

Ponyfinder

Griffons of Everglow

Dawn of the Fifth Age



By
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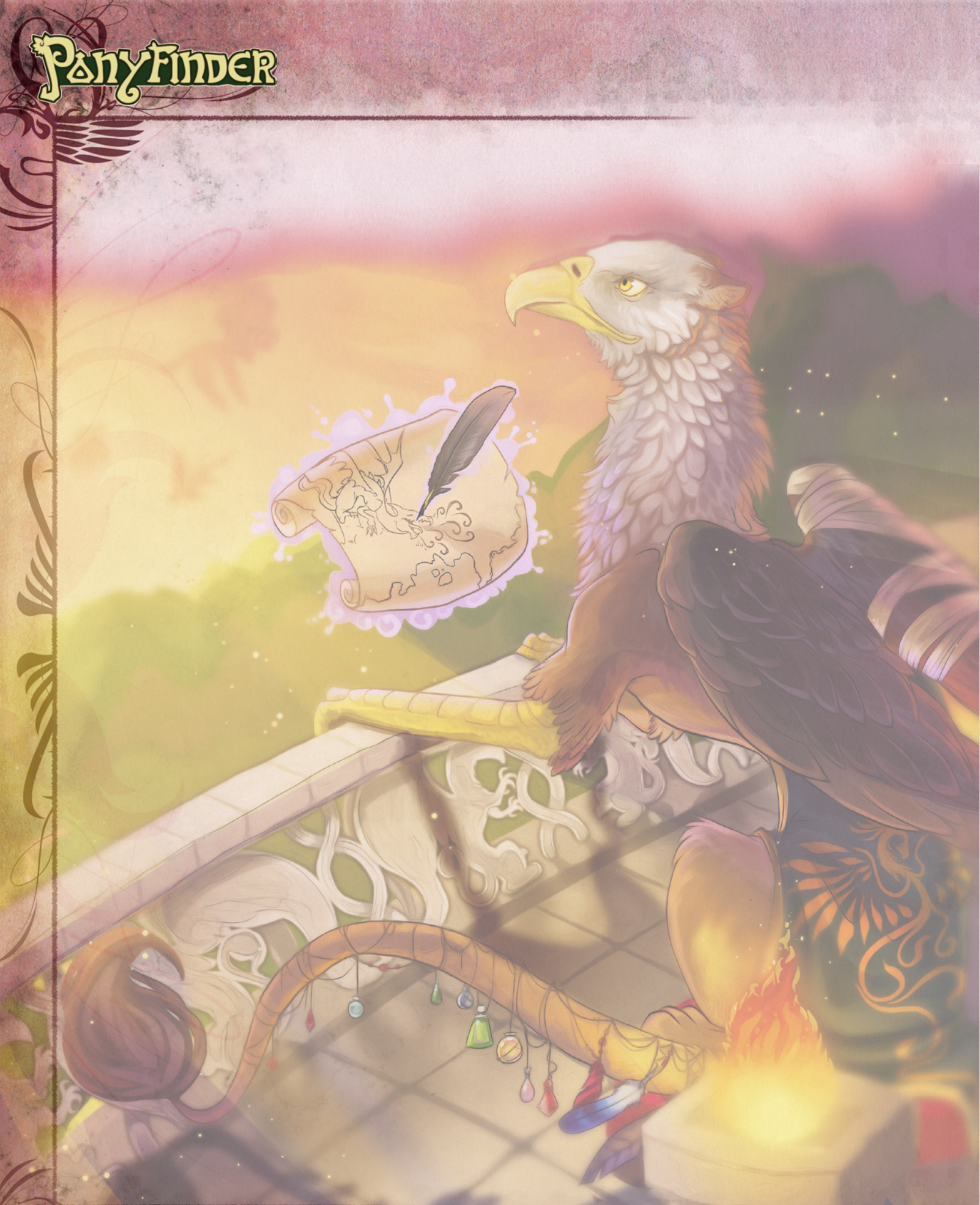
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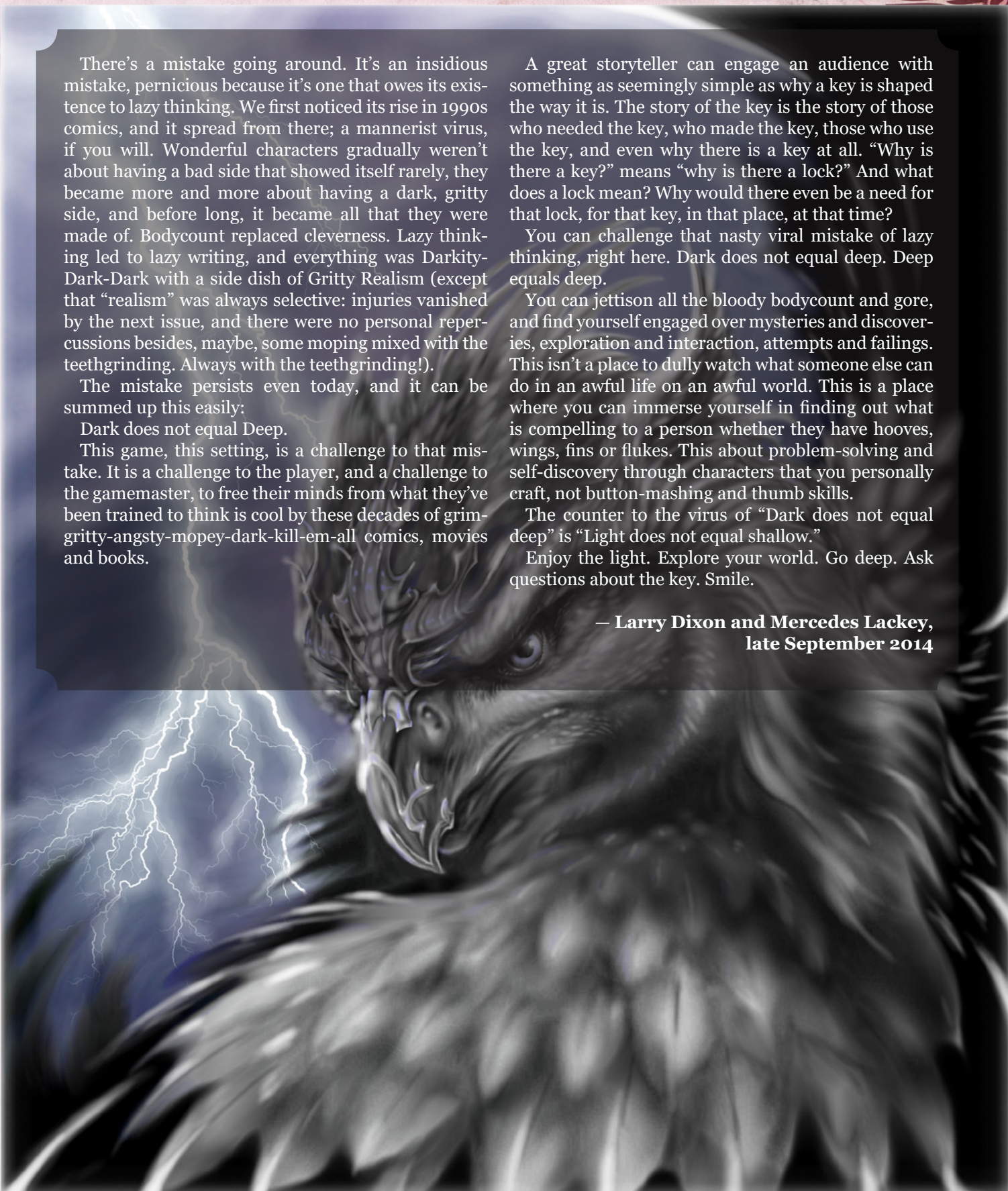
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There's a mistake going around. It's an insidious mistake, pernicious because it's one that owes its existence to lazy thinking. We first noticed its rise in 1990s comics, and it spread from there; a mannerist virus, if you will. Wonderful characters gradually weren't about having a bad side that showed itself rarely, they became more and more about having a dark, gritty side, and before long, it became all that they were made of. Bodycount replaced cleverness. Lazy thinking led to lazy writing, and everything was Darkity-Dark-Dark with a side dish of Gritty Realism (except that "realism" was always selective: injuries vanished by the next issue, and there were no personal repercussions besides, maybe, some moping mixed with the teethgrinding. Always with the teethgrinding!).

The mistake persists even today, and it can be summed up this easily:

Dark does not equal Deep.

This game, this setting, is a challenge to that mistake. It is a challenge to the player, and a challenge to the gamemaster, to free their minds from what they've been trained to think is cool by these decades of grim-gritty-angsty-mopey-dark-kill-em-all comics, movies and books.

A great storyteller can engage an audience with something as seemingly simple as why a key is shaped the way it is. The story of the key is the story of those who needed the key, who made the key, those who use the key, and even why there is a key at all. "Why is there a key?" means "why is there a lock?" And what does a lock mean? Why would there even be a need for that lock, for that key, in that place, at that time?

You can challenge that nasty viral mistake of lazy thinking, right here. Dark does not equal deep. Deep equals deep.

You can jettison all the bloody bodycount and gore, and find yourself engaged over mysteries and discoveries, exploration and interaction, attempts and failings. This isn't a place to dully watch what someone else can do in an awful life on an awful world. This is a place where you can immerse yourself in finding out what is compelling to a person whether they have hooves, wings, fins or flukes. This about problem-solving and self-discovery through characters that you personally craft, not button-mashing and thumb skills.

The counter to the virus of "Dark does not equal deep" is "Light does not equal shallow."

Enjoy the light. Explore your world. Go deep. Ask questions about the key. Smile.

— Larry Dixon and Mercedes Lackey,
late September 2014

Griffon Heartland





GRIFFONS OF EVERGLOW

HISTORY OF GRIFFONS

Griffons were among the first of the civilized races to dwell on Everglow, claiming the mountains as their own. Powerful of wing and deadly of talon, they had few natural predators. Theirs was a simple life of competition and rivalry between tribes. Unlike savage races, griffon inter-tribal conflict usually ended before lives were lost.

Their tribes spread across the highlands of Everglow during these early times, spreading across its fertile expanse, their only resistance the vicious beasts they drove away. They encountered the other feline kin in their travels, finding the sun cats to be their brethren of the plains, and the purrsians as their questionable allies of the deserts. Though the feline kin saw some measure of similarity among themselves, their differences drew them to occasional conflict.

Long before the ponykind were even imagined, the purrsians discovered a great vein of wealth running in the mountains near the eventual site of Clovenhame.

Griffons had already laid claim to the mountains, and erected a grand temple to the highest of the griffon gods, the Sun King, on the very peak the purrsians sought to mine. Attempts to negotiate were met with resolute refusal. The griffon tribe charged with upkeep and protection of the temple, the Razormanes, challenged the purrsian merchant lord of the mining effort. The purrsians refused the challenge and withdrew from the area. They would return in twenty years, starting the first true war of Everglow.

THE SUN'S ROAR INCURSION

The scheming purrsians were too cowardly to attack on their own against the martially trained and capable griffons. Instead, they sent word and money east, seeking allies. When they returned, it was at the side of strange mercenaries. They seemed incapable of four-legged movement, and had no wings. They were naked of fur, feather, and tail, but proved capable warriors. The combined force of purrsians and humanoids

took the Razormanes by surprise and forced a retreat from the temple. As the invaders bashed in the gates and flew over the walls the griffons carried away their wounded and what little supplies they could.

The other griffon tribes were appalled and incredulous at the news. The very idea that an army led by purrsians could eject one of their proudest tribes was difficult to grasp, but the evidence was clear: volleys of arrows met any griffon daring to approach the temple. Even worse, the great gold architecture of the Sun King was being torn down day by day. As word of this travesty spread, the tribes of the mountain range banded together, and the war began in earnest.

Several griffon tribes and purrsian families were sent to the Sun King's court, most notable of which were the original tenders, the Razormanes, who fought to the last ejecting the invaders from what was left of the temple. By the time the last of the purrsian army had been ousted, little remained of the holy edifice. The last standing Razormane, well aware that she was the last of her line and that her kin had failed in their task, surrendered her life to the Sun King in return for one last great magic. The temple and the riches beneath vanished from the face of Everglow, taking with it the griffons that had shamefully failed to protect it. Some scholars think that it may yet exist, hidden in the vast tapestry of the universe between here and there. Perhaps it may yet be uncovered.

The war ended with the purrsians and their allies

forced back out of the mountains. With the efforts proving most unprofitable, they fell back away from the suddenly barren mountains, leaving the griffon tribes to recover and nurse a lingering dislike towards their hoarding cousins. The humanoids that had banded with the purrsians returned to their distant home to the east, not to be seen again until the time of ponykind. These strangely shaped but skilled warriors that had met griffons boldly on the field of battle were worth remembering.

LORDS OF THE GRIFFONS

During the war, the tribes came together as they never had before. With so many griffons in such a small space, the conflicts between tribes grew more intense even as they did battle with the invaders. Two griffons rose above the noise and confusion, and marshalled their people. Gerald Skyswiper and Sheh'an Longtalon—a mated pair that had not even yet undergone the binding rite—bound their people together. Generals and peacekeepers, they mediated between the tribes even as they oversaw tactics and logistics. When the war wound down, the griffons still looked to them. They had earned their respect, and this would not be shaken easily. They were to become the first true lords of the people. They accepted the positions hesitantly at first, but once the crowns rested on their feathered brows they rose to the challenge, united as lords, and took a new name: Skycrown.

Displaying the wisdom that had won them the position to begin with, one of the first decrees made by the newly minted lords was how to transition to the next lords in case of age, disease, or violence.

All who thought themselves worthy would come to Lord's Roost, a small keep in the high mountains north of where Yishēng would eventually stand. It was also possible to nominate another who would be asked to join if thirty griffons of at least three tribes called for them. Once all worthy were gathered, they would undergo a tenfold trial before all who wished to witness. These tests were designed to put the potential ruler's wit, strength, leadership, and sincerity to the test. The trial has served the griffons well, as they have not suffered many incompetent rulers to claim the name of Skycrown. True to the first, it is common for lords to take the test as a pair, though this is not required.

The first Skycrowns also called their people to peace. There were many tribes that were urging their neighbors to battle. The wounds of the Sun's Roar Incursion still ached, and the urge to strike a vengeful



The Sun King

blow to the purrsians ran strong through the griffon people. Though some lashed out on their own, the griffon kingdom as a whole made peace with the purrsian cities. The purrsian that had incited the war had died during the conflict, and few other desert cats seemed interested in resuming his plans, especially with the mountain drained of its mineral wealth. The resumed trade was beneficial for all, and after a hundred and three years, the pain of the war faded to a distant memory.

ARRIVAL OF THE GOATS

It was a crisp autumn day when a griffon hunter in the mountain range where their temple once stood fell upon a goat. Instead of a terrified bleat, it begged in Sylvan to be released. Startled, the griffon complied, and the cloven were discovered. Where the goat came from, neither the goat nor the griffon knew, but he had a family, and there were others beside. The griffons did not feel threatened by these unassuming herbivores, so when they asked for a small peak to call their own, it was given to them. The goats proved to be hard working, and the griffons watched as Clovenhame was built. The griffons found their goods to be of fine make, and the goats found clever griffon fingers and powerful wings were very useful indeed. The two people became warm to one another and Clovenhame became a part of the griffon kingdom. This was never formally announced as such, but simply how everyone came to believe. The goats had no strong ambitions, and rarely argued the laws of the Skycrowns. While they had leaders of their own, they seemed to content themselves dealing with internal affairs of the city. The cloven had fine mayors, but never a true king, which made the griffons able to manage the larger picture around them.

THE SCOURGING

The court of the Skycrown was interrupted with the panicked arrival of a young scout. She had seen something terrible rising from the deserts far to the south, where the largest purrsian cities dwelled. It radiated malice so potent that even from miles away she was struck ill and took flight to escape its fell presence and report. The Skycrowns of the time were a pair of puma-hawks who had received the position in no small part due to their discovery and perfection of the twinned tail fighting style. They dispatched additional scouts and mystics to learn more of the menace, urging cau-

“Do not allow yourselves to be drawn into purrsian

foolishness. Discover its purpose. Discover its strength. Find its weakness, and report back,” said they, and the scouts obeyed. Flying on determined wings, they learned of their enemy. A demon larger than ever seen, known as Apep, towered over purrsian cities as it laid them to waste. The griffon mystics were quick to discover that this was no mere summoning. The horror had been fully brought into Everglow, and would likely remain until it was banished. Something had to be done, and quickly.

The purrsians were no help. Their people were scattered and seemed to be the first target of the destroyer. The griffons acted without them. They beseeched the Sun King and divined the locations of several crystals so immense it took four full grown griffons to heft each into the air. They had to negotiate with the sun cats for one, but this proved easier when made clear it was a mission for their mutual deity. They had also felt the presence of the demon as it grew stronger, but their migrations did not carry them through the desert. The matter became more urgent when Apep began to roam outside the desert, seeking and destroying sun cat prides with wild abandon.

When all the materials were gathered, they had to confront the demon. The ritual would only work with Apep in the center, and it was not prone to idleness. They



ALFINA

would have to fight it if only to keep it in one place. Many griffons lost their lives to the demon's wrath that day, including the Skycrowns who fought at the front to embolden their people. The mystics had done their job well, and the link to Everglow was weakened. When the griffons withdrew, the demon remained, but its time was limited. It faded away several days later in what would become the Scar of the Sun. The purrsians would eventually emerge from their hidden city of Murrage thinking the demon had faded on its own. The griffons knew better, but there was no educating the foolish.

All Everglow felt the aftereffects of the demon's rampage. While the griffons had suffered in the final battle, the purrsians and sun cats were hardest hit. The demon had favored low lands, missing griffon cities while annihilating purrsian cities and casually destroying sun cat prides. Neither race would ever fully recover from the holocaust, and certainly not in time for the next large player to arrive on the field.

ARRIVAL OF PONYKIND

About fifty years after the demon's defeat, the first ponykind began scaling the mountains that were the home of the griffons. While the goats had bowed their heads meekly to the superior griffons, the ponies re-

fused to kneel. Some of the ponykind were enamored with the majestic predators and began to follow them, invited or not. They watched them hunt, dance, and live in the clouds, and they aspired to join them. Some few fought the griffons, but the griffons were more powerful, and could fly. The griffons were swift and lethal in their response to any assault, and soon only the ponies that behaved themselves remained. Others fled them, retreating deep into the mountain caves where the griffons did not care to chase them.

These strange ponies began to change. Their next generation had half-formed wings that flapped urgently as if they would fly. The gen-

eration after that would leap from cliffs, gliding on the currents as far as they could before gravity drew them gently to the ground once more. It was the third generation that finished their transition, with children that flew in lazy circles above their proud parents. The griffons were amazed at this development. How had they adapted themselves? Was this a test of the Sun King? They resolved not to fail it.

They took in these strange new flyers, even if they lacked talon and beak, and began to teach them the way of the air. The ponies, now pegasi, eagerly took to the lessons, and the gift of the clouds was shared between the species. While griffons had might, pegasi had speed. Competitions between the two were frequent, but good natured more often than not. They became fast friends as peers, unlike the subservient position the cloven had taken. Ultimately, griffons accepted pegasi as younger kin.

When the griffons became aware of other ponykind tribes, however, they were wary. The Sun King had gifted them the mountains, they would remain there. The pegasi agreed not to speak of the griffons or their ways to the other tribes. Other ponykind would never hear of the Skycrowns or griffon traditions.

THE EMPIRE FORMS

It would be two centuries of relative peace for the griffons. They erected a new temple to the Sun King, hidden deep in the northern mountains where no others dared tread. The Skycrowns would rule from within its bright halls, managing the affairs of all the griffons of Everglow. They watched from afar as the various ponykind tribes squabbled amongst themselves over resources. They bore witness as the gem pony kingdom rose and fell in what seemed the blink of an eye. Countless enthusiastic would-be rulers arose, attempting to unite ponykind under a single flag.

When Iliana led her attempt, they thought little of it. Near as they saw, she was a simple pegasus, doe-eyed and idealistic. They wagered she would not last long. The subtle differences in her frame that signaled her earth-bound heritage were lost on the griffons, who did not study ponykind tribal anatomy. They were shocked when their pegasi allies almost instantly joined the earth-bound tribe gathered to her banner. When asked, the pegasi said they saw in her a leader and a purpose. They claimed it was her undeniable destiny to rule.

This confused the griffons, who did not believe in that sort of destiny. To be certain, the Sun King had given every griffon had gifts and weaknesses, but what



JADE STAR

they did with those abilities was up to them. They could squander them, rise to them, or go off in some other direction all together. The Sun King did not command his children, he led by shining example. The idea that these ponies would bow to this idealistic filly because the stars said so seemed ridiculous. They demanded to know if the Sun King had told them directly of this fate. No, came the answer. The ponies didn't worship any Sun **King**; they had a Sun **Queen**. Shaking their heads, the griffons left ponykind to handle their own politics.

They watched as the "imperial movement" became The Empire. They watched as some pony tribes were ground to dust beneath the growing war machine, while others were absorbed into its expanding mass with barely a whisper. In scarcely half a generation, all of Everglow ponykind united under the flag of the empire. The griffons accepted this as a distant fact. Their trade with the pegasi went largely unchanged, at first. Then it grew as pegasi traded griffon goods down the mountains to the rest of the empire. In return, new things began to flow up into the mountains: exotic metals, art, tools, and foods the griffons had never seen before. However insane ponykind were, they were building a successful empire.

OTHER RACES APPEAR

Fifty years after the forming of the empire, ponykind encountered the dwarves. These short, bipedal, creatures were amazing smiths and engineers. They built a railway across Everglow with the help of ponykind laborers and magicians. It stretched from the far south, where the dwarves called home, to the north of Everglow, strangely close to where the griffons' new temple was hidden. Young griffons took delight in racing the train cars, but what the griffons lacked in speed, they made up for in unending endurance. Eventually, the train would win, but the measure of how long the griffon could keep up with it was what earned the praise of their peers. One griffon, a lion-eagle of the name Cloudchaser, raced the train the entire way to Viljatown on her day of maturation. She earned the title "Thunderracer," for the griffons said the trains ran on beds of lightning. Griffons considered dwarves to be fine lesser creatures. No creature bound to the ground could properly rival griffons.

The elves came next, sailing across the western waters to arrive on the shores of the pony empire. Griffons met them largely when griffon young happened on them during their travels. No formal contact occurred, and the griffons saw no reason to change this until the elves stole the gift of the clouds much later.



The griffons took note of the arrival of their ancient war rivals, the strange warriors of the distant past, who had marched beside the purrsians all those years ago: the humans. They seemed to have no recollection of the war. They seemed to have little recollection of anything, as if it had never happened, or they had simply never thought to record the event. A major war to the griffons was to them barely worth discussing. The griffons bristled at the idea. Were the humans so populous, or simply forgetful? Neither answer satisfied. That the humans seemed to be in extensive contact with the skinny and frail elves made the griffons curious, but they never figured out the connection.

THE HIGH NOON CONFLICT

The exact timing of this battle is unclear, but the legends of it continue to be told in taverns and around campfires. It is said that, in the one formal battle between the griffon kingdoms and the empire of ponykind, both Blaze and the Huntress appeared before their respective armies in full view of the other. The seers of races were baffled. The appearance of their war goddess was meant to signify victory, likely with great cost. How could both sides be the victor?

Regardless, neither goddess was to be fled from, for that invites terrible vengeance from her upon the cowardly soldier and all they know and love. Neither leader was willing to surrender to the other, so the battle would not be postponed or cancelled. They met on the field of battle and clashed with a fury that is said to have brought tears of joy to both looming goddesses. Soldiers of both sides died in horrific numbers. Brave-

ly, cowardly, stupidly and cleverly, more and more died. The only certainty seemed to be the ever rising casualties as the battle proceeded through the noon hours. As the sun began to lower in the sky, the din of the battle waned.

Somehow, perhaps at the direct intervention of Blaze or the Huntress, neither side had paused as their numbers reached pathetically few in number. As sanity returned to the warriors, there remained only two. A griffon warrior woman, heavy with chick, and a female earth-bound pony who was of similar state, but was of yet unaware of it. They gazed at each other, weapons thick with the evidence of their bitter struggle for survival, and the will to fight fled them. They retired from the field together, swearing their people would never cross weapons again.

