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Lands and Peoples of Pavis and the Zola Fel Valley

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The Avalon Hill Game Company

DIVISION OF MONARCH AVALON, INC.

XGXD\*IIIO\*#\* Glorantha RIVER OF CRADLES is a supplement for the RuneQuest roleplaying game. This book is usable with the RQ Deluxe Edition.

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# The River of Cradles An Introduction

This RuneQuest campaign supplement describes the settled lands in the valley of the Zola Fel River, also known as the River of Cradles. This narrow belt of civilized farmlands and frontier settlements lies in the Great Wastes of Prax, among the harshest, least hospitable inhabited regions of Genertela. This challenging environment has created some of the most hardy and great-spirited of Glorantha's peoples and cultures.

The Zola Fel valley was first described in the classic RuneQuest campaign packs *Cults of Prax, Borderlands, Pavis* and *Big Rubble.* Portions of these works, revised and expanded here for use with The Avalon Hill Game Company's *RuneQuest Deluxe* Third Edition rules, are presented in this volume as a compact campaign reference for RuneQuest roleplaying adventures in central Prax. In addition, a new scenario sequence introduces beginning player characters to the distinctive landmarks and cultures of the valley.

This book follows the The Avalon Hill Game Company's Deluxe Edition of the RuneQuest rules, and many of the divine spells listed are taken from *Gods of Glorantha*. Standard Edition users must adapt or ignore unfamiliar spells.

### Where in the World?

The Zola Fel valley is a great river draining from the rugged uplands of Dagori Inkarth south through the plains of Prax to its mouth in the Rozgali Sea. The plains of Prax are the western, relatively habitable portion of the Wastelands, the vast arid region lying south of Pent, bordered on the west by Dragon Pass and the Rockwoods Mountains of Balazar and the Elder Wilds, on the east by the great Shan Shan mountain barrier, Teshnos, and Kralorela, and to the south by the Rozgali Sea.

The map nearby indicates the most important geographic features of Prax and the Zola Fel valley. (For more details see *Glorantha*, *Genertela Book*, "The Wastelands," pp. 88-92.)

### Prax

Prax is an uninviting expanse of barren plains, unbearably hot in the summer and unpleasantly cold in the winter, scourged with strong, capricious winds and parched by periodic drought. The climate of the arid high plateau of Vulture Country to the east is even worse, and only the hardiest nomads (driven there by the Lunar invaders) can survive there.

The nomads of Prax belong to several distinct tribes, each of which rides and herds a unique species of beast. The great nations of Prax include the Bison, Alticamelus, Sable, Impala and the Morokanth (the nonhuman Morokanth herd a bestial variety of humans but do not ride them).



The Prax Region and the Zola Fel Valley

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The nomadic cultures of the beast herding tribes are well suited for survival in the harsh wastes of Prax, and nomads share a lofty disdain for the soft, settled agricultural societies clustered along the banks of the River of Cradles. (See *Glorantha*, *Player's Book*, pp. 10-13, for a detailed treatment of Praxian nomad culture.)

### The River of Cradles

The River of Cradles lies in a great fertile valley that runs from its source in the Desolation Hills south to the Rozgali Sea, dividing Western Prax from Vulture Country. The river got its name centuries ago from the epic journeys made by great cradles bearing the children of giants that floated to the sea from a mysterious source in the Desolation Hills. The natives call the river Zola Fel after its resident deity.

Unlike the arid plains, the river valley is comparatively fertile, and its grazing lands are much sought after by the nomads. However, the valley is presently dominated by civilized farmers, and the nomads are no longer welcome in their ancient tribal grazing ranges.

### New Pavis and the Big Rubble

The northern end of the valley is controlled by the city of Pavis, a Sartarite colony founded near the ancient walls of Old Pavis (also known as the Big Rubble), now a ruin haunted by trolls. Pavis fell to the Lunars in 1610 S.T. The Lunar governor, Sor-Eel the Short, rules over New Pavis, the Rubble, Pavis County, and Prax, and by terms of the Armistice is the nominal overlord of Solanthos Ironpike, ruler of Sun County to the south. New Pavis is a small city of approximately 3,500 people, including a sizable Lunar garrison. The Suntown district of New Pavis is populated by Sun Dome cultists who enjoy considerable freedom from interference by the Lunar authorities.

The city of Pavis is the administrative center of Pavis County. Many of the 20,000 people of Pavis County are of Sartarite stock, but an increasing number are Lunar settlers, recently arrived here with the aid and encouragement of the Empire.

#### Sun County

The authoritarian agricultural theocracy of Sun County has endured uninterrupted in the Zola Fel valley for centuries. This dour, puritanical, but vitally cohesive society is founded upon its state worship of Yelmalio and its free farmer-soldier citizenry. The cult, its nobility (the Light Sons with their ruling head and ranking Rune Lord Count Solanthos Ironpike), and its priesthood control all political, social, and economic elements of the society. Its redoubtable standing army, the famed Sun Dome Templars, and its universally conscripted, well-trained, and disciplined citizen militia protect Sun County from internal disorders, from external nomad and bestial raiders, and from any interference by distrusted outlanders and foreigners.

Outlanders are treated with contempt and distrust by Sun Dome citizens, and foreigners must expect harassment from the minor officials and militia units that act as the county's police force. Civilized observers find the interlocking strictures of cult and state bewildering, harsh, and occasionally barbaric, and enforcement of these strictures often seems arbitrary and capricious.

### The Grantlands

To the south of Sun County, Lunar settlers are colonizing the previously unsettled southern reaches of the river valley. Under Duke Raus of Rone, a pioneering Lunar nobleman exiled from the Empire proper for political reasons, a region known as Weis Domain has been settled by colonists and a fort and town built on the Zola Fel known variously as Raus Fort or Ronegarth. At the direction of the Red Emperor, Governor Sor-Eel is surveying the valley south and north of Weis Domain for division into parcels and placed under the lordship of loyal servants of the Empire. At the time of this campaign the boundaries of six more land grants are under review by the Governor; as the campaign develops new overlords from the Empire may arrive to take control of these grants.

### Corflu

This island settlement and seaport on a deep-water channel of the Zola Fel is jointly owned and administered by the Corflu Trade Alliance, a business enterprise chartered and supported by the Lunar administration in Pavis, and the Tolkazzi family, the descendants of the exploreradventurer who helped found the settlement at Corflu. Employees of the Trade Alliance, their dependents, and the Marine garrison comprise a civilized population of about 200. Another 300-600 riverfolk (depending on the season) live on the island or nearby, along with a small population of newtlings and other aquatic sentients. A modest but growing sea trade funnels through Corflu, where goods must be off-loaded from ocean-going vessels and carried upstream to Pavis and points north and west by shallow draft riverboats.

#### INTRODUCTION



### **Trade in Prax**

The nomads of Prax need but one item, salt, for their way of life, but metal is highly desirable both for war and for domestic use.

Salt comes from the sea or a handful of wellknown licks. Sea salt is harvested along the Rozgali Sea by the Zola Fel riverfolk. The best known and largest lick is within the walls of the Big Rubble.

First Age trade in Prax came through three points. The northern was Moonbroth, an oasis at the edge of civilization on the trail to Dragon Pass and far Peloria. The central point was the Monkey Ruins, on the overland route to the coast. The southern outlet was at Kitoy, a small trading settlement at the mouth of the River of Cradles. The Issaries cult dominated trade. Goods passing out of Prax included truestone, leather, animals, and slaves. Mercenaries hired from these points returned later with tastes for foreign goods.

During the Second Age trade at these posts continued, though Kitoy was moved and its name changed to Feroda. The founding of Robcradle, and later Pavis, stimulated trade. The Morokanth developed a lucrative slave trade, bringing civilized sodbusters to Pavis and strong nomad slaves to Dragon Pass for use in other tasks. There was more exchange of material goods, much of it made in Pavis, to the nomads during this time. The Paps especially prospered and obtained many exotic items from the Empire of the Wyrm's Friends, and other specialized items from the Jrusteli via Feroda on the coast.

After the destruction of Pavis as a political force in 940 the Praxians found themselves isolated once again. The fear of dragons caused everyone to ignore any routes leading to Dragon Pass, and the closing of the oceans made Feroda wither away. Many peoples fled eastward into Vulture's Country and beyond. During this time, the level of material culture declined significantly. All metal in the area came either from Gonn Orta, the trolls via Adari, or through the Monkey Ruins.

In 1376 Tarsh sent envoys to the nomads to hire mercenaries. Glad to comply, the nomads quickly arranged for trade once again. Moonbroth was again the forward trading post, and remains so. Adari grew from the contact.

When Pavis was again settled in 1550 there was already a great surge of nomad demand for civilized goods. This outpost of civilization quickly became a primary market for decent quality and decently-priced goods, and attracted many nomad customers.

Under the Lunars new settlements in the valley and the requirements of the army and auxiliary garrisons have stimulated the economy. As throughout the history of Prax, weapons and other metal goods must still come via caravans from the west, but most food and equipment for settlers and soldiers are produced locally and carried by cart and riverboat to Pavis. Additionally, the opening of the Rubble for expeditions attracts merchants, scholars, and adventurers. Grain is shipped by river barge from as far south as Sun County, and leather goods and cavalry mounts from Pavis County command high prices.

Certain exotic and civilized goods with a high value-to-weight-and-volume ratio, including spices, furs, and educated slaves, are imported through Corflu and shipped upriver to Pavis by boat. Few items of comparable value are available for export (mainly unskilled slaves, hides, and curios and artifacts from the Rubble), but a number of Lunar entrepreneurs believe that flax, rice, and cotton plantations established in the Grantlands could provide commodities for ocean shipment to markets in Esrolia and the West.

With the rapid growth in trade has come an accompanying increase in banditry, and most caravan and river shippers rely on mercenaries to safeguard their cargoes in transit.

#### **Currencies in Prax**

Silver pennies are known as "Lunars" because most of these coins in circulation in the Valley are minted by the Empire. People with an anti-Lunar bias usually call them "guilders," "pennies," "stars," or just plain "silvers." Lunar peoples call these silver coins "Imperials."

"Wheels" are coins minted from gold by the Lokarnos cult. They are named after an ancient race called the Sun Wheel Dancers. The Yelmalio cult leaders have an obligation to use gold as much as possible. This sometimes gives them an image of ostentatious wealth, which is seldom the case. Silver money is typically pounded into lumps of metal before trading it for gold.

Copper coins of both Lunar and Sun Dome origin are commonly referred to as "coppers" or "clacks."

The lead coin called the "bolg" used by trolls is not in wide circulation in the valley, and the currency of Darkness creatures is not accepted in Sun County.

Relative	Values of Currencies
1 Wheel =	20 pennies/Lunars/guilders/stars
1 penny/Lunar =	10 clacks
1 clack =	10 bolas (for trollkind)

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### A Timeline for the River of Cradles Region

Here are dates for the most significant events in regional history.

- 620 Battle of Necklace Horse. United Praxian nomads are defeated by the Pure Horse Peoples and allies. Pure Horse People settle in Prax.
- 720 (?) Jrusteli/God Learners establish Feroda, a trading settlement at mouth of the River of Cradles.
- 780 (?) Robcradle founded by Jrusteli leader Thantax the Fair in alliance with Horse People. Several giant cradles captured here over the next few years.
- 800 Paragua the giant destroys Robcradle with assistance of Waha. Paragua and Waha then erect the gigantic walls for their own future defense.
- 809 Waha the Butcher, with assistance from some giants, sacks Adari. Settlers scatter, including the child Pavis, who goes to the Empire of the Wyrm's Friends. The next twenty years sees much success for the Praxian nomads.
- 830 Lord Pavis completes his studies and preparations and makes his way to the legendary Faceless Statue of Stone in Shadows Dance and animates it. With allies, Pavis attacks the barbarians at Paragua's Walls while the statue engages the giants. This is called the Too Tall Battle. Paragua is killed, Waha is incurably wounded by the statue, the barbarians flee, and Pavis is victorious. Waha is hurt again, later, by another Wyrm's Friend, Varajiia Nopor.
- 831 Pavis travels to Paps and cures Waha of his wounds. The god agrees to be friends with Pavis, then retires from active life. Peace is made. Settlers arrive to study with Pavis and his friends.
- 850 Lord Pavis declares the city finished enough for his immediate approval. He hopes other people can do their best, too, and dismisses the dwarves from his employment. The portion completed up to this time is later called the Real City.
- 860 Pavis calls his family, friends, and people together for one final lesson, then retires to a private and secret chamber inside his temple where he still resides. King Joraz Kyrem, first of the Arrowsmith Dynasty, is named lord of the city.
- 870 Thog the giant, with a small army, attacks the city of Pavis and is repulsed.
- 875 Thog the giant, with many of his kind and an army of trolls and nomads, attacks Pavis and kills, enslaves, or drives the humans into hiding. Priests seal up Pavis' temple, with themselves inside, to resist.
- 877 Joraz returns, with Horse army allies and friends from the Empire of the Wyrm's Friends, especially the Sun Dome Templars. The giant Thog is defeated and his allies destroyed. An era of prosperity and growth follows, with Pavis friendly to the nearby Empire.
- 924 Jaldon Goldentooth, unknown before this, leads a motley band of Praxian nomads in an attack on Pavis. They are driven away.
- 927 Jaldon Goldentooth leads a huge army of nomads against the city of Pavis. The defenders meet them in the field and are defeated. Refugees fleeing the horde fill the immense city. Jaldon lays seige to the Land-within-a-wall; the herds of his followers graze in the lush, barley-filled valley of Zola Fel.

- 940 Jaldon uses his secret magic to eat a great hole in the walls of Pavis, collapsing a part. His army rushes in to plunder the city, though much is undestroyed.
- 1042 Leaders of the Empire of the Wyrm's Friends assassinated, Empire cast down overnight.
- 1100 Dragonkill War wipes out all human life in nearby Dragon Pass. Shortly afterwards a mysterious force closes the oceans; no surface vessels are allowed upon it, and Prax and Pavis are cut off from outside civilization. Feroda abandoned.
- 1150 Toras Joran also breaks through the walls of Pavis and his army destroys more structures, except individual fortresses. Toras Joran was the first person to damage the temple of Pavis.
- 1195 Toras Joran slays many leaders in another invasion, and cracks the crystal bricks of Pavis' temple before being driven off by Balastor the Axe. Jokat Pulos sends for aid from northern darkness allies before he dies.
- 1237 Gerak Kag, a Karrg's Son, leads a troll army from Dagori Inkarth; nomads muster and are defeated by their magic. Balastor the Axe dies. Gerak Kag makes great spells and protects all his followers within the walls, trying to seal out humans. Troll dominance within the walls begins.
- 1237-1539 Troll dominance. City sealed off from outside world.
- 1250 Bimabwe Bigger-Than-Life leads nomads to defeat Horse Peoples at the battle of Alavan Argay.
- 1270 Unnamed hero killed by trolls in the city. Major nomad interest in the place ends.
- 1376 Envoys from the kingdom of Tarsh approach Praxian nomads and offer to hire mercenaries. Contact with civilized lands begins anew.
- 1420 Cattle-eating people enter Prax, with resultant trouble from angered natives.
- 1489 Battle between the nomads and the Horse Peoples ends in alliance at the hands of Sartar the Peacemaker.
- 1490 City of Thieves is established as a tradepost on the river, near the ancient city of Pavis.
- 1539 Dragonewts' Dream. Troll gates are broken, and many of their powers are disrupted.
- 1550 Duke Dorasar founds the city of New Pavis.
- 1554 Dragonewts build a temple in the Rubble.
- 1572 Nomad revolt in Pavis defeated by Dorasar and the forces of Pavis.
- 1579 Dorasar dies; Pavis becomes a republic.
- 1591 Kingdom of Sartar invaded by Lunar empire.
- 1598 Dormal the Sailor's Opening of the Seas permits sea passage along the southern coast.
- 1602 Armies of Sartar defeated. King Salinarg is killed and Boldhome, Sartar's capital, is sacked.
- 1605 Lunar invasion of Holy County.
- 1606 Earliest recorded raids along southern coast by Wolf Pirates based in Three Step Isles.
- 1610 The Lunar Empire invades Prax. The Lunars and their allies defeat a massed nomad army at Moonbroth. The Empire assumes authority over the city of Pavis, Pavis County, and the Zola Fel Valley from Sun County south to the sea under the terms of the Armistice of Prax. Political dissidents and rebellious elements from the Talastar, Carmanian, and Redland regions of the Lunar Empire are forcibly relocated to Pavis County lands ceded to the Empire under terms of the Armistice.

#### INTRODUCTION

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- 1612 Founding of Corflu by Tolkazzi, a member of the influential Ingilli family of Pavis. With Lunar Etyries Priest Koronius Falabdur, Tolkazzi established Corflu as a minor trade port.
- 1613 Count Solanthos Ironpike becomes ruler of Sun County. Sun Dome policy of alliance and accommodation with Lunar Occupation continues under Ironpike, though Sun County prerogatives are jealously guarded.
- 1613 Starbrow's Rebellion in Sartar. The ill-conceived rebellion is swiftly crushed. Starbrow escapes to Heortland. Many Sartarite refugees emigrate to the Pavis County region during the ensuing Lunar pacification of Sartar.
- 1615 Duke Raus of Rone, an exiled Lunar noble, establishes Ronegarth (Raus Fort) in the Grantlands [seven land grants created by the Red Emperor]. Duke Raus is the first of a series of Lunar exiles taking occupancy of Imperial grants along the southern reaches of the Zola Fel. The Emperor's dual purpose in creating these grants is to export political liabilities from the Empire while establishing civilized settlements to displace the intransigent Praxian nomads and their herds from the fertile lands of the valley. Settlers include recruited valley inhabitants and political troublemakers relocated from the central Lunar provinces; some plantations employ slave labor.
- 1615 Etyries High Priest Gharan Falabdur of Corflu disappears into the Wastes. Henceforth, the Corflu marketplace is without a permanent Etyries priest. Trade rights revert to the Tolkazzi family.

- 1616 Mysterious death and disappearance of Pharoah; Kethaela (The Holy County) is leaderless and vulnerable.
- 1617-1621 The approximate years of this campaign.
- 1619 Lunar army invades Heortland (western Kethaela) from Sartar. Surprise naval assault of Karse is staged from Corflu.
- 1620 Heortland in Lunar hands, except for city of Whitewall. King Brian of the Volsaxi and the last Orlanthi resistance to Lunar conquest are besieged in the citadel of Whitewall. Argrath rumored in Pavis. Cold Wind [organization of Sartarite expatriates fomenting rebellion] activities in Sartar and Prax provoke harsh reactions from the Lunar provincial government.
- 1621 Lunar Provincial General Fazzur Wideread vows to take Whitewall this year. The Red Emperor has declared that, in recognition of Orlanth's final defeat at the hands of the forces of the Red Goddess, a year of Empire-wide celebration is to commence at the fall of Whitewall.
- 1621 A Giant's Cradle appears floating down the Zola Fel to the Sea.
- 1621 Garrath Swordsharp vanishes.
- 1621 Gim-Gim the Grim, head of Lunar Intelligence in Pavis, returns to the Lunar Empire. Replacement unknown.

### **River Traffic on the Zola Fel**

#### **Newtling Reed Boats**

The newtlings typically build their crafts from bundles of reeds lashed together, though they use other materials if reeds are unavailable. These boats are 4-6 meters long and usually require two newtlings to handle them, because they are rather heavy in the water. They can be poled or paddled; oars and oarlocks are unused, though such craft could be braced and rigged for them. The passenger/cargo space is rarely more than a meter wide and three meters long. Newtlings will not let more than two passengers into any one reed boat. Because of their wide beam, these boats are quite stable. They survive encounters with rocks and rapids well because of their flexibility. Once they begin to come apart, though, they must be abandoned or rebuilt with entire new reed sections. The newtlings have a special way of rigging a small sail when needed by using one newtling as mast and rigging while the other steers. By trading off, the newtlings can move under sail for several hours before becoming exhausted.

Such reed boats are the most handy small boats in Glorantha. Many fishermen and small boaters along the River of Cradles copy the newtling style.

#### **Riverfolk Craft**

Traditional nomadic riverfolk craft are either reed boats and rafts based on newtling designs or coracles, small boats of fish or saurian hide stretched over flexible reed or wood frameworks. The coracles are light for portaging and easily dismantled for convenient storage. Both types of craft may be poled or paddled, often with the aid of cult magics for longer seasonal journeys.

Riverfolk who settle permanently in fishing communities along the river and its tributaries increasingly turn to more modern planked boat designs, though traditional designs are maintained alongside the

more modern boats for various specialized tasks. These riverfolk have also adopted simple sail rigs, most commonly the lateen rig, for travel along the long pools of the upper river in Sun and Pavis Counties.

#### **River Trade Craft**

The establishment of Corflu and settlements in the Grantlands have greatly stimulated river trade. Before the Lunars some grain barges were towed along the river, but most Pavis and Sun County communities were self-sufficient and had little interest in river trade. Now a small but growing import/export trade travels by river between Pavis and Corflu, and the Grantlands settlers are a ready market for goods from the relatively civilized north river reaches.

The river trade craft are of two kinds: hulled boats and barges, and rafts. Rafts cost relatively little to assemble, but require two to six raftsmen to guide them - large rafts can be poled only, and are very heavy, but are guite convenient for downriver-only shipments to the Grantlands. Hulled boats or flatboats, on the other hand, are more expensive and required skilled manufacture, but require smaller crews, are more maneuverable, offer more buoyancy than rafts for equal deck area, and with skill may be sailed, poled, and rowed back upriver. Skiffs are typically 4-6 meters in length and 1-2 meters wide, and have collapsible masts for sailing. In the marsh regions they are typically poled, paddled, or rowed. In bad weather a sailcloth shelter can be rigged on removable supports. Tow paths exist along the river through most of Sun and Pavis Counties, except where marshes and bogs make footing unreliable. Most boats designed for Pavis-to-Corflu travel also benefit from undines bound by enchantments into the keel or tiller; such enchantments are the exclusive grant of the Zola Fel cult, and part of the secret of its successful monopoly of boat trade on the river.

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### **History of the Region**

### **During the Godtime**

Before Orlanth slew Yelm and Darkness arose out of the Earth to shadow the world, Prax was a verdant and abundant land of plenty whose inhabitants ate the fruits of the fields and wandered where they pleased, friends to all.

With the Darkness, and Ernalda's withdrawal from the land, the peoples of the land met want and starvation, and most died. To keep away the Darkness, the folk called on Oakfed and fed him the forests of the land to keep him alive. The Wild Hunter, a rambunctious Air god, howled about the plain, slaughtering all who crossed his path. Eventually, the Devil himself arrived on his march of conquest and met Storm Bull. Their long battle devastated the land. One section of the plains died; the rest was blasted by the energies released in the struggle. But when the Spike exploded, a fragment of that truestone center of Law pinned the Devil to the ground and allowed Storm Bull to make his escape. The Devil still lies under the fragment, now known as the Block.

Then Waha was born from his mother Eiritha, one of Ernalda's daughters, and he brought the Covenant of eaters and eaten to the people of Prax. Certain animals, men, and morokanth became the eaters, and fed on those other animals (such as bison, impalas, high llamas, sables, and rhinos) who could survive on the rough vegetation left upon the plains. These peoples and creatures are the ancestors of the present day Praxian Nomad tribes and their beast herds.

After time began, the tribes of men and morokanth warred among themselves for the best remaining spots on the plains. Losers were often forced across the River of Cradles into Vulture's Country, an arid region more blasted and desolate than Prax. In a few years, hardened by the life there, the exiles would recross the river to raid and harass their now-complacent foes, and then reestablish their niche in the ecology of the region.

(For a review of Godtime events, see *Gods of Glorantha, Cults Book*, "Jrusteli Monomyth," pp. 6-12.)

### The Horse Barbarian Incursions

During the Dawn Age the harsh lands of Prax were left to the Nomads of the Covenant, but in the early Second Age came the migrations of the Pure Horse People into northwestern Prax from their homelands in Pent. West of Prax the kingdom of Dragon Pass had thrown off the yoke of troll rule in 578 in the socalled Tax Slaughter. This unified and powerful human-ruled land in firm alliance with the dragonewts soon became embroiled in wars with neighbors to the north.

These northern neighbors were allies or provinces of the Dara Happan empire. These sunworshipping, river-valley dwellers had ruled their lands ever since liberation from trolls in the early Dawn Age. They had thereafter borne a mythbased grudge against the Orlanthi barbarian highlanders. To the Dara Happoi, resumption of war with the kingdom of Dragon Pass merely continued a more ancient conflict.

Dara Happa sent mounted corps into the open grasslands of the Redlands and Pent to punish the horse barbarians, traditional enemies from the east. During this great foray one of the horse tribes was badly battered; their only divine solace was obscure prophecies. At this same time, the leaders of Dragon Pass sought armed peoples to resist the raids of the Prax nomads; a tribe of the horse barbarians agreed to come southward and live in Prax as allies to the King of Dragon Pass.

The tribe was called the Pure Horse People. They were among the most conservative peoples of Pent. They held to the most ancient belief, and refused to augment their dwindling horse herds with foodstuffs from other types of herd beasts. Their migration was a relief to most other nomad chiefs, for they took most of the stiff-necked traditionalists with them. Shortly after this time, most of the tribes of Pent were riding horses but herding sheep and cattle as well.

The Praxians were outraged at the intrusion of a new tribe into their limited grazing lands, and they sought the aid of Waha himself. The god did not respond, and many leaders fought without him. The decisive battle was fought in 620 at the battle of Necklace Horse.

The battle brought the Praxians to utter defeat. The nomad army charged the horsemen and their allies and fought it out face to face in epic barbarian fashion. The horsemen won.

The Praxian nomads withdrew from the marches of Dragon Pass and began raiding the Pure Horse tribes instead of Dragon Pass, as had been planned by the sly leaders of Dragon Pass. The horsemen prevailed against the nomads, and even expanded their grazelands into the Valley of Cradles.

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## The Jrusteli God Learners and the Giant Cradles

Thus the first invasion of Prax was by the Pure Horse People, a nomadic culture similar to that of the Praxian nomads. The second invasion came from the sea and was by the Jrusteli, also called the God Learners, a civilized culture with utterly alien customs.

The Jrusteli came from the large archipelago of the same name located across the ocean to the southwest of Genertela. They had moved to Jrustela generations before to avoid rebellion in Seshnela. In Jrustela they built warships and fought the Waertagi, who had ruled the seas from their legendary dragonships since before the Dawn.

In 718 the battle of Tanian's Victory destroyed the majority of the Waertagi ships and drove the rest into hiding. The oceans were abruptly open to unrestricted exploitation, and the Jrusteli moved into the gap. They wrought a worldwide empire which touched the coasts of every continent and ringed the whirling Pool of Magasta.

The Irusteli once found an enormous cradle floating upon the seas, and boarded it to find a giant baby, with guardians and many magical treasures. The cradle itself was valuable to the God Learners. The infant, despite its youth, fought back and was slain along with the guardians. The God Learners deduced that the cradle had come from the "Prax River" and that there could be others like it floating downstream. In 720 they built a port called Feroda, at the mouth of the so-named River of Cradles. Several more cradles were captured, but nomads told the Jrusteli that more cradles were captured upriver by the Horse People. Explorers went upstream and returned with shrewd political observations. Chieftains were called to make deals, arrangements were weighed, and at last a new alliance was formed between Thanrax the Fair of the Jrusteli and Firegleam, king of the Horse People.

About the year 780 the city of Robcradle was founded upriver from Feroda. Walls were laid and buildings constructed. The river was thus secured to prevent the escape of any cradle. Trade quickly moved up and down the river, strengthening the Horse People as well as the Jrusteli. Three cradles came downriver over the next 20 years; all were seized and dismembered at Robcradle.

The native Praxians were outraged that the Jrusteli and Pure Horse People had allied against them and seized so much grazing land for their outlandish animals. Chieftains and khans sent great gifts and fervent prayer to Waha in the Paps. Others sought allies against the strange intruders. Both attempts eventually succeeded. In 800 the giant Paragua and many friends came out of the north from the Rockwood Mountains to attack the city of Robcradle. Waha raised his armies in support; all the tribes of Prax rode to assault the city. Resistance was crushed. The majority of the Pure Horse People escaped by fleeing, leaving their unmounted allies to be surrounded and slaughtered to a man. The giants marched on Robcradle and kicked and stomped, smashing the city to bits. Thus, they exacted vengeance on those who had slain their innocent children.

Waha gloried that they had overcome the enemy magics. He called his new friend, Paragua, to him and spoke. "We have proven the might of our arms this day. The enemy sorcery would not save them. I do not know what their magic is, but I propose to use it against them. Surely they will return and fight us. Let us put up great walls to impede them, as their puny walls tried to impede us. Thus, we will turn their magic against them." Paragua agreed and set his giants to work. They returned to the Rockwoods, where many giants still live, and wrought great slabs of rock from the cliffs. These were trimmed and carried back to Robcradle, then simply thrust into the ground and pounded into place, making a great wall surrounding the region of Robcradle's former farmlands. Animals grazed in the ruins.

Once inspired, Waha did not rest. He sent his armies against foes on every border, plundering and destroying. In 809 his army stormed Adari, the trading town between Prax and Dagori Inkarth. Many residents were killed or enslaved, but some escaped and made their way through troll country to the safety of Dragon Pass. For the next decade Waha's peoples made trouble for everyone adjacent to Prax.

### The Hero Pavis and the Faceless Statue

As a young man, Pavis escaped the sack of Adari and reached Dragon Pass. His family had connections there, and this bright young man studied the magic of the dragons, as was newly popular there. He made many friends among important peoples as he progressed in his research.

The details of his study are unknown, but the results are clear. In 830, after many years and preparations, he and his companions sneaked deep into the troll lands of Dagori Inkarth and made their way to a mysterious statue which sat atop a huge throne. Troll legend says the statue was there when they arrived aeons ago. Pavis is known not to have believed this, but never revealed why. GVV€+LA□XOU: AR∞ £UQ2+2AY#OXT

Pavis animated and befriended the statue. He and his companions rode atop it as it strode to Dragon Pass. There he met with Joraz Kyrem, khan of the Horse People, who was anxious to reestablish his folk in Prax. The new allies marched slowly to the old site of Robcradle. In the first battle, the statue alone drove off the beast riders, and they retreated within the walls of Paragua. Then Pavis and his army and statue attacked. This is called the Too Tall Battle, and was fought in 830. The giants were driven off by the magic of the horse priests, the nomads were confounded by the magic of Pavis and his friends, and Waha engaged in combat with the statue, but was injured, and had one of his hamstrings torn out. Howling in pain, the god limped away and his armies fled with him, abandoning the useless walls to their foes. The giants withdrew to the mountains and never returned.

Other folk retaliated against the Praxians. The denizens of Dragon Pass sent out a strong expedition against the Paps. It was led by a great worker of magic, Varajiia Nopor. Waha had to respond to this challenge, and was once again wounded severely. Numb with loss, the barbarians agreed to surrender if their sacred grounds would be left unharmed. The invaders agreed and withdrew.

Pavis then visited Waha in the Paps and used his arts to heal the barbarian god of his crippling injuries. This brought peace between Pavis and the nomads, and they agreed to act peacefully around Robcradle if Pavis would properly respect their beliefs, too. Many compromises were made, but both parties agreed and peace was made.

### The Building of Pavis City

After the Too Tall Battle, the Faceless Statue collapsed, all magical energies exhausted. Its body made the great quarry whose stones built the city's interior. Construction was swift, thanks to the statue's stone and dwarvish craft.

The dwarf aid was voluntary, although Pavis gifted them with some headstone, bowelstone, and marrowdust. They came because they wished to honor the Faceless Statue. They were led by Flintnail Hardeye, who was one of the ancient race of Mostali, the Dwarf-Makers. Before he left the city he fathered a son upon one of Pavis's daughters; this son began the Flintnail cult when he grew up. This cult centered around a temple of masons and sculptors built within the quarry, whose existence has continued through all Pavis's history, providing the craftspeople and experts necessary for the continued building within the city grounds.

Five general types of stone came from the statue quarry. The Headstones were used exclusively in the creation of the original King's Villa, later called the Temple of Pavis. The stones were radiant crystalline growths and included the most exotic of the Organstones built right within the structure of the temple palace. Armstones were used to construct walls for the city, while ordinary buildings' walls were made from Bodystones. Legstones were used for streets, steps, and bridges. The Bowelstones made plumbing, dungeons, and sewers.

Organstones, mentioned above, are unique gems of exotic function. Mastering them was the craft of the Mostali, but many people could put them to some use. A Heartstone was once set upon the sceptre of Pavis, while Liverstone is useful as a purifying agent. Trollkin once fought a war over the Kidneystones. In Pavis' temple, the Eyestones are magical perceptors, while the Toothstones are immortal soldier guardians.

Around 850 the city of Pavis was complete. In 860 Pavis himself retired permanently to his palace. His children were unsuited to rule, and rather than cede control to the Empire of the Wyrm's Friends, the city leaders met and selected a new king from among themselves. Pavis approved, and the Arrowsmith Dynasty took rule of the city.

Although located strategically in the River of Cradles' delta, entry to the port of Feroda was treacherous due to the shifting sand bars and to the tides which rose and fell many meters. Only small craft with long tie lines or alert captains could approach the place, and the heat, humidity, and pestilential insects made Feroda an unpopular habitation. Many ships preferred (if possible) to sail upriver to Pavis itself. Thus, Pavis became a port as well as an interior trade city.

By 870 the city flourished. This also was the height of the power of the Jrusteli and the Third Council. The Dara Happan empire had been crushed by the Council and the new Carmanian Empire, and the only remnants of its power were the scattered Sun Dome Temples. The few cradles that still floated down the river were snared by a Pavis-devised trap based on Cradlecatch Island.

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### The Vengeance of the Giants

In 870 Thog the giant appeared with an army of trolls and trollkin raised in Shadows Dance. They laid siege to Adari and marched south to Pavis. The Arrowsmith Dynasty raised their own troops and mercenaries among the troll-fearful nomads and drove off the giant and his allies.

Thog returned with more trolls and a band of Jolanti in 875. Jolanti were a race of mindless, brutish giants. In this case, they followed Thog's every whim. Moving too swiftly to permit barbarian allies to come to Pavis' aid, Thog and his allies broke the walls; the trolls swarmed in. Defense was fierce, but most of the city fell. But even Thog's power was unable to desecrate the Temple of Pavis.

King Jhoraz Kyrhee (Joraz Kyrem) fled to the Empire and recruited the Sun Dome Templars to assist him. Braced with their magic and his own, he met Thog in battle outside the walls and put out one of Thog's eyes. Then his men marched against the trolls as Thog retreated.

The trolls tried to keep Jhoraz from the places of power, but the spears of the Sun Domers opened the way and Jhoraz engaged Thog in a further test of magic and will. They locked in battle for days while Thog's allies were whittled away and even the Jolanti toppled. The pursuit ended when Thog lost an arm, for he fled to the ironcold peaks of the Giant mountains. After this defeat, the cradles ceased floating down the river.

### The Founding of Sun County

The Sun Dome mercenaries from Dragon Pass who aided Jhoraz Kyrhee in the defense of Pavis took as payment for their service a grant of land south of Pavis. Their leader and first count, Arinsor Clearmind, led the Sun Domers south along the banks of the River of Cradles. Here a naiad, a daughter of Zola Fel, engaged Arinsor in an ancient ritual re-enacting the story of Yelm and the Oslir River, wherein the lord of light fell but was revived by the river. Thus the sun people made an accord with Zola Fel whereby the river would provide for the Yelmalion crops while the Sun Domers would guard the purity of the river.

The martial prowess of the Sun Dome Templars and the cunning irrigation of the Yelmalion farmers enabled the Sun Domers to prevail against the raids of the nomads and the harsh climate. Settlements were well situated and fortified, and well-trained light cavalry provided a necessary deterrent to nomad raids. In time the lands of the sun grew green and prosperous.

### The Great Walls of Pavis

The Flintnail cult had been leading guerrilla warfare against the trolls. After the victory, they took control of the remaining Jolanti and rebuilt the giants' wall. Using clever Mostali stonemagic, they sealed the seams where the cyclopean slabs were joined, sacrificing most of the rock-like Jolanti in the process. Thus treated, the walls gained the power of the Jolanti to resist magics, gods, or spirits who attempted to travel over, under, or through the walls. The walls were a uniform 25 meters tall, so they rippled with the contours of the land. Three immense gates were built in the earth fashion, using lintels instead of arches. Sacred creatures, which can still be seen visiting their old nesting grounds, gave the three gates their names: Griffin Gate, Wyvern Gate, and Hippogriff Gate.

Later, human-sized fighting platforms were erected atop the walls. Aerial defense of the city was conducted from chimney-like towers, surmounted by open-topped and unwalled discs of stone where magicians, aerial combatants, and archery machines gathered, as was customary in Third Council and Jrusteli cities.

The walls were much larger than necessary for any city of the time. They formed an enclosure about five kilometers long and almost two kilometers out from each side of the river around Cradlecatch Island. Because of the Pure Horse lineage of the inhabitants, much of the flat land within the walls was given over to pasturage, while homes were built on the nine hills within the walls.

Under the rule of Jhoraz and his descendants, the city again flourished. Inspired by Sun Dome methods, farmers spread all along the River of Cradles to use the new agricultural methods. A demigod-like priest from Dragon Pass built the Puzzle Canal, and elves arrived from Shadows Dance to create the still-famed Garden.

### **Jaldon Toothmaker**

With the horse clans once again in the ascendant, certain animal-riding Praxian nomad tribes began migrating from their ancestral homes into the wastes of Genertela. These departures were first held to be suicidal or mystical in nature, but soon proved to be merely a bleaker variation of the familiar nomadic lifestyle. As the Horse People and Pavis flourished, more animal nomads were forced into the limitless wastes. GVV€TIADXOU.: AR∞ £WO2#&AY#O\*T

Jaldon was born among the wastes around 890 in a Bison tent. He was struck mad, they say, by statues of gods he saw in the ruins of the Tunneled Hills, whose perfect teeth and sparkling grins inspired the diet-plagued barbarian. After a troubled life of adventure, which may have included several years in easternmost Genertela, Jaldon returned to his nomad brethren. From that time he was called Goldentooth by contemporary chroniclers, which indicates that he had already received the symbol of his power and was striving for Hero status even then.

His raids against Pavis and river valley farmers grew bolder until in 924 Jaldon led the first invasion of Bison Riders supported by Impalas. He hoped in that way to mislead the Pavis army about his growing strength among all the tribes. The Pavis army defeated Jaldon with a clever pincer movement and wrote him off as just another barbarian opportunist.

In 927, however, he reappeared in force, laid siege to Pavis, and then destroyed the zebra cavalry which gathered to oppose him. He besieged the city until 940, defeating three relief armies from the Empire of the Wyrm's Friends. With the magics, defenses, and treasury of the great city drained, he summoned the power of the inspirational statues of his youth and chewed through the mighty walls. The barbarians poured in, sacking the city and its palaces. The Arrowsmith Dynasty was destroyed and the city lost all contact with the now-decadent Empire of the Wyrm's Friends.

#### The Seventeen Foes of Waha

During the period between 940 and 1237 the city of Pavis was visited many times by the nomads, intent each time upon capturing soft city folk for slaves or to kill them for sport. There were goods to steal or destroy, and tearing down buildings was occasionally considered a sacred deed. Burning the grasslands within the walls was common, though frowned upon by Eiritha, and the expansion of the elvish forest from the confines of its former garden further added to the ruin.

The natives of the city metamorphosed from cultured urbanites into desperate savages. The greatest single slaughter followed the initial breakin by Jaldon Goldentooth in 940 when half of the city's 25,000 inhabitants were killed or enslaved. The succeeding bloodbath among the helpless outlying farmers was even worse. Some straggled into Adari. Some found survival in serfdom to the nomads, dedicating the best of the crops and lands to the upkeep of the nomad animals while subsisting on the leavings. This was virtually the same as slavery, but had the nebulous virtue of allowing them some claim to their lands.

The Arrowsmith Dynasty was no more. Others arose to lead the remnants. These leaders were valiant and powerful, but their eventual doom is told by their historic legendary title: The Seventeen Foes of Waha. All eventually fell before the might of the nomads. In later years several of these leaders actually ruled at the same time, each over his own little besieged district in the ruins. Little is known of some save their names, immortalized in nomad chants. Sometimes their spirits can be encountered on the streets of the Rubble. They attack nomads, but are known to befriend others.

Garngar Gateguard was a general of Pavis who fortified the gates and the breach and held off the nomads for several years. He was a zebra rider, and his cavalry was held to rushing from gate to breach to gate again. Garngar died when Jorbal Rhino Khan performed The Great Magic and summoned the long-dead Great Rhino, who pushed down the wall for the Second Break, on the hill now known as Rich Hill in New Pavis. This had the dual effect of making an entry for the nomads and of breaching the security of the zebra pens. The defenders of Pavis met a double defeat, as the victorious nomads killed Garngar and stole most of the Zebra breeding stock.

**Opili the Wallmaker** was Garngar's successor, and he devised the current scheme of many small forts spread throughout the rubble. This served to protect the now-immobile populace, but allowed the nomads free riding wherever they wanted to travel throughout the Rubble. Only the everguarded glades of the Garden were safe. Now began the Garden's rapid expansion beyond its original boundaries.

Despite its segmented nature, the entire city was ruled by Opili for many years. He died either in bed, or, as told in barbarian chants, at the hands of various tribal heroes. Pavis' organization splintered into small clans after his death. Remaining records are vague and contradictory.

**Estangtang Griffin Rider** is thought to be one of the few humans ever to be accepted as a member of the Sun Dragon cult, and the nomads have a fear song of the "Sun Riders" who come out of the sky to haunt them. Their favorite song is that of the death of Estangtang to Impala arrows.

**Kagtang Four-Magic** was a mighty spell-user slain by Sable treachery. Little else is known.

Mapiri Red Stallion is thought to have been a zebra rider from the far reaches of Prax who came to set up his own throne and died on it.

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**Bisjoe Boggle-Eater** ruled during a period of light nomad activity, and is said to have disappeared into the earth while pursuing his favorite activity, fighting chaos manifestations. Contradictory nomad songs name him as one of the first of the Rubble leaders slain by Toras Joran.

**Forestang** has not left even an honor-name, though his spirit, like those of most of the others, has been encountered in the Rubble.

Bingolos Blue Nose and One-Eyed Afasari Por rose to power and fell leaving only their names.

**Baku of the Three Treasures** is thought to have been an Agimori adventurer who rose to prominence. Adventurers still try to discover one of his three treasures, but some scholars propose that Baku's three treasures were his spear, his mate, and the loyalty of his people.

Tan-Bard Smoke tried to fire the Garden in return for an insult and died under elven arrows while nomads sat on their beasts and laughed.

**Olkog Two-Club** was a dark troll leader who came down from Adari and was slain by Balastor, the Champion of Pavis. This was the start of Balastor's mighty career as a trollslayer, and is thought to have prompted the troll invasion of 1200.

At that time, Toras Joran was in his decline, but the warring of factions within the city prompted one last raid in 1195, in which he slew four of the five most prominent leaders of the Rubble. **Makor Abolg the Six-Fingered** went down under his lance at the break. **Jokat Pulos the Dark Priest** died at the Pavis Temple, when Toras Joran actually cracked the crystalline walls of the temple; the cracks are there still. **Morkor Ablos** and **Baskori Alingos** died at the Angle fort and Opili's Hill respectively, and only **Balastor** managed to drive Toras Joran off.

Balastor was jubilant in victory until he stood in the gatehouse at Griffin Gate in 1239 and beheld the plains darken with the bodies of trolls arriving armed with the magic power of Kyger Litor. The battered nomads could do nothing to stop the invasion: without their buffer, the city was doomed. Balastor fell in its defense, buying time for the last citizens of Pavis to get to the dubious safety of their forts and holes.

### **Troll Invasion and the Fall of Pavis**

During the troubled times, the human residents sought many different forms of assistance. One group, experimenting with Darkness and the powers of Hell, discovered many interesting ways of help. In this they lost sight of many dangers as well, for about 1195 one of their leaders sent for help, offering great rewards to the Queendom of Dagori Inkarth. Shortly afterwards trolls found their way into Pavis, and their scouts sought the best routes for an army to march.

In 1237 the army, led by a Karrg's Son named Gerak Kag, set off southward. They were intercepted near Pairing Stone by a combined Praxian army, eager to do battle with infantry trolls in the daytime. But the priestesses with the troll army released a stinking black cloud which made the nomad mounts uneasy, and then from it sprang hellhounds which caused terrible panic. The nomad shamans loosed their gods against the darkness, but successive attacks by Morning Star, Thunderbird, Lightning Boy, and the Pure Horse Founder all failed against the spectral troll spirits. Panicked and demoralized, the nomads fled and fell with their backs to the monstrous enemy.

Gerak Kag and his picked warriors approached the city first, and with one jump landed atop the mighty walls. They paced the length of the structure, then their army streamed through the long-shattered gates. During this time Balastor, the last popular leader of the humans in the Rubble, fell.

Within the walls there was much building by the trolls, and rock and lead were used to seal the ancient gates. The breaches were closely guarded, and it grew increasingly difficult and dangerous for nomads to penetrate the city. Trolls eventually built walls of questionable strength across the breaches.

With the final collapse of Pavis, Sun County was left completely isolated from allies, trade, or communications with other Yelmalion communities in Dragon Pass and beyond. In the more peaceful preceding era the Sun Domers had ceased to raise horses; now, without an effective cavalry, they were less able to defend their lands from nomad raiders who increasingly found slim pickings in Pavis to the north. The Sun Domers refer to the period 1200-1575 S.T. as the Solitude of Testing. Some Sun County lands occasionally fell under the domination of various nomad tribal chieftains, but the line of counts descended from Arinsor remained unbroken and the Sun Dome Temple remained unconquered throughout this troubled time.

Around the year 1270 a barbarian hero tried to enter the city, first by stealth and then by great magics. He was defeated, and the trolls say it was Waha himself whom they had conquered. None of the chieftains in Prax had children that year, nor the next until the rescue of the armed corpse by a one-armed woman from Tourney Altar. Afterwards, no nomad tried to invade or plunder the troll fort.

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### The Troll Occupation

During the lifetime of Gerak Kag the humans were hard-pressed to survive at all. Some, legend says, were captured and totally enslaved. Others were captured and totally devoured. Some simply hid well, or fought valiantly but not well enough. The death of Gerak Kag was followed by the splintering of troll unity, but not of troll dominance. The demarcation of forces was never clear-cut. After many years of shifting fortunes, several human strongholds, a dozen powerful troll clans, and many trollkin gangs remained. Alliances were short-lived and constantly betrayed.

The temple of Kyger Litor and Gerak Kag was the dominant unifying factor among trolls when danger threatened, but some clans never joined the hero cult and barely recognized the priestesses there. One group of rebellious trolls is known to have worshipped at black stone altars topped by impaling spikes, but records are scarce for 200 years.

Iffinbix was the name of a settlement which lasted until about 1400. It centered about a god of that name, connected to the earth but with some sort of sorcery as well. Yojarl Thirdeye was the name of their leading hero; who showed how to eat the Agipith root which lets worshippers across the threshold of their temples without harm. When their temples are found even now, the root must be eaten to ensure safety. These temples are easily recognized by their four-sided, sloped, slate roofs.

The followers of Mani Tor were well-known for a long time. They centered upon Mani's Hill, where their fort stood. Mani of the Many Lives was their leader; who irregularly reincarnated in the clan every two or three generations. He uses strange powers to protect his people, who are very loyal to him and his cult.

Kar's Family was a gang of wandering humans made famous by the feats of Vokord Foroish, a nomad whose betrothed had been kidnapped. This nomad braved the terrors of the Rubble to rescue her. In the process he single-handedly wiped out Kar's Family, who had not kidnapped her. (She was later sacrificed by trolls, after a series of transfers.)

### Life Outside the Walls (1237 to 1540)

About 1250 the animal nomads temporarily allied under the leadership of Bimabwe Bigger-Than-Life, an Impala Hero whose fate led him to crush the horse barbarians who had entered Prax some 500 years earlier. The Pure Horse People, still weakened from their sufferings in the fight against Gerak Kag and Kyger Litor, had little chance against the combined tribes, and the greater part of them were destroyed by Alticamelus, Impala, Morokanth, and Sable tribesmen in the battle of Alavan Argay. The survivors, mostly children guarded by the elderly and a few women and maimed warriors unfit to fight in the last battle, decided to brave the dangers and high adventure of a deadly territory rather than the slave collars of their conquerors, and slipped away to Dragon Pass.

Prax contact with human settlers in Dragon Pass came late. The Pure Horse People had been kindly received by the nonhuman races of the region, and were ceremonially adopted by the natives with a ritual of rebirth and baptism. Afterwards, the remnant Pure Horse People were called the Grazelanders, and were heir to grazing rights over all the lowland grasslands not reserved for Ironhoof's folk. Tarsh was founded afterwards and opened trade with the Holy Country, but maintained a silence toward Prax, probably as a precaution against the rapacious nomad hordes.

In 1376 envoys from Tarsh, escorted by magicians and guards bedecked as messengers from the gods, approached tribes in Prax. The initial contact was with Sable peoples, but Alticamelus and Bison folk eventually came as well. The Tarsh envoys were hiring mercenaries to fight off the horse mercenaries who had penetrated from the north, and offered plunder and training in exchange for nomad aid. This began a long history of hiring mercenaries from Prax for distant wars.

By 1420 cattle-herding, horse-riding people had been re-introduced into Prax. The event caused considerable unrest and fighting, but the newly arrived people were well able to take care of themselves. They carried battle magics, and their magicians worshipped Rune gods, unlike the shamans of Prax. These cattle people offered proper sacrifice to the deities of the Paps and steadily forced their way into Prax history as the "illegitimate" tribe of Prax. The animal nomads were content when the "cattle bastards" kept mostly to the regions of No Man's March, the Better Place, and the approaches to the Storm Hills and Moonbroth Oasis. Horse clans did, however, wander far on occasion.

In 1489 a nomad shaman alliance summoned many of the old spirits who had driven out the Pure Horse People some 230 years earlier. Led by temporarily incarnated spirits acting as puppet leaders for the shamans, the barbarian tribes began a terrible war against the cattle peoples. The

#### HISTORY OF THE REGION

#### **River of Cradles**

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newcomers proved more powerful than anticipated, and were aided by mercenaries from Dragon Pass as well. The ancient spirits, who had been counted on heavily, were defeated by Orlanth and his god-children from Dragon Pass. The shaman alliance began internal squabbling, but the appearance of the holy man Sartar saved the situation and provided honorable compromise for all. Sartar himself recompensed much of both sides, and personally led a campaign against recalcitrant shamans.

About 1490 there was a new settlement started outside the walls of Pavis. It was called the City of Thieves (now called Badside), and it was permitted both as a favor to Sartar and because it offered a trade outlet between the nomad peoples and Adari in the far north. This place was supported by the riverboat people, who had long before spread their influence all along the river. It was also a convenient neutral ground for the tribes.

This trading city continued to grow, and eventually housed a fairly large human population. The brooding walls of the ancient troll-haunted city continued to sit in closed silence, ignored and feared, until the year 1539.

### The Re-Opening of Pavis

In 1539 the unusual event called the Dragonewts' Dream took place. At that time all of the living dragonnewts of Dragon Pass crawled into their ancient cities, sealed and boobytrapped them, and disappeared from view.

Then, in numbers far greater than those of living dragonewts, there appeared phantasmal images of dragonewts, generally dressed in antique costume, going about a silent and mysterious ritual. In some cases, they caused other portions of their phantom reality to appear as well, such as the Pyramid of Caran, which has sporadically appeared ever since. It was possible to interfere with the ghostly creatures, but such attempts almost always led to severe retaliation by the apparitions. In those occasions where a ritual was entirely disrupted or destroyed by external forces, the dragonewts always made at least one more try to perform it again.

The purpose and result of this five-year dream is quite unknown, although many theories have been put forth. Among other events forced by the Dragonewt's Dream was the opening of Pavis. The magically sealed doors hampered the easy passage of the dragonewt ghosts, and when the defenses of the Wyvern Gate were breached by spectral dragonewt magic, there was a terrible battle with the defensive spells and spirits, which destroyed the phantom dragonewt procession. A second procession destroyed the gate's remaining defenders, and the spooks continued on to the ruins of the ancient dragonewt temple, built there during the heyday of the Empire of the Wyrm's Friends. The ruins were spiritually erected for the occasion, and the ghosts completed their ceremony. Two more processions appeared later and performed the same ritual, and for a final time, the ghosts marched around the perimeter of the ruins hissing a song which is still heard by people on occasion.

This event broke the vise grip of the trolls on the Rubble, and once again movement into and out of the Rubble was fairly easy. About 15 years later, a band of dragonewts populated their temple site in Pavis and began to erect the temple again. Although not at all the size of its ancient glory, this holy place is one of the few major dragonewt sites maintained outside of Dragon Pass, Ralios, or Kralorela.

Since that time there has occurred little of major historical interest within the walls of Pavis, although it had become a major hunting ground for persons seeking ancient goods or heroic glory. Natives continued their internecine feuding, and neither trolls nor humans were powerful enough to leave their ancient ruins, yet both banded together in times when a major invasion threatened. Occasional raids to the outside were considered normal by nearby humans and simply part of the everyday danger of living in Prax.

In 1550 refugees from the principality of Sartar founded their own city, New Pavis, or Pavis Outside the Walls, made sacred by bones of their friends, who act as guardian spirits. Its walls included part of the Great Wall, which they patrolled and kept clear along the top, mounting defensive engines in several places.

### **Dorasar Founds New Pavis**

In Dragon Pass, the great and wise King Sartar started a splendid dynasty renowned for wisdom and generosity. A son of King Sartar, Eonistaran the Sage, lived in Jonstown. His two sons were raised with their cousins, the princes of Sartar. Dorasar was the younger of Eonistaran's sons, and he was close to Prince Sarotar, the heir to the throne. He and Sarotar practiced at arms, poetry, law, and the hunt, and Dorasar was the first to swear allegiance to the prince when he was of age to receive fealty.

Prince Sarotar fell in love with a woman of the Holy Country. Their love was deep and intense, but a terrible problem kept them apart. Sarotar, by such vows. They had one child, a girl, but Sarotar was slain by Arkilia's other lovers while attempting to secretly kidnap her.

Dorasar's life was destroyed when his liege was killed. Dorasar had sworn to defend the man with his own life, and had only thought to sit at the right hand of his lord. Dorasar felt guilty that his prince must depart without Dorasar's sword in defense. Dorasar decided to make a place which would keep Sartar's secrets and lifestyle pure and untainted by such nonhumane traditions.

Dorasar was a clever man, much traveled. After long scouting, he settled on the wilds of Pavis. He returned to his clan with treasure and tales of wonders in the legendary Rubble of Pavis. He found many who would commit their bodies or money to his first expedition, one of exploration and plunder. Many who went returned wealthy. There was trouble in Sartar in those days, and many people wanted to withdraw before the encroaching Lunar menace. When Dorasar and his friends led a second expedition to settle in Pavis there were many volunteers.

Dorasar did not approach this new land as a stranger, without plans or friends. His wisdom was evident in his foresight. While upon the plains with his people, he traveled with Gorgar Bluecloak, a Sable chieftain and friend. Together they drove off a large warband of Impala people and reached the river.

At the river, several others came to meet them. There was Ingilli the Fisher, who came with many people from the banks and mouth of the river to aid him. Too came Varthanis Brighthelm, the count of Sun County, who sought allies against the Impala tribe. There was Olgkarth Arrow-Eye of the Zebra people, who was made king of that tribe with Dorasar's help. Finally came Ginkizzie, king of the dwarves of Pavis, who spoke for the inhabitants of the Real City and the Flintnail cult.

All these folk sat down and counted their followers, added their wealth, boasted of their exploits, and determined what each would receive in the city to be built. During this time, many folk came out of hiding from the valley and asked for refuge. A great troll attack was fended off. Finally, decisions were made and everyone agreed: oaths were sworn, pacts made, and promises spoken.

Dorasar staked out the limits of the city walls. Others performed parts in the rites as well. The council met in the center, swore their oaths, and founded the city. The walls were begun, the streets laid out, and the buildings started. Dorasar became ruler of the city for life, but none of his heirs could take the title, nor could any other. After the Duke's death, the city was ruled by a council of its leaders, each aware of the others and of their part in the whole. The Pavis cult gave guidance.

New Pavis was founded in 1550. Dorasar lived as duke until 1579. His body was burned, in Orlanthi fashion, though some say his spirit remains to protect the city in need.

During his life Dorasar ruled strongly and well. His city was not part of the kingdom of Sartar, though it swelled with refugees from that war-torn land. His farmers went up and down the river, expanding their holdings and remaining friendly with the nomads.

The nomad irritation with the civilized rules of Pavis exploded in 1572 when those within the city revolted and tried to open the gate to allies outside. The plot was poorly planned, and defenders moved to prevent the attack before it began. There was savage bloodshed as the nomads were defeated. They lost many rights because of that fight, for they no longer have a member upon the council, nor may they ever camp on the south of the river within thirty kilometers of Pavis.

The wearying troubles between the kingdom of Sartar and the expanding Lunar empire sent many refugees to distant Pavis. The city kept aloof and sent no warriors, though individuals certainly went on their own to fight the distant foe. Many Sartarites came just after Sartar fell, in 1602, when it seemed Pavis was safely out of the line of the Lunar advance.

But in 1610, after being turned back from the ports of the Holy Country, the Lunar army marched eastward toward Pavis. The nomad chieftains were well aware of the invasion. Storm Khans and Khans of all the tribes had predicted it, and each was sure it would bring glory to them as they crushed the Chaos-worshipping Moon followers.

When the actual invasion began, the nomads were embroiled in one of their usual fratricidal conflicts. Despite pleas from the priestesses of the Paps who gathered all the Khans together, only the Bison and Impala Khans would lead their warriors against the invaders. In fact, the Sable Riders refused even to come to the gathering and showed up on the right flank of the Lunar army. None of the tribes had reckoned that the famed Antelope Lancers of the Lunar Army, Sable Riders with close clan ties to their Praxian cousins, would accompany the invading Lunar forces. Neither had

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the nomads anticipated that the Sun Dome phalanxes and citizen militia would appear as allies of the Lunar Provincial Army.

### The Battle of Moonbroth

The nomad host met the Lunars, Sun Domers, and Sable cavalry on the edge of the Good Place, near the Moonbroth oasis where the Lunar army was assembling. The Bison Riders and Impala Riders had gathered Rhino Riders, Pavis Survivors, the Agimori, Newtlings, the Basmoli Berserkers, and the Bolo Lizard people to their side, along with some medicine bundles, a shaman-controlled Oakfed, and even a contingent of Broos.

Despite the power of this coalition, it had no coherence, and the Lunar army used its strong infantry to break the charge of the bison and rhinos. The nomads had never encountered caltrops before; the sharp spikes slowed down the assault so the Lunar and Sun Dome hoplites could slaughter the oncoming hordes. The skirmishing Impalas and Pavis Survivors were met by the Sable Riders and Grazelander and Dragonewt mercenaries, and scattered to the winds. Agimori, Newtlings, Broos, and Berserkers were crushed by the march of the hoplites after their mounted allies were driven from the field. Oakfed could not withstand the Lunar magics; his shamans died screaming into the spirit world.

With the disaster at Moonbroth, all opposition to the Lunars faded. The Impalas and Bisons were driven over the River; the Morokanth and Alticamelus withdrew beyond the Paps, and the Sable Riders were supreme between the Paps and the River, and occupied all the choice parts of the Good Place.

New Pavis resisted for a single day, then opened its gates to the besiegers. There was mutiny, but the ringleaders were caught and slain. Those who resisted were summarily dispatched. The alliance of the Yelmalion ruling family with the Lunars was a surprise to many: the purge of Dorasar's kinsmen was less so.

Since that time the city has remained in Lunar hands, though the original army of invasion went home long ago. The Lunars maintain peace with the nomads and the trolls, and keep the city's coffers full. By terms of the Armistice of Prax, which is enforced by the administration of Lunar Provincial Field Commander Sor-Eel, Governor of Pavis and Count of Prax, Pavis has ceded sovereignty over lands along the Zola Fel south of Sun County to the Red Emperor. Other lands in Pavis County have been seized and distributed as homesteads for settlers relocated from the Lunar heartlands and as prizes for service and loyalty to the Emperor. Many of those displaced by these land seizures are folk of Sartarite stock with demonstrated hostility toward the Empire and her servants.

### Lunar Settlements in the Grantlands

The reasons for the Lunar expansion in the valley south of Sun County were twofold. First, the Lunars desired a seaport in the delta for trade and military reasons. Second, the River of Cradles was to be settled by old Lunar soldiers turned farmers. These cultivated lands might then serve as the base for the eventual destruction of the animalriding nomads' way of life, which had been the curse of Pelorian civilization since time began.

However, while the Lunar armies could easily defeat organized opposition on the field of battle, the Plains of Prax were full of ruthless outlaws and small tribes, and the river valley was a refuge for every exile and outlaw. To meet this new challenge, the Empire addressed this and a second problem with a single solution.

The second problem had to do with the clan feuds which disrupted the serenity of the Imperial government. Leading clans from two Lunar provinces had feuded politically for years, but suddenly the acrimony broke out into open warfare. One set of clans, those out of favor with the Red Emperor, was quashed by the Imperial Army, but their political standing was such that outright executions of the survivors, many of whom had had no direct involvement with the actual fighting, was impossible.

Instead, the leading men of those families who still professed full loyalty to the Empire were given land grants along the river and their traditional family lands were confiscated by the Empire. The land was theirs to improve and protect. The Empire would send settlers, who would swear fealty to the noble and provide for the cultivation of the borderlands. The inspiration for the plan is said to be that of one Fazzur Wideread, who was commanding the Lunar possessions in Sartar at that time. From what is known of that sagacious leader, it seems only likely that he was indeed the idea's progenitor. GVVSTLADXOU: AROSUO2#20Y#OXA

### Geography of the Zola Fel Valley

From the Leaping Place in the north to the salt marshes of the Zola Fel the river measures 445 kilometers. The northern reaches of the river flow through the broad fertile plains of Pavis and Sun County. In the south high cliffs to the east and west confine the river to a narrow valley between prairie uplands. Finally the Zola Fel reaches the sea as countless shifting courses through the delta marshes.

#### The Northern Zola Fel Plains

In the north the native grassland and chaparral of the Prax plains have been displaced by cultivated land in a broad belt along the banks of the river. From Chomoro north to Pavis scattered clumps of whitewood trees, small farming villages, and stretches of flood plain marshlands are all that interrupt the broad vistas of flat wheatlands along the river.

The soil is rich, and in good years the water is sufficient for bountiful grain harvests. The most reliable farmland lies along seasonal rivers (called 'wadis') or uses irrigation to supplement rainfall during dry years. The threat of drought traditionally discourages cultivation of marginal lands, but the influx of Sartarite and Lunar immigrants in recent decades has pressed less suitable land in service.

Most farmers raise poultry, and some keep small native beast and cattle herds, though nomad raids, poor transportation, and sparse population makes this unprofitable. Horses for riding and farm use are common in Pavis County, but rare in Sun County, where the ox is the common draft animal. Wood is scarce, and timber unavailable on the river plain; the only productive woodlands are found in the highlands to the north.

#### The South Zola Fel Valley

From Chomoro south the valley narrows between high rock walls that border the prairie uplands to the east and west. The 300-meter-high cliffs to the west are impassable, even for climbing animals, except at the two great breaks, the Weis Cut and the Bilos Gap. The eastern wall rises more gradually and is frequently climbable by mounted riders. These slopes, broken by occasional falls and cliffs of 30 to 100 meters in height, lead up to the 900-meter-high plateau of the Vulture's Country, a dry, forbidding land that stretches away to the east to the trackless desert of the Genert Wastes.

The valley between the cliff walls is primarily wild, unsettled land, with dwarf pine and flood-

tolerant hardwood forest choked with scrub. thorns, and low brush alternating with open parkland, mixed grassland and chaparral, and vast marshes. The woodlands are the remnants of a once extensive forest overgrazed by dinosaurs. These forests are most common on the eastern edge of the valley and continuing up to the high ground of Vulture Country. The mixed grassland and chaparral is the predominant terrain of Prax - wide ranges of tall, tough grass spotted with clumps of hardy, tangled, dense shrubs. In many areas, particularly along the river and near convenient fords, the nomads and their herds have grazed the land enough to keep the grass short, but in Sea and Fire Season, when the nomads keep to the upland pastures, the grass grows chest-high on a walking man. There are no roads through these grasslands-only the animal trails preferred by the beast herds.

In the three great swamps of this region, the North, South, and Great Bogs, the dry season river flow is diverted into shrub-clogged side-channels, winding backwaters, and quiet pools. Like the smaller bogs along the northern reaches, these bogs are a morass of mudpits, cypress, and cane. In Storm through Sea Seasons, the bogs are dotted with numerous patches of open water. In Earth and Fire Seasons they may dry up a bit, becoming hazards for wildfire. The vegetation is a daunting tangle of brush, thorns, dwarf pine, and twisted hardwoods. The ground may be treacherous and unstable; even game trails grow over and disappear within a week, and the growth is hard to walk in, impossible to ride in, and easy to hide in. A splendid variety of wildlife presents itself to the traveler's eye, from the bright plumage of the firebeak to the charming antics of the giant otter. However, these bogs also feature the greatest populations of biting insects, gorp, and broos in Prax, and only experienced rivermen should contemplate travel through these bogs.

Recent forest clearances and fort construction in the Lunar grants here promise future farm settlement comparable with the north valley, but at present the south valley remains a dangerous frontier region.

#### The Zola Fel Delta

The salt marsh of the Zola Fel delta is part of the infamous Mosquito Swamp. The Rozgali coast receives heavy year-round rainfall; the climate is humid and unpleasantly warm in the summer, clammy and raw in the winter. Insect pests make the area uninhabitable during Sea, Fire, and Earth seasons.

### **GEOGRAPHY OF THE VALLEY**

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The main channels of the Zola Fel are tidal to below the cataracts south of Three-Kilometer Island. The Blue Moon drives the irregular and unpredictable tides at periods of one to six days. Normal tides rise gradually with the Blue Moon to an average six meters, while flood tides may reach 10 meters. When the Blue Moon falls from Pole Star to Magasta's Pool, the tides drop precipitously to low ebb in less than an hour.

Apart from nomad tribes that winter along the Defender's Shore and nomadic riverfolk summer encampments, only newtlings, dinosaurs, and other thick-skinned creatures can thrive here. Aquatic chaos creatures like gorp, dragonsnails, etc., are feared by natives, but are fortunately restricted to small areas. The seaport of Corflu, the only settlement of note in the delta, is by repute the most disagreeable posting in the Lunar Empire.

#### Weather and the River

(See the "Prax Temperature and Precipitation Table" below.)

The width and depth of the Zola Fel varies with the season. Even at its shallowest during Dark

Season, a navigable channel of at least two meters in depth and 10 meters in width persists several kilometers north of Pavis City. At the crest of the flood in Sea Season, swollen by rainfall and snowmelt from the northern mountains, the river's main channel may be twelve meters deep, and the river itself up to 400 meters wide, and quite swiftflowing besides. Typically, however, it is a mildmannered and forgiving river, leisurely in pace, with many long lake-like pools, and without serious obstacles except in the bogs of the south valley and in the shifting channels of the delta.

During Storm and Sea Seasons the main channel is usually between three and four meters deep, and the river 100 to 200 meters wide, sometimes growing much wider during floods, and, during drought years, sometimes considerably narrower. The main channel depth drops to no more than a meter or two in depth, and the river width to 100 meters, during Fire Season, and may be crossed at many easy fords throughout late Fire Season through early Earth Season, when the rains begin to swell it again. Main channel depth increases to two or three meters by late Dark Season, then to the yearly maximum during Storm Season.

Prax Temperature and Precipitation				
<i>Season</i>	Normal Daily Temperature	Rainfall/Days of Rain	Prevailing Winds	
Sea-Early	45/75	10"/21	Southwesterly	
Sea-Late	50/85	4"/12	Southwesterly	
Fire-Early	50/85		Southwesterly	
Fire-Late	50/90		Southwesterly	
Earth-Early	50/85	2"/2	Westerly	
Earth-Late	45/75	3"/3	Westerly	
Dark-Early	20/65	2"/4	Northwesterly	
Dark-Late	15-45	4"/16	Northwesterly	
Storm-Early	30/55	6"/28	Westerly	
Storm-Late	30/65	10"/25	Westerly	
Sacred Time	40/70	3"/9	Westerly	

The early portion of a season is the first four weeks: Disorder, Harmony, Death, and Fertility. The late portion of a season is the last four weeks: Stasis, Movement, Illusion, and Truth.

Normal Daily Temperature (in Degrees Fahrenheit): Average nightly low / average daily high

Rainfall / Days of Rain: In a typical year, this amount of rain falls and this number of days are rainy. In the frequent drought years, the rainfall is much less, perhaps six inches per season or even drier.

Prevailing Winds: The normal winds come from the stated direction. Other winds blow intermittently. During drought years, a northeast wind frequently scours the plains.

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The prevailing winds are ideal for the river boatmen. Only in Dark Season do the northwesterly winds, river current, and low water conditions conspire against upriver sailors. However, the unpredictable Desert Wind occasionally forces even the most adventuresome riverman to abandon the river, sometimes for a week or more.

The Genert Wastes to the east of the valley are the center of exceptional and irregular mythic influence. The high-pressure zone usually in residence over the Wastes helps generate the violent and powerful Desert Wind of Storm Bull. This magical wind is the Storm Bull's fury; it is warm and highly charged with raw powers. The Wild Hunter is said often to ride this gale.

When the Desert Wind blows, it blows both north and south, away from the center of the Wastes, with strong winds in one direction and weak winds in the other. Uplands to the east and west channel these winds down the valley. Howling blasts carry acid dust, poisonous gases, and debris from the inland chaos devastation which Storm Bull still protects for his lord, Genert the Land God.

Storm Season marks the height of the winds, when the south-gusting erratic storms can rob the wastes and Prax of much of the rain of the wet westerlies. In Sea Season the situation is often worse, for the Desert Wind may defeat even the southwesterly winds that should be carrying the rain inland. Because of such unpredictable patterns, occasional droughts, sometimes continuing for several years, plague the valley, making agriculture more uncertain than rainfall amounts listed in the accompanying "Prax Temperature and Precipitation" table suggest.

#### The Upland Margins of the Valley

The Zola Fel Valley is bordered on the north, east, and west by desolate uplands. The Eiritha Hills on the west, sacred to the Prax nomads, are said to cover the body of Eiritha, their goddess. Only a few unmarked paths cross the mountains, and travelers do not cross without a veteran guide. Primitive agricultural peoples live in a few small isolated settlements along the edges of the mountains; few accounts exist of the rugged interior. The high western steppes and chaparral of the North and South Head Acres are popular grazing lands for the native nomads and their beast herds.

Vulture's Country to the east is (for a few weeks a year) the more verdant area of the Genert Wastes. Normally, Vulture's County and the Wastelands are even drier and less hospitable than the western plateau. Considered a dreadful waste even by the hardy nomads, these lands currently provide a safe haven for nomad tribes driven from the river valley by Lunar expansion and the persecutions of their Sable allies.



