grants the character considerable ability in terms of silencing those who precipitated the state. First of all by – granting the character another attack that can be executed on every one of their turns. Also, by increasing the die that is used to calculate damage by one step – e.g.: d6 becomes d8. The Rampage continues until the adversary who initiated it has been killed, or until the character who is Rampaging has died - a likely occurrence, as a Rampaging character tends to draw significant attention. Rampages are usually precipitated by a single attack the damage of which is equal to at least 1/4 of the target's current HP total.



Ranged Bonus - The bonus to To-Hit rolls you make when making ranged attacks. This modifier is added to a d20 roll when you make attacks

Resistance - Simply put resistance is one's extraordinary ability to resist harm, to resist danger & to remain alive long after others have perished. When you gain this ability you become much more resilient to harm & danger. When you choose to use this power you make a d20 CON check - the margin by which the

check is successful creates a pool of points which can be applied as bonuses to any of the following - HP, AC - a Saving Throw. You can use this ability once per session to set up your pool of resistances - which are expended at the end of a session whether they are all used or not.

Resourcefulness - The ability to generate useful materials from more or less nothing. Resourcefulness is the opposite of preparation. Resourceful characters depend on their wits to be able to get by much more than they might depend on gear. This ability can be taken 3 times. Each time it relates to a different type of gear - Weapons, Armor or Tools. Within these broad categories a resourceful character is able to produce any one example of any of these items in a single given scene. For example a Resourceful weaponeer could create a longbow which functions for a single scene before it stops working. The same character could fashion a sword for another scene.



Riches - Characters are sometimes bequeathed and sometimes discover great fortunes. Upon gaining this ability the character is entitled to roll 20 new pieces of starting equipment and to make a roll on the treasure table 7 - hoards. Any money gained this way does not count toward the character's Xp as treasure normally does - it does however grant many more options for a PC who is unlikely to otherwise have easy access to such wealth.

Riding Dog - Plioshr dog riders are among the most iconic figures of the slatewind valley. Those who have this ability have a loyal riding dog as a pet. It doesn't count against their starting equipment. Roll its traits as if it were a mount. The referee has its statistics.

Ritual - A ritual is a profane, i.e.: irreligious personal practice which is a focal point for a character's interior force - or soul. Rituals are personal practices which focus the character's attention & magnify their will. Individually rituals strongly resemble maneuvers - in that there are an abundance of them and they are all defined by you as a player. Practically, you'll want to describe what your ritual looks like in action and to determine one ability - from Saves to Attack Rolls to a specific skill that the ritual governs. Performing the ritual ritualistically invokes the benefit that the ritual provides. You can take this ability many, many times - each time you must create a new ritual and describe which of your abilities it affects. No two rituals can affect the same character trait. Each ritual provides a benefit to the action equal to a 1 point modification per hour that the ritual requires to be performed. To a maximum benefit equal to your HD total. For instance a 4HD character creates a 3 hour ritual to help stave off poisoning - it is a -3 benefit to their Save vs. Death trait. The ritual is as you describe it.

Rugged - Rough and tumble wanderers at the very edge of civilization tend to have in common a robust, earthy presence, a respectable jaggedness to them which is called Ruggedness. Rugged characters rely on the forcefulness of their presence over the cleverness of their words. A Rugged character can use CON to determine the costs to advance normally CHA linked traits - such as

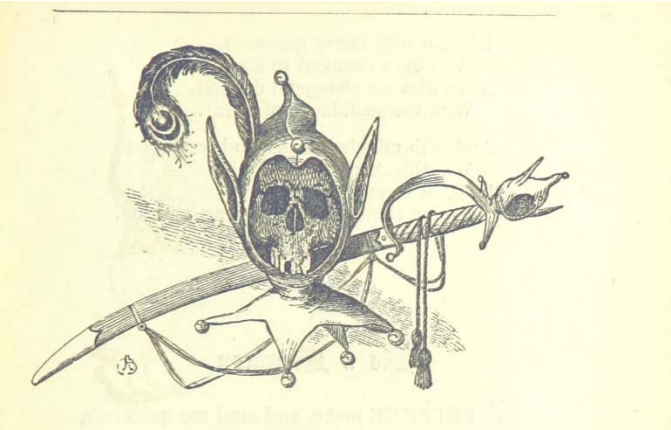
improving Parley dice or uplifting a follower. This ability can be taken more than once - doing so opens a suite of available options that can be taken individually. Strong-Silent-Type - Choose one mental attribute (CHA, INT, WIS) and one physical attributed (CON, DEX, STR). From now on, when you are meant to test against the applicable mental attribute you can substitute the physical attribute. Steely Gaze - When you win or lose an initiative contest - going either first or last based purely on the roll of the dice - you increase your attack roll by your HD - if you go first - or you increase your damage roll by an amount equal to your HD if you go last. This only works on the first round of a battle. Firm Grip - You can go hand over hand for any length of time - you aren't fatigued by climbing. You can make a d20 DEX check to save someone you are with who is falling. If you succeed they do not fall & take no damage as you grab them from out of the air. Iron Constitution - You can consume preposterous amounts of alcohol or similar substances without ill effect & you can choose whether or not you wish to be intoxicated. You always wake up an hour before dawn feeling refreshed and ready - so long as you've slept at all.

Ruin - A few of the fairie tribes possess a pernicious aura that has a cumulative deleterious effect on the works of more well intentioned people. Those who have this quality will find that the built world around them does not respond favorably to them. Anything that has been constructed will be less durable, less functional and much more prone to break when a character with the Ruin quality is near. Buildings, weapons, ships and conveyances of every type have a cumulative penalty applied for every character with this quality in near proximity. The penalty is either a portion of the Hits that the object or structure contains, or a penalty to the item's usage. A weapon suffers a -1 penalty to attack and damage rolls as it rusts away in the presence of such a character – while a building or ship hull will have 10% of its Hits taken away as it rots to sticks. Many characters in close proximity, all with this ability, can completely wreck a modest village overnight. When you have this ability any attack directed against you has a 5% of catastrophically failing - causing the weapon to become broken & dealing damage to its wielder. If you have this ability anyone rolling a 1 on any d20 check will automatically fail and their equipment will be ruined. They will also take whatever damage a successful hit would have done to you. You can take this ability up to three times - each time it increases the fumble range by 1 to a maximum of 3. The more ruinous your presence though, the more difficult it is to keep the area around your character intact or clean.

Scale Walls - This is specifically the ability to Scale without the use of ropes or grapples up surfaces that approach or even exceed 90 degrees. Surface conditions can apply penalties or even bonuses to this ability. Any non-encumbered character has an innate ability to climb a rope, ladder or that is resolved as an ability check. This ability refers to the more difficult ability pursued by the specialist climber. A character can exceed the Maximum ability designated by his race at the rate of 1000 XP per 1 in 10 chance above the maximum.

Scholarship - This ability grants you the ability to research & to learn well. Scholars are those who have a conversational rapport with information, a fluency with standards of written & unwritten lore. When you have this ability you can research a subject by gaining access to some information about it and making a d20 INT check. The margin by which you achieve success on this roll (assuming you are successful) becomes a pool of bonuses - which you can apply to any one of your

attributes while you are interfacing with the subject of your research. You can gain this ability a second time - becoming a lore-master. In this case you use a d12 to make the initial INT check. You can only be under the influence of one research project at a time.



Shamanism - What prayer is to the civilized adventurer, Shamanism is to the atavistic, earthly adventurer. Shamanism grants access to the totemic powers granted by nature itself to those who observe her rites and follow closely her decrees. Shamanism is a spellcasting ability and its expense is related to the level of spells available to be cast. The shaman gains the ability to cast 1 level of shaman spells from one of the 4 Prana each time they gain this ability. In order to cast a 3rd level spell in a day the shaman would have to purchase this ability 3 times. Individual Prana are all opposed so a shaman who wishes to cast 2 level 1 Black Prana spells & 1 level 2 White Prana spells in a day would have had to have gained this ability 4 times.

Siege - Using machines & men to wreck structures isn't a trivial task. The use of this skill is necessary for undermining walls, successfully burning cities and breaching gates. You can use this skill to fashion catapults and trebuchets as well. This skill's utility & difficulty is based upon the strength of the fortifications you seek to defeat as is the required time necessary for performing the siege successfully.

Signaling - Imitation bird calls, semaphore & smoke signals all fall under this suite of abilities. If you have the signaling ability you can, at will, make a d20 stat check - either INT, CHA or DEX - your choice - to signal a one sentence phrase to a distance equal to the difference on the check in hexes. A failure on this check indicates that the signal is either misinterpreted or intercepted and deciphered by others. You can signal at close quarters too - allowing you to secretly communicate through surreptitious gestures. If you are attempting to Signal to someone else with the Signaling ability - and you've previously met them and settled on some signals - the check to send a signal is reduced to a d12.

Simplicity - Quet characters can gain the ability of simple living. Simplicity means that a quet character can thrive with the bare minimum. So long as you never indulge yourself by consuming luxury items, such as any drink besides water or any food beyond vegetables & fruits - you reduce all of your saving throws by -1. If you indulge you lose this ability and cannot gain it again until you have lived simply for at least one month.

Sociability - A simple & straightforward ability - the Sociable character is good at communication & gets along well with others. Sociable characters have one of their influence dice improved by one step every time they acquire this power.

Song - Rhythm, Harmony, Melody, & Dissonance – the Magic of Song provides an array of benefits to those who are lost within the music. Song magic is best used by a number of people simultaneously and the bigger the ensemble the better the magic.

Sorcery - Understanding magic is typically beyond the ability of even magicians. Magic being idiomatic & unique to all its practitioners. Some can interpret what they

have witnessed and recognize the presence of magic - whether they understand it or not. Sorcery is useful for sensing the presence of magic as well as interpreting the function of magic that is infused in local objects - such as a magically enchanted item or series of magical circles. Finally, this skill grants the ability to interpret & transpose spells from other people's spellbooks. The difficulty of tests of this skill are based on the complexity of the magic present.

Spell - Spell saving throws help you to resist magical spells cast by NPCs & PCs.

Spellbook - The hallmark of a true Wizard, the spellbook is the constant companion and truest aid to those adventurers who wish to transcend mere dabbling and become a proper Wizard, one who wields power and scorns the petty constraints of reality. The ability to use a spellbook requires the application of Xp. Each additional spellbook costs double the cost of the previous Spellbook. A Spellbook is always 100 pages and each spell occupies a number of pages equal to its level of complexity. You can certainly fill up an entire spellbook when you acquire this ability in a fit of mystical creation. Any amount of spells may be inscribed in any number of books, and a competent magician is likely to travel with a small library – as a spell requires a number of pages of spellbook interior equal to its level. A found spellbook can be attuned by a character, and this requires the same Xp tax that would be paid for creating a new Spellbook from scratch. The preparation of spells is a different matter, and requires that a different Xp tax be paid.

Starting HP - This is the calculation used for determining your character's Hit Points at the start of the game. Hit Points are a number representing how many attacks your character can successfully avoid before being hurt. Attacks that surpass your AC deal damage - once that damage exceeds your HP - you have been attacked & must roll on the Defeated table.

Strength - Your character's strength or STR is a measure of their physical force & power, a measure of how muscular, but also how capable of focusing that muscle the character is.

Survival - Characters who can survive are skilled at enduring a specific environment. PCs who gain this ability can choose a hostile environment - such as underground, deserts, glaciers & the ocean floor or the dark forest - in this environment the PCs Skill checks are reduced in difficulty by one die type. A character can take this ability multiple times for different environments. A PC may sacrifice this ability while in the environment specified when taking this ability in order to stave off imminent death. By sacrificing this ability and losing any Xp committed to it - the Character trades their affinity for the land for a brief respite from death - in exchange forever losing their nerve and affinity for the place where they nearly died.

Theurgy - The will of gods as well as their very presence can be discerned by those who've been chosen by a deity themselves. Knowing which gods & interdimensional forces are at work on the scene is a frightening prospect - observing well that you are the plaything of an unknowable higher intellect is a horrifying prospect, nevertheless - skill at theurgy can help you to boldly face such cosmic terror with some modicum of hope. You can use this skill to determine the presence or absence of a god or demonic or elemental force within the world. You can also use it to interpret these presences successfully - effectively diagnosing their cause and potential means of dismissing them.

Tinkering - The ability to craft gimmicks & wonders which are mainly technical in nature. The various tricks you're capable of executing are listed the Game of the North rulebook

Traceless Passing - An uncanny, preternatural ability to go undetected through terrain. Characters with this ability cannot be tracked by any means short of powerful magic. They leave no scent, no footprints & no sign of their passing.

Traveler - The hobo's knack for meandering and the socialite's skill at packing - Traveler is a transectional ability that grants its possessor great skill when traversing the earth. When you gain this ability your movement speed increases by 2 and your overland speed improves by 1 hex in all terrain types. You may take additional ranks in this ability - each further purchase grants a specific travel power. **Luggage** - You are gifted at packing away everything you could need. Your encumbrance capacity increases by 4 and you may roll up 4 new items instantly. **Equestrian** - You are especially skilled at riding. If you have any creature with the Mount tag - you can instantly promote the creature to a Professional follower - improving its abilities. The creature also gains a loyalty rating & so forth & can be considered when creating a party as an NPC member. **Wagoneer** - You can drive wagons & carts with the best of them - you can engage in all types of vehicular feats & you can create maneuvers for your character involving any of your conveyances. You can double the capacity of a wagon or cart in terms of passengers - and you can increase the cargo capacity by 25%. **Sailor** - You're good at sailing & operating other types of oceangoing boats as well. You can move a sailing ship in any direction & cause it to make better progress over the water - ships you operate have their speed increased by 1 hex. You can swim with half of your encumbrance without testing for drowning. **Portage** - Canoes & rafts & trailblazing journeys into uncharted interiors is your bailiwick. If you have help carrying it - a canoe or boat only counts for one point of encumbrance to all those who help move it. You can swim with up to half of your encumbrance and your rate of movement on rivers & lakes is improved by 1 hex when you operate a canoe. **Guide** - When you are in a party the overland speed of the party, normally equal to the rate of the slowest member of the group - changes to become equal to that of the fastest member of the group.

Trickery - Subversion & misdirection are reasonably innate to most people - and can be carried off with a bit of dexterity. Some, though, are exceptionally gifted with these techniques. They can use trickery to conceal objects, play pranks, confuse & swindle the unwary and so forth. This skill is used to conceal small objects for the purpose of tricks of sleight of hand. It is also useful for rigging up a location with traps, feigning the presence of magic and sabotaging equipment.

Vanguard - The vanguard is a peerless combatant, one who understands that a quick & certain offense is the best of all defenses. The Vanguard ability, when first taken grants a character a killer instinct which aids them in combat, helping them to act quickly in times of danger. When you gain this ability you can, once per session, choose to make a d20 DEX check. If you succeed at this check you gain the difference on the check as bonus points which you can apply to any of the following in any proportion - Initiative, To-Hit, Movement Speed. You can gain this ability a second time - doing so lowers the difficulty die to a d12.

Vocals - The ability to project your voice, to sing, to perform vocally & to imitate other sounds using your voice alone are all described

by the Vocals skill. You can use this ability to perform - earning a modest living as a singer or storyteller. You can also modulate your voice so that it projects to substantial distance and so that it seems to be the voice of another or the call or cry of a beast.

Wayfinding - Traversing the wilderness is a complex prospect if only because one person's wilderness is another person's highway. When you gain this ability you choose one type of terrain - Forest, Mountain, Desert, Jungle, Woods, Plains & etc.… Thereafter you move across this terrain type as if it were a clear road. You may take this ability multiple times, each time it applies to a different land form.

Weaponry - Skill with weapons sometimes goes deeper than pure combat instincts. When you gain this ability you choose a weapon - with that weapon you gain a bonus equal to your HD. This bonus can be divided up when you gain the ability between your attack bonus & damage that you deal with that particular type of weapon. You can take this ability multiple times - each time it relates to a different weapon. You can take it twice for the same weapon - which grants these bonuses to all weapons of that class e.g.: Swords or Bows. When you improve your HD the bonus is increased as well, you determine if it is applied to damage or to-hit when you raise your HD.

Wisdom - Wisdom or WIS is your character's intangible intuition regarding people & places - your ability to gather information quickly from passive deduction.

Wizardry - There are magical paths toward an approximation of power, and then, there is the true path of the Wizard. Wizardry is most specifically the ability to cast spells from a Spellbook. While a character can certainly have as many spells composed in their mystic library as they choose, the actual performance of the magic in the books requires a different kind of investment. A character must purchase the Wizardry ability in order to cast a spell. This indicates that the character has devoted some aspect of his or her spiritual self and interior efforts toward modifying and changing the universe, bending it to their sorcerous will. Each spell level useable per day by a character is purchased as a separate ability. When using Xp to purchase abilities you can purchase Wizardry over and over again – each time you gain one daily spell level. If you gain this ability 20 times, you can cast a 20th level spell each day - or you could cast 2 10th level spells each day or you could cast 10 2nd level spells each day. This reset happens after dawn or after you've had a full night of rest – whichever comes last.



Magic Systems -

The mechanics for creating prayers and glammers & wizard spells that appear in the Game of the North are largely unchanged. However there are new magical systems In The Ruins that your character may make use of.

Song Magic – encompasses a communal magic-making that involves others in performance.

Mentalism Magic – is a suite of abilities that come from deep concentration & awareness.

The Pantheon – of the Slatewind is a collection of 30 gods, known as the Tricadic Pantheon. Characters may become blessed by any of these gods & may wish to follow any of their faiths – they are each described on their own – the 30 gods of disparate cultures all brought together into a single, sometimes coherent pantheon. Individual gods & their notable prayers are listed sequentially.

Song Magic

Introduced here for the In The Ruins campaign, Song Magic is applicable to any Game of the North campaign.



The magic of music is a powerful force when it is performed by skilled players in sufficient numbers. Song allows characters to use the performance of music to evoke powerful emotions within the hearts of its listeners. These effects are substantially improved by the skill of the players – but unlike other magical practices – the magic of Song is easily improved by adding more and more participants to the music's performance.

Song is at its base a collaborative type of magic which affects all the players – though very good songs can be performed by an individual alone – or can be made to affect all who hear it or even only a few among those who listen. Songs are created much like other spells. Provided here are the details required to statistically compose a song useful to your PC

Rhythm: **Song magic that is based upon Rhythm is useful for setting paces & improving order, cooperation & sequence.**

- Base song – grants all participating +2 Initiative
- Duration – Sustained
  - +1 per additional +1 to Initiative
  - +4 to grant participants an additional action each turn.
  - +1 to increase movement speed by 1.
  - +2 for dance-attack – granting +2 To-Hit when the participant moves (dances) prior to attacking.
  - +2 to decrease the time required to accomplish a complex task by ¼.
  - +2 to perform this song alone – granting the benefits to listeners.
  - +4 to perform this song alone – granting benefits only to allied listeners.

Harmony: **Song magic that is based Harmony provokes sympathetic resonance that helps group to work better together**

- Base song – grants all participating +1 when cooperating on the same task.
- Duration – Sustained
  - +2 to grant increased damage die when attacking the same target.
  - +2 to improve AC by 2 to adjacent participants
  - +2 to improve Saves by 2 to adjacent participants
  - +2 to increase the cooperation bonus by an additional +1.
  - +2 to perform this song alone – granting the benefits to listeners.
  - +4 to perform this song alone – granting benefits only to allied listeners.

Melody: **Melodious magical songs grant individual participants benefits when their turn to perform arises.**

- Base song – Each round one participant, called the soloist, in the song gains a one point benefit to all rolls.
- Duration – Sustained
  - +2 to have the soloist heal d6 HP.
  - +4 to have the soloist radiate sonic energy – adding d6 damage to all attacks & dealing d6 to all who are adjacent to the soloist.
  - +4 for the soloist to make dance attacks – improving movement & To-Hit by 4 each.
  - +3 to increase the benefit to the soloist by an additional point
  - +3 to perform this song alone – granting the benefits to listeners. (soloist randomly determined)
  - +5 to perform this song alone – granting benefits only to allied listeners. (soloist assigned by you)

Dissonance: **Dissonant magical songs afflict penalties to those who hear them.**

- Base song – Those hearing must save vs. spells or suffer a 1 point penalty to all rolls.
- Duration – Sustained
  - +2 to exclude allies from the ill effects
  - +2 for the dissonant effect to afflict Fear.
  - +4 for the dissonance to inflict Madness.

- ✶ +4 for to add Sickness to the dissonant effect.
- ✶ +2 to perform this song alone – granting the benefits to listeners. (soloist randomly determined)
- ✶ +4 to perform this song alone – granting benefits only to allied listeners. (soloist assigned by you)

Creating a Song –

Songs contain at least one of the 4 elements of music listed above. Each of the 4 elements raises the level of the song by 1. Individual improvements under each of the elements can be applied beyond the base level. Applying all the modifications you wish to include then creates the Song, which you should name (and possibly learn to perform at the table- if you're capable). The level of the song determines how much Xp you'll need to expend in order to be able to perform it once per day. Songs Xp cost can be divided among any number of PCs - so that a level 20 Song could be purchased by 5 PCs – effectively reducing the cost to an individual to a level 4 song. When performing the song – it only works if all those who helped create it are present and capable of participating. A song lasts as long as the ensemble are physically capable of sustaining it. All participants must have access to & have acquired the Song ability. Each level of a song costs 200 Xp to perform. PCs can create any number of songs for free – but the ability to perform them and to activate the magical effects of the song requires the expenditure of this Xp. The songs a character or group of characters know is known as a Repertoire.

Sample Repertoire

Way of the Driving Drum for Two

Level 2 Song (400 Xp)
Rhythm & Harmony
This musical endeavor is played upon a drum and a maraca and is a driving, insistent pattern that aids the song's two players granting them +2 to their initiative scores while helping them to cooperate on the same task – granting them a +1 bonus each when they both attempt to attack the same target, resist the same effect & so on.

Cacophony of Terror for Woodwinds & Strings

Level 5 Song (1000 Xp)
Dissonance – exclude allies – inflict fear
This harrowing threnody is extremely disquieting to those who hear it. All who hear the song, beyond those allied to the 2-5 musicians playing, must save vs. spells or suffer a 1 point penalty to all their rolls while they can hear the song. Those failing this save are afflicted by fear and each is randomly affected by fear.

Magnum Opus #2 for Tenors

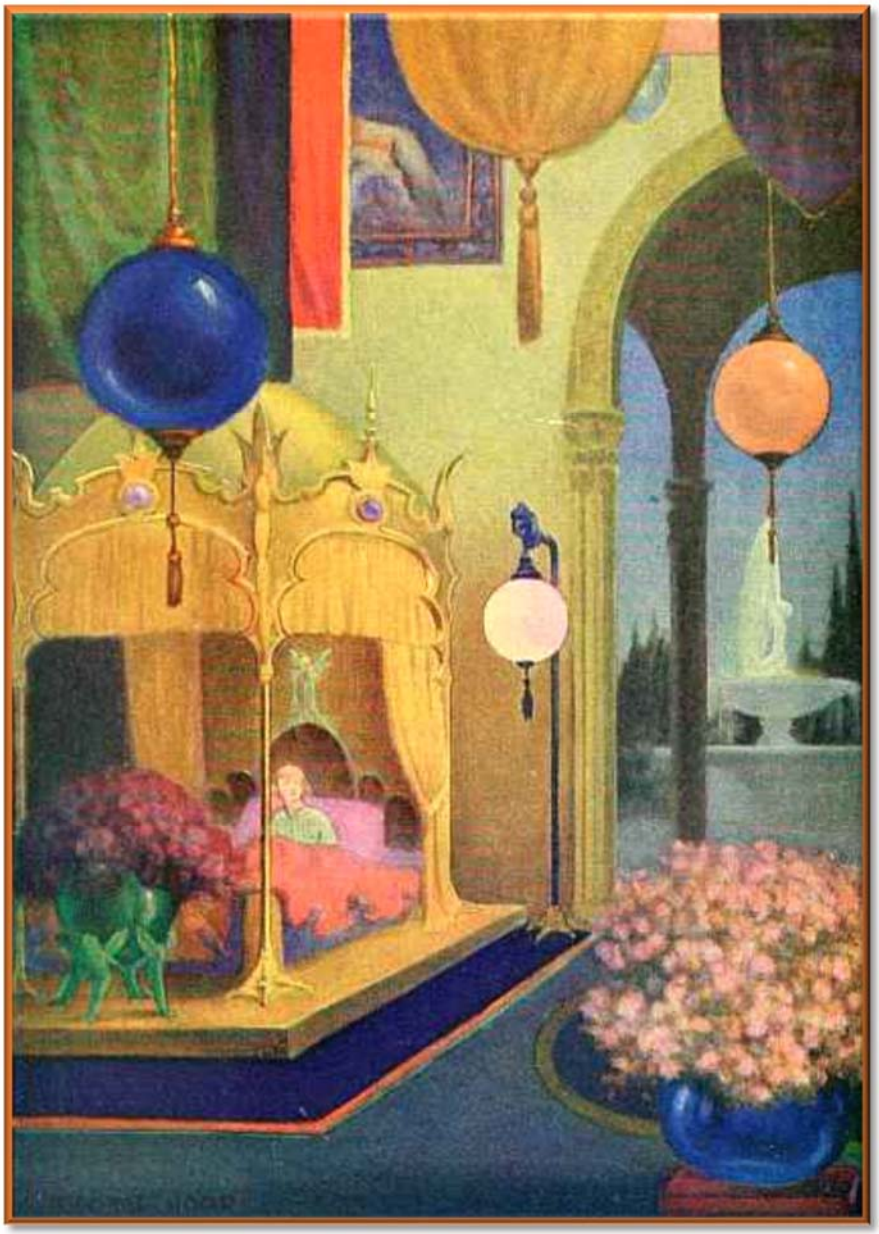
Level 14 Song (2,800 Xp)
Melody – Include only allies – Heal Soloist x2 – Soloist radiates energy
This moving aria is profoundly affecting to those who are acquainted with its powerful, emotional refrain. Each round that the song is sustained by the lone Singer – one member of the singer's party becomes a soloist – improving all their rolls by +1 for the round. They also vibrate, ecstatically as the energy of the song raises their spirits & neck hairs. The soloist heals 2d6 HP on their first turn & radiate energy which increases melee damage by d6 and causes all those adjacent to the soloist to take d6 damage. Each Round the singer selects a different ally to become the soloist.

March of the Victorious Few

Level 30 Song (6000 Xp)
Harmony – Increase AC, Increase Damage, Increase benefit, Improve Saves, Include all allies
Rhythm – Increase Speed, Increase Initiative bonus, Include all allies
This march – performed by no fewer than 5 participants playing brass & percussion is a powerful, inspirational song that has a strong effect on those who are patriotically identified with the March's subject. All allies who hear the march have their AC, Attack Modifiers & Saving Throws all improved by +2. Whenever all the listeners are attempting to accomplish the same thing – attacking the same target – for example- they all gain an added +2 benefit and their damage dice are improved by 1 size. Allies also have their Movement & Initiative increased by 6.

Mentalism

In the ruins introduces a new system for magic – Mentalism – which is the power of the awakened mind. This system is transferable to any Game of the North Campaign you might wish to create.



Mentalism is a multifarious suite of disciplines which have in common arduous & intense concentration. Through the force of this extremely personal practice a Mentalist is able to manifest phenomena by using their mind alone.

All the disciplines of mentalism are distinct and when a PC gains the Mentalism ability they must choose which of the disciplines they intend to use.

The disciplines have in common that they function based upon Stat Checks. When you gain one of the Mentalism disciplines you must choose one of the three mental attributes – CHA, INT or WIS – this stat will be tested when you wish to manifest a mentalism ability.

The disciplines of Mentalism all correspond to one or more of these attributes more closely than the others.

Meditation – WIS – Mentalist powers based upon achieving interior states of consciousness that transcend the bounds of reality.

Dreams – ANY – Mentalism unbound to reason or even conscious focus – Dreams are the work of the unconscious mind that have an effect in the real world.

Hypnosis – CHA – Mentalism effects based upon exerting control over others through subtle tricks and overt manipulations.

Psychometry – INT – Mentalism effects which have a foundation in the body and which are unleashed as protections when the body fails.

Each of these powers may be further divided into specific practices – each of the practices represents a different application of Mentalism – and each must be acquired through the expense of Xp – as if a new ability were being gained.

Meditation – the 5 types of meditation have their own increasing intensities. Each meditation has its own 4 layer track and each track must be acquired. Meditations work only during the period of time in which you are meditating and for an equal amount of time after your meditative practice has ceased. You can meditate for any amount of time – but you must comply with rules concerning the need for sleep & sustenance

- **The Root** – By accessing the Mind's Root you can regenerate 1 HP per minute **d12 WIS**
  - **The Shape** – Bodily intuition – you improve your saves by 1 point **d20 WIS**
    - **The Outside** – You can cure blindness or deafness that has been inflicted upon you. **2d12 WIS**
      - **The Inside** – You can remove fear or madness from yourself. **2d20 WIS**

- **The Base** - You can regenerate 1 HP per minute of another's wounds **d12 WIS**
  - **The Tail** – You create a phantasmal representation of yourself that you control **d20 WIS**
    - **The Aura** – You can create a suit of telekinetic armor – providing you with 19 AC **2d12 WIS**
      - **The Mask** – You create a region of invisibility around yourself **2d20 WIS**

- **The Furnace** – Charge yourself with energy so that your touch inflicts 1d6 damage **d12 WIS**
  - **The Fire** By organizing the three bases of the mind you can project your force – creating a weapon of energy which deals 1d6 per successful check, if a check fails, so does the effect **d20 WIS**
    - **The Glare** – You can focus your energy into your eyes – which exert a pushing force on what you look at. Targets save vs. Paralysis or are knocked down when you glare at them **2d12 WIS**
      - **The Ashes** – the ultimate in mentalism grants you the ability to move your consciousness out of your body and for it to move unhindered through the realm of lights **2d20 WIS**

- **The Pulse** – Modify your bodily density – you increase your AC by 2 **d12 WIS**
  - **The Vibration** – You gain an affinity to a type of energy – becoming resistant to 1 type of environmental damage – such as Fire or Electricity you take no damage from that force **d20 WIS**
    - **The Hush** – You create a region of impenetrable silence all around you. No one within can be heard. **2d12 WIS**
      - **The Resonance** – Your mind can inflame the minds of others. You inflict d6 damage to a target per successful check. **2d20 WIS**

- **The Breath** – Enrich your voice – improve your Parley dice by 1 step **d12 WIS**
  - **The Words** – You communicate beyond language by telepathically speaking **d20 WIS**
    - **The Voice** – You focus your energy into an arrow that arcs into the minds of others, implanting your thoughts into them and controlling their emotions **2d12 WIS**.
      - **The Scream** – Your voice is a piercing cry that harms others – dealing 1d4 damage to all on site per success **2d20 WIS**.

Dream – Dream mentalism focuses upon sending your consciousness out into other realities to gather information or even materials. The difficulty of these journeys sometimes determine the quality of what is gained but just as often the randomness & strangeness of the dreamworld intrudes – making the magic of dreams rather treacherous to the unskilled.



When you use dream magic you must roll 4 d20's and consult the Dreams Resolution Table. Your intention, when you attempt the dream is your **Lucid** component. If you roll well you may actively choose your **Lucid** effect. The **Lucid** effect comes to be within the dream itself.

Next are **Stat Checks** – this determines the number & difficulty of the checks you must make to achieve the Lucid result. Dreams use all three mental attributes when making stat checks.

If you succeed at all the **Stat Checks** – you get the Lucid Result and can stop rolling.

If you succeed at most of the **Stat Checks** but not all – you add a Dream roll to the experience – this is a result that occurs after the dream is over and will persist for half as long as the dream lasted.

If you fail at most or all of the **Stat Checks –** you add Nightmares to the experience. Nightmares have bad effects which persist after the dream has ended. Usually a Nightmare lasts for half as long as the dream itself.

Adding all the elements together gives your dream narrative & structure which you & your Referee can use to describe the larger event & the positive & negative results of your dream.

You can choose to expend the Xp that you spent to gain the Dreams school of Mentalism – each time you do so you are entitled to one re-roll of a d20 when you roll to create your dream.

Dreams Resolution Table

d20 Roll	Lucid	Stat Checks	Dreams	Nightmares
1	Referee Chooses 1	No Rolls	No Dreams	Referee Chooses 2
2	Learn a skill	1d12	Float uncontrollably	Tooth flakes away
3	Learn a language	1d20	Speak Gibberish	Foot Consumed
4	Find a good path	2 d12	Return with a descendant	Return with Enemy
5	See a lucky path	2 d20	Return with an ancestor	Return with Monster
6	Observe a group remotely	3 d12	Grow Slightly	Boils break out
7	Observe a person remotely	3 d20	Laugh uncontrollably	Clothes disappear
8	See a specific item	4 d12	Change skin color	Sink into the ground
9	See what is hidden	4 d20	Return with an item	Paralysis
10	See another's alignments	5 d12	Return with a weapon	Fall 20 feet
11	See another's thoughts	5 d20	Return with clothing	Hair falls out
12	Enter another's dreams	6 d12	Return with an animal	Roll Sickness
13	Control another's dreams	6 d20	Run uncontrollably	Roll Madness
14-18	PC chooses 2	7 d12	PC Chooses 1	PC Chooses 1
19-20	PC Chooses 3	7 d20	PC Chooses 2	No Nightmares

Psychometry – An especially clever mentalist, one who has mastered the power of will isn't bound by normal physical limits – rather, they can override their own physiology through hypnotic suggestion. Psychometry practitioners use INT checks to overcome their own shortcomings. Each of the powers of Psychometry is based around one of the 5 attributes besides Intelligence.



Each check of Psychometry takes place as a reaction to a failed roll. Because Psychometry relies upon the will – it cannot improve passive statistics like Saves or HP or AC, rather it mitigates those & other statistics failures. Psychometry doesn't act like a re-roll, rather, it compensates for the body's failures through other avenues.

Psychometry effects are usually quite brief and they manifest only as reactions – you cannot provoke yourself to develop the psychometric effect outside of the crisis which has overtaken you.

Upon gaining the Psychometry ability you have access to all of the reactive abilities listed here. You can gain the ability a second time – which reduces all the checks you are required to make to d12 INT checks.

Charisma + Psychometry = Protective Auras

- **Failed Parley Attempt –** Roll d20 INT test. If successful you radiate calm for as long as you concentrate and take no action – you cannot be directly attacked while radiating this calm.
- **Failed Morale Check –** Roll d20 INT test. On a successful test your movement speed increases by 10.

Constitution + Psychometry = Breath Control

- **Failed Death Save –** Roll d20 INT test. If you pass this test you can roll twice on the relevant condition table and take either result.
- **Failed Starvation Check** – A successful d20 INT test causes you to be able to be able to take sustenance from air & sunlight but requires five hours of uninterrupted meditation in sunlight.

Dexterity + Psychometry = Bullet Catch

- **Failed Ranged Attack –** Roll d20 INT test. On a successful check you are able to catch any arrows or other ranged weapons directed at you for the following round. Any ranged attacks made against you automatically miss and you retrieve the ammunition for yourself.
- **Failed Skill Check –** Make a d20 INT test. The test, if successful, allows you to levitate in air for 10 minutes. You can control your movement while levitating but only move at half your normal speed.

Intelligence + Psychometry = Concentration

- **Failed Psychometry Check –** When you fail a Psychometry check you may choose to fall into a deep concentration - roll a d20 INT check and if successful you receive 10 Xp per point of success as you contemplate your errors.

Strength + Psychometry = Telekinesis

- **Failed Melee Attack –** When you fail to hit with a melee attack you may roll a d20 INT test. On a successful check you cause your hands & any weapons they hold to vibrate with a furious energy. On your next successful attack – anyone you strike must save vs. devices or be thrown 10′ and knocked down.
- **Failed Strength Check –** This applies to a failure to lift something heavy, move something large or to break something rigid. When such a check fails roll a d20 INT test – if you succeed at this check you spontaneously develop a telekinetic field which can manipulate tremendously heavy objects. Your field persists for 1 minute per point by which you pass the INT check and it can be used to lift & break any object without requiring a stat check. You cannot use this power to make direct attacks, however.

Wisdom + Psychometry = Locational Awareness

- **Failed Search Roll –** When you fail a roll using your Search Die – you can make a d20 INT check. On a successful check you become capable of seeing in total darkness & of hearing the faintest noise. Your senses are highly attuned & you can automatically detect all living creatures within 100 yards of yourself.
- **Failed Spell Save –** When you fail a saving throw vs. Spells – assuming you survive, you can make a d20 INT check. If you succeed at this check you have internalized the magic and may throw it back on your next action. The one who cast the spell must resist the same spell.

Hypnosis – the art of manipulation is the mentalist's most obvious trick – their most infamous tactic.

Hypnosis is the imposition of the Mentalist's will upon others. It utilizes all the relevant techniques of misdirection, sleight of hand, animal magnetism & mesmerism. Hypnosis places subjects into trance states under which they are susceptible to all types of suggestion – even being prompted to perform supernatural feats & suicidal tasks. Hypnosis requires a Charisma check in order to be carried off – it is made as part of a social interaction with a target & so the relationship between the Hypnotized subject and the Hypnotist determines what the outcome might be.

When you attempt Hypnosis upon a subject their Disposition is the salient element which determines what is likely to happen when they undergo hypnosis successfully. Failed Hypnosis checks are likely to make the situation much worse than it already is – but these risks are mitigated by the benefits.

Hostile targets who aren't attacking will begin attacking if Hypnosis fails – and otherwise well-disposed targets will have their opinion of the Hypnotist fall, sometimes sharply should the Hypnotist try and fail to manipulate them.

Hypnosis Resolution Table

Disposition	Fail the d20 CHA check	Succeed by 5 or less	Succeed by more than 5	Succeed by more than 10
Wrathful	They attack/ do not stop attacking	Flee for 1 turn	Flee for 1 Round	Flee
Hateful	They attack/ do not stop attacking	Defend for 1 turn	Defend for 1 Round	Flee
Malicious	They attack/ do not stop attacking	Does not act for 1 turn	Does not act for 1 Round	Ceases Attacking
Mistrustful	They become Hateful	Sleeps 1 Round	Sleeps 1 Minute	Sleeps for the Scene
Suspicious	They become Hateful	Sleeps 1 Minute	Sleeps for the Scene	Sleeps until Awakened
Indifferent	They become Malicious	Trance for 1 Minute	Trance for the Scene	Trance until Awakened
Nonplussed	They become Malicious	Trance for the Scene	Trance until Awakened	Trance until You Awaken Them
Neutral	They become Mistrustful	Compliant for 1 Minute	Compliant for the Scene	Compliant until Awakened
Curious	They become Nonplussed	Compliant for the Scene	Complaint until Awakened	Compliant until You Awaken Them
Congenial	They Become Neutral	Obedient for 1 turn	Obedient for 1 Round	Obedient for the Scene
Friendly	They become Congenial	Obedient for 1 Minute	Obedient for the Scene	Obedient until Awakened
Allied	They become Friendly	Obedient for the Scene	Obedient Until Awakened	Obedient until You Awaken Them
Devoted	They become Allied	Mystified for 1 Minute	Mystified for the Scene	Mystified until Awakened
Loving	They become Devoted	Mystified for the Scene	Mystified until Awakened	Mystified until You Awaken Them
Trusting	They become Loving	Entrhalled for 1 Minute	Enthralled for the Scene	Enthralled until Awakened

Successful Checks of Hypnosis using d20 CHA tests have a variety of results – the quality of the success has a bearing on the effects as does the target's Disposition. All of the tests have three rates – success by 5 or less, success by more than 5 and success by more than 10. This is the difference between the roll of the d20 and your CHA check – a failed check provokes the results in the failed column.

Targets who **Flee** run away from the Hypnotist as best they are able.
Targets who **Defend** improve their ACs against attack but will not attack in turn.
Those who **Do Not Act** do just that – standing still & silent.
Sleep indicates that the target falls into an entranced sleep – they fall to the ground unconscious.



A **Trance** indicates that the target will speak what they are commanded to say – "bark like a dog" & "Tell us where the treasure is." They tell the truth if they know it but will not act beyond speaking.

Compliant targets obey simple verbal commands – such as Stand, Sit, Disarm or Jump.

Obedient targets are completely obedient. They will attack and defend on the Hypnotist's behalf & they will do anything they are normally physically capable of doing – even suicidal actions.

Mystified subjects of your Hypnosis can accomplish supernatural feats – such subjects will obey commands you give to them even if they would not normally be physically capable of doing so – "Fly around the room" & "breathe fire" are both examples of a Mystified subject's abilities. Once Mystified a subject will follow your every command – but only within your presence – moving far beyond your influence causes the mystification to fail – possibly catastrophically. Mystification is powerful & some of your requests may be altered by Referee Fiat. In most cases you should try to limit your Mystified target's antics to those actions which are replicable using the existing magical spells & abilities.

Enthralled hypnosis victims are completely obedient, much like Mystified subjects except that their obedience is unrestricted by distance & may grant them immunity to things such as the passage of time or exposure to elements. Commands like "Wait here until I return in three years," will certainly work – and subjects to the hypnosis may resist aging & hunger while they wait – depending on how thoroughly enthralled they become.

You can always choose to command a hypnotized subject to follow the instructions of a lower rank of hypnosis. You can command a Compliant subject to fall to sleep or an Obedient subject to go into a trance.

Hypnosis has a duration based upon a set amount of time in rounds or minutes – based upon the subject's unwillingness to actually be hypnotized and their successful escape from your control. In some cases though, hypnosis has a **Scene** based duration, in which case it persists until the scene changes or the session ends. If the duration indicated is **Awakened** – the subject will no longer be hypnotized if they are awakened – this happens by the usual means of achieving wakefulness. In some cases they remain hypnotized **Until Awakened by You**. In these dramatic instances no amount of external stimulus will rouse the victim of your powers short of you simply snapping your fingers and commanding them to wakefulness. Once you do so, the hypnosis ends.

You may wish to use Hypnosis on other PCs – and yet there is a miraculous strangeness about them that prevents them from becoming hypnotized. Hypnosis works exclusively on humanoid NPCs. Monsters and animals may be affected by Hypnosis – but they are entitled to saving throws to resist the power.

The Gods of the Slatewind Valley

As a polyglot region of mixing cultures & races the Slatewind offers a great array of religious callings & followings. In the past these religions were representative of single cultural groups & were often at odds & sometimes in open conflict. This period of troubled colonization & tribal animosity subsided as the city of Elan became dominant & its council of religionists formulated the syncretic pantheon of all gods, unifying all worship into the ***Tricadic Church of Celestial Union***. This amalgamation of 30 gods & 8 religions has not been universally accepted & has approached outright destruction more than once. It persists, however, and among the faithful of these gods it is supposed that they have allowed the development & advancement of this pantheon.

In recent memory the church was struck a near fatal blow when, during the last war, the shrines of Elan were toppled & the city almost destroyed. That conflict erupted for a variety of reasons but was intensified by religious feeling & religious failing. Reconsolidation of the Tricadic church is the present order of the day for the valley's faith communities.

Except when it isn't. In opposition to the Tricadic Church there are numerous ***Singlist*** cults. The Singlists venerate their deity above all others & they regard the Tricadic Church as innately heretical. In many cases the Singlists are harmless – small groups of people who are really only interested in venerating their own god – but in other instances their influence is a danger to the emerging peace of the valley – because they wish to foment insurrection against the Tricadic church & to cleanse the valley of the worship of other gods.

The Slatewind Valley is in flux, and change is a charging rider that chases at everyone's' heels. Your characters role in the coming events is entirely in your hands – you may choose to be a Singlist underminer or a Tricadic hopeful. You can forgo a religious calling altogether if you prefer – but the pantheon of 30 gods exists – whether you like it or not & their power is real & substantial in the world.

In the section that follows the gods are discussed individually – with a brief description & a pair of prayers unique to them. As well, you will find each god's feature of patronage. This is an ability that a PC may gain when their service to the god has be recognized by the deity itself – it is a reward for faith, devotion & deeds. A PC very rarely gains the patronage of a single god & having the patronage of more than one is a tremendous feat demonstrating supernatural levels of devotion.

Ailise – Queen of Spite – the wrathful goddess of cruelty, of hate & contempt for all things. Other goddesses serve her, her whips & lashes – her many angels of destruction. Ailise isn't called upon lightly & her clergy is a very small, very dedicated contingent of unspeakable people. Ailise is called upon to do harm to enemies, to curse their fields, break their hearts & sicken their children. Any terrible thing that anyone wishes lies deep in the realm of Ailise who governs all Malice.

Ailise is a ***Saayang*** god & appears in the form of a painted & tattooed woman, covered in marks & with great & horrific fangs that drip blood. She is neither beautiful nor ugly, she is a ferocious divinity & her eyes burn with unthinkable hate.

Ailise is worshipped in many places. The most rudimentary form of worship is to fold up a piece of paper with the name of one's enemy upon it and to stuff the paper into a crack in the floor of one's own house. In the city of ***Sword of the West*** her priesthood has their temple – which has many cracked columns filled with prayers of murder.



Feature of Patronage – The Adversary – People don't worship Ailise without having an enemy. The adversary of an Ailise Worshipper is marked & has a foreboding sense – portents & prophecies around these people reveal the hate of Ailise's worshipper. Adversaries know they are hated & possibly hunted & they have their HP total reduced by d4 (to a minimum of 1) as their nerve is badly shaken by the realization that someone, somewhere wishes them dead.

Supplication of Ailise (Level 4 Prayer) – Ailise is composed of hate & thrives on contempt. Her favorite supplication involves a long litany of curses spoken over images & possessions of one's enemies which are torn apart by hand. This defacing of the adversary must be performed over the course of an evening. On any night that the Black Moon is up this supplication becomes a level 5 Prayer, and if the supplicant brings a portion of the adversary's body – hair or fingernails or blood – each object increases the level of the supplication by 1. The supplication always takes an entire night to perform.

Angel of Spite (Level 2 Prayer) – Ailise sends one of her angels to harass & do harm to the supplicant's foes. When the prayer is spoken the worshipper's next attack against their foe becomes fiercer & has the die-type increased by 1 size per HD of the recipient of the spell.

Amrenweets – Mother of People – Amrenweets is the goddess-mother figure who has created all people, she is love & abiding compassion. Forgiving & eternally patient she weeps for all her children. Amrenweets is worshipped in many households but she has few temples, devotion to her is personal and familial. Amrenweets is called upon to secure family bonds, bands of friendship & the unity of lovers. While other gods secure these matters in public, Amrenweets is the private protector of these matters. She is called upon in seclusion & some consider it shameful to worship her in the open.

Amrenweets is a ***Ffioshr*** goddess, in their mythos she bore all the people of the world herself & she is viewed in personification as the land itself & the grass specifically. Numerous depictions of Amrenweets exist in the talismans & amulets of these folk – but there is not much of a unitary depiction, she is commonly represented as the worshipper's own mother.

Amrenweets is often called the mother lion - protector of her children & the lioness is important to her faith though it isn't considered an actual representation – more of an omen.



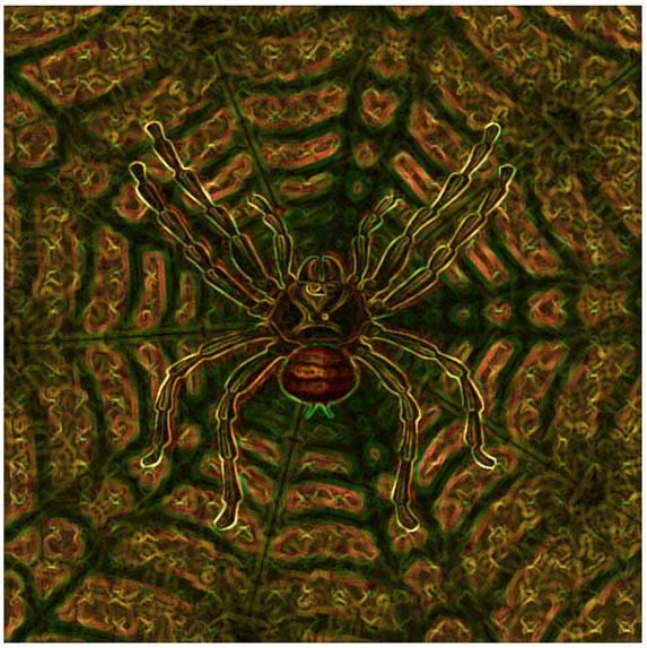
Feature of Patronage – The Blessing – Amrenweets is the mother of all things, she blesses her special devotees with confidence & greater strength & when those sensations flourish in one's heart they gain the benefit of greater wellbeing. Those worshippers with Amrenweets as their patroness gain an additional HP for every HD they possess.

Supplication of Amrenweets (Level 8 Prayer) – This is a 4-day supplication that the worshipper of Amrenweets carries out within their home. This supplication requires the presence of Amrenweet's symbols- the hearth, the housecat & the child. At the end of this supplication – which takes the form of an extended period of housecleaning & cooking the worshipper has gained Amrenweets' pleasure & may perform the goddess' rites.

Blessing of Amrenweets (level 2 Prayer) – Amrenweets' worshipper calls upon the goddess to provide cleansing & health. Those who share in this prayer by holding hands & sharing food or at least drink all regain 2HD worth of regenerated HP & they may remove one condition that applies to them.

Bick Buck – The Taker – the contemptuous *Goblin* god Bick Buck laughs at help & takes without asking. Expecting everything while offering nothing is Bick Buck's way & he appears as a plump spider – who bites & leaves the carcasses of his prey scattered in the home. As with other fairy gods Bick Buck is a mythic & real presence- it inhabits all house spiders & lacks any coherence as a real being. *Goblins*, when they worship Bick Buck do so by snatching things from others when they are offered and shouting the god's name in place of presenting gratitude.

Bick Buck's temple at *Able* is a substantial affair, a wooded grove with a great stupa of wood all carved with images of the spider. Webs grow over it & cover the stupa like veils and blankets while in the midst of it all lives Bick Buck's fairy avatar – a spider of immense size with the leering face of a that spits out yet more spiders from its claw-filled mouth. Or so it is reported, Bick Buck is not commonly seen – instead it appears as missing coins & stolen objects – many of which appear at its shrine. Sometimes, when someone has lost something of importance they may seek it out at the temple of Bick Buck.



Feature of Patronage – The Expectation – The few devout of Bick Buck experience the peculiar blessing of the god as a bit of advantageous trickery. When one is blessed by the god of taking they have their Pick Pockets skill improved by 2 & when they transact business of any kind they always find themselves just a bit ahead – anytime a worshipper of Bick Buck buys anything they decrease the price of the object by 1 SP per HD they have as they bully & snatch & steal their way through life.

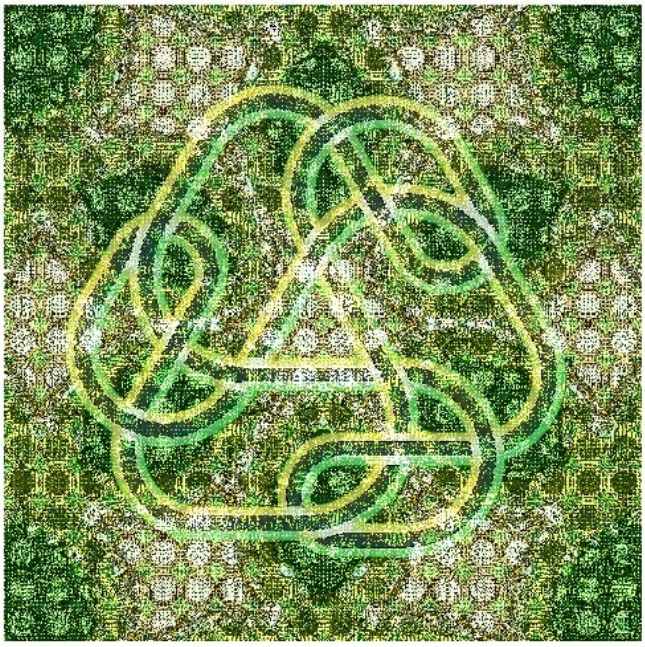
Supplication of Bick Buck (Level 3) Bick Buck is notoriously unwilling to bless his followers but he will if they give to him. This supplication requires an offering of 10 SP which is cast into the woods over one's shoulder. The SP must have been given to the one praying or they must have been stolen from others – they cannot have been earned in any way. After this the one praying must shout "Bick Buck" and glare angrily at everyone nearby while holding out their hand demanding payment.

Bick Buck's Stolen Reward (Level 1) – The worshipper of Bick Buck causes up to 3 of their HD to be regenerated. This spell can't be cast on others.

Chuu Milik – Happiest Worker – Chuu Milik is the *Quet* god of industriousness, productivity & striving. It is a god of efforts & the pursuit of one's deepest drives. Some deities will offer aid in the pursuit of one's efforts – but Chuu Milik offers a passion, the consuming fire within that gives the drive to accomplish. Chuu Milik fills hearts with desire. It is a god of passions & the stirring of the heart & the confusion of the mind. Often Chuu Milik will come upon the mind of its followers as a driving impulse that cannot be shaken. This gives them great drive & desire, but Chuu Milik is single-minded and favors the single-minded as well.

Devotion to Chuu Milik is never a permanent affair & Chuu Milik bears no grudge against those who turn from its passion to engage in ease, so long as they do not give up before their great work is finished.

The Happiest Worker has a temple at *Shield*. A sophisticated affair it is built, like other *Quet* temples, of many small things – but its construction is among the most elaborate. It rises like a miracle & it's winding interior corridors are galleries of the arts & works of Chuu Milik's favored.



Feature of Patronage - The Great Work – Chuu Milik wishes that its servants would complete the great work of their hearts, it burns within them passionately. When one gains the patronage of Chuu Milik they improve their Composition & Artisan skills by 3 each.

Supplication of Chuu Milik (Level 6) After 2 days and nights spent crafting something of significant quality Chuu Milik hears its servants. The god visits its power upon those who devote themselves to their work & its own passion is drawn to those who's passions are similarly lit.

Chuu Milik's Pure Solitude (Level 6) The follower of Chuu Milik will often pray that their efforts are not disturbed by distractions. When the worshipper says this prayer to Chuu Milik the god grants the benefit of protection form such irritants. The prayer drives out people of 6 or fewer HD. All those in the area of the worshipper's workplace feel compelled to leave & those that do not suffer damage while they remain in the place as the loud heartbeat of the infuriated Chuu Milik begins to deafen them.

Drum – The Forever Rhythm – Dwarves sometimes worship this sound – the beating of a heart & the rhythm that dwells within – it is a sound that the Dwarves can hear – a low sound that is felt & experienced through the feet, the drum of the earth. This sound is persistent & eternal. The Dwarves that worship it (and the other beings as well) experience the presence of this deity as a deep & distant sound, not a personified force or even a consciousness so much as an overwhelmingly powerful natural phenomenon. Drum is the resolute & beating heart of all things, the rhythm in the elements that causes matter to exist, the cadence of persistence.

Drum is not so much worshipped as observed. Those who follow Drum hear it most clearly at Elan & that is where the cult of Drum resides – in the form of a perennial circle of drummers who gather upon the city's low hilltops to beat out the long, long rhythm. Sometimes these episodes go on for many consecutive days, sometimes they are brief affairs and only sparsely attended.



Feature of Patronage – Permanence – The resilient refusal to follow along gives those who follow drum the ability to stand & endure. While Under Drum's patronage a character who does not move has their AC increased by 2 & they are allowed two rolls on any check that would normally cause them to move.

Supplication of Drum (Level 5) – The drum's persistent droning carries over the land as the supplicant beats the unheard rhythm. This prayer of devotion goes on for the better part of a day after which time the enduring sound of the drum's cadence resides in the supplicant's heart.

Benediction of Drum (Level 1) – This prayer is pattered out on a drum or on the palm of one's hand – a quick little invocation that grants for 1 minute a benefit of protection & defiance. While under the invocation the Invoker improves their Saves by an amount equal to their HD the next time they must roll any saving throw.

Echo – The Worry after the Shout – Dwarves in the Slatewind Valley especially revere the echoes of the winds which they hear as the long, low & plaintive moan of all the people of the valley conspiring and calling out – those who live upon the surface all muttering their contemptuous & wicked plans. To the Dwarves the Echo speaks of thieves & traitors & they listen to this ruinous noise that portends the end of their households. Many others are able to hear the voices of betrayal & suspicion in the wind of the valley. The Echo reverberates in perpetuity, it is the high & distant whine that carries over wind.

Echo is experienced, not worshipped. Dwarves have no gods but they regard the sounds that the world makes as having an eternal, immutable soul. While Drum is the sound of the deep earth that gives Dwarves heart, the Echo is the sound of the wind that snatches the spirit & the hopes from an ***Dwarf***.



The center of the cult of Echo is at ***Red Banks*** – not because it is loudest there, but because it is the most reliably heard there. The place of Echo in ***Red Banks*** is at the river's edge, where the ominous flow of water along the canyon edge carries a cold wind & a truer sound. The Dwarves who listen for Echo's warnings mill about in silence, staring long & thoughtfully at their feet while they listen to the sound of their downfall.

Feature of Patronage – Preparedness – Being aware of enemies & adversaries long before they strike is important. When Echo is your patron you increase your Initiative by two die sizes. You must also reduce both of your social dice by a similar amount.

Supplication of Echo (Level 2)– You must perform this supplication every day for at least 2 hours. If you fail to perform the supplication, you must perform it for 2 days consecutively for no benefit to be back into proper form. This prayer is more of a troubled, fearful glance over the shoulder, it is a dawning, unavoidable sense of anxiety that grips you for the two-hour duration.

Benediction of Echo (Level 2) – The next time you are attacked your AC is increased by an amount equal to your HD. The fruition of your anxious discomfort, you become far more evasive while you hear the whispering echoes behind you.

Invocation of Echo (Level 2) – You can force 2 HD worth of *spirits* to be driven away if they fail their save vs. spells.

Flute – The Joyful Melody of Friendship – While the Drum is the sound of the earth and echo the sound of the wind – Flute is music of water and of blood which flows within. Dwarves who are sensitive to the sounds of these things, the metaphysical synesthesia that conflates a particular sound with a particular spirit & emotion – regard Flute as the kindest of the powers that exist in the world. The rain falls, the river flows & the music of voices is lit by vitality from within.

Like the other dwarven divinities Flute is a spirit without a consciousness, a *feeling* rather than a person. Nevertheless, it is a powerful feeling & one that the Dwarves of Slatewind do not take lightly. Hearing this music, the flue in the speech of another, in the tone of their voice & the cadence of their footsteps – this marks a friend to Dwarves who can hear it. The playful music of Flute is melodic & benign it fills with ease the hears of those who seek & observe it.



Flute's cult lies at ***Bitter*** – not because the river or the rain flow well there, but because the place is so full of dwarves and the sound of them speaking in their own language all together is like a song heard once by all the dwarves, an old, good, song. The Cult of flute does play flute – in particular they play on stone-carved pipes of numerous sizes, some bigger than a person – these pipes are played at the edge of the Old Woman Cavern's mouth that lies in the heart of ***Bitter***.

Feature of Patronage – Melodic Friendship - When Flute is your patron you needn't suffer doubt in your allies. Those who are your true friends may save you from mortal danger. Your friends can prove their trustworthiness by accepting HP damage dealt to you themselves.

Supplication of Flute (Level 3) – You play your flute & practice for a time, listening & joining into the conversations & jokes around you. Afterward you feel a closer bond with your friends.

Invocation of Flute (Level 3) – Your flute playing among friends is heartening & causes up to 3HD of healing to occur – you split the value of this healing up among your allies as you see fit.

Gaalist – The King of Hungers – Gaalist the hungry god who craves for ever more & needs to be forever fed with wealth & sweets & strong drink. A god of excess & of hoarding & lust, Gaalist is intermittently called upon by those who seek to gain something in business or in other transactions. Gaalist is sought out & worshipped whenever one hopes to receive more than their share & whenever one seeks to have a bountiful excess. Worshippers of the ***Saayang*** gods often say a prayer to Gaalist before they eat, in the hope that they'll have their bellies filled & their thirsts slaked by what provender lies available. Sometimes feasts are called in honor of Gaalist – and all the food produced for such events is burned up in the presence of the god who hungers for that and more.

Gaalist is worshipped in temples & in secret as well. The major center of his faith is linked to banking, lending & usury – all practices that the god condones & even demands. Hoarding wealth is an act which pleases Gaalist and any amount is sufficient. Those who have treasure & seek to keep it hidden will pray to Gaalist that their loot remains untouched.



Feature of Patronage – Deep Hunger – When Gaalist is your patron you require double the food & drink you'd normally require, you are filled with an aggressive hunger & a strong desire to *have* things. You increase your To-Hit by +2 at all times while you have the deep hunger.

Supplication of Gaalist (Level 3) – In your finest clothes & best accoutrements you spend a few hours peacocking around the neighborhood, showing off your superiority to others.

Benediction of Gaalist (Level 3) – Your social tests are all improved by an amount equal to your HD for the length of a scene so long as you're wearing your finery & elegant accoutrements.

Habradan – The Son of the Grass – Habradan is the ***Plioshr*** god of rams, goats & sheep, the herd animals that the ***Plioshr*** traditionally keep & follow. Habradan appears often enough in the form of the Ram, the leader of the herd & most responsible for the wellbeing of the others. The Ram is expected to make sacrifice, to fight & die to protect the rest of the herd & this is a well understood aspect of the Habradan cult. Part of that responsibility is the leading of the other goats & sheep to slaughter. Habradan is a mourning god – one who experiences the sacrifice of others but sacrifices himself in pursuit of the sustenance of the herd's generations.