Whether or not the battle ever actually took place, it remains the only documented conflict between the nations. Both nations are fully aware of the might of the other, and that any battle

between them would result in a terrible price. It is hoped that this price would never be paid again, but the dark goddesses of war await the inevitable with an unusual patience. Some say that the two unnamed survivors of the battle are the patron saints of hippogriffs, and that the existence of the half-breeds hints at an alternative ending to things.

The Empire Falls

When the queen of the ponies died at last, the griffons were most surprised that she had lived as long as she had. When they learned the ponies had no true heir, and that a succession struggle had begun, they were aghast. Griffons had transitioned smoothly from one Skycrown to the next for centuries, and ponykind had been successful for generations. The idea they had never worked out a method of transitioning power was incredible to the griffons. The empire collapsed as quickly as it had formed, leaving violence and loss all across the lowlands. The griffons interceded only on behalf of their pegasus allies, and otherwise allowed things to proceed as they would.

The pegasi would come to them for that help five years after the empire. Their control over the clouds had suddenly been taken from them. The griffons knew this to be true, as it had been lost to them as well. Griffon mystics followed the threads of this foul act and found the elves had secured the gift, snatching it from the two, but did not know how. The griffons did not care for the hows or the whys. The griffon kingdom took flight almost as one. Ponykind were too distracted with their own affairs to notice the mass migration, but that was the start of a fresh war.

"They thought to take advantage of our allies, the pegasi, while they were weak and distracted. They thought they were hunting an already defeated prey. Let us not forget that our kingdom is twice the age of the pony empire, and it will not fall this day or any other. The elves do not even begin to comprehend our numbers, our ferocity, and our fury. Today, we fly as one, and when we return, all of Everglow will know the truth of our might," spoke the Skycrown's male just before the army departed.

They sailed across the sea with many pegasi at their sides to bring battle to these frail elves. The elves of Everglow did not speak of it, either unaware or uncaring of the griffon attack even as they expanded their reach into Everglow. One day, perhaps, the griffon army would return with news. Until then, those that remain guard the old nests, their sacred temple, and watch the chaos of the lowlands. The empire had ended, but a new war had begun.



Blue Wave



GRIFFON TRAITS

PHYSICAL & MENTAL TRAITS

Griffons are very distinctive in appearance, with the fore-body of a bird and the back end of a feline. The species of bird tends strongly towards the predatory. Hawks, eagles, owls and falcons are particularly common. Unlike normal birds, they often have the ears of their feline ancestry. Griffons of scavenger descent, such as vultures or ravens, are seen in equal parts as shrewd and scheming. Such griffons have a reputation for being fast thinkers, but frail. Those few griffons of herbivorous and prey species are shunned by some, but those most loyal to the Sun King know them to be seers and mystics. Only a griffon with the humility forged of being born to prey status can prostrate themselves fully before their god and hear his words clearly. These aspects do not carry true from parent to chick every time. With interbreeding between various combinations of griffons, even griffons can never be entirely sure what will result.

Their hands, which appear much like talons when

on all fours, are agile enough for fine tool use. While in flight or when standing on their feline legs, griffons enjoy the use of any tool a humanoid would in much the same fashion. They do not wear saddles or racks as ponykind does, finding them demeaning, and clumsy besides.

The fur and feathers of griffons are kept immaculate when at all possible. Griffons feel they are the shining example of the Sun King's brilliance, and carry themselves tall, proud, and clean. Griffons do not typically have hair, but those of maned feline species are fond of braiding their hair and interweaving bits of gold and platinum. The more displayed, the more success or wealth the griffon claims. Their tails are usually left naked, but merchants often adorn their tails with bangles and rings as symbols of their wealth. Priests are also fond of the practice, though they use holy symbols. Clothing for the rest of their form varies by region and station, running the full gamut from nothing at all to full courtier attire.

The difference between males and females is slight.

Males tend to be a little larger than females, but their overall strength is close enough to put neither in a clear advantage in personal conflict. Both are possessed with a powerful sense of self-agency and importance, and are not prone to allowing others to dictate their actions. Mated pairs, as a result, form from griffons that see eye to eye on most issues. Couples that disagree often go their separate ways, unless they enjoy arguing.

It is considered an honor to be successful in gently guiding one's young, and tribal elders are quick to play matchmaker with nearly mature chicks. Headstrong as griffons are, such interference must be done subtly. Those chosen by their meddlesome elders will find themselves being placed together more often without any spoken cues as to the hopes placed on them. If they were told, they might spurn one another just out of defiance.

Heavier than their ponykind allies, griffons possess wings powerful in comparison to those of a pegasus. Of the feline kind, griffons are the most able fliers. The sun cats are pious and honorable creatures, but entirely earth-bound. The purrsians are fat and lazy,

undeserving of what wings they have. The griffons enjoyed their dominance of the air over the others, and all the rest of intelligent Everglow, at least until the ponies arrived. On average, griffons fly faster and truer than pegasi. The differences emerge when a pegasus devotes themselves to flight. Overcome with destiny, these strange pony creatures will practice day after day to the exclusion of all else, eventually becoming as fast or faster than their griffon rivals. Griffons mutter in private that, perhaps, their neighbors are still not finished changing. Despite this, griffons enjoy racing the smaller ponies and fueling their friendly one-upmanship.

Though other races know them as fierce predators, griffons are slow to draw blood from kin. When conflict arises between tribes, it is usually settled in display of skill, strength, and bravery. The challenged tribe may choose the nature of the contest, and both tribes will elect a champion to participate. If the losing tribe cannot be satisfied with the result, they may demand trial by combat, though doing so without a good reason is seen as a sign of weakness. Not because fighting is a poor challenge—it is not—but the first challenge was lost, and all the losing tribe proves is poor sportsmanship and desperation.

STRENGTH AND PERCEPTION

Griffons have powerful builds and lean mass. Consummate predators, they delight in hunting up close, with melee weapons or bared talons and beak. Until the arrival of ponykind, griffons were slow to adopt weaponry outside what the Sun King granted them. It is still considered a simple delight to complete a hunt with nothing but the will to fight and survive, but as ponykind—and eventually dwarven—tools were imported griffons began to use their strength to hammer steel as well as take down prey. Purrsian tools had been available long before ponykind, but their treasure-hoarding cousins did little to inspire the griffons.

Weapon-using or not, all griffons respect strength. In areas with sparse griffon population, the stronger claim larger territories and defend it against intruders through sheer power. Wrestling, boxing, and other ritual combat are all popular sport, with the regular winners earning fame and respect of their peers. No division is made in males and females in such competitions.

Strength is a shared duty. Mated pairs will defend their home, tribe, and kingdom together. Should a couple expect a child while in military service, they



GRIFFON PALADIN

will retire together to return later. If the situation is dire, then they will fight on together, maternity be damned. Likewise, the rearing of chicks is shared, with both parents hunting, teaching, and disciplining their progeny. Other species find it odd to find entire griffon families present in times of war, but to griffons it is the natural order, with neither parent wishing to hide at home.

In tune with their martial lives, griffons possess a keen perception to the world about themselves. They have –occasionally literally–eyes of a hawk and the keen hearing of a feline. Their sense of smell is on par with a human—just as well, with their need to spot things at a distance being far more important to their lives than noticing things up close.

This enhanced sense extends beyond the physical. Griffons can feel the subtle pulls of the otherworldly upon them, and tend to be a pious people. They share this trait with their closer feline kin, the sun cats, just as they share their god. Their strength is a gift from their god, they claim, and that strength runs well and deep in the veins of griffon clerics. This works well with their stubbornness, throwing off attempts to fool their perceptions or thoughts.

Their pride can get in the way of true piety when things are going less than ideally. Believing themselves more important than others, the idea of suffering for some unseen plan does not sit well with many of them. This is not to say that a griffon can not be bold to the point of martyrdom, but the call to do so usually requires a tangible object to protect. The idea of fighting to the last to defend a city is easily grasped, but the idea of fighting for an ideology, or because the universe may, some day, be a better place is foreign. Even with a physical object, it may yet be better to withdraw and exact revenge another day. Dead griffons are poor combatants, and there is no shame in delayed vengeance.

This self-centeredness hampers their empathy. Their demands are harsh and impatient. They have difficulty achieving proper empathy with others. This can cause griffons to come off as loud-mouthed braggarts even when they are trying to be polite. It is for this reason more than most that griffons tend to spread themselves apart. A happy neighbor is a neighbor at arm's length, where misunderstandings have little opportunity to develop. Those who must dwell in metropolitan areas live by their saying, "Speak only when there is something to say." They become withdrawn and choose their words more carefully, interjecting only when something of direct importance needs to be said.



BLOODRUNE

ASPECTS

Griffons come in three primary aspects. The aspect refers to the predator, prey, or scavenging nature of the avian half of the griffon. Some draw lines between the feline ancestries, but the difference between a cougar griffon and a lynx griffon is far smaller than the striking contrasts of a hawk and a dove. These are presented as alternative racial traits, allowing you to customize your griffon. A griffon can only have one aspect, even if they share the lineages of more than one. The campaign setting otherwise assumes a predator aspect griffon, which are the most numerous.

Unlike ponykind, griffon aspects tend to be inherited from parents or grandparents. It is extremely rare for aspects to go into remission for longer than two generations before emerging again, instead simply being bred out entirely. It is for this reason that aspects tend to be drawn towards one another and there is significant social pressure, especially amongst rarer aspects, to create families within the aspect.

PREDATOR ASPECT

The default and most common griffon. All other griffon aspects are based on the predator. You gain the fol-

lowing traits:

Ability Score Increase. Increase your Strength score by 1.

Cloud Walker. You can treat fog, mist, or any cloud as solid.

Beak. You gain a natural attack with your beak, it has the finesse property, and deals 1d6 piercing damage.

Flight. You have feathered wings, and your base flying speed is 40 feet. You cannot fly if you are wearing armor you are not proficient in, armor not tailored to accommodate your wings, or a backpack not specially tailored to your wings. While flying, you have disadvantage on strength checks to interact with objects that are on the ground. You fall to the ground at the end of your turn unless you move at least half your flying speed during your turn.

CHEETAH ASPECT

Your feline half is known for speed, and is quite likely the spotted cheetah. You have grown to be faster than your peers when on the ground, and this has hampered your flying. Your long legs and lithe body are ideal on the grassy lowlands, where you stalk close to the

If using aspects, use this as a griffon's base statistics:

Ability Score Increase. Your Strength score increases by 1, and your Wisdom score increases by 1.

Age. Griffons are somewhat longer lived than many of the other everglow races. They reach maturity at age 20, at which time they are likely to begin striking out on their own.

Alignment. Though relatively few griffons are good aligned, they tend towards more self serving and neutral alignments.

Size. Your size is Medium.

Speed. Your base walking speed is 30 feet (20 feet bipedal).

Languages. You can speak, read, and write Common. You can also choose one language from the following list: Sylvan, Auran, Elven, or Gnomish.

Fey Born. Griffons count as fey for all purposes.

Four Legged. Being a four legged creature, you can bear greater weights (up to 50%) than a human of the same strength without being encumbered. Any roll to avoid becoming prone is made with advantage.



Cursed Aspect

ground instead of the all-too-exposed air.

Ability Score Increase. Increase your Dexterity score by 1.

Feline Speed. You may dash as a bonus action. Land speed increases by 10 feet.

Beak. You gain a natural attack with your beak. It has the finesse property and deals 1d6 piercing damage.

Cloud Walker. You can treat fog, mist, or any cloud as solid.

Flight. You have feathered wings, and your base flying speed is 30 feet. You cannot fly if you are wearing armor you are not proficient in, armor not tailored to accommodate your wings, or a backpack not specially tailored to your wings. While flying, you have disadvantage on strength checks to interact with objects that are on the ground. You fall to the ground at the end of your turn unless you move at least half your flying speed during your turn.

Differences: Your long legs marked your nature from birth. The kiss of the wind against your face when you get into a good run is all the rush you need. Preferring the ground to the air, your kind excels in tight quarters, such as urban areas, dungeons, and thick forests and jungle, where flying becomes too awkward. Your preference for class remains largely unchanged from the basic griffon, though classes that offer increased speed, such as barbarians and monks, have a certain appeal, while those that restrict your movement, like well-armored fighters and clerics, less so.

CURSED ASPECT

Known more commonly as the crystal wings, your ancestors were involved in the banishing of the great demon Apep. In his defeat, he laid a terrible curse on your line, and it manifests in jagged crystals that grow from your body. Though painful, the crystals do lend a robustness to your line. They come in all colors and textures, making your kind easy to spot in a crowd. Though it was not known at the time, when the psionic school in Zurich was founded, it was discovered that your crystals harmonize with psionic energy quite well.

Ability Score Modifiers. Decrease your Strength score by 1 (for a total of +0 for the race), and increase your Constitution score by 2.

Flight. You have feathered wings, and your base flying speed is 40 feet. You cannot fly if you are wearing armor you are not proficient in, armor not tai-

lored to accommodate your wings, or a backpack not specially tailored to your wings. While flying, you have disadvantage on strength checks to interact with objects that are on the ground. You fall to the ground at the end of your turn unless you move at least half your flying speed during your turn.

Beak. You gain a natural attack with your beak, it has the finesse property, and deals 1d6 piercing damage.

Strong Mind. Gain resistance to psychic damage.

Differences: Long inured to pain and discomfort, the cursed aspected bear the scars of the epic conflict that formed the desert wastes on the south end of Everglow. You are capable of taking incredible punishment that would fall a lesser griffon, but your muscles have suffered for it. Ultimately, cursed griffons are equally capable of becoming any profession they desire, their keen senses and perception of the otherworlds calls them to paths that take advantage of it, such as monk or cleric.

PREY ASPECT

Your lineage bares the mark of prey. Doves, parrots, cockatiels, or some other prey species comes in stark contrast to the predatory kin that surround you. Your feline side, as often as not, also takes on the form of



Cheetah Aspect



Prey Aspect

less imposing species, such as house cats. As a chick, they treated you as if you would break at the slightest injury while they wrestled for dominance. Even so, you are revered for your potential closeness to the other-worlds.

When allowed to live freely, prey aspected griffons tend to value culture, wine, and dance. They are a vivacious lot, full of warmth and community spirit. Some ponies think all of griffon kind could learn something from their friendlier lineages, but that does little to encourage the idea amongst traditional griffons.

Flight. You have feathered wings, and your base flying speed is 40 feet. You cannot fly if you are wearing armor you are not proficient in, armor not tailored to accommodate your wings, or a backpack not specially tailored to your wings. While flying, you have disadvantage on strength checks to interact with objects that are on the ground. You fall to the ground at the end of your turn unless you move at least half your flying speed during your turn.

Cloud Walker. You can treat fog, mist, or any cloud as solid.

Ability Score Modifications. Decrease your Strength score by 1 (to a total of +0 for the race), and increase your Charisma score by 2.

Piety. When casting spells granted by a domain, oath, or similar divine class feature, you can cast them one level higher without expending a higher level slot, to a maximum of the highest level spell you can normally cast.

Differences: Your kind are the least likely to be seen by outsiders. Sheltered and protected, the prey griffons often become priests and shamans for the griffon people instead of venturing out to seek the adventuring path. For those that do venture out, your talents lie clearly with divine magic, be it cleric, paladin, or otherwise. It is not uncommon for prey to be extreme in their violence or avoidance of it. They will either embrace it wildly, trying to prove themselves capable warriors, or avoid it entirely, following their innate natures.

PRIDE ASPECT

Your back half is that of the lion, known for gathering in prides where all other felines hunt either alone or with a mate. This makes you more social than most of your kin. Some say this aspect came into being due to crossbreeding between griffons and sun cats. A born diplomat, your people are eager to send you forth to negotiate with other tribes and races, saving them the hassle. Unlike your kin, your keen senses are focused on the interplay of one person to the next instead of the movement of prey or the whispers of the other-worlds.

Ability Score Modifications. Decrease your Wisdom score by 1 (to a total of +0 for the race) and increase your Charisma score by 2.

Flight. You have feathered wings, and your base flying speed is 40 feet. You cannot fly if you are wearing armor you are not proficient in, armor not tailored to accommodate your wings, or a backpack not specially tailored to your wings. While flying, you have disadvantage on strength checks to interact with objects that are on the ground. You fall to the ground at the end of your turn unless you move at least half your flying speed during your turn.

Cloud Walker. You can treat fog, mist, or any cloud as solid.

Beak. You gain a natural attack with your beak, it has the finesse property, and deals 1d6 piercing damage.

Differences: You were not immediately obvious when you burst free from your egg. Many pride grif-

fons look just the same as standard griffons, but instead of following the urgings of their bird half, they feel the call of their feline side, specifically that of the lion. A team player by nature, you excel in roles where your powerful personality can be put to work, such as bard or sorcerer. Those of martial cast make up most of the griffon paladin population, championing the forces of good amongst their less driven peers.

SCAVENGER ASPECT

Clever and indirect, you have the head of a bird species known for being opportunistic. A vulture, crow or raven are the most common of the sort. Your fellow griffons find you a little shady, but you will have the last laugh when they charge directly into failure and you take the long route to success.

Ability Score Modifications. Increase your Intelligence score by 2, and your Dexterity score by 1. These modifiers replace your Strength and Wisdom ability score increases.

Flight. You have feathered wings, and your base flying speed is 40 feet. You cannot fly if you are wearing armor you are not proficient in, armor not tailored to accommodate your wings, or a backpack

not specially tailored to your wings. While flying, you have disadvantage on strength checks to interact with objects that are on the ground. You fall to the ground at the end of your turn unless you move at least half your flying speed during your turn.

Cloud Walker. You can treat fog, mist, or any cloud as solid.

Beak. You gain a natural attack with your beak, it has the finesse property, and deals 1d6 piercing damage.

Differences: Likely a grand pest from the first day, scavenger chicks are renown for being as annoying as they are clever. Your nimble talons find their way into anything that is locked against you, and the habit continues forward into adulthood, calling you to professions such as wizard, rogue, or other brains-over-brawn positions where you can prove to the world that a good plan will win out over raw muscle power.

SEA ASPECT

Rare and unusual amongst the aspects, your back end is not that of a feline at all. Instead you have the sleek lines of an otter, with the thick tail and waterproof fur and feathers to match. You are at home in water, where you can hunt fish, sharks, and anything else foolish enough to be caught in your beak. Playful and predatory, your kind tend to build sprawling beach-side villages, preferably where a mountain touches the shore.

Having formed large sprawling villages, the 'Fish Wings', as they are sometimes called, have developed a culture all of their own. They favor intricate art on driftwood, and decorate themselves with white pigments in lines and circles to indicate rank, heritage, and personal taste. If raised near ponykind, some will give themselves a picture on their flanks of what they envision their life's goal, or current fancy, to be.

Flight. You have feathered wings, and your base flying speed is 30 feet. You cannot fly if you are wearing armor you are not proficient in, armor not tailored to accommodate your wings, or a backpack not specially tailored to your wings. While flying, you have disadvantage on strength checks to interact with objects that are on the ground. You fall to the ground at the end of your turn unless you move at least half your flying speed during your turn.



SEA ASPECT

Ability Score Increase. Your Strength score increases by 1.

Cloud Walker. You can treat fog, mist, or any cloud as solid.

Beak. You gain a natural attack with your beak, it has the finesse property, and deals 1d6 piercing damage.

Wave Rider. You gain a swim speed of 30 ft.

Water Speaker. You can speak and cast spells underwater, though you still have to breathe air.

Differences: The only griffon type to swim beneath the waves, your affinity for water does not impede your choice or dramatically change your personality compared to a standard griffon. Just as eager to prove themselves, sea griffons are known to be a touch more playful and cheerful than many others. Of the aspects, you are most likely to become fast friends with non-griffons, especially if they share your desire for mirth and levity between bouts for physical supremacy. They share the same predisposition towards the various professions as their land-dwelling kin, though they prefer

jobs that don't require objects that get damaged easily in water, such as book-using wizards. Martial sea griffons will opt for leather over metal whenever possible, unless they can find and afford a suit of mithril. While adamant will also resist rust, its weight is considered an unacceptable trade off more often than not.

SNOW ASPECT

Your ancestors lived in the snowiest peaks of the tallest, most northern mountains. Your coloration is white and black, often like that of a snow leopard. You have become more bulky to hold in heat and favor ambush tactics over long chases; your sudden emergence from the snow is often the last thing your prey ever sees. Though your people have spread out from the tops of mountains to snowy forests and other arctic locations, they remain uniquely built to survive in the most frigid of environments.

Ability Score Increase. Increase your Strength score by 1.

Flight. You have feathered wings, and your base flying speed is 30 feet. You cannot fly if you are wearing armor you are not proficient in, armor not tailored to accommodate your wings, or a backpack not specially tailored to your wings. While flying, you have disadvantage on strength checks to interact with objects that are on the ground. You fall to the ground at the end of your turn unless you move at least half your flying speed during your turn.

Beak. You gain a natural attack with your beak, it has the finesse property, and deals 1d8 piercing damage.

Snow Walker. You gain resistance to cold damage, and advantage to stealth checks in snow. You also gain vulnerability to fire damage.

Prowler. Gain proficiency in Stealth.

Differences: Being larger than normal griffons, you stand out in a crowd. While designed by nature's hand to be a lone ambush predator, your keen mind allows you to see the advantage of working as part of a team. Those snow aspected griffons that acclimate to the civilized forms of battle often take up polearms and other reach weapons. Wielded while standing on their hind-legs allows them to capitalize on their superior reach, while using their razor sharp beak to dissuade any that manage to get past it. Spellcasting snow griffons are a minority, even more so than the standard griffon. With so much mass and muscle at their call, it is difficult to lure them away with the call of the arcane or divine.



HIPPOGRIFFS

Hippogriffs are the result of relations between griffons and ponykind. Most often they are the natural outcome of the kinship felt by pegasi and their griffon allies. It is technically possible for griffons to crossbreed with any variety of ponykind, but the idea of being with something both a pony and bound to the ground is repugnant to most griffons. Regardless of what aspect of griffon or ponykind is involved, hippogriffs tend to not display the specific strengths of those breeds, instead demonstrating a more general kinship to both species on a broad level.

Physically, hippogriffs have the forebody of a griffon of any possible avian aspect. Their back is that of a pony, brand of destiny included. Their appearance is considered unusual to either race, making finding

a place to call home a challenge. Hippogriffs produce more hippogriffs when they make families, though it is rarely possible for a child that appears to be a pure-blooded griffon or pony to result.

Despite their lack of specific strength, hippogriffs can draw on their combined lineages as no other can, blending griffon tricks with pony ones with effort and training. Many hippogriffs drift from griffon lands to and from pony lands repeatedly, picking up little fragments while doing odd jobs and whatever comes to mind. Less commonly, a hippogriff will be raised by a parent of strong enough character and/or finances to shield their progeny from their fellows. Such hippogriffs will typically identify with the culture they were raised in and be confident in their place in it, despite odd appearances.

Ability Score Increase. You may increase any one ability by 2 or two abilities by 1. If an attribute is raised by your spiritual tribe, you may not raise it by 2.

Age. Hippogriffs are longer lived than many of the other Everglow races. They reach maturity at age 20, at which time they are likely to begin striking out on their own.

Flight. You have feathered wings, and your base flying speed is 30 feet. You cannot fly if you are wearing armor you are not proficient in, armor not tailored to accommodate your wings, or a backpack not specially tailored to your wings. While flying, you have disadvantage on strength checks to interact with objects that are on the ground. You fall to the ground at the end of your turn unless you move at least half your flying speed during your turn.

Alignment. Though relatively few hippogriffs are good aligned, they tend towards more self serving and neutral alignments. Compared to griffons, one is more likely to find a good aligned hippogriff.

Size. Your size is Medium.

Speed. Your base walking speed is 30 feet (20 feet bipedal).

Languages. You can speak, read, and write Common. You can also choose one language from the following list: Sylvan, Auran, Elven, or Gnomish.

Fey Born. Hippogriffs count as fey for all purposes.

Four Legged. Being a four legged creature, you can bear greater weights (up to 50%) than a human of the same strength without being encumbered. Any roll to avoid becoming prone is made with advantage.

Spiritual Tribe. Hippogriffs begin with one spiritual tribe of ponykind.

