

# MASTERS OF LUCK AND DEATH



STEVE  
JACKSON  
GAMES







# HEROQUEST



## Masters of Luck and Death

### *Hero Bands for the Hero Wars*

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***Tessele the True holds forth Truth  
for whomever would see it.***

***Karkule See Not takes the eyes  
of whomever bears theft in his heart.***

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# LIVING BY THE SWORD

**P**rofessional fighters rely on someone else for their livelihood, be it a clan, individual, or government agency. Those without support from their society are forced to find other ways to make a living. Mercenary bands (such as the vexillae of the Lunar Empire) sell their services to others. Hero bands who find themselves without support or employers may have to resort to robbery and looting.

## What Kind of Fighter Are You?

When discussing fighters, it helps to differentiate between *warriors* and *soldiers*. Wise, cunning, brave, and skillful at arms, the warrior is the archetypal hero and the principal character of countless myths and legends. He distinguishes himself by his individuality. A warband may display an amazing array of different weapons and fighting styles, as individual warriors bring their favored gear with them. Even when coordinating efforts (such as in a shield wall), no two warriors are alike. A heroic warrior often has some extraordinary piece of equipment that sets him apart from the crowd, be it a magnificent steed or an enchanted sword.

Soldiers, on the other hand, are trained to fight in units. Frequently part of standing armies, they are subjected to hard training and rigid discipline. Soldiers follow orders, and all are trained in the fighting style of their unit. They carry the same weapons and are equipped by their government or sponsor. A given soldier's personal skill at arms may or may not be greater than that of a single warrior, but they rely on teamwork to win the day. In a pitched battle, few warbands can endure the might of an organized unit of soldiers. They are part of a strict hierarchical organization, where every man knows his place; individual heroism is not as important as staying in formation, and is usually prohibited. If a commander is killed in action, a subordinate leader is ready to take charge. In a warband, the chain of command may not be as clear. While this gives a certain degree of flexibility, it makes the warband vulnerable in battles against a more organized foe. Because of this, skirmishes and ambushes are important components of their tactics.

## Scenario Seeds

- A member of your unit has deserted. When you find him, he is with his children, whose mother has died. Will you bring him back? He has no relatives, so no one else will take care of his kids. What if the punishment for desertion is death or mutilation? Is there another way?
- Your leader is gone, and you are second in command. Are the men ready to follow you?
- While on campaign far from home, your baggage train does not arrive. Will you take advantage of the locals (quite possibly condemning them to starvation), or can you find some other way of feeding yourselves?

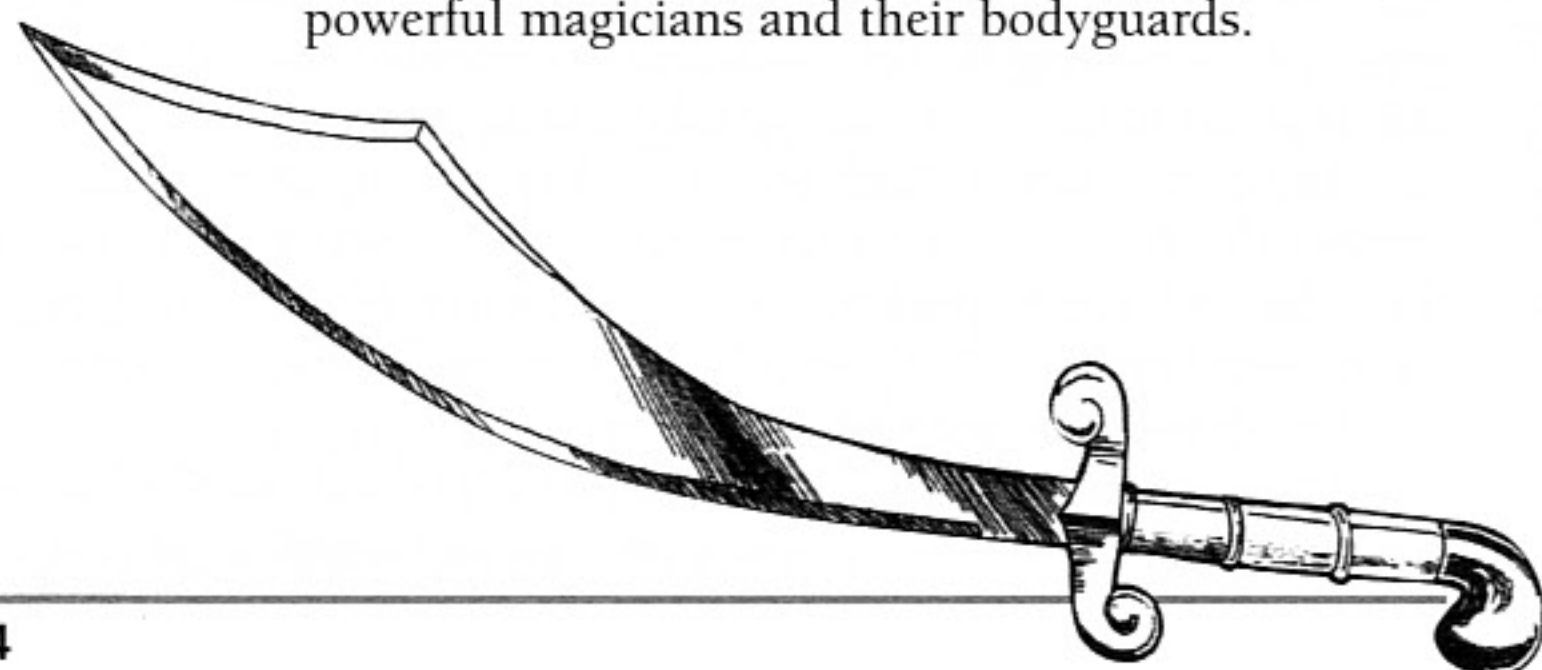
## Heroes in a Fighters' Campaign

The reason for joining a military unit or warband varies. For many heroes, it is a combination of necessity and a willingness to fight for what they believe in. Take a minute to think about why your hero became a fighter. Is she motivated by a desire to test her courage and hone her skills, or is she simply a mercenary for whom fighting is an easier route to riches than hard work on the farm? A player hero may even be a former criminal who was captured and forced to choose between a slow death in the salt mines or taking his chances on the battlefield.

Different hero bands will attract different kinds of people. The Silver Shields are professional soldiers, but theirs is also a specifically Lunar unit, which will attract those who were chafing under the old traditions of their homelands or who are inspired by Rufelza. On the other hand, the Hidden Gale has become a focus for rebels of the most extreme kind, Heortling traditionalists and those driven by revenge.

Above all, when creating your hero remember that even fighters have goals, dreams, and ambitions. Like everybody else, they are part of their society, with friends, family, rivals, and enemies. In fact, fighters often view themselves as the saviors of their society, performing the grim duties that common men are too timorous or unskilled to do. Groups such as the Golden Bow Society are the proud final line of defense for their people.

Not all heroes in a fighters' campaign need be warriors or soldiers, however. All kinds of people follow in the trail of armed men. Healers take care of the wounded. Entertainers keep up morale. Hunters and nomads may be hired as scouts. Scholars work as advisors; for example, a sage specialized in military lore can provide information on the strategies, tactics, weapons, and magic of the enemy. Translators are always useful when traveling in foreign lands. Cooks, animal-handlers, and bearers can be found in a baggage train. Military operations are always in need of good intelligence, so the skills of a competent thief may prove useful in retrieving information from the enemy. Many nobles serve in warbands or the military as a matter of course, and some use the military as a way to reach higher social status and increased influence. Most warbands have at least a few capable magic-workers (whether priests, wizards, or shamans depends on the culture and nature of the band). Sometimes, entire military units are made up of powerful magicians and their bodyguards.





## Adventure

Not every adventure is a battle. You might lobby the narrator to make combat the focus, and this is fine—as long as everybody is enjoying the game. However, most players expect more from a role-playing game than an endless series of battles. Even warriors and soldiers expect to face non-martial challenges once in awhile: the Sea Skippers face the perils of the open seas, while the Silver Shields must cope with inspections by dour and disapproving Dara Happan top brass.

Eventually, your hero may have to answer some difficult questions. Is the cause important enough to risk your life for? What if it is not your life you are endangering, but that of your loved ones? Sometimes the price of victory is higher than anticipated. What are you willing to sacrifice to get what you want? Not all choices need be between bad things either. Sometimes you are forced to choose between things you really value. Do you pick the kingdom, or the princess? Well?

### Scenario Seeds

- Divination has identified a key individual whose skills your band must have if it is to win against its enemy. However, the man in question is a proud supporter of the enemy in question. You are ordered to contact the warrior and attempt to sway his loyalties. What if it turns out that your hated adversary has noble motives?

- You discover that a member of your hero band has a secret love affair with a member of the opposing camp. What do you do?
- You are asked by an allied group to hide weapons, equipment, or fugitives temporarily until the group reclaims them. That makes for a nerve-wracking time when the enemies come sniffing around, especially if the stash is not picked up at the indicated time.
- You find yourself having to take sides or mediate in theological or ideological wrangling between members of your band. If not stopped in time, it could give your enemy an opportunity to regain the upper hand.
- You are asked to judge in a beauty contest. Too late, you discover that influential people back several participants. Your decision will have political repercussions far beyond what is normal for such a trivial competition.

Most combat in your campaign will probably consist of minor skirmishes and encounters, but eventually the narrator will have the daunting task of running a huge battle with hundreds or even thousands of participants. *Orlanth Is Dead!* contains an extensive treatment on how to handle such major events. While written from a Heortling perspective, the book is useful for any campaign involving extensive military action and large numbers of combatants.

## Running Combat in a Fighters' Campaign

Make sure that your battles are meaningful. The Hero Wars are not just a sequence of random clashes; they are fought for a reason. For many reasons. The Hero Wars are about beliefs and ideals, about ethics, about right and wrong. Is the hierarchical civilization of the Dara Happans a moral way to organize a society? Does the violent behavior of Orlanth set an ethical example for people to follow? The Hero Wars are also a series of drawn-out battles over the truth. Who is the Sun? Is it Yelm, Elmal, Yu-Kargzant, or Somash Endi Varo? The Hero Wars will determine the reality.

Most adventures do not decide the fate of the universe, however. Many hero bands do not even recognize that they are participating in the struggles that will end the world as they know it. Your hero's reason for participating in the Hero Wars may be fairly mundane. Whether he is a member of a hero band for the glory, for the excitement, for the loot, or simply to hide from his creditors, your hero will eventually have to consider the greater implications of his actions.

### The Goal of Battle

The goal of a battle is to break the enemy line, causing the opponent to flee. This is when most of the killing takes place; a fleeing fighter is unable to defend himself properly. In addition, causing your enemy to rout is generally the only way to decisively win a battle. Most everything else is more or less a draw, enabling the enemy to come back another day. That is why there is so much maneuvering going on before battles, as each side tries to get a significant advantage. Hit-and-run is one of the most popular tactics, since people are (usually) not desperate to die just because they are fighters.

### Playing by the Rules

A common mistake is to overuse the extended contest, especially when it comes to combat. Instead of routinely starting to calculate advantage points as soon as a battle begins, ask



yourself if this truly is an important part of your story. If it is, go ahead and play it out as an extended contest. If not, use a simple contest instead. *HeroQuest* differs from most games in that the *story* dictates what rules should be used in any given instance, not the other way around. For those who are used to highly detailed, simulationist combat rules that always work the same regardless of circumstances, this can take some time to get used to. Once you become familiar with the narrative gaming style, however, you will find that the game works best when played this way.

### 'Realism' Is Not Your Friend

It is not always appropriate to keep things "realistic." Real-world sagas and epics do not. In the *Iliad*, for example, the vast majority of fights end with one participant slain after a single blow. Even in the midst of a large battle, heroes single each other out for one-on-one duels. This is hardly realistic in terms of warfare, but it is a staple of epic fiction, and if it makes your battles more enjoyable, you should allow it.

You may even allow heroes to make speeches or lengthy boasts about their own greatness during combat, if the players are so inclined. In a real battle, participants would not have time for oratory, but in sagas and legends a hero rarely misses an opportunity to scold his enemy. Players and narrators should do whatever they are comfortable with.

Battles are larger-than-life moments, when the Other Side is closer than usual. Masses of fighters facing each other, with the singular objective of vanquishing their opponents, may have ritual significance that the participants are unaware of. As such, a battle is an excellent opportunity for various kinds of divine intervention; see *Orlanth is Dead!*, page 56, for some examples. Even supporters not actively partaking in the fight may influence events in this regard. The prayers of your people in the village miles away may very well tip the scales in your favor.



# The Sword Brothers

"We are all brothers in the Sword."

The Sword Brothers Society was formed in the First Age when the Council of Friends entered Prax. Humakti led the army, and the Council's forces defeated all the Praxian tribes. The army then sent their greatest Humakti hero to Tourney Altar, where one by one he defeated all of the Praxian war spirits. All Sword Brothers know that the Sword Man plucked a tail feather from the defeated Thunder Bird, then vanquished Pole Star and as a reward received the Star Metal Sword. From the Monkey King he took the wisdom of guile, and from Bronze Treasure the Sword Man won loyalty.

The Praxians recognized the glory of Humakti, and most tribes joined the Council. A few devoted warriors worshipped this foreign entity because he had defeated their war spirits, and thus proved that he was the greatest war spirit of Prax.

Each time Prax was invaded, the Sword Brothers fought and established their superiority. Only recently have they struggled, as the Lunars have brought with them powerful magic. However, the Sword Brothers know that the Carmanian war god is actually Sword Man, and that even the Lunar war god Yanafal Tarnils could only fight their spirit to a standstill, so they are confident that they will eventually defeat the Lunars. After all, they took over a generation to help the Praxian demi-god Jaldon Goldentooth break the walls of Pavis.

**Common Names:** The Brotherhood of the Sword, the Cohort of the Sword Man.

**Form:** Inter-tribal warrior society.

**Typical Homeland:** Bison People or any other Praxian.

**Cultural Context:** The society provides an outlet for those who eschew mainstream Praxian life, whether by choice or necessity. By joining the Brothers, these "touched" ones can remain a part of Praxian life instead of becoming outlaws.

**Ideology:** "Fight for your Brother and he will fight for you."

**Look and Feel:** Whooping, paint-wearing wielders of Death that descend, nearly naked, on their opponents. Magical war paint toughens their weather-beaten skin and incites them to fury. Each member's distinctive combination of clothing, decorative feathers, tattoos, and ritual scars records his history with the band, including battles, kills, status in the band, and religious level in the Sword Man Practice.

**Purpose:** To defend Prax; to defend fellow Sword Brothers; to bring glory to the Sword Man.

**Headquarters:** The Sword Brothers have no permanent base, as members wander with their own clans. Tourney Altar has a religious significance for the Brothers, for it is here that serious conflicts between members are resolved, and here that any new

champion of the Sword Man proves himself. However, the society has members in all the tribes and most clans, and members can always talk to their great spirit through his manifestation in their own swords.

**Reactions:** Other Praxians consider the Sword Brothers "touched" members of Praxian culture. Although different, they are still part of society, not outlanders, even those who associate with the foreigners at Tourney Altar. They are blessed with a difficult burden, and spend their spirits to learn the foreign magics that deliver Death to their enemies. Some few dedicated worshippers of Waha deny Sword Man's claim of supremacy, claiming that he never defeated Bronze Treasure in combat.

## Resources

**Leader:** Ketnowa Wahkuknee Tonee, aged and infirm, yet still respected above all.

**Renowned Members:** Ket Pusa Erambath of the Bison People, the current champion of the Sword Man, whose bravery knows no bounds.

Butavo Toowanakmin of the Rhino People, who wears a breastplate of wyrm hide gained by his ancestor during the sack of Pavis.

Tantay Mirekan of the Zebra Riders, who anchors himself to the ground with a leather cord during combat.

**Membership:** About 450 tribesmen who seek to be the best warriors of all. Some are drawn from the worship of other Praxian war spirits; others simply feel the call of the Sword Man, often after taking a serious wound or otherwise coming close to death. New members are always welcome, as long as their dedication can be proven to the other Sword Brothers.

**Other Contacts:** For several seasons, Ket Pusa Erambath has sought to create ties to other Praxian warrior societies (such as the Bullocks and Twin Spears), working to unite all Praxian warriors for a great battle that he says is coming. He speaks of the White Bull and the White Bear, who will fight each other for the right to destroy the Red Moon, whose light has blighted Sacred Prax.

## Organization

The Sword Brothers are a strict and secretive Praxian warrior society, with members in most clans. Members owe allegiance to clan and tribal khans, as do other Praxian warriors, but never would they go against the wishes of Ketnowa Wahkuknee Tonee. He alone has the right and privilege to muster the combined forces of the society. In such dire times, each clan's and nation's Sword Brothers answer his call, forming bands of 50 or more riders. Members of each band obey





the commands of the most respected one among them, as determined by age, deeds, and bravery. These leaders in turn owe absolute loyalty to, and in war take their commands from, Ketnowa Wahkuknee Tonee.

All Sword Brothers are blood brothers, and may not fight each other except in ritual duels. When two clans or tribes fight, Sword Brothers may find themselves on opposite sides of the battle, but they will not fight each other, and *both* will quit the field if there is no other alternative. Praxian khans accept this as a necessary price for leading such brave warriors, since at other times these very warriors may be the head or pinion of a vital fighting force.

### Membership Keyword

**Membership Requirements:** A prospective member must own a sword that has been "proven to last in a fierce fight" and swear an oath of blood brotherhood with each other member of the band, vowing to defend them to the death. The initiation ceremony involves ritual cutting with the Star Metal Sword, then creation of tattoos from the cuts that set the member apart from other Praxians.

**Skills taught:** Sword Fighting, Sword and Shield Fighting, Warband Tactics.

**Typical Personality Traits:** Brave, High-spirited, Reckless, Tolerant of Outlanders.

**Magic:** Most Sword Brothers maintain their primary allegiance/membership in the Praxian Tradition, but all worship in the Sword Man Practice as well.

## Thulahoo Sinamajan (Guardian)

The Sword Man gave Thulahoo Sinamajan to the founder and first champion of the Sword Brothers. Only the champion of the Brotherhood may wield the sword. Recently, Thulahoo Sinamajan has spoken to Ket Pusa Erambath about uniting all the warriors of Prax for a great battle ahead, when it will return to the place in the sky where it was forged.

**Method:** Emanation.

**Form:** Thulahoo Sinamajan is the Star Metal Sword. It is a sword of the finest quality, forged from a shimmering metal not found in the Inner World. Its design is unique, never before seen anywhere in Prax.

**Communication:** When Thulahoo Sinamajan speaks to the champion of the Sword Brothers, or when foes are at hand, it glows with the brilliance of the stars in a dark night sky.

**Guardian Requirements:** Members give up their tribal weapons in favor of the sword, receiving a magical geas not to use any other type of weapon. As long as they follow this geas, they gain an automatic +5 bonus with any sword. If they ever once pick up another type of weapon, the bonus is lost forever.

**Functions:** Members only benefit from the guardian's magic unless gathered together into bands.

☉ **Awareness**—Sense Foes.

☞ **Blessing**—War Paint Fury.

☐ **Defense**—Blood Brother Unity.

## Sword Man

### *The Spirit of the Sword*

Praxians remember that soon after Bright Treasure was returned to the sky, the Sword Man marched into Prax with an army. They fought him, but could not drive him out. At the Tourney Altar, he challenged and defeated every champion—mortal and spirit—sent against him. He showed the Praxians that a few outlanders were brave and honorable, so many brave warriors joined his band and learned his secrets. He gave them the sword in place of their tribal weapons, taught them honorable combat in place of their ambushes, and held them to strict honor in place of their lies.

Praxians know that Sword Man practitioners are Death Men; everyone else are just men. They know that Death Men are special because they serve the Sword Man. Others are not tough enough or brave enough. Death Men are fierce because the Sword Man's spirits are tougher to wrestle than anyone else's. They see the cost in their faces and watch them writhe in agony to conquer their spirits. Death Men spend their waking hours mumbling to Sword Man and seeing death in everything.

The ritual inducting new members to the practice takes anywhere from an hour to a full day. Upon its completion, the new practitioner transfers the full rating for any one weapon ability (removing the ability completely) to his or her *Sword Fighting* ability.

Worshippers are grim, rigid, and obsessive. They have a number of taboos they must follow. A taboo-breaker's sword will shatter in combat. Common taboos include: never cheat, even outlanders; never ambush or assassinate opponents, even outlanders; never be resurrected; never participate in the creation of the undead; never fight other Sword Man practitioners unfairly or beyond the first fall;



never dishonor the bravely fallen; never use any weapons except swords.

**Entry Requirements:** All practitioners (including the rare woman) must swear to uphold discipline and honor. (Note that honor is *not* the same as truthfulness: lying to Outlanders to keep from being cheated is not dishonorable, but intentionally cheating Outlanders is.)

**Tradition:** Praxian Tradition.

**Abilities:** Craft Sword, Follower of Sword Man, Know Tactics, Recognize Honor, Spirit Face, Sword Fighting, Sword Man Practice Knowledge.

**Virtues:** Brave, Fierce, Honorable, Obsessive.

**Practice Spirits:**

† **Sword Spirits**—Rally Swords 17 to 3W, Slash Otherworld Foe 12 to 8W, Strengthen Blade 10W, Strike True 15 to 15W.

Y **Honor Spirits**—Convince Praxian of Honor 12 to 2W, Punish Oathbreaker 2W to 12W, Sense Hidden Attack 15 to 7W, Shame Cowards 17 to 4W.

**Spirit Ally:** Any sword spirit can be allied and placed in the practitioner's sword.

**Charms and Fetishes:** Sword spirits go into blades, honor spirits into bones. Praxian swords are often made from hardened bone, and so can hold either kind of spirit.

**Other Side:** The Sword Man inhabits the Great Arena at the edge of the Wide Plains, presiding over the spirits of his followers, who train for the final day.

**Disadvantages:** Worship of Sword Man is misapplied worship of the god Humakt (see *HeroQuest*, page 110).



# Forloss Raiders

*"They seek him here; they seek him there; the Lunars seek him everywhere."*

Bundri Strongblood was the youngest son of Angori Nine-sons. As a young man of the Aranwyth Tribe, Bundri desperately wanted to join King Morus' weaponthanes. For years he tried to attract the king's attention and prove himself worthy of the honor, and the stories of his deeds are among the most popular Aranwyth folktales. The king steadfastly refused Bundri, however, because he bore a grudge against the warrior's father. However, tired of Bundri's constant nagging, the king finally promised to make him a weaponthane if Bundri could stop the recent attacks by Culbrea tribesmen upon the peaceful Toena Clan, with no help from any other warrior of the tribe. Bundri accepted this seemingly impossible task.

Bundri traveled the Whitehoof Path and returned nine days later with the White Stallion. He gathered a band of shepherds and stickpickers, creating the Forloss Riders. Men at first mocked Bundri and his Riders, but when the band drove out the Culbrea tribal warband from the Toena Vale in 1499 the Riders were recognized as true warriors of the tribe.

Having succeeded in his ordeal, Bundri returned triumphantly to the tribal king, expecting to be properly rewarded. The king, however, refused to honor the young man's deeds. Enraged, Bundri claimed the right of trial by combat, and in the ensuing fight killed the king's champion with a single blow. At last, the king acknowledged Bundri as one of the best warriors of the tribe, and offered him the position of tribal champion.

This time it was Bundri who refused, declining to work for a leader who put his personal interests before the well-being of his people. Instead, Bundri remained with his loyal warband until his death in 1530.

For many years, the Forloss Riders remained true to their ideals. When Prince Jarolar fought the Lunar Empire in Tarsh, the Forloss Riders were among the cavalry that swept upon the Lunar army from behind and slaughtered them. The Riders were generously gifted for their actions. When the corrupt Empire finally reaffirmed its control of Tarsh, the Riders defended the honor of Sartar by participating in many raids against the enemy king.

The Riders were decimated in the Lunar invasion of 1602. The Lunars outlawed them after the fall of Boldhome, so they changed their name to the Forloss Raiders. They began to concentrate their efforts on robbing Lunar caravans and other rich merchants rather than actually defending their tribe. The current leader has gained quite a reputation as a rebel, and constantly mocks the authorities with his daring raids and unbelievable escapes. He seems to have an uncanny ability to shake off pursuers, and has avoided several well-planned ambushes. The ignorant believe him to be the avenging ghost of Bundri Strongblood, returned to deliver justice.

*Common Names:* The Forloss Riders, the Shepherd Warriors.

*Form:* Outlaw warband.

*Typical Homeland:* Heortling.

*Cultural Context:* Highway robbers idolized by the poor and despised by the rich and powerful.

*Ideology:* "Steal from the rich. Oh, and give a little to the poor...sometimes."

*Look and Feel:* Former heroes turned highway robbers working under the charismatic leadership of a skilled demagogue. Unlike some "noble bandits," their ideals are less important to them now than their profits.

*Purpose:* Their original purpose (to defend the Aranwyth clans from outside aggressors) has given way to the more profane objective of robbing the rich, albeit usually only rich Lunars and Lunar sympathizers.

*Headquarters:* Constantly on the move, the Raiders have no permanent headquarters. They have hideouts in the Forloss Hills, Quail Hills, and, reputedly, in Prax. According to rumor, they have allies among the Poljoni.

*Reactions:* The Raiders are outlaws, hunted by the authorities. They still have strong support among people of small means, who occasionally receive a portion of their loot. No clan or tribe would dare support them openly, and most chieftains regard them as nothing but romanticized bandits. They have not actively supported the rebellion, and none of the rebel leaders is sure enough of them to call upon them for aid.





## Resources

**Leader:** Aski Strongblood, a daredevil who claims to be a servant of the oppressed and dispossessed. Despite his anti-Lunar actions and his stirring speeches in support of the rebellion, however, he is nothing but a bandit.

**Renowned Members:** Hengist Neversleep, Aski's bodyguard and loyal companion, who would gladly sacrifice his life for his beloved master.

Inganna Speaks-With-Horses, a horsemaster with ambitions. She is unhappy with Aski's leadership, believing that he has strayed too far from the true goals of the Riders. She seeks to re-establish the hero cult of Bundri Strongblood; when she does, she will challenge Aski for leadership of the band.

Unstani Clubfoot, a once mighty Kolating shaman who uses more and more vision-inducing mushrooms and herbs to perform his magic. These days, he talks more to spirits than to people, and communicates with the band through his assistant, the Poljoni shaman called Broken-spirit Krise. Everyone says that Unstani's mind will eventually fade into the Spirit World.

**Membership:** Four dozen warriors and several priests, and about as many active supporters. Most originate from the Aranwyth Tribe, but lately disillusioned tribesmen from all over Sartar have joined the band. Always vigilant for infiltrators and traitors, the band is very careful when recruiting new members.

**Other Contacts:** Most members do not have personal bans of outlawry or exile, for few have been caught or identified by the Lunars. In times of need, these members can count on some clandestine help from their friends and relatives.

## Organization

The band is structured like a clan, despite its small size. Members elect the leader at a wapentake, although the White Stallion must approve the selection; this leader takes the title Strong-

blood. Several members advise him, with the leader and advisors taking on various roles as if they were an Elmal Clan ring (see below). Aski holds the position of Anatyr the Chieftain, Hengist Neversleep fills the seat of Elmal Hearthguard, Inganna Speaks-With-Horses holds the Redalda seat, and Unstani Clubfoot fills the Beren seat. The Raiders do not currently have members corresponding to the Elmalhara, Kero Fin, and Esrola seats.

## Membership Keyword

**Membership Requirements:** Must pay lip service to the ideals of the raiders. Lunar sympathizers are slain.

**Skills taught:** Light Sleeper, Ride, Sleep on Horseback.

**Typical Personality Traits:** Headstrong, Loyal.

**Magic:** None taught. Most members worship Elmal or Orlanth Adventurous; a few animist members, led by Unstani Clubfoot, follow the Kolat Tradition.

## The White Stallion (Guardian)

The White Stallion is a steed of extraordinary powers obtained by Bundri Strongblood for the leaders of the band. When its body dies, it immediately inhabits a new white stallion and returns to the leader. Only a righteous leader of the Raiders is able to ride the horse; so far, Aski has not been seen to have any problems with it.

**Method:** Manifestation.

**Form:** A magnificent white stallion of the galana breed (see **Anaxial's Roster**, page 51).

**Communication:** Members' horses neigh and stamp their hooves whenever the White Stallion speaks to the leader.

**Guardian Requirements:** Ride a horse whenever you can, and never turn down a challenge to a horse race.

**Functions:**

- ☉ Awareness—Sense Injustice.
- ☞ Blessing—Do the Right Thing.
- ☐ Defense—Hide from Pursuers.



### Anatyr Ring

*Variant form of Heortling clan ring*



The Anatyr Ring is a clan ring commonly found in Elmal clans. In an Anatyr Ring, the chieftain has absolute authority to make decisions. However, he is supposed to listen to his powerful companions and specialists before making a decision, and only a foolish or incompetent chieftain would ignore their advice.

More information on Heortling clan rings is available in **Barbarian Adventures**, pages 14-15.

**Anatyr:** The Chieftain sits on a high chair in the hall. He wears a helmet with small bronze wings on it, and has the torc of leadership around his neck. Traditionally, a large shield hangs on the wall behind him, with a white Sun over a mountain painted on it. It is taken down only in times of direst need.

**Elmalhara:** The Grower is usually an old man, the wisest in the clan. He stands to the right of the Chieftain and whispers wise counsel into his ear. He has a long white beard and golden sickle. His domain is mostly agricultural, but he also knows about weather and fertility.

**Elmal Hearthguard:** The Warleader stands to the right of Elmalhara. He leads the weaponthanes and warriors, and is responsible for preparing boys to become men.

**Beren:** The Horsemaster is commonly found to the right of Elmal Hearthguard, and wears a replica of the golden-eagle-winged helmet of Beren. He leads the clan riders, who are scouts and skirmishers, and as such is responsible for the patrols that defend the tula. He is always consulted on external affairs.

**Redalda:** The Horse Queen stands to the left of the Chieftain. She speaks for the women, and has all of the clan's horses under her jurisdiction, even those owned by men as personal property.

**Esrola:** The Grain Mother stands to the left of the Queen. She conducts fertility ceremonies for plants, animals, and women. She rarely speaks, but even the Elmalhara wise man must defer to her if confronted with a question he cannot answer.

**Kero Fin:** The Grandmother stands to the left of the Grain Mother. Usually, other wise women stand nearby, with whom she confers. She does not often speak, but when she does, everyone listens because of her age and wisdom. She speaks for the children, the ancestors, the land, and the clan as a whole; tends the alynxes; and provides the blessings of Kero Fin to the whole clan.



# Golden Bow Society

"Our bows will glorify the new sun."

While all Grazers are skilled with the bow, and all Gazer men pass through the Warrior age group, only a few are dedicated enough to join the Golden Bow Society. This elite warband is probably the best in all Glorantha at mounted archery. They are the only standing army among the Grazers, although when the entire tribe mobilizes they account for only about a tenth of its fighting strength.

The Golden Bow Society glorifies the majestic spirit Jardan the Warrior, whom they call Vastaka Indo, the "Feathered Horseman." Its members strive to be like Jardan, and worship him directly in a separate practice of the Majestic Horses Tradition. They ride the prized goldeneye horses that the Grazers claim are directly descended from the ancestral hyal horse (see *Anaxial's Roster*, page 52).

Jardanroste Polestar is the one who formed the Golden Bow Society twelve generations ago. The worshippers of Golden Bow were known from stories, but had not existed in the tribe since Jardan had left them in the Great Darkness. Jardanroste quested to find the Golden Lance and Feathered Bow, and questioned the spirits to restore the original rituals. His great success led to his becoming the Luminous Stallion King. The Golden Bow Society formed the foundation of his military reign and rode at the forefront of his raids against the Orlanthi. Several later Luminous Stallion Kings personally led the Golden Bows in battle.

The Golden Bow Society is a light cavalry unit. They typically skirmish rather than charge, seldom closing to lance distance unless they feel that their foe is about to break. They are masters of mounted tactics, including turning in the saddle for the "parting shot." They sometimes serve as mercenaries, but are less successful when fighting for others than for their people, against traditional foes. Tactics such as the feigned retreat often confuses foreign allies, who react to it as a sign of cowardice and so do not take best advantage of it on the battlefield.

**Common Names:** Brotherhood of the Golden Bow, Golden Bow Warband.

**Form:** Military unit organized along religious lines.

**Typical Homeland:** Grazer.

**Cultural Context:** Elite warband and religious secret society.

**Ideology:** "Power comes from pure blood." All members must come from preferred bloodlines, which they must work to keep pure. This gives them power in the Natural World and on the Other Side.

**Look and Feel:** Mounted on the fastest horses in Glorantha, the warriors are equipped with ornate bows and lances. They decorate themselves with gold and feathers, and adorn themselves and their horses with war paint to frighten their enemies. When they ride into battle, they are accompanied by pounding drums; foreigners never see them on foot. Combat tactics are coordinated with the help of piping signal whistles and *Ride Together* spirits.

**Purpose:** The Golden Bows serve the Luminous Stallion King as a rapid reaction force, his crack light cavalry. More importantly, they honor Jardan, the war spirit of the Grazers.

**Headquarters:** None. They may be found anywhere in the Grazelands, usually near the Luminous Stallion King. Their camp is denoted by a golden spoked-wheel standard, hung with the scalps of defeated enemy generals.

**Reactions:** Golden Bow members are a privileged elite among the Grazers. They receive the best weapons, have their pick of vendref and Dastal riders as servants, and can generally do what they want without fear of reprisal. Outsiders fear their lightning raids and find them frustrating opponents in battle, since they rarely close. Their fame has spread through Tarsh and into Saird, where their victories are admired or disbelieved.

## Resources

**Leader:** Jardanroste Firehawk, a grandson of former tribal king Dastapolti Peaceful, is the Pole Star. He has a hawk he found in the Otherworld, which can fly into a fire and dematerialize. His instant decisions in battle are invariably correct. He and his horse are often absent at night, although nobody is sure if he has a secret lover or rides into the Sky World.

**Renowned Members:** Varanoste, a Denbitos shaman who walks the Nova Path. This discipline gives him mighty powers for a period of time, but at the end will burn him out. He commands Dirtkiller, a spirit mighty enough to warrant worship from the rest of the Society. It provides fetishes for *Crumble Earth Magic*.

Churaskos Wife-Hater, renowned for his ability to fight with any type of weapon. He never speaks to married women.

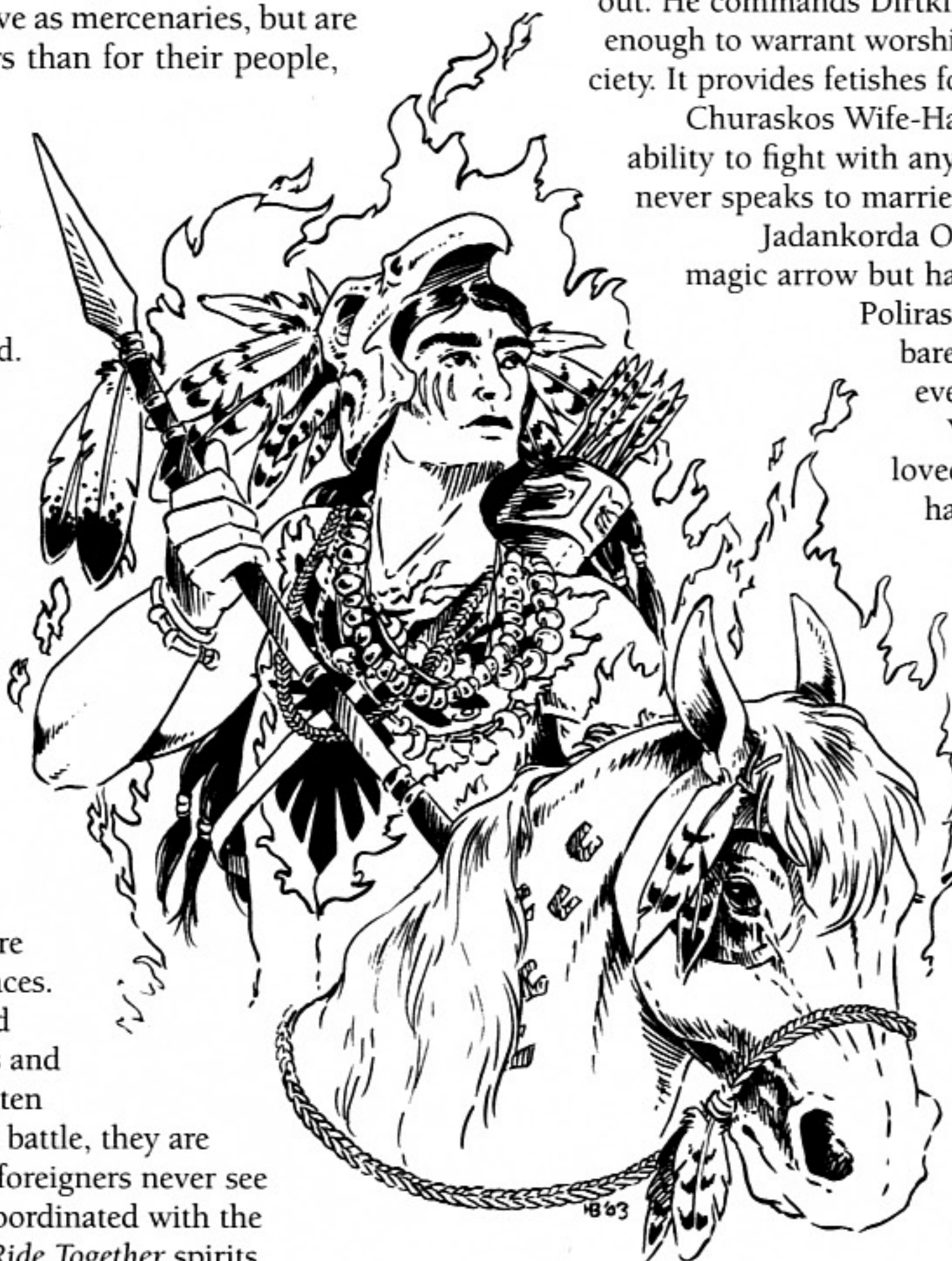
Jadankorda One-Arrow, who owns a magic arrow but has only one eye.

Polirast Brightface, who rides bareback and is feared by every horse except his own.

Yanorgran Hawk, who is loved by his men despite his harsh discipline.

**Membership:** 416 warriors and their servants, for a total of 525. They never go to battle under-strength, and have no shortage of warriors waiting their turn to fight for Jardan and the Luminous Stallion King.

**Other Contacts:** As a warband, they are under the jurisdiction of the Luminous Stallion King. With his permission, they may deal with the Feathered Horse Queen.





## Organization

Members of the Golden Bow Society are organized in a strict hierarchy. The leader of the band is known as the Pole Star. He has a staff of five, an honor guard of ten warriors, and four personal servants. Although the Pole Star holds council with his staff and the five Star Captains, he always has the final say in decisions. He must also approve any new members, who are nominated by their clan chiefs to fill vacancies caused by combat or the occasional retirement. All members of the Society (including servants and horses) must obey the orders of the Pole Star and Star Captains.

Each Star Captain leads a company of eighty warriors, who are supported by seventeen servants to cook, fetch water, mend weapons and tools, and perform other tasks that are beneath the warriors. Finally, five shamans support the band, each with an assistant and a servant. All of the servants are Grazers drawn from lesser families, who gladly and honorably serve the warriors. They are tested for loyalty and obedience. Although there is no possibility for advancement, even this level of membership is considered a great honor, and servants benefit from the guardian's defense function (only).

There is also a hierarchy among the horses, with the warriors' Goldeneye horses at the top. Other riding horses are subordinate, and the Society usually travels with a herd of lesser horses that provide milk, blood, and meat. The goldeneyes are full members of the band, but other horses benefit only from the guardian's awareness function.

## Membership Keyword

**Membership Requirements:** A candidate must be willing to be a warrior to the exclusion of all else, even the accumulation of a bride price. He must be sponsored by a clan chieftain and approved by the Pole Star. Final approval comes from the steed—a goldeneye must be willing to form a *Rider Bond* with him. If he is accepted, the new member must leave the Yu-Kargzant Practice and give his magical allegiance to Jordan alone.

Just as their horses must be carefully bred, Golden Bows must refrain from sex with inappropriate partners. They also follow a strict diet, eating no animals except horses herded within the Grazelands.