A Bend in the River

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### **Peoples of the Zola Fel Valley**

### The Nomads of Prax

Their gods gave the nomads of Prax a wide, desolate wasteland for their home, but in turn promised that if the nomads honored the lore of Waha and the bounty of Eiritha, they might live in harmony with the great beast herds provided for their sustenance. The Praxians thrive in an environment which all other peoples regard as uninhabitable. Proud of the toughness and wisdom granted them by their harsh life and the demanding teachings of their gods, they scorn the soft lives and easy ways of settled people.

The Tribes of Prax: Nomad nations are usually identified by the beasts they herd (with some exceptions, as with the Morokanth nation, the intelligent non-humans who herd unintelligent man-beasts, and the Agimori, who hunt but do not herd or ride beasts). The Five Great Tribes of Prax-the Impala, Bison, Morokanth, Sable, and Alticamelus Nations-represent most of the nomads of Prax. There are many other smaller, less powerful tribes, the best known of which often referred to as the Ten Independent Tribes. Listings of those included in the Ten Independents differ with the authority cited, and inclusion among the Ten is generally a reckoning of their prowess in plains warfare rather than an indication of their actual status as a "tribe" per se. Standard accountings of the Ten may include Rhino Riders, Basmoli (also known as the Lion People, worshippers of a slain Lion-god, and noted for their berserker warriors), Bolo-Lizard Riders, Agimori, Pavis Survivors (also known as Zebra Riders), Baboon Troop, Cannibal Cult (a fierce primitive tribe of flesh-eaters), Unicorn Women (also known as the Yelornan Amazons for their patron deity), and the Newtling Peoples. Native Praxians often include the Sun Dome Templars as the tenth "tribe." The Pol Joni (horse-riding Orlanthi-worshipping nomad tribes similar to the Tarshite Grazelanders and Pent horse nomads) might more logically be included, save that Prax nomads hate and despise the Pol-Joni and regard the horse nomads as alien interlopers.

Nomads follow their herds from oasis to grazeland, from grazeland to oasis, from high prairie in summer to sheltered lowlands in winter, following the seasons and the periodic blossoming of the grasses that feed their beasts. When on the move, they live in the small men's tents, cramped, but easily raised, downed, and packed. When remaining for a week or more, the larger, more comfortable women's tents are erected.

Nomads are utterly dependent on their beast herds for survival. These beasts provide everything needed for life, and nothing is ever wasted. After slaughtering and dressing an animal, nothing is left. Only weapons, highly treasured by their owners, are regularly imported from outside. Herds are also the visible signs of wealth and status among nomads. A nomad with many herd beasts is a rich man. A nomad with many captured animals gained by raiding is a man of great deeds.

**Tribe and Clan**: There is no uniform tribal or clan structure among Praxian nomads. Some tribes are comprised of hundreds of individual clans typically identified by a totem (eg, Skull Bat clan) or clan symbol (e.g, Green Sable clan, indicated by green stripes on herd beasts and green tattoos on women's cheeks). Other tribes show little or no evidence of clan structures.

Most commonly nomad family bands of blood relatives live, travel, and fight together. Authority structures are typically loose and informal. Personal leadership is often the primary element in determining authority. Rich or famous men or women attract followers by expressing wisdom and virtue in words and deeds. Elders, priests, and shamans are respected for their wisdom; brave warriors and heroes are respected for courage, strength of arms, and good war counsel.

The Nomad Way: Courage and knowledge of the tribal ways are the prime virtues for all Praxians. Honesty toward tribal members is also required, toward other Praxians is respected and expected, but is not required toward outsiders, who are considered dishonorable and contemptible. All chaos is hated, and any mercy or compassion shown towards anything of chaos is a supreme moral flaw.

In general women are associated with the skills and labors of maintaining the forces of life, while men master the forces of death. For example, in women great knowledge and practice of healing is deemed virtuous, while in men great skill at arms is highly praised. The women own their tribal herd animals, cooking wares, living tents, and tools to perform their tasks. They are responsible for tending the herds, raising children, and for all healing. Men own their captured beasts, their tools of war, and travel tents, and are responsible for herding the beasts, killing and butchering animals, protecting the herd and tribe from raiders and monsters, and for raiding other tribes' herds for captured wealth. Law is determined by the Way of Waha, the culture hero who codified the life style of the Praxians ages ago. Remembering the rules of behavior and precedents is the task of the priests and shamans. Banishment is the harshest punishment delivered by the tribe. A banished person may not eat the flesh of the tribal animal, speak the tribe's secret tongue, or communicate with any tribal members, under penalty of retribution by fierce cult spirits.

The Way of the Warrior: Combat is a normal feature of nomad life. Predators and monsters are a constant threat to tribe and herd. Raiding other tribes is a cultural institution. Capturing women and children is common, but herd animals are the real prize, since they may be eaten, thus preserving the wealth of one's own animal herd. Raiding neighboring settled lands is a popular sport, for it provides goods not available by native manufacture. Clothing, weapons, and metal cookware are especially valued booty. Warfare between tribes is rare, but aggressive posturing and intimidation is a crucial tool of inter-tribal diplomacy, and challenge combats to resolve issues of policy and honor are common. Hatred for the horse-mounted Pentan nomads of the north, however, is ancient and mutual, and periodic wars between beast-mounted and horse-mounted nomads are noted for uniting the independent nomad tribes under a great war leader.

Praxian Worship: The gods most commonly revered by Praxian nomads are Waha the Founder, Eiritha the Herd Mother, and Storm Bull. Waha freed the herd beasts and women from the darkness, taught men to kill and dress beasts, established the customs of the tribal peoples, and first learned the songs of power which are the culture's magical heritage. Eiritha, the source of life and wife of Storm Bull, was buried beneath the Eiritha Hills ages ago, from whence she still sends out herds of wild and free animals from a secret cave, its location long lost to mortal beings. Storm Bull defeated the chaos which threatened to destroy the land. The wild ferocity of his followers is all that preserves the people from the chaos which still seeks to corrupt and ruin all that is good and holy.

Also common are the worship of Daka Fal (Ancestor Worship) and Foundchild (the Hunter). Many individual tribesmen, indeed sometimes entire clans, are occasionally devoted to the gods of the Orlanthi and Yelmic pantheons. Such nomads typically still revere the way of Waha, Eiritha, and Storm Bull, but honor the foreign gods for the power and enlightenment they offer. Most common is the worship of Yelmalio, but some Rhino tribesmen worship Orlanth, and the Lunar cult of the Seven Mothers is increasingly common among Sables serving as auxiliaries in the Lunar Provincial Army.

**River of Cradles** 

The main religious festivals are held in the spring, at calving time. Other ceremonies are held as needed, and their forms may vary widely according to place, tribe, practitioner, and circumstance. Though the appearance to an outsider is often of spontaneous improvisation, in fact a vast tradition of oral lore informs such ceremonies. Standing temples are unknown to Praxians, though certain festivals and rituals are associated with sacred sites like the Paps in the Eiritha Hills. Clan priests and shamans set up shrines as needed from their personal possessions, and the defenses and capabilities of these shrines are determined by the number of worshippers present. Permanent shrines to nomad gods maintained in towns like Pavis and Garhound are considered travesties by tribal peoples, but settled folk of nomad heritage regard such shrines as their only link with the ancient ways of their people.

Attitudes Toward Other Peoples: Prax nomads are united in hatred for those who ride the tabooed horse and in contempt for those who live a settled life cowering within four walls or grub for their living in the soil. Civilized men-at-arms like the Lunar hoplites and Sun Dome Templars are treated with wary respect, but the farmers and shopkeepers they protect are fit only for abuse and theft. Historically, Praxian nomads have also hated any being bearing the taint of chaos; however, the Sable People's recent alliance with the chaostolerant Lunar government is hard to reconcile with their traditional Praxian fanatic anti-chaotic sentiments.

The nonhuman Morokanth and the more-thanhuman Agimori are formally treated with the same respect as other beast-riding nomads, but most nomads view the beast-like Morocanth with distaste and distrust. Native non-humans like baboons and newtling are considered sentient but primitive in culture. Aldryami, Mostali and Ducks are alien curiosities, seldom confused as animals, but often dismissed as soft civilized folk. Non-Praxian humans who respect the way of Waha and who prove themselves wise in the ways of the waste may earn the respect and trust of most nomads, though recent bitterness occasioned by the defeat at Moonbroth, subsequent persecution of other tribes by the Lunar-allied Sables, and the intrusive Lunar settlements in the Grantlands have

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made some nomad tribes unrelentingly hostile and distrustful of all non-Praxians.

Character Generation: See Glorantha, Player's Book: Genertela, "Prax," pp. 30-31, "What My Father Told Me: A Personal View of Praxian Culture," pp. 10-11, and "Nomad Warrior," pp. 11-13. See also Gods of Glorantha, "What the Priests Say: Tales of the Wastes: Wisdom from the Tribal Shaman," Cults Book, "Praxian Pantheon," pp. 16-17, and cult descriptions for Ancestor Worship (see also "Daka Fal," River of Cradles, pp. 150-152), Eiritha, Hunter, Horned Man, Storm Bull (see also "Storm Bull," River of Cradles, pp. 153-155), and Waha. For nomad mounts (ie, alticamelus, bison, impala, and sable antelope) see Gloranthan Bestiary, pp. 12-13, 14, 25, 37 respectively.

#### Settled Peoples of the Zola Fel Valley

The civilized peoples of Prax are but a fraction of the region's total population. Most settled folk come from one of five major cultural traditions: the Oasis peoples of ancient, uncertain heritage, the Pavic peoples of Orlanthi barbarian stock, the Yelmalion peoples of Orlanthi barbarian stock, the Zola Fel Riverfolk, and Lunar expatriates.

Most citizens of Pavis County are descended from Sartarite stock. The ancestors of the Yelmalions of Sun County came to the Zola Fel valley centuries ago from the Sun Dome County region of Sartar, and but for their worship of Yelmalio and the Yelmic pantheon rather than than Orlanth and the Lightbringer cults, their culture and traditions have much in common.

Most civilized people of the Zola Fel Valley earn their living by farming. The local techniques typify Genertelan farming of mixed cereals and animal-tending. Barley is the main cereal crop, augmented by vegetables and other farm products including flax and herbs. Plowing is done by draft horse or oxen yoked to light plows; reaping is done by hand with sickles. Sheep were introduced in ancient times, but mostly succumbed to hoof rot and wool canker, and have been replaced by native beast herds, particularly sables for meat and impalas for hair. Pigs thrive, and domestic ducks and geese are common, as are dogs and cats. Popular also as pets or familiars are a local species of mongoose, kagas ( a large insect-eating gecko), and song birds of many kinds.

#### **Oasis Peoples**

The native farming peoples of the oases are indigenous to the land and have descended from survivors of times before the Darkness. They speak their own unique language, but most speak Tradetalk as a second language. Some communities have adopted the worship of Ernalda and other Orlanthi deities, but many worship versions of the earth, ancestor, and hero cults unique to their locale. Though popularly regarded as unenterprising and dull-witted, these folk have endured in the valley for centuries.

Most communities are primitive in appearance, scattered adobe huts with small grain fields and vegetable patches clustered around a remote, isolated oasis or fertile margin valley of the Eiritha Hills. These native farmers have always been dominated by the nomad tribes; each community buys security from a nomad protector through tribute of farm produce and crude crafts. The largest and most prosperous oasis community of the Zola Fel Valley is Horn Gate. Perhaps the best known representative of the Oasis People is Sir Indagos, an influential landowner of Pavis County.

**Character Generation**: As "Barbarian Belt," *Glorantha, Player's Book: Genertela*, p. 25, except 94-00 is a Farmer, not a Warrior, since the Oasis People have no martial traditions. As such, they make unpromising player character adventurers. The Oasis People have no cultural weapons, receiving only the listed base attack and parry chances listed on the weapon tables.

#### **Pavic Orlanthi Farmers and Town-Dwellers**

These farmers of Sartarite heritage make up a large proportion of the valley's civilized population. The first wave of recent immigrants came with Dorasor, who founded New Pavis; these folk generally occupy the best land. A second wave of Sartarites followed when the Lunar army conquered Sartar in 1602. However, both waves have lived long enough in the valley that their children know no other home.

The farmers of rural Pavis County maintain the traditions of their Sartarite forebears. They speak a Sartarite dialect heavily influenced by Pavic and Praxian. The clan, or the patriarchal family, is the basic unit of organization. A clan consists of a strong leader, his immediate blood family, and as many intimates, confederates, and hangers-on as can be supported. They recognize a common ancestor and a common history, and draw strength from the surety of the physical, emotional, spiritual, and military strength which their clan provides. However, agriculture and land ownership have replaced martial prowess as the strongest tokens of leadership in Pavis County. The incessant clan feuding of the Sartar hill peoples has perforce given way to the more

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civilized warfare of coin and land title among the Pavic Orlanthi.

The Orlanthi have a tradition of loyalty to kin and friend and hospitality to strangers of Orlanthi heritage. A traveler who offers the Orlanthi greeting or introduction from a friend can expect the hospitality of the hearth and such provender as the family can afford. Pavic Orlanthi are even open and tolerant toward non-Orlanthi outsiders, so long as such are not hostile, deceitful, or of ill repute. They never forget an insult or grievance, however; feuds between clans are common, and hatred of the Lunars who hold their homeland in chains is deep-seated and pervasive. Under the Occupation many Orlanthi present an outwardly friendly face toward their Lunar overlords, but few doubt the savagery of their vengeance should an opportunity for a successful uprising appear.

The Pavic Orlanthi traditionally worship the Lightbringer pantheon which includes Orlanth and his allies Lhankhor Mhy, Issaries, and Chalana Arroy. Since the veneration of Orlanth is outlawed within the Lunar Empire's borders, most Pavic Orlanthi have adopted the public worship of Ernalda while privately continuing to honor Orlanth as an associated cult. At present the Empire tolerates this transparent imposture, but many fear that when Whitewall falls and Orlanth is officially declared dead throughout the Empire more energetic persecution of Orlanth worship may follow.

Character Generation: As "Barbarian Belt," Glorantha, Player's Book: Genertela, p. 25.

Sun Dome Orlanthi Farmers and Town-Dwellers The agricultural society of Sun County is the longest-lived civilized culture in the valley, having maintained an unbroken period of settlement here since 887 S.T. when Arinsor the first count claimed the land. Sun Domers speak Pavic, a dialect recognizably Sartarite, a Theyalan tongue, but heavily influenced by Old Pavic and Praxian. Sun Domers use the same farming tools and methods, live in similar structures, and raise the same foods as their Sartarite neighbors and ancestors.

Unlike Pavis County, Sun County has a centralized theocratic government. Authority resides in the Count, the ranking Light Son of Yelmalio, and in the High Priest of the cult. The cult has complete hierarchical control of land and commerce, and personal status is determined by the quality of loyalty and service to the cult. The Sun Dome Temple officials form the administrative bureaucracy, and the Sun Dome Templars and active citizen militia squads serve all military and police functions. Each initiate of the Yelmalio cult is granted plots of land to farm according to his merits; priests, rune lords, and high cult officials receive additional land and benefits, and function as the nobility of the society.

Sun Domers are known for their belligerent distrust and hostility toward outsiders. Travelers can expect no hospitality from farmers and town folk, even in remote communities, and can expect petty to grievous abuse from Sun Dome militia and officials. The Templars are especially infamous for their haughty demeanor. Friendly Yelmalioworshipping nomads receive reserved respect. Other nomads are dismissed as savages, and face summary execution if caught trespassing or raiding Sun Dome lands. Baboons, newtlings, and morocanth are not afforded the rights or courtesies of human beings. However, Sun Domers reserve special enmity for Darkness and Chaos worshippers.

All Sun County males belong to the cult of Yelmalio; a small fraction also belong to the associated cult of Lokarnos. A tiny minority of recently arrived Lunar immigrants retain their worship of Yelm with Yelmalio as an associated cult. Most females belong to the Ernalda cult, with some associated worship of Dendara, Chalana Arroy, and Uleria. In general Sun Domers are notably pious, with most social and community life centering around cult functions. They are also exceedingly puritanical and self-righteous; they take great pride in the culture's exceptional virtues, and look upon all other societies as beknighted or corrupt.

Character Generation: Use the "Civilized Culture Occupation" tables in *RuneQuest Deluxe*, *Player Book*. The people of Sun County never use sorcery, so substitute "Farmer" for "Adept Sorcerer."

Native Sun County males may automatically become initiates of the Yelmalio cult at age 15; females may join Ernalda. Children whose parental occupation is "Merchant" may automatically join Lokarnos. In recent years a small minority of exiled Pelorians worshipping Yelm have been granted rights to settle in Sun County; those whose parental occupation is

> Cultural Weapons: Attack and parry — 1-H or 2 -H Spear (25) Sickle or Scythe or Military Flail (20) Attack only — Javelin or Pilum 20, Self Bow 20 Parry only — Hoplite Shield 20

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"Noble" may optionally choose to join the Yelm cult rather than the Yelmalio cult.

**Equipment:** As per occupation. In addition, initiates of Yelmalio are granted rights to cultivate a plot of temple land for the duration of their service, and up to 100L ransom money if ever required.

#### The Zola Fel Riverfolk

The river people descend from native peoples predating the Darkness, and speak the ancient language Boatspeech, known by fishermen along the rivers and coastlands of southern Genertela. The river fishermen depend on the river and its resources. Fishing is common and several industries are based upon the reeds which clog the banks and channels. Papyrus papermaking, boatmaking and basketry are common occupations.

Along the length of the valley most Zola Fel people migrate with the seasonal changes of the river, living in temporary shelters made from reeds. At high water their encampments are found all along the river; at low water they depart for the marshes of the delta and south coast. Giant insects, chaos beasts, and sea pirates make life in the delta and south marshes difficult, but the Zola Fel folk have adopted means of dealing with these challenges. Substantial permanent riverfolk communities appear near Pavis and other population centers where trade in fish and river crafts and transportation services are valued. With the growth of river trade following the founding of Corflu, their river-wise skills have brought many boat people new prosperity.

The basic structure of riverfolk society is the clan, with authority shared equally among respected elders, river priests, and wealthy figures of large reputation and deeds. Having experienced ill-treatment from landsmen throughout history, and having little interest in land-dweller affairs, the riverfolk are wary of outsiders, and do not go far out of their way to welcome or aid native Praxians or travelers. Further, the Zola Fel cult has no special respect or affection for Orlanth or Yelmalio, and an active antipathy toward Waha. A land-dweller who hopes to traffic with the river people is well advised to become a lay member of the cult if he hopes for cordial relations. On the other hand, the riverfolk treat fairly with baboons, and have excellent relations with newtlings, tracodons, the fish folk, giant otters, dolphins, and other sentient non-human races of the river valley, delta, and south coastlands.

In fact, in the Zola Fel cult the human riverfolk are in the minority. Most cult members are



A Zola Fel Riverfolk Settlement

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intelligent fish, while a large proportion are newtlings. Zola Fel is a peaceful cult, with no military traditions and few strictures other than those respecting the purity and freedom of the river and its denizens. They respond to aggression and compulsion with outward acquiescence, evasion, and covert treachery; when possible, they avoid conflict by relocation.

**Character Generation**: Player character riverfolk may come from primitive or barbarian cultural backgrounds. The following guidelines are for humans only; newtling and intelligent fish species are not included. All riverfolk speak Boatspeech as their native tongue; barbarians often (75%) and primitives rarely (10%) Speak Tradetalk at 15%.

**Barbarian Riverfolk**: Settled fisherfolk and riverboatmen are largely assimilated into the dominant barbarian culture of the river valley. See *RuneQuest Deluxe, Players Book, "Barbarian* Culture Occupations," pp. 21-24, except use the following "Occupation Table":

**Riverfolk Occupation Table** 

01-02	Crafter
03	Entertainer
04-50	Fisher
51-80	Fisher/Barbarian Initiate
81-85	Hunter
86-90	Hunter/Barbarian Initiate
91-92	Noble/Barbarian Initiate
93-98	Barbarian Initiate
99-00	Warrior/Barbarian Initiate

All barbarian riverfolk are at least Zola Fel lay members, but many are accepted as initiates in late adolescence.

**Cultural Weapons:** Attack and parry -1-H or 2-H Spear (25) Attack only -Javelin or Self Bow 20 Parry only -**Buckler 25** 

**Skills:** As per occupation, except all riverfolk gain Boat x5 and Swim x4.

Equipment: As per occupation.

Primitive Riverfolk: The nomadic riverfolk are primitive hunter-gatherers with a very modest material culture. Their shamans revere Zola Fel as a foremost water spirit among water spirits, and typically do not rely on divine cult ceremonies, though some may become initiates. See *RuneQuest Deluxe, Players Book*, "Primitive Culture Occupations," pp. 14-15.

#### **Lunar Immigration**

Since the Armistice of Prax, the Lunar Empire's policy of translocation of rebellious peoples has brought several waves of Lunar settlers to the valley. There have been several centers of persistent resistance to Lunar rule within the borders of the Empire. To finally eliminate these troublesome disturbances, the Red Emperor recently has resorted to the practice of deporting entire communities to colonize the frontier provinces. These deported peoples can tell a uniform story of rebellion, defeat, and bitter marches marked with dead kin left beside the road. Nonetheless, once established in colonies in Prax, the Lunar deportees find themselves preferring the protection of the Empire to the practiced savagery of the nomads, and they find comfort in their shared Lunar culture when set down among the native inhabitants of the valley. Most valley people recognize a single block of Lunar farmers, but more world-wise observers note three main cultural divisions among the Lunar Settlers:

• Talastar Farmers: These Lunar peoples share common origins and customs with the Sartarite and Sun County inhabitants of the valley. This group includes many peoples from the Pelorian hills as well as folk from Talastar proper. They speak a Pelorian language influenced by Sartarite.

Character Generation: As "Barbarian Belt," Glorantha, Player's Book: Genertela, p. 25.

• Carmanian Farmers: The Carmanian farmers are distinctly different. They do not worship the goddess Ernalda (as do all Orlanthi farmers) and use a different kind of plow. Their magic differs also, being more like sorcerous spells than prayers of supplication and respect. They speak their own language, Carmanian, which is related to the tongues of the far west, though many also speak the Lunar tongue of New Pelorian.

Character Generation: As "Carmania," Glorantha, Player's Book: Genertela, p. 26.

• **Redland Farmers**: These Lunar folk worship the Yelm pantheon, but more highly favor Yelm than his son, Yelmalio. Their tongue is Pelorian, also called Lunar, for they descend from peoples of ancient Dara Happa, now the heart of the Lunar Empire. They use methods and prayers similar to the Yelmalion people, but address their own earth deities rather than Ernalda.

Character Generation: As "Dara Happa," Glorantha, Player's Book: Genertela, p. 25.

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### Human and Nonhuman Races of the Valley

### Agimori (Men-and-a-Half)

The Agimori, also known as the 'Men-and-a-half,' are one of the independent tribes of Prax. Great hunters and deadly fighters in any land, many think them the most formidable irregular infantry of Glorantha.

**Origins of the Agimori**: In his wanderings across Glorantha during the Godtime, the young god Lodril came to the fiery lands of Pamaltela, where he met the god Eurmal. Eurmal was very clever, and had learned the secret of making men. He, Lodril, and some others then set about fashioning a living race. Their first efforts were flawed, and did not survive, but in their last attempt, the gods crafted a race well suited for the hot, dry climate. Tall and strong, yet lithe and handsome, these people revered Lodril greatly but had minds of their own. Lodril taught them how to live, how to fight, and how to survive where no other people could.

When chaos appeared and threatened the world, Lodril answered the call to battle. He gathered his people together and led them north and east to Vithela. After many adventures, a much-depleted nation crossed a now-vanished landbridge into Fethlon. They then turned west to Prax to fight chaos in Lodril's name.

After the Spike exploded and the world changed, the people of Lodril were stranded in Prax. During the Darkness some wished to reproduce, but could not due to their fiery origin. Desperate to replace their battlefield losses, the tribal leaders begged Lodril for help. For once at a total loss, Lodril asked Ernalda, the Earth Mother, for help. Ernalda revealed to the tribe that they must first, in order to reproduce, take into themselves the antithesis of their natures. Before any of Lodril's people could conceive, each would have to drink untainted water to counteract their dry natures. Lodril's people partook of the pure waters, and found themselves fruitful; thus was the Praxian tribe of the Agimori created.

**Physical Characteristics**: Average members of this tribe, both men and women, stand at least six feet tall and weigh more than 200 lbs. With strength and endurance in measure with their size, they are formidable opponents in any situation.

The Agimori have other traits that make them unique. They do not sweat and they require much less water than other men. Their bodies are exceptionally efficient in drawing sustenance from their food. Their bones are larger and stronger than those of other men; their hearts are larger and beat more slowly. Their sight is exceptionally keen, for sight is the sense associated with the element of Fire. (Agimori receive a bonus of +15 to Scan and Search skills in addition to other normal modifiers.)

The naked skin of the mature Agimori (aged 16 years and more) is remarkably tough. Treat adult skin as two-point armor. Children of five years or more have only one-point skin. Those younger are as vulnerable as the infants of other human races.

The Agimori also derive special benefits from their close relationship to the element of Fire: from birth to death they need surprisingly little moisture to survive. Indeed, a tribesman normally needs no more than a liter of liquid water (the Agimori digestive tract extracts several more liters from their food), and in desperate circumstances may survive with far less. The major part of the liquid water ration is consumed during religious ceremonies each Fireday. Mature Agimori also display an amazing immunity to the effects of heat. Tribesmen can work or fight in the hottest of climates. In combat damage done by spells such as Fireblade, Firearrow, Sunspear, and the heat attack of a salamander is halved after penetrating any



An Agimori Warrior

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armor or magical protection. The remaining damage (fractions round up) is then applied to the rolled hit location.While heat has little effect on the Agimori, they are very vulnerable to cold. At temperatures below 32°F all Perception-based skills are at half value, and DEX score receives a temporary -3 penalty.

Social Structure: The Agimori are nomads, freely wandering the length and breadth of Prax. In peacetime, the extended family group is the basic tribal unit, consisting of 20 to 30 individuals, from grandparents to infants. Each family group is led by a proven warrior and/or hunter who is formally addressed as 'Baba' (meaning 'parent'). This title is largely one of respect and may be held by a woman or someone of relative youth. The criterion for leadership is ability and experience, not sex or age. Although the wise Baba seeks counsel from other family members, his or her formal spoken word is law and may not be disobeyed under pain of expulsion.

When traveling great distances to new hunting grounds, family groups often band together in larger blood-related clan groups. Each clan is nominally led by the eldest Baba (family leader) and is titled Koos (chief). The authority of the Koos extends only to those matters that concern more than one family. The arbitration of the Koos is generally accepted; any who disagree may leave the clan. If the majority of the families do not agree, the Koos had better reconsider; a partial or overbearing Koos may find himself and his family driven from the clan.

Way of Life: Unlike the five Great Nations of Prax, the Agimori do not rely on domesticated herd animals for sustenance. The Men-and-a-half are first and foremost hunters. The hunt is both their chief occupation and their greatest pleasure. From the time a child is old enough to understand, he is taught how to stalk and track, how to kill and dress, and how to use the carcass for food, clothing and tools. Children are neither named nor recognized as tribal members until they have successfully hunted, no matter how small the prize.

The Agimori are ideally suited for their lives as hunters. Gifted from birth with great strength and endurance, they are taught patience and resourcefulness in the harsh school of the Praxian wastes. Given time, an Agimori warrior can run down anything that walks. Thanks to the tutoring of his clan's Huntmasters and his own experience, tribesmen are capable of tracking and stalking in any type of Praxian terrain. Hunting is such a passion with this tribe that individuals will often endure incredible hardships and take terrible risks just to be present when the prospect of hunting some particularly marvelous or fearsome beast presents itself.

Life within the tribe may seem unnecessarily harsh to outsiders. Everyone, old and young, must contribute in some way to the tribe's well being or they will be cast off as dead weight. The crippled and the aged are not tolerated unless they are able to provide a valuable service to the tribe. Those who cannot are abandoned to fend for themselves or die. Most Agimori prefer to die with dignity in a traditional way. When life has become more of a burden than a joy to them, they deliberately court death until it finds them. Prevented from doing so by illness or imprisonment, they will neither eat nor drink until death frees them.

**Taboos:** As with most primitive societies, the Agimori have a number of restrictions laid upon their actions by tradition or religion. Some of these taboos are more a matter of survival or pride than religious belief, but all are serious and not lightly disregarded.

• **Riding**: No Agimor may ride an animal into battle. It is permitted to travel on a mount only in case of injury or illness.

• **Cowardice**: Anyone guilty of cowardice in the face of the enemy or at any time where the lives of others are involved is slain out of hand. Due to the immense family pride of these people, the guilty one's relatives are usually the first in line. Cowardice cannot be tolerated because the lives of many often depend on the actions of one person.

 Theft: The theft of anyone's food, water, or personal weapons is punishable by death if the culprit is caught. Personal weapons are usually the favorite possessions of the owners. They may be gifts from honored friends or trophies taken in some memorable battle or duel. Whatever their origin, a fighter's personal weapons are easily recognized for they are always within reach of their master and are usually decorated so as to identify their owner's clan, family, and cult. This may take the form of feathers, carvings, precious stones and metals, or the scalps of enemies. These weapons are used only for war or for certain ceremonies, such as the yearly Great Hunt. Spare weapons are used for lesser hunts and weapons practice. Lesser weapons are regarded as mere tools and their loss or theft is considered a minor inconvenience.

• Murder: Murder is unforgivable because the tribe can never afford to lose any healthy member, man, woman, or child. The penalty for murder is set by the victim's family and is enforced by the

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Agimori Character Generation	Agi	mori	Chara	cter	Gen	eration
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Aginori onaractor deneration				
charact	eristics	average		attributes
STR	3D6+6	16-17		Move: 4
CON	1d6+12	15-16		Hit Points: 16
SIZ	3d6+6	16-17		Fatigue: 32
INT	2d6+6	13		Magic Points: 10-11
POW	3d6	10-11		DEX SR: 3
DEX	3d6	10-11		
APP	3d6	10-11		
melee	/missile	location	poin	nts
01-04	4/01-03	R Leg	4/5	
05-00	8/04-06	L Leg	4/5	(armor points include
09-1	1/07-10	Abdom	4/5	2-point skin and
12/	11-15	Chest	4/6	2-point stiff
3-15/16-17		R Arm	4/4	leather armor)
16-18/18-19		L Arm	4/4	
19-20/20		Head	4/5	

**Battle Dress**: Total encumbrance = 17. Fatigue (32–16). Stiff leather armor on all locations (AP 2/ENC 6).

Weapon	SR	Attack	Damage	Parry	ENC/AP
1-H Long. Spear	5	25+7	1d10+1+1d6	25-3	2/10
Kite Shield	7	05+7	1d6+1d6	25-3	5/16
Javelin (x2)	3/9	20+7	1d8+1d3	-	3.0/8

**Combat Notes:** Agimori hunt with javelin and spear; the shield is only borne in warfare. In battle the javelin are cast, then the enemy is charged while they are disordered by missile fire. **Age:** 2d6+13. Use Aging table beginning at age 40.

Hunter: Most Agimori encountered are hunters. *Skills*: Climb x1, Jump x1, Throw x2, Speak Praxian x1, First Aid x1, Animal Lore x4, Plant Lore x1 or World Lore x1, Conceal x2, Listen x2, Scan x4, Search x4, Track x5, Hide x1, Sneak x1, Ceremony x1 or Summon x1 or Enchant x1, Fist Attack x1, Javelin Attack x3, Spear Attack x2, Shield Parry x1, Dodge x2. *Spirit Magic*: 1d3 points at age 13, plus 1 point per each additional 10 years or fraction. *Equipment*: loincloth, knife, javelins, spear, kite shield, firemaker, animal products worth 100 pennies, leather armor and cap (for battle).

Warrior: Some Agimori are full-time protectors of the tribe; others hire as mercenaries. Skills: Climb x2, Jump x2, Throw x2, Speak Praxian x2, First Aid x1, Animal Lore x3, Plant Lore x1 or World Lore x1, Conceal x1, Listen x3, Scan x4, Search x2, Hide x1, Sneak x1, Ceremony x1 or Summon x1 or Enchant x1, Dagger Attack x1, Javelin Attack x6 or Spear Attack x6 other weapon x3, Shield Parry x3, Dodge x3. *Spirit Magic*: 1d3 points at age 13, plus 1 point per each additional 10 years or fraction. *Equipment*: loincloth, knife, javelins, spear, kite shield, firemaker, war booty worth 300 pennies, stiff leather armor and cap (for battle). **Cult Membership**: Membership in Foundchild is almost universal; some also worship other cults.

01-05	Foundchild & Lodril
06-20	Foundchild & Daka Fal
21-95	Foundchild only
96-00	Foundchild & Others

Magic: Bladesharp 2, Disruption, Mobility, and Protection 2 are common spirit spells. Heal Wound is a common divine spell. Languages: Praxian. Some know a little Tradetalk (10% chance of Speak Tradetalk 10).

Armor: 2 point skin. Leather or stiff leather armor on all locations. Special Features: half damage from all heat attacks. entire tribe. Punishment takes one of two forms: (a) The slayer must take the victim's place in the family group for the rest of his life. (b) If the slaying was a fair fight the killer is given an hour's grace before the victim's avengers start after him. Under any other circumstances, the murderer is slaughtered like a pig. Agimori do not hire out as mercenaries on opposing sides of a fight, for it is considered murder if one is forced to kill another in battle.

• Slavery: It is taboo to own a slave. Agimori doctrine holds that, since other peoples are inferior and cannot survive their way of life, any slave owner would have to adopt an easier lifestyle if he wanted his slaves to survive. The Men-and-a-half think that this softening of their life would reduce their abilities and lessen their chances to survive, both individually and as a people. For the same reason, Agimori rarely marry outsiders.

**Relations with other Valley Peoples**: The Agimori rarely war with the Great or Independent Tribes. They do not hunt the marked animals of the beast nomads, do not compete for land or resources, and are daunting warriors, so the nomads take care not to provoke them. The perfidy of the Sables in allying with the Lunars against the nomads at Moonbroth is accounted by Agimori as base and cowardly. The Alticamelus Riders are scarcely better thought of for their failure to join the nomad war alliance. Hotheaded Agimori hunt Sables for vengeance without compunction, though prudent Babas and Koos counsel against antagonizing the Sable Riders or their Lunar protectors.

Agimori demand deference and tribute from the Oasis People, as do all nomads. They rarely come into contact with Pavic or Yelmalion settlements or River Folk, and tend to lump individuals of these cultures in with the Oasis People as worthy of little interest and no respect. Baboons and newtlings are respected as people of the Independent Tribes. Broos are hunted avidly; though despised as chaos spawn, they are widely admired for their strength, ferocity, and cleverness, and are considered truly worthy enemies.

Agimori Worship: All Agimori are at least lay members of the Foundchild (Hunter) cult. A sizable minority are also initiates or shamans of Daka Fal, while a few worship Lodril as an associated cult. Lodril is revered as the father of the Men-and-a-half, but there are rarely more than two or three Lodril initiates in a clan, and usually a single priest called the 'Baba-u-Lodri,' or 'Father of Fathers.'

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### Aldryami (Elves)

Aldryami are seldom encountered in the valley except in the Garden and Puzzle Canal sections of the Big Rubble. When the odd troll-hunting Aldryami Yelmalions travel upriver to visit Sun County, Pavis, and the Big Rubble it is a rare occasion worthy of gossip and rumor.

Character Generation: See RuneQuest Deluxe, Creatures Book, p. 20, and Elder Secrets, Elder Races Book, for detailed treatment of the Aldryami.

### Baboons

Baboons are a race of intelligent quadrupeds of Prax and the Wastelands. They believe themselves to be the remnants of an elder age when men and animals had not yet separated from each other. They consider themselves superior to humans because they are an integration of both human and animal natures, and they scorn humans who are no longer in touch with their animal selves. They claim that the Monkey Ruins of Prax was once the capital of their ancient culture.

Baboons have their own simple society based on an extended family called a troop. A baboon troop is led by a single powerful male, commonly called the alpha male, who monopolizes reproduction within the troop by isolating the



A Baboon Tomb

females who are in estrus. The other males of the troop act as guards and hunters for the alpha male and the females. One of the other males eventually succeeds in challenging the alpha male's supremacy and assumes control of the troop. Challenge battles commonly result in the death of the formerly dominant male.

Baboons generally worship their ancestors through the cult of Daka Fal. Baboon shamans do not challenge the authority of the male, being loyal to the current troop leader and the troop itself.

Throughout history baboons have rarely been accorded the rights of human or sentient creatures. In Prax they are at best tolerated, and at worst hunted as pests or for sport. As a result they avoid contact with humans. Baboons are intensely territorial, and dangerous if alarmed or challenged on land they consider their own. They may be encountered anywhere in Prax, most commonly in the Zola Fel Valley and delta or in the steppe regions of western Prax.

Character Generation: See Gloranthan Bestiary, p. 13, and Elder Secrets, Elder Races Book, p. 77-78.

#### Broos

Broos are widely dismissed as just another chaosborn monstrosity with particularly repulsive appearances and practices. In fact broos are more than just monsters. In numbers and in power, broos are strongest of the chaos folk. They have secured a niche for themselves in the ecology of Glorantha in spite of the opposition of all other life. Their manifestly vile habits and biology actually provide the source of their vitality and competitive advantage in Prax's harsh environment.

Broos History: Long ago, the broos were just another race, related to the Beast People, and loyally serving their great parents, Ragnaglar and Thed. Ragnaglar hated his kinsman, the Storm Bull, for he was jealous of the Bull's great deeds. When Ragnaglar took Malia for a second lover, the broos gladly worshipped Malia as well and aided her to the best of their abilities. When she transferred her originally fertile properties into the essence of pestilence, the broos cheerfully spread her catastrophic plagues among the nations of their foes, thus adding to the disorder of the God's War. When Ragnaglar finally became the Mad God and released the devil into the world, the broos revelled in serving the devil as well. This binding to chaos is known to scholars as the Turning.

Before the Turning, though wild and fierce, broos were no more evil in themselves than were

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trolls or untamed sylphs. After becoming the slaves of Wakboth the Devil, however, they became the leaders of the races of chaos, and made up large portions of the chaos hordes of that time. When the armies of the Devil were blighted and scattered, the broos that escaped spread throughout Genertela and founded numerous tribes. Broo armies have not been seen since the I Fought We Won battle, but broo regiments and raids have been frequent throughout Time. Units of broos have aided the armies of various nations, including the forces of Nysalor, the Golden God, and the tribes of Prax during their constant internecine warfare. In the Gbaji wars, tens of thousands of broos aided the chaos god against Arkat Humaktsson. Later on, the broos took advantage of the widespread destruction of the Empire of the Wyrm's Friends and ravaged both sides at will.

Habitat and Ecology: Broos are found in three habitats in Genertela: swamps and marshes, mountains, and desert wastes. In all areas, they are ferocious and wildly destructive predators. There are no broo cities or villages, though frequently broos are found inhabiting ruins originally built by some other race. Wild broos are usually nomadic, setting up a home camp, foraging from that location for a few months, then moving on. Occasionally a band of broos establish a more permanent home base for many years.

Swamp broos live in bogs and fens all over Genertela where their ferocity and resistance to disease and swarming insects give them an advantage in competing with other less hardy and aggressive races. Partly due to the broos, swamps have a bad reputation in Prax, and in fact encounters with broos in wetlands terrain are all too common.

Mountain broos live in the Rockwoods, the famed Tunneled Hills, and anywhere else that trolls and dwarves do not prevent them. Mountain living does not seem to come as naturally to broos as does swamp or desert life, and encounters in the Eiritha Hills and Desolation Hills are relatively uncommon. Mountain broos often make their camps in the rocky slopes of a mountain, but do all their hunting and raiding in the valleys beneath.

The desert tribes of broos are the most numerous and widespread branch. Desert broos range across Prax, Genert's desert, Pent, and other areas. These tribes are the most nomadic of the broos and occasionally small bands penetrate into settled areas, wreaking great destruction before being slain or driven out.

Broos disdain riding animals except as food, and are known to dislike swimming, although they are also known to do it well if necessary. Their arms and armor are typically a hodgepodge of items scavenged from previous victims. Wise persons fear to touch anything handled or wom by the disease-bearing broo.

For centuries the settled lands of Pavis and Sun County have conceded the borderlands and wilderness regions to the broos. Nomads have always hunted and fought broos, but never in a persistent or organized fashion. However, with the arrival of the Lunar empire in the valley and the expansion of Lunar settlements in the Grantlands and delta, desert and swamp broo tribes on the margins of civilization are confronted by increasing pressure from well-armed, well-organized human opposition. Although notoriously incapable of concerted action in the past, some worry that this pressure may occasion alliances and cooperation among broo bands that may present a serious threat to frontier settlements.

**Biology and Reproduction:** Broos originally developed as a distant relative of the fertilityoriented Beast People. For many centuries they have worshipped the warped goddess Malia, who in the beginning was a goddess of fertility and healing. Since the Turning, they have been irrevocably bound to the principle of chaos, the origin of everything in Glorantha—the Primal Source. As such, broos tend to be profoundly fertile.

The warped appearance of broos is also a matter for comment, since many broos have hooves rather than hands, or sport various kinds of heads, such as deer, goats, antelope, sheep, or even horses. This is generally ascribed to their chaotic nature, and indeed many of their disfiguring features are due to their connections with chaos. However, most of their peculiar forms are a result of their varied maternity.

Broos are essentially magical in nature, like all other forms of life, and have features peculiar to them. The most obvious feature of broos is that most appear to be male. This feature has been commented upon by many, but only a few know the reason behind this fact. Broos are predominantly male (only 15% female), with a fairly common mutation (05% of population) of hermaphroditism among them. The hermaphrodites appear wholly male to a casual observer. An obvious question is then, "how do they reproduce?"

A broo can mate with any other organism of suitable size of either sex and produce broo offspring. Each birth gives rise to a single larval broo, capable of movement at birth, and already possessing teeth. Every such mating, unless the target animal is already pregnant, invariably

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produces such offspring. The larval broo grows as a parasite in the viscera of the victim, bursting out of its abdomen at full term, causing 2d6 points of damage to the victim (healable by magic or by time). The gestation period for a broo is 2 seasons + 1d8 weeks. The new larval broo invariably attempts to scuttle away from "mother" and escape into the wilds. If other broos are present at the birthing, they try to catch it and raise it with them, permitting it only what it can take from them by stealth or strength. Few larval broos die under this treatment, but only because of their renowned hardiness. Broos are known to keep small flocks of sheep, goats and the like in order to continually increase the numbers of their tribe. Broos are also known to sneak into the corrals of Praxian beast-riders in order to beget young upon their beasts. Bison- and rhino-derived broos are uncommon, possibly because of challenges inherent in impregnating such creatures. Fortunately, few broos with carnivore features have been reported, again possibly because they more successfully resist impregnation.

Despite this astounding ability, or perhaps because of it, broos are notably lecherous. They, for obvious reasons, have no sexual taboos and but few social ones. They are unlikely to keep a captive human alive merely to use him or her as breeding stock. With their ability, mates are easy to find.

**Culture of the Broos:** Most broo populations have a tribal structure, though more primitive feral broos populations are occasionally encountered.

Most tribal broos are peculiarly social creatures, though social bonds are based more on dominance and exploitation than in other sentient races. The only aspects of culture transmitted to larval and adolescent broos are those that make them more efficient predators, for the dominant broo in a tribe is often the leader most effective in marshalling the tribe's tactical resources for hunting and raiding.

Feral broo bands, on the other hand, may result when large numbers of creatures are impregnated then neglected by their "parents." Dozens, even hundreds, of broo larvae may be spawned. Many perish, but the hardiest survive as a pack of ferocious, cunning, but primitive creatures using only rudimentary weapons and battle tactics, and lacking any organized worship or access to learning spells.

Among tribal broos, all females automatically become followers of Malia, the disease goddess. Thed, the mother of broos, is said to be a jealous goddess who wants only males as worshippers. Those broos who are female, or who dislike allmale associations, usually end up as Malia worshippers. As might be expected, Maliaworshipping broos often set up semi-permanent, semi-monogamous relationships. Thedworshippers have no such alliances, trusting to the solidarity of the tribe and replenishing their numbers by forced breedings which turn their captives' offspring into broos. A certain percentage of broos worship Malia, Primal Chaos, and other chaos-associated cults in addition to their primary cults. (See *Gods of Glorantha* for descriptions of the Malia, Thed, and Primal Chaos cults.)

Broos are known man-eaters. Like most creatures of chaos, they kill and eat other sentient life, including members of their own race. For reasons unknown, they are observed to avoid eating other creatures of chaos except in times of extreme stress. Some say broos simply prefer softer prey than the savage creatures of chaos.

All broos automatically are lay members of Malia, in addition to any other cults they may join, and this also is true for the cult of Primal Chaos.

Broos are not creators. Their urges are towards vandalism and destruction. If broos hold items of value, their initial impulse is always be to destroy or mar them. Broos have little use for money, but delight in infecting it with diseases. Unless an item has some magical value to them, its fate is sealed. Broos will go out of their way to pluck up a flower or use a young sapling as a urinal (broo wastes are not good fertilizer and tend to kill plants).

The relationship of one broo to another is always that of slave to master. The stronger broo is the master, though he may not always be extraordinarily cruel to his so-called "slave", wishing to retain it as a useful servant. Broo relationships with other races are always those of hatred and hunger. Even other chaotic races are maltreated. If a member of another chaotic race is extremely strong, he may be respected, but rarely obeyed. Nonchaotic beings are seen only as objects for destruction or for pleasure, as the whim strikes.

**Guarding Against Infection**: Broos are feared and despised for their ability to carry disease but not be affected by it. Most broo-borne diseases are infectious, not contagious (that is, transmitted by physical contact), except when a spirit of disease is present. Contact with disease-bearing broos or their possessions — in particular, receiving wounds from broo weapons or natural attacks exposes one to disease. (See *RuneQuest Deluxe*, *Players Book*, "Disease," pp. 81-82.)

Since broos mark their possessions with their urine and feces, any object a broo has is a possible source of infection. Most broo possessions, therefore, are typically abandoned rather than

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taken as spoils of war. Porous materials like cloth and woods cannot be cleaned, and are usually burned. Metal, jewelry, or other durable objects may be decontaminated, though it is a dangerous and time-consuming project.

The process takes one full week. Each item must be cleansed individually; at the end of one week test Treat Disease skill for each item cleaned (ie, for each blade, coin, piece of armor, enchanted gem, etc.). Success means the object is safely decontaminated. Failure means the object is not cleansed, and the character is exposed to disease. If any object is infected with a disease spirit, the process above is ineffective, and the spirit must be driven away or destroyed by other means.

Character Generation: See *RuneQuest Deluxe*, *Creatures Book*. Feral Broo Shamans do not exist in Prax, since feral broos there have no magic. See also *Elder Secrets*, *Elder Races Book*, p. 78-80.

**Chaotic Features:** Chaotic features are relatively common among broos (POW x 3 or less 1d100 to have one chaotic feature). On a 1d6 roll of 1-3, the feature is taken from the Chaotic Features Table in the *Deluxe RuneQuest Glorantha Book*, p. 30. On a 4-6 roll ,the feature is taken from the Curse of Thed Table in *Gods of Glorantha, Cults Book*, p. 63.

### Ducks

Like so many of the strange denizens of Glorantha, ducks originated in Dragon Pass during the Godtime. Their origins are obscure, though some tales tell of them as an avian folk who forswore their allegiance to Yelm to follow Orlanth, and were denied the sky as punishment. It is true that the majority of ducks worship Orlanth and his kin, or associated gods such as Humakt, Heler, and Ernalda.

Another peculiarity of duck physiognomy, said also to be a result of the curse, is the fact that they bear live young. Yelm is said to have denied them the sky and burdened them with their young. Instead of laying their eggs and being free to fly, ducks must bear their eggs within them until they hatch alive.

Duck children are like human children, helpless when very young, and not able to fully take their place among their fellow ducks for years. As a consequence, perhaps unintended by Yelm, ducks have a life expectancy equal to humans, rather than the short life of their ancestors.

Despite their small size and strength, ducks were long-respected for their keen intelligence and quickness, and were honored citizens of Dragon Pass for centuries. They kept to themselves in their stilt homes along The Creek, and under Sartar and his descendants they prospered.

Even after the Lunar conquest they were honored and treated as well as any other citizen of a conquered land, until the time of Starbrow's rebellion.

The result of that ill-conceived and disunited attempt to throw over the Lunars and install the ambitious Starbrow as Queen of Sartar was a shameful treaty that, in effect, made scapegoats of the duck population of Sartar. (Starbrow is *not* a duck, contrary to widespread misconceptions among outlanders.) Ducks were outlawed throughout the Empire, and entire clans were slaughtered by Sartarite and Lunar alike. Those who could fled to their kin in the Holy Country, or to desolate regions like Prax.

When the Lunar Empire extended its rule and its anti-duck policies to Prax, the emigre ducks were forced to flee into the Rubble, or to go downriver, dodging Lunar patrols and bounty hunters as they went.

By 1615 the worst of the anti-duck fervor was over and ducks no longer actively persecuted except in Sartar proper. By this time, however, many ducks had settled into the lives of outlaws, and would not trust the uncertain mercies of the Empire. The River of Cradles became a perennial haunt for pirate ducks and brigands of every type. These outlaw communities became natural refuges for Sartar exiles plotting treason against the Empire. As Lunar settlement in the Grantlands expanded, the Lunar Commission for the Armistice sent numerous mercenary and regular army expeditions against the duck outlaw camps with only moderate success.

**Ducks and Swimming**: Cursed ducks have always been able to swim faster than humans underwater, averaging about a rate of 8 meters per melee round. Any duck can stay underwater without difficulty for 6 minutes, and needs only make one Luck roll per full turn to be able to breathe for each full turn thereafter. After missing a roll, the duck then begins to take 1d4 points damage to the abdomen each successive melee round.

Ducks are naturally agile and dexterous underwater. In underwater combats ducks receive a +10 bonus to attack and parry chance modifiers when fighting other non-aquatic species.

Character Generation: See RuneQuest Deluxe, Creatures Book, p. 15, and Elder Secrets, Elder Races Book, pp. 81-82.

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### Morokanth

Most people of Glorantha know only these things about the morokanth: they are one of the five great tribes of Prax, and they alone herd and eat men there. There is more to the story than that.

Origins of the Morokanth: In the Godtime the morokanth lived on the plains of Prax with the other worshippers of Storm Bull and Eiritha. There were two kinds of these people— the two-legs, called men, and the four-legs, called animals. They lived together as equals, sharing the bounty that came to them without effort. Prax was so rich and fertile then that if you dropped a seed you had to spring back when the tree sprang up all covered with leaves and fruit.

Those who lived without struggle and effort could not survive when Oakfed and the Devil blasted the plains. The edible plants disappeared and only the coarse chaparral remained. Many men and animals starved, for they had neither learned to seek their food, nor what to look for, nor how to prepare it if they did find something.

Then Waha was born to Eiritha. He taught the people new skills they needed to survive in a new, hostile world. Waha and Foundchild taught the people to hunt the food that no longer came to them. They learned to gather grubs, lizards, and other small creatures, roots, berries, and vegetables in those rare places where food was to be found.

By these teachings the doom of the plains was postponed, but not averted. Too much land had been blighted. Even Waha could not show the people sustinence where there was none. Then Waha performed his greatest deed. He arranged the Survival Covenant. His mother, Eiritha, through her connections with Ernalda, would support some peoples with the plants sent from her home beneath the earth. Other peoples would live on the bodies of those who ate the plants.

The peoples of Prax, both men and animals, agreed that this sacrifice was necessary for the survival of all. The men and animals of Prax chose lots to see who would eat, and who would be eaten. In most cases men won. The exception was the morokanth. Of all the animals on the plains only they would treat men as their herd-beasts. Neither side was satisfied with the outcome. Men thought they should dominate all the animals. Morokanth thought more animals should have been dominant. Each suspected the other of cheating to gain its position.

So a new way of life began on the plains. The herd-creatures lived on the plains and the tribes lived upon the herd-creatures. Waha taught the tribes the duties they had towards their herds in return for the sacrifice the herd-creatures had made that all might live. From Waha the tribes learned to use weapons to fight their foes and protect the herds. They learned the Peaceful Cut to let their herd creatures die peacefully and without fear. They learned to use the flesh, bone, skin, and sinew efficiently that beasts might not die unnecessarily. From Eiritha they learned to find food and water for the herds, and how to bury the beast's tail (or hand in the case of the herd-men) with a special prayer to send the beast's soul back to the Mother of Herd-men.

Way of Life: Morokanth are said to herd humans, but this is false. Those who lost to the morokanth at the time of the Survival Covenant lost their humanity by divine mandate. The humans of Prax call these beings the slave-herds, but the morokanth call them herd-men.

Herd-men look exactly like humans to the untrained eye but there are differences. Like other herd beasts of Prax they have only animal intelligence. Morokanth Khans even awaken them as familiars. Herdmen are herbivorous — they can live on leaves, grass, bark and other vegetation of the chaparral. While they are close enough to humans to interbreed, any young will be unintelligent herd-men 50% of the time.

Since morokanth are too large to ride their herd-men they do not have the skill of Riding. They have a related skill, Beast Training (see page 35). The morokanth cults of Waha and Eiritha require 90% in this skill for Rune Lord status instead of Riding. Since morokanth do not ride, a pretentious morokanth must use herd-men to carry a litter or draw a cart or chariot.

Morokanth keep intelligent human slaves in addition to their herd-men. Slavery is a common practice in Prax (and Glorantha generally). Morokanth take most of their slaves by tribal raiding. Humans rarely sell slaves to morokanth. Praxian nomads keep slaves and eat beasts, including herdmen. Outsiders are often appalled by what appears to be human remains at nomad feasts, but the nomads see nothing strange in eating what looks like human flesh, for the way of Waha makes the matter clear, and has done so for generations beyond reckoning.

Though morokanth are able to stand or walk on their hind legs for a time, to slash with their claws or to use tools, they prefer to walk on four legs when travelling any distance. They are like bears in this matter. A morokanth's forepaws are well fitted for fighting and walking but are too clumsy for fine manipulation skills. When calculating a morokanth's manipulation bonus for full body
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Beast Training (Knowledge 10% Morokanth, 00% others): This skill is similar to Riding in teaching skills, in making a herd-man do something it has not been trained to do, in making a herd-man fight on command, and in choosing a herd-man for use.

In addition to teaching ordinary body attack skills, such as fist, head butt, and kick, Beast Masters can train herd-men to throw rocks and attack (but not parry) with a club or cestus. Herd-men have a basic 00% chance with such weapons. Herd-men cannot learn weapons skills more complex than these.

Beast Training also measures a morokanth's ability to tell a herd-man from a human being after a 10minute inspection. One who speaks is obviously a person. Is that mute a herd-man, a human in the last stages of Brain Fever, or a spy trying to sneak into your herd for cover? Is that impala just a beast, or is it a rune lord's intelligent allied spirit? This ability is important because, while it is permissible to eat herd creatures, it is cannibalism to eat people of any race.

Members of other Praxian tribes use their Ride skill to distinguish beasts from people. If the attempt to make the distinction is a fumble, the character has reached the wrong conclusion. If the attempt is inconclusive (i.e., the roll is failed), the being in question may be forced to live off the chaparral for one week. If it thrives it is considered a beast. If not, it is considered a slave.

manipulation skills (agility-type skills) such as Climbing, Jumping, or Swimming, use its full DEX. When calculating a morokanth's hand manipulation skills such as Sleight or Devise, use half its DEX rounded down. They also have difficulty in fine manipulation-related skills such as Writing. Additionally, morokanth have a base chance in these skills 05% worse than normal, so that their base chance in Devise (for example) is 00% instead of 05%. For this reason, a morokanth will pay top price for slaves with manipulation skills, and will usually keep skilled captives as slaves rather than free them for a ransom.

As with other Praxian tribes few morokanth read. Even fewer write. Most use human scribes for the few written records they keep. Most of the armor and weapons of the morokanth are made by their human slaves or bought from outland traders whose greed is greater than their fear of the morokanth.

Human Attitudes Towards the Morokanth: While both Praxians and outlanders hate and fear the morokanth in varying degrees, their feelings have different roots. Praxians hate morokanth because they know them too well. Outlanders hate morokanth for things they think they know.

All tribes wish to keep their herds intact, for the milk, and for the status of owning many tribal beasts. To get beasts for meat and hides they raid the herds of the other tribes. Much of the meat eaten is that of other tribes' beasts. This includes herd-men. There are also raids to rescue captives and beasts captured by the other tribes. In Prax, raiding is an occupation second only to herding.

For the most part, Praxian humans see morokanth as just one more rival for the resources of the plains and one more raider of the herds. This is not to say that they regard the morokanth in exactly the same way they regard the other tribes, merely that the disfavor Praxian humans feel for the morokanth differs more in degree than kind from their feelings for the other Praxian tribes. In human eyes, morokanth are also guilty of cheating at the time of the Survival Covenant, of not releasing skilled slaves for ransom, and generally of being Not-Like-Us. At the same time there is a bond between Praxian human and morokanth born out of a common lifestyle and common gods. Both know in their hearts, as an outlander never could, the feelings that make them stay on the harsh plains rather than search for a new way of life in more fertile surroundings.

Barring the rare individual friendship between human and morokanth, relationships are strained and formal. Praxian humans cannot afford to turn their weapons and hostility against the morokanth. There are three other tribes, not to mention the independents, waiting for the chance to do some



The Nonhuman Morokanth

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raiding for themselves. Humans usually content themselves with morokanth-baiting, refusing to sell slaves to the morokanth, and raiding. When they occasionally try to carry the fighting farther than that, their own warlike natures are as much a protection as a threat to the morokanth. Tribal alliances are unstable, usually ending with the allies falling out, and often falling on each other. When any tribe musters for war, the others soon join in a five-way battle to dominate the plains (until the next time).

Morokanth have a worse reputation than they deserve outside of Prax. Outlanders believe morokanth are vicious man-eaters. They frighten naughty children with tales of morokanth. This is due to ignorance. They do not know of the Survival Covenant. They have not experienced the hard life of the plains of Prax or they would know of the desperation that drove men and beasts to risk becoming herd-things in return for a chance to survive at all. Outlanders do not realize that the humans of Prax also eat and otherwise use herdmen. (Even when outlanders see herd-men in human camps their own expectations blind them: herd-men are seen as slaves rather than meat for the stew-pot.) They do not know that herd-men are unintelligent animals in human form. Thus it is that morokanth alone have the reputation for being "man-eaters." Outside Prax morokanth are seen as either dangerous butchers by the common folk or sources of great profit by black-market slave traders. The greatest exception is the Lunar Empire, which accepts anyone or anything willing to obey the Lunar Way.

Herd-Beast to Man: The changes that took place in men and animals as a result of the Survival Covenant are not final. It is still possible to awaken the spark of intelligence in each herdcreature, or to extinguish it in each person. Since both humans and morokanth believe the other gained undue advantage by cheating at the time of the Survival Covenant they believe it only right to "correct the situation" by magic. The Waha divine spells Release Intelligence and Fix Intelligence (Gods of Glorantha, Cults Book, p. 77) are used to quicken the intelligence of herd beasts as vessels for allied spirits or to turn sentient creatures into beasts. Fix Intelligence may be used to humiliate enemies by turning them into beasts, to punish criminals guilty of "bestial" crimes, to use a particularly desirable person as breeding stock for the herds, as an incentive for swift delivery of ransom, or for impersonation. Impersonation is achieved by taking an individual, turning him into a herd-creature, and binding a cooperative spirit

into that body. You then have a body that will do and say what you want it to. All you need is an explanation for his changed habits, such as vegetarianism.

**Current Affairs:** The Morokanth avoided involvement in the resistance to the Lunar invasion, and after a period of isolation are now making their peace with the conquerors. They are still a populous tribe and, if anything, the official Imperial policy of tolerance of non-humans has helped their standing in the land.

Character Generation: See Gloranthan Bestiary, p. 31, and Elder Secrets, Elder Races Book, p. 88.

### Mostali (dwarfs)

Mostali are seldom encountered in the valley except in Pavis Dwarftown or the North Quarry in the Big Rubble. The only stone or minerals of interest to Mostali in Prax are found in the Big Rubble, and the only labors worthy of their masons are found in New Pavis. Those seeking skilled engineers, masons, miners, or prospectors must inquire at the Flintnail temple in the Rubble or the Dwarf Offices and Clearing House in Pavis Dwarfside.

Character Generation: See RuneQuest Deluxe, Creatures Book, p. 16, and Elder Secrets, Elder Races Book, pp. 6-25.

### Newtlings

Newtlings are an amphibian race with a complicated life cycle. The larval stage of newtlings is totally aquatic and unintelligent. The larvae (tadpoles) resemble the adults in form but have three pairs of external gills on each side of the neck, are grayish brown, and smaller in size. They spend three years in this stage, staying in guarded pools where outsiders are forbidden until they metamorphose into the bachelor stage.

The bachelor stage is a sexually immature stage in which both sexes spend the next 30 years of their lives. The bachelor is semi-aquatic, has a thick, rough skin, is dark brown with yellow spots, and stores water for travel in the fat of its large tail. The bachelors are sometimes forced to leave the home area by crowding or food shortages. These become the newtlings that are met at the far corners of the continent. In this stage they develop their skills and learn new things for the time when they return to the water to breed.

After about 30 years of bachelorhood, the newtling gets an urge to return to the homeland (if he or she left it). The transitional period lasts for

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about a year and any newtling that does not return to the water by the end of this time is doomed. This is the third stage of newtling life; with sexual maturity is lost the ability to withstand drying. The skin becomes soft, smooth, and porous; the tail becomes smaller and can no longer store water (though it is better fit for swimming); and the color changes to a golden brown with orange spots. The newtling enters a village and begins life as a breeding adult. He guards the larvae, teaches what skills he can, and is now allowed to enter the priesthood (or lordship) of the newtling deities, whose origins and nature are poorly understood by scholars. This stage lasts an unknown length of time, as newtlings discourage others from looking into it.

Bachelor newtlings in the River of Cradles region commonly become initiates of the Zola Fel cult or other minor river cults, and some few advance to acolyte or priest status in these cults. When the bachelor becomes an adult, however, he is thought to forsake all other worship except the newtling cults.

**Newtlings and Swimming:** Newtlings swim underwater at a rate of 4 meters per melee round. Any newtling can stay underwater without difficulty for 6 minutes, and needs only make one Luck roll per full turn to be able to breathe for each full turn thereafter. After missing a roll, the newtling then begins to take 1d4 points damage to the abdomen each successive melee round.

Newtlings are naturally agile and dexterous underwater. In underwater combats newtlings receive a +10 modifier to attack and parry chances when fighting other non-aquatic species.

**Tridents:** The newtling trident is a threepronged, one-handed short spear for dry land and underwater. Instruction for those converting from one-hand short spear to trident takes place at the rate of 15% weekly.

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weapon	damage	STR/DEX	ENC	base %	AP	SR	price
Trident	1d6+1	19/7	2	05%	9	2	125L
Net	special	12/10	3	05%	6	1	150L

Character Generation: See Gloranthan Bestiary, p. 32-33, and Elder Secrets, Elder Races Book, p. 88-90. For combat use of nets see Monster Coliseum, Coliseum Book, pp. 16-17, or Gloranthan Bestiary, p. 3.

### Ogres

Interpretation of signs and portents by Praxian Storm Bull priests have long suggested the existence of a large community of Cacodemonworshipping ogres in Prax, but ogres are seldom



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seen in the valley and positively identified more seldom still. Storm Bulls insist that this is only what would be expected with a race of creatures so difficult to distinguish from normal humans. They theorize that the ogres plot to rescue Wakboth the devil from his imprisonment beneath the Spike, though there is no evidence to support this contention. They further assert that a substantial number of innocent-looking Lunar settlers are actually ogres in disguise, again without supporting evidence. This sort of rumor only serves to exacerbate the normal xenophobia of valley dwellers, and is a sharp point of contention between Storm Bulls and the Lunar administration.

Ogres are difficult to positively identify. They are believed to have more sharp incisor teeth than normal humans, but overzealous Storm Bulls and vigilantes performing spot inspections of suspected ogre's dentition are noted more for enthusiasm than discernment. Storm Bulls also confidently assert their god-given ability to sense the taint of chaos, but again this ability is widely acknowledged to be less reliable than is claimed by Storm Bull cultists.

No evidence has been produced to support the contention that the ancient sacrificial site on Ogre Island in the Big Rubble is once again active, though rumors persist. Storm Bulls insist that Cacodemon cult magics prevent the detection of ogres and their innate chaos taint, regardless of Storm Bull cult senses and spells.

Character Generation: See RuneQuest Deluxe, Creatures Book, p. 31-32, and Elder Secrets, Elder Races Book, p. 90. See also Elder Secrets, Elder Races Book, pp. 103-107, for a description of the Cacodemon cult.

### **Tusk Riders**

This humanoid race is widely believed to derive from cross-breeding humans and trolls. These species are not inter-fertile; however, the notion is supported by their physical appearance, especially the facial features which combine the head and facial hair, brow, eyes, and nose of humans with the protruding jaws and prominent tusks of trolls. Tusk riders are also intermediate between humans and trolls in strength, size, and aggressiveness.

Tusk riders are noteworthy for two things. The first is the giant boars which bear them over plain and mountain with equal facility. The other is their cult of the Bloody Tusk, which glorifies combat and blood sacrifice. Historically tusk riders have been scorned and distrusted by both men and trolls as degenerate halfbreeds. In turn, tusk riders are defiant and proud, flaunting their bloody ways and openly proclaiming all other races and religions of the earth as their legitimate prey.

In Prax tusk riders hire as mercenaries to any who meet their price of cash and blood. Their employer must provide sentient beings to torture and to kill. He who wishes an entire tribe of tusk riders (such as those of Dragon Pass) must deliver regiments of victims to them to satisfy their bloodlusts.

Tusk riders are native to Dragon Pass, Peloria, and Ralios, and until recently have been little known in Prax, as the chaparral provides insufficient food for tuskers. However, tusk riders employed by the Empire as mercenary auxiliaries found the frontiers of settled Prax ripe for their brigandage, and valley settlers, nomads, and riverfolk alike report ever more frequent encounters with these savage creatures and their tusker mounts.

Prax nomad tribes have always raided one another for herd beasts and captives, but tusk riders raid for loot and blood sacrifices. Because of the growing threat to new settlements in the Grantlands, the Lunar Provincial Administration has been placed in the embarrassing position of hiring mercenaries and bounty hunters to track down and capture, drive away, or exterminate their former tusk rider allies.

Character Generation: *Gloranthan Bestiary*, p. 43, and *Elder Secrets, Elder Races Book*, p. 93. See also *Elder Secrets, Elder Races Book*, pp. 99-102, for a description of the Bloody Tusk cult.

### Uz (Trolls)

The troll colony of the Big Rubble is large and vigorous. Parties of trolls encountered in Pavis are typically respectful of local custom. When seen in the Big Rubble, they are either raiding other Rubble folk or hijacking careless adventurers. In the Troll Stronglands they are fiercely territorial and aggressive, though troll friends with a proper introduction and goods or knowledge for trade may receive a warm welcome. Tavern tales of Zorak Zorani war parties ambushing and slaughtering travelers, sometimes whole caravans, are common but probably exaggerated.

Character Creation: See RuneQuest Deluxe, Creatures Book, p. 38-39, Gloranthan Bestiary, p. 41-43, Elder Secrets, Elder Races Book, p. 53-76, Trollpak, Troll Gods, The Haunted Ruins, and Into the Troll Realms. GVWSTLAUXOU: AR ~ & UO2 ~ & A Y # O X T

# From Corflu to New Pavis

Major Settlements on the Zola Fel

### Corflu

In 1611, the year after the seizure of Pavis, the Lunar army prepared an expedition downriver to search for the site of the ancient coastal city of Feroda. Ingilli was glad to aid them, for they paid an honest price for honest work in a land where work had been scarce. Ducks, newtlings, and men worked for a season to make rafts and boats. At the end of Sea season, as the water began to subside, the army departed downriver.

The Lunar army is known for its research. The expedition carried a map to the city of Feroda. Though the map was true, the ever-shifting delta had changed, and no ruins were found. Soldiers and priests alike were assaulted by giant mosquitoes, tiny gnats, and hungry leeches. Courageous before spears and spells, the Lunars quailed before the insects' ceaseless assault. At the height of the insect assaults, after the reed rafts were infested with thumb-sized lice, Tolkazzi, Ingilli's brother, spoke loudly and boldly.

"It is hard for me to believe," said he, "that these Lunars have conquered all the dry world. I told Lunar leaders of the bad conditions here, and offered a solution, but they declared that only their Red Goddess could found a city, and would have nothing of me. Perhaps now they will pay me what I am owed."

Paid he was, with river rights for the delta channels, and trading rights with all the seagoing boats which stopped there, and fishing rights off the coast. In return he had to agree to some Lunar rituals and to some minor magical conditions.

There on an island in the delta Tolkazzi built a seaport for the Lunars. Corflu was the settlement's name. It was named after the wife of Tolkazzi, who is unknown to history except through her husband's compliment that "she corrects all my mistakes, treading upon my life and erasing the errors of my record from my weary mind."

In 1613, Tolkazzi sold his market rights to Koronius Falabdur, a Lunar Etyries priest. Tolkazzi retained actual ownership of the island. With most of Falabdur's payment, Tolkazzi employed a troll priestess and her followers. They erected an altar to Gorakiki Dragonfly on Corflu island. Shortly after that, the area swarmed with one and two-meters-long dragonflies, which devoured the mosquitoes. Newtlings complained about the new, dangerous dragonfly naiads in the waters, but ate them as well. Appreciative of an insect-free environment, many riverfolk relocated their camps and homes to Corflu island.

Later that year Tolkazzi and Falabdur traveled to Pavis where the Corflu Trade Alliance received its charter under the authority of the governorgeneral. Tolkazzi and Falabdur were to receive a large portion of annual profits, while the administration of the Trade Alliance was turned over to a Lunar-funded and -appointed bureaucracy. A wooden stockade and stone dwellings were built to house the Trade Alliance officials and a garrison of Marines sent to protect Corflu from pirates.

The first trade ships came from Esrolia, bringing exotic goods from the civilized lands in the West. Though these goods were highly sought in the empire, they could be shipped there more cheaply by other routes. However, New Pavis was a small but hungry market for these luxuries, and trade moved upriver through Corflu.

In Storm season of 1614, wolf pirates visited Corflu. One ship anchored in the channel but instead of a horde of bloodthirsty raiders only a single woman swam ashore and strode naked about the market. One person of all the gaping merchants spoke to her, offering to trade all his goods for a place among her crew. She did not accept, nor did she return with others to plunder this market, even though the wolf pirates were looting the coast. Such was the poverty of the settlement at that time.

In Water season of 1615 the Falabdur family ended when the heir was cursed through receiving an enchanted hyena skin from an unnamed nomad. Though thoroughly unfit, he was forced to fulfill the Issaries curse and marched to his death

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in Vulture's Country. The Corflu Trade Alliance has been scarcely inconvenienced by the failing of the Falabdur line, other than that the Etyries marketplace is activated now by any priest rather than by a permanent priesthood.

In 1618 an incomplete Watchdog of Corflu is assembled and animated (see p. 42). Excavations in following years discover more fragments of the Second-Age colossus.