Ponykind. You qualify as ponykind for all effects, feats, and class specializations, to be used by or against the hippogriff.

Griffon. You qualify as griffon for all effects, feats, and class specializations, to be used by or against the hippogriff.



Griffon Feats

Balancing Tail

Prerequisite: Griffon, purrsonian, or sun cat

The long tail that many griffons sport isn't just for show, though it is good for that. Your tail also provides an excellent counter-balance for your movements. You gain the following benefits.

- You gain advantage to saving throws or ability checks to avoid being knocked prone or falling.
- Your dexterity increases by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- When rising from prone, you only use five feet of movement.

Break the Line

Prerequisite: Cheetah aspect

Your incredible speed allows you to dash past enemies unscathed. You gain the following benefits.

- You can disengage as a bonus action.
- If you've moved at least 20 ft since the start of your

last turn, those attempting an attack roll against you do so at disadvantage.

- Your Dexterity increases by 1, to a maximum of 20.

Clever Mind

Prerequisite: Scavenger aspect

When the chips are down, you make do with what you have. Perfectionists may wait forever, but you don't have time for that. You gain the following benefits:

- You may replace your Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma modifier with any other Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma modifier when making an ability check. You regain this ability after a short rest.
- Your Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma increases by 1, to a maximum of 20.

Cloud Heritage

Prerequisite: Griffon

You have found the link to the skies that was slumbering in your unusual line, allowing you to rest on clouds as the pegasi and griffons do. You gain the following benefits:

- You gain the Cloud Walker trait, allowing you to treat clouds and fogs as if they were solid.
- You gain the storm stallion or weather pony feat.
-

Decisive Lunge

Prerequisite: Griffon

A sudden charge ending with your beak applied to the softest part of the enemy allows you to bypass their defenses. You gain the following benefits:

- When you move at least 15 feet in a straight line in a round then attack immediately with your beak, your first attack deals extra damage equal to your proficiency bonus. The extra damage dealt by this ability bypasses all damage resistances.
- Griffons don't withdraw, they simply tactically reposition. When you disengage, you may make a single melee attack against an enemy within range of your weapon, but it deals half damage. This extra attack can only occur at most once per round.
- When attacking a creature at least 2 sizes larger than you (huge or larger, normally), you may choose to inflict half damage to attempt to cripple the tar-



Griffon Monk

get. On a hit, they must make a Constitution save against 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Strength modifier. If they fail, their movement rate is cut in half until they can perform a short rest.

Deep Diver

Prerequisite: Sea aspect

Other griffons may think you have drowned, but you're just enjoying the sights underwater. There's no reason to hurry. You gain the following benefits:

- For every round of held breath for the average person, you can hold it for a minute with the same effort.
- Any bonuses to your land speed are also added to your swim speed.
- Your strength or Dexterity increases by 1, to a maximum of 20.

Grasping Talons

Prerequisite: Griffon

Those claws are not just for display, as lovely a display as they can be... With practice and constant care, you keep them ready for battle. You gain the following benefits:

- You gain two natural claw attacks. They deal 1d4 slashing damage and have the light property. Whenever an action or bonus action is spent to attack with one claw, the other claw may be attacked with as well, provided it has not been used since the start of your turn.
- Whenever you score a critical hit on a target with a claw, if it can be grappled, it becomes grappled.
- If you follow a sun god, such as the Sun King, Sun Queen, Huntress, or Blaze, your claws and natural attacks deal an additional 1d6 fire damage.

Jagged hide

Prerequisite: Cursed aspect

Your crystalline curse has advanced to the point that much of your skin is strewn with little painful flecks of hard crystal. You gain the following benefits:

- Your armor class increases by 1.
- Your hit point maximum increases by an amount equal to your level when you gain this feat. Whenever you gain a level thereafter, your hit point maximum increases by an additional point.



Mountain Predator

Prerequisite: Snow aspect

Your aspect is known for its spectacular ambushes. Stories are whispered at the horror your kind unleashes when they emerge from the snow to attack in a fury of talons and beak. You gain the following benefits:

- Your strength increases by 1, to a maximum of 21. Your maximum (normally 20) in strength increases by 2.
- During the first round of combat in which any participant was surprised, but you were not, you may take a dash action, disengage action, or make a single melee or ranged attack once during your turn in addition to the normal actions you would take.
- You may attempt to hide in plain sight, provided you are in a snowy terrain.

Pride-Minded

Prerequisite: Pride aspect

You have learned well the ways of the sun cats, and have picked up on their tricks. You gain the following benefits:

- You gain the Sun Cat Tactics trait.
- You gain the Pride Tactics feat.

Ruler of the Air

Prerequisite: Griffon

You are a sovereign of the sky, and this fact is so well recognized that when you put out the call for aid from others of your court, they respond unusual power or swiftness. You gain the following benefits:

- When you conjure a bird or roc with a *conjure* spell, such as *conjure animals*, you may increase one of their ability scores by 2.
- When making an attempt to intimidate, cow, or demand obedience from birds, you have advantage on ability checks towards the effort.
- Upon scoring a critical hit against a creature native to the mountains, it will attempt to flee unless magically controlled.

Stable Flier

Prerequisite: Griffon

Where pegasi often rely on nimble grace, griffons have raw power behind every flap of their wings. You are the pegasi's big brother, never forget. You gain the following benefits:

- When subjected to wind, you treat it as one step less severe.

Stage	Condition
1	Calm
2	Moderate Wind
3	Strong Wind
4	Gale
5	Storm

- Attempts to knock you from the air are done at a disadvantage. If there is no roll to do so, you gain advantage on any saving throw or ability check to avoid such a thing.
- Your strength increases by 1, to a maximum of 20

Sudden Save

Prerequisite: Predator aspect, Pride aspect, or Sun Cat Tactics trait

You keep an eye out on the battlefield and leap to the assistance of your lessers, or allies as they prefer to be called. You gain the following benefits:

- When you strike an opponent in your melee reach who is within melee range of an ally with less hit points remaining than your own, you may, as a bonus action or reaction, move the ally up to 15 feet away from the enemy. This movement does not provoke.
- When an ally is struck with a melee attack that would reduce them to 0 hit points and you are within five feet, you may, as a reaction, take the damage in their stead. Any resistance you have to the damage applies, but not any ability that would allow you to avoid the hit in the first place.



BRIE BRIGHTWING



COMBAT: BATTLE FORMATIONS

These specializations were developed by griffons for their use and require being a griffon to take.

Midmountii Master (Monastic Tradition)

Training in the depths of caves, these griffons seem even more unusual than most monks to their fellows. They become a fury of claws and beak, striking at the eyes of their foes instead of at their core, and enhancing their bonds to the plane of earth while most griffons exalt in the embrace of the air.

Natural Fury. At 3rd level when you choose this tradition, you gain the ability to channel the strength of the mountains. Whenever you hit a creature with an attack granted by your Flurry of Blows, you deal an additional 1d4 damage of the same type as the attack. This damage dice increases at the same rate as your Martial Arts damage dice.

Blinding Strike. When you reach level 6, you gain the ability to strike at the ki of your opponents and affect their vision. When using stunning strike you may elect to blind the target instead of the normal effect,

causing the target who fails the Constitution save to become blinded temporarily for a number of rounds equal to your Wisdom modifier, minimum 1. The target may make a Constitution saving throw at the end of each of its turns. On success, this effect ends.

You can also spend 2 ki points when you blind someone with this ability to disable blind sight the target may have. Curing the blindness also restores the blind sight. At 16th level, the midmountii master gains the ability to permanently blind targets with this ability.

Earth Alignment. At 11th level, with enough practice, the midmountii master's innate power of cloud surfing turns to the ground. By spending a ki point as a bonus action, you gain the ability to burrow and move through any dirt, soil, and rock other than metals, effectively gaining a burrow speed equal to your land speed. This effect lasts for a number of rounds equal to your monk level.

Avalanche. Upon attaining 17th level, you become a force of nature. When standing on solid ground, you can spend 3 ki and an action to strike with disastrous

Ponyfinder

force creating a 15ft cone of stones and debris. All creatures within this cone must make a strength save. On a failed save, they take 5d6 bludgeoning damage and are knocked prone and on a successful save, they only take half damage and negate the prone condition.

In addition, if there is an adjacent creature within this cone, you may make a free unarmed strike against them. On hit, in addition to the normal damage of the attack, the creature, if they would be knocked prone by this action, is instead knocked unconscious for 1 minute, or until they are roused by an ally as an action and otherwise is knocked prone.

Skycrown Pledged (paladin oath)

An order that griffon paladins are often found in, those pledged to the Skycrowns dedicate themselves to the cause of the species as a whole, rather than any one single lord, Skycrowns excluded of course.

TENANTS OF THE SKYCROWN PLEDGE

While the specifics of the oath may vary, paladins of this order share these tenants

Protection: Protect the land of your people, and both the young and the old who cannot protect themselves

Dedication: Obey the just will of the Skycrowns, and serve the good of all griffons

Humility: Your personal honor is second to the Skycrowns, and the glory of all griffonkind is your glory

Honor: Bring no misfortune or discourtesy to those who have not broken the laws of the Skycrowns in word or in spirit

Oath Spells

You gain Oath spells at the levels listed

3rd	<i>Heroism, bane</i>
5th	<i>Warding bond, magic weapon</i>
9th	<i>Eagle's soul, Lion Heart</i>
13th	<i>Freedom of movement, death ward</i>
17th	<i>Griffon's majesty, dominate person</i>

Channel Divinity. When you take this oath at 3rd level, you gain the following two channel divinity options:

Challenging Roar. As an action, choose up to your Charisma modifier (Minimum 1) targets within 30ft of you. They must make a Wisdom saving throw. On failure, the targeted creature(s) have disadvantage on all attack rolls that target a creature other than you for 1 minute.

Resolve of the Skycrown. You immediately cease to be Charmed, Frightened, or Stunned, and for the next minute, have advantage against any effect that would bestow those conditions as well as death saving throws. You may use this as a reaction instead of an action whenever you are affected by one of these conditions, even if you would not normally be able to act, or when you are reduced to 0 hit points.

No Army Large Enough. At 7th level, as an action, you may make a single melee attack against each creature within 5ft of you. Each creature hit by this attack has disadvantage on all attacks to hit you until the end of your next turn. You regain the use of this ability when you finish a short or long rest.

Impossible Task. At 15th level, As a bonus action, you may designate a creature you can see within 30ft as your ward for the next minute. Whenever your



SKY RIDER

ward is attacked, you may first, as a reaction, move up to your speed toward the creature who attacked your ward, then make a melee weapon attack. If this attack hits, the triggering attack has disadvantage. You may only have a single ward at a time, if you designate another ward, the previous creature ceases to be your ward.

Glory of the Skycrown. At 20th level, as an action, you can treat all allies within 30ft of you as your ward for 1 hour. While this ability is active, you and any of your wards have advantage on wisdom and death saving throws, and gain 10ft of additional movement. You regain use of this ability after a long rest.

Sky Rider (Ranger Archetype)

Griffons are very particular when it comes to their beasts, refusing to be bound to the ground below. They train great avians to serve as their companions and storm the battlefield in a hail of feathers.

Avian Rider. When selecting this archetype at level 3, you gain the ability to bond with bird creatures. You can select a medium or larger sized bird of CR 1/4 or lower with the beast type as an animal companion. You cannot choose a flightless bird. Your chosen animal companion gains a number of 1d6 hit dice equal to your ranger level, affecting its hit point maximum. It also shares your proficiency bonus in place of its own. Finally, the creature gains a bonus to its armor class equal to your Wisdom modifier.

Your animal companion acts on your initiative, and it moves on your initiative as ordered (no action required by you). You can use your action to order your animal companion to make a normal attack (with multiattack if applicable), or you can use your bonus action to order it to make a “quick attack” that deals half of the normal damage.

You can also use your bonus action to instead order your companion to make a Dash, Disengage, Dodge, or Help action. At level 10, your animal companion deals its normal damage when ordered to make a “quick attack”.

If your animal companion should die, you must spend a day of downtime in atonement before you can bond with a new animal. Finding a suitable replacement requires a minimum of one day of additional downtime, either finding a bird out in the wild, or going to a civilized area where birds are raised and trained as mounts.

Big Rider. At 7th level, your animal companion grows to large size if it is medium sized and it may use the statistics of the giant eagle. You can elect to use those statistics even if your initial mount was large sized.

In addition, your animal companion increases any one of its physical ability scores by 2, or it increases any two of its mental ability scores by 1.

First in Flight. Starting at level 11, if you or your animal companion have moved at least 20 feet by flying, you gain a +2 bonus to your respective armor class until the start of your next turn.

In addition, your animal companion increases any one of its ability scores by 2, or it increases any two of its ability scores by 1.

Eagle Grip. Beginning at 15th level, your animal companion can, as an order requiring your action, grasp one large sized creature in each





STORM DANCER

talon, or as many as two medium sized creatures or smaller in each talon, as long as the creatures are adjacent at the time of being grasped. It has advantage when attempting a grapple contest to grasp an unwilling target. Your animal companion can freely fly but cannot walk while it is grasping numerous creatures. The animal companion's carrying capacity and ability to push drag or lift is calculated as if the companion was huge sized (see Lifting and Carrying under Using Ability Scores in the SRD).

Your animal companion also gains the ability to grapple as part of its attack. It can only grasp one creature in combat per talon when doing so. Add the following text to the attack of your animal companion:

If the attack is successful, the target is grappled (Escape DC 15). The animal companion has two talons, each of which can grapple only one target as part of an attack.

Storm Dancer (Martial Archetype)

With their innate mastery of the clouds, griffons turn this seeming parlor trick into a fully realized combat style that baffles their enemies while striking down groups of opponents in sudden blasts of angry wind.

Eyes of the Sky: At 3rd level, fog and smoke do not obscure your vision nor affect your attack rolls or checks.

Heave of the Tornado: At 7th level, when attempting a shove, you can shove a creature an additional 10 feet. Any other creatures in the path of the first creature must also contest your Strength (Athletics) or be knocked prone by the first creature. Roll once and apply the result to all targets. At 12th level, you can also use your bonus action to gain advantage on a shove attempt once. You regain the ability to do so after finishing a short rest.

Eye of the Storm. At 10th level, you become en-

tirely immune to wind, both magical and mundane. Wind can only move you if you allow it to do so.

Raging Tempest: At 15th level, you can use your action to trip or disarm any number of opponents within reach of your melee weapon. You regain this ability after finishing a short rest.

Shroud the Skies: At 18th level, when attacked with a melee weapon while wearing light or no armor, you can use your reaction to cause a mist to erupt from your space, obscuring you momentarily. You have half cover (+2 AC and Dexterity saving throws) against the first attack against you, and you have three-quarters cover (+5 AC and Dexterity saving throws) against any further attacks in the same round. This resets to no cover at the start of your next turn. This has no effect on ranged attacks and is considered fog for abilities that penetrate fog.

Talon Warrior (Martial Archetype)

Savoring in taking the fight to the enemy, griffons specialize in ambush tactics with sudden pounces from the air onto unsuspecting victims. They attack with a seemingly reckless bravado as they slice through the battle with their natural armaments.

Eagle Blood. At 3rd level when you gain this martial archetype, you have advantage on Dexterity ability checks that involve acrobatics or flight and your passive Perception score while flying increases by 5. At 12th level, you also have advantage on active Wisdom (Perception) checks made while flying.

Fearless Maneuver. At 7th level, you can spend your reaction to gain advantage on a combat contest, such as a grapple check, whether you are initiating or resisting the effect. You regain the ability to do so after a short rest.

Talon and Beak. Upon reaching level 10, any beak and claw attacks you have gain a +1 to attack and damage rolls. At level 19 the bonus increases to +2. This bonus does not stack with manufactured weapons that affect or modify your beak and claw attacks.

Ferocious Start. At 15th level you gain the ability to attack with ferocious alacrity. When you move a t least 10 feet in a turn towards a

target and take an attack action, you can use your bonus action to make a beak or claw attack against that target. At 17th level, you can use your bonus action to make two claw and/or beak attacks as long as you have moved at least 15 feet towards the target of the attacks.

Sky Lord. When you attain 18th level, your gift of flight makes you a fearsome opponent. You can use your reaction to gain advantage on one attack roll once per round. In addition, opportunity attacks against you have disadvantage. You do not gain these benefits if you are restrained, or otherwise unable to fly, for example, due to heavy winds or cramped quarters.

NEW MARTIAL WEAPONS

Claw Tips: These metal sheaths enhance a griffon's natural armaments. They deal bashing or slashing damage, and weigh two pounds. If the wearer does not have a claw attack, but at least has fingers to fit in the sheaths, they deal 1d4 slashing damage. If the wearer does have a claw attack, it increases the die size of that natural attack by 1(1d4 to 1d6, for instance) and its enchantments (if any) affect that claw natural attack. It costs 20 gp.

Beak Tip: Like claw tips, this apparatus is worn over a griffon's beak and enhances its die size by 1. It weighs one pound. It cannot be used by creatures without a beak attack. Any magic effects on the tip applies to bite attacks made by the wearer. It costs 20 gp.



NEW MAGIC ITEMS

CEDRIC-FORGED

Armor (any heavy), uncommon

While not actually forged by the griffon whose name it bears, armor made in this fashion is designed to create an impression of size and power that may not otherwise exist. Cedric-Forged armor can be made from any heavy armor. While worn, you gain advantage on Intimidation checks, as well as on saving throws to resist the frightened condition.

CLEAR SHOT

Weapon (any bow or crossbow), uncommon

This ranged weapon allows you to strike with unerring precision. When an attack with the weapon is made against a target without any cover, such as a creature flying in the open, you deal 1d4 extra piercing damage. This ability does not work if your attack has disadvan-

tage, and only functions once per round.

CLOUD BLESSED

Armor (any light), rare (requires attunement)

A powerful enchantment of the skies allows flyers to avoid their enemy with sudden darts and bobs. This enhancement only works on light armor. At any time that you are flying, whether you are hovering or moving, you gain +1 to your armor class. Additionally, if you move more than 10 feet while flying, enemies have disadvantage to attack you until the start of your next turn.

GRIFFON FEATHERED ARROW

Weapon (arrow), uncommon

Arrows constructed with griffon feathers are imbued with just a bit of their mastery over clouds. With the right alchemical preparations, they can be made into especially valuable ammunition. Such arrows ignore concealment due to fog or smoke, provided the user targets the correct square. Darkness, displacement effects, or other sources of concealment work normally. Enhancing a set of fifty arrows increases the market price by 500 gold pieces.

MASK OF OBEDIENCE

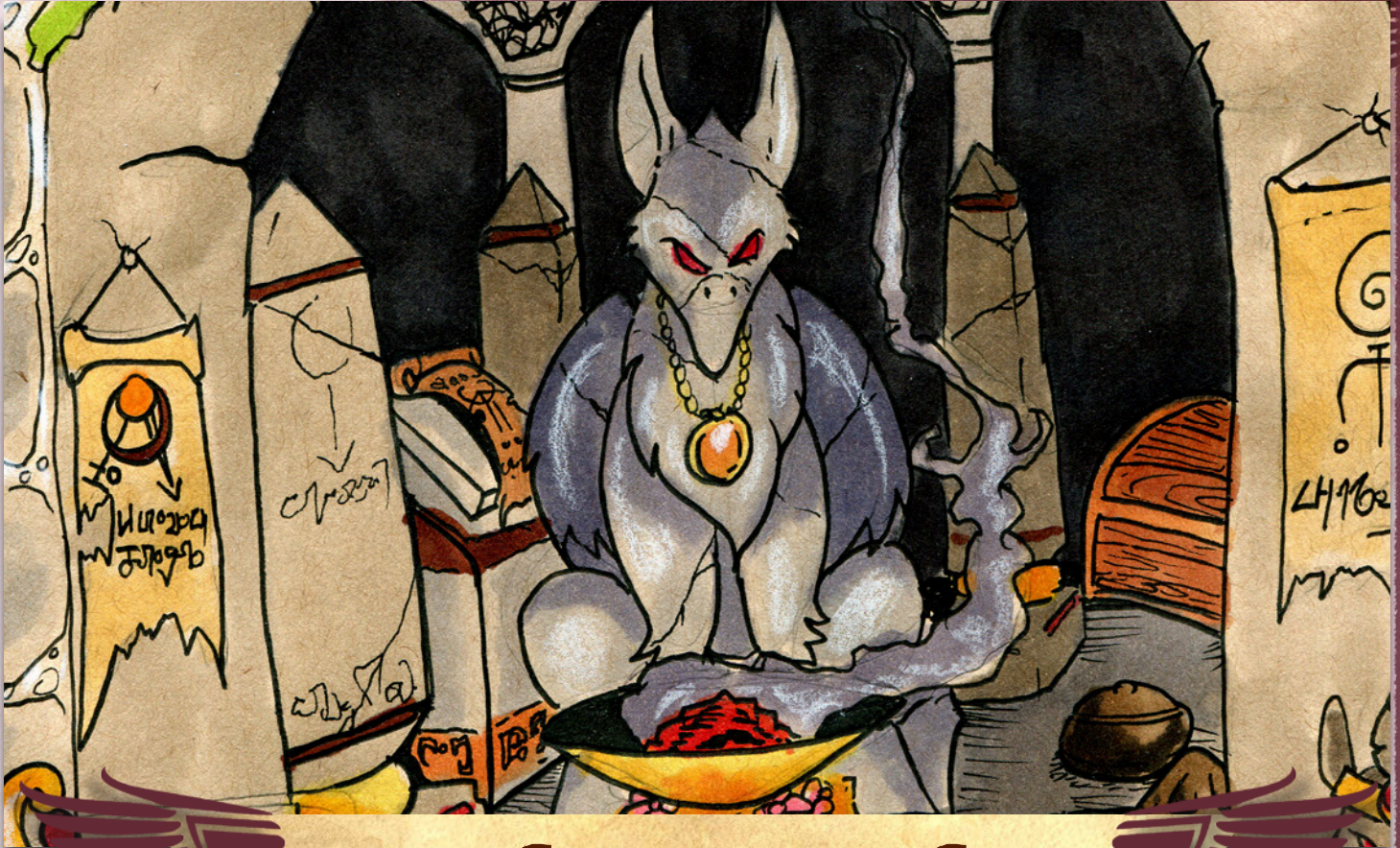
Wondrous item, very rare (requires attunement)

This mask changes its shape depending on who wears it. On golems it serves as a benefit, allowing anyone with a matched key to calm the golem should it go berserk or otherwise leave the controller's grasp.

Curse. If you are any creature other than a construct, including constructs without a controller, this mask changes to become a mask that covers your face and mouth (a muzzle in the case of most four-legged species). The wearer is rendered effectively mute (aside from muffled noises). The same key that works for golems will allow the wearer to speak until used again, but will not remove the mask. Its cursed functions are concealed as per standard rules concerning cursed items. A mask that is created accidentally will not have a matching key. If the key still exists, the *mask of obedience* cannot be removed save by *wish* or similar magic. However, if the key is broken (or never existed), the mask can be removed with *remove curse*.



GRIFFON FORGE



FAITH: GRIFFONS AND GODS

SUN KING

The Sun King is high god of all the feline races, with worshippers amongst the griffons, purrsians, and especially the sun cats. He is often depicted as perched on the sun itself with a smug or regal expression. Unlike many pony gods, he is without wings, having no need for such contrivances to defy the pull of something so tame as gravity. He encourages his followers to tackle the world with all the majesty born within them. It is his guidance that good followers should be supportive, or at least not harmful, to their neighbors. If one has the strength of perfection behind them, then one has the luxury of magnanimity. Let the lesser races scabble and scheme against one another.

Revelations: The Sun King imparts hints and guidance in contemplation. Those who bask in his glory are known to meditate, be it through singing, smoking, simply sitting still, or occasionally in playing games of strategy alone. The vision of the future, if there is one to be imparted, comes in a sudden, giddy rush of inspiration.

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Visitation: The Sun King is not shy about materializing if there is something that needs to be said and a revelation simply will not suffice. When visiting, he will appear before his faithful in a burst of light and heat. He will sometimes speak in riddles, and other times speak plainly, as is his whim. He will not do battle or otherwise act in direct interference with the world. It was his rule that forbade it, after all. Speaking, however, is allowed.