**Skills taught:** Cavalry Tactics, Distance Shooting, Quick Draw.

**Typical Personality Traits:** Dedicated.

**Magic:** Members must become practitioners of the Golden Bow Practice, and are encouraged to concentrate their magic. Knowledge of the Golden Bow Practice secret is a prerequisite for any leadership position in the Society.

## Jardanroste Polestar (Guardian)

When his people were threatened by the invading Colymar Tribe of Heortlings, Jardanroste Polestar re-founded the Golden Bow Society, which had fought for the Pure Horse People before the Grazers entered Dragon Pass. He broke the charge of the Black Lance, wrested the Final Words from the Death Stars, and melted the Lead Men in a night attack. After his death, he continued to guide the Society as its war spirit.

**Method:** Archetype.

**Form:** Jardanroste's presence is focused through the Golden Lance that the Pole Star carries into battle.

**Communication:** Group Contact. The hair on the back of a member's neck (or mane) rises when enemies are near, or when Jardanroste emboldens them with his presence.

**Guardian Requirements:** Never treat peacefully with members of the Colymar Tribe (this does not mean that they must attack whenever the two meet).

**Functions:**

- ☉ Awareness—Sense Enemy (this always includes members of the Colymar Tribe).
- ✂ Blessing—Ride in Spirit World.
- ☐ Defense—Dodge Arrows.

## Golden Bow

### Warrior Son

Jardan is the Golden Bow, the pure warrior nature of Yu-Kargzant. The Golden Bow Practice attracts Grazers who wish to dedicate themselves solely in the glories of war rather than taking a normal place in Grazer society.

Although the Grazers view the Golden Bow Practice as a more focused version of Jardan the Warrior (see *HeroQuest*, page 145), in game terms it is treated as a separate practice. Members replace their *Follower of Jardan* ability with *Follower of Golden Bow* at the same rating, at no hero point cost. Golden Bow practitioners may continue to use any Jardan or Dastal charms and fetishes they may have.

**Entry Requirements:** Be accepted as a member of the Golden Bow Society and leave the Yu-Kargzant Practice.

**Abilities:** Archery, Follower of Golden Bow, Golden Bow Practice Knowledge, Lance Combat, Spirit Face.

**Virtues:** Audacious, Brave, High-Spirited, Vigilant.

**Practice Spirits:**

- ☉ Pureshot spirits—Bird-burning Arrow 15 to 5W, Fast Arrow 17 to 5W, Piercing Arrow 15 to 5W, Silent Arrow 20 to 10W, Spirit-burning Arrow 20, Troll-burning Arrow 20.

- ▼ Sun Horse spirits—Night Riding 17, Ride Far



17 to 5W, Ride Together 12 to 5W, Sure Seat 13 to 10W, Tremendous Leap 15 to 5W.

† Victory spirits—Fearsome Charge 13 to 10W, Fight On 18, Fire Together 12 to 5W, Glowing War Paint 18, Rally Compatriots 17 to 10W, Surprising Tactics 15 to 5W.

**Practice Secret Requirements:** Archery (or any related ability) 1W2, Follower of Golden Bow 1W2, Ride Horse 1W2.

**Secret:** Sun Rider (While riding, the warrior and his goldeneye burn like the Sun, and become indistinguishable to observers. Therefore, they must be targeted together by magic, forcing the attacker to take a multiple target penalty. In addition to augmenting each other, both receive an automatic augment equal to ¼ the secret's rating when taking any action together, such as fighting in combat or fleeing the field. The secret can never augment independent actions, such as the warrior using magic.)

**Disadvantages:** Members are not part of the Yu-Kargzant Practice, and remain warriors until their death. To learn Henird or Josad magic they must obtain the Pole Star's permission to retire, and then rejoin the Yu-Kargzant Practice. Although there is no dishonor in taking this path, few members ever do.



# The Hidden Gale

"The old world is dying, and we will save it."

Gyffur Ulfsson has been a man without a home since Lunar cavalry destroyed his stead, his family, and his clan in the infamous Harrowing of the Orvano, as the Amad were driven north and east. He escaped to the hills with the clan guardian and the remnants of the warband, and refused to become a refugee or slave. Over the years, he has become a famous leader with a great following among those who hate the Lunars. His followers move through the hills of Sartar like ghosts, striking at the Lunars in guerrilla raids. He worships Barantaros, an obscure subcult of Orlanth, and requires that all of his followers do likewise.

**Common Names:** Hidden Gale Clan.

**Form:** Rebel guerrilla warband.

**Typical Homeland:** Heortling.

**Cultural Context:** Heortling resistance fighters.

**Ideology:** "We will fight forever if we must. Death to all Lunars!"

**Look and Feel:** Dedicated traditionalist barbarians, confident in their conservative ancient lore. They wage businesslike war from the hills and wastes of Sartar.

**Purpose:** To liberate Sartar from the Empire.

**Headquarters:** None. Gyffur invokes the Hidden Gale "Clan" when needed. The dedicated members remain with Gyffur, but they coordinate other troublemakers

over a wide area, sometimes leading large raids that attract several hundred temporary members.

**Reactions:** Although most Sartarites admire the Hidden Gale and pray for their success, some are afraid of Lunar retribution and do not support them. Its members are officially outlawed by the Lunars, and are frequently sought by Lunar authorities, military units, and bounty hunters.

## Resources

**Leader:** Gyffur Ulfsson, a canny Orlanthi warlord who has escaped death at the hands of the Lunars so often his followers believe he is immortal. See **Orlanth is Dead!**, page 38, for a detailed write-up of this rebel leader.

**Renowned Members:** Vandolan Greybeard, the "Worthless Scholar," whose wealth supports the warband and whose ruthless cunning ensures that his Lunar-guarded caravans are wiped out by rebels.

Pola Scarmaker, who can throw a javelin through three men and whose smile slays as many hearts.

Auric Traskarson, an outlawed Starkval weaponthane who slew his Lunar-loving chieftain before joining the Hidden Gale.

Orstalor Sweetsong, a Drogarsi devotee whose tongue is scandalous and whose songs, no matter how sweet, always mention Barantaros.

## Barantaros

*Subcult of Orlanth Thunderous*

Barantaros is a minor god, but he once saved the universe. One day Orlanth led all of the other Thunder Brothers on a great raid and left behind Barantaros to guard the stead. Not long after Orlanth left, a lesser god reported to Barantaros, that a great army of Fire Chaos was coming. Barantaros went and concealed himself among the rocks and bushes. As the vile creatures roared past, Barantaros gathered his strength and rushed upon them like a whirlwind, striking here and there with seeming impunity. He routed the army, and was well re-warded by Orlanth upon his return.

Extremely dedicated members of the Hidden Gale devote to Barantaros, despite his relative lack of magic. They do have an advantage in that Barantaros' secret is easier than most to learn, since devotees need a rating of 1W2 each in only two affinities (not three), plus the Whirlwind Combat feat.

**Entry Requirements:** Take the geas *Never Surrender*. (This ability will always have the same rating as the *Whirlwind Combat* feat.)

**Skills taught:** Ambush, Climb, Local Area Knowledge, Run Up Hills.

**Affinities and Feats:**

† **Combat** (Aid Throw With Wind, Armor of Woad, Enchant Silver ritual, Flickering Blade, Leaping Shield, Overbear Foe, [Weapon] Help)

♫ **Movement** (Burst of Speed, Find a Way, Leap Over Obstacle, Lift Objects With Winds, Run On Mud, Run Up Cliffs, Sunset Leap)

♣ **Whirlwind Combat** feat.

**Secret:** **Attacking Death Gasp** (This releases the devotee's soul to begin a new contest against his killer. The ability rating of the Attacking Death Gasp is increased by the number of negative AP the hero had at the time of death. [A hero slain in a simple contest is assumed to be at -40 AP.] The hero's soul continues the fight as a whirlwind, battering his killer(s) with loose debris and snatching the breath from their lungs.

The wind automatically collapses and the soul goes to the afterlife when all enemies are dead or at sundown, whichever comes first. Using the Attacking Death Gasp ensures that the character cannot be resurrected by any means.)

**Other Side:** Barantaros' stead is in the Mountain Wild region, near the winter winds, on Orlanth's tula in the Storm Realm. From the stead, one may enter into the Storm Age or the Darkness Age.

**Disadvantages:** Hidden Gale members are fanatics against the Empire and will be revealed as such by appropriate detection magic. Even members who do not know or use the secret are not resurrected.





**Membership:** As many as fifty core members follow Gyffur; hundreds of other members have served in secret since the failed rebellion of 1613. Most members acquired their equipment as the spoils of battle, and it shows.

**Other Contacts:** Most Sartarites are sympathetic to the Hidden Gale's cause. These common people live and work in their own communities but assist the Hidden Gale with food, shelter, and information. They allow the Hidden Gale to operate as "sword rebels" (guerrillas). The Hidden Gale also has contacts with many other rebel bands.

## Organization

Despite its small size, Gyffur leads a traditional Orlanthi warband. When it is time for action, he accepts the sworn oaths of other leaders, with himself as chieftain of the temporary "clan" so formed. Volunteers from other clans arrive and join or reunite with the band on a temporary basis. When the core band slips off into the wilderness, these temporary members return to their clans and hearths to await Gyffur's next call.

## Membership Keyword

**Membership Requirements:** Only worshippers of the Storm Pantheon may join the warband, and a sworn member must recommend them to Gyffur. All applicants take a dire oath of secrecy, even before acceptance, which includes a vow to worship Barantaros until the last Lunar is slain or driven from Sartar. Members must sever all normal ties to old kin (see **Storm Tribe**, page 63) and be willing to lay down their lives for "the cause."

**Skills taught:** Ambush, Ride, Sword Fighting, Warband Tactics.

**Typical Personality Traits:** Dedicated, Fearless, Hate Lunars, Reckless.

**Magic:** Members must worship Barantaros as a subcult of Orlanth Adventurous or as a hero cult, and thus learn the *Whirlwind Combat* feat. Devotees of Barantaros may learn the *Attacking Death Gasp* secret.

## Kaarvon (Guardian)

Kaarvon was once a much greater being: the wyter of a mighty clan of the Amad. Now he is the guardian of a band of fugitives. In the Storm Age, he stood proud with Starkval and guarded Stormtown against giants, trolls, and dragons, but he fared best against the sorcerers of the Kingdom of Logic. Unlike most of the Thunder Brothers, he dwelt far from Andin's Wall, setting his hearth in harm's way. He struck down those who trespassed upon the tula, weakening them with quick strikes until the other Thunder Brothers arrived. Once, when Orlanth was imprisoned, Kaarvon awakened him with the flapping of his cape. Kaarvon perished during the Gods' War, but his descendants have always been able to call upon his powers.

Since Harvar and the Lunars slaughtered his people, seized their lands, and destroyed almost all of the clan regalia, Kaarvon is only a shadow of his former self. His "clan" is now small, with few Ancestors to support it (although this number grows after every battle). Because of this, his Otherworld abilities have been reduced to these three functions, their ratings now no greater than those of similarly sized hero bands. However, his powers grow as Gyffur's fame does, especially as the clan heroquests for weapons to fight the Shepelkirt's minions.

**Method:** Manifestation.

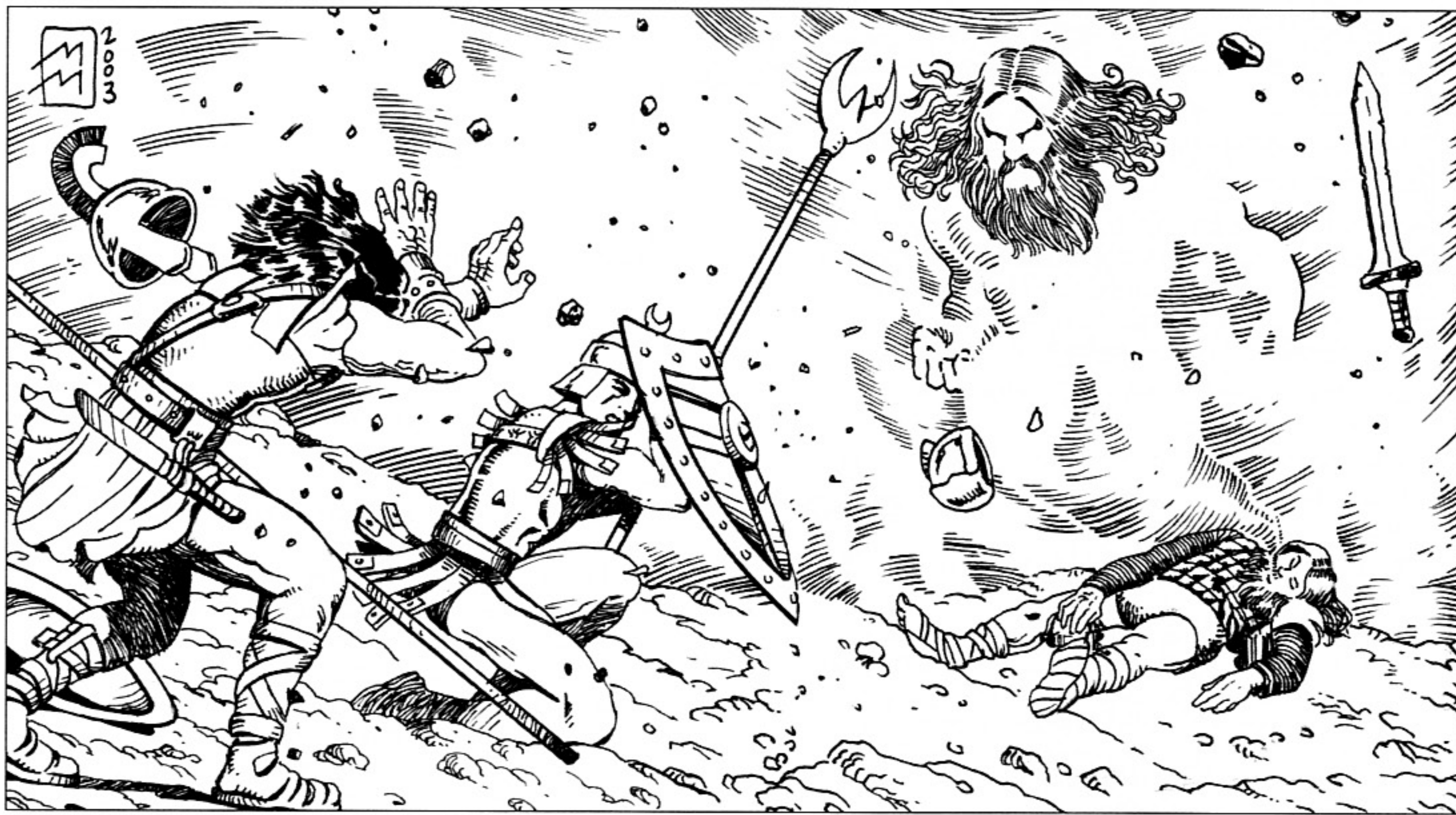
**Form:** Ancient bronze armband worn (but kept hidden) by Gyffur.

**Communication:** Whenever Kaarvon communicates with Gyffur, all members of the warband recall their battles with the Lunars, reliving the sensations of triumph and terror they felt when they slew their Lunar foes.

**Guardian Requirements:** Hate Lunars [must be taken as a personality trait]; shed Lunar blood at least once a year.

**Functions:**

- ⦿ Awareness—Recognize Sorcerer.
- ⚡ Blessing—Effortless Running.
- ☐ Defense—Conceal Hearth.





# Temple of the Wooden Sword

*"Humakt wood be death."*

The Temple of the Wooden Sword is a "wandering regiment" that has appeared and disappeared throughout time, space, and legend, always returning to its original home between missions. Most people in Dragon Pass who have heard of it know that it was a group of Heortling Humakti active around the time of Starbrow's Rebellion. They were famous for converting a large number of trolls to the worship of Humakt, and for the Sword in their possession—a relic sacred to the god of death. A select few know that the Sword was a portable shrine to the war god. Most people believe the band disbanded in 1615, when Londra of Londros gave the Wooden Sword to the elves—but the Sword is the heart of the band, and both still live.

The truth about the warband is hidden deep inside Arstola Forest. Oofmarthan the Wooden Sword was a powerful spirit planted near the center of Arstola in the elves' Red Age—when Death first came into the world—and sprouted in their Black Age—the Darkness. Some call it the kin of Bengara and Veratha, the Two who Are One, Death in Life and Life in Death. When Aldrya's people burrowed into the earth and died, Oofmarthan remained ever vigilant. Planted in the bodies of its worshippers and fertilized by the Great Darkness, it became the keeper of balance. Dwarves tried to steal it, but were blinded when it reflected their own powers back at them. Trolls tried to eat it, but could not stomach its corrosive secretions.

During the elves' Brown Age—before the Dawn—a green elf named Risat Pineneedle led the Awakeners to Arstola Forest to awaken his brethren there. He pulled the Wooden Sword forth from Gata's loam and cast it aside, saying, "So shall Death be struck from the hearts of our friends." Thus was Arstola re-awakened. Afterwards, the Sword disappeared for many years. It next emerged when the Unity Council fought the Horse Riders; the Temple of the Wooden Sword prepared the way for the forests that eventually forced the enemies out of Peloria. Members call this pruning.

Back then, the band consisted of over a thousand members, mostly elves but with some human members. Arkat was

the Temple's greatest foe. When his lieutenants razed the Tallseed Forest that covered Dragon Pass and the Elder Wilds, the Wooden Sword and its followers fought in vain to repel the attackers. Perhaps the Great Tree in Balazar could have been saved, but the band was recalled to its original home to help attune the Song of Aldrya, and so the last large-scale military effort of the Temple of the Wooden Sword ended.

Returned to Arstola, the Wooden Sword fell into the hands of Ebarata Hazelnut. He carried it back to the Grove of Sacrifice, where the sword had been grown and where it had been planted during the Darkness. Here he used it to strike down Risat Pineneedle, onetime savior of Arstola who had become its leader in the centuries since. As he did this, Ebarata stated, "Only when the Green have been Taken can the Forest be one again." This initiated Aldrya's Sorrow in the Arstola Forest. The Taking did not end until the brown elves had killed all of their green brethren. The greens were buried in the Grove of Sacrifice, and it was said that they were only sleeping.

In the Second Age, the Sword fought to protect the secrets and hidden seeds of Aldrya by hunting down and killing the God Learners who tried to take what was not theirs.

Today, the aldryami plot to cover all of Genertela with a vast forest is coming to fruition. The Wooden Sword is destined to kill *someone* in the Hero Wars in furtherance of this goal. Magic of this magnitude always draws its opponents from the world, and it is likely one of these opponents that the Wooden Sword is destined to slay. It is believed that the following prophecy also relates to the Wooden Sword in the days to come:

*From the Planting Glade,  
The soil of our roots,  
There shall rise,  
That which was gone.*

*The Takers shall arise again,  
Taken.  
And Grown.  
Complete once more.*

*And they shall know  
More than we know,  
And they shall teach us,  
As we once taught them.*

**Actual Name:** Es Marananun Po ("The Death that Will Not Die").

**Form:** Humakti warband.

**Typical Homelands:** Heortling and Aldryami most recently, but the Sword cares little about the race or culture of its members.

**Ideology:** "We are a tool of the Taker, preparing for a new summer. We are cutting off the withered parts of the world tree, so that new branches may sprout."

**Look and Feel:** Death-worshipping fanatics on a mission that even they do not fully understand.

**Purpose:** Help the Sword fulfill its destiny in the Hero Wars. While the purpose of the band is to further the aims of the Aldryami, membership is by no means restricted to elves. In the past, both humans and trolls have been members; Oofmarthan is indeed pragmatic.

## Fodronu Enchasol, the Leafless Warrior

*Subcult of Humakt*

Fodronu Enchasol is Death in the service of Life, born the first time something was killed in order to save something else. Fodronu Enchasol can be worshipped as a subcult of Humakt or as a deity in his own right. The latter is unusual, and provides no benefits other than those listed below.

**Entry Requirements:** Non-Aldryami must be members of the Temple of the Wooden Sword.

**Skills:** Mythology of Fodronu Enchasol.

**Virtues:** Belligerent, Protective.

**Affinity:**

† **Taker** (Blind Dwarf, Burn Troll, Food Song, Kill Fire, Prune)

**Secret: Death Aids Life** (By committing ritual suicide, the devotee can aid a number of allies equal to the secret's rating. Companions so aided must all be participants in the same contest. For the duration of the contest, each companion receives a bonus to his combat abilities equal to the suicide's rating in the secret.)





**Headquarters:** Wherever the Sword is. Oofmarthan's original home is the Grove of Sacrifice in Arstola Forest. From there, members may enter Fodronu Enchasol's Vale of No Flowers on the Other Side.

**Reactions:** Aldryami are frightened of the Sword and what it can do. Those who understand its purpose are likely either to react favorably toward the band or to condemn it as a servant of the Taker. Should outsiders learn of the presence of the Wooden Sword, many would be inclined to investigate. Lunar authorities consider the group a potential threat to the Empire, given its earlier involvement in the Sartarite rebellion.

## Resources

**Leader:** Lagor of Battle Valley, one of the trolls converted by Londra of Londros when the Temple of the Wooden Sword was active in Sartar a decade ago. Enfrew (see "Organization" below) approached him two years ago and handed him the Sword, with instructions to drive it into the heart of the enemy.

**Renowned Members:** Currently none, as the Sword only recently returned to Dragon Pass.

**Membership:** About 70. Most are humans, but a few elves remain with the band.

**Other Contacts:** 100 or so sworn Aldryami initiates of Fodronu Enchasol guard the Grove of Sacrifice in Arstola Forest. Many are former members of the band, veterans of the temple's campaign in Dorastor several years ago. When the time is right, they will rejoin Oofmarthan. The commander of this guard is former leader Eltang Swiftfoot, the hero who planted the Seed of Destruction in Dorastor.

## Organization

Oofmarthan the Wooden Sword chooses the band and its leader, not the other way around. The internal structure and organization of the band varies with the Sword's needs at the time. Once the current members have served their purpose, Oofmarthan chooses a new band to handle its affairs.

When the Temple disbands without successors, an old human named Enfrew carries and tends the Sword. Throughout the ages, he has often been the one to hand over the Sword to new groups, for he always seems to know where the right people are. No one knows if he is an ancient (perhaps immortal) disciple of Fodronu Enchasol, some god in disguise, or merely the latest in a long line of guardians of the Wooden Sword.

## Membership Keyword

**Membership Requirements:** Swear loyalty to Oofmarthan until death or the Sword itself releases you.

**Skills taught:** Sword Fighting.

**Typical Personality Traits:** Pious, Stoic, Tenacious. Members are required to give up any hatred of elves when they join the band.

**Magic:** None taught. Members are encouraged to become initiates of Fodronu Enchasol (a subcult of Humakt; see previous page), and most do.

## Oofmarthan (Guardian)

Oofmarthan was planted in the Darkness when the world was dying. He was the weapon with which thousands of elves committed ritual suicide rather than being consumed by Oblivion. In this way, they became the fertile soil from which the world could be regrown. When the Wooden Sword was destroyed by Arkat in the First Age, it regrew in the Grove of Sacrifice in Arstola Forest. The site is now avoided by most elves from the forest, who call it the Heart of Darkness.

**Method:** Manifestation.

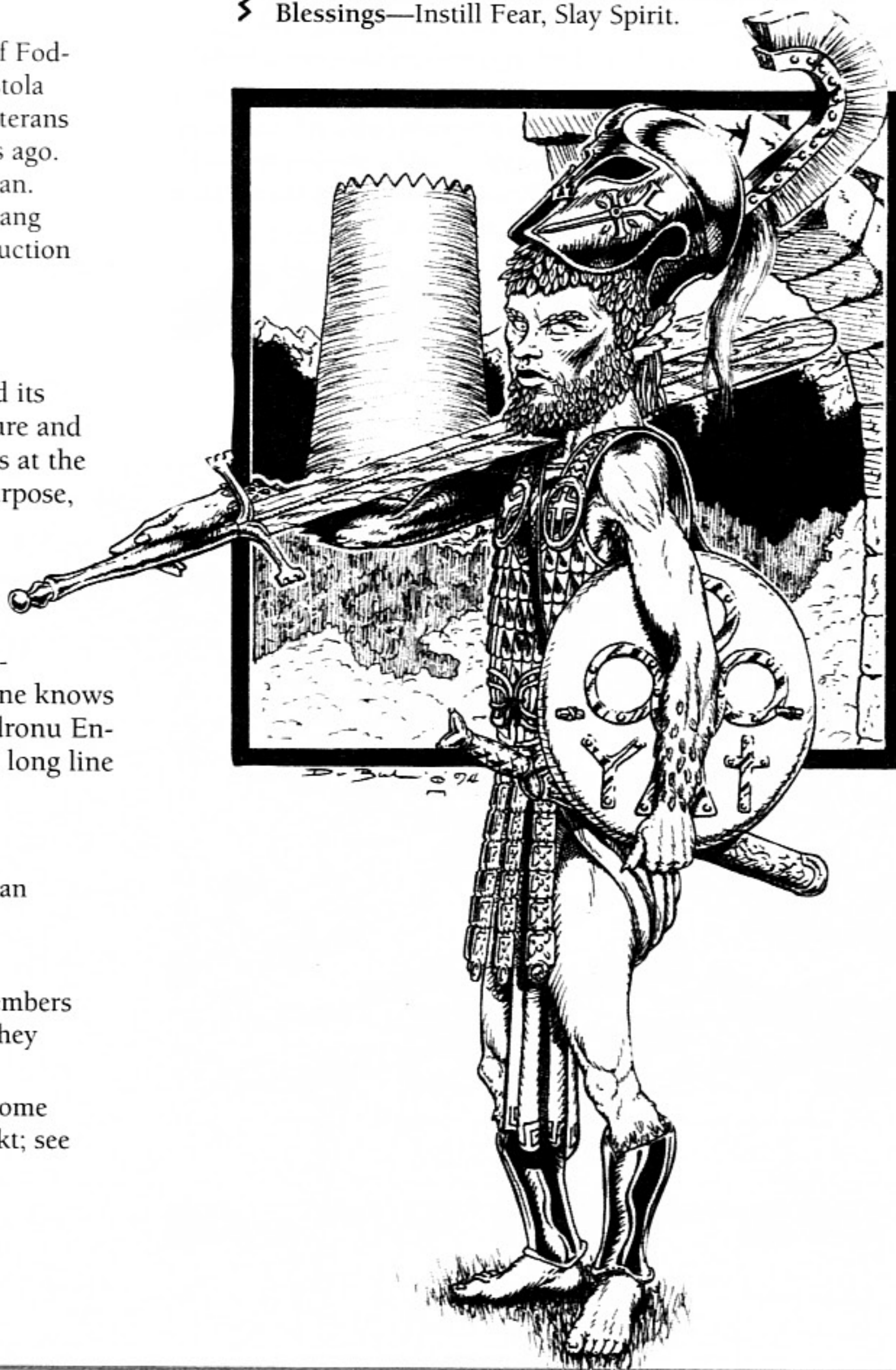
**Form:** A large sword made of a type of wood unknown outside Arstola Forest. It has a +9 weapon bonus (reduced to +6 when used to attack elves or other aldryami).

**Communication:** Members' swords gleam with an eerie light (see **Storm Tribe**, page 93) that only becomes visible to non-members and non-Humakti when Oofmarthan communicates with the band's leader.

**Guardian Requirements:** Kill only for the Grower; live in peace with the bearer of the Sword (who may or may not be the leader of the band).

**Functions:**

- ☉ Awareness—Locate the Heart of the Enemy.
- ☿ Blessings—Instill Fear, Slay Spirit.





# Sea Skippers

"The old world is over, and we can have anything we want."

The Sea Skippers are a group of feared naval mercenaries that operates along the southern Manirian coast, seizing shipping, raiding coastal cities for food, and plundering the occasional small town. They originally sailed as the *Wave Runner* with the Wolf Pirates, and their leader was even more deadly and ruthless than most: Captain Jump. He was killed and his ship burnt in battle, but his loyal crew stayed together, believing the captain still watched over them. The band continued on another ship, the *Sea Skipper*, one of several other ships they have lost.

The Sea Skippers go from ship to ship as hired pirates. They have worked for several Wolf Pirate captains, including Orandlaial and even Harrek himself; for several merchant ships; and even the local Holy Country fleet, which gave them their own ship. They recently earned the enmity of the Alatan pirates after aiding the Admiral of Seapolis in his fateful raid against the pirates' stronghold on Smelch. The Sea Skippers lost their ship once again during the raid, though as always they managed to keep the figurehead that holds their guardian.

Marauders from many lands, eager for rapine and plunder, have sought to join them. The Skippers can run on the waves and are protected when they climb up ropes, both of which make them dangerous foes at sea. This magic is unique among the Wolf Pirates, an ability Captain Jump stole from an otherworld entity on a heroquest. (The entity later manifested in the Inner World, killed him, and cursed the *Wave Runner*.) The other Wolf Pirate captains are jealous of this powerful and useful magic.

**Other Names:** Wave Runners.

**Form:** Mercenary crew of exotic magical fighters.

**Typical Homeland:** Any. Although the leader and core are from the northlands, others are swarthy Southerners from Pamaltela, colorfully dressed Easterners, adventurous barbarians, and chivalrous Westerners.

**Cultural Context:** Pirate band for hire.

**Ideology:** "We like it, we take it." Self-interest, with honor among thieves enforced by Captain Hangaygg.

**Look and Feel:** Swashbuckling ravagers from across the seas of Glorantha.

**Purpose:** To get their own ship once again. To keep members provided for and wealthy with plunder.

**Headquarters:** Whatever ship they are currently on. When they can, the band takes a new ship, usually during a raid but sometimes by mutinying against a (non-Wolf Pirate) captain. When they get a new ship, they eliminate the current guardian and install their own figurehead, thus restoring Captain Jump as their guardian.

**Reactions:** The Sea Skippers usually serve on other ships, and thus usually go unrecognized. When they have their own ship, they are one of many similar Wolf Pirate ships, feared by everyone (especially inhabitants of the southern Genertela coast).

## Resources

**Leader:** Captain Hangaygg is the last person living who knew Captain Jump when he was alive. He is a tough old fighter, a skilled negotiator, and a ruthless enforcer of peace among the crew. His pet Guya, a fan-head lizard captured during a raid in the Machine Ruins, is always perched upon his shoulder. Hangaygg tells people it is mechanical to impress them, but it is a natural animal, albeit an unusual and exotic one to most people.

**Renowned Members:** Ban and Dan, twin Yggites with several swarthy blonde followers. They worship Ygg (see *Hero-Quest*, page 127), and can all summon ice to tear the sails and rigging of enemy ships.

Big Ab, a fearless fighter from the Fronelan coast who wields two huge clubs and commands several followers of his own.

Kuanchuti, a colorful Vithelan who claims to be the rightful viceroy of some distant island. He leads a ragtag group of East Islanders and Teshnans.

Hujaniti the Westerner, a powerful wizard of Saint Waertag who keeps the Closing from destroying the band's ship (when they have one).

**Membership:** Depending on recent missions, the crew numbers as few as 40 or as many as 100.

**Other Contacts:** The band is known and feared now by many people along the seacoast.

## Organization

Hangaygg is the boss; everyone else follows his orders. Any dissenters suffer no shame, for individual fame and skill is respected. These dissenters are closely watched by Hangaygg, either for promotion to more important roles or, if they get too vocal, for an opportunity to "leave the crew" (for good). Participation in





raiding expeditions is voluntary. However, once the Oath of Ygg is sworn for an expedition, each crewman must follow the commands of Hangaygg or be bereft of Captain Jump's protection.

Once a hireling has been accepted, there are only two requirements to remain employed. First, he must maintain loyalty to Hangaygg. Second, he must worship Ygg of Threestep (see *HeroQuest*, page 127), the band's divine patron. Although many members abandon their old religion and initiate or devote themselves to Ygg, not all give up their former faith or magic. Members can meet the requirement by participating in worship as communal worshippers, as if there were a "Ygg Pantheon"; the presence of Captain Jump effectively serves as a shrine to Ygg for this worship. Theists who worship Ygg in this manner gain the normal benefits of communal worship, including the ability to call on Ygg (only) for divine aid. Animists, monotheists, and devotees of other deities do not gain the normal communal worship benefits, and furthermore may be subject to reprisal from their own religions for participating in Ygg's worship. Ygg and Captain Jump have no concern for such problems, and most members of the Wolf Pirates care little as well.

### Membership Keyword

**Membership Requirements:** All applicants must demonstrate their ability to fight on land and sea, be able to show their knowledge of the rigging, and prove their willingness to die for Hangaygg. Proof of piracy and plunder is required, so famous reavers might be automatically accepted, but newcomers will be brought along on a raid and their actions closely watched. If service is sufficient, they will be allowed to join this close-knit crew. In the end, no one really cares who is in the crew, what their background was, or what they think about anything, as long as they do their job and make no trouble.

Crewmembers must also take an oath not to steal from or murder other crewmen (although fights, even to the death, are allowed, with the winner claiming the loser's possessions). Members must obey Hangaygg and do nothing to shame or dishonor the band or ship.

**Skills taught:** Rope Climbing, Sailing, Swimming, Sword Fighting, Use Dagger.

**Typical Personality Traits:** Obedient, Violent.

**Magic:** Some common sailing magic is taught to members who have proven their loyalty. Most crewmen are theists (including original crew members from Ygg's Isles), but some wizards and even a few animists belong as well. Although initiation or devotion to Ygg is not required, it is common among the Sea Skippers and members of most Wolf Pirate ships.

### Captain Jump (Guardian)

Captain Jump is the crew's nickname for the guardian, for not even Hangaygg remembers his real name now; even Captain Jump seems to have forgotten it.

**Method:** Archetype.

**Form:** A beautiful carved and painted figurehead, which the band makes every effort to save when they lose a ship. Captain Jump is embarrassed by the fact that the figurehead is a feminine figure, but efforts to move him to a new home always fail, and usually end up with their ship sinking as well.

**Communication:** Sometimes Hangaygg sounds different when giving orders, and the crew believes that this is the voice of Captain Jump.

**Guardian Requirements:** Swear Ygg's Oath before each raid, to follow and obey Hangaygg. Participate in the communal worship rites to Ygg, even if an animist, monotheist, or devotee of another deity.

**Functions:**

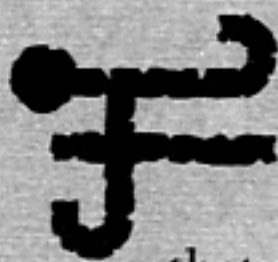
- ☞ Awareness: Sniff Out Beer.
- ☞ Blessing: Run on Water as on Land.
- ☐ Defense: Defense while Climbing Ropes.

## The Wolf Pirates

Harrek the Berserk, the most famous warrior in Glorantha, rules these naval raiders. He convinced many natives of the Ygg's Isles to build ships and sail off for adventure. The fleet of sleek longships came to Maniria and occupied the sparsely populated Threestep Isles south of Kethaela. The pirates ruthlessly attacked the emerging fishing and trade fleets of many ports, and with acts of rapine and lust took whatever they needed to survive and flourish. The peaceful peoples of the coast, unused to such rapacity, were easy prey for these pirates, who are known by such names as Blood of the Howl, Brothers of Sword and Fire, and Boat Sons of Ygg.

The Wolf Pirates are made up of many "hero bands," each with its own ship, crew, and guardian (usually inhabiting the ship's figurehead). The fleet consists of at least several dozen ships, sometimes a hundred or more, with each ship carrying about 20 to 40 crewmen.

Each ship captain is a member of the Ship Council. All captains together make a group decision. As aboard the individual ships, dissenters suffer no shame, for personal fame and skill are respected. Participation in raiding expeditions is voluntary, and overall command is determined by vote of the participating captains. However, once the Oath of Ygg has been sworn for an expedition, each ship captain must follow the commands of the expedition leader.



Harrek the Berserk is the most powerful ship captain, and effectively heads the Ship Council. Although theoretically just one captain among many, all of the other captains fear his wrath, and it is rare that any vote against him or refuse his demand to lead an expedition. His crewmembers are famous for their ferocity and their loyalty to Harrek. Renowned members include Gunda the Guilty, a warrior maiden from Fronela cursed to never know love; Mularik Ironeye, an amoral knight from Seshnela; and Dervalash Mal, highest priest of Ygg.

All crewmembers of a ship must give loyalty to their captain and to the Wolf Pirates as a whole. Beyond that, each captain sets his own requirements to join his crew. Most ships are organized in a manner similar to that of ships from the captain's original homeland.

The Wolf Pirate capital on Threestep Isle, Shipstead, has a large civilian population. These people have some farming and fishing practices. Once simple farmers and fishers, these natives provide a comfortable home for the Wolf Pirates. Although they live in constant fear, they are rarely mistreated, and are among the richest peasants in all Glorantha, thanks to the plunder brought back to the island by the pirates. Their simple houses are lavishly furnished with stolen booty, and many are well dressed for their humble tasks.



# The Silver Shields

"The new world is at our feet!"

The Silver Shields are a modern Imperial unit of the Lunar era. The regiment was founded in Sylila, but has most recently been deployed in the conquests of Dragon Pass and Prax. Its recruits are drawn from across the southern reaches of the Empire and even the Provinces. The predominance of Sylilans is reflected in the relatively large number of worshippers of Hwarin Dalthippa and Odayla the Bear; in recent years, an increasing number of Jajaloring recruits have brought with them both worship of Jajagappa Hunter and their own hunting and war dogs. These are now widely used by the Silver Shields to support their patrols, help herd their animals on the march, and guard encampments. Once deployed in cat-favoring Dragon Pass, the Silver Shields were soon called "Dog Soldiers," meant as a term of abuse but soon adopted by the regiment as an unofficial nickname.

They are hypaspists: medium infantry with spears, scimitars, and javelins, wearing hardened leather breastplates. Their uniform comprises white tunics and brown trews, red parade cloaks, and their namesake silver shields. Able to fight in either close or skirmish order, they are deployed in a variety of roles, from garrison duty to long-range patrols. In Dragon Pass, they have acquired an enviable reputation for being able to engage with Orlanthi warbands in their native hills. Like many such units, the Silver Shields do not hold to the spit and polish of the Dara Happans. Reflecting the flexible and inclusive nature of the Lunar Way, they are professional and disciplined, but neither hide-bound nor rigidly hierarchical.

**Common Names:** The Dog Soldiers.

**Form:** Lunar regiment.

**Typical Homeland:** Dara Happa, Tarsh, any Lunar.

**Cultural Context:** Infantry regiment.

**Ideology:** "Their Death, Our Glory!"

**Look and Feel:** Tough soldiers, informal but professional.

**Purpose:** Victory, survival, and plunder, not necessarily in that order.

**Headquarters:** The regiment's headquarters is in Jillaro, Sylila, but it has not returned there since the deployment to Dragon Pass.

**Reactions:** Aside from the usual unit rivalries, they work well with other Lunar units, though Dara Happans tend to look down on them. In Dragon Pass, the rebels reluctantly respect their abilities and their refusal to involve themselves with the worst atrocities carried out by the Empire.

## Resources

**Leader:** Tribune Orilan, known as the Red Wolf, has only recently been assigned to the regiment following its return from Pavis, but the Vanchite has already won the respect of his troops by his cunning and fearlessness in battle, as well as his willingness to ignore Tattius the Bright's more extreme or brutal orders.

**Renowned Members:** First Centurion Gwindae Arandas, the "Bitch of Bostok".

Centurion Etheliun, three-time champion of the Ganbarri Wrestling Ring.

Optio Lacellus, described by Fazzur as "the best scout and worst rogue in the Pass."

**Membership:** At full strength, the regiment numbers about 1000, but it is rarely at more than 80% strength.

**Other Contacts:** The regiment is part of the Heartland Corps of the Imperial Army.

## Organization

As a modern Lunar unit, the regiment has a structure based on squads of seven soldiers. Two squads are a maniple, under a sergeant. Five maniples plus a command group of 14 soldiers plus a centurion make up a company, a total of 85 members. Ten regular companies, a command company, and a support company make up the full regiment, led by a tribune. There is also a 13<sup>th</sup> company—a depot unit in Jillaro—which is responsible for raising and training new recruits.

## Membership Keyword

**Membership Requirements:** Sign up for at least one seven-year term, swearing loyalty to Moonson and the regiment.

**Skills taught:** Dodge, Mass Combat (Loose Order Infantry), Javelin, Scimitar and Shield Fighting, Silver Shields History, Spear and Shield Fighting, Wilderness Survival.

**Typical Personality Traits:** Adaptable, Loyal, Self-Reliant.

**Magic:** None taught. Many follow Hwarin Dalthippa or Jajagappa Hunter, and most are initiates of Ipharia Elnestratos, the regimental deity (see *Under the Red Moon: Imperial Lunar Handbook, Volume 2*).