In 1619 the Lunars stage a surprise sea assault on the Esrolian town of Karse from Corflu. During the two years preceding the assault the Lunars attempt to keep their preparations for the operation secret. Marines and supplies are funnelled to Corflu under various pretexts until the garrison numbers 400 men and the warehouses are packed with innocuously labeled crates. Two warships and three transports appear in Corflu one day, and the ships are loaded with men and supplies within 24 hours. During the preparations for the adventure, many Esrolian ships visit Corflu. It is remarkable that the Esrolians had no notion of the impending invasion, and a credit to Lunar counter-intelligence.

#### The Geography of Corflu and Environs

Corflu is built on one of the prominent local rock features known as the Wens. More than a dozen of these plugs of resistant rock poke up 20-40m over the marsh and swamp of the Zola Fel delta. The stockade and its buildings are built on this high ground, and out of danger from floods. Structures on the swampy lands beneath the stockade are, however, subject to occasional flooding.

The Zola Fel follows several main channels through the delta to the sea. Though their courses shift from time to time, the channels themselves remain constant. Corflu is located on the largest of these permanent channels, one deep enough to permit all but the largest sea-going vessels access to Corflu's modest seaport facilities.

Beyond the river's mouth the ocean floor drops precipitously to great depths. Mermen communities lie in these great depths, but contact between them and the people of Corflu is limited to occasional merman visits to the Magasta shrine.

Normal tides vary 6m. from high to low tide. Flood tides may vary as much as 10m. Thus much of the Zola Fel is salt marsh subject to frequent flooding, and camps and permanent residences must be built on high ground. A number of ridges formed on old sandbars and numerous wooded islands are prominent upon the floodplains; here may be found the seasonal camps of river nomads and the more permanent villages of the settled riverfolk. Cypress groves are common in lagoons protected by natural dikes and levees. Cypress groves may in time become scrub pine islands, as cypress colonizes the lagoons, while scrub pines colonize the cypress groves. Hardwood, pine, and cypress swamps are found farther from the river channels. These terrains grade into the floodplain parklands along the river north of the delta.

#### The Settlement

(See the diagram "Corflu and Surrounding Environs" on page 41.)

The stockade is made of logs from the Holy Country. Within the stockade are the stone edifices of the Trade Alliance House, the Marine Garrison and Servant Quarters, and Tolkazzi Manor. The other buildings within the stockade are constructed from local timber. The larger warehouses near the southeast double gate were built in anticipation of great trade; presently most goods can be easily sheltered in the stone Trade Alliance House.

Outside the stockade the houses are built in the traditional riverfolk fashion as reed huts on stilts. Little labor is expended on these structures, which the riverfolk regard as temporary, so they present a rather ramshackle appearance to the visitor. Riverfolk instead lavish their crafts and energies upon their brightly-painted boats and decorated sails. Most settled riverfolk here have planked sailing skiffs, though traditional reed boats and coracles are used as utility craft.

Off the island but nearby are a number of riverfolk communities and private residences that shelter within range of the Gorakiki cult's effective insect pest control. Their residences are like the reed huts on the islands, except that each dwelling has its own floating dock and landing, whereas the Corflu islanders generally maintain docks in common. Note that the docks shown on the map float. In fact, one traditional nomadic riverfolk dwelling, still occasionally encountered in remote regions of the delta, is the reed hut built on a reed raft which rises and falls with the tides. This design has largely been abandoned in favor of more permanent camps on high ground above the tide mark.

Farther afield but clustered within an hour's paddle of Corflu are many seasonal camps of the nomadic riverfolk. Before Corflu these camps were spread more widely across the delta region, but the lure of the Corflu market and and its trade goods and the inviting social atmosphere of the Zola Fel temple have drawn these camps closer to the island. In the warm seasons a hundred or more

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boats may gather here for the weekly market and Zola Fel holy day ceremonies.

The Corflu stockade is a social as well as physical barrier. Those within the stockade are mostly Lunars or city-bred New Pavisites who consider themselves civilized and the riverfolk without the stockade as primitive barbarians. On the other hand the riverfolk who live in the fishing settlements outside the stockade dismiss the "civilized" people as soft and corrupt, and are confident that the riverfolk will be here long after the foolish city folk's enterprise has failed. Ironically, the settled riverfolk of Corflu island also look down on their nomadic riverfolk cousins as primitive, while the river nomads are equally contemptuously of the soft and corrupt lives of the settled riverfolk of the island.

### **Points of Interest**

Newtling Village: 200 meters northwest of the town. Sa'arrachmbro the Zola Fel priest and many newtling Zola Fel worshippers live here. Newtling bachelors live on high ground in reed huts on stilts. Adults and tadpoles live in nests and dens sheltered from outsiders in reed thickets. The bachelor huts guard access to the nests, and trident-armed newtlings challenge any who would violate the nest's privacy.

**River Folk Settlements:** Approximately 10% of Zola Fel valley riverfolk are settled, non-nomadic, and live in riverside settlements from Corflu to Pavis. About 600 settled riverfolk live in the Corflu area, half of them in Corflu. In dry season small communities of nomadic riverfolk are spread across the delta region, though they rarely interact with the settled Corflu riverfolk except at the market and the Zola Fel temple, where settled and nomadic riverfolk communities treat each other with exaggerated courtesy.

Magasta Altar: Offerings to Magasta are left at the altar, which a Ludoch merman acolyte visits on an irregular schedule. Ships' crews often make sacrifices and worship at altar before leaving for the high seas. Ludoch are rarely encountered in the delta, which is a hostile wilderness region by their standards. Contact may be made through intelligent fish of the Zola Fel cult who may in turn communicate with their deepwater cousins to deliver messages to the Ludoch, whose communities are at great depths off the southern shelf of the Genertelan coast. The only contact between Ludoch and Corflu is in trade for metals.

**Dormal the Sailor:** An unattended altar is maintained in the Seven Mothers shrine at the Corflu Trade Alliance stone house. **Docks**: The only sea-going vessels likely to call at Corflu at present are Esrolian trade vessels or Lunar navy vessels. Corflu was in fact a staging area for the daring naval raid which resulted in the capture of the port of Karse in Heortland.

**Cult Temples and Shrines**: The Zola Fel temple has a permanent staff of the high priest and several acolytes, and a number of other priests and acolytes are often in residence. The Seven Mothers temple, housed in the Corflu Trade Alliance building, is attended by a Deezola priestess and two acolytes; the Dormal shrine there is maintained for visiting sailors but not attended. No Lightbringer or nomad gods shrines are found in Corflu.

**Gorakiki Altar:** The Gorakiki Dragonfly colony was brought here by founder Tolkazzi and the Corflu Trade Alliance to control the insect pests that once plagued the town site. A troll priestess, mothers, providers, and trollkin live near the causeway in stone buildings built by Tolkazzi.

**Tolkazzi Manor:** East of the Marine garrison is the fine stone mansion of the Tolkazzi family. The family still owns the island and considerable interest in the Corflu Trade Alliance, but the Tolkazzis have shown little interest in Corflu or its administration, preferring to spend their time and wealth in the cosmopolitan society of Pavis.



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**Ingilli Riverside Association**: Boatmen Hall is a small building south of Tolkazzi Manor where river boatmen conduct their affairs. The clerk there knows the schedules of all major merchant traffic up and down river, and here a riverman seeking employment may place his name on the service list. A bulletin board is also maintained for postings of a private and personal nature.

**Corflu Trade Alliance House**: The offices of the Corflu Trade Alliance, Grantlands Lunar Administration, Military Affairs, Department of Antiquities and various commercial agents are housed here. The Department of Antiquities consists of a single Irrippi Ontor scholar in charge of the Feroda Project. Feroda is the lost site of a Second Age God Learners trade community sought by the Lunars. The Feroda Project seeks to locate and recover other Second-Age magical treasures like the Watchdog of Corflu.

The Watchdog of Corflu: From 1618 this 72meter-tall magical statue spans the main channel of the Zola Fel several hundred meters south of the sea-going ship docks. Assembled from parts of a larger Second-Age colossus excavated from nearby sites by the Department of Antiquities, approximately 60% of the original statue is missing. The assembled and animated fragments walk upright on two arms attached to hips, surmounted by a huge one-eyed head with a vast, fanged mouth. Before 1618 the Lunars search for and excavate the fragments of the Watchdog; from 1618 and after they continue to uncover additional pieces of the original statue.

**Slavery**: Slavery is legal here, and many Lunars own both trained civilized slaves and servantslaves of Prax nomad stock. The Lunar Trade Alliance relies on slaves for most labor and administrative work in Corflu. Aiding slaves to escape is punishable by crucifixion.

#### **Corflu Population**

**Riverfolk**: 250-300 on Corflu island; 300-400 more nearby. Another 300-400 nomadic riverfolk camp within several kilometers from early Fire season to early Dark season.

Lunar Garrison: 100 marines.

Lunar Adminstration, Tradesmen, Warehousers, Etc.: 100

Trolls: 2 great trolls, 4 dark trolls, 35 trollkin. Newtlings: 100 bachelors in nearby village; adult and tadpole population unknown.

Ducks: 20 merchants, craftsmen, seamen, and shipbuilders.

### Prominent Corflu Personalities Sa'arrachmbro (Reverend Sa'ar), Newtling Priest of Zola Fel

Reverend Sa'ar is the High Priest of Zola Fel and head priest of the local temple, but he is a bachelor newtling, and of only modest status in his tribe. The true leaders of the newtling community, the adult council, remain in seclusion with the tadpoles. For a person of such influence in the Corflu community, Sa'ar is exceptionally selfeffacing and exquisitely polite. As a result, Sa'ar has very few enemies in Corflu, and receives great respect and cooperation from riverfolk and Lunar communities.

Martris Gratifex, Corflu Trade Alliance Administrator, and Hahmi, his educated slave Gratifex is a venal, lazy, but a moderately effective administrator and manager. He leaves his competent slave Hahmi to do all the Trade Alliance administrative work.

Gratifex scorns the native settled and nomadic river people as lazy, lying savages and thieves. (In fact, locals do not provide a useful workforce for the Trade Alliance, so slaves must be imported and fed, at ruinous rates.) To him the riverfolk lifestyle seems indolent and irresponsible, and their culture hopelessly crude and barbaric.

Hahmi is apparently a good-looking, welldressed, well-spoken, efficient, and effusively friendly clerk and administrative assistant. In fact Hahmi is skilled at appearing helpful while providing no actual assistance at all. His promises are lavish and generally unreliable; when confronted with his failures, he overflows with tragic excuses and humble apologies.

Nomelion Flactus, Lunar Captain of Marines Flactus is a simple soldier nearing retirement, expecting a good plot of land in the Grantlands for his years of service. The last thing he wants is trouble or adventure. "The only good nomad is a dead nomad," says Flactus, who is sick of futile pursuits of nomad raiders into the wastelands. If Flactus takes a liking to a PC, he'll recommend that he seek out Duke Raus of Weis Domain for hospitality and employment, pronouncing Raus a "good captain and a sound fellow, though a bit chummy with the natives."

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### The Grantlands

The Grantlands is the southern region of the Zola Fel valley where it narrows between high rock walls to the east and west. From Sun County to the delta the valley's marshes, wetlands forests, and river terrace grasslands average between 5-20 kilometers wide, and access to the prairie plateaus beyond the east and west margins is difficult.

The western margin of the valley is very steep and inaccessible even to most climbing animals, except for two canyons cut by tributaries. The western cliffs of that valley rise sharply to an average of 300 meters above the valley floor. The eastern wall rises much more gradually and is frequently climbable by mounted riders. Such slopes often are broken by steep falls and cliffs of 30-100 meters. The eastern wall rises higher than that in the west, finally reaching 900 meters and Vulture's Country, which stretches away to the endless desert of the Genert Wastes.

The valley here is a comparative land of plenty. Melt-off from the mountains far upriver floods the valley every spring, then the river dwindles to its lowest flow just before Storm season. The flood plains are covered with thick, tough plants and flood-resistant trees and shrubs producing the lush, tenacious wilderness morass called the Bogs. These bogs begin to grow with Storm season, are largest in Sea season, then subside over Fire, Earth, and Darkness seasons. The valley floor is runnelled with the collapsed ruins of ancient irrigation ditches of unknown antiquity.

The width and depth of the river varies with the season. At its shallowest the main channel is a meter deep and ten meters wide. At floodcrest it may be 400 meters wide and six meters deep, and quite swift-flowing besides. It is normally a gentle river, slow-moving and without serious obstacles, except in the bogs, where it divides into countless channels, many of which dead-end in cypress pools or are blocked by flood debris.

The bogs along the River of Cradles are a morass of mudpits, cypress, and cane. Everything grows here, and insects are thick and pesky. Unless a trail is used daily, it grows over and disappears within a week. In Storm through Sea seasons, the bogs are at least half water. In Fire and Earth seasons they dry up a bit and may become fire hazards.

At various times in the past the valley forests appear to have been cleared for farming; the forests have not returned, and are attested to only by ancient stumps buried in the bogs. Scattered clumps of scrub pine and hardwood are present up the east rise of the valley nearly to the top.

The valley terraces are a mass of brush and grasses. Wild herds and nomads have grazed the land sufficiently that much of the grass is fairly short, but, especially during Sea and Fire seasons, the grass is chest-high on a walking man. The only roads are those recently hewn by the recent Grantlands frontier settlers, and most travel in the region is by boat or animal trails.

### The People of the Grantlands Prax Nomads

The Prax plateau to the west is a dry region of wandering barbarians. Tribes like the region and try to settle there permanently, but they are often driven off by more powerful outsiders. At this time the Agimori and Morokanth nomads are the dominant tribal forces, and they maintain an uneasy truce with the new settlers and each other. The upland plateau is unsuited to farming, and of little interest to the lowland settlers, but access to the river and the valley terrace grazing by nomads is a likely source of future conflict between the native nomads and the homesteaders.

Vulture's Country and the Genert plateau are even dryer and less hospitable than the western plateau. Considered uninhabitable even by the animal nomads for many years, tribes forced there by recent Lunar expansion struggle to survive.

The presence of hungry, mounted barbarians on either side of this ribbon of valley has prevented any lasting settlement and exploitation of the excellent valley farmland for the last six centuries. It is considered prime grazeland property for the nomad's herds, and for centuries they have fought to live here. The powerful Lunar army has subdued them for the present, and ensured a relative peace from their wild chieftains.

#### **Oasis People**

Weis Hamlet is an Oasis People settlement nearby. Most Oasis Peoples communities are found farther to the west along the Eiritha Hills. Though surface water is rare there, underground water sources are focused and fed by drainage from the hills, and subsistence farming is possible. Horn Gate is a large and relatively prosperous Oasis People settlement, and an important source of slaves, foodstuffs, livestock, and various services for the Grantlands settlers.

#### Settlers

The civilized homesteaders of the Grantlands are a mixed stock of refugees from throughout the empire and enterprising adventurers from the GVVSTLADXOU: AROSUO2#QAY#OX7

north valley. For many, the promise of cheap, fertile land here overshadows the daunting reputation of the hostile frontier. Refugees, generally from Talastar, Carmania, Redlands, and Sartar, have been sent here to distract them from their preoccupations with political affairs. While relocated here against their will, these exiles are tough and pragmatic in outlook, and generally resolved to make the best of the situation.

### **Ronegarth (Raus Fort)**

Duke Raus of Rone, an exiled Lunar noble, established the first settlement in the Grantlands in 1615. He built his fort at the confluence of the River of Cradles and the Vilinar, bringing a full crew of slave laborers and free craftsmen to begin his estate, and a tough guard of veteran mercenaries to provide security for the growing settlement. The peasants of Weis were hired as laborers, since it was Fire season and they were not busy. Slaves and freemen lived inside the stockade when completed. The guards delighted in telling the slaves tales of morokanth butchery, and perhaps because of that only one slave escaped during the entire period of construction. The stockade was built of earth, stone, wicker and timbers atop a low



Ronegarth, also known as Raus Fort

but abruptly rising stone shelf midway between the rivers and the western cliff wall.

The stockade was the first structure to be built, to protect stock and men from any nomad raids. Materials were accumulated in Pavis, then floated down the river to the site. The raft timbers were laid out to dry and to season, providing the main supports for the houses of the settlers to come.

In following years bottomland along the river was cleared for farming, and the first settlers installed in a tent village outside the stockade walls. During this period the homesteaders lived and labored near the sheltering stockade. It was during this time also that the Duke's villa was constructed under the supervision of Mostali masons from the Flintnail cult of Pavis.

By 1617 individual settlers were establishing independent steads throughout the Duke's domain. Each frontier farm centered around a sturdy fortified house, within which beleaguered settlers might shelter from nomad or bestial raiders until smoke signals could summon aid from the Duke's mercenaries and nearby settlements. The life of the frontier homesteader was hard and dangerous, but the promise of owning fertile, productive bottomland farms continued to draw settlers, while the practice of granting farmlands here to retired Lunar army veterans created a seasoned militia for the region's defense.

### New Domains in the Grantlands

Over the period 1615-1621 the boundaries of seven domains were marked and established by the Lunar governor at Pavis. (See the "Grantland Domains" diagram nearby.) Weis Domain was the the first and largest grant. Subsequent grants were to be made by Governor Sor-Eel, sometimes at the behest of the Red Emperor, sometimes to reward a loyal Lunar general with a land grant, sometimes to favor ambitious entrepreneurs with schemes of producing agricultural products for export through the seaport of Corflu. The prominent candidates to receive grants at the time of this publication are as follows:

• A popular but politically-suspect Yelmist general of the Lunar army in Esrolia was slated to receive the Red Cliff Domain.

• An infamous Lunar carpetbagger expected to receive Bilos Grant.

• An entrepreneur proposing to establish a number of slave-cultivated rice plantations for the export trade hopes to receive Lokazzi Grant.

Future Praxian campaign and adventure supplements may deal with the events surrounding the settlement of these new grants along the southern Zola Fel.

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### **Points of Interest**

**Bilos Gap**: This is a short valley leading from the River of Cradles up to the Prax plateau, one of the two ways to reach the plateau from the main river while in the duke's domain. The pass onto the plateau is rocky and slow to climb, but riders and mounts can pass if they keep to the ancient herd-beast route. Large caves in the valley walls are a favorite camping spot for Morokanth.

**Bilos Creek**: Flows from the mountains through the gap to the River of Cradles. Often dry for years at a time.

**Bogs**: Marshy areas over which the River of Cradles floods. These areas retain moisture for much of the year, gradually dwindling over Fire, Earth, and Darkness seasons. They are thickly covered with brush, thorns, and hardwood trees. They are difficult to walk through, impossible to ride through, and very easy to hide in. The ground is treacherous and unstable. There are three bogs, the North bog, the Great bog, and the South bog.

**Condor Crags**: These tall, rounded crags of red sandstone rise from the edge of the eastern highlands. They are quite perpendicular and hard to climb. They range in height from 100-300 meters above the supporting ground. The condors which gave them their name thrive there. The crags can be seen from anywhere in this section of the valley, and are an unmistakable landmark.



Boundaries of Grantlands Domains

The Desert Wind: Vulture's Country and the eastern highlands in general are the mere edge of the Genert Wastes, an unnatural region of excessive and irregular mythic influence. The highpressure zone usually in residence over the Wastes helps generate the violent and powerful Desert Wind of Storm Bull. This magical wind is the Storm Bull's fury; it is warm and highly-charged with raw powers. The Wild Hunter often rides it. When it blows, it blows both north and south, with strong winds in one direction and weak in the other. Mountains to the east and west help guide the winds. These howling blasts carry acidic dust, poisonous gases, and debris from the inland chaos devastation which Storm Bull still protects for his lord, Genert the Land God.

Storm season marks the height of the winds, when the south-gusting erratic storms rob the wastes and Prax of much of the rain of the wet westerlies. In Sea season the situation is often worse, for the Desert Wind often defeats even the southwesterly winds that should carry the rain inland. But because of such irregular patterns, droughts may occur for several years.

**Eastern Highlands**: A general term denoting the eastern slope of the valley of the River of Cradles, and the first few kilometers of the lands beyond.

**Eyes Rise and Five Eyes:** A broad ledge of rock on the east side of the River of Cradles. It is 10-60 meters high, and the top is relatively flat. The edge is abrupt and cliff-like; there are only a few points up which riders may take their mounts.

The name is derived from the fact that it is a rise, and that the cliff face nearest the river is painted with ancient symbols which look like five eyes staring down on the river. These are a wellknown landmark and have been used by people from time to time as temporary shelter, for at least one "eye" is the opening of a cave. Currently a newtling settlement and temple are located here.

Horn Gate: Horn Gate is a white-walled oasis and a shrine of the Prax barbarian peoples. It lies near a mountain called Yiskoz, and includes ruins of a most ancient kind. An ancient holy place, considered to be haunted or cursed by common folk, lies within the area as well and is said to run underground for miles until it reaches fabulous ruins beneath the distant mountain. Some elders say that the entry to those haunted ruins was once sealed by Waha the Butcher with immense gates made of animal horns but that blasphemers ripped them down ages ago.

Horn Gate has year-round water, and as such is one of the rich places of the Prax plateau where people gather and settle. The oasis are always THE GRANTLANDS

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fought over by the native tribes who want to 'own,' even temporarily, the lush land. Part of the property includes the thousand permanent residents.

The residents of Horn Gate are mostly mixed stock, including many blue-eyed people alien to the Praxian nomads. They live in conical huts of dried mud and palm-frond thatch within the walls. They grow herbs, dates, grain, and grapes.

The people are treated like slaves or animals by the nomads, as though incapable of organized resistance or of independent thought. The natives rarely do anything to counter that opinion. They gather, plant, harvest, and so on as they have since time began. When ordered to do so they bring foodstuffs and tribute to the nomads who currently own the oasis. Good chieftains trade with the natives and treat them fairly. Meat raising is generally forbidden to the oasis peoples, so gifts of it are greatly appreciated. They trade foodstuffs or child slaves.

The people speak a language unknown anywhere except in Horn Gate, and a similar situation exists at several other Prax oasis. Some residents do speak known languages.

In addition to these permanent residents, outsiders seeking privacy or refuge from the Lunar empire may take up residence in this remote town. For example, a Chalana Arroy priestess and her entourage live here in peaceful seclusion. The White Ladies favored this resting place during the conquest of Prax. Once they were favored in Pavis, where many still live, but one group protested Lunar rule and took up residence at Horn Gate, which was accessible to enemies of the empire who could not enter Pavis. Praxians, knowledgeable travellers, and even Lunar patrols discovered that the Chalana Arroy were there, and grew to rely upon them. These Chalana Arroy cultists are usually the nearest source of Fight Disease, Restore Health spells, and Resurrection for Grantlands settlers and frontier adventurers. Chalana Arroy priestesses are also skilled herbalists, and may have valuable healing potions available in return for donations and services to the faith.

A day's ride from Ronegarth, Horn Gate is the nearest population center for most Grantlands settlers. Many supplies and services not available in the Grantlands may be found here, though metal goods, especially weapons and armor, are never available; settlers must make the difficult journeys north to Chomoro or Sun Dome in Sun County or south to Corflu for such commodities.

Hosar Mountain: The first mountain west of Bilos Gap. It is 580 meters high. Unclimbable, steep, and barren, it is the easternmost tip of the southern horn of the Head Acres.

The High Plains of Prax: The great animal herds of Prax feed here on the hardy prairie grasses. The only permanent settlements on this steppes plateau east of the Eiritha Mountains are the scattered Oasis People villages in valley drainages at the eastern edge of the hill country.

This land was beloved of Eiritha and was once fertile and pleasant, but she gave its essence to aid the Storm Bull against the Devil, so that now only prairie grass grows there. Even though great amounts of rain may fall during Dark, Storm, and Sea seasons. Little rain falls the rest of the year. The surface of the earth beneath the grass is hardpan and sand, and the water runs off or goes underground; without surface water, permanent settlements are impossible. Adventurers frequently see rivercourses, but with only a trickle of water in them. By Fire season, the number of streams flowing in the center of Prax can be counted on one hand. Whitewood trees and pitchbushes sometimes line the watercourses and tap underground waters beneath the dry soil. Still, a cross-country traveler crosses many stretches of baked soil and exposed rock with only the sparsest vegetation. Late summer thunderstorms have sometimes saved travellers from death by thirst in a land whose total rainfall can be as high as 50 inches a year.

**Spirit Mountain**: West of Bilos gap, it is steep, barren, and unclimbable by normal means. It is about 650 meters high. Its name shows its repute.

**Stone Tower**: A fortification built centuries ago and still retaining much of its integrity — a tribute to the builders! Nomads shun it. They gladly tell anyone that it is haunted, and that a vampire Rune lord named Nosferal has lived there spreading terror for years.

Valasa Mountain: Southwest of and flanking Yiskoz mountain, it is 670 meters high. It is steep, barren, and unclimbable by normal means.

Vilinar River: A stream which flows from underground sources to merge in Weis Cut and then joins the River of Cradles.

**Vulture's Country**: The (for a few weeks a year) more fertile area of the Genert Wastes, paralleling the River of Cradles.

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Weis: A hamlet situated on safe, dry ground. The residents are sorry remnants of an ancient farming population, unable to free themselves from a miserable existence. They live by farming, but they are often robbed by nomads as their crops ripen, ruining the harvests. These farmers are part of the duke's Weis domain, but they have known other overlords before this, sometimes nomads and sometimes even non-humans. They are unimaginative and unnotable, except that they have a reputation for petty theft. Anyone of interest among them rose to fame and departed or died long ago.

Weis Cut: The northern break in the Prax Cliffs. This was cut by the Vilinar River, a year-round stream which is fed by underground springs draining Prax and by runoff from Dark season rains which cascade from the cliffs in tiny waterfalls. Some people say that it is possible to reach the Paps by following the Vilinar underground and underwater. No one has tried. The actual cut is an ancient landslide, long stable and dependable.

**Yiskoz Mountain**: A mountain, about 600 meters high, near Horn Cate. It is steep, barren, and unclimbable by normal means. It is the easternmost tip of the northern horn of the Head Acres.

### **Prominent Grantlands Personalities**

Duke Raus of Rone, Lord of Weis Domain Raus is from the Dara Happan lands of the Lunar Empire, his ancestors were from Kostaddi, and he served with distinction in the Lunar army. Though his household still uses them, the duke's titles and honors are now meaningless. The political authorities who stripped him of his previous status also sent him to this place, a desolate land populated with monsters. Those in power gave exile like a reward, promised that caravans of peaceful Lunar farmers would follow Raus, and at the same time threatened him with death if he ever returned to the places that he loved.

Raus determined to make the best of his lot. He recognized the value and the potential of his new lands, and planned to make them the seat of whatever dynasty his descendants could forge after him. He is sure that the Rones of Prax will have power in the future if he works hard now. To secure his domain for the homesteaders to come, he sought to clear the land of beasts and enemies, build a fort and town, and gain the confidence of potential allies and neighbors in the region. Raus is aristocratic, and approves of class structure and distinction. He wants little to do with anyone in his employ—such matters are for his household to tend. With visiting commoners Raus is formal and aloof. He is sensitive to rudeness or impertinence, and immediately ends any audience where a hint of disrespect or carelessness of social station appears. He is unused to contradiction and dispute, and deals instinctively and harshly to discourage such foolishness.

All his immediate family share the duke's religion, an ancestor worship in the style of Daka Fal. There is an ancient family spirit bound in the Crown of Rone, a family heirloom which the duke still owns, which gives advice to whomever is the rightful heir to that crown.

Raus loves his family and is devoted to his household. These family and extended family bonds are recognized, appreciated, and nourished. There is no dissension among the Raus's liegemen: they will do whatever Raus decides, including holding opinions and grudges. Only Raus's hellion daughter, Jezra, challenges her father—she takes contrary opinions just for the hell of it. As much as possible, Raus overlooks her youthful indiscretions and follies, giving the uncouth behavior the same cold disdain that he shows to street scum. In her calmer moments, his only daughter melts Raus's heart.

In dialog with player characters Raus is formal and aloof. He is sensitive to rudeness or impertinence, and immediately ends any audience where a hint of disrespect or carelessness of social station appears. He is unused to contradiction and dispute, and deals instinctively and harshly to discourage such foolishness.

#### Varrna, Wife of Raus of Rone

The duke's wife is a likable, attractive woman of 35 years. She appears to be too delicate for this frontier, however, and she does not conceal her dislike for its unsavory customs.

She is single-minded in her devotion to the well-being of her husband and daughter, now as always. Her aristocratic upbringing allows her to maintain a mask of formal good will even in her wretched surroundings. Unless shocked, she is cheerful and reserved, ever-reliant on her beloved husband. Her household screens any contact with foreigners from her. (In the *Borderlands* supplement Varrna dies of plague in 1615 or 1616.)

### Jezra, Daughter of Raus and Varrna

A young woman, Jezra was raised with luxuries and a formal education which taught her

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everything except how to control her rage. The cause of her anger may well be only the frustration of a lonely young woman or they may stem from a deep-seated madness.

#### Daine, Chief of Mercenaries

Daine, an accomplished Sword of Yanafal Tarnils, came with Duke Raus in 1615. His entire life has been devoted to the service of his hereditary leader, Raus, and when Raus was exiled, Daine accompanied his lifelong friend. (In *Borderlands* Daine dies in 1615-1616.)

Raus's Chief of Mercenaries commands a force of 15-25 mercenaries in Raus's employ. The Chief of Mercenaries is also the primary source for training in the region, and spends much of his time doing just that. Daine (or any Chief of Mercenaries who succeeds him) is typically the highest authority in Raus's household who may speak commonly with player characters.

#### Muriah, Malia priestess

This human priestess of Malia is the leader of the largest and most-organized tribe of broos in the Grantlands region. She appears as an exceptionally ugly ten-year-old girl, but is reputed to be invulnerable and to have attained her leadership status among the local broos in the one-on-one challenge combats broos use to establish their pecking orders.

#### Krang, Dream Dragon

This dragon's lair is in the cliffs of the Eyes Rise region. He may sometimes be seen on hunting forays in the skies of the Grantlands.



#### SUN COUNTY

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### Sun County

(For a complete treatment of Sun County, its lands, peoples, and culture, with roleplaying encounters and scenarios in this setting, see *Sun County, RuneQuest Adventures in the Land of the Sun,* available at fine game stores everywhere.)

In 877, Joraz Kyrem, Lord of the city of Pavis, requested aid from the Sun Dome temple of Dragon Pass. The religious mercenaries complied in return for land, a spot in the sun, and a good price for their horses. After the mercenaries helped free the city, they moved to their new lands and were titled Counts of the Sun Dome lands.

Arinsor Clearmind was the first Sun Dome leader. He was so devoted to Yelmalio that he shone with an internal glow during the darkest nights. As he and his people went about the land, a wonder struck them. A water naiad, daughter of Zola Fel, engaged Arinsor in an ancient rite: they reenacted the story of Yelm and the Oslir river, wherein the lord of light fell but was revived by the river, and so they made an alliance. The sun people were reconciled with the river, and there was irrigation upon the lands for the good of all.

In the early days, when the Arrowsmith dynasty ruled in Pavis, the population, fertility, and security of the land grew. Food was plenty, children common, and marriages pleasant.

After Pavis fell in 1200, Sun County was isolated from the peoples beyond the nomads. They call this era "Solitude of Testing." They feel they passed their tests and survived and are now receiving their blessings from their lord, Yelmalio.

This blessing began in 1575 when Dorasar arrived with presents, offers and an alliance to clear the valley of nomads.

The history of Sun County thus has three phases. First, 879-1200 S.T. (some 321 years) is called the Peaceful Era, the end of which was marked by terrible violence. Then came the Solitude of Testing from 1200-1575 (lasting 375 years). The time since then is called Recent History.

In 1610, the Lunar Empire defeated the nomads at the Battle of Moonbroth and occupied Pavis. Sun County has allied with the Lunars, who in return do not interfere in Sun Dome affairs.

The Count of the land is usually the ranking Light Son of the temple, with special privileges among his fellows. He deals with outsiders.

#### Sun County Settlements

The population of Sun Dome Temple and the town beside it totals about 1,000. The inhabitants are

almost all humans, though a band of griffins stops by regularly. Most of the people are farmers, but a large percentage are religious personnel and craftspeople to maintain dignity proper to the temple. This is also a seat of civil government, and a significant portion of the temple and town's population is employed by the bureaucracy.

Crafts include ironsmithing. Like the smaller settlements, Sun Dome has a weekly market within its walls.

There are several other small towns scattered through the County with an overall population of about 2,500 people. A further 12,500 farmers live in small hamlets or farmsteads throughout the valley.

The People: The people of Sun County look unlike their Pavic or Praxian counterparts, typically having blonde hair and brown eyes. They are distinguished further by their language, a dialect recognizably Sartarite, but heavily influenced by Old Pavic and Praxian. Despite these differences, they use the same farming tools and methods, live in similar structures, and raise the same foods as their neighbors and ancestors. Their religion of Yelmalio worship, their social customs (based on a patriarchal theocracy), and their history (of presence on the Plains) set them apart.

Sun County men favor beards. They are the providers and the protectors. They are expected to marry young (except those blessed with celibacy by Yelmalio) and sire many children. Children keep their father's name as their surname until they earn another, sire children of their own or, in the case of girls, marry.

Sun County women are considered socially inferior, but occupy a special place in Sun Dome society as caregivers and mothers. Women may take on a man's role in the Yelmalio cult, but this is unusual. They are expected to dress modestly, and veil their faces in mixed company. Following Dara Happan custom, women have property rights, the right of divorce, and half of all gifts received during marriage.

Sun County people have great reverence for the aged, and respect their wisdom and experience.

**Religion and Governance:** The Yelmalio cult is the way of life for the people of Sun County, and provides them with answers to all their spiritual needs. Almost all Sun County males join the Yelmalio cult at maturity. A few Lunar expatriate families still revere Yelm the Fiery Father, and can claim certain prerogatives. Worship of other deities is uncommon, even of other gods in the Yelm pantheon.

Although the cult of Yelmalio is open to them, women typically worship Ernalda the Earth GVV●TIADXOU: △R∞ + UO2 + × O × T

Mother, wife of Yelmalio. A few eccentric souls choose to follow other deities and are usually considered "strange" by their peers.

The worship of Yelmalio and associated deities is the official state cult. The cult itself retains title over the lands according to the original grant by Joraz Kyrem. Sun County lords earn their tenure upon those lands, and cult initiates earn their right to dwelling, workshop, and farm plots through faithful service to the cult. No non-Yelmalion may own land in Sun County, though the cult may grant permission to rent land to outlanders. In each farming community, farm plots are assigned by lot each year. Rights of personal property are recognized and protected, but all benefits from land and labor are acknowledged as deriving from the grace and generosity of Yelmalio.

Sun County citizens are proud and deserving of the reputation they have among foreigners as exceptionally moral. Cult lords and priests have power of judgement over lay and initiate cultists , and are encouraged to judge according to the spirit as well as the letter of the law. Important rulings (capital crimes, banishment, blinding, etc.) are confirmed by divination. A judgement divined to be unpleasing to Yelmalio is reconsidered until it is met in his sight.

Sun County culture has also earned the reputation of being sexually repressive. A strict monogamy is enforced upon cult members, and sexual congress is permitted only within the bonds of cult-confirmed matrimony (though bachelor cultists may worship with Uleria priestesses who travel a regular circuit through the larger villages of the county). Yelmalions are offended by and scornful of the sexual license tolerated by Lightbringer and Lunar cults.

Sun County culture has been authoritarian, stable, and cohesive for eight centuries. In times of good leaders, this proves a benefit for all citizens; in times of poor leaders, all citizens suffer equally. Sun County currently thrives under the strong, competent leadership of Count Solanthos Ironpike. The previous count, Varthanis II, was also an effective administrator, though he is now remembered primarily for what is popularly regarded as a demeaning accommodation with the Lunars. Solanthos, slayer of two Lunar Rune Lords in duels in his youth, is popularly credited for preserving Sun County's honor and independence as an ally of the Lunar Empire, but in fact the Count prudently avoids unnecessary conflicts with Lunar authorities, and is resentfully tolerant of the presence of acknowledged and secret Lunar agents in Sun County.

The Sun Dome Templars and Militia: The Yelmalio cult is famous for its mercenaries, the Sun Dome Templars. Such was their fame that Joraz Kyrem called for them back in 877. Although their original grant from Kyrem stipulated it, the Sun Domers of Sun County no longer revere nor raise horses. They have adapted to their fate afoot, and have been forced on occasion to rely on allied mounted nomad tribesmen of their religion for cavalry support. The Sun Domers once even used chariots in war, but only the Count now has such a vehicle for ceremonial purposes only.

The Sun Dome has formed an alliance of convenience with the Lunar forces in Prax, and joined them at the great battle of Moonbroth where the nomads were subjugated in 1610. As a condition of this alliance, the Lunars do not station their troops in the count's lands. This suits both the insular Sun Domers and the Lunar authorities, who lack the manpower to garrison and patrol such a large region and its borderlands. The arrangement will probably continue unchanged as long as the Sun Dome properly remits its taxes to the Lunar administration in Pavis.

In Sun County the peace is kept by small squads of Sun Dome Militia. These squads are made up of young farmers doing their annual cult service under the command of professional soldiers. A standing force of Templars exists to meet stronger threats, and to guard the Sun Dome officials. This regiment consists of approximately 800 men, superbly disciplined and well-equipped with pikes, hoplite shields, and heavy armor. In a time of crisis Sun County could call upon nearly 4,000 men, nearly the entire adult male population. Realistically, the count might be able to muster a force of up to 1,000 levies to support his Templars.

The Fruits of the Land: Each Yelmalian initiate receives a plot of land to work for as long as they remain faithful to cult and count. Such plots are always as rectangular as possible, to imitate the Earth-rune, and vary in size depending on rank and status. The corners of farm plots are marked by special white stones inscribed with fertilityrunes, which must stay in place for the annual Bless Crops rituals to be effective.

The land is plowed by teams of oxen and is reaped by hand with sickles. Clever irrigation channels ensure the crops are kept well watered, and the farmers spend a certain amount of their time each season keeping the watercourses in good repair. Barley is the main crop grown, and the cult takes a portion of it as tax. This is hoarded in the temple granaries, and distributed in times of shortage or famine. Other crops include vegetables and common plants like flax, tomatoes, and herbs.

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Hops are often grown to brew beer, and grapes, to produce wine and raisins.

Sheep were originally brought to the valley with the first settlers, but most succumbed to hoof rot and wool canker. Pigs thrive, and domestic ducks and geese are common, as are dogs and cats. Popular also as pets or familiars are a local species of mongoose, kagas (a large, insectivorous gecko), and song birds of various species. Domesticated sables and impalas provide wool, meat, cheese, and other necessary products. The hardy, independent Sun Dome beastherder needs strength, courage, and wit to defend his wideranging flocks from nomad raiders, predators, and feral broos.

Trade: All trade and portage in Sun County is strictly controlled by the Sun Dome Temple through the Lokarnos wagon-cult. The temple enjoys many choice monopolies, including salt production, the harvesting of dates, and the smithing of gold. The count claims all sturgeon and pike caught between Helmbold and Harpoon as his own, a point hotly contested and routinely ignored by the River folk. Farmers are forbidden to deal with foreigners directly, and the wares of all passing traders are scrutinized carefully. Most of the trade passing through Sun County is by river. This is because the wheel ruts of Sun County are broader than elsewhere and bringing a wagon into the area requires a changing of axles. Traders are further discouraged by the Sun Dome cult's stubborn insistence of using the unwieldy gold Wheel coin as the unit of exchange.

Despite the prohibition against dealing directly with foreign traders, Sun County citizens are easily persuaded to exchange goods if a suitable pretext can be devised which avoids the appearance of trade. For example, the exchange of gifts is not prohibited, and barter with tribal nomads who worship Yelmalio is specifically permitted. Within Sun County borders outsiders may purchase certain services from specially licensed foreign concessioners in some locations. For example, the only inn open to foreigners in Sun Dome Temple, the Light House Inn in the Yard district, is run by an Issaries cultist licensed by the temple.

River traffic passes through Sun County, and local authorities make occasional attempts to charge a toll or duty on trade goods, sometimes without the direct authority or knowledge of the cult. The Sun Domers ignore the newtling reed rafts which ply the river, partly out of racial distaste and partly because the newtlings always attempt to avoid them (newtling-tail is a great delicacy in Sun County). The Sun Domers also let official Lunar traffic pass unhindered, preferring to exact the toll from private craft and traders. Their ability to waylay passing boats is hindered by their own fear of water and lack of boating skills, and most experienced traders know not to pull in at any of the Sun County settlements if they want to escape without a fee.

**Currency:** "Wheels" are coins minted from gold by the Lokarnos cult. They are named after an ancient race called the Sun Wheel Dancers. The Yelmalio cult leaders have an obligation to use gold as much as possible. This sometimes gives them an image of ostentatious wealth, which is seldom the case. Silver money is typically pounded into lumps of metal before trading it for gold.

Silver pennies are known as "Lunars" because most of these coins in circulation in the Valley are minted by the Empire. People with an anti-Lunar bias usually call them "guilders," "pennies," "stars," or just plain "silvers." Lunars themselves call them "Imperials."

#### **Prominent Sun County Personalities**

#### Count Solanthos Ironpike, Ruler of Sun County Ranking Light Son of Yelmalio

The temporal head of Sun County, Solanthos Ironpike is also the ranking Light Son of the Sun Dome temple. Arbitrary, suspicious, and vain, he is nevertheless both loved and feared by his people. Unlike his predecessor, Solanthos keeps his association with the Lunars to a minimum, and this attitude has won him the respect of the populace. Once renown for his martial prowess, the count is now middle-aged, increasingly sedentary, and no longer a master duelist. He is unmarried.

Perimides the Chaste, High Priest of Yelmalio

The spiritual head of the Sun Dome community. Though extremely (some say unnaturally) old, Perimides stubbornly resists pressure from subordinates to retire to the Towers. Almost bedridden, he is cared for by a team of Ourania nuns and supported by a pair of acolytes during the ceremonies. The High Priest is rarely seen except on these occasions, and never deals with outsiders. He speaks only Firespeech.

### Gaumata the Strange, Light Keeper

An outsider from Pavis who converted to the Yelmalio religion in early youth, Gaumata has worked hard to distinguish himself and now oversees the magical and religious duties of the cult. Elderly himself, Gaumata is next in line to be

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High Priest. Gaumata suspects a reluctance to promote an outsider to High Priest behind the delay of Perimides' retirement. Perhaps because of this, Gaumata follows cult strictures to a degree even his fellow priests consider excessive.

#### Laertes Coatilon, Light Guide

A man of subtlety and discretion, the Light Priest Laertes directs the internal affairs of Sun County. His shrewd and discrete agents keep him wellinformed concerning local, Pavic, and Lunar affairs. His loyalty to the Sun Dome temple is unquestioned, but he persistently advocates closer ties with the Lunar authorities.

#### Invictus, Light Captain

Invictus is a ranking Light Son in the county, Light Servant (acolyte), and commander of the Sun Dome Templars. Invictus's passion is hawking, which he shares with the count. He leaves the dayto-day running of the militia to his subordinate (and former wife) Lady Vega Goldbreath. He is now married to her sister, the earth priestess Penta. As befits his status, Invictus is always accompanied by an honor guard of at least three Templars.

#### Belvani, Lieutenant of the Light Captain

Belvani, a Light Son, Light Servant, and second officer of the Sun Dome Templars, is accompanied by a crested dragonewt manservant. Often employed on missions for the count outside Sun Dome lands, Belvani has a somewhat more cosmopolitan and balanced view of the world outside the County than is typical for a Sun Dome Light Son. Belvani is condescendingly friendly to foreigners, and always insists on the traditional friendly contest with Orlanthi associates. If the Orlanthi loses, Belvani graciously offers to return the gold which changes hands as a sign of his generosity to inferiors. Equivalent in rank to Lady Vega, Belvani regards her with amiable contempt.

Lady Vega Goldbreath, Guardian of Sun County Lady Vega is a Light Lady (the only female rune lord in Sun County) and commander of the Sun Dome Militia. The only woman rune lord in a man's cult, Vega Goldbreath rose to authority in spite of prejudice, derision, and chauvinism on her way to the top. Once married to Invictus, they were compelled to divorce after he became an acolyte. Invictus later married Vega's twin sister, something she has never forgiven him for. Vega is intelligent and quick-witted, but hardly orthodox Sun Dome in outlook. Her militia unit, The Victors, is the best in Sun County.

#### Hector the Wise, Temple Librarian

Though formally reporting to the Light Keeper, Hector treats the library as his exclusive domain. A true worshipper of Dayzatar, he is both learned and aloof. Even the count is said to be wary of his sharp wit and intolerance for the modestly educated. Hector is even older than Perimides, and is his only real friend. Hector's *Yellow Book*, a fantastic collection of assorted notes on current and historical events and everything animal, vegetable, mineral, and magical, is maintained in the Sun Dome Temple library.

Jalmara Yelmsfoot, Chalana Arroy's High Healer Jalmara is kind, gentle, loved by all, but rarely heeded. She capably manages the Hospital Block in the Sun Dome Temple complex.

**Penta Goldbreath, High Priestess of Ernalda** Although Penta heads a religion that claims nearly 50% of the Sun County population, she exercises little influence outside of her cult. Penta is the identical twin-sister of Vega Goldbreath, although they are almost complete opposites in personality. Married to Invictus the Light Captain, Penta is the mother of three sets of twins, a great cause for celebration.



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### **New Pavis**

New Pavis is more commonly known as Pavis, or Pavis City, though Big Rubble residents insist on the more accurate and formal name. The current city is of recent origin, but has inherited the protective spirit, and hence the name, of the old site. The city is primarily a human center, though with a sizable non-human population. It covers about 280,000 square meters (approximately 530 meters on a side) and houses 5000 souls.

New Pavis was founded in 1550 when Duke Dorasar of Sartar marked out the walls of New Pavis, then went to the old site of the future temple of Pavis and called forth the spirit of the old city to watch over the new as well. This sacred ceremony, attended by the leaders who established powerful families in the city, dates the beginning of the building and settlement.

Dorasar came from the family of Sartar, a clan noted for skill at building roads and walls. Their building methods were imported from the coastal regions and follow a city plan called the Jrusteli pattern. This indicates a central market, a nearby public and temple complex, and straight main streets. The establishment of a successful new city indicates Dorasar's leadership ability.

By custom and design, the city divides into districts called neighborhoods or quarters. Each district retains a flavor of its original inhabitants.

**Population**: The number of people in Pavis changes with the season. According to the most recent Lunar census in 1611, there are 4500 permanent residents, but winter drives many to take refuge within the city, adding another 500 or so. As with all populations, about half are adults — say, 2500 — equally divided between women and men. In a military emergency, Pavis could field about 1000 fighters.

The most recent census does not include those who live just outside the wall in Badside and Zebraside. These wretches might prefer to live closer to the city, (yet still outside its walls), but the City Watch always drives them across the river and downwind. Many nomads camp in Badside. The Sable Tribe, who are Lunar allies, have a semipermanent base there, and other clans regularly set up nearby.

**Religions of Pavis**: Popular pantheons in this locale include Lightbringer, barbarian, and Lunar deities. The Yelmalio cult, with associated sky gods, is one of the two largest minor cults, sharing that honor with Zola Fel, the river god. Ernalda is worshipped by many. Worship of Pavis itself, while extensive, is mainly composed of lay members. A number of minor cults complete the list.

The Lightbringers include Orlanth and his allies. This religion is philosophically opposed to the Lunar deities, and worship of the chief of the pantheon, Orlanth, has been suppressed by the invaders. Worshippers of that deity have often transferred their loyalty to associated religions, ones less politically offensive. The political clout of Orlanth's priests allows some of the them to remain in the city despite the repression.

Praxian cults are popular here because many inhabitants descend from the nomads or are aware of their dependence upon those deities for survival. Dorasar's founding pact agreed to a temple to these deities as well.

The Lunar cults are represented by the Seven Mothers, a provincial religion designed to acculturate ignorant natives to the Lunar truths.

In this region, many farmers are firm worshippers of the Yelmalio cult, which is also a significant and influential faction within the city. As is common, Yelmalions are a tight-knit group who set themselves apart from the crowd.

The Zola Fel cult appeals to the river people, who have a way of life differing from either the nomads or city-dwellers. In Pavis the cult is small and little-developed, having only a few associated cults. Most cultists are not human, and most human and non-human cultists live beyond the city along the river and its tributaries.

Ernalda, the earth goddess, is worshipped by farmers up and down the valley, and the farmers often include male gods in rituals combining her worship with that of Yelmalio or Orlanth. When the Orlanth cult was suppressed years ago, many people hid their worship of the air god within the worship of the earth goddesses. If confronted, they swear to worship the goddess, not the god, though in their heart know otherwise. Enfolded within the protection of the goddess, they wait.

Pavis, the god of the city, is naturally popular. As lay members, most people attend ceremonies to the god, and these are often city-wide festivals. Membership in this religion aids the defense and safety of the city and so all residents like to be a part of it. Similarly, many citizens are also lay members of Flintnail, though its dwarvish snobbery and secret society overtones keep it from being as popular as the Pavis cult. Most artisans within the town are at least lay members.

**Housing**: Buildings in Pavis are generally of one or two stories. They vary with the income of the residents. The poorest may sleep eight to a room, which they share with chickens, prairie GVVOTIADXOU: AROXUO242AY#OXA

rabbits, and pigs. The richest have several voluminous rooms per individual, outfitted with civilized trappings dragged all the way across Prax.

A middle class freeman's dwelling is a common building. Some of the larger buildings in Rich Hill are expansions of these ideas and many of the poorer houses in other places were once of this type, but are now divided into smaller rooms. These houses measure from 10-20 meters to a side. If square, a shape popular with earth worshippers, 15 meters on a side is common. This rectangular style is a carryover from the hill-dwelling barbarians and reflects some rustic throwbacks among some of the most conservative families of the city.

The bottom floor is divided into three rooms, one of which is often a shop rented by a merchant. The central area is a general cooking and eating room, and it is here that some single-story oldtimers still have a fire pit. Such customs quickly disappear when a second story is added and fireplaces must be installed. There is also a part for the servant's quarters. Furniture depends on taste and budget. Most furnishings are modest, with their grandparents' styles still common since they made the stuff, or brought it from Sartar.

The second story is usually divided into one large room, often used for entertaining and more servant sleeping, and a number of smaller ones, usually private rooms for family members and close households. It is common to have a guest room.

There are two fireplaces, one in the downstairs cooking area and one in the upstairs entertainment area. Most civilized houses have a ground floor room set aside as a privy. Food storage is kept far from this room.

**Buildings and Styles**: Buildings are made of four types of materials, stone, bricks, reed, and leather. Structural wood is rare and valuable, coveted by the rich and scavenged by everyone. The size of most buildings requires rafters to support the roof or second story.

Building stone of many kinds is available in the Rubble quarries. The comparative military strength of the New Pavis occupants allowed them to negotiate effectively with the natives of the Rubble. Knowing much about stonemasonry, though not as much as Flintnail, Sartar migrants used the material frequently for public and private structures. About half the buildings in Pavis are stone, mostly of a pale, gray limestone.

Brick, made from baked or fired clay, is traditionally used in many places. For instance, the temple of Pavis is made of fired brick, befitting Pavis himself. Many of the earlier residents who accepted Dorasar's invitation and moved inside his walls built their houses of brick. The earliest houses were huge, and many collapsed later due to poor construction techniques. Those remaining show no regularity to the room plans. When stone became available, the popularity of brick fell.

Reed is a common building material in the poorer sections of the city. It is used as thatch roofing even in many middle class houses, though tile is preferred. As building material, reed is woven into thick bundles which hold heat well, shed water, and (given a wooden frame) effectively slows down passage of humans through them. Wattle (interwoven reed, forming a solid wall of network) is used for wintertime or permanent structures, and the thatch is sewn to the wattle.

Many of the larger buildings are holed, with light wells in their center. Tenements are almost always illuminated this way, as are many apartment buildings and homes of the rich. Many rooftops hold water cisterns which collect rainfall in winter and store it during dry months, saving the household constant walks to the wells and guaranteeing water in case of a drought the next rainy season.

Ambiance: Before the arrival of the Lunars, this frontier town had the reputation of the "City of Thieves," and is still regarded as such by most foreigners. Though the Lunars have attempted to bring order and civilization to the New Pavisites, the city is still in large part a dirty and dangerous place, teeming with scum such as adventurers, assassins, beggars, carpetbaggers, con men, mercenaries, politicians, racketteers, thieves, and opportunists. Though most New Pavis citizens are honest citizens and craftsmen, visitors to the city inevitably encounter the least savory elements of society. By civilized standards, the town is squalid and overcrowded, with people living eight to a room. The ripe aroma of New Pavis in Fire season is something fierce by any standards.

Locals are blind to the faults of New Pavis, partially as a consequence of their proximity to the Big Rubble, a place of abundant sinister lore. Compared to the Rubble, any place looks like Paradise. With few exceptions, New Pavisites are profoundly ignorant concerning the Rubble, except as a place where some fools go and far fewer fools return. The many tall tales told among cityfolk of fortunes gained and souls lost in the Rubble are generally broadly exaggerated or simply fictional.

**Food**: There are two minor and three major sources of food. The minor sources are hunting and imported exotic foods. Exotic foods can be bought for ridiculous prices at the Founder's

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Market. Game is in limited supply and is always consumed privately.

Major sources of food are grains from farmers, meat from the nomads, and fish from the river. Each of these major sources may supply between a quarter and three-quarters of the city's total food requirement for a year. Many of the same factors which influence fish stocks are likely to affect herd raising and crop growing, so that all food supplies vary in the same way. Out of eight average years, the food availability for the city of Pavis will be: one year of acute food shortage or even famine; two years of some food shortage, two years of sufficient food; two years of enough food to allow export; and a year of enough excess to considerably lower prices.

The city of Pavis, recognizing long-term fluctuations in the food supply, purchases and distributes a large percentage of the city's food in order to stymie speculators and maintain stability. Though this is paid for through taxes and service, access to nominally-free food is a cherished right of the Pavis citizenry.

Grain Distribution: At harvest time, general city representatives travel to market hamlets and arrange collection and shipment of the city grain levy and purchase further supplies. It is boated and barged to Pavis and stored in the city granaries. Mills on site grind the grain for a fee.

The granaries distribute the wheat or barley to the citizens, and also sell some to bakers and perhaps traders. These latter also may purchase extra grain directly from the farmers and make their own shipping arrangements. Bakers may be simple peddlers and street vendors, or may own a shop to sell wares, or both.

Meat Distribution: When nomads come to Pavis to sell their stock, their leaders first go to the Cattle Market. There are many buyers there, either in offices about the square or in booths. The nomads may have sales prearranged in town, or may sound out several traders before striking a bargain. Once the deal is closed, an agent of the buyer(s) accompanies the chieftains back to the herds and guides them to the butchery area. This is northeast of the town and entails swimming the herd across the river upstream at Salt Ford, or moving them across the bridge if the water is high, then in either case driving them to the butchers. The animals are kept in corrals here, and the agent counts and grades the herd. He prepares a voucher for the chieftain; the city clerk approves the transfer and marks out the animals for the city tax. Almost all animal killing is done in this area, as well as the curing, etc. The chieftain can then take

this voucher back to the Cattle Marketer office and cash it in for goods, money, or training.

Once meat is ready for market it is delivered via the Meat Path through Badside, across the bridge, and to the Meat Market. There it is delivered to butchers and other retailers who, in turn, prepare it for consumption. The other retailers may, for instance, run a food stand, peddle by foot, or own an inn.

The government meat travels to food centers located near the granaries, and citizens may pick up their allotments there. Much of it is jerked or otherwise prepared for long storage. Some is also sold to individuals. On the days when meat is sold, a fair crowd can be seen gathered about the meat centers in the morning.

**Fish Distribution**: Fish eaten in Pavis comes from the length of the river, though little is shipped very far if not preserved. Some fishy delicacies caught at the mouth of the river are preserved in Corflu in oil or salt, then boated upstream.

The high quality of the local river fishing is aided by the great care given to the river by the fishermen and other river creatures who participate in the Zola Fel cult.

Generally fish are brought to the unloading area at dawn or late afternoon. Retailer agents are there and reserve parts of the catch. The fishermen carry it to the Fish Market where it is graded and weighed. A voucher is issued there, verified by a clerk, and cash is paid.

Tax collectors keep records of all sales and tax the fishermen a fee payable in dried fish. This is collected every four weeks. Fishermen naturally preserve the worst of their catch for tax payments.

Fishermen local to Pavis sell fresh fish to retailers and individuals; what cannot be sold is dried. The scattered fishermen living at a distance from the city bring mostly dried fish. Dried fish is stored by the city as part of the emergency food stocks. It is also an export item of some importance, especially to the upriver trolls.

Walls, Gates, and the Lunar Bridge: Pavis is surrounded on three sides by walls commissioned by Duke Dorasar and made by the Flintnail cult, and on the fourth side by a portion of the ancient wall surrounding the Rubble. The man-made walls stand about six meters high, though they dwindle on the riverward side since they top a precipice. The giant-made walls are generally 25 meters high, though they drop to as little as eight meters where they were broken by invaders.

Dorasar's expedition made walls of stone quarried from the Faceless stone quarry

**River of Cradles** 

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### **A Pavis Panorama**

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Pavis is a city of contrasts. It is small, yet garrisoned by more soldiers per citizen than any other Lunar frontier town. A major troll population lives just a few kilometers downriver, yet Pavic relationships with the dark men are as good as you will find anywhere.

**New Pavis** 

The ruins of the Big Rubble are immense, cyclopean – still showing the vestiges of the magnificent work of Pavis, the masterbuilder, while much of New Pavis consists of adobe and wattle shacks.

There are more temples and taverns per capita than are found in most big cities of the Empire and Holy Country. Adventurers are both more closely regulated and more vigorously encouraged here than in any other locale with so abundant a collection of ancient ruins so close at hand.

A variety of peoples and cultures are represented in Pavis. Lunars from the Heartlands brush shoulders with rebel Sartarite hillmen and Ernalda worshippers from the Holy Country. Nomads from the plains of Prax sneer at the tall, solid buildings, and even the occasional dwarf can be spotted carrying his wares to the market. These streets have seen prancing centaurs, Heortland knights, demon-horse riders from Muse Roost, and caravans from Ralios and Balazar. Troll envoys from the Stronglands saunter the same walkways as Yelmalion hoplites – all under the alert eyes of the Lunar watch. Welcome to Pavis!





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downstream. Construction equipment included cranes, drills, and incredible Glue matrices. Both salamanders and gnomes were employed to help shape and move rock. Dorasar's experts completed the walls within a year and a season, including the towers.

Two towers stand between each of the main gates, and between them is a strong parapet overlooking the ground below. From this parapet boiling oil, fire, rocks, arrows, and spells can be poured upon enemies at the gates. The right tower is 30 meters tall; the left is ten meters tall. A tower similar to the smaller one overlooks the River Gate from atop the cliff.

The gates themselves are about four meters high and four meters wide, with two doors which can be swung wide open. They can be closed rapidly and barred with large logs. They are 20cm thick and bound with brass and iron. The Old Gate once withstood the charge of an enraged, maddened bull rhino. It was repaired afterwards, and though the rhino did not penetrate the door, the nomads always say that the Old Gate is weaker than the others. The city fathers, naturally, disagree.

Postern gates are at each major gateway. These are used at night to allow legitimate visitors to enter after the main gate is closed. They are more easily opened and closed than the larger ones, but a visitor must dismount to enter by them.

A combined guard of Lunar hoplites and Pavis bowmen hold the gates. The gates are open all day and closed at night.

Within each gate is a gateyard. Each gateyard has a public well, around which people gather all during the day. Water can be drawn up the well by bucket, and several city-owned buckets are tied to the ropes there. Many folk bring their own pails to avoid waiting in line. The water level is always about seven meters below ground level for each well. The wells never have run dry. Some of the gateyards are filled with markets as described below.

A total of six gates penetrate the wall. beginning with the city's southern wall, they are called the South Gate, West Gate, Old Gate, River Gate, Temple Gate, and People's Gate. These last two gates go through the giant-built wall into the Rubble.

The South Gate leads into the Farmer's Quarter. Within it lies the Farmer's Market, a place to buy food stuffs and the ordinary goods of city life.

The West Gate leads to the Lunar Quarter of neighborhood. It is most frequented by the soldiers and most non-Lunar citizens avoid it. Of the six gates, the Old Gate is the most used. Almost all river traffic unloads just upriver and the people enter this gate with their goods. Many farmers go in and out daily. It is the preferred ceremonial gate for visiting dignitaries, debouching as it does straight to Parade Way and Pavis Temple.

The River Gate is the smallest gate and the most difficult to reach. A pathway leads from the bridge to it after winding up the slope. This is used mainly by people coming from Badside or any place across the river. The butchers in Badside travel the route daily. Most nomads are forced to camp in Badside, and they also use this gate.

The Temple Gate is for official use only, and only those authorized may use it. This is strictly upheld. "Official" means here city officials and immediate entourage, Flintnail cultists possessing special privileges, and city guardsmen. This gateway tunnels through the temple of Pavis at ground level, opening on the far side into the City Court. Several doors open from the tunnel into the temple.

The People's Gate is used by Rubble denizens entering the city and by adventurers leaving the city to go to the Rubble. Hapless explorers often struggle with bureaucrats here.

The New Bridge across the Zola Fel river was built in 1587. After nomads attacked the city in 1572, they were ordered to make camps on the far (northeast) side of the river, swimming across or going upriver to use the Salt Ford crossing, when they needed to enter the city. Once the butcheries moved across the river as well, closer to the herds, the council decided to build the bridge.

Made of wood and stone, it was planned and overseen by the Flintnail cult. It is of excellent workmanship and, though most of the workers were human, everyone now thinks of it as a dwarf make.

The bridge is nine meters wide and 110 meters long, with supports arching upwards from several weight-bearing piles. It is theoretically high enough to allow a giant baby's cradle to float by (though no cradle has been seen on the Zola Fel for centuries). Human boats easily fit under it. If necessary, nomad herds can be moved slowly across the bridge when the river is in flood.

### **River of Cradles**

#### **NEW PAVIS**

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### Neighborhoods

Each of the 10 neighborhoods of Pavis has distinctive inhabitants and flavor. The boundaries of neighborhoods wander with the fortunes of the folk who live there. For instance, a portion of the Solar Quarter was seized by the Lunar invaders and included in their Downtown section. The displaced Suntown residents moved into the buildings vacated by those Sartar sympathizers who fled, when the Lunar troops seized the city, thereby shrinking the Oldtown section.

In the following pages each part of the town is described and its boundaries are shown on a map. (The numbers of buildings is approximate in neighborhoods where shanties go up and down in a week.) Population estimates are included, and important landmarks are described. Miscellaneous notes indicate the local street gang or other important facts. Important buildings are singledout and listed.

Individual buildings are designated by a code consisting of a neighborhood initial and a building number (e.g., P-7 is marked on the Public Neighborhood map with a "7."). The initials for each neighborhood are listed below. The building numbers are presented for the referee's convenience only; Pavis citizens do not use modern addressing systems.

#### Key to the Building Descriptions

Buildings in this description are defined in relation to their meaning to the typical adventurer. The categories - Common, Apartment, Tenement, Shops, and Wealthy - are somewhat artificial for the time, but are convenient and recognizable.

Common: A residence for 10-15 people (2-3 hearths), of whom 2-5 will be workers. These workers will most likely be the owner and employees of the shop in the building. The shop is separate from the living quarters and faces the street.

Apartment: Multiple-living guarters with a common entrance to the outside, private entries within. These house 10-20 people. Living units are generally self-contained. No food or maid services are offered to the residents. A shop or stalls probably face the main street, often selling cheap food.

Tenement: Multiple-living quarters with a common entrance to the outside. Facilities (i.e., latrine, kitchen, etc.) are shared. These have no services and usually no or poorly locked individual quarters. These house 15-50 people, depending on size and typically crowded.

Shops: This indicates a building which is divided into a number of small shops rented by workers and salespeople. The shops may be places of work, places to sell goods made elsewhere, or even an office for meetings.

Wealthy: This indicates a large building, usually well kept, which includes quarters for servants, an area for animals, etc. Usually has 5-15 residents.



### **Neighborhood Initials**

Badside	В
Downtown	D
Farmers	F
Rich Hill	Η
Dwarftown	М
Oldtown	0
Public .	Р
Riverside	R
Suntown	S
Zebraside	Z



# **Public Neighborhood**

This part of the town contains most of the public temples, government buildings, and wealthy shops. The buildings were financed by private parties and public taxes. They were begun to impress the nomads by their

- size and beauty. They are a source of great civic pride.
- P-1 Market Administration Building. Many small shops; administrative offices in the rear.
- P-2 Store. Honest Kolli's Artifacts and Appraisals.



- P-3 Shops. Various types.
- P-4 Temple. Lokarnos, solar god of trade.
- P-5 Shops. Various types.
- P-6 Shops. Various; includes Godja Missile Weapons.
  - Shops. Various types.

P-7

P-8

- Shops. Various; includes Hold, Carry, and Sell.
- P-9 Guild Hall. Meeting place for all guilds of the town.
- P-10 Shops. Various; includes Derek's Polearms, Honest Hermosius' Used Weapons.
- P-11 Inn. The Bristle Inn, the largest in town, fills this building.
- P-12 Shops. Various; the Dorasar Building includes Outrageous Fortune Bowyers.
- P-13 Shops. Various; includes Goram's Sturdy Weapons (sales office only; the smithy is in Dwarfside), Bison-Hide Leathers.
- P-14 Temple. Seven Mothers; has shrines of all seven deities.
- P-15 Temple. Trade temple; shrines both to Issaries and to Etyries. A statue of Etyries is in front.
- P-16 Temple. Argan Argar temple; includes shrines to Kyger Litor, Zorak Zoran, and Xiola Umbar.
- P-17/18 Temple. The Rent-a-Shrine is open for all to worship.
- P-19 Temple. Chalana Arroy.
- P-20 Temple. Ernalda, a perfect cube in shape, counting the basements.
- P-21 Temple. This Air temple includes a shrine to Orlanth, but the priest is thought to be illuminated.
- P-22 Temple. Knowledge; both Lhankor Mhy and Irrippi Ontor.
- P-23 Temple. Irrippi Ontor annex.
- P-24 Storehouse. Knowledge is stored here, but the building must be entered from one of the Knowledge temples.
- P-25 Offices. Public Food Office. These administer distribution of the city's supply of food to the citizenry.
- P-26/27 Granaries. Storage for the public grain and the mills for it.
- P-28 Warehouse. Public Mean Warehouse; only preserved stock is kept on hand.
- P-29 Residence. Mayor's house, currently occupied by Brygga Scissortongue.
- P-30 Offices. City Administration Building, includes courts, jail, mayor's offices, city council room, and central watch station.
- P-31 Temple. Pavis, includes Flintnail shrine Recruiters. Rubble Trackers and Pavis Roval Guard.
  - Residence. Benderri, high priest of Pavis, and other priests live here.

#### **NEW PAVIS**





### Downtown

Downtown was first settled by local farmers who accepted Dorasar's protection. Their lowly status demanded that they live downhill from the thanes and merchants on Rich Hill. The farmer's original buildings were of great size but of poor strength and most eventually collapsed. When the current Farmer's Quarter was begun, most residents of Downtown moved there. New settlers coming to the city razed Downtown and began constructing its current form.

The locals purchase food at the Farmer's Market, but get most of their



water from the wells at Old and West Gate, which are much less crowded. On- and off-duty Lunar soldiers congregate here. The local streetgang is called the Red Bastards.

- D-1 Residence/Headquarters. Count's palace, used by Lunars as headquarters.
- D-3 Barracks. Lunar garrison Training. Darius Oranius.
- D-4 Tavern. Hoplite's Home.
- D-6 Recruiters. Magan's Greys mercenary cavalry regiment.
- D-9 Tavern. Barrel O'Brew, low class soldier hangout.
- D-10 Shop. Heartland Imports, expensive knicknacks from the Empire.
- D-15 Inn. Reed Inn, named for its construction.
- D20 Inn. Sable Horn Inn, high class soldier's hangout.
  - 5 Stable. Eskos' Stables, high class caterers to Praxians.
  - 3 Residence. Shared by Jorjar the Quick, Jotarran Longsword, and Derenx the Handsome.
- D-34 Residence. City house of Duke Raus of Rome.
  - 5 Inn. Silk 'n' Plume, very posh quarters.
- D-37 Inn. Erigios', very high quality food.
  - 1 Recruiters. Marollo's Escort Service.
  - 6 Stables. Friendly Stables; standard rates-no exotics.

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### Riverside

Ingilli the fisher was a famous fisherman who aided Dorasar in the founding of the city. He was influential among the river folk, both footed and finned. His ranks swelled with people arriving from the poor marches along the coast, and many were glad to live among the buildings between trips up and downriver.

The area includes fine homes of influential people, but also many squalid huts crowded with the poor. The streets smell more of fish than do other areas. Most people here buy their daily food from the Fish Market, and they must trek to the well there, or further, for water.

Many of the streets here are so clogged that horses cannot pass. The map is deceptive, for the decrepit state of many of the buildings makes passage through and over them possible to those knowing the way.

The local streetgang is called the Dolphins, and they are an angry lot, with little to lose, but they are sensible enough to flee from adversity. The local bigwigs have standing guards, but there are few of them. Thugs and thieves lurk, ready to trap the unwary.

- R-1 Inn. Fish Legs; has decent accommodations.
- R-41 Tavern. Homar's Fish.
- R-55 Training. Filbar's Fine Swordsmanship, on second floor.
- R-57 Shops. Includes Hanafel's Magic Goods.
- R-65 Training. Eparikondos' School of Speech.
- R-79 Temple. Teelo Norri, Lunar goddess of help to the needy.
- R-81 Training. Churchak the Quick.
- R-87 Inn. Goldfang's Grotto, known for unique entertainment.
- R-89 Training. Scharman's Academy. Recruiters. Ingilli Guardsmen.
- R-94 Poorhouse. Free tenement dwelling space, sponsored by the Teelo Norri temple.
- R-95 Soup Kitchen. Sister Kitchen, residence of the Teelo Norri volunteers and source of three free meals a day, served to all who come.
- R-105 Residence. Ingilli's outer house, lesser family members.
- R-106 Residence. Ingilli's great house, major family members.
- R-107 Residence. Ingilli's Workhouse, craftspeople connected to the Ingilli family.

 R-116/117 Shops. Part of the Meat Market.

 R-118
 Stable. Two Boot Stables.

 R-122
 Inn. Riverfish Inn.

- R-125/136 Fish Market. Includes the following: R-129 Tavern, Rowdy Djoh Lo's. R-133 Hall, Riverman's Guild Hall.
  - R-136 Inn. Golden Dolphin.



#### **NEW PAVIS**

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### Suntown

This part of town has always been in the hands of the Sun Dome Templars. Count Varthanis Brighthelm aided Dorasar and received the right to have a small palace within the walls - one of only two fortified palaces within the walls. To assert his independence, he had his streeets run contrary to the general plan forwarded by Dorasar, and his folk have maintained their stubborn and distrustful independence since. They are an unusually integrated neighborhood; even the street gang is more an auxiliary of the temple leaders than ruffian ragtags.