If he is summoned specifically by a community at high noon during summer, he will appear in the sky, seeming to draw the sun down with him. He will remain for exactly one hour, no shorter or longer. During this time he will mingle with those present, be they followers of him or not. It is said that the radiance of his personal sun will cure lingering ailments in those who can bathe in it from start to end. Be this true or not, all can agree that it is a comforting heat no matter how warm it may be already in the area, and that the Sun King is a well-mannered and lively party guest.

Holy Symbol: A feline perched on a radiant sun.

HUNTRESS

Some say Blaze of the pony pantheon was inspired by the Huntress, who came first. Mate of the Sun King and blazing with the same fury of the sun above, she represents the unrestrained fury and the chaos of war itself. While Sun Cats see the Huntress as male, and more of a brother to the Sun King, griffons and purrsians insist they are a couple. The gods do not seem to have time or inclination to correct the matter, and their followers claim with equal conviction to have seen the deity as both Hunter and Huntress, depending on their beliefs. All agree that the Huntress is entirely feline, just like the feline Sun King. No matter the form, the result is the same.

Despite the destruction left in her wake, griffons revere her, for what is life without a battle well fought? They understand better than most that sometimes a good fight is the only way to resolve a situation with finality when diplomacy has failed. There are also crimes for which mercy is far too kind to consider.

Revelations: The huntress reveals wisdom to her followers when their blood runs hottest. A vision of sudden clarity in the middle of rage or grief will guide her faithful to how to exact their revenge or win out over their foes.

Visitation: Like Blaze, it is rarely a good thing when the Huntress deigns to descend to the mortal realm of Everglow. A sighting of her signifies that much blood will be spilled across the ground. It also means that, if one is faithful and battles as if the day may be their last, and it very well may be, the battle will be glorious enough to sing songs of for generations to come. Unlike Blaze, she will speak to her priests if they call out to her, but those who receive her answers are committing themselves to battle until the end, or invite her direct wrath upon them.

Holy Symbol: A clawed hand or paw raking lines across a globe.

CE WHITE TALON

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Far less known, and without ponykind analogue, is the griffon goddess of the dead, Koidon, also known as White Talon. Depicted as a severely aged griffon, it is her judgement that awaits each griffon when time has run out. She awaits them at the final nest, where she will either welcome them for a life well spent, or shove them over the side, to be dashed on the cruel rocks below. Morality has no meaning for her. A griffon who lives a life of cruelty can still serve to provide purpose to others, as a test, and is fulfilling themselves just as much as any righteous crusader.

A mother who raises her chicks with pride, a warrior who never wavers in their protection of home and tribe, and an adventurer that meets their end doing what they chose to do are all well lived. Her disfavor finds those who never take flight: the ones who wish they could do something, but never gather the courage and will. If one's soul is burdened with what could have been, she will find it, and her swift judgement will manifest, sending them with their toxic gravity to smash against the ground.

White Talon has special providence over griffons, able to render judgement even if they worship another deity. Even if they are not aware of White Talon, she will be there to greet them. Those who gaze down at the lowlands and consider the chicks born there worry that their first encounter with Koidon will be at their moment of judgement. Non-griffons are only called to her judgement if they held her in true faith during life, such as pegasi raised within or near a griffon settlement. For better or worse, White Talon shows no favoritism, be those approaching her griffon, pony, or otherwise.

Revelations: White Talon visits those whose opportunity to take flight is upon them. Often, this is their last chance to avoid poor judgement. The vision of her aged power descends on them when they are lacking focus, such as when half asleep or otherwise distracted, startling them terribly. However frightening such an image may be, it is mild compared to what she has prepared if they do not heed her advice.

Visitation: The world of the living is no place for Koidon. She has little interest in visiting longer than to reveal the path for the hesitant and fearful. The few times her direct presence has been recorded has been at the birth or maturation celebration of a chick. Such a sighting is taken as a sure sign that they are meant for something incredible, but that it will take bravery beyond compare to reach.

Holy Symbol: A jagged cliff with a lone nest perched at the peak.





MAGIC: GRIFFON ARCANA

These spells were designed or discovered by griffon spellcasters. Many of them can only be cast by griffons, and even those that can be cast by others require a griffon source of knowledge to discover the spell. Spells that require a griffon spellcaster are noted in the spell header under caster race.

MIEN OF THE WEAK

3rd-level transmutation

Classes: Sorcerer, Warlock, Wizard

Casting Time: 10 minutes

Range: Self and all griffon allies within 30 feet of you

Components: V, S, M (hair, scales, or skin from the target disguise)

Caster Race: Griffon

Duration: 24 hours

A powerful explosion of transformation magic temporarily hides the splendor of the caster and their al-

lies from those who need not know how many griffons are moving through the area. They gain the appearance of small or medium fey as per *alter self*. All targets become the same race, as chosen by the caster. If the target race has wings, they retain their fly speed. If not, they may, as a move action, hide their native wings or sprout them to regain their fly speed. If the caster dismisses the spell early, it is cancelled for all targets.

EXPLOSIVE TALONS

3rd-level evocation

Classes: Sorcerer, Wizard

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 30 feet

Components: V, S

Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute

The caster chooses a target creature within range whose weapons, both natural and artificial despite the



spell's name, are wrapped a sheath of hostile energy of the caster's choosing (Cold, Fire, Lightning, or Acid) and deal an extra 1d6 damage of the chosen type.

The target may alter their element as a bonus action during their attack by making a DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check. If successful, they may switch the bonus damage's type to either Cold, Fire, Lightning, or Acid. Alternatively, they switch the damage to either Necrotic, Thunder, or Force damage, but doing so reduces the bonus damage to 1d4 while the spell is set to those elements.

At any point, the target may end the spell early as an action, causing all creatures with 5ft of them to take three times the current bonus damage of the spell.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 4th or higher, you may target one additional creature. Any creature who ends the spell early only ends its effect on themselves, the other targets of the spell are unaffected.

LIONHEART

3rd-level transmutation

Classes: Cleric, Ranger

Casting Time: 1 reaction

Range: 30 feet

Components: V

Caster Race: Griffon

Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute

With a mighty roar befitting the Sun King himself, you fill the target with a sudden surge of power. The target, which must be a griffon, gains advantage on Constitution and Strength ability checks for the spell's duration, 2d6 temporary hit points and doubled carrying capacity. Until the end of the target's turn, the target may also take an extra action, as per the *haste* spell (this action can only be used to make a single attack, Dash, Disengage, Hide, or Use Object action).

EAGLE SOUL

3rd-level transmutation

Classes: Cleric, Paladin, Ranger

Casting Time: 1 bonus action

Range: Self

Components: V

Caster Race: Griffon

Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute

You let loose the call of your avian ancestors and move with unmatched speed. Until the end of your next turn, gain a bonus to fly speed of 10 ft and opportunity attacks against you are made with disadvantage. You gain advantage on Dexterity and Wisdom checks and saving throws for the duration.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 4th level or higher, you increase the speed bonus by 10 feet for each slot level above 3rd. If you use a spell slot of 5th level or higher, you no do not incur opportunity attacks from flying out of an enemy's reach for the duration of the spell.

GRIFFON'S MAJESTY

5th-level transmutation

Classes: Sorcerer, Wizard

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Self

Components: V

Caster Race: Griffon

Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute

Calling upon your combined ancestry, you infuse yourself with the true might of griffons, natural rulers of the animal kingdom. Gain a bonus to fly speed of 30 ft, as well as advantage to your Strength, Dexterity, and Wisdom rolls and saving throws. When making a Charisma check or saving throw, increase the die result by 4, to a maximum of 20. Creatures of the Beast or Monstrosity type that attempt to attack you must first make a Charisma saving throw or falter, losing their action. A save allows the creature to attack that round, but the creature must save again to attack each following round. A creature failing the first save cannot attack you during the spell's duration. A creature making the first save may attack you, and may attack you on subsequent rounds only if it makes an additional Charisma save for that round.



SOCIAL: CLASS ROLES

Griffons have many ancient tales of heroics, both told by campfire and written for posterity. Heroism in the eyes of griffons is usually the accomplishment of great deeds against greater odds. Remaining resolute in the face of increasing adversity, or, conversely, bowing one's head in sacrifice for the greatness of griffon-kind as a whole are celebrated. Cowardice and timidity are scoffed at and ridiculed where found. This chapter goes over the most commonly held views that griffons have towards each class as a profession.

Barbarian: Lacking all subtlety, the path of the rager is a compelling one, especially to the predator aspect. To wade into battle and rend those who have offended you limb from limb in a frenzy of vengeance is a romantic notion to many griffons and sung about eagerly. Wise griffons advise tempering the fury for "one who flies too close to the heat of the Sun will be burnt in it." It is all too common for those wielding the sun's fury to die in its embrace, where more level-headed response may have revealed alternative paths. Proud, effective, and heroic, a barbarian will have little

trouble commanding respect in a griffon town.

Bard: Griffons are a vain people. The presence of a bard inflames griffon vanity most viciously. Although they will sing praises of a bard's singing voice, or the skill of their talons across their instrument, they are scheming how to get the bard to sing of them. To be immortalized in song passed from one bard to the next is the very definition of becoming a hero. If you die alone and unsung, who will know of or care for the reasons you do it? For this reason that bards are celebrated and eagerly welcomed to share their stories as they travel. Griffons, young or old, wish to hear the tales of great heroes, to learn from, or, even more satisfyingly, surpass them.

Cleric: The path of the cleric comes naturally to many griffons. They have an intuitive feel for the otherworldly and find divine energy courses through them easily. Usually devoted to the Sun King, but quite capable of placing their faith in other gods, griffon clerics are considered honorable and vital. Prey aspected griffons are especially good at the task; their humil-

ity keeps them from reinterpreting the words of their chosen god and focused on doing what must be done. Griffons of this path rarely lead. Most often they advise others, serving as the commander or alpha's ears to the otherworld.

Druid: Naturally attuned to the power of the sky, griffons find those that hone their kinship to the clouds and the mountains inspiring. The imagery of a griffon descending from the sky as lightning pours down around them is a thing of poetry, and just the sort that griffons enjoy. Protecting their nesting grounds is also a critical task, and so druids that defend griffon lands are treated with respect and highly favored. When the griffons left to do battle with the elves, many who remained were druids, tasked with ensuring there was a home to return to when the war was won.

Fighter: This class has the martial prowess of a barbarian, while keeping one's wits. The fighter is a popular choice among griffons, favored in story and fable, shrewd tacticians and stout defenders both having appeal. With their inherent mobility, griffons often opt for devastating double-handed attacks, relying on tactics and armor to shield them from the reprisal of their foes. In any griffon army, fighters will be the most numerous.

Monk: Seen as curious fighters by most, the patience and strange devotion to seemingly non-combat

practices confuses most young griffons before they can reap the benefit of such discipline. There is an appeal to fighting with bared talons, with nothing between the griffon and that which has offended them, making the path of the monk romantic in stories, even if somewhat baffling in practice. Most who attempt to follow the path of the monk become discouraged with the round-about lessons and mental practices that seem to have no relation to the brawling they wanted.

Paladin: The selfless crusading of the paladin feels like something best left to ponykind. This is not to say that griffons scoff at a good deed, but the idea of being mandated to do good, along with the other restrictions that the oath demands chafes on the individualistic griffon mentality too intensely for it to appeal to any but the rare few. Pride aspected griffons, focused as they are on the greater social picture, can find themselves drawn down this road, to the mild confusion of their peers.

Psionics: The psionic classes are a curious case. For a long time, they were thought to be gifts handed down by the gods to the lucky few who received these strange abilities. Being low before the divine, prey aspected, and the ever clever scavengers were the most frequent of the wild talents in the griffon. When the school of Zurich formed and the city grew out around it, the psionic disciplines became a talent that could be



learned, or mastered. While the gods did favor some with innate skill, it was the truly dedicated that would rise. Predictably, psionics that allow flashy and rapid effect earn the easiest adoption amongst griffons, but clever-minded ravens revel in the subtle tricks provided. In either event, the ability to manipulate the world through simply being more certain in your own way over the way of the world is extremely attractive to the egotistical griffons.

Ranger: To know the wild places, to be a consummate hunter, this is a class that brings joy to the hearts and imagination of griffons. Archery lends itself well to their mobile fighting styles, and their love of independence and the wild nature of their territory makes this a match made in the Sun King's court. Griffons are known to be harsh with their animal companions, insisting they be as great as their handler. This training, while grueling, does result in tougher companions.

Rogue: Fight smarter, not harder. To win through guile has its appeal, but the profession is an ill fit to many rural griffons. Those born in cities, especially scavenger aspected, can appreciate the path of subtlety.

Sorcerer: Legends of griffons that have taken exotic husbands or wives are interwoven in many of their greatest tales. Not every ballad of victory in battle ends with death. Instead, love blossoms in the strangest places. The results of these happenings often produce sorcerous bloodlines in their descendants. It is often a matter of personal pride to be born with such a gift, as it signifies their ancestor was mighty enough to defeat, or at least impress, the creature from which they draw power. Conversely, a weak heritage, such as a ponykind line, may draw no end of taunting. Boasting aside, sorcerous talent is deeply practical in matters of hunting and war. Being without the long years of book studying of a wizard, sorcery finds quicker appeal amongst the griffons.

Warlock: Forging pacts with powerful creatures that demand obedience can set the hackles of many griffons on edge, but for some, it's just the natural order. Know your place, and wield that given power to prove to others that they are lower than you. It's a fine position, for them. Others look at them with distrust. Any griffon that would bend a knee towards a creature that is not itself a griffon is one that should be watched carefully.

Wizard: The idea of spending

a life in quiet study is of limited interest. The results, however, are far more difficult to argue. Most young that believe they have a talent for wizardry find their patience wearing thin as their mentor tries to impress upon them the importance of knowing the language of magic before knowing how to throw fireballs or freeze people in their tracks. Most who endure past this are scavenger aspected, revelling in the new tricks afforded them.







FAMOUS FIGURES OF GRIFFON HISTORY

ALFINA THE FEARLESS

The exception that proves the rule, Alfina was a passionate young griffon with the head of a white-faced cockatiel and the hindquarters of a grey-striped house cat, and she has dedicated herself to martial service in the name of the Sun King. Born to a nest of pious prey aspect griffons, Alfina was expected to enter the service of the church. Despite her love of playing rough with the nearby puma-hawk hatchlings and her insistence that she wanted to enter the training grounds with them, her parents sent her to receive the teachings of the Sun King. And she did, though perhaps not in the way her family had intended.

In the divine she saw not something to be humble before, but a being that inspired her own pride as a child of the sky. She took to spellcasting well enough, but always favored those that added precision to her blows and strength to her limbs. Years into her training, battle lines were drawn with a tribe of encroaching raiders and battle seemed imminent. When Alfina was finally chosen to serve the cause of the Sun King as a combat healer, she was thrilled. However, her prey aspect saw her relegated to the medical stations far from the front lines. Her chance finally came when the chaos of battle finally left her the best choice to run emergency medical supplies to an outpost.

When the young cleric arrived, however, she found many of the soldiers there slain or badly injured, with only two puma-hawks tending to the wounded while another pair of soldiers flew off to seek reinforcements.

A sizable squad had evaded the bulk of the griffon's forces had attacked the outpost and were driven back only at great cost. However, by happy coincidence, the two griffons that had stayed at camp were some of her childhood playmates, Ursul and Namara Skystalker. While heartfelt but rushed reunions were had, Ursul and Namara fitted Alfina with armor taken from one of the fallen warriors—their sister Kynora—while explaining that another attack was expected soon.

Shortly after Alfina administered her healing magic to the wounded, the humanoids approached once again. Initially, Alfina stayed in the back, near the wounded as the two surviving puma-hawks made their stand. But as she stood there, Kynora's broken form to her left and Ursul and Namara's haggard silhouettes in front of her, a great roar sounded in her mind and warmth flooded her body. The Sun King and the Huntress called her forward, and with a screech, Alfina took up Kynora's mace and joined her comrades in the charge.

Alfina's actions—along with her borrowed mace—helped turn the tide that day. With Ursul and Namara's commendations, Alfina was tentatively allowed to join the ranks of the Sun King's army. Wielding strengthening magics in one talon and Kynora's mace in the other, the young prey-aspected griffon became known as Alfina the Fearless.

GM Notes: Above all else, Alfina is passionately devoted to the protection of the weak, and to the Sun King's ways. As long as the PCs do not oppose these

things, she has little problem with them; if they pursue a similar course, she may seek to join them. However, Alfina is as proud as any predatory griffon, and she allows no insult to the Sun King, her allies, or to her abilities—as she sees herself as a reflection of her god’s shining example, allowing herself to be slighted would be its own sort of blasphemy. She meets any challenge to these with as much of the Sun King’s might—and her own—as she can bring to bear. Alfina can generally be found with Ursul and Namara as they ensure the protection of those who need it and the punishment of those who deserve it.

Ares Steelwing

A griffon warrior that prefers tactics and grace over brute strength, Ares wielded his longsword and shield to keep the peace and put down those that would threaten his people. Fastidious, his equipment was always in top repair, which included his well-polished armor and the odd bit of dwarven jewelry that jingles alongside his griffon accessories. When not fighting the good fight, the introverted fighter had a passion for cooking. Preparing succulent meats with just the right amount of flavor was almost as satisfying as holding the lines against impossible odds.

GM Notes: Ares is a friendly sort around law abiding citizens. If convinced the PCs are taking action against something that would threaten his community, he may volunteer to help root out the trouble. He looks for flanks, fights defensively, and prioritizes fighting smart over berserking tactics. He is often found with his mate, Katrina. She is a gunslinging griffon and focuses on whatever target Ares is on, unless another combatant attempts to flank Ares, in which case she delivers her full

fury upon them. Unless the threat is of dire and immediate threat to the griffon kingdom as a whole, Ares is not likely to follow the party onwards after the first threat is taken care of.

Asbjørn Thunderchild

Asbjørn Thunderchild is the near-mythical hippogriff that founded the remote fortress town of Mountain Guard. A giant of his kind, Asbjørn flew into battle wearing armor, heavy as a bear, with no sword or spear. With his skin of iron, he tore into his foes with just his bare claws. Where legend starts and facts end can be confusing with Asbjørn, but some facts are known thanks to books and well-kept heirlooms. Asbjørn was a true giant, who may have been taller than any living griffon. While it is unknown what gave him his size, it is known that it was his downfall. Asbjørn did not die in a battle of combat, but one against his heart. His size having gotten to be more than it could handle, he passed before his fur grayed with age. Part raven and part pony, he was imposing and cunning. Using his intellect just as much as his raw power, he made his way from the runt of the litter to a true leader.

GM Notes: Should the PCs encounter this legendary figure, he can be very imposing. He fights rough and hard, and demands anyone under his banner put in the same give-it-all attitude. He has a soft spot to the smallest of any group, and can serve as a mentor to anyone who wants to escape being the omega of any pack. His teachings are as rough as his fighting, however, and any student fortunate enough to have him will experience new pains. Well-meaning, skilled, and sharp, Thunderchild is a good leader to rally behind, and a terrible foe to face against.

Baroness Sylvia von Zurich

As a psionicist, Sylvia was an unusual sort of griffon. She forsook the physical arts to refine the power of her mind directly. Her peers could argue the effectiveness of her curious techniques, however, as she altered the world with just her thoughts. She is commonly credited with inventing the art, though there are accounts of it appearing rarely throughout Everglow at times. She founded the settlement of Zurich for others seeking to unlock the potential of their psyche to master the inner and cast their vision to the outer. It is said she had visions of far-flung worlds, and she worked to visit



Ares Steelwing

them personally.

GM Notes: Sylvia can be difficult to approach, being a visionary of such a strange art. She is more likely to summon the PCs than to be happened upon by accident. Her plans to reach the stars require a great many rare materials and possibly ancient arcane or psionic artifacts, which could have her hiring the PCs to go into harm's way to fetch them for her. A psionist PC may find her to be a valuable mentor, and may even be a current or former student at her school.

BERTRAM STORMCROW

Bertram was of the scavenger aspected, with the forebody of a raven and a matching back end of a panther. He excelled in getting into places he wasn't wanted in and finding out things others would prefer hidden. He bought and sold in information, both personally gotten and traded for. The fact that he personally obtained good portions of the information he sells was not public knowledge, and he liked it that way. Better that they think he is just a broker, rather than know the truth of the matter. The truth costs extra.

GM Notes: Bertram is most likely to be the holder of some information the PCs need to know, but he could also turn up if the PCs have made powerful enemies. If caught in the act of spying, Bertram will feign innocence. He is as good at lying and disguise as he is at stealth, and passing himself off as a janitor, guard, or other 'should be here' profession has gotten him out of a few tight spots. If pressed to battle, he will take the first available exit he can find. He wants to get paid for information, not die for it.

BLOODRUNE

Bloodrune is an infamous historical figure with a reputation of blood and violence. Armed with sorcerer's powers, a bloodline from the mighty red dragons, and a whole tribe devoted to his service, Bloodrune set out to gather gold and power and to the world. Chieftain of the Crimson Claw tribe, he is often out raiding villagers and battling other tribes for power and plunder. Bloodrune was a strongly built griffon with an almost feral appearance, with yellow-golden feathers mixed with red-tipped ones that made him look fresh from the battlefield. His draconic bloodline also gave him minor traits of the creatures he hails from. Small sharp teeth and a few scales on his front claws and back legs helped all who looks at him to know the violence and death soon follow.

Bloodrune began his life as an neglected son of his



father, the chieftain of the tribe. Always blamed for his failure to be born a pure griffon, like those that had ruled the tribe for many generations, he quickly learned that he had to use his powers in a more aggressive manner to survive—often resulting in the death of a fellow griffon which was then blamed on another. Throughout the years of his growth, he discovered that he had a talent for fire magic, thanks to his red dragon heritage. In light of such powers he began to question the pure bloodline of his family. His father's abuse didn't stop, and by the time Bloodrune came into adulthood, his powers had grown. He then orchestrated a rebellion against his father to overthrow him and all who were loyal to him. Many griffons gathered to his cause, but he realised that it was not enough.

Bloodrune then sought the aid of the red dragons from around in the surrounding lands, hoping to gather his strength and overthrow his father. The dragons were sceptical to meddle in affairs that did not concern them, but after promises of riches and a strong ally they finally agreed. Though the struggle was hard-fought, the challenger was victorious and, with his father's head between his claw, he claimed rulership over the Crimson Claw tribe. Bent on becoming one of the strongest griffons in history, Bloodrune flew out into the world in search for treasures and glory.

GM Notes: A classic story of what can go wrong when one's role of parenting is treated lightly, Bloodrune is a bad egg and, full of anger and spite, not shy about sharing it with the world. He believes that if he can just get enough power he can make sure no one has to learn the harsh lessons he did, but each new trick, each new trinket, does nothing to soothe the true hurt within himself. He is a very easy antagonist for any party, but could also join for a time to secure a given bit of power. He could rise to become a true tyrant of terror, or could be reformed through the extended efforts of the players, depending on their actions and the desires of the GM.

Blue Wave

One of the rare sea aspected, Blue Wave served proudly as part of the guarding force of his beach-side town. Like many others of the local community, he was half otter, and spent as much time sailing beneath the waves as he did through the air. His other half was that of a blue jay, and his skill in the air rivaled that of the mountain-bred griffons. He is well known for putting the community before his own pride or ambitions, which led him to spending much of his time off-duty helping out around the village.

GM Notes: Blue Wave is a proud warrior, and talented in water and air magics, using his skills to aid his community or punish intruders. He is most likely to run into PCs if they are traveling to or close by to

his village. Greeted courteously, he can become a fast friend and guide to the local griffon culture. Insulted by strangers, he can become quite a source of trouble. Provided he isn't outright attacked, he isn't likely to initiate combat, but can arrange for misfortune on the party.

Blutikrallen

Blutikrallen was a true neutral bard, with the sandman archetype. Though not necessarily as bulky as other griffons with a military record, his form was clearly that of a predator. Dark eyes gaze piercingly over his cruelly-hooked beak, and Blut took great care in maintaining the rippling shine of his sanguine plumage. At the height of his first life, Blut was a proud warchanter and through his inspiring song drove griffon warriors to glory and honor. After years of weaving through the heart of battles as pegasi might dodge through the heart of a storm cloud, he was finally laid low by cowardly foes who ambushed his fellow warriors. This weaker force overwhelmed Blut and his allies through sheer force of numbers. Such an ignoble death left the griffon's spirit unable to rest peacefully.