## Ipharia's Colors (Guardian)

The regimental standard is a gold and silver bat atop a silver moondisk on a blackwood staff. It has its own nature as a guardian, but also represents the regiment's link to its patron herodeity, Ipharia Elnestratos. If the standard is destroyed, much of the power it provides is lost until a new one has been re-dedicated.

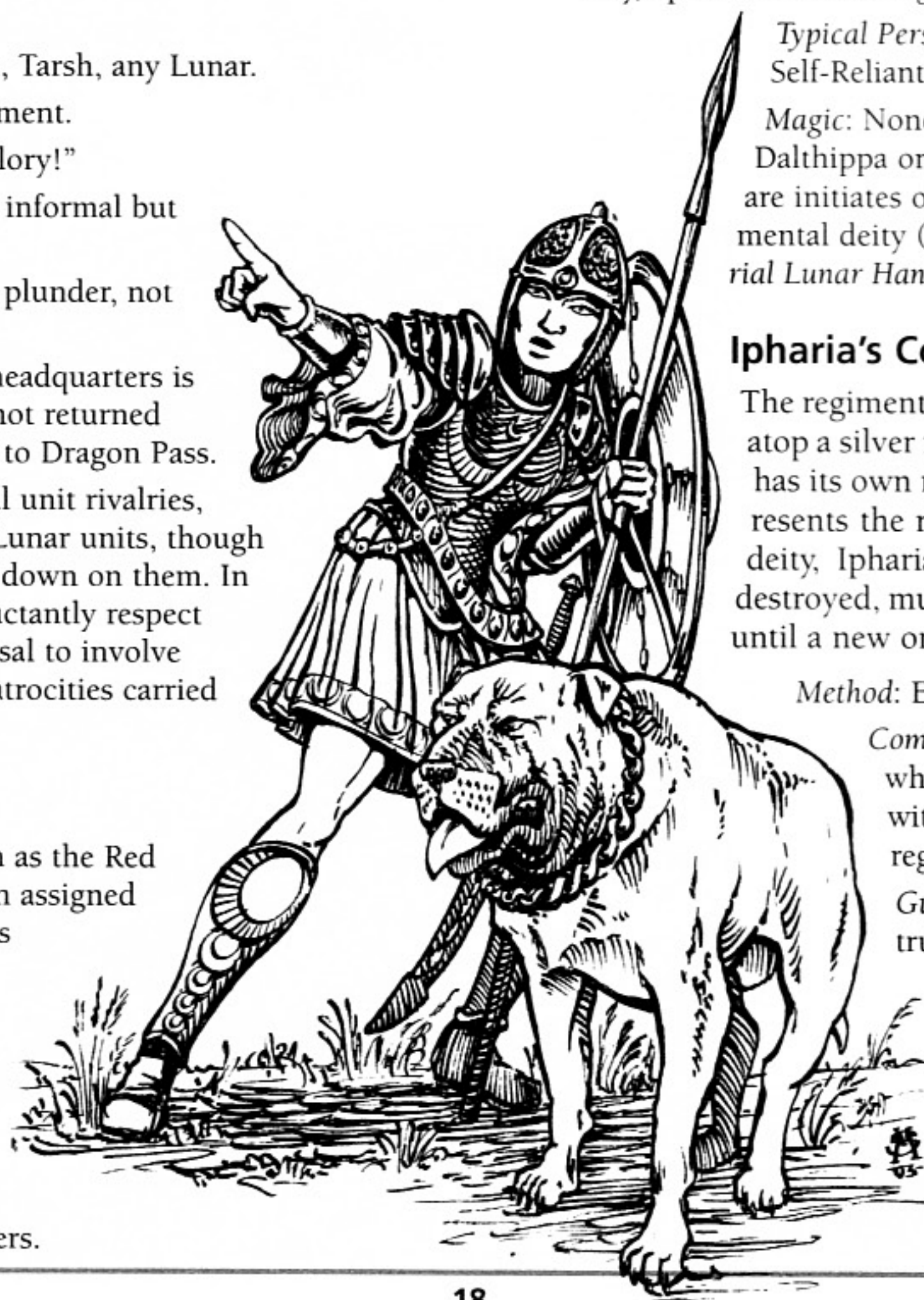
**Method:** Emanation.

**Communication:** Shields glitter when the Colors communicate with members of the regiment.

**Guardian Requirements:** Remain true to the regiment.

**Functions:**

- ☉ Awareness—Sense Presence of Enemy.
- ☼ Blessing—Shining Shield.
- ☐ Defense—Resist Enemy Magic.







# THE WOUNDED WORLD

A career as a healer is not for the faint-hearted. Healers commonly see more bloodshed and suffering in a year than most warriors see in a lifetime. Regardless of circumstances, a healer ought to be able to keep his calm and do his best to help his patients. Yet, few healers are altruistic do-gooders. Some may be (or pretend to be), but most are part of a larger cultural and social context. They have friends and enemies just like everyone else, and while most follow this career because they want to help people, others are driven by less exalted motivations: profit, power, or even just family tradition.

Not all healers are the same—as in any profession, there are specialists, from medicine men to veterinarians, herbalists to exorcists. Some mend relationships, but know little of physical ailments. Others are charlatans who prey on people's misery but lack the proper knowledge to cure them. Furthermore, different magic systems rarely use the same cures: wizards and shamans use different methods to exorcise a possessed person. Nor need healers always fit the “goody-goody” stereotype. Whatever the official doctrines they follow, they are still human beings with all the attendant weaknesses. The devotee of a pacifistic healing goddess, who strives to be respectful of all life, may still have an undying hatred of the man who killed her family.

Non-healer heroes within such a campaign can come from almost any occupation. Hunters provide food, and can scour the wilderness for healing herbs and other necessities. If the patients need cheering up, a good entertainer may be useful. Although some pacifistic bands (like the Little Sisters) refuse armed protection, most acknowledge the value of good bodyguards.

## Scenario Seeds

- A rival healer turns up near the hero band, using alien magics, or maybe no magic at all. You consider him a heathen at best, a charlatan at worst. For all that, he seems popular and successful. Not only is he undermining your support and clientele, he also poses a challenge to your beliefs. Do you undermine, expose, and expel him, despite the good work he seems to be doing?
- Sometimes clichés work: a terrible disease stalks your land. No one can stop it. Until your band discovers an ancient rite, which requires water from this far-away sea, a healing herb from that distant mountain, and so on...

## Everybody Loves a Healer...

Although some healers choose to be poor, this is not typical. Healers are important to any community, and they rarely have a problem earning a decent living. People gladly give them food, shelter, and even money in return for their ministrations. Even when patients are reluctant to pay, most cultures have customs or laws that require reimbursement of one kind or another. In

spite of this, affluent healers are rare, since wealth requires a steady stream of prosperous clients.

Berinda's Daughters rely on members to fend for themselves, but both they and the Little Sisters live off customary gifts and contributions from grateful patients and their families. Additionally, like all who choose not to fight the invaders, the Sisters are treated favorably by the Lunars. The Lunar Empire and its Provincial Church support the Yellow Peony. The White Chapel of Purity is largely self-sufficient, with garden plots, domestic animals, and farmland of its own.

## Scenario Seeds

- The children of a dirt-poor family are taken ill, unable to pay you anything. If you help them all the same, one of your most important patrons hears about your charity. What do you do when he asks for the same generosity?
- An unusual disease is raging. The aristocracy is paying cartloads of money for competent medical aid. Healers are appearing from all over the surrounding area. Are you prepared to compete with other healing bands to get the best-paid work, or are you content to make much less, catering to the poor? What if you are losing clients to the new arrivals?

## ... Or Do They?

Heroes joining a healers' band may well get more excitement than they expected. Accomplished physicians are sought after by the rich and powerful, but if the king dies in his doctor's care, those bodyguards may come in handy! Likewise, healers often accompany warbands. While they do their best to protect their healers (typically placed at the rear of the force in battle), warfare is dangerous for all involved. A unit without healing support is usually doomed, and the enemy knows this. Callous opponents may target healer bands for precisely that reason.

At times, healers have to make difficult choices. Will you heal the enemy soldier that your clan mates just beat to a pulp? Your cult or personal beliefs may lead you to do this, but remember that healers can get in trouble if they aid enemies.

Some healer bands, such as Berinda's Daughters and the Yellow Peony, have agendas other than healing. Similarly, the purpose of the White Chapel is not healing, but protecting The Stream from pollution. These goals easily put them into conflict with others. There might even be times when a guardian's requirements or a band's goals contradict the religious requirements of its members. Do not shy away from the contradictions. Solving conflicts like this is what the Hero Wars are all about.

## Scenario Seeds

- It has been a big battle, but you are prevented from helping the wounded of the defeated side. How much are you willing to risk to save other people's lives?



# Berinda's Daughters

*"The old world is dying, and we must heal the good parts."*

Berinda's Daughters originated over 200 years ago, when a group of healers, tired of the constant infighting among the clans, intervened in a battle between the Blackbird and Red Wool clans. Without regard to personal safety, they entered the battlefield and began to heal the wounded of both sides. Astonished by the healers' bravery, the combatants stopped fighting, and eventually agreed to negotiate. Iristernalde the Karandoling headed the negotiations, and for this boon asked only for the support of the clans in obtaining a suitable guardian for the healers. Divinations were performed, and Ernalda guided the fledgling band to the sleeping goddess Berinda. Iristernalde healed the wounded daimon, who became the patron of the group.

Always opposed to fighting between Quivini (and later, Sartarite) clans, Berinda's Daughters have consistently refused to choose sides in such conflicts. According to their beliefs, inter-clan warfare is not only counterproductive, it is immoral. While the Daughters never hesitate to nurse injured participants back to health, they always condemn the fighting.

Yet the feuding of the clans did not stop. Many members were not content to stand idly by, watching the clans destroy each other. Finally, a priestess of Orventili named Enothea the Soother founded the Little Sisters (see page 22), a group dedicated to preventing the unnecessary violence that the Daughters loathe so much. A special bond formed between the two bands, which shared the same goals. While the Little Sisters healed relationships, Berinda's Daughters healed wounds. Until recently, healers were often members of both bands.

At times, the Little Sisters were overly optimistic, occasionally taking on more than they could manage, such as when they tried to bring about peace with the wolf men. It was the Daughters who restored their mutilated bodies. At other times, they were more successful. When the Aldachurings agreed to join the Kingdom of Sartar, both bands were instrumental in

arranging the marriage that brokered the deal.

Whenever outsiders threaten the clans, the Daughters are there to aid the defenders. When the Horse-spawn stole Heortling farmlands, the Daughters healed the wounded so that they could return to the battle. When undead things emerged from the marsh, many Daughters sacrificed their own lives to save the warriors who fought the abominations. When the Lunar Empire invaded, Berinda's Daughters did not falter. They were at Rune-gate when the Crimson Bat arrived. The Daughters supported the defenders of Boldhome when the kingdom was betrayed by the dragonewts. Many died or were captured, and the few survivors gained an undying hatred of the Empire and its chaotic ways. Among the survivors was Ortossa, the current leader. It is due to her heroic efforts that the group still exists.

Berinda's Daughters have made many sacrifices, and they intend to make sure that these were not in vain. Having changed from a healing band to an anti-Lunar band with a healing focus, they are staunch supporters of the resistance. Since the conquest, the Blood Moon has seduced the Little Sisters. They have become so concerned with peace that they even shut their eyes to the Chaos-tainted nature of the invaders. After the Righteous Wind Rebellion, the Daughters severed all contacts with their former allies: one must never hesitate to choose between good and evil, and the "neutrality" of the Little Sisters definitively and irrevocably branded them as traitors.

*Common Names:* The Daughters, Ortossa's Crew.

*Form:* A band of patriotic healers.

*Typical Homeland:* Heortling.

*Cultural Context:* Nationalists combining a longing for domestic peace with a desire for war against the Empire.

*Ideology:* "All people deserve compassion and a healthy life. Lunars are not people."

## Mother's Little Helpers

### *Heortling Common Religion*

Earth is the Mother, and Mother's Little Helpers provide the healing salves, potions, balms, and poultices made from natural ingredients and empowered by minor daimones, petty spirits, and weak essences (called arlings) that live in the Inner World and inhabit plants, animals, and earths, even air and sunshine.

Mother's Little Helpers know the recipes to create a medicine and the rites to empower it with the proper arling. These medicines then act as a normal common magic feat, charm, or spell, depending on the nature of the arling that inhabits it. Although a worshipper can create as many doses of a medicine as she can find ingredients for, she cannot use the common magic abilities directly, only as augmentations using the medicine. Each arling has only one condition that it can help cure—a Bonemend Arling is useless to help heal a cut.

This common religion has two unusual characteristics. First, even if a worshipper concentrates the appropriate type of magic, she can never use arlings or these common magic abilities actively; a medicine must always augment another ability. On the other hand, any **mundane healing** attempt made using one of the medicines is treated as **minor magic healing** instead (see *HeroQuest*, page 81).

*Entry Requirements:* A sincere wish to heal. Most worshippers are mothers and wives rather than dedicated healers.

*Abilities:* Find Arling, Know Healing Recipe.

*Virtues:* Careful, Caring.

*Common Magic:* Mother's Little Helpers combines ingredients to produce healing medicines. Whether a particular potion is handled as a feat, charm, or spell depends on the arling used in the process.

**R** *Common Magic Abilities*—Bonemend, Cool Fever, Cure Sniffles, Ease Headache, Heal Bruise, Heal Cut, Remove Splinter, Restore Strength, Rub Away Chills, Soothe Child's Pain, Stop Bleeding, Stop Seizure.

*Other Side:* The Little Helper Recipes are found in the home of the dominant Earth goddess of the local pantheon. Each one has a story of how it was made or discovered during the Gods' Age.

Arlings are relatively easy to find, although they may be more or less present in an area of the Inner World depending on many factors, such as location, time of day or year, or being temporarily "used up" by a large battle or epidemic.

**R**



*Look and Feel:* Lunar-hating rebel healers.

*Purpose:* To prevent unnecessary violence among the clans and tribes of Sartar, which can only happen if they throw off the Lunar yoke.

*Headquarters:* Healer's Rock, near Wilmskirk. Members are organized in small groups among the clans around the Quivin Mountains, and rarely all come together.

*Reactions:* Supporters of the rebellion look favorably on the Daughters, but most Chalana Arroy healers believe they are too indulgent towards violence. The Lunars are not yet aware of the band's survival. If the Lunar authorities discover that the band is still active, they are unlikely to brand them as traitors, as most people look unfavorably upon the persecution of healers.

## Resources

*Leader:* Ortossa Moonlayer, devotee of Belveren the Queen. She has single-handedly killed four Lunar investigators who were about to discover the band's survival.

*Renowned Members:* Hengalla Two-Axe, devotee of Babeester Gor, who never leaves Ortossa's side.

*Membership:* About 100. Half are healers; the rest are patriots, bodyguards, and hangers-on. Since Ortossa assumed leadership and violence became an option, most pacifists, such as worshippers of Chalana Arroy, have turned to other groups (such as the Little Sisters).

*Other Contacts:* Ortossa has a close relationship with Gyffur Ulfsson of the Hidden Gale warband. Both have experienced great loss, and both are famous for their hatred of the Lunars. They are said to be lovers.

## Organization

Berinda's Daughters are organized in a number of small groups, who have only little contact with each other. Members know only the identities of those in their own group, and of a single contact in one of the other groups. This secrecy was only adopted recently, and many members are uncomfortable with this change. Everybody knows that Ortossa Moonlayer is the leader, but few have met her in person.

## Membership Keyword

*Membership Requirements:* Hate Lunars 17 or greater and any healing ability with a rating of 13 or higher. Non-healers are accepted as long as they are deemed useful and trustworthy. These days, the Daughters are quite willing to set aside their differences with almost anyone opposed to the Imperial expansion, including former enemies such as the Grazers, Praxians, and Beast-men. Chaos is the enemy, whether it comes in the form of tentacled monsters or seductive words. Therefore, members always oppose Chaos and support those who fight the Predark.

*Skills taught:* First Aid, Heal while Fighting.

*Typical Personality Traits:* Courageous, Hate Lunars.

*Magic:* Berinda's Daughters are friendly to the Storm Pantheon. Most healer members worship Ernalda the Healer; Bevara is the most popular subcult. Many are also members of various common magic religions, such as Mother's Little Helpers (see previous page). Non-healer members are often taught this common magic as well, although wizardry of any kind is abhorred as a sorcerous tool of Chaos and the Lunars. (Determining that a given common magic ability is a spell is not always easy, but members will often ask, so burning is their hatred of the Lunars and anything they feel is associated with them.)

## Berinda (Guardian)

Berinda was a granddaughter of Ernalda who healed Vingkot's people during the Great Darkness. She was wounded by Empty Eloquence, a Chaos demon, and was forgotten until found and healed by Iristernalde in 1412.

*Method:* Emanation.

*Form:* An amber cup, which Ortossa carries with her at all times. The cup is a unique item, giving a +20 ritual bonus to appropriate healing magic, such as the preparation of ointments, salves, and potions.

*Communication:* Water pours from the cup when Berinda speaks to the leader.

*Guardian Requirements:* Never exaggerate, use flattery, or tell a lie.

*Functions:*

- ☉ Awareness—Find Wounded People.
- ⚡ Blessing—Feign Death.
- ☐ Defense—Work Past Exhaustion.





# The Little Sisters

"The old world is over, and we must stop the bloodshed."

The Little Sisters are a peaceable and relatively humble hero band, first established among what were then the free tribes of southern Dragon Pass more than 150 years ago. Since that time they have traveled throughout the kingdom, helping to calm excessive passions and ease the inter-clan bloodshed that they believe can only weaken the kingdom. They rejoiced when Sartar unified his kingdom, and looked forward to a time of great peace and prosperity.

The Little Sisters were originally part of Berinda's Daughters (see page 20), and there has always been a special bond between the two bands. Until recently, many healers were members of both bands. They often came to each other's aid, such as when Kolla, a leader of Berinda's Daughters in Sartar's time, almost began a blood feud with the Black Cherry Clan. Her son was killed by one of their weaponthanes and she was blinded by hatred. The Little Sisters intervened, restored her vision, and made peace. On another occasion, the Daughters rescued the Sisters from the treacherous Spitting Disease, saving them from certain doom. When the Aldachurings agreed to join the Kingdom of Sartar, the Sisters were instrumental in setting up the alliance. Initially, the Daughters were skeptical as to the advantage of such an arrangement. Only because of the involvement of High King Terasarin did they support the endeavor. Despite this and other disagreements, the two bands always remained allies.

When the Lunars first appeared, the Little Sisters first treated them as outsiders—exactly the sort of foe that the Sartarites should stop fighting each other to defend against. In the years since the conquest, however, they have had to deal with

the invaders rather more directly. Many among the hero band have begun to believe that a peaceful accommodation can be reached with the Lunars, and they strive to find that compromise so that both peoples can live alongside one another without bloodshed. The Sisters are implacably opposed to Chaos, of course, and decry the Lunars' atrocities. They recognize, though, that there are those among the Lunars who act nobly, and who can ease the needless suffering that Chaos and overzealous local commanders alike can bring.

According to the Sisters, Berinda's Daughters have let their hatred of the Lunars interfere with their compassion. Refusing to believe in a peaceful solution to the conflict, the Daughters have severed all contact with their former allies. A couple of years ago, Sister Taraldesta took a peace rug to the Daughters, but returned with a basket full of threads. The two groups have had no contact since.

**Form:** Inter-clan healing association.

**Typical Homeland:** Heortling.

**Cultural Context:** An independent band of healers and peace-seekers that moves among the clans and tribes.

**Ideology:** "Conflict is caused by misunderstanding. If we can create comprehension, we can bring an end to needless suffering and death."

**Look and Feel:** Mellow peaceniks.

**Purpose:** To prevent unnecessary violence among the peoples and clans of Dragon Pass. More recently, to help achieve this goal by reaching a peaceful détente with the Lunars.

**Headquarters:** Boldhome.

**Reactions:** Heortling feelings about the Little Sisters are ambivalent. On the one hand, they are part of an ancient tradition, prevent many needless deaths, and are valued as neutral arbitrators. On the other hand, they often interfere with justified feuds, and many think them impractical and overly idealistic in a world where violence should always be an option. Their recent overtures to the Lunars cause many to label them as collaborators, traitors to their true heritage.

## Kesta the Preparer

*Subcult of Ernalda Allmother*

Kesta prepares the food for Ernalda's household. She made the great feast at Orlanth and Ernalda's wedding. When Ernalda was sleeping and the cooking fires had gone out, she helped the Vingkotlings find cold victuals in a dying world. When, finally, there was nothing left to eat, she joined her mistress in the Underworld, where she became the splendourbread the gods ate so that they could live again.

Kesta is one of the Household Goddesses (see *Thunder Rebels*, page 32), and is normally worshipped as a subcult of Ernalda Allmother.

**Skills:** Cook, Find Provisions.

**Affinities:**

✕ **Prepare Food** (Bake Bread Blessing, Cook without Heat, Keep Food Hot, A Little Goes a Long Way, Prepare Huge Meal)

**Bless Family feat:** Ease Hunger.

**Secret:** **Bake Splendourbread** (The devotee can bake magical splendourbread. When she feeds it to any being it acts as minor magical healing; on a complete victory, a recently dead being can even be returned to life. When given to a quester at the beginning of certain Orlanth and Ernalda heroquests, the splendourbread (using the devotee's rating) can be used to open the way to the Otherworld or to provide aid later during the quest.)





## Resources

**Leader:** Sister Taraldesta, an aged priestess of Orventili. Her inability to heal the Sisters' most important relationship (that with Berinda's Daughters) causes her immense pain. She is so distressed that her health is beginning to deteriorate. No one has managed to put a smile on her face in over five years.

**Renowned Members:** By the nature of the group, very few of the Sisters attain fame during their own lifetimes.

Erynn Mercy is an old woman, and a former member of the Sartar High Council. She is much respected all through Sartar, although many are disgruntled or confused by her willingness to heal the enemies of Orlanth. She is used to this, and very patient.

The young Sister Jareena Rockflower has recently become well known for healing a long standing feud between the Karaling and Ivorti clans, although her stunning beauty may be as much a factor in the spread of her renown.

The twin brothers Bren and Brol have gained a reputation for their calm tempers, as well as for currently being the only two male members of the band.

Malta Foodmaker is a devotee of Kesta the Preparer whose cooking can calm even the most violent stomach. Once she made a stew so wonderful that even the winds stopped to smell it. Her husband is Orlebard the Fat, who obeys her every command so that he may experience her renowned cuisine again and again.

**Membership:** About 40. The Little Sisters have no bodyguards. They are convinced that their credibility as peacemakers would be harmed if they traveled with armed guards, even traditional female guards like Maran or Babeester Gor worshippers (see *Storm Tribe*, pages 220 and 202, respectively).

**Other Contacts:** The Little Sisters can reasonably expect to receive aid from temples of Chalana Arroy and Ernalda when needed, but members generally survive on the hospitality of various clans and towns throughout Sartar. Only the most extreme of war clans would deny them basic Heortling hospitality, no matter what they think of their specific policies.

## Organization

As a small hero band, the Little Sisters do not require a complex organizational structure. The leader of the band is selected by a typical Heortling vote by all members; often, only one candidate comes forward.

The Little Sisters commonly travel in small groups, spread throughout Sartar, and only come together as a whole at pre-arranged locations two or three times a year. When in small groups, the most experienced Sister has seniority in those rare instances that require such a distinction. In any event, individuality and personal conscience are stressed within the band, as in so many other Heortling institutions.

## Membership Keyword

**Membership Requirements:** Take a vow to prevent unnecessary violence wherever possible. Must not be initiated into any cult with a *Combat*, *Death*, or similar affinity. There is no proscription against male members, but they are unusual.

**Skills taught:** Calm Tempers, Negotiate.

**Typical Personality Traits:** Calm, Gentle, Idealistic.

**Magic:** Most members follow Orventili or Chalana Arroy, although other Ernalda worshippers are not unknown.

## Enothea the Soother (Guardian)

A priestess of Orventili named Enothea the Soother founded the Little Sisters shortly before Sartar entered Dragon Pass. Originally a member of Berinda's Daughters, she felt that more could be done to prevent the unnecessary bloodshed among the Quivini tribes. After her death, her soul has continued to guide the band, acting through her successors.

**Method:** Archetype.

**Communication:** A feeling of peace descends on all members of the band when Enothea communicates with the leader.

**Guardian Requirements:** Never strike a blow or say a word in anger.

**Functions:**

- ☉ Awareness—See Price of Peace.
- ⚡ Blessing—Sound Reasonable.
- ☐ Defense—Soothe Passions.





# The Yellow Peony

*"The old world is over, and the new world must be freed of its pain."*

The Yellow Peony is dedicated to easing suffering among the poor of the world. Founded by Teelo Norri nuns in the Lunar city of Jillaro, it has since expanded to include healers and other charity workers from a variety of Imperial cults. It has "shelters" throughout the southern portion of the Empire. It recently established a shelter in Sartar, helping the many beggars made homeless by the Conquest and subsequent upheavals.

Members do not attempt to convert others to the Lunar Way (leaving that to groups such as the Provincial Church) and have no interest in politics. They work for no consideration except the satisfaction of helping other human beings, and their efforts are concentrated purely on soup kitchens and homeless shelters. Most Heortlings, of course, do not believe a word of this. Lunars are the enemy; anything that appears to contradict that must be a trick, a smokescreen to hide some sinister reality. To these die-hard cynics, the Yellow Peony cannot just be helpers of the needy, they must also have an ulterior motive for being in Sartar.

Those who believe this are right. But not for the reasons they think.

Twenty years ago, after the Crimson Bat was used at Rune-gate and Boldhome to conquer Sartar, the leadership of the Yellow Peony came to a difficult conclusion: Chaos is not good for the Empire. Chaos only harms the world; it cannot be safely harnessed as some priestesses of the Red Goddess claim. In order to bring about the genuinely better world that the Goddess promises, the influence of Chaos must be fought wherever it rears its head. These beliefs were hardly something that they could tell the religious hierarchy about; Chaos was far too widespread—not just in deluded religious rites, but also, more importantly, in the Lunar military. If the band's true feelings were known, they could be crushed as dissidents, all their good work destroyed.

Instead, the Yellow Peony clandestinely fights the influence of Chaos in the Empire using all the non-violent means at their disposal. Politics, magic, and entangling bureaucracy are their primary weapons, although they do not shirk from employing violence when necessary. Their mission to Sartar helps to counteract the excesses of the military, in addition to its genuinely charitable work.

Since the fall of Whitewall last year, when the Bat was again used, they have accelerated their mission. They actively seek ways to expand the fight against Chaos, and are even considering alliances with traditional Heortling anti-Chaos groups such as the Storm Bulls. They are also concerned about the effects the Great Winter may have had: people are starving in Sartar, and they fear that weather patterns throughout Glorantha may have been altered, with disastrous effects.

**Common Names:** The Yellow Poison (Heortling nickname).

**Form:** Charitable institution.

**Typical Homelands:** Dara Happa, Heortling, Sylila, Tarsh.

**Cultural Context:** A state-supported charity under the aegis of the Provincial Church.

**Ideology:** "The world is in pain, and we can help heal it."

**Look and Feel:** A band of healers with suspiciously effective combat and magical support.

**Purpose:** Officially, to provide food and medical support for the most disadvantaged members of society. Secretly, to prevent the rise of Chaos.

**Headquarters:** The Shelter of the Yellow Peony, Jillaro.

Smaller shelters are located in other Lunar cities (especially in the south of the Empire) and in Boldhome.

**Reactions:** Most Lunars regard the Yellow Peony as a beneficial charity, the caring face of the new religion. Old style Dara Happans and some members of the Lunar military regard them as time-wasters that could more usefully employ their resources elsewhere. More fanatical Lunars, who either believe in the integration of Chaos as a religious tenet or who are more concerned with the Empire's continued expansion regardless of its potential cost on society, would naturally be very unhappy if they learned of the group's true purpose. This is the primary reason for the group's secrecy, since such potential enemies can be very influential in the Lunar government.

Heortling attitudes towards the Yellow Peony vary. Most regard them as a corrupting influence, pretending to provide benefit while secretly seeking to destroy traditional ways of life and (ironically) bring everyone into the worship of Chaos. Less conservative members of society react to them neutrally, as an outside influence with little meaning to their everyday lives. Destitute beggars and others they have helped in the past are generally much better disposed toward the group.

## Resources

**Leader:** Mother Fara, a priestess of Teelo Norri from Holay, is the leader of the mission to Dragon Pass.

**Renowned Members:** Entragon, a Heortling devotee of Rigsdal who serves as Mother Fara's bodyguard (and an occasional covert Chaos fighter).

Sarassi Elvor, a Pranjalan healer who herself came from a desperately poor background on the streets of Furthest, and is as dedicated to the cover mission of the group as to its secret one.

Gralara, a follower of Belveren from the backwoods of Aggar, who is far more skilled at combat than is typical of healers.

Kendur, a hunter from the highlands of Sylila who follows the Moon Bear. He is actually in Sartar because of his knowledge of tracking and other wilderness skills, but appears to be just another charity worker when he is present at the shelter.

**Membership:** The Yellow Peony has over a thousand members, not counting part-time volunteers. About three dozen are presently active in Dragon Pass.

**Other Contacts:** The Yellow Peony is on generally good terms with most Lunar healing cults, and can count on their support, at least where its public activities are concerned. However, members have clashed with military authorities in the past, which occasionally affects dealings with local commanders.



## Organization

The Yellow Peony is organized around its shelters, each led by a devotee (of either gender) titled the "Mother." The Mother appoints various other members as necessary to keep the shelter running, but the exact style of administration is largely at her discretion. The Mothers are appointed by the Bouquet, a council of priestesses based at the shelter in Jillaro. The aristocratic Deezolan priestess Mother Sibillaria Hentos is the official leader of the band. She deals with fellow nobles, government officials, and other potential large sponsors on their behalf, but is mostly a figurehead. Unbeknownst to outsiders, real power belongs to Mother Ensla, a Sylilan priestess of Teelo Norri who works with her fellow members of the Bouquet to organize the band's less publicized activities.

Obviously, people who join the Yellow Peony do so because they agree with its stated objectives of aiding the poor, not because they know of its clandestine purpose. Only those with clear sympathies for the group's true ideology are inducted into its secrets, and only they are sent on important missions, such as the one to Dragon Pass.

## Membership Keyword

**Membership Requirements:** Avoid excess wealth and property. (In game terms, *Wealth* may not exceed 20. Should it ever rise above this level, the excess must be donated to the hero band to support its charitable works.)

**Skills taught:** Cook Soup, Soothe Anguish, Work Long Hours. (These abilities and traits are not essential for support staff such as guards and traders.)

**Typical Personality Traits:** Calm, Charitable, Gentle.

**Magic:** None taught. Members come from many cults. Although the group does not discriminate against animists or monotheists, most members tend to follow theist goddesses, such as Teelo Norri, Deezola, Erissa, Belveren, Chalana Arroy (especially the Pranjala and Natyrza subcults), and Jera. (The Heortling goddesses listed are worshipped not just by members in Sartar, but by some in southern Peloria as well).

## Grand Mother Tiella (Guardian)

The band's fourteenth-century founder still watches over her flock. She taught that, just as the peony flower is a fragile source of beauty that can nonetheless bloom from a hardy shrub, so could apparently weak women be strong enough to make a real and lasting difference in the world. Also, just as the peony is usually pink but can sometimes be golden yellow, so can a charity shelter shine as an unexpectedly bright light in the gloom of poverty-stricken streets.

**Method:** Emanation.

**Form:** A brilliant golden peony preserved and embedded within a solid piece of clear crystal.

**Communication:** Grand Mother Tiella communicates with her followers through dreams.

**Guardian Requirements:** Never refuse a genuine request for shelter or sustenance.

**Functions:**

- ☞ Awareness—See Disease.
- ☞ Blessing—Soup Makes the Meal.
- ☐ Defense—Avoid Attention.





# The White Chapel of Purity

*"We healed the Old World; we can heal the New World."*

In the Quivin Mountains is a stream of pure essential water—it has no daimones or spirits, only pure essence water originating in the Essence Planes. As it flows from the headwaters called Oshjalaba, theistic and even a few animistic rivers flow into it, diluting the waters. It flows into a large lake, called Kjartan's Pool; it is here that most of the dilution of the waters occurs.

Oshjalaba has been here since the time of Danmalastan. In the Third Action, Malkion blessed the place. At that moment, the barrier to the Essence Planes was breached and the Stream Maiden flowed into the World of Matter. In the Dawn Age, Prior Aldosar led a group of Malvonian adepts in the footsteps of Malkion to seek Oshjalaba. They established the Chapter and began worship of the Stream Maiden. The monks survived hidden in the secret glade of Oshjalaba during the Dragonkill Era. They thought they were the last of humankind until they were "rediscovered" by wandering Heortling clansmen in the early 1400s.

Strange things happen to those that venture near Oshjalaba, the most commonly manifested being memory loss. Those affected remember some generalities but no specifics of their time in the area. This dramatically affects theists and animists, especially devotees and shamans; those who use mixed magic suffer fewer effects, while members of wizardly religions or organizations do not feel this effect at all. The Chapter relies upon this effect to help defend Oshjalaba against discovery.

The waters attract wizardly creatures from near and far. Memovores (*Anaxial's Roster*, page 207) cross from the Otherworld through Oshjalaba, another reason for the memory problems experienced by visitors. Recently, a magnificent eskaval (*Anaxial's Roster*, page 204) entered the Inner World, surely a sign of great healing for the world and a return to the perfection and tranquility of Danmalastan.

**Common Names:** The Maidens of The Stream.

**Form:** Small band of sedentary wizardly healers.

**Typical Homeland:** Seshnela.

**Cultural Context:** When known, the Chapter is a misunderstood order of healers who sometimes use their special magics to heal the people of Sartar.

**Ideology:** "Be one with us, be one with The Water."

**Look and Feel:** Monks and nuns clad in pale blue and white, living in a tranquil glade.

**Purpose:** To protect The Stream from pollution and Oshjalaba itself from any corruption or damage. They heal outsiders who come here only because to do otherwise would be a breach of the trust passed on to them by Malkion the Healer. They have no desire to see outsiders come, and less to see them leave for fear of exposure, but they never try to force anyone to stay. They always use the *Forget Painful Memory* blessing on those who insist on leaving such a peaceful and beautiful place.

**Headquarters:** Oshjalaba, a hidden glade at the headwaters of The Stream; its exact location is hidden, unknown to most outsiders.

**Reactions:** As godless "meldeks," the healers of the Chapter are regarded with fear and suspicion by all right-thinking Heortlings. However, they are also pacifist healers, who some claim are following a manifestation of Chalana Arroy. As a result, most Heortlings will not take direct action against them, but will avoid them unless in desperate straits. Most Heortlings who have visited the glade remember only the beautiful nuns that reside here, not where Oshjalaba is or how to get there.

## Saint Bertorl

*Patron of Missionaries*

Bertorl was a Loskalmi cleric, but he was dissatisfied with the religious teachings of his day. Once he acquired a copy of *The Abiding Book*—viewed as heretical in Loskalm at that time—however, he found exactly what he had been searching for. Bertorl prayed to God for guidance. It was revealed to him that his future lay not in Loskalm (where others would pick up the torch and convince the unbelievers) but in the far off lands where the Word of God was yet unknown. He traveled throughout eastern Fronela, enduring great hardships in his quest to bring Malkion's Word to the heathen. He was canonized many years after his death.

Saint Bertorl is followed by those who live in heretical or heathen lands, especially missionaries. He is represented as a middle-aged man with a full beard, wearing simple robes and carrying a walking staff and a book. His symbol is a goose, representing his love of river travel.

**Entry Requirements:** Show dedication to spread the Word of God and teachings of Saint Bertorl.

**Churches:** Hrestoli, Rokari, Ship of Life.

**Abilities:** Know Culture of [Foreign Land], Know Saint Bertorl, Resist Inclement Weather, Rule of Saint Bertorl, Rural Survival Skills, Walk Far.

**Liturgists only—Venerate Saint Bertorl.**

**Typical Relationships:** Member of Saint Bertorl's Mission.

**Virtues:** Evangelical, Stoic.

**Scripture:** *The Life of Saint Bertorl*

△ **Common Blessings**—Bear Witness, Forget Painful Memory, Preach Clean Living, Reconsecrate Talismans.

✂ **Special Blessings**—Bless Shelter, Find Path, Masterful Oratory, Stave off Illness, Walk Without Rest.

⚔ **Curses**—Silence Questioner.

**Formularies:**

⚔ **Book of the Wild** (Calm Raging River, Calm Storm, Ignore Cold, Ignore Pain, Purify Water, Survive Without Food, Turn Aside Hostile Blow)

⚔ **Book of the Word** (Calm Temper, Fill with God's Love, Make Voice Carry, Omnilingual, Overcome Pagan Magic)

**Talismans:** Orderlies use ornate bookmarks (their only luxury) as talismans, which they place in their holy books.

**Other Side:** Saint Bertorl's Foreign Mission lies on the Saint Plane, where it connects to Solace and also to Saint Talor's node.

**Disadvantages:** The missionaries of Saint Bertorl are generally expected to observe his example of simple poverty, although there are exceptions.





## Resources

**Leader:** Abbess Alicia de la Source. The illegitimate daughter of a Seshnegi knight and an Esvulari noblewoman, Alicia has chosen a life of seclusion where she can be helpful without having to suffer the jibes of her former peers.

**Renowned Members:** Prior Dontran is the community's leading liturgist; close proximity to the waters keeps him less infirm than might be expected for his advanced years.

Nivien is a specialist in healing afflictions of the mind, bringing peace to those who have been warped.

Heortlings who distrust the Chapter point to Brygga, a former Chalana Arroy devotee who abandoned her goddess to learn "sorcerous" healing and now lives with those who converted her.

Hrinif the unicorn travels the surrounding area, leading wounded animals to the healing waters.

Perhaps the most unusual resident is the dark troll, Arblug. Healed of a Chaos wound by the waters, he has sworn to defend the community from potential raiders.

**Membership:** About 20 of the 30 permanent members are monks and nuns. At any given time, there are also a number of people and animals recuperating here, but most do not remain for long after they are healed.

**Other Contacts:** At Oshjalaba there is a chapel to Saint Bertorl, Patron of Missionaries, giving members of the Chapter access to the blessings contained in his scripture:

## Organization

The White Chapel provides a place of solace within the world of man, a sanctuary in the hurricane of the Hero Wars. The permanent residents are mostly monks and nuns, dedicated to the life here. Some hold specific positions, such as being in charge of accommodations or food supplies; however, all share in the work of the community and serve its needs, whether that means healing the sick or performing menial labor. A few, like Arblug, are not monks, but carry out other duties.

The body of monks elects the Abbot or Abbess; of course, the Maiden herself must also bless the individual they choose. A Prior leads most daily religious services, and acts as the Abbot's deputy. The Maiden of The Stream occasionally sends members out on specific tasks, often to "heal" some impurity. The Chapter sometimes visits nearby Heortlings who might be "polluting" The Stream (too many cows fouling the waters, too much wood floating in the waters, etc.) and try to teach them better ways.

## Membership Keyword

**Membership Requirements:** Full membership requires renouncing the mixed world of magic and giving oneself to the Essence as a monk. Anyone in need can receive healing from the Chapter, regardless of race or religion.

**Skills taught:** Care for the Sick, First Aid, Worship God.

**Typical Personality Traits:** Calm, Pious, Reserved.

**Magic:** None taught. All members benefit from the blessings invoked during the weekly chapel services. The magic of the waters themselves is due to their purity; the healing powers are only the most obvious manifestation of their true effect. The imbibed waters remove "impurities." The grosser, more obvious impurities (such as illness) are healed first, but physical scars soon follow, and eventually even prejudice and hatred succumb to the waters' effect. Theist souls and animist spirits are also affected, being gradually "purified" into essence. Beings of mixed spiritual nature, such as most users of common magic, notice

little effect, but dedicated members of theist or animist religions find their magic impeded and eventually lose access to it altogether.

Furthermore, beings with more "pure" souls or spirits receive less mundane benefit from the waters, which treat the pure soul or spirit as the most serious impurity of the imbibitor and spend all of their energy working futilely against that instead of in healing. Some members of the Chapter believe that even a physical body is an impurity; they bathe in the headwaters daily, hoping to become, in time, entities of pure essence.

## The Maiden of The Stream (Guardian)

The Maiden of The Stream was called from the Primal Plane and blessed by Malkion in the Third Action. She regularly travels the length of The Stream as far as Kjartan's Pool, and occasionally follows the narrowing pure waters all the way to the Upland Swamp, working to keep The Stream pure.