The Sun Court surrounding the Yelmalio temple is the center of their life. Within the community are rich, middle class, poor, devout, and irreligious. It is, thus, less homogeneous than other neighborhoods. Shortly after the surrender of the city, Count Varthanis gave the palace to the Lunar commanders — under duress, some say — and since then the city influence of the sun people has been less powerful.

Their own merchants bring goods to the Court to sell, and their people usually buy there. They go to the West Gateyard for water, even though the wells in Founder's or Farmer's Markets may be closer.

The local street gang is called Gods Own. The poor members are called the Irregulars, while the rich, who are trained and skilled, call themselves The Chosen. The gang will take safety among their fathers and priests when the going gets tough.

Suntown is distinguished by a lack of inns and taverns. Visiting sun worshippers are usually given hospitality among the residents of the district, and alcoholic beverages are available within the Sun Dome temple itself, which has a monopoly on brewing among its worshippers. Suntowners are often seen in drinking establishments elsewhere in town.

- S-14 Recruiting Office. Sunspear Guards. Training. Brighteye Spear School.
- S-21 Yelmalio Temple. Recruiting Office. Sun Dome Spears Regiment.
- S-40 Uleria Temple. Frequent public ceremonies, private ceremonies upon request.
- S-49 Stable. Hyalor's Care, for horses of residents.
- S-53 Tavern. Graineater's Glade, sponsored by temple and open to outsiders.
- S-63 Residence. Eiskolli family.
- S-70 Training School. Thurkan Thumper teaches mace and maul here.
- S-76 Residence. Hucipites, captain of Lunar Marble Phalanx.
- S-84 Stable. Whole Beasts Stable, only for Praxian animals.
- S-97 Smithy. Kalf Haldelson, master of metal workers guild.



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**NEW PAVIS** 

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# **Farmer's Quarter**

This area was once mostly open, where nomads and their animals camped. When a riot broke out, some nomads were killed, and all were expelled for a time. When they returned, the farmers had taken over the ground. Farmer's Quarter is a poor part of town with a population of farmers and some nomads.

The street gang is the Skinners, naming themselves from their delight in butchering or mutilating nomad animals, or threatening that they will. The constabulary patrols these streets in pairs.

- F-1 Temple. Eiritha and Waha. A last resort for exiles and disowned nomads.
  - Agency, Purchase of nomad beasts.
- F-2 Stables. Mother's Beasts, Praxian Animals only.
- F-5 Tenement. Home of bow weaponmaster Surrak Shonar.
- Temple, Storm Bull, F-12
- F-13 Shop. Butai's Birds.
- Tavern. Stomp and Brew, also called "The F-22 Foaming Boot".
- F-24 Tavern. Bob's Bisonburgers.
- F-26 People's Gate Offices. From this office Lunar officials record or spy upon everyone using this gate.
- F-30 Stables. Salty Stables, Praxian animals only.
- Inn. Transients welcome. Low quality in all F-33 respects.
- F-43 Tavern. Beleaguered Buffalo.
- F-50 Residence. Sitzmag Redmoon, captain of Lunar Antelope Lancers Regiment.
- F-53 Training. Garrath Sharpsword: both shield and sword.
- F-58 Tavern. Bisonbones.
- F-65 Animals Sales. Horses and zebras.
- F-66 Leather Goods Shop. Saddler by the wall.
- F-72 Temple. Humakt.

Training. Krogar Wolfhelm and Derenx the Handsome: both teach sword.

F-77 Recruiters. Sir Holburn's Axemen, Longspear Slayers, and Jordan's Scouts.



# Oldtown

This neighborhood used to be larger, but many Yelmalio people took up residence on along the west side and claimed the area for their own. The former residents had moved out when the Lunars moved in, so there was no conflict.

The neighborhood once held many of the moderate and middle class families from Sartar originally settling here. Their cause has declined of late, and the neighborhood is rundown in comparison with a few years ago.

The street gang is called the Deadheads, taken from an insult delivered generations ago to some kid, and brutally avenged. Since then, the gang has proudly preserved the name.

This part of town is sometimes called the Adventurer's Quarter, or the Tourist Quarter. Even before the coming of the Lunars, it catered to transients who were likely to arrive poor and leave rich (or not at all). Several inns and tenements have a variety of quarters for varying purses.

- O-1 Residence. Banaryos, captain of Lunar Silver Shields Regiment.
- O-3 Inn. Silibar's Fancies, noted for gambling games.
- O-4 Shop. Magic Needle clothing made and sold here.
- O-6 Stable. All Riders Stable takes any kind of animals.
- O-7 Nan's Breadbox. Good quality food and drink.
- O-14 Inn. Jareen's had a good reputation.
- O-19 Inn. Moonlighters has a Lunar clientele of the officer class.
- O-25 Inn. Geo's, popular with Sartarites. Recruiting Office. Govoran's Men.
- O-29 Loud Lilina's, low class clientele.
- O-34 Offices. Office and main warehouse for the city government salt agency which monopolizes output from the mines downriver.
- O-40 Inn. Gimpy's, favored by adventurers.



New Pavis

#### **River of Cradles**



# **Rich Hill**

This has always been the affluent part of town. The houses are larger, wider, and cleaner. There are armed guards at the houses, and regular patrols of the constabulary. Many of the houses are those of affluent servants but none are of poor or middle class tenements.

Servants of the house owners here go to the Meat Market or the Founder's Market for goods, and are

# Dwarfside

At Ginkizzie's invitation, Dorasar built the walls of New Pavis around the caverns of Ginkizzie the dwarf king. The dwarfs built the Pavis temple and helped build the walls. They assist in community projects, but charge dearly for their services.

The map provided shows a single divided tunnel, the area known to the human residents of New Pavis. Very few have even seen these areas, but rumors of further tunnels, some said to go all the way to Dwarf Run in Dragon Pass, have never been proven.

It is fairly certain that the dwarfs can go under the walls into the Rubble if they have to, but have not been seen to come out anywhere by anyone in the Rubble. It is fairly well documented that they have no means of traveling underground to the old Flintnail temple in the troll lands. One record speaks of "demon-ridden counter-tunnels." likely to search the city daily for the best fare. Water comes from the well between the Meat Market and the granaries.

The street gang's members call themselves the Fine Fellows, and they are often brutal and cruel in their dealings. They are not appreciated by their parents, either.

H-14 Training. Holfar's Movement School. H-26 Residence. Kost the Tracker. H-38 Residence. Serena Jonglure of Patroma family.

Training. Serena Jonglure.

- H-55 Residence. Malavar Patroma family, Lunar landholders.
- H-56 Residence. Rass Family of the Indagos Clan, an old Rubble Survivor family.
- H-61 Residence. Garhound family, influential Sartarite colonists.
- H-62 Residence. Indagos hearth, influential Pavis Rubble family.



- M-1 Dwarf Offices and Clearing House. Nondwarfs and non-Flintnail cultists usually go no further than this.
- M-2 Dwarven Constabulary and Guardpost. Armed dwarfs stand guard here.
- M-3 Constable's Headquarters.
- M-4 Mostali Mall. Open space.
- M-5 Metal Fabricator. Makes mechanisms, such as crossbows.
- M-6 Bronze Smith. Makes armor and arms.
- M-7 Silver and Gold Smiths.
- M-8 Alchemist's Shop.
- M-9 Human (Flintnail) Living Quarters.
- M-10 Dwarf Living Quarters.
- M-11 Diamond Living Quarters.

#### **NEW PAVIS**

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# Badside

Nomads would once camp just outside the gates of Pavis, but foolhardy hot-headed chieftains ruined their own future fortunes by raiding and losing. Now all nomad gatherings must be on the far side of the river; individuals are allowed within the walls on peaceful missions.

Butchering and meat-aging also take place across the river, giving employment to dismounted nomads and their attendants. The high ground here also attracts other humans who live there all year round but shun the protection of the high walls, like the Agimori. Thus a small and ramshackle town, often called Shantytown, Thieves' Town, or Poortown, has grown here and remains most of the year. Badside swells with the tents of visiting nomads in some seasons, but shrinks with the coming of winter cold as people give up scruples and move within the warmer walls. Residents here are mostly human.

These slums are lawless and dangerous. The street gang here, the Blood Knives, are in fact quite skilled at knife-fighting. When they take part in any street fight, they always receive the blame for starting the battle. The Blood Knives are also blamed for most of the thefts in Badside.





### Zebraside

Zebraside is a small collection of mostly temporary residences on the Rubble side of the wall, notable for extensive zebra corrals and grazing areas of the zebra tribe.

During troll incursions or nomad invasion, residents move through the People's Gate into the city itself. The area outside the gate is not defensible.

Fires occasionally destroy some or all of Zebraside, especially in years following wetter rainy seasons which have encouraged underbrush growth.

In the arroyos leading down to the river, several tribes of non-humans live, mostly newtlings and a few baboons. They band together for selfprotection at need. Since many of the human "residents" actually live in the town and go to their duties in the zebra pens every day, many townspeople believe that Zebraside residents are entirely non-human.  $G \nabla \forall \bullet \dagger \wr \Delta \Box X O \sqcup : \Delta \land \circ \mathscr{R} \sqcup O \mathscr{A} \mathscr{R} O \mathscr{R} \land \mathsf{T}$ 

### Prominent Pavis Personalities and Political Factions

#### The Lunar Army

Ostensibly, the occupation forces are distinct from the civil government, even though Count Sor-Eel the Short is responsible for both. The Count has a trusted handful of close companions to assist him, plus advisers for each of the branches of his duties.

**Sor-Eel the Short, Count of Prax and Governor of Pavis**: A retired Rune Lord of Yanafal Tarnils, Sor-Eel comes from a well-connected imperial family. Cultured and unprejudiced, he admires his barbarian friends.

He is accompanied by Bor-Eel, a Rune Lord of Yanafal Tarnils, a half-brother whose life has been devoted to assisting his elder sibling. Sor-Eel appreciates this unswerving loyalty and shares his wealth and fame.

### Directives of the Occupation

Posted by Order of the Commission for the Armistice

- 1. Anyone convicted of committing violence upon the person or possessions of a Lunar citizen or ally shall be crucified.
- 2. All taverns, eating houses, and places of entertainment must be closed by midnight and no citizens may be on the street after then without a pass.
- 3. All weapon masters, weapon schools, and their students must be registered with the Lunar authorities.
- 4. All adventurers entering the city must register with the Lunar authorities at the gate.
- All adventurer parties expeditioning in the Rubble must:
   A) Register with the Lunar headquarters before leaving, stating their objective, and estimated time of return.
  - B) Pay a tax of <sup>1</sup>/10 of monies retrieved in excess of 100L per party member to the Lunar authorities.
  - C) Declare and display for inspection all magical artifacts found on the expedition at the Lunar headquarters.
  - D) Leave maps of the explored areas with the Lunar authorities.
- The temple of Orlanth, being a hotbed of seditious activity, shall remain closed indefinitely.

[Signed]

His Excellency, Lord Sor-Eel, Count of Prax and Governor of Pavis Jotaran Longsword, Administrator-in-Chief of Pavis Hetaera Thessen Fleeter Nemm Thandren Clubfoot Faltikus the Good Hallarax the Singer Radak, the Iron Centurion: Another companion of Sor-Eel's. Radak commands an elite force of 50 men, Sor-Eel's personal guard, and acts as the Count's bodyguard. Radak is an active Sword of Yanafal Tamils.

Other members of Sor-Eel's household and family are of less importance.

Gimgim the Grim, the Masked One: A silent fellow, Gimgim (not his real name) is responsible for intelligence gathering in Prax and Pavis. Gimgim is also charged with seeking out and destroying enemies of the empire. It is whispered that he is a priest of Black Fang, though there are many rumors about this devious and subtle powerwielder.

Sitzmag Redmoon, Commander of the Antelope Lancers: Sitzmag comes from a noble family of the distant Hungry Plateau. He is a Sword of the Yanafal Tarnils cult and is constantly accompanied by his commanders and staff, including a Rune Lord of Yanafal Tarnils.

Hucipites, Commander of the Marble Phalanx: Hucipites is an Iron Lord of Yanafal Tarnils. Within his personal retinue is another Rune Lord of that cult for the regiment.

**Banaryos, Commander of the Silver Shields:** Banaryos carries the traditional weapons and armor of his peltast regiment and refrains from special, decorative armor. Among his personal retinue is a full Rune Lord of Yanafal Tarnils.

#### **The Occupation Forces Now Present**

The original invading army was much larger than the present remainder, but the difficulty of providing food caused the others to be sent home. Pavis and Prax was so peaceful from 1611-1620 that further reductions in the garrison were under consideration, but subsequent disturbances made such troop reductions unlikely.

Three regular army regiments are stationed in Prax, plus a number of mercenaries. The regular army units include the Marble Phalanx, a heavy infantry unit composed of hoplites; the Silver Shields, a medium infantry peltast unit; and the Antelope Lancers, a heavy cavalry-mounted regiment which rides large sables similar to Praxian ones.

The mercenaries include a contingent of dragonewts (who rotate from among those living in the Rubble), native sable warriors, and the zebra people. Smaller bands are hired on a contingency basis.

Most of the soldiers in these units are stationed up and down the valley in small forts or on patrol. Only about a third of each regiment remains in the

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city at a time. They live in the established barracks, or are scattered about in rented flats, temporary barracks, or with friendly citizens who volunteer for the duty.

Another third of each regiment could reach the city within 36 hours. A regiment would be up to full strength at need within a week at most. Thus, there could be a full force of the three regiments, plus mercenaries mustered at Pavis within a week's time. Given that time, any besieging force would be opposed by about 4000 men, including those militia the city itself could muster.

#### The City Council and City Political Factions

The city government is run by the city council, whose members are appointed by traditional groupings from the merchant class and ruling families. Their primary interest is in the city economy; they are, for the most part, conservative, trying to maintain price balances for stable profits.

The city council appoints the judges, delegates temporary authority (such as the power to negotiate with nomads), levies taxes, controls food distribution, keeps peace within the walls, schedules stone housebuilding, organizes celebrations, keeps the streets clear, and maintains standards of sanitation.

The mayor is head of the city council, elected every five years by all citizens who care to vote. The mayor appoints clerks, and is responsible for overseeing their work, which includes tax records, food payments, and so on.

The council currently reflects the three major political blocks of the Pavis citizenry. The first, the Imperials, accept the Lunar occupation and are eager and happy to do business with and otherwise support the Lunar presence. **Hallarax the Singer**, head of the Riverman's Guild, is currently the spokesman for this group on the council.

The City Peacers are conservatives whose primary interest is living with little conflict. This group is content to await results rather than force action. The leader of this faction on the council is **Kolli the Portly**, head of the Jeweler's Guild.

The Free Pavisites, or Frees, want the Lunars out of Pavis, complaining about taxes to support the garrison troops and the flood of Lunar carpetbaggers preying on the city economy through the favoritism of the Lunar administrators. **Brygga Scissortongue**, guildmaster of the Cloth and Leather Workers Guild and member of the influential Sartarite Garhound family, is the leader of this faction, and currently the mayor and head of the council.

#### **Civilian Administrators**

Jotoran Longsword, Chief Administrator of Pavis: Jotoran was appointed by bureaucracies within the Empire, and is a mismatch for his leader Sor-Eel. Jotoran scorns the barbarians he administers and is tyrannical in his pursuit of Lunar interests in Pavis. His position is unofficial; he is but an advisor to the Mayor of the city. However, he is also in charge of food distribution records, taxes from the salt mine, and prizes from the Rubble, and gets reports from the Constable of the City.

Jorjar the Quick, Constable of Pavis: An old friend of Jotoran, Jorjar brought his troll friends to the city from Adari, where he had been living. His position is appointed by the mayor. Brygga appointed him shortly after she was elected.

Commission of the Armistice: This council. established by the treaty of the armistice between Pavis and the Lunar Empire signed after the fall of the city, formulates and publishes policy for the Lunar administration of Pavis City, the Rubble, and Pavis County. Its members are appointed by Governor Sor-Eel, who also sits on the council. Its other members are ostensibly chosen to represent the interests of all peoples in Pavis County. Jotoran Longsword, Hetaera Thessen, Fleeter Nemm, Thandren Clubfoot, Faltikus the Good, and Hallarax the Singer are the current members of the Commission. Widely regarded as a rubber stamp committee for Governor Sor-Eel's proclamations, in fact it is an effective communication channel to the Lunar administration for economic interests and a certain limited expression of dissent.

#### The Lunar Temple

The religious affairs of the Lunar Empire are beyond the hands of its domestic and military rulers. The temple of the Seven Mothers at Pavis is not responsible to Sor-Eel or any of his lackeys. However, they are wise enough to cooperate with each other and prepared to deal with political machinations as a way of life.

Six priestesses and one lord are part of the temple administration. Some of these have civic duties as well. Those duties count as part of their temple-work times.

**Porusa the Patient, High Priestess of the Seven Mothers (Pavis Temple)**: Porusa is an old, patient woman whose origins lie in the Deezola subcult. She enjoys her job, tries to avoid politics (but is a willful defender of the Lunar way), and is experienced in dealing with others of her station.

Tala Errio, Rune Priestess of the Red Moon: A sacred woman, Tala is kept isolated from the

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mundane. Pampered and idolized, she prepares for the momentous hour when she weds Pavis, the god of the city. She received her orders from the Red Emperor himself and is aloof from all affairs, though she is the subject of immense speculation and gossip.

Hetaera Thessen, Rune Priestess of Irrippi Ontor: Devoted member of her cult, Hetaera's duties have taken her into the realm of law, and she sits upon minor city committees as well as observing her temple duties.

Berene Pavalava, Rune Priestess of Seven Mothers: Called Mother of Mercy, this priestess lives in the tiny temple in the poor part of town, Riverside. She is an ascetic holywoman of the Teelo Nori subcult with a keen eye for other people's magic. She also serves in the main temple on holy days.

Harnasti, Priest of Deezola: Harnasti is a native of Pavis who quickly took to the Lunar way and proved his worth to the cult. He is famed as a healer and generous in the proof of the value of his belief to other Pavisites.

**Pharnastes Rugbagian, Rune Lord of Etyries:** This merchant came from a Tarsh trading family established here with the first wave of settlers. He now bargains for the temple and is a good friend of the High Priestess. He is happy to do service which will derive such monetary benefits for his cult, empire, and family.

Valerina the Peddler, Rune Priestess of Etyries and High Priestess of the Market: A native of distant Dragon Pass, Valerina was a merchant's daughter who found her trade in the light of the Red Moon. She is fair and wily, as are all merchants, but takes no pleasures in baiting merchants of other faiths for their beliefs.

#### **Pavis Temple**

For the first time since Jaldon bit away the city wall, the Pavis temple has a full complement of Daughters and a High Priest Son. As often in the cult's history, most of the "Daughters of Pavis" are actually male.

**Benderri, Son of Pavis**: The High Priest of the temple is an old man now. He is the priest with whom everyone is familiar and the political head of the temple. He lives at the New Pavis temple and sits on the city council, where he attempts to maintain his city's rights within the Imperial domain. He is believed to favor the approaches of the Lunar priestesses wishing to marry Pavis into the Lunar pantheon.

Fleeter Nemm, Daughter of Pavis: Fleeter has the second highest seniority in Pavis and holds the rank of chief priest. He is Benderri's obvious successor. He sits on several judicial panels and works closely with the Lunar authorities. He is known to have sponsored several expeditions into the Rubble to rescue artifacts of bygone glory.

Ginkizzie, Daughter of Pavis and Flintnail: The leader of Dwarftown, Ginkizzie is a dwarf of great importance. He is a priest both of Pavis and of Flintnail, and spends most of his time over his forge in the dwarf tunnels. However, he always shows up to perform his temple duties.

**Bendrath, Daughter of Pavis**: Bendrath is a new priest, an adventurer originally born in Oldtown in the Rubble and who had spent most of his life in the Rubble. He is devoted to the resurrection of the Rubble to restore the glory of Pavis of old; he is generally found in the temple in Real City.

**Cyrilius Harmonius, Daughter of Pavis**: Cyrilius has risen quickly to priesthood in Pavis, helped by his extensive connections with the Lunar government. Cyrilius is a true Pavisite, but he spent some time in Lunar-controlled Dragon Pass and returned with the Lunar army. As a Pavis initiate, he worked for the temple on a full-time basis and became a first-rate mason. Benderri and Fleeter Nemm could do little but induct him into the priesthood when he became eligible.

Currently, Cyrilius supervises the temple areas of the zebra pens and barns in Zebraside. His work crew augments the constructions in Zebraside and makes the pens more defensible. The trolls are rightly nervous about this development, feeling that there are too many human-fortified areas in the Rubble already.

Cyrilius is also the main liaison with the Pavis Royal Guard and the Zebra tribe of Zebra Fort.

**Bilkar, Daughter of Pavis**: Bilkar is the son of an old Real City family from the Rubble. His devotion to Pavis is unquestioned, but he gained his position through steady, painstaking work, rather than talent, natural ability, or political pressure. Though senior to Bendrath, he has taken a subservient position under him in the Real City temple.

**Broosta, Daughter of Pavis**: The only actuallyfemale Daughter of Pavis, Broosta is an associate of Lhankor Mhy as well, and spends most free hours in the library, uncovering glories of Pavis' past. She is married to Fleeter Nemm and shares his passion for the past greatness of the city.

#### The Pavis Royal Guard

The Pavis Royal Guard was established when the Lunar conquerors disbanded the Pavis Survivors and drove the ruling family of the Pavis zebra folk
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out of the Rubble. In their place they raised the bandit **Hargran the Dirty**, who styled himself king of Pavis (meaning the Rubble) and established the Royal Guard.

The Guard is made up of men from his bandit gang, soldiers of fortune, and a large contingent of Lunar foot and horse soldiers placed there to train the Guard and instill a sadly-lacking discipline.

At this time, the Guard has three branches and theoretically three subcommanders under Hargran. In practice, Hargran has taken two of the subcaptaincies to himself, and the other contingent is independent from the Guard, owing lip service to Hargran, but reporting to Jotaran Longsword and other Lunar officials.

The Fort Guard: This is the garrison of Zebra Fort: their main function is to collect tolls on the northern bridge and to provide escorts to people wanting to go to the Real City and other locations in the Rubble. Hargran is captain of the fort and lives well on the tolls.

The Zebra Riders: Unlike the Fort Guard, the Zebra Riders are composed of about half Hargran's old followers and half Lunar and adventurer recruits. Hargran holds a ceremonial captaincy of the Riders, but Lunar lieutenants command their own patrols up and down the river in coordination with other Lunar regiments and mercenaries. The Zebra Riders share the Pavis barracks with other Lunar cavalry, and also have a watchpost on the Zebraside of the Wall.

The Watch: The Watch is both the basic garrison and the constabulary of New Pavis. Theoretically, its members guard the gates, patrol the walls, man the wall forts, and patrol the streets— the first line of defense against attack and protectors of the safety of the residents against thieves and fires. Actually, however, Lunar regulars fill many of these roles, and the watch is presently reduced to street patrols.

The Wall Watch mans the walls and guards the gates. While any member of the watch is eligible for his duty, in practice the ones detailed are retired Lunar veterans and non-coms, who have had a lot of garrison duty already. Units of the wall watch occasionally patrol the Rubble. There they wear scale armor, carry zebra-hide shields, and use whatever weapons they previously employed.

The Street Watch patrols Rich Hill and Downtown singly, Oldtown and Farmers Quarter alone or in pairs, and stays out of Suntown (unless invited) and Riverside (except in platoon strength). They make occasional in-strength patrols to Badside. Both divisions of the watch (wall watch and street watch) report to the Constable, Jorjar the Quick.

### Yelmalio Temple Group

Karial the Pure, High Priest of Yelmalio in Pavis: Karial seems dedicated enough to his temple and his people, and they like him well enough, but he has no discernible personality. His blandness is so overpowering that he does not sit on the City Council. He has no outside interests.

Haloric Glowbrow, Light Captain of Yelmalio in Pavis: This is the person most likely to be seen as commander of this area. He does most of the outside work and is also the commander for the more active members of the community. He commands mercenaries, men, and militia.

Thrandren Clubfoot, Rune Priest of Lokarnos: Lokarnos is the sky god of wagons and hence, by association, movement and trade. Thrandren is a native Pavisite, but was apprenticed to a wagonmerchant at an early age. He is responsible for supplying the Suntown neighborhood, and performs the necessary dealings with outsiders competently, if without verve. He is assisted by Durdath, his stooge.

### Various Other Personalities

**Krogar Wolfhelm**: This distinctive figure is usually found either at Gimpy's, where he maintains a room, or at the Humakt temple where he teaches all forms of swordplay. He is, in fact, a Wind Lord of Orlanth Adventurous, for which he makes no apology. He has even taken over for Faltikus at ceremonies (some say over Faltikus' objections), particularly on the Orlanthi High Holy day (Storm/Movement/Windsday).

Krogar Wolfhelm always wears the distinctive headgear which gave him his name and generally wears a light hauberk of iron chain as well. As is the right of any weaponmaster, he always wears at least one of the weapons he teaches.

Krogar is known to disappear into the Rubble at odd times, vanishing for a few weeks, then returning as if nothing had happened. If approached by a friendly cultist, he is reserved and often helpful. He is polite towards Lunars and trolls, but he is also brief with them. He is tall, broad-shouldered, swart, and pale-eyed. He is said to come from any number of nations, including Sartar, the Holy Country, legendary Ralios, or even the Empire itself. He does not speak of his origins. **NEW PAVIS** 

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Faltikus the Good, Priest of Orlanth Thunderous and Other Air Deities: Faltikus came with the Lunar armies and installed himself as the ranking priest of Orlanth. It is commonly reported that he is Illuminated, though there is no proof, and he is mistrusted by many of his flock. But, who else is there to go to? The Lunar authorities do not encourage Orlanthi worship, but seem to feel that if it must occur, best that it occur under Faltikus, who is friendly to the Lunars.

Kost the Tracker: This elderly Issaries merchant is the only successful Goldentongue Desert Tracker in Pavis. He was away when the Lunars invaded, and only returned a couple of years ago. Since then, he has hosted Bison Riders who came into Pavis from Vulture's Country with him. They are young lay members of various tribal cults, getting to know a big city for the first time.

Kost is officially retired from his merchant career and is enjoying his retirement. He seems to have been very successful on his last endeavor, and had much wealth even before that expedition.

### **Various Other Political Factions**

The Merchant Guild: The merchants of Pavis determine all prices in the city. Their opinions carry much weight and can prevail against public opinion or real need, sometimes causing suffering or bad blood. The guild acts in concert whenever the economic stability of the city is threatened. If only a portion of the financial stability is threatened, the guild act indecisively. Portions of the guild are controlled by the major families, and other portions by families trying to become important. The shifting alliances within the guild mirror the city at large.

The Ingilli Riverside Association: These are the fishermen and boatmen of the Zola Fel river. Their primary concern is with themselves, and they control the Riverside neighborhood and the waters far up and down the River of Cradles. Ostensibly they are now loyal citizens of the empire, but any Pavisite knows that their loyalty only lasts as long as is convenient. Every river worker has to be a member of this Association or to risk the ire of river-dwellers, who are firm friends of the Ingillis.

### **Leading Families**

Several leading families control most of Pavis. The families are extended and clannish. Their membership is large and they can recite their genealogy backwards with pride to their first known ancestor. Family members trust close family members first, distant family members second, and others last. Ultimately everyone in Pavis pays loyalty to one of these families, although often indirectly.

The **Ingilli family** are the heir of old Ingilli the Founder, who aided Dorasar. They dominate the entire Riverside neighborhood, the cult of Zola Fel, and most other activities concerned with the river and its ways. Politically they lean toward support of the empire, since the empire supports the growth of trade along the river.

The **Garhound family** is the largest ruling clan of Sartarite extraction. It once rivaled the heirs of Dorasar, who were killed or driven out by the Lunars years ago. Now, a few survivors from the Dorasar family have been absorbed through business mergers and marriage into the Garhound family. Brygga Scissortongue, the current mayor of Pavis, is the best-known member of this group, followed closely by Govoran the Magnificent, reputedly the last honest priest of Orlanth in the city. Sir Davis Garhound, a landowner of great influence in the southern farmlands of Pavis County, cooperates with the Lunar authorities, and both Sartarite and Imperial factions claim him as supporter.

Members of the **Eiskolli family** have been prominent in Pavis Sun Dome affairs for generations. Other Yelmalions less friendly to the Lunars had previously held more influence here, but a series of honorable duels and accidents has thinned their numbers, leaving the more accommodating Eiskolli family in power. The Lunar general's residence to Sor-Eel was a gift from Count Varanthis II, an Eiskolli.

The **Indagos family** are of Oasis People stock, solid in ancient traditions of Prax. Their main wealth comes from landholdings in the northeast and from control of the city's salt monopoly. Some families of this clan are held in great awe and esteem, because they survived inside the Rubble during the Toll Occupation. Many of the members of this clan are among the most radical supporters of the "reclaim the Rubble" factions in the Pavis temple.

The **Patroma family** are Lunar citizens and recently come from the Imperial heartlands. They rule most of the former holdings of the zebra people, whose current king is less imposing than his predecessors. The Patromas hold some land, and are making great inroads in trade control as well.

### NEW PAVIS

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### Gimpy's Tavern (O-40)

The tavern called Gimpy's was founded some five years before the Lunar invasion, when three adventurers were brought out of the Rubble by their comrades. Each had lost part of a leg, but the party as a whole was rich.

The three amputees found that evil magic prevented the regrowth of their legs, so they retired from the adventurous life and bought a tavern from its previous owner (who had called it "The Temple," so customers could tell their wives that they had been "down to the temple" when they finally staggered home).

The three new owners attempted to maintain the old name, but their customers found their similar problems so amusing that Gimpy's became the name of choice. Even the owners agreed: they took down the signboard of the Pavis temple and put up one showing a peg leg instead.

The three former adventurers are still the proprietors of Gimpy's and at least one will be found in the common room when customers are there. The three proprietors are Morey the Short, and the brothers Parzel and Miltry Post. **Clientele**: Gimpy's is an adventurers' tavern, attracting every sort willing to set old grudges aside for a few hours. For instance, one might see Yelornan shield maidens and Zorak Zoran berserks in the common room at the same time, albeit at opposite ends.

Griselda and Wolfshead were seen at Gimpy's before their latest escapade, and Krogar Wolfhelm, an Orlanthi who teaches swordplay at the Humakt temple, maintains a room upstairs.

Lunars such as Derenx the Handsome and Jorjar the Quick come occasionally, usually when it is known that a particularly favored entertainment, such as the Minstrels Three or the Blonde Piper, is performing.

The conversation is of adventuring, and the owners encourage such talk with tales of their own adventures on Temple Hill. Many adventuring bands recruit from the common room, and many adventurers looking for a place in a warband come here for exposure. Fights are common, but not encouraged, and general brawls are forbidden. The occasional petty fight, such as the one where Ruric Runespear is said to have gotten his first taste of



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blood, are less common with the now somewhat higher class of customer, but they are not unknown.

Layout: To get to Gimpy's from Salt Street, one must enter the archway on Salt street with the pegleg sign over it and descend a flight of stairs into a tunnel which continues toward the Great Wall for about ten meters, then ascends again. At the top of the stairs is the common room of Gimpy's, which generally has a population of a dozen adventurers and a couple of serving girls, plus at least one of the owners.

This entrance is in the wall facing Salt Street. Opposite the entrance is the east wall of the tavern, which is itself built up against the great wall. Between the entrance-side wall and Salt street is a courtyard, which can be reached only by going through Gimpy's or by climbing over the Salt street wall. In the courtyard are benches and tables, and it is used as the eatery known as the Open Kettle. There is always a rich stew available for a nominal sum.

Rumor has it that the stew comes from a magical artifact the owners and their friends took out of Temple Hill, but the proprietors do not say.

The ground floor consists of a common room and a side kitchen from whence comes the stew for the Open Kettle.

Upstairs the three owners each have a room, and one is leased to Krogar Wolfhelm. Four other rooms, each with its own chamber pot, are for rent. Usually at least two of these rooms are occupied.

Gimpy's basement is known for two things. First, its wine cellar and beer kegs are filled with good, if not exotic, wine and beer which is sold at reasonable prices.

The other claim to fame for Gimpy's basement is the tunnel which runs under the great wall into the Rubble itself. The end of the tunnel opens up to the south of the zebra pens, and watchers there keep an eye on it, having been paid to do so by the owners at Gimpy's. These watchers are also regular guards for that side of the zebra pens. In the basement annex, four adventurers are always on guard, encouraged by a generous stipend from the management, and fortified by all the beer and stew they can consume while off-duty.

First-time adventurers are usually disappointed to find that one of the four guards is also in the employ of the Lunar empire, and is in charge of filling out the Lunar forms necessary for an expedition into the Rubble. The Lunar forces are well-aware of the tunnel, and of a couple of others like it elsewhere, and they guard them just as they do the Peoples Gate and the gate through the Pavis temple. The zebra clan guards on the other side of the wall let adventurers back into the tunnel for a small charge.

There are rumors of sub-basements beneath Gimpy's, with secret meeting rooms and yet another, unofficial, tunnel big enough to pass horses through, but this is unlikely: how would one bring the horses into Gimpy's, up and down all those stairs?

Noted Residents and Customers: The place attracts noted individuals. Both Fleeter Nemm and Bendrath of the Pavis temple come by often; the weapon master Garrath Sharpsword is a regular. Shalmar goes there looking for students, and Filbar has a regular table he insists on having when he comes. Backhus the Wolf drops by.

Of the town council, Kalf Haldelsson is a regular, as is Derenx the Handsome. Kolli the Portly appears when he wants to talk and yarn with his old comrade, Parzel, one of the inn's owners.

The clientele is not the most powerful in New Pavis. People like Byrgga, Benderri, Sor-Eel, or Jotaran have higher-class places to attend. But riffraff and known criminals are kept out, and the food and drink, while reasonably priced, is not given out on credit, so that the poorest members of the community are excluded.

There is no restriction as to race; trolls and dwarfs are welcome, as is the occasional elf. This has led to some confrontations, but the owners are adamant in their policy, and Krogar is sufficient to keep the peace. Racial, political, or social differences occasionally erupt into duels, but the principal atmosphere at Gimpy's is goodnatured revelry, with islands of quiet talk and contemplation.



Bird's-Eye view of the Temple Barge of Zola Fel at Pavis.

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### The Big Rubble

The Big Rubble is the name given to the area within the great walls built by the giant, Paragua, many centuries ago. The walls average 25m in height. They were made by cutting immense slabs of rock from a distant quarry in the Rockwood Mountains. These slabs were driven upright into the earth, leaving breaks for the river entry gates and for the entry of the Praxian allies of the giants. After the hero Pavis captured the city, his dwarfs smoothed the rough walls, built guardhouses at the gates and river, and some years later added the parapets atop the walls.

In 940 the city of Pavis fell to Jaldon Goldentooth. Since then the ruins have been occupied by humans, dominated by trolls ,and often used as a place of refuge by outlaws or a place for adventuring by heroic fools.

The giant-built walls are properly in scale with their makers, and the ruins of many cultures lie inside, as well as many troll dugouts and outlaw hideaways. It is widely spoken that treasures lie amidst its ruins and death lurks in its shadows.

The area within the walls covers about 25 square kilometers of ground. This is larger than any known contemporary settlements of humanoids in all of Genertela. There are larger, perhaps natural features in the world, and some believe them to have been settlements, but the Rubble is the biggest definite settlement.

Centuries of warfare and magic have left a twisted and warped ruin of a city. Ancient and incomprehensible magics are at work here. Repeated attempts to study the mysteries of the Rubble have ended in frustration and failure, including the recent efforts of the Lunar Magicians. As a Mostali once remarked to a Lunar scholar after reading his treatise concerning the Rubble, "You know very little, and everything you know is wrong."

### **Major Features of the Rubble**

The features of the land within the walls are divided into Open, Ruin, Road, and Bridge.

### **Open Land**

Open land is held in common. In ancient times the peoples kept herds of beasts here as food, and also farmed large expanses with plow and prayer. Some areas are still farmed or ranched especially those close to human habitation. Most of the open lands are wild now, suitable for hunting small game and occasional larger beasts. There are few large predators except for intelligent ones such as humans, trolls, or broos.

#### Ruins

Most ruins in the Rubble are uninhabitable by humans. In many cases the walls are still standing, but roof collapses have led to severe weathering of interiors. Some stone buildings of more than one story have survived the collapse of upper story roofs, and may be habitable. A small fraction of the Rubble's ruins have been repaired and reinforced; such buildings present a deteriorated and unsightly appearance, but in fact are as secure and comfortable as most housing in New Pavis.

At the other end of the scale are ruins which are completely falled to rubble, with little more than occasional traces of standing walls, relict floor tiles and stone pavements, or stone foundations. Occasionally the cellars of the grander ruins of this type are still habitable.

Sometimes no trace of a ruined building remains above ground level. In such cases scholars and experienced treasure hunters skilled at reading patterns of vegetation, distinctive ground features, or old maps and documents have the best chance of locating such lost building sites.

### Roads

Several ancient, permanent roads cross the Rubble. These were dwarf-made and have survived the centuries well. They have good foundations; fitted slabs surface them. The roads are usually 5m wide, sloped from the center for effective drainage. They have resisted encroachment by plants everywhere except in the Garden, and even there the trackways are still visible. In some spots the road has been purposefully destroyed, and often it is littered with broken stone, barricades, or the detritus of ambush. Compared to the land about them, they are open, clear, and are the fastest travel routes through the Rubble.

### Bridges

These bridges were built of the same magical stone the giants used for the city walls. The bridges sparkle in the sunlight, even when the river is low and the bridges are dry. They arch high over the river, but have gently sloping approaches for riding animals. The bridges are just barely wide enough for two carts to pass one another, touching hub-to-hub. Four horsemen can ride abreast with comparative ease. The side rails rise to the hip height of a full-grown man.

Attempts have been made to destroy each of the bridges over the years, but the Jolanti built well.

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Through fire and magic the bridges have stood unmarked, and probably will exist as long as one stone stands upon another in the Rubble of Pavis.

### **Rubble Areas**

The Rubble is divided into five areas, each with its own particular characteristics. These five areas are Manside, Huntland, Troll Stronglands, Big Grazing, and the Garden.

### **Big Grazing**

This is mostly open land, comprising in full about a sixth of the area within the walls. It lies south of the river, between Manside and the Garden. This neutral area forms a buffer between the humans and the elves, but trolls are also often found there.

Big Grazing include Ogre Island, a rumored haunt of ogres and site of an ancient Cacodemon cult shrine. A small ogre fort is said to be located on the highest part of the island.

A large hill, called Yelmalio Hill, is also located in the Big Grazing, rather too closely to the Garden for most adventurer's tastes. The Sun Dome Templars sometimes travel there, but are secretive about what they do. They haven't set up a temple there, for some unknown reason. There are some fairly intact ruins atop this hill.

The Devil's Playground is right smack in the middle of the Big Grazing. This area has no buildings or ruins, but is full of biting insects and twisted underbrush. The stories about this area conflict. Some adventurers claim that chaos monsters dwell underground there in force, and come out each night to revel and destroy. Others claim that any chaos there has long since evaporated, leaving only the plants and bugs. There are certainly no chaos monsters there in the daytime. Adventurers that have gone there at night sometimes get ambushed by human bandits from nearby areas.

The Dragonewt Temple is located in this area as well, and its residents patrol the area. It is wise to avoid them, since they are vicious, and care nothing for human life.

The sages claim that the Big Grazing was one of the centers of the old Robcradle city. The few ruins here do seem to have more than their share of ancient powerful artifacts.

### The Garden

The Garden fills the southwest corner of the Rubble. It is a burgeoning surplus of plant growth that sprawls over the city walls in every direction, stopped only by the river and Big Grazing. The elves stick to themselves and are only rarely met outside their Garden. However, they kill anyone they find in the Garden. Worshippers of Yelmalio occasionally are granted permission to enter the Garden, but only by prior invitation, and no established method is known for soliciting such invitations.

The Garden has all sorts of healing plants and valuable herbs, and adventurers persist in invading it for these items. One of the three old gates of the Rubble, Hippogriff Gate, is located here. Its ancient magics are said to keep elves away, so it is widely believed the safest way into the Garden.

### Huntland

This includes all the area north of the river and west of Temple Hill, except for Zebra Fort. Despite its size, Huntland holds only a few kernels of civilized settlements.

Humans and trolls both hunt here. The Griffin Gate entrance to the Rubble opens onto the Huntlands. There are plenty of ruins near to the Gate, some reputedly the most dangerous underground places in the Rubble.

The Blind King's Hill is a grass-covered prominence speckled with ruins. The entire hill was once a single enormous palace. A great castle, nearly intact, sits on one side.

The North Quarry, a large open-pit hole filled with water, is in the north corner of the Huntlands. The Flintnail Temple, which is inhabited by civic dwarfs, is here. Many bandit families lurk in the ruins spotting the area.

The Puzzle Canal, a bizarre spot about which little is known, is also in Huntlands. The most successful expeditions to this region go by boat, through the entrance to the river.

The Salt Mines are at the south part of the Huntlands, near troll territory. A renegade clan of humans share the mines with a group of trolls. Neither band is trustworthy, but if salt could be taken from the mines without their permission, there would be plenty of folk willing to trade for it.

### Manside

Men have always lived here. The temple of Pavis is located here, and it is the safest part of the city for humans.

There are several major portions of this area. Downtown is a place of ruins with few humans. Real City is the most intact part of the city, and inhabited by many humans and a few dwarfs. The city's ruler is called Gomoranx the Wise. It is the nearest thing to a true town anywhere inside the Rubble. Oldtown is a bunch of ruins clustered

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along the river. Smalltown is a strange cluster of buildings, evidently built for dwarfs, though now inhabited by some humans and bandits. Real City, Downtown, Oldtown, and Smalltown are collectively called the Main Ruins.

The Twin Hills are a landmark here, and Mani's Fort is atop one of them. The Mani tribe is a major clan of Pavis, and are good people.

Zebra Fort is here, too, and part of it extends across the river. The Zebra Riders are basically bandits and charge grossly exorbitant tolls to use their bridge. However, they are many and strong, and should not be challenged. The Zebra Pens near the city of New Pavis hold much more civilized Zebra Riders.

### **Troll Stronglands**

The trolls own the largest section of the Rubble. They are divided into clans, of which four are greater than the rest and are called the Four Great Clans. The Rubble trolls have a long history of wars with humans, but can sometimes be befriended. Nobody has ever seen or heard of a mistress race troll in these parts.

The trolls control Temple Hill, a major adventuring site. Temple Hill has a lot of different ancient temples atop it, of which only the troll temples are operative. A troll fort covers part of the hill, and must be avoided, but the temples are worthwhile areas.

The famed Troll Bridge is at the edge of troll territory, right by the Garden. The trolls here are quite deadly, as many adventurers can attest (those that survived), but can be bought off sometimes. On rare occasions, elves are found here instead of trolls. Perhaps they take turns manning the bridge?

### **Denizens and Treasures of the Rubble**

By listening to stories from old adventurers and questioning at appropriate times, even the most obtuse adventuers can hear tales of what types of creatures and treasures can be found in various parts of the Rubble. The accounts below reflect the variety and doubtful plausibility of tales often heard by adventurers concerning the Rubble. It is often difficult to separate fact from fiction in such reports.

### Denizens

Manside holds mostly civilized humans, but parts of this section are a little wild, and dangerous bandits or raiding broos can be met. Dwarfs live here, too, mostly visiting from Dwarfside in New Pavis, or from the Flintnail Fort.

### Official Lunar Government Sentient Species Census Figures for the Rubble, 1611

1,500 humans 2,500 trolls and trollkin 1,000 aldryami 200 dwarfs 150 dragonewts 500 broos and similar chaos creatures 250 other (newtlings, baboons, ogres, unicorns, etc.)

6,100 Total

Scholars express misgivings about the accuracy of this census, citing the conveniently round figures and noting that the census takers spent little time in Manside, and did not actually visit the Garden or Troll Stronglands.

The Troll Stronglands are full of trolls of every sort. Bandits and adventurers sometimes raid here, and so do broos, but trolls speedily kick them out again. The trolls are disorganized, and some parts of their lands are carefully patrolled by armed dark trolls, while other parts seem to be left to their own devices, with only an occasional trollkin gang scavenging likely to be met by adventurers.

The Garden is populated by Aldryami. Trolls raid here often enough to be noted.

The Big Grazing, as a neutral ground, has seen bandits, nomads, trolls, elves, ogres from Ogre Island, broos in force, dragonsnails (possibly from the Devil's Playground), a few baboons, gargoyles, and newtlings from the marsh by Ogre Island.

Huntland has bandits, nomads, trolls, dwarfs from the North Quarry, ogres, the everpresent broos, gorp, dragonsnails, a few jack-o-bears, vampires, baboons, and gargoyles. It is a plenty dangerous spot.

Lunars patrol in all the areas except for the Troll Stronglands and the Garden. Townspeople live everywhere except the Troll Stronglands and the Garden. All but the most hardened adventurers or bandits frown on attacking or robbing peaceable humans. Bandits or nomads are a different story, of course, and are one of the prime enemies of the Rubble.

The nastiest broos are found in the Huntlands. A notorious elf bandit roams the Big Grazing, according to unconfirmed reports. There is supposed to be an intelligent walktapus somewhere in the Rubble. Mermaids have been seen in the Puzzle Canal. Duck and centaur vampires have both been reported operating out of the Blind King's Hill. Plants capable of moving by themselves and strangling intruders are known to live in the Garden. There are unicorns in the GVV€tIA□XOU.: AR∞ + UO2 + 2 AY#O + T

Rubble, but they are protected by the tiny Yelorna cult of savage, man-hating amazons. A jack o'bear priest is supposed to live in the Huntlands.

### Treasures

An artifact that gave great power to chaos monsters at the time of the Closing is believed to lie in or near the Devil's Playground.

The Pavis Old Mint is intact as an example of an item taken from a giant's cradle. It makes perfect coins, and various bandit gangs frequently take it over to make themselves some hard cash.

The Puzzle Canal is widely believed to have been made to house some wonderful item or group of items taken by the God-Learners. There are many speculations as to why this item or group of items needed to be guarded by water.

A Holy Place to Cacodemon on Ogre Island holds loot taken from the thousands of victims eaten by the ogres living there over the centuries.

The trolls have gathered many potent magical items and taken much treasure over the years they have been raiding the rest of the city. Almost every tiny troll clan has at least one magic item from centuries past. The strongest clans (the Four Great Clans) have many such items.

The elves guard exotic and magical plants, including one variety that grows gems and jewelry on its stalks! There must also be some artifact that keeps the Garden green all the way up to the top of Green Hill.

In Manside is a magic museum, which contains several magic artworks at times. Some adventurers know its location and visit it regularly. The North Quarry contains the remnants of the giant statue that conquered the city for Pavis. His organs became gems of rare quality. The Eyestones are located in the Pavis temple, and loyal Pavic cultists have seen them. The Heartstone, Kidneystones, and Liverstones are held by different gangs and forces, but many organ stones wait discovery. Some of these organs may still be within the North Quarry.

### How to Get Into the Rubble

Riverways provide the easiest and most used entry into the Rubble. Regular river traffic sails up and down the river during all seasons. Fishermen provide one-way transport to passengers going into the Rubble, and they can sometimes be hailed from the shore to carry people out as well. Lunar authorities also patrol by boat to receive all due entry fees. Entering the Rubble via the River of Cradles allows characters to disembark directly into any of the interior regions. New Pavis has one public gate, one government gate, and at least one known tunnel under the walls. Everyone believes the dwarfs have another secret tunnel to their Flintnail Temple. Entry via these routes are watched by Lunar guards and clerks. These petty bureaucrats thrive on bribes gained by threatening ignorant and impatient adventurers with more paperwork. Entry from New Pavis into the Rubble leads into the section called Manside.

Wyvern Gate was smashed sometime in unrecorded history. Its once proud gatehouse is scattered as pebbles about the gateway. One time in its history this gate was sealed with rock, lead, and troll magic, but now even the salvageable remains of that are gone. Guards from one of the private escort services hang about here as well, eager to sell their services. Wyvern Gate opens onto Manside. It is also fairly near to the Big Grazing.

Entry into the Rubble through the Hippogriff Gate or over the walls via the vines leads directly into the Garden. Hippogriff Gate is so clogged with vegetation that it is impassable to mounts of all types. Thick briars, sometimes poisoned, twist up from the ground. Tangled vines, which seem to move by themselves, hang down from the gatehouse. Within that old defensive structure lurk spying elves, who are reported to be able to send special spirits out against foes.

It is just as easy for people to climb over the great walls adjoining the Garden densely hung with vines, creepers, and exotic plants. As the map indicates, the Garden covers both sides of the wall, and it does so in thicknesses of several meters in places. These hanging gardens are inhabited by colonies of runners (small primitive arboreal humanoids related to elves) as well as birds and other wild animals which are natural sentries for the elves.

The Troll Break is the largest single entry into the Rubble. It is patrolled sporadically and irregularly by the trolls. Trading takes place at the break, for by troll decree, only there are merchants granted safe passage for trading. Whenever adventurers wish to gain entry into the Rubble via this break, they can hire additional muscle from the Adventurers' Free Guard.

Griffin Gate still has its guardhouse intact. It opens into the Huntlands sector of Pavis. It is less often patrolled by either the Lunars or the private guard services.

In theory, the great walls can be climbed anywhere, but only expert climbers aided with mundane and magical support should attempt it. GVVOTADXOU: AR ~ & UO2 ~ & AY # OX

# Gorp: Spawn of Pocharngo

### **Forms and Features**

When the chaos gods were freed by the destruction of the Spike, one chaos god, Pocharngo, resolved to liberate the earth from the arbitrary forms forced upon it by Law. Each fragment of earth he touched was freed from its form, making his will manifest in the transformed creatures of chaos called gorp.

These amphibious masses of incoherent tissue may be encountered anywhere in Glorantha where the cult of Pocharngo has been worshipped during Time. Gorp are as transparent as water, but when injured they become milky and translucent. They may or may not die, and may or may not reproduce, according to chance, so the growth or decline of their populations varies in any location at any time.

Gorp may be destroyed only by fire or magic. Weapons pass harmlessly through their undifferentiated tissues, often taking damage from the gorp's acidic composition, but causing no damage or discomfort to the gorp. Neither acid nor poisons are reported as affecting them. Non-fiery weaponenhancing magic (e.g., Bladesharp, Truesword) have no apparent effect. Spells like Disruption or Lightning, however, cause normal effects.

When a gorp is slain, noble metals and other rare indissolvable treasures may be found encysted in the gorp's tissues. Tools used to probe for or retrieve items are subject to acid damage.

Gorp apparently feed on other live forms and objects by digesting them with their body acids. It is noted, however, that the mass of the gorp does not necessarily increase with consumption of objects, and that they prefer to consume living tissue. They sense the presence of potential prey nearby in some fashion; it has been suggested that they perceive with a magical sense similar to Second Sight.

Gorp attack victims by enveloping them. When on land, the location affected is usually the legs (eg, for two-legged creatures, 1-10: right leg; 11-20, left leg), though gorp are known to drop from above, so that any location may be enveloped. In fluid environments, the location enveloped is determined normally. The most common form of gorp is the acid gorp. Anyone attacked by acid gorp is enmeshed and corroded by acid each round until the location is freed of enveloping gorp tissue. Normally a character may be allowed a Dodge or Jump roll to avoid an enveloping attack, but if the test fails, the victim is enveloped. Armor protects against acid damage until destroyed by the acid damage. If a character can still move after the initial round of attack, he may attempt further Dodge or Jumps to extract himself from the gorp. Fire may also be used to burn the gorp from an afflicted location, though any damage in excess of that done to the gorp is inflicted upon the victim's location.

If a Dodge is used, the character may attack as usual in the same round. If the character tries to Jump, he may not attack that round. Other agility skills may also be attempted at GM's discretion.

The acid gorp is the most common reported, but hardly the only gorp form. The second most common form has such weak body acids that it is essentially a harmless, coherent, animated pool of tissue resembling the jelly masses of frog eggs. This form may in fact be much more common, but rarely recognized or reported.

Other less benign forms are occasionally encountered. Six uncommon forms and their game effects are described below. Other forms are known; for example, some gorp are known to feature:

Non-acidic but poisonous tissues,

• Clandestine parasitism, where a weak acid form insinuates itself into the host victim's tissues and may lie dormant for a time before attacking the host's flesh,

Disease spirits,

• Colony structures, where upon death of the larger organism numerous micro gorp emerge.

Gorp are classified by size into four categories: micro, small, medium, and large. A fifth category, colossal, is extremely rare. Game effects for each of the standard sizes are given below.

### GORP: SPAWN OF POCHARNGO

**River of Cradles** 

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Micro A	cid Gorp			3
Character	ristics	AV	erage	
STR	0	- 11		Move: 1
CON	1d3	2		Hit Point Avg: 2
SIZ	1d3	2		Fatigue: NA
INT	1	1		Magic Points:10
POW	3d6	10-	11	DEX SR: 4
DEX	0	- 10 - 10		
Location	melee &	& missile d	20	points
Body	la sere sine (	01-20		all
Weapon	S	R Attk	/Par%	Damage
Envelop	1	100	/-	1 point acid
Small Ac	id Gorp			
Character	istics	Ave	erage	
STR	0	-		Move: 1
CON	1d6	3-4		Hit Point Avg: 5-
SIZ	2d6	7		Fatigue: NA
INT	1	1		Magic Points:10-
POW	246	10	44	DEV CD. 4

DEX	0		DEX SR: 4
Location Body	<i>melee &amp; mi</i> 01-2		<i>points</i> all
Weapon Envelop	SR	Attk/Par%	Damage
1011 Come of the second second	e strength of a	100/- cid for each sr	(1d3) point acid*

### **Medium Acid Gorp**

Character	istics	Average						
STR	0	-	Move: 1					
CON	2d6	7	Hit Point Avg: 13					
SIZ	2d6+12	19	Fatigue: NA					
INT	1	1	Magic Points:10-11					
POW	3d6	10-11	DEX SR: 4					
DEX	0	-						
Location	melee & mis	sile d20	points					
Body	01-20	0	all					
Weapon	SR	Attk/Par%	Damage					
Envelop	1	100/-	(1d3+2) point acid*					
* Determin	* Determine strength of acid for each specimen by rolling 1d3+2.							

### Large Acid Gorp

Luige Au	a doip		
Character	istics	Average	
STR	0		Move: 1
CON	2d6	7	Hit Point Avg: 23
SIZ	4d6+24	38	Fatigue: NA
INT	1	1	Magic Points:10-11
POW	3d6	10-11	DEX SR: 4
DEX	0	2 <del></del>	
Location	melee & mis	ssile d20	points
Body	01-2	0	all
Weapon	SR	Attk/Par%	Damage
Envelop	1	100/-	(1d6+3) point acid*
* Determin	e strength of a	cid for each sp	ecimen by rolling 1d6+3.
		and the local days of the	and the second s

### Six Uncommon Varieties of Gorp

**Glue Gorp:** Enveloping affects the victim as would a Glue spell. As each body location is affected, the gorp attacks an adjacent body location in subsequent rounds, eventually enveloping and immobilizing the victim. The glue does not adhere to living tissue or living vegetable matter. Typically the digestive juices of this form are no stronger than saliva, so the victim suffers no immediate harm; however, suffocation is a risk, and removing the gorp is extremely difficult.

**Exploder Gorp:** This form is an otherwise standard acid gorp which explodes at death, causing acid damage to all within 5 meters. The damage caused is 1d6 per each point of the creature's acid strength. (Underwater damage is 1 point to all within 1 meter.)

**Regenerating Gorp:** This form is an otherwise standard acid gorp which regenerates 1d3 hit points each round. Forms with greater regenerative powers are theorized.

**Zoomers**: This form is less viscous than normal, and cannot climb vertical surfaces, but has a faster movement rate of 1d3+1.

**Breeders**: This form is identical to standard acid gorp until it absorbs organic tissue equal to its own mass (ie, SIZ), whereupon it goes into breeding stage. Breeding stage resembles a cluster of frog eggs, with defined indentations on the surface that mark the outlines of potential offspring. The tissues become milky and opaque, and the gorp does not react to any stimulus or attack. In 1d6 days the breeder disintegrates into a number of microgorp equal to the gorp's hit points; the microgorp immediately disperse at full movement rate for several hours, seeking a sheltered location. Some later grow into full specimens while others do not. One in ten micro gorp mature into new breeder gorp.

If injured during its breeding stage, the specimen undergoes explosive premature disintegration once it receives half or more of its total hit points in damage. Only a number of microgorp equal to half its hit points survive the destruction; the other unviable specimens are expelled as acid jelly-masses causing 1d6 acid damage to all within 5 meters. (Underwater damage is 1 point to all within 1 meter.)

**Paralyzing Gorp:** This form typically has very weak body acids but a strong contact poison paralyzes the location enveloped. Test CON x 5 or the enveloped location is paralyzed. Paralyzed limbs are useless. Paralyzed abdomen or chest locations cause collapse and incapacitation. Paralyzed head locations cause unconsciousness. Each location remains paralyzed as long as the location remains enveloped, or for 2d10 rounds after the gorp is removed from the location. However, by the time the paralysis would wear off, the victim is often completely enveloped and suffocating.

# **Troubled Waters**

# A River of Cradles Campaign for Low-Level Adventurers

### Sequence Summary

In Episode One the river god rescues the adventurers from certain death and delivers them to a mud flat in the delta region. Here they discover they bear mysterious marks in the form of the runes of Zola Fel, god of the river. After an encounter with giant baboons, friendly fishermen help them to the nearest town, Corflu seaport.

In Episode Two the adventurers meet Sa'arrachmbro, a newtling priest of Zola Fel. He identifies their marks as enchantments associated with River Voices, legendary defenders of the river, and interprets their miraculous rescue and magical gifts as a sign they are needed to help protect the Zola Fel and its people. He tells of a plague of gorp, foul corrupt creatures of chaos, that threatens the river's purity and the safety of those along its banks. A boat and boatman are provided to carry them upriver. He tells them to visit the Zola Fel priest at the Shrine of Kinope on their way for more information about their magical gifts.

In Episode Three, on their journey upriver the adventurers find many opportunities to aid the denizens of the river and see first-hand the threat the monstrous gorp plague presents. At the Shrine of Kinope the priest tells them more about their magical gifts, and shares a puzzling dream vision. Finally they encounter a colossal gorp which appears to the be the source of the chaos infestation. With their help, the creature is destroyed, and they are celebrated as heroes.

In Episode Four, they are treated to a hero's welcome at the Zola Fel temple in Pavis. However, gorp continue to appear in the river, and Che'en the high priest of Zola Fel offers great rewards if they can end the gorp menace once and for all. The adventurers are told that loud disturbances and fishkills associated with the gorp plague are located near Ogre Island in the Big Rubble, and with the help of the priest and the Ingilli family, the adventurers can seek expert informants and special gear in the city of Pavis before investigating. In the final episode they find a hidden shaft near Ogre Island leading to flooded natural caverns. Within these caverns they confront creatures of chaos and discover an ancient temple of the Chaos god Pocharngo and the inhuman priest who is the source of the gorp plague. Destroying the priest ends the gorp infestation and its pollution of the river's precious waters.

### **GM Background**

The player characters are adventurers of good reputation hired by the Ingilli family to deliver trade goods and dispatches to Ingilli commercial agents in Corflu. The parcels and dispatches destined for Corflu are entrusted to two characters; the other characters are hired as guards for the river journey. The stipend to be paid each character is 400L, 200L in advance and 200L upon delivery in Corflu. In addition, Ingilli promises training in swimming to a maximum score of 25% free of charge for each character.

As the PCs head south on the river, the Reverend Amina, high priestess of Zola Fel in New Pavis, an old woman and in declining health, was distressed by numerous reports of gorp sighted in the river. On her deathbed, and with grave doubts about the one selected to succeed her as high priest, Amina undertook a personal HeroQuest, in which she asked Zola Fel to help those who would protect the river from chaos pollution. She achieved her purpose, though her spirit did not return to her world, for Zola Fel granted her request.

As it happened (or as is said by scholars of Gloranthan history, "as it was meant to happen"), as Amina lay dying in New Pavis, many kilometers away a colossal gorp enveloped the boat carrying the player characters, dragging them all to certain death on the bottom of the river. Zola Fel rescued them, as he had once rescued the legendary hero the Cleansed One, and in so doing elected them as his agents in fulfillment of the Amina's HeroQuest. Zola Fel placed the sign of debt and favor upon the characters in the form of  $G \nabla \forall \bullet \dagger \wr \Delta \Box X \odot \sqcup : \Delta \land \infty & \exists U O 2 & 2 & O X T$ 

enchanted marks, the runes of Water, Movement, and Harmony, on the right palm of each PC. These stigmata are enchanted matrices for the spells Rivereyes, Breathe Air/Water, and Extension. These spells permit a human to function temporarily underwater as well as an aquatic creature. By granting these magical favors, Zola Fel places an obligation upon the characters to put these abilities to the service and protection of the river god that saved them.

### Selecting PCs for the Adventures

This adventure sequence is designed to introduce beginning characters to the River of Cradles region. For a quick start, use the pregenerated player characters provided. Otherwise the players must create their own PCs.

Using Pregenerated PCs: If you have new players unfamiliar with the RuneQuest rules and the world of Glorantha, or want several evenings of adventure but don't want to spend time creating characters, use these.

Duplicate and let your players study the Pregenerated Character Profiles (pages 142-149), then let them choose their characters. Or, if you know your players well, and if they prefer, assign the characters to players according to their preferences and personalities.

**Creating Home-Made PCs**: Experienced RuneQuest gamers may prefer to create their own characters, with the following restrictions:

1. Characters should be 21 years old or less, or relatively unskilled or inexperienced. (This assures some balance of abilities and skills.)

2. At least one character must be an initiate of Zola Fel. All others have paid fees to become

temporary lay members of the Zola Fel cult. (Lay members of a cult simply pay a small fee to gain certain mundane benefits.)

Adapting the Sequence for Home-Made PCs: If the players have created their own PCs, you must adapt them for use in the first episode.

Examine the pregenerated PCs on pp. 142-149. Note that they lose certain items of equipment in the incident that precedes their first actions.

Permit your players to create their characters normally, but you may want to warn them that the introduction to the adventure involves events that may cause possessions to become lost due to circumstances beyond their control.

### Scenario Hooks for Existing Characters

The **Troubled Waters** campaign is designed for use with beginning characters. However, existing characters with limited skills and experience may be suitable, if they fulfill the conditions listed above for creating new characters. The "GM Background" above explains how such characters may come to be in a boat together on the river.

The attack of the colossal gorp that precedes the first episode could occur to any characters boating on the Zola Fel, crossing a ford, or ferrying across river. Delete all references to the parcels of trade goods and dispatches carried by the PCs, the payments made by the Ingilli agents for their delivery, and other rewards and considerations granted the PCs for this service to the cult.

Alternatively, Episodes One, Two, Three, and Five may be adapted as isolated scenarios for your own River of Cradles campaign. Episode Four is merely a prelude and preparation for Episode Five, and cannot stand alone as a scenario.

### **Gloranthan Themes**

The Mythic Past Prefigures The Present: The magical event and the enchanted runes that draw the characters into this adventure are prefigured by a Gloranthan myth of a despairing hero also miraculously rescued by a river god. As that hero discovers a new sense of purpose out of obligation to the god who rescued him, so are the player characters supposed to find a new sense of purpose in the magical gifts that link them with that mythic past.

**Obligation to Society:** The river god grants the characters powers to be used to defend against the menace threatening the people of the valley. The characters are meant to see that the gods gift mortals with magic power, but with that magic power comes obligation. As such the characters are singled out by fate to become heroes, not for wealth, pleasure, or power, but for the bitter honor of facing the tests of life and death so that others might live without fear.

Living in the World: The river itself does not appear as a character here, save in the person of the river god whose intervention initiates the sequence of adventures. However, the imagery of water and the river environment is pervasive in all the scenario settings, and the river is central to the lives of all the people encountered in these adventures. Describe the whisper of river reeds against the gunwale as the boat is poled through the marsh. Describe the thick, yellowbrown mud that laps over their boot-tops as they step from the boat to the shoreline. Describe the quiet majesty of Yelm's reddish sunset glow on the limestone cliffs along the south river. Look for inspiration in National Geographic magazine and your own ventures through salt marshes, cypress swamps and river valleys.

We suggest the following real world landscapes as models for the River of Cradles. The salt marshes of the Atlantic seaboard and Gulf Coast suggest the Zola Fel delta region. The Okefenokee Swamp and Suwanee River of Florida and Georgia are the model for Zola Fel's great bogs, marshes, and forest wetlands. The Columbia River Gorge is the model for the southern Zola Fel basin, while the bluffs and breaks of American prairie rivers are the model for the northern Zola Fel. Finally, the March 1991 **National Geographic** photo essay on Lechuguilla Cave is the inspiration for the Grotto of Pocharngo.

# Face Down in the Mud

### **Troubled Waters: Episode One**

### **Episode Summary**

The PCs awaken face down on a mud flat to find giant baboons looting them. After dealing with the baboons, they realize they have been transported magically to the delta marshes of the Zola Fel river. They also discover that during their magical transportation mysterious rune-shaped marks have appeared on their palms. A pair of local fishermen happen by and ferry the PCs to Corflu, the nearest settlement.

### **Pre-Session Preparation**

Read and study the five episodes of the adventure sequence. If using the pregenerated PCs, familiarize yourself with them. Assemble the necessary GM references, handouts, and other materials. If using the pregenerated characters, duplicate the Character Profiles (pp. 142-149) for distribution, and explain beforehand to your players that you'll be providing characters.

### **Beginning the Adventure**

The Time and Place: The time is early afternoon. The suggested date is Storm Season, Stasis week, Windday (i.e., Storm 32). If another date is chosen, adjust references to seasons, weather, rainfall, high and low water, and so forth.

The place is a mud flat at low tide in the grassbeds of the Zola Fel river delta. (See "Mudflats" diagram on page 84.) The dense marsh grass surrounding the mudflat is 2 meters high; visibility in the grass is limited to one meter. The channel running along the mudflat (one of several major channels through the delta) is four meters wide and three meters deep. The tide is close to its low point (having dropped to low tide the previous day), and will not reach high tide again for 1d6 days. (See "The Zola Fel Delta," pp. 18-19, for a description of local tides.)

It's a pleasant Storm Season afternoon, about 55°F, and warm in the sun, though the characters are soaked to the skin and chilly. The smells are of brackish swamp and rank, black, slimy mudflats.

#### If Using Pregenerated Characters

Decide which player is to receive which PC and distribute the appropriate sheet to each player. Now read the following aloud, or describe events in your own words, then proceed to "Waking on the Mudflats" below.

"The prosperous Ingilli clan of New Pavis has hired you to deliver trade goods and dispatches to their commercial agents in Corflu. It will take a week or so to reach Corflu and two weeks to return to New Pavis. The Zola Fel and Issaries initiates are responsible for delivering the goods and dispatches, while the rest of you are a paid escort.

"You are paddling your boat along a wide, deep stretch of the Zola Fel just north of the Pavis County border when the river surface explodes and the river bottom rises above your heads, blotting out the sky. Then you are drowning in gelatinous goo. The boat is no longer beneath your feet, and you can't draw a breath. You struggle...

"Then, suddenly, each of you are no longer present. For a timeless moment, you are not anywhere at all. As characters, you have no sense of place or time passing — only a sense of peaceful, cool green depths."

### If Using Homemade Characters

Get the characters into the river where the colossal gorp can get them. If they're on one side of the river, get them to take a ferry across or ford the river. Or let them persuade you to provide a boat for a journey to the supposed site of their next adventure. Once they're in the water then Zola Fel snatches them up and dumps them in the delta.

Anything they are wearing comes with them. Anything held in hand is lost. Anything lying in the boat is lost. If you like, let each player choose one hand-held object he wants to keep, and let him test DEX, INT, or POW x5 to keep it with him. Otherwise its gone.

Now proceed to "Waking on the Mudflat".

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### Waking on the Mudflat

Show the players a copy of the Mudflats diagram and inform them that they are presently all sleeping soundly, lying face down in the mud in the positions indicated on the diagram. If desired, use counters or miniatures on the hex grid diagram for clarity.

Next, determine which characters awake first. During the first five rounds, each PC tests as follows to see if he wakes.

Round	<u>Test to Wake</u>
1	CON x 1
2	CON x 2
3	CON x 3
4	CON x 4
5	CON x 5
6	All wake.

Noise does not improve chances to wake. However, if a PC or baboon shakes or attacks a still-unconscious PC, that PC immediately tests CON x 5 to wake, and he wakes automatically in the following round.

As each PC awakes, describe his surroundings and sense impressions, then ask him what he wants to do. Each awakened PC hears, sees, and smells his mudflats surrounds, the sun low on the horizon, the gurgle of the river channel, the fetid mudflat surface his face rests on. Describe also the baboon near his prone body, the foul breath of the baboon, and the baboon's clumsy tugging at his garments. Each character is wearing wet clothing, any light armor they had on, and retains any sheathed or secured light weapons, pouch belts, jewelry, magical items, and any other small valuables. Pregenerated characters have only items marked in boldface on their sheets.

When they wake, the PCs are initially dazed, with no idea where they are or how they got there — or what the baboons are up to.

### The Baboon Forage Troop

As the PCs awake, they realize the baboons are trying to take their possessions. The longer a character remains unconscious, the more likely he loses something useful. The baboons start on metal weapons, which are most valuable. A sheathed weapon takes two rounds to remove. In the round he awakes, a PC may only observe his predicament, and make a STR vs. STR test to retain anything a baboon is trying to steal.



### **River of Cradles**

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A troop of giant baboons led by a shaman was following a trail along the channel. They discovered the apparently dead bodies of the PCs lying on the mudflat. (See "Chuff the Baboon Shaman" and "The Baboon Forage Troop" on p 88.) Hardly able to believe their good fortune, they immediately set about stripping valuable metal objects from the bodies. When the supposed corpses come to life, the baboons react in surprise and terror .

Staging Hint: In portraying Chuff and his baboon troop, recall the primitive man-apes in the first part of 2001: A Space Odyssey. Their speech includes growls, grunts, barks, chuffs, and excited chittering. A GM with a gift for physical comedy can imitate the crouch-shouldered, loping gait of the man-ape, moving around the game table poking and prodding at the players, sniffing, tasting shirt sleeves, cocking his head to one side curiously and chittering to himself.

### The Stigmata of the River Voices

Each PC bears a stigmata, a dark blue birthmarklike discoloration of the skin on the palm of his right hand. Zola Fel placed this mark on each PC when he answered the call for divine intervention that saved the PCs from certain death.

#### **Appearance and Rune Associations**

The mark is only 3 cm. wide, and consists of the three runes, Water, Movement, and Harmony. As Zola Fel laymen, they all immediately recognize the significance of the Water and Movement runes. The association of these two runes with the Harmony rune is more obscure. Acolytes, priests, and initiates steeped in cult lore know that these three runes are connected with the Cleansed One subcult (see pp. 175).



While the Zola Fel cult traditionally keeps itself aloof from the affairs of landsmen, the Cleansed One subcult emphasizes the importance of friendship and cooperation between the river peoples and other cultures, stressing the interdependence of all creatures in the Valley who ultimately owe their lives and livelihoods to the river. Champions of the Cleansed One subcult are known as "River Voices," and they figure in various river tales and legends.