Habradan is inextricably linked to shepherding & agriculture generally. Sacrifices to Habradan are performed as part of butchery – and the humane & hygienic practice of the ***Plioshr*** butchers at the ***Sword of the West*** are both cult ritual & practical observance.



Habradan's cult is disposed toward protection – of the many by the few – they consider this the responsibility of sons – and among the ***Plioshr*** & those in their orbit sons are dedicated to this god at the age of majority – when they must take the knife & kill the strong rams among their herd.

Feature of Patronage – Eldest Brother – When you receive the patronage of Habradan you choose a group of people, the number of whom don't exceed your HD. These people may use one of your statistics instead of their own to calculate one benefit. They all receive the same benefit – e.g.: All your charges may use your CON bonus to HP in place of their own. This effect ends for everyone if anyone leaves the group either voluntarily or involuntarily.

Supplication of Habradan (Level 6)- This supplication takes the form of sacred butchery of some of your herd animals. The supplication requires a full day of effort and you must have spent the prior day fasting.

Invocation of Habradan (Level 6) – The invocation is applied to the meat that you've butchered in the supplication. When the meat is consumed by anyone they remove one status condition & recover 2d6 HP.

Hoon – The Low God of Sweetness – Hoon is one of the low caste gods of the ***Brizai*** people, it is a minor deity and considered pitiful but which earns its place by offering good things. Hoon is seen sometimes as a child, sometimes as a bee & sometimes as a small animal, slaughtered for its flesh. It is the tender god of kindness and it offers succor to those at the base of ***Brizai***an life – the low caste & outcaste. Hoon is depicted often as the kindly hand of the master, the beneficent presence that all creatures crave – a lord with a soft temperament.

Hoon's cult & worship is focused in the city of ***Saedu***, where the great temple of Hoon is tucked away in the midst of the greater temples to more severe gods.

Those who practice the faith of Hoon often do so in order to receive affection that they would otherwise be denied. Hoon is patron to the downtrodden, the disfigured & the unlovable.



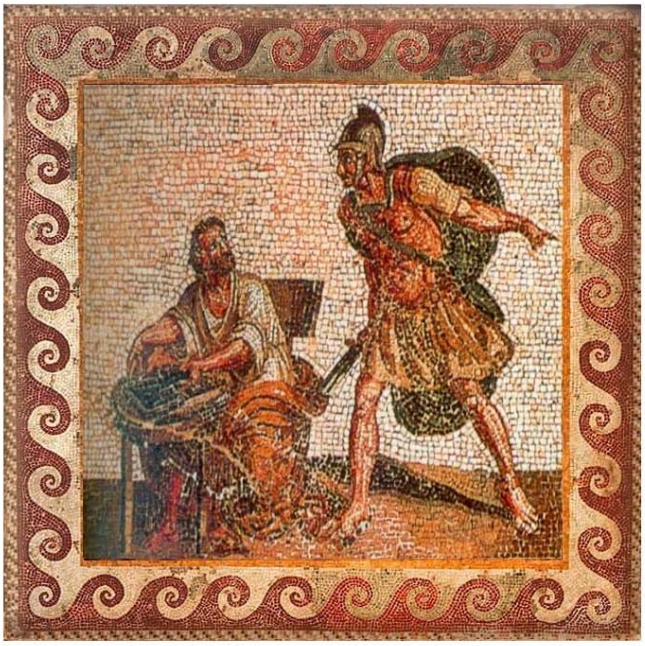
Feature of Patronage – Untouchable Blessing - You cannot gain this benefit if you don't have at least two statistics at less than 8 and you cannot qualify if you have any statistics higher than 15. Those who qualify for the patronage of Hoon receive the god's benign blessing. You are immune to the Defeated status condition, but you cannot gain the Victorious Status condition either.

Supplication of Hoon (Level 10) – You must be enduring significant privation. This supplication requires that you have neither eaten or slept or had anything to drink for 3 days. On the 4th day you may plead with Hoon for an entire day to receive its succor. (Note that you will have had to make survival based statistics checks by this point).

Benediction of Hoon (Level 1) – Hoon helps you to endure. You gain a blessing to your HP – which temporarily increases your HP total by an amount equal to your character's HD. These HP are removed completely even if the damage is not equal to the amount of bonus HP you receive from the Benediction whenever you take damage and these HP cannot be regained through healing.

Hrururush – The Vicious Face, the Ravager that flays alive the world – one of the triune faces of the ***Khin*** god, Hrururush is the god of torments & cruelty who exists purely to punish the world for its iniquity. Far from being a patron of divine guidance Hrururush is purely hostile to all living things. When the god wears this face it flays the skin off of the living and forces it to be eaten by the dying, bringing about monsters, pain & a sighing,, wretched horror.

There's very little to recommend Hrururush worship, and yet the triune god of the ***Khin*** is worshipped with an intensity & devotion that the rest of the pantheon lacks entirely. No casual worshippers of Hrururush are allowed at this face's temples. In all the cities & places of the ***Khin*** the god Hrururush is represented – a force of terrible destruction which must be worshipped to be appeased – which must be thwarted through devotion.



In the city of ***Saedu*** the temple of Hrururush is the largest of the many temples, and it is a place of public torture, opulent depravity & human sacrifice. It is barely tolerated by the followers of other gods & only because the ***Khin***ite worshippers of Hrururush are numerous & fanatical.

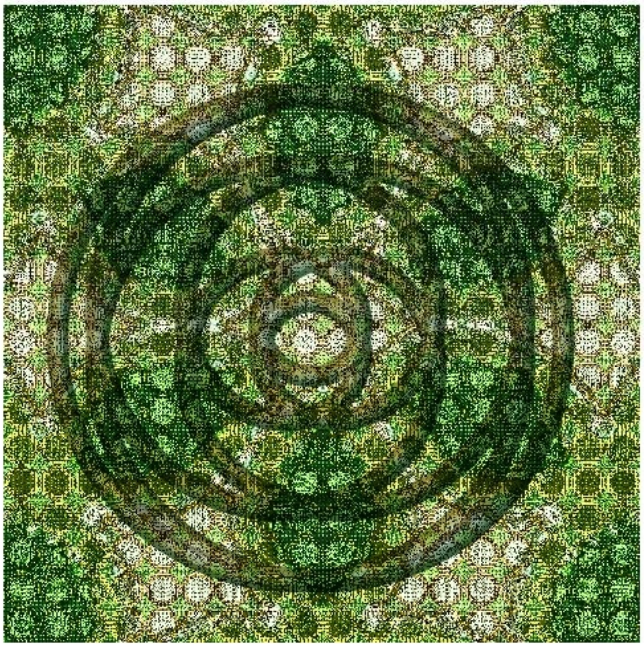
Feature of Patronage – Intensified Cruelty – You cannot gain this blessing if you have never killed anyone in anger. Hrururush fills you with violent passions & you increase the damage you deal on all attacks by 1 die-size. You can increase this temporarily by sacrificing your own HP at the rate of 1 greater die size per 5 HP sacrificed. This increased benefit only applies to your next attack & if it misses you take the damage but for no benefit.

Supplicaiton of Hrururush (Level1) – Hrururush is not an amenable god & it dislikes listening to the groveling of its minions. You must spend one hour each day doing just that, however, if you wish to gain Hrururush' favor. If you skip a day you must atone by performing this supplication the following day for no benefit. Prayers to Hrururush take place in the hour before dawn.

Benediction of Hrururush (Level 2) – You gain the wicked boon of Hrururush – which causes all of your allies in the scene to take d4 damage and which in exchange grants you an increase to your next damage roll equal to the amount of damage inflicted to your allies. You take 4 HP of damage when you use this benediction.

Ispi Que – Inspired Visions – The *Quet* god of inspirations & magical visions Ispi Que guides its devout into a state of cosmic consciousness – of true & profound awareness where all things occur through some unseen mechanism unrelated to time, cause or thought – all things merely are. The psychedelic aspects of Ispi Que's worship are not followed lightly. As with all the *Quet* gods, Ispi Que is turned to at need. When the desire for inspiration & enlightenment becomes great a worshipper has recourse to Ispi Que who exists to provide the enlightened guidance & the opened mind.

Ispi Que's order is based in the city of *Diya*, where the god's followers maintain their union with the kin-god Tik Pael. Ispi-Que's temple, a temple built of small pieces, of single coins & single stones stacked until at last the miniscule becomes the incredible. The palace of wonder that is the temple of Ispi Que has four hundred famous stairs – each is meant to bring about a different sensation of enlightenment & inspiration. Seekers of Ispi Que often make the walk both up and down the stairs – and are said to enter a dreamlike state of higher consciousness when they do.



Feature of Patronage – Enlightened Path – You improve your movement speed by 10 spaces in detail & by 25% overland. This benefit applies to all those that are traveling with you overland but only yourself in detail.

Supplication of Ispi Que (Level 4) – Ispi Que grants nothing to those not willing to put in the work that inspiration demands. This supplication takes the form of a detailed mandala being made over the course of a single day through the use of at least 4 colors of sand. The supplication requires the entire day & the mandala must be made so that it matches your aspirations when you set about its construction. The mandala is at least 9 feet square.

Invocation of Ispi Que (Level2) – Ispi Qui grants benign insights that aid in actions if only briefly. You can invoke the insights of Ispi Que to grant yourself a bonus of +2 or -2 to your next die roll – the modification is always in your favor and the addition or subtraction is based upon the type of roll you are making.

Jegl – The High God of Riches – Jegl is head of the high caste gods of the ***Brizai***. It is the chiefest of their gods and it holds dominion over opulent material wealth. Jegl's worshippers levy a high cost to acquire the divinity's affinity but they regard this, always, as a worthy expense, as the patronage & priesthood of Jegl establishes the highest orders of ***Brizai*** culture. In ***Zenith***, where Jegl's cult is dominant, the ostentation of Jegl worship is exploited in a parasitic cycle by the Gaalist worshippers that share the mountaintop city.

Jegl worship depends upon many highly affected behaviors that display authority, wealth & education. Jegl worshippers are expected to speak with an intense disdain & a discourteous tone meant to keep others in their place. The god Jegl is himself an ostentatious & disdainful deity who manifests annually as an apparition in the city of ***Zenith***'s temple to him. When he appears he casts his withering gaze over his followers & reluctantly chooses just one of them to be his representative on earth – the contention for this honor is incredible & whole communities devote themselves & their lives to it.



Features of Patronage – Your Best Foot Forward – When you receive the patronage of Jegl – the god fills you with a flashy sense of style and purpose. You can spend 100 Sp to increase your CHA by 1 point, 200 Sp to increase it by 2 poins & 400 Sp to increase it by 3 points. You cannot increase your CHA beyond 18.

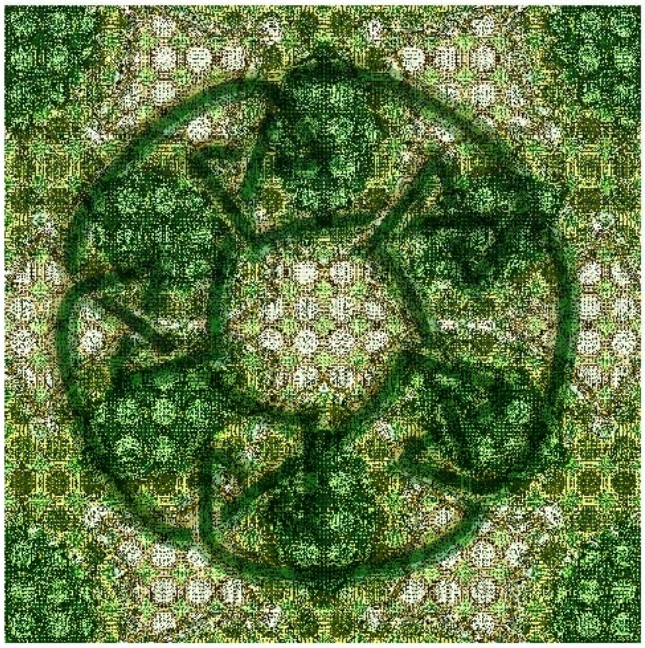
Supplication of Jegl (Level 5) – Supplication to Jegl takes place almost automatically. It requires little in the way of conscious practice – but it requires much in the way of expense. To perform this supplication you must have on your person no less than 5,000 Sp worth of elaborate clothing, jewelry & other accoutrements. To perform the rite you must strut purposefully through a populated area for at least 10 minutes, so that all can see your wealth & taste.

Invocation of Jegl (Level 3) – The Withering Look of Jegl is a well worn prayer that inflicts those who've earned your contempt with cringing inadequacy. When you perform this invocation those present on the scene who have fewer Sp than you on their person must save vs. Spells – on a failed save they suffer a d8 frightened effect.

Kila Tiif – The Trusted One – A god of the *Quet*, like others of this sort Kila Tiif is partly a being but mainly an experience of divine sense. The Trusted One is a patron of bonds & oaths. It binds people together by trust & trustworthiness. Those who are under the influence of Kila Tiif find themselves strongly bound to their kin & their companions. Kila Tiif reinforces these bonds and enforces the good faith following of contracts.

Kila Tiif is worshipped in *Bitter* more than in other places & those who seek to make their contracts truer & their bonds more perfect often make the pilgrimage to *Bitter* to engage in the exercises of trust & kinship that bind people in solidarity.

The temple at *Bitter* is composed of small things assembled into something greater, as with the temples of the *Quet* gods. In this case the small matters & objects are the funerary relics of those who are interred by their loyal friends. The temple, a mountain of urns & coffins is overwritten again & again by innumerable oaths, all scrawled over the great temple of trust.



Features of Patronage – Trust Bonds – When you gain the favor of Kila Tiif you are able to provide aid & assistance to your closely bonded friends. Members of any party that you belong to have the statistics of their party all improved by 1.

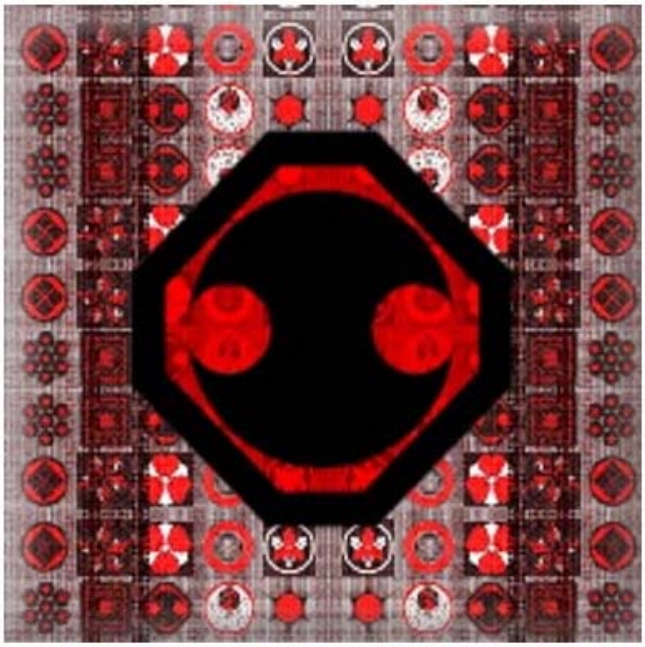
Supplication of Kila Tiif (Level 6) – Supplicating Kila Tiif is a daylong process that requires the participation of at least 4 other participants. The supplication takes the form of a long day spent preparing food & cleaning together and culminates in the hosting of a social event or party. The food must be good & the venue well cleaned – else Kila Tiif's presence won't be felt.

Benediction of Kila Tiif (Level 6) – The Great Bond of Kila Tiif is something not taken up lightly. This benediction may only be applied to those who have participated in the Supplication alongside you. When the benediction is received all those who have aided in the supplication are then bound together. For every participant in the supplication all the participants gain 1 HP permanently. This extra HP is lost permanently if any member of the group dies. If anyone leaves the group through abandonment or betrayal – the loss is great – Kila Tiif abandons the priest who cannot any long pray to the god & the characters who received the additional HP permanently lose twice that amount from their HP total – e.g.: if you gained 5 HP but betray your group, you would lose the 5 and an additional 5.

Massiip – Queen of Goodness – the benign goddess of compassion – Massiip tempers the great power of the gods & the intensive authority they wield with pity for those mortals caught up in the machinations of the heavens. Massiip provides kindness to the living. Massiip offers not protection, but succor & nourishment. She is the mistress of the summer & her long, pleasant season is the period of ease that characterizes the mood her faithful wish to cultivate.

Massiip's great temple is built at the city of ***Bitter*** in the clifflike hills. There, the great temple is a place of continual comfort. The temple functions as a hospital, as a bath & as a bakery. Good things are prepared there for all to enjoy and health & wellness are on offer to those who seek ease, particularly after a time of trouble.

Prayers & worship of Massiip is traditionally performed on behalf of others – particularly on behalf of the weak and the small. Those who pray to Massiip for their own happiness or pleasure are said to be ignored by the goddess, who cares principally for the weak.



Features of Patronage – Warm Hearts & Kind Deeds – You must swear a pact of nonviolence to gain the patronage of Massiip. Once you've gained this benefit you can cure the hurts of others. You may cure d6 HP per minute of concentration when you touch any subject. You also cure one status ailment per hour of similar concentration. You must touch the subject of this effect to gain its benefit. If you ever harm another person through direct action you lose this ability forever. If you ever kill another person, all of the damage & ailments you have cured are returned to you as status conditions & HP damage.

Supplication of Massiip (Level 1) – Massiip is easily supplicated through careful acts of consideration. Any time you help anyone and say that you are doing so in Massiip's name you are blessed with her power.

Invocation of Massiip (Level 1) – The invocation of Massiip is just as simple as her supplication – you touch someone & in Massiip's name you are able to restore d6 HP to that person.

MikMak – The Snatcher – the plague wolf of the *Goblins* is the thief of life, the one who takes through deception & cheating. MikMak is god of disease in the *Goblin* mythos, one who steals by cheating life. This god is particularly significant to the *Goblins* who are subject to diseases unlike many others of the faerie races. MikMak is a sinister god who all people must protect against, for he comes in the dark to take & to never, ever give.

MikMak worship has become a locally cosmopolitan cult in *Sword of the West* following a period of plagues that struck at the ports & butcheries there. Since those plagues have come & gone worship of MikMak has become a commoner practice as many seek to allay the Snatcher's terrible thefts.

MikMak is worshipped in a large tent made of the rotten carcasses of wolves & other animals. Those who wish to receive the blessing must go into this repellent place & offer a bit of money to the dirty priests of MikMak.



Features of Patronage – Let It In – You gain the clever reversal of MikMak – you become immune to disease & even death, but it is by inflicting these on others. Your character becomes a ***Vampire*** when you gain the benefits of MikMak's patronage- the effects are identical to those described in the Game of the North rulebook.

Supplication of MikMak (Level 4) – MikMak requires blood & death. The usual supplication of MikMak is to sacrifice an animal of at least 2 HD. The death of the creature needn't be easy or peaceful & MikMak acknowledges deaths that occur in battle as supplications – but only so long as they are initiated by the supplicant & that the sacrifice has both life & blood.

Benediction of MikMak (Level 2) When you call on MikMak to invest you with power it does so, albeit stingily. When you've cast this prayer you increase the die size of all your damage dice for a scene.

Mrun – The Furious Killer – A higher god of the ***Brizai***, Mrun is the god who governs the murder of low caste individuals by high caste nobles. Represented as the mate to Jegl, Mrun is bathed in blood & its eyes cross with fury – it is an intensely brutal god that spreads danger in the world. Worshippers of Mrun are murderers by tradition, but this murderous aspect of their religious practice has been sublimated to a warrior cult of soldiery – rather than pure cold-blooded slaughter.

Mrun is worshipped in ***Shield*** – the seat of the ***Brizai*** culture in the Slatewind. The temple of Mrun has the skins & skulls of the city's enemies adorning its high minarets & all wars performed by that ferocious city are begun in the temple of Mrun where the blood of many creatures is mingled and the blood of faithful warriors is shed in homage to the animosity of the Furious One.



Features of Patronage – Mastery of Weapons – The ***Brizai*** god of killers grants its special favorites skill at weaponry. When you gain this ability, you increase your To-Hit score with any weapon by 2. You lose the favor of Mrun if you ever lose a fight or gain the defeated condition.

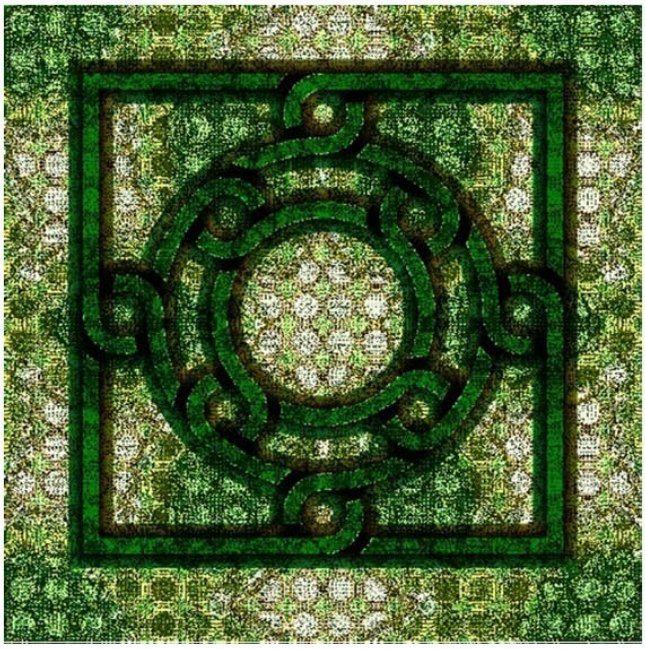
Supplication of Mrun (Level 1) – Murder. Though Mrun worship focuses upon warfare in modern times, only the god's truly devout worshippers actually follow its deeper will & higher teachings. The Supplication of Mrun is simple – you must murder someone. The murder must be performed alone & the target of the murder must not be armed. Every HD that the murdered person possesses is gained by you as a point toward the casting of prayers beyond the single point gained by performing the murder – for instance, murdering a 2 HD target would grant 3 points of prayers.

Invocation of Mrun (Level 5) Calling upon the evil power of death, you are able to brandish the deadly knife of Mrun & plead for it to be a sliver in the flesh of all. This prayer causes everyone near you to suffer 3d6 points of slashing damage as Mrun itself cuts apart those who surround you. The space this effect occupies is no more than 40 feet from you and no less than 20 – but the exact range is up to Mrun & not you.

Que Itst – The Big Farter – Among the ***Quet*** Que Itst is a mentality & a state of relaxed comfortable equanimity. While the ***Quet*** share the very mild prohibition against flatulence in polite company common to most humans– they also recognize that these manners are indicators of class differentiation, of domination & of stratification which they regard as being particularly improper.

Some may wish that they did not stink, and yet all the people of the world must fart – this is the ethos behind those who follow Que Itst – who is worshipped by those who seek to avoid shame, who have grown too ostentatious – or who have fallen deeply into the patterns of formalism & rigidity.

Relaxing from the tasks of high office is a particular calling of those who take up worship of Que Itst. The temple of Que Itst at ***Saedu*** is a place for relaxation & for forgetting one's place in the larger world. The temple there, like the other ***Quetist*** temples, is made of a number of small items – in this case it is comprised of cemented quantities of books, of papers & finery – all the trappings of professional life – including uniforms and the symbols of other gods – are discarded into the expanding pile that creates the temple retreat of Que Itst.



Worship of Que Itst is usually very personal. The physical processes associated with this worship is a series of exercises & some purges, all meant to relax.

Features of Patronage – Easy Company - You're very easy to be around, when you've got Que Itst's patronage. When you gain this ability, you improve both of your social dice by 1 size. You lose this benefit & the patronage of Que Itst if you seek rulership or pretend dignity you don't have.

Supplication of Que Itst (Level 3) – Que Itst is beseeched through mortification. To achieve the god's blessings one must forgo wearing clothes, cleanliness & self control for an entire day. Slovenly & relaxed is how Que Itst likes its followers. Each time the supplication is performed it adds to the total of available prayers – but cleaning oneself following such an interval – taking care to dress or act more pleasantly eradicates the blessings- removing all your held prayer levels.

Benediction of Que Itst (Level 2) When you call on Que Itst you can receive its benign benediction – which improves the social dice of everyone present by 1 step each on their next roll.

Retuun – King of Evasions - The cowardly god of fear – Retuun is a deity of avoidance, of delay & procrastination. Among the ***Saayang*** who have deified Retuun, direct confrontations are unwelcome, dangerous & to be avoided. Retuun sets a tone & creates an example of proper avoidance applied to unappealing states.

Priests of Retuun wear veils comprised of jewels which they can tilt to provide a view of beautiful things – and some wear kaleidoscope spectacles to ensure that they never have to see anything that is not at least partly beautiful, and that they don't ever have to make eye contact with others. Such deliberate and intensive scrutiny would be uncomfortable & unseemly besides.

Retuun is worshipped principally at ***Saedu*** – in a temple of frosted mirrors & shadowed windows. Those who seek out the succor of Retuun must avoid contact with others, be discrete in their dealings & keep secrets without fail.



Feature of Patronage: Servants of Retuun are gifted with superior evasion & skill at avoidance. They improve all their saves by 2. In return they sacrifice the initiative & are reticent to act aggressively. When you gain this patronage your Initiative die is reduced by one size & your To-Hit is reduced by 2.

Supplication of Retuun (Level 3) Beseeching the aid of Retuun is an elaborate series of prayer spoken from beyond a series of veils which increase in number as the prayer continues. The supplication requires a few hours to perform properly – but if you face combat or fighting of any type you lose all the favor you may have gained from Retuun in an instant.

Benediction of Retuun (Level 2) The blessing of Retuun is that of peace & aid. When you speak this prayer in an scene the next time you would be subject to an attack against your AC – you spontaneously increase your AC by 4 & may move up to 4 spaces.

Seriit – Queen of Decisiveness - The mistress of forthright truths & of stories. Seriit is the opposite number of Retuun & her priests & the priest of her brother-god have a long history of disagreement. Among the ***Saayang*** peoples whose gods these are, there is a tradition of seeking the wisdom of both Retuun & Seriit in matters of importance. Seriit's advice & the advice of her priests tends to be much more direct and faithful.

The Priests of Seriit in the great city of ***Red Banks*** operate an observatory where they carry out the business of astronomy and augury – both of which are important rites in the Seriit's faith. These priests have a conspicuous tendency to specificity in language, coloring all things with excessive detail & speaking of all their matters in a very frank manner. For instance a priest of Seriit will relate the events of a specific day, giving the date & the time & a plain assessment of the people being reported upon, saying they are ugly or beautiful or dressed well and this they do without any apparent conscious judgement.



Feature of Patronage: Servants of Seriit are granted affinity at investigation & Judging Alignment. Both of these skills are improved by 2. Lying will spoil this ability though & Seriit is not particularly forgiving. Lying while under her patronage will cause a day's worth of blindness, though the benefits she provides as a patroness will not be lost during this time.

Supplication of Seriit (Level 2) – Seriit is properly beseeched under starlight at night. Her star is the evening star & during certain times of the year, particularly in the dead of winter, it is not possible to perform this supplication. The prayer itself a simple one, spoken with sincerity & unselfconscious admiration for the night sky.

Invocation of Seriit (Level 2) – The power of Seriit lies in certainty – of thought & action. When the invocation is cast it remains active for 2 minutes. During that time, any task that you accomplish successfully grants you a cumulative bonus of +/-1 on the task that follows (the modifier is in your favor – either up or down). The effect ends immediately if you fail at one of these checks.

Shiddush – The Face of Form & Balance – the Orderer of Death & Life – In the cosmology of the ***Khin*** the triune faced god went from compassionate to cruel and began to destroy the world. It's third face came about when the ***Khin*** themselves, the gods most faithful servants petitioned the triune god with excellent tact & formality. Shiddush then showed its face, the impassive face of serene judgement. This face of the god is the one that is sought in matters of court, in trials & wherever very formal & very grave stakes are being decided. Shiddush is a god for judges & sober folk who know how to behave in good company.

Priests of Shiddush are the bureaucratic corps of the city of ***Shield***. They commonly command both the devoted of Hrururush & Ushro though these may overtake the calm nature of their brother priests if properly provoked. Worship of Shiddush is not compulsory in ***Shield***, but observation of Shiddush' relevant rites of correct behavior is what keeps that city from boiling into chaos & internal violence.



Feature of Patronage – Those faithful to Shiddush who are called to its service are able to disguise their intentions and alignment to all others so long as they don't act overtly in a manner that would reveal their nature. Shiddush' rigorous system of self-control & manners prevents any intention for good or ill to be discerned from one's speech or writing alone.

Supplication of Shiddush (Level 3) – Sometimes portrayed as comical to outsiders – the supplication of Shiddush is a series of exercises emphasizing physical balance. The poses entailed are sometimes awkward but they do have a centering power the Shiddush' espouse as essential to good health. The exercise itself requires two hours to perform.

Benediction of Shiddush (Level 6) – The Hidden Hand – Shiddush helps to balance matters. You may make this prayer & its effects linger for an entire day. After the next time you take damage or have a status condition applied – whoever (it must be a person or monster) inflicted the injury suffers the identical effect, so long as they may be affected by it at all. E.g.: A zombi that hits you would take damage back, but if it inflicts fear on you it would not- because it is incapable of experiencing fear.

Silofpishen – The Daughter of Dogs – The ***Plioshr*** goddess of dogs Silofpishen has a central place in the nomadic culture of the dogriding herders. The dogs of ***Plioshr*** are massive beasts, larger than an ox & covered in long curled hair. These dogs are like family to the ***Plioshr*** herders who keep them & ride them, distant family, but family nonetheless. Where humans make use of the sheep, and the sheep make use of the grass –Silofpishen reminds her worshippers that the dogs are without care, for they make use of people.

While people must plan & sheep must forage – the dog must simply be. In some instances, it needs to attend to its own affairs & when it does it does so unpredictably, often foolishly. More often than not the dog depends on its master for guidance & this spirit of blithe, innocent recklessness is the spirit of Silofpishen. Her worshippers carry out ecstatic rites & go on maddened moonlight rides over rough country, howling all the way.



Silofpishen's cult is most popular amongst the youth of the ***Plioshr*** people, those who've not come into their own property or begun to raise their own family.

Feature of Patronage – All who follow Silofpishen are known to her minions. If you take Silofpishen as patron one of the ***Plioshr*** dogs finds you and takes you as master.

Supplication of Silofpishen (Level 2) – The Wander – Silofpishen requires little in the way of formal worship. She is best pleased by one of her faithful simply wandering aimlessly for as long as it suits them – usually this takes quite a bit of time but not always. As an average a proper wander takes 4 hours.

Invocation of Silofpishen (Level 2) – Help – Simple in its way – the invocation of Silofpishen simply cures up to two people of d6 HP worth of damage. If one of the targets of this spell is a riding dog the die type increases by 2 sizes.

Tergiit – The King of Scales – The careful, precise god of measures & weights & the well-run society. Tergiit is, oddly, the chief god of the ***Saayang*** peoples, as he sets the measures & marks the boundaries. Tergiit, and especially Tergiit's priesthood is concerned with surveying, keeping records of transactions, establishing standards of weight & volume & generally supervising the detail that make civilization possible.

Tergiit's temple is dominant in ***Saedu***, it is the house of the city's bureaucracy & it is the center for a guild of tradespeople who are employed outside of that city as judges, auditors & bureaucrats. The temple, known as The House of Absolutes, contains examples of all the major conventions of weight & size & distance that are measured in the Slatewind Valley. The Temple, a 6-sided structure built with pillars & a carefully calibrated roof shows the precise hour in the shadows of its interior & the sum of its sides, when taken as a whole is accepted as a *mile* by those who need to measure such distances.



People don't commonly make offerings to Tergiit, he is rarely sacrificed to -or even prayed to – but his followers have achieved great wealth through their utility & so, the temple of Tergiit is often poorly attended, and the feast days of the god are only really observed by those who gain their license from his blessings even though the temple itself is quite remarkable & exceptionally well made.

Feature of Patronage – True Scale – Those who are favored by Tergiit have a perfect sense of scales. They can measure weights exactly by holding objects, sense distances to an exacting degree & they always know the time.

Supplication of Tergiit (Level 4) – Tergit's supplication is… not for everyone. It is a profoundly meditative prayer that is written, not spoken, and it takes the form of a series of increasingly more complex mathematical operations performed sequentially & based upon the day & time it is begun. The complete operation (in the lattitudes of the Slatewind) require at least 2 hours to complete, writing materials & implements & sufficient light.

Benediction of Silofpishen (Level 2) – The Mastery of Space – When you say this prayer for the next two rounds all ranged attacks of any type made by you or your allies have their ranges doubled.

The Disappointer – The Fumbling God of the Wee Folk – The singular god of Halflings is looked on by his faithful with more scorn than deference. The Disappointer, they will say, doesn't even deserve a name. In the cosmology of the Halflings The Disappointer created the universe, the world & everything in it. He made the land & the seas, the trees & flowers, he made all the animals, and then, when it was nearly done, The Disappointer began making people. He made people for a long time and finally decided to make his best possible creation – one last race of people in which he would put all his practice to use. Thus he made Halflings superior to all other people (so Halflings say) but because he left them for last The Disappointer didn't have enough to make them full sized.

Just as Halflings are considered half the size of others & have no name of their own – their god is named for its inadequacies compared to other gods. In practice The Disappointer is worshipped by Halflings in open contempt of other religions. As if to mock the gods of other folk the Halflings hold up their own god as an example of the pointlessness & stupidity of the divine, the fallibility of the heavens.



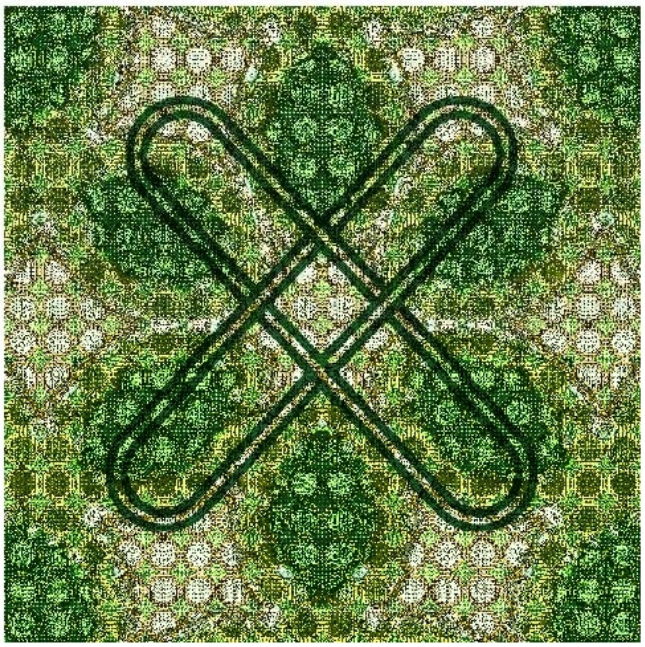
Feature of Patronage – Fearlessness – Those who take the Disappointer as their patron have no fear of the existential vacuum that exists beyond the world. They accept that nothing at all matters & that there is no power greater than that of people. They internalize this knowledge so thoroughly that they cannot be subject to any sort of Fear effect. While so blessed though, those with The Disappointer as patron cannot ever use Prayers.

Supplication of The Disappointer (Level 10) – The Disappointer is a terrible god who's attention is extremely difficult to gain & impossible to hold. This prayer takes the form of a year of your life spent wearing no clothes & speaking no words & doing no work.

Benediction of The Disappointer (Level 10) – The Disappointer's benediction is powerful & yet still underwhelming. When you say this prayer over the course of an entire year, spent doing whatever you wish, you gain an amount of XP equal to half of all the XP you have earned over the course of your career.

Tik Pael – The Valiant Guardian of the *Quet*. Tik Pael is a being, sometimes experienced by its worshippers as a presence within them – a force of sudden competence & courage that overtakes them & guides them toward noble pursuits. Tik Pael is the protector & patron of the other gods of the *Quet*, it is the great strength that allows the minutia to exist without fear. Tik Pael is also a god of small matters, like all the pantheon of *Quet*. It is a god of many small acts of courage compiled into an overwhelming demonstration of goodness & of heroism. There is no hero comprised of a single action. A hero is made of many good deeds, so say the faithful of Tik Pael.

Tik Pael's focal cult is at the far city of *Diya*. There, the god's servants gather the remnants of their right actions – whether the remains of dangerous creatures or the debris of a burned house. Like all the temples of the *Quet* Tik Pael's is an amalgam of these many things, cemented together. Unlike other such temples, it is also a home for those who follow the path of Tik Pael – who pursue valor throughout the land, the heroes of the world will always have a home at *Diya*, it is said, so long as anyone yet worships Tik Pael.



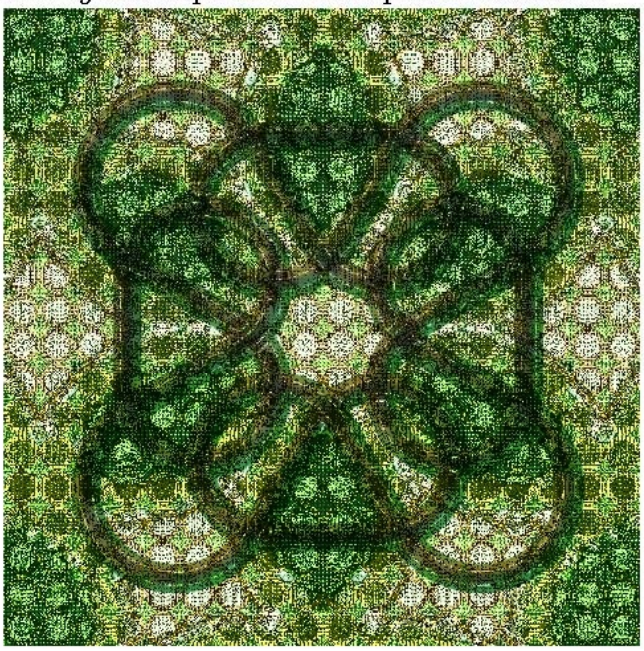
Feature of Patronage – Heroism – Tik Pael requires a good hearted champion. Those who fall short or turn away from the righteous path will lose the god's favor forever. Those who have attained the god's favor though, have their valiant deeds rewarded with an increase in the size of their HD by 1 die size.

Supplication of Tik Pael (Level 3) – Tik Pael likes stories – stories of great deeds & high adventure. Storytelling is its preference & prayers to Tik Pael take the form of a story being told to any group larger than 2. The story must take at least an hour to tell & it must include bravery, heroism & the punishment of wickedness.

Benediction of Tik Pael (Level 1) – Whenever this prayer is cast, for the next round all attacks made by you or your allies are at +1 To-Hit.

Tulat Ku – The Miniscule Helper – God of the insignificant united into the overwhelming – Tulat Ku is the basis of much of the theology & practice of the *Quet* pantheon. Tulat Ku is the god of humble & inconsequential things. Though when each of these is combined together a great thing may be formed – that great thing, that achievement lies well outside of Tulat Ku's provenance. Only the parts that make the whole function are of concern to Tulat Ku who is the god of cells, of atoms, of parts.

Tulat Ku's worship is highly esoteric & it is focused in the forest city of *Termus*. There, the great stupa, built of a million drawers & ten thousand twigs & stones stands – a vast & monumental object when taken as a whole – in its parts though, it is an assembly of junk & ruin. This is the emphasis of Tulat Ku's ethos – that even the greatest of things, of people, of cultures & societies – all of the great things are comprised of humble pieces that cannot be recognized as great alone.



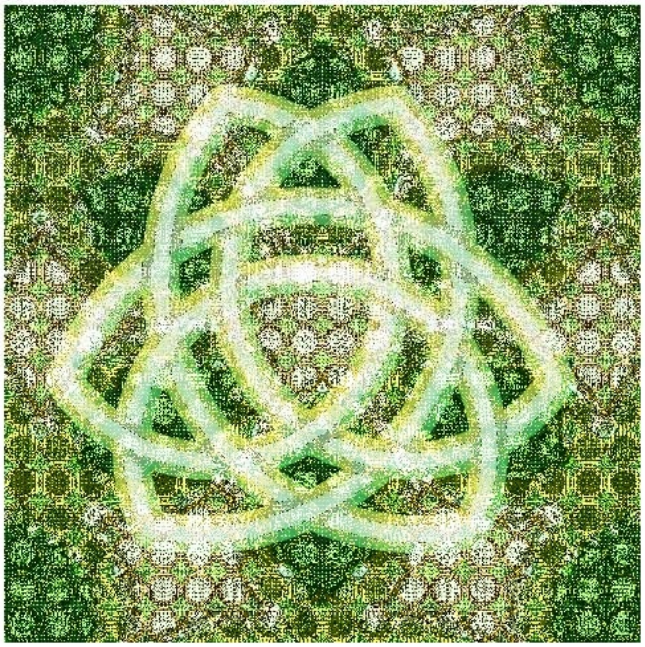
Feature of Patronage – Insignificant Pieces – Tulat Ku is governor over the inconsequentially small parts that comprise a person. Each of these resonate together to create a person & Tulat Ku sings with them. When you have this patronage, you reduce by one step the die type that you roll when recovering from wounds. Ordinarily you recover the delta on a d20 CON check – or a d12 CON check if you are rested at home. Tulat Ku reduces these checks to a d12 and a d10 respectively.

Supplication of Tulat Ku (Level 1) – Supplicating Tulat Ku is a painstaking process of gathering small & personally significant objects to yourself & attuning them. A worshipper of Tulat Ku is likely to have a cupboard or a bag full of little items of interest that they've pondered & collected. Each individual item is joined to you when you pray over the course of a single day which you don't have to spend praying – only bonding with a small item you've found that has drawn your attention.

Invocation of Tulat Ku (Level 10) – The resurgent self. When you speak this prayer its effects fill you completely & you contain a power within yourself that is immense. The spell does nothing until you gain a status condition or die – should that happen & you wish it, you become resurgent – healed of all harm by Tulat Ku's power. You recover to your normal HP maximum & cease to suffer any status conditions that you didn't have prior to using this prayer the first time.

Ukrut Ter – The Gatekeeper of Joys – Most hopeful of the *Quet* deities, Ukrut Ter is the enlightenment of attaining perfected grace. As all of the gods of the *Quet* are depersonified emotions & senses that are given names – Ukrut Ter is the named experience of coming to the threshold full of joyous anticipation. What is next? That is the question that Ukrut Ter answers – with optimism & a dream of hope. As one traverses the stages of life there is always a dawning sense of the next thing and the higher, better thing – and this is the power & sentiment of Ukrut Ter who awaits at the doorway offering a better dream.

Ukrut Ter is worshipped in many places but the focus of the deity's cult is at *Bitter*, where folk must climb up to live and climb low to prosper. The priests of Ukrut Ter stand by the doors of the city to welcome those who make the difficult journey to the city of easy hearts. The temple of Ukrut Ter lies at the inner gate of the city – which lies at the edge of the *Old Woman's Cavern* – the gate between the lost world and the current one. This gate lies permanently open & guards against nothing, but it is architecturally impressive. The monks who serve Ukrut Ter's shrines gather the letters written to the god to paste over the structure. These letters are numerous as it is a common practice at holiday times for children to write to Ukrut Ter, tracing their hands & noting the thing it is that they wish to happen, to be or to receive.



Feature of Patronage – Forward & Up – Those who are in fellowship with Ukrut Ter advance with ease. All XP awards they receive are improved by 10%.

Supplication of Ukrut Ter (Level 3) – Surprise & joy is what most speak to the power known as Ukrut Ter – the main supplication is to offer a surprise gift to a friend or family member & to do so at dawn. The offering is usually worth only a single Sp or less.

Invocation of Ukrut Ter (Level 2) – Ukrut Ter likes to offer a pleasing surprise. When you invoke its power it grants a random benefit to a random person. A member of your group is randomly chosen & they either recover 3d6 HP or gain 3d6 bonus HP or have a status condition removed – depending on which of these will have the best impact.

Ultist – The Suffering Prisoner – God of Elves & the persecuted. Ultist is a psychopomp deity – a god of death who carries the spirits of the dying away into another world. This is notable for a wide variety of reasons starting with the traditional habit of the Elves to observe no religious calling. Since Elves typically are beings of faerie they lack the anima that sits within those who were created by gods such as men. And yet Ultist the Prisoner offers a soul to any ***Elf*** that wishes, and a way toward a paradisiacal perdition for any who will follow him out of life & into death.

Ultist was once an ***Elf***, through magic it has sustained itself through death & lives now as an unliving being – killed by the folk of ***Zenith*** in the last war between that city & the forest dwellers of ***Able***. Upon his capture Ultist made many claims of divinity & the folk of ***Zenith*** sought to strike him down for his blasphemy. And they did so. Many times. And all of these murders Ultist survived, quite gracefully in fact. He lives now in an iron prison in the center of ***Zenith***, a martyr & saint. An unliving, undying god.



Feature of Patronage – Grace – Those who are favored by Ultist may roll twice when making a saving throw vs. death & they may take either result of their choosing. Ultist offers guidance & love to any who are at the mercy of their foes & neve to any who persecute others.

Supplication of Ultist (Level 4) – A prayer to Ultist goes unheard – for the god is imprisoned in Zenith. When you wish to gain the benign aid of Ultist you must harm yourself – usually by gripping a thorny branch quite hard. The prayer is simple & quick, but it inflicts d4 HP damage to you when you properly say it

Benediction of Ultist (Level 4) – The Eternality of Ultist is an emergent quality that has caused the world to become a far more confusing & dangerous place of late. Ultist has been killed over and over but does not die- and he grants some small amount of his own immortality to his followers. When you say this prayer you grant yourself a bonus of +4 HP per HD. These bonus HP last until they are lost when you take damage, and they are removed first, before your permanent HP.

Ushro – The Stern Face, the Designer of the World – the first of the faces of the ***Khinish*** Triune god. Ushro was the first face, that which summoned the world into existence & commanded that all things be made & ordered. It is the stern face that contains within it all the multitudes and all the gods that are or were – it is faith itself, the origin of belief & the purpose behind it as well. Ushro is Divine – at its base it embodies & presents godhood as a *thing* something tangible in the world.

Ushro is said to have created the world but that it lost faith in people and turned to Hururursh – in rage & destroyed the greater part of all things. It is said that Ushro created things in the image it preferred and that what is left following the slaughter of its furious, other face are unrectified & broken examples of what once was. There was a perfect day, the priests of Ushro say -and that day is gone.



Ushro's great temple is at ***Able*** – and this is the source of much conflict in the valley of Slatewind. It is held that only the faithful of Ushro & the Triune god itself should tread in the temple and the ***Khin*** of ***Able*** are ruthless in keeping the temple free of unbelievers & quite often non-***Khin***. Ushro turns away, say the ***Khin*** and as a result the anger of Hururursh is loosed. This is considered either a terrible fate or a hopeful eventuality – based upon one's ideology.

Feature of Patronage – Faith Overwhelming – Ushro is the most divine of divinities, if there is a higher world or a heaven it rules there as a king rules on the earth. Those who serve Ushro above all others have the level of any prayers they say improved by 1 level in their favor (i.e.: Supplications are 1 level higher, Invocations & Benedictions are 1 level lower).

Supplication of Ushro (Level 2) – A request for blessings that must be said daily upon waking. Ushro's power leaves the adherent who fails to pray five times each day – when rising, before each meal and before sleeping. Missing only one of these prayers resets all prayers to 0.

Invocation of Ushro (Level 5) – Ushro's power is divine & opposed to the diabolical. When you say this prayer of protection you create an area around yourself which has a radius of 50 feet. Any demons in this zone take 5d6 damage whenever they begin their turn in the area. The zone persists for 5 rounds. You may also spend 5 minutes casting this spell which increases the duration to 5 hours.

Yts – The Low God of Servants – Yts is the deity who endures mistreatment & performs amiably anyway. One of the low caste gods of the ***Brizai,*** Yts is the sharer of burdens. Yts is called upon by those who are made to shoulder a heavy weight & to endure harsh treatment. It is a god that knows that all things – even the station of the Low Gods & the High Gods of the ***Brizai*** will one day be reversed. All comes to the same end and the world will turn on its head one day – this is the sentiment of Yts' devotees, who pray to be treated well but also offer that they would return no malice more than they receive. Yts is a deity of retributive justice, but especially of proportional justice. In those instances, in the history of the ***Brizai*** when the low caste overthrew the high – the servants & faithful of Yts sought to restrain the slaughter & to keep the old masters as servants rather than killing them all of outright. This, it is said by the ***Brizai***, is the order of things – a cycle of dominion & that Yts is the god who maintains the cycle.

In ***Saedu*** where the cult of Yts is strong the god of servants is worshipped at a shrine built upon the sea-shore – where the waves lap & the tides go in & go out – indications of the equanimity of all things.



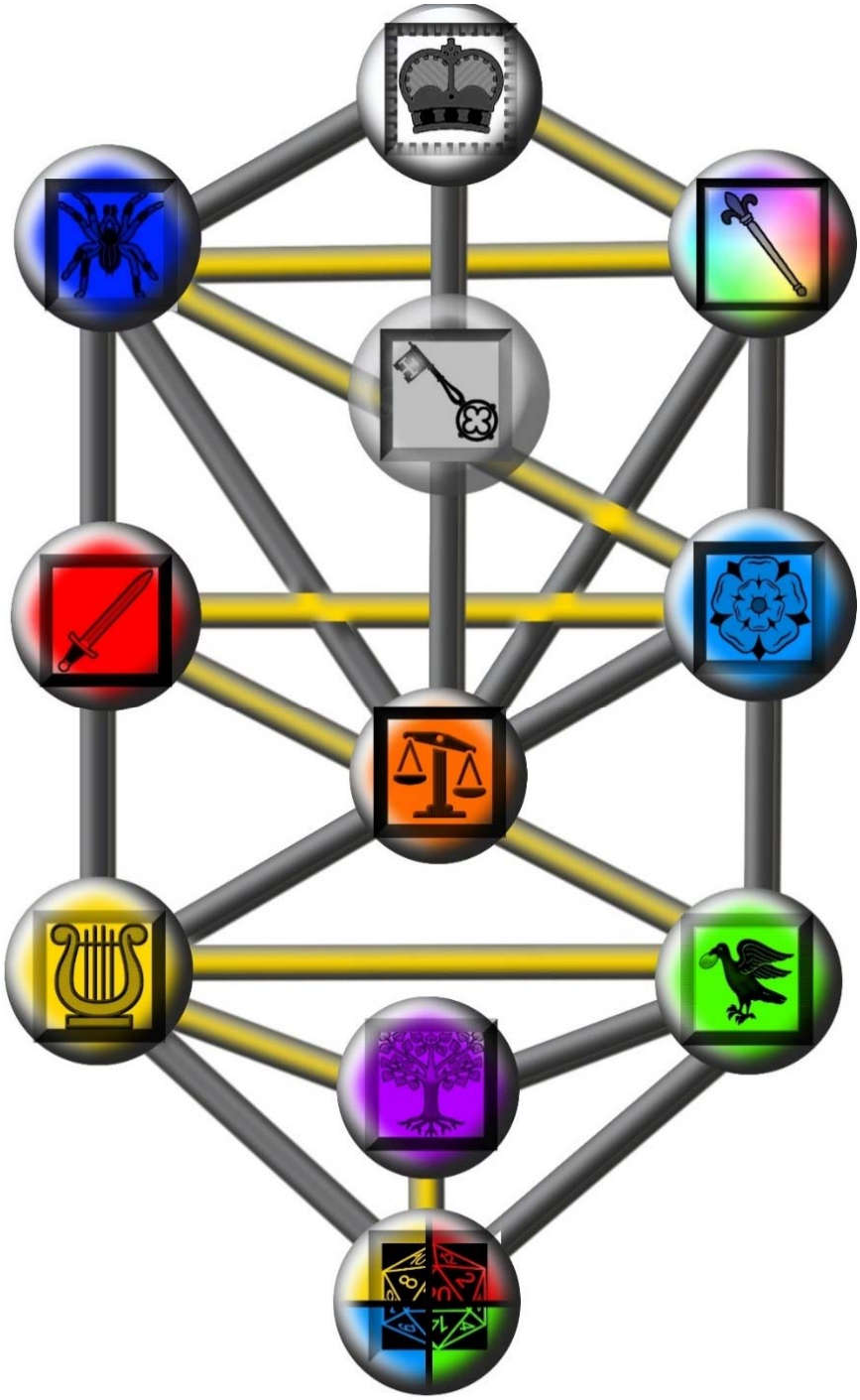
Feature of Patronage – Reversals – Yts has the power to turn the world on its head, if only briefly for devout followers. When you have Yts' patronage whenever an adversary deals a blow that would defeat you, you are unharmed and the adversary takes the HP damage instead. You cannot have Yts' patronage & be the master of any servants, animals or lands & you must forsake all claim you may have to money of any kind while in Yts' favor.

Supplication of Yts (Level 1) – The Supplication of Yts is simplistic & yet difficult to carry out- while supplicant to Yts you must be a servant to another person, obedient & contrite. Each day you are a servant you gain a level of prayers. Each time you are resistant to commands, lie or somehow undermine the relationship – your prayer levels reset to zero.

Benediction of Yts (Level 1) – Yts helps you to be a better servant. This prayer grants you a stronger back & sturdier body. When you use this prayer, for the rest of the day your encumbrance value is increased by 5.

Chapter 3 - The 10 Games in the Game

You may be a longstanding player of RPGs, you may be a neophyte – I don't know. I do know that this Thing We Do Together the game we play – that isn't just a single system – it's a few different types of games all rolled together. What's presented here are 10 varieties of Sub-Games. These Sub-Games are mini events within the framework of the shared, collaborative storytelling experience.

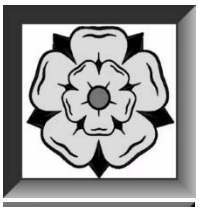


When you create your character you'll receive two sub-game invocations – the two icons at the top of your character class' page. These are your starting invocations & they allow you to interject a type of event into the game – they allow you to change the flow of the narrative to suit your character's abilities & preferences. Each of these sub-games is explained in detail in its own section.

The idea, behind this system is that your character & you as a player have a whole additional level of agency that allows you to declare that the game is going to be played a different way for this scene- the tables are being turned – so to speak.

Referees – do not despair. An explanation & rationale for this system is provided for you in the referee's In The Ruins guide.

Subgame invocations



Rose – the language & talking game – this entails extended periods of PC & NPC interaction using languages & social dice to resolve the conflict (or create a conflict) through the use of social abilities.



Sword – the strategy game – this entails the use of miniatures & a long battle drawn out using more advanced combat rules & the more in-depth tactical system.



Crown – The competition game- this is invoked when a duel or a contest is occurring between one PC and NPC or two PCs. It is pure contention with a clear winner & loser that doesn't always end in death.



Tree – the overland travel game is invoked when PCs wish to traverse the countryside. It entails the strategic/logistic challenge. The PCs use this to track, chase & evade in overland travel.



Scepter – the spiritual game – the PCs demonstrate their own devotion to the setting, the gods & their ideals when challenged, this is a transcendent game of interaction on a spiritual & intentional level with very high stakes for the player.



Crow – the having game – here the PCs play at commerce & carry out a haggling & bargaining contest to receive more resources or to expend fewer. The PC's inventory & economic resources are tested with encounters of this type.



Key – the key game is the game of magic which entails esoteric knowledge & the use of complex formulae to gather magical power & avoid magical danger.



Harp – the entertainment game – the PCs use this as an opportunity to perform & engage the rest of the group with some kind of performance. This type of encounter utilizes PC ingenuity & clever tricks as well as their in-game & out of game performances.



Spider – the skill game – here the PCs are tested with their skills & knacks to accomplish some specific skill-dependent challenge – such as a break-in or a mountain ascension.



Scale – the ability game – the PCs are tested according to their attributes & abilities – it is a test of their personal fortitude & capacity as determined by fate alone.

Your invocation – based on your character's class you can call one of two invocations in a scene – for instance – if you've stumbled upon a serious combat in which the Ref is using a Sword – you can choose to disrupt the combat by using your Rose – for example – to force a diplomatic interlude – or the use of your Scale – as an example – to make the combat a test of statistics rather than combat puissance.

Your access to these invocations begins with a single use of each of your available invocations. Further invocations are gained when your character follows a particular alignment. When you follow an ethic to the point where you are awarded 10 points in that ethic – you receive an invocation which correlates to the alignment in question.

Kindness Rose	Ego Crow
Belligerence Sword	Civility Key
Nobility Crown	Impulse Harp
Defiance Tree	Audacity Spider
Piety Scepter	Fairness Scale

Pulling it together – here's how these invocations look when applied against a bear.



Bribing the Bear

When invoking the crow, the PCs are expending their fungible resources to bypass the bear. In this case something is being removed from the PCs inventory to pacify the beast. Bears, it is assumed, have no interest in money – so an encounter resolved this way must include something a bear does want. PCs could attempt to pass of food – depleting their rations – or they could utilize some type of trap – removing it from inventory – or they could even distract the bear with an unwanted pet (or possibly a follower). In all cases the bear rolls it's Saving Throw when anything is offered to it, and this can continue until the bear fails its save or the PCs cease to offer it things – if they are inclined to stop, the encounter type will change – but they have only a 50% chance of recovering each of their cast aside possessions.



Challenging the Bear

The bear is focused on one of the PCs – this encounter is an intense conflict of strength & will, a duel between two forces that must be confronted head on. In this case the bear squares off against a single opponent – they battle to a certain point at which a winner is determined. In this context the combat takes the form of turns – one acts & then the other follows. Maneuvers & combat statistics are used until one of the two either retreats or falls. In a battle like this the PC is aided by their own courage & vitality but above all speed. Each time a target takes damage in the duel they subtract 1 from all the rolls that follow until the end of the duel. Duels have not special notation – the character & the bear both use their combat statistics & should energetically describe the action to keep events vivid for the other players.



Soothing the Bear

In this scenario the bear appears on the scene unexpectedly but it is not bellowing or chasing the PCs – it is making up its mind whether it should though. While it's a wild beast & not likely to tolerate much in the way of social interaction, it's not very bright & is easily calmed. Here the PCs can perform their way through the encounter. They can use their own creativity & license as players – or defer to the performing skill of their characters – or a hybridization of the two options. Performance of music, puppetry, dance or other related arts are enough to soothe the bear and send it off without conflict. A test of this nature utilizes any number of checks that the Referee determines based on the quality of the PC's ideas & their character's skill. Encounters of this type are free-form and should be fun & quick paced, but can easily spin into danger, they have no distinct notation beyond that they are Artistic.



Slaying the Bear

PCs can decide to Fight. When a result indicates that the encounter type has changed – it very often changes to this – each monster has a default method of interacting with PCs and the Bear's is definitely fighting. The Bear has a lot of HD & many & variable attack forms – which it will employ in a fight. On the map the Bear doesn't use terrain very effectively but it does fight with a terrible ferocity. Given that this is among the more traditional encounter types – its notation is baked into the bear's other statistics as are the PCs stats.



Eluding the Bear

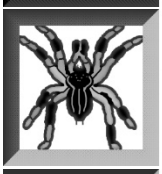
Woods savvy characters can enter into a contest with the bear in which they attempt to elude or otherwise escape the bear through the use of superior knowledge of the area, more skill at navigation & generally better survival abilities. In this case the characters enter into a truncated version of the overland movement game where they attempt to overcome the bear's own abilities. If this succeeds & the players overtake the bear's scores – they elude- or even trap the bear – if they fail, then the bear catches them & the encounter type changes.



A Prayer for the Bear

ar.

When the communion is formed the Bear interacts spiritually in the form of a long dream of sleep, an incessant hunger & a deep tiredness, its day making up a ye
When the experience peaks the PC must save vs. Spells. If they fail, the encounter ends with the PC attempting the change taking the role of & the statistics of an ally to the bear. If the encounter succeeds the PC has gained attunement with the bear & may attempt other encounter types to gain it as an ally or follower



In the Bear's Cave

The PCs enter a cave & discover that in its circuitous & dark depths there is a bear, a dangerous one & huge. Choosing to avoid facing the bear they engage in a series of skill checks to avoid confronting the bear at all. The PCs must scale walls, move quietly, hide in shadows & listen for the bear's movements. This is a tense situation which can turn ugly at a moment's notice. Because it is not winter, yet the bear is not hibernating – this is a difficult encounter so the PCs must succeed a total of 4 d10 Skill checks before they make 6 skill checks. They have few chances to fail & the odds are against them. **This type of encounter is noted as Skill 4>6 d10 Stealth** with the descriptor stealth indicating, broadly, which skills are applicable in the encounter.



A Rose Colored Bear

Injured, Cornered & Afraid – the PCs stumble across a bear who is suffering. They can deal with it however they'd like, of course, but they have an opportunity here to befriend the creature, help it & take it in. In this situation the bear is open to being recruited as a follower or ally of some kind – it just takes the right types of social tests & language skills & the bear can be brought on board. Social dice are rolled sequentially until the PCs can get to a total of 15 before they roll 4 tests. Should they fail the bear's allies – maybe it's mother – appear on the scene and the conflict changes type. We note this encounter as Social 15>4.