**Method:** Manifestation.

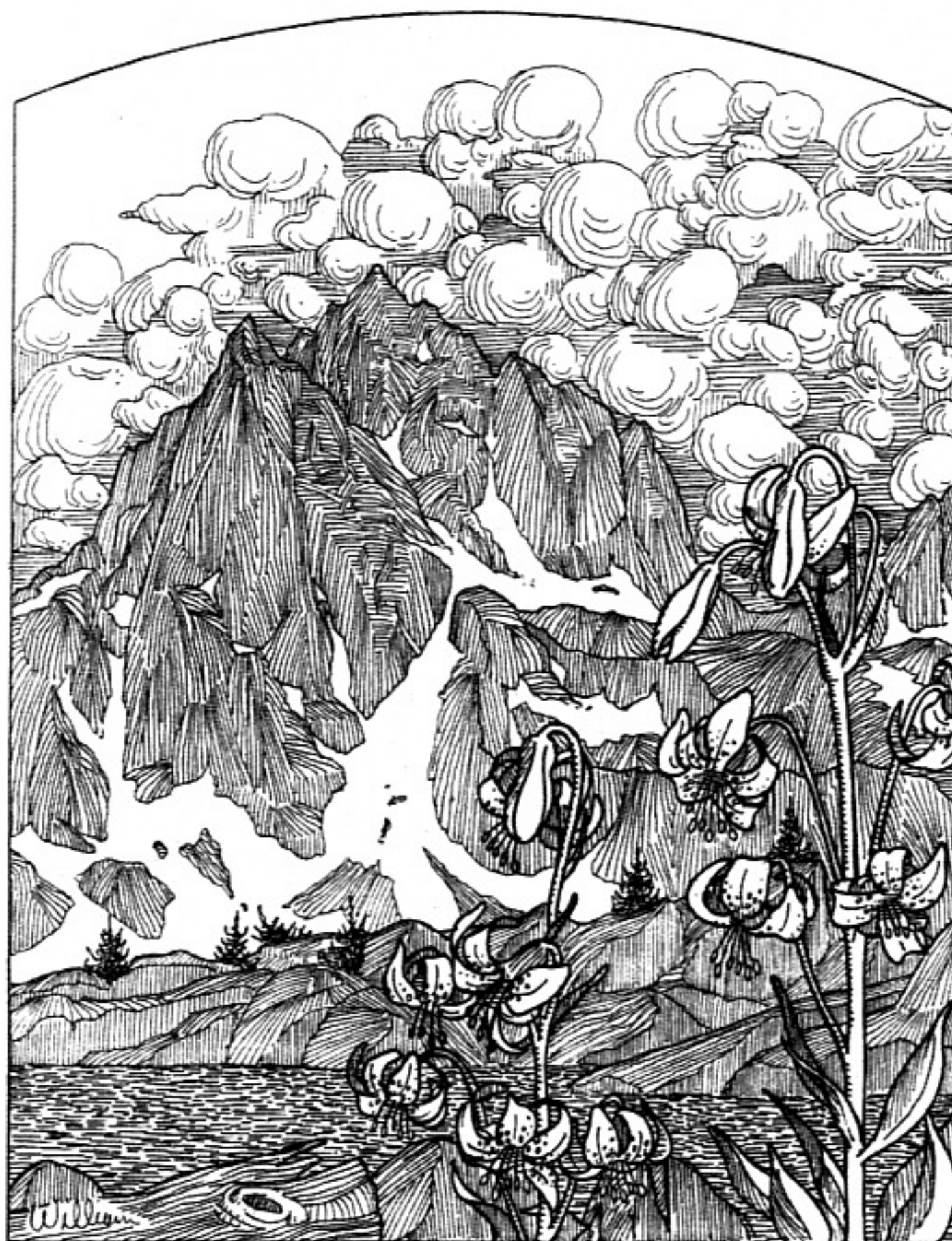
**Form:** She can take the form of a pale blue, unicorn-headed female. Most of the time, she appears to a being as an especially attractive female member of its own species.

**Communication:** She seems to speak aloud on the rare occasions she communicates, but members hear her in their native tongue. Non-members hear only the sound of rippling waters when she speaks.

**Guardian Requirements:** Membership (even associate) requires taking a vow of pacifism and vegetarianism and promising to aid the Chapter in whatever way the member can.

**Functions:**

- ☉ Awareness—Sense Impurity.
- ⚡ Blessing—Indescribable Beauty.
- ☐ Defense—Divert Creature of Essence.







# SEARCHING FOR TRUTH

A scholar may want power, prestige, respect, security, fame, or even adventure, but what defines him is the basic drive to learn. A scholar's campaign will therefore be built around that drive. Nonetheless, heroes with a variety of motivations and backgrounds can fit into such a game.

## Scholars of All Shapes and Sizes

"Scholars" need not always be full-time professionals like the followers of Lhankor Mhy, Buserian, or Irippi Ontor. A dedicated amateur will generally have a knowledge base narrower than but as deep as a professional's. A seemingly hide-bound Lunar bureaucrat may just see his job as a necessary chore that allows him to indulge his real passion, that of collecting rare artifacts. A hard-bitten mercenary's expertise in military matters could extend to a detailed knowledge of military writings in a dozen languages. The current ruler of Sartar, Prince Temertain, has a keen interest in Brithini iron statuary (indeed, a greater interest in that subject than in administering Sartar). Furthermore, even professional scholars will generally need allies, supporters, servants, and protectors. Thus, one of the key factors defining a scholar's campaign is the nature of the scholars, as individuals and as a group. What are their interests or primary fields of study? More importantly, to what purpose do they put their learning?

The heroes' homelands may provide some of the answers to these questions, but scholars are a freethinking and fractious lot, and even two scholars from the same culture may have very different goals. For example, both Minaryth Purple (see *Orlanth is Dead!*, page 40) and his rival Tosti Rune friend (*Barbarian Adventures*, pages 18-19) are likely to patronize the Jevdur Temple from time to time. However, while Minaryth is a dedicated supporter of the Rebellion, to whom knowledge is a weapon to be wielded to that end, Tosti is primarily interested in knowledge as an end in itself.

Many times, the group to which a scholar belongs will determine the cause for which he toils. Bevegoroi's Open Eyes are primarily Lunar intelligence-gatherers, for example, while the Servants of the Almighty Dragons are motivated by their possibly bizarre but undeniably firmly-held search for draconic enlightenment.

If a scholar is not solely a professional savant, her primary occupation may shape her goals. Especially appropriate amateur scholars include healers whose study of medicine goes beyond the immediately practical, merchants who compile accounts of their travels for an ethnographic survey, or petty nobles who have taken advantage of the educational opportunities provided by their rank. Of course, there is no reason why a scholar could not just as easily be an entertainer who gathers and compares the songs of different peoples in a quest to uncover Donandar's core melodies, or a former general who spends his retirement poring over accounts of ancient battles.

## Scenario Seeds

- A local clan chieftain and a Lunar official contact you at about the same time, seeking to enlist your services in gathering information. You sense that they have deeper motivations, most likely related to the Rebellion (each on his own side, of course). Whose side will you join? Can you work for both of them? If not, can you work for one and still remain neutral?
- People whose cause you support (whether the Empire, the Rebellion, or something else) ask you to spread disinformation relating to your field, relying on your reputation to give it an appearance of truth. Are you prepared to sacrifice your morals, risk your standing, and possibly undermine your religion for them?

## The Greasy Pole

Scholarship tends to involve hierarchies. There are self-taught mavericks and solitary recluses, but most scholars learn through schooling or apprenticeship, and eventually earn positions of authority or take on students of their own. Such a hierarchy can be the frame for an entire campaign, in which the heroes start as apprentices or assistants (given all the dirty and dangerous jobs) and work their way up over time. In some cases, the relationships within a hierarchy are nurturing and supportive; in others, antagonism is the rule, as the juniors try to outdo each other to secure promotion and impress (or even supplant) their seniors. Death by the sword can be clean and welcome compared to the professional death caused by common room gossip and critical reviews of your work!

Of course, different organizations have different standards for progression. Within Jevdur Knowledge Temple, scholarship and successful disputation is key. It is not enough to have developed some brilliant thesis; you need to be willing and able to defend it against pedantic nitpickers and breezy rivals alike. Within the Black and White Owls, by contrast, the ability to identify truly important works is the first step towards advancement, with their successful theft the second.

## Scenario Seeds

- Your master has decided that he has too many students, apprentices, assistants, or the like. You have a season to find some new lore to prove your worth to remain in his school, or else you must seek a new source of support.
- A young scholar of the opposite sex wants to become your apprentice. The scholar is reticent about his or her past, but is attractive, intelligent, educated, and willing to do *anything* to advance. Is this person a spy sent by your greatest rival? Will a dark past catch up with the youngster after you have accepted the petition? Will you abuse your position for personal reasons?



## I've Heard of You

Given that there is no objective measure of learning, reputation is of central importance to a scholar. A great scholar is a great scholar because everyone says he is—even though in some cases this means that some brilliant intellect languishes unrecognized while a mediocre talent rises to the heights because of luck, political connections, or a talent for self-promotion. This is true even in covert organizations such as the Open Eyes or the Black and White Owls, although there it is reputation within the organization that counts most. If Bevegoroi loses faith in the accuracy of the reports he is given, for example, then that operative is no longer an asset and becomes a liability.

A scholar's reputation is also dependent on the quality of his memory and his library. In largely pre-literate cultures, memory is the main record, and knowledge is usually transmitted orally. Even within literate cultures, records and manuscripts must be copied manually, and there is little opportunity to check copies for accuracy. Access to and control of original sources becomes very important, and is one of the reasons why many libraries are virtual fortresses.

### Scenario Seeds

- Rumors are spreading that your copy of a seminal text is flawed, casting doubt on your credibility and expertise. You must locate the original to determine the accuracy of the rumors and, if necessary, procure a new and corrected copy.
- A scholar from far away challenges you to a contest of knowledge and expertise. After you win the contest, he says that he was sent to test you. His master, the potentate of his distant homeland, wishes to engage your services. Are you willing to travel so far and abandon your home, perhaps forever, to seize this opportunity for new knowledge? If you decline, he then mentions that his master has several documents related to your primary area of study. Documents that you have heard of only in distant legends and histories...

## Patrons and Clients

A basic question a scholars' campaign must consider is, "Who supports and feeds the scholars?" One approach is to hire out services for cash or shelter. In more primitive cultures, scholars must find ways of making their services valuable to the community. Amongst the Heortlings, for example, some Lhankor Mhy worshippers use their learning and skills as lawspeakers, while others (especially in the cities) charge petitioners for their time and expertise. In more advanced societies, scholars may be supported by the central or local government (within the Lunar Empire, for example, both the Imperial University and the Provincial University in Furthest are funded by the government) or powerful figures or groups, such as Bevegoroi and the Bearers of Good News. Of course, patrons expect something for their support. This may be as little as reflected glory (although in that case the scholars had better not be publicly hoodwinked or discredited) or as demanding as full-time work on the patron's personal interests.

A scholar might become the leader of a hero band in his own right, though whether because of his knowledge, force of personality, or access to wealth (either personal or through a patron) is usually unimportant (at least to him). Not all scholars are frail or retiring individuals, after all, and experienced heroes realize that a strong sword is useless without the knowledge of where best to swing it.

A scholars' hero band cannot survive for long without the services of more practical folk. After all, the academics need to be free to conduct their work. There is a place for porters and guards, beadles and janitors, cooks and bedmakers. Traveling hero bands may simply engage the services of locals, but many will have some kind of base, if only as a place to store their work and write up their findings.

### Scenario Seeds

- A wealthy and generous patron wants you to compile a history of an ancestor, based on a well-known family history. As you begin your research, you realize that the "illustrious ancestor" was actually a fraud and an opportunist. Do you tell your patron the truth and risk alienating him, rehash the old stories and betray your principles, or try to find some different but also positive aspects to his deeds?
- A rival school approaches you with the offer of a senior position. All you have to do is defect with the key manuscripts held by your present one....

## Where Do These Campaigns Go?

There is nowhere scholars will not go, whether they be Cherran Seekers delving into abandoned ruins or Irippi Ontor Borovich exploring alien myths and heroquests. Indeed, the lust for knowledge may well take scholars into places and situations no sane warrior, adventurer, thief, or trader would ever risk: even the memory of the Dragonkill is not enough to dissuade some people from joining the Servants of the Almighty Dragons! Scholars can also prove central to political, military, and religious conflicts. For example, thanks to Minaryth Purple's work amongst the trolls on behalf of Harshax of the Culbrea, the Rebellion gained valuable allies at the Battle of Iceland (see *Orlanth is Dead!*, pages 52 and 60-61).

However, over the course of a long Scholars' Campaign, the personal goals of the heroes will most likely revolve around developing their reputations and extending their expertise. In due course, they may find themselves in the same position as Minaryth Purple, their services requested by heroes and princes, their time spent embroiled in high politics and intrigue. The fate of a dynasty may rest on a disputed bloodline claim or the details of some ancestral heroquest, while knowledge of the geography of a mountain range might be the key that unlocks it to an invading army. Knowledge, after all, is power.

### Scenario Seeds

- You have been gathering some obscure information that fascinates you, but seems unlikely to be of interest to anyone else—the mating habits of the Black-Red-Black Butterfly, perhaps, or the varieties of Tarshite bagpipes. Suddenly, powerful people and organizations are offering you wealth or position, trying to steal your notes, or threatening your life, friends, and soul. What have you stumbled upon? Why do they want this information? Or are they mistaken—and in that case, how will they react when they find out that you have no value to them?
- Years ago, when just an apprentice, you tutored a nobleman's son to earn a few coins. Now he is a mighty ruler, and he has summoned you to his court. You remember him as a cunning and clever but idle young man, and you parted on bad terms. Does he really want to apologize for being an obstreperous youth, as he says, or does he want to settle an old score?



# Servants of the Almighty Dragons

*"The old world is over, and dragon time is coming."*

Dear secretive friend,  
I shall try to answer your questions to the best of my ability. What you must understand, however, is that we are nothing but a loose network of beings sharing a common interest in things draconic. We have no formal organization; no individual leads us. My friend Fendi coordinates the efforts of our humble group, but he has no authority beyond the respect we lend him due to his superior organizational skills and his insights into the purifying pursuit of Left Action.

What can I tell you of our past? Many of us have known each other for years, decades, or centuries even. Yet, it was not until our dear friend Van Varion brought us all together, twenty years ago, that we decided to coordinate our efforts. But the past does not really matter.

You asked if I could recommend other people familiar with dragons. Garstal Shavetop of the Boldhome Knowledge Temple is an acquaintance of mine. He is a friendly fellow, but his knowledge is quite superficial (although he does occasionally express unusually astute thoughts, such as when he said, "A decade or so of persistent observation, say by burying yourself in a mound of earth near a dragonewt plinth and keeping very quiet, will do wonders for your understanding of these remarkable beings."). Tosti Runefriend, whom you mention with such affection in your letter, while knowledgeable to an extent, is so concerned with fact that he is hardly a reliable teacher. Draconic wisdom must be *yoused* to be understood. Minaryth Purple, if you can find him, is far too entangled in the schemes of his little revolution to provide any real insights. Also, he is at best quite ignorant about dragons.

Thus, I recommend that you join our little organization. In order to become an "associate member," you must demonstrate sincere interest in our endeavor to increase our knowledge of dragons. You must also strive to purify your body and mind through Left Action. Once a year, we assemble in the Vale of Bones for a 15-day recitation of *ouroboros*. While participation is optional, the experience is very liberating and therefore highly recommended. It is not unusual to suffer profound insights into the draconic mind during the ceremony. I write suffer, because the narrow path to enlightenment is painful and demanding. If this seems harsh, remember that most senior members are capable teachers, who would be pleased to answer questions even from non-members. I for one would be honored to teach you how to best approach dragonewts, in return for a modest donation.

To increase your learning and respect for these greatest of beings, I strongly recommend that you seek out dragonewts. Bring gifts and prostrate yourself before them. Our friend New Wyrnish, for example, is especially fond of maple syrup. Angi Moro, a former member, was extraordinarily successful in following this path. He was obviously ready for enwyrmization, since he never returned from his visit to Dragon's Eye.

May you be forever blessed by fate.  
Yours truly,  
VWS

**Common Names:** Draconic Disciples, Dragon Scales.

**Form:** Scholarly association of people interested in dragons.

**Typical Homeland:** None.

**Cultural Context:** Only outsiders, oddballs, madmen, and the truly inspired would ever even consider consorting with dragons.

**Ideology:** "We can be friends with dragons. We can even be dragons. All we need is a little more know-how."

**Look and Feel:** Draconic fan club.

**Purpose:** To learn about, and teach, the Draconic Way. Their secret goal is to become one with any one of the local true dragons.

**Headquarters:** A small, circular stone building in Jonstown, behind a brewery in the Merchant's Quarter.

**Reactions:** Members are considered to be "as dragons" by anyone who hates or fears dragons. (In the Modern Age, this is almost everyone.) "Remember the Dragonkill," they say, and shake their heads.

## Resources

**Leader:** Fendi Blackdragon, who spends most of his time in meditation. He rarely speaks to outsiders.

**Renowned Members:** New Wyrnish, rebel dragonewt noble who considers himself the new link between humans and dragonewts.

Scholar Wyrm, an intellectual wyrm who spends most of his time in the Jelenkev School of Lhankor Mhy in southern Heortland.

Van Varion son of Ingest (also known as "the Art Guy"), human devotee of the Dragon Rune cult who is trying to learn the magical secrets required to speak Auld Wyrnish.

Veevee the Magisaur, who guides tourists to famous dragon sites in Dragon Pass.

**Membership:** About 240 full and 60 associate members in Dragon Pass. (The associate members probably include a fair share of enemies wanting to spy on the band, not that the members care.)

**Other Contacts:** Since many members are well educated and prosperous, the band is surprisingly well connected. It has no formal relations with other organizations, however.

## Organization

Despite what members usually claim, the Servants have a strict hierarchical structure. Everybody is expected to know his place in the organization, and it is of utmost importance to obey and respect one's superiors. Unfortunately, this hierarchy changes constantly, depending on draconic currents (as interpreted by

### Auld Wyrnish

Auld Wyrnish is the tongue of dragonewts and their kin, such as wyrms and dream dragons. In addition to its magical elements, it has olfactory, gustatory, and emotive components. Humans must undergo extensive surgery in order to learn even the basics of the language.

Using the *Reproduce Auld Wyrnish* ability, generally no meaningful conversation beyond simple greetings and the like is possible. This ability involves dragging copper chains across tin, blowing unusual whistles, flapping birch-wood sheets, spraying scents into the air, strongly emoting various emotions, spreading food and other, less tasteful articles on the ground, and performing any number of other bizarre activities.





the guardian). A member may be highly respected one day, only to be completely ignored the next. Most members are surprisingly adept at sensing these fluctuations.

Associate members have no status, and do not benefit from the guardian's magic. They receive occasional announcements about upcoming activities, as well as free entry into periodic special drawings and prize giveaways. They are allowed to participate in the yearly recitation of *ouroboros*.

Full members are organized into five rival factions, known as scales. Each scale corresponds to one of the true dragons of Dragon Pass: Red, Green, Black, Brown, and White. Depending on the currents, these five scales may be arranged in the hierarchy in any order. Members belong to the scale associated with the dragon they are closest to becoming one with. This is the cause of some speculation among associate members, since there is no known Brown Dragon, and the White Dragon's existence remains unconfirmed.

Members adapt their meditations and behavior to suit the attitudes of the dragon they are trying to emulate. Black Scale members tend to favor trolls, Red Scale members associate with Lunars, Green Scale members seek out Earth beings and worshippers, and Brown Scale members favor the Heortling resistance. White Scale members wear pointed hats and mediate between the other factions. As members alter their actions in this way, however, they unwittingly change the draconic tides, thus possibly becoming closer to a different dragon than the one they originally tried to become one with. When this happens, they join another scale and alter their conduct accordingly.

### Membership Keyword

*Membership Requirements:* Subservience to all dragons and dragonewts.

*Skills taught:* Draconic Trivia, Know Status in Band, Meditate, Reproduce Auld Wymish\*, Understand Auld Wymish\*.

*Typical Personality Traits:* Admire Dragonewts.

*Magic:* None taught. All members wish that they had access to dragon magic.

\* Humans, elves, dwarves, and similar races normally cannot increase past 12 in these abilities.

## Sound of Silence (Guardian)

Fendi Blackdragon brought Sound of Silence to the group. He claims that he found it in a dream, and that That Which Dwells Beyond the Mountain gave it to him. It is Sound of Silence who youfs the status of scales and members.

*Method:* Emanation.

*Form:* We leave it to the narrator to decide the exact form of Sound of Silence. Perhaps it is one of the famous draconic artifacts of the Hero Wars, such as a Battle Banner of the EWF or the sword Ormfang.

*Communication:* Sound of Silence communicates only in Auld Wymish, severely limiting the ability of humans to deal with it.

*Guardian Requirements:* Use only the left hand when eating and drinking.

*Functions:*

☉ Awareness—Recognize True Dragon.

⚡ Blessing—Think Holistically.

☐ Defense—Avoid Entanglement.





# Bevegoroi's Open Eyes

"A new world? Let's have a look."

The Empire has a number of separate intelligence agencies, known as "instrumentalities." One of the most secretive is the Hidden Path of the Bearers of Good News, the main external espionage service. Bearers operate individually or in small groups, with considerable autonomy. Many are heroes in their own right. Some live their lives in the shadows; others relish the limelight, but few are as distinctive, subtle, and capricious—and yet as effective—as Bevegoroi the Blind.

Originally from Sanken, Bevegoroi is now officially retired, living a life of luxury in the northern Tarshite city of Talfort. He uses his wealth and position to indulge his interest in riddles, mysteries, conundrums, and distant lands, through a personal retinue of investigators and envoys that he calls his Eyes. Sometimes they are sent to deal with specific problems; more often, they simply gather information requested by Bevegoroi, ranging from an exact description of the noise of Thousand Thunder Falls to the number of warriors in the Sambari fyrd. The knowledge may be sought to resolve some mystery, or may simply bring Bevegoroi pleasure. One may also hire the Eyes to carry out individual commissions, provided one can either meet Bevegoroi's huge fees or else pique his interest with an especially thorny problem.

Bevegoroi uses his eccentric activities as a cover for his work as a Bearer of Good News. Many of his Eyes may at any time be working unknowingly on a mission commissioned by the Bearers. There is also a secret inner circle, his Open Eyes, who are aware that they are agents of the Empire. They handle the toughest problems, gathering secret information under the guise of more innocuous errands. As such, they roam far and wide, and are granted great freedom in carrying out their missions. They are not themselves Bearers, but more than one Bearer has been recruited from the Open Eyes (such as Aspashat the Waymaker, who went on to become one of the shadowy figures behind the successful conquest of Heortland).

**Common Names:** Beve's Boys, the Talfort Tattlers.

**Form:** Lunar spies masquerading as a personal agents.

**Typical Homeland:** Any, especially Lunar.

**Cultural Context:** Investigators and spies. Many Lunar magnates have their own such networks, so while the Eyes do not usually make a great display of their role, it is not unusual in Imperial society.

**Ideology:** "Knowledge Is Power. And Anyway, We're Nosy."

**Look and Feel:** A varied collection of wanderers and spies.

**Purpose:** To be Bevegoroi's (and thus, the Empire's) eyes, ears and, when necessary, hands.

**Headquarters:** Although Bevegoroi lives in Talfort, he encourages his Open Eyes to live independent lives, so long as they can be contacted easily and report in to him at least once a season when not on a mission.

**Reactions:** Bevegoroi has friends in high places, but Lunar authorities are frequently leery of his Eyes. Not knowing their real role, these officials tend to think of them as a rich meddler's agents, even though they are often of use. This official ambivalence in turn makes the Eyes relatively acceptable to Orlanthi, who generally regard them as neutrals, on par with merchants and tourists. This would change if the existence of the Open Eyes and their role as Imperial secret agents became known.

## Resources

**Leader:** Bevegoroi, a blind albino who nonetheless has thrived within the Imperial service. In his time he has been a logistical officer for the military who never wore a uniform, a tax assessor who never left his house, a merchant who never turned a profit, and a philanthropist who made a fortune.

**Renowned Members:** Elurena naSimpraxis, a former dart warrior from Holay who serves as Bevegoroi's assistant, fixer, bodyguard, and office manager.

Black Coll, an Aggari swordsman whose bear-like bulk belies a keen mind.

Smiling Urku, who can make friends with anyone.

Osokar the Cat, a sly Tarshite hunter who can speak a dozen Sartarite dialects like a native.

**Membership:** Bevegoroi's Eyes number around 80 full-time members, 20 of whom are Open Eyes. There are hundreds of occasional collaborators and informants on Bevegoroi's books.

**Other Contacts:** Bearers largely work autonomously.

Although Bevegoroi could pull rank or call on other Bearer assets, it would take a real crisis to bring him to endanger his cover so. His position within the Bearers is known to the Provincial Overseer, Appius Luxius; his Chief of Intelligence, Dagius Furius; and certain key

## The Instrumentalities in Dragon Pass

As the current focus of Imperial expansion, unsurprisingly Dragon Pass has also become an arena for covert operations and intelligence gathering. Just as unsurprisingly, the result is more often competition and working at cross-purposes than cooperation.

Bevegoroi's Open Eyes are the only element of the Bearers of Good News permanently operating in the region, though from time to time other outfits and agents do enter the theater, largely under the cover of traders or travelers. However, now that the region is—formally—under Imperial authority, Bevegoroi is beginning to face active competition from the Spoken Word. This is the Empire's main domestic security agency, and its leaders argue that as Dragon Pass is now an Imperial province, it falls within their jurisdiction.

Bevegoroi understands Imperial politics well enough to refer the matter politely to an inter-agency sub-committee at court, knowing this is likely to delay a formal decision by seasons or years. In the meantime, the Spoken Word allege that he has gone so far as to stir up trouble against them, blaming him for the unmasking and subsequent tarring and feathering of their senior agent in-theater, Brannor Sun-High of the Vantaros. Bevegoroi expresses polite incredulity at such wild accusations.

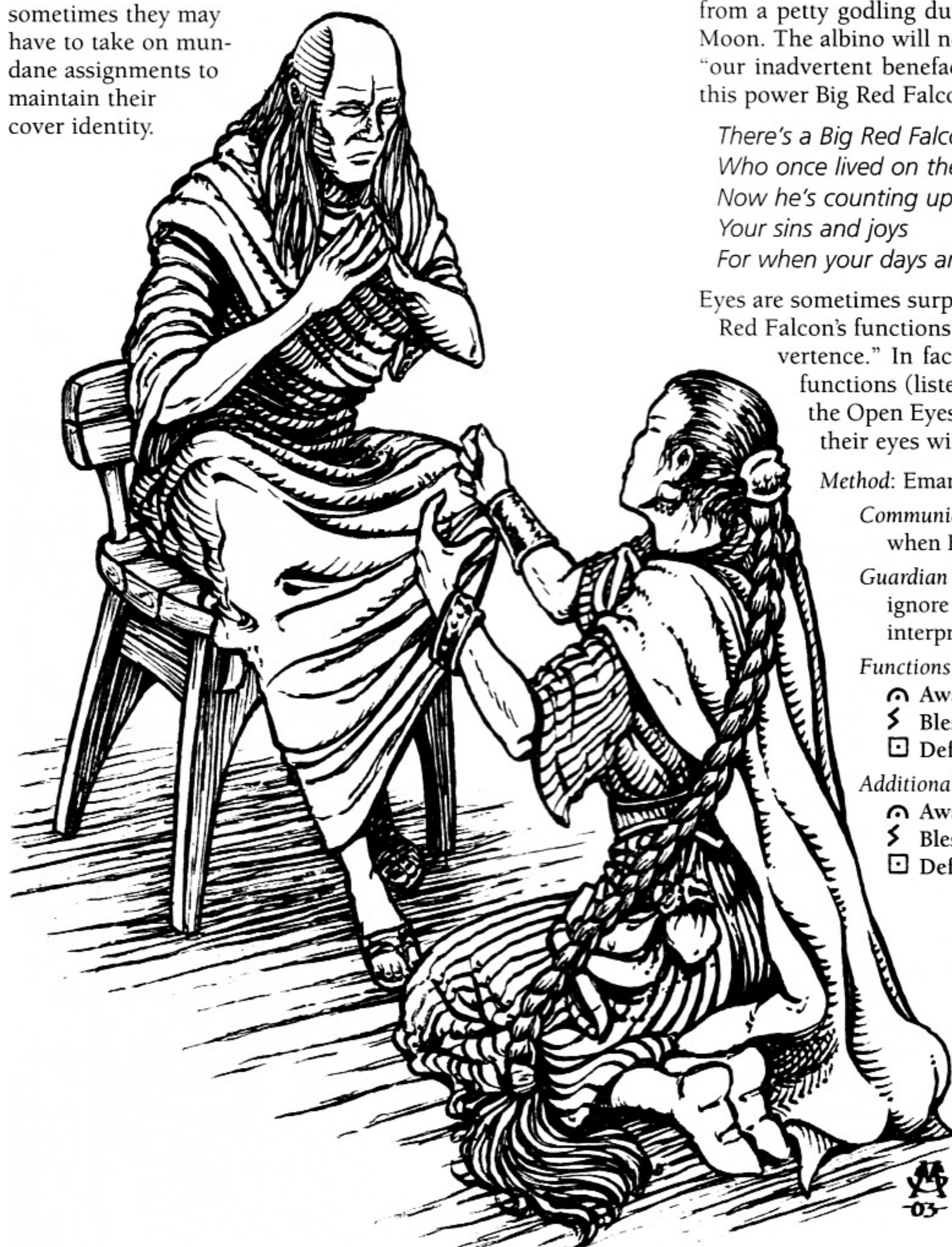
Agents of the Entelathosium (military intelligence) accompany many of the regular Imperial units in the Pass, and on the whole Bevegoroi maintains good relations with them. Likewise, Appius Luxius' troubleshooters, the Coders and the Overseer's Hand, both find him a useful ally, although the Provincial Overseer is himself wily enough to appreciate how Bevegoroi needs such a powerful ally, especially now that he is engaged in his turf war against the Spoken Word.



officials within Tarsh, including Prince Pharandros and Arkas the Hekatontarsh, Magnus of the Tarsh Temple of the Reaching Moon. Rather than use the Agate Seal of authority he secretly bears, Bevegoroi would prefer to whisper into one of these men's ears when he has a problem or requirement, relying on them to expedite matters. Even so, given that the Provincial Overseer, the military authorities, and the Kingdom of Tarsh know he has his own agenda, relations with the formal bodies of Imperial authority can sometimes be difficult.

## Organization

The Eyes are Bevegoroi's and thus operate however he wants them to. In practice, they tend to form or be recruited as groups, and acquire particular areas of operation or specialties. Although there is no real hierarchy below Elurena naSimpraxis, groups informally compete as to who can take on the biggest mission or bring back the most unusual information or problem. The Open Eyes are, of course, special, although their secretive nature means that sometimes they may have to take on mundane assignments to maintain their cover identity.



## Membership Keyword

**Membership Requirements:** Once recruited by Bevegoroi or one of his agents, membership requires swearing an oath to Bevegoroi as a personal follower. Each member must also visit Bevegoroi at least once a season. Joining the Open Eyes requires a deeper oath to the Empire and the Bearers of Good News, which leaves the member open to legal, magical, and murderous retribution if broken.

**Skills taught:** Deductive Logic, Give Accurate Report, Good Listener, Good Memory, Keen Observer.

**Typical Personality Traits:** Inquisitive, Problem-Solving, Self-Reliant.

**Magic:** None taught or prohibited, although in practice deities hostile to the Empire (such as Orlanth) would rarely be appropriate or acceptable. Many Eyes follow the Seven Mothers or a subcult of Natha.

## Big Red Falcon (Guardian)

The Eyes are the beneficiaries of magic powers Bevegoroi won from a petty godling during a game of ravenkaaz on the Red Moon. The albino will not disclose its name, but refers to it as "our inadvertent benefactor." The Eyes have taken to calling this power Big Red Falcon, after a Lunar nursery rhyme:

*There's a Big Red Falcon  
Who once lived on the Sun  
Now he's counting up  
Your sins and joys  
For when your days are done.*

Eyes are sometimes surprised by the relative mediocrity of Big Red Falcon's functions, but most put this down to his "inadvertence." In fact, the true and rather more powerful functions (listed second below) are only available to the Open Eyes, and even then only when they cover their eyes with red cloths or scarves.

**Method:** Emanation.

**Communication:** Eyes hear a hoarse cawing when Big Red Falcon's powers are in effect.

**Guardian Requirements:** Open Eyes must never ignore a riddle (which they may choose to interpret literally or metaphorically).

**Functions:**

- ☉ Awareness—Remember a Face.
- ⚡ Blessing—Sense Absolute Lie.
- ☐ Defense—Resist Sense-Dulling Magic.

**Additional Functions (Open Eyes only):**

- ☉ Awareness—Remember What You Saw.
- ⚡ Blessing—Sense Truth Behind Deception.
- ☐ Defense—Resist Hostile Magic.



# Jevdur Knowledge Temple

*"The new world needs Inspiration."*

It is written, on the bronze sheets of the Great Ledger of Ulfodell held in the Jonstown Library, that even Organization must include Disorder, if it is to birth Inspiration; and that Knowledge is not Infinite, but Ultimately Elusive. Of such paradoxes was Jevdur built. Many know that it is a remnant of the Gods' Age, but few know that it is actually a fragment of Lhankor Mhy's Grand Library itself. Epikhon the Librarian, most inflexible and meticulous of all Lhankor Mhy's retainers, harbored a particular dislike of paradox, willful obscurantism, and un-founded speculation. All works he felt embodied these qualities he relegated to a particularly distant and inconvenient annex. Some say he eventually built up a critical mass of esoterica, others that Elasa stepped in to save Inspiration from Classification. One way or another, in a great blast of gnosis the annex was ejected from the Grand Library and extruded onto the Mundane World.

Jevdur is entered from one of the numerous ruins of Dragon Pass, the location and identity of which is neither a secret nor widely known. It is a Great Library, to be sure, but an unusual one, for it is the ultimate resting place for many works that may contain truth but are not essentially scholarly works: the rambling and raving itineraries of mad travelers; love poems penned by unknown alchemists; a complete set of miniatures of Leonardo the Inventor's early triptychs, with secrets of geometry and anatomy coded into their composition. In short, as well as the predictable stacks of tracts and treatises, there is the unpredictable, the unreliable, and the potentially inspirational. Its staff members are famous for their unexpected leaps of logic and bizarre interests.

The Library itself is equally unpredictable, and learning its routes and ways a skill in itself. It is a many-leveled underground warren of corridors, corridors, chambers, and chimneys, every surface covered with writings in every language known, both living and dead. The upper level, the Promenade of Elasa, is well lit by slanting light shafts to the surface. This level is open to every kind of petitioner, independent researcher, or lowly apprentice.

Successive levels becomes darker, more confusing, and more and more difficult to enter, as Jevdur dips into the God World. To enter the second level, the Great Biblioteca, requires passing through a 10W barrier, by negotiating the befuddling mazes in the sloping walkways. This is where the main library stacks are located, as well as the halls of instruction; senior sages typically lead the apprentices to their classes. Behind a 10W2 barrier, the Well of Deep Research contains unusual and disturbing works, as well as quarters and studies for the sages. Whispered senior common room rumor even suggests that it houses an original copy of *The Book of Drastic Resolutions*, fragments from *Enigmas of the Serpent*, and an early draft of Sir Ethilrist's *A History of My Black Horse Troop* (at the time still laboring under the working title *To Hell and Back: Memoirs of a Brilliant Soldier*). Below the Well is the Hall of Madness and Inspiration (10W3 barrier); somewhere in the Hall, a 10W6 barrier protects a secret route into the Grand Library itself.

**Common Names:** The Pupils of Paradox, the Dark Sages.

**Form:** Lhankor Mhy Great Library.

**Typical Homeland:** Heortling.

**Cultural Context:** A temple-library of the god of knowledge, even more outside the Heortling mainstream than most.

**Ideology:** "Knowledge is found even in unusual sources."

**Look and Feel:** A dark, strange, and deliberately unusual Library, whose staff members cultivate their own peculiar habits and interests.

**Purpose:** To gather knowledge of every kind, but especially the unusual and possibly speculative, which may not find a place in a mainstream Library. To use that knowledge productively.

**Headquarters:** In one of the many ruins of Dragon Pass.

**Reactions:** The various Libraries cooperate when they have to, although they are all jealous of their own specialties. Given Jevdur's unusual nature, it is treated as a neutral, and it often hosts major conclaves of Chief Librarians.





## Resources

**Leader:** Chief Librarian Kirnan Scrollthane, a man whose hunger for new information is only matched by his delight in sharing it with others...at great length and in minute detail.

**Renowned Members:** Atoric the Retort, the contradictory philosopher.

Ungare Stand-Back, the experimental alchemist.

**Membership:** Seekers after knowledge. Most worship Lhankor Mhy, but the unconventional nature of the Library is also reflected in its willingness to give access to the Great Biblioteca to others who show a thirst for knowledge and a willingness to contribute to the Library.

**Other Contacts:** Jevdur has a particular rivalry with the Jonstown Library, as Jevdur feels that the *Jonstown Compendium* ought to be in its collection, given its role as a repository of esoterica. As a result, Jevdur scholars periodically seek to copy, borrow, or even steal volumes of the Compendium.

## Organization

Jevdur is characteristic of a Lhankor Mhy Great Library (see **Storm Tribe**, page 130).

### Membership Keyword

**Membership Requirements:** Be an initiate of Lhankor Mhy, or pass an exam and pay fees to become a Corresponding Member, requiring a 10% time and resource commitment.

**Skills taught:** Know Jevdur Library, Lateral Thinking.

**Typical Personality Traits:** Curious, Imaginative, Too Curious.

**Magic:** None taught. Members must worship Lhankor Mhy or another god whose magic is used to seek knowledge. These tend to be footloose deities such as Issaries, Alusar, or Destor, or visionaries such as Kev.

## Andrene Everyluck (Guardian)

Although Ulflodell the Inspired was the original caretaker of Jevdur, he is not the library's guardian. He is occasionally seen in the stacks or the cafeteria, and many members worship him as a subcult of Lhankor Mhy; he is less popular at the other great libraries.

Instead, Jevdur is home to the visible but insubstantial form of Andrene Everyluck. An apprentice to one of the first Chief Librarians, Orlev the Pedant, she was equally renowned for her extraordinary ability to uncover information by bringing together seemingly unrelated documents as for the misfortunes she suffered through meddling with Knowledge Mortals Were Not Meant to Know. Her eagerness to assist her master was matched only by her bad luck. One of her eyes was blinded in one of his magical mishaps, although this left the other reportedly invested with the ability to see intangible connections left by Lhankor Mhy himself. Later, she was lost, presumed dead, somewhere in the Well of Deep Research, while entrusted with the task of double-checking all 12,426 footnotes in Orlev's magisterial (but mind-numbingly tedious) opus *On the Dialects of Vingkotling-Age Sevid*.

Andrene now wanders Jevdur, sometimes aiding a researcher with an unforeseen insight or piece of advice, sometimes rebuking those who disturb researchers, misfile scrolls, or hum while working. Her tears mark a temporary trail; more than once, lowly apprentices lost in the distant stacks have followed this trail back to the main thoroughfares.

**Method:** Manifestation.

**Form:** Ghostly form of a female Lhankor Mhy sage, whose right eye constantly weeps silver tears which mark her trail for about ten minutes before they fade.

**Communication:** Andrene can speak with others when encountered "in person," but her main method of communication is through the reading she requires of each member. During each week, their attention will be drawn to some book, scroll, or other source, perhaps sticking out from a stack or simply lying on a desk. This selection will often contain a message for the member, and not always a cryptic one: being directed to read Effornuff's *A Simple Guide to Drafting Wills* is rarely an encouraging sign.

**Guardian Requirements:** Each member must read one work (suggested by Andrene) per week while in the Library, over and above their personal study plan or scheduled researches.

**Functions:**

- ☞ Awareness—Sense Interference with Library Materials.
- ☞ Blessing—Suggest Unexpected Cross-Reference.
- ☞ Defense—Humble Disruptive Presence.