### **The Enchantment**

Each rune mark is a matrix enchantment for the following spells: River Eyes, Breath Air/Water, and Extension IV. The enchantment has two attached conditions: first, that the enchantment may be invoked only by Zola Fel initiates or the wearers of the marks, and second, that each stackable level of Extension becomes available only after the wearer of the mark performs significant deeds that aid the river and its peoples (i.e., Extension I is available after the first deed is performed, Extension II after the second deed, and so forth).

### The Dead Awaken

As each PC wakes, the baboon looting his body screeches and jumps back one meter, taking with him any possession he's already taken, but letting go of anything else. If the PCs attack or try to retrieve their possessions, the baboons fight back; otherwise the startled creatures stay one meter from the PCs, shrieking and jabbering in baboon talk, torn between a desire to flee the dead come to life and a greed for more loot. A surprised Chuff vacillates between fleeing, returning to the looting, or deploying his ancestral spirits from the fetish. (Though the fetish is a powerful tool of his shaman's office, Chuff wants his authority and status to derive from his own actions rather than from the spirits of tribal ancestors he summons.)

Unless a fight breaks out first, in the sixth round curiosity finally overcomes greed and fear, and Chuff tentatively addresses the PCs in broken

Detect Magic and Mystic Vision spells indicate the stigmata are magical. Test Enchant skill for any character examining the marks; a success means the marks are recognized as divine enchantments, though nothing more is known about the nature of the enchantments. Otherwise, a mundane (ie, non-magical) examination does not reveal that the marks are enchantments, or what spells the enchantments bear.

A Divination invoked upon Zola Fel or an associated cult can suggest the exact nature of the enchantment; for example, the communicant may receive the following answer - "Pray Blessed Waters Be Breathed and Seen," or may have a vision of himself swimming underwater with the stigmata glowing on his palm. A drowning PC also instinctively and unconsciously invokes the enchantment; once invoked this way, it may be consciously invoked thereafter.

Initially only the River Eyes and Breathe Air/Water matrices may be invoked by the wearer. However, once the wearer has proven himself in words and deeds to be a friend of the river, the Extension spell may also be invoked. The first point of the Extension spell is earned by the first great deed, the second point is earned by the second great deed, and so forth. Once fully activated, the stigmata can store and access all four points of Extension.

Casting the spells in the divine matrices requires no expenditure of PC magic points. Casting the River Eyes spirit spell does cost character magic points. However, once cast, the divine spells in the stigmata matrices may not be cast again until they are renewed by worship at a Zola Fel temple. The PCs do not know this until they are told so by the Zola Fel priest in Corflu, or by any other Zola Fel priest who examines their stigmata and attempts a Divination to discover their significance.

(See "The Cult of Zola Fel," pp. 173-176, for the River Eyes spell and the Cleansed One subcult.)

FACE DOWN IN THE MUD

**River of Cradles** 



Tradetalk. "Why mud sleep? Trick ambush? All sick?"

The baboons instinctively withdraw into a group clustered behind Chuff the shaman, barking and screeching nervously and looking to one another for reassurance. Chuff apologizes for stealing things, and tells the baboons to return what they've taken, but, still puzzled and suspicious, he insists on an explanation for the PCs's strange behavior. If he realizes that the PCs are equally bewildered, or is told that magic brought them here, Chuff is no longer suspicious, but continues to be very inquisitive.

If a fight breaks out (a likely occurrence), for the first few rounds all is confusion, with each individual baboon fighting or fleeing as best he can. Chuff casts spells and sets an ancestral spirit loose to aid the troop. Ancestral spirits summoned appear within 10m of Chuff's totem stick. Each spirit takes one full round to materialize. Depending on the seriousness of the situation, Chuff either directs the ancestral spirit against a PC in spirit combat or directs the spirit to cast spells at PCs.

After these initial stages in the encounter, the baboon's actions depend on the PC actions. Keep in mind two things:

1. Once a baboon takes damage exceeding hit points in any location, it withdraws from combat, and if pursued, it flees, first trying to escape with its loot (at 3m/SR), then, if closely pursued, tossing aside its booty and running on all fours (at 5m/SR).

2. The baboon shaman Chuff directs the actions of the baboon troop. If a PC speaks in Tradetalk, and Chuff replies in Tradetalk, all baboons immediately attempt to disengage while the parlay continues. If Chuff is attacked, all baboons come to his defense. If the PCs gang up on Chuff, Chuff flees. If desperate, Chuff directs his ancestral spirits to cover his retreat. If Chuff falls, all baboons flee.

Parlay with Baboons: Chuff speaks Tradetalk adequately, and the other baboons understand a few phrases, like "Trade!" or "Want!" or "Bad!" or "Good!" The "Sample Chuff-PC Dialogs" on page 87 suggest how Chuff responds to PC speeches:

#### **Resolving the Baboon Encounter**

The encounter with Chuff and the baboon troop may resolve itself in one of the following ways:

Fight: If fighting begins between any PCs and baboons, it continues until any single baboon is seriously injured (ie, below hit points in a location) or until Chuff begins to speak with the PCs. A seriously injured baboon flees or attempts to flee. At this point Chuff tests against Orate to rally the

### FACE DOWN IN THE MUD

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### Sample Chuff-PC Dialogs

Sample Dialog 1:

PC: Give us our stuff back. Chuff: Sure. You bet. We sorry. All dead on mud, we think.

Sample Dialog 2: PC: We'll pay you for help. Chuff: Hmm. Show me. Not little shinies [coins]. Want knife. Want sword. Want pot. You trade?

#### Sample Dialog 3:

PC: Why did you attack us?

Chuff: We not do that. We find you dead, take things. This our land. What we find then, ours now. But you not dead, so stuff still yours. Sorry.

#### Sample Dialog 4:

#### PC: We are of the (name) cult.

Chuff: (if cult named is Daka Fal) So? Some Daka Fal thieving scum. [But a positive connection is possible if PCs are polite and persistent. "Swear on my ancestors" is a universally respected and solemn oath.] (if cult named is other than Daka Fal) We

Daka Fal. So what?

troop. If he succeeds, the troop remains and fights. If he fails, all baboons flee, carrying any possessions looted from the PCs.

Flight: This is the likely result of any protracted combat. Baboons move at 3m/SR if encumbered with burdens, or at 5m/SR if they throw away spears and loot and scramble on all fours. If they flee with PC gear, they may drop the gear if PC pursuit is persistent.

Staging Chases: As the home team, the baboons get benefit of knowledge of terrain, and in an evenly matched foot race they should eventually open distance on pursuers. Running doubles movement rate and fatigue point cost per melee round. When baboons or PCs exhaust their fatigue points, test CON x 3 minus negative fatigue point score or lose half movement per round. If a baboon reaches the tall grass without being caught, it escapes, since the tall grass blocks line of sight, giving the pursued an advantage in evading. If one baboon is caught, Chuff tests against Orate to rally his troop to rescue the captured baboon. If successful, Chuff and all baboons return to fight and rescue the victim. If failed, all baboons flee (dropping possessions) and escape.

**Negotiate:** Chuff considers gaining any one worthwhile possession a pleasant outcome IF no other baboon is seriously injured (ie, maimed or killed). For each baboon maimed or killed, he feels he has lost face if he doesn't receive at least one additional possession in compensation. He accepts loss of face if the PCs seem capable of taking baboon lives. He trades information on a one-forone barter basis for useful news items. He sells aid for modest gains. Any metal weapons are sufficient to persuade him to aid the PCs in finding their way to Corflu. Coin are accepted only if a PC Daka Fal swears on his ancestors that the coin can be used to buy metal goods.

The Baboons Return to Foraging: Chuff asks if the PCs are going to Corflu. If so, he says, the PCs may accompany the baboons on the trails south, which is the best route to Corflu, and also the route the baboons take on their forage expedition.

#### **Post-Encounter Activities**

Once the baboons are driven off or befriended, four main problems should concern the PCs:

**Finding Their Stuff**: Most of their stuff is several hundred kilometers away at the bottom of the river being slowly digested by a colossal gorp. Though the PCs have no way of knowing exactly what happened, they are obviously far from the place where disaster robbed them of their goods.

**Reviewing the Mission**: PCs delivering the parcels of trade goods and dispatches to Corflu will recall their mission. If the pregenerated characters are used, Forazi has the dispatches in a waterproof satchel, and Geoffa has two shoulder bags full of Rubble curios and Praxian crafts. Forazi also has a copy of a Zola Fel River map. The map lists only major landmarks and locations of significance to riverfolk, indicating safe camps, swamps and marshes, and communities where riverfolk or riverfolk friends may be found.

**Discovering the Stigmata**: In the aftermath of the encounter with the baboons, have each character make a POW x 2 roll. If all the characters fail the roll, have them roll every hour or so to notice. They should notice the runes before the next encounter, the Fishermen.

The first to succeed notices a strange mark on their right hand — three small dark blue marks in the form of the runes of Water, Fate and Harmony. The runes weren't there before the event that dumped them on a mudflat in the delta, so they may reasonably infer that the stigmata and their transportation here are connected. Secretly test against Enchant skill for each character; a success means he recognizes the stigmata as similar to divine enchantments he has heard about.

If Chuff is still with the party, and they ask him what he thinks of the stigmata, he identifies the individual runes, but has no idea what else it might be. He thinks they are probably the marks of the 'boat riders' (fishermen) and that they might want to ask them if they see any.

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Getting to Corflu: After the encounter with the baboons, the party may collect their gear, if they have not done so already, and get their bearings.

If they travel with Chuff or get directions from him, they proceed along the trail to the south that follows the river channel.

If they have not gotten directions from Chuff, they may have no idea where they are. With a little thought <World Lore tests>, they can figure out that it is midafternoon (they've been out cold for a

### Chuff the Baboon Shaman

STR 11			
CON 16 SIZ 08 INT 15 POW 14 DEX 18 Move: 3/5	melee/missile 01-04/01-03 05-08/04-06 09-11/07-10 12/11-15	location R Leg L Leg Abdom Chest	points 1/4 1/4 1/4 1/5
Fatigue: 27 Hit points: 12 Magic points: 14 Dex SR: 2	13-15/16-17 16-18/18-19 19-20/20	R Arm L Arm Head	1/3 1/3 1/4

Attacks: Total encumbrance = 1.5. Fatigue 25 (27–1.5).							
Weapon	SR	Attk/Par%	Damage	ENC/AP			
Bite	8	40/-	1d6	-/-			
Claw	8	48/-	1d8	-/-			
Fetish (Club)	7	42/35	1d6	.5/4			

Spirit Magic (68%): Disruption (1), Detect Enemies (1), Befuddle (2), Protection 2, Spirit Screen 4 (known by fetch) Countermagic 4, Heal 6 Divine Magic: Axis Mundi, Spirit Melding, Summon Ancestor. Skills: Dodge 49, Scan 84, Search 75, Orate 75, Speak Tradetalk 21. Magic Items: Totem stick Fetish: Holds binding Enchantment for Power Spirit (INT 07 POW 9) and two ancestral spirits (see box). Fetch: Int 12 POW 22. Takes the form of a giant rat. few hours after the gorp attack), and that they are in the Zola Fel river delta, since the cliffs of the Defender's Shore are visible to the northwest and the water is brackish. Failed World Lore tests mean the PCs believe they could be anywhere on Glorantha. Encourage wild speculation about coastal marshes from Seshnela to Teshnos.

They must decide which way to go. If they decide to camp there for the day, or proceed to go north or south along the river bank great, proceed

Ancestral Spirits: These friendly ancestral spirits are the ghosts of former tribal shamans who have permitted themselves to be bound into the totem stick fetish as tribal shaman heirlooms transferred through the generations. Chuff usually commands the spirits to attack enemies in spirit combat. When possession is successful, it is only temporary (1d6+1 hours); in time the spirits abandon their possessed victims, typically exhausted and terrified but not seriously hurt, after having driven them to a safe distance at Chuff's request. When outnumbered and desperate, Chuff may ask his spirit ancestors to aid him through spell attacks – for example, to cover a retreat by Demoralizing or Befuddling enemies.

By tradition and societal convention, baboon shamans avoid killing other baboons (or humans, trolls, newtlings, or other similar sentient creatures) by spirit combat and possession. This tacit "limited spirit warfare" agreement permits expressions of conflict and aggression without precipitating the deadly variety of warfare that cripples entire tribes of primitive creatures.

### **Chuff's Ancestral Spirits**

Whahf: INT 14 POW 19. Spirit Spells (95%) Disruption (1), Befuddle (2), Dispel Magic 4. Divine Spells: Axis Mundi, Resurrect, Summon Ancestor. Bragh: INT 10, POW 21. Spirit Magic: Disruption (1), Demoralize

(2). Divine Magic: Axis Mundi, Summon Ancestor.

### The Baboon Forage Troop

8 Baboon Troopers: (Hruuh, Kjunjun, Wharf, Nuhkra, Ohgro, Gurun, Urghar, Eech)

SIR	17				
CON	11				
SIZ	11	melee/missile	location	points	
INT	13	01-04/01-03	R Leg	1/4	
POW	13	05-08/04-06	L Leg	1/4	
DEX	17	09-11/07-10	Abdom	1/4	
APP	11	12/11-15	Chest	1/5	
		13-15/16-17	R Arm	1/3	
Move: 3	/5	16-18/18-19	L Arm	1/3	
Fatigue:	28	19-20/20	Head	1/4	
Hit point	s:11				
Magic p	oints: 13				
Dex SR:	2				

Weapon	SR	Attk/Par%	Damage	ENC/AP
Bite	7	60/-	1d8+1d4	_/_
Claw	8	55/-	1d8	-/-
Thrust Javelin *	6	45/35	1d8+1d4	1.5/8
Thrown Javelin *	2/7	50/	1d6+1d2	1.5/8

Spirit Magic: Disruption (1), Detect Enemies (1), Heal 2 Skills: Dodge 60, Scan 55, Search 35, Speak Tradetalk 03.

	Hruuh	Kjunju	in Wharf	Nuhkra	Ohgro	Gurun	Urghar	Eech
head	4_	4	4	4	4	4_	4	4
l arm	3_	3_	3_	3_	3	3_	3_	3_
r arm	3_	3_	3_	3_	3_	3	3_	3_
chest	5	5	5	5	5	5_	5	5_
abdomen	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4_
l leg	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
r leg	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4

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to "The Fishermen" below. If, on the other hand, they decide to move away from the river and head west (into the two-meter tall marsh grass), they need to be discouraged. The marshy terrain is very treacherous — tell any Zola Fel initiate or experienced scout or nomad that this is very dangerous terrain, and that going is very slow. If they ignore this, let them go 50 meters before someone get sucked into a quagmire, and is barely rescued by the party. Hopefully, they take the hint and return to an easier route, but if they persist, confront them with deep open water.

### **The Fishermen**

If the party heads north, south, or stays put, as evening approaches, they see a small coracle (a light boat made of animal skins stretched over a frame of woven branches) with two figures in it paddling south along the Zola Fel. The figures see them and stop paddling, obviously surprised. Give the party the first chance to hail them, but the figures hail the party after a careful looking-over.

If the baboons are still with the party, they bid farewell and leave the PCs with their own kind.

The two figures in the coracle are fishermen from Corflu, Sarky and Dagis. Both are males in their late thirties, wearing wool tunics and trousers, dark haired, and dark skinned from exposure to the sun. Sarky squints (he's very nearsighted), talks as though he's been everywhere and done everything, and fancies himself a skilled linguist. (In fact, Sarky does speak Boatspeech and Pavic fluently, and Sartarite, Praxian, and New Pelorian very poorly.) Dagis is large, overweight, and speaks in monosyllabic phrases like "Yup," "Nope," "Mebbe so," and "I reckon." Both are friendly, not apparently afraid of the PCs, and curious about why the party is walking around in the middle of the delta. Once the party explains the situation, the fishermen are happy to help them out, particularly if any PCs mention being members of the cult of Zola Fel.

If at any time either fishermen catch a glimpse of the stigmata, they are very interested. If they see all the PCs bear the mark, they are fascinated. If the PCs mention the marvelous circumstances of their arrival in the delta and the appearance of the stigmata, Sarky is very excited, saying it is a mark of Zola Fel, and that they are surely here to talk to the Reverend Sa'ar.

In any case, Dagis volunteers to row ahead to Corflu and bring back a boat to carry the characters there. If the fishermen have seen the stigmata, they do not mention recompense. If they have not, they say there will be a modest fee of one Lunar apiece "to pay the ferryman." Sarky stays with the party to keep them company (unless they were unpleasant), saying there are a few good hours of fishing left, and chats with them as he fishes. Sometime later that evening, a large fishing skiff pulls up with Dagis and two other fishermen. With the PCs aboard, the skiff turns and heads downstream for Corflu.

### **Evening in Corflu**

The fishermen have by now almost certainly noticed the stigmata. They suggest that the characters talk to Sa'ar once they get to Corflu. However, they also have some old fishermen's clothing with them which they ask the characters to put on. They also ask the PCs to conceal any weapons larger than a dagger , telling them that they don't want to attract any attention in town. They explain that the Lunars really don't like strangers visiting and poking around, and if any of the Lunars ask them anything they should play dumb and pretend they're visiting relatives. If the PCs question this, the fishermen say that they've heard stories about strangers disappearing.



Grass Beds in the Zola Fel Delta

**River of Cradles** 

# The Port of Corflu

**Troubled Waters: Episode Two** 

### **Episode Summary**

In Corflu the PCs meet the Zola Fel priest Sa'arrachmbro. The Reverend Sa'ar tells them what he knows about their stigmata, tells them of a dream vision, and withdraws to divine the will of Zola Fel. When he returns, he explains that they must attend a worship service to fill their matrices with divine spells, and that they should visit the priest at the shrine of Kinope for further guidance. He also asks the PCs for help in hunting a menace that has preyed on the local newtlings. If they agree, they encounter fierce mudsharks, and discover Lunars excavating a colossal statue in the marsh. Sa'ar and the local riverfolk then send the PCs on their way upriver with gifts, messages, a boat and local river guide.

### Welcome to Corflu

Late that morning, under the rose of the predawn sky, the fishing boat draws near Corflu. As they

#### **Corflu Rumors**

The following rumors may be heard from river folk and townfolk in Corflu and throughout the river delta.

#### About the Gorp Plague:

"When Karcher and Mellits disappeared with their boats, I thought it was a surprise tide that got 'em, but now I'm not so sure."

"I swear, fishing in the west prairie pools is bad this season – fewer fish, harder to catch, and dozens of dead ones on the flats at low tide."

"Mermen say they found some giant gorp out across the shelf and even down the seaslope."

"Griffin said he see'd a jellymass the size of a newt raft hung up in a hightide draft. Said it smelled to Yelm's lunchbox. Went up to take a look and he see'd a whole mudshark skeleton in it, he said."

"Damn, no, ain't no jellyfish, I see'd jellyfish afore, and jellyfish's gots parts. This'un just like a big bowl a water without the bowl. Jest let it float, I did, and a good thing."

#### About the Lunars:

"Got the newtlings out dredging the channel. What's that all about? Channel's deep enough for any coastal trader. What's the point?" approach, the PCs note along the river bank clusters of small reed huts and boats of riverfolk fishermen. Rounding a bend, they see the island of Corflu, with the wooden stockade on a rocky rise surrounded by the fisherman settlements on the grass flats below. Sarky and Dagis shelter the PCs in their own homes in the river folk settlements on the north end of the island, providing food and privacy for sleep, and cautioning them to stay out of sight. Then Sarky and Dagis take their coracles and go in search of Reverend Sa'ar. Curious PCs can question the wives and children about the island, but at first their hosts are shy while the menfolk are away, and speak only of the weather, fishing, and the recent plague of gorp attacks, while eagerly seeking rumors of events in the world upriver.

The Reverend Sa'ar: Near midday Sarky and Dagis return with Reverend Sa'ar. The newtling wears only a utility harness with many pouches, a

"Boatloads and boatloads of wool blankets from Pavis. Crates five high in the warehouse. Who needs wool blankets here and the south? And who's gonna buy wool blankets?" [Marked as wool blankets, the crates are actually very heavy, and loaded with weapons and armor for outfitting marines when they land in Karse.]

"Lots of soldiers. Sharp soldiers. Dressed sharp. But they drill barefoot and without armor — I see'd 'em. Who'd do such a thing?" [Armored Marines drown. Best to use magic protection instead.]

"Those scholars boys always out digging in the swamp. Think they's gold or something. Plenty newtlings get good pay for digging, but lately the mud sharks are hurtin' 'em something fierce."

#### About Traffic on the Docks:

"Lots of Esrolians (pauses to spit meaningfully) in and out. Sometimes in such a hurry they can't wait to unload their cargoes. Spice merchants, most likely — or hazia for the fancy-pants toffs."

"Look. What're them Esrolian fat cats up to, thick as thieves with the Lunars? Ever know a Etyries initiate that'd give the time o' day to a Holy boy? Yet those Esrolians aren't sleeping on their ship, and they're not sleeping at Fellow's. So who's putting 'em up? The Alliance, that's who... but what's their angle?"

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knife, and a simple hobham root medallion with the runes of Zola Fel. He is soft-spoken, polite, but fluent in Pavic, Boatspeech, and New Pelorian. He expresses sympathy and concern for the party's misadventures as recounted to him by Sarky and Dagis. He then promises to find a boat and boatman to return them to Pavis. He says there is a worship service that night, and there he will ask among the local initiates who might have a rivercraft and be free to conduct the PCs upriver.

Sa'ar then says that Sarky and Dagis have told him about the stigmata, and asks if he may examine them. After looking closely at each PC's stigmata, he settles back on his haunches and remains there, staring into space, for a long time. Sarky, Dagis, and their household make themselves comfortable; if PCs ask, they are told the Reverend is thinking, and it may be a while.

**Sa'ar's Dream**: After five minutes Sa'ar comes to life again, and the PCs' riverfolk hosts become alert. Sa'ar speaks:

"This night I have received a strange dream, which I believe to be a True Dreaming, a divine shadow, now that I have seen the marks upon your hands.

"In my dream I am seated before many strangers in my house. Their faces are hidden in darkness. Before each is set a place, and before each is a basin, but the basin is empty. I am ashamed, for naked plates lie before guests, yet I know not what to offer these strangers that might not offend them.

"And one stranger stretches forth his palm over his basin in thanks, and says, 'Trouble not, Sa'ar. We seek aught but breath and light, and your hospitality is nothing lacking in this matter.' And so then each stranger also reaches forth his hand over his basin, and I see upon each open palm these runes of power (he gestures at the stigmata of the PCs): Water, Movement, and Harmony.

"I tell you these things, which I know.

"Among the followers of the Cleansed One I have seen these marks. The runes of Water and Movement are the river god's; the rune of Harmony the Cleansed One has taken as his own.

"I have heard the words of Shennin Ashal, who walks in the hard path of the Cleansed One. She has said: 'You shall be shown a Hand, and in that Hand shall be the Voice of the River. (Here the riverfolk gasp in surprise, then murmur excitedly among themselves in Boatspeech.) The Harmony of the River shall be broken, and Hands and Voices shall be raised among the peoples, and shall bid them by words and deeds to come together, to honor the river folk with gentle deeds and scourge the river's foes with cleansing wrath.' I have heard these words from the lips of Shennin Ashal, and by the grace of Zola Fel I know them to be true sayings.

"I know these marks to be divine enchantments, for I am of the craft and grace, and know them to be true magics.

"Now I tell you these things I do not know.

"I see on you the marks of a god, yet I know not what they portend.

"I see these enchantments, yet I know not what they may accomplish.

"I see I am placed here to give you counsel, yet I know not what path you must take."

Sa'ar then rises, saying, "I beg you take shelter here among friends. Do not go abroad in town except in riverfolk guise, and go only with a guide." Sa'ar looks sharply at Sarky, Dagis, and families and says, "Mind your tongues. This is fine news, but it should not spread to certain ears. I will speak at evening worship; that is good time enough for others to know.

"Now, I would visit the temple, and open my mind to the river, and pray that I may know what you must know. Look for me here as Yelm sets."

Sa'ar then bows formally to the PCs, takes each by the hand and presses his muzzle into their palms as though kissing the stigmata, then hustles away to the water, submerging and swimming strongly away underwater.

### If It's Waterday, This Must be Corflu

**Riverfolk Hospitality**: The riverfolk then all excitedly grab the PCs's palms, peering with fascination at the marks and kissing them as Sa'ar has done. They explain that Shennin Ashal is a morokanth and itinerent Zola Fel priestess who sometimes visits Corflu River, but who has not been seen here for over a year. River Voices are heroes of legend, known both as champions who defend the peoples of the river from villains and monsters, and as mediators who speak for the water people with the people of the land.

They also note that a newtling guest is expected to bring his own plate, or basin, to a feast. The palm-out gesture simultaneously signifies a request for food and a polite thanks for the offer of hospitality. They happily speculate upon further interpretations of Sa'ar's dream.

Also, now that the PCs are revealed as potential celebrities and heroes, their hosts freely answer any questions asked about Corflu, providing detail and speculation on sundry topics. (See "Corflu Rumors" on page 90.)

If PCs ask, the riverfolk are happy to guide the them around Corflu until evening when they are to meet again with Reverend Sa'ar. They ask the GVV●+LA□XOU∴AR∞+UO2+AOY#O+A

PCs to maintain their disguises as riverfolk, and insist that no PC go abroad without an accompanying family member.

Sarky and Dagis offer to show them the inn ("Fellow's place, timber building near southgate off the market square"), the market ("Markets are Wildday, but you might find someone at the craftsbarns nearby to help you"), the Trade Alliance Offices ("stone, two stories, soldier guards at the entrance, there you'll find your Ingilli agent"), or the docks ("down south at the bottom of the island, can't miss 'em, one ship in, Prudence, out of Esrolia [spits reflexively]"). Riverfolk think the Lunars are mostly posh, thieving bastards, though some are right enough. The Prudence's officers and crew, and all Esrolians in general, are venomously dismissed as "scum, unfit seamen, with the manners and morals of goats."

Their hosts help the PCs deliver their parcels and dispatches to the Ingilli agent at the Trade Alliance House. The agent affects a world-weary indifference to the PCs' appearance and narratives, and casually collects the parcels and dispatches, checks them for damage, then goes to a back room, emerges with a cloth bag, and presents it to the PCs. Inside they find the 200L each promised as final payment for delivery.

The PCs now have enough coin to purchase lost gear. The riverfolk warn the PCs that they'll cause a stir if they appear at the craft barns loaded with Lunars. Instead, they suggest the PCs look around for what they want, then their hosts will find some quiet way to purchase the material on the sneak.

Finding Gear for Sale: Artisans at the craft barns can adapt armor to fit for 1/10 the normal price for armor. No ready-made armor is available for sale in Corflu, but some available used armor can quickly be adapted by local craftsmen. Soft leather is available in unlimited quantities. Only two stiff leather and two cuirbouilli suits, all four medium-sized, are available for sale from private citizens. The quality, and prices of these suits of armor, including fitting by a local craftsman, are as for brand-new, but the craftsmen can guarantee the modifications in hour or less. As for weapons and shields, only dagger, 1-H and 2-H spear, 1-H mace, axe, or sword, buckler, or target shields, and javelins, self bows, and slings are commonly available; none of these are brand-new, or easy to find. If willing to pay full prices, with the help of their hosts the PCs find many locals willing to sell.

Metal armor, weapons, and shields not mentioned above are simply not available here unless obtained from the Lunar military. It is profoundly illegal to sell such equipment to civilians, but shrewd application of bribes may produce persons willing to sell bezainted or lamellar armor. Such offers are scarce and very dangerous, and should be improvised by the GM to be as deadly as single-handed combat with a tough broo. If caught, buyer and seller are crucified. Period.

Note that the officers of the Esrolian ship *Prudence* possess chain armor and fine weapons and shields, but they wear their battle gear at all times, regardless of weather or discomfort, because of the constant danger of mutiny on their ship.

Crime Doesn't Pay: The riverfolk breezily warn the PCs not even to think about stealing anything in Corflu. They explain this in such a way that it is clear that they would have absolutely no moral objection to stealing from the Lunars or Esrolians, but that, as a practical matter, theft is too risky a vocation in Corflu. Stealing money from the Lunar craftsmen, warehousemen, bureaucrats, and soldiers is a sure way to lose hands and feet; Lunar folks carry their money with them and sleep with it beneath their pillows. The Corflu Trade Alliance House is well guarded, and the treasury well-Warded. The warehouses are guarded by loud dogs whose barking brings the guard, and in any event the warehouses contain nothing easily convertible into cash. (Of course, stealing from riverfolk is unthinkable.)

If asked about the trolls, the riverfolk say they have nothing to do with them, but it occurs to them that trolls might sell large weapons and lead armor — and trollkin, for that matter, if PCs are in the market for one. The trolls are not friendly, and do not fraternize with the locals, but they might listen to any decent offer, and might refrain from attacking rude or foolish humans to keep on the good side of their employers, the Trade Alliance.

Scurvy Sea Dogs: The only ship in Corflu at present is the Esrolian ship coastal trader *Prudence*, with a crew of three cruel, tyrannical merchants who command and navigate the ship and 15 blackhearted seamen. Its cargo of olive oil and wine has been partially unloaded to the Trade Alliance warehouses, where an outbound cargo of alticamelus wool and other Praxian goods awaits loading. Only the officers have any weapons, armor, or cash. Messing with the boat or its cargo sets Lunar Marines and spellcasters after the thieves. The Corflu Trade Alliance and its Lunar guardians safeguard the cargoes and ships at dock, and punishment of thieves is public and imaginative.

The Esrolian merchants are actually Lunar agents bringing reports of the defenses and

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### **River of Cradles**

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garrisons of Karse. Their cover is solid, and not even the crew know the merchants are really spies. The only time the Esrolians drop their cover is in the privacy of the Trade Alliance offices and in their ship's private cabins. [If the PCs insist on tangling with the Esrolians and their crew, adapt "Civilized Levy," *Monster Coliseum, Monster Book*, p. 29, as blackhearted seamen; replace 2H spear with wooden club, and add Befuddle or Mobility spirit spells. Adapt "Soldiers of the Baron," **Monster Coliseum, Monster Book**, p. 32, as the Esrolian/Lunar agents; delete weapons and replace with gladius.]

### The Stigmata's Mysteries Revealed

At dusk Sa'ar returns to meet with the PCs at the home of Sarky or Dagis. Sa'ar tells the PCs what he has learned through his divinations:

1. The stigmata bears matrix enchantments for the spirit spell River Eyes and the divine spell Breathe Air/Water.

2. The River Eyes matrix may be used without restriction. The Breathe Air/Water matrix, however, must be blessed in worship for each use (i.e, it is a one-use spell that must be loaded after each casting at a Zola Fel worship ceremony). Sa'ar interprets the empty basins in his dream as the stigmata in the strangers' palms that he is to fill, and the hospitality he is asked to offer in his dream is to perform a worship service permitting the palms to be filled with divine spells which provide air and light. Sa'ar invites the PCs to attend his evening worship service to place Breathe Air/Water spells in the matrices.

3. To invoke the powers of the matrices, one must be in contact with the waters of the Zola Fel or its tributaries and ask that Breath be granted by Zola Fel. The conditions upon the enchantments limit those who may invoke these powers to initiates of Zola Fel and those who bear the marks; it is therefore possible for one PC to invoke the powers of another PC's stigmata if necessary.

4. The duration of the effect of the stigmata's spells is a mystery, but appears to be dependent on the actions of the PCs. If they prove themselves worthy, they may expect the duration of effect to be extended. Sa'ar recommends that the PCs visit the Pool of Kinope, a Zola Fel shrine in the the New Bog of Sun County, revered by the Cleansed One subcult, to confer further with the priest there. Sa'ar then says:

"I have thought long about your marks, and about the River Voices. I see clearly that gorp are a threat to the purity of the river, and that your help may be wanted in protecting its waters from the taint of chaos.



Newtling Boatmen on Native Reed Rafts

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"But there may be more beneath the surface. I also see that the Lunars profess to be friends of the river, and furnish our people with labor for coin, and help the growth of river trade. But I doubt the Lunars are true friends of the river. I doubt they wish to live in harmony with the river, for wherever they go, they extend the domain of their Red Goddess.

"I see the settlers in the Grantlands. They come, and swear to honor the purity of our water, but what do they do to protect it? Do they grow careless of this great treasure in the dry wastes of Prax?

"And the Sun Domers. They observe the River Ritual, and reaffirm the friendship of the Farmer Count and the River Daughter. But they eat the tails of my people, and they treat the folk of the river, not with friendship and respect, but with disdain and abuse.

"Do those who have long lived in this valley forget themselves, and their debt to the river of life that sustains them? Are you the Voices that might speak to remind them?

"I ask you to think upon these things. I invite you to share our worship. Zola Fel willing, you shall be filled with his grace, and a sign of his favor. Your hosts will guide you there."

### The Evening Worship Service

Sa'ar then leaves for the temple. If any PCs wish to attend the worship service, Sarky, Dagis, and their households accompany them. About 80 initiates are present with their families, equally divided among human, newtling, and fish worshippers.

The Cleansed One Hears the Voice of the River "His eyes opened through the arts of the Three-Bean Circus, the Cleansed One perceived the tragic perversion of his condition, and he despaired, and would have destroyed himself. He wandered disconsolate and unknowing, and coming upon the river Zola Fel, he threw himself in the swift, deep waters that he might drown. He sank to the bottom, and tumbled along the river bottom, buffeted by the current. But miraculously, surrounded by darkness and despair, at the brink of death, he discovered within himself a mysterious hope and desire for life. His spirit cried out, and was answered by Zola Fel, for suddenly the Cleansed One could see through the dark river depths and could breathe the pure river waters.

"And he felt a hand grasp his right hand. The Cleansed One quailed, for he knew his nature was unclean, and he sensed the hand on his was pure, and he would withdraw in shame and fear, but the hand held tight, and drew him to the banks of the river. And then it seemed to him that on that river bank he slept the refreshing sleep of the pure and innocent, yet all that time his spirit was awake and speaking with a Voice. This Voice spoke to him of mysteries and quests, of tasks and

The Zola Fel temple is an open area in the reeds on the north side of the island surrounded with tall reeds and grasses cultivated to form a wall-like barrier. A winding, sheltered inlet permits aquatic worshippers access from the river channel to the north. In the center of the clear area the inlet ends in a wide pool about six meters in diameter, with shallow sandy margins and a deep center. The ancient limestone altar itself lies half-in, half-out of the pool at its southeast edge. An artesian spring rises from the center of the stone altar, spouting clear water into a pool before the altar, and brimming over into the pool before it. Cultists gather here for services, terrestrial members on the sandy margin of the pool, aquatic members in the pool, and the priest and acolytes on the sand in front of the altar's spring.

The presence of the PCs at the ceremony occasions many questioning looks from other Zola Fel initiates, but Sarky and Dagis politely deflect any direct queries. Reverend Sa'ar and a fish and human acolyte take their places before the altar and the ceremony begins.

During the service Sa'ar tells the story "The Cleansed One Hears the Voice of the River" (see below). Then later in the service when he invokes the Worship spell, Sa'ar raises one open palm before his face in a reverent gesture, and all other worshippers do the same. If a PC performs this gesture with the palm bearing the stigmata (and their hosts will prompt them if they don't think of it or seem hesitant), the stigmata suddenly flash with a radiant glow for about five seconds, then

trials, of duty and service, of paths that might be traveled to the Heart of the Sea and the secrets of purification that might be found in the Deep Waters.

"And when The Cleansed One awoke, he found he had new faith and purpose. And when he looked upon the palm of his right hand, he saw the mark of the river god's Runes, and knew whose hand had taken his in darkness, and knew what Voice had spoken to him in sleep. And with the river god's marks he also saw the Rune of Harmony, and knew that this mark was his own, the gift of the insights gathered from the Three-Bean Circus. And by those marks upon his hand he swore forever to be a friend to the river, and to serve it in gratitude for its gift of life and purpose.

"So you see how The Cleansed One swore to be a Voice of the River, to praise its gifts of life and purpose, and preach to all of their duty to serve the river and keep it pure, to respect its gifts that they might not be lost to waste and corruption, and to admonish those who through weakness of wit or poverty of spirit were blind to the great debt owed to Zola Fel by those who shared its bounty." **River of Cradles** 

### THE PORT OF CORFLU



A worship ceremony at the Zola Fel temple of Corflu

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fade. (The Breathe Air/Water matrix is now charged for one use.)

After the formal ceremony, Sa'ar addresses the congregation and speaks briefly of the PCs and their stigmata, their appearance here in Corflu, and the divine visions he has received naming them River Voices. This causes quite a stir, and after the service, man, fish, and newtling all wish to touch their palms and hear their tales from their own lips.

Sa'ar Asks a Favor: After the service, Sa'ar accompanies the PCs back to their host's homes and takes them aside for a private talk. He announces that he has found a boat and guide to return the PCs to Pavis, and that they can leave as soon as they wish. Then, having obviously gone to great lengths to assist the PCs, he asks a favor of them. Though he does not say as much, it is clear that Sa'ar expects the hospitality and generosity of his Corflu hosts to be reciprocated.

"From what Sarky and Dagis tell me, you fellows are warriors, yes? (Waits for a response.) I have a great favor to ask. Many of my people have been hired by the Lunars to dredge the channels. Of late, many newtlings have been victims of mudshark attacks. The Lunars do nothing, saying they are helpless in the swamp. Though my people are not afraid, they are neither tough nor strong in arms, and mudsharks are fearsome creatures; I fear many would die if we hunted them, so I have spoken against such a hunt.

"But...with men of your skills such a hunt might be successful. Might I ask this favor of you, on behalf of my people and the temple of Zola Fel?"

If the PCs agree to help, Sa'ar tells Sarky and Dagis, who are pleased and excited. Sa'ar offers to ask around for any weapons and armor that the PCs might borrow for the expedition. The hunt begins before dawn the next morning, so purchases from the craftbarns are impossible, but Sa'ar and the river people will round up all the good weapons and armor they can find.

If the PCs decline, Sa'ar is obviously disappointed, but tells the PCs he will bring the boat and boatman who will provide transport to Corflu in the morning, then takes his leave. Since this interview has been conducted in private, their hosts do not know that the PCs have declined to help Sa'ar, and are friendly as usual.

An Uncouth Blacksmith: During conversations with the congregation, the PCs also pick up an interesting rumor. One fisherman mentions that a Lunar blacksmith has been bothering his daughter. The Lunar authorities have listened politely, but have done nothing, and the riverfolk hesitate to act against anyone so prominent and well-connected as a blacksmith. The fisherman hints vaguely that such heroes as the PCs might be able to handle such a fellow.

In this region a blacksmith is as rare and noteworthy as a sorceror; PCs may also wonder what a blacksmith is doing in a little port town like Corflu. The blacksmith is in fact producing grappling hooks, chains, weapons, and various metal goods necessary for the naval assault on Karse. (If the PCs do act against the blacksmith, adapt "Gregor Gougepoor," *RuneQuest Deluxe*, *GM Book*, p. 40, as the Lunar blacksmith with hammer, fist skill, strength mods, and the craft skill of craft/iron.)

### The Mudshark Hunt

Fish have located the submerged entrance to the mudshark den a kilometer downchannel of Corflu near the dredging site. The riverboatmen fear to approach too close by boat, since mudsharks are most terrible in the water, and can easily overturn boats, while spells and missile weapons cannot be targeted against them in the silt-murky river waters. Mudsharks are best faced on land, where ranged attacks can be used and where they are less mobile.

When Sa'ar calls for the PCs at their hosts' houses several hours before dawn, he and several rivermen have all the armor and weapons they could find. Included are a pair of broadswords, a poleaxe, a 2-H spear, 2 bucklers, and a medium size chain hauberk. All are Lunar army issue, but the chain hauberk is most obvious with its distinctive Lunar-style shoulder reinforcements. Sa'ar says nothing, but the rivermen quietly suggest it would be bad to be seen wearing this stuff by Lunar officials or soldiers.

The PCs are ferried to the site by several riverboats, arriving before daybreak, when mudsharks are likely to be in their dens. While approaching the site, the PCs notice a series of excavations along the channel banks marked with ropes and with labels marked on the stakes supporting the ropes. Sa'ar offers to inspect these sites on the return, but asks that the PCs not delay.

On arrival Sa'ar remains with the fishermen in the boats to wait for the PCs, where he may be of assistance with his Heal Wound spells upon their return. The riverfolk drop the PCs off five minutes' walk from the mudshark den. If the PCs are few in number and weak, Sarky and Dagis bravely offer to come with them.

### THE PORT OF CORFLU

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### **Adult Mudshark**

Character STR CON SIZ INT POW DEX	ristics 4d6+6 2d6+10 1d6+16 2 3d6 2d6	2		Move: 3/5 swim Hit Points: 18-19 Fatigue: 37 Magic Points: 10-11 DEX SR: 4
Weapon	SR	Attk%	Dama	-1d6
Bite*	7	40+2	1d10+	
Claw	7	35+2	1d8+1	
Tail**	7	35+2	2d6	

\* If successful in deep water, the mudshark drags the victim to the bottom to drown.

\*\* When swimming, the mudshark may make a second attack with his tail.

	melee &		#1	#2	#3
Location	missile d20	Points	19hp	19hp	19hp
Tail	01-02	x.25	4/5	4/5	4/5
<b>Right Hind Leg</b>	03-04	x.33	4/6	4/6	4/6
Left Hind Leg	05-06	x.33	4/6	4/6	4/6
Hindquarters	07-08	x.4	4/8	4/8	4/8
Forequarters	09-10	x.4	4/8	4/8	4/8
Right Foreleg	11-12	x.33	4/6	4/6	4/6
Left Foreleg	13-14	x.33	4/6	4/6	4/6
Head	15-20	x.4	4/8	4/8	4/8

Armor: 4 point skin

### **Juvenile Mudshark**

Characte	eristics	Average	
STR	2d6+6	13	Move: 3/5 swim
CON	1d6+6	9-10	Hit Points Avg: 11
SIZ	1d6+8	11-12	Fatigue: 22-23
INT	2	2	Magic Points: 10-11
POW	3d6	10-11	DEX SR: 4
DEX	2d6	7	

Weapon	SH	Attk%	Damage	
Bite*	9	30-1	1d8	
Claw	9	25-1	1d6	
Tail**	9	25-1	1d6	

\* If successful in deep water, the mudshark drags the victim to the bottom to drown.

\*\* When swimming, the mudshark may make a second attack with his tail.

	melee &		#1	#2	#3
Location	missile d20	Points	11hp	11hp	11hp
Tail	01-02	x.25	2/3	2/3	2/3
<b>Right Hind Leg</b>	03-04	x.33	2/4	2/4	2/4
Left Hind Leg	05-06	x.33	2/4	2/4	2/4
Hindquarters	07-08	x.4	2/4	2/4	2/4
Forequarters	09-10	x.4	2/4	2/4	2/4
Right Foreleg	11-12	x.33	2/4	2/4	2/4
Left Foreleg	13-14	x.33	2/4	2/4	2/4
Head	15-20	x.4	2/4	2/4	2/4

Armor: 2 point skin

The mudsharks are in their dens. (See "Mudshark Den" diagram below.) The entrance is two meters underwater, but the passage slopes sharply up and emerges above water level as indicated on the diagram. The mudsharks are asleep, each in their own dens, with the three juveniles in Chamber 2. If you feel your PCs may have trouble with three adults and three juveniles, delete one or two adult mudsharks. On the other hand, slightly higher STR and SIZ scores produce a 2d6 damage bonus, which ought to scare even experienced heroes.

Test against Sneak for each character, once when he emerges from the water in the entrance, and for every three meters of movement inside the den. Failure means a sound has awakened a mudshark. Roll 1d6 to determine which adult or juvenile is awakened. In that round the PCs hear a whuffing sounds from the den of the awakened mudshark. In the following round the awakened mudshark barks, and all six mudsharks are awake.

The adult and juvenile mudsharks alike are ferocious carnivores, fiercely territorial, and fight to the death within their dens. Tender-hearted and ecologically-sensitive PCs who capture the juveniles for relocation earn the wide-eyed wonderment of the riverfolk and the deep respect



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and gratitude of Reverend Sa'ar. Note: If the mudsharks are killed or relocated, the PCs have performed a great service for the people of the river, and a point of Extension in their Rune matrices is activated. There is no apparent evidence of this effect, and neither the PCs nor Sa'ar should be aware of it at this time unless the Extension is invoked by accident or a PC asks Sa'ar to perform further divinations.

Characters successfully searching the dens (or casting Detect Magic spells) discover an unnaturally spherical object protruding from a muddy corner of a chamber. If removed and cleaned, the object is revealed as a translucent globe 70cm in diameter. As the surface is exposed to the air it begins to glow with a bright light. At eight equally spaced points around the circumference, the same unfamiliar symbol glows in a contrasting color. At the bottom of the globe is an eye for a hook or tether. When cleaned and released, the sphere floats in the air, neither rising or falling.

This mysterious artifact is an ancient channel marker that guided ships upriver to the lost Second-Age port of Fedora. The symbols on the sphere are archaic Western alphanumerics indicating the location of the channel marker on ancient nautical maps. If such a channel marker happened to be found in its ancient position, and a

Desi (Grandad) Shing, Zola Fel Initiate

STR	9	Move: 3	01-04/01-03	R Leg	1/3	
CON	7	Fatigue: 16	05-08/04-06	L Leg	1/3	
SIZ	13	Hit points: 11	09-11/07-10	Abdom	1/3	
INT	13	Magic points: 11	12/11-15	Chest	1/4	
POW	11	DEX SR: 2	13-15/16-17	R Arm	1/3	
DEX	17		16-18/18-19	L Arm	1/3	
APP	11		19-20/20	Head	1/3	

Gear: Soft leather armor on all locations (AP 1/ENC 3.5).Quiver of 20 arrows (Enc. 1)

Weapon	SR	Attk/Par%	Damage	ENC/AP
Dagger	8	40/35	1d4+2	.5/6
Self Bow	2/8	75/—	1d6+1	.5/5

Spirit Magic: (56–ENC): Detect Enemy, Farsee, Glue, Heal 3, Ignite, Light, Mobility 1, Protection 2, Repair, Rivereyes.

Divine Magic: Heal Wound I (1-use), Command Undine (1-use x3), Extension I (1-use), Summon Undine (1-use).

Skills: Scan 75, Listen 45, Sneak 80 (-ENC.), Dodge 40 (-ENC), Boat 106, Devise 58, Swim 82, Human Lore 45. World Lore 65.

Languages: Pavic 62/09, Tradetalk 41, New Pelorian 18.

Special Items: Four Command Undine and four Extension I matrices enchanted into Wooden Root Rings (water-resistant hobham and meacham wood roots; loaned from Zola Fel temple ). Second-Age nautical chart of the port of Feroda were available, the PCs would have an excellent clue to the location of the ruins of lost Fedora. Whether this sphere is discovered in its original location or not is up to the GM, and finding nautical charts of the ancient port of Feroda is beyond the scope of this adventure.

On the way back to Corflu the PCs may stop to investigate the excavations. What they find are very large pieces of granite buried in the deep silt deposits. The granite has been cleaned in places and is apparently part of a colossal sculpture. If the PCs arrive before 1618, they see sunk halfway in the mud an enormous stone head, nearly 30 meters across, with a huge gash for a mouth and a single vast cyclopean eye. This head eventually becomes part of the Watchdog of Corflu. If after 1618, they see a second one-eyed head identical to the one now part of the Watchdog, and, as with that other head, its single eye appears to be a right eye.

### **Farewell to Corflu**

If the PCs have not participated in the mudshark hunt, Sa'ar brings Desi Shing and his boat to the PCs the next morning as he promised. The farewell is friendly, but not as emotional and generous as if the PCs successfully hunted the mudsharks.

If the PCs return triumphant from hunting the mudsharks, Sa'ar and the Zola Fel congregation

Grandad is the only Zola Fel acolyte available to accompany a boat for the trip north, and offers his boat on the condition that he travel with it. (It is his boat, and he intends to bring it back, and is afraid that the clumsy laymen will get lost or rip open her belly on rocks.) A cantankerous old man past his years of useful service, he is no longer respected by locals. He owns a river skiff, very old, but carefully maintained. (Other initiates may scoff at the ancient boat, but its hull is sound, its rigging clean and neat, its sails mended, and an undine is bound into the enchanted tiller for power assist upriver and emergency defense.) Grandad also has all the skills necessary for river travel, though he no longer has the stamina to do things himself. He has a terrible, shuddering, chest-wracking cough, but is otherwise fit enough for the journey.

While the provisioning for the trip is provided by the cult (many riverfolk bring gifts of food), Grandad provides all the necessary sailing and fishing gear, and a shelter that can be rigged on the boat for sleeping and sun protection.



Diagram of Grandad Shing's River Skill. The mast can be shipped and the tiller removed for safekeeping.

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arrange a lavish noonday feast to honor the heroes before their departure.

During the feast various riverfolk and newtlings come forth to PCs and give them parting gifts. Most of the gifts are food for their journey north to Pavis and replacements for gear lost with their sunken boat. In particular, any weapons or armor loaned for the mudshark hunt are given as presents. Gifts from newtlings are especially generous, though sometimes unappetising. Some newtlings also gift the PCs with the traditional dinosaur leather harnesses newtlings wear. These are especially handy for activities underwater; a character wearing one is greeted by a strange newtling with curiosity and tentative cordiality.

These gifts from the Zola Fel people should be accepted with the greatest gratitude and solemnity. The giver is honor-bound to insist that the gift be accepted freely, with no compensation or pledge of repayment; on the other hand, the receiver is honor bound to pledge faithfully to return the gift at the first opportunity, and to speak the praises of the giver at every gathering of riverfolk. (One commonly promises to publically dedicate meals or make toasts to the benefactor at every opportunity.) All Zola Fel initiates know this custom, and should inform other PCs

During the feast Sa'ar finds the PCs and introduces them to Desi Shing (known locally as "Grandpa"), who has offered his own boat for transportation upriver, on the condition that he accompany the PCs and the boat to Pavis so he may return downriver with the boat thereafter. Sa'ar recommends that the PCs leave as soon as possible after the feast, and promises to arrange for ample provisions. Sa'ar also mentions that he has sent fish couriers upriver with the message that River Voices will be traveling north in Desi Shing's company, and that riverfolk, newtlings, fish, and all Zola Fel worshippers should grant them hospitality and such aid as is required.

Sa'ar gives the PCs a parcel of written accounts of rumored and reported gorp attacks along the river with the PCs to be given to the Zola Fel temple in Pavis. He invites the PCs to read the accounts, just in case the written accounts are lost. He tells the PCs all he knows about gorp and how to deal with them, and asks the PCs to pass this knowledge on to the people they meets downriver.

Sa'ar also provides a personal note of introduction to all Zola Fel initiates along the river, just in case the fish couriers do not spread the words quickly enough. The note identifies the bearers as Voices of the River, Chosen Champions of Zola Fel, tells of the miraculous rescue of the

#### What Sa'ar Can Tell About Gorp

"Some say that in the Darkness gorp were born as the fragments of Pocharngo's shattered self after his destruction by some trool god. Others say everything Pocharngo touched turned to life, and he rejoiced.

"Some say gorp breed, some say not. Probably both true. They sense life and pursue it to consume it and make it into themselves. They also consume nonliving things, but do not seem to prefer it.

"Only fire and magic harm them. Long separation from water, their natural environment, also seems to hurt them, and they may die in the sun. They seem to die occasionally from natural causes, but may not be dead unless they rot. Some say they can go dormant."

The Purify Water divine spell creates a litre of holy water; this holy water may affect gorp. [A liter makes ten flasks of holy water, each causes 1d6 damage as with vampires]. Sa'ar says PCs must go to a priest of the Cleansed One subcult to receive Purify Water. He only knows of three priests initiated in the subcult: an ancient catfish priest named Brighteye at Shrine of Kinope, Reverend Amina at Pavis, and Shennin Ashal, an itinerent. Brighteye may also have more to tell them about the subcult.

PCs and the magical significance of the Rune marks on their palms. He asks that all riverfolk give hospitality, aid, and comfort to these River Voices and treat them as honored guests of the cult. If the PCs have used the Breathe Air/Water spells in their matrices, Sa'ar holds a brief private worship service to refill their matrices with the spell. **Note:** Refilling the matrices is not like "remembering" divine spells (i.e., 1 point regained per day); divine spells are restored to the enchanted items upon completion of the the appropriate Worship (Deity) spell.

Amidst the final farewells and good wishes from Sa'ar and their riverfolk hosts, Sa'ar offers his last present — an ancient Resurrect matrix given as a gift to the Zola Fel cult years ago by the Chalana Arroy temple in Pavis. It contains one use of the spell, is to be used only in emergencies, and must be returned to the Zola Fel temple in Pavis, who will in turn have it blessed by the Pavis White Ladies and returned to Corflu. Sa'ar makes sure the PCs understand how valuable this precious heirloom is, and urges them to guard it with care.

Then, with friendly parting gestures from Sa'ar and the local riverfolk, Grandad Shing guides his river skiff upriver as the PCs paddle away from the shore.

# Against the Current

**Troubled Waters: Episode Three** 

### **Episode Summary**

On their journey upriver the adventurers encounter people from the various cultures of the Zola Fel valley. They also happen on a remote farm settlement besieged by broo marauders, and may feel obligated to attempt a rescue. At the Shrine of Kinope, they confer with the Zola Fel priest Brighteye. Finally they take part in the destruction of a colossal gorp blocking the river at Harpoon and, thinking the gorp plague is thus ended, the river people celebrate them as heroes.

### Preaching the Gospel of the River Voice

Sa'ar has sent a river fish messenger upriver with warnings about the gorp plague and accounts of the miracles which have befallen the characters heading north along the river and seeking hospitality along the way. These tidings come to all riverfolk communities along the river, either by the fish messenger or further transmission by rumor and word of mouth.

The warnings about the gorp are taken to heart, and the riverfolk are on the lookout. The news about the miraculous rescue of the PCs and their enchanted stigmata are received with more ambivalence.

Most riverfolk are by nature skeptical and worldly. Since the Zola Fel cult is relatively small and weak, most place little stock in its heroes and magic. Further, there is some resentment upon learning that the PCs blessed are not all Zola Fel initiates; it doesn't seem right that long and faithful worshippers should be overlooked in favor of outsiders.

Nonetheless, some riverfolk, particularly the young and impressionable and the old and thoughtful, show great interest in the PCs as they pass or visit riverfolk, newtling, and river fish communities on the way north. In addition some non-Zola Fel worshippers who hear local rumors also show up to take a look at the PCs and their stigmata.

Grandad expects to stay overnight with river people, Zola Fel initiates, and river friends

whenever possible on the voyage north. At each location the PCs are asked to tell their story and show their stigmata. Ask PCs if they wish to cooperate. Also ask if any PC wishes to take the opportunity to preach the gospel of Harmony and good relations with landsmen, and urge more direct and aggressive attempts to press landsmen to honor and protect the river's gifts.

Each PC willing to preach gets a chance to test Orate at each stop along the way. If fumbled, the listeners decide the PC is a lying conman with a scheme to betray the river people. If failed, the PC's listeners are unimpressed. If successful, the PC receives an experience check, and some listeners go away with new ideas about how to deal with landsmen. If special or critical success, the PCs gains an enthusiastic supporter who promises to speak to others about the PC's ideas.

Keep track of successful and fumbled Orate tests on the journey. The more successes, the more

### **River Travel Schedule**

Use this schedule to plan the river passage north from Corflu to Pavis. The fast passage indicated here is a result of favorable wind and water conditions and undine assists against the current. Scheduled encounters along the river are indicated in **boldface**.

- Day 1: Corflu to Lokazzi.
- Day 2: Lokazzi to Easy Ford at Nomad Island in South Bog. (Encounter 1, The Boy and the Otter)
- Day 3: Easy Ford to Five Eyes. Camp near Five Eyes Temple.
- Day 4: Five Eyes to Great Bog. (Encounter 2. The Homesteaders and the Broos; may lose a day or two if PCs hunt broos.)
- Day 5: Great Bog to Raus Fort. Camp in Raus Fort.
- Day 6: Raus Fort to North Bog.
- Day 7: North Bog to Chomoro. (Encounter 3, The Agimori and the Newtlings and Encounter 4, The Sun Domers)
- Day 8: Chomoro to Nisa's Stream.
- Day 9: Nisa's Stream to Shrine of Kinope.(Encounter 5, The Shrine of Kinope.)
- Day 10: Shrine of Kinope to Harpoon. (Encounter 6, A Colossal Gorp at Harpoon)

Day 11: Harpoon. to Scritha River.

Day 12: Scritha River. to New Pavis.

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favorable, cooperative, and generous the reaction of NPC informants and patrons when the PCs arrive in New Pavis. If there are any fumbles, Che'en and his advisors are exceptionally suspicious of the PCs, and the more fumbles, the more uncooperative and obstructionist they become.

Use special and critical Orate successes as an excuse to provide PCs with small gifts. River people are poor, and have little to offer, but if the PCs are also poor and ill-equipped, river people may band together to offer some special gift, like a newtling trident, a fishing net, or a buoyant shield made from a giant turtle shell with air trapped by a glued inner panel of fitted shell. A couple of pennies is a generous gift from river people, and the PCs must be properly grateful. The point of giving these gifts to the PCs is to reinforce their feelings of connection and obligation to the river peoples, and thereby make the PCs' actions along the river more meaningful.

### News of the Gorp Plague

As they visit river people communities, the great news up and down the river is about the plague of gorp. Most desperately affected are amphibian and reptilian water creatures slow enough to be prey for the gorp. Depredations of fish populations and dieback of river plants are locally disastrous, but not yet on a large scale. Most prominently noted is the variety of of gorp forms never before encountered. Disruption is universally recommended as the only effective weapon against gorp in the water. Other common tactics depend on driving or luring gorp out of water, then corralling and killing them with fire. Befuddle and Demoralize appear to have no effect on gorp. Slow immobilizes them for easier killing. Protection spells are effective against weaker acid specimens. Unusual forms reported include paralyzers, suffocaters, gluers, exploders, regenerators, and scooters (exceptionally swift-moving gorp).

Gorp reports are limited and offhand early in the voyage, increasingly more numerous and anxious as they enter Sun County. When they reach the Shrine of Kinope, there are hints of panic among river peoples; however, even as they reach Pavis, landsmen are generally uninformed and unconcerned , though vaguely aware of rumors of trouble downriver.

### **Encounter 1: The Boy and the Otter**

As the skiff carries the PCs north from Corflu, they see fewer and fewer settlements. By late morning Grandad has called upon the undine in his tiller to carry them up the dangerous cataracts south of Three-Kilometer Island. As you pass the island Grandad mutters something about the place being cursed.

Late that afternoon the party puts into the fishing village of Lokazzi, a small permanent fishing camp. The fishermen there greet the travelers with generous hospitality, but are very curious about the marks on their palms and their miraculous adventures. <Oratory tests>

They leave Lokazzi early next morning with a good breeze and sail upriver to South Bog, then begin poling their way along narrow, overgrown channels. They pole along a winding passage of open water lined with dense reeds and shrubs. Permit all PCs a Scan test. A success spots a pair of small upright figures peering from concealment in thick shrubs and grasses along the channel 20 meters ahead.

Ask for statements of intent and action phases for the next few rounds as though an ambush was imminent. Detect Enemy, however, reveals no harmful intent. In fact, the figures are a 12-year-old riverfolk boy and a young giant otter. The otter has a problem, and the boy has heard the rumors in camp that River Voices are coming upriver. The boy and otter have set themselves out at a likely spot to intercept the River Voices and ask a favor, but they are being careful that it is River Voices they see before they reveal themselves. If the PCs don't scan them, they call to the PCs as they pass.

If hailed, the boy and otter remain in hiding, but the boy cries out, "I am Greyreed! I want to speak to the River Heroes!" He bravely ignores all threats, and refuses to show himself until the PCs identify themselves. "Do you wear the mark? Show me!" he yells. Of course, the boy can't see the marks from any distance, but the moment a PC presents his open palm, the boy and the giant otter break from cover and rush toward the boat. The giant otter bounds gracefully into the water and darts smoothly toward the boat as the boy runs along the river bank. The otter surfaces at the skiff's gunwale and hauls himself up to stare at a PC just as the kid draws close enough to see marks on a PC palm.

The otter communicates only with body language, but the boy tells in Boatspeech of a serious emergency. "The gorp are in Moonsilver's

**River of Cradles** 



Cautious travelers pole along overgrown marshland waterways.

#### **River of Cradles**

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den!" the boy cries. "You must help!" If the boy is carefully questioned, it is revealed that the problem is really not so urgent. A gorp has invaded the otter Moonsilver's den, but no one is in immediate danger. The local elders have ignored the boy's pleas for help, explaining that they have no way to enter a giant otter's den and deal with a dangerous gorp, and that in any case it is no matter, for the otter can simply dig a new den.

However, the boy explains, all Moonsilver's treasures are in the den. "Will you please help us?" he pleads. The boy understands the otter's body language as clearly as Timmy understands Lassie, and the boy interprets for Moonsilver. "See? He's very upset! Can't you get rid of the gorp? You're heroes, aren't you?"

If they choose, the PCs can indeed help Greyreed and Moonsilver. Moonsilver's den is in a mudbank on a secluded swamp pool. The entrance is a submerged passage nine meters long, a very tight fit for a human. At the end of the entrance passage is a series of four small chambers, each three meters in diameter. Plucky characters need only the Rivereye spell from their stigmata and a magic lightsource to scout the den, where they find only a small acid gorp, which can be easily slain with Disruption spells or lured out into the open, driven from the water, and burned.

There are a few problems, of course. First, the PCs don't know how big the gorp is or what kind of damage it can cause. If asked the size, Moonsilver blinks, then dives into the water and goes for a look. (This is some indication of how little danger there is.) He returns to the surface and runs in circles on the mudbank to indicate a circumference of two meters.

Further questioning of Moonsilver gets him to do the most difficult scouting. Through pantomime and gesture Moonsilver describes the

Small	Acid Go	rp		
STR	0	Move: 1		and the second
CON	4	Hit Point :	6	Contraction of the second
SIZ	7	Fatigue: N	IA	
INT	1	Magic Poi	nts:11	
POW	11	DEX SR:		
DEX	0			
Weapo	n	SR	Attk/Par%	Damage
Envelop	be	1	100/-	2 point acid
		melee &		
Locatio	n	missile	points	
Body		01-20	all	The Party of the
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layout of the den, the location of the gorp in the farthest of the four chambers, and the location of Moonsilver's treasures (consisting of pretty rocks and cypress roots, a variety of coins pilfered from travelers' campsites, and a few odd bits Moonsilver has no way of describing) in a niche at the back of the fourth chamber. Use hand gestures, body language, and movement to indicate Moonsilver's activities. He vocalizes with growls, snorts, and high-pitched squeaks for emphasis and emotion.

To get in the den through the entrance passage, characters must negotiate three tight squeezes. To get past each squeeze, test the PC's SIZ vs. the SIZ of each squeeze on the resistance table. Armor of any kind adds its maximum protection value on the torso to the PC's SIZ. Clothing other than a loincloth adds 1 to PC SIZ (the best way in is Moonsilver's way - naked). A success means the PC squeezes through. One failure in a given squeeze means the PC is stuck, but can still move forward or backward. A second consecutive failure means the PC is stuck, and can only move backwards; he must test again to exit, and cannot attempt to move forward through that squeeze again without widening the passage. A third consecutive failure means the PC is stuck in place, and can move neither forward nor backward. A stuck PC may not be pushed forward, but may be assisted from behind; the aiding PC may test STR vs. the stuck PC's SIZ to pull him out. The three entrance squeezes are SIZ 16, SIZ 12, and SIZ 14.

Once inside the den, the PC finds himself in the first of four chambers. He can smell the gorp, but not see it. (It is in the fourth chamber.) A few Disruption spells can dispatch it; other methods may also be devised.

Once the gorp is eliminated, curious PCs may find among Moonsilver's pile of treasures two interesting objects. One is a black marble token on a lanyard with a Silence 2 matrix of Lunar military issue, often given to Lunar agents for scouting and spying missions. Moonsilver found it near a campfire near the south edge of the bog. The other is a gold-plated shield-strap buckle bearing a Lantern spell matrix enchantment. If cleaned of muck, the words "Alalia Eskolos, Yelm's Griddle" are etched into the buckle in Firespeech. Moonsilver found this several years ago in a tangle of drifted debris; it was lost upriver many years ago by Alalia Eskolos, a woman who then was only a militiawoman, but who is now one of the Lady Vega Goldbreath's Honor Guards. Lady Vega is the Guardian of Sun County and head of their militia.

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Moonsilver cheerfully gives any PC who aided him any one of his treasures as thanks for his help. On the other hand, if a PC steals something, Moonsilver follows the PCs north along the river, waiting for an opportunity to sneak up and steal the item back, and a few other objects as well to teach the PC a lesson in manners.

Greyreed excitedly begs the PCs to come visit his village elders after they have helped Moonsilver. The boy's home, a small fishing settlement of fewer than 50 people near Easy Ford at Nomad Island, is about an hour by river from Moonsilver's den. Having received news of the PCs' approach by fish messenger, the villagers are suitably impressed by the boy's tale, and at the nominal cost of showing everyone their stigmata and telling the stories of their adventures over and over again <Oratory tests>, the PCs enjoy a good meal and a warm, dry place to sleep.

### **Encounter 2: The Homesteaders** and the Broos

The party leaves Easy Ford early in the morning and slowly makes it way north through the bog, passing Duncanna Island by mid-morning. Grandad says the island is sacred ground to the nomads. By midafternoon the skiff reaches Five Eyes where Grandad plans to spend the night. The inhabitants of Five Eyes are newtlings, some of whom are friends of Grandad. A number of individual newtlings drop by the camp during the afternoon and evening, curious about the River Voices they've heard about. Some ask the PCs to tell their tale, which Grandad translates <Oratory tests>.

The next morning the breezes are not favorable, and the pull north from Five Eyes is slow, hard rowing. While heading upriver toward Great Bog, the PCs see a dark smoke plume suddenly rise in the distance on the east side of the valley. In a few minutes they see another dark plume and three white plumes rise to the north rise beyond the first one. To the south they can see another two dark plumes rising. Grandad explains that these are distress signals used by the homesteaders of the Grantlands to call for help from neighbors and from Duke Raus's mercenaries at Ronegarth. On the frontier a distress signal is a strong moral obligation, and Grandad releases the undine from the tiller and commands it to drive the boat upriver at top speed.

As they pass a homestead a man in a watchtower hails them and asks them if they're headed to help. He says the trouble seems to be at Gubrana Stead, and that they've sent two men ahead on foot an hour ago, though the route is



Gubrana Stead

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difficult and they likely won't reach Gubrana Stead before dark. Raus should be sending his men from Ronegarth, too, provided they're not out on some mission for the Duke.

**Gubrana Stead:** It's late afternoon when they approach the source of the first distress signal just on the south edge of the Great Bog, at a frontier farm called Gubrana Stead. A small boat sits on the river bank, its bottom shattered. The smoke signal still rises, but the house and wooden stockade are buttoned up tight, and there's no sign of activity from the river bank.

At the stead they find only Shayla Gubrana and two young children aged five and seven years. Her fourteen-year-old daughter Tameh and eight-yearold son Faron have been snatched from the fields by a band of broos. The boy was tortured by the broos before her eyes as the girl was carried off. Shayla's husband Tros and Shayla's brother Gidet Kevro set off two hours ago in pursuit of the broos. Shayla begged her husband and brother to wait until help arrived, for she feared the broos tortured the boy before them in order to lure them into the wilderness to an ambush.

Shayla says she saw about 10 broos of all shapes and sizes, some with typical herd beast features, but others she said looked like giant rats. She also saw a bloated, hairless, tattooed broo with the group that carried away her daughter. Shayla is in shock, and she has no doubt that her son, daughter, husband, and brother are all dead. Since neither Tros nor Gidet were well-provided with weapons, spells, or armor, and since they were apparently severely outnumbered, Shayla's assessment is simply realistic.

1105 0	aubia	na, oeven	mothers i	Intiate	
STR	11	Move: 3		01-04/01-03	
CON	11	Fatique:	20	05-08/04-06	

Tros Gubrana Seven Mothere Initiate

CON	11	Fatigue: 22	05-08/04-06	L Leg	4/4	
SIZ	13	Hit points: 11	09-11/07-10	Abdom	4/4	
INT	13	Magic points: 11	12/11-15	Chest	4/4	
POW	11	DEX SR: 3	13-15/16-17	R Arm	4/3	
DEX	11		16-18/18-19	L Arm	4/3	
APP	11		19-20/20	Head	4/4	

RLeg

4/4

**Gear:** Total encumbrance = 11. Fatigue 11 (22–11). Cuirbouilli armor (AP 3/ENC 5), Linen armor on all locations (AP 1/ENC 3.5), Quiver of 20 arrows (Enc. 1).

Weapon	SR	Attk/Par%	Damage	ENC/AP
2-H L. Spear	6	75/65	1d10+1	2/10
Self Bow	3/9	35/	1d6+1	.5/5

Spirit Magic: (60–ENC): Bladesharp 2, Heal 2, Mindspeech 2. Skills: Scan 75, Listen 65, Search 33, Sneak 30 (–ENC.), Dodge 70 (–ENC), Farming 45, Human Lore 35. Languages: New Pelorian 32/--, Tradetalk 07/--. If questioned closely, she cannot provide descriptions of the broos or their equipment other than that the one who tortured her son used claws, teeth, and clubs to tear and batter him. She's not even sure he was alive when the broos left. Tros is below average height and weight, balding with a full beard, and has tattoos on his right arm from his Lunar Army service. Gidet is of average frame, wears three earrings in his left earlobe, and has a birthmark on his inner right thigh. The boy, Faron, has a scar on his cheek where he scratched himself as an infant, and the girl Tameh wears her bright red hair in long braids.

**Pursue or Wait**: Grandad urges the PCs to pursue immediately, that it's the only decent thing to do. He explains privately that he thinks Tros and Gidet were fools to follow without help, and may only be saved if they were smart or lucky enough not to have caught the broos yet. He thinks the broos may keep the captives alive for breeding. A tattooed broo may be a priest or shaman. Rat and chicken broos sound implausible to him, but if true, it may be an odd group they're after.

If the PCs decide to wait for reinforcements, just after nightfall six mercenaries from Ronegarth and four farmers from nearby steads arrive. For mercenaries, adapt "Typical Member of the Greenbrass Militia," *RuneQuest Deluxe*, *Gamemaster Book*, p. 41; Orlanth initiates; Detect Enemy replaces Detect Life. For farmers adapt "Typical Local Militia Auxiliary," **RuneQuest Deluxe, Gamemaster Book**, p. 41; Orlanth initiates; add 1H spear and Target shield as militia above and 2 point leather armor on all locations. The Ronegarth mercenaries give the orders; if the

### Gidet Kevro, Seven Mothers Initiate

STR	11	Move: 3		01-04/01-0	3 R	Leg	1/4
CON	11	Fatigue: 22	2	05-08/04-0	6 L	Leg	1/4
SIZ	13	Hit points:	11	09-11/07-1	0 A	bdom	1/4
INT	13	Magic poin	its: 11	12/11-15	C	hest	1/4
POW	11	DEX SR: 3	1	13-15/16-1	7 R	Arm	1/3
DEX	11			16-18/18-1	9 L	Arm	1/3
APP	11			19-20/20	H	lead	4/4
Gear:	Total	encumbrance	e = 7.5. f	Fatigue 14 (	22-7.5	). Cuirbo	ouilli
helm (	AP 3/	ENC .5), Line	en armor	on all locati	ons (Al	P 1/ENC	3.5).
		arrows (Enc					
Weapo	n	SR	Attk/Par	% Da	mage	ENC	C/AP
2-H S.	Spea	ır 6	35/	10	18+1	2/	10
Self Bo	W	3/9	35/	10	16+1	.5	/5
Culult	Maria	(00 ENO).	Diadaah	and these			
		c: (60-ENC):					
Skills:	Scar	35, Listen 3	5, Search	n 33, Sneak	30 (-E	NC.), D	)odge

Skills: Scan 35, Listen 35, Search 33, Sneak 30 (–ENC.), Dodge 30 (–ENC), Farming 45, Human Lore 15. Languages: New Pelorian 32/--, Tradetalk 15/--.

