



# Hero's Book

## *The Pathfinders*

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*The Pathfinders* by Mark Galeotti.

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***We have explored the old world, now let us explore the new.***

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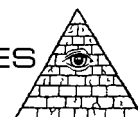
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# The Pathfinders

*We have explored the old world, now let us explore the new.*

Orlanth is the god of change and adventure, but some people are footloose and curious even by Heortling standards. Garrulf is one such. He spent his youth traveling, exploring, hunting, and wandering. In his time, he has flown up Stormwalk Mountain, drunk from the dusty oases of Prax, stalked hornbeetles alongside troll hunters of the Shadow Plateau, and counted the great grain barges going north up the Oslir from Tarsh. When he was young he was content just to travel and explore for their own sake, but then the Empire came to Dragon Pass, bringing division and despair, taxes and Chaos. He heard the call of his people and returned to put his talents at their disposal.

Gathering like-minded supporters, he began to watch the Imperial forces and explore their ways, as once he explored the land around him. His Pathfinders are scouts and spies, sometimes messengers, sometimes raiders. Whether an army or a single messenger, few are the imperial movements unseen by the Pathfinders. Sometimes they simply shadow, warning rebels of impending attacks. At other times, they raid and they kill, striking quickly and then using their unparalleled knowledge of Dragon Pass to disappear into the hills or the forests.

They were, for example, instrumental in passing on the message for rebel forces to gather at the Aurochs Hills for the great battle that would see Orlanth unchained from Lunar sorcery (see *Orlanth is Dead!*). Their success in stealing not one but fully three wagons bearing tribute from Boldhome to the Tarshite capital of Furthest, all without leaving clear evidence as to their identity, has left several Lunar tax farmers severely out of pocket. As a result, the worryingly efficient Lunar magistrate, Judex Ohenkash Twice-Maned, has begun investigating the raids. Also, the generous bounty offered for information on the raiders has attracted all manner of mercenaries, adventurers, and opportunists, including the Heortling turncoat who calls himself No-Orlanthi-I.

As a player hero band, membership in the Pathfinders allows the heroes to resist the Empire without confining themselves to one part of Dragon Pass, and by taking part in a range of missions, from espionage to battle. Also, being a Pathfinder means that you never know what mission or errand will come next, and this is a great boon for a narrator who can simply tell the heroes that they have orders from Garrulf and throw them straight into the next adventure.

**Real Name:** Garrulf's Pathfinders.

**Form:** Rebel scout group.

**Cultural Context:** Irregular Sartari resistance fighters.

**Ideology:** "We watch, we strike, we are gone."

**Look and Feel:** Daring rebel scouts and rangers.

**Purpose:** To be the eyes, ears, mouths, and sometimes spears of the rebellion.

**Headquarters:** Garrulf was originally from the Cinsina Tribe, and many in and around Jonstown know how to contact him. A hill to the south of the city called Tumper's Mount (on which is a now-overgrown chalk outline of a wind rune) is a favored contact point. A stone of the right size, shape, and color set in the right place is a signal for a rendezvous in the woods at the base of the hill one week hence. No one is quite sure how Garrulf knows when such a signal has been left, but he does, and he or one of his most trusted companions will be there in a week.

**Reactions:** The Pathfinders are popular heroes among those Heortlings who know of them. The Lunar authorities have not yet outlawed the band, but most of its actions and allies would earn them prompt crucifixion if caught.

## Resources

**Leader:** Garrulf Featherfoot, a lean and vigorous devotee of Destor, now in his late 30's. He is never entirely at rest, his eyes often fixed on the horizon. He is dedicated to the liberation of Sartar, but many believe that once this is accomplished, he will simply return to his travels, breaking the heart of many a Sartari maiden.

**Renowned Members:** Old Jonatan, a wily huntsman who forever complains of his old bones and aching joints, yet can walk for days.

Sorane Ravenmane, a young woman warrior who can hide anywhere, even on the open plain.

Leiken Longshanks, the fastest runner in three tribes, who carries messages between rebel leaders up hills and through forests quicker than a mounted Imperial dispatch-rider.

Borin Blackpaw, who worships the alynx-god Yinkin. He is a sly scout and deadly warrior, when he is not womanizing or taking cat form and curling up by the camp fire.