## Ulflodell the Inspired

*Subcult of Lhankor Mhy*

Many sages bemoan Ulflodell's unstructured ways, but in fact, they should be impressed by his restraint. He was, after all, fathered by Eurmial the Trickster the time he wore the Six Beards. For all that he felt his father's unruly blood in his veins, Ulflodell was fascinated by knowledge. After instructors failed to teach, trick, or beat a conventional education into him, he went on his Long Stroll, on which he sketched the shape of buffalo eggs, learned to speak Grass, and even found and read his own heart. Eventually, he wandered into the Grand Library through a passage that should not have been there.

Lhankor Mhy indulges Ulflodell, for his Inspiration often opens doors that defy mere Knowledge, such as the time Ulflodell tamed the jolsedarings after they infested the Grand Library and drained Lhankor Mhy's ink pot. Ulflodell succeeded where even the Seven Sages failed, for when the brain flayers tried to devour his mind they found that the more they



ate, the more he knew—and the hungrier they became. After all, for all its virtues, knowledge alone can prove insufficient when not supported by creative thinking, but the Inspired always have more to discover.

**Skills:** See Connections, Think Creatively.

**Virtues:** Curious, Disorganized, Flighty.

**Affinities and Feats:**

☑ **Inspiration** (Finite Knowledge, I Know I Saw That Somewhere, Intuitive Insight, Jog Memory, Leap of Faith, Trace Elusive Thought)

**Secret: Knowledge from Disorder** (Devotee can use any ability in an attempt to figure something out or learn something new, even if the ability normally has nothing to do with knowledge or learning. The ability must be appropriate to the task at hand, and an improvisational modifier may still apply, at the narrator's option.)



# The Black and White Owls

*"The new world is coming, and we have a Plan for it."*

It began as a lie. It is well known that many Lhankor Mhy sages have a predilection for hoarding valuable documents in private libraries, while others hide away scrolls they have accidentally damaged rather than admit to the offense. It became fashionable at one point to blame such missing documents on "the Scroll Snatchers," an imaginary band of thieves who crept into knowledge temples to steal important works. As time went by, the story grew, so that the Scroll Snatchers gained an origin in the Empire of the Wyrms Friends as rebels who sought information to use against their draconic overlords. Many people scoffed at such fables, and they were right to do so.

They *were* right to do so. Not any more.

It is not clear exactly when or how a real Scroll Snatchers organization came into being, although the best estimates seem to place it in the early sixteenth century. Whatever the precise details, someone in the Esrolian city of Rhigos somehow made contact with a daimon apparently associated with Lanbril, the god of theft. The daimon foretold a time when all writing would be lost to the land, but claimed that it knew a means to protect written documents and the knowledge they contained from the coming doom. Whoever possessed this information would be able to resurrect learning at some more distant time, and would be in a position to influence even kings and emperors.

To this end, a circle of handpicked Lanbrili initiates was selected to gather information from as many sources as possible. Naturally, Lhankor Mhy temples were key targets, and the band used the "urban legend" of the Scroll Snatchers to great effect, so that few would suspect they really existed. They took their name from a bird native to Wenelia and Caladrland, because of its silent, nocturnal flight and dark camouflage, and because of the traditional association of owls with Lhankor Mhy. The network has grown slowly, and now has contacts from Tarsh to the New Coast. Although most of its members are based in Esrolia, Jonstown is home to several members, who plague the famous Jonstown Library.

At first, the thieves took only information of obvious use to their cause, as directed by the mysterious daimon. Later they expanded their mission, taking advantage of their experience to steal documents for personal profit, selling them to marks far afield from their source or even ransoming them back to their original owners. Even today, though, the Owls continue to accumulate specific pieces of knowledge, according to some master plan known only to the group's inner circle, and hoard them in secret caches spread from Esrolia to Tarsh. One day, when the Hero Wars begin in earnest, the daimon will set the Plan into motion....

## Life in the Shadows

*Playing in a Criminal Campaign*



For some, crime is a regrettable necessity: they break the law because it is that or starve, or because they know no better. For others, however, crime is a career, an art, even a shadowy form of rebellion. For those prepared to live their lives in the underworld, the rewards can be rich, but the dangers equally great.

Criminal hero bands will usually have some cover identity, unless they are living their lives as outlaws. Hierarchies are important, but given that they are by definition rule-breakers, in practice gangs will often be held together by personal relationships or the presence of a respected (or feared) leader rather than any common ideals or loyalties. Criminals must also be deeply pragmatic: members of a gang who repeatedly fail to play their role or live up to expectations will find themselves facing expulsion at best, extinction at worst.

### The Criminal Mind

Professional criminals, of the sort who make up the outer circle of the Black and White Owls, may well have other professions, being scruffy soldiers who supplement their income with judicious banditry or sassy young apprentices who become burglars by night. All essentially turn to crime because it offers them economic opportunities otherwise denied to them. Most will generally share some core abilities relevant to their "trade," but there will always be room for someone who has some useful knack, skill or contact.

Dedicated criminals, on the other hand, are often motivated more by the thrill and the challenge of their work (although, to be sure, they enjoy the rewards, too). Some con-

centrate on honing their personal abilities, others on meticulous plans. Many of the second circle of the Owls are such artists of crime.

Laws are laid down and enforced by society, whether the local clan elders or Moonson in all his glory, and for some, breaking those laws is an end in itself. These are the criminal revolutionaries, who use crime as others use rabble-rousing or armed rebellion—as a weapon against the established order. The Finovani cattle-rustler who has joined the Eagle-browns since the Empire razed his village may not think of himself in these terms, but he is such a revolutionary. So, in their own mysterious way, are the inner circle of the Black and White Owls, who gather knowledge in pursuit of a distant Plan which will reshape the old ways.

### The Criminal Campaign

A criminal campaign can explore many of the classic themes and clichés of the gangster movie. On the one hand, it will be about the criminals and their next criminal exploit, on the other their struggle to evade and outwit the forces of law and order. Often, however, this is just the backdrop. The real theme is the human issues involved in a life of deliberate law-breaking. How do the criminals feel about the consequences of their deeds, for example? What do they believe in, and what holds them together? Personal loyalty and codes of behavior should all be tested to their limits when they stumble on the Big Score, when the authorities start posting rewards on the gang member who betrays her comrades, and when the boss starts to look weak and replaceable. Honor among thieves? Fagedaboutit.



*Common Names:* Knowledge Thieves, Scroll Snatchers.

*Form:* Specialist thief cult.

*Typical Homelands:* Esrolia, Heortling, Tarsh.

*Cultural Context:* Highly secretive criminal organization, regarded as an urban legend by most outsiders.

*Ideology:* The Black and White Owls believe that controlling information is the most effective means to obtaining power. They thus seek to obtain future influence and wealth by controlling knowledge.

*Look and Feel:* To those that know of them at all, a gang of urban burglars. To themselves, a gang of urban burglars with a mission. This sets them a cut above the rest.

*Purpose:* To carry out the Plan.

*Headquarters:* A nondescript building in Rhigos.

*Reactions:* Most people do not know that the Owls actually exist. Those who do rightly regard them as criminals. Only fellow thieves and similar ne'er-do-wells would knowingly deal with them. Of course, most appear as perfectly normal members of society. . . .

## Resources

*Leader:* The Old Man, whose true identity is unknown even to many members of the band.

*Renowned Members:* There are no renowned members, and they strive to keep it that way.

*Membership:* Unknown, presumably only a few dozen.

*Other Contacts:* The Owls have many covert contacts throughout the Kethaelan underworld, especially with other Lanbrili bands. However, any assistance rendered by such groups would certainly come at a price!

## Organization

The Black and White Owls have three levels of membership, although the hierarchy is loose and not precisely defined. At the bottom are the assorted criminal contacts, petty thieves, and the like that any thief band cultivates. None has any real understanding of their employers, nor do they know the band's true name or nature. They can be of almost any urban profession that the Owls might find useful, and need have no connection with the Lanbril cult.

Above them are the real members of the organization. Most are skilled thieves who carry out missions on behalf of the inner circle, but members of specialized professions are recruited from time to time. Some members are based in large cities, others in tribal areas where several of Lhan-kor Mhy shrines can be watched for interesting activity. Most have considerable autonomy, only occasionally being contacted by messengers from the inner circle and sent on specific, often apparently meaningless, missions in accordance with the Plan.

The inner circle consists of seven members in imitation of a Lightbringer ring. This ring selects all of the other true members of the group, and so are the only individuals to have a real conception of the Owls' resources. The Old Man is the leader, and monopolizes direct communication with the guardian.

## Membership Keyword

*Membership Requirements:* Be invited by existing members and approved by the inner circle. The only absolute requirements are skill and discretion.

*Skills taught:* Copy Document, Read [Language].

*Typical Personality Traits:* Crafty, Discreet, Meticulous.

*Magic:* Initiation to Lanbril is common, but not compulsory.

A few trusted members may be taught useful common magic, but this must be approved by a member of the inner circle.

## Black and White Owl (Guardian)

The daimon that forged the organization knows that knowledge is power, and so is very secretive about itself. Only the Old Man even knows what name to call it—and it is rumored that he may not know much more than that.

*Method:* Manifestation.

*Form:* The daimon uses the body of a black-and-white owl to interact with the Inner World.

*Communication:* The Old Man can somehow interpret the owl's hooting. No one knows how.

*Guardian Requirements:* Absolute, unquestioning obedience to the Plan. Always carry writing materials, including paper, in case you come across a document to copy.

*Functions:*

☉ Awareness—See Big Picture.

⚡ Blessing—Read Any Language.

☐ Defense—Protect Information.







# FOOTLOOSE AND FANCY FREE

**A**lthough most people need the stability of a settled home, others (by choice or necessity) choose to live a life on the road. A campaign set around such wanderers embraces a huge array of different groups, from merchants and missionaries to spies and showmen. What these campaigns tend to share is an emphasis on change or novelty—instead of devoting loving care to the development of a campaign location, the emphasis is on the adventurers themselves, with each present location a backdrop painted with broad strokes and bright colors. As such, the campaign will often be driven much more clearly by the hero band's own motivations and by the interactions between its members.

## Scenario Seeds

- One of your group, who possesses a vital skill or with whom you have a close tie, wants to stop and drop out of the hero band. Maybe he has met a local girl, or perhaps he is just sick of life on the move. Is he being duped? Can (and should) you convince him to stay on the road?
- The members of your band cannot agree on where to go next. The leader(s) refuse to take sides, causing you to hold the balance of power. Can you make a decision without turning your back on at least part of the band?

## Your Hero

Wandering hero bands often need to be more self-sufficient than those with communities on which to rely. As a result, they tend to be much more varied in their composition. As well as entertainers, Captain Dashwood needs men of business to balance the books and muscle to load up the wagons, while the gung-ho knights of the Fabulous Hunting Troupe can hardly be expected to buy and cook their own meals and raise their own tents, and so need beaters and bearers, medics and merchants.

It is thus difficult to think of occupations that would *not* fit within most traveling hero bands. As long there is danger on the road, explorers will need trained guards, warriors, and soldiers. An entertainer can draw an audience to the band's side and put them in a pleasant mood, ready to buy their wares or listen to what they have to say. Where there are sick people who need a cure, there is always work for a healer. In addition to adding valuable meat and berries to the menu, most hunters are excellent scouts, and decent warriors. A scholar's in-depth knowledge of the laws, customs, myths, or geography of other people can be invaluable. Useful, too, is the practical knowledge of a merchant, who may well also be traveling in the hope of finding new opportunities or exotic goods.

There are also those who *follow* larger bands: the poor, hoping for morsels of charity or casual work as laborers (or less salubrious night-time labor); would-be heroes, hoping to get their "big break"; entrepreneurs hoping to make some side-money out of the heroes' activities.

## Scenario Seeds

- Your hero band suddenly finds itself dependent upon a member who usually plays a subservient role, perhaps a healer, or even a follower (who just happens to be related to the chief of the next clan). Have you treated him fairly, or will he use this opportunity to settle scores?

## How Footloose and Fancy-Free?

One of the great appeals of the wanderers' life is precisely the very lack of ties and consequences. Instead of the complex interconnection of responsibilities and relationships that define settled people's lives, they can do what they please and be on the road again before the dust settles.

However, life is not always so neat. First, a narrator should ensure that there are times when the heroes feel the lack of those relationships. The native population often treats travelers far from home with suspicion. When times are hard, you only trust those you know, not some roaming ne'er-do-wells with no one to vouch for them. Most Gloranthans are quite xenophobic. Strangers often mean trouble, so even the friendliest character is likely to alert the local authorities when outsiders arrive. Whether the heroes are members of an itinerant band or locals encountering one, the culture clash should be played up to maximum effect.

In addition, sometimes even wanderers must be forced to come to terms with the consequences of their actions. If your heroes are raiding and looting in a foreign land, for example, have them witness the results of their forays once in a while: poverty and starvation.

## Scenario Seeds

- A native insists that you engage in numerous petty rites to appease the local daimones before you can carry on. Eventually you begin to suspect that some of the ever-escalating requirements are just made up for the native's amusement (or enrichment).
- If you are allies of the Empire, you find yourself the prey of a rebel band, such as the Forloss Raiders or Eagle-browns. Robin Hood-style encounters ensue with you on the wrong side. The issue is further complicated by the fact that the local population secretly aids the rebels.



## Circuits and Lines

Some wanderers are forever striking out in new directions, whether they be explorers curious as to what is over the next hill or one of the Fabulous Hunting Troupe, eagerly following reports of some new beast to kill. The Society of the White Bear will simply follow its insane and self-destructive obsession, while the entertainers of Captain Dashwood's Traveling Show look forward to their next audience.

Wanderers do not always have to be strangers, though. In many cases, they simply live a nomadic life, such as merchants whose caravan follows a familiar path each year ("If you want to buy some of these, you'd best wait a week or so—Joh Mith's caravan usually swings past here in the last week of Earth Season"), or entertainers who roam a particular region or realm. Part of the effectiveness of many bands lies in the fact that their members get to know an area and its people.

### Scenario Seeds

- Two of the groups that you deal with regularly begin to feud with each other. Each demands that you stop dealing with the other.
- You have an opportunity to join a larger caravan traveling outside Dragon Pass, perhaps to Prax, Tarsh, or the Lunar Empire itself.
- You are asked to smuggle goods, spy, or pass messages for one of the major sides in the Hero Wars. Are you willing to take the risk?

## When the World Comes to You

How can a static location like Geo's Inn be part of a wanderers' campaign? The focus on such a campaign will be on the people who come through the inn—think of it as a TV series, with a fixed cast of regulars and a special guest star or stars each episode, with their own story to tell or problem to raise. In this way, while the usual wanderers' campaign sees the heroes traveling around Glorantha, in Geo's the heroes have different parts and aspects of Glorantha come to them.

Even this kind of campaign has reason to move about from time to time. Perhaps the heroes or their people need to buy or sell something unusual. The market at the local capital will be bigger than the one at home, and the one in the nearest city will be bigger still. Although most people have the basic temples and shrines that they need, there are occasions when one needs to worship elsewhere. There are specialist deities, saints, or spirits whose aid must be beseeched, major ceremonies that need supporters from many communities, and priests rich in obscure lore who congregate at the larger (or remote) temples.

Aside from the deals struck at the market each year, certain groups may have long-standing trade agreements. The Black Bull Clan sends 200 bushels of barley to the Red Rock Clan each Earth Season, and in return receive five horses, a barrel of raw bronze, and ten fine cloaks each Sea Season. These goods need guards to protect them from bandits and other hazards. Most marriages involve local families and clans, but there are always exceptions, usually important ones. (This sort of event *can* happen periodically, but realistically your community only has so many members to marry off, so it should not be overused.)

### Scenario Seeds

- Traveling heroes visiting Geo's Creek Inn could easily find themselves in a classic *Seven Samurai* scenario, with enemies approaching and only themselves to muster the aged or disabled Geo's regulars in a desperate defense of their favorite eatery.

- Someone contaminates the Geo's stewpot "network," leading to a rash of illness among regulars and distrust of the Inns by travelers. Can you uncover the culprit and reverse the contamination?
- You escorted cousin Rana to her first wedding. When her husband died and she wanted to come home, you were sent to fetch her. Then she remarried, but shortly got divorced. She married a third time, but ended the union after her husband was banished. And so on. When she eventually does find stable happiness, you may have a hard time believing it.

## Follow the Money

With the possible exception of the Society of the White Bear, all hero bands in this chapter are involved in mercantile ventures in one way or another. The merchant caravan is one of the staples of roleplaying adventure. Merchants travel far and wide in search of profit, braving the dangers of the road, from bandits to inclement weather. They have to involve themselves in local politics, whether they like it or not, and will have to decide how they deal with the authorities. In addition, merchants, who have a ready excuse for traveling far from home, make excellent spies and smugglers.

Narrator characters naturally include the merchants with whom the heroes trade. They may be Heortlings, Lunars, Praxians, Grazers, or even non-humans. A wide variety of character types could also appear as customers. The heroes must deal with the local clans, Lunar troops, bandits, and other adventurers.

Traveling with many valuables can be costly, even without taking into account the danger of being robbed. Merchants have to pay taxes to travel on important roads, to cross bridges, to enter cities, and to use market places. Sometimes these taxes are just a form of highway robbery or "protection" money, but most of the time the local ruler is simply exercising his legal right to tax travelers who pass through his lands. Not that it is always easy to tell the difference.

As the campaign progresses and the Hero Wars take shape, the heroes' lives will become more complicated. War and rebellion will destroy their regular markets even as they provide new opportunities to aid or hinder the Lunar occupiers. The heroes will find that the Lunar stranglehold on trade tightens as the years pass. Perhaps this will force them into seeking out exotic markets, or into smuggling supplies to the rebels.

### Scenario Seeds

- The authorities place a prohibitive tax on the goods that you usually sell, forcing you to look for new markets.
- You encounter an exotic trader or caravan, perhaps even non-humans like trolls or dwarves. What unusual goods will they have to trade? Will there be dangerous misunderstandings in the course of negotiations?
- You acquire a valuable treasure, but when you get to the next market, the local chief claims that traveling entertainers stole it from his household. Can you prove that you are the rightful owner?
- Well-armed soldiers requisition your goods, giving you a "receipt" in return. When you try to redeem it at the nearest fort, the garrison commander laughs at you.
- A temple to Etyries opens for business. Merchants who convert receive valuable tax concessions as long as they agree to trade only with other worshippers at the temple. A number of the heroes' trading partners convert and will no longer deal with them.



# Geo's Creek Inn

*"You want to go where everybody knows your name!"*

Established in 1510, Geo's Creek Inn is part of a chain of "inns" founded over a century ago by the hero Geo as a place of refuge and hospitality. It stands on the south shore of The Creek at Dangerford, right next to the King's Road. When Geo built it, the Dinacoli and Culbrea tribes were on the verge of war. After several years of good beer, excellent fish stew, and the occasional marriage, the two tribes realized they had much in common and ended hostilities.

The inn is typical of its kind in Sartar. A wooden wall surrounds a large courtyard, its double-doored gate always open. To the right and left of the gate are a small smithy and brewery, respectively. Against the back wall stands the inn itself, a two-story wooden building. The ground floor is taken up by the tavern, kitchen, and a small storeroom. The second floor has a common sleeping area and a small room for the innkeeper. A hayloft above the second floor provides quarters for casual staff and the poorest travelers. Horses are stabled outside, to the right of the inn. Rumors persist of a secret cellar filled with treasure and weapons, but with The Creek so close any basement would be flooded. Of course, such a basement might have an underground stream leading to The Creek, allowing members to get in and out of the inn without being discovered.

The inn was acquired in 1616 by a wanderer known only as "Rock"; the previous keeper went for a walk one night and never returned. The patrons still keep an empty seat and full tankard ready for him, just in case. When a stranger enters, everyone looks at the innkeeper. Stewpot immediately tells the innkeeper if he belongs to Geo. If the innkeeper serves the newcomer a bowl of stew, he is considered family. If not, he is an outsider, and although he may be allowed to purchase dinner or even a bed for the night (but only after *all* members have been served first), he will know that he is not welcome to stay long.

**Common Names:** Creek Inn, Geo's Salvation Army, Geo's Own, Geo Boys, Sanchali Tribe.

**Form:** Everyone's favorite inn.

**Typical Homeland:** Heortling.



**Cultural Context:** A home away from home. Geo's serves as a "substitute tribe" for the disenfranchised and unlucky, with each inn acting as a stead or bloodline (although there is no king or tribal ring).

**Ideology:** "Everyone needs a little help from their friends."

**Look and Feel:** Friendly inn with a secret.

**Purpose:** To provide shelter and cheer to those "inn" need—especially rebels.

**Reactions:** Most outsiders have little to do with Geo's other than to enjoy the good food and warm beds. Many write the "Geo Boys" off as cripples, do-gooders, and has-beens. Lunar sympathizers dislike Geo's, as they are never given hospitality (which is guaranteed only to members).

## Resources

**Leader:** "Rock" is well educated but blind, his eyes seared from their sockets. Some think he is an apostate scholar. Whatever his origins, many people in the region seek his advice on law, customs, and history.

**Renowned Members:** Even with one hand, Whitefringe the Grazelander is the best ostler the inn has ever had.

Porter Strongarm maintains order, cracking heads and tossing people out when needed.

Seven-Man does maintenance chores, patching the roof and making sure the mice do not get in. Depending on whom you talk to, he is the seventh man to have the job or he does the work of seven men. Either way, he's not talking: he can't.

The "Three Broyons" are in charge of most of the inn's needs—cook, brewer, and smith. Broyan the Fair rules the kitchen and keeps Stewpot happy. His apple tart makes even Humakti smile. Broyan Catwise has never been seen outside his brewery, and patrons joke that he is a myth. Broyan No-son served Ingenew Humaktsson; few people know he can work iron.

**Membership:** The inn employs about a dozen full-time staff; thirty or forty other people are loosely associated as "regulars." Many local "Geo Boys" are rebels and outlaws from the Culbrea, Dinacoli, and Cinsina tribes.

**Other Contacts:** The Creek Inn maintains contact with some local rebel bands. Most Geo's do not risk being so closely aligned with the Rebellion.

## Organization

Geo's is a closely-knit fraternity. The innkeepers and staff are often veterans who cannot find work anywhere else. But Geo's is not a charity—all members are expected to pull their weight. They sweep the floors, change sleeping straw, cook, and brew ale for their healthier kin. The bulk of "Geo's Own" are still adventurers, outlaws, and wanderers, who always find a mug of beer, a bowl of stew, and a place to sleep when they get "home."

## Membership Keyword

**Membership Requirements:** A new member must be a "Son of Sartar" (usually interpreted as meaning a member of one of the tribes) recommended by an existing member. He must swear an oath of loyalty and take *Loyal 14* or higher as a personality trait. Membership is for life, and Geo Boys who become wealthy or powerful should remember



who helped them. Geo Boys who do not work at one of the Inns are considered members, but receive no special benefits other than food, drink, and shelter.

**Skills taught:** Staff (only) learn Animal Care, Brewing, Cooking, or Housekeeping.

**Typical Personality Traits:** None.

**Magic:** None taught; most members are theistic Heortlings.

## Geo (Guardian)

Geo came to Dragon Pass with Sartar (the Man who would be King) as his cook and brewer. He began a hospitality cult that operated a series of refugee places scattered throughout Sartar, wherever there was need for a warm bed and safety. Most were located in trouble spots or along the borders of feuding tribes, and they helped bring about Sartar's Peace. Sometimes the flood of refugees was so great that it included non-Sartarites, and the first expansions were to allow room for those unfortunates. Later, some of the refugee centers added an area for paying customers, and thus Geo's Inns were born. Despite these changes, the primary function of these places is to provide refuge to and support for Sartarites.

Geo blesses and defends *all* his inns. Innkeepers may call on his powers as long as they are on the grounds belonging to any inn, and Geo sometimes speaks to others, as needed.

**Functions:**

- ⚡ **Blessing**—Prevent Hangover 12W2.
- 🛡️ **Defense**—Geo Takes Care of His Own 18W2.

Some members worship Geo as a hero cult of Issaries. However, he is not an Otherworld entity—he is a guardian. As such, these membris are practicing misapplied worship. They always pay 2 hero points to learn or improve his two functions as feats, even if they have concentrated their theist magic; see “Worshipping Guardians” (*HeroQuest*, page 94).

## Stewpot—Geo's Proxy

In addition to Geo himself, each inn has its own unique guardian and a special blessing. For example, Geo's Wintertop Inn keeps the beer cold. Geo himself hung a battered bronze caul-

dron over the fire in the Creek Inn. It answers to the name “Stewpot” and houses the inn's personal guardian. Its functions protect all members when they are present in the inn itself.

No matter what ingredients are put in Stewpot, it always contains fish chowder (although the type of fish does change). Some say that all Geo's stewpots are connected, each contributing stew according to its ability and receiving stew according to its need. Most people dismiss this as the drunken ramblings of the regulars, but when a big chunk of saltwater bluefish is found in Stewpot, one does wonder how it got there...

**Method:** Manifestation.

**Communication:** Wonderful smells of fish stew wafting through the air.

**Guardian Requirements:** Bring “fixins” for Stewpot once a month. This can be one carrot or a cartload of beef—Stewpot judges contributions based on members' means.

**Functions:**

- 👂 **Awareness**—Who's Listening?
- 🍲 **Blessing**—Tasty Fish Stew.

## Geo's Bouncer

Responsibility for enforcing Geo's rules lies with the members. If this is insufficient, or if one commits a secret crime, punishment is left to Geo's Bouncer, a being whose exact origin and nature are unknown. He speaks only to Geo's members, either to offer a drink of his bull's blood or to state their crime while he trusses or otherwise prepares them for execution. (It is not offensive to refuse someone else's drink, but the refuser must supply his own.)

The Bouncer is bare-armed, but otherwise covered in black leather. His unblinking eyes stare out of an executioner's hood. He carries an immense iron and silver double-bitted axe, and drives a two-wheeled oxcart drawn by a huge black ox. Upon the cart is a hanging gallows with several nooses, a beheading block and basket, and an iron box, which he never opens. He never eats, but lives by drinking blood from the ox.

**Significant Abilities:** Execute Member 15W2, Strong 5W2, Wrestle 10W2.





# The Fabulous Hunting Troupe

*"Nothing like the chase to get the blood pumping, eh, lads?"*

Around thirty years ago, a young Seshnegi knight named Sir Herik Vinder was exiled from Seshnela following an undisclosed incident that had severely embarrassed his liege lord. He ended up in the city of Karse, and once there spent his time in his favorite pursuit: hunting. He quickly realized that the magical fauna of nearby Dragon Pass provided many exciting challenges for an aspiring hunter like himself. He recruited other expatriate knights and so formed his "Fabulous Hunting Troupe" whose members travel across the Pass in search of adventure.

In recent years, Sir Herik has greatly expanded the enterprise. Now, using contacts back home in Seshnela, he has arranged a number of expeditions to Kanthor's Islands and other out of the way locations. Although he himself cannot return home, some of his associates can, and they guide wealthy patrons from Dragon Pass on quests to hunt exotic Western creatures unknown in their own lands, such as eskaval, bonnacons, leucrotta, and paranders. Similarly, Seshnegi clients come to Dragon Pass with the promise of hunting "earth-shakers" (gaz-zam), dream dragons, jack o'bears, and similar monsters. (See *Anaxial's Roster*, pages 145-149, 155-159, 176, and 204, for some of these creatures' statistics.)

Members and clients of the Troupe may be found in both Dragon Pass (where they visit places such as the Chaos Woods and the Stinking Forest) and Seshnela. Members organize hunting expeditions to both regions, and then use the largest portion of their profits to finance their own private treks to locate and kill especially interesting, rare, or dangerous creatures. On these exclusive outings, they sometimes journey as far as Prax or the southern Lunar Empire.

**Common Names:** The Big Buff Beast Bashers.

**Form:** Commercial hunting fraternity.

**Typical Homeland:** Seshnela (but can be any).

**Cultural Context:** The Hunting Troupe is officially one of the many military fraternities followed by Seshnegi knights. In practice, it is more of a commercial enterprise, and includes many non-Seshnegi members.

**Ideology:** "Nature looks best when it's dead, stuffed, and mounted on a wall."

**Look and Feel:** Macho safari hunters with huge crossbows.

**Purpose:** To kill fabulous beasts and have fun doing it.

**Headquarters:** Karse is the location of the official headquarters, because of the necessity of a port to ship people to and from Seshnela. Most members prefer to dwell in Sartar, however, since that is much closer to their favored hunting grounds.

**Reactions:** Other Seshnegi's opinions of the Troupe vary. Many regard them as a knightly fraternity, no different than any other, that specializes in hunting fell beasts. More traditional Rokari look down on them for their commercial interests and their willingness to deal with pagans. Heortling and Grazer hunting bands are usually hostile; they regard the Troupe's ethos of hunting for sport and lack of respect for Nature as antithetical to their own traditional beliefs. Still, Sir Herik seeks access to the Wood of Fabulous Beasts, and so is looking for Grazers willing to guide him safely through the Grazelands to the Forest and back.

## Resources

**Leader:** Sir Herik still leads the Troupe. Now in his sixties, he is remarkably fit and muscular for his age. He commonly wears aristocratic Seshnegi clothing decorated with his personal coat of arms: vert, a bonnacon rampant coward or, a bordure undy argent.

**Renowned Members:** Sir Grund, the Troupe's most able hunter, is a huge man who wields a heavy bastard sword; he is also an unerring shot with the crossbow.

Pol Heringby is the Troupe's treasurer, a role that has expanded since the Troupe began dealing with non-Malkioni clients from Dragon Pass.

Siglulf the Green is a Heortling initiate of Tatouth who is often employed for his tracking abilities.

One of the Troupe's most famous clients is Trevarius Ploncus, a wealthy Lunar noble who provides substantial funds to the group, but who is an astonishingly inept hunter.

**Membership:** The core Troupe consists of 30 Rokari knights and 50 or so support staff, the latter including members of the Rokari farmer caste and local Heortling guides.





Although the band employs liturgists of Saint Rendoir, patron saint of hunters, it includes no wizards, since use of such magic is viewed as unsporting. At any given time, there will be a variable number of clients with the band, usually from either Dragon Pass or Seshnela.

**Other Contacts:** The Troupe has a number of allies and patrons throughout Seshnela, and can lean on their support for temporary bases of operations. In Dragon Pass, they generally have to be more self-sufficient, although some Esvulari lords in Heortland occasionally lend their assistance to members.

## Organization

In true Rokari fashion, the Troupe is strictly divided between hunters (knight caste) and support staff (farmer caste). The knights act as guides and intermediaries for Manirian clients in Seshnela and conduct their own hunting expeditions in Dragon Pass. The farmers carry out all the other tasks that keep the Troupe functioning. They are servants for the knights and their clients, and also deal with all the tedious financial matters that no knight would sully his hands with. Members often hire local hunters and trackers to assist them on expeditions, especially when traveling to relatively unfamiliar lands (such as Tarsh or Prax); such hirelings are considered farmer caste regardless of their occupation, might, or fame.

The Troupe's clients are mostly wealthy Esrolians and Esvulari who seek adventure in lands far from their native cities and towns. However, anyone who can pay is accepted as a client. The knights do not attempt to push their Rokari beliefs on anyone; they know it would not be good business.

## Membership Keyword

**Membership Requirements:** Permanent members of the band must be practicing members of the Rokari Church, and belong to either the knightly or farmer caste. Only knights need possess the abilities and traits listed below; since farmers may fill almost any role, their skills are highly variable. Clients may be of any background, so long as they have money.

**Skills taught:** Crossbow Hunting, Dragon Pass Geography, Fabulous Beast Lore, Follow Spoor, Seshnela Geography, Wilderness Survival.

**Typical Personality Traits:** Boastful, Macho.

**Magic:** None taught. Most members of the Troupe are at least lay members of the Rokari Church, although clients and local guides may use any type of magic.

## "Big Buff" (Guardian)

"Big Buff" is the stuffed hide of an exceptionally large bonnacon—a magical beast native to Seshnela that is especially difficult to hunt because of its habit of flinging poisonous, burning turds at its pursuers. A Hunting essence was bound into the stuffed animal by a friendly wizard, and now offers its advice and assistance to Sir Herik. The hide is also enchanted with defensive spells that make it very difficult to damage.

**Method:** Archetype.

**Form:** The stuffed body of a large, buff-colored bonnacon mounted on a wheeled presentation platform.

**Communication:** The enchantments on the stuffed body enable the essence within to animate its mouth and have it speak audibly. It only speaks Seshnegi and ancient Brithini.

**Guardian Requirements:** Must personally hunt and collect an appropriate trophy from at least one fabulous beast per year.

**Functions:**

- ☞ Awareness—Find Fabulous Beast.
- ☞ Blessing—Accelerate Crossbow Bolt.
- ☐ Defense—Disguise Scent.

## Bonnacon

*Recurvitauros inflatus*

**Ages:** Golden, Storm, Historical.

**Distribution:** Seshnela, Ralios.

**Habitat:** Woodland.

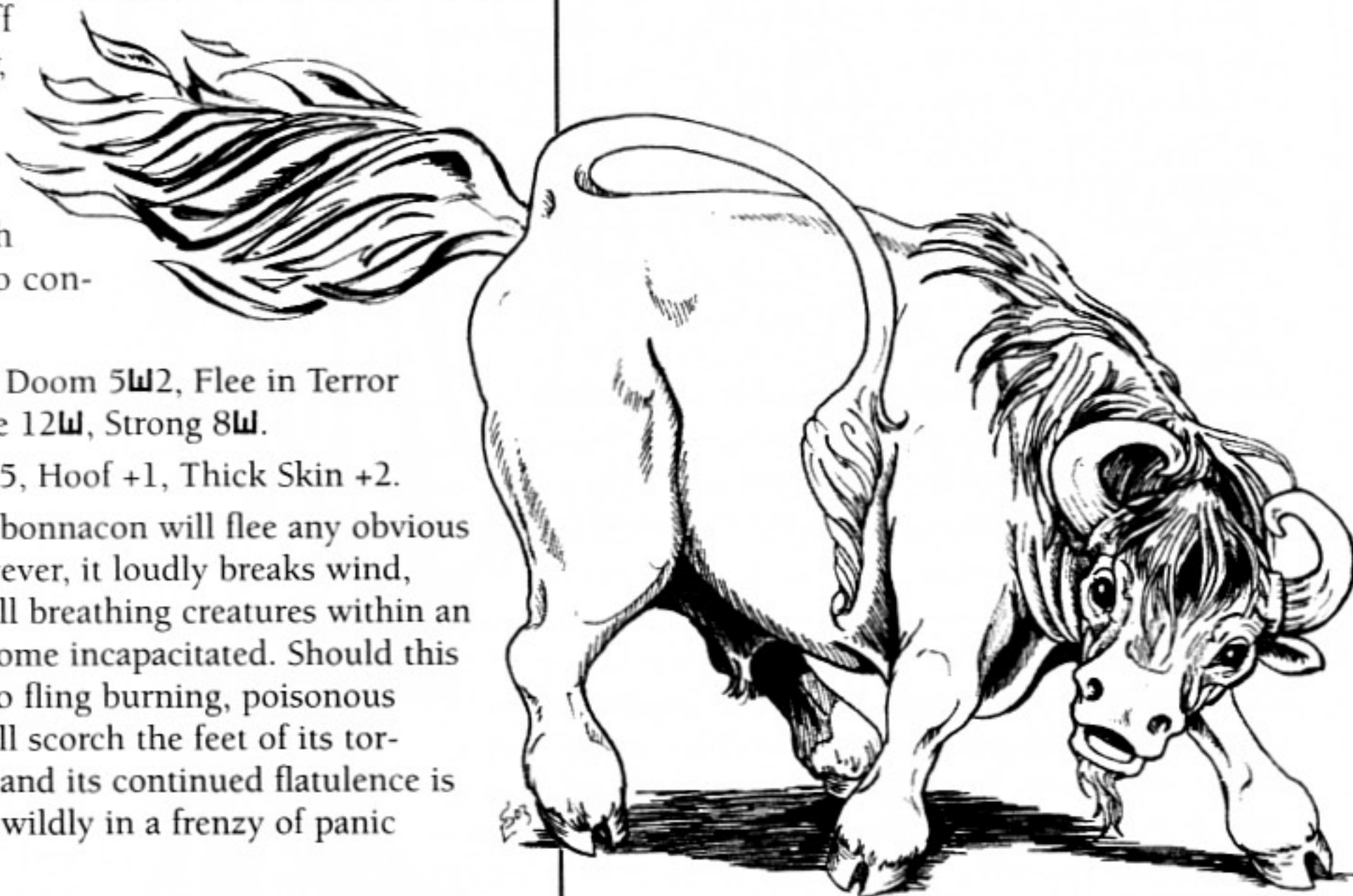
A rare fabulous beast, the bonnacon somewhat resembles a large cow with a long, shaggy mane running down the back of its neck. It has ram-like horns, but these are curled up in such a way that it is unable to use them in combat. They come in a range of colors, although a russet hue is most typical.

Bonnacon are generally placid but have a healthy fear of man, since Seshnegi knights often hunt them to show off their prowess. They are normally solitary, but one calf may sometimes accompany a female. Seshnegi wizards say that the bonnacon was created to demonstrate to humans the true nature of cowardice, both in its inherent foulness and in its ability to contaminate everything that it touches.

**Typical Abilities:** Fling Dung 18W, Fart of Doom 5W2, Flee in Terror 10W, Hear Predator 8W, Kick 12, Large 12W, Strong 8W.

**Weapons and Armor:** Burning Hot Dung +5, Hoof +1, Thick Skin +2.

**Tactics:** Being weak in direct combat, the bonnacon will flee any obvious threat. When alarmed or trapped, however, it loudly breaks wind, emitting a stench so foul that almost all breathing creatures within an area of two acres around the beast become incapacitated. Should this fail to deter pursuit, the beast begins to fling burning, poisonous dung out of its rear, which it hopes will scorch the feet of its tormentors. Should it finally be cornered and its continued flatulence is of no effect, the creature will kick out wildly in a frenzy of panic until it is subdued.





# Captain Dashwood's Traveling Show

*"Roll up! Roll up! Fun for all the family!  
The Old World may be falling down around our ears,  
but the Traveling Show only gets better and better!"*

Dashwood ("the Captain" as he likes to be known) leads a band of entertainers around Dragon Pass, Kethaela, and the southern Lunar Empire. The troupe is over fifty years old, and many folk eagerly anticipate the return of the great round tent, as did their parents and grandparents. Sometimes the troupe spends a season at a prestigious festival, but members generally prefer life on the road, interacting with common folk and being "big fish in a small pond."

**Common Names:** Dashwood's Troupe.

**Form:** Donandari entertainment band.

**Typical Homeland:** Any (Dashwood himself is Heortling).

**Cultural Context:** Itinerant performers. There are few travelers more likely to catch your attention than Donandari, with their colorful horse-drawn wagons decorated with flags, bells, and charms. Because any travelers may be susceptible to bandit attacks and other dangers, however, the troupe always travels prepared. When they feel that their members are not enough, they hire local guards.

**Ideology:** "Here we are, the Traveling Show, here to entertain you." (Repeat in harmony and fade.)

**Look and Feel:** Traveling circus and carnival.

**Purpose:** Dashwood's Troupe makes its living as entertainers, and the main performances are also ceremonies to entertainment gods. Within the troupe are members who act as spies for Sartarite rebels, and others who are not averse to picking a pocket or two.

**Headquarters:** Like all Donandari, Captain Dashwood's Troupe has no home but the road, and no headquarters but its wagons.

**Reactions:** Most folk appreciate professional entertainers, despite their strangeness. The troupe commonly performs at least a small show whenever they stop in a settled region, and are provided with food and drink in return. People who attend full performances normally pay in more substantial food, useful goods for daily living, or even coin (especially near the cities). The troupe sensibly encourages members with connections in a particular community to take the lead in dealing with the locals there. Sometimes members of conservative social or religious elites make life difficult, but Dashwood is an excellent judge of local feeling and his entertainers rarely outstay their welcome.

**Renowned Members:** Seddig of Bagnot is the security chief of the troupe, and a friend of Dashwood's from way back. He gathers news about territory the troupe will travel through, and watches over the band. He is no performer, but a worshipper of the Rigsdal subcult of Elmal.

The "Three Esrolians" have a wide musical repertoire and provide the backdrop for most acts. One follows Dathar, another Hyraos, and the last Drogarsi (see *HeroQuest*, page 111, and *Thunder Rebels*, page 223).

The "Leaping Londrasons" are equally at home swinging from ropes or diving through a succession of rolling, fiery hoops. They worship Thelados the Contortionist, a "subcult" of Donandar.

Jomas Ten-Bears claims to be a Praxian for reasons of showmanship, and dresses like a nomad during his performing-bears act. However, he is actually one of the Rathori Bear People, and he and his bears are outlaws from their homeland.