# GVVSTLADXOU: AR \* HO2\* RAY # OXT

### **Toadface's Broo Band**

Broos are seldom seen near settled lands in the Valley, but are almost as common as nomads in Prax, and even more common in the Wastelands. Everyone hates them, but Valley folk fear them so much they may treat with them rather than fight. On sighting men, broos typically either flee or attack based their estimate of the opposition, though they may taunt and posture at a distance to prove their courage to their companions. When raiding they rely on stealthy ambush covered by darkness or undergrowth .

2d6 broos accompany Toadface and Bigmouth on raids. They avoid direct confrontation unless they have overwhelming odds or a good ambush position. If a fight goes against them, they scatter to the winds.

Toadface uses the rat and weasel broos as scouts and

#### Bigmouth, Rubble Runner Broo and Thed Initiate

g		and the first	inter broo und i	neu m	innere		
STR	13(25	) Move: 3			melee/missile	location	points
CON	14	Hit points	: 13		01-04/01-03	RLeg	(10)/5
SIZ	12	Fatigue: 2	27 (39)-ENC=25	(37)	05-08/04-06	LLeg	(10)/5
INT	08	Magic poi	nts: 10 (8)		09-11/07-10	Abdom	(10)/5
POW	10	DEX SR:	2		12/11-15	Chest	(10)/6
DEX	16	Parenthes	ses show values		13-15/16-17	R Arm	(10)/4
APP	01	with spells	s cast. Normal sl	kin	16-18/18-19	L Arm	(10)/4
		is 6 AP.			19-20/20	Head	(10)/8
Weapo	n	SR	Attk/Par%		Damage	ENC/AP	
Bite		7	66/-	1d1	0+1d6(2d6)	-/6	
R Shor	tsword	6 or 10	67/18	1d6+	-1+1d4(1d6)	1/10	
L Short	tsword	6 or 10	56/20	1d6-	-1+1d4(1d6)	1/8	
Head B	Butt	7	30/-	1d4	I+1d4(1d6)	-	
					11 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1		

flankers, sends the dog and pig broos into the melee, and supports them from the rear with his spells.

**Bigmouth the Warleader:** The meanest fighter, he always leads the charge. He is crazily brave (though he always casts his spells before a fight), and the gang fears him. Toadface promoted him to this position because Bigmouth is too dumb to plot against him.

**Toadface the Shaman** This "son" of an unlucky Cliff Toad and a broo is the mastermind behind this band's foray into the valley. He doesn't know what a bad idea it is to set up so close to humans.

Greenpee the Chaos Chicken: The accidents of this broo's birth make him likely to scare the wind right out of most people. Fathered by Toadface on a chicken, Greenpee ended up looking like that horribly dangerous creature, the cockatrice, and Greenpee's appearance has managed to scare off many a chaos fighter.

#### Spirit Magic: (50-ENC): Protection 4, Strength 4.

Skills: Bargaining 35, Conceal 80, Climb 75, Evaluate Treasure 70, First Aid 50, Hide 95, Animal Lore 65, Jump 80, Listen 45, Sneak 35, Scan 20, Search 86, Speak Praxian 25.

Magic Items: POW Spirit binding ingood Gladius hilt holding POW 6 spirit. Notes on attacks: Bigmouth is as good at biting as most broos are at butting. Normal tactics are to Bite and hang on first, immobilizing a limb or weapon if possible. 3 SR later he uses a sword. In following rounds, he hangs on with the Bite and attacks once with each sword 3 SR apart. To get loose, a bitten character opposes STR vs. the damage of the bite attack. Add 1 to the damage of the bite attack each round for purposes of resisting STR, as Bigmouth continues to clamp down harder. He likes to bite shields.Though able to parry, Bigmouth does not do so unless badly wounded. His skills reflect fanatic status.

Chaotic Features: 6 point armor everywhere, always acts as if fanatical.

Lowest status of all Toadface's sneaking-around work. Most d Spirit Magic: (50–ENC): Disru	10 SIZ 6 INT 11 POW 10 D s Gang, these wimps get all the angerous at range, or when uns uption, Heal 1, Mobility 3, Silenco Dodge 46, Hide 66, Jump 50, Li	watch duty and seen. Cowards. e 2	Weapon Head Butt Bite 2H Shortspear Sling	SR 8 7 2/7	Attk/Par% 40/- 51/- 30/39 41/-	Dan 1d6+ 1d3 1d8+ 1d8	-1	ENC/AP - 1.5/8 -
Makkay, Rat Broo 1 Hit points 8 Fatigue: 17 -ENC=15 MP:10 DEX SR: 2 Move 3 Carries Wasting Disease Chaotic Feature:Very long prehensile tail, Attack 37% SR 4. Use "Whip" rules. Extra action with tail.	Mannay, Rat Broo 2 Hit points 8 Fatigue: 17 -ENC=15 MP:10 DEX SR: 2 Move 3 No Disease Chaotic Feature: none	Mojak,Rat B Hit points 8 Fatigue: 17 -I MP:10 DEX SR: 2 M No Disease Chaotic Feat	ENC=15 love 3	melee/mis 01-04/01-( 05-08/04-( 09-11/07- 12/11-15 13-15/16- 16-18/18- 19-20/20	03 R Leg 06 L Leg 10 Abdom Chest 17 R Arm	#1 0/3 0/3 0/3 0/4 0/2 0/2 1/3	#2 0/3 0/3 0/3 0/4 0/2 0/2 1/3	#3 0/3 0/3 0/3 0/4 0/2 0/2 1/3

Weasel Broos STR 8 CON 11 SIZ 7 INT 16 POW 16 DEX 19 APP 9 Toadface wants to kill these untrustworthy but skilled guys as soon as he has bred replacements. Too smart for Toadface's taste, they might try to take over. Spirit Magic: (80–ENC): Disruption, Heal 3, Mobility 3, Shimmer 3, Silence 3. Skills: Conceal 42, Climb 71, Dodge 46, Hide 76, Jump 60, Listen 48, Sneak 71, Scan 71, Search 59.			Weapon Head Butt Bite 2H Shortspear Dagger Sling	8 8 7	ttk/Par% 40/- 41/- 50/49 37/41 61/-	Damage 1d6+1(impales) 1d4+1 1d8+1 1d4+2 1d8		ENC/AP - 1.5/8 .5/5 -	
Niko, Weasel Broo 1 Hit points 10 Fatigue:20 -ENC=17 MP:16 DEX SR: 2 Move 4 Carries Wasting Disease Chaotic Feature: Climb skill 124% (suckers on feet & hoade)	Salta, Weasel Broo 2 Hit points 10 Fatigue:20 -ENC=17 MP:16 DEX SR: 2 Move 4 No Disease Chaotic Feature: none	Fangeak,Wea Hit points 10 Fatigue:20 -EI MP:16 DEX SR: 2 M No Disease Chaotic Featu	NC=17 ove 4	melee/missile 01-04/01-03 05-08/04-06 09-11/07-10 12/11-15 13-15/16-17 16-18/18-19 19-20/20	a location R Leg L Leg Abdom Chest R Arm L Arm Head	#1 0/4 0/4 0/5 0/3 0/3 0/4	#2 0/4 0/4 0/4 0/5 0/3 0/3 0/4	#3 0/4 0/4 0/5 0/3 0/3 0/3	

hands).
#### AGAINST THE CURRENT

# GVVOTIADXOU: AROXUO242AY#0

#### Toadface, Broo Shaman of Thed and Primal Chaos

	roughdos, broo onamar of they and thinki onaos										
	STR 15 Move: 2/10		)	melee/missile	location	points					
	CON	17	Hit points:	19	01-04/01-03	RLeg	3/7				
	SIZ	20	Fatigue: 3	2- ENC =31	05-08/04-06	LLeg	3/7				
	INT	14	Magic poir	nts: 18	09-11/07-10	Abdom	3/7				
	POW	18	DEX SR: 3		12/11-15	Chest	3/9				
	DEX	10			13-15/16-17	R Arm	3/6				
	APP	10			16-18/18-19	LArm	3/6				
					19-20/20	Head	3/7				
Weapon			SR	Attk/Par%	Damage	ENC	VAD				
Head Butt			6	60/-	1d8+1d6	ENC/AP					
Left hoof Fetish Stick		- 11 C		and the second second							
		of	6 50/- 5 50/50		1d8+1+1d6	5 2 2 5 1 <del>0</del>	and the				
		Stick			1d6+1d6		1/10				
	Bite		6	62/-	1d6+1+1d6	; -	-				
Swallow		V	bite SR+1	Auto*/-	suffocation	-	1				

Spirit Magic: (90-ENC): Ironhand 4, Demoralize (2), Detect Enemy (1), Heal 4, Control Passion Spirit, Control POW Spirit, Summon Spell Spirit, (known by Bendofahl:) Dispel Magic 4, Silence 4 (known by Illdrife:) Spirit Screen 4, Visibility, Control Magic Spirit, Strength 3.

Divine Magic: Divination 2, Spirit Block 3, Sanctify, Reverse Chaos.

#### Greenpee the Chaos Chicken, Thed Initiate

STR 11 CON 11 SIZ 00 INT 11 POW 14 DEX 11 APP 00	6 8 0 4 6	Move: 4/3 Hit points: Fatigue: 2/ Magic poir DEX SR: 2	13 6 nts: 14	melee/missile 01-04/01-03 05-08/04-06 09-11/07-10 12/11-15 13-15/16-17 16-18/18-19 19-20/20	location R Leg L Leg Abdom Chest R Wing L Wing Head	points 0/5 0/5 0/5 0/6 0/4 0/4 0/5
Weapon		SR	Attk/Par%		Mar	ENC/AP
Peck		8	70/-	1d1	and a subscript	2/10
Claw		8	66/-	1d6-	+1	1/10
Dropped F	Rock	2/8	65/	1d8-	+1	.5/7

CTD 10 CON 14 CIT 10 INT 0 DOW 10 DEV 10 ADD 0 Do Poo still

nunumer, boy broo i	
Hit points: 13	
Fatigue: 27 -ENC=22	
MP:13	
DEX SR: 3 Move: 3	
No Disease	
Chaotic Feature: Not	
incapacitated until dead.	

-

55, Jump 181, Listen 66, Sneak 50, Oratory 51, Scan 84, Search 35, Track 45, Devise 33, Enchant 47, Summon 69, Ceremony 69, Speak Praxian 33, Speak Tradetalk 11, Speak New Pelorian 13 Speak Spiritspeech 31. Magic Items: Fetish Stick with the following enchantments: 2 Passion Spirit Bindings, 1 Power Spirit Binding, and +5 AP Armor enchantments. The Passion Spirits are Fear (POW 12) and Madness (POW 15). The Power Spirit has POW

Skills: Conceal 52, Climb 145, Evaluate 35, First Aid 25, Hide 81, Animal Lore

11. Usable only by Toadface. Gold finger ring with a 15 MP storage matrix mounted through a hole in his horn. Chaos Features: Can leap 10m on its huge toad legs and stick to nearly

vertical surfaces, though not as well as real cliff toads. 3 point warty toad skin. Illdrife, Fetch: INT 13, POW 17. Manifests as a floating goat skull. Bendofahl, Allied Spirit in a goat: INT 11, POW 17. Reflects up to two point

spells back at the caster. This manifests visibly when spells enter her right eye, emerge from her left eye and head back at the caster.

Other notes: Toadface's very large horns do more damage than "normal" broo horns. Though descended from a cliff toad, Toadface cannot swallow things larger than SIZ 3. Pets and familiars are fair game, as are limbs no longer attached to their owners. Toadface's stomach acids do not work very quickly, and he can vomit back up any objects (like enchantments) later.

Spirit Magic: (70-ENC): :Demoralize, Ironhand 4, Shimmer 4, Heal 1. Skills: Dodge 54, Hide 45, Listen 55, Sneak 20, Scan 44, Speak Praxian 32 Magic Items: Mobility 3 Matrix in a Pol Joni fetish bag around neck. Chaotic Feature: Appears extremely dangerous, it looks very much like a cockatrice. As a result of its appearance, Greenpee has no hands, just wings. Other Notes: Characters failing World Lore don't know what cockatrices looks like, those Specialling World Lore realize Greenpee is not one. Scare the Dark Hell out of everyone else. If Greenpee's mere appearance is not enough to scare off opponents, it casts Shimmer and Mobility, then starts flying over the targets, dropping rocks. It can only carry 2 rocks per flight, but at a speed of 6, he can make runs every 2 melee rounds. Greenpee prefers to be up higher, doing more damage, than down lower, hitting more often.

DI BIOUS STATIZION 14 SIZ IZINT 9 POW 13 DEX 12 APP 9			weapon	SH	Antipar%	1	Jamage	ENG	AP	
bor breeding stock makes these broos weaker than normal ones, but they're Il the best Toadface can muster. <b>birit Magic:</b> (65–ENC): Ironhand 3, Heal 1, Mobility 3, Protection 2 dills: Climb 31, Dodge 35, Hide 46, Jump 40, Listen 62, Sneak 46, Scan 31,			Head Butt	9	50/-	1	d6+1	-		
			Bite	9	41/-		1d6	-		
			2H Spear	8	37/39	10	110+1	2/10	)	
			Sling	3/9	35/-		1d8	.1/-		
earch 49, Track 55		BT ARR	Dog Broos wea	ar raw hide	s and leather	bits as hear	d & body a	armor (El	VC 3).	
Runtinner, Dog Broo 1	Lassay, Dog Broo 2	Banjay, I	Dog Broo 3	me	lee/missile	location	#1	#2	#3	
Hit points: 13	Hit points: 13	Hit points	: 13	01-	04/01-03	RLeg	1/5	1/5	1/5	
atique: 27 -ENC=22	Fatigue: 27 -ENC=22	Fatigue: 2	27 -ENC=22	05-	08/04-06	LLeg	1/5	1/5	1/5	
MP:13	MP:13	MP:13		09-	11/07-10	Abdom	3/5	3/5	3/5	
DEX SR: 3 Move: 3	DEX SR: 3 Move: 3	DEX SR:	3 Move: 3	12/	11-15	Chest	3/6	3/6	3/6	
No Disease	No Disease	Carries W	Vasting Disease	13-	15/16-17	R Arm	1/4	1/4	1/4	
Chaotic Feature: Not	Chaotic Feature: Track by	Chaotic F	eature: none	16-	18/18-19	L Arm	1/4	1/4	1/4	
ncapacitated until dead.	scent 123%			19-1	20/20	Head	3/5	3/5	3/5	

Pig Broos STR 15 CON 14 SIZ 17 INT 10 POW 10 DEX 7 APP 6	Weapon	SR	Attk/Par%	Damage	ENC/AP	
Another example of Toadface's creative response to limited breeding stock,	Head Butt	8	60/-	1d6+1d6		
these huge, slow broos still aren't as good as ordinary Goatkin.	Gore	8	51/-	1d8+1d6	Sa - metros	
Spirit Magic: (50-ENC): Ironhand 3, Heal 1, Mobility 3, Protection 2	2 H Maul	6	35/29	1d10+2+1d6	2.5/10	
Skills: Climb 21, Dodge 05, Hide 26, Jump 20, Listen 42, Sneak 16, Scan 11,	Thrown rock	4	35/-	1d3	-	
Search 59, Track 05	Pig Broos wear	raw hides	s and leather bits	as head & body an	mor.(ENC 3).	

Ozkerr, Pig Broo 1	
Hit points 16	
Fatigue: 29 -ENC=24	
MP:10	
DEX SR: 4 Move: 2	
No Disease	
Chaotic Feature:+ 5 point sk	i
a state of the second sec	

Mayear, Pig Broo 2 Hit points 16 Fatigue: 29 -ENC=24 MP:10 DEX SR: 4 Move: 2 No Disease Chaotic Feature: Head not a vital area - use limb rules.

rig broot from fai	Those and loaner	ono do nodo	
Ballognah, Pig Broo 3	melee/missile	location	#
Hit points 16	01-04/01-03	R Leg	6
Fatigue: 29 -ENC=24	05-08/04-06	LLeg	6
MP:10	09-11/07-10	Abdom	8
DEX SR: 4 Move: 2	12/11-15	Chest	8
Carries Wasting Disease	13-15/16-17	R Arm	6
Chaotic Feature: Smells very	16-18/18-19	L Arm	6
bad, -25 to stealth skills.	19-20/20	Head	8

# GVV●tLAUXOU: △R∞ + ШQ2+ A GY # O + T

PCs don't like it, they can stay clear. Tracking the broos proceeds as described below, except both Tros and Gidet are found dead. Tros dies of his injuries while broos finish Gidet off in a late night assault.

#### Tracking the Broos, Part 1

The first tracking task is simple, because the broos wanted to be followed. Permit PCs to elect one character as chief tracker. All PC tracking tests may be significant, but the chief tracker is the most important. Secretly test Tracking for all PCs and for any NPCs with them. The chief tracker succeeds in following the trail unless he fumbles; if he fumbles, and any other character achieves a special success, that character persuades the chief tracker of his error, and the broos trail is followed successfully.

The broos trail leads east through the woods and up the rising eastern margin of the valley, then strike out north along an escarpment that overlooks the river valley. At sundown the PCs find the tracks lead to a rocky cliff, then west down a steep scree slope back toward the river valley. Here the broos set the ambush that caught Tros and Gidet.

Secretly test Sneak for all characters or for scouts in advance of the party; failure warns the waiting broos, and they flee. Otherwise the PCs surprise two weasel broos (see page 106) standing 25 meters below the clifftop guarding Gidet's hiding place at the bottom of the cliff. Each PC gets two rounds of missile or spell casting action before the broos can reach the cover of the woods along the bottom of the cliff. PCs may also successfully sneak down the cliff and outflank the broos.

If any PC fails his Sneak and the broos flee, secretly test Listen for all characters; success means they hear fleeing broos moving through cover at the bottom of the cliff, but can't see them. Secretly test Scan for all characters; success reveals the apparently dead body of Tros Gubrana lying at the foot of the scree slope. There's no sight of Gidet.

Tros was pushed from the cliff and left for dead by the broos. He's unconscious, his chest location is reduced to -3 hit points, and he has lost 1 point each in head and both arms. When ambushed Gidet jumped off the cliff to a ledge and found shelter in a chimney eroded in the cliffside. The broos couldn't reach him with spells or missiles, and had to come one at a time to melee him. This didn't suit the broos, so they decided to wait until their magic points had returned and make a fresh assault on Gidet later that night. Two weasel broos remained to watch the chimney while the others proceeded toward their lair. Gidet cannot see or hear outside his hiding place, and unless the PCs make noise or identify themselves, they are not likely to find him. If they call, however, he calls back.

If rescued and healed, Tros and Gidet both want to join the PCs in pursuit of the broos.

#### **Tracking the Broos, Part 2**

The second tracking task is far more difficult, since the broos attempt to cover their tracks back to their lair. The broos know the terrain, which features bare rock outcrops ideal for confusing trackers, and they are led by a smart broo who understands the importance of keeping his home base location secret.

Secretly test Track for all PCs and for any NPCs with them. If the chief tracker succeeds, he follows the tracks to the broo lair. If the chief tracker fails, the tracks are lost, unless any other PC obtains a critical success, which cancels the chief tracker's failure.

An unfortunate byproduct of successfully following the tracks is the discovery of the dead boy's corpse several hundred meters from the point where Tros and Gidet were ambushed. He's been torn to shreds, but the head and torso are still recognizable. Twelve points of healing, Heal Wound, Heal Body, or other similar magic are required to bring him to three positive hit points, whereupon the PC may use their Resurrect matrix if they choose. Alternatively they may send the body back with an NPC (Grandad) for swift delivery to a healer, or write the poor lad off.

If the tracks are lost, only a lucky break can find the broos lair. All further Tracking tests made this day are automatic failures. Only a critical success by the chief tracker can recover the trail leading to the broos lair, and the chief tracker can only attempt a test once a day.

#### **Broos Lair**

Toadface the Shaman recently fled from his master in a larger Wastelands broo tribe. (See pp. 105-106.) Taking with him a host of low-status broos he set up camp in a region east of Great Bog known to nomads as Boulder Cliffs. He's found a secure lair in caves along a section of cliffs cut into columns and boulders by the drainage of a seasonal wash. (See diagram on page 110.) Toadface schemes of establishing a great broo tribe in this excellent and easily-defensible location, and wonders why no other broos have come here before.

The only flaw in the Boulder Cliff location is its proximity to human settlements. Toadface sees

#### **River of Cradles**

### GVVOTIALXOU: ARSHUQ2#2AY#OXX

that as ideal, with easy access to raiding sites. He fails to see that it is also means easy access to the lair for humans. Humans are the only race more dangerous than broos in the Valley, and Toadface has yet to discover this principle by experience.

The Breeding Stock: Toadface considers himself a bold innovator and social engineer. Rather than raid nomads and settlers for breeding stock, Toadface is experimenting with animal husbandry. He keeps a number of captured Praxian herd beasts in the north section of his cliff caves, breeding them, then capturing and raising the larval broos in a structured, authoritarian setting. At present there are five sickly, impregnated herd beasts here, along with several carcasses resulting from recent spawnings. In a nearby pen are five larval broos which confound the popular wisdom that the infant offspring of all species are cute. Between the stench of the carcasses and the yelping, clucking, and barking of the larval broos, this site is easy to locate. A single weasel Broo (or three weasel broos, if they escaped

the encounter earlier where Tros and Gidet are found) has drawn nursery duty, and spends his time tormenting the larval broos and leering at the herd beasts.

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The south cave contains three rat broos, three dog broos, three pig broos, Greenpee, Bigmouth, Toadface, and the captive daughter Tameh Gubrana. The rat broos are on watch duty, one perched on the top of the cliff while the other two stand at opposite ends of the south cave ledge. Toadface hides in the dark at the back of the deepest recess, "investigating" the girl. Bigmouth, Greenpea, and the dog and pig broos are celebrating the recent raid, boasting of wit and courage, and hoping Toadface will share the fruits of his investigations with them.

Staging the Assault: Approaching the north cave is a cinch, since shrubs block line of sight from the sentries at several points. Any disturbance in the north cave, however, warns the sentries and puts the broos on alert. If the weasel broos escaped the first encounter, the broos camp



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is especially alert, having been warned that a large party is out here tracking them.

If the three rat broos on watch can be dispatched silently, the other broos are making so much noise that approaching PCs avoid detection unless a Sneak is Fumbled. Unfortunately, though clear lines of sight on all three rat broos are easily found, all three are in plain sight of the other broos in the cave. If sentries disappear, receive injuries, or act strangely, permit Scan tests for Bigmouth, Greenpee, and each pig and dog broo to notice and sound the alarm.

If an alarm is sounded, Bigmouth orders the dog and pig broos as a screen in front of him to give him time to cast his spells, then charges the biggest, meanest-looking PC attacker. Greenpee takes to the air, hunts rocks, and returns on repeated dive bombing runs.

Toadface deploys his Madness and Fear spirits to attack two tough-looking opponents, then assesses the battle's progress. If things look promising, he and his allied spirit either use Demoralize and Dispel Magic spells on opponents, or Toadface casts his Ironhand 4 and wades into combat next to Bigmouth as the allied spirit hangs back and continues Dispelling Magic.

If the opponents seem strong, Toadface and his allied spirit goat make as if they were charging

forward into combat, then Toadface grabs the goat and makes a prodigious leap from the ledge to the clifftop above the cave. From here he either continues to cast Demoralize spells or heads for the horizon at top speed with the goat tucked under an arm.

The girl is still alive in the back of the cave. A pig or dog broo may try to use her as a hostage if the PCs overwhelm their defenses. She has already been impregnated by the Shaman. If she can be gotten to the Chalana Arroy priestess in Horn Gate quickly before the broo larva grows too large (gestation period is roughly 24 weeks), a Cure Chaos Wound spell will destroy it.

**Running the Broos:** A low-level PC party accompanied by Tros Gubrana and Gidet Kevro can defeat this comparatively weak broo tribe with few losses, particularly if the broos concede the initiative to the PCs, and if Toadface flees the moment the battle turns against him. The broos could be much more dangerous if their sentries were more alert, or if they had arranged an active ambush for pursuers approaching the lair. If Toadface enters combat side by side with Bigmouth, some PCs are likely to get killed.

On the other hand, if you make it possible for the PCs to double-team Bigmouth and Toadface while other PCs take on the weaker pig and dog



Ronegarth from the River

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#### **River of Cradles**

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broos, and if healing support is available for the PCs facing the big broos, the PCs should come through in good order. Alternatively, if you wish less deadly broos, assume that a Discorporate Toadface monitors the approach of the PCs, then flees with the girl at an opportune moment, leaving only Bigmouth and the rest of the broos to contend with.

**Resolution**: On their way back to the stead the PCs meet up with the Duke's mercenaries and the local homesteaders searching for broos and their captives. If the PCs haven't defeated the broos or rescued the girl, the mercenaries and homesteaders take up the challenge; the PCs are welcome to come along as guides and/or reinforcements.

If the PCs have cleared out the broo nest and rescued Tameh, the mercenary leader offers the PCs the hospitality of the Duke and a healer's services at Raus Fort. A healer's services may be especially valuable for any PCs exposed to disease or badly injured, and anyone needing more advanced healing treatment (i.e., Healing spirits, Regrow Limb, Cure Chaos Wound, Resurrect) can be taken on horseback to the Chalana Arroy at Horn Gate (see p. 46). The group heads back to Gubrana Stead. The homesteaders remain at Gubrana Stead, while the mercenaries, PCs, and members of the Gubrana household cram into Grandad's boat and head upriver to Raus Fort. With undines, lanterns, and caution, Grandad can even proceed in the dark in an emergency, and in a few hours they arrive at Raus Fort.

Raus's priest and healer, Daryli Godspeaker, attempts to treat any diseases the PCs have contracted. If unsuccessful, Daryli sends the PCs to Horn Gate for treatment. Daryli can provide normal Heal spells sufficient to bring all PCs back to full hit points, but characters needing Healing Spirits, Regrow Limb, or Resurrection must be sent to Horn Gate. Such a trip requires a delay of at least two days, and Grandad strongly recommends that the PCs not wait.

The PCs are housed in comfortable tent shelters within the fort and fed in the mercenary mess. After dinner the PCs are invited to Duke Raus's hall, where he thanks them for their help and gives them the 50L bounty for each broo they've killed. After the brief, formal audience the PCs are dismissed. The mercenary sergeant who escorts them back to their tent suggests that the Duke is always looking for good men, and that their performance against Toadface serves as an excellent resume.

As poor homesteaders, the Gubranas have little to offer as reward, but they promise to grant any favor or gift they have in their power to give. At the least the PCs are told they are always welcome at the Gubrana Stead, and they ask the names of each PC's god so they can make prayers in their honor at Sacred Time ceremonies.

# Encounter 3: The Agimori and the Newtlings

From Raus Fort Grandad guides the boat for an uneventful day's travel to a fishing camp in the North Bog. The settlement is small, with fewer than 15 adults, and the thatched-reed shelters are built on platforms on stilts in the middle of a marsh. The evening meal is a communal affair in the largest of the huts, and the PCs are asked once again to tell the story of their miraculous rescue and the marks of the River God <Oratory tests>.

In the morning the skiff gets a steady breeze and by midday is sailing briskly beneath the Black Rock Bluffs near Arrowsands on the southern margin of Sun County. Permit Scan tests for all PCs and Grandad. A special PC success or a simple success for Grandad reveals an Agimori hunter running along at a fast but steady pace, his wool cloak held about his neck with one hand and his hunting javelins held easily in the other. Grandad can quickly tell that he will catch up to the boat sooner or later, so he pulls over toward the bank to wait for the runner.

When the Agimori draws close enough to hail, he stops, breathing hard but with control, then gestures with his javelin hand for the PCs to come to the bank where he stands. When the PCs approach, the Agimori says in Praxian, "Newtman hurt bad. He dies or gets help. Have you craft of healing?" If the PCs agree to help, he gestures back downstream and takes off at a fast jog. He refuses to ride in the skiff (he can't swim), but he runs easily for a kilometer back downriver, then gestures that the PCs must follow him on land.

He then sets out along a shallow streambed headed for the cliffs on the east wall of the valley. A kilometer from the river the Agimori leads the PCs to a deep stream pool. Here two newtlings lie on the sand by the water. One is clearly dead, horribly disfigured by acid burns all over his body. The other is unconscious, in shock, and badly acid burned as well.

The Agimori introduces himself as Pachala Palmline, and explains that, while on a trail high on the eastern wall of the valley, he noticed these two figures lying by the pool. He climbed down the cliffs and came to investigate. He shows the GVV●TIA□XOU.: △R∞ +UQ2+20Y#O\*T

PCs the newtling fishing tridents he found, and guesses the newtlings were spearing fish when something attacked them.

The acid burns suggest a gorp attack, but Pachala knows nothing about gorp. If told that a gorp likely attacked the newtling, and that the gorp is probably in the pool, Pachala wants to hunt and kill it, for he has never seen a gorp, and knows of no one in his tribe who has ever killed one. The excited Pachala is hard to discourage, but the words of an experienced hunter (e.g., Agimori or nomad) carry special weight <Oratory or Fast Talk test>.

Moreover, the first order of business is saving one newtling's life and possibly Resurrecting the other. Ma'char is the dead newtling; Ge'hechya is gravely injured. (See below.) Healing Ge'hechya is fairly easy. When revived Ge'hechya tells what happened. They were fishing in this hole, usually a good fishing spot, but they couldn't find any fish. Ma'char dove in to look in the pool, and suddenly surfaced croaking in pain and terror. Ge'hechya waded in to pull his companion to safety, then felt his own legs on fire. Ge'hechya managed to drag his friend from the pool, but Ma'char was already dead. Ge'hechya could do nothing for his own wounds, but before he collapsed from shock and pain, he called on the River God for aid. He says his prayer has been answered, obviously believing the PCs are his saviors sent from Zola Fel.

After healing Ge'hechya, killing the breeder gorp is probably the second order of business. The pool is eight meters long, six meters wide, and two meters deep in the center. The breeder gorp sits at the bottom in its dormant phase as the micro gorp begin to develop. The water is clean and clear, and two things are distinctive about this gorp: its appearance, and its inactivity. The gorp's mass is milky and translucent rather than transparent, like a badly injured gorp, but it's also marked with a pattern of indentations on its surface that suggests many smaller gorp clustered together. The gorp is also unusual in that it does not react when approached or when attacked.

After taking 7 points of damage, the breeder gorp explodes. Most of the gorp's destroyed tissue floats to the surface as a putrid, slimy mass, but four micro acid gorp emerge from the dead parent's tissues and begin moving around the pool looking for refuge. Test Scan for PCs. Failure means the fleeing micro gorp are not seen; success means 1d3 are seen; special success means all four are seen. If no PC gains a special success, PCs must successfully Search to find any missing gorp, or locate any missing gorp with a Second Sight spell.

#### Large Breeder Gorp

STR	0	Move: 0
CON	7	Hit Point : 7
SIZ	19	Fatigue: NA
INT	1	Magic Points:1
POW	11	DEX SR: 4
DEX	0	

Special Features: The breeder gorp does not move or attack, and does not react to stimuli. Contact with the quiescent form does 4 points of acid damage. A standard acid gorp of this size should have 13 hit points, but breeders explode after losing one-half of normal hit points. When it explodes all within 5m (1m if underwater) take 1d6 acid damage in a random location, and 4 micro acid gorp emerge from the wreckage of the parent.

#### Micro Acid Gorp (4)

STR 0		Move: 1				
CON 2		Hit Points: 2	each			
SIZ 2		Fatigue: NA				
INT 1		Magic Points:11				
POW 11	La Section	DEX SR: 4				
DEX 0						
Weapon	SR	Attk/Par%	Damage			
Envelope	1	100/-	1 point acid			
	melee	&				
Location	missi	le point	ts			
Body	01-20	) all				
Statistics of the state						

Ge'hechya and Ma'char, Newtling Fishermen								
STR 7   CON 15   SIZ 8   INT 12   POW 12   DEX 13   APP 11	Move: 2/6 Hit Points: 12 Fatigue: 22 Magic Points: 12 DEX SR: 3							
Location Tail Right Hind Leg Left Hind Leg Abdomen Chest Right Fore Leg Left Fore Leg Head <i>Weapon</i> Trident Net	melee 01-02 03-05 06-08 09-11 12 13-14 15-16 17-20 <i>SR</i> 8 7	missile 01-02 03-04 05-06 07-10 11-15 16-17 18-19 20 Attik/Par% 60/50 55/70	Ma'char 0/3 -6 0/4 -6 0/4 -7 0/4 -2 0/5 0/3 0/3 0/3 0/4 Damage 2d3 ensnare	Ge'hechya 0/3 -1 0/4 -8 0/4 -2 0/4 0/5 0/3 0/3 0/3 0/4 Pts. 10 6				
Net, Thrown	3	50/-	tangles	6				

Skills: Dodge 50, Climb 46, First Aid 45, Jump 53, Animal Lore 36, World Lore 56, Scan 45, Search 54, Swim 84, Throw 24. Spirit Magic (62%): Detect Enemy, Mobility 1

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The micro gorp are easily dispatched. Even naked PCs protected by Protection spells can gather them by hand, then destroy them on dry land. Searching the pool for stragglers is tedious detail work, but if PC don't search, or fail the Search tests, one micro gorp escapes downstream and grows into another large breeder gorp. Note: If the breeder gorp and all four micro gorp spawn are destroyed, the river is protected from the further spread of this dangerous variety of gorp, and a point of Extension is activated in their Rune matrices.

Test Animal Lore for each PC. Success means the PC realizes that this may be the way gorp breed; special success means the PC realizes that the sudden appearance of this variety of gorp might account for the recent plague of gorp.

Pachala is disappointed by the gorp hunt. Micro gorp may be nasty, but they are too stupid and easy to kill. He quickly grows bored, then leaves to continue his own hunting.

The final order of business is to decide what to do about Ma'char. The PCs may leave the responsibility for Ma'char to Ge'hechya and his people. Ge'hechya explains that his newtling village is several kilometers south in the New Bog, and that he would appreciate help in getting Ma'char's body back to the village. He has no thought of Resurrection since none in his village has such powers.

If PCs have the resources to Resurrect Ma'char, they must consider whether to try it. Another possibility is to take Ma'char to the Chalana Arroy healer in Chomoro. If no PC suggests the possibility, Grandad mentions that all large Sun Dome towns have Chalana Arroy healers. This strikes Ge'hechya as an unlikely plan, since the Sun Domers are said to hunt newtling for their tails. However, Grandad, infected by the spirit of the River Voices and the gospel of cooperation between river people and landsmen, strongly encourages the PCs to at least make the attempt.

Ge'hechya (and Ma'char, if resurrected) spontaneously offer to serve the PCs as slaves for a year in gratitude for saving their lives. Newtlings believe that life-debt obligates one to the person who saved your life. The key phrase in Boatspeech is "My life is yours for a turn of seasons." Grandad knows of this newtling custom, and explains it to the PCs. The newtlings ask permission to return home to put their nest affairs in order, but promise to meet them as soon as possible at any rendezvous the PCs suggest. At your discretion, the newtlings arrive in Pavis to work off their life debts in time for the Grotto of Pocharngo episode. They may also be used to replace player characters lost in other encounters.

As soon as the PCs are finished with the newtlings and breeder gorp, Grandad hurries everyone back to boat, insisting that all hands must work at the sweeps so they can reach Chomoro before nightfall. Fortunately a strong breeze from the south holds, and by late afternoon the town of Chomoro comes in sight.

#### **Encounter 4: The Sun Domers**

As the PCs sail up the long, open stretch of river toward Chomoro, a Sun County militia boat pushes off from shore and moves to intercept the PCs' skiff. Since they have nothing to declare, and therefore owe no tax or tariff due, Grandad would never even consider evading the ever-vigilant Sun County Tax and Tariff Militia Patrol.

The militia boat is manned by a half-file of Sun Dome militiamen and commanded by the patrol unit's leader, Coriander Yarrowill. Coriander politely orders the PCs to head for the river bank for an inspection. By his weapons, armor, and trappings, Coriander is obviously a Sun Dome Templar, and as such, he is serious business. He also wears the brass arm ring with a Fire rune identifying him as a member of the Monrogh subcult (the Yelmalio cult spirit of reprisal); Grandad notices the arm ring, and explains its significance to ignorant PCs.

(If the PCs bring the dead newtling Ma'char to take him for Resurrection in Chomoro, skip ahead to "Resurrection?! A Newtling?!" below, then return here to complete the tax inspection If the PCs produce the gold shield-strap buckle with the markings in Firespeech from the otter Moonsilver's treasure hoard, skip ahead to "The Lost Lantern Matrix" below, then return here to complete the tax inspection.)

The Tax Inspection: Once at the riverbank, Coriander orders everyone out of the boat. He then asks for a detailed accounting of everything, personal goods and trade goods, carried on the boat. A militiaman makes detailed notes on wax tablets as the PCs speak. Then the contents of the boat are removed and spread out over the river bank, carefully inspected, with everything recorded in detail by an efficient militiaman on wax tablets. The boat is then taken from the water and its bottom searched for secret compartments. The PCs and their possessions are also searched. About fifteen minutes after the inspection has begun, Coriander casts a Detect Gold and Detect Magic to make sure nothing is missed.

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Throughout the process the Sun Domers are polite but firm. Coriander watches from a distance, offering suggestions and advice, but not dirtying his hands. All PC challenges, questions, and requests to speak to Coriander are refused while the militiamen complete their inspection. The entire process takes over an hour. When the patrolmen are finished, Coriander cordially thanks the PCs for their cooperation and grants permission to continue their journey.

"Resurrection? A Newtling?!": If the PCs say they wish to take the dead newtling Ma'char to be Resurrected at the Chalana Arroy hospice at Chomoro, several militiamen laugh out loud and act as though the PCs are crazy. "Newtlings? You'd waste God's grace on a lizard? You've got to be kidding!" Coriander, however, calls his men to order and takes the PCs very seriously. He examines the newtling's wounds carefully and asks how they were received. If the PCs explain, Coriander says he has heard strange rumors of encounters with gorp, but that this is the first time he has seen any evidence.

Coriander thinks a bit, then asks, "What business is it of yours whether this newtling gets Resurrected? And by what right do you request such grace on Sun Dome lands?"

Permit the PCs to elect one character as chief spokesman. All PC Orate tests may be significant,

but the chief spokesman is the most important. Secretly test Orate for all PCs and for any NPCs with them. The test begins with a –50 penalty since Coriander is opposed to the request by practice and tradition. Effective use of the following arguments confer the following bonuses to PC and NPC Orate tests:

Bonus	Argument
+10	water and land people should live in
	Harmony (Cleansed One gospel)
+10	show stigmata and tell story
+10	PCs offer generous donation and show collateral
+10	note that River Gods are associated
	with the Yelm pantheon
+10	PCs offer to serve in hospice
+15	PC present lost Lantern matrix
+20	spokesman is Yelmalio initiate
+20	spokesman is Chalana Arroy initiate
+20	note ritual obligations between Count
	and Naiad, Sun County and River
+20	well roleplayed

If the chief spokesman fumbles, Coriander concludes the PCs are using the dead newtling to distract him from a tax inspection, and angrily arrests the PCs on a hair-split legal point and holds them for a day in jail before they are released to continue their journey.



An Encounter with the Ever-Vigilant Sun County Tax and Tariff Militia Patrol

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If the spokesman fails, Coriander denies their request, but respects them for their principles, and offers to give the creature a decent burial or return it to its people for burial.

If the spokesman is successful, Coriander grants them permission to take the newtling to the Chalana Arroy hospice, even though he disapproves and will advise the Chalana Arroy healers against granting the request.

If the spokesman achieves a special success, Coriander is persuaded that the PCs are right and speaks in their favor at the hospice.

A critical success by any other PC or NPC changes the spokesman's fumble to a failure, but has no other effect. A special success by any other PC or NPC changes the spokesman's failure to a simple success, but has no other effect.

Reward good speeches preaching harmony between the people of the river and the people of the valley. A good in-character speech ought never fail completely.

If persuaded, Coriander accompanies the PCs to the hospice in Chomoro. The boat remains on the river bank as the militiamen complete the tax inspection. It's a short walk into Chomoro, and the procession with PCs carrying a dead newtling and led by a Sun Dome templar attracts a lot of stares.

The Chalana Arroy hospice is attached to the local Sun Dome temple. The healers are very surprised to see the PCs and the newtling. They briefly examine the body, shaking their heads and looking doubtful. Coriander then asks to speak privately with the chief healer and either speaks against or for the PCs' request.

Once again Orate tests are required to persuade the Chalana Arroy healers to attempt a Resurrection. The test begins with a -50 penalty, as above, and with the same bonuses for effective arguments as used above, with the addition of a +20 bonus if Coriander speaks in favor. A simple success by the spokeman persuades the healers to attempt to resurrect Ma'char. A failure means the healers politely but firmly decline, arguing that practice and tradition prohibit resurrection for any but Yelm worshippers without special orders from the Count or High priest in Sun Dome Temple. Critical success by any other PC or NPC turns a spokesman's failure into a success.

If attempted, the Resurrection is successful. Ma'char asks permission to return to his people to settle his affairs, after which he will seek the PCs at an appointed rendezvous and serve as their slave for a year in gratitude for their help. The Chalana Arroy permit the PCs to defer any payment or promise of service for one season, but require each PC and NPC to swear upon their cult spirit of reprisal before a priest of Yelmalio at the temple altar before they let the PCs leave.

The Riddle Challenge: After the Tax Inspection is completed, and after any Resurrection attempt has been resolved, Coriander tells the PCs they are free to go, but asks if there are any Orlanth initiates among the PCs who wish to engage in the traditional riddling contest between Yelmalio and Orlanth worshippers. (See the Orlanth cult description, p. 158) This riddle challenge is only obligatory upon the peaceful meeting of a Wind Lord and a solar priest or lord, but Orlanthi and solar initiates aspiring to future runelord status often practice this ritual.

Coriander favors riddles with farming references against the Orlanthi, which folk he believes to be more herders than farmers. Coriander disapproves of riddles that are only clever; he respects riddles that show an appreciation of life and the world around him. Any Orlanthi who engages in the riddling contest in a sound, sensible fashion impresses Coriander as a sensible, reliable fellow. Frivolous, literary, or citified riddles earn a formal but cool acknowledgement of the riddler's worth. Riddles with religious themes are not Coriander's strong point, and he is politely neutral if comparisons of relative virtues of cults are implied, but in principle he approves of the serious tone of religious riddling.

If the challenge is accepted, here are the riddles Coriander uses.

#### Riddle #1

The wheat is like a rich man, it's sleek and wellto-do.

The oats are like a pack of girls they're thin and dancing, too.

The rye is like a miser, both sulky, lean, and small,

But I'm ripe and fine, long bearded, and monarch of them all.

(Answer: The barley)

#### Riddle #2

I'm the farmer boy's toy by the river bank, the farmer man's joy in his richest treasure, and the farmer's last tenant in the evening's shade. (Answer: The worm)

[[Alternate: I'm the farmer's toy on the river by dawn, the farmer's joy in his treasure by day, and the farmer's last tenant in the evening's shade. (*Answer: The worm*)]]

As Coriander is the challenger, the Orlanthi must offer his riddle first, then Coriander offers his

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riddle. If one riddle is answered and the other not, the answerer is the winner, and he receives a gold Wheel from the loser. If neither riddle is answered, there is no winner. If both participants successfully answer their riddles, the Orlanthi, as the challenged party, has the responsibility to judge the best riddle and the best answer. Both selfinterested favoritism and polite deference are frowned upon in making this judgement; the choice of winner must be carefully reasoned and true to the spirit of friendly rivalry between cults. When in doubt, it might be safe to award a victory to both parties. An unfair or unreasonable judgement is a far greater disgrace than losing the contest, and a poor judge rightly earns the contempt of his opponent.

Further events depend on the outcome of the riddling contest.

If the contests is refused or conducted in a disgraceful or disrespectful manner, Coriander curtly tells the PCs they are free to go. The militiamen offer no help in reloading the boat and coolly ignore the PCs as they leave.

If the contest is fairly and honorably conducted, regardless of the winner, Coriander and his militiamen are immediately more friendly with the PCs. Coriander invites the PCs to share a meal and river news with the patrol. Included in the meal are dried fruits and fresh vegetables, compliments of splendid Sun County farms. During the meal Coriander and the militiamen share local gossip. The following items concern the gorp plague.

**Gorp Rumors**: One of the fellows in the patrol says he saw something big and jellylike in the water several days ago. He touched it with his spear and lost a very expensive bronze spearhead. Another fellow mentions that a couple of bathers drowned nearby — a common enough occurrence, but the witnesses said they thought the two were attacked, and no bodies were recovered. The bathers' mother swore the two boys were good swimmers. Despite these two incidents, the patrolmen seem not at all concerned about the gorp. They speak much more of the hazia runners and the damned arrogant Lunar soldiers parading up and down the valley like they owned it.

The Lost Lantern Matrix: If the PCs have found this in Moonsilver's den and obtained it, and give it to Coriander to identify, Coriander reads the inscription, does a double-take, whistles, then explains that Alalia Eskolos is a bodyguard of Lady Vega Goldbreath, the Guardian of Sun County and head of the militia. He offers to return the buckle to its rightful owner, but strongly suggests it is their right and responsibility to return the object — especially since a reward might be in order. He assures them, however, that such a valuable Yelmalio cult artifact is an excellent letter of introduction and conversation starter for any Sun County militiaman, militia commander, or templar they meet on their journey.

**Continuing the Journey:** Once their affairs with Coriander and the Sun Dome militiamen are completed, the PCs are ready to continue upriver. They spend the night in the nearby fishermen's settlement where the Bitter Stream meets the Zola Fel. Once again the local people treat their special visitors to a special feast, then ask the PCs to tell about their adventures <Oratory test>.

The next day is spent fighting headwinds and rainy weather, and the skiff arrives after dark at the fishing community at the mouth of Nisa's Stream. Exhausted PCs pass CON x5 tests or begin to nod off during the standard communal feast, but dedicated PCs can stay up late to speak with their hosts <Oratory test>. The next morning the weather still looks foul, but by time they get on the river, the breeze has shifted around to the west and the boat is sailing swiftly upstream towards New Bog and the Shrine of Kinope.

#### **Encounter 5: The Shrine of Kinope**

Grandad insists on visiting the Shrine of Kinope so he can reconsecrate the Command Undine and Extension matrices he's exhausted in driving the skiff upriver. The added power for the boat more than compensates for any delay, and besides, the fortunate winds helped them make good time from Nisa's Stream. Six kilometers north of High Water in Sun County Grandad guides the skiff into a marsh north of the river, and the PCs spend the next two hours poling slowly though twisted channels choked by debris and overhung by mossdraped cypress.

The shrine of Kinope is marked by no work of man, its location known only to Zola Fel cultists. Deep in the North Bog a large spring bursts forth into a clear, sandy-bottomed pool in the midst of a splendid grove of cypress. The spring bubbles into the air like a fountain, and the sweet water is reputed to have healing properties.

The resident priest, the venerable catfish Brighteye, presides over this Minor Temple of Zola Fel. Most local initiates here are fish or newtlings, but the shrine is a cultural center for the nomadic riverfolk during highwater bog and marsh encampments, and with the recent gorp crisis, a steady stream of river peoples visit the shrine in search of healing.

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The spring is sacred to the naiad Kinope, and worshippers may sacrifice 1-5 magic points and receive in return a Heal of 1-5 points. A maximum of 10 points of healing per day is available, however, and lately this resource has been in great demand. Worship here consists of sweet words of praise; the naiad also greatly prizes artistic celebration of nature, especially in its aquatic forms, in poetry, song, sculpture, crafts, etc. (Poets believe nymphs can grant the gift of genius, and shrines in more civilized regions are often visited by poets seeking inspiration; how-ever, there are no poets in residence at present.)

Grandad ties up the skiff and leads the PCs along a raised wooden walkway toward the shrine. A dozen coracles and reed boats are drawn up on the bank nearby, and there are a number of fisherfolk and newtlings at the spring, some showing signs of gorp burns. Grandad greets several by name and stops to express concern and sympathy, then introduces the PCs as River Voices, and they must show their Rune marks and tell their stories once again.

**Brighteye the Ancient Priest**: Suddenly everyone is quiet, and the PCs turn to find the head of a huge catfish with long whiskers poking out of the water. Grandad and the other locals all bow quietly and formally; Grandad never showed such deference to Reverend Sa'ar or any other personage on the river.

Brighteye can speak Tradetalk but won't. He speaks only in Boatspeech, and Grandad and other initiates present translate as needed.

Brighteye asks to examine the marks on the PCs' hands. He looks carefully, then twitches his whiskers haughtily. He then asks for privacy, and all other initiates but the PCs and Grandad leave the shrine.

Brighteye launches into a long and rambling speech, speaking too quickly for Grandad to translate at times, and plainly in a sour temper. He ignores any attempt to interrupt with questions or comments, and abruptly submerges and dives to the bottom of the pool when finished.

**Brighteye on the Cleansed One Subcult**: The speech repeats much of what Reverend Sa'ar has already told the PCs about the Cleansed One subcult, River Voices, the stigmata, and gorp, with the following additional details:

The subcult grows larger in times of trouble on the river, but has been small and obscure for many years, with few initiates and most quite old. With the death of the Reverend Amina (surprised PCs get no chance to ask further about her death at this time), Brighteye and Shennin Ashal, a morocanth in her eighth decade, are the only two surviving priests of the subcult he knows. (Brighteye is over 100 years old.)

Brighteye says there are Cleansed One subcults associated with other river cults, but he has never left the Zola Fel basin. He has no idea where Shennin Ashal is, or if she's still alive, since Shennin is a world traveler who has visited ports and rivers all along the Rozgali Sea. Therefore, with Amina's death, Brighteye is the only mortal source of access to the Purify Water divine spell in the Zola Fel valley. Zola Fel's immortal daughters, the naiads of the river, also know the Purify Water spell, but whether they could grant the spell, Brighteye does not know.

Shennin was for a time a companion of a Karrg's Son (a dark troll Kyger Litor rune lord) who was a great hater of Pocharngo, father of gorp. During his travels with the Karrg's Son, Shennin learned that Purified Water affected the spawn of Pocharngo as it does vampires and

#### Brighteye the Catfish, Priest of Zola Fel

STR 6	Move:	6	Tail	01-03	1/3	
CON 11	Hit Po	ints: 9	Hindbody	04-08	1/4	
SIZ 6	Fatigu	ie: 17	Forebody	09-13	1/4	
INT 15		Points: 17	R Fin	14	1/3	
<b>POW 17</b>	DEX S	SR: 1	L Fin	15	1/3	
DEX 23			Head	16-20	1/3	
14/	00	AH/D- 0/				
Weapon	SR	Att/Par%	Damage			
Bite	4	54/-	1d3			

Skills: Dodge 87, Jump 112, Swim190, Animal Lore 120, Human Lore 25, Plant Lore 90, World Lore 95, Scan 75, Listen 95, Search 50, Hide 115, Sneak 135

Armor: 1-point scales

Languages: Speak Fish 69, Speak Boatspeech 51, Speak Tradetalk 21,

Spells (Ceremony 97, Enchant 86, Summon 99). Spirit Magic (92%) Glue 4, River Eyes, Detect Enemy, Mobility 3, Mindspeak 1, Slow 3, Disruption, **Divine Magic** (100%) Breathe Air/Water III, Binding Enchantment, Command Undine (x4), Extension I (x2), Float III, Heal Wound II, Mindlink, Purify Water III, Sanctify II, Spellteaching, Summon Naiad, Summon Undine (x2), Warding I, Worship Zola Fel.

Magic Items: Five enchanted river jewels (current-polished milky quartz pebbles) Glued to Brighteye's dorsal fin. One contains two bound POW spirits (POW 7, POW 15). The other four each contain a bound undine.

Undine #1: "Voe": STR 12, SIZ 1 cubic meter, POW 1, HP 7, Move 6/2

Undine #2: "Wrack": STR 7, SIZ 1 cubic meter, POW 4, HP 9, Move 6/2

Undine #3: "Siphon":STR 24, SIZ 3 cubic meter, POW 7, HP 29, Move 6/2

Undine #4: "Swallow": STR 70, SIZ 10 cubic meter, POW 20, HP 95, Move 6/2 GVV●+XA□XOU: AR∞ + UO2 + 2 O × 7

various other chaos creatures. The Purify Water spell creates a liter of holy purified water, which can be divided into ten flasks of holy water, each of which does 1d6 damage when applied to the substance of a gorp. Brighteye also provides an exhaustive catalog of facts known about gorp; permit PCs to read the general description of gorp features and forms on page 79.

Brighteye says he has never seen marks like those on the PCs's hands, but that their symbolism is clearly that of the Cleansed One. He says that heroes called River Voices numbered among the friends of the giants and trolls when the city of Pavis fell in 875, and that River Voices are named among the heroes who have defended the giant cradles in the distant past. He knows no Third Age tales of River Voices.

Brighteye has also been granted through divination knowledge of any points of Extension activated in the PC matrices through services performed in protection of the river and its people. Brighteye describes their matrix enchantments in full, including all the details Sa'ar mentioned, and adding the presence of any Extension spells now available through their matrices.

Brighteye concludes by offering any creature bearing these marks the training that leads to acceptance into the Cleansed One subcult, but his tone suggests that he would make such training as difficult as possible.

When Brighteye has left, Grandad suggests that seeing the favor of the Cleansed One granted to a bunch of humans, many of them not even Zola Fel cultists, must seem a bitter pill for an old and faithful servant of the subcult. Grandad suggests that the PCs respect Brighteye's privacy for the rest of the day, and that they can speak to him in the morning before they leave the shrine. Grandad hopes to get his Command Undine and Extension matrices blessed at that time. If PCs ask, Grandad also thinks that Brighteye might consent to Purify some water for them, though he wouldn't ask such a favor at the moment.

Grandad then leads the PCs back to the skiff where they'll spend the night. Other initiates are also camped there, and over a shared meal from collective stores the PCs can gather news of the Reverend Amina's death, hear tales of gorp attacks, and tell the story of their miraculous rescue and show their stigmata to the assembled river people <Oratory test>.

The Death of Reverend Amina: From others camped at the shrine they learn that Reverend Amina, Priestess of Zola Fel in Pavis, died many days ago, but apparently the news has only now reached the shrine of Kinope (squabbling over



Brighteye, priest of Zola Fel and The Naiad Kinope, daughter of the River God

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the attack, and 3. mopping up the micro gorp after the parent gorp is destroyed.

#### Phase 1: An Audience Before Sun Dome Command

The Sun Domers know nothing about gorp, and know nothing about the help the Zola Fel people can give them. They remain ignorant unless the PCs can speak to them and persuade them of the value of their counsel. Most of all, the Sun Domers need to know:

• How to attack gorp and how not to get burned by acid when attacking gorp.

• What a breeder gorp is, why this colossal gorp appear to be a breeder, and what happens when a breeder dies.

What the priest Brighteye can do to help.

The PCs are currently the premiere authorities on gorp in the valley. Brighteye can't deal directly with the Sun Domers, partly because he's a fish and rather helpless on land, but more because he's a narrow-minded creature too proud to speak in anything but Boatspeech. Even if he would consent to speak Tradetalk, he has little talent for polite speech, much less diplomacy.

The PCs, however, are humans, and can at least approach townspeople or militiamen and ask to speak to someone in charge. Ideally they have a



special calling card — Alalia's lost Lantern matrix — which automatically gets them an interview with a bodyguard, and then the head of Sun County militia. However, even if they don't have this calling card, they must find some way to speak to Sun Domers in authority.

Sun Domer Command: The following persons and military units have hurried to Harpoon to deal with the giant gorp crisis. Permides, High Priest of Yelmalio in Sun County, is an ancient and stubborn old man, borne here on a litter, and attended by a team of priests, advisors, acolytes, and nurses. Permides never speaks directly to outsiders, and all his comments are muttered into an aide's ear and then repeated for listeners. Gaumata the Strange, Light Keeper of Sun County, ranks only below Permides in the Yelmalio cult, and actually directs most cult affairs in the county. Lord Invictus, Light Son and Light Captain of Sun County, head of military affairs and commander of the Sun Dome Templars, is accompanied by four files of Templars guarding the Sun Dome notables. Lord Belvani, Invictus's lieutenant is here with his dragonewt servant The Gamon. Lady Vega Goldbreath, Guardian of Sun County, is head of the militia, and has assembled here three files: Unit I, The Victors (Goldbreath's own crack unit), Unit IV, Jovian's Men (named for

Coloss	al Breeder	Gorp	
STR	0	Move: 0	
CON	7	Hit Point : 122	
SIZ	480	Fatigue: NA	
INT	1	Magic Points:11	
POW	11	DEX SR: 4	
DEX	0		

Special Features: When encountered, the colossal gorp is in quiescent breeder stage. It does not move or attack, and does not react to stimuli. Contact with the quiescent form does 6 points of acid damage. A standard acid gorp of this size should have 244 hit points, but breeders explode after losing one-half of normal hit points. When it explodes 122 micro acid gorp are released.

#### Micro Acid Gorp (122)

STR	0		Move: 1	
CON	1		Hit Points:	
INT	1		Fatigue: NA Magic Point	
POW	10		DEX SR: 4	0.10
DEX	0			
Location Body	mele	e & mis 01-20	sile d20 )	points all
Weapon Envelope		SR 1	Attk/Par% 100/-	Damage 1 point acid

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their leader Jovian, the no-account brother of Lady Vega), and Unit XI, the Crow Eaters (led by the shady Dawn Eagle-Eye). **Hector the Wise, Sun Dome Temple Chief Librarian**, serves here as technical advisor and polymath. **Jalmara Yelmsfoot, High Healer of Sun County**, is the high priest of Chalana Arroy. (For descriptions of these persons, see pp. 52-53.)

The Sun Dome leaders meet in a large command tent set up on the bluff overlooking the giant gorp. Rings of militiamen and templar guards surround the command tent. The PCs cannot approach the Sun Dome leaders without going first through a guard line of militiamen, then crack Templar guards.

However, Vega's militiamen are on duty when the PC arrive, and they have been given orders by Vega to bring her any locals who approach with useful ideas or resources. The militiamen listen carefully to the PCs <Oratory or Fast Talk test>. Persuasive PCs are taken directly to Vega. Less persuasive PCs are given an annoying runaround, asked to repeat their stories to various file leaders, then to stern, poker-faced templars, but eventually are given a few minutes of Lady Vega's time. If the Lantern matrix is shown, militiamen take the PCs directly to Alalia, Vega's bodyguard, who listens to them, then takes them directly to Lady Vega.

The Factions: When the PCs come before Lady Vega in the command tent, the Sun Domers are still uncertain how to handle the gorp. Invictus, Belvani, and Permides feel they have sufficient offensive weapons to destroy the gorp, and support an immediate attack. Gaumata, Hector, Vega, and Jalmara favor sending to Pavis for the Lunar magical support unit from the Ivory Phalanx, and want to summon freelance adventurers and nomads (Storm Bull and Orlanthi in particular) to provide more magical punch.

What the PCs tell Lady Vega about the gorp possibly being a breeder seems extremely important. She asks the PCs to speak before the Sun Dome Command group, asking the PCs to be brief but explicit, and to tell especially about their experience with the breeder gorp.

After hearing the PCs speak, Hector observes that this explains the recent appearance of so many gorp in the river waters. Gaumata notes that the Sun Domers discussions have so far overlooked the resources of the Zola Fel people, and asks the PCs to report as soon as possible what the riverfolk may be able to contribute to the destruction of the giant gorp. Invictus and Permides openly debate the PCs' expertise, but Belvani, questioning them closely on the release of micro gorp from the destroyed breeder gorp, concludes that organizing a mop-up afterwards is even more important than destroying the gorp.

#### Phase 2: Planning the Attack

Gaumata suggests dividing the group to work on separate aspects of the problem. Invictus and Permides are assigned to devising methods for destroying the gorp. Hector and Jalmara are assigned to devising schemes to limit the injuries and damage caused if the gorp does explode. Vega and Belvani are assigned to plan hunting down micro gorp after the gorp explodes. Gaumata functions as a liaison between groups.

Gaumata asks the PCs to serve as advisors for each of the groups. A sharp judge of character, Gaumata places action-oriented warrior-types with Invictus and Permides, cautious healers and thinkers with Hector and Jalmara, and patient, methodical planners with Belvani and Vega.

Gaumata asks each team to make a preliminary assessment, then all teams will meet in an hour for a council of war. Gaumata encourages the PCs to speak first with the Zola Fel people first to find out what help they can offer. Lady Vega loans her bodyguard Alalia to the PCs in case they need information about the Sun Domer forces and resources available in Harpoon.

Grandad recommends speaking with Brighteye to learn what useful ideas and abilities he may have, and to find out what local fisherfolk can do to help. If questioned, Brighteye proudly lists his mundane and magical powers (permit PCs to review his stats on page 117). As for getting help from local fishermen, Brighteye offers to find out what useful spells they may have, and suggests that skilled boathandlers may be of value.

Alalia has details of the Sun Dome templar and militia units present in Harpoon and their mundane and magical assets. Alalia knows that Invictus, Permides, and Guatama all have a single Sunspear spell, that some Humakti Templars have Fireblade spells, and that a number of Shield spells should be available, but that Disruption and Protection spells are not common among Sun Dome troopers. Alalia can also explain about the giant spearthrower on the bluffs (which is completely useless against gorp).

#### Preliminary Research and Brainstorming

Let all players participate in the planning sessions for each team, regardless of which team their PCs are working with, under the assumption that information and ideas can be passed back and forth easily between groups. Whenever necessary,

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help players interpret their plans in terms of game mechanics. For example, ideas listed below like the use of fire rafts require improvised interpretations of RuneQuest rules. Where possible, adapt existing mechanics according to precedent. When no precedent suggests itself, improvise.

#### **Destroying the Gorp**

PCs assigned to this team should help Invictus and Permides devise methods of damaging the gorp. Invictus explains that he, Permides, and Gaumata can invoke one Sunspear apiece, and that among his Templars, 10 Humakti know the Fireblade spell. Assuming the Humakti manage to cast the spell on three blades apiece, that means thirty blades with Fireblade spells on them. Between one-use Shield I spells sacrificed for by 15 individual templars and another 15 Shield I spells available from priests and acolytes, that makes 30 Fireblade-wielding pikemen with Shield I magical protection. More than enough Humakti templars have volunteered for this dangerous task, though Invictus considers using criminals who volunteer in hopes of commutation of sentences.

This is impressive, but the PCs should explain that a Shield I probably won't be enough to protect from a gorp's acid, and that many men could die in such an attack. Further, if the gorp did die, then exploded, the Fireblade warriors would be even more at risk. If presented with these arguments, Invictus understands and appreciates them, but he aggressively challenges the PCs to propose other plans.

Invictus willingly accepts any practical suggestions the PCs can offer. A few possible schemes include:

Purified Water Grenades: Brighteye currently has three uses of the spell, and can therefore produce 30 flasks capable of producing 1d6 damage apiece. Suitable flasks can be found in the town of Harpoon, though militiamen may have to run from house to house requisitioning oil jars and other containers. The flasks can be thrown into the gorp's bulk, where they immediately dissolve and release their contents. Throwing individual flasks is inefficient and risky for the thrower; a safer delivery method should be devised. For example, an undine could easily carry all 30 flasks up the surface of the gorp, then dump them in the center of its mass. A successful Devise test reveals a method for delivering the purified water with Harpoon's famous giant spearthrower.

Fire Rafts: These may be guided by good swimmers or River Voices, or sent to drift down against the gorp. An existing boat can be improvised as a fire raft by filling it with brush. A fire raft does 2d6 points of damage per round.

**Fire Arrows**: Though quickly smothered by the gorp's moist tissues, they still cause 1 point of damage, and such a large target is hard to miss.

Call for Outlanders and Nomads With Useful Spells: Neither Disruption nor Protection are popular among Yelmalions, but very useful against gorp. Baboons and Orlanthi are known to rely on Disruption, while Protection spells are popular with Waha and Storm Bull nomads. Daka Fal worshippers are known for using a wide variety of spells, and are the only folk in the area likely to know Firearrow, the ideal spell for this application. When this suggestion is made, Invictus immediately sends runners to Harpoon and nearby communities asking for persons knowing the Disruption and Protection spells, and the PCs are asked to spread the word among local river people.

Undines: Undine attacks unfortunately do no damage to gorp, but they can be used to pin or corral gorp, and can also act as shields for attackers. An undine can flow over the surface of a gorp and prevent it from touching its victim, or at least dilute the strength of its acid for an attack.

Hector offers his estimate that by mass this gorp should be approximately 10-20 times tougher to kill than any gorp encountered before. (In game terms, tell players that means the gorp might have 200-300 hit points). PCs who have killed the other breeder gorp, however, recall that their gorp seemed a lot easier to kill than they expected (i.e., tell players it took only about half the damage they might normally have expected), and that this gorp might die and explode easier than Hector's estimate suggests.

#### Protection from Gorp Acid

The key problem facing this team is to determine the danger of being near such a mammoth gorp when it explodes. Hector estimates that full strength acid might splash over 25 meters away, and Jalmara says that could easily kill even wellarmored and magically protected soldiers. The only solution they can see is attacking only from long range with spells and missiles.

However, the PCs who destroyed the other breeder gorp may realize that being underwater protects from the worst effects of acid by diluting it and confining it. Thus a soldier submerged in the water with magical protection might be right next to the gorp when it exploded without desperate risk. However, unless he had a weapon that could damage the gorp, this idea is of little

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use. However, a PC with the Breathe Air/Water spell might stand inside an undine formed as a barrier and attack the gorp with a Fireblade cast upon a pike which extends beyond the undine.

Undines can also be used in other clever ways to confine the effects of an exploding gorp. Brighteye has four bound undines, Grandad has one in his boat's tiller. With that many undines it may be possible to cover the portion of the gorp nearest exposed attackers with a flowing sheet of undines; when the gorp explodes, most acid AND micro gorp would be thus contained for easy disposal and destruction.

#### Hunting Down Micro Gorp

Hunting micro gorp breaks down into three problems: finding them, catching them, and destroying them.

The best way to track micro gorp is with a Second Sight spell. Neither Yelmalions nor Zola Fel folk learn this spell often, but Daka Fal nomad hunters do. If persuaded of the importance, the Sun Domers have a 50% chance of rounding up 1d3 persons who know this spell before the attack. Such persons teamed with characters who know Disruption are most important downstream to discover and destroy any micro gorp carried by the current.

Detect Enemy does detect normal gorp, but probably will not detect a micro gorp attempting to escape a pursuer.

With their special abilities, the PCs are ideally suited as micro gorp hunters. Further, fish and newtlings with one or two points of Protection can also easily handle micro gorp. Any micro gorp thrown onto dry land can be destroyed by infantry with torches. Brighteye, a strong, swift swimmer with useful spells, would be ideal to lead and coordinate hunting down micro gorp.

#### **Council of War**

Once the players have had time to roleplay and problem-solve in each of the separate teams, Gaumata calls the three teams together and asks each to report their ideas. Invictus then takes over as the military commander of the operation. He asks for clarification of any details suggested by the three teams that are unclear, then proposes his own plan for destroying the gorp.

Offense: First, Invictus proposes to attack the gorp within an hour while there is still plenty of daylight. The risk of the breeder gorp releasing hundreds of micro gorp in the darkness is unacceptable; besides, Invictus is now positive he has enough firepower to kill the gorp. He depends on the following main offensive elements: 1. Two Sunspears (4d6 damage each) cast from the bluffs by Invictus, Permides, and Gaumata.

2. Fifteen templars attacking from the eastern river bank with Fireblade cast on their pikes and Shield II protecting each. Invictus also includes any undine gimmicks suggested by the PCs to protect these templars. Each attack automatically hits, so each round 3d6 x 15 points of damage are done.

3. Enough Protection 2 spells are available to outfit another 15 Fireblade-equipped templars to be held as a reserve behind a shield wall close to the riverbank. If necessary, these less-well protected templars may be risked to provide more attacking power.

4. Mass Disruptions striking at the same time as the Sun Spears. Within the hour Invictus has available 15 templars and militiamen and ten local Sun Domers who know the spell, and Brighteye has sent five more riverfolk who know the spell (not including himself or the PCs), for a total of 30 Disruptions. (Assume that 50% overcome resistance in the first salvo to cause 15d3, for an average of 23 points of damage.)

5. All militia units are supplied with improvised fire arrows. I Victors and IV Jovian's Men are stationed on the east and west banks of the river south of the gorp. XI Crow Eaters are stationed on the east bank north of the gorp. After the gorp is destroyed the militia are to aid in hunting down the micro gorp. (The huge target is hard to miss. Each round 40 militiamen hit the gorp with fire arrows, causing 1 point of damage each for a total of 40 points per round.)

6. The giant spearthrower will fire one improvised harpoon covered with sheafs of burning dry grass. This showy weapon is fired for morale reasons, and causes only 10 points of damage because it immediately penetrates deep into the gorp, extinguishing the flames. (If a method for delivering the Brighteye's purified water by harpoon has been devised, that method is used instead of the improvised fire harpoon.)

Even without other offensive elements like fire rafts, Purified Water grenades, and any spells the PCs have available, this represents 122-437 points of damage in the first round without counting the reserve templars. The destruction and explosion of the gorp in the first round of the attack is a foregone conclusion.

**Protection**: All spell casters are to remain at maximum range to cast their spells, and are in little danger from acid thrown from the destroyed gorp. The only men exposed to acid damage are the 15 Fireblade armed Humakti templars, who

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resounding "twang" that echoes down the river, the great spearthrower hurls a giant dart into the gorp's translucent tissues.

The giant gorp explodes immediately. Fountains of water and shattered gorp rise in the air then crash back to the river surface and adjacent river bank. The bulk of the destroyed gorp remains in the river where it exploded, but chunks of milky tissue fly through the air, landing as far as 30 meters from the creature's shattered bulk. The militiamen immediately drop their bows and, taking torches from bonfires nearby, run about and scorch the bits of tissue that hit dry land. Many pieces of tissue also land in the water near the PCs, and the mop-up operation begins.

Ask each player to indicate on the diagram on page 119 where his PC waits to assist in the mopup. When the gorp explodes, anyone within the central hex takes 1d6 acid damage to 1d3 random locations; if underwater, he takes 1 point of acid damage in 1d3 random locations. Anyone within the six adjacent hexes takes 1d3 damage in 1d3–1 random locations; if underwater, he takes 1d3–2 points of damage in 1d3–1 random locations. Those outside these seven hexes are safe from acid damage.