Enchanting the Bear

PCs can choose magic as the solution to their encounter with the bear. In this situation the innate magic that the PC's possess allows them to manipulate the situation & the scene so that they can overcome the bear's danger. This effect can take more than one form. In one instance, the PCs simply utilize their spellcasting abilities to tame, kill or in some other way invalidate the bear. In this case the bear rolls a Saving Throw – and if it passes the encounter will change type as the magic has failed. PCs can also forgo spellcasting & utilize innate magical knowledge – by making a d10 Sorcery, Alchemy or Theurgy check they can bypass the bear in the form of a ritualistic performance that magically pacifies or defeats the bear. Should this check fail though – the encounter type changes.
This type of interaction is noted as Spell Level X (where X is the level of spell that is required to defeat the bear – commonly it's HD) /d10Magic Skill
Spell Level 3 /d10 Magic Skill



Bear Breakfast Meeting

Surprised While Out Hunting – owing to their skill and stealth, the PCs meet a bear who was not expecting them. It's on the prowl for food & considers the PCs good candidates for a late breakfast. How they respond here will determine how the bear faces off against them. They need to seem big, threatening & dangerous & they need to do it quick. To get the bear to leave the PCs alone requires that they make 3 Statistics checks- a d20 WIS check, to know what to do first, a d20 CON check to seem formidable & not worth fighting & lastly a d20 STR check to give the bear a decent bop on the nose, to dissuade it from actually biting. If they fail 2 checks before passing all 3 – the encounter changes its type as the bear realizes it may eat them. **This type of encounter is noted as: Stat 3>2 d20WIS-d20CON-d20STR.**

The Travel Sub-Game

This subsystem is used when characters wish to traverse significant distances. It utilizes an abstract system of measurement which can be called *Spaces* or – if you wish *Hexes* – following the traditional practice of switching between square & hexagonal grids for local & regional scales respectively. A Hex is, again, an abstract quantity of distance & characters traverse them at a pace specified by their species & modified by their statistics.

The pace is merely the basic outline of one's overland travel. Should you wish to traverse a long distance without invoking this sub-game, you would probably rely on pace alone and move along quickly.

Getting deeper into this system though – there are a variety of moving parts. The system itself is intended to challenge players with conflicting options that need to be balanced. Think of each of these modifiers as a kind of slider – adjusting one up or down will affect the rest of the apparatus – so each decision affects every other aspect of this sub-game.

The areas of choice for PCs are:

Rate – how fast you go

Caution – how vigilant you are concerning encounters

Stealth – how secretive you are in your movements

Comfort – how pleasant you make the journey for yourself

Baggage – how much you are bringing along

Each character has a base rate that's determined by their species with a minimum of 1 and a maximum of 3. Remember that this rate refers to hexes or spaces and that these are abstractions – not intended to indicate an actual running or walking speed. That said Rate is derived from your character's height & physical attributes.



You can moderate your rate to be more vigilant – going faster means you're more likely to stumble into situations while going slower means you're less likely to have encounters you don't want – but also that you'll take longer to get where you're going.

You can be sneaky. If you want to avoid pursuit & go undetected while traveling – you're going to have to go pretty slowly. Making your priority Stealth means that you'll be less detectable on your journey.

Comfort means taking time each day to rest & cook & eat. Prioritizing comfort means you'll go slower & be more detectable, but you'll recover from wounds more quickly.

For example –

You and your crew are traversing enemy territory – it's dangerous but you feel you need to move quickly instead of cautiously.

You prioritize speed & make traveling light your plan. Let's say you use this array:

I – **Rate** III – **Stealth** V – **Baggage**

II – **Caution** IV – **Comfort**

In this case you move at 150% the speed of your slowest character.

Should there be an encounter of any type you avoid being ambushed on a notice roll of 1, 2 or 3.

You may attempt to sneak around without being detected by making d10 Skill rolls – these rolls are usually Hide in Shadows & Move Quietly, but depending on terrain you may have to make other rolls.

Your punishing pace means that each day you travel everyone takes d4 HP damage.

A total lack of packing means that you must make 5 daily checks to find food, water & shelter & to traverse the land successfully. The difficulty of these checks is based upon the terrain traversed. Usually these rolls are Navigate & Forage checks.

An alternative example –

You have abundant resources & chose to take a leisurely trip through friendly territory. You choose to prioritize based on having a pleasant journey & use this array:

I – **Baggage** III – **Caution** V – **Stealth**

II -**Comfort** IV – **Rate**

In this case you are spending 100 Silver each day – to take advantage of dining establishments, inns & a whole array of services – from toll-roads to ferries. It's expensive going – but you needn't trouble yourself with any type of check to avoid exhaustion.

You get plenty of rest but are perhaps a little distracted by the money you're spending – as a result, you roll a d20 to test recovery (a d20 CON check, with the value you succeed the roll by representing HP you regain). You make this roll daily.

You're reasonably cautious of highwaymen & ambushes – meaning that should there even be an encounter you're surprised on a roll greater than 2.

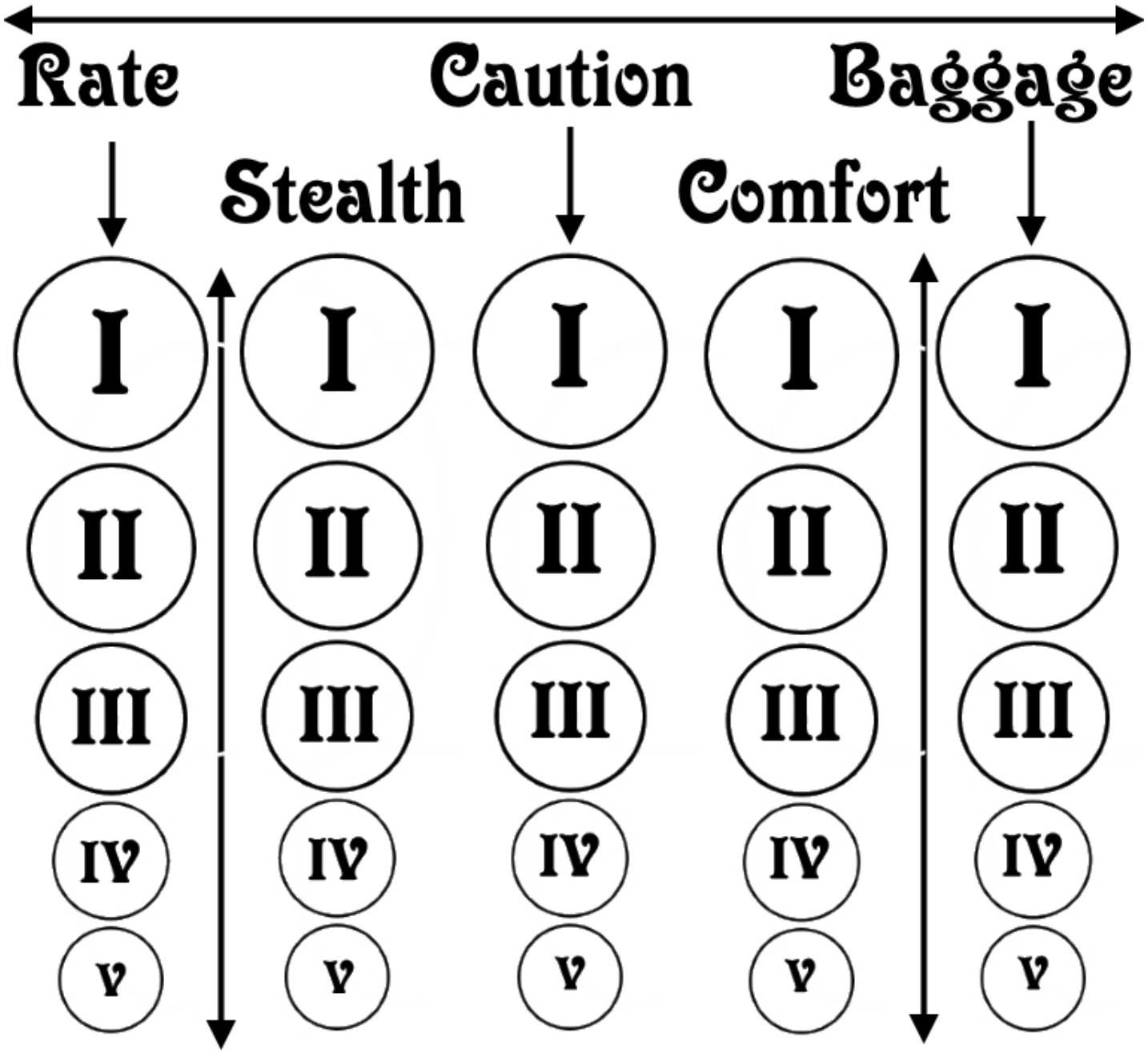
You keep up a sensible rate, going at 25% of the speed of your slowest character – or at least one space/hex each day.

You're altogether visible, given that you've deprioritized stealth – so you make no rolls to avoid detection, in fact – everyone knows where you are.

Altering your priorities from day to day is possible – depending on the environment you're traveling through. You may be able to instantly chose a new priority for the next day – or you may need to spend some time reorganizing – this is a matter for the Referee to decide.

In fact, the referee's role in this sub-game is to determine the types & treachery of the obstacles you'll face. They'll do this by constructing the geography of your journey.

Typically this geography is fashioned well in advance when the Referee has built up the world. When mapping territory & determining the kinds of terrains that lie between any two points on the map, the referee will establish what types of biomes exist & what types of encounters & experiences are possible within them.



The Referee will answer each of your priorities with their own system of priorities – each established behind the scenes- and possibly kept secret.

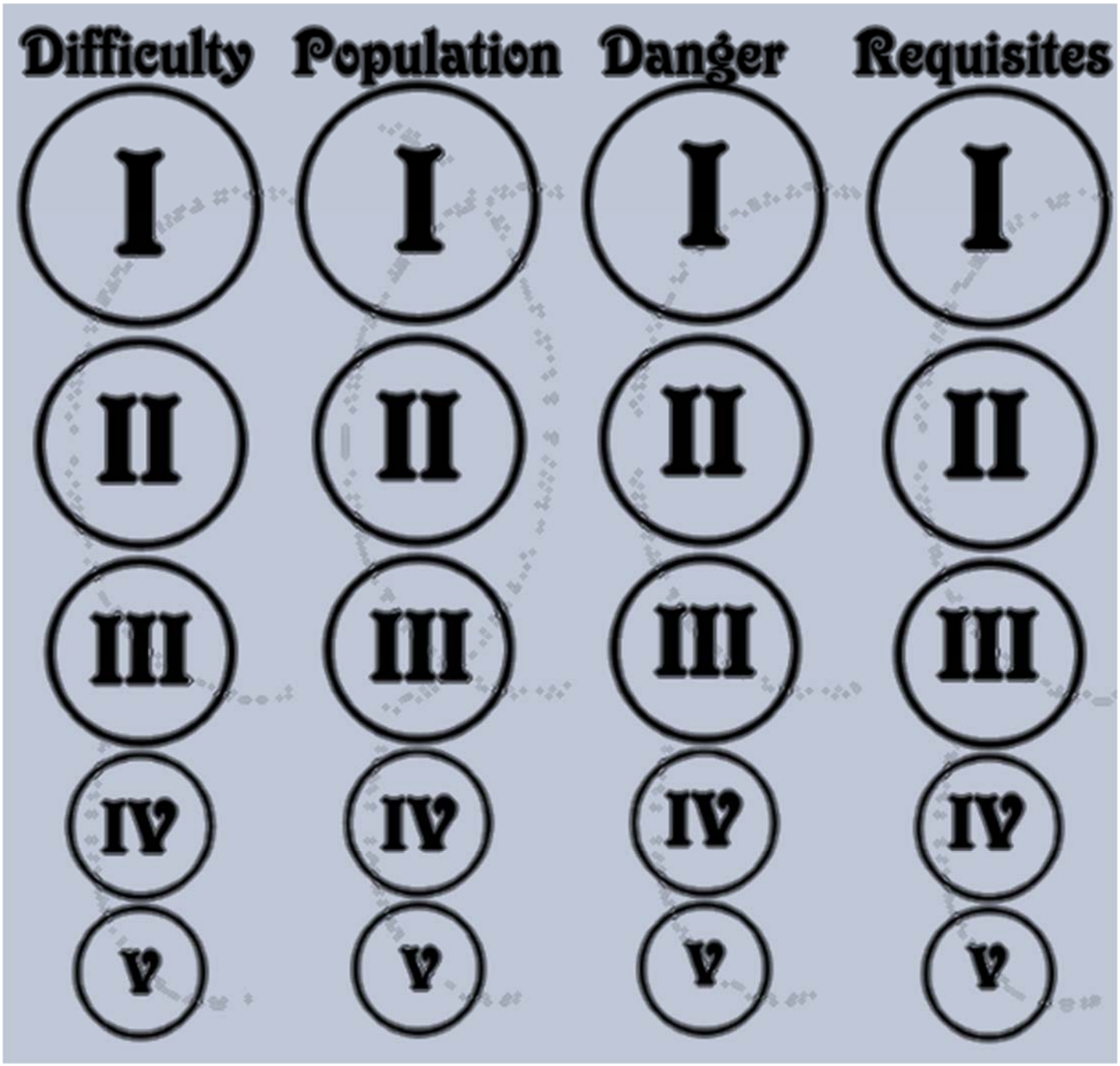
For every space you traverse the Referee has different priorities to apply as well. The Referee prioritizes between these 4 aspects:

Difficulty – How rough the terrain is to navigate

Population – the density of people, animals, monsters & other encounter types

Danger - How treacherous the terrain is itself – including weather & other environmental phenomena

Requisites – How much specialized gear is needed to cross this location.



Difficulty is the larger sense of what the terrain is like – a steep mountainous area could be quite difficult to move across. Difficulty modifies Pace – so once the PCs have established the pace they're attempting your application of terrain specifics will modify that. In some cases, the terrain is so difficult to pass that it cannot be traversed at all without exceptional stamina.

Population is the likelihood of having an encounter. Ideally, you'll have some sense of the types of encounters possible all built into a table of some kind. Depending on how population is prioritized you'll be making greater or fewer checks for random encounters.

Danger is the score assigned to the route's various hardships. Cliffs, rickety bridges, lightning strikes & lava flows fall into this category. The higher the danger, the more skill checks the PCs will have to make – as the Referee – you'll be required to define the danger & determine which types of skill check the PCs will have to make & the consequences of failure. Commonly you'll deal damage to the PCs based upon the danger – when they fail a check – between d10 & d4 damage could be inflicted based upon how dangerous the route is.

Requisites indicates whether special equipment needs to be applied to the route. Characters who can't breathe water for instance may require a boat to traverse the ocean, or they may need camels to cross a desert. The severity of the requirements indicates how expensive they are to procure and maintain. Players who can't fulfill the base requirements either can't make the trip, or they'll experience very serious setbacks.

Of course, as the Ref you have the ability & option to bend rules. While the PCs must apply their priorities between I-V – you've no such strict requirement. You could set all the priorities to IV – for instance, indicating a really easy way to go. You could also set them all to I – indicating that the journey is impossibly foolhardy & dangerous. Your choices here indicate the reward that the journey will offer. For every I prioritized item you should give all the surviving PCs 100 Xp. For every II



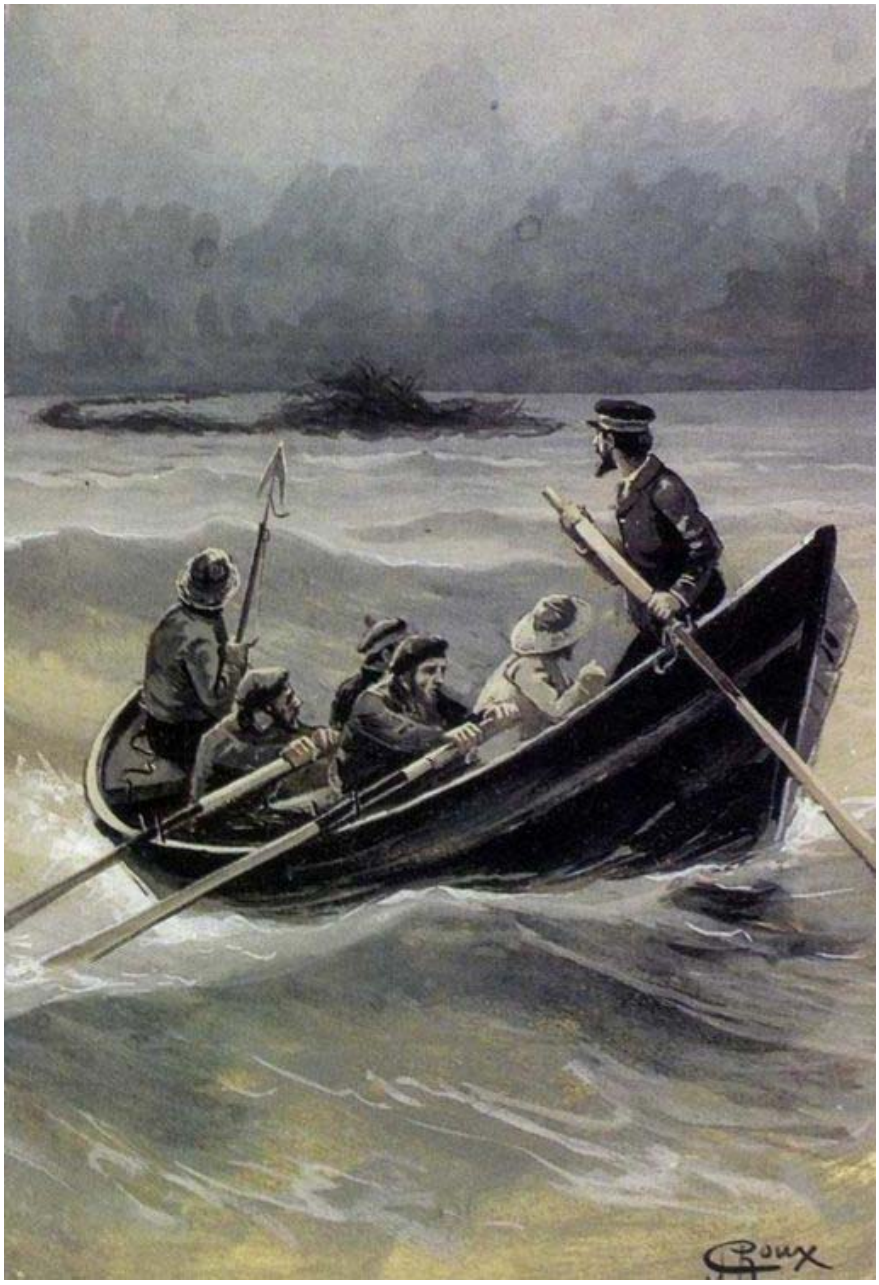
prioritized item you should give 50 Xp. 25 Xp for a priority III & 10 for priority IV. These Xp awards are per-day that the journey takes – but shouldn't be awarded until after the journey is completed.

As an example let us say you plan the route the PCs will take while using the first example above. The PCs have prioritized like so:

I – Rate; II – Caution; III – Stealth; IV – Comfort; V – Baggage

Already we know that this is enemy territory – you decide that the route they're planning on taking has the following priorities in opposition:

I – Danger; II – Population; III – Requisites; IV – Difficulty



You set the Danger at I - highly dangerous. The PCs could be discovered & they're traversing occupied lands with dangerous fortifications. You set the danger at I and determine that to pass the fortifications the PCs will need 4 successful rolls & decide on Hear Noise, Detect Traps, Siege & Joke. The PCs will need to succeed on all of these checks at d10 difficulty. If they fail they will take d10 damage. For these checks – only one PC must pass the check & it's up to you whether they can traverse the danger(s) present using fewer than all 4 skills. For instance, you could allow that PCs are able to Joke their way through all the checkpoints & interrogations they encounter on the route. Failing any of these rolls means fleeing danger, getting shaken up by blown cover, falling into traps & so on – on each failed check the PCs each roll d10 and take that amount of damage.

Population is set to II – so there is a dense quantity of people or monsters or whatever constitutes an enemy in this situation. This means that there will be 2 daily checks for an encounter (not that there will absolutely be 2 encounters). Note that because the PCs prioritized Stealth – any encounter rolls made may not actually occur as encounters. It's possible for the PCs to outmaneuver enemies & potential encounters – if the PCs pass all of their requisite stealth rolls – you can still roll encounters – but the PCs should have the option to avoid them. Again, this system assumes that you have some kind of table available for determining the likelihood & composition of random encounters. Requirements are set to III – Normal. The PCs need whatever gear they're ordinarily have. However- because the PCs set their Baggage to V – that is, they've not brought anything at all along with them – you'll need to force them into either skill rolls or encounters. Whenever Requirements are a higher priority than Baggage – the difference in priority must be applied as an added encounter or an added quantity of danger. In this case you can say that the PCs really should have identity papers or passports & that without them – they're having to bluff their way through customs checkpoints & random inspections by patrolling authorities.

Difficulty is set to IV – Easy the rate is increased by 50% - on top of the increase in rate that the PCs have committed to by prioritizing Rate. For all the dangers they're facing the PCs are traveling on good roads through an easy climate – so they go quite quickly.

Combining all of this together you create a narrative of the day's travel.

The PCs are going quite quickly – running in fact, but they're running over well-maintained roads & they make excellent time – crossing twice their normal distance. All the while they are cautious for ambushes & traps. Two encounters are possible, given the population dynamics of the area they're crossing & you roll up two such encounters. Fortunately the PCs are vigilant & roll low on their notice die- meaning that they avoid an encounter, should they choose, or they take the potential opponents by surprise. On the second encounter roll they're not so lucky & they roll up an encounter. The PCs have prioritized Stealth though – so they're making those rolls, using d10s. Assuming the PCs are gifted ninjas, they pass these rolls and thereby have the option to bypass the encounter you've rolled. Should they have failed any of those checks though – you could say that they are unable to avoid the encounter, or that they're detected. Through their Notice checks – using Caution – and their Skill checks – using Stealth – the PCs should have an opportunity to avoid all random encounters – provided they're skilled & perceptive enough. The PCs don't' prioritize comfort at all. They run at a maniacal pace & every one of them suffers d4 hits as a result of this punishing journey. They take this damage each day that they press forward on the route so long as they don't realign their priorities. Because it's dangerous going through fortified & inhabited lands - the trip is dangerous. The Siege & Joke skills are required & the PCs have to talk their way through some tight spots – failing that, they'll take damage – either from falling from difficult climbs, getting beaten by aggressive officers or even falling into traps. The PCs must pass the skill checks you've indicated to overcome the danger – with each check being narrated as a small scene. Failed checks indicate damage done.

Finally the route requires some bare quantity of gear - gear the PCs didn't bring – so you divide up the difference between another danger check & another encounter – meaning there's one of each. Here again, Stealth & Caution should help the PCs, if the dice favor them.

At the end of this first day of journeying – let's say the PCs traverse the entire distance they set out to cross. In this case, they take the damage they've been dealt, experience whatever setbacks they've accrued & are awarded Xp for their trouble – in this instance 185 Xp apiece – for each of the priorities I-IV being assigned.

Taking the second example from above – let's say the PCs prioritize their journey favoring equipment & ease like so:

I – Baggage; II -Comfort; III – Caution; IV – Rate; V – Stealth

And let's say that the journey is a trip by boat, across the water – meaning that you prioritize the route with the following characteristics:

I – Requirements; III – Danger

You decide that this is a fairly routine journey & while the PCs have the right amount of preparation – that is, their prioritized Baggage is not less than the prioritized Requirements – you decide that the only real threat is the possibility of a storm – which you describe by prioritizing Danger at III. You

determine that there's no population & no chance for a random encounter at sea & you don't prioritize difficulty at all – meaning that the rate isn't modified by the route. In this case the rate is set by the conveyance (more on this below). With a Danger of III the PCs must pass only 2 easy d6 skill checks – you decide on Navigation & Numeracy – to properly steer around a waterspout. The PCs fumble the dice & fail one of these rolls – meaning that they all take d6 damage. Fortunately – their ship is quite comfortable – so at the end of the day they're allowed to roll to recover any lost HP. The journey is easy & uneventful – save for a few bumps around the waterspout. The PCs don't lose HP, don't make exhaustion rolls or anything of that nature. They do have to spend money though – 100 Sp in fact – the cost of keeping their crew & ship & provisions all in order. In exchange though, they receive 125 Xp apiece – for sailing over the ocean blue.

Base Rates

Rate is set by Height & modified by your statistics. Modifications that reduce Pace below 1 do not become negative. A -1 rate should be considered ½.

Given these characteristics you can extrapolate the pace of mounts – adding an additional +1 to the pace for every pair of legs the mount has.

For instance, a horse standing 7 feet tall & with good average statistics will go 6 spaces per day. An unmounted halfling with average statistics meanwhile may only make it 1 space per day.

Conveyances all have their own pace as well. A wagon uses the speed of the creature pulling it – less 1 – which may negate the gain for having an extra pair of legs. A ship's rate is set by its means of propulsion, number of crew & a whole variety of traits beyond those.



Travel Options	Priority				
	I	II	III	IV	V
Rate	Move at 1.5x Pace	Move at 1x Pace	Move at 1/2 Pace or 1 space	Move at 1/4 Pace or 1 Space	Move at 1/2 Space
Caution	Notice on a roll of 1-4	Notice on a roll of 1-3	Notice on a roll of 1-2	Notice on a roll of 1	No chance to notice
Stealth	Make d6 Skill Checks	Make d8 Skill Checks	Make d10 Skill Checks	Make d12 Skill Checks	Make no skill checks
Comfort	Use d12 for recovery	Use d20 for recovery	No recovery possible	Lose d4 Hits	Lose d6 Hits
Baggage	Spend 100 Sp/ day - no checks	Spend 10 Sp /day - 1 check	Spend 1 Sp / day - 2 checks	Spend 0 Sp /day 3 checks	Spend 0 Sp / day 5 checks

Route Options	Priority			
	I	II	III	IV
Difficulty	Avoid exhaustion to move at half	Rate is halved	Rate is normal	Rate is incresed by 50%
Population	3 Encounter checks daily	2 Encounter checks daily	1 Encounter check daily	No Encounter checks
Danger	Make 4 Skill Checks / d10	Make 3 Skill Checks / d8	Make 2 Skill Checks / d6	Make 1 Skill Check /d4
Requirements	Extensive- Vessels & crews	High - mounts & conveyances	Normal	Easy - halve baggage costs
Experience	100	50	25	10

Base Movement Rates			
Height	Rate	Average of STR, DEX & CON	
Less than 3 feet	1 space / day	Less than 8	- 1 space per day
3 - 4 feet	2 spaces / day	8 - 12	no modification
4 - 6 feet	3 spaces / day	13 - 15	+1 space per day
6 - 8 feet	4 spaces / day	16 +	+2 spaces per day





The Resources Sub-Game

A subsystem all about your possessions & fungible resources such as food, water & especially money, this system emphasizes preparedness, ingenuity & improvisation.

The Resource Game is precise. That is, exact quantities of items & goods are important to the game's functioning – so you should use this when you've got accurate records of what your character has, and what of their total possessions they have on their person.

You can invoke this game & have it fail spectacularly – as with the other games – but a failure here is one that reflects not so much unlucky rolls by overmatched players – but rather – a dearth of useful possessions – that said, this game should be invoked when you've got a fair quantity of confidence in your ability to circumvent or engage in a situation using the things your character owns.

This game is very fluid & when the situation brings it into focus it becomes a narrative undergirded by a kind of auction. The PC(s) collaborate to determine what they're willing to sacrifice & the Referee determines what amount(s) and what kind(s) of items will overcome the challenge.

For instance – the PCs find themselves in the high mountains on a snowy night – wolves patrol nearby & the PC's hear their howling – and worse, their nearby snarls out in the darkness. Deciding to make this encounter a resource game – the PCs collaborate & determine that they've got torches, oils and some spare meat to invest in avoiding a fight. The Ref determines that there are 6 wolves & that they're very hungry – hence their commitment to attack a group of people. Since the main motive of the wolves is food – the Referee determines that food will solve the fight & it's only a matter of how much. The PC's make the first move- lighting their torches & revealing 6 starved looking wolves surrounding them – they quickly dispose of the food they've committed to this enterprise – 4 rations. The Ref determines that they're not exceeding the Wolves threshold – since they need 6 rations – the PCs counter that their torches are frightening enough to wolves that they'll have to accept the 4 rations & the Ref agrees – the PCs spend some time watching starving wolves fight over scraps. Note – that nothing prevents the PCs from offering more food, from reconsidering their offer once the wolves are revealed or from deciding that starved wolves are weak enough to overpower without sacrificing any food. In all cases they've committed at least their torches to the resolution – so they've expended resources toward its resolution.



The resources game tends to take on this character – that of bypassing a situation

through superior wealth. Take the same situation as above but substitute bandits for wolves. The PCs, assuming they know that the bandits are people – commit to a quantity of money that they'll offer as a bribe in order to be left alone. They offer this money & the Ref notes that it isn't enough. The bandits demand more & the PCs can follow a second round of bidding – this time they raise the quantity of money & also add that they're going to commit their swords to the conflict – they put their hands on the hilts – adding to menace. The Bandits in turn raise using their weapons & demand yet more money – it's entirely possible that the PCs are losing this conflict – will lose this conflict if they haven't enough money to bribe the bandits properly. Defeat here could take a few forms – first the bandits could accept the money & then just return to attack the PCs later (after all they know the PCs have money & don't want to fight) – or they could just attack the PCs outright- in which case they lose the money they've demanded if they lose the fight – or they could begin to demand the PCs swords or other accoutrements – seeking a richer pot. The bidding and the escalation can continue – and the PCs could conceivably begin to bargain with the bandits – making this encounter more of a social test.

One can see that the resource gambit against other people verges very close to the social arena (and vice versa) so these sub-games can be seen as related – and one might make social tests alongside the offering of bribes – creating a hybrid game involving a large amount of acting & PC-Referee back & forth.

The resources game really comes into play when bypassing less socially involved interactions. A pair of examples where this variant game can really save the PCs effort & time:

Example - The PCs venture into a dungeon which is known to have many very dangerous death traps. The entire situation is one where life & death are but a hairsbreadth apart & flinching just once during a skill-check could prove fatal.



Example – The PCs are hunting the Disaster of Cloud Bog – a fabled creature of terrible appetite & unthinkable power. It has haunted this region for centuries & the lore of the Disaster is well documented, albeit, in difficult to find books.

When facing traps – the PCs entering the dungeon decide to make the exploration of the dungeon a challenge of their resources – they bid quite high – adding all of their torches, lanterns, rope, pitons & ladders to the mix alongside some more esoteric items like a collapsible pole, a bag of marbles, some ball bearings, jars of oil, incense & a pet parakeet. They're given carte blanche to apply these items as they see fit to the escalating challenges

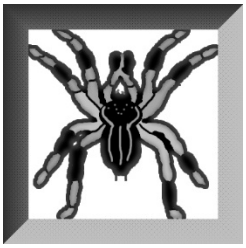
as described by the Referee – who must operate with the understanding that these items will be used in place of any skill checks or statistical checks. The PCs must realize that for every challenge they overcome they're removing these items from the pool that they've pledged to overcome the dungeon – thus it's quite possible that they run out of gear before getting to the end of the dungeon's tricks. When creating the dungeon – or even the individual rooms or traps of the dungeon the Referee is assigning a resource value – this is the number of tools that the PCs will have to use to get past it. This is a matter of art rather than a strict rule – but the Referee will have to make rulings regarding the value of the materials in question – for instance a pit trap may have an indicated value of 2 – meaning there's an expectation that at least 2 pieces of gear will need to be sacrificed to the pit in order to bypass it. But let's assume that the PCs have committed a canary and a spool of string to this challenge – these are uniquely inappropriate to the trap so the Referee decides to raise the trap's value to 3 – meaning that the items won't surpass the trap & that either more resources need to be applied – or some added effort needs to be applied. On the other hand – let's say that the PCs have a portable ramp that they carry with them – committing this item to the challenge is probably a bit of overkill on top of that – so the PC's commitment of 1 item to the challenge is, the Referee rules, enough to bypass the trap.

In this situation the resources committed to the dungeon are eliminating some quantity of skill & stat checks – circumscribing a good portion of the danger.

But the case of the Disaster of Cloud Bog is entirely different. Certainly PCs could attempt to apply resources to the monster, but it happens that it wants no food & loves only destruction. They could, possibly chose to apply their swords to the creature – but this entails more of a combat scenario and one they're quite unlikely to win. Instead – let's say they choose to commit resources in this order – first, they pay the charge the antiquarian book dealer wishes for access to his library. Once there they gain a book of legendry concerning the beast & learn that its great weakness is a complex potion that needs to be applied to a spear made of a specific type of wood – this entails a few more adventures – gathering the wood, forging the spear & distilling the potion – now they've put together the resources to defeat the monster & they only need to find it. This is another series of adventures that lead to the culmination of the quest- the spearing of the beast & its defeat at their hands.

In this situation the commitment of resources to the creature's defeat wasn't exactly bid up as a deterrent to the battle – rather – it was paid in advance through the PCs' legwork & effort – which culminate in a quick fight – here the adventure arc is a Resource game – but the entire adventure takes on many parts, including social, skill & combat challenges.

The essential idea behind the resource sub-game though remains the same in both examples – bypassing a problem through the **sacrifice** of materials recorded on the character's equipment record. These types of challenge shouldn't be concluded without the removal of materials – either money or possessions, but the expense of these items guarantees some amount of success being achieved.



The Skills Sub-Game

PCs accomplish things through the use of skill throughout the course of the game all the time – so why is there and entire sub-game devoted to a mechanic that is a matter of course? The idea behind the invocation of this game is that PC's can overcome obstacles through the clever use of skills without having to resort to alternatives such as fighting or magic. They rely on their learned abilities to overcome threats.

A Referee can build a skills game to be a series of challenges that are overcome by training & cleverness as well, making a skills game means that you're describing a series of pitfalls & obstacles that need to be overcome through the use of innate talent.

Here's an example of a Skills based game:

The PC's are tasked with abducting a noble from a formal gathering – a party. This party is being held on the cliffside palace of the Winter King. They have a few options (this is an RPG after all – the can do whatever they want!) but they choose to rely on their adventurer's know-how & make a stealth mission their plan. The Referee has to set targets for these skills & the PCs have to determine which of their skills they want to apply.

It begins with climbing the cliff face. The Referee determines that this is quite difficult & requires a d10 skill check just to attempt and that the cliff is high enough that it is a matter of endurance. The PC's indicate that one among them is going to plant a rope & use it to help the others along – meaning that they are choosing one character to make the requisite checks. The Ref decides that the character will need to succeed at 3 Scale Walls checks before making 5 rolls – that is, if they fail 2 of these checks before passing 3 they fail the check & probably face dangerous consequences.

Assuming that the climb is successful the PCs now need to infiltrate the garden party. Two of the players decide to sneak around at the edge of the party to locate the target – they make independent Hide in Shadows checks – which the Referee determines aren't too difficult – after all they've approached from up a cliff face who would suspect the party to be invaded from such a direction? The pair of them must make d8 Hide in Shadows checks. Since the pair remain stationary only one check is required apiece – but each time they want to reposition within the shadows – another check is required.

It happens that the party is a masquerade & it's not at all obvious who the target of the kidnapping is. The PCs must watch closely & they make Investigation checks to determine who is the right target. This is not too easy at all & each of the players makes the attempt independently – d10 checks for each of them. One among the PCs identifies the target & sees them going inside from out of the garden. This PC wanders away while the others remain at the party – perhaps distracting the guests using Jokes or Trickery – to draw attention away. These checks are easier – since the attendees are in their cups & looking for a good time anyway – so the checks are made at d6. The lone PC follows the mark & must move silently (d8) and open locks (d8) to get to the target. Quickly applying a sleeping drug (d10 – poisoning) the PC sneaks away & waits for the poison to take effect. This requires a bit more cover, so the other PCs must continue distracting the partygoers – now they must make more

checks opting for vocals (d6) and Languages (d6 again) to present themselves as foreign ambassadors who've come to the party but can't produce their invitation. This distraction grants the poisoner cover & they are able to lower the sleeping target down the cliff using their rope & the Siege skill at d8.



For every roll that the PCs make the Referee must choose a difficulty – between d6 & d12, the higher – the more difficult -and they must consider a range, between 1 & 5 – this reflects the window of time during which the skill is being used & indicates the number of rolls that need to be made – So the initial scale walls check is **d10/3.** The rate of failure is always 1 less than the time range – that is – if only one check is required, the skill check fails on a failed roll. If 2 checks are required, this means that the skill check fails as soon as a roll is failed – but if 3 are required the PCs can roll a failure & still manage to succeed – so long as they don't fail twice.

Note that, as with all the sub-games – there is a lot of shifted focus throughout the events described – at some point the distracting PCs could begin socializing – creating a social game & the kidnapping could well be an assassination with the stealthiest PC breaking off into a fight with the target. This doesn't mean that the skills game ends – it's just that like all the other games – it can accommodate aspects of the other sub games.

Skill games offer a high risk / reward ratio. Referees need to consider harsh consequences for failure – for instance – instant death from falling off of a cliff – or being taken prisoner when exposed as a party-crasher – or even accidentally poisoning oneself. The skill sub-game is a high stakes caper situation in which failure is very dangerous indeed. The rewards are commensurately high in terms of Xp awards – each d12 check gives 200 Xp and each d10 gives 100. 50 for a d8 check & 25 for a d6. Succeeding at all the rolls made during the caper is worth doubling the reward.



Magic Sub-Games

There's very little use to creating a magical setting with magical creatures & treasures & then disallowing or limiting magic. You put magic in your game because you want magic! Here's a way to include it in a useful system that's meant to engage all your PC's – not just the spellcasters.

First – there is a distinction between spellcasting PCs and non-magical PCs. That's obvious & true – some characters have spellbooks & can throw spells while others don't have these. In the course of play spells come in handy & can be used in a variety of ways to overcome obstacles & to outmaneuver the Referee's threats. That's certainly by design – and in some cases you could look at such endeavors as being part of this sub-game.



Playing the game is a fluid experience – different characters & different classes of abilities are going to rise to the forefront & dominate in different arenas – and some of these will plain outclass others in a given situation. The focus of the game doesn't shift in those cases – rather the focus is on the PCs and the Ref's interaction – invoking the sub-game means that the focus has really changed – in the way that a roll for initiative is a new phase of the game where new kinds of detail & rules arise that aren't used in the same way outside of that specialized sequence.

Occult Ceremonial Practices

One Magic Sub-Game is based around a single, stated objective. Kill the wicked prince, for instance. If the PCs wish to do this by magical means – using spells & sorcery, that is possible, but by no means guaranteed. Magic responds to Will – force of will exerted to bend reality around a caster's intent. It's not a trivial thing & the contest of wills between the spellcaster & the target is often a matter of some real intensity.

The Magical sub-game all follows intention – so the clearly stated intent is the first thing to be determined & it sets many of the bars which PCs must overcome.

In the case of the wicked prince – the Referee determines that the Prince is powerful – with 5 HD. This number will determine much of what comes next. Each HD sets an interval – an amount of time that will be needed to affect the magic being used. The interval itself is either months, weeks, days or hours and this depends on the type of effect being sought. To kill the wicked prince the Referee decides 5 days is the proper timeline.

Next the PCs must commit their magical efforts to the cause. Wizards have different schools of magic to use & so do Shamans & Priests – when preparing the magic everyone who has access to a spell-type within the group must commit to using at least one of these. For instance – a character with Wizardry commits to using *Curse* magic to kill the wicked prince while a red prana shaman who's along commits *Calling* magic to the effort. Once the school of magic is determined the PCs who aren't casters will begin to involve themselves. Here, skills will substitute for magical ability – Each participant must make a **Sorcery**, **Alchemy**, **Theurgy** or **Composition** or **Building** check – the target of these checks is up to the player rolling – but making the check more difficult adds to the effects to come.

Assuming that everyone who can contribute – is contributing the ritual is designed. In this case the spell is requiring 5 days to cast – including 5 days of creating potions, creating ritual circles, chanting the spells & seeking greater knowledge of the subject through meditation & trances – the PCs all contribute to this as they are able.

Required Time		**Skill Rolls**		**Spell Range**	
HD < 2	Hours	d6	+1 Spell Level	Hours	10'
HD >2	Days	d8	+2 Spell Levels	Days	100'
HD > 5	Weeks	d10	+3 Spell Levels	Weeks	1000'
HD > 10	Months	d12	+4 Spell Levels	Months	10,000'

Remember- those committing their spell schools can't make skill checks here.

Failed checks increase the time for the casting by another interval. So – let's assume that the party attempting to kill the prince through magic has 5 members. The Shaman & Wizard have committed their magic to the effect while the other 3 are making skill checks. One makes a d10 alchemy check & succeeds – adding 3 points to the spell for both Shaman & Wizard. Another attempt a d6 Sorcery check & fails – adding another day to the spell's casting time. The third non-caster makes a d6 Composition check – successfully codifying the magic into a scroll that is to be read as part of the final casting. This adds 1 to the Shaman & the Wizard's spell levels.

Now the spell itself is designed. This spell doesn't occupy any space in any spellbook & it can't be cast ever again (though a replica spell with identical results could be created – the magic of each effect is highly specific & esoterically singular) In the example the Wizard has 4 points to put into a curse & the Shaman has 4 points to put into a calling. The Wizard determines that the party's power isn't sufficient to really, certainly kill the prince with magic so they choose to apply their spell levels to something that is more of a metaphorical death – a murder of identity & character – the Wizard puts 2 points into making the spell disfiguring & another 2 points into making the spell inflict blindness – the magic won't damage the wicked prince though – so a point is deducted (here, we're using the spell-design system for curses which is found in the Game of the North rulebook). The

Shaman's calling is yet more basic – committing all 4 points to increasing the HD of the totem creature to be summoned – in this case let us assume a Crow.

Describing this spell & its final creation means combining all the applied elements together – Alchemy, Curses & Crow Summoning & Scroll Reading – at the end of the spell the party has created an alchemical, magical crow-creature which, when the words of command are read – flies to the wicked prince's palace unerringly to strike at his face & eyes to blind & disfigure him. It's a pretty ruthless spell.

At this point though – the whole plan could come to nothing – because the Prince now attempts a Save vs. Spells. On a successful save the magic fades & doesn't work against him. If he fails the save though? All the better – the mystic alchemical crow claws his eyes out & then it disappears.



Now none of this is without consequences for the players. The one failed skill roll means that the magic is distinct enough to be traced back to the PCs with a successful application of the same skill – that is – Sorcery. An enemy may track the PCs down using the sorcery skill. Depending on whether the Save is successful or not this roll is either easier (d6 for a failed save) or harder (d10 for a successful save). Even before the spell is cast though – the Ref may determine that the subject of the spell should make a saving throw- to sense, somehow, that magic is being used on him. The wicked prince is allowed this save because of the failed check -and should he succeed on the save- perhaps he becomes aware of the magic working against him – and perhaps he has options to militate against it.

This is just one example of the magical subgame using ritual casting as a method. PCs can become extraordinarily ambitious using this type of magical sub-game but in all cases it requires all of the following – Time – Magical Ability & Teamwork. Everyone must contribute to the effect & the effect must be generated over a period of time as decided by the number of targets & their quantity of HD.

The total HD to be affected is insignificant – if the spell can be created to affect a group of targets. If so – the spell's time requirement is based on the highest HD to be targeted within the group – although if it's intended to hit an area – it only affects those in the area.

When it comes to the HD of the target – the PCs shouldn't be told exactly what the HD is – rather, it's up to them to guess it and plan accordingly. Whatever HD the PCs decide upon – the Referee knows the actual power of the target- if the PCs estimate low enough to have shifted the time scale into the wrong range – the spell will be cast but fail automatically. If they are in the right range but still low- then the target receives the difference as a bonus to their die roll when making their Saving Throw.

The risk of modifying the length of time to cast the spell upwards is that the target may be too mobile. When the spell begins to be cast the range of the target is established. This is higher or lower based upon the timeframe in which the ritual is performed. The range indicates the range from the targeted spot that the spell will have an effect within. If cast over the course of months – the spell, when finally cast, will affect an area surrounding the original target spot up to 10,000 feet. If the target isn't within that area though – the spell won't succeed & the target won't be affected.

Taking a long time on a ritual casting is also tricky because it means that the PCs are caught up in performing the ritual & are stuck in one location for the duration. The ritual requires space to cast – 10 square feet per HD in fact. And within this space the ritual must be continuously performed during the entire casting time – this means that it's possible the PCs must take shifts to prepare the spell & to cast it. The time resets if the spell is ever disrupted & it's only completely lost if one of the PCs involved in the ritual bows out completely owing to disinterest or inability.

The sorts of effects that can be ritually cast aren't limited to simple attacks. Enchanting materials, creating things from out of nothing – transporting huge objects – teleporting & so on – ritualistic magic can be applied to many circumstances & a huge array of situations – that's the very point of magic in the game – versatility. When applying a spell to a target that lacks any described HD – the PCs must still state their guess for the HD of the result- the Power of the result as they perceive it & the Referee has to judge how close they've come to the effect using knowledge of the setting.



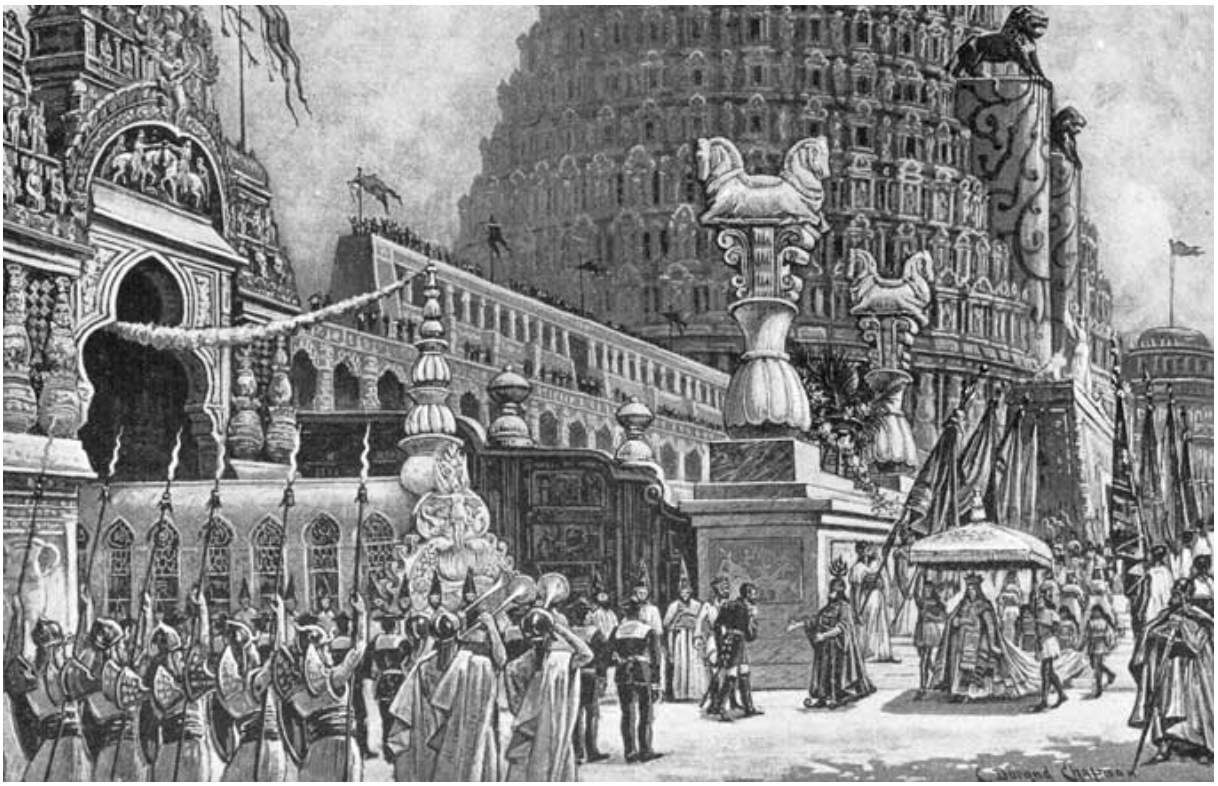
For instance a prayer to grant a blessing upon a community allied to a green shamanic rite to summon plants to the community & a protective spell meant to guard the community would have an HD value equal to the highest HD of the community's residents – but an identically crafted spell in an unpopulated area would have to have its HD adjudicated by the Referee – possibly using an inhabited village as a template.

Occult Observation

A different sub-game involving Magic is the performance of a magical investigation – this is a much less structured system & will tend to be applied to supersede social & skills based games. In this variant the characters are in search of information that will overcome deception or trickery of some kind & it tends to involve a scenario in which the PCs lack vital information required to make a proper decision. When this subgame is invoked those characters who have spells & abilities – and especially abilities – that allow them to circumvent barriers to information will use those abilities in a collective manner. For example – PCs wishing to bypass the complexities of a long overland journey can collaboratively create what

amounts to a well stated argument against the Referee's challenges. Combining their varied abilities in a specific orientation the PCs can present a kind of thesis – "Between character A's Domesticity, Character B's Endurance, Character C's Shamanism of Plants & Character D's Animal languages we suggest that the journey through the virgin woodland should be easy & effortless." In this case each of the PCs must present some piece of the puzzle & each must answer an aspect of the Referee's challenge – Domesticity for comfort, Animal Languages for scouting. Endurance for long, difficult nights on watch, Shamanism for identifying useful plants & creating magical zones of safety. Looking at all of these elements the Referee can determine that there are contingencies not covered – for instance, while encounters & foraging are covered well – inclement weather isn't answered & neither is speed, so the characters may end up remembering this particular journey as one that was particularly arduous, snowy & unpleasant with some unwelcome consequences – such as a few days trapped in a blizzard and difficulty – even damage or disfigurement arising from such difficulties. An additional character added to the mix – one with the Traveler ability or with some kind of protective magic could ameliorate the problems that the referee has planned – eliminating even that complexity.

This variant is a means of using magic & abilities to circumscribe what might seem to be a very difficult task – which is, after all, the very core sensibility behind the use of magic- to make the impossible attainable & to render easy what is difficult.





Dueling Sub-Game

When one PC chooses to engage with the setting alone – this is a duel. Duels can be between a single PC and NPC or between a PC and an environmental challenge of some sort. Duels rely upon a mechanic that involves opposed rolls more than they do any kind of static check. Duels are matters of ability, strategy & a good quantity of luck. When engaging a duel Players and Referees will be acting against one another in a competitive way that will be a tightly focused scene with only a few rolls but a high degree of focus & drama.

The typical system of duels is based around a contest which doesn't have an assumptive victor. The basic system of dueling is a contested roll modified by ability & luck. Luck is represented using randomly drawn playing cards.

The nature of the duel is determined initially by the type of the conflict that the characters engage in. There are combative duels – which are either melee or ranged based and duels of body & duels of mind – which are statistically based.

A combat duel is fought in multiple phases – starting with initiative, moving on to the attack & followed by the damage phase – this is repeated as often as needs be – depending on whether the duel is one to the death, to the hit or to the blood.

When a combat duel is declared the two combatants determine which type of combat is to be engaged in – ranged – for gun-fights or archery duels or melee – for sword or knife fights (these are just well-worn examples – any type of weaponry can be used – even no weapons at all). Then the combatants must choose what rules their duel will abide by – whether it is to the death, to the blood or whatever else they decide upon. Sometimes these duels won't be so formally defined & the rules need to be implied by the context of the battle.

Once the parameters are set both combatants draw a number of playing cards from a 52-card deck – two decks should be used – one for each contestant & they ought to be well shuffled.

Initiative is the first matter that is decided. This is rolled as normal – using the character & the NPC's initiative scores. At the point at which the initiative would be rolled each participant in the duel also commits a number of cards to the duel with a maximum bid of 1 card per HD that the character possesses. When the dice are rolled the cards are flipped over and the pips on the cards are added to the initiative roll. The suit of the cards matters & if a face card is played there are specific results that apply (about which more later). The cards played add to the initiative & the player with the highest number acts first. They make an attack roll in the same way – adding their relevant To-Hit bonus to a d20 alongside however many cards they have wagered on the to-hit check. In this instance though the target number to hit on this roll isn't the target's AC – rather there's a duel value for AC that's equal to the normal AC score less 10 & then modified by a d20 roll and the value of any number of cards bid on defense. If the attack roll is higher than the defense roll damage is resolved. If the attack isn't successful then the next attack in the initiative sequence is carried out and the whole matter continues in the same way until a hit is actually struck. The hit's damage is resolved as normal – with all the various modifiers being added along with the pips on any cards that have been bid. If this hit doesn't resolve the duel's victory condition, then the initiative keeps going until the conditions are

met. If the entire round passes without the condition being met the entire duel resumes from the beginning or the duel is declared a draw – depending on the disposition of the opponents & the terms of the contest.

Numbered Cards add their value			
♠2	♣2	♡2	◊2
♠3	♣3	♡3	◊3
♠4	♣4	♡4	◊4
♠5	♣5	♡5	◊5
♠6	♣6	♡6	◊6
♠7	♣7	♡7	◊7
♠8	♣8	♡8	◊8
♠9	♣9	♡9	◊9
♠10	♣10	♡10	◊10
J	Counters all cards of another color		
Q	Counters all cards of same suit		
K	Counters all cards of one other suit		
A	Counters all face cards		

The Contest itself is modified by the cards played – when you draw your hand you can choose a card to play in each interval of the duel – different suits affect different rolls – Spades & Clubs are offense based & work on the To-Hit & damage rolls. Diamonds & Hearts are defense based & work on AC & Resistance. All suits can be used on Initiative.

Face cards don't have a numeric value – instead they modify the cards already played. Jacks counter all the cards played of the opposing color – Superior skill overwhelms good equipment & vice versa. Queens counter all cards of the same suit. Kings counter all cards of any other suit & Aces counter all the face cards that have been played.

Playing the cards occurs sequentially with each participant (the PC & the Referee) taking turns. Card effects are applied sequentially as well.

The number of cards drawn is determined through a bid process – The PC draws one card & for every card they draw into their hand the Referee draws one. When the player is finished drawing the Referee is as well. This represents the PC's ability to potentially overmatch an opponent on their statistics alone – that is – a PC may forgo any cards at all & choose instead to simply duel it out with stat rolls unmodified by drawn cards. Assuming the cards are brought into play - at any stage of the contest none of the participants can play more cards than they have HD. So, a 1 HD PC could only play 1 card in initiative, and another 1 card in Attack & and another in defense for the subsequent turn.

Example – *Daphne wishes to duel the knight of Dog-Bridge – a stout warrior who guards the bridge & demands a duel of all who wish to cross. Daphne has 3 HD & when the duel commences she ends up drawing 6 cards. A ♡3, ◊7, ♠8, ♣2, ♣K, ♣6. The referee also draws 6 cards. On the initiative phase that follows Daphne decides that striking first is most important to her – she plays the ◊7 & the ♠8 – adding 15 to her normal initiative score. The Referee decides that the knight will play only one card – the ◊J – which adds nothing but counters all cards of another color- meaning the ♠8 is discarded from Daphne's roll. Assuming the 7 is enough to still put her over the top – Daphne is first and decides that she must strike first & best. She's lucky in that she has the King, 2 & 6 of ♣& plays all of them. The knight plays 4 cards of his own on defense – the 3,6,8 & Queen (all hearts and diamonds). When the cards are revealed Daphne's ♣K counters all of the knight's cards – assuming that her bonuses & rolls are good enough with all this benefit Daphne strikes the knight & the duel may be resolved – depending on the circumstances of the roll.*





The Combat Sub-Game

Roll for initiative! This is the old standard – the tried & true combat system that's well known & well worn.

Combats that involve this game are elaborate – they tend to require the use of props – specifically miniatures & some method for mapping relative distances & topographic features – commonly a map or battle-mat, something that can be used to easily depict relative locations. These are going to be needed if you want to plan movement & strikes & attacks & defenses. A lot of the design of the game is already devoted to combat so some of a character's traits will only ever emerge during this type of game.

When a combat is declared someone at the table commands that initiative is rolled - commonly this is the Referee - who then positions the PC's representations on the map as well as those of any visible enemies.

Characters roll their initiative dice & they operate on every turn that shares a 1's digit with their roll. A round is formed of several turns – usually about 30. Once the count of turns is brought to 0 the round ends and a new round is declared.

So, for instance: *Eustace goes into battle with the legion of froggerts – leaping, slimy bipeds with human teeth. Eustace rolls his initiative & ends up with 18 – this means that he goes on turn 18 and again on turn 8. Had he rolled a 21 he would go on turn 21, 11 & finally on 1. Had he rolled an 8 he would go only on turn 8. The Froggerts are monsters & so they roll their own initiative – but because they are Referee controlled antagonists they have certain actions which occur at set intervals in the countdown of turns.*

Characters move upon the map by traversing spaces – in general the character's movement score represents how far they may move in a round – with each round's movement being expended during the PC's Turn. Some spaces require more or less movement speed to traverse – as in the case of climbing a stair or tiptoeing over thin ice.

As an example: *Eustace has a movement score of 12 and on his first turn runs at a froggert that is 8 spaces away. The map & the referee indicate that two of the spaces in question that Eustace will traverse are coated in a thick slime & that great care has to be taken to avoid slipping & falling. Eustace must use 2 points of his movement score for each of these spaces instead of 1. So crossing the 8 spaces to approach the froggert requires 10 points of movement. If Eustace wishes to move again on a later turn he is restricted to moving only 2 spaces since his remaining movement is 2. At the beginning of the next round his movement would reset back to 12.*

Characters make attacks using their To-Hit score and compare it to an enemy's AC – armor class. Should the roll of the To-Hit attempt be <u>equal to or higher</u> than the target's AC – the attack lands & the attacker rolls the damage dice indicated by the weapon being used.

This continues until all the combatants no longer wish to continue – such as in the case of one side eliminating the other completely.

Combat flows in a fairly uniform way – but it lends itself to myriad complications, each of which adds savor to the mix & makes the fight a more interesting aspect of the game beyond simply rolling to hit & then rolling damage.

In the Ruins & the Game of the North players will use Maneuvers – maneuvers are idiosyncratic combat techniques that a character adopts to aid them in persisting in a dangerous world. A complete guide to maneuvers can be found in the Game of the North rulebook – but in overview

- A character has a number of maneuvers equal to their number of HD.
- A maneuver that requires specific conditions or tools will yield stronger results than one that isn't so specific.
- A maneuver needn't be attack based & could even apply defense.

When a character is hit the value of the damage is deducted from their HP – hit points – when that value goes below 0 the character is *defeated*. They must roll on the defeated table using the die type that was used to deal the damage in the first place.

Other status conditions can be made to apply – these generally allow a *saving throw* which is an attempt to resist an effect at the last minute. Saving throws or Saves are rolled against the type of save indicated by the Referee – one of the 5 types of saves will apply to most of the situations that a PC can encounter. Status conditions are rolled & generated using a die size indicated by the potency of the power used to apply the effect. Conditions include *maddened*, *frightened*, *sickened* & *poisoned*. Other conditions like blinding & deafening are well defined enough not to require a die roll to establish severity. All of these conditions apply penalties to your character's ability to perform actions normally.