Baranor the Swift is a juggler and fire-breather from Boldhome, who worships Mercario the Street Entertainer (see *HeroQuest*, page 124). He commonly rides ahead of the caravan, announcing its arrival as the troupe approaches likely performance sites.

Black Hawk and Red Hawk are middle-aged Kralori who perform amazing acts of coordination using knives and swords. (Former senior officers of the Kralori navy, they narrowly escaped execution during an attempted uprising a decade ago, and fled to the West.)

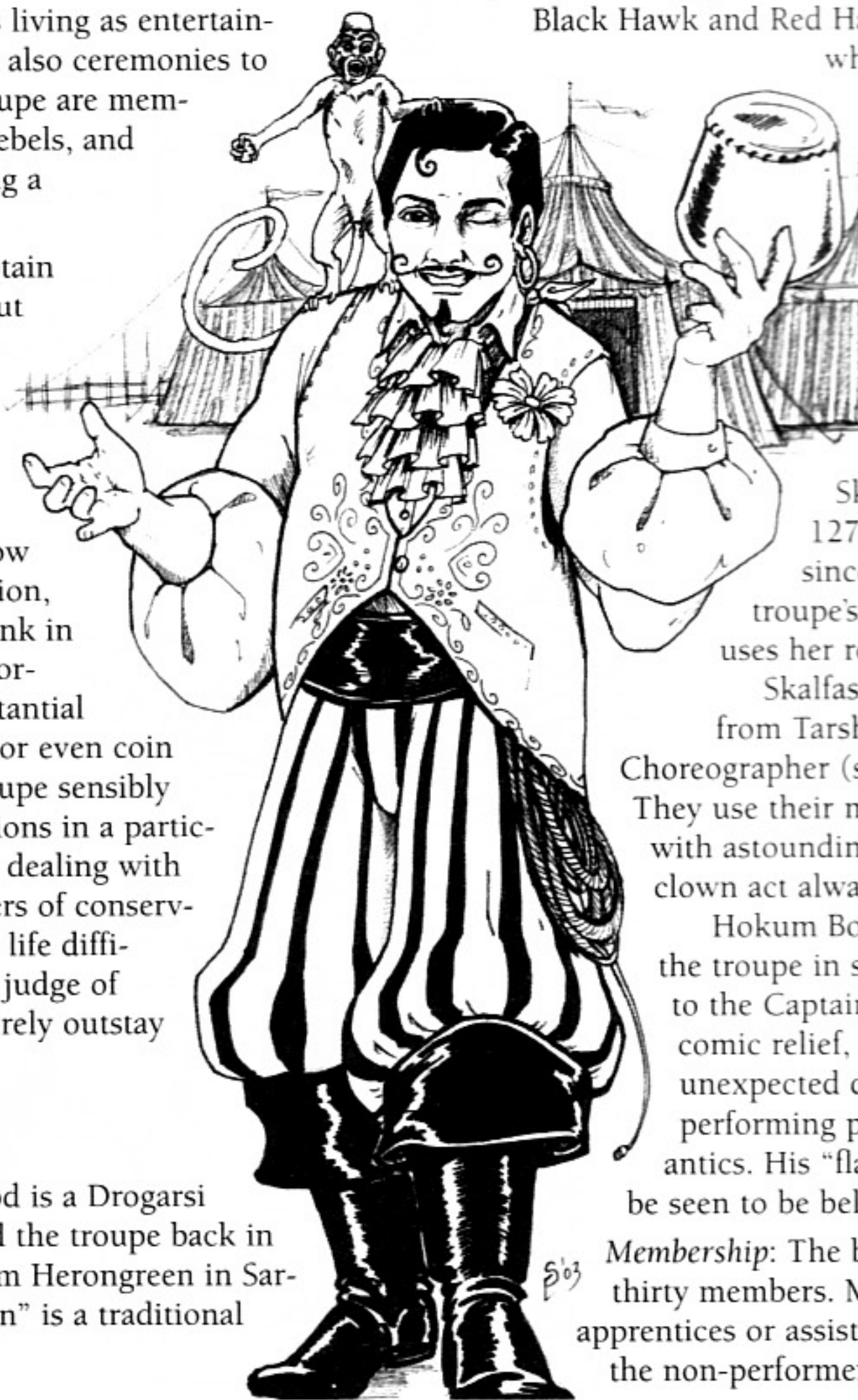
Jonlana the Puppetress entertains families outside the main tent. She worships

Skovara (see *HeroQuest*, page 127), and has been with the Show since birth. Uniquely among the troupe's renowned members, Jonlana uses her real name rather than an alias.

Skalfason and Dulfarson are brothers from Tarsh who worship Molamin the Choreographer (see *Storm Tribe*, page 213). They use their magic to execute comic capers with astounding precision, though their clown act always appears spontaneous.

Hokum Bokum is a trickster, bound to the troupe in some unusual way known only to the Captain and Seddig. Hokum acts as comic relief, entering the ring to cover unexpected delays, or wandering about performing pratfalls or other amusing antics. His "flaming flatulence" feat has to be seen to be believed. (Or possibly not.)

**Membership:** The band currently has more than thirty members. Most of the performers have apprentices or assistants, and alongside these are the non-performers required to keep the show



## Resources

**Leader:** The current Captain Dashwood is a Drogarsi worshipper. His grandfather started the troupe back in 1566. His family was originally from Herongreen in Sartar. He claims that the title "Captain" is a traditional Donandari honorific.



on the road. One of the performers, unbeknownst to all (even this individual), is the grandchild of Marlesta the Dancer, a descendant of King Sartar. This performer is thus a potential heir to the kingdom.

**Other Contacts:** Relations with similar troupes are good. However, despite being widely tolerated, Donandari have few special friends beyond appreciative audiences.

## Organization

Dashwood controls the troupe's operation. Performers are required to maintain their acts, and Dashwood offers frequent suggestions. Most performers are Donandari. Other personnel include carpenters and a medic. The troupe often hires locals to help with manual labor, but they are not actual members.

## Membership Keyword

**Membership Requirements:** Dashwood and Seddig assess applicants. Few are turned away, providing there is a need for their talents, but most non-performers do not stay with the troupe for long. (This life is only a career if you perform.) Everyone must do their fair share of work, and help with other acts when required, even if only by throwing out props or standing blindfolded.

**Skills taught:** Carnival Speech, Games of Chance, Make Camp, Sleep Rough.

**Typical Personality Traits:** Gregarious, Wanderlust.

**Magic:** Active performers usually worship Donandar. Black Hawk and Red Hawk maintain worship of their native Kralori deities, but do not speak of their religion to outsiders or even colleagues.

## Tob (Guardian)

Tob is the troupe's mascot, who warns and advises them. Only properly inducted troupe performers can see him, although in emergencies he may whisper advice to guards or helpers. No one understands what he really is, and his only concern seems to be the troupe's safety. Though timid, he usually seems content, and when observed is usually sleeping in a warm spot or riding happily atop a wagon.

**Method:** Manifestation.

**Form:** A small brown monkey.

**Communication:** Members hear whispering in their ears when Tob wants to communicate with them, or see him beckoning them to follow as he flits in and out of the crowd.

**Guardian Requirements:** Members who treat Tob poorly or fail to leave out fruits or berries for him once in awhile may see a less favorable side of the troupe's mascot.

**Functions:**

- ☺ Awareness—Find Audience.
- ⚡ Blessing—Pass Undetected.
- ☐ Defense—Sense Threats Nearby.

## Concentrating Donandar and Lanbril Magic



By concentrating on talents and giving up all magic from the Otherworlds, a hero has a reduced cost to learn and improve talents. However, a common religion may worship a "primal" entity such as Donandar or Lanbril (*HeroQuest*, pages 111-112), who epitomize Music and Theft, respectively. Such entities may be associated with deities, spirits, or saints. For example, Donandar is associated with Mercario (*HeroQuest*, page 124), and a hero who concentrates his Donandar talents would have to give up the affinities gained from Mercario. How does concentration work in such situations?

Like a follower of the Lunar Way (*HeroQuest*, page 113), a worshipper of such a "primal entity" has a choice. Rather than concentrating on a single magic system (and thus giving up either his talents or the abilities granted by his specialized religion), the hero may instead specifically concentrate on the magic of the primal entity. In doing so, he retains all common magic from that entity *and* any feats, charms, or spells learned from related specialized religions, which become common magic abilities at their current ratings. (An initiate may select three of the affinity's feats to retain as common magic, at the affinity's rating.) All other magical abilities from the specialized religion are lost, including any affinity or grimoire from which the retained feats or spells may have come in the first place.

Janeera is an initiate of Skovara. She knows the *Bless Family*, *Bless Mothers*, and *Low Entertainment* affinities. Additionally, Janeera has learned several of the Left Hand and Right Hand talents as a worshipper of Donandar.

When her player concentrates Janeera's magic, she decides that being an entertainer is more important to Janeera than being a member of the Ernalda religion. She erases all three affinities from her character sheet, as well as any common magic not derived from Donandar. She keeps her Donandar

talents, and selects three *Low Entertainment* feats to keep as common magic feats: *Make Audience Happy*, *Make Music Without Instrument*, and *Make Puppets Look Real*. (Her other two affinities derive from Ernalda, not Skovara, so she does not get any of their feats.)

A hero who makes this choice is not restricted to the talents listed in *HeroQuest* or the magic of his deity, spirit, or saint. He may learn feats, charms, and spells from other associated entities as common magic abilities. However, the hero may not learn magic from any other source, common or specialized, without losing the benefits of concentration.

Kobold is a worshipper of Lanbril and Thelados the Contortionist who has concentrated his Lanbril magic. He knows several Face of Lanbril talents and all of Thelados' feats. In the city of Refuge, he meets a practitioner of the Meer the Cat Burglar Practice, who teaches him several charms to get into and out of locked rooms silently. These charms are Lanbril magic, so Kobold writes them in under his common magic keyword. Like his talents and feats, he spends only 1 hero point each to learn or improve these charms.

Even a devotee or practitioner who knows their religion's secret can "switch" his concentration. Although he could never learn a secret through the common religion, he does retain the secret after switching his concentration.

Karaman is a devotee of Molamin. He is exiled and joins a Donandar troupe. His player pays a hero point to switch his concentration from theism to Donandar. Karaman gives up all of his affinities, but retains his *Choreography* feats as common magic *and* his full ability rating in Molamin's *Harmonize Movement* secret.



# The Garden of Delightful Mobility

*"The old world is not over, for we still dance."*

Ostensibly a band of dancers and entertainers, the members of the Garden of Delightful Mobility have a higher purpose. They seek perfection through the movement of their bodies. The Sacred Dance is a re-enactment of the primordial movement that created the world. While they take entertainment and their art seriously, this does not mean that they refrain from the burlesque or the profane. In their repertoire is everything from the sensuous snake dance to the white elephants performing courtly dances from Kralorela.

Whenever they arrive at a new destination, members enclose an area large enough to house nearly two hundred spectators. Large firepans are placed inside the perimeter, and are lit just before the audience enters. As the show begins, the entire audience is transported to the Garden of Delightful Mobility. As long as they stay inside the enclosed area, the spectators experience only a dreamlike sensation. Outside the enclosure lies a beautiful garden tended by green-fingered goblins.

No one knows much about the history of the band, as nobody has bothered to record it. Once part of the now extinct School of Liberating Movement, they became traveling entertainers over three centuries ago. Members of the Garden of Delightful Mobility have more to tell about their recent history, however. In Pavis every single performance was sold out for a week, but the subsequent riot caused the company to be expelled from the city. Before that, a Bison Khan hoping for ransom held them hostage for seven years until they bought their freedom with a love apple grown in the Garden. When they first arrived in Dragon Pass, they attracted the attention of every merchant in Pimper's Block by buying thirty slaves only to free them in return for later favors. They have even performed for the Black Flintclub Clan of the Indigo Mountains, but had to hand over all their mules in order to keep the trolls from eating the elephants.



**Form:** A traveling band dedicated to the sacred art of dance.

**Typical Homeland:** Teshnos.

**Cultural Context:** Like many other traveling entertainers, they are outsiders even in their own culture, never really belonging anywhere.

**Ideology:** "We are entertainers, but our art teaches us and our audience about good and evil, about what it is to be human, and ultimately about Life itself."

**Look and Feel:** Philosophically inclined entertainers.

**Purpose:** To seek the Great Dancer, who will lead them in the Final Dance that will reunite the Garden of Delightful Mobility with the Cosmic Garden of Perfection. To this end, they perform for common men and women, helping them to escape the grim realities of ordinary life as an unintended benefit.

**Headquarters:** The Garden of Delightful Mobility, a unique and perverse place of mystery and temporary being, which exists without connection to any Otherworld.

**Reactions:** Most people see the Garden of Delightful Mobility as nothing but entertainers, and few care to find out more about their motivations. Fundamentalists might take offense at their religious tolerance. Few ordinary Teshnans can understand why anyone would want to leave their tranquil way of life to become wandering performers.

## Resources

**Leader:** Sengbankhala, who dances on broken glass with such skill and grace that his feet are never cut.

**Renowned Members:** Wherever they go, people talk about their extravagant show, but few learn the names of the performers. Warriors secretly admire the sword dance, performed with flaming swords. Women are often bewitched by the graceful motions of Mar and Rar, the dark-skinned brothers with their Panther dance, while their husbands secretly covet the belly dancers. The snake charmer is very popular with the children.

**Membership:** The number of members varies, usually between 30 and 50 individuals. Not all are performers.

**Other Contacts:** While many have heard of their spectacular show, few know them well. They have informal relationships with a few other groups on the road.

## Organization

The Garden of Delightful Mobility has no formal structure. Everybody performs the duties for which they have some talent. Leadership belongs to those to whom the others will listen. Sengbankhala, the current leader, has been with the troupe for over four decades. Few challenge his authority.

The Garden of Delightful Mobility shows a remarkable tolerance toward people holding different opinions from their own. This accepting attitude has made them a refuge for all kinds of people. Under no circumstances, however, will they accept murderers, thieves, or other common criminals. Foreigners who join the band rarely stay for long. Like the perfect cosmic dance, the Garden's movements eventually bring them to their place in the world, a place where they are needed or where they want to stay, even if they did not know it before.



## Membership Keyword

**Membership Requirements:** Participate in the Sacred Dance and sacrifice to Somash Veren the Beauty Sun on holy days. No prior dancing experience is required for new recruits, but members are expected to improve their skill continually.

**Skills taught:** Perform [Dance].

**Typical Personality Traits:** Disciplined, Unprejudiced.

**Magic:** The Dance is a celebration of life, so death worshippers are not welcome. All members sacrifice to Somash Veren the Beauty Sun, in effect becoming communal worshippers of the Teshnan Pantheon. When enemies eradicated the School of Liberating Movement, the band managed to salvage some of its writings, collecting them in *The Book of Dancing*. They have been supplementing it ever since. Members who have proven their trustworthiness and loyalty to the band are allowed to learn spells from the book (including *Martial Dance*, *Seductive Dance*, *Self-healing Dance*, and *Mesmerizing Dance*). These spells must be learned independently. Members have heard of Westerners who can unite a book of spells into something called a grimoire, and they are now seeking a way to do that with their book.

## Keeper of the Gates of Joy (Guardian)

Keeper of the Gates of Joy has always been within the Garden, dancing and aiding those who dance with her. In order for her to be present in the Middle World, the troupe must make music-like sounds at all times. As long as at least one member does this, she will remain in this world, but if the entire band goes silent she will leave the Mundane World, closing the Gates of Joy forever. For this reason, most members wear bells and similar paraphernalia attached to their clothing. At night, members take turns keeping the music alive.

**Method:** Manifestation.

**Form:** The sound of music. Most often she is perceptible only as a soft whisper in the ear of the leader, but at other times she can be heard as anything from a lively tune to the sound of blaring trumpets.

**Communication:** Only when she is opening and closing the Gates of Joy can outsiders hear her clearly.

**Guardian Requirements:** Eat no dairy products.

**Functions:**

- ☉ Awareness—Aid Negotiations.
- ☿ Blessing—Delightful Mobility.
- ☐ Defense—Seal the Gates of Joy.

## Laughing It Up

### *Playing in an Entertainers' Campaign*

Entertainers can be heroes, too. Businesspeople, travelers, exhibitionists—they are a bit of everything and very much a breed apart. Some are “low entertainers” like Captain Dashwood, who can bring new life to tired workers at the end of the day with a bawdy skit and a flashy show. Others, like the Garden of Delightful Mobility, can illuminate cosmic truths with dance and mime, and satisfy even the jaded palates of lords and potentates. In any case, entertainers depict the society in which they live, from the myths of the gods to the deeds of the ancestors and heroes, and in doing so teach their audience something about themselves.

As in other themed campaigns, members of these bands need not all be professional entertainers. Entertainer bands may include the warrior who ekes out a living with his knife throwing, the deserter from the cavalry who now practices trick riding, the scholar who supplements his meager stipend spinning entrancing tales of distant lands. Bands also need auxiliaries—roustabouts, animal-trainers, shysters to relieve the delighted audiences of their spare coin, and merchants to tally the takings.

### Scenario Seeds

- The most talented member of the troupe is also an arrogant swine. He decides to strike off and set up his own troupe in direct competition. What do the heroes do?
- A lowly member of the troupe is revealed as a noble traveling incognito to avoid the authorities or another enemy (perhaps his own family).

### The Entertainers' Campaign

Although there are settled entertainers, a campaign is more likely to be based around heroes who travel, either as opportunities arise or along a regular route, playing to a new audience every few days. In the process, they will have ample op-



portunity to adventure while braving the perils of the road, from rapacious toll-keepers to hungry beasts. All kinds of narrator characters could appear in such a campaign, from stickpickers to kings. Everyone needs to be entertained at some time. Even the Lunar occupiers are not immune to the lure of the skald and the puppet show, even though they may prefer entertainers from home.

Heroes must be careful to tailor each performance to the current audience or face the consequences: a show appropriate for Lunar-oppressed Heortlings could get the heroes hanged if performed for an Imperial official! Knowledge of established rivalries between clans or tribes is important for the same reason. Entertainers must always be aware of the context in which they are going to fit their performances.

During their travels, the player heroes could become involved in everything from trade disputes to raids, natural disasters to full-scale rebellions. As the series develops, they can take part in the intrigues of the Hero Wars. Lowly entertainers are vital tools of the rebel movement. They can spy where no warrior can safely go, and are known for bearing news and gossip. They can hide propaganda and other messages, such as the banned teachings of Orlanth, in their shows. They may not be warriors, but their actions can still strike a blow against their enemies.

### Scenario Seeds

- The troupe stages a satire that angers a local potentate, who sends his henchmen to “teach them a lesson.”
- A member of the troupe proposed to a local girl the last time you passed through this region. Whether or not the individual (one of the heroes?) remembers the promise, the locals certainly do...
- A contact wants the troupe to carry out a risky task for him, such as spying on an enemy or smuggling arms or people. Refusal could be dangerous.



# Ibex Moon Society

*"The old world is over, let us show you the new!"*

The Ibex Moon Society is a bold mercantile venture that has recently extended its operations to Dragon Pass. It is essentially a travel agency that conducts rich Lunar citizens (especially Dara Happans) on safe tours of foreign and barbarian lands. Trips to Dragon Pass have proven especially popular, as much for the novelty of the region as for its picturesque landscapes, unique sites, and the quaint customs of its peoples. They offer regular, special, and adventure tours in Dragon Pass and other exotic lands. The last are typically created to meet the needs and interests of well-paying clients. For Massavan Destrino, spoiled son of the Satrap of Bindle, they even chartered a moonboat for his dinosaur-watching safari, as well as a hundred of the pygmy Wasp Riders to keep brutish Tarsh Exiles at bay.

Although a commercial enterprise, the Ibex Moon Society is primarily motivated by idealism and faith. They hope that through common understanding, the barriers between peoples can be lowered, relations improved, and the manifest virtue of the Lunar Way demonstrated to benighted heathens. Without all that preaching: the Ibex Moon Society does not proselytize, feeling that friendly contact is most easily maintained without pressure. True to their philosophy, they are among the friendliest Lunars in Dragon Pass or, for that matter, anywhere else.

**Typical Homelands:** Tarsh, any Lunar.

**Form:** Lunar commercial venture.

**Cultural Context:** Enthusiastic but optimistic traders and travelers, they promote travel with the underlying intention of progressive peace through making friends.

**Ideology:** "Travel safely. The world can be a better place if we all meet each other."

**Look and Feel:** Travel agency and tour guides. Imperial residents seeking to "explore" Dragon Pass employ it to provide efficient and safe passage to its many marvels. "Let us guide you safely through the wonders of this primitive society."

**Purpose:** To provide safe and educational journeys for Lunars who want to visit barbarian lands. To spread the philosophy that "Talking and Listening proves 'We are all Us.'"

**Headquarters:** The Gazetorium in Gostolos, in the Lunar Satrapy of Doblian (far to the north of Dragon Pass). This temple houses a huge library of maps and accounts of Known Glorantha. Its roof is a massive mosaic map of Genertela, which is being expanded as more details become known. Many smaller temples can be found locally. The Sartar headquarters is at the Etyries temple in Aldachur, which has (among its regular staff) approximately 20 full-time members, 30 full-time guards, and 30 to 50 guides (all initiates of Etyries or Selven Hara).

**Reactions:** Pro-Lunar attitudes always raise the prejudice of anti-Lunar bigots. However, the Ibex Moon Society's non-aggressive, non-proselytizing nature (and its generous payments and gifts) means that it is accepted in many places where anti-Lunar feelings are weak. The

band is very strongly Lunar, with inclusive and egalitarian attitudes, which can also cause problems with the more traditionalist Imperial officials and officers.

## Resources

**Leader:** Analax the Traveler, said to have "stopped at every city, waded every river, climbed every mountain." Now almost entirely crippled by his adventurous life, he vicariously savors new experiences through the maps, reports, tales, and testimonials he receives from his followers.

**Renowned Members:** Arl Ban Gavan Baravashtran, the mysterious "Mountain-Leaper."

Drofats the Dittyman, who made up a series of popular and widely-circulated rhymes about the wonders of Dragon Pass. They are more renowned for their lyrical melody than their actual lyrics.

Open-Handed Elindu, the scout who never bears weapons, but who once

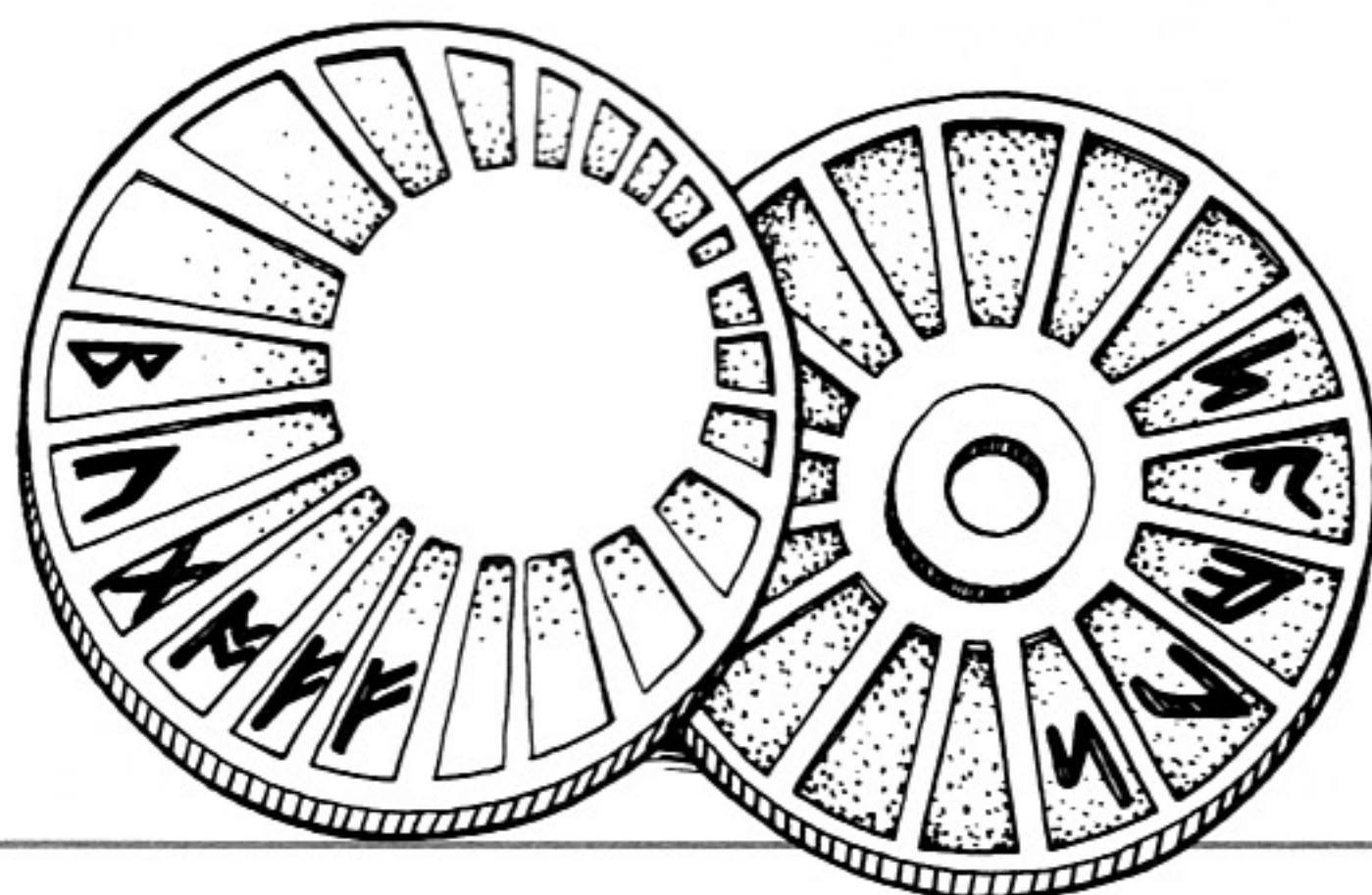
wrestled a tusker to the ground.

Fod-ariam, a well-known mapmaker in the Empire. Though his maps are as accurate and complete as he can make them, his tendency to lapse into poor poetry about JarEel the Razoress has made him something of a joke in Lunar society.

**Membership:** Varies according to the season, since they hire and release as needed. The minimum in Dragon Pass is around 80, with many solo agents residing in strategic places throughout the land (including one in Pavis). The Society maintains a widespread network of experts, hirelings, and trusted locals that it hires (as non-members) when needed.

**Other Contacts:** The Society has contacts throughout urban Dragon Pass, providing previously agreed-upon rates for lodging, food and supplies, etc. It has nice (but frequently inaccurate) maps that it gives to its customers. The Society has extensive casual contacts throughout the Empire with guests whom it has escorted safely, and who have gone home to normal duties. The Ibex Moon Society is on excellent terms with the Etyries cult.

*"See, the city nestled there,  
Between the Cow and Raven.  
Boldhome, built by magic to  
Create a mountain haven."  
—Drofats the Dittyman*





## Organization

The local headquarters oversees operations throughout the entire area, with Analax and his officers directing large-scale ventures (known as "voyages" in the jargon). Arl Ban Gavan Baravashtran personally came to Dragon Pass to lead Destrino's aerial jaunt, using the opportunity also to scale Kero Fin alone, returning with a full sketch pad and an empty heart, although he still has not told Analax what he found above the cloud-line.

Headquarters works with local groups known as crews, which can number as few as five or as many as a hundred. These crews are sometimes purely temporary, perhaps assembled for a particular voyage, but others are more permanent, and have become well-known in their own right. Valkov the Perpendicular is the prime mover behind the creation of a permanent office at Alda-chur, and his crew has been acquiring a reputation for entrepreneurialism after it began advertising "lineage tours" for wealthy Tarshites eager to discover their Heortling kin (admittedly, in order to patronize them and show off their riches) and "battlefield tours" for 'dinner-couch generals' from the Heartland, eager to visit the sites of famous engagements in Dragon Pass and hear stirring tales from veterans.

## Membership Keyword

The Society requires that all applicants swear the Wayfarers' Oath to protect travelers and treat with them honestly, to speak no ill of the Red Goddess or her ways, and to obey their tour leader. Anyone meeting this minimal requirements can be hired as a casual employee. The Society hires many Heortlings and other locals this way, most commonly either owners of lodging houses, eating establishments, or outfitters, or else as bearers or guides. Many casual employees have long-standing friendships with local guides and find the Society an excellent employer, for it pays generously and promptly and does not try to force Lunar beliefs on them. Formal employment is for longer periods, and requires swearing the Ibez Pledge and obeying the guides.

Most formal employees become initiates of Selven Hara (a travel goddess linked to Etyries; see *Under the Red Moon, Imperial Lunar Handbook Volume 2*), although this is not required. Only formal employees are full members of the band, and thus only they gain the magical support of Two Good Ferrets, the band's guardian.

**Membership Requirements:** Speak the local language and prove capable of survival in the wilderness. (If applicants already know skills taught by the Society, it is counted in their favor when they apply.)

**Skills taught:** Archery, Build Shelter, First Aid, Load Pack Animal, Local Area Knowledge, Make Fire, Read Map, Scimitar and Shield Fighting, Speak New Pelorian.

**Typical Personality Traits:** Confident, Friendly.

**Magic:** None taught. Guides must be initiates or devotees of Selven Hara or another appropriate (preferably Lunar) deity.

## Two Good Ferrets (Guardian)

When Selven Hara was still a mortal, she was loyally served during her epic Talastar Tour by a Nungaring scout, whose knowledge of the ways of the wild were matched only by his communication abilities. While he never managed to muster more than a rudimentary command of any civilized tongue, he nonetheless could make himself understood by gestures and a crude pidgin

form of almost any language he encountered. Selven Hara elevated him to watch over the Ibez Moon and in return he provides members with the same abilities.

**Method:** Manifestation.

**Form:** A small, dark, wiry man, wearing only a loincloth and a beaded headband; he carries a short spear and a spirit-rattle.

**Communication:** When Two Good Ferrets speaks, members hear him in a low, grunting pidgin version of their native tongue.

**Guardian Requirements:** Swear and keep to the Ibez Pledge—never to live in the same place for over a season, always to help and encourage travelers, and never to refuse to tell tales of distant places. A little more perplexingly, members must follow up any leads to something called the "Four Nose Chancel." This last is presumed to reflect some interest of Two Good Ferrets himself.

**Functions:**

**Awareness—**Know Way Home.

**Blessing—**Pidgin Communication.

**Defense—**Sense Ambush.





# Society of the White Bear

*"The old world is dead! Harrek killed it!"*

In 1595, Harrek the Berserk invaded the White Bear Rituals of his native Rathori tribesmen. He skinned the White Bear spirit and bound it in its own pelt. Since then, he has pillaged his way across Genertela. Even distant Teshnos and Seshnela have felt his wrath. With each devastation, a few survivors are drawn after him like jackals. These doomed folk form the Society of the White Bear and seek vengeance. Time after time they attack Harrek; time after time they are wiped out. But one of them survives. One of them always survives.

Usually, the Society gathers its strength and attacks when they think they have the power to overcome Harrek. Every time they fail. Recently, the band has changed tactics. They know that Harrek will come to the Holy Country again; Esavangli the Seer has "seen" Harrek destroying the City of Wonders. When he does, the Society will be waiting for him. Taking the name "Harbingers of Doom," the band has traveled to the Holy Country to begin enlisting allies.

The Harbingers have expended much effort in recent years helping Broyan, last High King of Heortland. (This will become tragically ironic in a few years, for it is fated that Broyan will "trade" the City of Wonders to Harrek in return for his aid against the Lunar Empire.)

**Common Names:** Harbingers of Doom, The Harrek Revenge Squad.

**Form:** Cursed revenge seekers.

**Typical Homeland:** Any (the guardian was Rathori).

**Cultural Context:** Victims bent on revenge.

**Ideology:** "Harrek destroyed us. We will have our revenge."

**Look and Feel:** Doomed revenge seekers and evangelical agitators.

**Purpose:** To kill Harrek or die trying. (The latter is easier.)

**Headquarters:** Kasovar travels from city to city and could be found anywhere in the region. He usually sets up in a townhouse or villa to maintain a veneer of respectability. Most of the band lives in small camps made in Harrek's wake. "Preachers" are scattered throughout the Holy Country and Dragon Pass to warn those who have not yet had the dubious honor of a visit by Harrek.

**Reactions:** Those devastated by Harrek's passing are often sympathetic, with many powerful individuals providing the Harbingers with money and support. In those areas untouched by Harrek, the people are more likely to see Society members as madmen and fanatics.

## Resources

**Leader:** Kasovar One-hand is the oldest surviving member of the band. He was once a powerful Dart Competitor and a member of the Mogorenitano Clan, the same nobles who foolishly hired Harrek the Berserk to destroy their rivals, the Blathiri-hen. Harrek wiped out both clans. Kasovar's experience with the White Bear left him with little *except* his left hand. His other arm is severed through the shoulder and both his legs are chopped off at the knee.

Kasovar rebuilt the Society and transformed it into its current incarnation. Most of his activities revolve around gaining allies and power. Like many members of the Society, he has no problem justifying murder, robbery, and extortion if it helps bring about Harrek's destruction. He also spends time searching for those touched by the Curse of the White Bear and integrating them into the Society.

**Renowned Members:** Sarini deTorma is the "face man" and go-between for the band. He was a Trader Prince until Harrek burned Fay Jee to the ground.

Esavangli the Seer is tormented by her visions of the future. She fled the City of Wonders to try to avert its destruction.

Ysgrin the Ravisher, a Ygg's Isles pirate who lost his ship to Harrek.

Toread duDerysi, a veiled sorceress from Hendreikiland who traffics in forbidden magic and lost her soul because of Harrek's meddling.

Vangeli Whiteblade, a Sword of the death god Humakt from Nochet, who wields three blades to avenge his teacher.





## Adventure Ideas

Most outsiders view the Society as a band of loonies. This often forces them to hire outsiders to deal with other non-members or perform other tasks. While most player heroes are unlikely to join the Society, they may find themselves interacting with them in several ways.

- A player hero gradually notices that he is under observation by a group he has never met before. When confronted, one of the watchers explains that he is evaluating the hero and his capabilities for his leader, who wishes to recruit the hero for a glorious mission.
- The Society offers to remove a troublesome official or rival from the heroes' path in exchange for a future favor. One thing can lead to another, and if the heroes are not careful, they may end up leading the charge in the next doomed effort to kill Harrek.
- The Society might give the heroes shelter and healing after a sudden appearance of Harrek in their neighborhood (probably with the Wolf Pirates). Will their anger and anguish make them more open to the word of the local Harbinger preacher?
- The Society hires the players to kidnap a member of Harrek's crew, thinking that perhaps they can use the crewmember to lure Harrek into a trap, or at least get information to help them. (Woe to the heroes who tries to kidnap Gunda the Guilty!)
- The Society has never been able to contact the White Bear's, despite frantic efforts. If they could communicate with the spirit, they might gain an advantage over Harrek. Thus, Kasovar might commission the heroes to steal a single hair from Harrek's cloak.

**Membership:** The number of Harbingers varies wildly. It ranges from the sole survivor of the last encounter with Harrek to several hundred fanatics readying to strike (and be killed). Currently, there are about 25 dedicated members, and another 75 or so individuals that Kasovar can rely on for aid (though not go up against Harrek). His biggest need right now is to build up a group who can go up against Harrek when he shows up again.

**Other Contacts:** Kasovar's knowledge of Imperial politics and Dart Competitions has earned him many contacts throughout the Empire. His advice is much sought after, and he takes payment in both favors and coin. Other Harbingers maintain similar arrangements with their homelands. Agents of this group can be found throughout the region preaching the coming of the Bear.

## Organization

The Society changes with each incarnation. They are usually structured like a warband, but this time they are dispersed, with lone "preachers" and small "cells." Kasovar could be found anywhere trying to drum up support.

## Membership Keyword

**Membership Requirements:** Members must swear an oath on Choptop to destroy Harrek or die trying.

**Skills taught:** Know Harrek's Life Story, Maintain Purpose, Recognize Harrek, Tough.

**Typical Personality Traits:** Hate Harrek, Vengeful.

**Magic:** None taught. The band's current incarnation is composed mostly of theists from the Holy Country and the Wolf Pirates, with a few wizards recruited from the Trader Princes and the West.

## Choptop's Skull (Guardian)

The band's guardian spirit is a relic of the White Bear Rituals. Choptop is all that remains of the lone shaman who survived Harrek's betrayal. He was cursed by the White Bear never to rejoin the Rathori until the Great Spirit is avenged. During his first attempt at revenge, he was slain. Choptop now cannot remember his name or past, nor does he care to. He insists on being carried by the Society's leader at all times, so that he misses nothing and as a reminder that it is his personal curse that drives the band's actions. Carrying around a skull causes the band much grief with their more civilized clients.

**Method:** Manifestation.

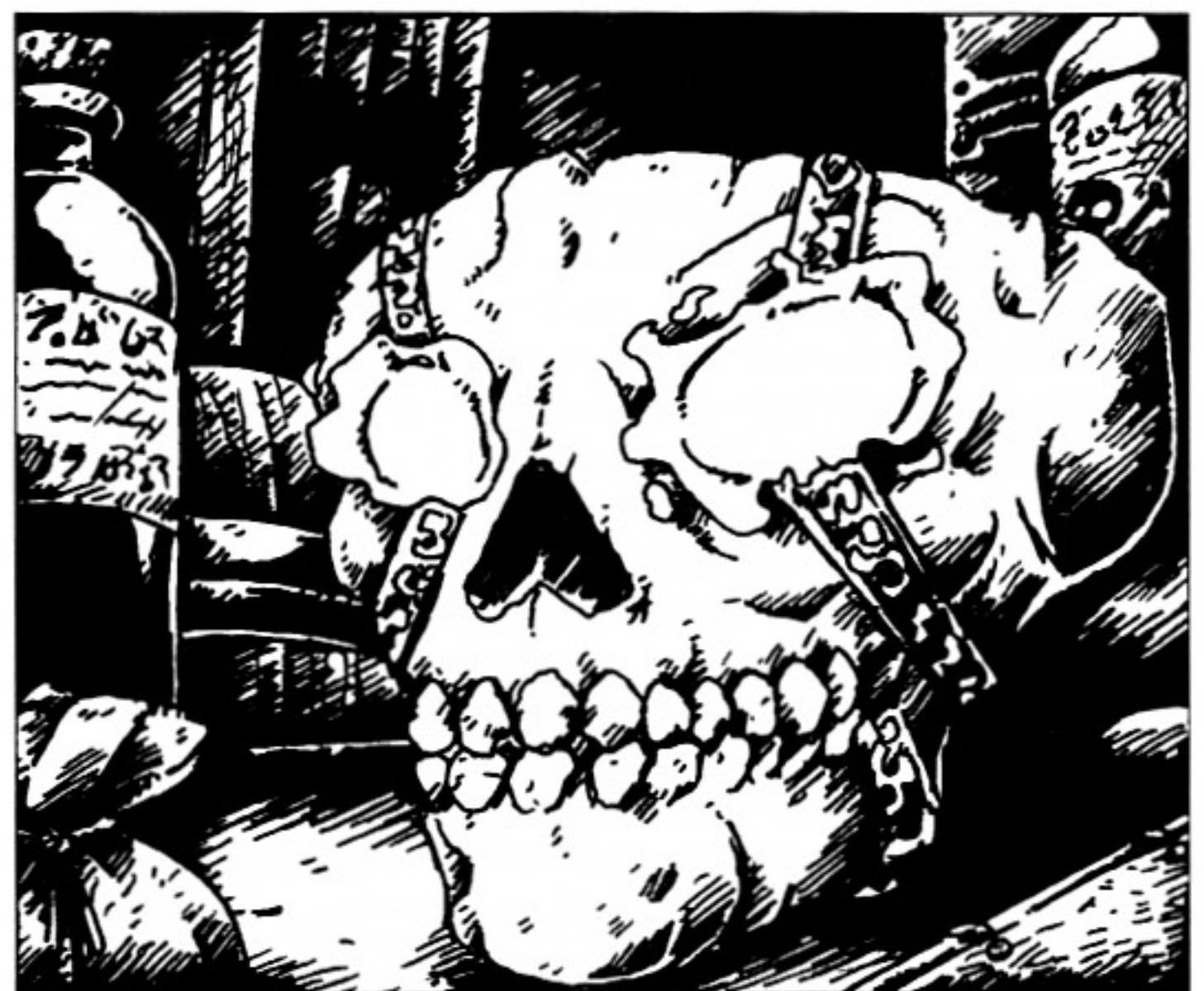
**Form:** All that remains now of Choptop is his battered skull, the top hewn off. Those who look too closely can almost see his spirit looking out through the empty eye sockets.