Scanning For Micro Gorp: Test Scan secretly for each PC. If successful, the PC sees three micro gorp land nearby. If underwater and using River Eyes, add a bonus of +20 to Scan. Improvise the details of pursuit and disposal of any micro gorp seen by each PC. If the Scan is failed, the PCs mistakes a chunk of dead gorp for live micro gorp; the PC must pursue and capture the hunk of tissue to discover his mistake. PCs using Second Sight or Detect Enemy automatically find three micro gorp.

**Capturing and Destroying Micro Gorp:** The micro gorp strike the water and immediately sink toward the bottom looking for deep shelter. A Swim test must be passed to successfully pursue a micro gorp. Also, for each Swim test, the PC must also pass a Scan test to keep any other gorp he has seen in sight. For each failed Scan test, another gorp escapes and must be Searched for later.

When a successful Swim test is made, the PC must make a DEX x 5 test to snare the gorp, either in his hands or in any container he carries (e.g., leather bag, net, clay pot, etc.). Once snared, the gorp may be delivered to a waiting boat or to the shore for destruction in 1d3 rounds. However, during those rounds the PC must continue to make Scan tests or lose sight of any other micro gorp he is tracking.

PCs using Disruption spells need not Swim to capture gorp, but must make a Scan test each round to avoid losing sight of other gorp. Searching for Escaped Gorp: Test Search for any PC willing to swim downstream looking for gorp that escaped them. For each successful Search another micro gorp is found, and may be caught and destroyed as described above. A special Search success discovers two micro gorp. For each failed Search a gorp makes a final complete escape; the micro gorp either is found later and destroyed by Brighteye or escapes to grow into a mature gorp.

Note: When the breeder gorp and most of its micro gorp spawn are destroyed, the river is protected from a serious proliferation of gorp, and a point of Extension is activated in the PC Rune matrices.

#### **Farewells and Feasts**

Within an hour after the gorp explodes, The Sun Dome notables, templars, and two units of militia are packing up to return to their homes and garrisons. Jovian's Men, the local militia unit, stays on to assist the townsfolk and rivermen in cleaning up the river banks.

Lady Vega and her bodyguard personally appear at the riverbank to thank the PCs and Brighteye before she leaves. With a courtly flourish, Brighteye greets Lady Vega in stilted but formal Tradetalk. The Sun Domers obviously are not making any special fuss about the destruction of the giant gorp. Vega explains that Invictus and the rest of the troops were actually somewhat disappointed by how easy it was. In fact, the only serious casualties were three Fireblade-armed Humakti templars who died of acid burns, and they could even have been subsequently healed and Resurrected by Chalana Arroy healers if their cult doctrine did not forbid it.

Vega then gestures to Alalia her bodyguard, who steps forward and gives a gold coin to each PC and to Brighteye. The coin looks like a gold Wheel, with a sun motif on one side, but it bears a griffin on the obverse with the words "Free Service of the Sun" in Firespeech (the pun on "sun" and "son" is preserved both in Firespeech and translation into Tradetalk). Vega explains that these coins are awarded to Sun County militiamen as tokens of exemplary service. She offers them by way of thank you for their help, and as an acknowledgement of the role that riverfolk have played here in the defense of Sun County. She and her bodyguard then take their leave and head home for Sun Dome.

The local rivermen are not so reserved in their celebration of the PCs and Brighteye's role in the destruction of the giant gorp. A great feast is held GVV●tXA□XOU:AR∞+UO2+AAY#O+T

are protected against up to four points of damage with their Shield I spells, and who are ordered to abandon the attack and dive underwater if injured, thereby reducing the risk of full strength acid striking them. If the gorp suddenly attacks the templars, they have orders to run away as fast as possible. Under no circumstances are templars permitted to stand and fight an advancing gorp; Invictus has made it clear that it would be false and futile heroism.

Invictus asks the PCs to arrange for fish and newtlings to rescue any injured templars in the water. Chalana Arroy healers stand with the reserve templars behind their shieldwall for swift treatment of injuries.

The Mop-Up: The PCs, Brighteye, and the riverfolk are asked to handle any micro gorp that end up in the water, while Lady Vega and her militiamen armed with torches will take care of any micro gorp that fall on land.

**Refining and Implementing the Plan**: After Invictus explains his plan, he asks for comments and criticisms. He adapts the plan to answer any major flaws the players (that is the PCs) or GM (that is, the various Sun Dome notables) can discover, then suggests the attack be made immediately. The templars and militia units have already received their orders from Invictus and are waiting in position with shields, weapons, and bonfires, and all those who can cast Disruption are being assembled behind a shield wall formed by a half-file of templars part way up the bluff to the east of the gorp.

Invictus announces that in 30 minutes a red, black, then gold flag will be displayed at the command tent on the bluff. At the sight of the gold flag, the attack commences. (Invictus may be willing to delay briefly to permit the completion of small projects like rigging several firerafts, but he's unwilling to delay for more elaborate schemes.)

#### Phase 3: Hunting Micro Gorp

The PCs barely have time to get down to the river and ready before the attack begins. When they arrive, they find Brighteye has arranged for teams of fish and fishermen to take care of micro gorp thrown upstream from the giant gorp. If asked, he has also cast his three Purify Water spells, and the flasks have been sent to whoever is responsible for delivering the flasks into the bulk of the gorp. He suggests that since he swims like a fish, has sharp eyesight, and knows the Disruption spell, he will wait farther downriver to catch any micro gorp the PCs miss. He then asks how the PCs plan to hunt micro gorp in the river. First, they have to be in the water at the right time; Brighteye suggests they can wait on the river banks or in boats until the gold flag is shown, then enter the water. Next, they have to track and recognize any micro gorp that survive the explosion. Various spells and abilities are particularly useful (Second Sight, Detect Enemy, Sense Chaos, etc.), but in the absence of useful spells, the PC must use Scan to recognize the micro gorp as they hit the water and submerge. Then, when they've taken care of all the micro gorp that got past them and are floating downstream.

Once the PCs find micro gorp, what are they going to do with them? Disruption spells are effective at range. Protection spells permit the PCs to handle the micro gorp. Micro gorp can be snared in leather bags or pottery for a few rounds before the acid destroys the container, giving the PCs time to deliver the gorp to a boat or the shore. Macho PC can handle micro gorp for a couple of rounds even without Protection spells.

Once captured, micro gorp must be destroyed. If captured near the river bank, they can be tossed to the bank and killed there by militiamen and riverfolk with torches. If in the center of the river, the micro gorp can be delivered to waiting boats where Grandad and other fishermen have tubs of water for carrying the gorp to the shore for destruction.

#### The Grand Assault and Micro Gorp Hunt

The following are suggestions for staging the hunt for micro gorp. Since there is relatively little risk of death, and the hunt is more a problem-solving activity than a melee, improvise freely the problems of tracking the micro gorp when they hit the water, of capturing the micro gorp, and of destroying them. The action may resemble a water polo match more than a desperate combat, and the PCs may suffer more from embarrassment at their clumsiness in water maneuvers than from acid burns from the micro gorp.

When the gold flag is shown on the bluff above the river, three Sunspears lance down from the heavens and strike the giant gorp, causing a great blast of steam and hunks of gorp tissue to fly in the air. Simultaneously flights of fire arrows arch up from each of the militia unit positions and descend upon the gorp's bulk. Striking in unison to a shouted cadence, the Humakti templars attack with their Fireblade-enhanced pikes as mass Disruptions are cast from behind the templar shield wall partway up the bluff. With a  $G \nabla \forall \bullet \dagger \wr \Delta \Box X \odot \sqcup : \Delta R \infty + U O 2 @ A O Y # O X T$ 

at the riverhouse of the local headman of the Harpoon fishermen's settlement, and it immediately becomes apparent that the role the PCs played has grown in the telling. The riverfolk act as though the PCs and Brighteye were the real heroes who planned and engineered the destruction of the gorp, while the Sun Domers simply provided the necessary manpower and support.

No amount of modesty or concern for accurate reporting can dissuade the riverfolk from this view. They had been told that River Voices were coming upriver, and they are completely satisfied with the quality of heroism they've been treated to. The monster was huge and terrible, the heroic representatives of the Zola Fel cult were included in the counsels of the mighty Sun Domers, and the destruction of the monster was colorful, dramatic, and remarkably light in loss of life and property. Solemn words are spoken for those killed when the monster appeared, and promises are given that all will help to rebuild the dwellings destroyed by its initial rampage. Then the party begins in earnest, and rivers of local rice wine are consumed.

When the party finally breaks up, the PCs are given the headman's riverhouse as their own private lodgings. Brighteye has taken his leave many hours before to return to the Shrine of Kinope. His farewell to the PCs was brief and formal, but he repeated his invitation to any PC who wished to return at a future time to study with him for acceptance into the Cult of the Cleansed One. The next morning the PCs are awakened before daylight by Grandad, who insists that they get an early start to make up for all the time lost in the giant gorp hunt. If the PCs protest that the gorp plague is now surely ended, he says that doesn't make any difference to him, since he said he'd deliver them to the Pavis temple, and he's going to do that as quickly as possible so he can return to Corflu. He also says that he's going to avoid visiting any more riverfolk settlements on the way to Pavis, since he's afraid of delays as the heroes are feasted and celebrated.

Indeed, as they proceed upriver from Harpoon into Pavis County, the news of the coming of the River Voices, The Chosen Ones of Zola Fel, Guardians of the River, and Slayers of the Titanic Chaos Monster, is known to every fisherman and boatman along the river. Young boys gather on the towpath to help tow the boat upriver, and smartlydressed river belles bring handsome packed lunches to the levees. Grandad gratefully accepts offers of food and tow, but avoids stopping until he reaches a friend's riverhouse at the mouth of the Scritha. There the PCs are treated to a quiet meal and a comfortable bed, and early the next morning the PCs are on the last leg of their river voyage to New Pavis.



Boat Paths in the New Bog

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# The Temple Barge of Zola Fel

### **Troubled Waters: Episode Four**

#### **Episode Summary**

At the Pavis temple barge they are treated like conquering heroes — until a report arrives of a fresh flood of gorp sighted in the river that morning. Che'en, High Priest of Zola Fel in Pavis, offers the PCs great rewards if they rid the river of the gorp menace once and for all. The adventurers learn that loud disturbances and fishkills associated with the gorp plague are located near Ogre Island in the Big Rubble. With the aid of Che'en and the solicitor of a powerful family friendly to the river cult, the adventurers can seek expert informants and special gear in the city of Pavis before investigating Ogre Island.

#### Managing the Campaign in Pavis City

The route from the Zola Fel temple barge to the final episode can be as direct or discursive as you wish. Channel the PCs directly to the underwater shrine through NPC informants, or let the PCs wander the streets of Pavis and the ruins of Big Rubble searching for the source of the gorp plague.

If you prefer to move immediately to the climax, provide any resources the PCs need through Che'en, the Zola Fel priest, and Ghanara Eberhell, the Ingilli solicitor.

If you enjoy improvising encounters, use the descriptions of Pavis and the Big Rubble provided in this supplement and let the PCs wander through Pavis City at will. Guide PCs to resources and informants by initiating visits through Che'en or Ghanara, or leave it up to the PCs to figure out who they wish to speak with.

Use Che'en and Ghanara to advise PCs about the various important social and political groups of Pavis. In particular, Che'en and Ghanara discourage looking for aid from the Lunar occupation because they distrust the Lunars, and may even suspect them of complicity in anything involving Chaos.

Advancing the Plot: The key hint leading to the next episode is the report of roaring noises and associated fish kills in the Big Rubble in the vicinity of Ogre Island. Whenever you want to go to the next episode, have a report of this phenomenon brought to the Zola Fel temple, and immediately delivered through Che'en or Herra, the human acolyte.

#### **Approaching Pavis**

From New Bog north to Pavis the Zola Fel is a series of long slow-moving pools separated by sections of shallow, swift-moving riffles and rapids. Fortunately for upstream traffic, the fast, shallow sections feature deep channels along one bank or another, permitting boats to be towed upstream from the shore, powered upstream by elementals, or sailed upstream with favorable winds conditions.

The Big Rubble is hidden from view by the high banks until revealed by a bend in the river a kilometer south of the walls. Lunar officials accompanied by guards stop all river traffic before it enters the Rubble through the south river approach, checking for contraband and warning of laws restricting removal of treasures from the Rubble. Boats must then be towed from the bank northwest beneath the Troll Bridge, through the east channel past Ogre Island, beneath Central Bridge, passing the entrance to the Puzzle Canal on the right, then beneath Zebra Bridge, finally emerging at the north river approach beneath the Lunar Bridge. Here once again all boat traffic is stopped by Lunar officials and searched for treasures and undeclared trade goods.

The New Pavis Zola Fel Temple is a barge moored on the west bank of the river north of River Gate. Grandad delivers the PCs here to report to the High Priest.

#### The Zola Fel Temple Barge

The Zola Fel Temple in Pavis is a great barge moored on the west bank of the river just north of the Lunar Bridge. Bound undines in the keel protect and propel the barge. The two large shelters on deck are timber frameworks covered with waterproofed sailcloth forming large, permanent tents. In warm weather the cloth walls



The Temple Barge of Zola Fel, New Pavis

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are rolled up for free air circulation. In cold or foul weather, or for privacy, the cloth flaps are lowered. The Great Well in the center of the barge houses the altar and provides easy access for aquatic creatures and undines. Numerous sweeps range along each side of the barge. On holy days human and newtling worshippers row the barge short distances upriver as part of worship ceremonies; however, undines propel the barge when it must shift location with rising and falling water levels.

When the PCs arrive, an unusually large crowd of idlers hangs around near the temple. As the PCs approach, several rush off toward the River Gate, shouting, "They're here! The Voices are here!" By the time Grandad pulls alongside the temple barge a large crowd of men and newtlings have gathered to get a look at the river heroes and to shout their good wishes. Grandad makes the skiff fast to a cleat on the water side of the barge and calls for an acolyte. For those who might not know, Grandad explains that only initiates are allowed aboard the Zola Fel temple barge, except during holy day and high holy day ceremonies, when lay members are invited to general worship.

A newtling acolyte in a formal fishskin sash comes to the side of the barge and looks suspiciously at the PCS, but when Grandad grabs the hand of one PC and displays the mark there, the acolyte is suddenly gracious and excited. The PCs are immediately welcomed aboard and taken directly to the priest's shelter near the stern of the boat.

The acolyte sweeps aside the sailcloth flap and gestures the PCs into the shelter ahead of him, bowing deeply. Inside the canopy another newtling acolyte breaks off whispering excitedly to two other acolytes, one human, one newtling, who stand to one side. On a reed mat before the PCs a newtling wearing the formal sash and ring of the high priest crouches upon a stool and peers up at them expectantly.

"Welcome. I am Che'enshashan. I am now priest." He then waits expectantly for the PCs to introduce themselves and reveal their stigmata. Che'en's accent reveals his imperfect command of Pavic, and he further seems clumsy with protocol. If necessary, his acolytes prompt the PCs. ("I believe the Reverend is eager to see your marks.")

Once introductions are complete, Che'en gestures for the PCs to seat themselves on the floor and says, "I congratitude you on your most heroful achievement in skewing great chaos beast in Harpoon. Words travel fast (he gestures to the noise of the crowd on the shore by the barge), and we have planned a great feast in heroes honor. I am most sorry now to tell you of evil news." He gestures to the human acolyte, who continues:

"We had all assumed that the great beast in Harpoon was the source of the plague of gorp, and that its destruction meant the end of that plague. Unfortunately, we have just received word that several gorp have been reported in the river south of the city this morning. Through the magics of Zola Fel we have divined that the source of the gorp plague is still be to discovered.

"We will, of course, cancel the feast in your honor and make a public announcement that the gorp crisis is not over. We are certain you will continue your efforts to discover and eliminate the source of the plague as quickly as possible."

Che'en then says, "Zola Fel has made it most clear in your hand, in the miracle to you in the delta, that you are chosen for a *great* destiny. Rid us of these foul chaos things, and we make for you a great reward."

At first Che'en, following the bad advice of his skinflint acolytes, timidly offers the PCs free training and spells for two seasons as payment if they find and eliminate the source of the gorp plague. The offer can be raised, first to include a 300L cash bonus apiece, then a cash bonus of 500L. If the PCs still decline, he finally promises to provide each PC with a single minor personal enchantment (the nature of the enchantment to be negotiated after the mission, and deliverable within one year) if they agree to help.

The PCs are then given the unusual honor of receiving room and board on the temple barge, eating and sleeping with the initiates in the shelter near the bow. Grandad reminds the PCs to return the Resurrection matrix Sa'ar has loaned them to the Zola Fel temple, then is in a hurry to be on his way back downriver. He wishes the PCs good fortune, and invites them to visit him in Corflu. Herra, the human temple acolyte, is assigned to provide whatever information or support the PCs require in their search for the source of the gorp plague. It is Herra who guides the PCs to the Pavis Problem Solving Resources listed below.

#### **Temple Staff Descriptions**

Che'en, Newtling High Priest of Zola Fel in Pavis: Indecisive, socially clumsy, barely understanding Pavic, Che'en consistently responds to PCs requests and demands with stalling, inaction, indecision, and timid politeness.

She'ella, Cha'Chi, and Te'e, Che'en Acolyte Yes-Newtlings: Weak-willed, well-meaning, mealy-mouthed skinflint cronies of Che'en. They GVV●+XA□XOU: AR∞ + WO2+ AAY # O + T

are exceptionally willing and polite, and completely useless.

Herra, Female Human Riverfolk Acolyte: An abrasive, competent passive-aggressive, Herra suffered long and impatiently under Amina's iron will, and survived by keeping her mouth shut. When she does talk, it is full of ironic bitterness and complaints about the incompetence of Che'en and his newtling cronies and the unfairness of preference for seniority. She can give the PCs a list of possible contacts to pursue (see below), and can function as a GM mouthpiece to focus and support the PC search for the gorp menace's source.

Various Initiate Brothers, Resident and Non-Resident Volunteers: Human, newtling, and fish initiates assist in temple charity, training, archive maintenance, boat repair, and other cult projects. Herra can direct the PCs to the proper person to speak with concerning any of these activities.

#### **Pavis Problem Solving Resources**

The following are useful contacts in Pavis. Che'en recommends the PCs speak to Ghanara Eberhell of the Ingilli family, and Ghanara is the probable source for further contacts.

Ghanara Eberhell and the Ingilli Family: The most influential family in Riverside. If the PCs go to the Ingilli family for help, Ghanara Eberhell, the Ingilli solicitor, offers to speak with the PCs. Ghanara (locally known as the Ghoul) is a stuffy, formal fellow, soberly dressed, clumsily and insincerely manipulative in business manner, but actually a warm and sentimental person. Ghanara knows the gorp menace threatens river trade, a major source of Ingilli wealth, and while he appears on the surface little more than a sympathetic ear with limited resources, in fact he is willing to spend considerable financial and political resources to aid the PCs. He offers to provide letters of introduction to any people the PCs want to meet (Ghanara has access to all but the upper 10% of Pavis society), and always manages to think of someone who might be able to do a favor for a friend of the Ingilli's. If the PCs ever run short of money or ideas, Ghanara can prime their pumps to get things going again.

Flintnail: Asderand Quarrywalker is a slow and patient Mostali, gruff and economical in speech. This very old dwarf lost both legs to bonerot, and moves around on a small metalframed wheeled cart like a modern racing wheelchair. He currently serves as Flintnail's contact with non-cultists in the Dwarf Offices and Clearing House in Dwarfside. He can tell the PCs about a network of tunnels beneath the Rubble created by krarshtkids; the Mostali deliberately avoid mining except near the locations of established quarries. He may be a source for exotic underwater mining gear (which the GM must improvise) and engineering technology for mining and tunneling.

Chaos Hunters: Ockasiola the Zebran is a Loud, Competitive, and Reckless fellow well known in the Farmer's Quarter. Found either at the Storm Bull Temple or the Foaming Boot in Farmer's Quarter, or in Zebraside where he has his mount and tent, Ocka knows the story of Taleo Illumine and the Devil's Playground (from The Big Rubble, a lamentably out-of-print Gloranthan supplement), and concluded that Krarsht is once again at work beneath the Devil's Playground. He has organized a motley mob of Chaos fighters and marched into the Big Rubble looking for things to kill. On his own, he lacks rudimentary investigative technique, and could never discover the entrance to the Grotto of Pocharngo. If the PCs reveal the entrance, Ocka and his gang cook up all sorts of hare-brained schemes for entering a flooded underground passage in force. None of these schemes are workable, and without guidance, Ocka and his vigilantees become a comic relief sideline futilely seeking to get their axes into the chaos menace.

Lhankor Mhy: Graehame Finehand, scribe and assistant librarian, is bubbly and chatty with a marvelous memory. Graehame processes all research applications for access to the Grey Sage library. You won't get anything without paying the standard 20L per hour fee for research (in advance!), but once you've paid, his service is swift, pleasant, and efficient. The temple has a complete account of chaos-related activities in the Rubble, and given the PCs' topic of interest, Graehame focuses on the underground, with references in particular to the Devil's Playground and the Eye of Wakboth.

Experienced Rubble Adventurers: Everyone tells the PCs to talk to Morey the Short, part-owner of Gimpy's tavern. Morey listens to everyone when he tends bar, and gives as good as he gets. Morey has heard all the latest rumors concerning Ogre Island activity, loud roaring disturbances, and fish kills in the Rubble.

**Newtlings:** Teuche'esta, a local fisherman and former champion swimmer in late middle age. He lives in Badside and teaches swimming and other water skills to humans. Teuche'etsa can offer PC advice about combat under water, and can recruit newtlings to assist in the Grotto of Pocharngo. Newtlings are poor fighters, likely to flee danger, but are very handy underwater.

# The Grotto of Pocharngo

### **Troubled Waters: Episode Five**

#### **Referee's Summary**

Upon investigating reports of roaring sounds and fish kills near Ogre Island in the Big Rubble, the PCs discover an entrance to subterranean passages and caverns inhabited by strange creatures of Chaos. Deep within lies the source of the gorp plague – a creature that must be slain in order to protect the river from further pollution.

#### The Ogre Island Geyser

The phenomenon that leads the PCs to the Grotto of Pocharngo is a geyser that has recently begun to spew forth from the west channel of the Zola Fel as it passes Ogre Island. No such phenomenon has ever been reported before in the Big Rubble.

The geyser has erupted on an unpredictable schedule more than a dozen times in the past 15 weeks. It is not always observed when it does occur due to its remote location in the Big Rubble. The phenomena reported include roaring noises from the central regions of the Big Rubble, followed by sightings of gorp and massive fish kills in the Zola Fel downriver from Big Rubble. These phenomena are reported 11, 5, and 3 days before PCs arrive in Pavis, and occur thereafter at random intervals (05% chance per night, or, preferably, at the GM's dramatic convenience). Geysers occur at any hour of night, but do not occur during the day.

On the surface the geyser erupts with no more warning than a brief, one-round period of rumbling noises and a faintly noticeable shuddering of the ground nearby. Characters underground get first warning of an impending cavern flood and geyser by a faint low rumble audible in any subterranean passage, but not on surface. First visible signs of the subterranean flooding preceding a geyser are seen in Oll's Chamber (Location I). Within three rounds of the first rumblings, the chamber begins to flood. It takes 1d4+6 rounds for Oll's Chamber to flood completely, with the water level rising roughly 3 meters per round. The flood presses out through the other chambers (Locations A-H) roughly 1d10+10 rounds after Oll's Chamber has flooded, bursting out at the surface as column of water under pressure, leaping over 15 meters into the air. The geyser lasts 1d6+6 rounds. Many gorp may be expelled into the air and thence into the river by a geyser (1d6 small gorp, 1d6–2 medium gorp, and 1d3–2 large gorp). At the GM's discretion, any PCs and or other creatures caught in Locations A, B, C, D, or E may be cast into the air by the geyser, sustaining damage as if falling 1d4 x 15 meters (part of this damage is battering while driven along by pressure in subterranean passages).

The cavern flooding and subsequent geyser are caused by activity in a subterranean chamber many kilometers beneath the surface occupied by the Eye of Wakboth.

#### Underground and Underwater

See the diagram "Grotto of Pocharngo" on the inside back cover, and the diagrams of the Dragonsnail Chamber, Walktapus Chamber, and Oll's Chamber on pp. 134 and 138.

Locations A-D are krarshtkid-excavated tunnels. As such, they are obviously artificial, having been eaten from the hard limestone by the stone-eating krarshtkids. These passages are two meters in diameter, circular in cross section, with walls almost smooth except for patterns of shallow gouges made by krarshtkid claws and teeth.

Locations E-J are caverns formed by natural Gloranthan processes, and similar in most features to terrestrial natural caverns.

Without an ability to breathe underwater, a character in any flooded underground section (i.e., the shaft, the krashtkid tunnels, the dragonsnail and walktapus chambers, the connecting passages, or Oll's Pool) must test Swim each round or begin to asphixiate. A light source AND a River Eyes spell are necessary to see in flooded underground areas. Vision in non-flooded underground areas requires a light source. Review *Runequest Deluxe*, *Players Book*, pp. 52-54, "Unfavorable Environments," including "Darkness,"

#### THE GROTTO OF POCHARNGO

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River Voices Negotiate a Flooded Subterranean Passage

The climbs on moist, slime-slick cavern walls are very difficult, and certain sections (eg, dome ascents with negative slopes) are exceptionally difficult. Most characters have little chance of making these climbs safely. Prudent PCs retreat to re-equip or devise schemes to aid in climbing. Ropes and spikes are the absolute minimum required; clever use of pole ladders, rope ladders, Glue spells, and human pyramids may also be useful.

Trying to explore the entire caverns area in one session is a Really Bad Idea. If necessary suggest that divine spells can be renewed at the Zola Fel temple, and that returning to tackle the caverns with a fresh supply of magic points and carefully considered plans is a Much Better Idea. PCs wise enough to beg throughout Pavis for aid in the form of skilled NPCs or magical widgets should be rewarded for their pains. Che'en and Ghanara may track down some spell matrices and magic point matrices to provide magic support; at your discretion, a Mostali Flintnail NPC may provide the technical expertise and exotic equipment necessary for safe cavern climbing.

Note also that characters who climb or make DEX tests with their hands full of weapons, shields, or spell foci receive penalties to skill rolls (e.g., -40 if one hand is encumbered, -90 if two hands are encumbered). A demonstration of this problem early in the adventure when the PCs are not threatened by attacks serves as fair warning.

#### Scouting Ogre Island and Vicinity

The easiest way to reach Ogre Island is by boat on the river. Entering the Rubble by night is unusual, and likely to attract the suspicious scrutiny of the Lunar administrators and guards, but daytime river travel is common and rarely harassed.

The geyser occurs only at night, and the PCs may try to camp on Ogre Island and observe one. If one occurs while the PCs are on the island, they catch a glimpse of the geyser in process, and discover dead fish and gorp in its aftermath. Such evidence narrows the area of search considerably.

Among the river grasses in the west channel past Ogre Island are many low ledges of resistant limestone that trend roughly east-west. Worn smooth by the river, these ledges are barely visible beneath the covering muck and river grass.

A search of the island during daylight hours reveals a faint trail leading from the ogre temple south over the center of the island and disappearing into the marshy area west of the island. The trail shows no sign of recent traffic (i.e., nothing in weeks).

At low water, the trail normally has led to a hidden shaft cut into a limestone ledge and sealed by a limestone plug cunningly matched to the surrounding rock ledge (-70 to Scan; -30 to Search). At high water, trail, ledge, and plug are submerged beneath the river waters. Until recently the entrance to the shaft has been tightly sealed by the limestone plug, but the plug has been expelled by a geyser and thrown 20 meters to the southeast (hidden in marsh grass, -30 to Scan). The shaft opening might be visible at low water, but at the present highwater it is seen only as an anomalous whirlpool in the midst of a thick patch of river grass. From the bank at the point where the faint trail disappears into the river, the whirlpool is spotted only with a Critical Scan success; however, if a character is looking for peculiar water turbulence that might mark an subterranean entrance, or if he enters the river to search, he has a normal Search chance to find it. (A fish or newtling would be certain to find the entrance unless he fumbled his Search.)

The shaft is clearly artificial, two meters in diameter, circular in cross section, descending straight down, with the walls almost smooth except for ubiquitous patterns of shallow gouges reminiscent of claw or tooth marks. At the present high water, the entrance is two meters beneath the river surface, and a strong current whirlpools

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down the shaft. Swimming upshaft against this current is impossible without special aid (e.g., an undine), and climbing upshaft against the current possible only with a securely anchored rope and remarkable strength (STR 17+). Moving downshaft is automatic at a speed of 3 meters per round, though avoiding buffeting and dizziness in the shaft is a problem. Test Swim or DEX x 1 or suffer 1d3 damage in a random location and a –20 to all skills for 1d3 minutes.

#### **Exploring the Grotto of Pocharngo**

#### Passage Junctions (Locations A-D)

At the bottom of the shaft a passage extends northwest and upwards at a 5° angle and another passage extends southeast and downwards at a –5° angle. Three meters down the southeast passage the floor of the passage opens out into a large narrow chamber that extends to the west. This narrow west-trending chamber is the Dragonsnail Chamber leading to Oll's Chamber (Location I).

The northwest-trending passage (Location C) leads toward New Pavis. This passage connecting with a krarshtkid hive beneath the Devil's Playground is currently blocked by a sinkhole collapse.

The southeast trending passage (Location D) leads toward Trolltown. The passage is known to the trolls as a source of Chaos vermin, and has been sealed at the Trolltown end.

#### The Dragonsnail Chamber (Location E)

This chamber is little more than a narrow crack that leads down at a  $-45^{\circ}$  angle towards the west, where it continues as a narrow crack a meter high and between 30-60cm wide all the way to the Eye of Wakboth chamber (Location K) over three kilometers down to the west.

The chamber widens to 2m beneath a 5m-high dome. At the top of this dome a passage (Location F) leads north and upwards at a 45° angle towards the Walktapus Chamber (Location G).

A two-headed dragonsnail placidly feeds upon a dead gorp where the chamber widens beneath the dome. Its bulk blocks any further travel. The PCs must kill it or force it back three meters in order to continue past this chamber. It continues feeding on the gorp until distracted (ie, attacked). Once distracted, it pursues any perceived potential source of food. It relies on smells in the water produced by its prey, and it follows the strongest source of smell (i.e., the largest number or most massive of the characters).

#### The First Passage (Location F)

The bottom three-fourths of this passage is flooded, so characters may swim upwards. The top fourth is not flooded, but is slick with damp and cave slime, and extremely difficult to climb (-40 to Climb test). Clever schemes (using Glue spells to anchor ropes) or effective equipment (spears or poles wedged across the chamber as anchors) may simplify the climbing task.

From this point the PC catch their first whiff of the stench of Oll's Chamber, and can faintly hear sounds like dozens of infants wailing at the top of their lungs. The wailing continues without interruption, and as such clearly cannot be any human infants – at least, not like any human infants the PCs have ever seen.

#### The Walktapus Chamber (Location G)

The stench and din from Oll's Chamber is strong here. Test CON x 5 each round or suffer nausea for that round (-10 to all skill tests). All surfaces are damp and slime-covered, suggesting that the area may be flooded periodically.

A walktapus lives in the pool in the west of this chamber. When the PCs first enter the chamber it sleeps at the bottom of the pool. If the pool is disturbed in any way, the walktapus senses the disturbance, and emerges from the pool. It senses PCs by smell and hearing, and attacks the nearest source of potential food. Once it has one victim, it stops to feed, unless attacked, in which case it attacks in self-defense. It pursues the PCs as far as the Dragonsnail Chamber, but no further. It moves without penalty up and down vertical walls with the suction cups of its tentacles, but cannot hang from a ceiling.

The second passage (Location H) leads up from a dome over the walktapus's pool. The walls and ceiling are damp and slick (–40 to Climb tests). To enter the second passage, a single Climb test at –60 is required where the dome becomes a ceiling.

The chamber continues to the west as a narrow crack a two meters high and between 30-60cm wide all the way to the Eye of Wakboth chamber (Location K) over three kilometers down to the west.

#### The Second Passage (Location H)

This passage leads north and upwards at a 45° angle across the east end of Oll's Chamber (Location I) and proceeds beyond the chamber. It is apparent that Oll's Chamber has broken into this passage through the wall and floor; proceeding up past Oll's Chamber is very difficult (-60 to Climb test) and risks a fall down into Oll's Chamber.

#### THE GROTTO OF POCHARNGO

#### **River of Cradles**







				A DESCRIPTION OF A DESCRIPTION
Walktapus	(See RC	Q Deluxe, Glorar	ntha Book, p.	29.)
STR 25		melee/missile	location	points
CON 16		01-02/01	rleg	4/7
SIZ 25		03-04/02	I leg	4/7
INT 2		05/03-04	abdomen	4/7
POW 11		06/05-07	chest	4/9
DEX 11		07-08/08	r arm	4/6
		09-10/09	larm	4/6
Move: 3		11/10	tentacle 1	4/6
Fatigue: 41		12/11	tentacle 2	4/6
Hit points: 21		13/12	tentacle 3	4/6
Magic points:	11	14/13	tentacle 4	4/6
DEX SR: 3		15/14	tentacle 5	4/6
		16/15	tentacle 6	4/6
		17/16	tentacle 7	4/6
		18/17	tentacle 8	4/6
		19-29/18-20	head	4/9
Attacks:				
Weapon	SR	Attk/Par	% Dam	age
Tentacle	6	45/-	2d6*	A PART AND
Constrict	1	auto	2d6*	
Gas Cloud	1	auto	POT	8 poison
* Tentacle Atta	acks' Ea	ch round the wa	Iktanus attac	ke with up to

<sup>1</sup> Tentacle Attacks: Each round the walktapus attacks with up to four tentacles simultaneously, doing damage equal to the creature's damage modifier. If two or more tentacles strike the same victim, they hang on and constrict, each doing damage every round. Armor protects only until its armor points are overcome, then it is broken through.

#### Armor: 4-point skin

Magic: Regenerates 1 hit point per turn. Severed parts rejoin parent organism, or if separated, regenerate into complete individuals. Acid and fire may prevent regeneration. Poison gas affects all within 3m radius. To avoid inhaling, victim must hold breath as per asphyxiation rules (*Deluxe RQ, Player Book*, p. 80). If the gas is inhaled, the gas is immediately harmful. If the victim's CON is overcome, he takes damage equal to the gas's full potency. If the victim resists, he takes damage equal to half poison potency. Each round the gas is inhaled, the victim must attempt to resist again.

#### Dragonsnail (See RQ Deluxe, Glorantha Book, p. 28.)

STR	27	Move:	1 <i>n</i>	nelee/mis	sile locati	on point	ts
CON	18	Fatigu	e: 45	01-08	she	II 8/11	
SIZ	22	Hit poi	nts: 20	09-14	bod	y 4/9	
INT	02	Magic	points: 10	) 15-20	head	d 4/9	
POW	10	DEX S	R: 4				
DEX	07						
Weapon		SR	Attk/Pa	ar%	Damage	ENC/AP	
Bite		7	56/		1d6+2d6	-	

Chaotic Features: Its spirit attacks the character who killed it in spirit combat after it is dead. If it possesses its killer, it will take him over.

Special Notes: The head and body is like a giant handpuppet with huge fangs and twin eyed mounted on long stalks. Tiny sinister-looking tentacles like those of a poisonous jellyfish thrash about madly as it lunges to bite, though these tentacles have no special effect. If possessed by the spirit of the dragonsnail, a PC attempts to crawl around and graze algae and slime from the rocks. The possessed PC automatically tries to bite other PCs who try to interfere with it.

## $G \nabla \forall \bullet t \land A \Box X O \amalg : A R \infty + U O 2 + A O Y # O +$

Beyond Oll's Chamber the passage narrows to a meter high and 30cm wide, but continues to a rubble-blocked exit to the surface on the edge of the main ruins. Clearing the rubble from inside the passage is impossible, but might require 10-60 man hours of labor to clear from the surface. Locating the blocked exit on the surface is easiest if someone calls out from the passage below the blockage.

This passage and Oll's Chamber (Location I) beyond stink like gangrenous wounds and resound with a din of speechless wailing reminiscent of someone torturing a nursery full of infants. Each round a character remains in this passage or the chamber beyond he must test CON x 5 each round or retch, suffering -20 to all skills for that round. Further, to cast a spell or use an Knowledge-based skill, a character must test INT x 5 to concentrate over the appalling racket of the shrieking manlings.

#### Oll's Chamber (Location I)

Crossing the narrow ledge of The Second Passage above Oll's chamber requires a successful DEX x 5 test or a successful Climb test; failure of either means a fall into Oll's Chamber.

Oll's Chamber is a steep-sided bowl with a pool at the bottom. A series of narrow limestone ledges descend from the Second Passage entrance. Each ledge is three meters below the next. The rock is slick with slime and moisture; to descend a ledge, test Climb at -40 or fall (see *RQ Deluxe, Players Book*, p. 80). Any fall continues to the next contour unless a DEX x 5 test is made; a successful test means the character has halted his fall, but lies prone on the ledge.

The ledge surrounding Oll's Pool (J) is occupied by 20 manlings. They mill around mindlessly, screaming and taking bites from one another, or crouch and feed on their fallen companions. Occasionally one blunders into the pool, and is pushed back onto the ledge by an indescribable noisome and distorted parody of a giant humanoid limb (belonging to Oll). From time to time a gorp slithers out of the pool and blunders around aimlessly among the manlings; in a few minutes it slithers out the lower exit (Location K).

The pool itself — Oll's Pool — has an opaque, black gelatinous scum-skin that shimmers like a pool of oil in light. Oll lies six meters below the surface, and therefore cannot be targeted by any missile or spell. River Eyes spell effects permit characters who stick their heads into the pool to see Oll, and therefore presumably to target him with spells (though with his MP score, good luck winning the resistance rolls). Firearrow, Fireblade, Sunspear, Sever Spirit, and similar spells are useless. Purified Water (i.e., water blessed with a Purify Water spell) has no special effect on Oll. Therefore PCs who attack Oll are going to have to get down into the pool and engage in hand-tohand combat.

The chamber continues to the west as a narrow crack two meters high and between 60-100cm wide all the way to the Eye of Wakboth chamber over three kilometers down to the west.

#### Tactics for Oll and his Spawn

Manlings: See "Manlings," p. 139, for a description of manling abilities. The manlings cannot climb beyond their ledge, and can only attack PCs on the ledge with them. Spells, missile fire, and patience can be used to clear this ledge of manlings from a safe distance, or PCs who descend to the ledge above them can butcher them with ease or shove them into the pool with intentional Knockbacks. (Manlings are always surprised, and therefore don't even add DEX to resist such knockbacks; however, Oll just keeps shoving them out of the pool back onto the ledge). The manlings are no more than nuisance creatures, and should present no real threat to the PCs.

**Gorp:** See pages 79-80 for a full treatment of gorp. When the PCs come within 15 meters of Oll's pool, gorp begin emerging from the pool to attack and pursue. The pool contains 2 small, 2 medium, and 1 large gorp (see p. 138). When presented with multiple possible targets or routes, the gorp move randomly (roll dice for target or direction at your discretion), but they always instinctively move toward a potential source of food (ie, PCs or bait). Gorp take one round to climb a ledge. They pursue until no target is within 15 meters; they then wander aimlessly (roll 1d6 for direction) as long as PCs remain in the chamber (the scent of food is in the air, but its location is unclear). When the PCs leave the chamber, they return to the pool.

Oll: See "Oll, Priest of Pocharngo," p. 139, for a description of Oll's abilities. Oll does not leave his pool. Oll fights only in self-defense. He cannot perceive beyond the limits of his pool *except* with the use of the Second Sight spell. Any creature that touches or enters the pool may be Scanned (Oll's Scan is based on his skin's sensitivity to pressure and sound), and any successfully Scanned creature may be attacked by spell or melee. Oll may make a maximum of one spell attack and one physical attack per round.

Oll does nothing until he perceives the visiting PCs. He does not perceive them until they touch or enter his pool OR they disturb the pool in some

**River of Cradles** 



Manlings cluster on the edge of the pool in Oll's Chamber

#### **River of Cradles**

### GVV●+XA□XOU:AR∞ +UO2+AAY#O\*7

way other than likely to have been caused by normal manling or gorp activity. For example, gorp enter and leave the water from time to time, and occasionally manlings tumble into the pool, but a spear or light-producing object thrust in the pool is clearly not the doing of a gorp or manling.

As soon as Oll perceives the PCs, he casts a Second Sight spell, which locates all PCs within 50m for spell targeting purposes.

The next round he casts a Mindspeech spell with enough points to establish contact with all PCs in range. For the duration of the Mindspeech Oll rhapsodizes about the ecstacy of birth and love, the splendor of pure reason, and the rapture of the divine. The language is an archaic form of Seshnegi, and almost certainly incomprehensible to most PCs, and even if they knew the language, the diction and logic of Oll's speech is poetic, allusive, elliptical, and just plain crazy. Nonetheless, the tone and musical quality of Oll's voice is deeply moving.

The effect of this Mindspeech on the PCs is similar to having a Swahili version of the Hallelujah Chorus played at high volume into headphones on each PC. The experience is soulstirring and incomprehensible, and there is no indication where the speech is coming from. For example, you might tell your players:

The PCs are gathered on a ledge in Oll's Chamber looking with horror and disgust at the manlings scrambling and bleating around the dark pool. A Storm Bull cultist, Sensing Chaos within the pool, hurls a javelin into the pool's depths. Nothing happens for one round [Oll casts Second Sight], then in the next round everyone present hears within their heads an unintelligible murmuring. The voice is gloriously musical and beautiful, though the language is unfamiliar.

But where is the source of this voice? The manlings? the pool itself, or something within the pool? or from some hidden creature in the dark cavern around them?

Oll does not attack physically or with spells until he is injured or magically attacked. In selfdefense he casts nothing but Disruptions until any of his body locations are reduced to zero points or lower. At that point Oll instinctively attacks with his most dangerous spells (the Consume, Corruption, and Wither spells). He only has one each of the latter two spells, and uses them only in extremity. These spells have dire effects, though with luck Oll may be so reduced in magic points when he casts them that the PCs have a good chance to resist. As he approaches death, Oll reaches out with Mindspeech to any suitable target and attempts to plead for his life while summarizing in mystical epigrams the exquisite brilliance of his transcendent insights. The language is incomprehensible, and the meaning of Oll's message is lost, but the emotional overtones of rapture and terror are excruciatingly clear. The character or characters receiving this message must test POW x 5 or contract the desperate intellectual malady of Doubt at a score of 5. This malady reduces a character's chance of success with a Divine spell by 5%. Each time a Divine spell fails, the Doubt score increases by 1d6 points. Doubt can only be cured by Divine Intervention or Heroquest.

#### **Oll, Ancient Priest of Pocharngo**

Oll has lain in bottom of this chamber for time beyond memory. His substance constantly renews itself, making him effectively immortal. His mind no longer functions like that of a normal human, resembling most closely a synthesis of senile ravings and the mystic's trance. Though alien and repulsive by human standards, Oll is in a perverse way a transcendent realization of supremely human impulses. A priest of Primal Chaos and Pocharngo, Oll lives in an eternity of peaceful darkness, only taking pleasure in the birth of Chaos's children, in his Divinations upon the splendid mysteries of Chaos, and in the ecstacy of oneness with the divine in worship. Giving birth to gorp and manlings is his sole carnal pleasure; his pride and love for his spawn are his maternal and family joy. His spiritual pleasure is in the mystical splendor of possibility without limit, and after each rhapsodic worship he ponders and savors over and over again the insight possible only in communion with the divine.

A Self-Contained Divine Ecology: With his Create Gorp spell Oll is constantly transforming the substance of stone into the living Chaotic substance of gorp. Over the centuries this sacred process has excavated the pit of Oll's Chamber.

He also spawns manlings. The day after Oll invokes the divine ritual, a new budmass appears on a body location. By the second day the budmass has swollen to fist size. On the third day the budmass has begun to assume humanoid form. By the fifth day the budmass's limbs and head are clearly formed, and the eyes and mouth open. On the seventh day the budmass separates from Oll, leaving an open sore that closes within 24 hours.

The average manling lives less than a week. The most remarkable lives no more than 10 days. The flesh and limbs fail and putrefy, leaving the dying manling to provide fodder for the other manlings.

#### THE GROTTO OF POCHARNGO

**River of Cradles** 

# GVVS+IA□XOU: AR∞ + UO2+ 2 OY # O + T

Small Expl	oding	Gorp (See pp. 79-	-80)
STR 0 CON 4 SIZ 8 INT 1 POW 3		Move 1 Hit points: 6 Fatigue: N/A Magic Points: 3 DEX SR: 4	
Location Body	π	nelee & missile d20 01-20	points all
		Attk/Par% 100/- ausing 1d6 acid da p, Manlings, and O	

Small Reg	eneratin	ig Gorp (See p	p. 79-80)
STR 0		Move 1	
CON 5		Hit points: 8	
SIZ 10		Fatigue: N/A	
INT 1		Magic Points: 6	
POW6		DEX SR: 4	
Location	me	elee & missile da	20 points
Body		01-20	all
Regenerates	s 1d3 poir	nts each round.	
Weapon	SR	Attk/Par%	Damage
Envelope	1	100/-	3 point acid
and the second second			E PARTIE AND

#### Medium Acid Gorp(See pp. 79-80)

Small Deconstine

STR 00		Move 1	
CON 10		Hit points: 14	
SIZ 18		Fatigue: N/A	
INT 01		Magic Points: 11	
POW11		DEX SR: 4	
Location Body		melee & missile d20 01-20	points all
Weapon Envelope	SR 1	Attk/Par% 100/-	<i>Damage</i> 8 point acid

#### Medium Paralyzing Gorp (See pp. 79-80)

STR 00		Move 1	
CON 09		Hit points: 13	
SIZ 16		Fatigue: N/A	
INT 01		Magic Points: 8	
POW 08		DEX SR: 4	
Location Body	me	elee & missile da 01-20	20 points all
		01-20	dii
Weapon	SR	Attk/Par%	Damage
Envelope	1	100/-	Paralyzation*

\* Test CON x 5 or location paralyzed. Paralyzed limbs are useless. Paralyzed abdomen or chest causes collapse and incapacitation. Paralyzed head causes unconsciousness. Paralysis lasts 2d10 rounds.



A STATE OF THE STA	ic Points: 15 (SR: 4
	& <i>missile d20</i> 01-20
SR	Attk/Par%
1	100/-

Location

Weapon

Envelope

Body

points all Damage Strength 20 Glue\*

\* Affects as Glue spell. As each body location is affected, the gorp attacks an adjacent body location in subsequent rounds, eventually enveloping and immobilizing the victim. Glue does not adhere to living tissue or living vegetable matter. Digestive juices are no stronger than saliva, so victim suffers no immediate harm; however, killing and removing the gorp is remarkably difficult.

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#### **Oll, Ancient Priest of Pocharngo and Primal Chaos**

STR 9		melee/missile	location	points
CON 51		01-04/01-03	R Leg	3/17
SIZ 50		05-08/04-06	L Leg	1/17
INT 21		09-11/07-10	Abdom	6/17
POW 36		12/11-15	Chest	0/21
DEX 3		13-15/16-17	R Arm	5/13
APP 1		16-18/18-19	L Arm	4/13
		19-20/20	Head	9/17
Move: 1 Fatigue: 60 Hit points: 51 Magic points: DEX SR: 4	36			
Attacks:				
Weapon Fist Kick	SR 7 7	Attk/Par% 50/- 50/-	Damage 1d3+2d6 3d6	ENC/AP - -

Spirit Magic: (180): Disruption, Light, Mindspeech 8, Second Sight (Oll has forgotten all spirit magic but the spells listed, which for various reasons Oll continues to cast from time to time.) Divine Magic (180): Dismiss Magic, Divination, Worship Pocharngo, Worship Primal Chaos, Create Gorp, Consume (3 castings), Wither (1 casting), Chaos Feature (1 casting). Skills: Scan 90, Listen 90, Dodge 30.

Languages: All forgotten but an archaic Western tongue. Special Notes: Oll can only perceive what it can touch. It has excellent sense of touch (Scan 90%), and must normally use this sense to target spells or physical attacks; however, Second Sight may permit him to target spells. Oll and his spawn, gorp and manling alike, are immune to the destructive effects of gorp.

Oll's body is so radically altered that damage to chest and abdomen locations takes effect as though to a limb; he suffers none of the effects normally suffered by humanoids as a result of damage to chest and abdomen. Damage to the head affects Oll normally.

#### Manlings, Spawn of Oll

C. C. C. C. TRU				
STR 3		melee/missile	location	points
CON 3		01-04/01-03	R Leg	0/2
SIZ 3		05-08/04-06	L Leg	0/2
INT 1		09-11/07-10	Abdom	0/2
POW 3		12/11-15	Chest	0/2
DEX 3		13-15/16-17	R Arm	0/2
APP 3		16-18/18-19	L Arm	0/2
		19-20/20	Head	0/2
Move: 1				
Fatigue: 6				
Hit points: 3				
Magic points:	3			
DEX SR: 4				
Attacks:				
Weapon	SR	Attk/Par%	Damage	
Bite	10	50/-	2 point acid-	and the ser

#### **Special Pocharngo Divine Spells**

#### Consume

1 point

ranged, temporal, stackable, reusable

The spell does 1d3 damage to a random hit location of a target whose magic points are overcome, ignoring all armor. On subsequent rounds, during the bookkeeping phase, the target must try to roll his current magic points x 5 or less on 1d100. If he fails, he takes another 1d3 damage in the same location. This continues until the hit location receives twice the number of damage points allotted to that location, and is completely destroyed (turned into grey slime), or the victim is succeeds in making his magic point x 5 roll, in which case the spell's effects end. Countermagic and similar spells cannot block this attack after the first melee round, but Dispel, Dismiss, or Neutralize Magic can cancel the process. If the location is not destroyed, damage done can be healed normally. If a vital location is destroyed, the victim dies. If a limb is destroyed, it may be regrown normally.

Each additional point in this spell decreases the target's magic point x 5 roll by 25 percentiles (to a minimum 5% chance of success). If a victim had 18 magic points and was being afflicted by Consume 2, he would have to roll 65 or less to resist the spell's effect.

#### **Create Gorp**

1 point

ritual Enchant spell, stackable, reusable This ritual is performed over the earth itself. It transforms a portion of the ground into a live gorp with a SIZ equal to the number of points in the Create Gorp spell.

#### Spawn Manling

#### 1 point

**3** points

ritual enchant spell, stackable, reusable

This ritual is performed upon the body of the caster himself. It transforms a portion of the caster's flesh (a randomly chosen body location) into a budmass that matures into a manling. In seven days the budmass matures and separates from the caster's body as an independent manling.

#### Wither

ranged, instant, stackable, reusable

This spell must overcome the target's magic points to be effective. A random spell hit location is rolled, and that body location becomes permanently withered, deformed, and useless. The location is reduced to 0 hit points, but no general hit point damage is done. If a vital organ is affected, such as the head, chest, or abdomen, the target dies. A Withered limb cannot be healed unless the Cure Chaos Wound spell is stacked with an appropriate healing spell, but it could be amputated and then Regrow Limb or Regenerate used to restore it properly.

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When gorp and manlings die, their putrefying bodies also provide the nutrients in the pool that nourish Oll's body. Thus this closed cycle would normally proceed uninterrupted indefinitely – a never-ending rhapsody of birth, inspiration, and worship. The resurgence of activity from the Eye of Wakboth, however, causes the floods and geysers that push Oll's gorp spawn into the Zola Fel, thereby creating the plague of gorp in the river. Thus the plague of gorp is a purely accidental byproduct of natural, albeit Chaotic, phenomena, and does not represent a deliberate assault by Chaos on the outer world.

#### The Ancient Treasures of the Pool

In ages past creatures once came to Oll's chamber to present offerings and to receive the blessing of a chaos feature. Most organic and metal objects have long since been dissolved by the gorp Oll has spawned, but a substantial number of stone and crystal artifacts are buried in the muck at the bottom of his pool. These artifacts are classified into three categories:

**1. Enigmatic Antiquities:** These items may be discovered in the muck at the bottom of Oll's pool with a normal Search test. The following artifacts are each worth 50-500L. The actual value is not known until the object is certified as an antiquity by a scholar with minimum 50% skills in both Human Lore and Evaluate skills. Such objects may have even more value (+10-100%) if sold to scholars or collectors of antiquities.

a stone bowl etched with geometric designs a stone cup in the shape of a skull a crude carved stone figure of a starfish an obsidian blade (still sharp)

a stone tablet marked with many wedge-shaped scars ( a form of ancient writing)

a small, chalk-white pyramidal piece of stone etched with different symbols on each face (an ancient four-sided die)

a group of interlocking stone rings carved from a single piece of rock

a stone sculpture in the form of human lips

2. Gems, Ornaments, and Decorative Objects: The following cut gem stones are found loose or salvaged from otherwise ruined artifacts. These small items are difficult to recognize, and require both a successful Search and Evaluate to discover, unless a methodical procedure of complete excavation and examination of the pool muck is employed, in which case a successful Search OR Evaluate is sufficient. Small jades worth 9, 9, 15, 21, 24, 45, 45 lunars Small emeralds worth 21, 56, 70, 98 lunars Small diamonds worth 40, 100, 190 lunars Medium jades worth 90, 240 lunars A medium diamond worth 500 lunars A medium emerald worth 275 lunars

The following artifacts are each worth 5d100+500L. These items may be discovered in the muck at the bottom of Oll's pool with a normal Search test. The actual value is not known until the object is certified as an antiquity by a scholar with minimum 50% skills in both Human Lore and Evaluate skills. Such objects may be of even more value (+10 to 100%) if sold to collectors of fine art.

a marble infant's head, apparently broken from a statue, with Kralorelan features

a decorated candlestick with silver and gem inlays (a critical Human Lore recognizes its pre-Closing Jrustelan provenance, and doubles its value)

an ornamental obsidian dagger of dragonewt manufacture

3. Objects with Magical Virtues: These small items are difficult to recognize, and require either a special Search or a Detect Magic or similar spell effect to discover:

a stone bead carved in the shape of the skull enchanted as a wraith binding; contains a wraith (CON 31, INT 13, Magic Points 16, Move 16, attacks INT)

an irregular chunk of smoky quartz enchanted as a Visibility matrix (a critical Mineral Lore reveals that this variety of smoky quartz is exceptionally rare in Genertela, but common in Pamaltela)

a small (15 carat) pearl enchanted as a 5-point magic point matrix

#### The Eye of Wakboth

From Locations E, G, and I narrow passages descend over three kilometers. Each passage is flooded and frequently squeezes to narrow dimensions, making travel difficult, perhaps impossible, for air-breathing, human-sized creatures, even with magical aid. At the end of these passages lies a vast subterranean vault containing the Eye of Wakboth. Wakboth (the Devil, the incarnate evil deity of the Chaos pantheon) is trapped beneath the Block in western Prax. The physical and metaphysical nature of the Eye of Wakboth is unknown, sealed as it has been beneath the surface of Glorantha for ages.

### $G \nabla \forall \bullet \dagger \& A \Box X O \amalg : A \land \infty & \blacksquare O 2 & Q O Y # O X 7$

#### **Resolving the Adventure**

Determined PCs will probably destroy Oll and bring an end to the plague of gorp. They should report the details of their adventures to Che'en. Che'en proposes a wait of one season to make certain the plague of gorp has been ended. In the interim he arranges for room and board among local Zola Fel worshippers at temple expense. While the PCs wait, Che'en provides letters of introduction to prospective employers. Che'en also persuades Ghanara Eberhell to write letters on behalf of the Ingilli family, which carry more weight in Pavic circles.

At the end of the one-season wait, Che'en awards the PCs any coin, training, or other benefit he has promised. Che'en also automatically accepts any PC as an initiate candidate for Zola Fel, and after a period of training in doctrine, welcomes the PC into the community of cult initiates.

If Things Go Wrong: If PCs are slaughtered, possessed, or otherwise spoiled, Che'en uses his influence with the Chalana Arroy and Teelo Nori temples to arrange for Resurrect, exorcism, or other healing rites, and Zola Fel picks up the bill.

If sensible PCs decide to leave the Grotto of Pocharngo to more doughty heroes, Che'en offers a partial payment based on what they have completed (10-40% of the promised price, depending on how far the PCs got).

#### Extending a River of Cradles Campaign

In the course of their travels along the Zola Fel the PCs have had opportunities to make useful contacts with many prospective employers of mercenary adventurers.

The temples of Zola Fel in Pavis, the Shrine of Kinope, and Corflu with their respective priests should be happy to engage loyal cultists who have shown their mettle in the service of the river god. Whether serving as guards for merchant or explorer expeditions along the river or protecting Zola Fel worshippers from monsters and other enemies, the PCs can expect respect, friendship, and good terms of employment.

If their encounters with Coriander the templar or the Sun Dome notables were favorable, they may also find a comparatively warm welcome in the normally xenophobic Land of the Sun.

Duke Raus of Ronegarth is always looking for capable mercenaries, especially those with river and marsh wilderness experience and good relations with newtlings, and their performance at Gubrana Stead against the broos raiders may earn them a good reputation and a recruiting bonus. The Duke is much concerned with control of river bandits and marauding broos, and his ambitions of scouting more land to put under cultivation require him to secure the borders of his grants.

The rumors of the heroes' exploits in the caverns near Ogre Island earn them free beverages and speculative offers in the Pavis taverns where mercenaries and adventurers gather.

#### The Ogre Island Geyser

Note that though the destruction of Oll halts the plague of gorp, it does not, however, bring an end to the geyser near Ogre Island.

The krarshtkid-excavated tunnels beneath Ogre Island are not flooded during the low water. It is through these tunnels that ogre Cacodemon cultists manage to approach the Ogre Island Cacodemon temple without being discovered. For centuries Cacodemon cultists have hoped to free Wakboth from his captivity beneath the Block. Having recently learned by divination of the presence of the Eye of Wakboth beneath the Devil's Playground, the Cacodemon cultists have embarked on a series of ritual sacrifices intended to contact and empower the Eye of Wakboth. It is these rituals that have stirred the Eye of Wakboth, producing the geyser of Ogre Island.

The activities of ogres and other Cacodemon cultists on Ogre Island and in the krarsht tunnels beneath the Rubble are excellent themes for new scenarios. See *Elder Secrets, Elder Races Book*, pp. 103-107, for a description of the Cacodemon cult.

#### **RuneQuesting in the Heart of Prax**

The following RuneQuest supplements offer settings and scenarios along the River of Cradles.

Sun County, RuneQuest Adventures in the Land of the Sun, details the history and traditions of Yelmalio-worshipping Orlanthi peoples who settled the fertile plains south of Pavis along the Zola Fel centuries ago. Three scenarios in this supplement, "the Garhound Festival," "Melisande's Hand," and "Rabbit Hat Farm," and numerous encounters and adventure ideas presented in Sun County are particularly wellsuited for player characters from a River of Cradles campaign.

*Shadows on the Borderlands* (a Winter 1992 release) is a collection of scenarios featuring covert Chaos cults and underground settings in the settled border regions of the Zola Fel valley.

# GVVSTLADXOU: AROSUD2#20Y#0XX

#### Chingua Tall Leopard of the Red Star Clan Agimor Hunter, Warrior, Foundchild & Daka Fal Initiate, male, 19

STR	17	melee/missile	location	points
CON	16	01-04/01-03	RLeg	2/6
SIZ	19	05-08/04-06	LLeg	2/6
INT	13	09-11/07-10	Abdom	4/6
POW	12	12/11-15	Chest	4/8
DEX	11	13-15/16-17	R Arm	2/5
APP	10	16-18/18-19	L Arm	2/5
		19-20/20	Head	5/6
Move: 4				
<b>Fatigue</b> :	: 33			
1 Ht - stat				

Hit points: 18 Magic points: 12 DEX SR: 3

Arms and Armor: Current encumbrance = 3.6. Fatigue 29 (33–3.6). Note: Only items listed in **boldface** are in PC's possession!

Weapon	SR	Attk/Par%	Damage	ENC/AP
2-H Spear	5	46/35	1d10+1+1d6	2/10
Fist	7	31/25	1d3+1d6	7/18
Gladius	6	32/30	1d6+1+1d6	1/10
Javelin	3/9	64/35	1D8+1+1d3	1.5/8
Dagger	7	38/29	1D4+2+1D6	.5/6

Spirit Magic (66-ENC) Detect Enemy (1), Disruption (1), Heal 2, Mobility 1, Protection 3, Second Sight (3)

**Bonuses and Skills:** 

Communication +3: Speak Praxian 39, Speak Firespeech 12, Speak Tradetalk 20, Speak New Pelorian 13, Hunter Sign 37. Agility -4: Climb 62, Dodge 27, Jump 60, Swim 15, Throw 39. Manipulation +8: Conceal 55, Craft Leather 30, Craft Wood 21, Craft Stone 21, Devise 60.

Knowledge +3: Animal Lore 40, Human Lore 24, Plant Lore 19, World Lore 29

Perception +7: Listen 61, Scan 73, Search 45, Track 66. Stealth –7: Hide 68, Sneak 64.

Magic +6: Ceremony 16, Summon 8

Armor: Hard Leather body & cuirboulli cap. (AP 2 or 3/Enc 2.1) No armor on limbs. He has 2 point skin everywhere.

Special Item: Chingua's body armor and leather cap are made of leopard skin. The cap is a double layer of leather.

Distinctive Traits: Discontented: Unhappy with ordinary tribal life, unable to fit in as a mercenary, Chingua searches for meaning and purpose in life. *Respectful:* Unless purposely mistreated, Chingua defers to authority and his elders. He sought (and got) permission to leave his tribe. *Superstitious:* Though absolutely fearless in normal combat, Chingua's fear of the Spirit World and its denizens keeps his spare time constantly occupied with charmmaking and prayers to his ancestors.

Tactical Notes for new players: Chingua's high Fatigue Points make him able to outlast opponents by playing a defensive game. Try to get his Protection spell going before combat, to make up for his lack of armor. Chingua can run down any normal man, and most animals.

Other Notes: Chingua's Craft skills focus on weaponmaking and hide tanning, and his Devise skill represents his trap setting and game snaring abilities. He has no idea how to pick a lock. Hunter Sign is an Agimor sign language, very useful for hunting, but with a limited vocabulary for anything else. He goes barefoot.

#### PC 1: Chingua Background Briefing

#### Who am I? Who is my family? What is my past?

I am Chingua Tall Leopard, clan of the Red Star. My father Harawi was lamed in the great slaughter at Moonbroth, yet he lives, bringing great shame and burden to my family. As a youth I walked the plains of Prax and learned the way of the hunter and the warrior, as does any True Man, but my father's weakness sickened me, and I became a warrior of the great moon tribe who defeated my father's people at Moonbroth. I stayed among them for many turns of seasons, but they gave me no honor, and though mighty in battle as a mob, they were weak and not worthy of me. Now I walk alone far from my people among strangers. Those that show me honor I may make a service for, in hunting or tracking, in guarding or fighting. I am sad, for I have lost my father's home, and have not yet found my new one.

# What is my homeland? Who are my people? What other lands do I know? Who are their peoples?

The plains of Prax is my land, and the Agimori, the Men-and-a-Half, the greatest of True Men in the world and blessed of Lodri, are my people. I have walked from the cold north mountains to the cliffs of the south sea, from the west grasslands to the wastes of Genert. I have seen all lands and stood in all nature's places. I have tracked all manner of creatures and honored them with my spear. I have seen Pavis and do not like it. The people of Pavis and Sun Dome are farmers and housemen, and are of little account. The beast herders of the plains are True Men of honor, though small, so they ride beasts. The Agimori have long shared the land with them.

#### What work do I do? How do I spend my time?

The red-moon-people paid me metal coins to serve as their warrior, and called it work. Now I hunt and fight for those who honor me, and they call it work. In fact, I do not understand work. I do what I must; I walk, I hunt, I fight, I eat, I rest. Some things I do for those who give me presents. I do not understand what people mean by fun. I do everything for fun, I think, for I do what pleases me.

#### What do I value? Who do I serve? What do I hope for?

I have served my clan and my father and my chief, but no more. I have served the red-moon-chief, but no more. I have served the traders bearing tin pots and the scholars seeking lost treasures, and I will serve them again, if they do me honor. I have all I need, but I admire the fine weapons of steel and the armor of the red-moon-warriors. Most I hope for a good home, a good wife, and many children, for brother hunters and warriors about me, and wide land to roam free. Perhaps I must then return to my people, but not yet, for in my unhappiness I look for something to satisfy my soul. [You have left 1257L in the hands of Padrone Ingilli of Riverside in Pavis, a trustworthy man. You do not know what 1257L is worth, nor do you actually know how many coins you have ("Many"), so you want more coins for a brideprice when you get married.]

# What things are good? What things are evil? Who are my friends? Who are my enemies?

Courage and skill at arms are good. Knowledge of the land and its beasts brings life and safety. Honor and trust among brothers and friends is good. Riding beasts is foolish, and for little men. Slavery is foolish, and for weak men. Cowardice is evil, and death its reward. Theft is evil, and death its reward. Murder is evil, and the debt must be paid, in service or blood. I am a solitary man without a clan, and my friends are my companions, and their enemies are my enemies. Those who do me honor may be my friends; those who do me wrong must be my enemies.

#### Who are my gods? How do I serve them?

My gods are Foundchild the Hunter and Daka Fal the Judge of the Dead. I share the lesser secrets of the Initiate, and must return to my people and my shaman for Sacred Time to do his bidding. My shaman and my ancestors give me leave to wander from my clan and tribe, for I have always been a restless spirit, and nothing seems to satisfy me. My great-grandfather too was a sad wanderer, and he watches me in my journeys. I serve the Foundchild by honoring the souls of beasts with the Peaceful Cut and practicing the mysteries of the hunt. I serve Grandfather Mortal and the spirits of my ancestors by doing deeds that honor their memories and preserve the honor of my clan and tribe. I am troubled, for I am no longer sure what the honor of my clan and tribe might be in the light of the red moon. My shaman has sent me on the path of the solitary seeker. Here I may only hope to find the path of honor beneath my feet.

#### Kannan Kannanson

Sable Tribe outcast and Storm Bull Initiate, male, 20

	and the second second		the Post Course Present		
STR	15	melee/missile	location	points	
CON	15	01-04/01-03	R Leg	1/5 1	
SIZ	11	05-08/04-06	LLeg	1/5	
INT	15	09-11/07-10	Abdom	1/5	
POW	14	12/11-15	Chest	1/6	
DEX	17	13-15/16-17	R Arm	1/4	
APP	10	16-18/18-19	LArm	1/4 - 6	
		19-20/20	Head	5/5	
Move: 3					
Fatigue	: 30				
Hit point	ts: 13				
Magic points: 14					
DEX SR: 2					

Note: Only items listed in boldface are in PC's possession!

Arms and Armor: Current encumbrance = 8.5. Fatigue 21 (30-8.5) Quiver of 20 arrows (Epc. 1)

(30-0.5). Guiver	0120	arrows (Enc.	1).	
Weapon	SR	Attk/Par%	Damage	ENC/AP
1-H S. Spear	7	55/35	1d8+1+1d4	2/10
Round Shield	8	19/40	1d6+1d4	3/12
Broadsword	7	35/	1D8+1+1d4	1.5/10
Self Bow	2/7	29/	1d6+1	.5/5

Spirit Magic (83–ENC): Bladesharp 3, Heal 2, Fanaticism (1). Bonuses and Skills:

Communication +7: Speak Pavic 41, Speak Praxian 40, Speak Tradetalk 22.

Agility +9: Boat 14, Climb 55, Dodge 34, Ride 33, Swim 29, Throw 44.

Manipulation +15: Devise 24, Play Sable Horn 22 Knowledge +5: First Aid 28, Craft Horn 14, Animal Lore 16, Human Lore 33, World Lore 20, Read/Write Pavic 06. Perception +10: Listen 43, Scan 49, Search 40, Sense Chaos 37, Track 39.

Stealth +7: Hide 17, Sneak 27.

Magic +13: Ceremony 19, Enchant 17.

Armor: Cuirbouilli and linen padding all locations, gilded open helm. (Padding: AP 1/Enc 3.5. Helm AC6/Enc 2)

**Distinctive Traits:** *Materialistic:* Years of deprivation have shown Kannan the absolute necessity of money and possessions, and he judges success based on them. *Bitter:* Convinced he and his family have been mistreated, he holds a grudge against Sables and Lunars. *Proud:* Kannan delights in putting on a good appearance and wearing fine clothes. Considered a bit "prissy" by the less-civilized Storm Bulls of his temple, he refuses to degrade himself with the wild drunken binges and filthy habits of some Bullers. When challenged about his behavior, he happily displays his chaos trophies and describes his kills.

Tactical Notes for new players: Kannan isn't really big, so he prefers flank attacks to frontal assaults.

Other Notes: A sable horn is a long thin hunting horn made from a sable antler. It can carry a simple tune, though it is very loud. This makes it a perfect instrument for Storm Bullers: simple and loud. This horn is a momento of Kannan's last mount; a sable killed in a raid last year. Kannan would love to get another one, preferrably stolen from one of the Lunar loving Sable Tribesmen.

#### PC 2: Kannan Background Briefing

#### Who am I? Who is my family? What is my past?

I am Kannan Kannanson. I am of the Sable people, but my clan and tribe are of no consequence, having shamed themselves in alliance with the Chaos-loving Lunars. My father was a great Storm Bull champion, sung of in many stories, but he died without clan or comfort, betrayed by his people. My family lives in Pavis Badside; I can provide, but they are proud and hate charity. I have walked among the Devil's filth in the Wastelands, the Dead Place, and the Marsh, and I have returned with wounds and trophies to place on Storm Bull's altars.

# What is my homeland? Who are my people? What other lands do I know? Who are their peoples?

Prax is my land. I love its wild empty places and the bitter Bull winds. Once I was happy there with my Sable people, until the Lunar came and bought their souls with silver pennies. Now I am a civilized free man of modern tastes and great wealth. I have a fine house in Pavis, and am at home there as on sableback or in the wasteland. I know the Lunar land is filled with chaos devils and tainted men. I know the Sartar land is filled with Lunar soldiers.

#### What work do I do? How do I spend my time?

I am a modern man for hire, a warrior for coin, for I would always be free, and a man of wealth need not die poor and forgotten. I will serve any man with money, so long as he is not a Chaos-lover, and so long as he grants my holy quest to destroy Chaos and defend the pure from its taint. When I am not in service for pay, I serve my Storm Bull and its temple, or I share the troubles of my brother cultists. I like to drink, to talk, and to sing. Perhaps I am loud... but no one complains.

#### What do I value? Who do I serve? What do I hope for?

I am most proud of my strong arm in the service of the Storm Bull. I have deep feelings, and I share his hatred of Chaos, and would save my land and people from its taint. I serve my cult and the people of my cult, and I protect all the people from Chaos as Storm Bull did. I am a man of honor; I pay my debts, and am loyal to those who pay. My house has more fine furniture than a Lunar count. I will die a rich man and honored by my fellow Storm Bulls, and my wealth will build a great shrine to His honor. And I have always wanted the skin of a Lunar rune lord. [You rent a house near the Storm Bull temple in the Farmer's Quarter in Pavis. You left 220L in the temple's safekeeping. Your house is furnished with expensive housewares to impress your guests with your wealth. You want more money so you can really BE wealthy like a merchant.]