Defeated			Poisoned			Sickened		
Roll	Body Location	Severity	Roll	Poison Type	Duration	Roll	Sickness Type	Duration
1	Finger	Broken	1	Wasting - Lose 1 HP/Day	1 Save - 1/Minute	1	Wasting - Lose 1 HP/Day	1 Save - 1/Minute
2	Toe	Crippled	2	Searing - Lose 1 HP/Hour	2 Saves - 1/Minute	2	Searing - Lose 1 HP/Hour	2 Saves - 1/Minute
3	Left Foot	Severed	3	Sleep - Fall unconscious	3 Saves - 1/Minute	3	Sleep - Fall unconscious	3 Saves - 1/Minute
4	Left Hand	Destroyed	4	Paralysis - Become immobile	4 Saves - 1/Minute	4	Paralysis - Become immobile	4 Saves - 1/Minute
5	Right Foot	Broken	5	Pain - Reduce AC by 5	5 Saves - 1/Minute	5	Pain - Reduce AC by 5	5 Saves - 1/Minute
6	Right Hand	Crippled	6	Retching - Reduce HD by 1	1 Save - 1/Hour	6	Retching - Reduce HD by 1	1 Save - 1/Hour
7	Left Arm	Severed	7	Sweating - reduce to-hit by 5	2 Saves - 1/Hour	7	Sweating - reduce to-hit by 5	2 Saves - 1/Hour
8	Left Leg	Destroyed	8	Shakes - Cannot use skills	3 Saves - 1/Hour	8	Shakes - Cannot use skills	3 Saves - 1/Hour
9	Right Arm	Broken	9	Palsy - Cannot make stat checks	4 Saves - 1/ Hour	9	Palsy - Cannot make stat checks	4 Saves - 1/ Hour
10	Right Leg	Crippled	10	Convulsions - Cannot attack	5 Saves - 1/Hour	10	Convulsions - Cannot attack	5 Saves - 1/Hour
11	Eye	Severed	11	Muting - Cannot speak	1 Save - 1/Day	11	Muting - Cannot speak	1 Save - 1/Day
12	Ear	Severed	12	Hallucinations - Fail all saves	2 Saves - 1/Day	12	Hallucinations - Fail all saves	2 Saves - 1/Day
13	Nose	Broken	13	Deafening - Cannot hear	3 Saves - 1/Day	13	Deafening - Cannot hear	3 Saves - 1/Day
14	Mouth	Crippled	14	Blinding - Cannot see	4 Saves - 1/Day	14	Blinding - Cannot see	4 Saves - 1/Day
15	Torso	Severed	15	Crippling - Cannot walk	5 Saves - 1/Day	15	Crippling - Cannot walk	5 Saves - 1/Day
16	Head	Destroyed	16	Killing - Roll on Defeat table	1 Save - 1/Week	16	Killing - Roll on Defeat table	1 Save - 1/Week
17	Voice	Broken	17	Boiling - Lose 1 HP/Minute	2 Saves - 1/Week	17	Boiling - Lose 1 HP/Minute	2 Saves - 1/Week
18	Mind	Crippled	18	Asphyxiating - Lose 1 HP/Second	3 Saves - 1/Week	18	Asphyxiating - Lose 1 HP/Second	3 Saves - 1/Week
19	Heart	Severed	19	Maddening - roll on Maddened table	4 Saves - 1/Week	19	Maddening - roll on Maddened table	4 Saves - 1/Week
20	Soul	Destroyed	20	Necrotic - Cannot regain HP	5 Saves - 1/Week	20	Necrotic - Cannot regain HP	5 Saves - 1/Week

Frightened			Maddened			Victorious	
Roll	Fear Effect	Duration	Roll	Mental Effect	Duration	Roll	Victory
1	Startled - You cannot make attacks	1 Turn	1	Phobia - You must save vs. Spells to interact at all with 1 type of being.	1 Hour	1	Insights - Gain 500 Xp
2	Jarred - You cannot make moves	2 Turns	2	Phobia - You must save vs. Spells to enter a specific location.	2 Hours	2	Cheerful Outcome - Increase 1 social die by 1 step.
3	Upset - You cannot speak or cast spells	3 Turns	3	Neurosis - You must spend d4 hours each day doing something pointless.	3 Hours	3	Calm Confidence - Increase your HP by 2.
4	Alarmed - You must run away & drop anything you are holding	4 Turns	4	Psychosis - Reduce social dice by 1 step but increase initiative by 1 step.	1 Day	4	Skilled Aura - Increase your Skills by 1.
5	Shocked - You can move or take actions not both	1 Round	5	Psychotic Anger - Increase damage dice by 1 step & reduce social by 2.	2 Days	5	Deep Insights - Gain 1,000 Xp
6	Defensive Posture - You can take no actions but your AC increases by 4	2 Rounds	6	Melancholy - Require double sleep & rest.	3 Days	6	Tricks of the Trade - Gain a free maneuver
7	Soil Yourself - Halve movement & initiative	3 Rounds	7	Fatigued - Reduce Imitative by 2 die steps.	4 Days	7	Growing Daily - Improve a random statistic by 1.
8	Panicked - Run away for one round and then take actions to hide	4 Rounds	8	Paranoia - You cannot regain HP through rest.	1 Week	8	Spring in your Step - Increase move by 5.
9	Terrified - You scream & scream and can't stop screaming	1 Minute	9	Delusions - You have outlandish beliefs that you hold true.	2 Weeks	9	Great Learning - Gain 5,000 Xp
10	Cowed - You fall to your knees cowering and reduce your AC by 5	2 Minutes	10	Fragmented - You randomly present another identity/character	3 Weeks	10	Self Assurance- Increase your HP by 5.
11	Petrified - You cannot move or take actions	3 Minutes	11	Catatonic - You do not act & cannot be made to perform actions.	4 Weeks	11	Great Confidence - Recalculate your HP to the maximum based on HD.
12	Fits - You convulse and can't do anything and fail all saves	4 Minutes	12	Demented - You babble incoherently and cannot speak or think.	5 Weeks	12	Can't Be Stopped - Improve all saves by 1.
13	Fainting - You fall unconscious	1 Hour	13	Lost Nerve - Your To-Hit is reduced by 5.	1 Month	13	Advancement - Increase two random stats by 1.
14	Terrorized - Run for 1 round and then discard all gear	2 Hours	14	Addicted - You crave a certain substance and must have it.	2 Months	14	In Every Way - Gain a free HD.
15	Collapse - You go into shock & take 1 HP per minute in damage	1 Day	15	Sanguine - You weep & cry with little provocation.	3 Months	15	On the Shining Path - Gain 2 free spell levels per day.
16	Shattered - You lose 1 HD	2 Days	16	Hysteria - You panic easily & drive others to do the same.	4 Months	16	Improvement - Increase a random stat by 2.
17	Phobic - You run away and cannot will yourself to return	1 Week	17	Lost Affect - You are immune to mental or emotion effects.	5 Months	17	Profoundly Empowered - Gain 2 free HD
18	Overcome - You fall into shock & take 1 HP damage per turn	2 Weeks	18	Hysteria - You cannot stop laughing and cannot speak while laughing.	6 Months	18	The Master - Increase all your Skills by 2.
19	Maddened - Roll on the Maddened table	1 Month	19	Delusion - You have become a god and are invincible - so you think.	1 Year	19	Superior - Increase 2 random stats by 2.
20	Traumatized - Roll on the Defeat table	2 Months	20	Manic - You increase all of your dice by one step for the duration, then die.	Permanent	20	The Victor - Increase all your Stats by 1.



The Statistical Challenge Sub-Game

A character's statistics tell all about their physiology & psychology – the 6 statistics bring together all the information one needs to know what, at heart, a character is & can do. Statistical challenges are tests of raw ability & determination, they come into play usually to resolve something that cannot be determined through battle or conversation – often a contest of some kind.

A statistical challenge comes up when a character wishes to contend with another character in some way that isn't combative or social in nature – commonly in a sporting contest. This type of sub-game can be invoked to attempt an action that isn't ruled by the skills or combat traits – actions like dragging a wagon or swimming across a quickly flowing river.

Statistical challenges should be phrased as a sequence of if-then statements.

If you are strong enough then you must prove that you also have endurance. If you have endurance enough then you must demonstrate that you have wit. If you are witty enough you must also demonstrate that you are quick. And so on – these forking paths indicate a route through a complex of interactions which are described by the flow of the statistical checks. The referee needs to have a tree of the flow of events & how they relate to the statistics of a PC – the challenge is to count up the number of successes at the end of the tree & to compare them to the number of failures. The entire ordeal is won by a net victory & lost by a net failure.

The Referee pits the PCs against some other contenders in an athletic race. First, they run & the runners meet at the starting spot. It's important not to have a false start so the first check is d12WIS.

If that succeeds, then the next check is d12STR – to leap to the start

If that succeeds, then the next check is d12DEX – to gain position

If that succeeds, then the next check is d12CON to persist

The race is set up as 4 distinct stat checks which need to be made for race to be won. The contender who has the most successes on these checks wins the race. If at any point one of the checks is failed- they simply note the failure and attempt another roll of the same check. Failures and successes are both retained & counted at the end of the contest.

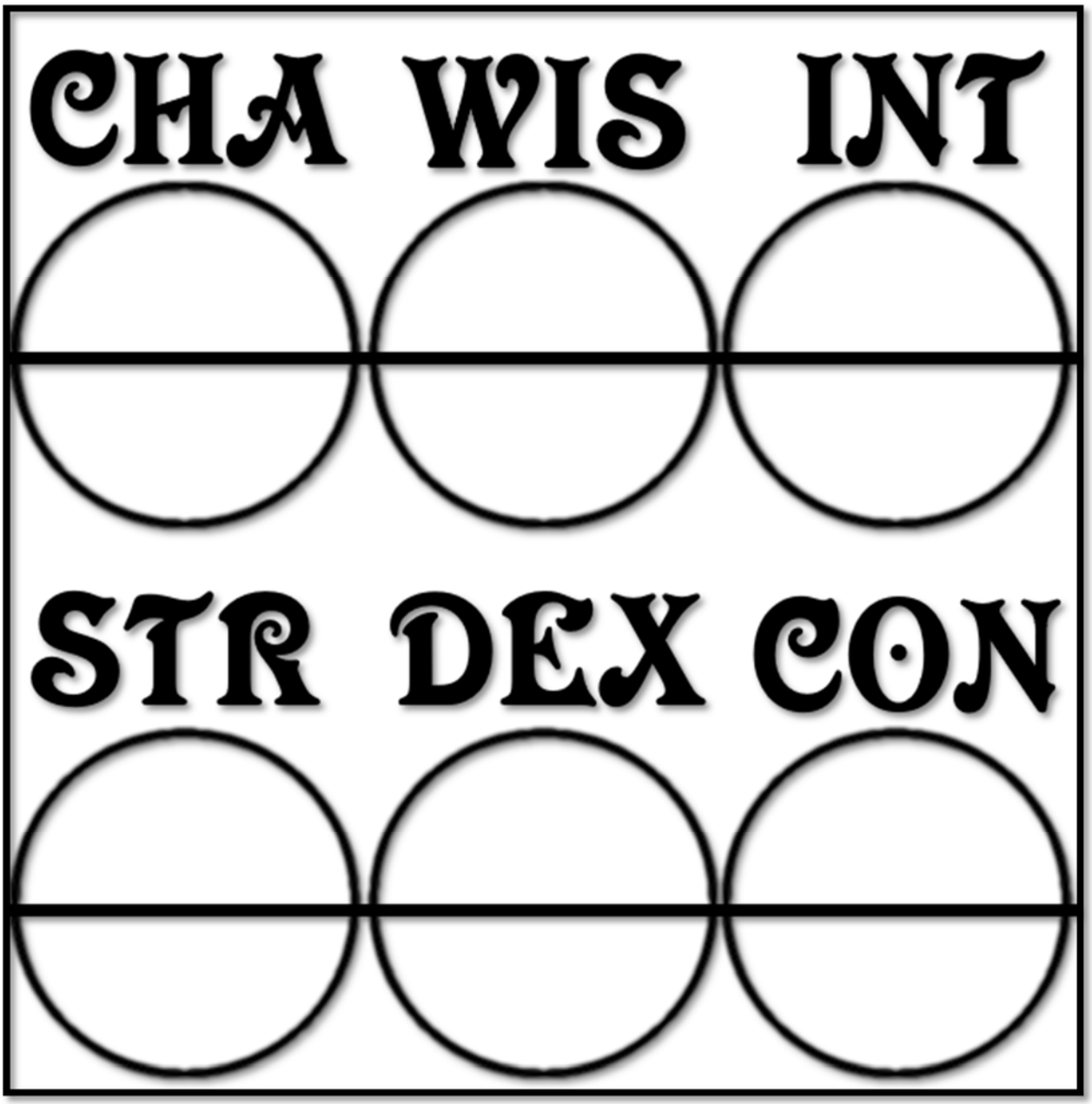
Checks have a difficulty of either d12 – easy or d20 – rigorous. It's possible that there could be d% based checks of statistics – but these are very far between. The Referee sets the difficulty of checks when designing the challenge – each either easy or rigorous.

Characters can choose, when making their checks, to modify them – making them more spectacular. Each time a check is rolled a PC can say that they wish to add a flourish to the check to make it better. They can demonstrate Finesse, Intensity or Persistence based upon the type of roll being made.

Finesse	Intensity	Persistence
Physical DEX	Physical STR	Physical CON
Mental WIS	Mental CHA	Mental INT

For instance, in the race – a PC wishes to make the d12WIS check but to demonstrate their Finesse (Finesse is linked to WIS & DEX) so to add this modifier they must make a d20 (always a d20) DEX check. Now – to succeed the check they must roll a d12WIS & a d20DEX check – if both are successful – they count both successes toward the total at the end of the contest. If either one fails – the roll is considered a failure and adds one failure to their count for the end of the contest. These modifiers are best used to settle ties and a PC may only choose to apply one of these modifiers if it seems that they are tied toward the end of the event.

The accompanying template is useful for recording one's successes & failures for this check.





The Spiritual Sub-Game

Transcendental thoughts, meditative conscious dreaming & the hint of a trance at the edge of consciousness – in some ways the game can progress & create a mythic cadence that truly does transport the players to a place of dreams & magic. The Spiritual sub-game is about playing through transcendence & the achievement of higher mental states through tiered devotions. This game is part of the essential being of your character – its existence as a person with hopes, fears, drives & history. When you play this game you are presenting your character as a self, as an identity that you, as the player, inhabit & generate as creative expression.

Which is all to say, spiritual sub-games are complex & difficult to do well. Fundamentally these types of sub-games involve you either getting deeply into character, or fully realizing your character's identity within the narrated world or in some way indicating the essential identity of your character.

It's very easy to either fail to characterize your PC at all, or to substitute your own identity in place of your characters. This component of the Hobby, the performance of a role, requires a lot of trust & confidence, trust in the other players and confidence in yourself & your ability to contribute to the story. You may find that you don't trust the other players, the referee or yourself, and in this case you may prefer to decline participating in this type of sub-game, and that is proper. There's no call to be uncomfortable while playing a game.

That said – spiritual sub-games offer a lot of enrichment. Generally these can be played in a few straightforward ways, often quite simply & usually without requiring any dice or large, specific sets of rules.

An easy example of a spiritual sub-game is the introductory game of questions. A PC, in character, asks the other PCs & NPCs present in the scene a question, a conversational question that the PCs and NPCs all answer in character. It's a simple way to establish identity & to get into character. This is also a good way for a PC to insert their own mythos, their own agenda & story hooks so that they can be addressed in the future.

Spiritual sub-games tend to take this format – a system that expands narrative options by expanding the scope or narrowing the focus of the stories being told.

Another sort of spiritual game is the vision-quest. This is a quest undertaken by the PCs. This sub game is more formal & defined, it offers danger & reward but requires little in the way of die-rolls or damage tracking. The vision-quest is, instead, a game wherein the PC can achieve peculiar spiritual benefits & suffer serious spiritual setbacks.

To begin the vision quest PCs must declare one or more **Bonds**. These are commitments to a certain number of conditions which will prevail during the quest. Common bonds are forsaking the use of magic, refusing to spill blood, engaging in total pacifism, refusing to speak, to eat or to groom oneself. The spiritual game requires that the PCs on the vision quest all accept the same bonds.

The bond is in effect for the duration of the quest & must be accepted before the other terms of the quest are established- that is, without knowing what the objective is, what the reward might be or what dangers must be faced – the PCs must all agree to forsake some aspect of their lives on a daring gamble that doing so will be worthwhile.

Once bonded through a mutual declaration, commonly played out in the form of a ceremony or rite of some kind, the PCs have their **Objective** revealed. The objective is the purpose of the quest & it may be circuitous, confusing or simple. It is explicitly stated either by the Ref through an NPC or by the PC who initiates this journey. Objectives are played out as a series of arduous tasks, sometimes described as impossible tasks. The PCs will undertake these tasks with the understanding that they are, effectively, riddles, for them to solve. The impossible tasks aren't approached using gear, statistics or other techniques relevant to other sub-games, rather, they're achieved by engaging with the scenes in which they take place through imagination, problem-solving & cleverness.

Spiritual journeys all offer at least one **Boon**. A boon is a spiritual gift that relates to the PCs' performance in seeking the objective. Each objective in the vision quest offers another boon. These are permanent benefits to the PCs' abilities that are earned through arduous endeavor.

No spiritual journey is without danger. Failure in such quests (and sometimes success) is often met with serious mental & spiritual setbacks known as **Scars**. Scars are permanent debilitating effects that PCs gain through their spiritual awakening. Scars aren't necessarily all bad, they may offer some benefit, but they are always a kind of mark & affliction, something that an outsider will recognize, but never really understand.

An example of a vision quest which plays out as a series of minor adventures.

The adventurers Gideon, Mishka & Pike wish to enter the fabled library of the Soot Priests. The vicar of Soot insists that to do so they must prove the purity of their intentions by making the pilgrimage to the Four Shrines of the Cardinal Essences. A series of shrines erected by otherworldly beings of pure elemental essence.

The 3 adventurers accept the Bond issued by the Vicar of Soot. Vowing to use none of their magical abilities the party begins their quest. The quest entails following a complex route through the wilderness encountering strange folk including other pilgrims.

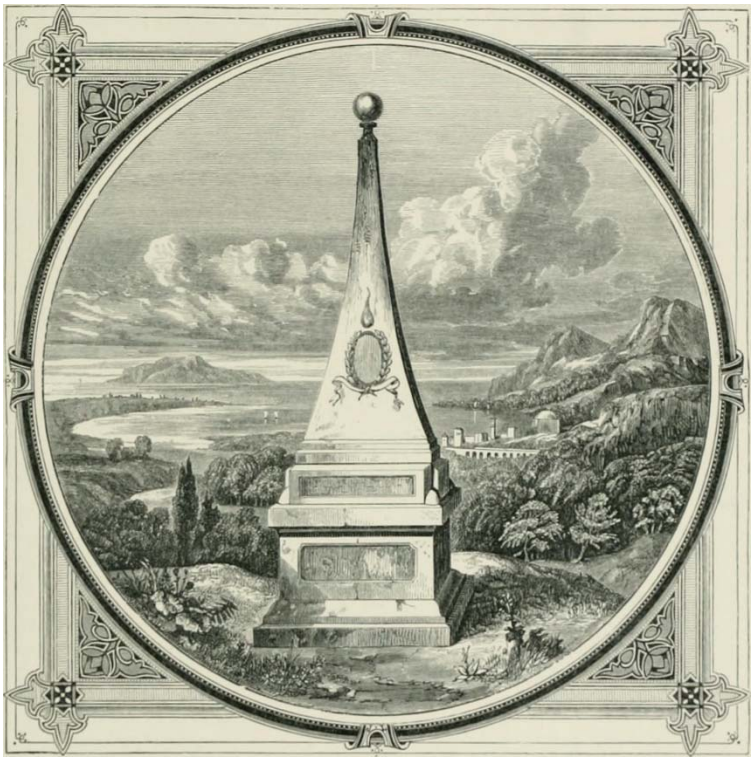
At the Shrine of Stone they must navigate a complex, every changing labyrinth. The labyrinth shifts and changes & the PCs are compelled to hatch a plan through the maze of stone. The referee has populated the maze with monsters & traps & the PCs may indeed have combat encounters to spice up the scene, but no amount of fighting will solve the maze. Instead the PCs must internalize some aspect of the quest & illustrate that they've achieved understanding of the resolute nature of stone. The PCs decide that they must consider the course indicated by their compass, (reasoning that the compass uses a magnetic needle, related somewhat to stone). The PCs determine that the direction indicated by the compass must be followed irrespective of barriers & they find that while they are on their correct path their resolute focus is powerful enough to cause the stone walls of the labyrinth to break & bend & fall away – for the PCs prove they are more resolute than stone itself.

At the Shrine of the Waters the PCs enter a flowing realm of visions & illusions. They find their way into a mist clouded plain. Lost they build a fire, and this somehow calls the rain, the rain flows at

great speed & the PCs are swept away into a sea, the sea freezes & they are desperate to break free to the surface. Starting fires, breaking free of the ice – the waters take different forms related to different circumstances. The PCs wander in this realm, confused – they find they can manipulate these different scenes fairly easily but that doing so gives them no real answers. Mist, rain, flood & ice. Eventually they realize that they must change their own state to match that of the water. When the realm freezes they gather together, solid like ice, when the mist prevails they run off in all directions – dissipating, when the rains cause them all to be swept away they flow along the river, floating. Thus they've demonstrated knowledge of the changing forms of water & the attendant attitudes that it encompasses.

After some detours & difficulties the PCs make it to the Shrine of Flame – a volcanic rift of heat & creation. Here they anticipate the direction of things, seeing the mountains formed of fire & the world destroyed by it as well. They gather up their treasures, their most valued items & arms & armor & plunge them in the fire & then work them over, in their fiery state, taking them in their hands, burning up and destroyed by the convection of lava flows they are nevertheless unharmed – indeed they are made stronger, having been tempered by the destruction & having taken in the powers of their own possessions. Pike's magical gem, once the source of much strength has been incorporated into his body – granting him its powers directly, Mishka's armor has merged with her flesh, making her resilient beyond reason & Gideon's magic wand has become infused in him, allowing him access to magical abilities beyond what he previously possessed. Alloyed now, they continue.

The Shrine of Breath lies at the end of another complex journey & there they engage with the spirit of the place, now old hands at this, they quickly grasp that the performance of a song, united in their efforts, is the way of Breath's communion. Returning to the temple, they're allowed into the inner sanctum, having learned the deeper truths.



So here, the PCs have engaged in a series of quests that don't have any scaling difficulty – but which become easier as they grow in understanding. The quest itself is an overarching mission – any number of other sorts of encounters could appear within this framework – but the framework itself is the spiritual sub-game. It binds & educates the PCs and invests the players into their character's identities.

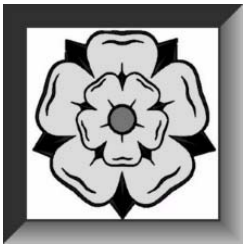
At each of the shrines an objective was stated so each of these should offer a boon. A stingier Ref may decide the entire quest itself only merits one reward, a boon offered at the end but a more generous ref may deem each phase of the quest sufficiently complex to merit its own boon. For the shrine of stone it's determined that the PCs have demonstrated resolve & so all of them have their saving throws improved by 1. At the shrine of

waters the PCs demonstrate their ability to change with circumstances & so they each gain the ability to use one of the other character's maneuvers. At the shrine of flames their willingness to destroy & skill at creation have produced a superior version of some piece of gear, possibly an enchanted item. At the shrine of breath they have shown their mastery of intuition & their quickness to grasp details – so their initiative dice are all increased by 1 size. These are examples of the sorts of Boons that a Spirit Quest might offer.

In the example above the Objectives are clearly defined. Scars could emerge if the characters, for example, chose to violate the terms, engaging in magic in defiance of their Bonds. These would tend to be tailored to their activities at the time of their scarring. Using magic in the shrine of flame – they may spoil the joining, losing some vital part of themselves by incorporating it into their possessions. Pike's gem might come to contain his own soul, Mishka's armor could become her skin, and Gideon's magic wand could become necessary for casting any spells. The scar doesn't mechanically alter the character too much – but it does become a scar, an outward manifestation of their failures.

Structure & form aside – you as a PC may wish to invoke the Spiritual game from time to time. When doing so you're effectively committing the entire party to a binding quest. This could take the form of a hasty promise made to a menacing dragon in exchange for your life – or the heartfelt oath of fealty offered to a noble king. A PC may determine that several items need to be gathered or that a specific place needs to be visited. In most cases, it's going to be up to you, as a PC to declare what you're willing to accomplish in order to survive or surpass the encounter in which you invoke the spiritual sub-game.





The Talking Sub-Game

Social interaction between PC & NPC is so common & necessary to the flow of the larger game that it seems almost impossible to quantify in any meaningful way using rules. But this is simply because not all social interactions are *games* in the sense that there are stakes, winners & losers. The talking, or social sub-game really only comes into play when those aspects are present, on the table.

By stakes it's meant that there is an immediate consequence. Failing to talk to the dragon correctly may result in being eaten. The dragon wins the PC loses. Succeeding in that same scenario means that the PC can live & the dragon is pacified – possibly a win-win, but more likely the dragon has been hoodwinked.

These interactions take place in a few contexts.

Deceit – where the PC is trying to trick an NPC

Coerce – where the PC is trying to command an NPC

Flatter- where the PC is trying to appease an NPC

Bargain – where the PC is trying to negotiate something from an NPC.

It's not necessary to declare that you, as a PC are attempting to use any one of these particular interactions, ideally the conversation flows naturally between your character & the Ref's character- but you should have a sense of what you want from the encounter & try to state it as clearly as possible, ideally, in character.

For example: "Let my people go" is a pretty straightforward desire. When stated to the wicked king you could phrase it in a different way depending on what tack you are taking:

Deceit – "If you don't **let my people go**, the sickness they all have will affect you for sure."

Coerce – "**Let my people go**, or I will kill you."

Flatter – "A wise & generous ruler like you would of course have no call to imprison **my people** & would **let them go**."

Bargain – "What is it going to take to get you to **let my people go**?"

Depending on the type of interaction you're attempting & the type of creature you're attempting it with – you can end up with a lot of different results.

Mechanics

Mechanically, as a game, this system uses your character's Social Dice – these are set by a combination of your character's race & class & CHA score and can be modified by maneuvers & abilities gained through other means. When you wish to accomplish something you roll these dice to affect the NPC's disposition.

NPC Disposition is tiered with the NPC willing to do different things based upon the tier that the PC has reached.

Affinity Tiers		
Disposition Descriptor	**Target to Improve by 1 step**	**Roll for Initial Standing**
Wrathful	15	<-5
Hateful	15	<0
Malicious	15	1
Mistrustful	10	2
Suspicious	10	3
Indifferent	10	4
Nonplussed	5	5
Neutral	5	6-7
Curious	5	8-9
Congenial	10	10-11
Friendly	10	12-13
Allied	15	14-15
Devoted	15	16-18
Loving	15	19-25
Trusting	15	>25

If the NPC's disposition is unknown by the Ref, the first thing that you'll do is roll for **Initial Standing**. Here, you'll roll your dice, modified according to the Referee's judgement. The result indicates an initial standing. Naturally, some NPCs will have an opinion of your character in advance & the initial standing will be set. A person whose house you've broken into & robbed is not going to have a random disposition – they'll be at least mistrustful & probably wrathful.

As a PC & a party – you have one chance per HD & only one chance per HD to move this disposition during an encounter. Movement on the disposition tier strata occurs in 1 step increments most of the time. The Ref may rule that your approach is in line with the NPC's disposition & so you might move up two tiers, but never more than that given a single die-roll.

As an example:

The party chooses to enter a shop & tries to negotiate a bargain with the shopkeeper. This is an NPC that the Referee hasn't really fleshed out and so there's a call to roll for initial standing.

One PC (and only one) rolls this check as they make their introductions. Assuming this PC is more capable than others when it comes to talking, assume that they get a result of 11 – the shopkeeper is Congenial.

Now the Party wants to persuade the NPC to give them a bargain. The lead PC has made their one roll for the encounter so it falls to another PC to attempt it. This PC rolls to move the shopkeeper to Friendly & needs a 10 to do so. Not as skilled as the other PC they end up with an 8 – a failure that makes the target less congenial and more curious. While it seemed that he, the shopkeeper, understood the PCs, their talk has persuaded him that he doesn't.

A third PC then attempts persuasion – this one states clearly that "I'd like to get a good deal today, what will it take for me to get a discount?" A bargaining posture that the Ref determines is right up the shopkeeper's alley. This PC rolls and gets only a 6 – but that's enough to move the Curious shopkeeper up a tier to Congenial – and determining that the offer

was in line with the NPC's motivation, the Ref determines that the NPC shopkeeper now has a Friendly disposition.

As straightforward as this system is mechanically – it does merit a lot of consideration in terms of what the different tiers actually mean. These are distinct & based upon the 4 approaches – each establishes **Boundaries**. Boundaries are the lines which an NPC will abide within based upon their disposition.

Mistrustful & Below – NPCs openly dislike the PC. They may attack & they may just run away, hide or do something else to avoid interacting with the PC – depending on how likely they think it is that they'll survive such an encounter. It's impossible to say something deceptive or to lie to such people, because they simply won't believe anything the PC says to them. Attempts at coercion are likely to provoke a much worse reaction & only pleading – in the form of Flattery – is likely to move them. That or a very favorable offer presented to them, such as the offer of all the PCs money. These NPCs will never help the PC, never offer any counsel and may actively seek to lie & cheat & steal from the PCs.

Wrathful NPCs are only susceptible to pleading in the form of Flattery. They either attack or flee depending on the circumstances.

Hateful NPCs can be Bargained with at significant disadvantage & are susceptible to pleading, in the form of Flattery. They can be easily provoked to attack through failed Deceit or Coercion attempts.

Malicious NPCs Bargain sharply, can be Flattered won't tolerate Deceit but can potentially be cowed by Coercion.

Mistrustful NPCs Bargain sharply, refuse Flattery & can't be Deceived but are susceptible to Coercion.

Suspicious & Indifferent NPCs aren't interested in the PC's welfare but they're not especially opposed to it. Suspicious NPCs can't be lied to – deception won't work, but Indifferent NPCs can be tricked through words, provided that the persuasion is effective enough. These NPCs will neither help nor hinder PCs based on this disposition alone.

Nonplussed NPCs are very middle-of-the road, they're susceptible to most of a PC's various social cues but not especially. Mainly, they'd prefer to be left alone & interactions with the PCs will be hurried.

Neutral NPCs have no opinion, they're waiting for the PCs to do something. Any of the tactics that a PC might engage could work.

Curious NPCs want to learn more. Their minds aren't made up but they'll give the PCs time to state their case.

Congenial NPCs might just be friendly people, or the PCs might have struck them as being on the same wavelength. These NPCs will reveal some of their attitudes & their opinions to a PC where other NPCs would not. Coercion against such NPCs may succeed but it always has an opposite effect, lowering the NPC's opinion instead of raising it.

Friendly NPCs will fight to protect & on behalf of a PC. Flattery is useful with them. Coercion has an opposite effect & a failed deception roll decreases their affinity by 2 instead of 1. They're easy to bargain with & will reveal anything not privileged or secret to a PC.

Allied NPCs will fight for PCs and will do so with or without the PC's knowledge. They can be flattered but coercion, if it succeeds, reduces their affinity instead of increasing it. Deception, if it fails, reduces affinity by 2 ranks and bargaining is rendered partly unnecessary because they're pretty happy to just give the PCs what they need.

Devoted NPCs will kill & die for a PC. They will swear oaths & bind themselves irrevocably to the PCs causes. Coercion can be used on them to make them more hopelessly devoted, but bargaining is useless. Deception, even if it fails, won't move them up or down in affinity. Flattery can improve their disposition.

Loving NPCs are enamored & totally in love with the PC. Such NPCs react to the PC as if they were a child, parent or spouse, depending upon the context. They are willing to forgive almost anything and ready to sacrifice all on the PCs behalf. Deception always works on a Loving NPC – but it cannot improve their disposition. Coercion has no discernable effect & bargaining is basically useless – as the Loving NPC will give the PC anything they have.

Trusting NPCs regard the PCs as godlike masters. What a dog feels for its owner, these NPCs feel for the PCs. They regard them with an awe & reverence that cannot be shaken. No social tests can be performed at this point & none are needed. Trusting NPCs will infer the PCs wishes & will kill & die to see them done. Direct commands from the PCs are seen as natural law.

The tiers presented are meant to give the Referee a fair reference in terms of how an NPC should respond to the PCs – a method for playing the NPC capably. At the same time it does give the PC a kind of guide for the layers & ranks of affinity that a person could have for them.

That said – the ranks presented are on a predictable continuum – a kind of generic spectrum of relatable feelings. A Monster is a monster, and very unlikely to have a predictable spectrum. The same is true of alien cultures & weird species. These may have completely alien, unpredictable or contradictory affinity tiers. The Referee will have recourse to alternate tier-lists & tables that can complicate these types of rolls.



But what about the NPCs trying to deceive, bargain with, intimidate or flatter PCs? This is a tricky business because at various points it may fall to a situation of the referee saying some variant of "Your character feels _____." Which is naturally anathema. Your character is yours to roll & to play. Having the Ref dictate your character's feelings & moods simply spoils the game.

At the same time a player must have a fair description of their character's feelings & motivations. What is best, when a Talking Sub-

Game is invoked – is to write down the four things that your character can be moved by. What would flatter them, what would intimidate them, what would they settle for in a trade & what would they believe about the NPC. This takes the form of an initial standing on the part of the PCs – where they can assess the NPC & gain some sense of their workings. Here the PCs have a chance to question the Referee – getting a sense of who they are up against while they make the determinations regarding their four social cues. When & if any of these are revealed by the NPC/referee successfully stating them – you could consider your character moved or touched persuaded or intimidated by the NPC.

Communication – Sometimes the issues at work that make the Talking Sub-Game a game, a matter of chance, accident & opportunity – is a lack of common understanding. Some players find a great deal of enjoyment in using their language skills & demonstrating their linguistic knowledge. This type of subgame is a category of the Talking sub-game in that it allows a PC to exploit knowledge of certain phrases to build trust & amity with strangers. Linguistic tricks of this type are used to produce **Shibboleths**. A shibboleth is a code phrase or statement or word that indicates belonging to an exclusive group. Membership & knowledge of such groups drastically improves a PC's position with other members of that group. Shibboleths also allow a character to determine if an NPC or another PC is part of this in-group. To use a Shibboleth the character must declare that they are doing so, either by the PC's open declaration or by the disclosure of an in-game shibboleth, some word or phrase that is known to the character through play. Once the Shibboleth is declared the Character makes a roll. This is a modified social test & uses social dice with a target that must exceed the HD of all the characters involved in the check – that is, the PC & the NPC, if there are just the two, for example. This test is harder depending on how many NPCs or PCs are present – such a check is easier in secret or isolation. A success on this check automatically moves an NPC to **Friendly** & potential to **Allied**. A failure on this type of roll is very unlucky and moves those affected to **Mistrustful**, where they will remain until drastic effort has persuaded them away.

In an opposite scenario a character may have nothing at all in common with an NPC – including language or culture. In these cases the PC may be attempting to trade or negotiate with an NPC that they cannot understand at all. These interactions are likewise mediated through the use of social dice. The target for this type of check, the search for **Commonality**, is equal to the difference between 40, less the combined value of each involved character's WIS statistic. When a character succeeds at this type of check they are able to communicate short phrases & instruction to an NPC they cannot communicate with. Failing this roll doesn't necessarily mean that there's any hostility between the PC & NPC – rather, it indicates that there is a random possibility of offense being offered or taken. Roll a d12 and consult the NPC Affinity Tier table.





The Entertainment Sub-Game

At some point in the development of this hobby, the game adopted & then adapted a specific archetype. The entertainer, commonly a musician or singer, who joins along with the rest of the group & provides moral support & often, comic relief. The party member who entertains the rest of the group is something, which at the table, doesn't always seem altogether worthwhile. But suffice to say – a road trip without music or an unscored fight sequence or a great story without someone to tell it impressively – these are all things that can go unmentioned in a game, but which oughtn't, given how nearly mandatory they are in real life.

Which is to say – sometimes it is easy to overlook the role that entertainment has in the game, since, as players in the game we're all, already, engaged in entertaining ourselves. When we play the game we sometimes may forget, in the midst of our amusement that those characters we are depicting, are in, often intense scenarios with scanty joy. To be in the spirit of verisimilitude, it's worth realizing that even the hard-bitten fighter with the thousand yard stare probably would enjoy a song or two.

This sub-game then serves to provide a further purpose and stronger use for entertainment based activities within the game. This takes a pair of forms. Primarily the entertainment sub-game will offer benefits to allies, soothing them & helping them to pass the time while recuperating or just traveling.

However, a character can devote themselves to this sub-game's use more aggressively & thus seek & even possible receive, wide-spread adulation, acclaim & even love. A hero is heroic and highly regarded by some, but a celebrity is a star and is beloved by all.

The use of entertainment & its invoked game can supersede other types of encounters. A social test could be suborned by a PC with a tight 5 minute routine, a tense encounter that looks like a fight could be defeated by a soul-searing ballad sung by a hopeful ingénue at just the right time & so on. There are plenty of places to seek a story or a show – a performance of some kind – in these stories we tell, but the story within the story & the entertainment within the entertainment isn't always easy to quantify.

Improving the Situation –

When a character wishes to use entertainment they improve whatever situation they find themselves in – provided they don't bomb & ruin everyone else's time. Long journeys on foot call for traveling music, extended stays in ratty inns & long campaigns spend in garrisons all ask for some type of amusement. The entertaining game is a method for enhancing the stress & mundanity of the unspoken day-to-day.

To engage in this type of play a character just makes a *Vocals, Joke* or *Instrument* check. These skills are the most suitable for this type of entertainment, but others could be used depending on the situation. The character who wishes to make use of these abilities does so by making a d0 skill check. On a successful roll the time has passed & those present have been entertained. This means that

sometime in the next few days, until a check is made again, each PC & NPC present for the entertainment may improve one die-roll by a single step – any roll at all.

Failing this (rather tough) test means that the character has taken up some time & attention but hasn't really given the listeners anything of note, they've been an audience but not a very appreciative one.

This check a d10 – can be made easier – reduced to a d8 or even a d6 check – if you, as a player – offer some type of performance to the Referee & other players. Singing your character's song, playing it on your own instrument – enriching the experience of the other players shows just how you've improved the experience of their characters. So, this sub-game offers a meta-game inclusion.



Entertainment Invocation

Just as you may declare that you are invoking a combat by rolling initiative or a talking game by issuing that declaration – you can declare that you are trying to resolve the scene using the Entertainment Sub-Game. This minigame is best utilized when you are in the mood to provide some type of entertainment to the Ref & the other PCs – though it doesn't require that you, as a player, perform for the group – it is improved by a level of performance. The sub-game allows you to attempt to soothe the savage beast, to let your music speak for you or for your cutting wit & cool dance to win the day.

In effect, you are attempting to de-escalate whatever situation you are in by declaring a dance contest – or you are choosing to change the terms of the current negotiation by calling a sing-along. You effectively derail the current scene by making it about you & your character's performance. Better make it a good one.

To invoke this game you must have some entertainment based skill, or some skill you wish to use for this purpose – you could use Divination, for example, provided you do your fortunetelling in a way that invites interest from others. Whatever skill you use you must also declare stakes. Here you set the difficulty of the entertainment test. This takes the form of a single skill check which you roll & the die to be rolled is based upon your stated aim.

Defusing a combat scenario already in progress is the most difficult use of this ability – it requires a d12 skill check while preventing a combat requires a d10.

Trying to mimic another type of sub-game – such as trying to use music instead of talking, or trying to dance your way through a skill challenge & so on all mean that you must stake everything on a single roll of the dice. These checks are never easy – always a d10 or a d12.

However – you can make the roll more than once. When you declare that you are invoking this game & you describe your efforts you can carry out some aspect of your character's performance. If you sing, dance, joke or even fortunetell successfully enough for group to go along with you – you are entitled to a single re-roll of this check.

Succeed or fail this is your one chance – when using the entertainment sub-game. This can derail entire campaigns – break the back of a city's defenses or push a dragon to tears – it is a legendary performance & one that isn't going to be forgotten – so you, as a player, will be best served if you really sell it to your fellow players.



Chapter 4 – A Map of Worldbuilding

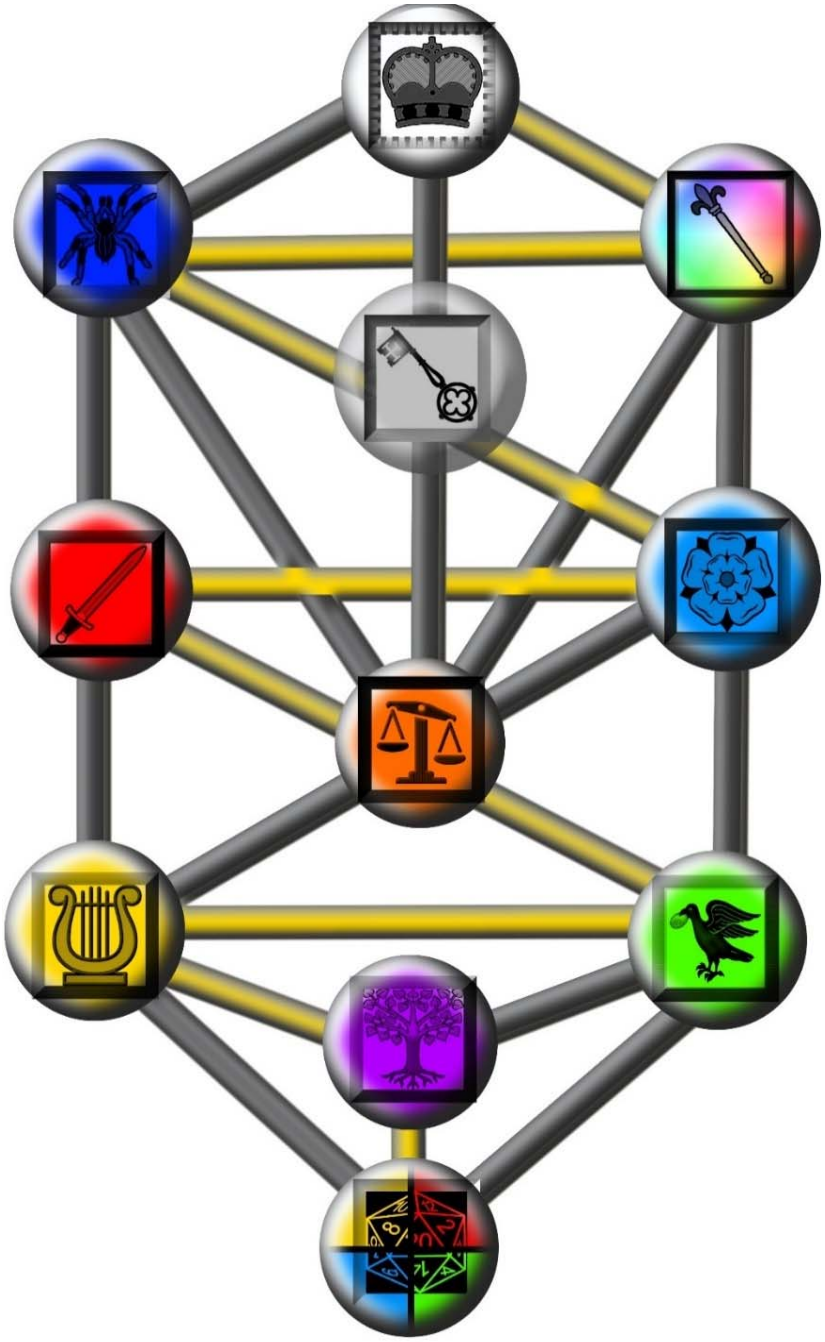
Now friend, you might ask & I will answer (I'm taking this in a more conversational route because we're friends. You're a Ref, I'm a Ref – We Make Worlds – that's a lot for us to have in common, so I say we're friends) – aren't you taking something mystical & maybe a bit sacred and making it into something… not those things? You're looking at my modification of the tree of life thinking – are you a crazy person? Just wicked?

Well, let's get right down to it friend. See, we make worlds. The tree of life, in the minds of the ancient people who devised it, was meant to be a map to understanding the mind of their creator. Well, here we are. Creating. Creating rather a lot. You might be running your game, building your setting and get the idea that really, you need to rewrite the laws of physics for your setting. You wouldn't be the first. This Thing We Do is an act of vast creativity, and maybe, in our way, in our imaginations we are like gods. Don't let it go to your head though – you need players and they're good at subverting your will – you're a creator of place & scene & people, but this Thing We Do – it's still an act of supreme creation & I realized that the map of understanding it from the perspective of those who wanted to understand the mind of the creator was a good place to start at mapping a path toward accomplishing This Thing We Do. The idea isn't to subvert anyone's mystical or religious practice – rather, it's to coopt it whole cloth and use it as I see fit.

Magicians & priests talked about the different sefirot – the different sections of the tree of life as aspects of the world and they devised a path through all of them to achieve the mind of god by passing from the bottom to the top. Discussed here is the journey from the top to the bottom – it's a method & a style for running your game that covers all the elements at work & that creates a journey of creation, just for you.

The top of the tree is called **Keter** & it's meant, in kabbalah to be the very peak, the Crown – which is what I've positioned there. The Crown. In the description of sub-games previously the crown was shown to indicate the Duel. In this case, for your purposes – it's a bit of both. Here, you're devising your villain. The villain may seem like a weird place to start, so let's clarify. This is the **Conflict.** There's no story without a conflict & creating one is what you'll have to do to invent the story. In many cases what you're creating is not your players' enemy – but a slate of potential enemies – a conflict in the game that guides the events of the setting. This conflict will draw sides & your PC's will chose one or the other or all sides or none- all of these are choices & they're forced, in some way, by the existence of the conflict to make a choice.

The lightning path that goes from the top to the bottom – the path we're looking at follows from the crown of Keter to the scepter of **Chokhma**. Here we have the spiritual component of the game. For the players this means vision quests & battles of identity – it's all very high level, in terms of play. Not all players are up to this kind of transcendent thinking at the table. Insofar as you, the Referee are concerned this is the motivation. Villains exist, conflicts exist – but why are they opposed & what is the threat that they pose to the setting & the players thereby? This is where you put together the villains' ideals, their ambitions & plans. What's the thinking that is the basis behind their schemes? Knowing this, knowing the rationale behind the conflicts allows you to really sell the conflicts as concerns – things that the players can grasp & understand & get involved in. You're creating an ethos here – competing ones - and this creates a spiritual, ethical axis that the PCs are forced to put themselves on – somewhere. Is this a battle between good & evil? Where do the PC's lie on this spectrum? They'll have to decide - you're just creating the relevant options here.



From Chokhma we travel over to **Binah** – the spider. We're doing away with Kabbalistic approximation here to address the spider & its web. The spider is your conflicting forces – they exist, so what then are their manipulations? Who are their minions, where are they set up? You've got to establish mini-bosses, hierarchies or orders – networks through which the villains & their plans interact with each other & the rest of the setting. If you're pitting the gods of Law against demons of Chaos – here's where you'll create the churches of Law & the cults of Chaos.

Now, on to magic. The sefirot **Da'at** is the unity of all the other sefira & is also knowledge. Here we have it as magic & it is your magic, as the referee. Here you're combining all you know of what you've created to concentrate – to tell the story as it will happen – as it will unfold without the intervention of the players. This is you, moving your pieces on the board, playing chess against yourself – this is you communing with your creation to really understand it, what forces are in motion & what will become of the world. You're creating a future here, predicting it from the hints you've placed. This is the whole of your invention – you'll return here often, but for now, on the path we are taking – you'll be consider the conflict you've invented, its cause & the groups & forces that work to create that future. Should good & evil be in collision, should their Templars & Anti-Popes be battling it out – you'll have to *know*, in your planning – what will happen if the PCs don't get involved.

The journey from this introspection flows to **Chesod** – to love, in Kabbalah – for us it is the talking game – the social game. Here you're going to conceive of allies & friends - helpful contacts & allied NPCs for your PCs. They needn't love the PCs, they could very well hate them – but you, you should love these characters you're creating because you are going to portray them. Create NPCs that you'd have as friends, lavish as much thought & attention as you're able onto these characters. The richer they are, the more likable they are – the more the PCs will respond, the more they'll attempt to protect or serve or help them.

Now to **Gevurah** – to the element of fire & to the fight. Here's where you need to put together some confrontations. You'll run any number of fights in your campaign – some may be completely incidental, those aren't what we're thinking of here. Here we are planning out large encounters, important & pivotal ones. These are the milestones of the character's struggles – the points of articulation where the campaign's secrets will be revealed through some confrontation. Confrontations can be battles – big, interesting fight scenes with

all sorts of embellishment – fighting atop a collapsing, burning castle – or aboard a sinking ship in a whirlwind – anything you wish – but just make it a pivotal scene – something where great matters are decided. You want to have these scenes in your mind far in advance of them ever being fought out at the table.

Now on to **Tiferet** – the adornment, decoration. Now you've got the big ideals, their resultant thematic allies, friends for the PCs and big scenes for them to chew – now you're into the biggest job – the most rigorous of your tasks – now you're building the world. The balance here is the balance between effort & reward & that balance is always in your favor. This is where you, the referee – can lose yourself into the deep wells of conlang & cryptozoology – you can spend a lifetime on a world, figuring out every type of tree in every woodland and every continent. This is the place where you are thinking up the details that comprise your world. It is an endless task but its own reward. The other aspect of balance here is determining how much detail you can present to players, how much is too much is a very difficult question to answer & it really is something each player determines for themselves – but you can't even ask the question until you've created something for them to seek or ignore. Good luck.

Everything below Tiferet – the balance – the Adornment of your setting is a specific aspect of the setting that you are adorning. These are all deep wells of specificity that all relate to one another. The first thing we get to is the materialist Sefirot – **Netzach**. Netzach suggests permanence & here you're filling in the blanks on what is, not permanent exactly, but what is permanent in human perception – institutions, symbols, material wealth, and magic artifacts. You're creating the material culture of your setting – all that will remain for the archaeologists in all the centuries to come. Corollary to this creation is the invention of material wealth for your players. Treasures & relics – the wished for & wanted trappings of power & wealth that drive so many PCs.

When working on Netzach you are creating your own mithril-silver, your own unobtanium & your own master-sword & your own great pyramids – you are making the materials that define your setting's civilizations – and by doing so you're implying its history & its likely futures.

From Netzach we move on the lightning path to the entertainment Sefirot – **Hod**. The Glory, the Splendor. This is your performance – your ability to manifest the setting as a shared imaginary place between you and your players.

There's no end of the tricks & tips that have been offered to Referees for making all the player's minds eyes focus into a single vision – your narrative vision. Cues, including music, artworks, cast-lists – there's a lot you can do to try and make the scenes pop out into shared existence.

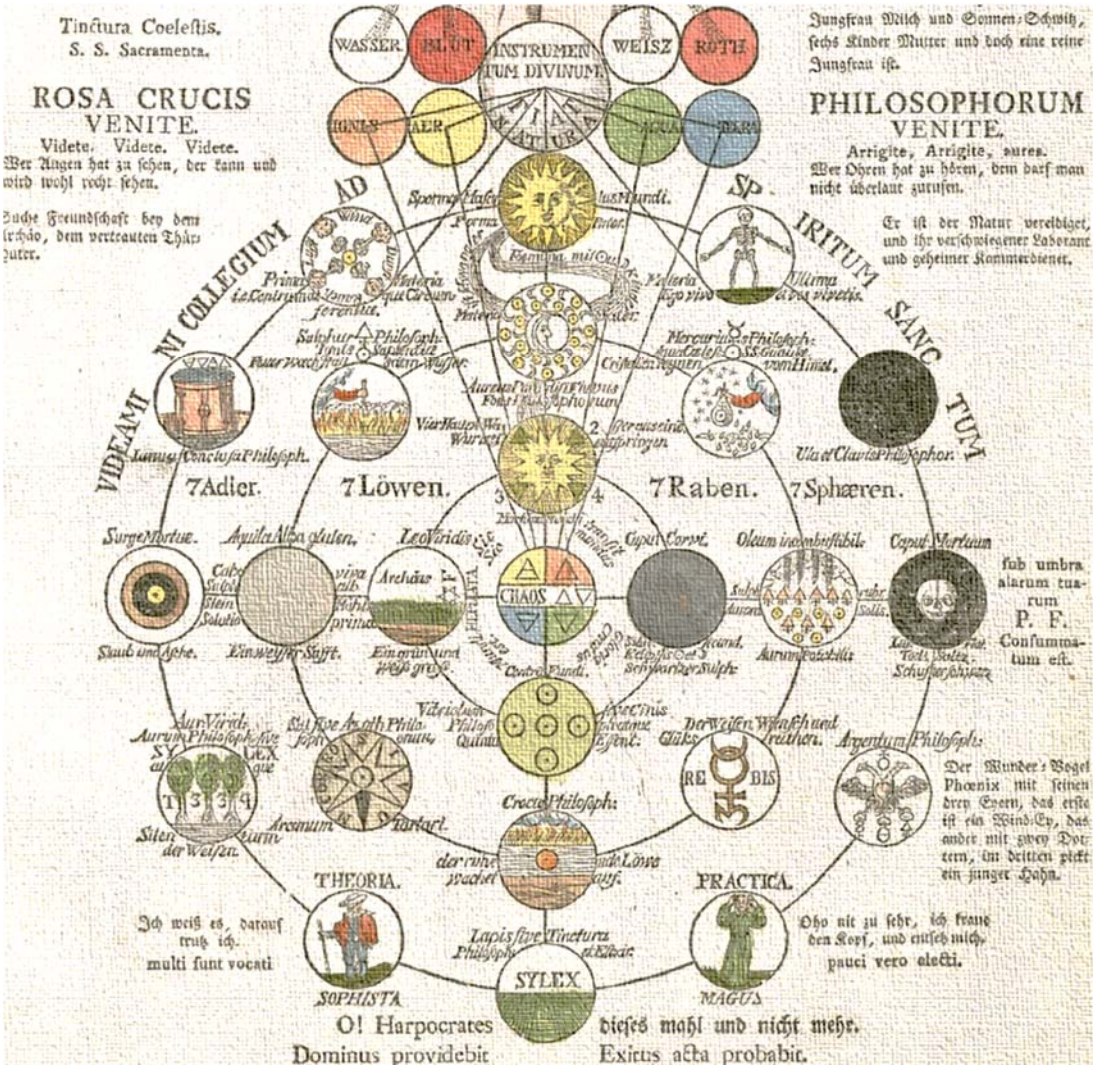
For us, at this moment though – for us the thing that really matters – that's essential – is that this rests upon everything else, it's caught in a net with the rest of the Sefirot & contextually, it can't exist without the rest. Really Refereeing well means being prepared. You have to have all the rest of the setting, the world & its people well defined enough that you can produce, at will, any variants or improvised elements of that setting. Should the players choose (as they are so often wont to do) to ignore a plot & to wander off in another direction – you must be prepared with interesting locations, people & events. More than that you must know what occurs without the players' actions. Time must pass & urgent events must transpire whether or not the players intercede – this is a lot to do at the table, and it's often a virtuoso performance for an audience of three or four – you must find the pleasure in the performance itself, for yourself.

After Hod we find ourselves in **Yesod** – the foundation – the base. This is matched to the survival, environmental game. Here's where you're creating an environment – ecology & populations – maps & monster-lists. You're making the world all the more real through devising its rich substance. Atlases of continents, maps of cities & travel guides – all the distances between all the rest of the things you've created comes up here – here you combine all you've made & apply it, like pigments to a canvas. The map becomes the map of your setting, of your whole creation. It is the reference document, as well, that will guide your

players- as the world opens to them, as they experience more & more of it, and the map is the graphical chart of the group's progress through your imagination.

And from there we find **Malkuth** – the kingdom – the world – or, in this construction – the Table. The place where we do This Thing We Do Together. Here, if all has gone well, if you've made the magic that's needed to invent & populate a world of your own imagining – the game becomes transcendent, the players are moved by your cleverness & the peaks of this hobby rise above the peaks of other activities. It's also where the players roll dice, where they interject endlessly with comedy references, where they get distracted & confused – but. But if you are on your game, if you've mastered all the Sefirot – you'll find that you have an attentive audience, engaged players & a final outcome that is superior to the components that comprise it.

Here, In The Ruins – this methodology of worldbuilding has been applied – so for each of the categories, a separate entry has been created – to illustrate aspects of the setting.



Foundations of Worldbuilding

Keter - The Conflicts

The Slatewind Valley – which is the name of the location where the In The Ruins setting takes place, has recently concluded a war that shook the whole of civilization & left everyone in a strange place of armistice without peace. The conflicts between the factions In The Ruins are still present & threaten to become armed conflicts all over again. The conflicting antagonists here are the 10 cities of the valley. Each of them is briefly described in their own passage. Understand that the Kabbalistic method of worldbuilding is indefinitely recursive – for each of these locales we can apply the method and establish further & further detail.

Now – as for the concepts that these 10 conflicting ideas stem from. The 10 virtues built into character design were invented as a way of interpreting & playing with the concept of alignment – with the intention of making alignments different reward tracks – different things for the PC's to pursue. The 10 virtues weren't obvious and took some time to develop into a coherent whole – from them the symmetrical notion of having ten places to stand in for the virtues as physical locations arose. So I decided on 10 cities. My preference isn't to push PCs into a war on a side – but to let them tour the countryside in a picaresque series of adventures before I raise the stakes and try to get them to commit – so I didn't put the cities in a state of open conflict – but neither did I make them peaceful or friendly. The cities are all at the edge of a war – this creates a conflict for the PCs to interact with & gives them some obvious outlets for their ambitions. From there the cities each were allowed to develop identities of their own until they formed into discrete forces – conflicting cultures. Then it just became a task of describing their cultures & understanding what their conflicts would be.

There is a power stirring In The Ruins and each of the ten city-states has its own resonance with that power – a new & growing strength that guides them in this unnavigable time of danger.

At this layer of the project it's important to create identities – distinct personae for the cities & the forces at work – since I've assigned these each one of the 10 alignments that I've built into the setting that's somewhat straightforward – I can just use those identifiers for the city.

But I thought that such a 1:1 ratio would be a bit too obvious – to clear. So I considered the pantheon. The Pantheon would be 30 gods – one for each of the traits associated with one of the virtues. Then I randomly assigned gods to cities. Then I created the phenotypes that would have colonized the location – the races. I assigned gods to the races randomly as well. This meant that some cities had more gods than others, and associated phenotypes & cultures. For example the first city we'll look at below – Able – has gods of Impulse, Piety & Kindness – specifically: Ingratitude, Faith & Love, with the associated gods of these characteristics being Bick-Buck, Amrenweets & Ushro, respectively representing Goblin, Plioshr & Khin peoples. This helps create a cultural mixture for the city & then by naming it the city of Impulse (again, randomly assigned) it's possible to generate a complex of narrative forces – alliances & conflicts suggest themselves as further cities are created & presently each of the cities is its own place – a crown of its own province & a force in the physical & spiritual worlds & in the political life of the setting.

Able – Throne of Woodland & Crown of the Expanse

-It is a time of Guilt (City of Impulse)

This territory lies in the western edge of the valley, all along the forested hills that are called **Woodland** & down the steep sided slopes to **Falling Lake**, a cascading waterfall filled lake upon the banks of which is built Able itself. Woodland is a densely forested region & difficult to traverse save along its solitary highway – which connects it to Diya. Formerly, other paths traversed the hills & rose up to the city of Zenith – which lies to Able & Woodland's western frontier – but in the last war these roads were wrecked & there is little will to repair them now.

As a city, Able is a bit scattered – it lies along the northern banks of Falling Lake – which is itself segmented into many tiers. Able's tiers are connected by a series of tall stairs, small canals & lock systems and by complexes of walkways & lifts built into the trees that shade much of the city. Only the upper two tiers of the city have walls & they are built around the temple of **Ushro** a castle of cut stone in a wide, tiled plaza. The plaza & its temple were once deemed the sacred place of the northern **Khin.** A sanctuary for their most holy rites. When the worship of the god Ushro was incorporated into the **Tricadic** Pantheon many a Khin sicarius came to Able to occupy the forum & the temple. This was the start of the last war. A clear line of events can be drawn but not a clear line of causality. Ushro's devout occupied the upper-tier of Able. Woodland's elves united around their hero **Ultist** and this caused some scattered violent clashes. This in turn caused Zenith to invade which caused more cities to declare different alliances until the war swept through the whole valley. The causes are hard to decipher, but the starting point is easy to spot – The plaza around the temple of Ushro is stained with blood & the bodies that fell there remain – the plaza & the temple are empty – no one is allowed to venture there by order of **Furious Exarch Maldamus** the leader of Zenith's occupation force that currently controls Able. The walls surrounding this city center are comprised of the castles & fortified palaces of the, principally khinish, elites who rule over portions of Woodland province. Here the games of dominance & commerce prevail – where swathes of the province change hands over bets on dog-races & the fates of innumerable serfs are decided at a whim. This is all done under the eye of Maldamus, who allows these petty lords to rule over his de-facto holdings.

The city beyond the walls is much more diverse – both in terms of population & in style. Able is largely a brick city full of massive structures of red & black bricks here and there covered in decorative mosaics. The great outer wall, where it still stands, is brick as well, many layered and several cubits thick. Passages & fortresses are built into this outer curtain – but it has been broken & the main camp of Zenith's expeditionary force currently occupies all the wall's fortifications. The curtain wall contains the mass of the city – the upper three tiers while the lowest tier & a fair sprawl of outlying shanties lies outside the wall's protection – and outside the power of the Exarch. Here the insurgent powers organize & exert their own force to undermine the Exarch as well as each other.

The province beyond is varied – wooden lodges & longhouses as well as vagabond tent cities of the Plioshr & forest enclaves of the elves can all be found – sometimes side-by-side. Woodland is not at all urbanized though, and there are only villages outside of Able – though these are themselves quite numerous – they are separated by the hilly topography & deep forests that make up Woodland.

Far out in the provincial outlands there is a hill fort, a holdout castle that is home to the khinish king of Able-in-exile. **Impra Minnick** claims not just Woodland but the Expanse to the North & all the lands south to Ditch Province. These claims are seriously attributed but not strenuously asserted. The king-in-exile has very little power – but does still command the fealty (if not loyalty) of **Ritheloth the Doubly Unkind –** demonic warlord of the **Infernal Band of Able**. The castle is contained but it has never been captured & Impra Minnick is not impotent, his plans may be brought forth at some point in the future & he could very well make good on his claims to the whole western edge of the valley.

Minnick is hardly the only warlord in Woodland. His dominance is thwarted & confused further by the goblin underworld & the faith of **Bick-Buck** the Taker. An entire resistance movement, formed around the secret worship of Bick Buck & the hidden forest stupa of the god lies somewhere in Woodland. Prior to the war this sect was hunted & feared – now it is only feared. The cult is a secret kept by tribes of sapient spiders, blood-drinking fanatics & the complicity of **Gatesfow**, the criminal underworld of the valley.