When he stood before White Talon, she judged him unfit for the final resting grounds, and he was shoved free of her nest. Broken upon the rocks below, Blut raged against the cosmos and its injustices for a time, cursing his executioners for their weak strategy and coward's gambit. Eventually luck paid him his due; the impotent fury of his soul caught the idle attentions of the Night Mare, curious that a creature driven by honor could be so easily defeated. In exchange for returning Blutikrallen to life, the Night Mare indebted him to her. Though he was free to exact vengeance against those who wronged him, he was expected to faithfully serve as an instrument of Her will. His duties would be to spread the word of her faith and extol the virtues of self-reliance and strength. As he was not himself truly evil, though he certainly emphasized ruthlessness in battle, his words bent the ears of pony and griffon alike that might otherwise turn their muzzle (or beak) up at other proponents of the Night Mare's teachings. Blutikrallen himself became a tool of his new mistress, applying subtle pressures on critical points to spur violence and conflict. It was his personal

belief that individuals grew strongest when burned by the flames and horror of war. Though many of his projects could not be traced to him,

Blut spent much of his time inflaming tensions between ponies and griffons to harden the resolve of both races. In battle, Blut favored



BERTRAM STORMCROW

spells that could confuse his foes or frustrate their efforts, as well as manipulate their perceptions, rather than relying on purely offensive powers. In the corner of his mind, he fears death, knowing that White Talon will not simply push him off next time he stands before her.

GM Notes: A harsh and reserved individual, Blutikrallen is destined to only join a party if his mistress demands it. He is much more likely to come at odd ends with the party, especially if they have made it a habit of peace-making. He is unlikely to attack directly, preferring to use confusing magic, subterfuge, and hired agents to foil those that would stand in the way of his divine mission.

CEDRIC SILVERCLAW

A griffon of small stature, Cedric made up for it with skill. He led a number of successful strikes during the Sun's Roar Incursion and made a name for himself, and many who saw him on that battlefield swore he grew larger during conflict. He achieved this illusion by wearing armor that gave the impression of a larger griffon within its spacious confines. Though it hindered his aerial agility, it was quite good for intimidating the enemy and keeping his own soldiers in line. His use of the armor popularized it within the griffon lands, making it the go-to armor for those that wanted to make an impression for centuries to come.

GM Notes: Cedric is very goal-oriented, and once he has settled on a goal, few things can shake his attention from it. If he wants what the party wants, this can make him a terrific front-line ally, wading into battle at the fore to secure the objective. As an antagonistic force, he leads small groups of griffons in daring but well-planned strikes against the party until he gets what he wants.

CHERRY MINT

This red-maned and pink-coated unicorn mare earned her place in griffon history when she led a mixed group of griffons and ponies on a crusade against the Red Shields. Her epic battle against the undead and the liches that claimed leadership over them are still sung about today, acknowledging her bravery and her piety, even if it was to the pony goddess of the Sun. Despite her heroics being spread far and wide, her personal life and inclinations remain shrouded in mystery.

GM Notes: Cherry is most likely to be encountered if the party is playing before the height of the

empire. She is a cheerful soul, and prefers to lead from the front, insisting that the light inside of her will guide her safely against the forces of evil. A party that is willing to combat the forces of evil, undeath in particular, can earn her favor and gain a long-term companion.

CYRUS SILVERBEAK

This brightly-colored, prey aspected griffon took it as his divine purpose to immortalize the actions of those around him. He spent much of his life bouncing from one adventuring party to the next, writing catchy songs that spread widely. His songs survive for hundreds of years, even in non-griffon taverns, perhaps because his music exaggerated the role of non-griffon heroes over griffon ones. Sociable and full of vigor, Silverbeak enjoyed singing and dancing long after others were too exhausted or drunk to continue. Despite—or perhaps because of—his quick wits, his licentious attitude and acidic tongue were the cause of many duels. Due to his vast experience on the topic, he is credited with first popularizing the sage advice “Never charm a girl whose brother that has more knife scars than you.”

GM Notes: Cyrus is an easy NPC to group with a



party, but he is not likely to stick around for too long. One leg of the adventure is about all he's good for, but he will serve faithfully for it. He has seen much, and will often have answers for the PCs, even if not always perfect, or relevant. This parrot-beaked bard is eager to see danger and make stories about its vanquishing.

FELIS

Felis was a gyrfalcon/snow leopard griffon with a coat of a whitish grey spotted with darker grey, and eyes of a bright spring green. He was born to the land of magic and danger known as the Ever Freeze Forest. Not a griffon of large stature, he felt the need to make something of himself. With a keen intellect, but little patience, Felis began tinkering with materials and infusing some with his power. He was able to make different extracts, potions, and, on the odd, accidental occasion, actual bombs. Not deterred by the few that blew up in his face, he kept on experimenting. One day he came across a formula for a mutagen, one that made him move like the world could do nothing to slow him down. With his mutagen and his other concoctions, he decided he would leave the Ever Freeze Forest and make a name for himself.

He traveled far and wide across the land until he came across Cerulean Tides. A port town and emerging trade hub hampered by the lack of safe passages, Cerulean Tides's would-be traders faced many dangers: storms that capsized boats, murderous pirates, and horrific monsters that swallowed ships whole. The surrounding area was full of life, though, with plenty of new ingredients to be found and used. Felis decided

he'd found his opportunity: he would brew potions to help sailors and travelers get through their trips safely, and utilize his special mutagen and bombs help fight off any pirates or sea beasts they happen to come across.

After a few trips out, Felis was getting the hang of being out at sea for extended periods of time, and his skills were improving—though perfection of his bomb-crafting still eluded him. It was during his downtime in the city before his next job that the inevitable happened. He was in his apartment, making some bombs for the next trip when the one he was working on blew up. This was more or less routine now, and he had gotten used to the concussive blast. What he wasn't used to was the room being on fire. A previously brewed alchemist's fire had been caught up in the blast, and what should have been a pirate deterrent was now burning the room down around him at an alarming rate.

Panicked, Felis grabbed what he could of his gear and ran. He ran, screaming, out the building, leaving the blaze to the local fire brigade. In his haste, though, Felis hadn't grabbed all of his volatile components—or all of his bombs. These ignited in turn, sending burning materials it into neighboring buildings and setting them aflame as well. The fire quickly spread, burning as much as it could. By the time the fires were finally put out almost a whole district had been burned to the ground.

Fearing the worst would happen, Felis fled the city without explaining, thus ensuring a guilty verdict. The city's next course of action was to put a bounty on his head. After putting as much distance between himself and Cerulean Tides as possible, Felis traveled the countryside helping those he could, keeping his identity to himself as much as possible.

GM Notes: Made wiser by his mistake, Felis is now a cautious alchemist, especially when it comes to bombs and fire-related alchemical toys. Having fled his adopted home, he has no lingering obligations, and could easily be drawn into a party for a longer term than most. Perhaps, he reasons, if he makes a big name as a solver of problems, people will overlook his little accident.

GATSBY SPARKS

Archthief Baramoss, also known as Gatsby Sparks. This male hippogriff is a self-proclaimed thief of all thieves. Archthief Baramoss is a young snow white gryphon who opens his trade to steal everything for a price. Despite his shady business, the archthief doesn't



SERPENT SCALE

take offers from clients who desire to steal for his or her own gain.

His profession may not leave him a wealthy hippogriff but when the archthief accepts his client's offers, from the stealing of precious gem to the pilfering of artifacts. Nothing stops the archthief from completing his hunt.

A younger brother of Goggle House, Gatsby was second in line to inherit House Sparks of Farzen. One day, this young gryphon accidentally destroyed a priceless artifact which led to international affair between his house and House Wind Chime, and his sister felt forced to tarnish her honor and save his flank. Ashamed of the whole ordeal, Gatsby fled from his home and forfeited his title. He later made himself an archthief in hope of making enough money to replace the destroyed artifact and restore his sister's honor.

GM Note: Archthief Baramoss will often join those who would benefit his ends in completing his hunt. He will accompany the party but when push come to shove, he's most likely attempt to get them out of the bind due to his good heart. Once his task is complete, he'd follow the party until he reached certain town or city where he can separate from the group after a good farewell and vanishing trick. Though certainly on the wrong side of the law, his heart at least rests on the side of good.

GOLD-MANE

She was born to a griffon and a pegasi in the heartlands, and they were scarcely able to keep up with their

daughter's constant need to explore the world around her. When she found a pile of dwarven artifacts for sale at the market, it was love at first sight. Though it cost them, her parents were supportive and soon she was learning to care for and use the long barreled rifle that had caught her eye. When she came of age she bid her parents a fond farewell and began exploring the griffon lands. Thanks to her efforts, many inconsistencies and mistakes in the old maps were corrected.

GM Notes: Gold-Mane is easy to approach and talk to. As sociable as she is curious, she is likely to happen on any PC party while they're in the wilderness, dropping from the sky to say hello. She seems largely unaware of her hybrid nature, and is unlikely to be antagonistic, more interested in looking and seeing rather than meddling. If asked, she could be pressed into assistance, but is likely to leave if things look too dangerous.

GREGORY VON GRIMOIRE

Dissatisfied with the way the pony empire had spread out across most of Everglow while griffons contented themselves with only the highlands under their mighty grasp, Grimoire mocked their queen, seeing the Sky-crowns as unrivalled. He derided their gods, finding the Sun King, Huntress, and White Talon to be far superior. Their peaceful ways seemed only weaknesses, and yet the griffons had not yet crushed them. Why?

Magic. He decided the pony penchant for magical study was their strength. For eachgriffon spellcaster of note, there were three notable ponies, and the griffon was usually an intuitive caster, unlikely to advance the field of magic with their sorcery. He decided he would correct this, and began collecting the wealth and influence needed to secure every magical tome he laid his talons on. It is said that he even met the pony uni-



corn named Luminace before she became a goddess. He found her friendly and naive, but her knowledge of magic extensive and perhaps even a little intimidating..

In the years that followed, he both learned and taught magic among his fellow griffons, promoting its use through the kingdom. He was hailed as good and wise, and when he began to grow old, he did it gracefully and with a building contentment—until he heard that the pony Luminace had become a goddess. The idea that the little filly had achieved immortality and such power infuriated him. All her talk of friendship and compassion was clearly a ruse, at least as far as he was concerned. Obsessed with revenge against the multi-hued pony goddess, he found his own way to immortality. Shedding his mortal flesh, Grimoire became a powerful lich, calling himself ‘Grimoire, god of knowledge and power’ in clear defiance of Luminace.

He built a sprawling army of griffons, living and dead, as well as a horde of constructs. He was fully intent on seizing the new temple of the Sun King, then driving the griffons by force to war with ponykind and conquering all of Everglow. Priests of the Sun King and White Talon stood before him, beseeching that he turn back from his ruinous course, but he would not be swayed.

His march across the griffon lands was unimpeded until one rainy morning. The reports vary wildly depending on the teller, but most agree a lone pony figure stood before his army and called him forth. Some

say it was White Talon in the form of a pony. Others say Princess Luminace herself descended to speak to him. No matter who the figure was, Grimoire was gone, and his army fell apart. It wouldn’t be until after the pony empire collapsed that new ‘Acolytes of Grimoire’ would turn up, taking advantage of the weakened presence of the Skycrowns, who had departed across the ocean to deal with the treacherous elves.

GM Notes: It is far more likely PCs will run into Acolytes of Grimoire rather than the nigh-mythical figure they have rallied behind. Ruthless and power-hungry, they will eagerly come into conflict with the PCs if ever they draw near to powerful artifacts or locations. They neither show nor expect compassion, fighting with religious zeal when their target is close.

GRISELDA

Griselda was an oddly-hued eagle/lion mix, hatched in the griffon city of Deep Waters. She spent much of her early life in the rapt study of magic, rather than getting into mischief with others her age. Her plumage was a wild mix of the colors of the twilight sky: the deep purple of the oncoming night, and the fiery red of the last gasps of sunlight. She kept many quills made from her own plucked feathers and vials of ink at the ready at all times, tied fast to her tail. Over the years of exploring the dangerous abandoned chambers deep within the great library of Deep Waters, Griselda collected many ancient maps and developed a love of cartography. She wished to one day see the distant lands they charted and to understand the wars and political intrigue that had led the Griffon lands to see such chaotic expansion, decline, and displacement. Upon reaching adulthood, she left her home city and explored much of the known world and beyond. Over the years she made many friends on her travels, and longed for her kinsmen to know the wonders that she had seen.

She became a diplomat between griffonkind and other races, eagerly learning their peculiar traits and smoothing over conflicts as they arose. By the time she retired, she had gathered quite an entourage of friends, fans, and contacts that served the griffon kingdoms well beyond her time.

GM Notes: Having never lost her appetite for the arcane, Griselda is likely to run into adventurers while side-tracked towards some forgotten piece of lore or curious artifact. Besides having a silken tongue, she is a skilled wizard and will put her talents to work to get at whatever drew her attention in



the first place. Overwhelmed with a continued sense of wanderlust, she is not likely to become a long term companion, but is eager to make new allies and friends along her way.

GWENDOLYN VAR BASTION

When griffons young and old gather around the warmth of a tavern hearth with drinks in talon to share tales of adventure, one griffon whose name inevitably crops up, leading to a passionate argument over her status as hero or villain.. Gwendolyn Var Bastion became renowned across all the griffon lands, but the tales differ on whether she was a noble and compassionate defender of the downtrodden, or a rebellious and ruthless vigilante with dangerous ambitions. Most accounts agree Gwendolyn was born in a tribe more militant than most, to parents who were among the tribe's best warriors. Gwendolyn's martial training started when she was old enough to pick up a dagger to fight against the many wandering monsters that threatened her pride's territory. She grew up strong and skilled, and it seemed she would one day surpass her parents; however, the course of her life changed drastically in her fourteenth summer, when an unprecedented drought parched griffon lands.. Numerous tribes were forced to begin fighting among themselves for dwindling water resources, and large numbers of griffons turned to banditry, both against their fellow griffons and the neighboring pony-held territories. While Gwendolyn was used to fighting monsters, this was the first time she was forced to fight fellow griffons outside of simple brawls and challenges among friends. The experience changed her: witnessing griffons killing each other for a simple drink of water.

Enraged at the fact that the griffon tribes would not work together to pool resources and would instead turn on each other, Gwendolyn argued for her own tribe to help their neighbors rather than fight them, but her words were not heard. Her anger drove Gwendolyn to abandon her tribe and set out on her own to protect griffons of any tribe she came across, and to seek a solution to the drought. In her travels she would speak out against the separation of the tribes and talk of uniting all griffons under a single banner, but this went against the competitive nature of the prides and more often than not Gwendolyn was driven away. However her words resonated with a few griffon youths in each settlement she visited, and before long she found herself leading a small band of warriors dedicated to her ideals of protecting all griffons, regardless of tribe affiliation, and in time this band grew into an army: the Red Shields. Gwendolyn

led this army in numerous battles, against bandits and roving monsters alike, never settling down in any one place. In time the drought faded, and the griffon tribes began to recover, but the Red Shields remained. As the danger of bandits and monsters dwindled, the question of the Red Shields' purpose rose. At that point, Gwendolyn's ambitions transmuted from merely protecting the griffon prides to uniting them—by any means necessary.

Gwendolyn's campaign of unification succeeded in taking over the territories of three griffon tribes before, ironically, her actions forced the other tribes to join each other in alliance against her. Her tactics and methods of conquest during this time were edged with a ruthlessness that caused the many griffons to set aside their differences and turn against her. In the now famous Battle of Broken Wings the allied griffon forces pushed back the Gwendolyn's forces into a deadly



ambush amid several narrow mountain valleys, where the Red Shields were broken and routed. While many griffons of the Red Shields survived in small, scattered bands, Gwendolyn herself was left missing at the end of the battle, her fate left unknown but her death a presumed fact of the tale ever since.

In the years since the Red Shields Rebellion there were still small packs of young griffons who held to the ideal of a united griffon kingdom and that of protecting one's fellow griffons regardless of tribe. Such griffons would strap red headbands on and leave their tribes to rove the countryside, protecting griffons from danger wherever they roam. Among these scattered idealists there is a legend that Gwendolyn never died at the Battle of Broken Wings, and that she is merely biding her time for the right moment to return and lead the Red Shields once again to unite all griffons into one glorious kingdom.

While the details differ sometimes among tale tellers, Gwendolyn was reputed to have been large even by griffon standards, orange-eyed with an amber-colored coat of fur and with stark white feathers tinged with bronze. She was reputed to wear no armor in battle, relying solely on her agility and speed, and wielded a magical pair of short swords that were enchanted to aid in intercepting attacks. While her fighting prowess was what many tales focus on, the most lauded virtue the tales speak of was Gwendolyn's dedication to those who followed her. Even the tales that emphasize her ruthless villainy acknowledge that Gwendolyn never fled a battlefield while her warriors still fought on, nor left even one of her soldiers behind.



KIRTAR SHADOWREAPER

GM Notes: More of a legendary figure rather than someone the PCs are likely to run into, her influence is still felt even after the founding of the Skycrowns. Of course, if you are running a game set before the Skycrowns were formed, the PCs could run into this idealistic griffon, join her violent but righteous cause across the griffon lands, or be recruited to oppose her.

HOLLOW NOCHYATH FATE

A lightly colored griffon of shady circumstances, Hollow was born Alto Nochyath, to two outlaws known for their thievery and willingness to harm, even kill, to get what they wanted. When their first child was born, they made a sudden attempt at reform and to provide a more constructive and stable life for their chick. Unfortunately, their past would not give them up as easily as they attempted to give up their former ways.

With the law and old associates closing in, they gave away their chick to a pony friend, a zebra, to take away before Alto was noticed. The zebra fled just barely ahead of the violence behind, finding solace in the Ever Freeze Forest, hoping they would not be disturbed. Alto was raised there, until mercenaries happened upon the hollow tree they called home. They were sent looking for him, but Alto was not even aware of his past. When the zebra attempted to evict them from her home, they slew her and began ransacking the house for supplies and valuables.

Aghast, Alto lept into the fray armed with a kitchen knife. Fighting with the fury of the sun itself, he found an empty victory; the bandits were dead, but so was his adopted mother. He wept over the unmoving form of his caretaker, and fell into a fitful sleep. There he beheld White Talon, matron of the dead. She informed him that he was playing his part longer than expected. The plans of the gods had included the death of the child of the outlaws along with them, and yet, here he stood in ignorant defiance. Even as he shook with terror and anger, she made him an offer. "Serve me in the living world," she said, "and we will forget this little matter. It is clear you have work to do."

He saw her again and again every time he lay his head down to rest, until he gave in to her demands. She touched his forehead at that moment, and the dreams faded from him with her final words, "Death comes to us all in time. You will be my knife, Hollow". Since then he has found himself in places where death is required, urged on by soft whispers when and where the deed need be done. He doesn't always agree with those Koidon declares forfeit, but he is loyal enough in his own way.

GM Notes: Morose and brooding, Hollow is resentful of his lot in life, but grimly determined to make the best of it. He is most likely to be found in places where death is slow in coming, or shadowing those who defy it. He could act as an ally or antagonist to the group, depending on what White Talon wishes of him in relation to the PCs court. In combat he prefers stealth and sudden ambushes. He is not above using deadly toxins to get the job done, or running away if the odds are against him.

HARKEN THE FIREBORN

Harken the Fireborn. Kinslayer, blasphemer, devourer of eggs, few people in the history of the griffon people are as hated and reviled as he is. The details of his youth are shrouded in myth and mystery. Coming from a small and unimportant tribe, he was able to take command through his cunning and ruthlessness. Born into a time of great strife and warring between the tribes, long before the rise of the Skycrowns, he amassed an army and began to conquer the other tribes. By the time they started to ally against him, he was too strong to defeat.

As his sanity failed, Harken came to believe himself the living incarnation of the Sun King. Forcing his subjects to worship him, he became increasingly tyrannical, even going so far as to make a steady diet of his enemies' eggs. As more and more of griffon lands fell under his control, he heard of a town of refugees. He laid siege against them in what was to be his final battle: some combination of the thin air, his ornate and heavy armor, and, rumor whispers, of his cannibalistic diet of griffon eggs inflicted a fatal heart attack. Some attribute his death to divine intervention. The vast territories Harken conquered fell apart in the resulting struggle for dominance amongst his generals.

Mystic debate why the Sun King allowed such a blasphemous griffon to achieve such success. Some say it was due to the influence of demons, others claim that his success was a punishment for corruption and lack of piety. There also are those who insist that the Sun King encourages all to shine, and it is up to the living to choose what sort of light will rise over their workings. Although his worshipers were exterminated, several evil and wildly heretical cults worship him as a dark aspect of the Sun King.

GM Notes: Cruel, determined, and increasingly mad, it is unlikely that Harken will be anything but an antagonist for most adventuring parties that take place during the early years of the griffons. It is possible that he may take the part of a pa-

tron, sending a group into a dangerous place to secure a trinket for himself or to weaken his enemies before he marches on them, but he has little need overall for griffons that are not part of his formal army in the long term. As a long-term antagonist, he is quite prepared to harass and harry the group with ambushes and outright violence at inopportune times, such as when they are emerging tired and victorious from a dungeon.

HAYDAR IRONBEAK

There are many who would say that Haydar Ironbeak, while an outstanding individual and a brave warrior, did not exhibit the traits desirable in a modern griffon. He did not carry himself with the pride that most griffons do, believing that humility was one of the most important virtues that any sapient being could adhere to. Because of this, Haydar is remembered amongst the griffons more for his actions than his character.

His distaste for arrogance, as well as his generally benevolent activities, however, did earn him the respect of the ponies of Everglow, making him one of the few griffons in history to be fondly remembered by a foreign culture. Haydar began his life away from the hustle and bustle of larger cities, supported only by his



isolationist family. His parents raised him with the belief that organized society was a crutch, and that relying on aid from any government was a mark of weakness.

Haydar, while he did not question his parents' wisdom, did not enjoy the prospect of living such a lonely life. An unrecorded event supposedly took place during Haydar's adolescence that set him on the path to greatness. Some say that his family was forcibly evicted from their home when it was discovered that the mountain they lived on was rich with high-quality iron ore. Others believe that his loneliness drove him to run away from home. Regardless of the reasons why, it is known that Haydar eventually began traveling on his own, armed only with beak and talons. Haydar's travels took him far beyond the borders of griffon territory.

He encountered many cultures, which gave him a uniquely broad perspective of the world. During his travels, he invented his own fighting style, which, up until then, was unlike any other in griffon history. Haydar reportedly clipped his talons so that he could ball his digits into a fist. To defend himself, Haydar inflicted blunt trauma on his opponents, striking at weak points on their bodies in order to cripple them. Haydar eventually returned to his homeland, and taught other griffons about his experiences while traveling. His tolerant view of other races met with poor reception, but his fighting techniques were heralded as revolutionary.

Haydar Ironbeak had stirred interest in the concept of disciplined unarmed fighting. This is why Haydar is viewed as the Father of talonless martial arts in griffon history. Haydar was rumored to have many adventures, though it is believed that a majority of the tales told about him are purely fiction. Eventually, a good, long while after his feathers began to gray with age, Haydar supposedly fell in battle with a terrible monster, saving ponies.

His actions may have saved ponies, but, more importantly to his griffon brethren, he died as he lived: proving that one does not need a weapon to be a strong warrior. Today, Haydar's techniques are still being taught in the Warriors' District in the capital city. His philosophy regarding the concepts of racial equality and humility remains controversial, but few griffons would challenge his legacy as the Father of talonless martial arts.

In other parts of Everglow, Haydar Ironbeak is remembered as a minor figure of racial tolerance. He is not considered a legend, merely fondly remembered as a griffon who fought and died protecting a race other than his own.

GM Notes: Haydar is a disciplined but eager combatant, especially if the fight is just or protects others from harm. A defender to the core, he will put his life on the line for the sake of others. Devoted and sincere, he makes for a steady, reliable addition to any adventuring party and is likely to remain at their side until their mission is complete and not a moment before then. Convincing him to join the group requires a worthy cause, however, and a demonstration that the group not only has good intention in their actions, but also the determination and capability to succeed.