**Total Membership:** Around 50.

**Other Contacts:** The Pathfinders have a wide range of contacts with many other rebels in Dragon Pass.

## Organization

The Pathfinders are Garrulf's personal warband, with no real hierarchy beneath him, although it is a mark of respect to be appointed Garrulf's Swordthane (finest warrior), Shieldthane (bodyguard), Spearthane (trusted lieutenant, send on missions in Garrulf's absence), and Backboy (healer or advisor). They rarely work together in a single unit, except for on the occasional raid. More often, Garrulf sends groups of no more than ten on missions. In such cases, he appoints one trusted member as leader, or 'first spear.' Whom he chooses varies depending on the mission, so it might be the best warrior one time, the most cunning hunter the next, and so forth. This is also a good opportunity to give different players the leading role in different adventures.

Membership is open to any Sartarite who impress Garrulf with his adventurous nature, wilderness skills, and determination to play their part in the war against the Empire. Those whom Garrulf does not know personally must prove themselves before they will be trusted.

## Unseen Breath (Guardian)

The hero band has its own guardian, granted to Garrulf after he found the hitherto-secret Three-Legged Path up Mount Kero Fin. This is the wind daimon known only as the Unseen Breath, which appears to and works through Garrulf himself. If joining the hero band during the game, characters must spend 1 hero point to acquire a link with the Unseen Breath. So long as members of the hero band remain true to the cause and maintain the group's geas, Unseen Breath blesses them with far vision, helps keep them from being seen, and send gusts of wind to lead

them in the right direction.

*Method:* Archetype.

*Form:* Cannot be seen, just felt or heard as a breeze as it moves around.

*Membership Requirements:* Never stay under the same roof for more than one successive night.

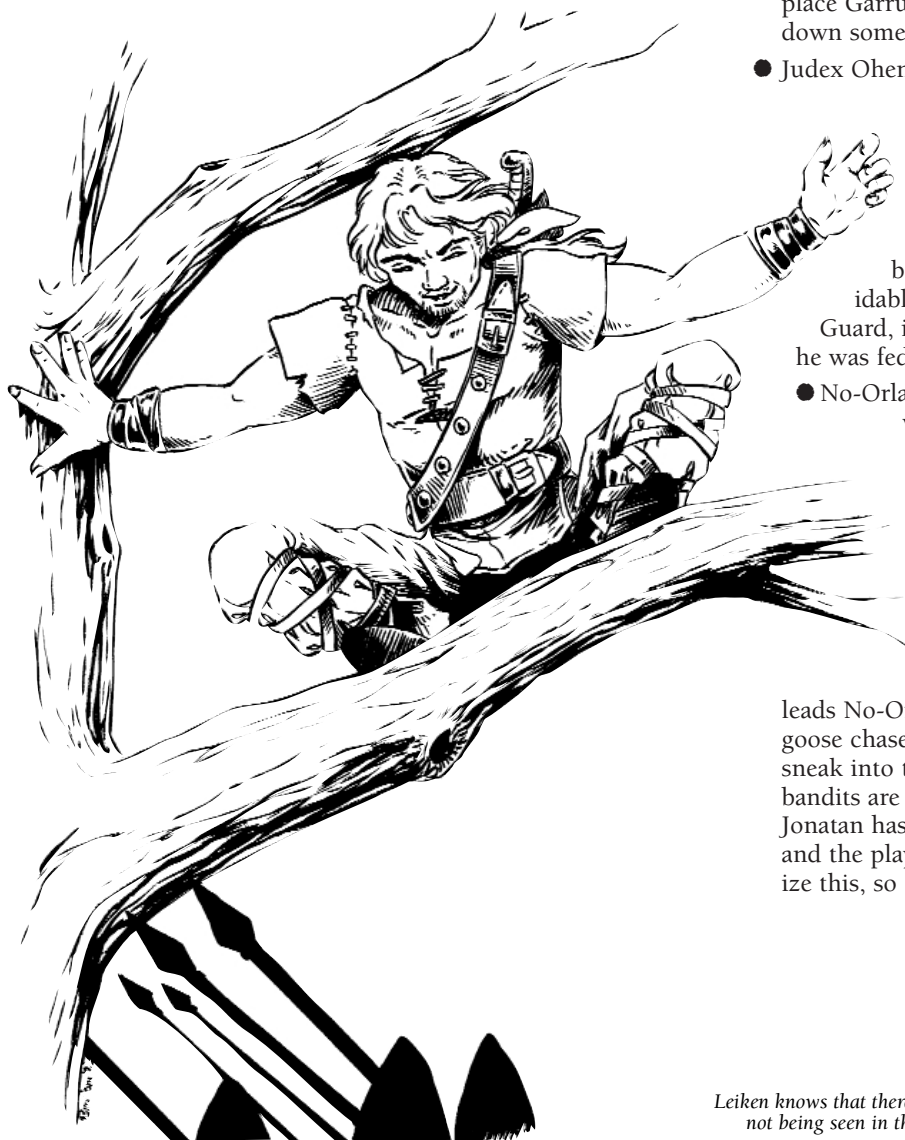
*Awareness function:* See Far 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ .

*Blessing function:* Hide Outdoors 20.

*Defense function:* Guess Best Route 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ .

## Fitting the Pre-Generated Heroes into Garrulf's Pathfinders

The Orlanthi and Vingan warriors (*Hero's Book*, pages 54 and 64) are the most obvious heroes to be members of the Pathfinders, ready to follow them into battle. The Humakti (page 55), while not quite what the band is looking for, would certainly follow Garrulf if he felt the Lunars were a threat to his way of life and his concept of truth. The Issaries merchant (page 57) shares much of their wanderlust, and the Lawspeaker (page 58) might be a fugitive from the Lunars for seeking to hold to the old laws. Where there is war, there is injury, and the healer (page 60) would certainly be a valuable ally, helping the band survive on the move and between skirmishes.



## Adventure Ideas

- The heroes hear rumors of a new wagon being rushed towards Furthest, full of taxes extorted from the poor, downtrodden Heortlings. There is no time to contact Garrulf or gather more forces. Do they strike? Is it a trap? Will it be guarded by tough Tarshite huscarls or bored and unskilled levies? Even if they manage to seize the wagon, will they leave any evidence behind that may link the Pathfinders to the raid? If so, will this lead to the Lunars finally outlawing the band?
- Garrulf is contacted by Barak the Black-Eyed, a warrior of the Torkani tribe. The Torkani are Heortlings after a fashion, but their prolonged and friendly contact with trolls means that they have magics and customs other Orlanthi neither trust nor understand. Barak is blessed with the ability to see perfectly in the dark, and owns a barbed javelin that returns to his hand when thrown. He claims to want to join the Pathfinders, and Garrulf asks the player heroes to assess him for membership. They need to confirm that he is who he says he is, which may require a trip to Torkani lands, and then decide whether he is tough and honorable enough to merit a place in the band. He might be a spy, he might be on the level, or he might be who he claims to be but also have some dark secret or ulterior motives. Perhaps he aspires to replace Garrulf as leader, or maybe he is just trying to live down some past shame?
- Judex Ohenkash is a careful, methodical, brilliant investigator. He is also an honorable man, uncomfortable with the brutality and lawlessness of so much of the Lunar occupation. Now, he seems to be getting uncomfortably close to identifying the role of the Pathfinders in the tax raids. Maybe he needs to be killed, but his personal retainers are formidable, and his own military retinue, the Lion Guard, is well-trained and loyal. Perhaps it is time he was fed a few false leads?
- No-Orlanthi-I is a vicious and unscrupulous bandit who has turned against his own people with terrible glee. He has kidnapped Old Jonatan's family and is demanding that he help them trap Garrulf unless he wishes to see them all butchered. Jonatan dare not tell Garrulf, as he knows the leader is too brave and honorable a man to let innocents die in his name; Jonatan is afraid that he might willingly hand himself over. Instead, Jonatan confides in the player heroes: while he leads No-Orlanthi-I and his closest allies on a wild goose chase, supposedly to ambush Garrulf, will they sneak into the abandoned village where the rest of the bandits are holding his kin and free them? Of course, Jonatan has no concern for his own life in this matter, and the players may need a few hints to help them realize this, so that they can save him, too.

*Leiken knows that there is a time for fighting, a time for running, and a time for not being seen in the first place!*