In a bygone time Woodland was not wholly subjugated by Able's leadership – there were outlying fringe communities adhering to the elvish way of life surrounding the city. These fringe communities, individually, held too little strength to stand against the organized might of an entire city. This was the despairing realization of **Ultist**, the elf hero – who united the myriad elf houses into a united front. This conflict escalated into one of the igniting conflicts at Able & when Zenith & its allies took the city – they were at great pains to capture Ultist – first & only of the elf gods. Now his followers wage a hidden campaign against Zenith, Able, Impra Minnick, even Sword of the West & Shield. Woodland Province is consumed by conflict at this point & one must measure carefully what they say when questioned – as loyalties shift constantly & people have died & killed for claiming the wrong loyalty in casual conversation.



Bitter – Seat of the Crone Mountain Prefectures
- It is a Time of Pride (City of Fairness)

Named for experiences of its founders – Bitter has proven to be extraordinarily misnamed. No city in the Slatewind is as joyous. The city is growing, not more prosperous but more united, more optimistic & in size it is burgeoning, expanding much more quickly than any of its contemporaries.

Bitter was among the first founded cities of the slatewind valley. Its easily accessible mineral deposits – native copper & veins of other ores made it a little boom town in the first wave of colonization. The easy wealth & steady influx of new & hopeful settlers created a lopsided dynamic of ownership & exploited. The divisions between the upper & lower classes were always extreme but grew far more so as the city joined the war. And in the midst of all the troubles war brought, the city's elites were overthrown. Slavers, landlords, mine owners & usurers all putting on airs of nobility & rulership. Every boss or tyrant or owner & their sycophants who didn't flee Crone Mountain were put to the sword – or rather the pick. The miners – the workers, the low-caste laborers & debt-bound-slaves of these masters staged a successful revolt. The lowly classes stole their lives from their owners & snatched the city from them as well. The city of Bitter is now in the midst of a successful proletarian revolution and has become the focus of much enmity among the rulers of the rest of the Slatewind.

Bitter is a wealthy city, and where once its wealth was consolidated into the elite's vaults – it is now spread equally among the citizens. These are idealistic days & there have been, as yet, few of the betrayals & power struggles that might spoil a revolution. The war's wounds have not yet healed in the other cities of the valley – else they might be looking at Bitter, seemingly weakened, with dreams of plunder. These avaricious dreams are held at bay in the nine other cities of the valley as the proletarian revolution at Bitter has lit the passions of the lower classes throughout the slatewind. No city wishes to tempt an invasion that could inspire their soldiers to mutiny & their laborers to resist domination – so at this moment, Bitter is a paradise for workers untroubled by foreign hostility.

Geographically Bitter lies upon a set of nestled valleys & wooded plateaus, laying like a shawl over the eastern mountains' shoulders. The city is made of buildings on hilltops combined with innumerable underground tunnels, mines, & an intersecting array of ancient labyrinths full of monsters & horrors. All of which lie under the city in layers representing the ancient societies that once occupied the valley. These ruins comprise a large part of what are called mines – but which are really excavations of those ancient societies' treasures. The remnants of these societies linger in the caverns still sometimes in strange, unspeakable form. Among Bitter's outcast rulers there is a growing idea that it was an evil from the ancient world, an unknowable horror buried deep in the earth that inspired the revolution. That the unspeakable overthrowing of authority was brought about by ancient, alien minds, incapable of comprehending the dignity of kings or the authority granted by wealth.

It may be that the city's rebellion was inspired by the machinations of creatures that live in those gloomy depths. It may well be that the city's period of hope & joy is artificial & brief – a moment before the horror.

In form the central city of Bitter lies in a great hollow pit – the blasted remnant of a granite caldera many millennia extinct. The city is built along the exterior walls – it is a tiered arrangement like a– but supported pueblo with steel & stone pillars. The city is a crescent of open structures built in tiers up the unbroken half of the caldera.

Civil life in the city now is focused upon the trials being held for the deposed rulers. Some who've been captured are struggled against openly – decried & humiliated by their former servants. Others are tried in absentia & are tormented in effigy. The prosecution of these trials is provided by the priests of the death-god **Kila-Tiif** *The Trusted One* – who is a unifying figure. The anonymous priesthood of that church, operating out of the grave catacombs at the top of the mountain were the organizers of the revolution. In defense of the old order stand the priests of **Massiip**, *Queen of Goodness*, who is a benign goddess of compassion, whose hospitaler-priests try their best to save the lives of everyone, irrespective of their guilt or innocence. Within this construction there are emergent factions within the revolutionary government. The **Three Family Village** – which is anarchic & the **Singing Horse –** which agitates for more of a militant junta with a citizen army. For now these ideologies are merely the different sides of the same coin – but they could, quite easily become the focus of a violent conflict.



Diya – Master of the Dusklight Hills

- It is a time of Heroes (City of Nobility)

Diya occupies the southwestern corner of the valley. It is difficult to approach from further south – but it is still at the end of a long trek that many make. Though not the most common place of entry, it is still an entry point to the valley & one preferred by the most rugged of travelers. In the last war Diya was second-to-last of the cities drawn into the conflict & it's entry marked the peak & the end of the war – for no city's armies are as large or as far ranging as Diya's.

The city & its subsidiary settlements & counties are all ruled over by **Khan Ishma'al** a powerful leader who rides as master over his own great horde. This horde is Diya's army, and the Khan is its master –but Ishma'al is no politician, no governor. Instead – the governance of the city & its province is left to the innumerable aristocrats & petty nobles who are granted leases over their lands to govern as they see fit – though final ownership of the lands is always said to belong to the Khan, Ishma'al has no administration. Rather, he is owed fealty & his army owed provisions in exchange for protection. This guarantee of protection is taken quite seriously & it was this guarantee that meant the end of the war – for the Khan & his riders were the ones who put Elan to the torch, who conquered Able, threatened Zenith & marched on Red Banks. The only force capable of fighting on three fronts at once, the **Horde of Diya** shook the valley.

With the war concluded the Khan has resolved to age peacefully, and to grant dominion to one of his innumerable vassals based upon some secret criteria. This has in turn led to a race to prove valor among the lords of Diya & the Dusklight Hills. The sons & daughters of the nobility are presently engaged in an ongoing contest to demonstrate more courage, more cleverness, more dignity & more resolve than all the others of their generation. As well, there are many who have come to Diya & its province to attempt to prove themselves.

The petty lords of the land – some of whom govern small towns, some who govern just a few acres of farmland – have gotten into the contest – staging all sorts of competitions & inventing all sorts of troubles for a hero to resolve. Old ruins needing exploration are everywhere in the valley, as are dangerous monsters that threaten the lives of the folk. Disputes over land & the rights over roads or commerce occur as well & then there are those who've clearly lost the contest.

There are those who've been outright defeated, before they began, by dint of bad reputation, bad history & bad attitude – these have formed gangs of spoilers – antagonists who seek to wreck the competition for those participating in good faith.

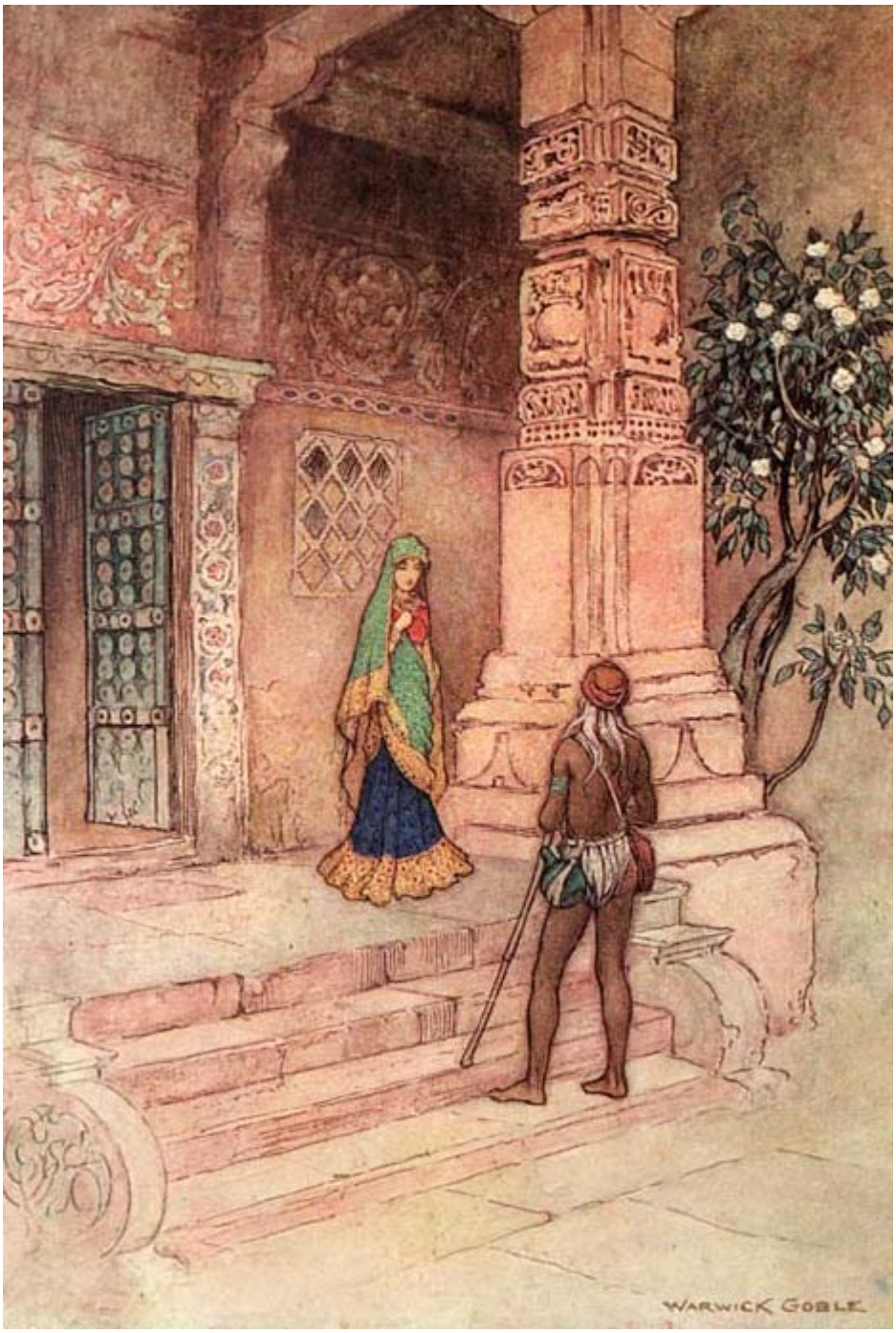
This has made Diya a kind of playground for would be heroes, and a place of high adventure for those so inclined – with numerous opportunities to earn patrons, gain reputation & perhaps to accede to the throne of the Khanate, there is incentive for everyone. The folk of the Dusklight Hills have largely embraced the contest with different communities backing different champions & the larger community rallying to support the general effort. It's said that a likely young hero isn't turned away from any stranger's door in Diya, and that every household will take in a hero to sponsor for themselves.

Elan – Capital of Salt

- It is a time of Confusion (City of Defiance)

The *winner* of the last war – Elan was marched over by 3 separate armies, all of which were repelled, all of which committed atrocities, desecrations & destruction. Inasmuch as no other city wishes another war with Elan, it was the de-facto victor. Inasmuch as the life of the city & the endured overwhelming casualties by it have led to a period of steep decline? The city is barely holding on & was decisively defeated.

All the cities of the Slatewind lie upon ruins, but only Elan lies upon its own ruins. The city is immense but whole sections of it lie in ashes. The Temples of **Silofpishen** at the edge of the plains is the only proper temple left – and it is largely a stable for the Dog-riders of the **Plioshr**, a gathering place rather than a ceremonial center of worship.



The Dwarf-God Drum is revered as a presence- an eternal one – based upon the mines of Elan & the underground colonies of the Dwarves that persisted during the war – providing refuge to the city's surface-folk while the Warlords of Zenith, Diya, Red-Banks & Able vied for ownership of the central valley.

Taking up the remains of the city & guiding the people toward a new life – the clergy of Silofpishen wander the streets teaching the skills of survival in the wastes while the Dwarves, and increasingly more numerous Human followers of Drum master the resolve required to continue after a fall.

The Ruined **Temple of All** – what once was a great & unifying pantheon to all the gods of the Slatewind was destroyed in the war – plundered by the vain adversaries of other cities to decorate their own temples – a few relics of the temple are sought out by the **Mothers of Elan** –the remnant of the ruling caste that previously governed the city.

Originally organized around a sort of family group, largely in imitation of the Plioshr & Khin religions – Elan was governed by a council of rulers – known as the **Patriarchate**, and provided for by a collection of marketers & merchants known as the **Matriarchate**. The Matriarchate is all that remains – most of the fathers of the governing body were killed in war, hung as captives & as the war carried on – executed by the folk of Elan in retribution for their failures.

Some in the city seek to reinstate the Patriarchate – others are highly resistant to re-establishing a group that willingly sought a losing war.

With the city in ruins, the rest of **The Prince of Salt** – the rich & populous province at the center of the valley has grown restive. There are other towns outside of Elan that are emerging as new centers of power in the region – among these are **Blackpool** & **Saltbridge** two up-and-coming districts each with ambitious leaders. These cities & their rulers have some fair claims to the rule of Elan proper – as both of these is held by its original feudal lord – lords who are the final members of the **Patriarchate** left alive. There are those who wish to see one or both of these men take Elan – not the least among these supporters are the ruling cabals of other cities. Zenith is known to favor Blackpool & Red-Banks is known to back Saltbridge – this plurality alone is sufficient to advance divisions & prevent the healing that Elan proper desperately needs.



In the midst of all of these competing interests the **Chant of All as All** is still sung, and the faithful of the **Tricadic Union** have returned to once again build the great temple of the unified faith of the valley – once the cause of the war, now hoped to be the cause of an eternal peace. This contingent weaves between competing patriarchs, matriarchs, dwarf-elders & dog-riders as well as the intermittent apocalyptic warlord & holdout soldier In The Ruins.

Elan is the central city & while it needn't be the focal point of a campaign, it has the largest share of the eponymous Ruins – providing a good deal of opportunity for the exploration minded adventurer.

Red Banks – First of the River Cities
- It is a time of Innovation (City of Audacity)

Suspicion, Cynicism, Sincerity

Red Bank or Red Banks – either is correct – lies at the edge of the slatewind, detached from the rest of the community of city-states by topography. This remove is replicated in Red Bank's interior identity, for it is deeply unlike the rest of the slatewind, idiosyncratic & strange – but still recognizably part of a larger civilization. Red Bank is ruled by the **Governors Sodality** – a coterie of sorcerers & alchemists who rule over swathes of the river banks that Red Bank sits astride. The **River Might** is a great deluge that cuts across the southeastern quarter of the slatewind, carving out a secondary valley – this comprised of steep & muddy cliffs interspersed with densely populated islands & banks. This community has grown & their works & efforts have managed to create networks of roads & canals & especially bridges (for which Red Banks is well known) all of which have knit this outlying community together. Red Bank itself is the greatest of these river-bank communities, the largest by far & the center of local governance. Ownership & command, for the two go together along the River Might derive, conspicuously, from magical authority. Sorcerers, alchemists & various sorts of Bruja & Magician all strive against one another for dominion over more territory, more commerce & more servants.

Red Banks' magical aristocracy by implication has created an underclass of non-magical servants. This internal arrangement is furthered by the caste system of the Brizai, which culture comprises a large component of Red Banks culture, though curiously, there are no great temples to any of the Brizai gods in Red Banks. Indeed the city & its province are the most secular region in the valley. It's said that with living gods as rulers, there is little to inspire one to conjure celestial overlords – or rather as is commonly said: "We've got enough people who think they're gods already." The **Disappointer's** faith & the mystic call of **Echo** both thrive here, in this margin – the former an almost atheistic deity – one worshipped almost as a joke & the other not so much worshipped as communed with, participated in.

The canyons that encircle the River Might, and the narrow defiles that cross over the hills & through the forests to the north & west of Red Banks are riddled with pioneering communities, foresters & logging camps, prospectors & ruins-hunters. This is the least settled region in the valley, the most wild, the most dangerous & the hardest to traverse. There are villages that have gone uncontacted for many decades & which possibly have no relationship to any other region of the slatewind in this range. There are communities of hunters & trappers – rangers – who move about on the woodland hills & provide protection & aid to these far flung settlements. This network is a burgeoning force in local politics. Among the sorcerer-lords of Red Bank there are those who seek to channel the energy of these rangers to carve out new territories to expand into while others wish to crush this new tendril of civilization to keep it out of the hands of their competitors. The compact nature of Red Banks means that it has grown up, climbing these valley slopes & expanding on the river's edge – but not out. Territory is at a premium and among the Governors there is intense competition over control of land & resources. This competition has become its own entity – its own reality & efforts to break the game by acquiring lands outside the river's edge are seen as, almost cheating.

The sorcerer-governors of Red Banks do not lightly depart their towers or their keeps – they must remain present & vigilant against the efforts of their peers. This means that there is a good deal of work that they need done by proxies. Sorcerer-Governors are plentiful & their resources are significant meaning that they are frequently patrons of mercenary groups & adventurers – though one must always be wary when engaged in this sort of employment – for in Red Banks little is what it appears to be.



Finally – Red Banks is the city of Innovation – it is the place where the future meets the present – so they say. This is not in small part due to the efforts of the priests of **Seriit**, the Saayang goddess of precision, the stars & the future. This priesthood, camped on the high cliffs above the city, are mathematicians, astronomers & intellectuals of the first order. Their calculations, and need for better calculations have had a cascading effect on the community – where inventors & sorcerer-patrons alike are willing to invest great efforts in advancing these scholarly pursuits – particularly given that these pursuits have proven to provide accurate readings of future events. The confluence of technical advancement & prescient magic have helped new things to burst into existence. The sorcerer-towers of Red Banks are alarmingly tall – for they make use of steel in their construction. The winds over the canyons carry fliers – kites fitted with rockets that allow messengers to jet along the water's surface. The bridges over the River Might are gracefully winged, artfully suspended. The production of the workshops & factories of the city produce the most exotic, outlandish goods. The province itself is swiftly dividing itself between the inventive, cosmopolitan cities on the banks & the curiously removed pioneers of the heights.

In the last war Red Banks fared better than most cities. It entered the conflict late – and on both sides. The governors of the city – in particular **Invincible Shaw** & his rival **Dolorous Hegemon Sinder** both sought auguries from the priests of Seriit & both were thought to have the opportunity to prosper after concluding the war on their terms. So both entered the war – but on different sides. The forces of Shaw & Sinder met at Diya, and fought, they met all throughout the expanse & fought, they met at the foothills of Zenith & fought & they fought to a standstill at the walls of Shield. In all of these conflicts they cancelled one another out & spoiled the efforts of the sides they had taken. This conflict alone is the one part of the war that actually touched Red Bank – but the battle was – intense, extreme. In the city the two loosed powerful & terrible sorceries – it is said that they controlled the thoughts of the citizens who no longer recollect the teeming thousands who were killed as the Might broke its banks & washed away the larger part of the city. In the end, though the city suffered, Sinder & Shaw suffered worse – for their contemporaries, to halt their war, joined the two into an amalgamated being – a single body housing both of the sorcerers. This curse broke the stalemate & ruined the dominion of both, leaving them far less powerful than they were, politically.

Saedu – The Seven Towns

- It is a time of Reconciliation (City of Civility)

Gentleness, Cruelty, Rudeness, Cowardice, Integrity, Tolerance

The city of temples, Saedu is the smallest of the cities of the Slatewind when one considers the size of the ruined underpinnings of the city, the substrate of wreckage & ruin that the city is built upon. The ruins Saedu has been built upon weren't as substantial as others. The main things that remain of the ancient city are its impressive concrete & steel piers, the largest of which extend a mile into the Gray Sea. This makes Saedu the most popular port on the great lake. Popularity as a port hasn't translated to popularity as a settlement though and most who come through Saedu only pass through. The local population is comprised less of Southern immigrants & more of northern natives – people whose five times great grandparents settled along the lake in one of the towns that comprise Saedu.



Brizai, Khin, Saayang & Quet peoples live throughout the district of ferns & their small enclaves – seven in total, make up the 'city' of Saedu – which is more a confederation of temple-centered towns than a single urban entity.

The towns of Saedu are segregated by population & are somewhat conflicted – by ethnic & religious strife. The different temples & their cohorts all contend either as rivals or as adversaries. Acts of vandalism & theft are common – but more troubling conflicts have begun to emerge – though the atrocities that are promised by the developing hostilities haven't begun yet, a few catalysts can be imagined that would cause the whole city to slide into civil war & destruction.

The seven towns of Saedu are:

Family of Wolves – Temple of Yts – a place of militant low-caste Brizai all made of one family. In character Family of Wolves emulates Zenith. It is a community at the height of its power and at the nadir of its morality. The Family, as it's often called, has consolidated & grown – it is the most urban of the towns that make Saedu with little in the way of plantations or farms to support it. Rather the skill of its people have brought the place wealth & it is a town of makers – creators & artisans. Violent & aggressive artisans who've overthrown the yoke of caste & slavery & who have intense biases that aren't reasoned away.

Propitious Angler – Temple of Retuun & the avoidant fishermen of Saedu. Propitious Angler has tried, and usually failed, to avoid the conflicts between the rest of the towns. In character it resembles an unfortunate Elan – a place attempting to find its way out of the fray – but which is unfortunately drawn in.

Port – temple of Que Itst – welcoming place of the north – a common ground for all. Port has the character of Termus – and is most similarly structured & closely related to that city. The folk of Port sometimes see themselves, and even all of Saedu as only part of that city – not its own entity.

Daggers – The Khin city of Hrurursh – the town at war & the town at the center of the conflicts that stir in the Ferns province. Daggers is like a dark version of the city Shield – one that plans war relentlessly, but which also seeks it. Daggers is ruled in strict hierarchy, its leaders are unnamed & masked, their subordinates likewise. The principle social events at daggers are the public flaying of criminals by the masked hierarchs – it is a city ruled by headsmen.

Contented Absolute – Temple of Hoon – a place for more peaceable low-caste Brizai. The runaway conclave, Contented Absolute lies at the end of many roads – it is the destination for serfs & slaves who break free, not just of far flung cities in the Slatewind, but from other, more dangerous towns within Saedu.

Fragrant Grass – Peaceful city of Tergiit – the trusted center where the many hold council. Effectively the capitol, and the center of Saedu. Fragrant Grass is the largest of the towns & controls the most roads & infrastructure. Its lords & ladies – landed elites – have prioritized protection & sustenance over growth – helping them to grow as a center for the province.

Luckiest Man Village - an unassuming town with every sort of person & every sort of temple. Luckiest Man Village is a big town on the western edge of Saedu, it commands the largest region of the province, that stretch of Ferns that faces off to the west. These lands are a patchwork of noble holdings & minor counties all of which coalesce in times of trouble to protect their trade center- Luckiest Man Village.



In effect Saedu is a miniature recapitulation of the valley as a whole – with conflicting groups seeking to conquer one another or to reconcile with each other – or to go their own way unaffected by the others. This community though – is threatened from all sides – without unity of purpose Saedu will be divided up between the rest of the cities – broken to bits. The folk of Saedu do understand this – and this is why it is known as the city of Civility. For though they have their internal rivalries the towns – really neighborhoods – of Saedu have historically coalesced & hung together in the face of foreign incursion. Even those parts of the city that are the least amenable to civil interaction have refused to be manipulated by agents of the larger cities. Their differences are upheld & respected, their mutual survival is assured – this is Saedu's essential creed diversity without compromise.

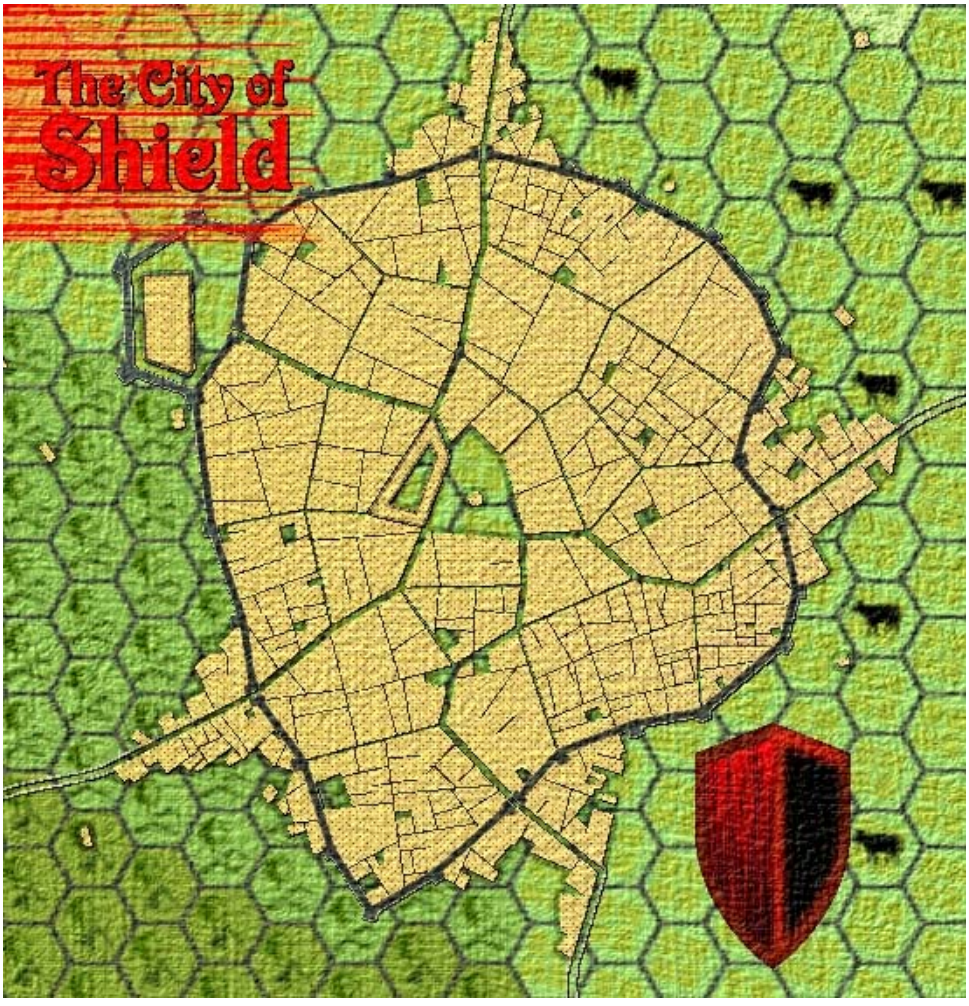
Shield – The City of Four Kingdoms
- It is a Time of Preparation (City of Belligerence)

The City of Shield – with its high painted walls! With its severe & pious folk, with its blood drenched gibbet, with its strict manners, its deep desires, and its overweening antagonism.

In ancient times there were giants. Titans who strode the earth & whose shields were taller than an orc. These shields are found in great abundance in the territories around Shield & the place is named for them. It has always been assumed that once a great battle was fought there & lost – for no other reason can be discerned for the great collection of these shields. In these days the shields give the city its name – for its impregnable walls are clad in & formed of these slab-like steel shields. The circular wall of Shield is a hedge of ancient steel & heraldry – a towering edifice that dwarfs the city within & the countryside without.

The folk of Shield field the great armies, passionate armies of patriots. They dress in their tall, buckled hats, their shining breastplates, their shimmering gorgets, their pig-hide capes & long moustaches. Shield is the city of ferocity, of the furious barely contained warriors of the north. The city of Shield is a xenophobic city that maintains a posture of siege. It looks at the lands of its nearby cities & sees not neighbors – but rivals, at best, adversaries at worst. Shield is in permanent preparation for war & has always been.

In Shield one finds the Temples of **Chuu Milik**, **Mrun** & **Shiddush** – the great gods that they combine into their Patron – **The Protector** – icon of the city.



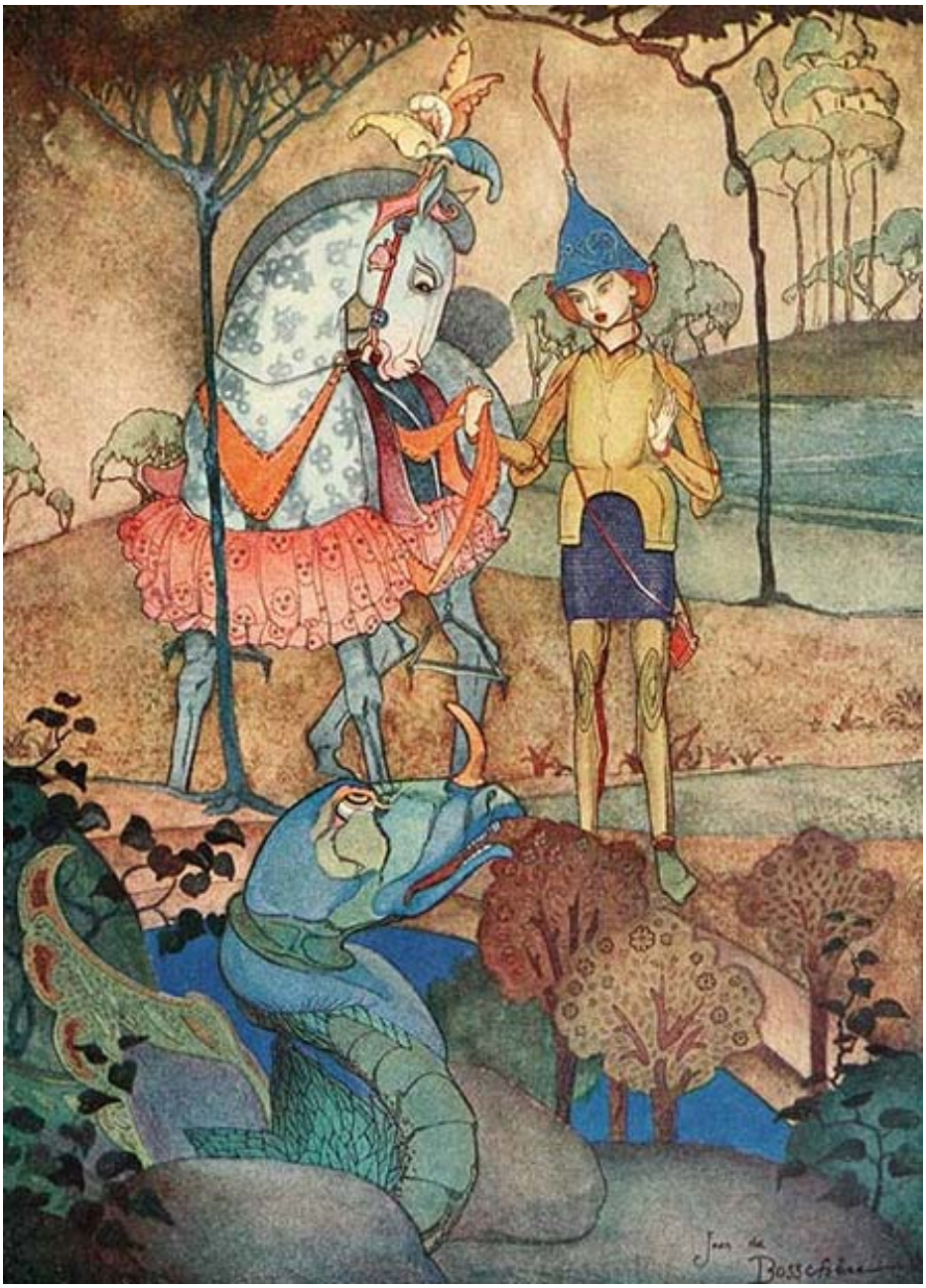
Chuu Milik's temple is wreathed in workshops & its walls are hung with the many shields of the officers & heroes of the great armies of shield. The work of fabricating for the war effort is sanctified here & the endless work of reinforcing the wall is based out of this immense temple. The temple itself is a tower built of ruins, stacked & concreted together artistically into a conical structure with a spiraling outside path.

The Skin Clad Temple of Mrun is the centerpiece of the city of Shield. It is both the academy of the city's officers & the prison for its many enemies. Here brutality, cruelty & the will to master others coalesces into a palpable, menacing palace to an unforgiving god. The Temple is a complex of curving towers all sharing a single walled base, it resembles nothing

so much as removed tooth with the roots as tower peaks. Each of the towers is a keep in itself & each of them serves a different function.

The House of Genealogies is the temple of Shiddush. Here the folk of the city establish their lordly houses, the objects of their ownership, the houses of the city & the city's few plantations. This temple is the center of civic life in Shield – a city with 4 Kings needs a lot of tactful management & careful courtiers – all of those meet here in the temple of Shiddush where the records are kept in high, delicate racks, scrolls made out on the thinnest rolls of cowhide. The temple of Shiddush is a box of columns & windows full of interior light & rooms where the brittle conversation of the Shield folk.

Shield is governed by 4 kings, each promoted by the acclaim of their officers. Each king governs one of the gates of shield (and the road beyond, it is said) where they are charged with protecting the city & with riding out to meet all threats upon the road. Each of the kings is named for the gate they protect & own – **Raccoon Gate – Bear Gate – Coyote Gate – Cat Gate** - the soldiers of these kings wear devices, helmets – masks & other trappings that identify them as members of one or another king's retinue.



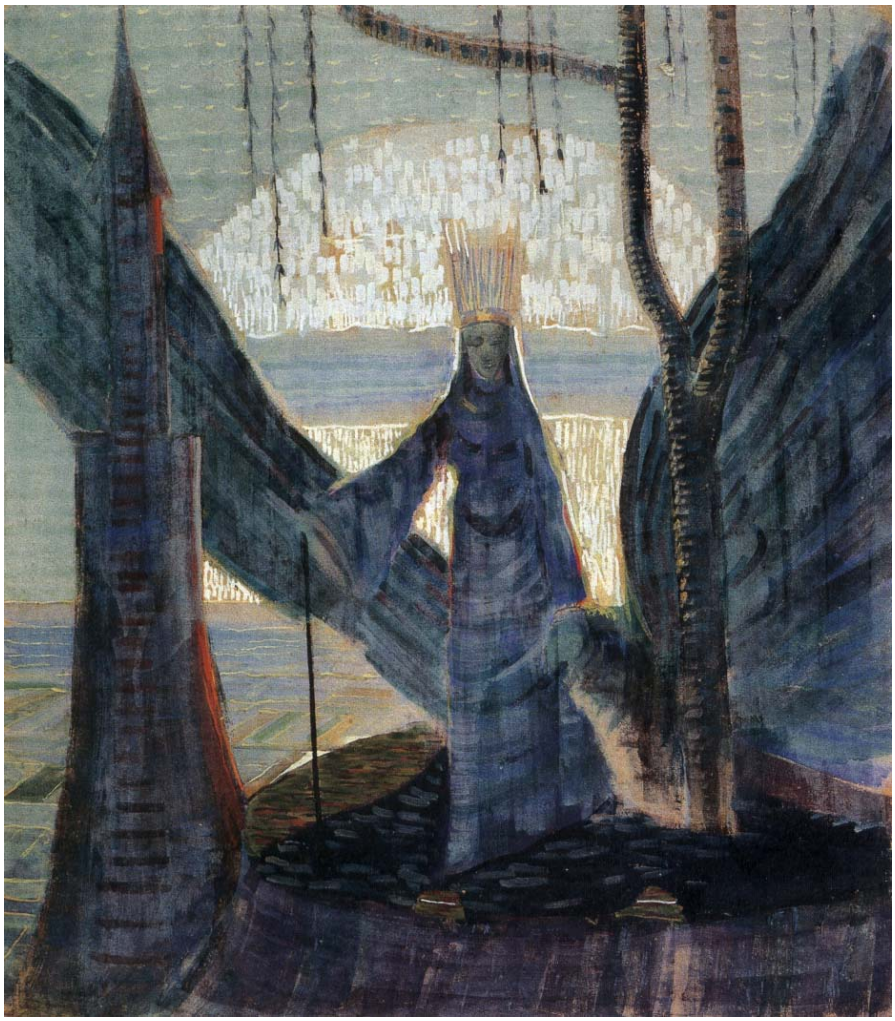
The soldiers & especially the officers of shield are equipped with exquisite gear – artistically crafted swords & shields & armor – they are not ostentatious about their martial gear but the best to be found in the North is what is made in Shield – but one must earn the right to buy or to even use the very best of these & this is won through the contest that the Shield folk pursue with a keen passion -duels of sword & shield. This is the only recreation that the otherwise severe Shieldfolk follow.

- It is a time of Intrigues (City of Ego)

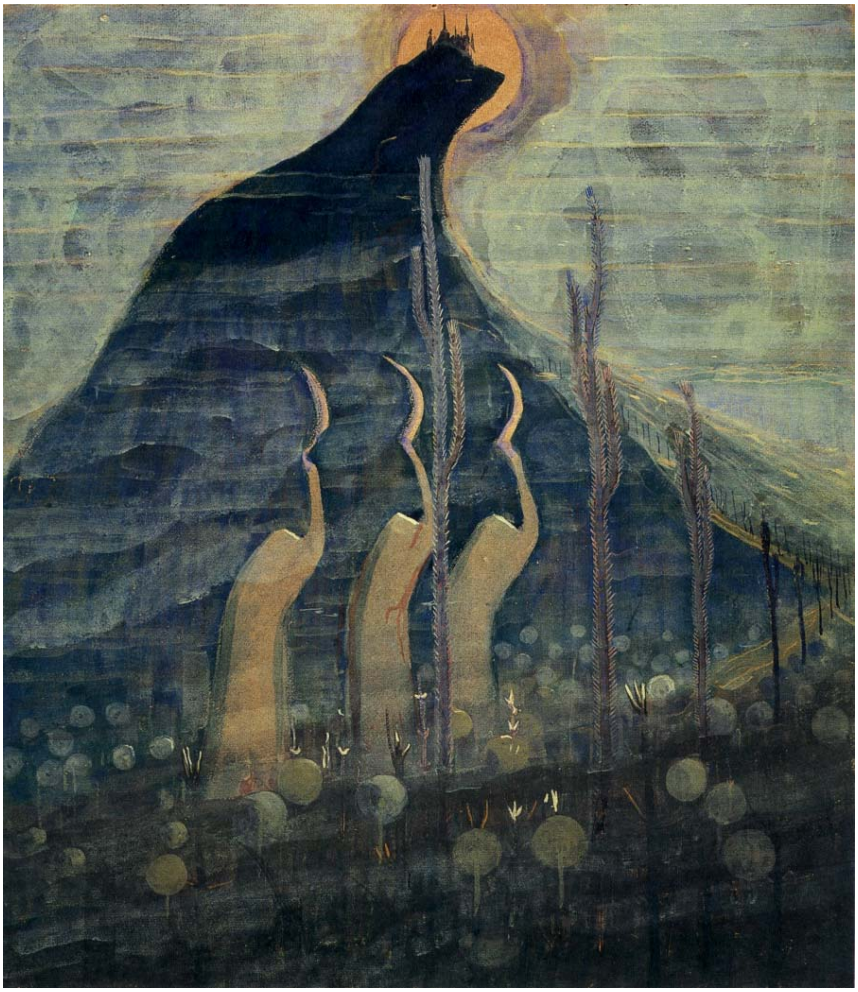
Malice, Responsibility, Cleverness

Sword of the west lies at the edge of the Great Gray Lake & it is a great city built upon the significant ruins of a much more ancient age. The ruins create layers of habitation – which causes the city itself to be made into a series of sprawling hills that rise up upon one another – each of these is a different, small urban center that combines to create Sword of the West - which is, in character, a bit more random & chaotic than the other cities of the valley. The Sword of the West is named for the preposterous sword that lies, plunged into the stone at the center of the city – the relic of some ancient, giant race. The famous sword is forty feet high and made of a shining, textured steel of unmistakable style.

The Sayaang people who live here are dominant & their cultural preferences & attitude prevail above those of the many smaller enclaves – but Saayang cultural identity is largely accepting of others – so the city is, in appearance, largely of the Sayaang style – replete with the repeated pointed arch, numerous minarets & many walled garden-style compounds rendered in variable styles to suit the Plioshr, the Goblins, the Dwarves & the rest who all share alike. The Sayaang dominance makes Sword of the West a place nearly devoid of slavery but inflected with an immense poverty in its place. Without the stratification that is enforced by slave/master relationships Sword of the West is instead governed by intrigues & familial & clan conflicts. Different houses of the city operate in different quarters & they feud with one another extensively. These conflicts have caused the dominant faith of **Ailise** to prosper.



This arrangement of conflicting commercial families has the complication of being at the center of the goblin presence in the Slatewind – the goblins live principally in the impressive underground corridors of the old city – operating what seems, at times, to be an entirely separate city with its own markets & societies. The goblins here revere their patron **Mik-mak** the Taker & their priesthood is comprised of vampires – vampires that dominate the Sayaang population as well as the Goblin underworld. This city of vampires lies at the edge of many trades & professions – but the greatest of these are the butcher-trades of the many blood-soaked abattoirs at the edge of the city, run primarily by the Plioshr devotees of Habrdan. Herders of the Plioshr people entered & joined the Sword of the West long ago, building a colony at the verge of their territory in

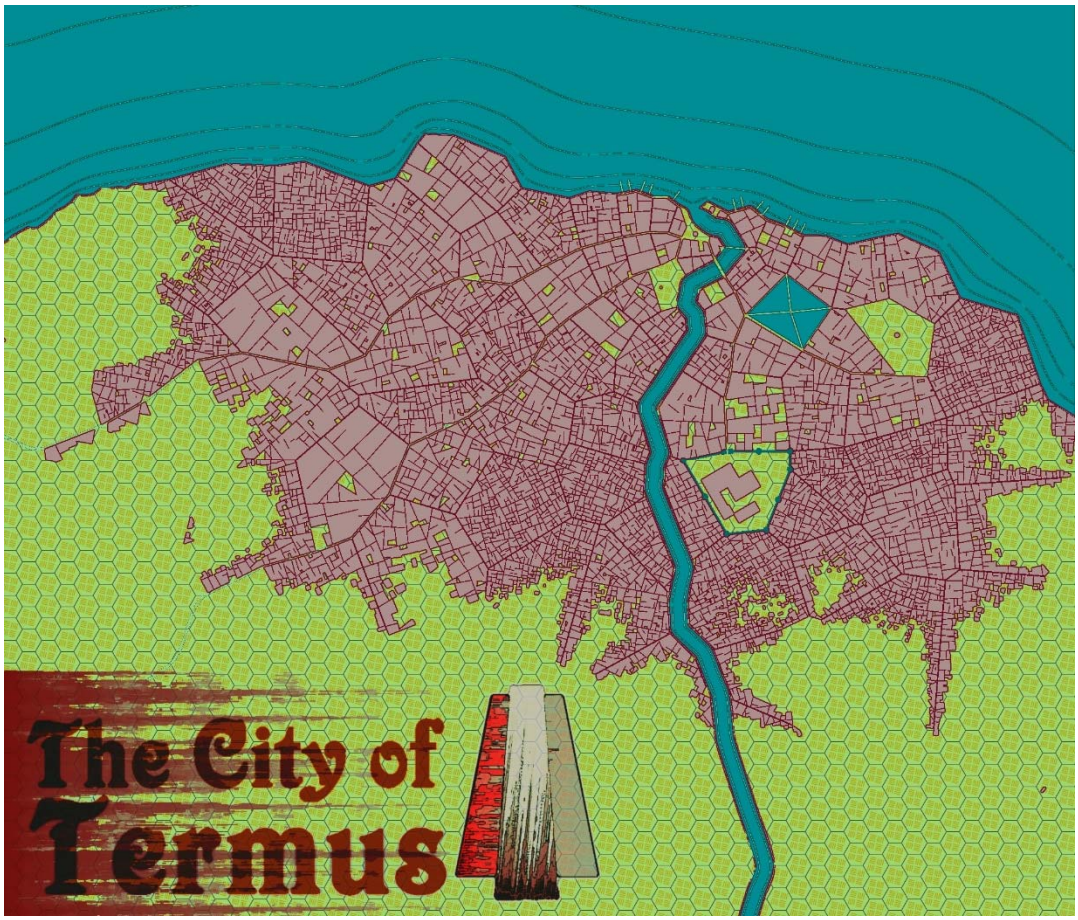


the ruins of a fallen ancient city. Sword of the West is then, an arrangement of densely populated neighborhoods built atop one another, in a seemingly pyramidal progression with goblin warrens at the base & vampire overlords at the top. This isn't precisely the view of the inhabitants however. Most Sword of the West denizens regard the city as the pre-eminent metropolis – the-should-be capitol of the slatewind. Sworders think of their city as the richest, themselves as the cleverest & specifically, their neighborhood as the very best. What exactly is meant by neighborhood isn't always internally consistent. **Traders** – the district of the city that lies around its port also follows the Broad Street to the southern gates of the **Centerring** – which is itself another neighborhood. **Butcher** is the outlying western frontier-facing portion of the city with great vistas of the plains & the mountains beyond the slatewind. **Timber** is the northernmost district of the city- the place of lumberyards & carpenters which lies just below **Gray-Strait** the northernmost edge of the city where it's ancient curtain wall abruptly cuts off all those roads that form the city's great grid. These neighborhoods (and many more) are undergirded by a whole maze of underground neighborhoods & warrens – themselves not even near the bottom of the city's extent. Neighborhoods are like fiefdoms in Sword of the West & the landlords of the city are of one or two sorts – Vampires, or more commonly – the unwitting servants of vampires. The secret wars between the vampire families in the city are part of the last layer of its habitation **Night** – the unseen neighborhood.

The nighttime warfare between vampire gangs is presented by locals as a rumor, a fact, a dangerous secret or an amusing anecdote – sometimes all at once by the same person. There's little consensus concerning this aspect of the city's hierarchy – but there is a powerful sense of unassailability – that is, that despite whatever problems the vampires, or rumored vampires, might cause – they protect the city from all comers. It's just a shame that their personal conflicts so often turn violent & that their ongoing intrigues have erupted so frequently into territorial wars within the city limits.

Termus – Place of Division

- It is a Time of Danger (City of Kindness)



The City of Termus rides on the **River Division**, a complex of forests, bluffs & cascading waterfalls. The forest of Division is an abundant jungle of bamboo & Mangrove – the towns along Division river are all built of wood & stone. Termus, in its present incarnation, was entirely founded by folk of Quet stock & the language of Quet is the primary form of communication in Termus.

In sign & symbol Termus is humble, plain & tidy. This is the motif of the city that worships **Tulat Ku** (The Helper) – the governor of humility, of plainness & simplicity. The unitary god of simple matters & small wonders is a patron deity to Termus, a city built into vast, impossibly complex ruins. These ruins spread deep & wide and profoundly overshadow the miniscule communities that shelter within them. Or seem to. It's uncertain who once dwelt along the banks of the Division, but the current population is immense. Division province is the most populous of the Slatewind – its divisions, petty despotisms, towns & districts are innumerable and relate to one another in a complex mesh of treaties, agreements & covenants. This amalgam of numberless small places is itself one very large place.

The whole district looks to Termus for guidance – the largest enclave & the eldest city of the division & the eldest of the contemporary Slatewind cities – Termus began a few centuries ago, and was opened up by explorers from the south whose original culture & name may be lost – but who are known in the Slatewind as Quet. The local culture that's emerged favors gentleness. The essential virtues of Humility, Hope & Valor are impervious to threat & immune to extortion & this is the reason that Termus, alone among the cities, has not been part of any of the wars fought in the valley yet. This cultural sensibility is lived out in Termus where miniscule efforts carried out by many over a long period has created a great city built of sandstone foundations & high scaffolds of bamboo. Canals crisscross the land around the Division, outnumbering roads by a significant margin. Indeed, roads are scarce in the mangrove forests, with only a few logging trails up into the rocky crevasses & bluffs that make up the city's hinterland. Some agricultural communes are cast farther afield but their route to Termus is over water – through the canals or across the great lake.

The Abbey of Tulat Ku's Saints is the government of Termus & Division. The abbey & its surrounding facilities are an interesting collection of small objects cemented together to create an impressive structure. Drawers & cupboards are built into the walls everywhere & this motif reappears throughout the city of Termus. In the houses there are drawers & in the city's walls there are cupboards & in the ground there are

doors & drains & deeper roads below. The Abbey's denizens are devout & as a rule avoid corruption – though corruption isn't unknown – it's principally unnecessary. The City is large but has few rich people, in aggregate it has great wealth but very few wealthy individuals. The administrative structure of the Abbey is based upon licensing & permitting – people are granted licenses to carry out their businesses & doings and that is the sum of governance. **Taus Elem** – The Abbot of Termus is a powerful man who rules the city. That is what is said. In practical reality Taus Elem is a simple man with an avid ear. Listening at people's wants & understanding their motivations helps him to reward his people with the exact thing that they need & to withhold enough to keep them still striving. He is a keen judge of people so long as they are not his own monks – his monks he gives free reign & trusts them.



Leadership, particularly military leadership is unknown – though mercenary companies have formed as have militias, they are small & don't threaten the peace.

The House of Golden Vines is a famous & famously large house of entertainment – functioning mainly as a tea-house, inn & theater. The House has baths & many other amenities besides & it is a compound of size large enough to rival any other structure in Division. It sits on the western side of the river & is a destination in the whole slatewind for recreation & amusement. It was founded & is operated by the Kallatta – a family of singers & actors who founded it. The house is built of wood & stone & its dining halls are lit with oil lamps & great fireplaces that bellow scented smoke. Its dining halls are numerous & large and during holidays the house is filled with the visitors from the city who celebrate here traditionally.

Crime & criminality in the city aren't so much punished as they are confronted. **The Shrine of Vanity's Death** is concealed in the woods at the southern & eastern edges of Termus & it is a place of dark humiliation. People are brought here, or come here, to be humbled by the monks of Tulat Ku – The Helper. This practice usually involves disfigurement, and beatings. It is known to be a terrible service performed upon those who seek too much or too deeply.

Famous in the city of Termus are the **Kallatta** a very large family of performers, acrobats, actors & singers – it's a sprawling clan that isn't clearly differentiated & which holds most of the western end of Termus as their own territory. They are faithful to Tulat Ku – The Helper but their special affinity is for **Ukrut Ter** – The Dreamer.

The City of Termus is extraordinarily heavily populated. This is remarkable for its lack of any military, any wall, and any strong defense at all. The city has people, and wealth – but it pays its way out of conflicts and remains neutral in the conflicts between the other cities. There is no real way that this policy can prevail during a serious conflict – the plunder at Termus & its lack of defense make it the primary target of all its neighbors' war plans.

Zenith – Highest of Peaks

- It is a Time of Transformation (City of Piety)

Dignity, Ostentation, Greed

Though many of the ten cities claim victory in the last war Zenith is not among them. This is conspicuous because of all the cities that gained in that war – Zenith is at the top. The district of Peaks of which Zenith is capitol is small & traditionally somewhat poor. Poor in resources & population. Those people it did have did, however, have an uncanny will, a will to control, to take & to have. This will manifested in machinations – principally financial in nature, which underpinned all the conflicts in the war. For what Zenith's people lacked in wealth they created – through manipulations of debt, ownership & investment. When a city entered the war it would find that its creditors & its resources were suddenly tied up or else heavily intertwined with the fate of the opposing side. A city would join the war with one set of allies and leave with another – all through the careful control over the finances of the lords, their vassals & the cities of the valley.

Zenith's position at the peak of the highest province made it a good place for a bank at some point in the past. The vaults of the ancients were still intact, their fortifications in the city's mountain fastness had stood for time out of mind. So why not use them? This was the thought in the minds of the explorers who came to Zenith. They first began by offering security, and grew that business by expanding services inventing networks – issuing bank-notes. In the Slatewind commerce in land & people & in commodities is all performed using banknotes issued by the temples of **Gaalist** & **Jegl** – the city's principal gods. These notes are backed by the stores of wealth given the temple-banks by those wealthy lords who find that insecure borders & the ever-present threat of Gatesfow are too great a threat to their own offers. So they keep their treasures locked in the mountain vaults of Zenith and transact their business in certificates & bonds – letters of credit & notes issued by these temples. Naturally smaller transactions, those engaged by the lower classes who don't own land or other people – these transactions make use of coin.

Part of the last war was the Mint at Able. Able's mint issued the silver coins that were the basis of the economy of the valley. The priests of Gaalist & their rival priests of Jegl saw this as an exploitable market, a method for extending their wealth & its accoutrements. This ambition led to various machinations that ultimately provoked the rest of the cities of the Slatewind into a war that no-side truly won.

While the war profited the masters of Zenith somewhat – it cost them as well – family lines were killed and their credit destroyed, lands were razed & their value erased – cities defaulted on loans & mercenaries robbed payrolls – the chaos of war was initially a boon to Zenith but in the end it proved to be ruinously expensive. At the final gasp of the war Zenith's lenders had called in their retainers at Shield to protect them from the other cities, only to find that of the four kings of that warlike city – two owed debts to Gaalist's church & one to Jegl's church, while the final owned the majority of the bullion held in common by both temples. Rather than turn on one another the 4 kings planned to attack together & to take Zenith for themselves. This was avoided at the last minute by the manipulation of these debits & credits & the war itself was finally concluded.

Zenith's fortunes began and ended largely in the same place – but the fortunes won & lost in the conflict were immense. The wealth of the city had moved so fluently through the ranks of the wealthy & the poor that the entire city's polity had been shifted. With this change has come a change in the city's direction. Where previously the worship of Jegl & Gaalist were masks worn by the greedy & ostentatious as an excuse for their behavior – these behaviors have evolved their own mystique – the gods are at the center of this & their temples & the whole city of Zenith – the one city in the province of Peaks – has been clad in gold – metaphorically & literally. The city is a place of concentrated wealth where ostentation reigns. It is considered the acme of civilization, of gentility, to lavishly demonstrate one's worth by wearing expensive & gaudy clothes, being attended by expensive & elite servants & living in fantastic luxury. These are pious sacraments in the local faiths. This has created a kind of mania – for ostentation & for the means to attain it that has in it a religious fervor. No longer the province of the vain – these antics are the bailiwick of the soberest churchmen. It's caused a bit of a stir & the feckless in Zenith are beginning to choose an entirely different mode.

That mode- the fashion of the wealthy elites & avant-garde is to follow the example of the community's notorious prisoner – the ever-dying **Ultist**, god of the elves. The immortal & endlessly dying god is a

monument to Zenith's authority – it is held in a cage, never given food or drink, shot with arrows regularly, stabbed & stoned & burned in turn – never dying, always suffering & all along with so much grace even the most shameless people in a city without shame are made dumb in its presence. The Ultist was taken as a prize for victors – but the peace is being won by its otherworldly dignity. The polity of Zenith is on a hinge at this moment – where the most pious & religious are becoming the most materialistic & grasping. Meantime the most well off & powerful are becoming ascetic – even tasteful. This is a transition that is unlikely to be without disruption.



So here there are 10 factions, 10 teams in one league – each with their own dramas – certainly. The kabbalah could be recapitulated for each of these on a smaller scale – but for our needs here – establishing the bounds of ambition that guide the world – here we are. Note that there aren't too many mentions of individual people. No. Here we work with ideas, concepts – these aren't rooted to any specific person or place – they linger in a cloud of the imagination over a landscape that has yet to form. We begin with these ideas and see how their friction ignites what lies below.

Chockma - the Ideals

On to **Chockma.** Here we fashion cultural & religious identities – forms that the players & the NPCs can borrow – items like clothing that they can wear – signifying membership in identifiable groups. This section covers the pantheon & the cultures. These are created in a player-facing way, that is, there may be secret underpinnings – but they're not relevant at the start – they're details for the players to look at & for the Referee to think about. Rather than duplicate those accessible details a few options are presented instead.

Virtue	Quality	Idea	Deity	Culture	City
Audacity	Cowardice	Avoiding Confrontation	**Retuun**	Saayang	Saedu
Audacity	Passion	Pursuing Passions	**Chuu Milik**	Quet	Shield
Audacity	Ostentation	Conspicuous Consumption	**Jegl**	Brizai	Zenith
Belligerence	Cruelty	Abusing the Weak	**Hrurursh**	Khin	Saedu
Belligerence	Hostility	Attacking others	**Mrun**	Brizai	Shield
Belligerence	Malice	Treating others with Contempt	**Ailise**	Saayang	Sword of the West
Civility	Integrity	Resisting Temptation	**Tergiit**	Saayang	Saedu
Civility	Tact	Being Polite	**Shiddush**	Khin	Shield
Civility	Humility	Defering to Others	**Tulat Ku**	Quet	Termus
Defiance	Resolve	Denying Faith	**Drum**	Dwarf	Elan
Defiance	Suspicion	Spying on Others	**Echo**	Dwarf	Red-Banks
Defiance	Cynicism	Denying Goodness	**The Disappointer**	Halfling	Red-Banks
Ego	Cleverness	Cheating	**Mikmak**	Goblin	Sword of the West
Ego	Dignity	Refusing Help	**Ultist**	Elf	Zenith
Ego	Greed	Stealing	**Gaalist**	Saayang	Zenith
Fairness	Trust	Beleiving in Others	**Trumpet**	Dwarf	Bitter
Fairness	Loyalty	Being Worthy of Trust	**Kila Tiif**	Quet	Bitter
Fairness	Tolerance	Accepting Others	**Yts**	Brizai	Saedu
Impulse	Ingratitude	Contempt for Help	**Bick Buck**	Goblin	Able
Impulse	Improvisation	Contempt for Culture	**Silofpishen**	Plioshr	Elan
Impulse	Rudeness	Being Rude	**Que Itst**	Quet	Saedu
Kindness	Love	Loving Others	**Amrenweets**	Plioshr	Able
Kindness	Compassion	Offering Aid to the Weak	**Massiip**	Saayang	Bitter
Kindness	Gentleness	Treating Others gently	**Hoon**	Brizai	Saedu
Nobility	Valor	Protecting Others	**Tuk Kael**	Quet	Diya
Nobility	Sincerity	Telling Truth	**Seriit**	Saayang	Red-Banks
Nobility	Responsibility	Caring for the weak	**Habradan**	Plioshr	Sword of the West
Piety	Faith	Believing in Something	**Ushro**	Khin	Able
Piety	Hope	Pursuing Dreams	**Ukrut Ter**	Quet	Bitter
Piety	Wonder	Being Inspired	**Ispi Que**	Quet	Diya

First the organization of the deities – here's a simple grid to help you keep them straight. The concepts each of these spiritual entities encompasses is part of one of the 10 virtues that are part of the basis of this setting. This setting, conceptually, rests upon the idea of decision-making. The environment is open-ended, there are no real boundaries save those that the PC's create for themselves – this system of morality exists to help them plan out the borders of their own character. As PCs, there may be all sorts of author-avatar tropes being

played out by the PCs, which is fine – this is the basis of the setting & the campaign – that there are 10 ideals, each with 3 components – these components each have a God and each God is worshipped in one of 10 cities. The cities are populated by people from one of the 10 cultures (the 9 presented here & the immigrant from the south – the default character-type for the Game of the North). These are trappings of identity that can be manipulated & gathered together in different proportions for different players to interact with according to their preference. Think of these as the palette with which the PCs will create their characters, but also, with which you will create the NPCs, the cities, the objects & so on.

The 30 gods & the 10 cities & the 9 +1 cultures are a lot to work with – again, they're not reprinted here, those are presented early in the player's guide where they can build their character – those same resources are used to build out the setting.

Each of the deities has a feature described called *Feature of Patronage*. These are, taken individually exemplary quests that a character may undertake – missions to delve into the ideal over which the god has dominion to gain the feature as a living avatar of that higher ideal.

It's worthwhile to also add a few idealized quests- high water marks for character focus – the Big Things that a PC might do. In The Ruins – the top-tier goals should be far from reach but not unthinkable.

- Rule one of the cities
- Gain the favor of all the deities
- Destroy one of the cities
- Destroy one of the faiths
- Exemplify one of the 10 virtues
- Unite the cities under some ideal

Note that none of these are *kill the villain* or *find the McGuffin*. These are player side visions, dreams for them to have – the idea is to give them enough of a palette to be able to paint these character-driven goals that supersede a plot driven outlook. Remember the boundaries are for the players to determine.



Binah - The Factions

The Factions are emergent, within the text – hopefully having come across through the descriptions in each class, each god & each city. These are affiliations & groups – some secret, some more overt that have a stake in the flow of events. These are the wheels that turn whether or not a player is on hand to turn them. This is where you determine what the course of events in your setting will be if there weren't players. Players comprise a faction of their own – and could be the leading faction – the most important one – depending on what they attempt. They can also abdicate that role & join an extant faction – so you have to have these established & understood in advance. What will happen tomorrow in your setting? What will it be like next year?

In The Ruins there are many factions, some of which could merit their own books. Each of the most relevant factions is described briefly here along with their Independent Goals – that is, what they would do if there weren't other factions to worry about – and their dependent goals – what they'll try to do in the face of opposition. Some statistical information is also provided – since the Game of the North provides statistics for Factions – each of the factions is presented as its own entity.

This list of factions is far from complete – but it does span a psychological region of the valley. Included are mystic sects, religious affiliations, mercenaries & criminal fraternities. The idea here is to create a broad palette with which to paint our setting.