IVAN IRONFEATHER

A steel grey griffon from the high southern peaks, this male lived a largely unnoticed life, but not one without some mark. His father died while he was still a chick, retaking the old Sun King temple during the Sun's Roar Incursion. He was not the only one, and the already small village struggled forward, scrabbling for life stubbornly on the peaks despite the appearance of terrible beasts that seemed quite insistent on removing the griffon settlement. As an adult, Ivan stood guard one fateful day as great lumbering beasts emerged from a cavern below the village. Thinking quickly, he kicked over a rock, which became many, and soon ran over the monsters with a wave of stone. When the sound died down he went to investigate and found they were made as much of metal as any-



thing else. He brought what he could back to town and began to smith it, crudely at first.

Eventually he forged himself a fine suit of chain clothing for himself, and metallic ends for his beak and talons. His friends began to call him Ironfeather, as his fur and feathers were hidden under his increasingly extensive suit. His friends appreciated his presence, especially when he shared what he had learned of metalworking, and helped supply the village with weapons to fortify their position. There was honor in destroying a foe with your own beak and talons, but there was also an honor in defending your home, talon or sword.

JADE STAR

A griffon of the lion/eagle variety, she served faithfully as a scout and guard for many years, and her penchant for hunting down hostile dragons and wrestling with them while enlarged earned her no small amount of notoriety among her peers. Her exploits saved the lives of countless other griffons and she is remembered well, despite having vanished some years back. Some say she wrestled with one dragon too many, but others insist she is still out there, hunting what beasts may bring ill to her kin.

GM Notes: No one knows what happened to Jade Star, but if she should come up, she is not as grim and stoic as the stories make her out to be. She loves a good fight, and finds doing it to protect others happens to add a little spice into the mix. She doesn't like being forced to do things, which is why she prefers scouting positions, which let her pick and choose her battles.

KIRTAR SHADOWREAPER

A lion/eagle born to proud parents, Kirtar did not like being told what to do, and rebelled at every opportunity. When his family's patience grew thin, he was run out. As many young rebellious griffons did when they were thrown from the nest, he set out to adventure and prove his worth while collecting enough wealth to make his own home.

GM Notes: Unscrupulous and prideful, Kirtar prefers to work from the shadows on his own. He has a pragmatic streak, however, and if the stakes are high and money is on the line, he will not hesitate to work with others to get the job done, although his money remains his first priority. The PCs could run into him in the middle of their own adventures, possibly as he runs into something large enough to slow him down. If the PCs appear to be willing to renege on their agreements, he is not above attacking them to ensure he gets his



KATRINA STEELWING

reward before leaving. Assuming all contracts are met, Kirtar is otherwise an easy going person to get along with.

LIGHTFEATHER

This male griffon made several names for himself during his long career as a captain of the guards. He watched over an arctic outpost that oversaw one of the few passes between the griffon lands and the lowlands and he took it seriously. More curiously, he did not worship one of the feline gods.

His loyalty, religiously, was to the Night Princess. He wore her symbol proudly on the chest of his armor, making no secret of the fact. The presence of the familiar sight made the few pony visitors they got relax with relief, but some griffons questioned his true motives. Despite that, he served long and well. He specialized in ice and cold magic, bringing the fury of the very mountains he lived on down on anyone foolish enough to threaten his people. When magic failed to dissuade his foes, he was accomplished with a blade and seemed impervious to the chilliest winds. He kept his outpost safe.

GM Notes: Possessed with a strong sense of purpose, Lightfeather is not likely to be encountered far from his home and those relying on his skills. He may be tempted away to face from threat that would grow

worse if they waited for it to attack first, but would eagerly return once it was dealt with. He is well-disposed to fellow worshippers of the Night Princess, but accepting of those who praise other gods.

LORD RUST

Lord Rust the Arrogant, a griffon with an eagle's head and lion's body, whose rusty, bronze-colored feathers covered his wings, founded the Blazing Sun paladin order. He may not have been a paladin himself, as he was never reported to exhibit a paladin's divine blessings. Lord Rust was a griffon of noble birth who fought in the Sun's Roar Incursion. Notorious for his refusal to change his mind once he set himself to a course of action, his utter disregard for the lives of those under his command and his unfailing ability to pick the bloodiest, costliest plan of attack made him an unpopular figure.

Nevertheless, Lord Rust is credited with several key (if costly) victories in the war with the purrsians. His recklessly suicidal plans of attack often caught enemy commanders off guard due to their flawed belief that no commander would be that stupidly reckless with the lives of those under their command. Rust might have been an arrogant fool to those who knew him, but no one could deny that he was a brave one as he usually led the charge of his suicidal attacks. His uncanny ability to avoid arrows and magic spells aimed at him was considered a sign that he was a chosen agent

of the Sun King, if a violent and angry manifestation. Ponies (mistakenly) believe him to be the chosen of Blaze, harbinger of costly battles. After the war, Rust founded the Blazing Sun paladin order to not only further his social and political status, but also in tribute to the Sun King to show his gratitude for a lifetime of great and terrible victories.

GM Notes: This great military leader of dubious tactics is unlikely to run into an PC group in the middle of adventuring. Loud, proud, and ultimately confident in everything he does, he can be a bit insufferable to deal with. His most likely point of contact would be to send the PCs ahead to arrange for his next move, by scouting or weakening a position just before the attack.

LOYAL BLADE

Inventor and scholar, this purple-hued unicorn stallion has a brand of several intertwined gears that make clear his purpose. This purpose he pursues eagerly and is demonstrated most readily by the mechanical wings he wears on his back. Forged of bronze, they allow crude but functional flight and permit Loyal to accompany his wife, Nightdream, wherever she may roam. As she travels the griffon lands practicing her art, he studies their magic and designs, hoping to improve his art with every discovery.

GM Notes: Friendly and inquisitive, Loyal's attention is most likely to be grabbed if any PC happens to be using an interesting mechanical object or rare artifact. Accompanying Nightdream more often than not, he is likely to turn up alongside her if she chooses to approach the party. In combat, he keeps his distance and uses his strange devices and magic to hamper foes while others deal with them more directly. If pressed into melee, Loyal will attempt to disengage as quickly as possible.

MEGA BIT

Mega Bit is a pegasus mare with a frail, slender frame and an average height for a pony. Her fur as well as her wings are a light, ashy gray, with a long mane and tail of light purple hair, highlighted with bright electric blue streaks, like bolts of lightning. Though her mane and tail are usually messy and unkempt, she will fix them into tight curls when the time calls for such formality. Her flank bears a mark depicting a piece of technology, matching her talent for invention. Born and raised in the city of Bits n' Bolt within the Pony Empire, she learned much of what she knows



about building and invention from the clockworksshe lived with. However, once she reached an age in which she could safely be on her own, she left her home with nothing but bags packed with parts, tools, and a little food, without much money to her name. Without a home, young Mega Bit wandered from town to town, doing whatever she could with her talents to help herself survive, repairing anything that needed fixing, selling her creations, or other similar tasks.

After years of wandering the countryside, she eventually found herself in the territory of the griffons where she decided to stay. Though never staying in the same place for longer than a few weeks, she always seemed to have a ready supply of various odds and ends within the bags carried upon her back.

GM Notes: Though regarded as an outsider in the griffon towns she finds herself in, Mega Bit is more concerned about the unearthing of technological artifacts and the assembly of new devices than in engaging in local politics. She hungers to plumb the legendary technology of the dwarves, but they are even more exclusive than the griffons. She will tag along with any party that is approaching a place with devices she can examine, or are willing to help her test her own creations. Having no preferred to call home, Mega Bit could become a long-term companion.

MOKOS VOGUL

A hippogriff born in shadows found in dark hours, Mokos was the daughter of Galel, a pegasus healer, and her griffon father, Willhelm. They met when Willhelm suffered an injury to one of his wings and crashed poorly, knocking the sense out of him. His peers sometimes jest that this is how he fell for a pegasus. Whatever the reason, love blossomed between them as she nursed him back to health, and Mokos was the result. She took after her mother, learning healing arts and tricks. Moreover, she found she could help bring people closer to their true power. She took delight in taking new people under her wing and coaching them to reach their potential, whatever it might be. Though some suggested she migrate to Zurich to explore her strange intuitive powers, she rebuffed the idea, insisting was a gift that should be allowed to grow as she works with all species to bring enlightenment to Everglow.

GM Notes: Child of two well-respected individuals, Mokos scarcely knows the sting of her hybrid nature. She is accepting of all species that approach her in peace, and takes delight in making new friends and testing them for psionic or healing potential. She re-

fuses the idea of seeking formal training, finding her more down-to-earth method of learning by helping others to be more rewarding. Psionic PCs may attract her attention; likewise, any injured souls will draw her to their side for healing. She is unlikely to join an adventuring group outside her village, however, unless it is to reach people in dire need of her talents.

NIKOLAS SPARKS

Ruler of the city of Farzen, this proud griffon traces his lineage to the original white griffon barbarians of the past. His deep blue eyes, white feathers and fur, and crystal blue skin leaves little doubt of it. He is all the more recognizable with his mask, which appears white and featureless, yet lets him see clearly as if he wore no mask at all. He rose to power through inheritance of the throne from his well-respected father and has turned his people's isolationist habits on their ear, encouraging the city to accept and welcome visitors. Though these ideas were widely, and even violently, opposed at first, the wealth that has come with the growing tourism economy is difficult to turn down, and the people seem to be begrudgingly warming to the notion of allowing foreigners to spend their money in Farzen's walls.

GM Notes: Despite being the Duke,



Sparks does occasionally slip away from the city to explore or get things done personally. While he is away, his good friend Solace Windchime, a doppelganger pony, is left in charge with no one the wiser. Being masked while performing his official duties, adventuring groups that he casually joins have no idea that they are partnering with Farzen's ruler.

NIGHTDREAM

Born to two unificationist sorcerers, this pony did not immediately inherit their ability to combine the tribes in her flesh. A pegasus for life, Nightdream was fond of exploring the wild places, far beyond where her parents felt comfortable. On her ventures she met some unicorn foals and made fast friends. She learned magic from them and their parents in between exploring every nook and cranny she could find, and fleeing up into the clouds when danger revealed itself.

As Nightdream grew up, she learned to love nature, and the clouds that protected her. She became talented in their sculpting and earned a reputation in pony and griffon circles as an artist of the sky as her powers as a druid became more clear. She was hired by the griffon cities to keep the skies clear over special events, sculpt particular pieces of the clouds, or to fashion magical items.

As her name implies, she had dark fur with white tribal markings. Her brand of destiny was three bands of grey stripes on a dark grey thunder cloud, and she was large for a pegasus, with a wingspan to match. She eventually married another pony of the name Loyal Blade, with whom she was usually found.

GM Notes: Nightdream is generally a source of advice and assistance from the sky. She won't follow the PCs into any dungeons or other enclosed areas, but will happily lend a hoof while they are beneath the sky—if they are doing something worthwhile.

She might also approach if the balance of

the area is threatened and petition the PCs for help. She can occasionally be found in cities, but is usually busy performing some task, be it weather control, cloud shaping, crafting, or some other task.

NIGHT SHADE

Night Shade is a grey leather wing fighter with a black mane and tail and piercing red eyes. Her eyesight is keen, even among her cave-dwelling people. As a filly, she was separated from her parents by a freak storm and unknowingly took shelter in a dragon's cave. The dragon was inclined to eat her, but a group of kobolds appeared and talked the dragon into sparing her life. The kobolds took her back to their part of the cave and began to ask her about ponies. Out of gratitude and curiosity, she stayed with the kobolds for a time.

Weeks turned into years, and Night eventually fell in love with a leader among the kobolds, a dashing cavalier named Kosh. Kosh and Night were married and lived happily for several months, until their home cave network was invaded by treasure hunters. Night and her kobold friends repelled the attackers by teamwork and clever use of the darkness. Night allowed her husband to ride on her strong back and they made cooperative attacks from the air. The fight made them realize that ponies and kobolds working so closely together was the exception, rather than the rule, and they resolved to travel together, to encourage others to do better.

GM Note: Night and Kosh can be encountered in caves, guarding their kobold allies, or outside at night, traveling to spread their message of teamwork. Night and Kosh fight as mount and rider. Both of them use lances, using darkness and charging from above to maximize the surprise and power. They will always listen to an offer of peace, and will happily assist players that are respectful and work for the common good. Should the group ally themselves with their underlying goal, they could become permanent allies, but it is far more likely they will only be around for a little while before their primary crusade calls them elsewhere.

OBSIDIAN FEATHER

The powerful griffon sorcerer known as Obsidian Feather dabbled in demon-summoning, seeking to find the power to ascend to the heights he considered rightfully his. Reaching out too far, he eventually ended up contacting a demon far



OBSIDIAN FEATHER

above his skill level to control or contain, and which ended up condemning him and his line to a cursed existence. It is little known that it was a griffon that opened the path that the great demon lord Apep took to ravage the purrsian lands, and few are eager to spread the story.

Obsidian Feather was a stately griffon, originally a fine deep brown on his hawk half, with golden fur, before the curse twisted his wings to black obsidian, earning his later namesake, causing him to forever after droop down, from the weight and pain of the twisted appendages. Post-curse, he became one of the foremost griffon experts on the fiends, a calling followed by many of his twisted progeny today.

GM Notes: Burdened with guilt and pain, Obsidian can be a bit of a morose character to deal with. When opposing the forces of the abyss or the hell planes, he is driven and talented. Unlike many griffons, he does not speak ill of the purrsians, feeling lingering compassion for unleashing so much pain upon them. He is more likely to be consulted for answers regarding the incursion of the lower planes or denizens thereof than to be found adventuring side by side in a party.

RATHARS VORRHAVIEN

Known sometimes with the title of 'the old', Rathars is the eldest griffon of the village of Kywall. Maturing into magic that came intuitively to him, he left the village while in his youth to seek out adventure. He survived these dangerous times and returned to his home, wiser for the efforts. He then spent his retirement telling tales of the things he'd seen and the adventures he'd somehow overcome. He was a valued member of society for the knowledge he had gathered and shared freely.

Though Rathars insisted his tales are all true accounts of his experiences, more than once a local mother has threatened a disobedient child with being snatched up by the flightless, missing-pelt monsters known as humans that figure so prominently in many of Rathars' tales. Unlike the isolated other members of his community, he saw many exotic creatures, humanoids included, in the lowlands far from Kywall.

GM Notes: Easy to approach, this elder will speak to the PCs for longer than they might wish for. He has a story for every occasion, and they're generally true. He is long past the age of comfortable adventuring, and is unlikely to accompany any PC party anywhere. Despite this, he is a valuable contact for information and dispenser of quests that he has no interest in doing

himself.

RAW AL SHAM

In the Great City of Barakat Al Shams, right in the middle lies a small pyramid. It contains a tremendous hall where the council sits to hear the pleas of the people of the city.

The griffon council members are different than most of their kind; they have a unique pattern under their eyes, and their wings have one longer feather than the rest. All griffons that have these distinctive features tend to be large, strong-willed, and honor-bound, for they all descend from the holy Sun King Raw al Sham. Right behind their chairs is a giant statue, standing over 12 feet tall: a griffon that stands on two taloned feet with massive, human-like shoulders, holding a staff pointing upwards. He is the holy Sun King of Barakat Al Shams, chosen and blessed by the Sun God himself. It is said, if ever needed, the statue will come to life, stone shifting to stony flesh to protect the city from dire circumstance.

GM Notes: Under the feet of the statue lies a passage deeper under the pyramid, which the holy Sun King blocks with his feet to keep evil creatures from



sneaking into his city.

SCLATER COPPERCLAW

An alchemist born to a remote village, Sclater soon outgrew the limited literature on the art available in his home town and left to expand his knowledge. Unfortunately, finding a qualified alchemist tutor in griffon lands proved challenging. Those drawn to the art were often eccentric, and attempted to impress their views on alchemy on him when not exposing him to dangerous experiments and accidents. He persevered despite this, learning what he could from each as he continued his travels. He eventually happened on a female griffon that captured his heart, and he settled with her. Her name was Sira, and she was likewise an alchemist.

In the town where he settled, he met another alchemist and became partners with her. During one of these experiments at Sclaters house, he had an argument with her about some compounds. He was afraid that adding them would be dangerous and she was of the opinion that that was not so. When he wasn't looking, the other alchemist added the compound to the experiment. Sclater saw this a moment too late, before it exploded. This explosion destroyed his house and killed his partner. Sclater lost his right eye and his claws were forever blackened. Afterwards Sclater decided to start a school for alchemy to prevent another tragedy like this to ever happen again. He named the school in honour of his mate, but also of his shame, as he could not protect her. This school was called Sira

Blackened Copperclaw.

GM Notes: Burdened with many jingly vials of all the hues known to griffonkind, the fact that Sclater is an alchemist is not hard to discern. If encountered early in his life, Sclater is an eager and excitable griffon, though he learns temperance with time. To his regret, Sclater is quite talented with explosives, and handles combat with them far more often than relying on his other infusions. Especially after his accident, he is wary of employing them in any populated area.

SERPENT SCALE

This unicorn pony was imbued with an odd appearance due to her work. As if by fate, one artifact she recovered brought about a draconic transformation within her, giving her green scales to match her brand of destiny. She was from the town of Arcysus, itself named after a great green dragon that had befriended the ponies of the area. For a profession, she was a retriever of artifacts. Rather than hoard them as many adventurers would, she took pleasure in returning the trinkets she found to their native peoples.

This brought her into contact with the griffons. Being a species older than ponykind, their artifacts were widespread and numerous. She eagerly delved into forgotten places and navigates traps to recover artifacts thought lost to the ages. Occasionally she was hired by the griffons directly to find some lost item for them. Her exploits brought her into constant conflict with the Shadowclaw griffons, creating a longstanding and occasionally violent rivalry.

GM Notes: With her habit of dungeon delving, trap eluding, and treasure recovery, Serpent Scale can easily run into PCs almost anywhere. She could even be the one acting as catalyst for the adventurer if she's after something big and well-protected and needs back-up. Because of her reputation, it's not uncommon for other forces to appear and try to snatch whatever trinket she's recovering. She is a capable troubleshooter with traps, and knows some limited fire magics. Her attempts at other forms of magic invariably ends up in explosive pain for everyone involved.

SHARIK BLOOD-EYES

In ancient times, griffons considered shields, spears, swords and other melee implements inferior to their own talons and beaks. This changed with a hen named Sharik Blood-Eyes. She was a griffon with bright white feathers, a huge black band on each wing, and the hindquarters of



CEDRIC SILVERCLAW

a snow leopard. Her most striking feature, and that which earned her her surname, was her bright, blood-red eyes. An orphan, she was pressed into military service at an early age. Almost nothing is known about her life before this and what little is known is merely legend. She proved to be a skillful fighter and often served in the front lines during conflicts. Her moment of legend came during a battle in a narrow pass.

Known as ‘The Blockade of Clipwing Pass’, it was a battle between a large contingent of raiding gem gnolls and a small force of griffons defending the only path through the hard-stoned mountains. During the battle, all of Sharik’s compatriots were killed or otherwise incapacitated, leaving her alone to hold back the raiders. With her crossbow and bow both broken, and the gnolls’ spears fending off her attempts to strike with talon and beak, she took up the only weapons she had close at hand. From the corpses of nearby gnolls, she grabbed a spear and a shield. To the astonishment of the survivors, she managed to hold off the raiders while using these allegedly inferior, ground-dweller-weapons long enough for reinforcements to arrive. Before long, other griffons had picked up shields, spears, and swords, and drove the raiding gnolls into retreat.

Sharik was commended and decorated for the fight, and assigned the duty of learning about these weapons that proved to be the linchpin in winning the battle. She went on to establish a school to teach all griffons how to defend themselves with all manner of weapons, no matter if they were military or not. As for the pass itself, its true location is lost to history. There are numerous passes which locals claim to be the Clipwing Pass of legend, but no evidence has been found to confirm or deny any of them as the true site of the blockade.

GM Notes: Should your campaign take place in the distant past, Sharik is a dedicated warrior of her people. She is not prone to adventurous urges, and is not likely to join the party unless it is to fight off invaders or otherwise ensure the safety of her village. Provided the PCs are not known for causing trouble, she is friendly enough, for a griffon.

SILVER QUILL

A hippogriff born of a griffon and a pony mare, Silver Quill was a bit unusual. While dalliances with pegasi were uncommon, but known, the idea of a griffon falling in love with an earth-bound was outright alien. The two decided to live in the small pony town of Stone



Bruise at the edge of the griffon lands, where they were regarded as a curiosity, but no trouble was raised.

Silver Quill never felt entirely at home in Stone Bruise, as the ponies found his avian features unusual, and when he entered the griffon lands, they focused on his fetlocks and equine tail. He was neither one world or the other, but a little of both, and he was sure that wasn’t a bad thing. After some reflection on the ways both cultures succeeded and failed, Silver Quill decided that he was exactly as he should be, and that he had work to do. He became a diplomat between the races, trying to create a bridge between pony and griffon kind. Neither side entirely accepted him, but neither side turned him away at sight, giving him a unique advantage compared to any save pegasi themselves, and he took pride in cutting off arguments before they could turn to violence.

GM Notes: Silver Quill is a charismatic and friendly would-be emissary. He is most likely to be found where tensions are running high between ponykind and griffons, doing his best to defuse the situation. He is open-minded and is unlikely to question the PCs unusual appearances, if any. A pacifist by choice, Silver Quill is not eager to battle, and may hire the PCs to escort him if things look especially dangerous.

TAKTE GREFFE

Born and raised in the lowlands, Takte was a creature built for speed and agility. True to his aspect, his back end was that of a cheetah, and he reveled in a great sprint. His profession was that of a guide and diplomat for visiting bipedal merchants; he would secure deals with them on the edge or just outside the continent of Everglow and guide them through the lands of ponykind, purrsians, and others. Knowledgeable and charismatic for a griffon, Takte honed his skills of bartering and diplomacy to a fine point to secure easy travel and

fine prices for any caravan lucky and wise enough to have him in their employ. He was also an eager linguist, picking up tongues from across the lands as he traveled as others collect rings or necklaces.

GM Notes: An oracle with a legalistic curse, Takte tends to require written agreements before traveling with anyone, but is a griffon of his word in the execution of the agreement. Despite having fully functional wings, he is a bit afraid of heights, and will not typically fly higher than about twenty feet or so before coming back down. He will not easily admit this fact, and is nervous around other flying races, lest they challenge him to a race in the air or invite him to follow them towards the clouds. In combat, if he can't skirt the danger, he will use his fire magics to dissuade—or toast—his opposition.

XANDER QUICKWING

This griffon, with hues of blue, green, and gold in his plumage, was driven to an ever-present wanderlust. Xander was born with both curiosity and a love of nature, and became an adventurer for the sheer love of exploring. He was always interested in what was over the next peak. This led him to eventually become an adventurer that often mingled among like-minded individuals whether they be griffon, ponykind or otherwise. Though mostly a protector of the high forest, his travels have taken him to Prisma and Mae-Mae's Reach to commune in their respective druid's' groves and exchange knowledge with the rangers and druids there. Though he prefers exploring and seeking out new adventures, Xander's home in griffon territory is

Sessie's Folly.

GM Notes: As his name implies, he is an agile flyer, and prefers to strike with his bow from above. If engaging in melee he wields a sword and dagger. He is an easy recruit for any adventuring party that is exploring wild places, or merely interesting places. So long as the party continues exploring, he is likely to stick around. Should the party become sedentary, he will say his goodbyes and depart on good terms, provided he was treated well.