**Communication:** Society members can make out Choptop's wishes from the meaningful silence that emanates from his skull. Onlookers find this most bizarre.

**Guardian Requirements:** None, but the oath members take ties them into the Society's strange doom, and thus seals their fate.

**Functions:**

- ☞ Awareness—Where is Harrek?
- ☞ Blessing—Heal Bear Claw Slash.
- ☑ Defense—Defend Against Harrek.
- ⚠ Special—Sole Survivor. (This is the "secret" of the Society. After an encounter with Harrek, Choptop and a lone survivor will escape. Carrying Choptop into battle is no guarantee of survival—quite the opposite, in fact. But the lone survivor will always find the skull. Always.)







# POWER AND PASSION

**M**agic is the art of using the power of the Other Side, and those who devote their lives to this pursuit risk being changed by that exposure to other realms and powers, by the demands made by such a life, and by the power it can offer. Magical specialists—priests, spirit-talkers, and wizards—know how to channel the energies of the Otherworlds. They know the myths and legends of their communities. They know secrets, and they know how to master both themselves and the world around them.

## The Magician

Magicians come in many forms and start upon this road for every reason. Many are the traditional community guardians and leaders of their cultures: the priest who stands as intercessor between his people and their gods; the shaman who speaks for the tribe's ancestors; the liturgist who leads his flock in hymns of praise, blesses them in life, and shrives them in death. Some had this life thrust upon them, others worked hard for it. There are those who abuse their offices and powers for personal gain. They revel in the pomp of their positions, taking advantage of them to line their pockets and practice petty patronage and vindictiveness. There are also those who take their duties seriously, who labor for the good of their communities.

Most magicians do belong to some form of wider community. The Comet Seers are merely one weapon in the devastating arsenal which is the Lunar College of Magic, just as the Two-Handed Brotherhood looks to the Provincial Church and beyond that, to the Empire. Even the Eaglebrowns, who may seem rootless mavericks, regard themselves as being part of an intangible nation, the "free Sartari." After all, community—whether a hero band or the wider church or tradition—is of immense importance to the magician. Communities can offer much to magicians: freedom from the day-to-day needs of survival, leaving time to delve into otherworldly secrets; protection from mundane threats; and above all, communal support for the dangerous rituals and heroquests through which they will tap the greatest powers. But in return, they also expect much: magical protection and guidance, restraint in the use of those powers, a willingness to use those quests and rites in the interest of the community as a whole.

This is why those magicians without ties to a community often founder. They have no one to teach them, no one to tend them, no one to look after them. By coin, suasion, and intimidation they may find servants and retainers, but true magic demands the wholehearted and genuine support of a community prepared to share in the magician's dangers as well as his triumphs. However, those who do prosper without these ties are often the most dangerous, for they have shown themselves uncommonly able—and they do not have the same restraints as do those with communities to listen to and protect.

## Scenario Seeds

- This is an especially auspicious moment for a great ritual, which would dramatically increase your own power and knowledge. Your community instead wants you to use it to bless their mundane lives. The stars (or spirit alignments, or mythic resonance) will not be as propitious for another hundred years: what do you do?
- You have been chosen by a greater power: the omens clearly mark you as a magician, though you planned to follow another path. Do you accept or seek to resist fate, even if it is what your community expect of you?

## The Magicians' Hero Band

Some hero bands will exclusively comprise magicians, typically senior figures plus their sidekicks, apprentices, and assistants. However, bands such as the Eaglebrowns and the Two-Handed Brotherhood, whose magicians combine magical expertise and practical know-how, are quite rare. For magicians to aspire to the heights of their chosen fields, they usually must specialize. Indeed, if anything, magicians tend to be single-minded, which means that they generally acquire their own gaggles of servants, protectors, agents and allies. This relationship may involve a formal structure, such as that of the Comet Seers and their personal retinues, or the exchange of service for education, as with the School of Ronos Allwinds. In other cases it is a matter of informal support, such as the regular assistance provided to the Servants of the Wild by the inhumans of Beast Valley.

Thus, almost any type of hero can belong to, or be allied with, a band of magical specialists. Some heroes may be of the more unusual occupations from the magic chapters of *Hero-Quest* (apprentice, clergyman, priest, spirit-talker, or wizard), but magicians are not the only heroes appropriate for this type of campaign. A warrior can provide magicians with protection, perhaps in return for provision of an unusual steed ("you ride a what?") or some magical equipment. Magic is often rooted in simple instinct and will, but as often depends on knowledge; thus, a scholar may be able to provide mythological or theoretical insights, or simply record the magicians' deeds and discoveries. Even a member of a seemingly mundane or workaday profession might be hired to meet the magicians' mundane needs. After all, they need a cook for their meals, a bookkeeper for their accounts, and other functionaries.

## Scenario Seeds

- You have become dependent upon what you thought were loyal servants, but now you discover they have been embezzling from you. You are far from home: do you ignore their perfidy until safely back amongst your own people, do you try to discipline them and hope they can be brought into line, or do you turn on them forthwith, even though they have vital skills you lack?



## Allies and Enemies

Great magic draws attention to itself, and the quest for magical power often arouses the fear or hatred of others. Many of the magicians' hero bands described in this book are natural enemies. Furthermore, magic often demands conflict, whether foes to be sacrificed or mythic antagonisms to be acted out. When combined with the increasing tensions of the Hero Wars, few magician bands will be able to avoid conflict.

Of course, not all enemies come from without. Magicians have devoted themselves to power of one kind or another, and tend to have healthy egos and ambitions. Even if a band is collectively devoted to a community or a cause, each member will be tempted to prove himself the most able defender of the people or teacher of the band's ways. Magicians' bands will thus be especially prone to internal rivalries, which could be as open as attempts to assassinate leaders or as subtle as smiling debates over obscure philosophy.

### Scenario Seeds

- The son of a local leader and important ally applies for membership in your band. So does one of that leader's rivals. When you evaluate the applicants, your ally's son turns out to be a no-good nobody, while his rival seems both trustworthy and competent. What do you do?
- An allied hero band wants your support for a dangerous quest. Will you aid them?

## Remember Rituals

One of the distinctive aspects of a magicians' campaign should be the emphasis on ritual. Through ritual, hero bands may affirm their linkage with Otherworlds and otherworldly entities, carry out magics otherwise beyond their powers, and gain mystical insights. Sometimes players and narrators have difficulty making up ritual elements, such as holy days, locations, and items for rituals. The following principles should be regarded as guidelines, not rigid rules, for coming up with components for ritual magic. If you come up with something clever that fits the magic you are trying to perform, go for it! Do not let these assumptions weigh you down. On the other hand, if you are stuck, the following basic tenets may prove helpful.

- R Phenomena similar to each other are often assumed to affect each other magically. A magician may use ritual objects associated with the effect he wishes to produce, such as tinder to create fire, or water to put it out, while drums might represent thunder, or flickering reflections from a shard of mirror, lightning.
- R The magician may perform his ritual at a location where earlier events associated with the desired effect took place. Godtime events are especially powerful in this regard. Much of the power of the Servants of the Wild is thanks to their understanding of the mythic past and connections of the Wild Temple.
- R Participants in a ritual may simulate a desired effect themselves, by moving, acting, or sounding like it. Kolatings (Heortling animists) often hyperventilate when conducting wind related rituals, for instance. Apart from putting them in a state of ecstasy, the act increases the potency of their magic. Likewise, the Five-Rune Ring's use of members of different races may be a crude representation of the Grand Council, but it is nonetheless an effective one. Eaglebrowns may wear the skins or skulls of animals they wish to hunt—and increasingly may use a Lunar soldier's red cloak to the same ends.

- R A common tactic is the use of images of the target of a ritual, for things once connected remain linked. Using a person's hair, nails, or even clothes in a ritual can increase a magician's chance of victory. The Comet Seers were able to obtain the clothes worn by Astolf of the Sambari during the Fire Bull Rebellion. In the Comet-Fire Ritual, they hurled burning coals onto the clothes, and the Falling Star unerringly dived towards the valley where Astolf lay hidden with his warband. He is no more.

## But Don't Forget the Mundane World

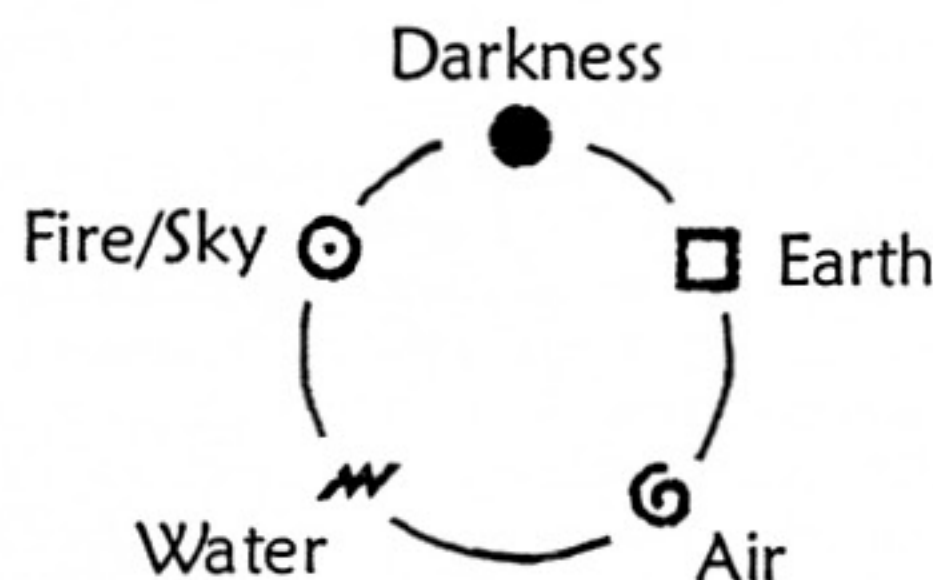
Not everything is about the supernatural. Even a magicians' campaign needs many ordinary events to put the wondrous enchantments of Glorantha and the Hero Wars in perspective.

### Scenario Seeds

- Bad News! Harvests fail, and people are starving. The rich and powerful flee the area, but you have an important ritual approaching. If you leave, it will be another decade before you can try it again. How far are you willing to go to protect your interests?
- An old rival has joined the ranks of a band that you are friendly with. You *know* he's up to his old tricks, but can he be dealt with without damaging the reputation of your friends? What is the nefarious fellow's motive, or are his claims of a sincere change of heart really true?

### The Elemental Progression

The Five Elements can be arranged in a circle as shown below. When this is done, the elements form a progression in which each overcomes the element clockwise to it, but is vulnerable to the one counterclockwise. This progression holds true across Glorantha, whether one is a follower of theism, animism, or wizardry.



A magician may gain a bonus when using elemental magic to attack the inferior neighbor. Any hero with the *Elemental Progression* skill gains this bonus, but other characters may as well—as narrator, you determine when it applies (such as when anyone casts ritual magic). This bonus equals  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the magical ability's rating, subject to a limit of  $\frac{1}{10}$  the character's *Elemental Progression* rating (or +2 if he lacks this ability). Of course, it is always possible for a magician to take a penalty when using elemental magic against a superior element.

- Δ Ronos is defending his school against sea demons sent by hostile wizards. One slithers up a building in the form of a blue serpent. Ronos uses his *Wind Stirs Waters* 3W spell to attack, and the narrator gives him a bonus for using the elemental progression. He would receive a bonus of +6, but his *Elemental Progression* rating of 8W limits the bonus to +3 (if he lacked *Elemental Progression*, he would get only +2). This gives him a rating of 6W against the demon.



# The Eaglebrowns

*"We shall hunt ourselves a new world."*

The Eaglebrowns are a group in transition. Originally a band of hunters who became scouts and raiders in the name of the Rebellion, the band has increasingly turned to magic, and animist powers in particular, setting the members on a path that will in due course transform them into the Eaglebrown Warlocks, one of Argrath's most powerful magical units.

The Eaglebrowns follow the formidable team of Dernu the alynx and Gernu the human, masters of the sudden raid and the equally sudden and successful withdrawal. Many are the times they have raided deep into Imperial territory, even sacking supply convoys in Tarsh. Dernu and Gernu formed the band when they met the Brown Eagle and assisted it in driving away a flock of sun hawks that were hunting a Heortling Deer (see *Thunder Rebels*, pages 194-195). Later, when the wind-banner of Rebellion was raised, the heroes called on the Brown Eagle to aid them when their hunting band became a war band.

From the first, it was clear that the Brown Eagle was not entirely what it seemed. One of the first hunters who joined the band was Irinwydd Feathercloak, a kolating shaman. He followed the spirits to the Storm Eagle Tree, and arrived speaking of a dream that called him. Thanks to his indefatigable spirit-quests, not only has the power of the Brown Eagle grown, but also it has become clear that it is a spirit being rather than a daimon. This revelation has changed the band and its members. The Odaylans among them, for example, have begun acquiring more and better beast charms, including types unheard-of in Dragon Pass, like horned bear and jeffalope. Irinwydd claims that many of these come from distant Sylila, where Odayla is greatly revered, and where there is the tale of the time when Earth Bear and Storm Eagle, once bitter enemies during the Beast Wars, united to defeat the No-Heads, thus gaining true respect for each other even as they remained adversaries.

Meanwhile, a new influx of kolating and animist hunters is flocking to the band, while at the same time many members still cling to their theist ways. The combination is not a problem, as Brown Eagle is not jealous and prizes his friendship with Orlanth's people. Indeed, it has become a common practice to "twin" theist/animist pairs, so that they might learn to use their respective abilities to complement each other.

More generally, a band whose members once depended on their natural abilities and weapons is increasingly turning to the combination of magic and mundane skill. Hunters are experimenting with using magic where once they used javelins; conversely, magicians are finding out what it takes to hunt Lunars in the hills, with spear and trap as well as fetish or feat. Additionally, the Eaglebrowns represent one of the largest concentration of kolatings and other animists (mostly practitioners) in the region. In contrast to the popular image of the solitary Heortling shaman, shunned and feared by the people around him, the Eaglebrown animists regularly work together and share their knowledge. As a result, they are learning new ways to combine their magics, and have proven to pose an unexpected challenge to the Empire.

**Common Names:** Brown Eagles, Eagle Hunters, Spirit Birds, Storm Eagles.

**Form:** Magical guerrilla and hunting band.

**Typical Homeland:** Heortling.

**Cultural Context:** Hunters turned guerrillas, increasingly turning to animism.

**Ideology:** "Once we hunted for the sake of our bellies. Now we hunt for the sake of our breaths and our people."

**Look and Feel:** Grizzled and rangy men and women of the wilderness.

**Purpose:** To support the Sartar Rebellion through magical raiding and scouting.

**Headquarters:** The Eaglebrowns are a wandering band, frequently traveling with Kallyr or venturing wherever the Rebellion needs them. Nonetheless, the Storm Eagle Tree, found in Lorthing Vale, is sacred to them. They often gather there, either to induct new members or to collect raiders who were separated from the band in a raid and know to return to the Tree to rejoin their comrades.

**Reactions:** Tarsh and the Empire have offered an ox's hide full of silver coins for Gernu's head and Dernu's pelt, as well as smaller but still tempting bounties on all their followers. Relations with the Culbrea may be complex. Many members come from the tribe (which reveres the Brown Eagle), but prior to the Battle of Iceland (see *Orlanth is Dead!*), King Ranulf fears that their actions might provoke further Lunar reprisals against the tribe.

## Resources

**Leaders:** Dernu is an intelligent alynx and devotee of Yinkin the Hunter; Gernu is a human warrior, an initiate of Finovan the Raider. The two are inseparable; Dernu is the brains and, usually, mouth of the team, while Gernu provides companionship, brawn, and raiding magic.

Irinwydd Feathercloak, the kolating hunter whose quests have healed many of the Brown Eagle's ancient scars, must be considered one of the band's leaders. While Gernu appears ill at ease in his presence, Dernu clearly respects his unexpected insights and growing bond with the Brown Eagle.

**Other Renowned Members:** Skalvarth Ironblossom, an Odaylan hunter who can throw his fifth iron javelin while the first is still in the air, and see all of them hit his target.

Golov the Tarshite, a renegade soldier, and Two-Buck Androgast, a kolating, who have learned to combine their magic so that Golov's thunderstones fly on the wings of deadly spirit winds.

**Membership:** There are almost a hundred core members of the Eaglebrowns, and this number is rising as new recruits join. Most of the original twenty-five hunters that followed Dernu and Gernu are still with the band.

**Other Contacts:** As the warband of leaders of the Rebellion, the Eaglebrowns have links with Kallyr and the other rebel leaders, particularly Orstalor the Spearlord, another canny worshipper of Finovan. As the band's use of animist magic has increased, however, it has occasionally found itself at odds with the ultra-theist Stormwalkers that follow Elmalandt Wildwind.

## Organization

Members follow orders from Dernu, Gernu, and their closest lieutenants. The notional leader (below Dernu and Gernu) is Skalvarth Ironblossom, although increasingly he defers to Irinwydd. This would be a problem were it not that Irinwydd is happy to remain the spiritual mentor of the band.



## Membership Keyword

**Membership Requirements:** Kill and roast an eagle and bring it to the band as an offering to the Brown Eagle, then convince Dernu and Irinwydd of your ability and loyalty.

**Skills taught:** Guerrilla Tactics, Throw Javelin High into the Air, Understand Eagle.

**Typical Personality Traits:** Patient, Proud, Vengeful.

**Magic:** Any Orlanthi deities, although Odayla and subcults of Orlanth Adventurous are favored. As the Brown Eagle's animist nature becomes more clear, kolatings are beginning to flock to the band. Members of the band, led by Irinwydd, Golov, and Androgast, have begun to share charms and feats among the band as common magic.

The Brown Eagle's *Make Prey* function is generally used in rituals before an attack, to consecrate the band's enemies as members' prey. Ideally, this involves using some trophies taken from them, or even a captive. The result is that the band can use hunting skills and even hunting magic freely against those enemies for the next day, without any improvisational penalties.

## The Brown Eagle (Guardian)

Heortlings associate eagles with the Evil Emperor, and consider them birds of ill omen. As with everything Orlanthi, however, there are exceptions. Keenlong Stormchaser was once one of Yelm's sentries and hunters, patrolling his realm, hunting down those who bore a spark of resistance to the Emperor's crushing tyranny. Once, as he tore at a rebellious kolating wind, he accidentally inhaled some of its breath, and with it the spirit of rebellion. At once, his brother Highguard Eagles turned against him with claws, beaks, and firewind, scorching and burning him. But Orlanth, Great Wind, sent a new wind and billowing clouds of rain from the sky above to scatter the fiery eagles and succor the beleaguered bird.

Singed and hurt, stripped even of its name, the Storm Eagle painfully made its way to the lightning-blasted oak now known as the Storm Eagle Tree, in the Vale of the Winds. There it paid homage to Orlanth the Liberator and swore vengeance against its former brothers. Yet vengeance seemed distant. Its energies sapped, its bright golden plumage darkened, the Brown Eagle remained a shell of its former self. Thanks to the kolat wind it had inhaled, its nature was now a discordant mix of soul and spirit. Its wounds therefore would not, could not be healed, resisting even Bevara's touch. Over time, the local Heortlings came to think of it as little more than the petty landscape daimon of the tree, around whom eagles circled every Windsday.

It was King Sartar who brought hope and an unexpected transformation to the Brown Eagle. Traveling one day, Sartar was assailed by a pack of Impossible Voles, their insane, hungry chittering striking fear into the hearts of his thanes, who otherwise would have faced any foe without a qualm. The Brown Eagle mustered its remaining strength and, with a fierce hunting shriek, drove the Impossible Voles back into the Square Sink.

The grateful king quickly apprehended the destiny dancing around the Brown Eagle's form as it faded once more. He knew he could not heal the bird's wounds. Sartar was Sartar, though, the man who knew that if you cannot win a game, you can always change the rules. There is, after all, always another way. He scratched his nose, he pulled his beard, he said a word...and the Brown Eagle changed. It folded inward, twisted without moving, disappeared into existence. Its wounded soul it shed, and where once there had been a stricken form, neither one thing nor the other, a spirit of the air now spread its healed wings.

The Eagle was still weak, and most Heortlings continued to regard it as a daimon. As it has healed, though, especially thanks to the work of Irinwydd, it has become clear that it is instead a spirit, and so too its magic has strengthened.

**Method:** Archetype.

**Communication:** Members sense Brown Eagle's messages while their skin faintly darkens and stings, as if being roasted.

**Guardian Requirements:** At least once a year, each member must hunt, kill, roast ("brown"), and eat an eagle.

**Functions:**

- ☉ Awareness—Eagle's Sight.
- ⚡ Blessing—Make Prey.
- ☐ Defense—Resist Daimon of Fire or Light.





# Comet Seers

"Watch the skies."

Those who would look down on the buseri as quill-pushers and maize-ear counters would do well to remember the lordly Comet Seers, an ancient and powerful school of the College of Magic, whose magics can shatter armies and lay waste to cities. They were formed over a thousand years ago, when Urvehenekash Blinded-but-Seeing first understood the nature of the Doom Comet. This stellar body appears in the heavens every 594 years, and is widely regarded as a portent of war, destruction, and upheaval. However, Urvehenekash discovered that it was a sign not of ruin but of hope, as it presaged an opportunity, through conflict and victory, to set the Heavens right at last and purge them of impurity.

Buserian rewarded Urvehenekash with control over The Falling Star That Never Comes Down, and the star-watcher formed a band of like-minded seers to join in this cycle of renewal. Much later, the band was incorporated into the College of Magic, the magical arm of the Lunar Army. Their members embark on heroquests to acquire new and dangerous stellar powers, from the common *See by Starlight* to the devastating *Comet Sear*, as demonstrated by the Seers of the Upper Heaven.

The Seers themselves are all priests of Buserian and other stellar deities, but each Seer is expected to maintain personal retainers who are counted among the membership of the band. In some cases, these are simply bodyservants and bedslaves, but other Seers choose to recruit tough guards, cunning agents, and other supporters. While the guardian (its *davu*, in Dara Happan parlance) provides no personal magic, the regiment is extremely wealthy, so such service often has material rewards.

**Common Names:** The Silverhoods.

**Form:** Magical Military Unit.

**Typical Homeland:** Dara Happa.

**Cultural Context:** A formal unit of the College of Magic, part of the Imperial Army.

**Ideology:** "We have been blessed by the heavens. With blessings come responsibilities, which demonstrate our virtue and rightfulness."

**Look and Feel:** Proud, traditionalist Dara Happan magical society.

**Purpose:** To use Buserian's teachings to wield mastery of the skies as a weapon for the Empire.

**Headquarters:** The Comet Seers are formally based at Yuthuppa, in First Blessed Satrapy. The regiment is supported by and technically part of the Three-Chamber Scriptorium, one of the largest temples of Buserian in the city. However, it is subordinate to the Imperial military authorities in almost all matters, although only the temple may recall or retire the Master Seer. In light of their open-ended attachment to the occupation Army of Sartar, they have been allocated barracks in the central Ovurlan's Ring district of Dunstop, which they have had opulently decorated in Solar style.

**Reactions:** As with many other elements of the College of Magic, fellow Imperial troops view the Comet Seers as an irritatingly arrogant but often useful force.

## Resources

**Leader:** The Master Seer of the Arraz Circle is Orshenkor Watches-from-Yajarananus, an aging but powerful and aggressive buseri.

**Renowned Members:** Starlight Striding Sussenesh, the Darjiniian seer who can walk a hundred leagues in a single clear night.

Master Six Stars Ketronkonath, so blessed by Buserian that he is orbited by his own petty constellation.

Kamarakahansh the Upright, magister of Orshenkor's personal retinue, so unbending and punctilious in his observation of Dara Happan etiquette that few would believe he was born Camerhon Broch of Aggar.

**Membership:** The establishment strength of the Comet Seers is 57, and such is the fame and wealth of the unit that there is no shortage of replacements for casualties. Each combat mage has about a half dozen servants and guards as personal retainers.

**Other Contacts:** The Seers have close links with the buseri priesthood and other stellar cults. Their haughty pride in their ancient status and direct links with Buserian means that they have relatively poor relations with their Lunar counterparts, whom they see as upstart meddlers in the symmetries of the heavens. This often leads for chain of command problems, as the College of Magic tends to be under Lunar commanders. However, with the appointment of the Solar traditionalist Tatius to head the Army of Sartar, the Comet Seers are content.

## Organization

The Comet Seers are a military formation; while each Seer is powerful in his own right, all must respect the chain of command. The commander is the Master Seer of the Arraz Circle. Beneath him are the eight Seers of the Upper Heaven, senior priests with powerful ritual roles; then the sixteen Seers of the Middle Circle; and finally the 32 Seers of the Lower Sky. Promotion is at the discretion of the Master Seer and the Peerless Gazer of the Stargazer's Crystal Frame (the chief priest of the regiment's patron temple). Joining the unit and rising within it thus requires an appropriate mix of magical strength, moral probity, influential connections, and personal wealth. The Master Seer must be formally inducted at a ceremony in the Stargazer's Crystal Frame. Thus, if one dies or retires there is often a lengthy interval until his successor joins the unit.

The Seers' retainers have a separate hierarchy within the organization that is dependent on their masters' relative positions. Thus, a given Seer's servants work tirelessly toward his promotion, by fair means or foul. This has led to reversals in the past, such as the occasion in 1602 when seer Red Sky High was administered a powerful laxative by an inventive retainer of his rival, Master Chuchkeveth of the Opal Key. What was intended merely to embarrass ended up having far more serious consequences: with Red Sky High unable to play a crucial role in the rites, the Comet Seers were unable to use their magics to blast the defenders of Boldhome. The Crimson Bat was deployed instead, and was banished (temporarily) from the Mortal World by the unexpected onslaught of a dragon. These events greatly increased Lunar loss of life during this crucial battle.



## Membership Keyword

### Membership Requirements:

Seers themselves must be men, priests with magical powers of at least two masteries. Although the patron temple must approve the appointment of a Seer, he need not be a buseri himself. An applicant must worship a stellar deity or one traditionally associated with a star (such as Durbadath or Doburdun), and may not worship traditional stellar enemies, such as Pentan or Heortling deities. Members have no restrictions on whom they may hire as retainers, although they must remember that their retainers' actions will reflect on them.

**Skills taught:** Spot Falling Star, Star Lore, Watch the Skies.

**Typical Personality Traits:** Distant, Gnostic, Haughty.

**Magic:** Seers themselves worship Buserian or another solar deity strongly linked to the stars, such as Polaris, Uri-maz the Star Captain, the Twin Stars, or Kalikos (god of the Northern Lights). Most acquire other stellar powers, such as *Draw on Stellar Energies*, *Blinding Starburst*, or *See by Starlight*. Seers of the Lower Heaven must have several such powers before they will even be considered for promotion.

## The Falling Star That Never Comes Down (Guardian)

Falling Stars are often imperfections being purged from the heavens. Buserian discerned, however, that one such imperfection bore secret signs of potential virtue. Albeit shorn of name, nature, and even form for some sin still unknown to mortals, The Falling Star That Never Comes Down now serves Buserian faithfully, soaring and dipping, peering and burning, until its secret merit is discovered and realized. As the Doom Comet nears again, its powers are in the ascendant, and

**"I mistrust the Comet Seers,  
who must be the second most destructive  
buseri within the Empire.**

**Only tax collectors can do more harm."**

*—attributed to JarEel the Razoress  
(when asked whether the Comet Seers  
should be used to level Boldhome)*

many buseri believe that this time it will be properly named and freed, to take its place in the perfected cosmos.

As an archetype, the Falling Star obeys only the Master Seer. It does not provide any personal benefits to members of the band, but can be deployed as a powerful battlefield asset, something that requires nights-long rituals by the unit. (Ratings are not given, but would generally be about 20W4 after the

ritual bonuses are added.) These powers are central to the regiment, and are never used except under orders.

**Method:** Archetype.

**Form:** An invisible comet, which orbits the heavens around the regiment.

**Communication:** When the Seers marshal the powers of the Falling Star, they hear a low roaring in the skies above them and their vision loses color sense.

**Guardian Requirements:** None.

**Functions:**

☉ **Awareness**—Eyes in the Sky ritual. (The Falling Star spends the next night traveling over an area of up to 57 square miles, while the Master Seer can gaze down as if atop it, seeing friends and enemies, regiments and spies, spirits and sorcerers.)

☼ **Blessing**—Comet-Fire ritual. (The Falling Star dips down from the skies, still invisible but burning with silver-white magics as its heavenly soul reacts to earthly impurity. This can sear an enemy regiment, burn down a village, or blacken the lands of a whole clan. However, this is also the hardest effect to produce, as it requires the Seers to overcome the Falling Star's innate opposition to the earth.)

☐ **Defense**—Invisible Frame ritual. (The Falling Star crisscrosses the skies above the regiment, smashing aside hostile magics.)





# The Five-Rune Ring

"Prepare for a New Dawn."

Once, peace reigned among the peoples of the world. Humans, dwarves, elves, trolls, dragonewts, and the now-extinct Gold Wheel Dancers cooperated in resuscitating the scattered universe. United in the Grand Council of Life, they brought hope and prosperity to the survivors of the Darkness. The Council even liberated the miserable Dara Happan civilization by defeating their Horse Rider overlords. Yet the ungrateful Dara Happans waged war upon the Council. It is an undeniable truth: Pelorians cannot be trusted. They are a greedy people who serve avaricious gods. They will not rest until the whole world is enslaved under their control. However, they could have been defeated had it not been for the dragons.

Three times the dragonewts betrayed the Council, each time transforming it into something inhuman and unrecognizable. They destroyed the Grand Council by transforming it into the Second Council when the Dragon Egg was found. They destroyed the Second Council when they left it and tricked the trolls and Heortlings into leaving with them. They destroyed the Third Council by corrupting its leaders with dragon secrets and then summoning the dragons to eat them all.

Dragons do this; it is their nature. They cannot be trusted, for they are not Men.

Now, the Pelorians are once again spreading across the continent. Their expansion has displaced many peoples. By waging war on the elder races they are destroying the last remnants of peace, tranquility, and cooperation in the world. A decade ago, a group of heroes summoned Five-Rune to aid them in recreating the Grand Council as it should have been, an association between the races of Man. Five-Rune was worshipped in the Silver Age, and members are confident that he again will unite all Men. This time, the dragons are not welcome.

What they and most other Gloranthans do not know is that the Gold Wheel Dancers did not die out. At a critical juncture in its existence, each transformed itself into something else. Ancient writings refer to the Gold Wheel Dancers as the Silver People, for they are not simply descended from Grandfather Mortal—they are his pure descendants. Unlike other races, their bodies are not made up of the five elements, only of pure Man. The Five-Rune Ring is currently searching central Genertela, always on the lookout for any story of golden magical objects. If only a single Gold Wheel Dancer could be placed on their inner circle, their magic would become many times more powerful.

In 1621, a Giant's Cradle came through Prax defended by a mysterious being that may have been a Gold Wheel Dancer. Several expeditions are planned to investigate this. Agents were dispatched to Prax to interrogate witnesses. Envoys are being sent to the giant Gonn Orta's castle in the Rockwoods, both to ask the ancient giant if he has any knowledge of the Cradle and its inhabitants and to seek his aid, since he was once a member of the Second Council.

**Common Names:** The Fourth Council, The New Dawn, The New Monster Army, Monster Lovers.

**Form:** Inter-species fraternal organization.

**Typical Homeland:** Any (but generally not Lunar).

**Cultural Context:** A multi-species alliance based upon the great fraternal traditions of the Dawn Age.

**Ideology:** "Two things distinguish us from the divinities. We are all committed to mortality, and the omnipresent specter of death colors our entire existence. We also pos-

sess the freedom to impose our will on the world. These things bring us together, and make our lives meaningful. This is why we should cooperate, without pressure or the use of force. This is why we must respect each other. In essence, we are all the same. We are all one."

**Look and Feel:** Magicians trying to create a utopian society.

**Purpose:** To resurrect the First Council, as it should have been. They seek political, military, and magical influence, and are not subtle in their efforts.

**Headquarters:** A small stead in the Division Hills, in Sartar.

**Reactions:** Many people distrust the band because of their open-minded attitude towards non-humans. As known anti-Imperialists, members are favored by rebels and shunned by Imperialists. The Dara Happans have always hated the so-called Monster Army, and the Lunar Empire has waged war on some of the elder races.

## Resources

**Leaders:** The inner circle includes the following members:

☉ **Air**—Henka Hensdotter, an exiled Tarshite noblewoman. She is growing old and weak, but is still the magically most powerful member of the band, as well as having the longest service of any current member. Her allies include clans among the Tarsh Exiles and the Bush Range bandits.

☐ **Earth**—Emarichal Fletcherrunner, an enthusiastic young elven warrior from the Stinking Forest who can fire an arrow and then outrun it. His personal bodyguard consists of thirty deadly archers, and he has many supporters among the aldryami of the Stinking Forest and the Elder Wilds.

● **Darkness**—Kargag Muckeater, a dark troll devotee of the Only Old One from the Shadow Plateau. The last member of a proud line of Uz staunchly opposed to the Pharaoh's rule, she has many allies among the Old Earth Alliance of Esrolia.

~ **Water**—Lochiana of the Bay, ludoch headmaster of the Choralinthor School of Linguistics. She has been unable to obtain much support for the band from her fellow mermen, but she is a well-respected member of her society. Since she is unable to attend in person, the bachelor newtling H'sino speaks for her at meetings.

☉ **Fire**—Joseph Greenbeak, a middle-aged durulz shaman of great power. His hatred of the Empire is well known, and some feel that the band's current anti-Imperial stance is largely due to his influence. He has many friends among the Heortling rebels.

III **Harmony**—Since the Gold Wheel Dancers are extinct, the other members of the inner circle could select someone of any race to fill this seat, but they have not yet reached a consensus on whom to approach. If a Gold Wheel Dancer could be found, it would of course be selected without any discussion.

**Renowned Members:** Toral the Golden, a gold dwarf who acts as recorder and administrator for the Inner Circle. In the Dawn Age, before the birth of Nysalor, he served the High Council of Genertela in the same capacity.

**Membership:** Due to its mixed membership it is widespread, with 400 members in Dragon Pass and Kethaela.



*Other Contacts:* Members come from many races, and so have contacts all across central Genertela. They work to persuade their quieter allies to support them openly.

## Organization

An inner circle runs the Five-Rune Ring. There is no voting: all decisions must be unanimous. Thus, the leaders discuss, argue, or debate until they reach a consensus. The council has a seat for each of the five elements, plus a Harmony Seat to help them bring balance. Ideally, a troll fills the seat of Darkness; a ludoch merman, Water; an elf, Earth; a durulz, Fire; a human, Air; and a Gold Wheel Dancer, Harmony. (Extensive research has proven to members that dwarves are not descendants of Grandfather Mortal. Their inclusion on the Grand Council is obviously one of the reasons its magic failed.)

## Membership Keyword

*Membership Requirements:* Theoretically, any descendant of Grandfather Mortal may join the band. However, Lunars are unlikely to be accepted.

*Skills taught:* Express Utopian Ideals, Mythology of Grandfather Mortal.

*Typical Personality Traits:* Cooperative, Distrust Mostali, Hate Dragons, Open-minded.

*Magic:* The group does not officially teach any magic, but individual members are encouraged to teach any common magic that will foster cooperation among the races. While devoting oneself to a deity or spirit is not discouraged, it is uncommon, for members try to emulate Grandfather Mortal, not the undying entities of the Other Side.

## Five-Rune (Guardian)

Five-Rune is the Man Rune, which has five appendages (including the head). It is neither daimon nor spirit nor essence; members claim it predates such divisions. If the band could place a Gold Wheel Dancer on its inner circle and recruit enough members, Five-Rune would be able to utilize a broader range of powers.

*Method:* Archetype. Five-Rune treats the entire inner circle as a single leader. It requires the consensus decision of the entire group to call upon its functions actively.

*Communication:* The members of the inner circle wear small Man Rune medallions, from which Five-Rune's voice comes when he speaks with any one of them. Five-Rune speaks an otherwise unknown language, Five-Ring, which he says is the original language spoken by Grandfather Mortal. When members are together, they can speak this language as if they had learned it from birth.

*Guardian Requirements:* Be mortal. (This should not be taken as a prohibition against resurrection.)

*Functions:*

- ☉ Awareness—Sense Death.
- ☿ Blessing—Speak Five-Ring.
- ☐ Defense—Protect Free Action.





# The Two-Handed Brotherhood

*"The new world must not merely hear the truths of the Goddess, it must also see them."*

There are all kinds of missionary groups within the Empire, from tub-thumping preachers who rely on passion and oratory to hard-eyed inquisitors with holy writings in one hand and naked scimitars in the other. The Two-Handed Brotherhood is a relatively recent phenomenon that is neither of the above, but that has nonetheless made real progress in spreading the word to heathen barbarians in Dragon Pass, Balazar, and even primitive Thrice Blessed. Its members go out among the heathen and engage with them, showing them the promise of the Lunar Way by deed as well as word. Thus, the Brotherhood is "Two-Handed" in that its members present both hands open in the Lunar sign of peace, and because they believe in evangelism by deed and example, not just word.

They initially avoid any attempts to preach, although they make no secret of their Lunar beliefs. Instead, they try to engage with the local community and win, if not their trust, then at least their acceptance. This typically involves doing good deeds, whether raising a barn, saving a lost child, or fighting off bandits. They will defend themselves if attacked, but try to avoid confrontation. Only when they feel they have begun to be accepted will they commence missionary work. Even then, at first it will be low-key and confined to those individuals who show a genuine interest.

New members are drawn from locations throughout the Empire, though converts from the Provinces and barbarian ally states tend to have more of the zeal, physical skills, and knowledge of local cultures necessary for this style of missionary work. For that reason, most members of the Alda-chur Lodge, which handles Brotherhood operations across Dragon Pass, are Tarshites or converts from among the Heortlings and Esvulari. Despite the group's name, it does not exclude women (although the generic term for a member is "Brother").

The Brotherhood is fiercely insistent on its need to remain independent of the established Lunar religious and secular authorities. It therefore refuses to accept any institutional subsidies or patronage from the great and the good. Instead, it depends on small personal donations from local well-wishers and, above all, the fruits of its own labors. Cutting wood and helping raise a stead may earn guarded thanks and maybe a chicken, but it is no base on which to run an Empire-spanning missionary undertaking. Thus, the Brotherhood relies heavily on the fact that it will have magic that is strange and unusual from locals' points of view, which it gladly puts at their disposal—for a "donation." In this way, Brothers not only raise funds, but also demonstrate the value and power of Lunar magic.

The Brotherhood is extremely entrepreneurial in their use of their magical talents, whether enchanting plows and healing wounds or driving away bandits and spirits. Among the Colymar, for example, they earned both cattle and respect for their ability to use spirits from distant Darjiin to ripen the harvest after the Black-Cloud Blight. (Of course, those Colymar still sympathetic to the Rebellion merely assume that the Brothers sent the Blight in the first place.) The Lismelder, too, were forced—grudgingly—to give the Brothers their due when they brought a visiting Brother from the Elkoi Lodge (who was a Carmanian follower of the funerary Order of Saint Abbassar) to cleanse the Lismelder lands of undead minions of Delecti that even their own Humakti had not managed to lay to rest.

The Brotherhood's members are not mercenaries, but they are prepared to join conflicts so long as justice is clearly on their

"employer's" side. This has led to serious problems with Harvar Ironfist, the self-styled Duke of Alda-chur. At Old Blade Point, several Brothers helped a force of Tovtaros weaponthanes ambush and kill the notorious Gagarthi raider known as Hookline Stinker. Ipporal of Yardesh, one of the Brothers, bashed aside Hookline's evil spirits before they could save the outlaw. When his body was dragged back to court, Hookline turned out to be none other than Heorl Linsker, one of Ironfist's personal guards. The Duke was forced to disown Linsker and exile his remaining followers, and the incident provided further embarrassing proof of his close links with Gagarthi bandits. As a result, the Brotherhood's stock among the Heortlings has sweetened—just as relations with the authorities have soured.

**Common Names:** The Barechest Brothers.

**Form:** Lunar missionaries and magicians-for-hire.

**Typical Homeland:** Any Lunar.

**Cultural Context:** Unsponsored but often well-regarded missionaries.

**Ideology:** "We must not only teach Sedenya's words; we must live them."

**Look and Feel:** Hearty and tolerant do-gooders who are nonetheless unafraid to haggle with the merchants or get into a scrap for the right cause.