Bear Gate - A military knighthood based in Shield – followers of one of the 4 kings

Cat Gate - A military knighthood based in Shield – followers of one of the 4 kings

Coyote Gate - A military knighthood based in Shield – followers of one of the 4 kings

Fuliginous Shogun - A mystical cult based upon the evil teachings of the Shadow Tome

Gatesfow - Guild of thieves & other criminals that operates throughout the valley

Governors Sodality - Coterie of powerful magical practitioners who rule Red Banks

Horde of Diya - Huge army that casts an even longer shadow

Infernal Band of Able - fading mercenary company that once shook the earth

Matriarchate - rising liberty based community of businesses & professionals in Elan

Patriarchate - failing tradition based community of priests & nobles in Elan

Raccoon Gate - A military knighthood based in Shield – followers of one of the 4 kings

Samnite Prince - Followers of the Lantern Book & its benign teachings

Tricadic Pantheon - The new orthodoxy – worshippers of the 30 gods at once

Woodwatch - Survivalist recluses who strive to keep the forest pure

Zho-Xen-Zho - Philosophical atheists who cast illusions

This represents, in the design of the world, a starting point – other groups may emerge as the creation of the PCs, or may become obvious as the design of the setting continues. For now, these provide a fair addendum to the different gods & churches of the pantheons & the culture identities of the different phenotypes presented in the Player's guide.

Party Bear Gate

Alignment Belligerence **Virtue** Hostility
Temptation Cruelty **Vice** Love

Devotion	14
Glory	15
Influence	10
Membership	17
Reputation	6
Secrecy	7

NPC		PC
Stats	6+1d10	AC
HD	+2HD	Social
Saves	-1	+Khinish Languages
Morale	+2	Maneuvers
Maneuvers	+1	Skills
To-Hit		
AC		
Skills		

Income 2
Operations 1

Qualities
Hierarchy, Knighthood, Technique, Banner (Battle Standard), Headquarters, Orders

Description

The Knights of the Bear Gate serve the Bear King of Shield. They are charged with the protection of the city's eastern quarter & the eastern road all the way to Bitter. This road is among the most dangerous & poorly settled in the slatewind & the Bear Knights are known to be constantly embattled, skilled & warlike. Individual knights are always well armored & their shield & axe technique for quickly bringing down enemies is universally feared. The technique is easily used in phalanx formations & the bear knights are regarded as the finest heavy infantry in the slatewind. Members of the order wear their bear-helms but prefer to be known & do not conceal their identities. Their war-banners, worn as accessories t their heavy armor are far more symbolic than their masks or stylized armor.

Party Cat Gate

Alignment Ego **Virtue** Clevernes
Temptation Wonder **Vice** Suspicion

Devotion	14
Glory	18
Influence	10
Membership	15
Reputation	4
Secrecy	6

NPC		PC
Stats	6+1d10	+1 AC AC
HD	+2HD	Social
Saves	-3	+Khinish Languages
Morale	+3	Maneuvers
Maneuvers	+1	Skills
To-Hit		
AC		
Skills		

Income 1
Operations 1

Qualities
Hierarchy, Knighthood, Technique, Badge (Distinctive Adornments), Headquarters

Description

The Knights of the Cat Gate follow the Cat King of Shield. This hierarchical knighthood rules over the Cat quarter & are theoretically responsible for everything that occurs on the western road out of Shield which leads to Sword of the West. The Cat King claims all the lands along the road as his own – but this claim isn't seriously accepted by anyone. The knighthood is known for its elaborate cat-masked helmets, its cunning technique for pulling riders from horses & its members great elegance. Cat Gate knights are more at home at the events of state that comprise their affairs than they are as warriors of the road. The Cat Gate is known to be the most fashionable & tasteful of the knighthoods of Shield.

Party Coyote Gate

Alignment Audacity **Virtue** Passion
Temptation Cowardice **Vice** Sincerity

Devotion	14
Glory	14
Influence	8
Membership	12
Reputation	15
Secrecy	12

NPC		PC
Stats	6+1d10	AC
HD	+2HD	Social
Saves	-1	Languages
Morale	+0	Maneuvers
Maneuvers		Skills
To-Hit	+1	
AC	+1	
Skills		

Income 2
Operations 1

Qualities
Hierarchy, Knighthood, Technique, Badge (Officer Insignia), Emblem (Uniforms, Coat of Arms)

Description

The Knights of the Coyote Gate are charged with all the possessions of the Coyote king of Shield – the city's southern gate & the southern road from Shield to Elan. The Coyote King makes no extravagant claims but his knighthood is well known for their skill at deduction, clever traps & ruses. Their main methods involve cunning tactics for overwhelming larger forcers. The Coyote knights are known for their armored coyote masks & their discretion – many of the knights aren't open about their membership – using their masks to grant themselves anonymity – which is useful in their work interdicting contraband & investigating smugglers. Their technique is well known though – the Coyote Trick – a feint that suggests to the opponent that they are outnumbered.

Party Fuliginous Shogun

Alignment Civility **Virtue** Tact
Temptation Dignity **Vice** Gentleness

Devotion	14
Glory	7
Influence	7
Membership	10
Reputation	17
Secrecy	17

NPC		PC
Stats	6+1d10	AC
HD	+1HD	Social
Saves	+2	Languages
Morale	+0	+1 Maneuvers
Maneuvers		+Sorcery Skills
To-Hit	+1	
AC	+1	
Skills	+1	

Income 1
Operations 1

Qualities
Technique, Rite (+1 To-Hit, +1 AC), Mystery (Initiation of the Profane), Emblem (Uniforms)

Description

Followers of the Fuliginous Shogun have taken the Profane Initiation & have elected to follow the diabolical ideology of the Shadow Tome. These demoniac cultists seek to bring about an age of impenetrable darkness in order to blind all beings to their nefarious acts. With a special hostility to beings of the white-moon & the shining sun – the Fuliginous Shogun's forces are poorly adjusted people with nihilistic ideals. The cult has become more popular since the war with many veterans & displaced refugees seeking an unconventional end to all wars through the destruction of the world itself.

Party Gatesfow

Alignment Defiance **Virtue** Cynicism
Temptation Greed **Vice** Valor

Devotion	8
Glory	15
Influence	10
Membership	17
Reputation	15
Secrecy	18

NPC		PC
Stats	2d6	AC
HD	+2HD	Social
Saves	-1	+Gatesfow Languages
Morale	+2	Maneuvers
Maneuvers	+1	+Pick Pockets Skills
To-Hit	+1	
AC	+1	
Skills	+1	

Income 8
Operations 4

Qualities
Thieves Guild, Initiation (3rd Degree), Cant

Description

The Slatewind Valley's criminal underworld. Gatesfow operates in all 10 of the cities, usually with multiple chapters. Small chapters exist throughout the valley in small towns & villages. Gatesfow has a cellular organization & no-one really knows who is the leader, or if there is a leader. As an ideology Gatesfow is based upon the refusal to obey or to fall into line with authority. In this respect Gatesfow draws from the cultural traditions of Halflings, Low-caste Khin & Plioshr outsiders. There is some speculation amongst the intellectual classes about Gatesfow & its origins, though most common people see them as either terrible adversaries or aspirational role-models. The upper crust regards them as nothing short of devils. Members speak in the secret cant known as Gatesfow.

Party Governors Sodality

Alignment Audacity **Virtue** Cowardice
Temptation Loyalty **Vice** Love

Devotion	18
Glory	11
Influence	18
Membership	4
Reputation	18
Secrecy	16

NPC		PC
Stats	10+1d8	AC
HD	+2HD	+1 Social
Saves	+0	Languages
Morale	-3	+1 Maneuvers
Maneuvers		+Sorcery Skills
To-Hit	+1	
AC	+1	
Skills	+1	

Income 7
Operations 3

Qualities
Hierarchy (X2),Syndicate, Coven (The Gathering), Rite (+5 HP, +1 AC, +2 Speed, +1 To-Hit, -1 to Saves), Mystery (Orthogonal Interspatial Transcendence)

Description

The governor's sodality is an extremely elite organization, a guild of sorcerers who govern the river Might & the city of Red Banks. The sodality is plagued with infighting, treachery & esoteric conflicts that aren't relatable to anyone who isn't a sorcerer themselves. Entry into this organization is a fraught affair involving many magical rites, complex interpersonal dependencies & the ownership of large quantities of territory. Individuals within the sodality are among the most powerful in the slatewind – and some consider the sodality less an organization of these people, than it is a necessary hedge to their individual powers – that the group must exist to keep open war between sorcerer-kings from occurring.

Party Horde of Diya

Alignment Nobility **Virtue** Valor
Temptation Improvisation **Vice** Ingratitude

Devotion	12
Glory	17
Influence	18
Membership	18
Reputation	15
Secrecy	8

NPC		PC
Stats	6+d6	+1 AC AC
HD	+4HD	+1 Social
Saves	-2	+Plioshr Languages
Morale	+3	Maneuvers
Maneuvers	+1	Skills
To-Hit	+1	
AC	+1	
Skills		

Income 8
Operations 4

Qualities
Hierarchy, Nomad, Banner (Dread Banner), Headquarters, Emblem (Uniform, Coat of Arms, Weaponry, Mounts), Initiation (3rd Dgree)

Description

Uniting the traditions of many different culture groups – the Horde of Diya is led by the great Khan of the city – its military overlord. The Horde could threaten the whole valley, if the Khan commanded it & he may yet. For now, the horde is caught up in infighting between regimental commanders who use their subordinates to fight for position. The Khan allows this fighting to continue to keep his officers loyal to him alone. Uniting Orcish shamanism, Plioshr dog-riding & Brizai military order the Horde is the pre-eminent force of arms in the valley.

Party Infernal Band of Able

Alignment Belligerence **Virtue** Cruelty
Temptation Hope **Vice** Cowardice

Devotion	10
Glory	4
Influence	10
Membership	10
Reputation	15
Secrecy	4

NPC		PC
Stats	6+d6	AC
HD	+5HD	Social
Saves	+3	Languages
Morale	+0	Maneuvers
Maneuvers		Skills
To-Hit	+1	
AC	+1	
Skills		

Income 0
Operations 1

Qualities
Hierarchy, Heresy, Coven (Infernal Cloud), Technique, Initiation 4th Degree)

Description

The infernal band is a demon-based mercenary company comprised of Red-Moon demons & their mortal offspring. These warriors are honorable & rigidly adhere to their ornate hierarchical structure. The byzantine machinations within the Infernal Band shame the politics of the slatewind. The Infernal Band is caught in a spiral of decay & growing irrelevance, but it was, for a long time, the preeminent mercenary group in the valley. Their martial abilities have not diminished but their numbers have & the devotion that their initiates must demonstrate still inspires respect, even fear, among the populace of the valley. The Overwhelming Force technique that they employ & their Infernal Cloud attacks are infamous & famously feared.

Party Matriarchate

Alignment Fairness **Virtue** Tolerance
Temptation Ostenation **Vice** Passion

Devotion	13
Glory	6
Influence	14
Membership	8
Reputation	15
Secrecy	18

NPC		PC
Stats	6+d6	AC
HD	+0HD	Social
Saves	+2	Languages
Morale	-1	Maneuvers
Maneuvers		Skills +Numeracy
To-Hit	+1	
AC	+1	
Skills	+1	

Income 0
Operations 1

Qualities
Sect, Mystery (The Union of Salt), Syndicate

Description

A collection of merchants, low-ranking civil authorities and professionals, the Matriarchate is an organization based upon the liberation of property & the advancement of individual freedoms. Once only a part of the cyclical leadership of Elan, the Matriarchate survived the war & exists today as an umbrella group for disparate political ideals that share in common their dedication to individual liberation. The Matriarchate is accepting of all religious creeds, all races & phenotypes & seeks to allow for all people to have recourse to live their own way. Members are usually upwardly mobile, professional elites within smaller communities & their overall agenda is to at least mitigate some of the excesses resulting from religious & feudal authority. They are opposed by the Three Family Village & by the ruling classes of other cities.

Party Patriarchate

Alignment Piety **Virtue** Faith
Temptation Malice **Vice** Dignity

Devotion	13
Glory	8
Influence	10
Membership	5
Reputation	13
Secrecy	13

NPC		PC
Stats	6+d6	AC
HD	+3HD	Social
Saves	+1	Languages
Morale	-2	Maneuvers
Maneuvers		Skills
To-Hit		
AC		
Skills		

Income 1
Operations 1

Qualities
Hierarchy, Heresy, Initiation (2nd Degree)

Description

Last vestige of the religious elite that plunged Elan into war. The patriarchate is a collection of religious elites who are intensely devoted to an early version of the Tricadic Pantheon. These priests seek to extend their individual church's dominions to create a theocratic union that governs the whole slatewind valley – with cities & provinces replaced by bishoprics. The group is in shambles following the war but there have been new initiates who seek to extend the power of the gods over the people of the valley. The patriarchate operates in secret but is well known to operate principally out of Blackpool – a city at the edge of Elan.

Party Racoon Gate

Alignment Impulse **Virtue** Improvisation
Temptation Rudeness **Vice** Responsibility

Devotion	14
Glory	10
Influence	12
Membership	7
Reputation	14
Secrecy	12

NPC		PC
Stats	6+1d10	AC
HD	+1HD	Social
Saves	+0	Languages +Racoon
Morale	-2	Maneuvers
Maneuvers		Skills
To-Hit		
AC		
Skills		

Income 4
Operations 2

Qualities
Knighthood, Code (Alighnment, Virtues, Vices, Punishments, Technique, Cant

Description

The Raccoon Gate's Knights are less ordered & less strict than other knighthoods of shield. Their King is always appointed form the knighthood's ranks for demonstrating themselves as a paragon of the knighthood's strictly held ideals which include independence, resilience, wisdom & resourcefulness. Fairness & decency are part of their code but less important than demonstrating competence in times of extremity. The Raccoon Gate runs the north of Shield & the road to Termus – they also have bases in Termus & its environs – though unsanctioned, they are important outposts known only to the trusted within the knighthood. Raccoon knights are known for their evasive techniques which help them to continue fighting without killing. Members are taught a secret language of signs & passwords.

Party Samnite Prince

Alignment Kindness **Virtue** Compassion
Temptation Faith **Vice** Rudeness

Devotion	16
Glory	14
Influence	13
Membership	6
Reputation	14
Secrecy	12

NPC		PC
Stats	8+d10	AC
HD	+2HD	Social
Saves	-1	Languages
Morale	-2	Maneuvers
Maneuvers		Skills
To-Hit		
AC		
Skills		

Income 5
Operations 2

Qualities
Inquisition, Knighthood, Code (Alignment, Virtues, Standards), Technique

Description

Followers of the Lantern Book & its author the Samnite Prince take on that beings name when they are initiated into its group. Samnite Princes consider themselves knights, though of a very specific type – heroic, romantic figures who seek to eliminate suffering in the world. The Lantern Book is a guide through the darkness cast by fear, despair & jealousy, so it claims, and is written by the prince of the white moon, a demon of compassion who seeks to alleviate suffering. Those who read the Lantern Book & are persuaded by its vision of a perfect society often join together. In the Slatewind Valley this joining occurs principally in & around the towns of Saedu. Members of the order are fantastically well-behaved, gentle, kindly & heroic, in a very straight-laced & sometimes stereotypical fashion.

Party Tricadic Pantheon

Alignment Piety **Virtue** Hope
Temptation Integrity **Vice** Suspicion

Devotion	15
Glory	17
Influence	16
Membership	18
Reputation	15
Secrecy	4

NPC		PC
Stats	6+1d10	+1 AC AC
HD	+2HD	+1 Social
Saves	-2	+Andaless Languages
Morale	+3	Maneuvers
Maneuvers	+1	Skills
To-Hit	+1	
AC	+1	
Skills		

Income 7
Operations 3

Qualities
Apostolic, Hierarchy, Mystery (Chant of All as All), Rite (Unitary Chant +5 HP), Headquarters

Description

Based in the ruins of Elan at the foundation of their former temple, the pantheon is rebuilding & growing in popularity & size. After the last war there was no group more prestigious than the pantheon based faith & their moral & spiritual pre-eminence has been a cresting wave for some time now. The church is the new orthodoxy, the union of all faiths into one religion that contains all the gods revered in the Slatewind. The Pantheon is growing in wealth as they have grown in authority & the bishops & vicars of the pantheon have been seeking roles in governing bodies & councils. They are present in, at least an advisory form, in all the cities of the Slatewind.

Party Woodwatch

Alignment Impulse **Virtue** Ingratitude
Temptation Compassion **Vice** Tact

Devotion	16
Glory	7
Influence	13
Membership	7
Reputation	10
Secrecy	5

NPC		PC
Stats	8+d10	AC
HD	+2HD	Social
Saves	+2	Languages
Morale	-2	Maneuvers
Maneuvers		Skills
To-Hit		
AC		
Skills		

Income 0
Operations 1

Qualities
Nomad, Surveyor, Posse, Code, Technique

Description

A barely coherent band of foresters & rangers – the Woodwatch has no central authority, no base of operations & no real process for membership. Members who wish to be part of the Watch must make a solemn effort to follow the code of the Woodwatch – which is a straightforward pledge to protect the forests around the river Might & to prevent incursions by ambitious military powers. This is a xenophobic & aggressive group that seeks to exclude the forests they inhabit from further colonization & development. They are known for destroying roads & bridges that might traverse the woods.

Party Zho-Xen-Zho

Alignment Ego **Virtue** Dignity
Temptation Trust **Vice** Cynicism

Devotion	15
Glory	8
Influence	13
Membership	10
Reputation	9
Secrecy	13

NPC		PC
Stats	6+1d10	AC
HD	+1HD	Social
Saves	+1	Languages
Morale	+0	Maneuvers
Maneuvers		Skills
To-Hit		
AC		
Skills		

Income 1
Operations 1

Qualities
Mystery (36 Unanswerable Questions), Technique, Rite (The Denial of Gods +1 AC, +5HP)

Description

The Disbelievers are a group of philosophers who use their inductive techniques – known as the 36 unanswerable questions, to disprove the existence of divine power. The philosophy, rooted in Quet theology and based in Termus, as not been satisfied with merely disproving the existence of gods, but has expanded to the disproval of all things. The Zho-Xen-Zho dreamers are committed to the unreality of all things and the philosophy holds that by fully internalizing the nonexistence of all things the proper Dreamer will enter a new state of being in which they become able to control reality itself. Many regard the use of illusions & phantasms as the fulfillment of this ambition. They aren't well regarded by virtually anyone in the valley.



The different factions & priesthoods & cities all suggest or insist upon people. Individuals. These are invented as part of Binah, their motives, their position in the world – but they aren't fleshed completely – not yet. Rather they are part of the motion of the setting. Binah leads to Da'at – to the motion of the world that moves through your imagination. In The Ruins there are competing factions that will ignite a new round of action. This is the course of events should the PC's not intervene or become somehow involved.

- *The Games at Duskystone Island are spoiled when the entrant from Shield murders the entrant from Sword of the West.*
- *Shield's Cat King (secretly influenced by the Fuliginous Shogun) makes a move on Saedu which is fragmented & broken by the conflict.*
- *Zenith & Able react and attempt to attack Shield – they are thwarted by the tricks of the Coyote King.*
- *The Bear King - under the tutelage of the Shadow Book attempts to invade Bitter.*
- *Civil War emerges in Shield as the Raccoon King – follower of the Lantern Book stages a successful coup.*
- *The followers of the Shadow Book & the Infernal Band of Able unite & conquer Zenith – making it their new stronghold – Shield is depopulated & Ultist is released just before Zenith falls.*
- *The Ultist flees to Elan & Bitter defeats the Bear King. Termus offers to join with Shield under Raccoon's rule but is divided by this effort.*
- *Saedu is finally conquered by the Cat Knights who join with Zenith & Able – they make war on Sword of the West – which retaliates. A secret war takes place as well between demon-generals & vampire lords.*
- *The secret war draws in the governor's sodality – which opens a supernatural front on the war. Ultist, the new leader of the tricadic faith rallies all of Elan & Salt together to try to uphold the pantheon with scanty support from Shield, Termus & Bitter.*
- *The Fuliginous Shogun appears & leads an attack on Sword of the West while a gate to the red moon & the demonic armies there opens at Able. Diya's horde attacks in retaliation.*
- *The Governors, in a fit of desperation attempt to close off all transport to other dimensions but break the link between mortal & divine entirely. The gods of the world are severed from the earth & prayers no longer work & no one born into the world has a soul. The war escalates afterward with more and more catastrophic consequences.*
- *Termus, drawn into the conflict, allows its shaman to call upon the waters & the beasts. The lake floods the coast & wipes away Sword of the West & Saedu killing millions.*
- *Diya & Elan turn on Termus & join with the Hell-King, the demonic overlord of Zenith. They raze Termus in retaliation & the refugees fleeing to Bitter collapse the economy of that city, causing it to spiral into chaos.*
- *The Hell-King, an amalgam of the Fuliginous Shogun & Ritheloth the Doubly Unkind comes to rule over the wasteland that comprises the north of the valley.*
- *After massacring the Horde of Diya the demonic armies turn toward Red Banks – they overwhelm the opposition by burning the forests entirely & damming the river Might. The Sorcerers respond by fighting each other.*
- *The land is wrecked & the remaining people must suffer and die as they await their turn to be consumed by the new demon-god that strides the valley – Fuliginous Ritheloth, who consumes all.*

Naturally this is a version of what could be – not the final or only path & one that the PCs could interfere with at many levels. The snowball effect that pulls the setting into final destruction could take decades to be fulfilled. The idea is that the factions & the cities are dynamic – that they have direction with or without the PC's noticing. The largest paradigms that guide events though are: The Fuliginous Shogun & the Samnite Prince – these are the forces of good & evil that stir the world & that secretly guide the leaders of the cities.

Beyond good & evil there are individual ambitions – smaller scale conflicts that can erupt as well. Should some event stymie the efforts of the Shogun or the Prince there's no reason that related conflicts can't emerge in turn. The 4 kings of Shield are tenuously at peace, the Horde of Diya is poised to attack & so on. It's important – when building a world for PC's to explore that you know what types of events are at the edge of being triggered. What circumstances the PC's could conceivably conceive.

Chesod - the Faces

Chesod is next, love & in this conception – talking or sociability. Here we delve deeper into the factions to create representatives of the sides & of the cities & of the gods – characters for you to inhabit that the PC's can interact with. Mainly, these are representatives of ideals & specific values. The NPCs also represent the different classes that are present here In The Ruins. For each of the 82 classes there are 2 representatives. Each of these has a province, a city & so on, it's an exhaustive list with a few singled out for consideration here. What follows is a list of a few NPCs that can be contacts or allies, adversaries and family members of a PC. These are exemplary individuals, meant to indicate qualities & loyalties & drives common to the setting as well as subversions of same.

Ambitious Zhai the Latrocinium



Exemplifying: **Tact** From: **Red-Banks** Follower of: **Governors Sodality**

Statistics

CHA: 14 **CON**: 9 **DEX**: 17 **INT**: 7 **STR**: 9 **WIS**: 5

Abilities: Destruction, Rugged, Traveler **HD**: 1

Description: A tough & antagonistic organizer in Red Banks - Zhai was once just a fisher along the River Might when his village was claimed by one of the sorcerers of the governor's sodality. Since that time time the village has changed hands and endured hardship, which hardship activated Zhai's political identity. Now the halfling lives in the city & works to provoke an uprising amongst the common people. He seeks an alliance with the Woodwatch.

Ardent Chaozee the Mystic



Exemplifying: **Love** From: **Red-Banks**

Statistics

CHA: 18 **CON**: 4 **DEX**: 13 **INT**: 14 **STR**: 5 **WIS**: 6

Abilities: Overlooked, Ritual, Wizardry **HD**: 3

Description: The angel-speaking seer of Red Bank - he lives at the temple observatory of that city & is a highly paid consultant who is held in high esteem by the Governor's Sodality. He surreptitiously uses his predictions to advance a peaceful course.



Audacious Aabe the Thief

Exemplifying: **Ostentation** From: **Bitter**

Statistics

CHA: 14 **CON**: 18 **DEX**: 11 **INT**: 6 **STR**: 8 **WIS**: 10

Abilities: Heightened Senses, Overlooked, Signaling **HD**: 3

Description: Boldest Thief on Crone Mountain, the diminutive Aabe is brave & reckless - in her time she was known for daring burglaries of the upper-crust. She's down to pick-pocketing the ocassional visitor now that Bitter has turned into a city of equals.



Civil Aeuicheua the Bodhisattva

Exemplifying: **Integrity** From: **Elan**

Statistics

CHA: 18 **CON**: 8 **DEX**: 8 **INT**: 17 **STR**: 8 **WIS**: 10

Abilities: Circles, Prayers, Ritual **HD**: 2

Description: One of The Ultist's primary acolytes the Bodhisattva Ayau Chaya has gone to Elan to help to promote the faith of the Ultist & to encourage the civil discourse regarding its current disposition.



Criminal Wash Stone the Forger

Exemplifying: **Improvisation** From: **Shield**

Statistics

CHA: 18 **CON**: 11 **DEX**: 8 **INT**: 9 **STR**: 8 **WIS**: 8

Abilities: Artisan, Forgery, Riches **HD**: 3

Description: An above average forger of banknotes - Wash Stone is a ward of the Kings of Shield who keep him as a hostage & asset against any impending war. A rumor holds that the poor man is overworked to the point of exhaustion composing a huge collection of forged certificates meant to bring about the collapse of the economy if another war comes about.

Defiant Aothuzta the Sannyasi



Exemplifying: **Resolve** From: **Termus**

Follower of: **Coyote Gate**

Statistics

CHA: 8 **CON**: 15 **DEX**: 7 **INT**: 11 **STR**: 12 **WIS**: 13

Abilities: Overlooked, Shamanism, Wayfinding **HD**: 1

Description: Restless & antitheistic knight of the Coyote Gate, Aothuzta is an agent of Shield who operates in Termus - and heads some secret operations. Not one to mindlessly follow orders, she acts under her own recognizance.

Dissonant Chegofzha the Musician



Exemplifying: **Cowardice** From: **Bitter**

Follower of: **Fuliginous Shogun**

Statistics

CHA: 17 **CON**: 4 **DEX**: 16 **INT**: 10 **STR**: 9 **WIS**: 11

Abilities: Domesticity, Scholarship, Song **HD**: 0

Description: Sinister Bard of Bitter - Chegofzha is a subject of the Fuliginous Shogun who superficially seems like a performer of dark & brooding music, but who is more deeply involved in the sinister workings of the demons than anyone knows.

Egotistical Gofami the Fakir



Exemplifying: **Dignity** From: **Saedu**

Statistics

CHA: 10 **CON**: 14 **DEX**: 4 **INT**: 18 **STR**: 10
WIS: 13

Abilities: Heightened Senses, Spellbook, Wizardry **HD**: 3

Description: Exceptionally vain, and notably so considering his profession as sideshow attraction - Gofami tours the towns of Saedu in search of richer audiences. His spectacle concerns the display of his superior senses, his absurdly long beard & his tolerance for pain. He is a fire-walker, sword-eater.



Fairplay Ji-Che the Duelist

Exemplifying: **Loyalty** From: **Zenith**

Statistics

CHA: 4 **CON**: 6 **DEX**: 18 **INT**: 16 **STR**: 14 **WIS**: 11

Abilities: Defender, Ritual, Vanguard **HD**: 1

Description: The famous duelsit of Zenith, Ji-Che is obsessed with fairness & fair play & duels for law in the streets of the city. His greatest ambition is to try the case for the Ultist but in the meantime works as an entertainer in the city of riches.



Faithless Hickory the Wanderer

Exemplifying: **Cowardice** From: **Bitter**

Statistics

CHA: 9 **CON**: 17 **DEX**: 12 **INT**: 9 **STR**: 11 **WIS**: 9

Abilities: Ritual, Signaling, Traveler **HD**: 0

Description: Doughty & tough, the wanderer Hickory is a storied vagabond who's walked the length of th valley innumerable times. He attributes his longevity as a wanderer to his cowardice & willingness to flee.



Gentle Bohob the Burglar

Exemplifying: **Compassion** From: **Able**

Statistics

CHA: 13 **CON**: 11 **DEX**: 10 **INT**: 6 **STR**: 14 **WIS**: 11

Abilities: Destruction, Overlooked, Traceless Passing **HD**: 1

Description: A comical little man, Bohob is a thief & a cunning one at that - but with a gentle streak. Baohob is more interested in getting into places he aughtn't go than he is in stealing - though he does steal.

Half Orc Daizek the Utopian



Exemplifying: **Humility** From: **Saedu**

Statistics

CHA: 6 **CON**: 13 **DEX**: 12 **INT**: 4 **STR**: 13 **WIS**: 16

Abilities: Shamanism, Traveler, Wayfinding **HD**: 3

Description: Among the valley's most accomplished adventurers, Daizek, the half-orcish, is an explorer of the smaller islands of the Grey Lake who ships out of Saedu port. Living principally upon her boat The Nowhere, Daizek has been seeking new lands & the promised treasure of Adder-Island, a small isle off the coast near Sword of the West.

Huntress Veelah the Hunter



Exemplifying: **Passion** From: **Able** Follower of: **Tricadic Pantheon**

Statistics

CHA: 13 **CON**: 10 **DEX**: 14 **INT**: 6 **STR**: 10 **WIS**: 9

Abilities: Animal Languages, Ritual, Wayfinding **HD**: 2

Description: A hunter of the woodlands beyond Able, Veelah is a passionate advocate of the tricadic faith, a recent convert, persuaded by her experiences in the war & its aftermath, Veelah sets an example to others in the woodlands.

Impetuous Fixio the Shepherd



Exemplifying: **Rudeness** From: **Diya**

Statistics

CHA: 13 **CON**: 10 **DEX**: 15 **INT**: 8 **STR**: 6 **WIS**: 13

Abilities: Endurance, Rugged, Traveler **HD**: 0

Description: Wanderer & Vagabond Farm-worker & Shepherd. Fixio strongly resembles an orc & keeps his Saayang heritage concealed - but frequently journeys back to his mother's home in Sword of the West. Otherwise he operates out of Termus - as a simple ranch hand



Impulsive Aizo the Bandit

Exemplifying: **Ingratitude** From: **Zenith**

Statistics

CHA: 8 **CON**: 7 **DEX**: 18 **INT**: 9 **STR**: 13 **WIS**: 13

Abilities: Destruction, Horrific, Traceless Passing **HD**: 2

Description: The Impulsive Halfling Bandit is a reckless, many say foolish lurker at the edge of Zenith's peaks. Aizo is waiting for an opportunity to rob the ostentatiously wealthy from Zenith & is probably going to get killed in the attempt.



Kindly Safvedii the Samurai

Exemplifying: **Compassion** From: **Sword of the West**
Follower of: **Coyote Gate**

Statistics

CHA: 8 **CON**: 12 **DEX**: 14 **INT**: 6 **STR**: 16 **WIS**: 5

Abilities: Claimant, Horrific, Rampage **HD**: 0

Description: Rider & archer & a knight of the Coyote gate - Kindly Safvedii is stationed now in Sword of the West where he administers an exclave of the Coyote Gate's King. This is a military outpot that the Samurai governs as an agent of Shield. He is well known for his soft-hearted ways & gentle tone as well as his terrifying combat prowess.



Little Sow Ear the Thief

Exemplifying: **Cruelty** From: **Shield**

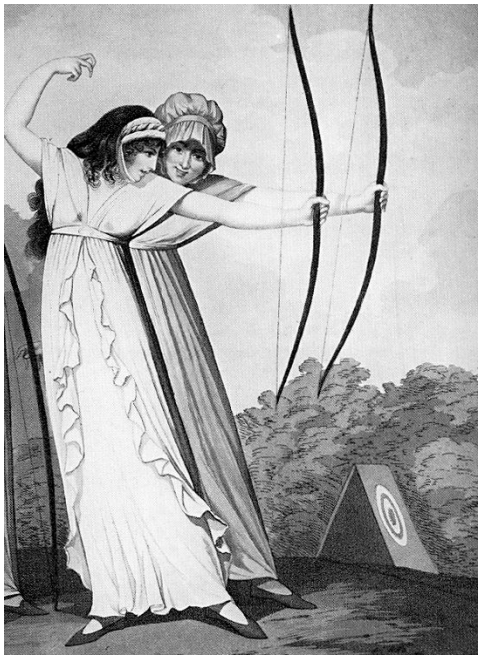
Statistics

CHA: 16 **CON**: 11 **DEX**: 12 **INT**: 5 **STR**: 12 **WIS**: 8

Abilities: Lucky, Riches, Traceless Passing **HD**: 3

Description: The luckiest thief & trickiest trickster - little Sow Ear has a mean streak a mile wide. Not satisfied with simply stealing - the halfling thief prefers to steal only those things that will be most missed - portraits, letters, heirlooms & so on. She hoards these in her safehouse at Shield but operates outside of that city - often in Saedu & Termus.

Loveliest Keyoha the Hunter



Exemplifying: **Greed** From: **Termus**

Statistics

CHA: 8 **CON**: 8 **DEX**: 14 **INT**: 8 **STR**: 15 **WIS**: 13

Abilities: Resourcefulness, Shamanism, Weaponry **HD**: 2

Description: Uncharacteristically vain by the standards of Termus - Keyoha is a big-game trophy hunter who's been living at Termus & who has ambitions on taking as many of the legendary beasts of the valley as she can.

Mad Djettho the Diabolist



Exemplifying: **Suspicion** From: **Able**

Statistics

CHA: 13 **CON**: 9 **DEX**: 8 **INT**: 9 **STR**: 4 **WIS**: 16

Abilities: Horrific, Shamanism, Tinkering **HD**: 2

Description: Crazy-eyed & anxious, the madman of Able is a follower of the much maligned demons of the Blue-Moon & a follower of Blue Prana Shamanism - the ecology of thought & language. Driven to madness by these improper devotions, Mad Djettho is nevertheless the master of the city of Bitter's Cannon - the designer of their ramparts & the commander of their best defenses.

Malicious Wednesday the Diviner



Exemplifying: **Malice** From: **Termus**

Statistics

CHA: 13 **CON**: 10 **DEX**: 14 **INT**: 12 **STR**: 6 **WIS**: 13

Abilities: Circles, Jinx, Prayers **HD**: 2

Description: Cruel devotee of Ailise, Malicious Wednesday is a weather-seer of Termus who is known for her antagonistic letters. A letter from Wednesday is never pleasant to receive - they always fortell the recipient's doom & the troubles that will come to them. Often they speak in metaphors concerning the weather.

Most Enchanting Hishka Urso the Charlatan



Exemplifying: **Cleverness** From: **Saedu**

Statistics

CHA: 15 **CON**: 7 **DEX**: 12 **INT**: 15 **STR**: 5 **WIS**: 8

Abilities: Ethereal Beauty, Glammer, Sociability **HD**: 0

Description: Socialite of Saedu & the ruler of that city's social scene. Hishka is a great beauty & a clever manipulator who has ambitions to unite the 7 towns into a single polity ruled over by her. Her manipulations are played out with great class & sophistication.

Mystic Cathothexi the Seer



Exemplifying: **Passion** From: **Sword of the West**

Statistics

CHA: 9 **CON**: 10 **DEX**: 7 **INT**: 14 **STR**: 7 **WIS**: 17

Abilities: Endurance, Jinx, Vanguard **HD**: 1

Description: Bright & Dangerous - Cathothexi is consumed by a vision of a different, better future. Using divination & cunning to seek out her prey, Cathotexi is a vampire hunter who seeks to end the reign of these parasites in Sword of the West.

Noble Aeshaia the Diviner



Exemplifying: **Valor** From: **Shield**

Follower of: **Matriarchate**

Statistics

CHA: 15 **CON**: 8 **DEX**: 10 **INT**: 13 **STR**: 10 **WIS**: 11

Abilities: Divination, Lucky, Riches **HD**: 2

Description: Mystical Aeshaia is an Elf of Elan & a follower of the Matriarchate - a clever diplomat interested in spreading the libertine message of the Matriarchate - Aeshaia has cgone to Shield, possibly the most averse to that message.

Noxious Lizzy the Inquisitor



Exemplifying: **Resolve** From: **Saedu** Follower of:

Statistics

CHA: 5 **CON**: 11 **DEX**: 15 **INT**: 14 **STR**: 6 **WIS**: 9

Abilities: Claimant, Destruction, Resistance **HD**: 0

Description: The lone inquisitor of the god Que Itst, Noxious Lizzy is an altogether repellent individual. Stinking & rude with no hygene or manners to speak of - she is an unwelcome crasher at any social event. She seeks to enter all those events that are grand or ostentatious in order to ruin them with her bad taste & terrible attitude & she's quite resolute in attempting to do so.

Old Father Satti the Insurgent



Exemplifying: **Integrity** From: **Red-Banks**

Statistics

CHA: 8 **CON**: 12 **DEX**: 15 **INT**: 17 **STR**: 11 **WIS**: 9

Abilities: Claimant, Jinx, Ruin **HD**: 1

Description: Called the Gremiln by many in Red Bank - Old Father Satti is notorious as a jinx & a wrecker of the city's greater works. He works tirelessly to bring about the ruin of the governors & their minions - but not from a position of malice or contempt- rather, he is the trouble-shooter who finds the weaknesses before enemies do.

Painter Chrio Arrow the Artist



Exemplifying: **Passion** From: **Diya**

Follower of: **Fuliginous Shogun**

Statistics

CHA: 10 **CON**: 16 **DEX**: 4 **INT**: 8 **STR**: 12 **WIS**: 9

Abilities: Domesticity, Forgery, Sociability **HD**: 0

Description: The Painter Chiro Arrows is a new talent in Diya with growing fame in the Valley. Practitioner of a new, frenetic style & consumed by passions becoming an artist - she is also a dilettente, fascinated by the Shadow Book. A mediocre scholar, the painter is dabbling in dangerous philosophies.



Redeemed Cash Eye the Trickster

Exemplifying: **Hope** From: **Shield**

Follower of: **Samnite Prince**

Statistics

CHA: 11 **CON**: 8 **DEX**: 9 **INT**: 15 **STR**: 8 **WIS**: 8

Abilities: Glammer, Mentalism, Sociability **HD**: 0

Description: Once a petty criminal, Cash Eye is a true devotee of the Lantern Book, which changed his life. He works in Shield, trying his best to advance the cause of the Samnite Prince but not through open advocacy - rather he works in secret, infiltrating the knighthoods.



Screaming Cothiotai the Muezzin

Exemplifying: **Hostility** From: **Sword of the West**

Follower of: **Infernal Band of Able**

Statistics

CHA: 11 **CON**: 13 **DEX**: 13 **INT**: 18 **STR**: 7 **WIS**: 4

Abilities: Communion, Prayers, Signaling **HD**: 0

Description: Violent & crazed, Cothiotai is a fanatical enthusiast of all things warlike. A singer for the god Mrun, this priest is a devotee of the Infernal Band of Able & acts as a recruiter, someitmes & an agent at others. Mostly, he seeks to stoke the fires of war.



Smiling Inoashu the Seer

Exemplifying: **Ostentation** From: **Zenith**

Statistics

CHA: 16 **CON**: 8 **DEX**: 13 **INT**: 12 **STR**: 4 **WIS**: 15

Abilities: Divination, Heightened Senses, Lucky **HD**: 1

Description: A demagogue of Zenith & purveyor of the life of greed & plenty that prevails there among the proletariat. Illustrious Inoashu is a gambler & fortuneteller who speaks to the crowd & gives them a tacky vision to aspire to.

Vociferous Chaithiau the **Harbinger**



Exemplifying: **Improvisation** From: **Zenith**

Follower of: **Matriarchate**

Statistics

CHA: 13 **CON**: 9 **DEX**: 18 **INT**: 9 **STR**: 11 **WIS**: 14

Abilities: Defender, Lucky, Song **HD**: 2

Description: Harbinger of the Matriachs, Chaithiau is a secret devotee of Ultist & wishes to see him set free. She is an agent of liberation & her message is growing around her embassy in Zenith.

Gevurah - The Scenes

Having created some people to carry out the plots and to further the goals that are already figured in it's now time to put together some encounters. **Gevurah** is the realm of conflict – the sorting out of differences by one means or another. For the purposes here, individual conflicts – Gevurah generally on the world-building scale are Adventures. These are presented In The Ruins as adventure modules. These are bigger than what this text will allow & so only a digest form is presented here, an index of upcoming releases.

ITR 1 – An Exemplary Contest *- The Great Games at Duskystone Isle provide a good introduction to the setting & the specific rules that are part of the setting. It is a series of contests – the Pangray games which will help to put an end to the war – or to start a new conflict.*

ITR 2 – The Threat Over Cannonforge Village – *A village on the borders, contested by two cities is held in thrall by mysterious forces. Can the party discover the source of the village's corrupting influence and which side will they choose when the conflict emerges? This adventure introduces the Fuliginous Shogun & the Samnite Prince as major forces In The Ruins.*

ITR 3 - Chiro Arrow & the 10,000 Blooms – *On the hills outside of Elan there is a auspicious event – a certain flower will bloom under a certain constellation. This event draws the interest of artists from across the valley – not the least is Chiro Arrow – the arrival of other artists brings about a new contest where bonds of friendship are tested.*

ITR 4 – The Town of a Million Knives – *Following another thread the adventurers have come to what they believe to be Spirited Colt Town – a town divided by a river & by some unspeakable tragedy. The town is in the grip of a gang war between the west & east sides & the PCs find themselves trapped in a gangland struggle where no one gets out alive.*

ITR 5 – In the Woodland's Shadow – *At the edge of the Woodland there is a castle held by a lonely nobleman. His lands are under threat & he needs help. But he is not all he seems & his enemies are perhaps more than anyone knows. This is a combat intensive series of encounters including large scale battles.*

ITR 6 – The Wolf's Bride – *In the woodlands the roads decay & the way is lost – a great treasure & a secret ruin is found but will this ruin the festivities surrounding the marriage of some of the forest's nobility?*

ITR 7 – Wreck of the Saints – *What seems to be a straightforward ruin to be explored & plundered turns out to be far more – the dangers are incredible but the rewards are immense. In this adventure the players follow the pirate explorer Half Orc Daizek to the wreck of the Saints – a huge ship of the ancients that no one has yet dared to explore.*

ITR 8 – The Salted Temple – *Adventurers must make use of their knowledge of the gods & the civil state of the cities in order to redeem the Tricadic Church at Elan. Fraught with political intrigue & mystical vision, this is a battle of wills as well as arms.*

ITR 9 – Back to Duskystone Island – *Two years after their debut at the Pangray games of Duskystone Island the party returns to host the next games with up & comers from throughout the valley – a fresh crop of would be heroes ready to join the ranks. But their knowledge of the new threats in the world & the burgeoning conflict of ideas gives the adventurers new insights into the conflicts at play in these games.*

ITR 10 – The Violent New Age – *The newest champions of the Ten Cities aren't what they seem & the adventurers alone are aware. They must race time to oppose their wicked efforts or bear witness to the dawning apocalyptic age. Is the war that they struggled to avoid going to happen anyway?*

This is a sketch of adventures – presented in series rather than in a continuous flow. Each adventure is keyed to a different ideal & a different part of the setting. It is intended as a picaresque journey around the valley that will give the PCs enough of a footing In The Ruins – allowing them to plot their own course thereafter & to explore & meddle & make war as they see fit.

Tiferet - The Great Work

Tiferet Comes next, the balance between detail & time & space is here rendered down to a footnote. Literally. The different specific details of the setting are presented at the end of this book as a glossary for your reference. Further details are appended to different companion texts that further flesh out the setting & advance the cause of verisimilitude. However –

The Game of the North offers some guidance on world-building & the establishment of specific details, the tools presented there are used here to give some shape to the Slatewind Valley. Using those tables the following items are generated -

Terrains	
1	Lakeshore
2	Crone Mountain
3	Division River
4	Dusklight Hills
5	Expanse
6	Ferns
7	Gray Cliffs
8	Gray Lake
9	Islands
10	Ledge Maze
11	Might River Valley
12	Peaks
13	Pinnacle
14	Pond Field
15	Salt Plains
16	Sprawling Meadow
17	The Rushes
18	Undercities
19	Uplands
20	Woodland

Landmarks	
1	Tower of Torments
2	Abandoned School
3	Academy of Mystery
4	Colossal Mine
5	Colossus of Horrors
6	Demonic Ruined City
7	Dungeon of Life
8	Enchanted Cavern
9	Harmonic Tower
10	Haunted Wall
11	Holy Canal
12	Impassible Monument
13	Lighthouse of 1000 Tales
14	Regal Waterfall
15	Temple of Heroes

Layers of Habitation	
1	Impossible Humans
2	Wizard Robots
3	Moon Eldrich Monsters
4	Horrific Devils
5	Learned Morlocks
6	Rational Giants
7	Insane Kenku
8	Emotionless Angels
9	Water Angels
10	Solar Fungus Monsters
11	Undead Frog People
12	Rock Wendigos
13	Night Trolls

These are sufficient to start with – launching points for creating further details & a narrative base for what exists in & under the Slatewind Valley.

Prior Inhabitants -

Layer 1 - The first discernable inhabitants of the slatewind are humans – but confusingly – impossibly advanced. Their perception of orthogonal realities & their mastery over trans-temporal existences set them apart from this reality – to the point that they created their own pawns to exist in the world that they themselves were abandoning. These constructs of pure magical essence given force & ability elaborated upon the human societies that they inherited. This layer joins to the next – it is not destroyed only abandoned.

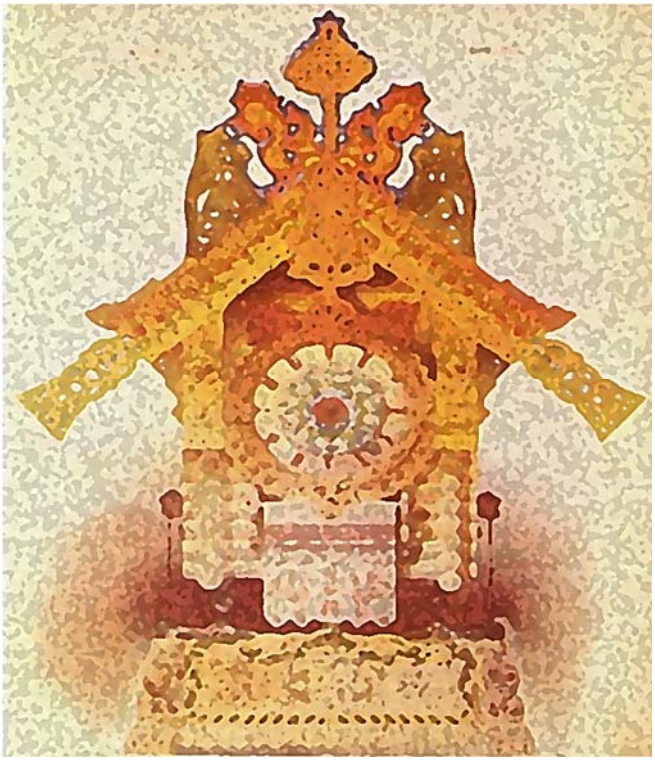
Layer 2 - The Twilight of the Mystical Machines – the automatons comprised of magic were flawed & their flaws only deepened over time. Soon they were gateways to the next beings – the demons of the moons. Each of these demons has its own type – Red, Blue, White, Black & Green – each is horrific in its way but the mystical automatons were host to all, used as incubators for the devils which burst upon the world & waged their own wars, destroying all there was in the conflagration of their competing might.

Layer 3 – The Educated Remnant – Sensing their doom the machines comprised of magical force followed, or reversed the course of their own creators – by creating living beings who could survive the unfortunate demonic apocalypse. These beings were made to thrive under the earth & they built their own places in the rock – underground enclaves that never quite approach the size of a city – but which nevertheless retain the knowledge of the most ancient peoples & their arts.

Layer 4 – The Newcomers – The lands above razed by devilish war became home to a migrating race of giants, themselves fleeing some other conflict. These giants, acquainting themselves with the underground dwellers, grew in knowledge & wisdom – becoming ever more capable. But- denied the deepest secrets of their precursors, the giants sought to snatch away the secrets of their underground tutors only to drive those tutors to a state of panic. In their effort to escape they broke themselves apart – creating a pair of new species – their emotional selves incorporating into a species of mad crow-people & their rational selves breaking off into a race of emotionless bird-people. The two of which emulated the wars of the moon-demons, bringing about the destruction of their giant tormentors.

Layer 5 – The Few angels & kenku that remained from this conflict coalesced into a species of their own. These inhabited the waterways & lake – the waters of the land which were their last haven. In time, this brief flourishing of a healed people was spoiled by other remnants of the ancient wars. Spores & pollen dispersed by the sun in that body's effort to cleanse the world of demons & their influence – rained down & polluted the waters, killing the survivors & rendering them both alive & dead – existing in a perpetual sleep. During this time they sought to eliminate all the remaining living people of the valley.

Layer 6 – The genocide of the undead sea-angels was not complete. Indeed it was thwarted by the last remnant of the giant/morlock union – their descendants, living in the uncharted realms of the underworld managed to survive & to push against their own extermination for long enough that their magic & the knowledge of their predecessors could form them into a new people – the night walking trolls, beings immune to the sun's attacks. These, final beings, walked the valley & built upon the previous cities for generations until they too began to fade into non-existence. Some few of them remain, at the edge of all civilization, barely remembering their legacy.



These events are a flow of eras – not a series of enumerated years. The whole prehistory of the Slatewind exists now, for the living inhabitants – as enigmas shrouded in mystery & only barely revealed by the ruins that remain.

The flow of events does provide enough information to give the remaining pieces of the setting more detail. From this march of eras the landmarks & remnants can be combined & fixed, creating whole ideas.

Landmarks -

Tower of Torments – This is part of Peaks & is associated with the Undead Frog layer of civilization. It corresponds nicely with Zenith – also at Peaks & so is made part of the Ultist's torment there. The final product is then called **The Iron Jail of Zenith** – an aerie which stands perched upon the highest part of that hilltop city – the prison is a 10 story cage made of steel – a horrific jail in the center of the town that all can see. When the cage is struck by lighting, as it often is, those inside are usually killed outright, though heartier folk sometimes survive for a few storms. The Ultist has lived through dozens of lightning strikes & the ongoing torment inflicted by the folk of Zenith – who throw rocks (and worse) through the bars of the immense cage.

Abandoned School – Associated with the Wizard Robots or **Gallack** – inhabited an area of woods & glacially cut rock in the uplands of the division river – there, in a maze of ledges & fissures that exists today, they built their school – a ruined structure, partially underground & partially liminal that was used for educating their protégés – the new race – the **Arlir**. The Arlir- beings of flesh & blood but strangely arranged, as if created by machines had stone bones & minds comprised of light alone. They were suffused with the power of magic through a series of rigorous efforts – some of which resemble education but many of which seem more akin to torture or to madness. The facility which uplifted these beings was shunned by every generation after the first – and so it lies abandoned still, the **Liminal Formatory** – at the edge of perception, hidden in a natural maze.

Academy of Mystery – Set in the Might River valley, this is a collegiate gathering place for the governor's sodality – for unbeknownst to most, the governors do gather & their gathering is a place of utmost security, not just against the outside world, but against one another. This place is accessible only through the rigorous application of secret magic – but once within – no magic of any sort can function. Even the gods cannot spy what occurs here in the **Indiscernible Oubliette.** For this reason the most potent of the ancients' treasures are kept here, for the safety of all living people.

Colossal Mine – Lying open & exposed in the Dusklight Hills, this mine was created during the conflict between the Solar-Fungus – the **Selest** & the rock-boned eaters of the dead the **Insyr**, last children of the Arlir. The Insyr used the great open quarry to construct the skeletons of their children, to arm themselves with weapons of chymistry & metal. And at last, to make their final stand against their adversary. The mine is a

huge open gravel pit that yields to only the slightest exploration, revealing hundreds of deep-delving shafts that seem to cut to the center of the world itself. Within these ruins one can find some of the remaining lore of the Insyr – who knew the secret of animating stone & making people from the elements. **The Broken Canyon** – as it is called today, is well defended by the Horde of Diya – they use the pits to inter their fallen leaders & they keep outsiders away, lest they uncover some weapon that could be used against the khan.

Colossus of Horrors – **Crone Mountain**, named for its superficial resemblance to a bent old woman lying on her side – is in fact the remnant of some colossal being – a giant of unfathomable size that lay petrified here. Now eroded so that its features aren't clear enough to make out – the colossus lies curled around the city of Bitter. A mining city. Whatever the colossus was once, it is now rock. A stone mountain – but its interior yet contains some spark of life. This living core within the colossus is not sedentary – rather – it is mystically vigorous & it calls out to those who are able to discern its voice – an inner voice of feeling & emotion. This power has in it an animating force – that gives power & size & substance to dreams & nightmares. These imagined horrors dwell at the deepest parts of the mines of Bitter & they are the authors not only of the revolution there, but of a coming apocalypse. **The Brimming Well** lies at the lowest point – there, brackish water pools, having seeped down to these depths in some horrid prehistory- they are the remnant of the aquatic angels the **Merieds –** and their strange intelligence is beginning to emerge.

Demonic Ruined City – This structure lies under Sword of the West – at the northern edge of the city, where it rises upon the gray cliffs over the sea. These cliffs are the hollowed out remnant of a far more ancient city & one that descends deep, under the ground & the water as well. The **Nacre Cliffs** are a vertical city beneath the city – a series of collapsed towers that must have once been unimaginably huge. These ruins once housed a tribe of the maddening demons of the moons - the **Qlpth Vital** – a contingent of demonic beings of the red-moon, the moon of blood & carnage & living beings. These beings were builders – in the style of termites & their structures were once huge. Huge abattoirs & torture palaces – the segmented ruins contain many cells, many chambers that connect & all of them are comprised of the dully gleaming nacre that was once extruded by **Nmal Qlpth –** unthinkable swarming creatures the size of men. The ruins remain & some features of the wrecked city still function. The Rulers of Sword of the West are well aware & they make careful use of some of the strange bounty to be found in their cellar – but they are also intensely vigilant concerning its defense – lest some unsuspecting fool manage to reopen the doorway to the Qlpth Vital.

Dungeon of Life – The expanse & the salt plain are large swathes of flat land at the bottom of the valley – they are the largest land forms that comprise the Slatewind. These plains are crisscrossed by invisible lines of force that were created in ancient times by the emotionless angels once they split apart from the Arlir. These creatures called themselves the **Omge** and though they were flesh & spirit & light they sought to emulate the eldest forms they knew. Thus they molded their minds to resemble those of machines. This emulation was not complete & never could be, for they'd been split from their intuitive halves, their feeling self. Still, rational enough to comprehend this – the Omge attempted to build a new type of perception & an associated emotion to go along with it. This apparatus exists today as a series of emotional & magical flows over the plains. The **Keening Hylge** is a maze of imperceptible power that connects living things together – this network can be observed, even navigated – with the right kind of eyes. At the heart of this immense labyrinth of ethereal flows lies the heart of the Omge – their collective soul & persona – not a being but a feeling, and a powerful one. This coalescence of indescribable robot-emotions is geographically under the Tricadic temple at Elan – but it cannot be accessed through geographical travel alone.

Enchanted Cavern – A minor site but an enchanting one, the **Tarn Cavern** is one of the few remaining constructs of the Gallack. The cavern lies in the field of ponds east & north of Elan. This field is a flat plain that is punctuated by many hundreds of round, water filled pits. These ponds, or tarns, as they are more properly called, have no coherent pattern, they aren't really even created – rather, they're naturally occurring

sinks in the land – but below them lies the cavern that they all sink into. This cavern is not easily accessible – its entries are all quite secret. Within the cavern though one can see that the tarns are held in place by some invisible force & that above, one sees many hundreds of fluid filled lenses that create an environment of rainbows & light for those underneath. What's more each of the tarns, when examined from below, is shown to be its own unique biome – unlike all the others. These biomes are easily studied within the cavern – but beyond this miraculous display – there appears to be nothing else to observe.

Harmonic Tower – This tower stands on the bluffs above the Might river just above Red Bank itself. The **Astral Spire** – is at present an observatory used by the priests of Seriit to plot the motions of celestial bodies & thereby interrogate the future. Popular understanding is that the tower was built by these priests – but this is not the case. Not exactly. The tower was constructed by the last of the land's native inhabitants the night trolls, or **W'lalaz.** These beings warred against the sun's most hateful minions & prevailed, building their own empire that would prevail in the night. The W'lalaz constructed this tower to observe the stars & to seek out signs of their own progenitors. Their skill at lenses, at fashioning glass has not been exceeded since & the observatory is a miracle of their unknowable science. It is not only a telescope though. The W'lalaz' skill was so great that the lenses that comprise this tapering spire of thick crystal & stone amplify sound, and thought. It is possible still to hear the voices of the stars & to listen to the voices coming from the sun & moons.

Haunted Wall – the River Division cuts through a verdant patch of land just south of the gray sea. The land is named for the river but the Division that lies in the river is one that isn't quite physical. This notional division, that still divides the minds of the people of Termus, is one that cannot be overcome by a bridge or defeated by a tunnel – it is a division of mentality & of identity – a division as substantial as left from right. **The Notional Division**, that of east & west is said to have as its origin – in the whole world – the river. As a meridian that divides the world itself – the division river is hardly geographically accurate – it is neither straight nor narrow. But it does cut through mentalities – or perhaps creates mentalities. This is best evidenced in Termus where city people rarely consent to cross the river & when they do cannot but help to remark about how much they prefer the other side. This division extends to the architecture, the religious feeling, ethnicity, outlook & personality – everyone from one side of the river is different from those on the other. What is most peculiar though is that over time the river & the division seems to create mirrors. This is known, now, in the city of Termus, where those descended from the first families all have chiral opposites – on the other side of the town. These twins, the left & the right versions of an individual are occurring more and more frequently and it is a growing matter of concern. The division itself is as old as the world – it is somehow a construction of the Impossible Humans – the **Pradeharade**. What purpose they had in investing a place with this division, that is unknown – but it bears exploration.

Holy Canal – The docks at Saedu aren't just utilitarian tools left over from an ancient society – they've got a whole hagiographic purpose that is beyond the ken of most living mortals. Where once these canals were an elaborate system of waterways that functioned as a labyrinth, intended to help members of the Meried race to focus upon their deities they are now only piers of gray stone that command the whole lake-front. These massive structures formed of **Graystone** in prehistory are half buried, a maze of foundations & earthen mounds that riddle the surface. Where they canals jut into the lake they have become piers, used for shipping & they dominate the town of Port, part of Saedu. Unbeknownst to most though, these canals still flow with water & aqueous energy & those who are able to navigate the subsurface waterway can find, at its heart, the notional, hidden guidance that empowered the Meried people. For most though, the **Graystone Piers** are sufficiently utilitarian that their ultimate or original purpose isn't much considered.

Impassible Monument – **Warlord Cenotaph** is an impressive structure that rises up out of the Gray Lake's depths. This monument casts a shadow over Duskystone Island & intermittently, when the sun is positioned behind it, one can make out the features of a vaguely human figure encased within the waxy-like rock. The

Cenotaph itself can't be reliably dated, nor can its provenance be understood – it exists, and may have existed for time immemorial – none can say. It's named for a naval conflict that occurred in a previous war during which ships of Shield ran ships of Sword of the West into the structure, scuttling them. Since then the gigantic form encased within the smoked stone has been called the Warlord.

Lighthouse of 1,000 Tales – **The Light of the World** stands imposingly upon a crest of the Dusklight hills. This is a tower, an impressive one that is comprised of heavy unmortared stones & thick panes of unbreakable glass. The origin of the tower isn't widely known, but it was manufactured in a previous age by the Insyr. Remains of similar structures around the valley beg many questions regarding the structure's use - but this lonely, intact tower offers no answers. The tower was, from the founding of the first cities of the ruins, quite habitable. It's been modified over time & made more appealing – but it's initial repurposing has stuck & the Light of the World stands now, astride a crossroads, a popular & very highly regarded inn. Run by the **Jelipadzo Clan** – a large family highly regarded for their hospitality – the Light of the World has been a functioning hotel & tavern for more than two centuries. The tower – famed for its 47 rooms & infamous for its 500 stairs – has been a popular stop along the road between Diya & Able for longer than those places were both cities in their own right. The Khan of Diya himself lived in the Light of the World for a good portion of his campaign to subjugate the city. The Light of the World is well regarded for the contests it hosts in arts of storytelling, poetry & music, all of which culminate in an annual festival, itself sponsored by Khan Ishma'al.

Regal Waterfall – The River Might can be navigated quite easily through almost its entire length from its numerous sources near Bitter & Red Banks all the way south, toward the end of the continent. However, it s northern most stretch is not navigable owing to the **Great Cataract** – the so-called king of the falling waters. This stretch of the river's length, just south of Able, is a quickly flowing torrent where the river is effectively turned on its side. The channel here is the narrowest part of the river & is the fastest & most dangerous portion as well. Canals have been cut to bypass the Great Cataract – but it still draws attention & visitors, for its immense beauty, but also for the remnants of an ancient society that remain here. Once spanned by a bridge of steel & cyclopean stone, what remains of the ancient span are huge graystone pylons that are carved to resemble figures. These are eroded to the point of unrecognizability but romanticists have identified these as kings, ancient overlords of the land & there is a small contingent of mythographers who create legendry & stories to describe these archaic kings. Within the cataracts & the surrounding lands there are innumerable caves & carven tunnels a few of which have contained treasures – lending credence to the myth of ancient kings, the cataracts are considered a necropolis of these ancients.