YI SUN-WING

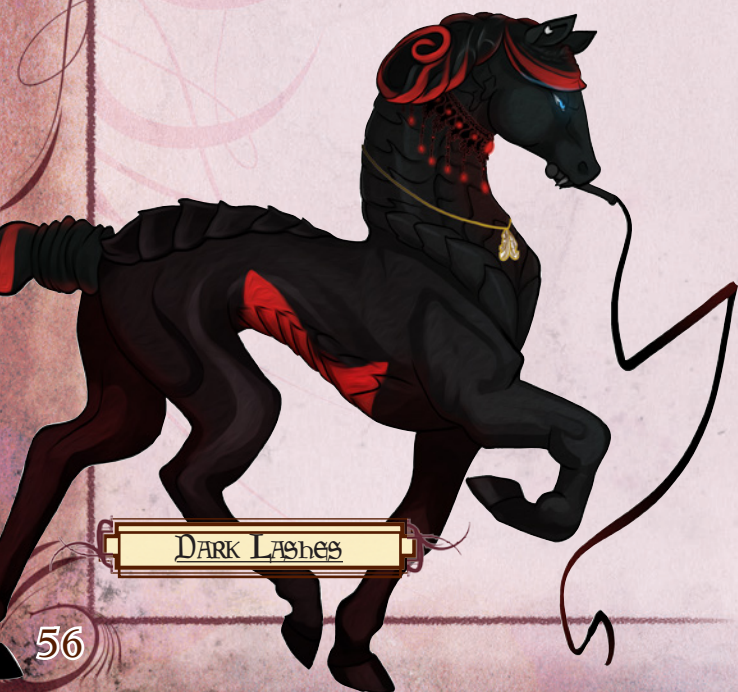
Yi Sun-wing was born as a Small white griffin in a tiny griffon village, and dreamed of being in the military, which was a rather strange dream, as the griffon kingdom he lived in had been in a state of relative peace for about 100 moons. But Yi was not deterred.

He went and passed the military exam to become an officer. He eventually became the regional commander of the naval garrison, after much hardship, including the death of his father. That was about when war broke out with their neighbor-over-water yak kingdom. They came to his land, attacked and killed thousands. With the military in disarray, and the army was defeated in battle after battle. Although the yak army won battle after battle on land, they were losing heavily on the ocean.

At one point Yi had 12 ships left, and won against over 100 ships without losing a single ship. In the final naval encounter of the war, he grabbed the mallet from the ship's drummer and started beating it himself. But he was hit by a stray arrow, and was fatally wounded. He was seen by only his son and an aide, and his last words were: "We have won this war. Keep beating the drum. Let no one know of my death." To maintain morale, he insisted his son create the pretense that Yi lived.

For hours, his son was Yi, commanding as he would, And when the battle was over, One of Yi's neighboring admirals who had been saved by "Yi" was coming over to celebrate, but he was met by Yi's son. He knew at once what had happened. He supposedly threw himself to the ground 3 times and stated, "even after death you saved my life!" Thus ended Yi's tale, but he would be forever known as the martial lord of loyalty.

GM Note: The group is unlikely to run into Yi himself, but his mark is enduring. Encountering a descendant or someone who has taken up his philosophies is far more likely, leading the PCs to be rewarded and tested based on their own commitments to their ideals and loyalties.



DARK LASHES



GRIFFON SETTLEMENTS

Barakat Al Shams

Population small city — 7,804 (40% griffon, 20% sun cat, 40% other)

Government magical (high priest)

Alignment Lawful Good

All hail the sun! While most griffons were hard at work constructing the grand temple to the Sun King high in the mountains, others decided it would be best to build where his warmth was most strongly felt. They built a dazzling jewel in the desert, calling the faithful to them. Many sun cats answered the call to abandon their nomadic ways, and even a few purrsians were motivated out of their hedonism to make the journey to the rapidly forming desert city. Most notably, otherwise uncivilized and/or hostile races were drawn to the light, setting aside their often dark pasts to live under His smile.

Also known as the City of the Noble Sun, it faded

from the world after the grand temple was sieged. Those who would seek it with ill intent find their way barred and thrown off course by dazzling lights with no obvious source. Much like the purrsian city of Murrage, it became part of the desert. For those whom the Sun King allows entry, it is a bright place of artisanship, community, and revelry that crosses racial lines. That is not to say that the city has never suffered incursion. Magic has allowed some to intrude, but Barakat Al Shams is not without its defending force, ready to repel invaders with strength of arms and powerful, light-based defenses.

Blaze's Roost

Population hamlet — 45 (100% griffon)

Government autocracy (captain)

Alignment Lawful Good

After the ruinous Sun's Roar Incursion and the for-



mation of the Skycrowns, some griffons took it upon themselves to be ready to march at their command. Working against general griffon nature, the Order of the Blazing Sun was formed. Composed primarily of paladins, these griffons stand tall as pillars of morality and fearlessness. They march with unwavering loyalty to the Sun King, and the Skycrowns. The 'town' is more of a fortified building. A large training and defensible fortress wherein lives a handful of disciplined warriors. It rests only an hour's flight from the new Sun King temple, which it can serve as protection for at any moment.

Despite the fortress' superior construction, glowing in the sun from morning to sunset, and shining in moonlight, the fortress remains sparsely populated. It proves quite a challenge to find griffons willing to rise up to the rigorous moral code of the order. Those who do win entry may enjoy the barracks, armory, training facilities, a reasonably well-stocked library, and a secure vault.

Crimson Claw

Population small town — 1,822 (100% griffon)

Government overlord (chief)

Alignment Neutral Evil

Not considered a proper part of the griffon kingdom, Crimson Claw is a haven for outlaws and raiders. A blight on the lands, only their relatively small size saves them from the direct gaze of the Skycrowns and the retribution they surely deserve. In addition to their above, somewhat variable, population, the city serves as host to several hundred slaves of various races obtained by force during the city's frequent raids

It is not uncommon for young captives to be trained in the ways of the city; this is one way they keep their numbers up with fresh recruits and able warriors. Leadership is determined through a complex series of politics and grandstanding to rise to the top of the heap with varying levels of success and stability.

Deep Waters

Population small city — 5,203 (70% griffon, 15% unicorn, 10% pegasus, 5% other)

Government magical (council of mages)

Alignment Lawful Good

One of the few lowland griffon settlements, Deep Waters hides in plain sight in the largest tree of the Forest of Dreams, where the tree descend into the tranquil waters of Black Pond. While deceptively small in diameter, the pond descends as far as any explorer has found thus far. The city is built on the inside of this tree, the denizens slowly hollowing it out deeper and deeper through what seems to be an unending network of roots. By necessity, the spellcasters of the city have mastered moisture repelling enchantments to protect valuables and books, as well as water breathing charms and spells for those needing to leave Deep Waters, or mining the tree dangerously close to its skin.

The more talented spellcasters, who founded the city long ago, considered the idea that the tree may descend directly into the plane of water, and may not root in anything at all. In order to practice their flight, and for the pleasure of it, long tunnels of hardened glass are fashioned around the roots, allowing griffons to fly alongside the fish for miles at a time. This also gives griffon scholars a unique opportunity to watch and learn of their aquatic neighbors. Though welcoming of strangers, its hidden nature makes visitors rare. Only those coming prepared to brave the wet depths can access the city's entrances. Unicorn scholars are especially prone to being drawn to its mysteries, such as the traveler that served as Griselda's guide to the pony lands.

Of the griffon aspects present, there is notable presence of the sea aspected, otter-like griffons. The appeal

Griffon Heartland



of a realm beneath the water, where they can swim for food and still fly along the great tunnels, is idyllic.

Farzen

Population metropolis — 32,141 (58% griffon, 20% ponykind, 11% cloven, 11% other)

Government autocracy (duke)

Alignment Neutral

Second only to the capital itself, Farzen, the Kingdom of Isolation, exists in the northernmost portion of the griffon reaches. It does not exist on most ponykind maps, and has little direct trade outside of the griffon kingdoms. One of the first major cities of the griffon people, they still celebrate old traditions, including an extravagant winter holiday to bolster cheer during those frigid months that transforms the bleak, winter-

locked city into a gleaming jewel of jubilation for several days of celebration. The city also hosts a shrine to a nigh forgotten goddess of the olden times: Raan, the chilly female companion to the Sun King.

The city is separated into six distinct districts. The first is the Museum District. Despite its name, it is most well known for and receives the most traffic by the upper class, including the duke and other authoritarian parties. It does have museums, holding and displaying old artifacts for those with the funds to pay for entry. The second is Overthere, where nobles reside. It has also attracted a small but notable flutterpony and doppelganger population, possibly attracted by the high sense of aesthetics on display in the district.

The third is the Underglow. It is a deep sea port, allowing ships to come and go even in the deep freeze of winter. A sizable gem gnoll population works in the area, making a mostly honest living. The docks get their name due to the strange ice-burrowing worms that

glow with shades of yellow and green that illuminate the under-ice caverns. Nobles often have their own passages to the Underglow carved from their manors to reach the ships more directly along the well-guarded tunnels.

Fourth is Evertrade, the market and residential district located on the surface. It is a common place for visitors to reside in if they are staying for longer than a day. Clean, open, and inductive to business, Evertrade is sometimes said to be the best of the city. The last district is the Hive, where the poor and disenfranchised live. By no coincidence, most of the city's cloven population reside here. They are not forced, technically, but there they are regardless.

Due to inhospitable valley surrounding Farzen, The city can only be accessed via flight, trains, glacial road in winter, or by the complex underground caves connected to most sea trade routes in Northern Everglow.

Kittyhawk

Population small town — 350 (94% griffons, 6% dwarves)

Government council

Alignment Lawful Neutral

Located far from the heartlands, Kittyhawk is perched directly over Deep Crag. This small village serves as a scouting outpost for the massive dwarven metropolis, trading these services in return for supplies and trade goods from the city. The griffons also report issues in the area, including the railway, before they become large problems.

The town is ruled by the eldest and most respected griffon alongside a council of 3-5 others. They negotiate deals with their wary, but largely cooperative, dwarven neighbors. It is also their responsibility to maintain law and handle disputes that come up within Kittyhawk. Not all agree with the close relation with the dwarves, and when the council or elder is occupied with one of the dissidents, relations can become strained for a time.

Due to the close proximity of the dwarves, the town has become the closest example of the two cultures coming together. Though both remain wary of the other, holidays of both cultures are celebrated by most, regardless of race, and it is not uncommon for chicks to know the dwarven tongue and the dwarven gods, though the majority are still loyal to the griffon deities.

Kywall Village

Population village — 170 (100% griffons)

Government anarchy

Alignment Lawful Neutral

This tiny settlement is famed for the strange landmark found at its center. A circle of floating stones, known as the Court of Liths, hovers serenely. The largest of the stones, known as the Judge Stone (known simply as 'The Judge' to locals), is covered with countless runes and sigils that appear to be arcane in origin, but their specific meaning and purpose remains an unsolved mystery. It stands twice as tall as the others and resides on the northern portion of the ring. Most of the year, all of the stones are covered with ropes, tubes, and other dangling objects that make the circle into a favored place to practice flying tricks or perform aerial challenges.

During the vernal and autumnal equinoxes, they are freed from their coverings as part of the holidays to herald good fortunes and fertility. At the end of the holidays, they are covered with an intense energy. It is said that the speed and cleverness of their covering will help keep the village safe and prosperous until the next time to uncover comes around. Though it is not proven how effective this is, the village has never been raided or victim to serious tragedy.



Midmount

Population large town — 1,147 (100% griffon)

Government autocracy (general)

Alignment Lawful Neutral

Midmount sits within the heart of the mountain where the old temple of the Sun King once rested. Therein the griffons of Solace Earthbound toil away. Unlike other creatures born of the earth and mountains, Midmountii are not smiths, craftsmen or miners of any type. Rather they are a militaristic sect of warriors. Midmount is a might makes right meritocracy, where yearly tournaments reconfigure the generals, officers, and even the rank and file based on the best of the best. Obstacle courses, mass melee, paw to claw to beak tournaments, tactical situations, and strategic endeavors weigh the value of each Midmountii soldier. The only way to change your lot in life in Midmount is to train hard to be come better than those above you. The reason for Midmount's existence is often lost in the annals of forgotten history, however many of the scholars believe they are a bastion against some defeated and buried ancient evil.

One feature of the town that draws the puzzlement of the few visitors it receives. Many of the native griffons have a strange condition; some call it a curse, others a deformity, and some say it is the simple result of griffons living underground. On their backs are spiny ridges that form the vague impression of where wings once were. Some call them 'keythongs' and, despite their hampered flying, they are fierce and ready combatants.

Mountain Guard

Population small town - 240 (75% griffon, 25% pegasus)

Government autocracy (chief)

Alignment Neutral

Mountain Guard is at the base of the mountain that holds the new Sun King's temple, on the interior of the griffon lands. It blocks the only land route to the peak with its formidable stone walls and heavy gate. Founded by Asbjørn Thunderchild, a great griffon warrior, the town was formed as, and continues to be, militarily ready. Its guards are known to wear heavy armor, ready to repel any land-based invaders that would dare to tread on the Sun King's mountain, lest the mistake of the Sun's Roar Incursion repeat itself. Despite this,

outsiders who are well-mannered can find solace here. Room is made by the hearths of the town, so long as guests are willing to work for the hospitality given them. Not much monetary trade happens in the town, with most deals being a barter of time and labor. It is not uncommon for travelers to remain in the town for a week while word is sent up to the temple to either allow them forward or send them away.

The Narrows

Population village - 120–176 (90% griffon, 5% pegasus, 0–5% other)

Government anarchy

Alignment Neutral

A small town that hosts rugged and hearty griffons; The Narrows' high altitude, bitter cold, and bleak, jagged peaks make life difficult for those that would call it home, or even pass through. There is only one pass through the mountains that allows passage without going so high as to steal the breath from travelers' lungs; even there, the wind rushes through with the force of a hurricane, and only the town's best flyers can get travelers through it with any regularity.

To join the city requires flying the course during the shortest day of the year, when the winds are at their fiercest and least predictable. To fail is to be dashed against the rocks, killing many would-be daredevils. To succeed is to be welcomed into the city and known as a perfect flyer. It is said that the flyers of the Narrows can sail with the grace of the Sun King himself. Some few pegasi with enough dedication have passed the test, despite their leaner frames. While the town is cool to outsiders in general, those that pass the test are welcomed as brothers and sisters of the air.

Razorbeak Ridge

Population large town — 3,740 (100% griffon [90% predator aspect])

Government overlord (inherited chief title)

Alignment Neutral

Nestled deep in the heartlands, Razorbeak Ridge produces some of the best warriors—and the weapons to send them forth with. Traditionalists to a fault, the populace can come off as close-minded and bigoted to outsiders. The one exception to their traditional beliefs is that, unlike much of griffon society at large, the town operates as a patriarchy, with property and titles de-

scending down from father to son. Visiting females, especially those of martial professions, find their receptions cool at best, and constantly patronizing at worst. The settlement welcomes those coming to purchase from their talented smiths, but has otherwise built a reputation for keeping guests away from its ruling caste.

When it comes time for war, the people of Razorbeak Ridge are ready. They will answer the call to battle for the sake of the griffon kingdom with rowdy cries and an eagerness to display the skill that most have been honing since they were old enough to hold a weapon. The womenfolk, however, they will leave at home.

Riverwings

Population large city — 16,249 (35% griffon, 35% ponykind [30% sea ponies, 25% leather wings, 20% pegasi, 15% earth ponies, 10% other], 20% Cloven, 10% other)

Government autocracy (mayor)

Alignment Neutral

Located north of Turves, where pony territories brush up against the mountains of the griffon heartlands, Riverwings was a place born of the interaction of the species. Located nearby the city in the mountains is the Arena of Strength. For years, this stone colosseum had been used as a means for warring groups of griffons to settle differences without going to war. Under the gaze of the Sun King and their fellow griffons, the offended groups would do battle or take on other tasks to settle a problem once and for all.

When ponykind came into contact with the griffon society, griffons were suspicious. When tempers flared about whether pegasi or griffons were the better fliers, the griffons decided to use the Arena of Strength to challenge the ponies. A group of cloven were passing by the mountainside when they heard the cheers and boos of the contest and choose to see what all the fuss was about. Although they couldn't join into the contest, the cloven enjoyed watching the tests and cheering for their favorite team. This was odd to the griffons, as the only spectators they had ever had were those griffons who came to watch their own kind.

When the challenges were over, the griffons and pegasi found they had tied. The griffons warmed up to the strange flying creatures, and the two sides continued to show up once a year to see which side would succeed at being the better flier. News spread from the onlooking cloven around the world, and many other races showed up to watch and cheer at the flying ath-

letes. As it became more popular, the outpost known as Riverwings was created by the cloven and the griffons as a place for weary travelers to rest before their long trip up the mountainside to the Arena.

The outpost began to grow as the need for more room and services increased. With more griffon travelers stopping by the outpost, they began to fish for fresh meat from the sea rather than relying on food being brought in. This grabbed the attention of the sea ponies, who aided in the creation of ships and regulation of how much fish should be caught, thus keeping a balance between demand and nature. Later, the hauls of fish and games of flight brought the leather wings out of hiding.

Riverwings is now known as a place that idolizes strength. The citizens—be they griffon, pony, cloven or others—love showings of physical strength, feats of grace, or an intellectual mind shown off by building something considered “strong.” Also prized are ships that can withstand the toughest of storms, buildings that will stand tall during a disaster, or sculptures of heroes and legends showing off feats of strength. Even the city's poetry is about the strength or grace of a person rather than things like beauty. This is something that has annoyed many actors in the city of Blevik, as a citizen of Riverwings is likely to make a comment along the lines of how a play could have been better if the mare punched the stallion prince for being weak and useless.

Ponies and cloven who have lived in Riverwings for all their life are more aggressive and brash compared to their loving counterparts. Conversely, the griffons seem more caring and understanding, much to the confusion of the rest of their kind. The city takes great care of the Arena of Strength, and when the Arena is not in use the city lives on its fishing and trade routes from the sea. There are also plenty of smaller fighting rings and arenas to help pass the time until the next big event.

Sessie's Folly

Population large town — 2,613 (60% griffon, 20% ponykind [mostly pegasus], 10% cloven, 10% other)

Government autocracy (council and mayor)

Alignment Neutral Good

Sessie Longwing had the heretical notion that griffons should reach out and engage with the other races of Everglow and not live apart from them—he was cast out as crazy shortly after raising the idea. Not discouraged, Sessie found a location west-northwest

of Yishēng in what would be considered shared territorial area between the griffons and ponies. Sessie worked with an immense passion to establish a location where griffons and non-griffons could co-exist. Though he named the place “Hope” it eventually became known by the derogatory name the majority of griffons gave it: “Sessie’s Folly.”

In time, it did attract a stable population, first by adventuring types, then by those who felt there were greater evils that could be best dealt with in concert with their fellow good-oriented Everglow neighbors, and finally those who realized it had become a nexus for exchange between the griffon lands to the north and the ponies of the south. Now a bustling trade town, it is still a starting point and place of recuperation for griffons who adventure south. There are also those who dwell in the city as vanguards, keeping curious ponies and other foreigners from intruding too eagerly into griffon lands.

The city became a popular meeting point for griffon nobility and foreign dignitaries, and a grand inn was created for the purpose. The Sheathed Talon is a three story tall monument to peace, comfort, and a little showing off of griffon resources. Fighting of any kind, even for sport, is forbidden within its walls, as are any weapons that are not peace bound.

Shadowclaw Sanctum

Population large city — 13,265 (100% griffon)

Government overlord (master)

Alignment Neutral

Named for its founder in times long past, the city started as a training center and hideout for an infamous spy and assassin. Chicks eager to follow his subtle path eventually inherited the growing town, and passed the traditions forward, with each generation of cavern dwelling griffons learning from their ancestors. The city grew over time as requests for its talents swelled in times of war and conflict. When mages were recruited to the city, their wizardry was put to work hiding the city from outsiders.

While any griffon could learn any or all of the original teachings, only the chosen few could become the city’s elite—the Shadowclaws. With natural coloring



similar to their master’s, black as night, they learned not only combat techniques, but also wisdom of the master spy, best ways to assassinate, and how to become one with shadows. And, thanks to Shadowclaw’s late magic training, he was also able to pass on some of his shadow spells. Shadowclaw lived a long life, staying strong even in his older years. But nothing is eternal, and one day he finally set his soul free, at home, in his sanctuary. Generations passed, but his legacy lives on in his city, his followers and his image, as a god of this place.

One commodity not made available to other griffon cities are artisan-produced rare poisons. Each of unique design, the formulas are passed from parent to child or master to student and zealously guarded. It is said that with one it is possible to stop a heart at a moment’s notice, but also to restart it when the need arises. How much is rumor and how much is fact remains their story to tell, which they choose not to do.

Nestled securely in a series of confusing lava-forged tunnels to the east of Blaze’s Roost, the entrance to the city magnifies the tunnel’s existing properties. Anyone daring them is faced with a shadowy labyrinth of mind-bending proportions. If one means the city harm, they will eventually find themselves exiting

the maze from where they first entered, having only wasted time. As isolated as the city is, far flung from the heartlands, its agents are found in many other griffon settlements, keeping an eye on things and seeking jobs for those at home.

Sun Nest

Population large town — 2,527 (80% griffon, 10% purrelian, 10% other)

Government overlord (current strongest)

Alignment Neutral

What started as a solitary home slowly grew into a town of misfits and outcasts. Griffons that were too stubborn to stay at home, but not driven enough to seek a life of adventure, found themselves landing in this sandy spot. Founded after the great demon's defeat, Sun Nest is not that far from Murrage, and trades with the large city regularly. Its proximity also makes purrelians a constant presence. The decisions for the community are largely determined by contests of strength and ability held every summer while the sun is hottest. The winner of this competition is crowned strongest for the year and is, mostly, unchallenged until next summer.

Tyrantfall

Population large city — 12,483 (85% griffon, 10% cloven, 5% other)

Government overlord (grand marshal)

Alignment Lawful Neutral

Tyrantfall began as a simple mountain community formed by refugees fleeing Harken in the centuries before the Skycrowns. After the tyrant finished conquering most of the Griffon lands, he marched out to besiege the town that had defied his will and undermined his authority. During the siege the tyrant died, and the defenders were victorious. The victory is attributed to divine intervention from the Sun King, and the city became a site of pilgrimage for the faithful, and was renamed Tyrantfall.

The city would remain a regional power until the unification of the Griffons under the Skycrowns, when it became significant political player due to its defensive position and military strength, occasionally butting heads with the Skycrowns and other political powers. The inhabitants of Tyrantfall are proud, fiercely independent, and devout in their worship of the Sun

King. The city is controlled by a holy order of warriors, the Knights of the Unconquerable Sun, dedicated to the Sun King in his many aspects, and whose leaders range from paragons of absolute virtue, to religious fanatics, to the cartoonishly evil and corrupt.

Most of the time, the city lies somewhere in the middle, and is a popular place for religious observation and trade. The city's food needs are partially met by a small community of cloven that sprawl around the city in a vast suburban area of meat and plant farms. The goats have been clever in their ability to produce crops even during the bitterest of winters, and proven their worth to the community. During times of attack, the cloven withdraw into the city proper to wait it out, emerging again to tend the fields when the danger has passed.

Zurich

Population small city — 27,284 (94% griffon, 3% pegasus, 3% other)

Government magical (baroness)

Alignment Neutral

Perched on the easternmost mountains of the heartlands, Zurich is composed of multiple, cross-linked towers. The largest and central tower houses the university of psionics that the city is most famous for, as well as its ruler, the Baroness. Though the city has enough people to qualify as a metropolis, its economic activity feels more like that of a small city, with all the positives and negatives thereof. This is due in part to the city's lack of easy trade routes, with land navigation being impossible. To compound things, many of the residents of the city are transient, coming and going, with a core of about a thousand full-time students. Near Zurich is a flattened region with an artificial lake. It is here that livestock are tended to and a small orchard is cultivated. Of particular note is a farm with hot peppers that are featured heavily in the local foods. The meat and fur from the livestock finds its way to the local market regularly as well, making fur-clad griffons a very common sight. Also present at the flattened area is a very large docking station made specifically for flying vessels to land easily without having to touch the ground. It is tall with many levels, allowing such vessels to park on top of, as well as side by side of other vessels. It is through these well-kept docks that Zurich's limited trade happens, exchanging local goods and psionic services for supplies and supplemental food from other griffon cities.



CUACHAN

Population metropolis — 53,257 (95% griffon, 3% pegasus, 2% other)

Government autocracy (steward)

Alignment Neutral

Cuachan History

Formed in the early years of griffon civilization, Cuachan has traded talons under force of violence many times since its founding. It wasn't until the Skycrowns united the fractious griffon people that the city knew something of peace and began to grow in earnest. Its early districts show this the most, with buildings built on top of the remains of less fortunate dwellings, and ancient ruins still waiting to be found under basements.