**Purpose:** To spread the Lunar Way beyond the Empire and among the unenlightened.

**Headquarters:** There are three lodges, in Elkoi (Balazar), Alda-chur (Dragon Pass), and Deranero (Karasal).

**Reactions:** Lunars are feared, hated, or resented in many regions, but the Brotherhood's low-key and helpful ways help mitigate this reaction in their case.

## Resources

**Leader:** The spiritual leader of the Brotherhood is Erendukos Hands-and-Heart. Now in his seventies, he is nonetheless a vigorous and charismatic figure, forever off finding new frontiers on which to preach. His latest plan is the most ambitious yet: he is actively recruiting among the membership for a new lodge in Biliniland and even an expedition to Dorastor, the land of doom.

**Renowned Members:** Hogor Heim, Elder Brother of the Alda-chur Lodge, who is building the new poorhouse single-handed.

Purivarnim the Smiling Redsmith, who forges needles that sing as they sew and blades that laugh as they cut.

Young Jorane of the Carafandoli, a Tarshite who specializes in winning over Vingans with a merry smile, a good heart, and a wealth of telling parables.

The wizard Ipporal of Yardesh, who still wears his Imperial University headdress, even while performing the most menial task.

The Black-Eyed Girl, a subtly beautiful and beautifully subtle Jakaleel Witch, whose spirits dance and glitter around the roof-beam of the Alda-chur Lodge on Moonstars' Night.

**Membership:** There are about 600 Brothers, split fairly evenly among the three lodges.



**Other Contacts:** The Provincial Church is equivocal towards the Brotherhood. Some of its leaders appreciate the Brotherhood's work in preparing the ground for their more systematic evangelization, while others regard them as unsubtle amateurs. The Provincial Administration and Harvar Ironfist are increasingly suspicious of the Brotherhood. As Sly Gutrik, one of Ironfist's lieutenants, put it, "You cannot dance both in the wind and on the Moon." Tatus the Bright has been especially critical, partly under pressure from Ironfist and partly because the Brotherhood has begun protesting about the humanitarian consequences for ordinary Heortlings of the chaining of Orlanth.

## Organization

Each lodge is effectively independent, although every few years their Elder Brothers meet to discuss policy, share news, and arrange for the exchange of Brothers seeking to move. Within the lodge, members elect an Elder Brother to coordinate their efforts. Missionary work is carried out by "ventures," each known by the name of its

elected leader (such as Ektor's Venture, which has done such good work among the tribesmen of Balazar). A venture may be out in the field for a month, a season, or a year, depending on need and resources. Ventures operate autonomously, although at least once a season they must communicate with their lodges with news and to receive instructions, assistance, and new members, as appropriate.

## Membership Keyword

**Membership Requirements:** New members must be elected by acclamation at a meeting of the lodge. They must "show both hands," demonstrating that they possess both practical skills (anything from combat to carpentry, healing to herding) and useful magic. In theist Dragon Pass, the Brotherhood especially values those with wizardly or animist powers, as these are unusual and thus valuable.

**Skills taught:** Communicate Meaning, Endurance, Understand Other's Point of View.

**Typical Personality Traits:** Cheerful, Dedicated, Hard-Working, Tolerant.

**Magic:** None taught. Most members are at least an initiate of a Lunar cult; the Seven Mothers are well represented, with several ventures operating as Collectives (see *Imperial Lunar Handbook*, Volume 1).

## Elders Brother (Guardian)

Each lodge is blessed by a being known as Elders Brother. No one is certain if the three lodges have identical guardians or simply share a single one, nor even whence this power comes. However, members have their own tales of feeling his unseen but nonetheless tangible presence, whether as a warning before danger or as a comfort in the darkness.

**Method:** Emanation.

**Form:** Elders Brother is an immaterial force embodied in each lodge's central roof-beam, on which are carved the names of all past and present members.

**Communication:** Brothers often feel a sense of companionship when Elders Brother's powers are at work.

**Guardian Requirements:** Cleave to the ways of the Brotherhood. Celebrate the annual vigil of Moonstars' Night (Crescent-Go Day, Illusion Week, Darkness Season), at which lodge members gather to sing, tell tales, encourage and celebrate each other, and chant "we are all stars" to the music of the reed-pipe and the tambourine.

**Functions:**

- ☉ Awareness—Locate Friend.
- ☞ Blessing—Unfazed by Hostility.
- ☐ Defense—Deter Attack.





# Servants of the Wild

*"They say the old world is over; that just shows how little they understand."*

The Wild Temple is a vast collection of standing stones covering an area about five miles across in Beast Valley. Since before the Dawn, it has been a sacred site and a powerful source of animist magic. During the Sunstop, as magical strands stretched across the sky to drag the Sun back onto its course, similar yet smaller strands spread out from the Wild Temple and "captured" seventeen human shamans. The shamans were unexceptional among their kind, and had not known each other before. Yet when they met, they knew that they belonged together, and that they had to contact a previously unknown spirit—the White Spider, sent to help guide humans in the sacred land of Kerofinela. These shamans were the first of the Servants of the Wild.

After the Dragonkill the White Spider faded away, for without humans the land returned to the Wild. There were beast-men that worshipped at the Wild Temple, but they had no need to contact the spirit, for they were already wild. When first the Grazers and then the Heortlings re-entered the Pass, neither they nor the beast-men wanted much to do with each other. Thus, the White Spider remained hidden in her web, itself lost among the stones of the Wild Temple.

However, the time soon came for her to cast her web once again. Seventeen female Gazer shamans petitioned Ironhoof, the centaur "king," for access to the Temple, having felt the touch of the White Spider through their own spirits. Once there they contacted the spirit, and the Servants were born anew. The White Spider bade them gather other members from throughout Dragon Pass, and charged them with the mission of defending the Wild of Kerofinela from human and chaotic intrusion.

Over the centuries since, the band has steadily grown. It now includes a few beast-men that share its ideals and see it as a way to help defend their Valley from human incursions. Most beast-men in the valley continue to worship in their traditional manner, and many only have contact with the Servants during key magical ceremonies at the Wild Temple.

**Common Names:** The White Spider Practice.

**Form:** Animist association.

**Cultural Context:** An independent group that operates outside of other cultures.

**Ideology:** "The Wild is the most important part of the Natural World; without it, everything dies. By communing with the Wild in the most direct manner possible, we can serve her better, so that everybody in the world benefits."

**Look and Feel:** Half-crazy, unkempt nature-lovers, usually accompanied by wild animals.

**Purpose:** To defend the Wild of Kerofinela from being obliterated or damaged by humans, sorcerers, dwarves, Chaos, trolls, and other inimical forces. The band concentrates

on defending those places yet untouched by orchards, roads, and other such human places. A few more militant members seek to incite the group to take the offensive in this struggle.

**Headquarters:** The Wild Temple. (The diagram on the next page shows the location and arrangement of only some of the stones, those determined to be important by the Lunar scholars who studied the Temple in 1621.)

**Reactions:** Most inhabitants of the Pass regard the Servants as a strange group, to be avoided as one would foreigners. They themselves care little for the Heortling-Lunar conflict, feeling that each is as bad as the other. The Heortlings tame the wilds for farms, orchards, and vineyards, and the Lunars build roads and other signs of civilization. Most recently, some foolish Lunar scholars excavated near one of the Anchor Stones, to their regret. However, the Servants also deal peacefully with individuals from both sides, especially those who have strong ties to the Wild.

## Resources

**Leader:** There is no true leader, although wisdom and experience are always respected.

**Renowned Members:** Laughs With Foxes is a human shaman of the White Spider famed for her communion with many spirits unknown outside of Beast Valley.

Valstatch Marsh-Eye is the band's most renowned warrior; he has an abiding hatred for all those who would bring agriculture to replace the beauty and majesty of the Wild.

Rastal the Mouse is famed for his friendship with many rodent spirits, and can walk through an army unmolested, simply by appearing insignificant.

Wild Iskalla is over a century old, but appears less than a quarter her true age. She disdains all but hand-worked stone tools and never enters any building.

**Membership:** Approximately two hundred humans, around half of whom are shamans. A number of assorted beast-men have recently joined the band, including several shamans and even a few minotaur warriors.

**Other Contacts:** The Servants are friendly towards aldryami (who regard them similarly), and might be able to call on the few elves and dryads in Kerofinela for assistance if forests are threatened. More importantly, the Servants are allied with the beast-men and their immortal leader, Ironhoof the Centaur. The Servants were instrumental in returning him to the Natural World in 1616, and they can petition him for magical and military support if the need is great enough.



## Jonstown Compendium #171,717

*Arachne solara* is the name of a type of tiny spider found almost everywhere in Glorantha. It often weaves its webs, unharmed, within the traps of larger spiders. Its food is invisible to the naked eye but detectable to Soul Vision, Spirit Face, Symbolic Sight, and similar magical abilities. Thus arises the belief that it eats tiny spirits. After devouring several such invisible specks, the spider spins an egg sac and dies. One day later, exactly seventeen baby spiders emerge from the cocoon and depart.

The habits of this diminutive species are supposedly allegories of the Goddess known as Arachne Solara. She weaves the world, and she is both source and devourer of life. To her, the gods (even the great gods) are like invisible specks, her food. She wields will over the universe.



## Organization

No formal organization is needed. As the White Spider guides them, the most appropriate person for a task performs it or leads a group. Somehow, the White Spider's needs never seem to interfere with any member's specific religious requirements.

## Membership Keyword

**Membership Requirements:** Members must pledge themselves to the machinations of the White Spider. Although the founders were animists, followers of deities with strong links to the Wild (such as Odayla, Votenevra, Kero Fin, and Orogeria) occasionally join.

**Skills taught:** Beast-Man Customs or Understand Human Habits (as appropriate), Wilderness Survival.

**Typical Personality Traits:** Passionate, Unkempt.

**Magic:** Members control many unusual spirits, most of them directly connected with the preservation or expansion of the wilderness. Members are encouraged to teach appropriate magic to one another, regardless of its Otherworld origin, and as a result several members are potent specialists in common magic.

✚ **Typical Wilderness spirit abilities**—Boggy Ground, Choke with Vegetation, Crack Carved Stone, Disrupt Road, Freshen Air, Hard as Stone, Purify Water.

## White Spider (Guardian)

The White Spider came to aid communication between humans and beast-men so that together they can fight against the encroachment of agriculture and civilization into the Wild.

**Method:** Emanation.

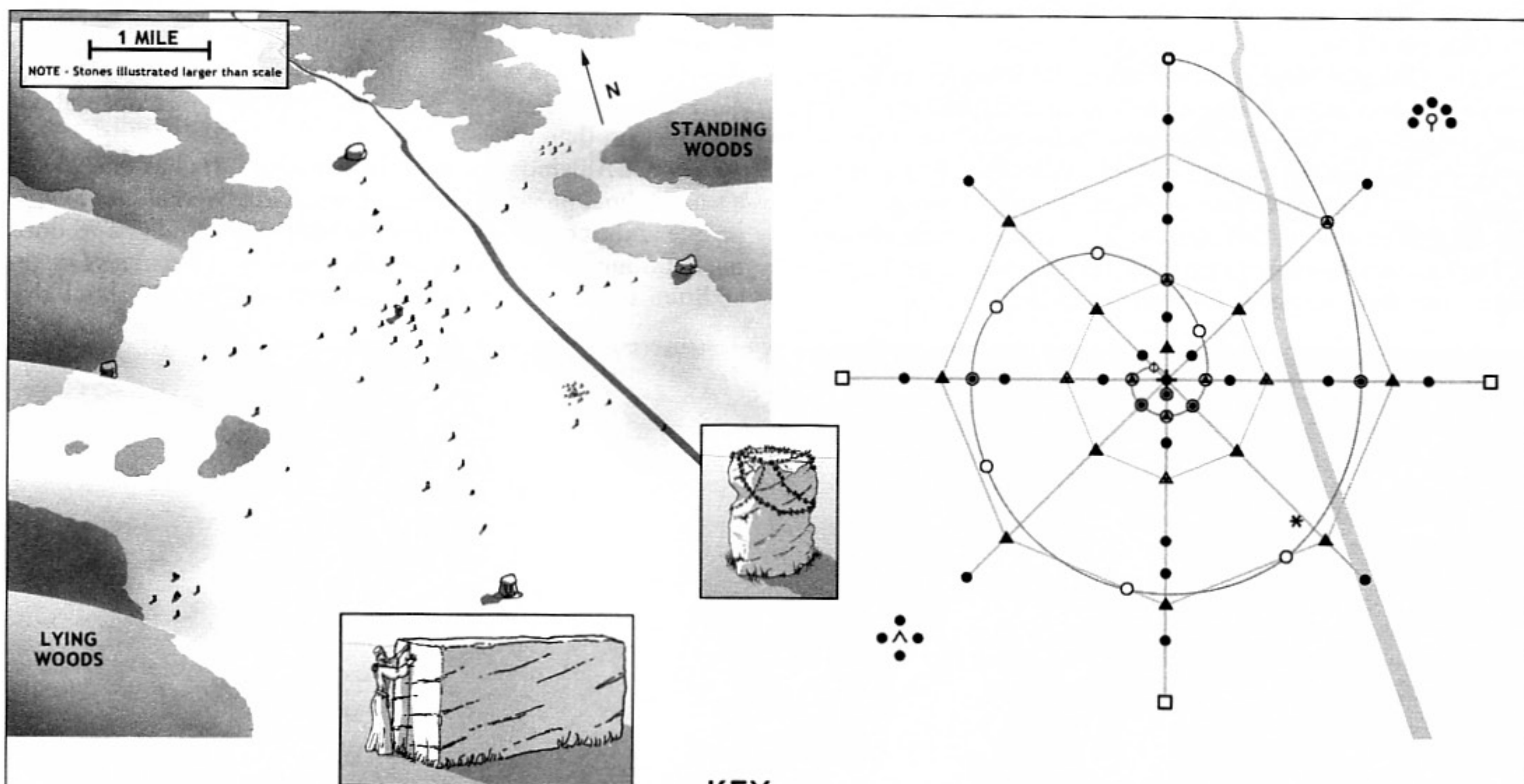
**Form:** A group of standing stones near the edge of the Wild Temple, seemingly unrelated to the rest of the stones. Seventeen stand vertically, surrounding a larger central stone in an apparently random pattern. The stones are all carved with intricate spider-web patterns. (This grouping is marked on the diagram below with a Fate Rune [✱], and is pictured on page 72.)

**Communication:** The Spider seizes control of those who participate in worship rites at her standing stones. She speaks through each for a short while, often jumping from one body to another in the middle of a sentence.

**Guardian Requirements:** Members may not deal with spirits inimical to the wild, such as those of buildings, craftsmanship, agriculture, or Chaos.

**Functions:**

- ☉ Awareness—Sense Hidden Spirit.
- ⚡ Blessing—Restore Natural Harmony.
- ☐ Defense—Deflect Metal.



## KEY

- Path Stone — All are 6' tall. Various rock types. Some have been cut, some piled, some knocked over.
- ▲ Web Stone — All are granite streaked with quartz. Size varies.
- Spiral Stone — All are shaped into rough cylinders and are standing upright. Size varies.
- ☐ Anchor Stone — Each of these is a crude statue of a head from the nose up. Each is 40'-50' above ground.
- ✚ Summoning Stone (Axis Mundi) — A 7' tall block of black stone, rectangular at the top but rough at the bottom.
- ⊕ Witness Stone — A 25' tall trilithon (the only one in the area) formed of a single piece of non-dissolvable limestone.
- ♀ Phallus Stone (Group) — 8' tall, roughly-formed linga stone, not identifiably human in shape. Ancient, worn red shale.
- △ Cleft Stone (Group) — Two pieces of ancient, worn red shale leaning against each other, forming the opening of a steep tunnel.
- ✱ White Spider Stones — A cluster of 17 rough stones covered with web carvings.

**NOTE** - Multiple symbols above denote a single stone with combined features. ☉ is a 6' tall stone formed of granite streaked with quartz, shaped into a rough cylinder.

Unless otherwise specified, all stones are formed of local rocks of various types, shapes, and sizes.



# The School of Ronos Allwinds

*"Old world or new, it needs Belintar. We seek him."*

Hepherones was a mystic living in Peloria during the Dawn Age. Although he achieved the Absolute before the rise of the Bright Empire, many of his followers accepted Nysalor. His teachings, mostly contained in collections of dialogues with his students (some apocryphal), were incorporated into Nysaloran philosophies. When Arkat pillaged the Bright Empire, most of the collections were destroyed, although a few were scattered across Genertela, subtly influencing many later philosophies. Thus, the Seven Mothers used fragments of Hepherones' teachings (among many other philosophies and magics) when they resurrected the Red Goddess.

In the Third Age, a copy of one collection, the *Dialogues on Oppositions*, made its way into the hands of Belintar. He used it to train an order of elemental magicians, the Order of Hepherones. After his ascension, the Order made a place for itself in the Pharaoh's new world by establishing schools in many cities to teach academic subjects (rhetoric, mathematics, geography, etc.) and magic. Since the teaching was both educationally solid and associated with the Pharaoh, an Order education was often a shortcut to positions within the government. However, the best students were encouraged to continue their studies as part of the Order itself.

The Order of Hepherones is primarily wizardly in nature, but the academies teach anyone willing to learn, and their magical philosophies (see "Hepherones Philosophy" on page 66) work for theists and animists as well. When the Pharaoh disappeared, the Order was one of several groups to receive *Belintar's Book*. Some of his followers call Belintar the reincarnation of Hepherones. Belintar himself never claimed to be Hepherones...but then, he never claimed not to be.

When Belintar disappeared, the City of Wonders closed and the academies lost touch with their grand masters. The master teachers responded quickly to preserve the work of the Order. While a few academies were abandoned or destroyed by anti-Pharaonic mobs, most remained open, adapting to serve the various rulers of the new Kethaela.

Then Vanstan the Younger, a master teacher, gave up his name and began preaching as Sinomen, the Nameless One. During Belintar's disappearance, many people saw his star burst into six pieces, but Sinomen saw a hidden seventh part fall from the heavens. The sight drove him mad with grief and hope, and he now preaches in rags throughout Kethaela. Inspired by Sinomen's prophecies, the remaining master teachers met and came up with a plan to find the parts of Belintar and return him to himself, using *Belintar's Book* as a guide. The most adept magicians formed small bands and began to seek Belintar within and without the Inner World.

These schools have become quite diverse. Many teachers gain followers by offering unique powers in return for aid. Some rely on anti-Lunar or anti-Uz sentiment to recruit. Others appeal to a sense of adventure and exploration. While all the schools work to locate and free Belintar from his Lunar prison, they do not always work together or even with similar intermediate goals. Furthermore, some teachers are more open about this mission than others.

Ronos Allwinds is one of these teachers. He has established a small school in Sartar, offering his services to wealthier townspeople and rich clan members. He uses magic and connections made through his students to seek for clues to Belintar's fate. In addition to teaching standard academy skills, the School also

## *I Show the Land Overturned*

*—From the prophecies of Sinomen*

Reconstruct, O my heart, this land in which you began!

To be silent is repression. Behold!

The Great Man is passed away!

He is divided and divided and divided. Part is thrown up into the Sky.

Part lost in the Red Mouth. Part hidden in the Dust of Giants.

Part constructed in the Words of the West. Part given to the Void of the Sea.

Part torn below. Part walks alone under the sky.

The land is overturned!

Every mouth is full of "Love me!" and everything good has disappeared.

The land and the laws made for it are perished.

The Great Man will return, O my heart, beginning with the center.

Rejoice, O my heart, in this land in which you began!

The Copper Woman's knife cut but six times, yet the Son walks under the sky.

He will wear six crowns in one, although he does not know his name.

Reconstruct, O my heart, this land in which you began!



teaches literacy and acts as a scriptorium, causing friction with the Lankhor Mhy cult. The School appeals to the Esrolian doctrine that only the sacred alphabets of the cult are covered by the Lankhor Mhy prohibition against others teaching reading and writing, and so it teaches a modified form of written Kethaelan. Further violent debates are expected.

For the most part, the Order is cautious when dealing with the Empire and its functionaries. Neither the academies nor the Order as a whole are publicly anti-Lunar, but the masters believe that Hephherones' theories form a portion of the Lunar Way. They fear that the Lunars would seek to control the Order's knowledge if they realized the connection (or the magical benefits they gain from their studies). Additionally, their goal to restore Belintar is contrary to Lunar politics.

The Order and its academies use a great many symbols, the most common being a hexagon made up of triangles in the Elemental colors, sometimes with one of Belintar's runes in the center. Ronos' School uses the hexagon as a symbol, generally without a rune. Students sometimes use this symbol for talismans, but many use carved stones, sticks, and bones, usually painted in appropriate (elemental) colors.

**Common Names:** All Wind School, the Hephherones Academy, "those literacy-teaching bastards."

**Form:** Informal educational institution and exploratory magical band.

**Typical Homeland:** Any (most current members are Esvulari or Heortling).

**Cultural Context:** Educators; underground supporters of the Pharaoh and the Holy Country.

**Ideology:** Belintar offers the best chance to preserve the world; he must be saved.

**Look and Feel:** A serious academic institution with hidden secrets.

**Purpose:** Find Belintar and restore him to himself. Ronos Allwinds personally seeks to uncover the deepest secrets of Wind.

**Headquarters:** The Order's Grand Academy is in the City of Wonders. Many Holy Country cities have academies. Ronos' School is based in Wilmskirk.

**Reactions:** The School keeps a low profile. While Ronos is in contact with the Order and other agents of the Pharaoh, he does not broadcast these connections. Publicly, he is moderately critical of the Lunars. In secret, his close associates have aided several rebel leaders. Within the Holy Country, the academies are well received by those who supported the Pharaoh, and poorly treated by those who opposed him.

## Resources

**Leader:** Ronos Allwinds. Born in a small town in Esrolia, Ronos found matriarchal life stifling. He followed the winds throughout Kethaela, finally finding a place in the Order. His studies deepened his understanding of Orlanth, and he found breaths of a secret, inner wind described in *Belintar's Book*. Driven by a desire to understand Belintar's wind,

Ronos studied the Order's magical techniques to expand his knowledge of the Otherworld and perfect his relationship with Ohorlanth. When the master teachers decided to search for Belintar, Ronos collected followers and offered to go to Sartar to search there; being an Orlanthi would help his mission. While Ronos has learned several kinds of elemental magic, he and most of the teachers and students excel at wind magic.

**Renowned Members:** Ebra Deepsighted is a teacher and Order of Hephherones wizard from Esvular. It is due to her Aeolian roots that Ronos has started seeking to master the Wind secrets of all three Otherworlds. Ebra is severe and difficult to please, but her past students praise her as much as her current students dread her. She currently has one advanced student as an apprentice, and she does not teach wizardry to anyone else. Unlike Ronos, she has mastered the Philosophy (and many spells) of all five Elements, as well as spells of Truth and Movement. She has the greatest theoretical knowledge of the Otherworld of anyone in the School. Away from the school grounds, she uses only common spells to avoid attracting attention as a soulless "meldek."





Oddi One-Eye is a devotee of Chernan from Volsaxi-land. While studying at the Final Information Library, he encountered the Order. His apparent lightheartedness disguises his deep devotion to Belintar, whom he sees as a guide to many secrets. He has the unenviable job of liaison to the Wilmskirk temple of Lankhor Mhy.

Jeraka Ronosdottir is the quiet and practical woman who looks after the day-to-day operations of the School. An initiate of Kev the Visionary, she has had several visions that relate to her father's quest. She does not practice the Order's techniques, but does teach students mythology, poetry, and Kethaelan languages.

**Membership:** Six teachers, eight advanced students, and 20 to 30 permanent students form the core membership. The School usually has 10 to 40 temporary students at a time, depending on the season. Most students are theistic Heortlings, although a few animists also study at the school, notably the kolating shaman Freki Speaks-at-Midnight.

**Other Contacts:** The School is friendly with pro-Pharaonic organizations, and secretly trades assistance with some anti-Lunar groups. In the Holy Country, Ronos would

be able to call on much greater aid. Sora of the Burning Earth runs an academy in Wintertop among the Exiles, and the two schools support each other. Relations with the local Lankhor Mhy cult are strained, at best.

## Organization

While the Academies are loosely tied together in a formal organization, most of the schools operate as independent entities. Ronos is in charge of his academy, but the instructors conduct their classes as they see fit. The School is housed in a small walled compound in Wilmskirk. The main building houses Ronos and most of the teachers and advanced students; several other small buildings provide classrooms. Other students room nearby in whatever lodgings they can find. Most classes are held in the compound, but others are held in rented rooms or even outside the town itself, among the untamed elements.

The instructors and about half the advanced students know Ronos' true mission, but few others do. Despite the School's location in Wilmskirk, Ronos seeks as many students as possible from the outlying clans, since he believes Belintar will be found outside the cities.

## Hepherones Philosophy

People often associate the elements with objects, ideas, and activities. The systems may appear unique to their believers but, knowingly or unknowingly, most draw on the work of the God Learners. Many cultures use these correspondences superficially in decorations and symbols, but some groups draw power from the connections. One example is the Elemental Progression (see page 53), a universally applicable (but not universally known) magical philosophy that Belintar used in his magical struggle to create the Holy Country.

The Order of Hepherones uses a set of correspondences created by the first master teachers. This system is based on Hepherones' theories, and sees the elements as fundamental sources of magic that permeate all aspects of the world.

In game terms, members of the Order use five skills to influence magic. The *Hepherones' [Element] Philosophy* abilities can be used directly to control elemental daimones, spirits, or essences, although such use takes an improvisation penalty. More importantly, knowledge of the skills allows a magician to roll for a **variable augment** of elemental magic with one or more appropriate abilities (as shown below.) A magician can augment with several abilities at a time, but no

single bonus can be higher than  $\frac{1}{10}$  the rating of the corresponding *Hepherones' [Element] Philosophy* skill.

The Order's application of Hepherones' philosophies (over 1000 years after he developed them) seem to require a sixth element. So far, no one has discovered what it is. Members have suggested Stone or even Man, but have not been able to develop an appropriate *Philosophy* skill to use the correspondences. Ronos fears that Moon may very well be the sixth element, which further motivates him to keep this knowledge secret from the Lunars.

△ Ebra is trying to keep knowledge thieves from ransacking the school by using her *Wind Blast* spell. This ability has a rather meager rating of 15, but her *Hepherones' Air Philosophy* allows her to augment it with any appropriate abilities. Thus, she can attempt variable augments with her *Breathe Deep* 20, *Hate Lunars* 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ , *Smell Trouble* 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ , and even *Play Horn* 13. However, regardless of her victory level in each attempt, no single ability can give more than a +4 bonus, the limit set by her *Hepherones' Air Philosophy* rating of 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ 2 (3 $\frac{1}{2}$ 2 = 43 ÷ 10 = 4).

	Darkness	Water	Earth	Fire	Air	[Unknown]
<b>Direction</b>	Below	South	East	Above	West	North
<b>Color</b>	Purple	Blue	Green	Yellow	Orange	Red
<b>Action</b>	Conceal	Create	Heal/Repair	Command	Fight	???
<b>Flora</b>	Fungi	Algae	Grain/Shrubs	Flowers	Trees	???
<b>Fauna</b>	Insects	Fish	Reptiles	Birds	Mammals	Human
<b>Metal</b>	Lead	Quicksilver	Copper	Gold	Tin	Silver
<b>Stone</b>	Obsidian	Pearl	Emerald	Beryl	Flint	Ruby?
<b>Flesh</b>	Fat	Blood	Bone	Sinew	Muscle	Skin?
<b>Organ</b>	Stomach	Genitals	Heart	Brain	Lungs	???
<b>Sense</b>	Hearing	Taste	Touch	Sight	Smell	Balance?
<b>Emotion</b>	Fear	Lust	Compassion	Pride	Anger	???
<b>Weapon</b>	Club	Net	Axe	Spear	Sword	???
<b>Tool</b>	Hammer	Net	Pot	Firestarter	Knife	???
<b>Instrument</b>	Drum	Reed Pipe	Bell	Harp	Horn	Voice?



Students may join on a temporary or permanent basis. Temporary students pay (in goods or services) for a season or two of training in a single focused area; this allows a hero to spend hero points to "purchase" up to three skills (at a rating of 13) or common magic abilities. Some students seek out the School because they do not wish to initiate to Lankhor Mhy or become full-time apprentices for several years just to learn how to read and write. Others seek skills to help them take advantage of Kethaela-Sartar trade opportunities, such as Kethaelan history, politics, culture, languages, and geography. The School requires that all students, regardless of membership level, regularly attend classes and ceremonies.

### Permanent Student Membership Keyword

**Membership Requirements:** Permanent students swear service to Ronos and the School in return for three to five years' training in a more complex course of study.

**Skills taught:** Hephherones' [Element] Philosophy; any others Ronos or the teachers want to teach.

**Typical Personality Traits:** Curious, Rivalry with Lankhor Mhy Worshipers, Studious.

**Magic:** Any common magic known by the instructors, who may refuse to teach certain spells until the student has shown diligence, good character, and talent (often by attaining a high rating in any *Hephherones' [Element] Philosophy*). Though the school teaches all types of elemental magic, the student's religion may restrict his studies (e.g., an initiate of Elmal will be in trouble if he displays knowledge of Darkness spells).

### Advanced Student Membership Keyword

**Membership Requirements:** Some permanent students are accepted as advanced students, usually those who show the proper mindset by attaining a high rating in any *Hephherones' [Element] Philosophy*. They are taught more advanced magic, and may in due course be brought into the greater purpose of the School.

**Skills taught:** As permanent student, plus *Member of Deep Land Mysteries* common religion.

**Typical Personality Traits:** As permanent student, plus *Devoted to Belintar*.

**Magic:** Ronos has learned to call and direct several petty wind entities, which he calls his "little winds." He believes that by naming them and offering them sacrifice, he can "grow" them into true daimones. So far, he has had no luck, and they merely function as common magic feats, which he teaches only to advanced students. Ronos has gained no wind spirits yet, but he hopes for good results from his studies with Freki.

**R** The "Little Winds"—Athol the Message Wind, Caffael the Cutting Wind, Effetral the Seeking Wind, Fofethe the Soothing Wind, Vina the Warming Wind.

### Lamp of the Door (Guardian)

Lamp of the Door is an Otherworld being that Belintar created using some strange and secret magic. It has an affinity for its creator and for the Otherworlds, although its full powers are unknown to Ronos or his colleagues since it was discovered after the Pharaoh's assassination.

**Method:** Manifestation. While Lamp of the Door has no "innate" body, it is a self-willed entity that works with, rather than for, Ronos.

**Form:** Lamp of the Door resides in a medallion with colored inlay, shaped like the School's symbol, which Ronos wears at all times.

**Communication:** Group contact. When it is active, Lamp of the Door appears as small, dim, colored globes that circle the group affected by its powers. Using any *Hephherones' [Element] Philosophy* ability, a member of the School can interpret its communications by the pattern, colors, and emanations of the globes.

**Guardian Requirements:** Do not curse or belittle the Pharaoh, or seek to do him harm.

**Functions:**

- ☉ Awareness—Examine Soul.
- ⚡ Blessing—Unwind Mystery.
- ☐ Defense—Otherworld Support.

## The Deep Land Mysteries

Most of the common magic taught by the academies derives from *Belintar's Book* and other Kethaelan lore collections. Each school has their favored sources and magic, such as Ronos' special wind daimones and Tak Brighter's many light spells, spirits, and feats.

The academies also preach the Deep Land Mysteries. As this common religion gives overt worship to Belintar, students are generally not taught its magic or theology until they learn the School's true mission. Even then, the choice to join the religion is up to the individual. Of the teachers at Ronos' school, only Ebra, Jeraka, and Ronos himself are active members; any student who showed a sincere interest in the Deep Land Mysteries would most likely be sent to one of the Holy Country academies to study.

The Deep Land Mysteries teaches several sets of spells collected into books similar to formularies in that each spell must be learned separately, just like any other common magic spell. One of the mysteries that members are unable to explain is why none of the spells is affected by concentration. (Unknown to the Order, the spells are all based on theist or animist myths, and as such are a form of misap-

plied worship; see *HeroQuest*, page 110.)

In addition to the Mysteries, Ronos knows several Wind-related spells that he often teaches to advanced students.

**Sample Spell Collections:**

- R** *The Dragon's Seed*—Call Fertilizing Rain from Clouds, Cool Mist, Fight Air Bully, Prayer to the Great Waters.
- R** *The Fearful Darkness*—Bring down Snow, Bring up Darkness, Call in Cold, Call out Fear, Eat Anything, Hunger for Nothing, Night's Dark Veil, See at Night.
- R** *The First Plantings*—Bear Fruit ritual, Enveloping Light, Nurturing Water, Plant Seeds, Rich Earth.
- R** *Initiating the Winds*—Aid Brother, Maddening Lust, Partially Heal Madness ritual, Wind Disarms Foe, Wind Escapes Prison, Wind Releases Beasts, Wind Stirs Waters.
- R** *Lodril's Journey*—Call Dream, Conserve Heat, Exchange Places with Prisoner, Face Darkness, Heal Enemy Instead of Self, Heal Friend Instead of Self, Increase Warmth, Recognize Hidden Treasure, See in Darkness, Walk in the Underworld ritual.









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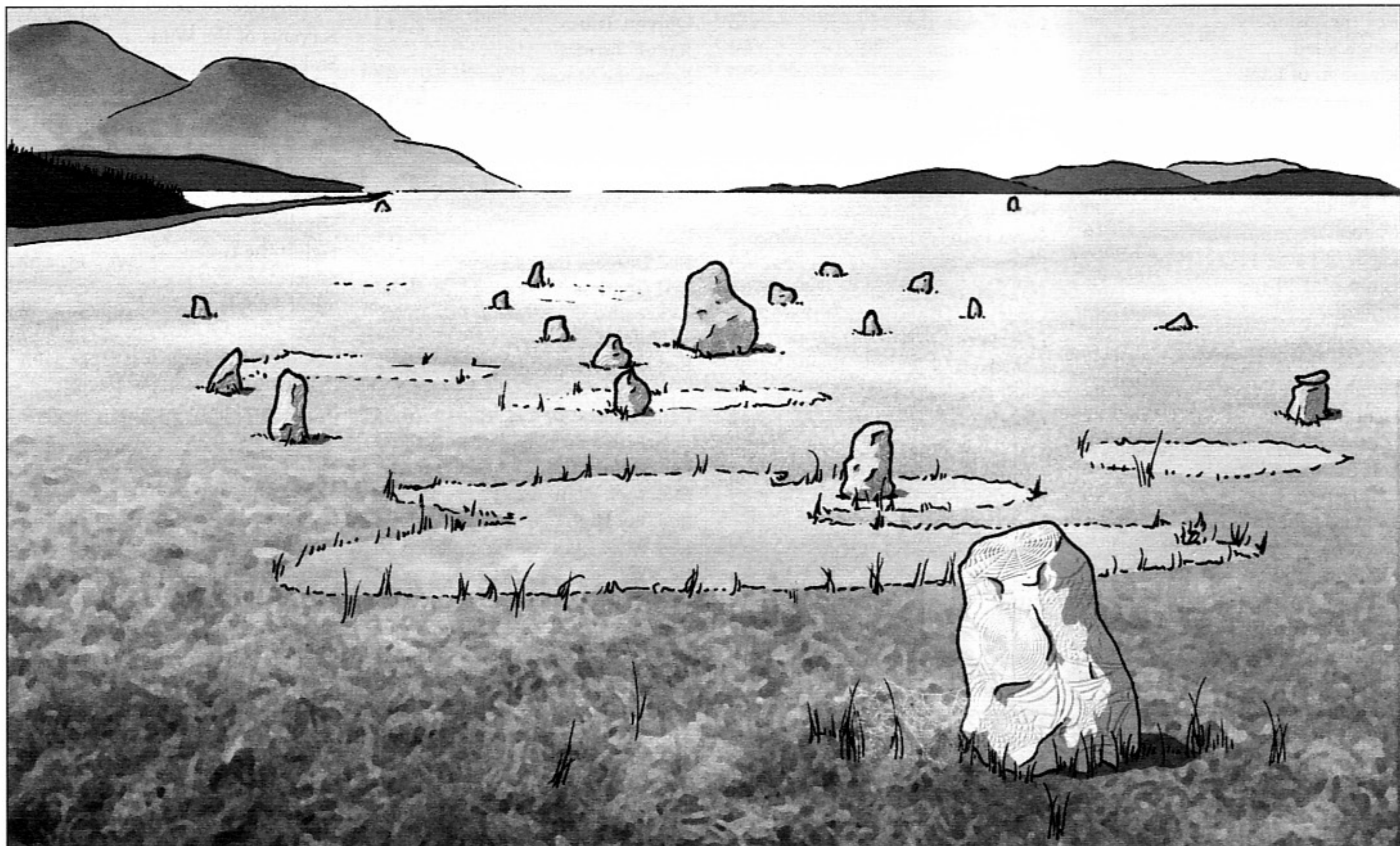
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The Wild Temple, looking southwest past the "White Spider Stones" towards a Web stone (left) and a Spiral stone (right).



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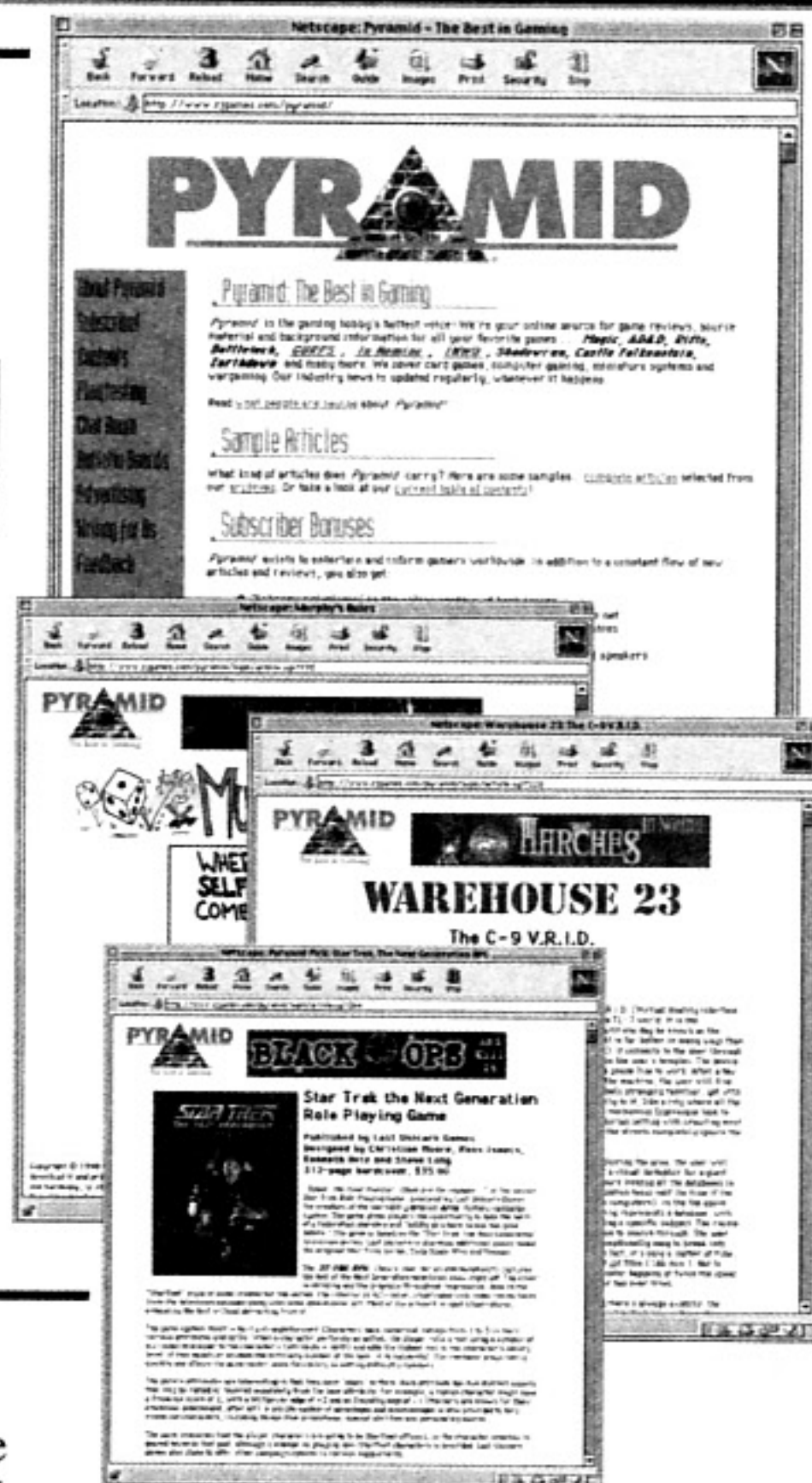
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