Temple of Heroes – In the uplands at the western edge of the valley is an ancient temple made of stone. This temple is built in a style unlike any other found in the Slatewind Valley. It branches & reaches into the sky almost resembling a tree. In composition the temple is crystal, a resilient but brittle sort of crystal that pierced the ground and grew in some explosive event that isn't currently understood. Whatever its exact provenance, the **Scaled Tree** was used in antiquity by the mad-bird-folk – the **Tshuludra.** These folk had in them the hunting doctrine of the shrike – the piercing of things upon thorns & this doctrine informed all of their behaviors. The piercing of flesh as sacrament was carried to a frightening extreme, once, upon this tree. The boldest & most courageous amongst these beings would cast themselves upon the scaled tree to be pierced & to remain, pinned into the sky for many days in



demonstration

of their unknowable virtues. Innumerable examples of the Tshuludra people died in this demonstration & their bones remain, a great cascading hill of colossal bird & tiny human bones littered with relics of those bygone people. The rites themselves were not, it seems, all in vain – for the tree responds to courage even today & it likewise calls out for blood – somewhat horribly. Those who are sanguine & hopeful & sure – they sometimes find their way to the tree. Of those who find their way, a very few are visited with the deeper wisdom needed to make use of the tree's power. It is known, by only the few that by piercing the flesh with a portion of the tree that one can gain a painful sort of invulnerability. Where the Tshuludra had to cast themselves down upon the tree, folk of the current age are able to peel away the razor-edged scales of the tree. Implanting them inside one's own flesh grants the benefit, but also injures eternally.

These landmarks each present different options for players & for the Referee – they provoke questions & provide good routes toward danger & reward. These are in turn part of a landscape – the 20 land-forms that were rolled & individually considered. Each of these is in turn part of Tiferet, creating the imagery & form of the setting, the descriptors used to bring the world to life during your narrations.

Each of these in turn creates & supports its own ecology. Tiferet is not only mythic locations but prosaic ones – but well defined & understood ones as well. Here, Tiferet takes the form of biomes & ecologies. This is a large effort – only hinted at here, but encompassed by the usual mechanism of creating monsters, encounter-tables & descriptions as relate to the biome – these details can be drawn from real-world ecologies or from larger collections of monsters & animals. Here, it must suffice to simply draw attention to the Slatewind Bestiary – a collection of monsters & encounters for the setting that is its own text.

Tiferet is balance because it can encompass so much that the world-building Referee can devote all their time to it and never actually run their game. It is balance because it can be all-consuming but will be made useless without an understanding of how to make your world useable as part of the game. So we don't exactly complete our discussion of Tiferet, of the Adornment, here – but rather abandon it and venture onward with a will.



Netzach - The Details

Netzach is what is permanent. In our efforts to build a world this is associated with the Coin & Crow- the image of wealth & possession. For the purposes of Worldbuilding Netzach refers to the permanent parts of culture – that is, what is left behind – tools, weapons, artifacts & writing – here we expand on the material culture of our imagined people. This is appropriately descended from Tiferet, but also appropriately separated from it – for here we abandon the larger details of the world that the players will interact within, and elaborate upon the material objects that the players will use.

For this portion of the world's construction the Book of Ten Trillion Things is quite useful for the creation of a material culture. To that end, a few distinctive items of clothing, equipment & food are presented for each of the cultures present In The Ruins both past & present. The individual entries for each of the cultures grants us insights which will in turn allow us to provide material cues to the players in the form of starting equipment. As well as knowledge of aspirational items, materials & statuses that can be achieved through adventure.

Arlir

Bones of Ocean Crystal - The physical remains of Arlir are prized, for though these beings were largely composed of light, their skeletons were formed of the nacreous stone that is found along the Gray Sea - these skeletons are lustrous & beautiful & the bones are sometimes worked by artisans into fine jewelry.

Goldenfoil - The Arlir wrote using a piercing stylus to mark & punch their idiomatic writings into thin sheets of a flexible, tough gold alloy. Called Goldenfoil, this stuff is resistant to being smelted back to its constituent parts but is considered decorative enough that some merely repurpose the examples they find as wall coverings or even clothing.

Wooden Chain - The Arlir trained trees to grow in patterns that they would take long after those who planted them had passed. There are whole groves of trees where the branches & trunks - specifically of elms, would grow into a pattern resembling a chain. There are hundreds of these wooden chains that were grown, not carved. Their purpose is unknown.

Star-Eagle - One of the Arlir's reoccurring symbols is the Star-Eagle, a depiction that to contemporary eyes, seems highly stylized. The image is usually carved or engraved. The eagle in question is native to the region, but in its iconic depiction it is cartoonishly plump but also intensely aggressive.

Death Iron - The Arlir had a talent for creating an iron alloy that chymically promotes bleeding. While largely corroded by time there are a few extant examples of the iron - usually in the form of knives which have a stylized rendering of a screaming face incorporated into the design.

Brizai

Heavy Pistols - The Brizai use of pistols is restricted to the upper caste of their culture but upper caste Brizai almost always go with a pistol. These are very bare-bones affairs - little more than a tungsten-tube with a flint striker & a pan. They are notable for the amount of carbon scoring that they carry - a well-used pistol is notably grimy & this is displayed as a badge of competence.

Mail Cloaks - Brizai are known for their very heavy cloaks. Whether furred or woven - they are commonly lined with tightly woven rings of steel. These mail cloaks are somewhat iconic of the Slatewind's Brizai population & a common stereotype is that constantly wearing these armored cloaks makes brizai people much stronger & more vital.

Painted Dagger Nail - Adapted from a more explicable tradition - contemporary brizai culture has offered up the painted dagger nail. Many Brizai, especially women, wear a long, very sharp nail over their finger-nail, commonly the pinky of the left hand. These are usually painted with colors and patterns indicating family relationships. They are very often painted over & over again as the paint chips away & this sometimes gives a very unique patina to one's dagger-nail.

Pet Wallaby - Upper-Caste & Lower Caste brizai alike are known for their avidity in breeding & keeping pet wallabies. These aren't native to the Slatewind, but the many fancy breeds that are common in the slatewind - both domesticated & feral, are a regular appearance. Current trends favor black-furred variants with an orange-brown muzzle. Bearded, long-eared, long-haired and other variants are popular as well.

Citrine Smoke - Brizai weddings & marriage practices use a good amount of incnese & burning. Part of the traditional ceremony is the burning of a bundle of aromatic herbs that give off gouts of dense yellow smoke. The smoke is often collected into a phial which is worn as a sign of one's married status.

Bear Gate

Heron Legion - Within the Bear Gate there is a faction of marines, warriors trained for ship-based combat. These are the Heron Legion & they supplement their bear knight kit with heron themed articles. They also have a technique involving abrupt, darting feints. Know them by their scale-armor comprised of wood & leather.

Scars of Merit - Bear knights are ritualistically scarred by their commanders using a specially designated bronze scalpel. These scars serve for medals & rank insignia.

Hooked Guards - Bear knights arm themselves with a variety of weapons but all of them share the stylized hook that serves as a supplemental weapon & as a hand-guard. These hooks have a square point & when used to pierce something they leave a distinctive mark that the Bear Knights use, intermittently, as a code.

Narlimin - The King's Goose, Narlimin is a very large goose that is exceptionally aggressive. It's kept as a pet

by the Bear-Gate King of Shield but has become a mascot & sometimes symbol of the order.

Asymmetrical Cubic Style - Most of the Bear-Gate's symbols incorporate a cube or square, very often highly stylized. This repeating square symbol is often rendered in perspective, creating a recognizable icon that reoccurs frequently in Bear Gate kit & design.

Dwarf

Shining Buttons - Slatewind Dwarves have a reputation for having highly polished metal buttons. This affectation which includes all articles of clothing marks the origins of almost any garment - for any piece of clothing with a series of functional chrome buttons is certainly marked with the legend indicating the garment's maker.

Abyssal Ferrets - Dwarves, particularly those who live underground make use of a variety of animals - but the abyssal ferret is an iconic part of most dwarven settlements. A free roaming type of pet, these creatures patrol the underground & feed on pests. They are well regarded by the dwarves but only rarely made into something resembling a pet. Some dwarf strongholds use these creatures as a symbol or mascot.

Absolute Plumb - For their underground excavations the dwarves make use of a resource shared among them - the Absolute Plumb is an impossibly dense spearhead of unknown origin - it hangs from a cable of mithril & points unerringly toward the center of the earth. Useful for all architects, the Absolute Plumb is a symbol of dwarven meticulousness

Phosphor Dogs - Dwarves have bred a line of bioluminescent wolves that are useful companion animals in their underground settlements. Under light the wolves seem to be ordinary - if particularly stoic wolves, in the dark they radiate light & are known for their fleetness. Racing these creatures & breeding them is a dwarven pastime.

Elf

Elven Steel - The elves of the Slatewind have a strong crafting tradition & their steel is highly regarded. Elf-Steel is textured & replete with swirls & grains that resemble wood-grains. This is formed of annealing wire & carbon in the forge.

Sapphire Belts - Elves of the valley are traditionally seen wearing belts studded with sapphires. Such belts are said to have a variety of uses but the main utility is in the belt's supposed prophylactic effect in protecting against disease.

Ape Hunts - Slatewind Elf culture includes a ritual hunt for the colossal gibbons of the upland woods. These colonial gibbons are easily twice the size of a human & are notoriously tough. The Elves hunt them only in a ritualistic pattern & they don't eat the flesh or make use of the hides of these creatures. They do use the blood & other fluids of living gibbons & for this reason they are taken alive - commonly through the use of numerous grapples. The hunts are highly spiritualized & the tools & the timing of the hunts are significant.

Ghost Forged Relics - Slatewind Elves sometimes have recourse to their spiritual predecessor's ineffable ghost-substance. Elves intermittently manage to band together the spirits of their ancestors to extrude magical ectoplasmic substance which can be forged through complex spiritual means. Articles made of the ectoplasmic substance are easily rearranged into other materials through the application of magical energy - though anything made of ghost-substance lasts only for the duration of a year & no longer.

Old Emperors - Forest-bound elves of the slatewind valley have a peculiar reverential kinship with the local apes & they regard the orangutan as the king of all the primates. The greatest of these are known as Old Emperors & they are known for their greyed muzzles & beards. The elves protect these creatures and are in turn protected by them. Folk who have personally encountered the Old Emperors are entitled to wear the honor-flag indicating this interaction.

Fuliginous Shogun

Estimable Hammer- The followers of the Fuliginous Shogun are shown the means of crafting the Estimable Hammer - a heavy headed hammer that is made - not of steel, but of a fine grained clay baked into a dense, yet elaborate & beautiful hammer. These are glazed & painted with signs of the Fuliginous Shogun.

Cord Rings - Devotees of the Fuliginous Shogun mark their allegiance by wearing rings of yarn corded around their knuckles. These cords are comprised of the woven material derived from the hair & guts of sacrificial victims - all are always dyed an impenetrable black color.

Scab Seal - The Fuliginous Shogun's devotees communicate using coded & sealed letters - these are sealed with magically applied scabs - and when the improper person opens the seal the message is known to bleed unstoppably, spoiling the message.

Folded Knives - All of the panoply of the Fuliginous Shogun is intended to be imposing, menacing. These knives, carried by all of the shogun's minions irrespective of their roles are quite disconcerting. A meter long, they are very nearly swords in their own right & are made from a cultured membrane coaxed out of paper & woven and then folded many many times. The Fuliginous Shogun's many substitutes for metal arms & armor seem to be related to the lack of metals on the Black Moon, which is home to the shogun's demons.

Pestilential Lens - Elites among the shogun's guard are gifted with the knowledge required to grind a magical lens, which, when it focuses light properly, can inflict disease upon those that are touched by that light.

Gallack

The Coral Osprey - There are raptors, huge winged, powerful fliers. These creatures have feathers & scales that are alive with filamentous creatures - a symbiotic, or parasitic coral that clings to the bird & provides a variety of effects, including venom & a toxic cloud. More significantly - this symbiosis, while unknown to most, was devised by the Gallack in their time of dominion - for these creatures were to them tools & weapons.

Stochastic Snail Calculator - Where folk of the present age work in steel & wood - the Gallack worked in flesh & bone. At their height they fashioned immense computers that worked slowly but deliberately & which were comprised of the motion of snails. The slime trail & the movements along those trails performed logical calculations which, in aggregate provided a vast computing power. Nowadays the descendants of the original snails still roam the world - their colonies are still computational & there are strange effects that linger on in areas where the snails congregate, including ancient messages, apparitions & more.

Sword-Bladed Birds - Very large flightless birds who's tail & wing feathers are long curved blades, hollow & filled with venom. The blades are fragile, useful only once or twice before breaking, but they inflict the venom that festers within them when used. The birds don't make use of the feathers in their own defense - they rely upon their horned, spiked legs for attack & more often, for fleeing.

Gatesfow

Horned Tabi Claw- Gatesfow infiltrators are issued climbing boots made of cat-hide that are fixed with retractable climbing claws. There is a fighting style that they employ which utilizes these hidden weapons.

Tricky Signaling Boots - One Gatesfow technique is to leave false footprints & trails using heavy boots filled with stones. The common, defiant technique for the use of such items is to lead a false trail into a dangerous area and to leave the boots as a final display of knavery.

The Counterfeit Library - Gatesfow members sometimes have access to a wandering library of false documents & forged certificates. The carrier of these articles is someone quite unknown, who remains at the very edge of perception & who cannot be recalled correctly. The large collection of forgeries that they sell for examples & for use are what is remembered - but the transaction always seems to take place in a dream.

The Little Pig of Spite - Thieves of the Gatesfow sometimes leave a small carven pig, sometimes reddish, sometimes painted black, among the effects of those whom they have robbed. Most commonly this is done when stealing from a very rich person, as a kind of signifier of the shamefulness of their hoarding. The tiny pig token is a hated symbol of the guild.

Catskin Raiment - Gatesfow thieves, when they are working the shadows, wear clothes made entirely of catskin - this is a bit of sympathetic magic, intended to grant the thief the cat's grace & stealth. It is said that the gathering of the cats for the harvest of their hides is a part of the Gatesfow's training regimen, and that one must provide a tax of a score of cats to be allowed into the guild at all.

Goblin

Beetle-Boots - Slatewind Goblins are herders & gatherers of insects which are used for meat & for other things, notably for their cobbling. Goblin fashion of the day makes use of the large-shelled beetles of the valley which are made into stylish boots with many flanges, fins & decorative elements - all comprised of colorful beetle carapaces.

Repellent Meal - Slatewind Goblins often offer their own delicacy to guests, a disgusting concoction of bird-fat skimmed & molded to be served in a beetle carapace.

Devilish Pistols - The Goblins make use of pistols that fire, not slugs or shot, but burning phosphorous - a rain of ignited match-heads that scatter like the breath of a dragon. These are said to be able to render the skin from a target in a single shot.

Leader's Skates - The elites among the goblins are allowed to go on skates - in their warrens they wear wheeled boots & stand tall & go fast - being trailed by their retinues.

Governors Sodality

Flying Mosaic - Analogous to a flying carpet, the Governors of the Sodality each have their own distinctive conveyance. These vary in shape and form, but all of them are comprised of mosaic tiles arranged into an iconic image that serves as the governor's symbol.

Lithe Gowns - The Governors of Red-Banks are known for their elite fashion which cannot be imitated. Each has an elaborate look all their own but central to the design ethos of the governors is the bearing of the body. Governors of the Sodality wear skimpy costumes that reveal a great deal, not the least their wealth, taste & authority.

Fanciful Hats - Beyond their revealing outfits, a governor of Red Banks is known for their headgear. The hats of the Governors are as distinct as their mosaic conveyance - each has a signature style for their hat. Some are quite tall, some pointed, some are wide-brimmed, and some are elaborately plumed.

Loyalty Kerchief - The most loyal servants of one of the governing sorcerers might be fitted with a silver scarf. These are magically applied whilst molten & cured in air while they rest upon the subject's shoulders. These scarves are solid silver, but not uncomfortable to wear. They signify one's alliances but also allow the sorcerer to know the thoughts of their subordinate.

Halfling

Halfling Gumbo - Recipes vary throughout the valley but the primary ingredients are always the meat of geese and alligators - both of which are found throughout the valley. The specialty is easily fashioned by anyone with the materials & interest but the reputation of halfling-made gumbo is very good.

Horde of Diya

Oryx Band - A portion of the Horde of Diya retain all of the traditional nomadic ways. They are primarily hunters of Oryx & they procure the Oryx horn for the Horde - these horns are components of the regalia of the horde & are incorporated into many of the horde's costumes & banners.

Ruby Trowel - A mason's tool, the blade of which is a large carved ruby. This implement is part of the regalia of the Khan of Diya - it is understood that whenever a new structure is commissioned or begun that the founding stone must be laid & mortared with the trowel by the khan in a ritualistic display. The mortar is always mixed with the blood of a victim who is sacrificed using the trowel as well.

Clacking Finch - A game, similar to backgammon & dominoes played using carved bones & rocks, it's named for the noise that the pieces make when they clatter in their collapsible case - a sound noted to be similar to the sound of a plains finch breaking open nuts.

Merciless Charge - Horde factions often hold contests & challenges during which they demonstrate their intimidation stances & poses. These can be quite drawn out & some of the contests, incorporating whole regiments, can last for the better part of a day.

Companion Ocelots - The plains-running ocelots of the Slatewind are tamed by Horde riders - they are trained to retrieve like falcons or hunting dogs but they are quick enough to lope alongside horse riders.

Infernal Band of Able

Locust Motif - The Infernal Band, though diminished from its once great size, still makes use of the locust as a symbol. Meant to intimidate through the implication of numerousness, the locust is repeated in the symbolism of the Infernal Band. Most commonly one encounters the locust-buckle - an iron belt-buckle shaped like a stylized locust. The traditional uniform incorporates a wide mesh belt that is bound by this buckle. Hanging on every belt of this type one finds the Infernal Band's Estoc - the sword all members train with.

Segmented Pouldron - Part of the infernal band's kit is the long, segmented pouldron which is fitted with hooks & commonly adorned with many jewels & a repetition of the locust symbol. These pouldrons - though gaudy & opulent, are still functional & useful for defense but also an offensive technique involving hooking & controlling an opponent's movement.

Fancy Clothes - Members of the Infernal Band have always worn very elaborate & expertly tailored custom clothes. These lavish outfits are notable for their lack of utility - many decorative flourishes & the incorporation of animal furs as well as non-functional pouches & pockets.

Locust Mark - The sign of the locust is used by the infernal band during their operations to enhance their fame. This sign isn't always the same, but it is always identifiable. Sometimes it is a painted sigil, sometimes it is an actual locust, placed in the mouths of victims, sometimes it is locust wings lain over the eyes of the dead.

Sealed Cloaks - Members of the infernal band are inordinately proud of their official position in the city of Able. Commonly they wear cloaks that are laden with seals & letters of marque affixed to them - with the innumerable licenses sealed to their cloaks with waxen seals.

Insyr

Lustrous Arms - The Insyr, eaters of the dead, were excellent metalsmiths & they had recourse to alloys & metallurgical recipes lost to modern times. Among their works are the Half-Coats of shimmering plate that can still be found today In The Ruins. These coats favor the left-side, are bulky & built up only on that side & are notably asymmetrical. They are unadorned & the metal is light & easy to wear with the effect of providing excellent movement without sacrificing defense.

Orichalc Stilettos - The Insyr used long piercing implements for a variety of tasks & these are found throughout the Ruins. They utilized, in their construction, a lost technique & their metal of preference for these implements is called Orichalc now. The secret of its manufacture is lost. In form these are long piercing knives without edges that shimmer by firelight but only dully reflect sunlight. They have no edge but the crystalline structure that they contain is like a quill - it can be pushed in without difficulty, but many thousands of miniscule barbs prevent the implement from being drawn out with ease.

Patterned Metals - Many metal goods of the Insyr can be found & they are easy to identify for the inclusion of a feathered pattern that repeats - a collection of misshapen blob like inclusions into the surface of the metal that runs deep & is incorporated into the smelting somehow. These stain-like decorations in no way minimize the toughness of these metals. While unappealing to most modern perceptions, they must have at one point been highly regarded for the steel-paisley pattern reoccurs throughout the remains left by the Insyr.

Khin

The Platinum Claws - These darkly beautiful tools are part of the worship of the Triune-Faced god. Each claw has three sharp talons signifying the 3 faces of the deity. In the Khinish imagination the claws are those of the devils who, in service of the divinity, rend the flesh of the wicked. While some priests carry utilitarian examples of these claws & do make use of them as tools of ritualistic punishment - more Khin wear decorative variants as a symbol of their faith & superstition. In the face of Tricadism the claw has begun to indicate Khinish ancestry rather than devotion to the Triune faced god.

The Spruce Lash - Khinish children all grow up with a healthy fear of the spruce lash - it's common to Khinish households & it is the principle means of educating & disciplining children in the Khinish tradition. Children are whipped with the lash - a switch of young spruce, and are considered grown when they are able to wrest the switch from their parent & turn its use upon them. This tradition is referenced throughout khinish literature & idiom & it is a basic element of the Khinish upbringing.

Family Lance - Khinish households are always equipped with a long metal slat that usually hangs upon the entry door. This slat, called a lance as this is what it is meant to symbolize or evoke, is marked each year with the height of each household member - which is measured against the lance. They're a notable feature of any house where Khinish traditions prevail.

The False Cobra Story - There is a story among the Khin that is repeated often - the story of a cobra pretending to be a harmless snake that in the end betrays those who trusted it - this story informs many attitudes common to Khinish people & it has been the basis of many a family's & ruler's decision making.

Sword of the Triune Faced God - There are a few of these swords. Long, long ago in some southern desert the predecessors of the Slatewind's Khin were adopted

by their triune faced god & when that god adopted them they were gifted with these swords - heavy curved-blade weapons which coruscate with an inner fire but are never consumed. These swords are indestructible. No flame has melted the metal, no tool has scratched the finish. There are 3 such swords in the Slatewind - two are in the possession of Kings of Shield - the last is in Able. Somewhere.

Matriarchate

Singing Crystals - The matriarchate utilizes symbolic quartz crystals, normally about a cubit in length. These crystals are worked & polished and generally lovely but they serve a specific purpose beyond mere decoration. Singing & Signing Crystals have specific resonances and make a tone when struck or stroked - this tone is unique from crystal to crystal. Currently members of the matriarchate are attempting to make their crystals an indelible component of commerce & communication - they haven't worked out how quite yet.

Permissive Costumes - The Matriarchate is notoriously sensualist & their fashions & styles accentuate their general endorsement of promiscuity. Members of the matriarchate uphold the permissive sexualized persona that their order is infamous for - mainly in the interest of controlling narrative & taking advantage of expectations. Nevertheless it's not uncommon for members of the matriarchate to appear in highly sexualized costumes.

Old Crows - There are two crows that are quite old, old to the point that they have anomalously gray feathers & muzzles & beaks. They have wizened, aged appearances & they both perch near the doors to the Matriarchate's old headquarters. They are de-facto symbols & mascots of the group now - especially in Elan, where the Matriarchate is sometimes conflated with the crows called "Old Crows" themselves.

Mereids

Titan Carps - A 'gift' of the Mereids the gray sea is infested with Titan Carps - which are, essentially, goldfish - but which never stop growing, to the point where there is an abundance of the creatures in the waters of the Slatewind that easily exceed ten cubits in length. They taste terrible

Sea Cloak - Parts of the gray sea are always under cloud-cover & protective fields of mist & fog. The danger these regions present is offset by their inaccessibility - people don't go where these threats reside because they have no call to do so. There is a peculiarity in the mist though, a strange property, that allows it to be cut away from the larger body & utilized, like cloth. Sea cloaks are a remnant of the Mereids - they are living creatures comprised of cloud & mist. Gentle & basically harmless, they congregate near rocks - so those who navigate through the mists sometimes run aground or wreck - this is incidental as the creatures do not hunt, nor do they feed. They do sometimes throw lightning - when they are apparently guarding something.

Wasteful Endless - The mereids lived at the bottom of the sea & their relics & history are largely confined to the mud far beneath the waves. This represents a huge wasteland, a vast plain of ruins beneath the sea. Here and there, relics wash ashore - and this is for no reason at all, called the Wasteful Endless. Folk along the shore sometimes seek out real treasures that might be washed up.

Dunce Crayfish - In their time the Mereids created a breed of fast growing, huge crayfish that would serve as a food crop. These creatures are rampant & feral today - they lack aquatic predators - owing to their immensity, but on land they are a target for any carnivorous creature - and an easy target at that - they seek the touch of human hands, they are mindless pets - and they haven't the faintest ability to defend themselves.

Sea Claws -Fighting under the water was a fact of life for the Mereids in their time - these creatures, angels with fins instead of wings - fought with their hands & mouths, clutching & scratching & biting in a terrible embrace. This weapon is a remnant of this slow-motion underwater combat. Claws & razor-edged belts that fasten to the body.

Omge

The Needle of Thought - The Omge culture utilized many tools, but foremost among them was the recording needle. This was used to carve out information into objects. Finer & smaller needles can be used on finer & smaller things, including even souls & minds. The Needle of thought is barely visible, so slender as to be unseen - but it can be used to write thoughts into the mind of another.

Doubling Needle - The magically articulated needles of the Omge weren't only good for reading - but for creating as well. There is one type, hard & usually

extant in an orthogonal dimension that can carve things into the world, whole people, buildings & so on.

Transparent Body - When remnants of the Omge are found they're often very confusing. The Omge apparently had translucent crystalline skin - at least on their torsos. There are shells of diamond that can be found with the definition & form of a human torso.

Patriarchate

Symbols of Authority - The Patriarchate is intensely hierarchical & has numerous gaudy indicators of one's position within the hierarchy. Most emblematic of these are the gold belts of increasing preciousness & size. Masters of the Patriarchate wear gold belts studded with numerous gems. The lowest members must get by with only jewel encrusted belt buckles.

Twisted & Violent Patrimony - The Patriarchy's control over Salt Province was won & held through constant fighting. Ownership & control have been at the heart of these conflicts & they have created a fairly grotesque series of interrelated families who war with & marry with each other in turns. Conflict between cousins is expected, between siblings is feared. Rarest is when any of these hierarchs will actually side with their kin against an outside threat.

Vanity Chop - The Patriarchate uses complex contractual documents commonly - decrees & bulls aren't uncommon either - in all these cases documents are signed using very elaborate stamps, or chops, which have symbolic elements denoting many things - such as the name, family, status & income. Some of these stamps are so ostentatious as to fill a scroll by itself.

Plioshr

Elven (Mis)conception - Plioshr often regard elves with a mystical reverence. It is a common belief amongst the Plioshr that their own ancestors were elves, but made mundane & human through close association with nature or the land. It's almost standard for a Plioshr to fetishize & idealize elves in a way that makes most elves uncomfortable.

Clanspear - Every clan of the Plioshr, and there are many, has a clanspear. This is the weapon that the Eldest-Brother wields during conflicts & times of war. Being a nomadic people & never very numerous - war & conflict between clans could easily put an end to a significant percentage of extant Plioshr - so a tradition of peace between clans has largely prevailed, with the exception of the war-charge. Against other dog-riders the Plioshr mount something very like a cavalry charge - with the sole distinction that the only lance-armed rider is the pack-head, the Eldest-Brother, and they always carry the Clanspear. In these engagements - one of the Eldest-Brothers must die. Their Clanspear is sent back to their mother & is reissued. It would be a taboo beyond bearing for someone to take the Clanspear away from a clan.

Sandax - A disease that apparently only Plioshr get, Sandax afflicts the lighter patches of a Plioshr's skin & it causes those patches to become dry, grainy & finally to dissolve into dribbling sand. This is said to be a curse & Plioshr who get the disease are suspected by their fellows of having committed secret & unspeakable sins. For this reason those afflicted often hide their symptoms - often to the point of death. This may help the pestilence spread.

Dogteeth - A Plioshr dog-rider is likely to raise & use a dozen dogs in a single lifetime. The first dog, that one that the Plioshr rider grows up with & is weaned alongside, is considered the Kin-Dog, a kind of spirit-double or shadow. In the composite sense of identity that Plioshr abide within, the Kin-Dog is close to a soul. That dog's death and the circumstances of that death are relevant to the Plioshr - after the death of that dog it's expected that the rider take that dog's canine teeth & keep them. Not only as a memento, but as a tool & and as a part of the self - this often is reinforced by utilizing the dog teeth in painful looking piercings.

Pradeharade

Primeval Architects - The Cunning of the Pradeheradim is beyond the ken of any beings who have followed. What they made & how they made it remain fascinating mysteries. Among their works there are some strange indications - remnants of their artifice. Among the tools used by the Pradeheradim were the exquisitely bred ancestors of many of the regions current fauna - hence the peculiarity of these fauna. Among them are the colonial otter - like creatures that are responsible for several mega-structures all along the river-banks.

Glowing Schools - The Pradeharadim seem to have had a fondness for collective organisms - swarming creatures of one type or another. At the height of their mastery it seems that they created small exothermic

fishes which school & swim through the infrastructure of civilization rendering the winters more habitable. The descendants of these creatures still swim the rivers of the Slatewind though now with variable shapes & sizes. The tribes of these fishes are known & are a hazard - given the fires they sometimes cause.

Final Protector - The Pradeharadim created creatures - simple furry rascals with quick hands & clever minds. Smart enough to be trained but not enough to properly speak. What remains of these creatures are the final protectors of the Pradeharadim's treasures. Grotesquely seeping perpetually vivid ichor in dizzying colors from their oiled fur, these creatures are like gargantuan raccoons with sabre tusks & too many hands with too many fingers. They lurk at the edge of contemporary civilization, which is the heart of the former polity of their creators.

The Flame that Knows - A being of fire - a creature that exists and lives yet is flame alone haunts the hills of the Slatewind. This creature, called often The Dragon - is mystically gifted, a vast intellect with a huge repertoire of magical abilities. It has taken apprentices over the centuries, some of them from the current crop of inhabitants. More often, it has hid from or destroyed those who attempted to seek it.

The Fire - Knowing & learning the consuming flame - this is the essential mastery of the Pradeharade who made with fire & consumed & created with it. For mouths they had fire, for hands they had fire.

Qlpth Nmal

Disordered World - Qlpth Nmal is the ferocious kaleidoscope vision of the world that breeds senseless conflict. It is the disordered reality that compels violence. This is an aura, a remnant that lingers over the works & places of the Nmal Qlpth - those places have their physical realities skewed. Expectations fail & assumptions are subverted - up is down, left is right, friends- especially friends become foes.

Corruption - The relics of Qlpth Nmal radiate their chaotic influence far beyond what is immediately visible. There is a danger in the world - created by these remnants - an affect that imbues some & overtakes others. The corruption of the Qlpth is a persistent hazard In The Ruins & it is known to affect entire communities. It's not clear whether the chaotic influence can be undone.

Nacre Spirit Mirrors - The most unwholesome of Qlpth Nmals relics are the nacre mirrors - these are fashioned of the growing pearl that forms in stochastic patterns, having been influenced by the Qlpth. These mirrors allow for diabolical, corrupt duplicates to be formed.

Qlpth Vital

Laced Eruptions - The Qlpth Vital is a force of energy that promotes growth, life & abundance - to the point where this growth creates danger in the world. A signifier of this power is the flourishing explosive growth of minerals & metals, treasures that burst up from the ground in preposterous patterns - laced & overgrown like waves frozen in air but of copper, gold & iron.

Unbreakable Code - This is a puzzle, one that has confounded the valley's inhabitants for time immemorial. The flows & eruptions of minerals that mark the remnants of a Qlpth Vital stronghold are marked with confusing symbols, strange signs & unknown alphabets - these are extremely interesting to magicians but so far remain undeciphered.

Unfortunately Afflicted - The Qlpth Vital's influence is not only visited upon the earth & it's mineral treasures - sometimes, regions of the Qlpth's influence affect the minerals within a person's body. These bone-eruptions are often fatal but sometimes they are only horrifically disfiguring.

A Natural Arena - duskystone Isle grew from out of the world at the behest of the Qlpth Vital - their power, in erecting it was spent and the place is inert - peaceful. The grooved, rugged edges of the place, worn down by weather.

Quet

Wide-Legged-Woven-Trousers - The Quet have few contributions to contemporary fashion - among them are their cultural costume - these creased, pleated trousers are worn high over the midsection flaring out. Often the only garment worn by a Quet, they are woven, patterned, embroidered & printed upon. Simpler elements are favored over the elaborate but the principal virtues of these garments known as "Huuk" is comfort.

Talent of the Willows - A game among the Quet is the game of the Willows - which is played using hoops & sticks - which are rolled & spun with the goal of bypassing a threshold to socre a point. The Talent of the

Willows can become a very intense competition & the players of the game who are exemplars of the talent required show a profound acrobatic ability.

Raccoon Gate

Handy With Tools - Raccoon Gate Knights are known for their ingenuity & resourcefulness. In terms of preparation most of the knights are known to travel with a variety of useful tools - rather than a large amount of supplies. Relying on their abilities rather than preparation has made Raccoon Gate Knights famous.

Sleepless Energy - Raccoon Gate Knights don't hesitate to complain about their schedules - they're a bit notorious for their complaining - though it's well justified as the knights of the Raccoon Gate function day & night - they work through the dark more often than they don't & they are quite reasonably exhausted much of the time. This isn't to say that they aren't extremely productive - indeed, the Raccoon Gate's Knights are the most productive of all their contemporaries.

Clever Ring - Quite a few of these knights wear a porcelain ring, wide as the first knuckle & decorated with a raccoon motif. This is more than a decorative accessory - secretly, these rings can be broken apart, revealing a bladed tool concealed in the ceramic. This has many uses, but is mainly a lockpick and a saw for cutting ropes.

Backhanded Underhand - Trickery among the Raccoon Gate's knights is more an expectation than a surprise of any sort. One secret that's gained a little infamy is the hidden knife. Raccoon Gate Knights commonly carry knives hidden in the small of their back and have invented a trick for drawing & striking with those knives in a single, deadly motion.

Saayang

Multipart Spear - Saayang culture accommodates violence but it has a strong preference for elegance. Owing to this a lot of the implements of strife are not obviously weapons. The multipart spear appears to be a thick belt or scarf with a spear-head like accessory, but it can be pulled taut easily and forms into a rigid spear. These are often highly decorated items with silk brocades & prints.

Icosahedral Patterns - A rendering of an icosahedron is repeated throughout Saayang design. It refers back to a southern phenomenon - the production of icosahedral crystals from a volcanic eruption. The crystals rained down for days & even now, possession of one of these black tokens is considered lucky.

Deep Stillness - Saayang nurturing practice emphasizes a period of innate solitude & quiet at the very earliest portion of life. Saayang custom requires that children aren't taught to speak or given access to language or reading until they have lived for at least a year, sometimes two. This longer interval of silence is said to grant the Saayang a greater patience, wisdom & tolerance for solitude.

Inauspicious Hawk - The hawk & the hawk specifically - not the falcon nor the eagle nor the osprey - is considered supremely unlucky in Saayang folkways. The Hawk is thought to steal the vitality from the creatures of the earth, to snatch life out of animals & people. This thief-of-life attitude prevails elsewhere in Saayang thought, with the concept of murder being considered a kind of theft, the stealing of one's line, children or parents.

Domesticated Giraffes - A breed of dwarf-giraffes (still quite large) have been domesticated by the Saayang - there is a small contingent of giraffe ranchers in the Slatewind.

Samnite Prince

Crescent-Moon-Spear - The Samnite Prince's devotees are warriors, albeit warriors with considerable affectation. Their mandate is to be graceful, effective & beautiful. These silvery staves are made in recognition of the white-moon in its crescent shape - the most dangerous time of the Samnite Prince's reign. The spears are very fine but completely unadorned.

Electrified Mail - The Samnite Prince lays out the stern demands of his order in the Lantern Book - and alongside these demands are instructions for the creation of the Electrified Mail. This armor suit is comprised of overlapping metal scales that covers only the vital regions of the body, the neck, the joints, so on. The metals used in the fabrication of the suit are mystically electrified so that a vivifying galvanic energy flows through the skin of those who wear the armor. It is known to be quite painful to wear - but also to provide uncanny protection.

Selest

Conical Planning Armor - The Selest were peculiar - alien in fact, and alien even to aliens. In their time they built little but what small things remain of theirs have a certain distinction. This armor, for instance, is a metallic cone which can be worn as a sort of cowl, a full covering of the torso. These aren't meant for human-sized people as it seems the Selest were diminutive, but they make fair suits for Halflings that stumble upon them.

Mycelial Coat - An accumulation of the root-like structures of a fungus woven among clods of decaying matter, this shroud was once the exterior exoskeleton of a Selest. THe weird physiology of these beings defies easy understanding but these coats, as they're called - can sometimes be found. They are body-shaped mats of fruiting mushrooms that can be draped or worn as a cloak & even sewn & worked like cloth. While harmless to living beings, the coats make short work of dead matter, skeletonizing their deceased wearers in hours.

Tools of the Selest's Terror - The Selest came from the sun, where no materials exist for creating. Their principal desire in coming to the world, then was in acquiring materials. What they favored & what they cherished are peculiar & often senseless. Among their favored tools were implements made of ebony wood. Hardened & carved to have an ersatz edge, these tools were used largely for vivisecting living beings. Quite often these items are fashioned so that they fit together like pieces of a jigsaw puzzle that once assembled, forms into a shell-like carapace.

Tricadic Pantheon

Macabre Authority - The Tricadic church's most coercive & controversial act has been to have mandated their authority over all internments, cremations & funeral observations. This has been one of the causes of the last war - but it is seen as an essential method for making the church primary. Different deities have different rites - but the church observes all traditions.

Chalkstone - Throughout the Slatewind Valley one finds the marks of the Pilgrims & Martyrs. The Chalkstone is a curious item - a cube of soft stone from which a block of ochre chalk can be broken off. These are dispensed to pilgrims & the faithful so that they can leave their own indelible marks throughout the valley on their journeys.

Antler Door Hanger - The local elk population has a reasonably large number of animals with 30 or more points to their antlers. These are large creatures. There's a new, popular tradition forming among the tricadists to hang the antlers of a 30 point buck over the doorframe of houses of the faithful. There's even a brisk & growing trade in these antlers & in forgeries of same.

Plasters & Infusions - The Tricadic church has been known to modify & doctor relics of different faiths & churches. From the temples of the gods that comprise the church they've adopted many relics which have been modified for conformity to the tricadic system. Other relics are lifted & changed in whole. There is a saying among artists, and forgers more specifically, that one can tell the wealth of the diocese by the quality of the plastered forgery.

Tshuludra

Intermittent Idols - The Tshuludra's tree is the greatest of their constructs but by no means the only. Throughout the Slatewind one finds statues fashioned of stone & crystal & sometimes wood - these are made in emulation of the horrid tree but they also have within them shapes & forms that resemble the Tshuludra themselves.

Tshuludra Mail - The mad-birdfolk of antiquity made use of every bit of material they could lay their talons upon. To wit, their relics are comprised of wood & metal & stone meshed & annealed together into a patchwork amalgam that is somehow more permanent & durable than the parts individually. Alloying non-metals, alloying wood & stone - this is an art now lost. Suits of Thuludra mail don't well fit any extant folk - but pieces of the armor are functional.

The Blazing Blade - This is a recipe for an alchemical brand - a rod of dull metal that when doused in water bursts into sparks & spouting flame. A dangerous item even for its wielder, these items are good for only a few uses before they're consumed. They are more plentiful than one might credit In The Ruins.

Tshuludra Handaxe - A disc of polished stone grown into a loop of wood & then bonded through secret alchemy - these handaxes were the acme of the Tshuludra's material culture. These objects exist in a variety of styles & sizes - each with a dedicated use. Caches with dozens of these objects are found somewhat regularly.

W'lalaz

Spear of Fate & Dreams - This artifact is a singular, one of the signal instruments of the night-trolls. Living strictly in the night-time & obsessed with fortune-telling

& divination, the W'lalaz devised this spear. A silver shaft of solidified starlight, frozen in air & time itself - the Yari is a blade & spear & staff - a tapered crystalline shaft. It is a thing of time & the defiance of time which allows one to pierce the veil of possible futures & to bring forth the unseen.

A Holy Illumination - The body of a fallen being, a hero of the W'lalaz but not one of them. Some unknown thing from a far star. The bones of the creature are woven with strands of light, a rainbow skein of intangible, permanent light. This object is a ribcage made of prisms, of a being that is as large as a whale at least. The creature may have lived or may live again or is a dream of something that could never exist. This becomes a place - a room that a person could go within, and become enlightened.

Failed Efforts - The W'lalaz managed many things, they built their observatory, they captured starlight & reordered time. Yet they could not face the sun, they could not build anything that could be called culture. This eluded them, traditions, art, ideals - all of these rose & feel within the lifetime of an individual with no inheritance or patrimony to offer.

Woodwatch

Simple & Professional - The Woodwatch's arms & equipment are basic by any standards. Mostly made by the hands that will eventually wield them, the weapons & tools the Woodwatch uses are extremely straightforward, knives, bows, spears & swords, all of them are simple, plain & functional.

Outmoded Ideals - The Woodwatch is beholden to moribund concepts of authority, kinship & propriety. These ideals make them seem by turns despotic, puritanical & reactionary. The unfashionable notions that they nurture extend to sex discrimination, polygamy & complex codes of hospitality.

Bird Poison - The Violet-Throated Tanager is an uncommon bird in the valley but it is found more abundantly in the Woodlands. This bird is interesting in that its feathers are dusted with a toxic film which has paralytic qualities. The Woodwatch uses this poison, carefully cultivated, for hunting & for assassinations.

Zho-Xen-Zho

Hand of Demonic Spiders - Part of the Zho-Xen-Zho's praxis is the use of terrifying phantasms. Among the most widely employed is an apparent transformation in which the Dreamer's hands detach and grow into enormous, horrific spiders. This particular illusion is common to many of the Zho-Xen-Zho and is something of a shibboleth, with different practitioners comparing and rivalling one another's technique.

An Unwholesome Circus - Part of the tactic of shocking people out of their closely held beliefs, the Dreamer's circus is a traveling show - a fairly paltry one that, while travelling appears as little more than a collection of road-tattered Zho-Xen-Zho. Once erected & ensorcelled through the use of their phantasmagoria, the circus becomes a kind of liminal maze - a house of horrors & delights that enraptures & confounds all of the senses. Those who attend the circus are changed, rarely for the better.

Hod -  The Personal Touch

Hod comes next, the performance. Ideally, creating the adornments, personalities & rewards that have been presented above grants the referee a special insight into performing & describing this invented world. Keeping all of these things ordered in one's mind is not always easy, so sketching out scenes in advance, finding the voices & motivations for the NPCs you'll portray & devising cues to indicate one or another of the features of the setting show up here.

Knowing how to tell a story well is a matter of practice & trust. Practice running the game, setting the scene & mastering the mechanics happens at the table. At the table mistakes will be made. Mistakes don't need to be a sign of weakness or of unpreparedness – rather, you can make these points of articulation where you can gain the trust of your players. Players who trust you to help them tell a story will provide better performances & will help the whole enterprise to rise up above its meagre basis. If you err, admit it and be corrected. With time in the top chair & time spent nurturing your players, you'll be able to present something truly unique.

Yesod - The Mise En Scène

A little confusingly, perhaps, we end our journey in **Yesod** – the foundation. It may occur to you that the geography, flora & fauna of the setting should be well established, possibly the first thing created. That's a fair view of things. I myself have certainly begun there more often than I have not. We can see, for example, how geography & the prevalence of resources by region have created all of human history. We could rightly say that geography is destiny. But here we aren't producing a world in a natural way. We've already devised cultures & relics, landmarks & geography. We have the consequences of these realities established in advance & now we have to populate the realities.

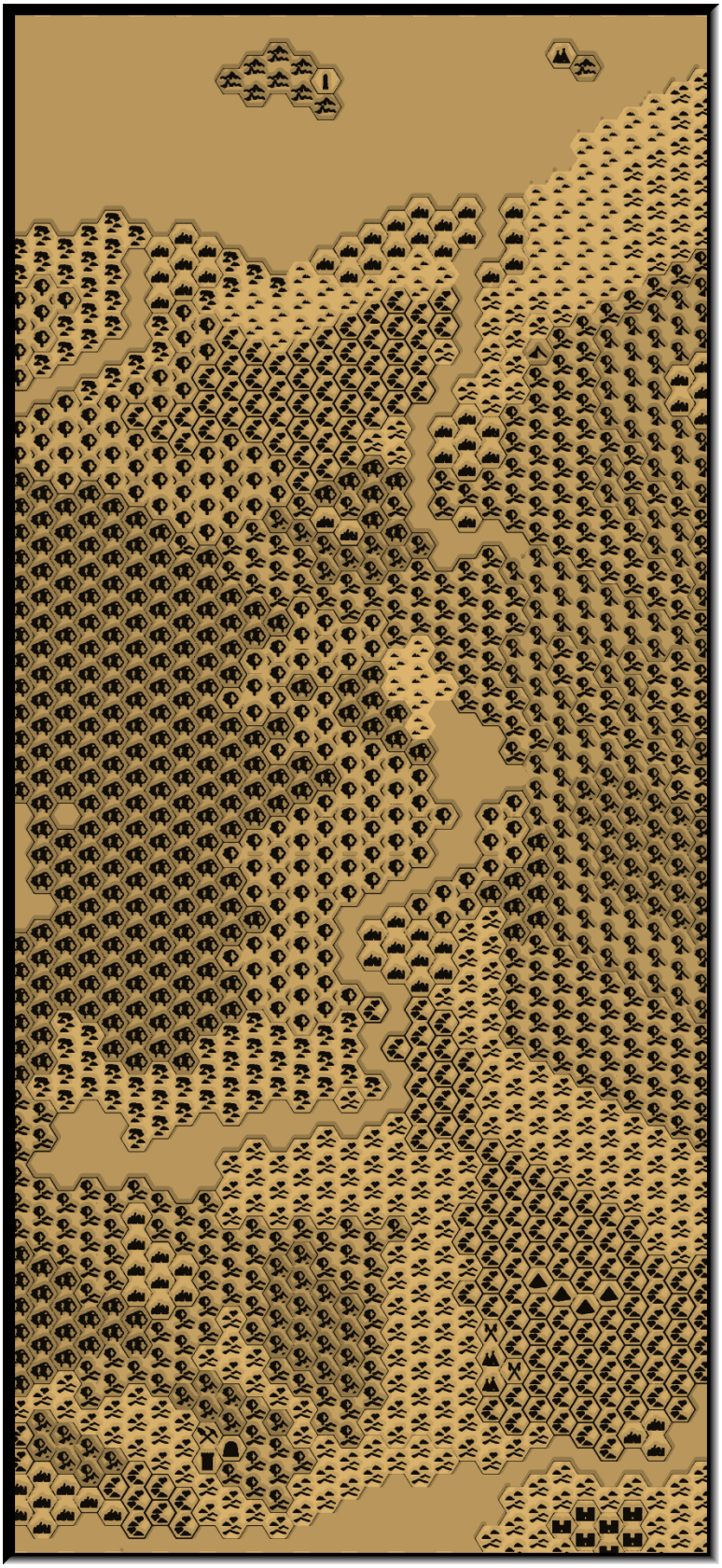
This is a large endeavor & some of it is outside the scope of what will fit in this book. The first thing to do, though, is to plan locales. You can do this any number of ways. You can simply map the setting in whatever format you prefer. Hex made maps & hand drawn maps & procedurally generated maps all have their place. Any of these can work. But you don't need to map things. You can avoid this entirely & depending on the game you want to run you may forgo it completely. For example you could simply plot a distance between each of the ten cities. Not a distance in miles or meters – but in sessions & encounters. You could say that traversing the distance from Termus to Shield takes the better part of a day & requires at least one difficult interaction with a group of knights. Or a journey from Elan to Red Banks takes at least two weeks & is hindered by the forests & hills between. You could plan a half dozen sessions of picaresque adventures between these places.

As a decision, this boils down to your style of performance & that's why Yesod is after Hod. You may be an inveterate storyteller with a very detailed plot you wish to set forth. You won't map your setting, except perhaps for your own reference. You'll plot the distance between places as adventures & skip over entire elements of travel – if you wish – or engage in travel-style sub-games to occasionally emphasize the ease or difficulty of travel.

You may prefer to leave the world open, a sandbox for your players to explore over many rambling sessions. You may simply be providing a setting for the PC's to create their own schemes & plan their own plots. In practice this type of play requires a bit more preparation on the part of the Ref – they must have maps & tables, encounters both plotted & random available for any given contingency.

You may run a hybrid of these two styles or have a style of running that isn't described anywhere on a continuum between carefully plotted & open-world.

I myself prefer player-driven campaigns without much meta-narrative. For this reason I must come to the table much more prepared than if I simply planned out a series of encounters related to a larger storyline. This entails maps, monstes & terrain based tables. I need to know what every landform the PCs may encounter looks like & be prepared with some idea of what lies there. For this reason I use maps & monster-guides, and some of these are presented here, as resources, if you wish to run a game set In The Ruins.





Ancestral Avenger

Monster Name

Folkloric

Liminal Tier

HD	5d8+7	# Appearing	2d6	Attack #	5
HP	33	Morale	19	Attack Mod	+5
AC	19	Treasure	7	Initiative	0+d20
SPEED	12	Parley	2d6	Saves	17
Tags	Ghost, Vengance, Spooky, Mother	Terrain		Stats	12
		Location		Skills	3

Attacks & Maneuvers

+5 Implacable Grasp d8- Ancestral Avengers grip on tightly with their one free hand applying brutal & surprising pressure.

The Grave Grip - After attacking someone with their Implacable Grasp an Ancestral Avenger causes the target of the attack to make a save vs. Petrification, on a failed save the target begins to become buried alive. On the first turn this attack applies the subject cannot move as their feet & legs are swallowed by the earth, on the second turn they cannot attack as their arms & upper body are swallowed up & on the 3rd turn they begin to die as their heads go under. Buried victims must make a Saving throw vs. Death each round or die. It takes 1 round to excavate one segment of a person - a fully buried person requires 3 rounds of digging to be freed.

+5 Flower Whip - d8/d8 - The ghost attacks with its bouquet of flowers- which come alive horribly and lash out - each hit strikes twice at considerable range

Look of Wrath - Revealing the ghost's face provokes a save vs. Death - on a failed save the target is subject to Fear

Keening - The Ancestral Avenger is heard long in advance of its arrival. Its screams of lamentation echo through dark landscapes. Those who are the targets of the ghosts must save vs. spells or suffer having their movement halved & their sleep requirements doubled until sunrise.

Description

The ghosts of a murder victim's maternal ancestors - Avenging Ancestors return to the world to bury the murderers of their descendants when those descendants have died without heirs. When the family line is fatally disrupted the echoes of the ancestral birth-pains of that line's mothers coalesce into an avenging spirit that pursues the murderer - attempting a final vengeance. These spirits never attack anyone else who is likewise the last of their own line & they have been known to be off put & wary in the presence of young mothers & infants - neither of whom will they suffer to see harmed.

These specters appear to be the shrouded, hooded mourners at a funeral. Each of them cannot be seen save for their two pallid hands – one of which is always clutching a bouquet of blood-colored flowers, the other of which is wrenched into a furious claw. They appear in groups & always to hunt one or more people who they hold responsible for ending their family line.



An Awful Old Man

Folkloric

Liminal Tier

Monster Name

HD	6d10+11	# Appearing	1	Attack #	8
HP	48	Morale	20	Attack Mod	+6
AC	20	Treasure	9	Initiative	-3+d20
SPEED	8	Parley	-3	Saves	14
Tags	Vampire, Undead, Fire, Elemental, Guest, Unwholesome	Terrain	Civilization	Stats	10
		Location	ITR	Skills	1

Attacks & Maneuvers

+6 Burning Touch d10 - The old man touches someone, a long, unpleasant stroke of his dry hand, it burns.

Hunger - The Old Man eats relentlessly & can't be sated by any amount of food or drink.

+6 Piercing Glare - d8 The Old Man's eyes scan about and where his gaze lands there is pain.

Burn The Haven - The Old Man can cause a fire to start in any house it occupies. Fires deal d6 damage to everyone in the house every 5th Initiative turn.

+8 Embrace d6 - The Awful Old Man takes the target up in its arms. The burning & hurt begin here.

Restored From Ash - The Old Man reconstitutes itself from ashes & lives on the ashes of others. It can consume the ashes of a dead person and recover 3d10 HP and improve its attack dice by one step.

+4 Lashing Flame d12 - Once his nature is revealed the Old Man attacks with fire - it strikes against anyone nearby. This attack is resolved whenever fire damage is taken from Burn The Haven.

Life Feast - The Old Man Can be put off & its harm overcome if everyone in the house sacrifices an HD to him.

Glammer – The Old Man can cast 4 Glammers of level 3 or less each day.

Description

An Awful Old Man is a notorious figure in some southern cultures and it seems that these cultures have brought the monster with them to the North. An Awful Old Man is an undead being of terrible power & intense cruelty but it masquerades, quite cunningly, as a simple & desperate old man merely seeking hospitality. In the cultures from which this revenant is native to principles of hospitality & kindness to the aged are very thoroughly ingrained and so the Awful Old Man is a predator who cruelly abuses the better nature of its victims.

In appearance the Awful Old Man looks like a starving & sometimes naked old man. It pleads for help in broken language – barely expressing itself properly. It carries a spoon – and this is often the best indicator of the Awful Old Man, to those in the know. When invited into a place & offered food, the Awful Old Man eats relentlessly & as it does so it begins to look less and less human & it begins to radiate more & more intense heat. When it has eaten & drunk everything in a place (it uses its Glammers in various ways to trick & steal) it will burst into flames which emanate from its eyes & mouth – and it will burn alive anyone within the house as it is quickly consumed by the unwholesome conflagration. The Awful Old Man's actual sustenance is the ashes of families & their houses. Once the creature burns up in a house it reforms in the morning form ashes, and can be found shoveling the ashes of the burned up house into its gigantic mouth using its spoon.

Monster Record



Bappelli-Appelli-Nop

Monster Name

Folkloric

Liminal Tier

HD	3d8+4	# Appearing	1d4	Attack #	2/turn
HP	18	Morale	16	Attack Mod	+2
AC	18	Treasure	0	Initiative	6+d20
SPEED	32	Parley	1d2	Saves	15
Tags	Underground, Elemental, Fast, Hunter, Strange	Terrain	Subterranean	Stats	10
		Location		Skills	6

Attacks & Maneuvers

+2 Focused Gaze - d10 - The Bappelli-Appelli-Nop stares hard at its target & they are burned by the invisible irradiance. It uses this attack twice per turn.

Radiant Gaze - Anyone who is in the vicinity of the Bappelli-Appelli-Nop is subject to this attack & must save vs. Devices every round on initiative pass 30. If the save fails the attack inflicts 3d8 damage & reduces the target's attack modifier by 2. If the save is successful none of these take place. Sightless targets are immune.

Irradiant Stain - Those harmed by the Bappelli-Appelli-Nop in any way are stained by its strange light & will glow fainlty in the ultraviolet spectrum - making it difficult to hide in shadows (-2) for d4 days.

Stone-Burn - Those hurt by the Bappelli-Appelli-Nop take an additional point of damage for every piece of jewelry or gemstone they have recorded on their character sheet.

Bappelli-Appelli-Nop! - Anyone in the vicinity shouts: "Bappelli-Appelli-Nop" if they fail a save vs. Paralysis. Those failing the save cannot move quietly & give away their presence.

Description

Named onomatopoeically, not for the sound that it makes (as it makes none) but for the noise that those who see it are all compelled to make. The Bappelli-Appelli-Nop appears solely underground and has not been observed in anything more luminous than firelight – as well, no living or dead example has ever been thoroughly studied – so very little is known about the creature. Because it appears principally in deep caves underground it has been described most often by Cavern Dwarfs & Subterranean Goblins – both of which groups independently confirm that the *"Bappelli-Appelli-Nop"* vocalization is universal across languages & culutres.

The creature radiates a lambent energy at the very edge of the visible spectrum – this light serves to confuse more than to illuminate & those who've observed the creature claim that it *'arrives in the universe from a strange angle'*. In appearance the Bappelli-Appelli-Nop is a massive spheroid comprised of huge goat-eyes or possibly octopus eyes. The eyes swim & move & stare independently of one another.

Anecdotal observations have produced an hypothesis concerning the thing – that it is possibly an elemental spirit linked with gemstones. It has been known to aggressively pursue those with many gems either on their person or even to their name in preference even to disabled or helpless victims.

Monster Record

Bawamb

Folkloric

Liminal Tier

Monster Name

HD	2d4+2	# Appearing	6d6	Attack #	3
HP	6	Morale	17	Attack Mod	+5
AC	20	Treasure	5	Initiative	11+d20
SPEED	24/8	Parley	+3	Saves	17
Tags	Bat, Horned, Flying, Aquatic, Sneaky, Skilled, Alien, Race	Terrain	Bamboo Forests	Stats	11
		Location	ITR	Skills	10

Attacks & Maneuvers

+5 Ram d8 - The Bawamb uses its horns to bash. This damage is increased to d10 if the Bawamb is flying and reduced to d6 if the Bawamb is standing upright.

Whisper-Mist - The Bawamb do not speak or use language but they communicate through the subtle flows of scent & moisture. They create mist from out of their bodies & this mist cn convey ideas & information. Anyone caught in the mist - which radiates twenty yards from the Bawamb - must save vs. Death or become mentally poisoned - suffering from a d10 Fright Effect.

+5 Deep Shriek d10 - Bawambs can shriek with a horrific intensity that shakes teeth & rattles bones. This attack can render an opponent incapacitated but it cannot reduce anyone below 1 HP.

Barely Seen - The Bawamb makes heavy use of hide & move silently and it makes all these checks with a d6 while in the forest or at night.

Tricky Mimicry - Bawambs don't understand language but they use it to confuse & drive off enemies - often they will repeat what has been said by others within their range - this has a confusing effect on anyone who hears it and it reduces the initiative of those subjects by half for the first round of any combat with Bawamb.

Description

Newly formed beings of mist & wind, water & wood the Bawamb are a race of giant intelligent horned bats. Or at least that is their most obvious corrolary in the mortal world. The appearance & behavior of Bawambs is inscrutable and this owes to the subtle peculiarity of their actual existence. Bawambs are holographic beings - principally existing in some unknown spatial dimension their presence in the mortal world is a strange coincidental projection. On some unheard of scale the Bawamb are effectivley the atoms of a larger being which exists outside of our own dimension. Their interaction with each other is much more blatantly chemical & physiological than those interactions mediated by language, sound & vision.

Given their alien nature it would seem likely that the Bawamb be alien & aloof, barely aware of the world around them and yet - this is not the case. They are active in the woods in which they dwell, social amongst themselves & unnervingly predatory when foraging. Though they are massive & agressive the Bawamb pose no special danger to the mortal world's animal population as they seem to eat the shadows & scents of creatures rather than the flesh - people who've been subjected to this consuming claim to have felt & experienced *something* - but somethng not quite describable. Bawamb do intermittently act against the encroachment of people into their territory, into the North more broadly and especially into the deep bamboo forests in which they dwell. Some people - Halflings in particular - have had some luck in cohabiting with the Bawamb.

Bawamb fly quickly and gracefully – they are very slow on the ground. Interestingly – their swimming is equal to their flight.

Monster Record



Blood Hound

Folkloric

Liminal Tier

Monster Name

HD	3d6+6	# Appearing	2d6	Attack #	1
HP	18	Morale	20	Attack Mod	+1 / +4
AC	17 / 21	Treasure	2	Initiative	-1+d20
SPEED	10	Parley	1d2	Saves	16
Tags	Dog, Guardian, Vampire, Automaton, Hunter	Terrain		Stats	10
		Location		Skills	1

Attacks & Maneuvers

+1 Vampire Bite 1d8 - The Blood Hound bites and drains the blood of its victim. If the damage roll is an 8 the Blood Hound's HP return to their maximum

Stoic Waiting - The Blood Hound will remain in one spot until it is awakened when the condition of its guardianship is triggered. It does not eat or sleep & is completely aware of its surroundings. Damage done to the Blood Hound in this state recovers slowly but surely. If the Blood Hound is killed it reforms in its original position after some time unless it is doused in molten silver.

Pursuit - The Blood Hound awakens when some trigger is sprung - something is stolen, a line is crossed & so on. Whosoever awakens the blood hound will be hunted, potentially forever. The Blood Hound unerringly knows where the one it is hunting is all the time. Its attacks against that target are increased by +4 and its AC is improved by 4 against that target.

Description

Tombs & Crypts are the lairs of the Blood Hound - a strange & terrible beast, it is a magical automaton that is created to guard a specific location or object. It does not leave its place, it does not move or breathe or do much of anything at all until its condition is violated. At this point the creature comes alive & it will not rest until it has hunted down & killed the one that awakened it. It does not rest & it heals when it is harmed. It drinks blood & takes all of it, when it can.

The Blood Hound is a large golem that resembles a dog. It's outer 'flesh' is hard & transparent crystal - its inner works are very like those of a dog - and so it appears to be a glass statue that displays the inner workings of a live dog.

The method for making the Blood Hound is all but unknowable in modern times, but there are still a few very skilled artisans & magicians who can perform the procedures. Uncommitted Blood Hounds – those who are not tomb-guards or the like – are extremely valuable & sought after oddities. The method by which the Blood Hound is bound to their master is a closely guarded secret.