The city's first ruler of peace, Farsaing the Just, was chosen by the Skycrowns. He lived up to his name, and ruled the city fairly, but was no expert in matters of trade and economics. Wishing to prove he was worthy of the position, he swiftly sought out advisors. The city's first economic advisor came at much concern of the people, for it was a purrsian. Miss Tralisha Grappelt was her name, and she managed the city's coins with a miserly grip that would do her people proud. Though Farsaing suffered taunts and insults for bringing in a purrsian for the task, he had the last laugh when she performed it well and laid the path for the city to expand rapidly and prosperously.

Not all rulers to follow served their people as well. Whitemane Los led the city to a severe depression when he succumbed to populist movements and banned all foreign goods of any kind. Even locally made goods of non-griffons were heavily taxed, and the economy ground to a near halt. The mandate was

ended when a furious crowd of irate griffons violently protested Whitemane's home until he relented, and stepped down shortly after.

It is tradition that those seeking to serve as steward of the city must supplicate themselves before the Skycrowns, but it has occurred several times that the Skycrowns select an individual that has not approached them. Such griffons are typically well known for acts of heroism, cleverness, or wisdom. Such appointments have fared well more often than not, and are regarded as a sign of good fortune for the city. An appointed griffon remains until they retire, step down, or the Skycrowns appoint another.

The only time the transition has been truly violent was just before the Skycrowns left to wage war after the elves had stolen the magic of the clouds. The current ruler, Callathar, did not wish to join the war. She claimed her duties as steward of the city came before joining the army to fight distant elves. The Skycrowns insisted, and yet she refused. When the Skycrowns arrived in person to challenge her, she ambushed them and their guards with her own forces. In the resulting skirmish many were injured or slain outright, but the Skycrowns had proven their superiority. They chained Callathar and hauled her along with the army. She would obey, even if she could no longer be trusted to do battle.

In the uncertain times after the departure of the Skycrowns, the city became a quieter place. With most of those capable of fighting off to do just that, the city was left with the very young and old, as well as those chosen to guard their homes while the main force was away. The smelting plants quieted rapidly and the air cleared. While remaining a city, it soon shrank to the population of a large town. Those that remained live day to day, hoping for word from their leaders.

Cuachan Districts

The Roost

Perched above the smoke, noise, and rabble of the rest of the city, the Roost is where those wealthy or influential enough flock to. It is also a popular destination for wealthy visitors to the city, making it a cultural center with many performance houses catering to wildly different tastes to be found along its clean and well-decorated avenues. Destitution is a crime in this section of town, with those who look less than well-to-do being firmly discouraged from remaining any longer than is strictly necessary. While it is not formally against the law to be poor in the roost, guards are inventive at creating reasons to escort undesirables



The Roost

Rised Pike

Sira Blackened
Copperclan

Little
Crown

Mithral Clan
District

Graniteclan
School

Hadget's School
of Pounding

Warrior's
District

The Martial
District

Blood-Eyed Aerie

Spread Wings

Theatre of Souls

The Lower
District

Guild of
Crossed Talons

City of
Cuachan

back into the heart of the city.

Non-griffon foreign visitors are often given an armed guard. While the griffons insist it is for their guest's protection, it is common knowledge this is for the welfare of the city. While being able to put up airs of hospitality, they can ensure that less-than-trusted visitors are not getting into any trouble. It can also become abundantly clear if such visitors have no business in the Roost, and allow them to be redirected back towards lower areas more suited to their rough tastes. The Little Crown rests at the center of the district, and is where the officials of the city gather to do business. The steward of the city lives and presides over the Little Crown, which is itself constructed to loosely resemble the titular skycrowns that the rulers of all griffonkind wear. The imposing four story tall building is home to the majority of the city's governance, and is where the major decisions and severe trials take place. Only the most severe or pressing of crimes are brought before its court, with most legal matters being delegated to smaller neighborhood or district courts.

The district is also home to the Raised Pike barracks nestled on the north side. Despite being called a barracks, it is home to only the most elite of soldiers in the city, and can appear more like an upper class inn than any military barracks. It is the aspiration of many of the soldiers in the city to eventually be stationed there. Besides the plush sleeping arrangements, those dwelling within are given full access to well-respected trainers, teachers, and medics to keep their elite in top fighting shape. It is also a frequent place for contests to be held between military units for fame and combat readiness testing.

The Lower District

Living up to its name, the Lower District is at the lowest point of the capital. It has a nickname of the Moulting, a fitting title for a place where those discarded by polite society end up. Menial workers, troublemakers, and outright criminals call the place home. It was not always this way. The Lower District was one of the first districts, and home to the wealthiest and powerful griffons. As the city expanded, the powerful moved on and left the district to be taken by those who would have it. There are still sprawling mansions that are slowly decaying over time, which have become home to those who do not wish to advertise their presence.

It is, for better or worse, built along the only land route into the city, which forces merchants and foreigners to navigate its central roads to get to the rest of the city. The denizens are fond of harassing such travelers with offers of supposed magic items, fortune

telling, protection against thuggery, or outright thuggery itself. It is said to be unwise to travel the district without a guide, but it can be almost as dangerous to obtain one.

Life is not without hope in this section of the city. The Guild of Crossed Talons exists within it, and will hire those able of body out for hire as mercenaries. They claim the rough surroundings keeps their soldiers fit and ready for action. Others say they're cheap enough, and discreet enough to appeal to anyone in need of a few quick warriors to get dirty work done. Those who work for the guild find their lives elevated to relative comfort, as long as they don't get themselves killed in the line of duty.

Also present is the Theater of Souls, a burlesque tavern where the dancers are said to be able to distract one from a day's worth of drudgery. It is rumored that, for the right coin, they'll take you in back and reveal your future with far more accuracy than the beggars on the street could hope to do. The tavern itself is only open for a few hours a night, with only about twenty customers allowed per evening. It is not certain what means they have for selection, as it seems random from an outside perspective. To have a pin of the theater is considered a minor mark of prestige in the district.

The Martial District

Bordering—and sometimes bleeding over onto—the Mithral Claw district, the Martial District is known to the locals as the Sword and Board. It is known for its high concentration of blacksmiths, armorsmiths, fighting schools, and mercenary guilds. There are very few residential portions of the district, unless one counts the barracks that house those working in these places or training in the schools. At the center of the district is the Blood-Eyed Aerie. This fighting school and mercenary guild was founded long before the Skycrowns by the matriarch of a local influential family, Sharik Blood-eyes, that continues to run it to this day. As a result, the Blood-Eyes family has great sway over much of the business in the district.

While relatively safe, the district is often shrouded in gloom in part thanks to the many smithies, forges, and smelting facilities that disgorge great amounts of smoke into the air. As displeasing as it is to be beneath them, clouds of smog smoke are surprisingly comfortable to perch upon from above, and are a common place to find griffons during their mealtimes and prayers, as it allows them to bask in the Sun King's proper glory. There is a thriving community of brawling and pit-fighting. While it is technically illegal to fight for money in such a fashion, the law often turns a blind eye to it,

even as guards themselves are relieved of duty due to injuries gained the evening before in the name of fame and fortune. A traveler can quickly earn respect of the locals if they can hold their own in such an arena, but should be wary. The locals are not above using dirty tricks on new faces, and the referees are more lenient than usual when considering acts of poor sportsmanship against travelers.

Also present is the Graniteclaw School of Tactical Mastery. This school is where many of the great leaders of griffonkind are trained and their skills honed. Instead of focusing on personal combat, they focus on maximizing the efforts of other griffons under a leader's command, and how to deal with the sometimes fractious and rebellious nature of griffonkind. It is unofficially considered a requirement to graduate from this school if one has aspirations to military greatness in the Skycrowns' army.

MITHRAL CLAW DISTRICT

Considered by many to be the other half of the Martial District, it is an older part of the capitol where much of the metalwork is done. From normal blacksmiths to silver and goldsmiths, all of the smithies are near each other, so when a soldier wants an ornate suit of armour, he or she could get it forged at a blacksmith and inlaid with gold and silver next door. Because of the amount of precious materials used, the district is heavily patrolled to discourage any would-be thieves, with varying levels of success. The theft of a golden White Talon statue is proof that it doesn't always work. The district also houses the Sira Blackened Copperclaw, a school of Metallurgy and Alchemy. The academy was set up by Sclater Copperclaw as a means to teach these sciences in a safe and a controlled way. Located at the edge of the district, the school has a ring of about a 20 wingbeats around made up of barren earth dotted with bits of metal and failed experiments. A notable landmark is the pit of acid near the north gate of the school. This was created after an experiment that involved acid, magic, diamond vials, and misplaced gunpowder. Because of the magic and the diamond vials, the pit keeps replenishing itself, but doesn't eat further into the ground. The edges of the hole have become diamond-like, resisting the acid and attracting vandals. The pit is property of the school, which sells the acid produced by it. Because of this, the pit is guarded, but there are rumors of breaks in the fence around the pit.

The district is also home to the lone major dwarven property of the griffon kingdom. Hadget's School of Pounding stands tall with a rather over the top statue

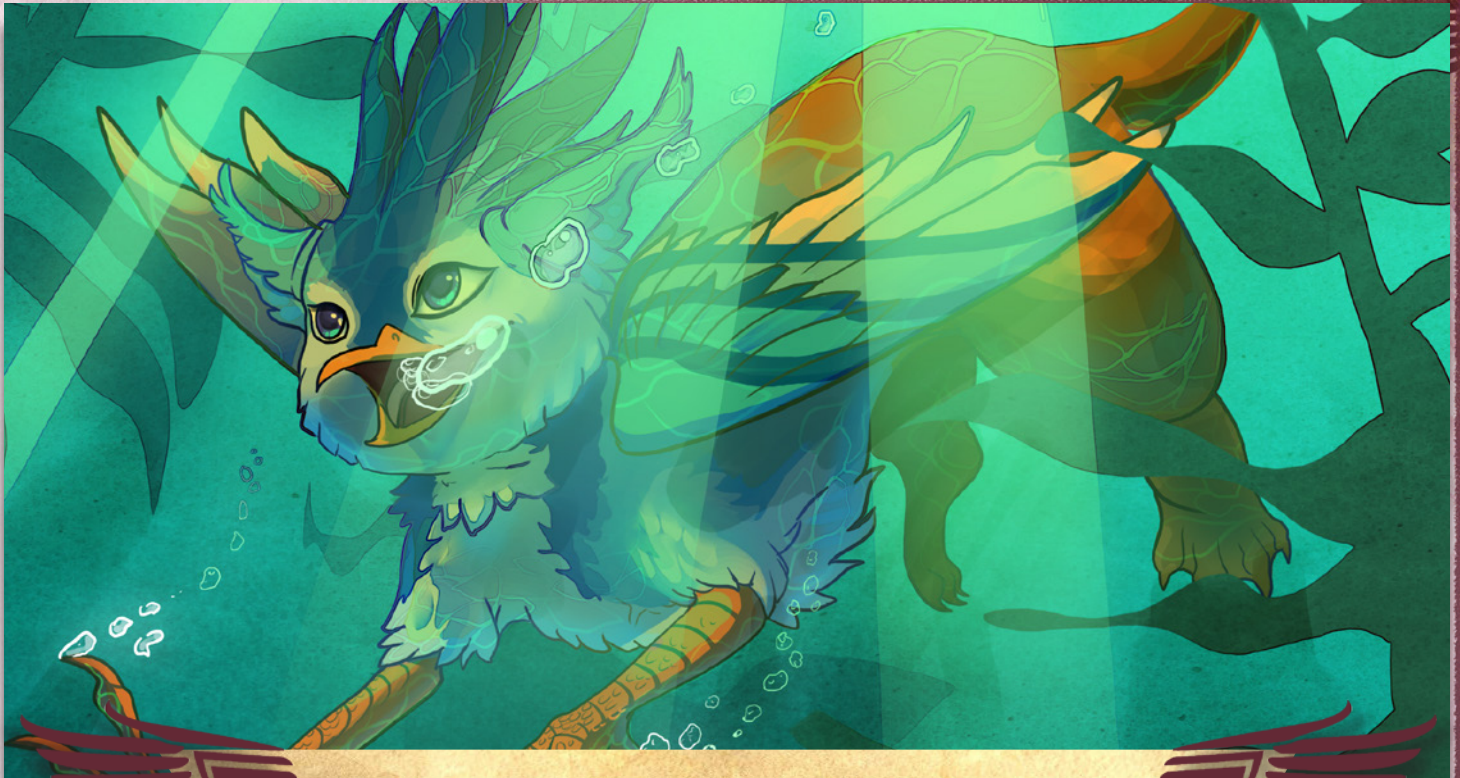
of a dwarf striking an anvil with an equally oversized hammer. Blacksmithery, armorsmithing, and weaponsmithing are taught with a preference for using the hardest metals around. It is here that the locals turn to if they have the funds to afford adamant, as the smiths trained here will get it right. The school is also known for its frequent riotous parties with heavily discounted but fine dwarven ale and smithing contests held to the public. The combination of two activities occasionally becomes cause for outrageous accidents, but that seems to only increase its appeal to griffons eager to prove themselves.

WARRIORS' DISTRICT

The Warriors' District is a small, exclusive section of the capital where the ancient fighting techniques and battle tactics of old are taught, as well as experimented with. Only the most talented and respected young warriors are allowed to learn from the sages there, as it is believed that the best techniques should only be taught to those who are worthy of them. The district has facilities dedicated to teaching war-arts of all kinds, including swordsmanship, military tactics, combat spellcasting, and martial arts. The arts of old are not only taught here, they are also expanded upon.

Experimentation with currently existing combat styles is encouraged, as it pushes students to improve upon the teachings of old and allows the old techniques to evolve into something new. There is some tension between the traditionalists (those who teach the arts created by the original masters of combat such as the father of martial arts, Haydar Ironbeak) and the innovators (those who attempt to expand upon the old ways or invent entirely new forms of combat.)

The traditionalists fear that the innovators will eventually become too influential, causing griffons to forget the original masters of battle and their teachings, while the innovators believe that the traditionalists are afraid of change, and refuse to accept the evolution of combat. This is made all the more clear with the Crossed Talons school across from the Spread Wings. The Crossed Talons encourages students to emulate the heroes of old, drawing their strength through time-tested techniques to defeat their opposition. Meanwhile, the Spread Wings urges their students to explore new ways to approach problems. The two schools also tend to separate partially based on aspects, with predators favoring the crossed talons, while rarer aspects find appeal in the Spread Wings. Their competitions are numerous and fierce, but visitors say the whole thing helps both schools, with the students pushed to ever greater skill in the fierce rivalry.



BESTIARY OF THE MOUNTAINS

Cliffside Eel

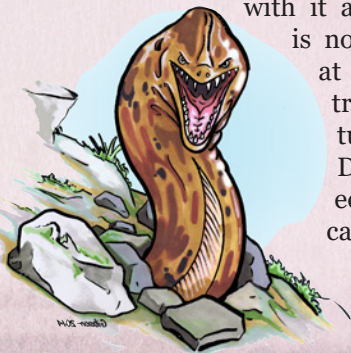
What seemed to be just a hole becomes so much more dangerous as a great tubular creature comes rushing out of it with its mouth gaping open, ready to snap you up.

CLIFFSIDE EEL, CHALLENGE 3

Perception DC 14, **Trigger** proximity (20 ft.), **Reset** automatic

Effect Atk +12 melee, (bite; 4d10)

These creatures act more like traps than a standard encounter, lunging out and taking a snap at passing targets and then withdrawing, successful or not. If they deal enough damage to lower the creature to 0 or less hit points, it is dragged into its lair with it and devoured, otherwise the target is not moved. This creature will attack at most once a minute. Unlike most traps, it can be avoided by flying creatures (who are already flying) with a Dexterity(Acrobatics) check contested vs the attack of the trap. This trap cannot be disabled, but can be avoided



by simply not approaching it, collapsing its tunnel, or distracting it with some other object and moving past afterwards. Eels can rebuild their tunnel with a day's worth of effort.

As their name suggests, these eels usually live in cliff-sides, waiting for flying creatures to sail past their holes before lunging out at them. Some eels form great colonies of deadly holes. While some griffon communities take great effort in clearing out such menaces, others value them as painful, but effective, displays of flying skill for truly capable fliers.

Gem Golem

This humanoid creature is comprised of various precious gems that have come together to form an imposing bulk of a figure. Light reflects off it dazzlingly as it approaches with no sympathy in its gait.

GEM GOLEM

Large construct, neutral

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)

Hit Points 136

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	9 (-1)	17 (+3)	4 (-3)	11 (+0)	1 (-4)

Saving Throws Con +7

Damage Immunities poison, psychic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks that aren't adamantite

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

Skills Athletics +9, Perception +4

Languages -

Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

Dazzling Brightness. Any sighted creature within 30 feet of a gem golem while the golem is within an area of bright must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw at the start of their turn. On a failure, the creature becomes blinded until the end of their turn. Once a creature makes its save against this ability, it is immune to that golem's brightness for 24 hours.

Immutable Form. The golem is immune to any spell or effect that would alter its form.

Magic Resistance. The golem has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Magic Weapons. The golem's weapon attacks are magical.

Multiattack. The gem golem makes two slam attacks.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack* +9 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. Hit: 2d8+5 bludgeoning damage, and the target must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or take an additional 1d8 piercing damage each round at the end of their turn. The target must continue to make saving throws at the start of their turn, ending the effect on a success. Multiple instances of this effect do not stack.

Reflect Spells (recharge 5-6). As a bonus action, the gem golem can align its internal structure to enhance its resistance to magic until the end of its next turn. During this time, the golem reflects targeted spells back to the caster, who then must resist the spell as normal.

Some say these strange creatures are the result of the work of the dwarves long ago before even the griffons



stalked the mountains, while others argue that an imbalance in earth planar energies are to blame. They are a threat to anyone in the area when they emerge. They seem to create themselves over time in rich mineral veins, drawing out the gemstones year by year until a fully formed gem golem can pull itself free and begin wandering. Rarely put to work guarding important places or things, most occur naturally and do little save attack any moving target that happens into its path.

Mountain Worm

What first appears to be a the leaves of a great and colorful blossom erupts from the ground, followed by a long, armored, purple tube. The great, worm-like creature curls to direct its four-jawed mouth at you, its long tendrils flailing between them hungrily.

MOUNTAIN WORM

Gargantuan monstrosity, neutral

Armor Class 20 (natural armor)

Hit Points 233

Speed 20 ft., burrow 20 ft., climb 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
30 (+10)	6 (-2)	25 (+7)	1 (-4)	8 (-1)	8 (-1)

Saving Throws Con +12, Wis +4
Skills Athletics +15, Perception +4
Senses darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft., passive Perception 14
Languages --
Challenge 14 (11,500 XP)

Tunneler. The worm can burrow through solid rock at half its burrow speed and leaves a 10-foot diameter tunnel in its wake.

Multiattack. The mountain worm makes two attacks: one with its bite, and one with its stinger.

Bite. +10 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. Hit: 3d8 + 10 piercing damage. If the target is a Large or smaller creature, it must succeed on a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw or be swallowed by the worm. A swallowed creature is blinded and restrained, it has total cover against attacks and other effects outside the worm, and it takes 5d6 acid damage at the start of each of the worm's turns.

If the worm takes 20 damage or more on a single turn from a creature inside it, the worm must succeed on a DC 21 Constitution saving throw at the end of that turn or regurgitate all swallowed creatures, which fall prone in a space within 10 feet of the worm. If the worm dies, a swallowed creature is no longer restrained by it and can escape from the corpse by using 20 feet of movement, exiting prone.

Stinger. Melee Weapon Attack +10 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. Hit: 2d8+10 bludgeoning damage, and the target must make a DC 17 Constitution saving throw, taking 10d6 poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Tendrils. Ranged Weapon Attack +10 to hit, reach 40 ft., one target. Hit: 2d8+7 bludgeoning damage, and the target is grappled (Escape DC 16). The mountain worm has two tendrils, each of which can grapple one target.

Disguising themselves as wild mountain flora, these tremendous beasts wait for something large enough to sate their appetite to happen by. Although they prefer living flesh, swallowed whole to be ground to paste in their gaping maw, they can subsist on tremendous amounts of rocks and minerals as they burrow through the ground. Corpses are also considered fair game, as the worms happily scavenge when the opportunity presents itself.

They are well-adapted to mountain life compared to average worms, with their long sticky tendrils capable of battering prey even as they haul them in to be devoured.

Sky Mask

What appears at first to be an innocent cloud turns dark before your eyes. Two bright points glimmer from within with the impression of eyes as it surges towards you.

SKY MASK

Large elemental, chaotic evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Speed 0 ft., fly 100 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	25 (+7)	16 (+3)	6 (-2)	11 (+0)	11 (+0)

Saving Throws Con +6, Cha +3

Skills Athletics +7, Perception +3

Damage Resistances lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained, unconscious

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages Auran

Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

Flyby Attack. The sky mask doesn't provoke opportunity attacks when it flies out of an enemy's reach.

Air Form. The sky mask can enter a hostile creature's space and stop there. It can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

Multiattack. The sky mask makes two slam attacks.

Slam. Melee Weapon Attack +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 2d8+7 bludgeoning damage.

Whirlwind (Recharge 5-6). Each creature in the elemental's space must make





a DC 14 Strength saving throw. On a failure, the target takes 3d8+2 bludgeoning damage and is flung 20 feet away from the elemental in a random direction and knocked prone. If a thrown target strikes an object, such as a wall or floor, the target takes 1d6 bludgeoning damage for every 10 feet it was thrown. If the target is thrown at another creature, that creature must succeed on a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw or take the same damage and be knocked prone. If the saving throw is successful, the target takes half damage and isn't flung away or knocked prone.

Lightning Strike. The sky mask can call down the wrath of the heavens. The sky mask causes lightning to strike a location as per the *call lightning* spell. Targets within 5 feet of the spot must make a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw, taking 3d10 damage on a failure, or half as much on a success. If there are stormy conditions, or if the sky mask has used its whirlwind action within the last round, the damage is increased to 4d10. On a round in which the sky mask takes any lightning damage, it cannot use its lightning strike ability until the end of its next turn.

An elementally-charged realm, Everglow is home to various native elementals. Some are benign. This is not one of them. Sky masks are roiling balls of generally displeased energy that are all too eager to vent their frustration out on passing griffons that intrude on their territory. Fortunately, these creatures are known to stay within the bounds of their claimed slice of the mountain, but have attacked griffon towns if they feel threatened, are in an especially poor mood, or during violent storms.

Some elementalists take pleasure in using sky masks

as guards. By assigning them specific portions of their keep, dungeon, or land as theirs and making regular tributes in the form of silver and platinum, a sky mask can be kept from attacking the owner or their allies, while attacking anyone else that happens into range. A sky mask is never truly tamed, however.

Sky masks can come in larger or smaller forms depending on age and power. Legends are whispered under stormy skies of some that grow massive enough to be the entire storm, instead of simply an angry agent of one.

Trained hunting Bird

This bird of prey has clean and well-preened feathers, a wicked beak and talons that grip firmly on whatever it chooses to perch on.

TRAINED HUNTING BIRD

Medium beast, neutral

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 19 (3d10+3)

Speed 5 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	8 (-1)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Con +3, Wis +3

Skills Athletics +3, Perception +3

Senses passive Perception 13

Languages Can understand common, but cannot speak it.

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Flyby. The hunting bird does not provoke opportunity attacks when it flies out of an enemy's reach.

Kenn Hearing and Sight. The hunting bird has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or sight.

Bite. +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 1d8 + 1 piercing damage.

Talons. +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 1d8 + 1 slashing damage.

Hunting Companion. The hunting bird may, as a bonus action expended by its handler, use the Help action to assist an ally in combat.

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Monarchs of the Sky

Explore the world of Everglow through the eyes of one of its oldest and proudest inhabitants, the griffons. Descend from the sky on strong wings and overtake your prey, be they food or competition. Learn the ways of griffon magic and tradition, and enhance your roleplay. In Griffons of Everglow, you will learn all there is to know of these majestic beings and their time tested ways.

This book includes:

- New subspecies of griffons, including snow griffons and aquatic griffons.
- Details on Everglow griffons, including their tradition, lore, famous personas, and physical characteristics.
- A history of the griffons, including their wars, formation of a kingdom, and their own take on the falling of the pony empire.
- A new race, the hippogriff, product of the griffon's close ties to their pegasus cousins.
- New Feats
- New Spells
- New Equipment
- New class archetypes to bring a griffon flavor to the base classes.