Monster Record





Bringer of War

Legendary

Liminal Tier

Monster Name

HD	3d12+5	# Appearing	1d6	Attack #	5
HP	26	Morale	16	Attack Mod	+5
AC	14	Treasure	5	Initiative	5+d20
SPEED	24	Parley	2d6	Saves	19
		Terrain		Stats	13
		Location		Skills	2

Tags: Immortal, Angel, Bird, Transdimensional, Beatific

Attacks & Maneuvers

+3 Otherdimensional Fugue - d6 - The Bringer of War flutters and scratches, somewhat ineffectively

Abominate - Anyone who can see the Bringer of War must save vs. Spells or be driven into a frenzy. Anyone frenzied must use their action every turn to make a melee attack or to move into range to make a melee attack. Another save is allowed whenever damage is dealt to an innocent or an ally.

Declaration - The Bringer of War makes a declaration of war- a loud shout which echoes in the mind. All who hear it increase their melee damage by +2. This persists until the Bringer of War has been dispelled.

Dreams of War - The Bringer of War can invade the dreams of one subject - causing them to crave violence & to pursue a path of warfare.

Banished by the Chant - Each Bringer of War is the minion of a deity and each is able to be driven out of the world by a certain song. Each Bringer has their own hated song.

Description

Before you there appears a being that casts shadows into unseen directions, it is of the higher spatial dimensions & its form is unfathomable. It appears to you to be a pair of conjoined pigeons as well as the negative space within their union. It is wings & claws and unfathomable features appearing in thin air, revealed by the motion of transdimensional feathers. It is An Angel and in its presence you feel a terrible fury.

The Bringer of War is an Angel of retribution often sent against impious rulers to inflict war & destruction upon them. In other instances these angels are dispatched to aid meritorious rulers who would be otherwise unprepared for an invasion.

These Angels often appear in groups & when they do each of them is dispelled by a different song. When threatened or in battle the Bringers will most commonly use their Abominate power to turn allies against one another. As immortal beings they are sucsceptible to prayers of exorcism.

Monster Record

FEATHERSCALE WATCHER

Ecological

Liminal Tier

Monster Name

HD	6d12+7	# Appearing	1	Attack #	5
HP	49	Morale	14	Attack Mod	+6
AC	23	Treasure	4	Initiative	3+d20
SPEED	15	Parley	-6	Saves	19
Tags	Ghost, Ancient, Spirit, Dinosaur, Possessor	Terrain	Petrified Forests	Stats	10
		Location	ITR	Skills	6

Attacks & Maneuvers

+6 Exoplasmic Tail Club 2d8 - The Watcher's principle attack is to strike an opponent with its massive spiked tail. When the ghost strikes it focuses its existence into a materially powerful hit & it flashes visibly as it does so.

Gaze of all Eyes - The massive feathered scales on the ghost's back flicker into view showing the two-dimensional portrayal of all the beasts that occupy it. Anyone seeing this must save vs. Spells or suffer a d10 Frightened effect.

+6 Focused Rays - d12 - Light passing through the creature's large scales bends and focuses - it can create a beam of burning heat that strikes like a splash of light through stained glass windows. This focused heat can cause anything flammable to begin to burn.

All Seeing - The creature senses anything around it in great detail and to a great distance. It has perfect knowledge of anything visible for 10 miles in a radius surrounding it. This extends through the ground & atmosphere. It can't be harmed by any attack or maneuver that requires stealth or surprise.

Incoherent Substance - The creature has no physical substance and takes physical damage only on even-numbered initiative passes or on any initiative pass where it uses an attack itself. On odd-numbered passes it cannot even be touched and isn't affected by any physical damage.

Possession - A target who fails a save vs. Spells becomes controlled by the Featherscale Watcher until sunset.

Description

Featherscale Watchers, assuming there are more than one, are extraordinarily elusive. Almost never seen, this creature or these creatures are known by the magical traces that they leave & the intermittent reports of their presence as reported by other spirit-entities. Those attuned to the metaphysical color spectra can discern the presence of the Featherscale Watcher through time - tracing its former position and anticipating its future location - but it is very rarely seen by anyone or anything, even other ghosts. The beast is the spiritual presence of multiple ancient creatures - beings from the unthinkably ancient past. The massive body of the creature suggests an antiquity replete with uncanny giants.

Named for the very large feathery-scales that crest its arched back, the Watcher is so called because each of these massive pentagonal feather-scales depicts an eye or face or muzzle of some other unknown creature. These depictions aren't patterns like a peacock's tail - rather, they are moving images that cast light & even seem to see & sense for the ghost.

The Featherscale Watcher rarely attempts to inhabit the body of a living creature & when it does so, it generally prefers an animal of some type. It is unclear whether the ghost has any sentience at all.

Monster Record





Hikamru

Monster Name

Ecological

Liminal Tier

HD	2d6+6	# Appearing	2d6	Attack #	3
HP	14	Morale	12	Attack Mod	+3
AC	15	Treasure	1	Initiative	3+d20
SPEED	15	Parley	1d4	Saves	19
		Terrain		Stats	10
		Location		Skills	6

Tags: Amphibious, Animal, Predator, Jumper, Ambush

Attacks & Maneuvers

+4 Tongue Dart d8 - the Hikmaru darts its tongue, spearing an opponent. The tongue sticks to any target it strikes.

Guzzle - Tongue Darted targets may be swallowed up by the creature - this generally applies to smaller beings - any adventuring races besides Humans, Orcs or Dwarves are susceptible. If the target of the tongue attack is unconscious or fails a save vs. Devices - they are swallowed up on the Hikimaru's next turn. When this occurs they take d8 damage on each of its successive turns until they or the Hikimaru are dead. They cannot move or attack themselves while restrained unless they voluntarily take full damage (8) in which case they may attempt an escape (d8 scale walls check) or attack (+2 to attack, +4 to damage). Larger individuals take only d6 damage and are not swallowed but are bitten up and chewed - they can escape only if the creature uses its tongue dart attack again, or until it relents for other reasons

+4 Plopping Pounce d6 - The Hikmaru falls down on an opponent or two - its claws deal damage to anyone beneath it - up to 4 targets.

Description

A bear-sized frog with an extensible tongue – it also has sloth-like claws & dangles from trees – it attacks with its enormous bit & its claws as a last resort – preferring to prey on birds and small animals with its darting tongue. It uses its superior camouflage to conceal itself while hunting. It is covered in sparse, greenish hairs and has adorable rounded ears.

The Hikmaru is aggressive but mainly relies on ambush- it is predatory but it prefers animals & especially fish for its prey – when it attacks people it tends to do so out of surprise & fear. It is easily dissuaded from combat & can be driven off – especially by fire – which it fears considerably more than one might expect.



The Hundreds

Folkloric

Liminal Tier

Monster Name

HD	2d4+3	# Appearing	6d6	Attack #	2
HP		Morale	14	Attack Mod	+2
AC	19	Treasure	3	Initiative	6+d20
SPEED	15	Parley	2d6	Saves	19
Tags	Hominid, Time Traveler, Emotionless, Mystery	Terrain		Stats	10
		Location		Skills	6

Attacks & Maneuvers

+4 Smash Attack D6 – Each of the Hundreds attacks with a flurry of rudimentary fists, they strike without great power and the effort seems to pain & confuse the creature.

Time-Dogpile – Save vs. Breath or take 3d6 – A hypnotic flurry of activity that cascades ephemerally upon an area. The Hundreds scratch, bite, claw & overtake a patch of territory with dimensions determined by the number of Hundreds present. For each one encountered add another space to the area of effect.

Description

You see a pack of strangely identical ape-men they look at you with indifference. The Hundreds seem to be a crowd of people, but careful observation reveals that only one of the specimens is ever actually present from moment to moment. Sages have examined the remains of a few specimens of The Hundreds and determined that each is effectively identical to all of the others.

It is speculated that all of the Hundreds are simply one specimen of a proto-hominid that somehow became lost in the flow of time. When The Hundreds are encountered they prefer to attack the largest member of any group. They appear to hunt for food alone & can be bribed into passivity with offerings of food. Some have shown that they can understand certain languages – particularly *Orkii & Wozeish* – but they don't consistently respond to either and cannot carry on any kind of conversation requiring continuity or attention.

Imp's Wheel

Legendary

Liminal Tier

Monster Name

HD	3d10+6	# Appearing	1	Attack #	4
HP	26	Morale	20	Attack Mod	+4
AC	17	Treasure	6	Initiative	1+d20
SPEED	13	Parley	2d8	Saves	17
Tags	Diabolical, Idea, Mythopoeic, Imp, Unassailable	Terrain	Liminal space	Stats	15
		Location		Skills	2

Attacks & Maneuvers

Grindstone of Ambition - The Imp's Wheel comes into the mind of someone who has become excessively focused upon the completion of a single goal. This subject must save vs. Devices or become caught in the Imp's Wheel - this causes the Character to stop attending to normal life functions such as sleeping & eating. The subject weaken over time, following the rules for starvation & exposure. For every day the subject goes without sustenance the Imp's Wheel gains an additional bonus HD. Beyond refusing sleep or consume the subject of the Grindstone of Ambition is otherwise unhindered & can work relentlessly upon the project that has captured them.

Contagious Enthusiasm - For every HD above 3 gained by the Imp's Wheel – the monster can affect another subject. The subject must save vs. traps or succumb to the same condition as the first subject - with the added distinction that this secondary falls under the initial spell of the Grindstone of Ambition. Secondary subjects don't add to the Imp's Wheel's HD – but if the primary subject dies – one of the secondary subjects – if available, is 'promoted'.

Prey Dependent - The Imp's Wheel dies out if all of the targets of the Grindstone of Ambition power starve to death & die. It also loses HD for every day that the subject both eats & sleeps. Allies can provoke additional saving throws by forcing rest & nourishment upon the target by whatever means they are able.

Sink of Passions - Those who fall prey to the Imp's Wheel find that their efforts are slightly sabotaged and that there is always a glaring failure in their relentless efforts. Subjects of the Imp's wheel cannot actually complete anything that they set about pursuing under its spell.

Description

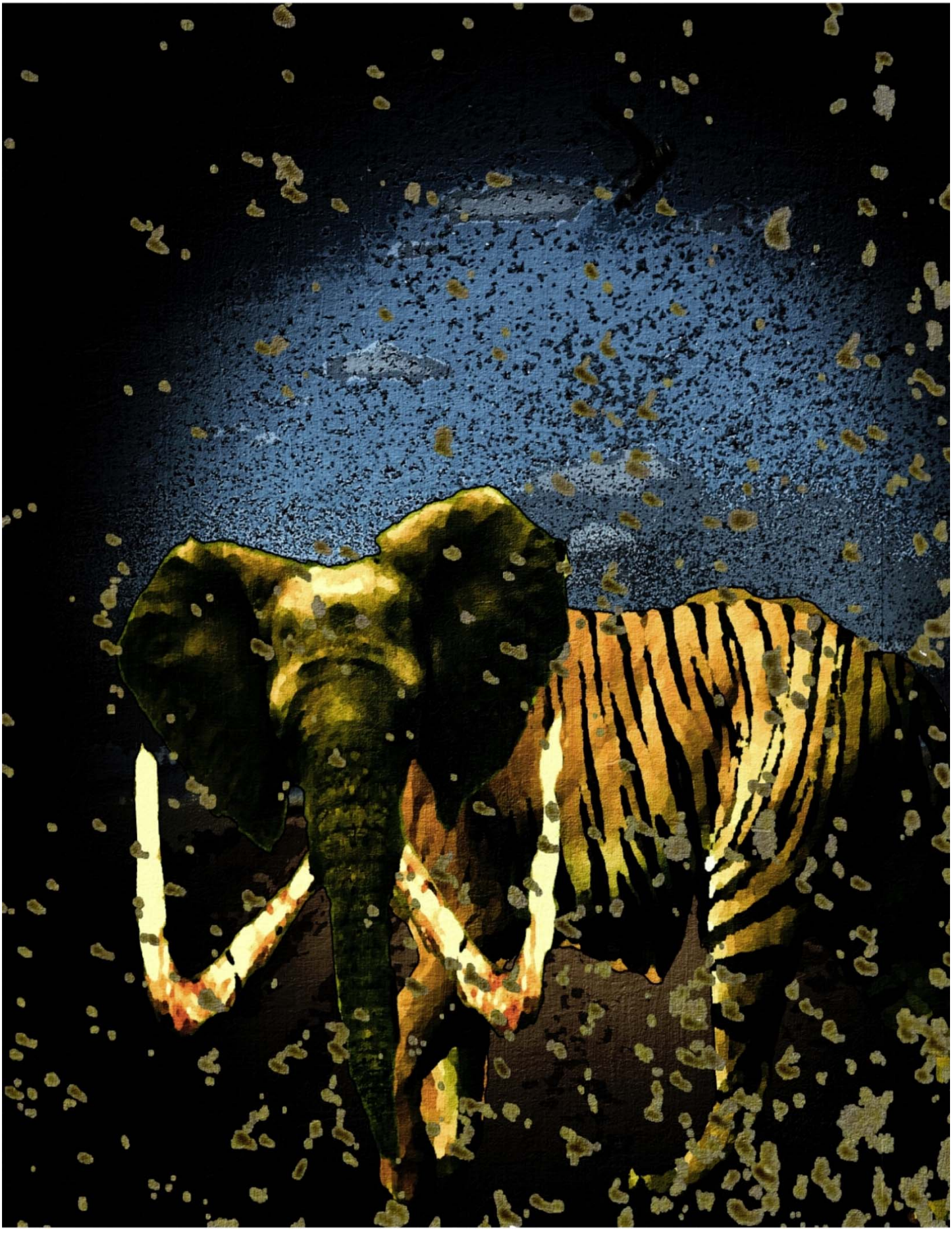
In the wilds a party stumbles across it, a massive & massively overbuilt structure that is somehow not quite complete. Throughout are the emaciated bodies of those who built it - they show signs of having died while working. This nightmarish encounter is the creation of the Imp's Wheel - a diabolical memetic monster that afflicts the ambitious.

The Imp's Wheel afflicts those with a monomaniacal ambition - those who do not seek respite or comfort, but who instead endlessly pursue their goals without rest. In the context of an adventuring party this can afflict party members who do not rest between adventures or who relentlessly pursue a focused agenda without cease.

The Imp's Wheel is visible to those who can perceive spirits & ghosts – it appears to be a massive circular track in the sky with irrational proportions – though it rivals a moon in visible size it also surrounds its victim's head in a halo-like cage of tracks- which is in turn scurried over & propelled by legions of tiny, barely discernable devils who struggle mightily but never seem to arrive at any place upon the wheel beyond their starting places.

Extremely unwise persons may try to use the Imp's Wheel to some advantage – this has been attempted, sometimes successfully, but always with a terrible price of suffering & death.





Iralaren-Guwol

Folkloric

Liminal Tier

Monster Name

HD	8d24+10	# Appearing	1	Attack #	7
HP	19	Morale	23	Attack Mod	+5
AC	19	Treasure	17	Initiative	10+d20
SPEED	18	Parley	2d8	Saves	15
Tags	Sphinx, Elephant, Mythic, Seasonal	Terrain		Stats	20
		Location		Skills	7

Attacks & Maneuvers

4X +5 Tusk-Gore d12 – The Irailaren-Guwol strikes twice with its horrific serrated tusks attempting to pierce the body of its prey.

Spit the Swarm – The Iralaren-Guwol lets out a mighty breath and famine follows behind. The creature breaths a cloud of stinging locusts. Anyone caught in the blast must Save vs. Breath or take 4d6 points of damage. Taking this damage subjects you to poison.

+5 Trunk Constriction d12 – Those struck by the Irilaren-Guwol's trunk must Save vs. Paralysis or lose their next turn. This effect lingers until the character succeeds on the save or the creature uses this attack on someone else. Those who fail the save take the damage on each of the Iralaren-Guwol's turns.

Bellow the Storm – The Iralaren-Guwol aggressively trumpets creating a loud concussive force surrounding it. Anyone who can hear the monster takes 2d6 points of damage & must save vs. Paralysis or fall down. Anyone rolls less than 5 on this save is also struck by lightning – taking an additional 5d6 points of damage. This attack kills most NPCs outright – including the Iralaren-Guwol's swarms.

4X +5 Claw Attack d12 – The Iralaren-Guwol can make one claw attack using one of its 4 arms against any target it close with. It can make up to 4 attacks as its action but only one per target.

Damage – The Monster uses any 2 of its attacks as a single action.

Description

Appearing as a sphinx with the head of an elephant & with 4 sets of clawlike paws. It is twice the size of a horse & around it there is a halo of buzzing locusts. It trumpets and calls down the storm. The Iralaren-Guwol is a terrible creature from out of myth – a creature of great malice & furious power. It appears only after 4 years of plentiful harvests – at which point it appears in the region to ruin the harvests by summoning plagues of locusts & torrential storms. Though it does not speak in any voice those who encounter it know, in the depths of their hearts, that the Iralaren-Guwol has come to kill & eat all fathers. Sacrificing the fathers of a village is the common way to drive away the monster – though it has been said that a hero bearing a magic sword can drive the Iralaren-Guwol before them.

It's treausre is said to be limitless – as its swarms carry off coins & jewels – but noone living can say where the Iralaren-Guwol lairs or where it's hoarde my lie.

Monster Record

KICKY YOYGO

Legendary

Liminal Tier

Monster Name

HD	6d12+9	# Appearing	1d6	Attack #	5
HP	44	Morale	20	Attack Mod	+5
AC	21	Treasure	7	Initiative	-1+d20
SPEED	13	Parley	-2	Saves	8
Tags	Automaton, Robot, Ghost, Spirit, Possessor, Armored	Terrain	Any	Stats	15
		Location	ITR	Skills	2

Attacks & Maneuvers

+5 Pincers d6 - The Kicky Yoygo attacks with both its hands, which form into pincers. It can use this attack twice per initiative pass rolling its attack twice and dealing d6 damage each time.

Impenetrable Hide - The Kicky Yoygo is only harmed by metal weapons - anything lighter cannot penetrate.

+7 Leap Attack d8 - The Kicky Yoygo leaps up to 30 feet and strikes a target with its entire body.

Mechano-Spin - The Kicky Yoygo spins furiously and deals d10 damage to anyone in melee range with it. It can keep this attack going while it moves. The Kicky Yoygo takes half of all the damage this attack deals as the strain it causes is great.

Ghost-Whistle - The Kicky Yoygo spits a shrill whistle into the air. Save vs. Paralysis or miss your next turn. Those who make the save are deafened for the rest of the round, those who fail are deafened for d6 hours.

Possession - A target who fails a save vs. Spells becomes controlled by the Kicky Yoygo until sunset. The Kicky Yoygo body becomes inert.

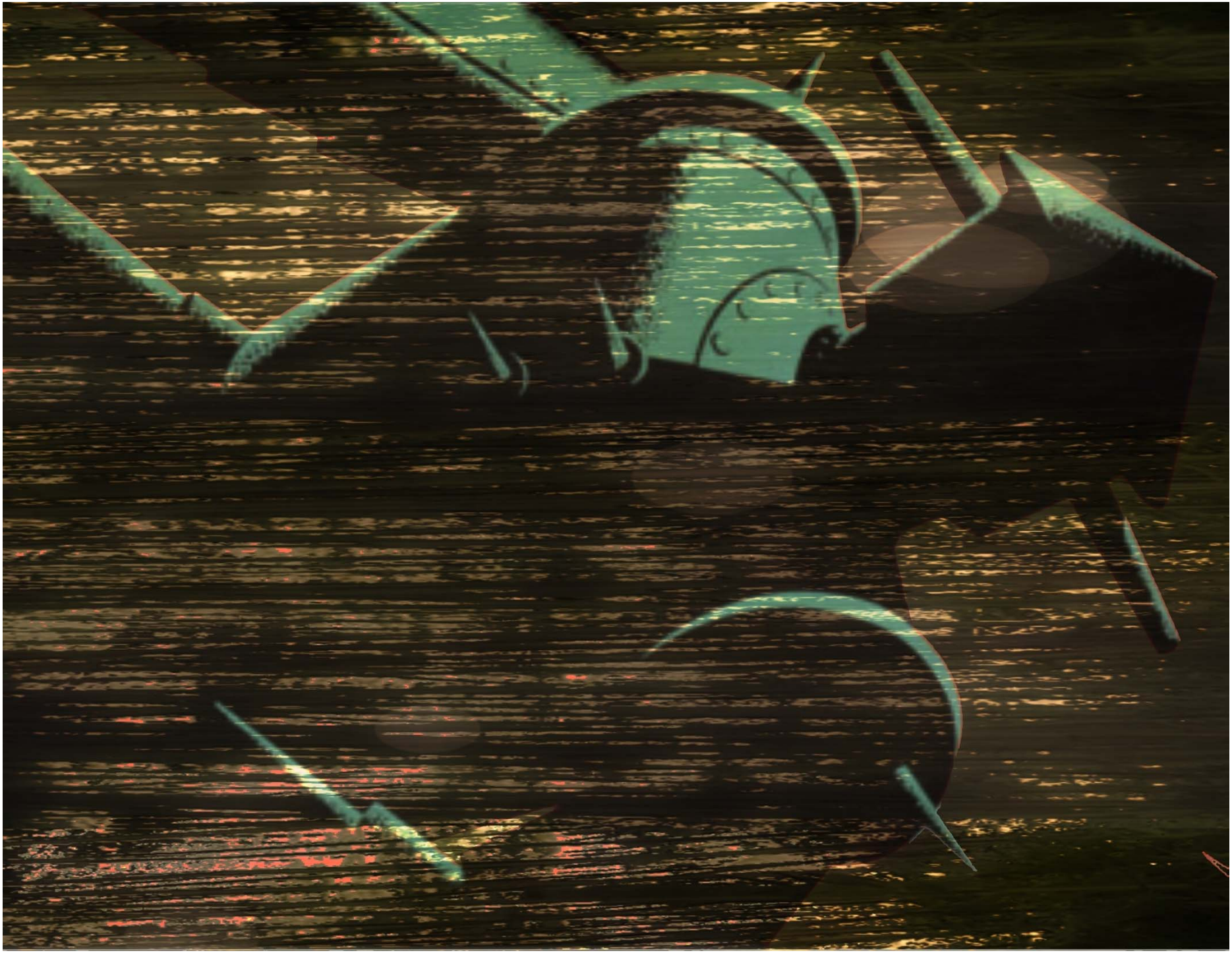
Description

Kicky Yoygos are the feral spirits of machines that will one day exist. These ghosts are the unwritten plans of dreamers, so coherent & fully realized that they have come into existence far in advance of their actual creation. Without actually existing, the Kicky Yoygos do not follow any planned operations.

The spirits are wild, they wander the earth hunting animals – the blood of which, when poured out and pooled – somehow grants these ghosts sustenance. They are reckless & dangerous & totally fearless. The wildness of the Kicky Yoygo seems to dissipate slightly when in the presence of any of the persons related to their eventual creation. These people, the Kicky Yoygos protect assiduously – they will brazenly sacrifice themselves and any other people to protect those who have any bearing on their eventual existence.

In appearance Kicky Yoygos look like massive men made of spiked metal which fades in & out of visibility. Though they are ghosts, they are singularly substantial – comprised of this uncanny metal, which makes a strong and highly functional armor, if it can be gotten. The name of these spirits is of their own devising. Those possessed by the Kicky Yoygo speak a future language that has not be deciphered.

Monster Record



Magical Sea

Ecological

Liminal Tier

Monster Name

HD	5d24+6	# Appearing	3d6	Attack #	3
HP	41	Morale	19	Attack Mod	+3
AC	14	Treasure	3	Initiative	d20-2
SPEED	7	Parley	1d4	Saves	14
		Terrain		Stats	10
		Location		Skills	1

Tags: Ocean, Water, Elemental, Mindless, Magical

Attacks & Maneuvers

+4 Cascading Wave d10 - The magical sea falls upon its prey with a terrible crash

Immunity - A Magical Sea is immune to most kinds of physical damage. The magical sea is not harmed by weapons except when the maximum damage result is rolled – representing a portion of the creature being severed

+4 Dash - The Magical sea rushes over its target with an insistent, powerful crushing movement. People hit by this attack must drop one piece of held equipment.

Douse - A Magical Sea can't be harmed by fire or heat & they douse any fires they come into contact with

Drag Down - People hit by the Magical Sea's attacks while in water must save vs. Paralysis or be dragged under. People dragged under begin to drown. Drowning characters must save vs. death or loose half of their current HP each turn.

Oceanic - When it is outside of the ocean a Magical Sea's mass is diminished by attacking - it takes the same damage that it deals. While within the ocean the magical sea recovers 2 HP per round on initiative pass 1.

Description

Magical Seas are bizarre denizens of the ocean – animate, living masses of water distinct from the ocean itself. These creatures seem to be utterly mindless – attacking like waves and are not always obviously anything other than particulary large & crushing waves. Magical creatures, they have the capacity to leave the ocean - which they do, apparently, to hunt. In instances where a Magical Sea has been defeated upon land the living wave will soak into the earth leaving no remains beyond the matter that was suspended in it's eddies & currents – often these are personal effects & the remains of animals & people – indicating that the Magical Sea somehow preys upon animal life.

These creatures are effectively mindless but some people have reported some success at communicating with them in the Lavithan language. Some speculate that the Living seas are effectively pseudopods of the living ocean itself – and that they are it's indifferent appendages – sent to land to finish the ocean's work. Supporting this theory is the Magical Sea's apparent preference for attacking mariners.

Monster Record





Malus Loci

Monster Name

Folkloric

Liminal Tier

HD	4d8+31	# Appearing	1d6	Attack #	6
HP	35	Morale	16	Attack Mod	+5
AC	22	Treasure	5	Initiative	5+d20
SPEED	15	Parley	2d6	Saves	17
Tags	Goat, Bat, Demon, Immortal, Tenebrous, Evil	Terrain	Cities	Stats	15
		Location		Skills	7

Attacks & Maneuvers

+5 Hoof Stamp 1d8 - The Goat of Bleak Alleys stamps its foot on its victim. If the attack roll is 20 on the die, this attack leaves a permanent mark on the target's forehead.

Shadow Mastery - Whenever anyone in the Malus Loci's home range uses the Hide in Shadows skill the Malus Loci knows about it. It can choose to attack such an individual using its Tenebrous Ram - which in turn causes the target to take damage and automatically fail to hide.

+5 Tenebrous Ram d10 - The Malus Loci manifests in the nearby shadows and rams an opponent with terrific force. After attacking it moves back to any location it occupied on the previous round.

Ferocious Malice- The Alley Goat is usually aided by a group of NPC cultists, followers of its wickedness. These individuals are always marked by the beast's cloven hoof - and anyone so marked can be commanded by the creature and must Save vs. Spells to resist its command for a round.

+5 Miasmic Flurry d10 - The Bleak Goat attacks everyone nearby with a combination of its hoof and ram attacks before returning to its prior locatin. The Malus Loci only uses this attack following a turn during which it has only moved and made no attacks.

Villain of Small Places - Malus Loci occupy small parts of large cities, within that area, known as its range, damage dealt by people to other people is increased by +3. Normally non-lethal methods always fail to mitigate murderous damage there.

Red Eyes - The Malus Loci's eyes are the only part of it that can be struck - they are both incredibly valuable, large rubies and they are all of what is solid about the creature. It's AC is commensurately increased to reflect this lone vulnerability.

Description

A being of supernatural spite, the Malus Loci manifests spontaneously in the blighted, murderous sections of the city. Known variously as the Bleak Goat, or the Black Goat of Bleak Alleys - it is conspicuous in that in any city, in any part of the world a Malus Loci with predictable characteristics can appear, suggesting that individual specimens are actually manifestations of a single entity- perhaps a spiteful god.

The Malus Loci appears to be a bat-winged ram with ruby-colored eyes. It is a being woven of shadow & the unutterable darkness that drives the most depraved & destitute in the world's most grotesque tenements. When roused it appears and will defend its territory brutally but its sublime defense lies in its lack of true substance. The only solid portion of the creature is its ruby eyes, which crumble to powder when it dissipates.



Motherwitch

Folkloric

Monster Name

Liminal Tier

HD	5d8+20	# Appearing	1	Attack #	3
HP	45	Morale	18	Attack Mod	+3
AC	15	Treasure	5	Initiative	2+d20
SPEED	15	Parley	2d4	Saves	14
		Terrain		Stats	12
		Location		Skills	3

Tags: Petrification, Bird, Aquatic, Stone, Hateful

Attacks & Maneuvers

Stone Gaze- if a subject looks into the Motherwitch's eye they must save vs. Paralysis or turn to stone.

Surprise Gaze - The Motherwitch poses as an ordinary goose or a bent old woman (which it resembles from behind) and then turns to catch a subject's gaze. Save vs. Devices or be turned to stone.

Mirror Aversion – The Motherwitch is badly endangered by its own reflection – which will cause it to turn to stone without a save. The creature knows this and is fearful and avoidant of any reflections.

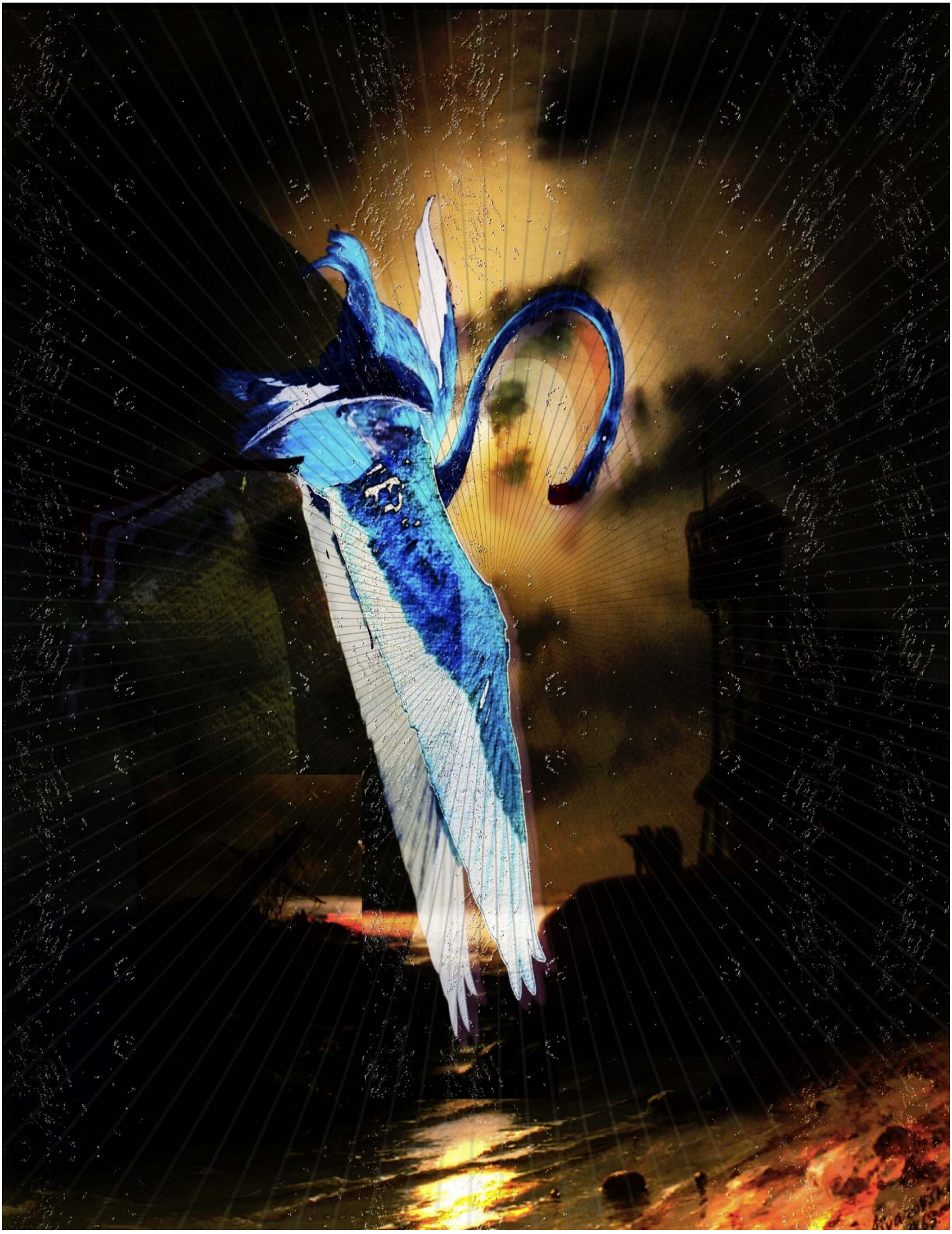
Description

Apparently a very large goose standing around 5 feet. It uses its wings to walk & swim – having no flight ability – it wanders in prescribed areas that are strewn with statues. It uses its massive single eye that occupies most of its head to turn living things into stone. The gaze turns things into a crystalline form – similar to quartz.

When cursed by the Motherwitch, a creature's insides can be seen clearly within, functioning normally. This result has some functional utility – particularly to those who are capable of lifting the curse or alleviating the stone condition – principally skilled magicians who may wish to see inside of people for obscure or even mystical reasons.

The Motherwitch itself is of unknown origin. Sometimes a nest can be found near a Motherwitch lair, though these nests tend to contain large gemstones rather than eggs.

Monster Record



Oscuramenco

Monster Name

Ecological

Liminal Tier

HD	4d12+7	# Appearing	5d10	Attack #	3
HP	33	Morale	12	Attack Mod	+6
AC	19 / 25	Treasure	4	Initiative	3+d20
SPEED	25	Parley	2d4	Saves	19
		Terrain	Seashores	Stats	10
		Location		Skills	6

Tags: Bird, Giant, Darkness, Shadow, Shore, Crepescular

Attacks & Maneuvers

+6 Snap d10 - The Oscuramenco snaps with its sharp bill. If it rolls 19 or 20 on its attack roll it also Snatches the target - they are grasped in the Oscuramenco's bill.

The Dark Prism - Light shone upon the Oscuramenco causes shadows to deepen and darkness to increase. The Oscuramenco is very, very difficult to see in any kind of light - causing its AC to increase by +6 whenever it is illuminated by even starlight. In the shadows of the Oscuramenco no colors can be discerned - everything washes out to a uniform gray.

+20 Drop 4d10 - The Oscuramenca drops someone it has snatched from a high altitude. Very few survive.

+12 Diving Claw - d12 - The Oscuramenco dives, unseen, and attacks an unwary target with its grasping talons. If the creature rolls a 19 or 20 on its attack roll the target is snatched and carried off.

Description

Flocks of Oscuramentos occasionally appear on the shores near inhabited areas and where this occurs people have reported the sun dimming at high noon and the stars being visible in the daytime sky. A single Oscuramento is rarely encountered, the creatures tend to flock in substantial numbers. Still eggs have been snatched and individual specimens have been raised from chicks to be pets or companions - these specimens never breed, apparently owing to the need for these birds to migrate to a secret location when spawning. The Oscuramento is a very large dark-colored bird, something like a crane. It is big enough to carry off an adult human without difficulty. The principal feature of the Oscuramento is its coloration - or rather -lack of coloration. These birds do not reflect light but rather dim & confuse it. They create shadows of profound intensity. Most of this dark-prisiming is done by the long feathers of the wings - and so the Oscuramento can be seen, when on shore hunting its favored prey - crabs & lobsters which it siphons through its beak. Oscuramentos are interesting animals in their own right but they are frequently the target of hunters given that their feathers & eggs draw a high price. The eggs are sought after by would be domesticators of this species. The feathers are altogether another matter. They can be used to permanently blind people- a technique used as punishment - simply by stroking the feather across the exposed eye. They can also be made into uniquely valuable writing quills. Both long & sturdy, these quills need no ink to write- rather they cast shadows upon the paper that are indelible marks so long as the shadow is made by a candle.

A PERFECT MAN

Legendary

Liminal Tier

Monster Name

HD	6d12+8	# Appearing	1d4	Attack #	5
HP	50	Morale	16	Attack Mod	+5
AC	19	Treasure	8	Initiative	7+d20
SPEED	8	Parley	+5	Saves	15
Tags	Immortal, Otherworldly, Machine, Saint, Devil, Worshippers, Divinity	Terrain	Settlements	Stats	18
		Location	ITR	Skills	8

Attacks & Maneuvers

+5 Crushing Grasp d0 - The Perfect Man places its hand upon those it meets, it crushes them in its powerful grip.

Triumph of the Glory - The presence of the Perfect Man is maddening & unsettling. Those who see the man must save vs. Devices or suffer a d8 Maddened effect.

+4 Punch d12 - When attacked the Perfect Man doesn't hesitate to defend itself with its powerful punching attacks.
Shimmering Words - When the Perfect Man speaks it provokes a save vs. Spells, those who fail this save feel compelled to obey the Perfect Man for the remainder of their turns. At the beginning of the next round everyone so affected may attempt to save again - else they feel compelled to obey the perfect man for another round.

+5 Illuminating Spark d8 - The Perfect Man radiates light, sometimes in the form of a caressing ray. Those struck by the ray have their INT score increased by 1 and their WIS score reduced by 1 so long as they remain in the Perfect Man's presence. Objects struck by this ray gain sentience in the Perfect Man's presence.
Beauty Beyond Beauty - Anyone attempting to harm The Perfect Man must pass a d20 WIS check or a d12 CHA check before each attempted attack.

Description

The Perfect Man is a notorious presence, a venerated saint & a terrifying devil - it is a blasphemous figure to some faiths - a being that commands veneration - stealing it from the true divines - while others have taken readily to worshipping the Perfect Man without restraint. It is a powerful presence, a stunning force that commands attention at least, devotion and fear at most.

The Perfect Man is a towering, symmetrical human-like individual apparently carved from rock or cast in metal. It has lidless, blank eyes and an assured expression - which rarely changes. It is beautiful, to all, irrespective of culture or species - the Perfect Man's symmetry, benevolence & authority are plain to all who look upon it.

The Perfect Man's motivations are obscure – each individual seems to prefer a type of behavior, which it rewards & enforces & different examples of Perfect Men have shown different preferences. Perfect Men appear, intermittently in groups – which are known as Pantheons. In these cases each individual has preferred one type of behavior & worship over others – sometimes in opposition. Perfect Men almost always have a large following of devoted followers.

Monster Record





Pond Flyer

Monster Name

ecological

Liminal Tier

HD	1d4+3	# Appearing	4d6	Attack #	1
HP	5	Morale	12	Attack Mod	+1
AC	14	Treasure	1	Initiative	1+d20
SPEED	13	Parley	1d4	Saves	19
		Terrain		Stats	5
		Location		Skills	1

Tags: Swim, Fly, Water Form, Leap, Sing, Poison

Attacks & Maneuvers

+1 Nip d2 - The creature bites a target for & inflicts poison to those who fail a saving throw against death.

Description

A frog with extensible body flaps- like a flying squirrel. These flaps allow the frog (about the size of a dinner plate) to take flight, launching into the air for brief sojourns that it uses in its mating exploits. The frog is extremely poisonous & has the strange ability to melt itself into a liquid plasm when exposed to air. There is speculation that they melt into the ground and that there is a 'river' or 'lake' of these creatures in underground aquifers.

Individual examples among these creatures demonstrate a vast array of coloration & markings.



Pony Snail

Ecological

Liminal Tier

Monster Name

HD	4d8+5	# Appearing	4d6	Attack #	1
HP	25	Morale	14	Attack Mod	+1
AC	15	Treasure	3	Initiative	-4+d20
SPEED	9	Parley	2d6	Saves	15
		Terrain		Stats	11
Tags	Riding, Animal, Mount, Snail, Forest, Fairy	Location		Skills	1

Attacks & Maneuvers

+1 Grinding Bite - d10 - The massive snail ocassionally succedes at latching on to its enemies & grinding them down with it's vicous grasper.

Slimy - Pony Snails leave slime trails - making them easy to track but nevertheless hard to follow- behind them their slime trail makes terrain tricky to traverse – requiring a d12 DEX check. (this effect also makes it relatively easy for them to pull loads)

Description

Pony Snails are a happy staple of certain secluded valley forests. Giant variants of common snails, these creatures are prized for their ease of domestication & simplicity of care. Though not particularly quick, they are tireless & strong. One of these creatures has been seen to pull a wagon that required an entire team of horses. Slow, steady & generally peacable, they aren't without their own defenses.

The coloring of these snails indicates their role within their herds. Blue indicates the 'warriors' - which are protective & aggressive, 'mothers' are the red snails which herd & see to the young while the 'Foragers' are green - they seek out new places to graze.

Pony Snails are a favorite herd animal of forest-dwelling Dwarves as their slow-steady rate mimics the dwarfish demeanor & their docile silence endears them to the easily irritated, frequently grouchy dwarves.

Red Herald

Ecological

Liminal Tier

Monster Name

HD	6d6+9	# Appearing	10d6	Attack #	2
HP	37	Morale	16	Attack Mod	+3
AC	15	Treasure	4	Initiative	2+d20
SPEED	21	Parley	2d4	Saves	18
		Terrain		Stats	10
		Location		Skills	1

Tags: Bull, Scorpion, Annual, Red-Moon, Plague, Curse



Attacks & Maneuvers

+3 Tripartite Sting - 3d8 - Red Heralds stings unerringly hit the same target. So long as one strikes - they all strike true.

Year of Red Venom - This affects only those who've been stung by the Red Herald. They must save vs. Death or succumb to the peculiar poison of the beast - falling into a years long slumber. Those affected by this poison sleep until the next interval of the Red Herald's appearance. Or until they are otherwise defeated by exposure or by scavenging animals.

Dusklight Charge - At the end of the first day of the Red Year all of the Red Heralds in the herd charge over the land all abreast. Anyone trampled by the great line of the Heralds must save Vs. traps or suffer 4d10 points of damage as the beasts stamp out the subject of this attack's bloody vintage.

Description

Red Heralds are a terrible instrument of the ferocious bloody gods of the Red Moon. When that Carmine orb shines full on the last night of the year the world must tremble for this will be a year of warfare, of strife & of blood - foretold by the horrific plague of Red Heralds.

Infused by the Carmine Moon's malicious wrath - the cattle of the fields spontaneously calve. These calves though are rather remarkable. In place of horns they've long scorpion stings, and in place of their tails they have an outsize chitin sting that likewise resembles that of a scorpion.

This spontaneous herd stampedes at dusk and charges over the land – trampling everyone and everything and laying waste to the land with their horrific stings – which have the power to put those affected and yet not killed into a stasis – a paltry consolation granted by the miserly blood gods. It is their intention that those strong enough to survive their heralds should survive until the last of the Red Years – when the world will be consumed in fatal, final war.

Slapper

Monster Name

Ecological

Liminal Tier

HD	5d8+12	# Appearing	5d6	Attack #	3
HP	32	Morale	34	Attack Mod	+5
AC	18	Treasure	4	Initiative	-3+d20
SPEED	10	Parley	-5	Saves	20
		Terrain	Forests	Stats	10
Tags	Undead, Zombie, Bug, Forest, Husk, Serpentine	Location	ITR	Skills	1

Attacks & Maneuvers

+5 Slap d8 The eponymous attack of the Slapper - the creature flops down upon a target striking with tremendous, wet, crushing force.

Repulse - The Slapper is grotesque. Its attacks & its very presence are disgusting & supremely alienating. In the creature's presence characters must save vs. Paralysis or suffer a d8 Sickened effect.

+6 Wet-Sting d12 - Whenever the slapper makes a slap attack it is able to attempt a simultaneous Wet-Sting attack on a target behind it. The Slapper lacks innate combat skill, it can only use this attack along with its slap & only against a target behind it. This attack is triggered every time the creature uses its Slap attack.

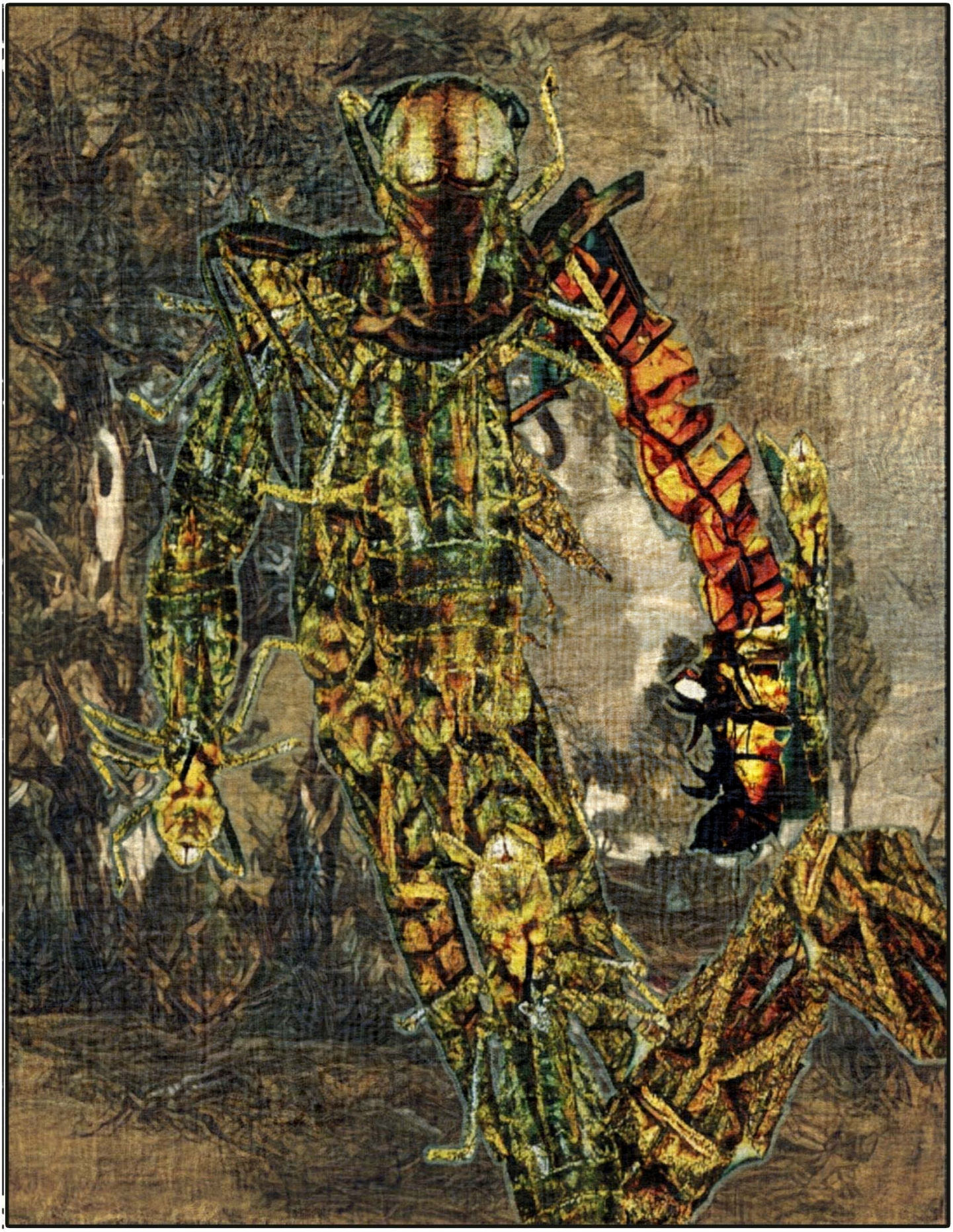
Molts - Whenever the Slapper is defeated, it becomes active again on its next initiative pass with half of its original maximum HP. This will happen either 4 times or until the Slapper is either burned or immersed in water.

Description

The Slapper (sometimes Slipper, sometimes Slopper) is a coherent mass of molted insect skins which has attained a sinister, unholy life. In form this grotesque assemblage only intermittently develops a consistent shape - it's sometimes a kind of rustling flowing wave & other times it's an entire fermenting substrate - a mass of husks undulating under piles of dried leaves - these are the innately, unnaturally occurring Slappers.

Most instances of the Slapper, however, have a clear & straightforward genesis - they are created by death-obsessed dark wizards - sometimes known as Necromancers. The Slapper is a sort of zombie, in this incarnation & tends to appear with the upper limbs & vague form of a man with a snake-like lower half - this owing to the mass' inability to properly walk. Conjured Slappers are utilized by those wizard-hermits who must live out in the wilds as they are rightly shunned by others & who must make do for their fodder by finding whatever cast off dead things they can gather.

Monster Record





Spinewer

Monster Name

Ecological

Liminal Tier

HD	3d6+4	# Appearing	7d6	Attack #	2
HP	16	Morale	17	Attack Mod	+4
AC	16	Treasure	5	Initiative	9+d20
SPEED	13	Parley	-4	Saves	17
		Terrain		Stats	11
		Location		Skills	5

Tags: Swim, Protective Spines, Gnawing, Social, Speech, Burrowing, Tool Use

Attacks & Maneuvers

+4 Spike Attack d6/d6 - The Spinewer uses two of its spikes like daggers. The attack is rolled twice each hit deals damage. The creature can use this attack at range or hand-to-hand.

Spike Ball - The Spinewer uses takes a defensive posture – forgoing any attacks it repels others by curling into a ball of thorns. Anyone attacking the Spinewer hand-to-hand takes d6 damage plus their own damage bonus.

Lingering Hurt – Anyone that the Spinewer hits with its spikes takes one point of damage per attack that hit them after any combat. A combatant hit four times by the Spinewer in a battle would take 4 points of damage after the combat ends – this represents the pain inflicted by pulling out the barbed spines that remain stuck.

Description

A slightly anthropomorphic porcupine – the creature has a rudimentary intellect & culture. Its buoyant spines allow it to float & to swim with great ease – but they can draw water into the spines as well, allowing them to sink – they are fishers & occupy the ponds & lakes where there is abundant food.

The creatures live in ruins and supplement them with dam-like constructions. These nests are impressively large and littered with discarded or molted spines. The creatures are somewhat aggressive. The males put on imposing & mating displays, the females are dun-colored & camouflaged. They can have some intellect but speak very little.

They are numerous & resilient & tend to use wave tactics – making them extremely dangerous when provoked. They do attack in numbers when one of their colonies territories are encroached upon. They are known for never willingly abandoning their territory and for fighting relentlessly sometimes to the last.

Some less than conscientious folk seek the Spinwer's hides & flesh for fur, meat & as grooming & eating implements. The spines can be harvested without killing, or even hunting the creatures, however, they always litter the areas near the Spinewer's dam.

Monster Record

Superb Dracon Quiscula

Monster Name

Ecological

Liminal Tier

HD	4d4+6	# Appearing	1d6	Attack #	4
HP	14	Morale	13	Attack Mod	+3
AC	13	Treasure	8	Initiative	1+d20
SPEED	16	Parley	2d4	Saves	18
		Terrain		Stats	14
Tags	Pet, Dragon, Lizard, Mimic, Colors	Location		Skills	3

Attacks & Maneuvers

+3 Lashing Tails d0 - The Dracon lashes with its many tails, slashing air & striking hard.

Whipcrack Lash - The Dracon lashes air furiouly with its tails causing everyone nearby to save vs. Traps or be deafened for 10 minutes.

Fascinating Scintilation - The creature undulates its muscles & scales, changing color so that it's irridescence & color provide a hypnotic entertainment. Make a d12 WIS check or lose track of time while staring.

Tail Dance - The Dracon weaves its tails through the air in a more entrancing display. Save vs. Traps or be hypnotized, staring & incapacitated for the next turn.

Description

Superb Dracons are a common novelty in certain southern courts - fancy bred miniature dragons often kept as exotic pets. There are dozens of breeds & strains of the creatures but the most beautiful of all is the *Superb Dracon Quiscula* - which is known for its 9 long tails, it's uncanny ability to change color & apparantly texture to light up and flash & glow even in patterns. Through mimicry they have been known to manipulate their many tails & color changing techniques to effectively spoof the presence of a person utilizing color & negative space. Some of the beasts are quite clever & have been trained to perform these feats not only for entertaining but for more nefairous purposes. There have been longstanding rumors of a gang of high-society thieves who use employ a coterie of *Quisculae*.

Superb Dracon Quisculae slash their many tails through the air with vicious speed as a method of defense but are usually bred for docility & rarely attack outright. They eat infrequently and most don't have any capacity for hunting at all – having thoe traits bred out of their lines.

Monster Record





S

Zifafmarid

Folkloric

Liminal Tier

Monster Name

HD	7d12+4	# Appearing	1	Attack #	7
HP	64	Morale	16	Attack Mod	+7
AC	19	Treasure	7	Initiative	4+d20
SPEED	15	Parley	2d84	Saves	15
		Terrain		Stats	17
		Location		Skills	4

Tags: Serpent, Moth, Genii

Attacks & Maneuvers

+Trap of the Sprung Terror d0 – Those struck by the trap are immediately startled as an image of terror springs from the floor. The trap causes a snake-tailed djinn with fangs & moth wings to spring up. The target takes damage & anyone within 20' must save vs. traps or take the damage as well - as the original target is thrown at the other wedding guests.

+7 Broken Dance - d6 - This attack strikes everyone within 50 feet of its origin point - which is usually in the midst of a dancefloor. When sprung the trap causes hundreds of small, moth-winged snakes to launch out into the party biting everyone in the radius. Those who are hit must save vs. death or be stricken by disease.

+7 Hateful Bite - d0 - when the trap strikes the target's neck is bitten and they begin to bleed. They must save vs. Traps or they are compelled to make this identical attack - including attack & damage statistics - against another person at the party. This continues until someone passes their save.

Uxorial Curse - When provoked by inattention the Zifafmarid will curse a couple. Both targets must save vs. Spells, if the save fails for one or both the marriage is certainly doomed as within the next year the targets of the effect will shift in alignment toward Good and Evil. If only one person is affected in the couple - they will become evil, assuming they are not already. This change in alignment ends when one or both of the targets dies, or when the marriage ends in bitter acrimony.

Fouling the Party - if not treated with enough respect the Zifafmarid will curse the party it is attending - in this case a number of traps appear around the wedding grounds. Each of the traps is detailed as one of the Zifafmarid's traps. The Ghost plants d6 traps per use of this ability, all within range of its vision.

Blessing the Couple - If properly appeased & celebrated the Zifafmarid will not be offended and will spread nuptial bliss to the wedding's celebrants. The blessing commonly takes the form of a minor windfall in that the ghost has the power to double the gifts given at the wedding. It is said to also grant a blessing that speeds & increases procreation, longevity & happiness.

Ghostly - The Zifafmarid cannot be seen by anyone lacking magical vision & it cannot be attacked by means beyond exorcism or the use of some technique which bars or restricts ghosts specifically.

Description

The Ghost of Poor Weddings - the Zifafmarid is a peculiar and altogether nefarious being known to sow discord and ruin between lovers. It is said that the Zifafmarid is at all weddings whether invited or not and at those where it is not invited & where its presence is not noted - it plies its cruelest magic - which is the spread of heartbreak & betrayal.

In those instances where the customary invitation is offered only halfheartedly the spirit of Ill Fated Love will curse those of the uxorial party and leave the other attendees unharmed.

In those cases where it's presence is celebrated & it is invited to join in and to dance - the Spirit's hostility is salved & it blesses the union with its strange powers.

Given its capricious manners & strange tactics the creature is often manipulated by those who wish ill upon a marriage - and in this capacity the Zifafmarid is considered a weapon by the cruelest schemers who may upset the spirit only to spoil the love of others.

The Zizafmarid strongly favors sweet wines & cake & it prefers music with a pleasant melody that is easy to dance to long into the night. It seems to be aware of the expense that a wedding requires and prefers weddings that are bought dearly over those that are easily afforded – irrespective of other qualities.

Monster Record

Because I devote inordinate time to designing games – I've a ready collection of monsters that I can repurpose for the setting. Some of these are more sensible fits than others into the setting – but I can adapt all of the monsters here to function In The Ruins. Reskinning individual monsters from out of your resources is one of the easiest tricks to master as a Referee – being able to switch around a stat block to represent another creature with an entirely different description is a handy way to keep your players surprised and engaged.

For the monsters presented these are the alterations I think are most useful:

Ancestral Avenger - Re-orient its motivation & make it an agent of the curse-goddss Ailise

Awful old Man – Its firey attack & its tricky behavior suggest both Qlpth Nmal & the Infernal Band of Able. I retain him as a kind of demon, brought forth by cursed rites.

Bappelli - Appelli – Nop – This can come forth almost whole cloth – I'll make it one of the maddening monsters that lives in the caverns of Crone Mountain.

Bawamb – Their nature & abilities are somewhat relevant to the Tshuludra – I'll retain them as a kind of relic of those people that exists, almost like a cryptid, at the edge of anyone's awareness.

Blood Hound – The transparent body is certainly in line with the Omge – I'll reconsider its abilities, possibly making it more insectine – adding legs and possibly needle-based attacks in line with the Omge's aesthetic.

Bringer of War – As an angel but a not particularly gentle one - the Bringer of War jibes nicely with the Samnite Prince, I'll consider it as an aspect of that being or one of its minions.

Featherscale Watcher – A little weird, but weird is alright. This can just be brought in as a creature that simply exists in the setting without further explanation.

Hikamru – Ditto this, this is a perfectly adequate naturally-existing creature.

Hundreds – No time-travel component has really been included in the setting, but that doesn't mean one-off adversaries can't appear & be red-herrings or strange peculiarities. The Hundreds will be a product of some strange manipulations by the Governors Sodality – some sorcerer's prank.

Imp's Wheel - A pernicious symbol that drives positive behavior to the point of excess really meshes nicely with the Qlpth Vital. The Imp's Wheel makes a nice trap that lies in the ruins left by those beings. Variants related to the 10 different virtues are a possibility as well.

Iralaren Guwol – A tough monster, something of a boss, it could stand in nicely for any of the different demon-princes alluded to, either the Samnite Prince, the Fuliginous Shogun, or some other being. Likely, this isn't something players encounter unless they explicitly go looking for it.

Kiky Yoygo - A robot's ghost fits in perfectly with the Gallack. I can modify the appearance to be birdlike, feathered & so on – and then populate regions of the wilderness with any number of these.

Magical Sea – Easily assigned to the Mereids – I can include this anywhere in the Gray Sea.

Malus Loci – This is an evil presence that exists in a city's worst sections. I can include one in almost any of the large cities that make up the setting but I'd be especially interested in the examples found in Elan, with its destroyed quarters.

Motherwitch – Similar to the Blood Hound in that it involves bodily transparency – it's easily made a thing of the Omge, its attacks could be altered from being gaze-based to being needle-based.

Oscuramenco – This is an ecological beast – meaning it's intended to be a naturally occurring animal. But I see it has potential in affiliation to the Fuliginous Shogun – I'll append the creature to the group & vice versa. Incorporating either into encounters with the other.

The Perfect Man – Though the Perfect Man is an idol of a god – I think it works best when linked to the Patriarchate. I'll include them as kinds of enforcers & bodyguards retained by that group.

Pond Fliers – Perfectly natural, these are a nice embellishment to bring up here and there – to mention that there are gliding or flying tree frogs will help to bring people along into fantasy, when their attention wanes.

Pony Snails – Having somewhat neglected Halflings in their entry above, they can be served by granting them a little more attention in the form of snail-riding & breeding. The Pony Snails can be smaller & their role in the setting can be associated with Halflings.

Red Herald – This creature matches the Infernal Band of Able almost too well, it's easily included as part of that group's repertoire – but it could easily be sent from the red moon to oppose the Infernal Band – a little bit of violence from home.

Slapper – Ghost chrysalis has all the hallmarks of the Omge – this creature can be a remnant of their power, something that stirs in the woodland that points back to some ruin or another that holds the Omge's secrets.

Spinewer – I don't really want to include another race of beings – something that could, conceivably be played as a character in the setting. I'm really more interested in monsters – so the Spinewer is toned down & made into more of an animal. I'll make it a social creature, almost a cross between bee & beaver, and I'll say that they proliferate along the rivers.

Superb Dracon Quiscula – Since the creature is described as an import & an exotic pet, I'll link it back to the dwarves & reskin it entirely – as a stat-block linked to the Abyssal Ferrets mentioned as a dwarf accoutrement.

Zifmarid – The wedding crasher – this fits nicely with a couple of the gods in the tricadic pantheon. I'll link it to the Brizai gods though, and addend its motives so that it tries to enforce Brizai class distinctions.

This is obviously a starting place. The setting's ecology hasn't been created, its seasons, weather, biomes – none of these are set here – but they can be. It's worth noting, again, that this type of information is subordinate to your style of running the game. If you are a Ref who prefers single-session standalone games, you can paint the environment whatever way you like from session to session – set one session in the middle of winter & the next at the end of spring – with entirely different physical traits. Or you can run each session sequentially, making the story progress through a single continuous trail. In this case the environment will take on a stronger presence, with the individual scenes within a journey being described in a long continuity.

The environment stars as much as you want it to, by virtue of your style of play. It can be a consistent element always in the background – or it can be an occasionally encountered adversary that's only dealt with when the session calls for it. Monsters & adversaries certainly take up that same kind of space – they are persistent ongoing threats – something that comes up each session – or they're situational & occasional – a very big deal when they appear.

Some Final Words

This hobby of ours is both demanding & rewarding. It can be a powerful inspiration & the systems that we use help us to create & imagine by building a framework that we can hang these thoughts upon. The systems of rules & the randomness of the dice go together in making this shared storytelling experience more than just story & more than just a game. The experience, taken as a whole is an art in itself & creating with this palette is just as satisfying as rendering images in pigments.

The creation of whole worlds is a tremendous undertaking without much in the way of established techniques. There are any number of ways to approach this artistic endeavor. My effort & my wish here is not to create rules for world-building – but just a tool that you can add to your own repertoire. I hope that you are able to find some value in what has been presented here.