# What things are good? What things are evil? Who are my friends? Who are my enemies?

The blessing of Storm Bull is good. A strong spear and a fine mount are good. I love the beautiful things that rich men own, so long as they are earned honorably. I love my fellow cultists, good, generous, fearless, and trustworthy. I like tough sellswords, but even more I honor the Chalana Arroy healers, who face Chaos without weapons. Most people are weak, and I would protect them, fools and cowards alike. But Chaos is evil, and friends of Chaos are evil, and fools who tolerate Chaos are stupid until they are warned, then evil if they heed not the warning.

#### Who are my gods? How do I serve them?

I love Storm Bull. He protects all the people: the people of the Prax plains, children of Waha; and the herders of the Sartar hills, children of Orlanth. He needs no tricks or books, just fists and courage. He fears not pain, not even death, for his cause is sacred, and the need great. Where there is Chaos, Storm Bull wants my strong hand and heart. Where the filth of Chaos swarm, there will be my lance, and a great cleansing in His name. I also honor the way of the plains folk, of Waha and Eiritha, for though I am a modern man, and free of the superstitions of my foolish Sable brethren, still I see their teachings are good in this land, and those who ignore such teachings shall not long endure here.
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# Foundling and Initiate of Chalana Arroy, female, 21

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STR	10	melee/missile	location	points
CON	14	01-04/01-03	R Leg	0/4
SIZ	09	05-08/04-06	L Leg	0/4
INT	13	09-11/07-10	Abdom	0/4
POW	16	12/11-15	Chest	0/5
DEX	13	13-15/16-17	R Arm	0/3
APP	12	16-18/18-19	L Arm	0/3
		19-20/20	Head	0/4
Move: 3	}			
Fatigue	: 24			

Hit points: 12 Magic points: 16 DEX SR: 3

Note: Only items listed in boldface are in PC's possession!

Gear: Total end (24-2). Satchel			atchel) = 2. Fa	tigue 22
Weapon	SR	Attk/Par%	Damage	ENC/AP
Quarterstaff	7	18/48	1d8	1.5/8

Spirit Magic (91–ENC): Sleep (3), Heal 6, Protection 4. Divine Magic (all one use): Resurrection (3), Heal Body (3), Regrow Limb.

# **Bonuses and Skills:**

Communication +7: Speak Pavic 39, Speak Tradetalk 21, Speak New Pelorian 17, Sing 33.

Agility +4: Boat 42, Climb 57, Dodge 52, Jump 45, Throw 51. Manipulation +6: Play Fiddle 33

Knowledge +3: Write Pavic 32, First Aid 71, Craft Sewing 14, Animal Lore 19, Human Lore 31, Mineral Lore 33, Plant Lore 64, Refine Medicine 55, Treat Disease 65, Treat Poison 63, World Lore 24.

Perception +8: Listen 45, Scan 43, Search 39.

Stealth +1: Hide 14, Sneak 11.

Magic +11: Ceremony 58, Summon 36.

# Armor: None

Special Items: POW 8 Power Spirit in Fertility Rune pendant, Healing Spirit (POW 13) bound in a gold necklace with harmony runes. Dullblade (3) matrix on quarterstaff. Slow 1 matrix on wristband. All of these are gifts from resurrectees. Walktapus Gas Antidote POT 5, 2 doses.

Gifts and Geases: Sworn never to kill, and to protect those under her care.

Distinctive Traits: Independent: her status as a child prodigy in the temple gives her little interest in following direction. Andra is convinced she knows best. Incautious: Certain of the symbolic protection of her white robe, Andra blithely steps where Storm Bulls fear to tread. Carefree: Andra loves to travel, living by her skills whereever she goes. She hates to get tied down to one place for too long, especially when there are other healers around to care for the populace.

# PC 3: Andra Background Briefing

# Who am I? Who is my family? What is my past?

I am Andra the Healer. I am a foundling raised by the White Healers. I have spent my youth tending the sick and learning the healing arts and wonders. I have walked the border circuits, and am not afraid of the Wastes or its monsters.

# What is my homeland? Who are my people? What other lands do I know? Who are their peoples?

Prax is my home, and its creatures my creatures. I spent several months among the Sun Domers in time of plague, and know their ways and faith. I love the river and its native people – human, newtling, and fish; each year I go among them, accompanied by their boatmen, and see to their health in the winter camps along the river.

# What work do I do? How do I spend my time?

There is plenty of work for healing arts and wonders in our land, as in all lands. I have some skill with the collection, cultivation, and preparation of healing herbs, and wherever I go I share my secrets with the people. When I have time I love the outdoors, and am never happier than when scaling a cliff for a wide view or poling a boat along quiet waters.

# What do I value? Who do I serve? What do I hope for?

The cult provides for all my needs, but I am greedy for knowledge, and am glad to have ready coin when some special schooling or spells are available. Indeed it is rare that a Healer needs coin, for many are glad to do a Healer a favor. I serve my temple and my Lady of Sorrows, but in truth I am tired of Pavis, and perhaps tired of the hospital walls. I am glad that my life has been of service to many, but now I think it time to serve myself also. I wish to see the land and to learn more of its mysteries. [You keep 400L on account at the Chalana Arroy temple of Pavis, including the 200L advance for this mission.]

# What things are good? What things are evil? Who are my friends? Who are my enemies?

The natural cycle of life and death is good. I see great pain and joy in life, and can imagine no god more fortunate than myself in cherishing each day. I shall always hate, and never understand, when creatures of good heart conspire to wound and murder one another – but I shall not see the end of it in my lifetime. I have scant patience and no tolerance for those so foul they would pollute, wound, or kill for pleasure or cruelty. I have many dear and wonderful friends, but I long for a mate with charm and humor – pray not a soldier or merchant, Lady willing.

# Who are my gods? How do I serve them?

I worship Chalana Arroy, and honor her companions the Lightbringers. For long years I have served her at the bidding of my temple. Now the priests and seniors agree that I should find my way in the world, and though I shall always place my time and healing skills at the temple's call, now more shall I seek my own path in reckoning the nature of my service to her.

Andra

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# Forazi Netmender

Pavis Fisher & Zola Fel Initiate, male, 22

		and the second second second		
STR	13	melee/missile	location	points
CON	12	01-04/01-03	R Leg	1/4
SIZ	09	05-08/04-06	LLeg	1/4
INT	10	09-11/07-10	Abdom	4/4
POW	10	12/11-15	Chest	1/5
DEX	13	13-15/16-17	R Arm	1/3
APP	10	16-18/18-19	L Arm	1/3
		19-20/20	Head	1/4
Move: 3				
Fatigue:	25			
Hit point	ts: 11			
Magic p	oints: 10			
DEX SP	1:3			

Note: Only items listed in boldface are in PC's possession!

Arms and Armor: Current encumbrance = 5.5. Fatigue 19

of 20	arrows (Enc. 1).		
SR	Attk/Par%	Damage	ENC/AP
8	47/28	1d8+1	1.5/10
3/9	57/—	1d6+1	.5/5
9	44/48	1d4+2	.5/6
9	36/32	1d4+2	.5/6
	SR 8 3/9 9	8 47/28 3/9 57/ 9 44/48	SR Attk/Par% Damage   8 47/28 1d8+1   3/9 57/— 1d6+1   9 44/48 1d4+2

Spirit Magic (52-ENC): Disruption (1), Detect Fish (1), Glue 2, Repair 2, Heal 1, River Eyes (1).

Divine Magic (all one use): Breath Air/Water, Float 2 **Bonuses and Skills:** 

Communication +0: Speak Boatspeech 51, Speak Pavic 30, Speak Seaspeech 34, Speak Tradetalk 25, Speak New Pelorian 11, Fast Talk 42.

Agility +6: Boat 67, Dodge 55, Swim 75, Throw 49. Manipulation +5 : Conceal 45, Devise 30.

Knowledge +0: Animal Lore 41, Craft Netmaking 34, Craft Boat Repair 27, Evaluate 23, Plant Lore 28, Human Lore 47, River Lore 51, World Lore 21.

Perception +1: Listen 47, Scan 51, Search 33. Stealth +4 : Hide 30, Sneak 27. Magic +2 : Ceremony 25.

Armor: Soft oiled leather everywhere.(1 AP/ ENC 3) This is water-resistant. 3 AP/ 1 point armor enchantment on abdomen. Special Items: Waterproof satchel containing river map listing major landmarks and safe camps and parcels and dispatches for delivery to the Ingilli agent at Trade Alliance offices in Corflu. Distinctive Traits: Optimistic: Even killing broos is better than mending nets all day, so Forazi goes into the most serious situation with a light heart. Naive: Forazi has never been more than a Klik or two away from the river, and has never dealt with a authority figure aside from those of his cult. He tends to think of the world as a small, wet place. Humorous: Forazi can always find a joke when one is needed, but doesn't let his sense of fun drift over into being a smart-ass.

Tactical Notes for new players: Forazi must avoid situations where strength or speed count for more than skill. A knife fight under water sounds like just the right idea. He can fight with his trident in his right hand and his dagger in his left. Disruption spells can be cast into water, if you can see the target.

Other Notes: Forazi's gear is all made to stay with him while swimming, and his bow and trident even float. The tattooed armor enchantment is "to keep turtles from biting it off."

# PC 4: Forazi Background Briefing

# Who am I? Who is my family? What is my past?

I am Forazi Netminder, of the Zola Fel people of Pavis, though I will happily forsake the name Netminder, for I am full sick of fishing. I have worked with the nets for my father and older brothers too long. Now I will go see the great salt ocean and its terrors, and travel up and down the great river like our cousins the riverfolk. My family has long caught fish for the Pavis market, and it is a good living, but boring. I now am an adventurer, and will travel and laugh at danger.

# What is my homeland? Who are my people? What other lands do I know? Who are their peoples?

Pavis and the upper river basin is my home. I know it well, and it bores me. My riverfolk cousins get to travel up and downriver each year and live in great swamps and eat dinosaurs and pull great gems from the clif walls. They all see the ocean and its great tides and walk about in the great seaport of Corflu and visit the Pool of Kinope. They see the great nomad herds upon the plains and the fierce dinosaurs of the lower marshlands.

# What work do I do? How do I spend my time?

Well, I used to fish, but now I will be a great riverboat guide. I will take expeditions to find lost Feroda and the castles of the ancient God-Learners. I will slay many broos and hideous chaos beasts. I am an excellent boathandler and can read the river like sages read books. I swim like a newtling, and speak their tongue. I can't wait to see the Sun Domers in their gold armor and their ancient towers of the dead.

# What do I value? Who do I serve? What do I hope for?

I want to see the world and have great adventures to tell my grandchildren. I have long served my father and brothers, but now I will serve as boatmaster and guide for coin. Perhaps one day I will own my own ships and carry rich cargoes to Esrolia and the west. [You keep 167L on account with Padrone Ingilli of Riverside in Pavis. Ghanara Eberhell, Ingilli's solicitor, handles your investments well (about 4% increase per annum).]

# What things are good? What things are evil? Who are my friends? Who are my enemies?

Well, it is stupid to neglect your nets and your boat, for you live by them. And never trust landsmen. They love money and war and don't care what happens to riverfolk, except when they have something landsmen want, which is when they take it. I have lots of friends in Pavis, but they are all happy to stay here while I travel, so I'll need new friends. I haven't got any enemies, unless you count weaselly landsmen. I hear broos are very bad, and I'm sure they will be my enemies.

# Who are my gods? How do I serve them?

My people worship Zola Fel, god of the river. I'm an initiate, so I get to man the temple sweeps on ritual journeys. We are supposed to be part of the nomad and Orlanthi gods, but the teachers say they don't worry much about what happens to us riverfolk, and that those gods treated Zola Fel and his waters pretty bad. I go to temple every holy day, and mend ropes and weave reed mats like I'm told. When I'm a guide I'll do my water rituals every day, and when I miss temple because I'm on an expedition, I'll make a special offering as soon as I can.

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# Bera Haythorne, Althimandi Clan

STR	12	melee/missile	location	points
CON	13	01-04/01-03	R Leg	0/5
SIZ	14	05-08/04-06	L Leg	0/5
INT	11	09-11/07-10	Abdom	3/5
POW	16	12/11-15	Chest	3/6
DEX	11	13-15/16-17	R Arm	0/4
APP	15	16-18/18-19	L Arm	0/4
		19-20/20	Head	3/5
Move: 3				
Fatigue:	25			

Hit points: 14 Magic points: 16 DEX SR: 3

Note: Only items listed in boldface are in PC's possession!

Arms and Armor: Current encumbrance = 10. Fatigue 15

(25-10).				
Weapon	SR	Attk/Par%	Damage	ENC/AP
Dagger	8	31/29	1d4+2+1d4	.5/6
Mtd. Lance	1	27/—	1d10+mount	3.5/10
Broadsword	7	38/25	1d8+1+1d4	2/10
Self Bow	3/9	35/—	1d6+1	.5/5
Target Shield	8	10/41	1d6+1d4	3/12

Spirit Magic (88–ENC): Firearrow (2), Befuddle (2), Heal 2, Countermagic 3, Glue 1, Mindspeech 1.

# Bonuses and Skills:

Communication +6: Orate 49, Speak Praxian 37, Speak Pavic 24, Speak Tradetalk 22, Speak Sartarite 49. Speak Storm 09. Agility -2: Boat 22, Dodge 07, Jump 28, Ride 28, Swim 29, Throw 31.

Manipulation +3: Devise 12, Play Flute 19

Knowledge +1: Animal Lore 29, Human Lore 33, Plant Lore 12, Read Sartarite 21, Read Trade 20, Read Pavic 12, World Lore 39.

Perception +6: Listen 41, Scan 40, Search 36, Track 19. Stealth -8: Hide 11, Sneak 22.

Magic +8: Ceremony 14.

Armor: Cuirbouilli on head and torso; stiff leather on limbs.(AP 3/Enc 2).

Special Item: Bera owns a cavalry zebra, stabled in Pavis. He owes 13 L stable fees on it.

**Distinctive Traits:** *Cool-headed:* Bera relies on his brains to win fights and handle problems. Never one to let his emotions get the better of him, he lets others get mad or panicky, and takes advantage of their mistakes. *Devoted:* Most of the money Bera has goes into his family, and this concern for others carries over to his friends and travelling companions. *Practical:* Bera shows appreciation for whatever gets the job done, not caring who proposes it, or if it goes against common wisdom. This makes him a good follower, and potentially a good leader.

Tactical Notes for new players: Working in a team with Lothran's poleaxe and your sword & shield could really take the guts out of some tough opponents. Double teaming takes out skilled adversaries. And it would be a big help if Andra would cast her Protection spell on you before the tough fights.

Other notes: Bera has a clan tattoo on his right forearm. It is a stylized cat's head in green.

# PC 5: Bera Background Briefing

# Who am I? Who is my family? What is my past?

I am Bera Haythorne of the East Scritha branch of the Althimandi clan. My family had a fine farm on the Scritha until the Lunars took it and gave it to some Carmanians. My father fought at Moonbroth, and we lost, so now we have nothing, and must live at the sufferance of my Uncle Harald, whose farm is so poor not even Lunar carpetbaggers would have it. My father and older brothers work Harald's land. I am learning the mercenary trade so we can get the coin to buy a farm of our own.

# What is my homeland? Who are my people? What other lands do I know? Who are their peoples?

County Pavis is my homeland. My people are Sartar-Praxian Orlanthi. My father's father's people came to Prax from Sartar; they are of Balmyr stock, and our lands were in the north hills beyond Wilm's Church. Some day I would like to go to Sartar and see the Balmyr lands; perhaps a mercenary's trade offers such opportunities for travel. I know little except east County Pavis, Pavis City, and along the river and roads south and west for caravan work.

# What work do I do? How do I spend my time?

I am a mercenary soldier. I am new to my trade, but I always was best at militia drills, and led my unit in East Scritha. I guard merchants and their cargoes on land and water south from Pavis to Garhound, Sun Dome, and the Grantlands. It is pleasant life, outdoors and quiet, but I've been lucky and met no great dangers. I spend my time learning the tools of war, but wish someday to have my own mercenary band, so I study the writings of military men and the science of business.

# What do I value? Who do I serve? What do I hope for?

I am glad to earn solid coin, for my family has need of a farm, for living with Uncle Harald will kill my father and drive my mother mad. I work for any who hire me. I bear no malice to the Lunars or those who follow them, for they are foremost in all the world at the art of war, and no one challenges their rule. I will work and give my coin to my family to buy their farm, but I myself will never work a farm again, for I like the mercenary life. Perhaps when I retire a wealthy captain I'll buy some land and slaves and teach them to farm. [You have left 225L with the Ernalda temple of Pavis. You send most of your coin to support family and relatives in southern Pavis County.]

# What things are good? What things are evil? Who are my friends? Who are my enemies?

I have left my old friends in Scritha; I find my new friends among my companions in service of arms. I am not a man to make enemies; I need not hate a man to best him at arms. I do, though, hate those Lunar carpetbaggers who use the laws to steal from the people of Prax, and I hate the bandits and thieves who prey on poor folk.

# Who are my gods? How do I serve them?

I worship Orlanth Adventurous as is proper for a mercenary, and I honor his companions the Lightbringers. I have not forgotten Ernalda and the spirits of the land, but I have put down the plow and scythe and taken up the weapons of Orlanth. We Orlanthi must wisely bear the burden of the warrior, and keep our arms keen. We are the warders of the peaceful farmer and the settled clan. By ever challenging danger we keep ourselves sharp against the murderers of peace and the pillagers of wisdom.

#### Lothran Baldi of the Heran Clan Sartar Expatriate and Orlanth Initiate male 21

STR	16	melee/missile	location	points
			Contraction of the second s	
CON	13	01-04/01-03	R Leg	0/5
SIZ	15	05-08/04-06	L Leg	0/5
INT	15	09-11/07-10	Abdom	0/5
POW	10	12/11-15	Chest	0/6
DEX	13	13-15/16-17	R Arm	0/4
APP	12	16-18/18-19	L Arm	0/4
		19-20/20	Head	7/5
Move: 3				
Fatigue	: 29			
Hit poin	ts: 14			
Magic n	ninte: 10			

DEX SR: 3

Note: Only items listed in boldface are in PC's possession.

Arms and Armor: Current encumbrance = 4.5. Fatigue 24

(29-4.0).				
Weapon	SR	Attk/Par%	Damage	ENC/AP
Bast. Sword	7	66/30	1d10+1+1d4	2/12
Dagger	8	51/	1d4+2+1d4	.5/6
Mtd. Lance	1	42/—	1d10+mount	3.5/10
Poleaxe	6	40/30	3d6+1d4	2.5/10
Comp Bow	3/9	55/—	1d8+1	.5/5
Heater Shield	8	21/48	1d6+1d4	3/12

Spirit Magic (57-ENC): Bladesharp 4, Detect Enemies (1),

Disrupt (1), Heal 4, Protection 3.

Divine Magic (one use): Shield 1.

**Bonuses and Skills:** 

Communication +6: Orate 19, Speak Praxian 19, Speak Pavic 22, Speak Tradetalk 16, Speak Sartarite 41, Speak Stormspeech 18.

Agility +1: Boat 11, Dodge 34, Jump 39, Ride 48, Swim 32, Throw 39

Manipulation +11: Devise 22

Knowledge +5: Animal Lore 51, Craft Silver 19, Craft Tin 21, Craft Gold 14, Craft Bronze 11, Evaluate 22, Human Lore 41, Mineral Lore 20, World Lore 35.

Perception +7: Listen 41, Scan 60, Search 45, Track 60 Stealth +3: Hide 23, Sneak 37

Magic +7: Ceremony 22, Enchant 11

Armor: Chain colf & hauberk, stiff leather arms and legs. (Chain colf: AP 7/Enc 2)

Special Item: POW 5 Power spirit in sword.

Distinctive Traits: Sentimental: Lothran misses his old friends, and longs for a day when the Lunars are gone and they can be reunited. Fierce in combat, he often breaks into tears after the killing is done. Thoughtful: A good son, he always remembers his familial duties. Lothran also takes pains to get along with his travelling companions, and might try to act as a peacemaker if tempers flare. Patient: The best laid plans take years to achieve, just as the strongest storms build up slowly. Lothran expects to see his family, his clan, and his nation restored, but he knows it will take years for the Flame of Sartar to be rekindled.

# PC 6: Lothran Background Briefing

# Who am I? Who is my family? What is my past?

I am Lothran Baldi. My clan is Heran, my tribe is Kheldon, my land is Sartar. My mother and younger kin are there with good friends. My father and I are in Pavis, trying to earn enough to bring the rest of the family out of Sartar. In Swenstown my father was a jeweler and I learned his craft, but now a Lunar has his shop and his trade. Here in Pavis my father is a laborer. I am still young, and will be a soldier of fortune instead, for with a sword no Lunar shall ever take my trade from me.

# What is my homeland? Who are my people? What other lands do I know? Who are their peoples?

Sartar is my land, and the Orlanthi my people. Someday I hope to return there beneath a sky free of the Red Moon. Prax is a dry, dusty, ugly place, but here I may earn a living with my sword. I know little of the nomad beast riders here, but the Orlanthi of Pavis County are much like my people at home. I have traveled through Sun County, and it little suits me, though the land is good and green, and the people seem happy enough.

# What work do I do? How do I spend my time?

I am trained as a warrior, and I sell my services as a guard or soldier. I have a head for business, and know something of trade. I practice my weapons and study the ways of Orlanthi and Lunar warfare. I enjoy sports like shield push and wrestling.

# What do I value? Who do I serve? What do I hope for?

Foremost I love my sword and shield and my skill with them. I love also the coin they earn me. I am fussy about who I serve, for I am proud and take no orders from fools or Lunar tools. I want enough coin so that my father can set up a shop in Pavis. For myself I want only time to improve my skills and study war, for someday I hope to join the army that will drive the Lunars from Prax and Sartar. [You have left 115L with your father in Pavis; he shares a poor dwelling with six other fellow laborers. You spend most of your mercenary pay on outfitting and spells.]

# What things are good? What things are evil? Who are my friends? Who are my enemies?

The life of a mercenary is lonely. I miss the friends and family of my childhood, and am sorry for the bitter man my father has become. I have met good people everywhere, even among Lunars, and enjoy their company. I especially enjoy the company of women, but I am sentimental, and hate to leave them; it is the one hard thing about being a traveling sellsword.

# Who are my gods? How do I serve them?

My father followed Issaries, but I follow Orlanth Adventurous. He sharpens my weapons, my skills, and my wits, and keeps me safe. I am troubled by the Lunar boast that they will conquer Orlanth, and the news from Sartar and Heortland worries me. Sometimes I doubt a god so weak that he falls to a moon goddess, but in truth I know it is not a matter of faith, but a matter of armies. When I most feel the doubt, I recall how Orlanth overcame all adversities in the Darkness, and renew my hope.

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# Geoffa Fordoni

Issaries Merchant and Pavis resident, male, 19

			ENERGY	
STR	09	melee/missile	location	points
CON	13	01-04/01-03	R Leg	1/5
SIZ	12	05-08/04-06	L Leg	1/5
INT	14	09-11/07-10	Abdom	1/5
POW	14	12/11-15	Chest	1/6
DEX	11	13-15/16-17	R Arm	1/4
APP	15	16-18/18-19	LArm	1/4
		19-20/20	Head	2/5
Move: 3	Kalen Landa			
Fatigue	: 24			
Hit point	ts: 13			
Magic p	oints: 14			
DEX SF	1:3			

Note: Only items listed in boldface are in PC's possession!

Arms and Arm	nor: Cu	rrent encumbra	nce = 8. Fatigue	16 (24-8).
Weapon	SR	Attk/Par%	Damage	ENC/AP
Quarterstaff	6	35/41	1d8	1.5/8
Fist	8	22/21	1d3	1
Dagger	8	38/25	1d4+2	.5/6
Thrown Knife	3/9	28/—	1d4	1.5/8

Spirit Magic (79–ENC): Glamour 2, Heal 4, Mindspeech 2, Mobility 4.

Divine Magic (one use): Path Watch

Bonuses and Skills:

Communication +9: Bargain 49, Fast Talk 39, Orate 29, Speak Sartarite 31, Speak Pavic 59, Speak Tradetalk 48, Speak New Pelorian 31, Speak Praxian 20.

Agility -1: Boat 19, Climb 39, Dodge 41, Jump 28, Ride 27, Swim 20, Throw 30.

Manipulation +5: Conceal 43, Devise 29, Sleight 44

Knowledge +4: Evaluate 46, Write Sartarite 11, Write Tradetalk 37, Write New Pelorian 15, Write Pavic 31, Human Lore 54, Mineral Lore 16, World Lore 37.

Perception +8: Listen 41, Scan 45, Search 39, Track 18. Stealth –1: Hide 22, Sneak 19 Magic +9: Ceremony 38.

Armor: Soft leather on all locations. (AP 1/ENC 3.5) Stiff leather cap. (AP 2/ENC .5)

Special Items: Two shoulder bags (Enc 2) containing Big Rubble curios and native crafts for delivery to the Ingilli agent at Trade Alliance offices in Corflu.

Distinctive Traits: Friendly: Geoffa tries to see the good side of everyone, keeping in mind that "everyone has a mother they love who loves them." Forgiving: He doesn't hold grudges, as long as the person apologizes and pays his debts. "The more you forgive, the happier you are," he says. Cautious: Geoffa has no love for combat, and always tries to find some way around a fight.

Personal Connections: Dilys spends too much time with her books, but what she knows she knows well. She is also very trustworthy, even with money. She needs to get out into the world more often; real world experience is very marketable in a scholar.

# PC 7: Geoffa Background Briefing

# Who am I? Who is my family? What is my past?

I am Geoffa Fordoni. My family has lived in Pavis for many generations. My father most recently was a supplier of provisions to the Lunar army in Pavis, but he was found guilty of fraud and malfeasance and sentenced to 10 years slavery for a Darra Happan lord. Yes, he was guilty, but everyone does what he does – only he was caught. I support my mother and my father's mother in modest circumstances in Pavis Public District.

# What is my homeland? Who are my people? What other lands do I know? Who are their peoples?

Pavis City is my home. It's a lovely town, teeming with people and opportunities. With the Lunars here, business is really booming. Beyond that, I only know what I hear, but I listen carefully, and I like people.

# What work do I do? How do I spend my time?

I do a little of this and a little of that. I've bought and sold horses, Lunar pots, cooking oil, and military weapons, among other things. I also broker talent, which is my current line of work. You got a skill, I find you a hire. You got a job, I find you people. I do some work for the Ingilli family, which is how I hear about this courier job to Corflu.

# What do I value? Who do I serve? What do I hope for?

I like money. I'd like to learn more about money, and how to make lots of it. Of course, my real pleasure is serving people, and getting them what they need. I love a happy customer. Mostly I work for myself, but I like doing favors for folks I know like the Ingillis. If this deal with Ingillis comes off smooth, maybe I can wrangle something more permanent with them. I think I need to expand my horizons. It's a big valley and a big river, and I hate them Lunars getting all the money out of it. I'd really like to get my 1000L back from that rat Rhyan. With a little capital I have some real sweet deals I could work. [You have left 200L with the Issaries temple in Pavis for safekeeping. A freelance weapons trader Rhyan of Oldtown owes you 1000L on an investment you made, but he has disappeared.]

# What things are good? What things are evil? Who are my friends? Who are my enemies?

My hobbies are food, good conversation, and sleep. I'm not big on good and evil. I find it hard to separate the two out in real people. I guess whatever works is good, and things that don't work are bad. I'm prejudiced toward peace and justice and law and order, but I can see where that stuff gets hard to figure out in the backcountry. I try hard to avoid making enemies. I know lots of people, and have plenty of drinking buddies, but I'm a little careful with friends. Like that rat Rhyan, I thought he was my friend, but he disappeared with my coin. Dilys and me, though, we go way back. I'd trust Dilys with my last copper.

# Who are my gods? How do I serve them?

I believe in the gospel of Issaries. If everybody would just learn to communicate, we'd have peace and plenty. In a civilized world it's trade that makes the world go round, and a smart man makes sure both sides are happy with a deal. I hate crime and war and famine. There's no reason why we can't get along, and get along better, if we just pull together.

# **Dilys Gavellaw**

Scribe, Pavic Citizen and Lhankor Mhy Initiate, female, 23

		A CARDINE ACTIVE AND A DUBLICATION		Within the state
STR	10	melee/missile	location	points
CON	11	01-04/01-03	R Leg	1/4
SIZ	11	05-08/04-06	L Leg	1/4
INT	17	09-11/07-10	Abdom	1/4
POW	17	12/11-15	Chest	1/5
DEX	12	13-15/16-17	R Arm	1/3
APP	14	16-18/18-19	L Arm	1/3
		19-20/20	Head	8/4
Move: 3				
Fatigue	:21			
Hit poin	ts: 11			
Magic p	oints: 17			

DEX SR: 3

Note: Only items listed in boldface are in PC's possession!

Arms and Armor: Current encumbrance = 7. Fatigue 14 (21–7). Quiver with 20 arrows (ENC =1)

Weapon	SR	Attk/Par%	Damage	ENC/AP
2-H Spear	6	45/48	1d10+1	2/10
Self Bow	3/9	31/20	1d6+1	.5/5
Dagger	8	33/27	1D4+2	.5/6

Spirit Magic (100–ENC): Befuddle (2), Countermagic 3, Detect Magic (1), Dispel Magic 2, Disruption (1), Mindspeech 1, Second Sight (3)

Divine Magic(one use): Warding (1).

Bonuses and Skills:

Communication +13: Orate 23, Speak Sartarite 25, Speak Pavic 68, Speak Tradetalk 45, Speak New Pelorian 49. Agility +1: Boat 06, Climb 45, Dodge 21, Jump 28, Ride 06, Swim 21, Throw 29. Manipulation +9: Conceal 19, Devise 22.

Knowledge +7: Write Sartarite 31, Write Tradetalk 57, Write Pavic 68, Write New Pelorian 56, Write Darktongue 16, Evaluate 47, First Aid 35, Animal Lore 28, Human Lore 48, Mineral Lore 29, Plant Lore 22, World Lore 53.

Perception +11: Listen 39, Scan 38, Search 51.

Stealth +1: Hide 13, Sneak 16.

Magic +15: Ceremony 26, Enchant 22.

Armor: Leather on all locations (AP 1/Enc 3.5). Padded chain coif (AP 7/Enc 2).

Special Items: Multimissile 1 matrix in ring. Papyrus leatherbound journal, ink, and quills triple-bagged in oiled leather satchel (Enc. 5).

**Distinctive Traits:** *Grateful:* She never forgets a favor, and repays them with interest. *Preoccupied:* Dilys' interest in everything can manifest as total absorption with some tiny facet of the world around her, to the exclusion of everything else. *Enthusiastic:* She loves to share her theories and discoveries, without any notion that some people might find her theories tedious, eccentric, overly credulous, or inadequately tested by experience. She spends hours recording her observations and ideas in her journal, and hopes to have it published and widely circulated so everyone can share her special insights. **Personal Connections:** An old friend from Badside, Geoffa has

proven his worth many times during their mutual escape from their past.

# PC 8: Dilys Background Briefing

# Who am I? Who is my family? What is my past?

I am Dilys Gavellaw. My folks are gone, rest their spirits, and I don't much care for my dead-beat Badside relatives. I got out of Badside a long time ago, and don't need to go back to visit. The Grey Sages are my family now. They taught me all I know, and I owe them everything.

# What is my homeland? Who are my people? What other lands do I know? Who are their peoples?

I'm a Pavis City street kid, brung up on the Badside, but now I'm a scribe and scholar with the Lhankor Mhy temple. The temple's been my home all my life, but now with the Irripi Ontor moving in, it's hard for a scribe and scholar to make a living. I figure it might be smart to do some mercenary work, get out and see a little of the world I've been reading about.

# What work do I do? How do I spend my time?

Mostly I've been handling business papers and affidavits for the city and the Imperial bureaucracy, but I've been thinking about going out adventuring for a while, and I'm ready for the wilderness. I've been thinking of writing a book about the valley, so I've been reading up about the land and the people. You'd be surprised how little has been written about the valley, about newtlings and broos, about riverfolk and nomads.

# What do I value? Who do I serve? What do I hope for?

I'm crazy about languages and ancient history. I'm also real interested in non-human cultures. You wouldn't believe the garbage that passes for scholarship in that department. I serve my temple and the pursuit of knowledge. I'd like to be famous like Tella and Gerunda and other great writers, but I know it takes years to become truly wise. First I need to have some first-hand experiences to write about, not second-hand book learning or experience copying Lunar proclamations. [You have 220L on account at the Pavis Lhankor Mhy temple for services rendered and 200L in coin there from the advance for this mission.]

# What things are good? What things are evil? Who are my friends? Who are my enemies?

I believe in the sanctity of life and in fair treatment for all pure creatures. I read and hear a lot about the menace of chaos, and everyone hates Wakboth and broos and disease, but I wonder if fear and hatred of chaos are just old-fashioned barbaric superstition and prejudice. The Lunars are the acme of civilization, and they don't have any problem with chaos. I've known Geoffa since our days at temple school, and he's my best friend outside the Sages. Maybe Geoffa's right. I need to get away from the bookworms and see how life is really lived. One day I'd like to have my own library of books and scrolls, with copies of my works right up there with Tella and Gerunda.

#### Who are my gods? How do I serve them?

Lhankor Mhy is my patron, and the Grey Sages are my guides and guardians. His learning has brought me this far, and I hope as I grow I'll gain more and more from his teachings. It's easy to serve Lhankor Mhy; there's so much to know, and so little time to learn it.

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# I. Mythos and History

There are no known tales of Daka Fal before the Great Darkness, but ancient philosophers connect him with the primeval being called Grandfather Mortal, common ancestor of all humanoid beings.

Grandfather Mortal explains mankind's position in the cosmos through a series of legends and fables. The first man, called Wanderer, was formed in the Hall of Creation of the Celestial Court. Many gods labored in common so that he contained some of all the world in him, and could work for all the gods.

Grandfather Mortal's most important deed was his encounter with Death. Trickster brought Humakt the infant Rune, a small, sharp thing cradled in his palm, and Grandfather Mortal was invited to test its powers. He agreed, and was the first of all to die. Since then, all men have been destined to die, following their Ancestor's path. Thus vanished Grandfather Mortal from myth.

In the Darkness, all mortality lived in hopeless fear amidst a disintegrating world, unable to separate life from death. Then Daka Fal walked the world. He separated the living from the dead, setting each in his place, and making known to all their duties and affairs. This established order in the world, and was the first successful worship.

He taught men to perform burial rites to keep the deceased from harassing the living. He also taught rituals of communication with the Other Side, and how to respect and honor one's dead.

Daka Fal was named by the gods to be Judge of the Dead, for he first knew that power and holds all the secrets of death. The style of worship he taught ancestor worship — has existed in all lands of Glorantha, though its power varies with the culture. In some places and times, such as Dawn Age Seshnela, it was developed until the Seshnegi ancestors surpassed the mighty gods in power, and reduced the immortals into mere superhuman heroes or multinational ancestors. More often, it has been eclipsed by the godly worship. Some cults, however, such as those of Kyger Litor and Aldrya, are simply enhanced forms of this style of worship.

The cult assures its worshippers that they will continue to have a personalized existence after death. All functions of the cult prove this to the worshippers. The cult cannot guarantee any quality or future for that existence.

The cult also ensures that the living will not be bothered by the souls of the dead if they follow their shaman's rituals and rules. Funeral rites are nonspecific, except that they always include some variation of this chant. It is a spell and chant which is spoken over the dead to separate them from the living. It goes: Go! Go! Be not slow! To the Place that Life must know. Flee! Flee! Flee from me. Thy type here may never be. Stay Away! Stay Away! Night is there, this is Day. I am free. Not as thee. Go. Thou can't touch me.

At the end of the ceremony, the grievers per-form special acts so the ghost cannot recognize them. These acts vary with each culture. For example, the custom in the Wastelands is to cover the face with the hands or a special mask, then turn tail and run from the funeral site, not looking back under pain of death. The cult is associated with the runes of Man and Spirit. Daka Fal is source of the Man rune.

# **II. Cult Ecology**

Ancestor worship supports the reality of human mortality and draws upon the dead for strength to survive in life. At the same time it provides barriers to help protect weak humans from malign supernatural powers. The forces of mortality are too basic to be eradicated, and ancestor worship will exist as long as people procreate and die.

Families or small clans practicing this religion exist throughout Glorantha. It takes only two or three generations to develop this way of life, and many disaffected or betrayed folk have done so.

Ancestor worshippers dislike gods in general, but are willing to compromise themselves in favor of being left alone if possible. Still, the hostile world is full of imminent dangers, and all men distrust that which they have not conquered. The most hated deity is Death, which separated men from gods and robbed humans of their birthright. The second most hated is Chaos, capable of destroying the gods as well as mortal beings. Cults tied to ancestor worship, such as Hykim or Kyger Litor, are generally regarded in a neutral manner.

Ancestor worshippers scrupulously observe the Sacred Time as the most holy time. Other religious celebrations are arranged at personal convenience.

# III. The Cult in the World

The cult of Daka Fal is widespread, though rarely dominant. It prospers among the disaffected and during times of trouble, when deities fail their subjects. There is little social power or prestige in a Daka Fal shamanhood, except from the followers.

In western Genertela, this primitive faith survives in central Ralios and northern Fronela. There are many pockets of the cult in Peloria and Maniria, often tied to noble families.

Ancestor worshippers are ubiquitous in the Wastelands and Pent, though they are nowhere a majority. The Kralorelan hill tribes include many such. Ancestor worship is strongest today on the Pamaltelan veldt, where it dominates religion in some places.

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All Daka Fal shamans know how to create a Center of Power (through the spell of Axis Mundi) for their ceremonies. This center is a holy place and gateway for the spirits, both good and bad. When worship services are held, the spirits of the dead participate. Their presence enables even small families to maintain a shrine or minor temple to their ancestors. Daka Fel shrines teach Summon Ancestor.

There is no organization to bind the cult into a single driving force, though there have been occasional shamans who inspired widespread interest and motivated many ancestral bindings. Shamans of Daka Fal bring a certain amount of power to their immediate families and can initiate relatives, but the very nature of ancestor worship renders proselytization impossible.

# **IV. Initiate Membership**

A person wishing to enter Daka Fal worship must demonstrate a blood relationship with the accepting shaman. He must not be a sorcerer or a member of any religious cult. He is tested, abstracted as POW x 5 or less on 1d100. He must also give the shaman a gift, which varies with local custom and the shaman's greed, but is at least 100 pennies worth of goods. He must sacrifice a point of POW to his ancestors. The ceremony is performed at Sacred Time, and someone who is rejected may try again in a year.

Initiates are taught spirit magic by their shaman. The shaman promises to protect and teach the initiate. Those worshipping regularly at the family altars receive a POW gain once per year.

The initiate must support his shaman, giving him upkeep and moral support. He may not become a sorcerer, or join any other cult. He cannot obtain divine intervention

# V. Shamanhood

A candidate for shaman must go off by himself during Sacred time and cast the cult spell Axis Mundi, praying mightily to his ancestors. A random ancestral spirit engages him in spirit combat to test his worthiness. If the candidate can reduce the ancestral spirit's MPs to 0, it tells him the secret of Daka Fal shamanhood. The candidate becomes a shaman via the normal rules.

Ancestral spirits are often friendly to a Daka Fal shaman. Nonancestral spirits are usually enemy or neutral. He also receives normal shaman benefits and handicaps. He may not join another cult. Ancestorworshipping shamans are also priests.

Ancestor-worshiping shamans must pay honor and respect to their ancestors, and must donate POW or a spell to a friendly ancestor (using the Gift Power or Gift Spell magics) at least once a year. This is in addition to any POW or spells given to ancestors in return for services rendered.

Common Divine Magic: Worship Ancestor

Special Divine Magic: Axis Mundi, Free Ghost, Gift Power, Gift Spell, Incarnate Ancestor, Resurrect, Spirit Guardian, Spirit Melding, Summon Ancestor

# **VI. Subcults**

If an initiate ceases to honor his ancestors and leaves the religion, they will be malign thereafter, preventing use of most cult special magics. If the initiate repents, the spirits may relent. They may demand penance.

Ancestral spirits usually behave like ghosts. They cannot normally provide their INT or MPs for others' use, but can cast spells and engage in spirit combat. Only malign ancestral spirits permanently possess individuals, though a spirit might possess an enemy to cause his death.

# VII. Daka Fal Special Divine Spells

# Axis Mundi

ritual Summon, nonstackable, reusable

This one-hour ritual creates a holy sanctuary (10m x 10m) which eases the passage of ancestral spirits to the mundane plane. Ancestral spirits can appear within the Axis Mundi without need of a Visibility spell. The spells of Gift Power, Gift Spell, Incarnate Ancestor, and Summon Ancestor can be cast within its bounds as if they were ordinary divine magic, without going through the usual lengthy ritual. Axis Mundi can be boosted with as many MPs as desired. Each point gives the Axis Mundi one hour's duration. This spell also attracts ancestral spirits and permits their participation in the holy day rituals.

#### **Free Ghost**

instant, stackable, reusable

This spell must be cast upon the ghost of a deceased mortal. The user must overcome the MPs of the ghost with his own. If he succeeds, the ghost is unbound from its haunting and returns to the Land of the Dead.

# **Gift Power**

ritual Enchant, nonstackable, reusable This spell allows the user to donate a point of his POW to a willing ancestral spirit.

#### **Gift Spell**

ritual Enchant, nonstackable, reusable

This spell allows the user to transfer the knowledge of any one spirit magic spell (only) to a willing ancestral spirit. The user loses knowledge of the spell.

#### **Incarnate Ancestor**

ritual Summon, nonstackable, reusable

This spell causes a named ancestor to dominantly possess the body of a willing descendant, who can be the spell caster. The summoned spirit can use all spells, knowledge, and skills it had while living. The spirit need not leave the host body until it pleases to do so or is exorcised. Friendly spirits leave when the job at hand is through. Neutral spirits must be bribed to do so by Gift Power or Gift Spell. Malign ancestors do not leave voluntarily.

If cast without naming the specific ancestor desired, a random ancestor is received — a dangerous procedure.

1 point

1 point

1 point

1 point

2 points

# $G \nabla \forall \bullet + i \Delta \Box X \odot U : \Delta R \infty + U O 2 + 2 \Delta Y # O +$

# Spirit Guardian

# 1 point

ranged, duration one day, stackable, reusable This spell must be cast upon a friendly ancestral

spirit. It sets up a mental connection, identical to Mindlink, between spirit and caster.

# **Spirit Melding**

2 points

touch, temporal, nonstackable, reusable

ritual Summon, nonstackable, reusable

This spell must be cast upon a friendly ancestral spirit which envelops the caster. For the spell's duration, the spirit's magic points are added to the caster's for purposes of resisting spirit combat and spells. If the spirit leaves the caster, the spell's effects end.

# Summon Ancestor

# 1 point

This spell summons an ancestral spirit from the Land of the Dead. If the spirit is friendly, it can engage in spirit combat or cast spells if the summoner desires.

Not all a character's ancestors may be righteous or kindly. Evil spirits may attack the caster, or at least refuse to aid him.

If the caster names a specific ancestor when the spell is cast, he gets that particular ancestor. Otherwise, a randomly-determined spirit is called, the characteristics of which are determined through use of the Random Ancestor Table.

# VIII. Miscellaneous Notes and Tables

# **Bound Spirits**

All members of this cult take upon them a major obligation. There is always a danger that one's ancestor, as a ghost, may be nabbed by someone and bound. If this occurs, the living descendants are obliged to go to whatever lengths necessary to free the spirit.

They are not obliged to free anyone's ancestors beyond their own, and it is permissible to bind one's own ancestor into enchantments or their fetches, if the ancestors' permission is sought and obtained beforehand.

1d20	Spell
01-02	Axis Mundi
03	Free Ghost
04-05	Gift Power
06-07	Gift Spell
08	Incarnate Ancestor
09	Resurrection
10-11	Spirit Guardian
12-13	Spirit Melding
14-17	Summon Ancestor
18-20	Worship Ancestors

#### **Ancestral Spirits**

Ancestral spirits usually behave like ghosts. They cannot normally provide their INT or MPs for others' use, but can cast spells and engage in spirit combat. Only malign ancestral spirits ever retain permanent possession of a mortal after spirit combat ends.

#### **Random Ancestor Table**

1d100	Туре	Power	Spirit Spells	Divine Spells
01	Friendly	5d6 + 6	4d3	3d6
02-04	Friendly	4d6 + 6	3d3	2d6
05-09	Friendly	3d6 + 6	2d3	1d6
10-16	Friendly	2d6 + 6	1d3	0
17-25	Friendly	1d6 + 6	1	0
26-28	Neutral	5d6 + 6	3d3	2d6
29-34	Neutral	4d6 + 6	2d3	1d6
35-43	Neutral	3d6 + 6	1d3	0
44-55	Neutral	2d6 + 6	1	0
56-70	Neutral	1d6 + 6	0	0
71-80	Malign	1d6 + 6	0	0
81-88	Malign	2d6 + 6	0	0
89-94	Malign	3d6 + 6	1	0
95-98	Malign	4d6 + 6	1d3	0
99-00	Malign	5d6 + 6	2d3	1d6

All ancestral spirits have INT rolled as per the species they once belonged to. Human spirits roll 2d6 + 6. A spirit never has more spells memor-ized than its INT — if a spirit's rolled INT is 10, but it is determined to know 12 points of spirit magic, decrease the spells known to 12 points. *Friendly:* spirit does as summoner desires.

Neutral: spirit does as summoner desires, but only if summoner gives it one MP for every POW point of the spirit. This must be expended immediately, and, though it adds to the spirit's MPs, are not used to assist the summoner.

Malign: These spirits always try to attack a summoner to possess him. Spirit Spells: this indicates the number of spirit spells known by a particular spirit. To determine the precise spells, roll on the Ancestor Random Spirit Spells Table. Spirits know 2d6 – 5 points of a variable spell (minimum of 1 point, and if a 12 is rolled, reroll, adding 6 to the result). Roll once for each spell known. If the same spell is rolled a second time, reroll.

Divine Spells: this indicates the number of divine spells known by the spirit. Roll on the Ancestor Random Divine Spells Table to determine the precise spells known.

#### Ancestor Random Spirit Spells Table

-			The state of the s
1d100	Spell	1d100	Spell
01	Armoring Enchantment	45	Ignite
02-04	Befuddle	46	Ironhand
05-07	Binding Enchantment	47	Light
08	Bladesharp	48	Lightwall
09	Bludgeon	49-51	Magic Point
10-15	Control <spirit type=""></spirit>	11/23 14	Matrix Enchantment
16	Coordination	52-54	Mindspeech
17-19	Countermagic	55	Mobility
20	Darkwall	56	Multimissile
21-23	Demoralize	57	Protection
24	Detect Enemy	58	Repair
25	Detect Magic	59	Second Sight
26-28	Detect <substance></substance>	60	Shimmer
29-31	Dispel Magic	61	Slow
32-34	Disruption	62	Speedart
35	Dullblade	63-65	Spell Matrix Enchantment
36	Endurance	66-75	Spirit Screen
37	Extinguish	76	Strength
38	Fanaticism	77	Strengthening Enchantment
39	Farsee	78-83	Summon <species></species>
40	Firearrow	84	Vigor
41	Fireblade	85-90	Visibility
42	Glamour	91-00	Other*
43	Glue	T. Station	
44	Heal	* GM's	choice or roll again.

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# The Cult of Storm Bull $\mathbf{T} \mathbf{G} \nabla$ Chaos Fighters $\mathbf{T} \mathbf{G} \nabla$

# I. Mythos and History

When Umath provided the world with his children the Storm Bull contained that which was bestial in nature: violence and raw unthinking strength, guided by instinct and the sensitivities of a god.

In the Golden Age the Storm Bull led his sons through the fertile lands of the world where they befriended the peoples and wed the goddesses. The mother of the land was Ernalda, and she gave the Storm Bull her daughter Eiritha as his own wife. In the Storm Age this furious god is often portrayed fighting for Genert against Humakt, the chill North Wind's ally.

During the Gods War, Storm Bull came into his power. He is sometimes pointed out as the source of the Great Darkness. The mighty god-beast conquered and gored Lodril the fire-spirit, helping directly to bring the Darkness. He often went on rampages and destroyed great tracts of life, such as the time his followers devoured all of the vegetation of the earth to prove how powerful they were. He also killed many gods and sent them to hell, and he spread fear, confusion, and warfare everywhere.

When Fear and Death came, openly seeking victims among the immortals, Storm Bull was headmost in combat. He taught Death's virtues to his people when he slew vile Ragnaglar with his horns of iron. But even such victories could not stop the devastation of the land caused by the coming of the Devil.

The Devil is the incarnation of Chaos, and abomination, a trick clause in the Laws of Creation, a hole in the cosmic fabric, motivated by destruction and evil.

The Devil had slain many gods before it came upon the Storm Bull's final defense in Prax. The fight was desperate and doomed. All the Storm Bull's people knew that survival would be only one of the possible horrors in their future. A clean death seemed impossible. But the Storm Bull stood firm, though all he loved died about him, and he fought the Devil with raw strength and courage.

Storm Bull mustered his troops to fight the Devil. Though his kin and his friends were slain all around him, the Storm Bull fought on, aided by all of the world, inspired by righteous outrage and strengthened by compassion, two things of which chaos has little. When he was thrown to earth, the earth gave him power, and when he was held in the air he drew strength from his breath. Fire aided him and so did cold. But he faced the Devil — the raw force of chaos and evil incarnate.

The Storm Bull should have died there. His ear was torn off, and, mortally wounded, his broken form was flung to earth; Eiritha, his last ally, lent him all of her power, and her land lay blasted and dead afterwards. The god-beast leapt up anew, and, now that he had run out of allies, the cosmos itself responded to his cry. From the edge of the world came hurtling a section of the exploding Spike. It struck once or twice and skidded into the Devil, pinning him beneath immeasurable tons of petrified Law. The Devil was crushed, ground asunder, and buried for eternity beneath a huge block of adamant. The effort nearly slew Storm Bull, and he dragged himself from the still-raging battle, now that his forces were certain of victory. He hid in the distant Storm Hills, where Chalana Arroy healed him.

He still lives in those distant hills. The sound of his thunder is still heard across the desert and in the mountains. He does not show himself often to worshippers, but the signs of his power are always manifest.

The cult has done little as a single entity since time began. The worship of the Storm Bull spreads wide, but the lack of any central organization prevents concerted action. Instead, there are many small tales of brave battles against lethal festering pockets of chaos.

The Storm Bull offers its members great things after death. All initiates are raised to the status of Storm Khans in the afterlife, and all his worshippers join in the Storm Bull's glorious life of struggle in the Eternal Battle, fighting against the encroaching chaos.

The Storm Bull is also known to pursue personally the souls of his worshippers slain by chaos, even to the pits of entropy beyond the cosmos. This assures his initiates of a greater chance of survival after death.

Funeral rites for the cult are simple. They kill the favorite mount of the dead warrior (without the Peaceful Cut, so that it will accompany the dead warrior everywhere). The beast is set on its belly with its legs folded beneath it, and the warrior is set atop it, equipped with his favorite weapons, armor, and jewels. There both are left, to defy passersby and frighten off chaos. Cultists believe the bodies will be drawn into the Eternal Battle and there rejoin their souls. The rites conclude with a song of fear, fury, and fighting to summon a violent wind to carry off the departing god.

The Runes of this god are Death, Air, and Beast.

# II. Cult Ecology

The Storm Bull is the Desert Wind, rough, raw, and capable of scrubbing the earth clean with his passage. He is the ruthless power of righteous purifying rage. The primary purpose of the Storm Bull is to prevent the rise of the Devil, or any associated form of Chaos.

Storm Bull berserkers dislike anything which does not conform to their crude and simple cult demands. They exercise this dislike through contempt, even though they may fully partake of the contemptible lifestyle. They distrust strangers and their odd gods.

Each season has a holy day during Stasis week. The day varies according to the season. In Sea-season it is on Freezeday, in Fire-season on Waterday, in Earth-season on Clayday, in Dark-season on Windsday, and in Stormseason on Fireday. The High Holy Day of the cult is on Storm-season, Stasis week, Wildday, when Storm Bull's marriage to Eiritha is celebrated.

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# III. The Cult in the World

The political power of this cult is small, at least insofar as determining tribal policies. However, the number and power of a clan's berserkers does influence the chieftain's decisions.

Socially, Storm Bull berserkers are unacceptable. They characteristically act with total disregard for any tribal taboos or manners, even to the extent of occasional murders which go unavenged. Normal people consider all Storm Bull berserkers to be mindless brutes, barely human, certainly deranged, and absolutely dangerous. These opinions are correct.

But the necessity of the warrior overrides the temporary discomfort which people must suffer to have the Storm Bull worshippers around in peace time. While most men fear Chaos, these seek it out, and that alone makes normal people respect them. This awe, and the respect born of fear, gives the individual berserker a great psychological advantage.

Everyone knows of the Storm Bull. Wherever the powers of the middle air are hated and despised, he is found. He is popular where sudden fury and uncontrollable rage are respected or irrepressible. His worship can be generalized with the statement that his worship is popular among barbarians, and the more savage they are, the more popular the Storm Bull is.

He is worshiped by the Pent horse barbarians, the Praxian animal nomads, warriors of the Theyalan culture, and by Orlanthi everywhere.

His temples are rarely larger than minor temples. However, thinly scattered across barbaric lands are special holy sites to the Bull. Each supports a major or great temple. Shrines teach Impede Chaos.

Each High Khan is the Bull's Head, and serves as a center of information and judgments for his followers. He is assisted by a varying number of Storm Khans. All Storm Khans must report to a High Khan, even if they operate in a band on their own.

Loyalty is always paid towards the person who initiated the worshipper to the cult. Initiation is possible only by Storm Khans. Each khan has many initiates in his following. A Storm Khan may have up to four other khans under his personal command. These subservient khans must have been initiated by their leader. Any more than that and the first khan would have to leave and attach himself to a High Khan or start his own band.

Storm Khans are allowed to arrange their initiates into whatever organization is required, not dependent upon rank or loyalty, but upon the job at hand. The word of the khan is law in this regard.

The cult center of power lies in the region of Prax and its neighboring mountains, where the god did his mythical deeds.

# **IV. Initiate Membership**

To join the cult of the Storm Bull requires that the candidate not be tainted by chaos, that he be armed with magic or weapons, that he be willing to follow the orders of his Storm Khan, and that he pass the initiation tests, which is the standard RuneQuest test. Skills tested are: Any Attack, Any Attack or Parry, Ceremony, Scan, Search

Initiates of the cult are allowed to leave their khan, but must return immediately upon being called and must be present for half the year, as demanded by the khan. Initiates are required to investigate any hints or rumors of enemy presence personally.

The Storm Khan is responsible for maintaining the troop and seeing to their preparedness for any action. The khan must provide food, weapons, and magic, and tries to provide personal followers with choice steeds, gold, and other favors.

If an initiate leaves his khan, he loses these benefits. Essentially, a Storm Bull initiate is sworn to his khan's loyal service. Initiates gain the skill of Sense Chaos.

**Spirit Magic:** Detect Enemies, Dispel Magic, Fanaticism, Heal, Protection.

# V. Storm Khan Membership

Storm Khans are berserker masters, killing machines, so skilled that they ignore ordinary laws. The only respect a Storm Khan owes is to his god, the Khan who initiated him, his own High Khan, if any, and to whoever can best him in battle. He owes obedience only to his god.

A candidate for Storm Khan must have a 90% weapon Attack, know Heal 4, and have 90% skill in four of the following: a second Attack, Ride, Scan, Search, Sense Chaos, Shield Parry, Track.

Storm Khans may marry only Eiritha or Ernalda priestesses, may marry many, but are not allowed any concubines. Some never marry — the cult has no proscription against casual sex.

Storm Khans are the cult rulers. They must give 90% of their time and income to the cult, but since they rule their religion, those not in the immediate service of another khan can use their goods and spend their time as they see fit, subject to their High Khan's commands.

Common Divine Magic: All.

Special Divine Magic: Berserker, Command Sylph, Face Chaos, Impede Chaos, Shield

# VI. High Khans

A High Khan must have been a Storm Khan for at least five years. He must be at 90% or more in two weapon attacks, Ride, Scan, Search, Sense Chaos, Shield Parry, and Track. He must have at least 15 points of reusable divine magic. One or more Storm Khans must currently serve him, and he must have initiated at least four Storm Khans in his life. He must be able to command the respect of the unruly berserkers and he must have the permission and approval of his current High Khan.

A High Khan has complete control over his own destiny. He answers to no one. Among the animal nomads, only the tribal khans of Waha and the Most High Elder of Eiritha outrank him.

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# VII. Storm Bull Special Cult Skill

Sense Chaos (Perception Skill 05%): This special skill begins at 5% plus the skill category bonus. It is available only to Storm Bull initiates, and may only be increased by experience — not by training or research. It allows the user to sense the presence of chaos in animate or inanimate form, including visible spirits. The ability does not single out the source, as a Detect spell would, but rather gives the warrior a vague sense of unease and the knowledge that chaos is close at hand. The intensity of the feeling gives a rough estimate of the amount of chaos present. This skill is effective within a 15m radius.

# **VIII. Storm Bull Special Divine Spell**

#### **Face Chaos**

1 point

ranged, temporal, nonstackable, reusable

This spell cannot be resisted and can be cast only on non- chaotic targets. When cast upon a single fighter, that person stands his ground and fights any chaotic foe he faces, even if ordinarily he would have run. In general, this spell is used on outsiders since Storm Bull cultists stand against chaos regardless of fear.

This spell does not render its target immune to the effects of such spells as Demoralize, though he still does not flee. A Demoralized fighter continues fighting, though at half attack chances; a Panicked fighter cannot fight at all, but does not flee; etc.

# **Impede Chaos**

1 point

ranged, temporal, nonstackable, reusable The target of this spell becomes difficult for chaos creatures to hit. Subtract 30 from the attack skill of any chaos creature attacking this spell's recipient. Impede Chaos is ineffectual against non-chaos opponents.

# **IX. Subcults**

# Spirit of Reprisal: One-Ear

This spirit attacks any initiates or khans who leave the cult. He also appears if they overstep their boundaries and threaten the cult way. Interpretation of this varies. If the initiate offends, some day the spirit will appear, declare his outlawry, and engage in battle. One- Ear has 2d6 +12 magic points, ignores the effect of all defensive magic such as Spirit Block or Spirit Screen, and can and will break off spirit combat any time its magic points are reduced to 6 or fewer. Should the spirit be driven off, then the outlaw can keep his Rune spells as one-use spells (even if he was a khan), and he can keep his cult skills. If the spirit succeeds in reducing the outlaw's magic points to 0, One-Ear steals away all cult and associate cult skills and all cult divine magic.

# Parts of the Bull

Each High Khan of the cult has several spirits of the cult at his command. These are each named after a portion of the Storm Bull's anatomy wherein resides an ability or attribute. Not all High Khans have access to all of these, nor is this list complete. These spirits are attached to the High Khan, though he can give them to one of his sworn Storm Khans for a season's use. After the season, they depart. The High Khan must perform heroquest rituals for recapture.

Most of these spirits know one spell, which it casts on command, even while the master is berserk. Most of these spirits have an INT of 3d6 and a POW of 4d6.

**Head:** This spirit has no spells, but engages any spirit in spirit combat which attacks its master. Unlike the other spirits, it has no INT, and has a POW of 4d6 + 6.

Heart: This spirit knows a spirit magic Strength spell equal in points to INT or POW, whichever is lower.

Hide: This spirit knows a spirit magic Protection spell equal in points to INT or POW, whichever is lower.

**Hooves:** This spirit knows a spirit magic Bludgeon spell equal in points to INT or POW, whichever is lower.

**Horns:** This spirit knows a spirit magic Bladesharp spell equal in points to INT or POW, whichever is lower.

**Legs:** This knows a spirit magic Mobility spell equal in points to INT or POW, whichever is lower.

Liver: This spirit knows a spirit magic Countermagic spell equal in points to INT or POW, whichever is lower.

# X. Associated Cults

# **Chalana** Arroy

The healing goddess cured Storm Bull's many wounds after the fight against chaos. She gives him her spell of Cure Chaos Wound.

# Eiritha

This cult, of the wife of the Storm Bull, gives the spell of Speak With Herd Beasts and teaches the skill of Understand Beast Speech.

# Ernalda

Ernalda lends the important Rune spell of Earthpower.

# Orlanth

Storm Bull's youngest brother supplies him with Increase Wind, a spell which can be devastating in the desert.

# Valind

Storm Bull's icy nephew, the North Wind, provides him with Cloud Call.

# Waha

From this cult comes the spirit spell of the Peaceful Cut, the Rune spell of Command Spirit of Law, and the craft of Butchery.

Spirits of Law are special spirits with no INT and a POW of 2d6 + 6. They only attack chaotic targets. Any chaotic being which is reduced to 0 magic points by a spirit of law immediately dies.

# Zorak Zoran

This war god was Storm Bull's friend during the Great Darkness. From him comes the Fear spell.

# The Cult of Orlanth $\bigcirc 2, \coprod$ The Storm God $\bigcirc 2, \coprod$

# I. Mythos and History

Orlanth was the youngest son of Umath, born after the older, more brutal, storm gods had begun their conquests. He inherited the reputation and manner of his brothers and had enemies before his birth. His mother was the mountain goddess, splendid whitemaned Kero Fin, and he has been associated with mountains ever since.

Orlanth's first action exemplified his later life. While playing in the Whistling Caves of his mother, Orlanth raised the wind to see if he could knock down his halfbrother, Yinkin. He did, and blew the Cat out of the cave, tumbling below to rocks miles away. Orlanth flew to the cave mouth, then leapt and rescued his brother. That was not the last time that Orlanth both caused a disaster and saved the situation in the end.

Orlanth aided his brothers in their pillage and rapine. He was with his kinsmen Vadrus, Humakt, and Valind when they surprised the armies of the Manthi sea-men and swept them from the inland waters of Glorantha, and later dried up the seas of Pamaltela. Since that time, only a few interior regions have ever been populated by merfolk.

He performed other deeds as well. When new-born, he set off on his first quest, armed only with a comb and a rattle. With those, he challenged the Emperor of the universe, Yelm himself, to a dancing contest. Orlanth did a war dance, while Yelm did a ballet. It may seem surprising that Yelm, Keeper of Law, should deign to contest with an upstart barbaric godlet sworn to seize the Crown of Rule. Apparently, Yelm sensed the threat to his worship, and accepted the problem as part of his office.

Orlanth's contests with Yelm are famous. Three in particular, those of Dancing, Music, and Magic, are often cited. In all three cases, the judges ruled in favor of Yelm, rather than Orlanth. It was in this early time that Orlanth became enamored of Ernalda whom he swore to free from the clutches of the Bright Emperor. Their last contest, that of Weapons, was ended wholly in Orlanth's favor.

The Orlanth and Yelm rivalry is known in several mythologies which do not even worship these two gods. In their own myths, the contest is central to worship.

The storm god's most famous act, which ended Orlanth's youth, was when Eurmal, a friend, stole the sword Death for Orlanth from Humakt, Orlanth's brother. This act of Orlanth's offended Humakt so mightily that the sword-god disavowed all kinship with the winds. Orlanth used it only once, and then to good effect. He struck down Yelm, and removed Light from the cosmos. This won Orlanth the hand of Ernalda and plunged the world into the Lesser Darkness, or Storm Age. In the Darkness, Orlanth continued to fight. The storm gods seized more and more of the world, but even before the more powerful foes were quenched, they had turned upon each other. Vadrus in particular found his brothers the only remaining opponents worth the sport of battle. Orlanth fought his kin though it pained him to do so. When Storm Bull bullied Yinkin, Orlanth conquered Storm Bull using only a lariat and a sharp stick. Orlanth also had a famous foe in his kinsman Thryk, a son of Valind often called Winter Giant. Vadrus and his sons were more like enemies than kin, and one son, Gagarth the Wild Hunter, was banished to the edge of the world, though he returned later. Orlanth fought and defeated Yelmalio at the Hill of Gold, and faced Zorak Zoran there as well.

**River of Cradles** 

Orlanth performed many famous quests. One was in defense of Ernalda, his wife, against Daga, god of drought, noteworthy because it was a kinfight, and because Orlanth conquered Aroka, the Blue Dragon. Another famous quest was when Orlanth sought Daliath's Well of Wisdom. After great seekings and proofs of purity, Orlanth survived the Baths of Nelat and a fight with Magasta and/or his son. Orlanth succeeded in gaining a sip of the sacred drink from Daliath, which brought him access to True Wisdom. Orlanth returned on the wheels of Mastakos, who later became his charioteer.

Then chaos crept into the world, following the trail made by death. Monsters and demons scout-ed the universe, preparing the way for the Devil. Gods died whose names are lost. Realms of beauty were blasted, and there was fear among the gods when Flesh Man gibbered his visions of the future to them. Order slipped. Orlanth found his mother dead, saw his father suffering, chained between the earth and sky, and heard the mourning of his wife for his sons and daughters. Orlanth took it upon himself to right the wrongs that had wrought such disaster. He took what tools and weapons he could, called on friends and met others along the way, and thereby initiated the Lightbringers who searched unknowable paths to rescue the world.

The Lightbringer's Quest is the single greatest undertaking of Godtime. It unified all other cosmic events and brought about the resurrection of a dead world. Many other deities had struggled as mightily and suffered as much, and the world would be a sorry place without their efforts, but the Lightbringer's Quest was unique in that it moved through the realms, bindining them and making important links in a world fallen apart.

On this famous quest, Orlanth and his companions journeyed from the center of the world across the dying Western Ocean to the lands beyond the sunset. At the Castle of Dusk, the Lightbringers found the gate to the underworld. They took the Long Descent to Hell, where fearsome foes hunted them. In the underworld itself, Orlanth found the Halls of the Dead, where Yelm awaited. Orlanth suffered the Requirement for Proof: a searing burning shower of the acidic hatred of all Orlanth's foes present. He was scorched but, as in the baths of Nelat, he survived.

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Orlanth then underwent the Trial by Combat, and defeated the Keepers of the Gate — monsters which had kept all the dead imprisoned in the underworld. After that, all the gods, dead and alive, prepared for the awesome Ritual of the Net through which the Great Compromise was reached. Finally, with Yelm and the other dead, the Lightbringers returned to the surface and were present at the Dawning.

When the Great Compromise was reached and evil was devoured, the renewed energies of life flowed through the channels forged by the Lightbringers.

For his leadership of the Lightbringers and his acknowledged superiority, Orlanth was confirmed as chief of the Air Gods and King of the Gods. That title is recognized by his brothers, the Light-bringers and several other gods, though not by all.

Social development continued in historical times. The trend was toward resolving the problems of large, complex social organizations. There is a clear struggle between the Wind Lords, who represent the terrestrial interests of the worshippers, and the priests, who are the spiritual leaders. The rivalry is seldom portrayed openly, but it is reflected in famous rival factions.

In the Dawn age, the clans were the principle political, economic, and social unit. Each clan was capable of providing the necessities required to survive in the Great Darkness. They were led by Wind Lords, whose mundane skill mastery was the key to survival and individual development. The priests acted as advisors to the leaders.

Cultural development throughout the Orlanthi regions was not uniform, and some regions remained in a retarded social form. This retardation is usually due to the level of social complexity which the area was capable of supporting. For instance, Brolia has never advanced beyond the most primitive clan organization of the Dawn Ages, and the difficult land prohibits the development of any settlements greater than a market town. Thus no compelling reason has forced the development of tribal politics or institutions.

The worship of Orlanth was known throughout much of the world in the Dawn Ages, and his worshippers brought the secrets of the Lightbringers down from the mountains to civilize the lowlands where the broken remnants of sun-worshippers struggled against the dark. But after darkness was conquered the ancient rivalry between the two ruling deities rose again, and soon the worshippers of Orlanth in the hills and mountains were warring with the worshippers of Yelm in the lowlands.

In the Second Age, the Empire of the Wyrm's Friends was a center of power for Orlanthi, but the people turned to dragon magic and away from their old gods. Orlanth's people both rebelled and aided in the Wyrmish projects. Orlanthi both participated in and helped to destroy the Jrusteli quasi-empire as well.

In the Third Age was born a new rival, the Red Goddess, possessor of arcane skills and magics. Through the passage of time, her worship grew in Peloria, and spread southward into the highlands. She has now set herself against Orlanth, to struggle for the Middle Air. Through the years, her worshippers have converted and conquered those of the storm god, and the gods themselves have been seen brooding anxiously over their children during wars between men.

Funerals are burnings, using especially smokey fires. Funeral goods are always included to assist the person in the land of the dead. Orlanth guarantees his loyal initiates that he will go and retrieve their soul from any place in the universe if the body is treated with proper funeral rites. This way his people need not fear dying in a strange land among foreigners.

High priests, wind lords, and rulers have their shrouded bodies tied into sacred trees or held aloft by specially built racks. Prayers send the soul to the wind, storm, and quiet air.

The primary Runes of Orlanth are Air, Movement, and Mastery; emphasized respectively by the subcults of Orlanth Thunderous, Orlanth Adventurous, and Orlanth Rex. Orlanth is the Source of the Air Rune.

# **II. Cult Ecology**

Orlanth is the Storm God. He is responsible for the current cosmic balance. He made the world what it is with his strength, and his virtues keep it that way. He claims, by right of his deeds, overlordship of the universe. Orlanth's cult provides guidelines for its members to follow in determining their activities about themselves, their society, the cosmos, and the great mystery of being. Participation in the cult of Orlanth makes a person a full citizen of the universe.

He is worshipped mostly by men; Orlanthi wives usually worship Ernalda. He is worshiped by folk from every walk of life and every social class.

Orlanth hates all chaos. He has a permanent rivalry with Yelm and his sons. This latter rivalry is expressed professionally and personally, but does not mean that the cults hate each other enough to fight at every occasion. Members of these conflicting cults can be friends, and an open, unhostile, rivalry between them satisfies honor.

Orlanth has a steady distaste for the Lunar Empire and all its deities and forces.

The Six Virtues of Orlanth are Courage, Wisdom, Generosity, Justice, Honor, and Piety. Orlanth respects these, even in a foe.

Each Windsday is a minor holy day for the Cult, of Orlanth, and each Windsday of Movement week is a special holy day. Windsday/Movement week/Storm season is the time when all worshippers celebrate the birth of Orlanth. Two weeks of minor festivals and holidays prepare worshippers for Windsday of Sacred Time, when they start the long and most holy ceremonies of Orlanth's descent into Darkness and Chaos in search of the Light.

# III. The Cult in the World

The worship of Orlanth is more than a religion. Where he is strong, he determines the entire societal structure. The term "Orlanthi" refers to a cultural, social, and  $G \nabla \forall \bullet \dagger t \Delta \Box X O \sqcup :: \Delta R \infty & U O 2 & A A A Y <math>Z O X T$ 

religious continuum. In fringe regions, where other gods hold sway, Orlanth provides a cult for wanderers and those individuals willing to move outside their rigid tribal or civilized hierarchies. There, Orlanth worship is an acceptable outlet for those who dislike rigid role models, yet wish to remain with their people.

Orlanth's worship dominates the Barbarian Belt of Genertela. It is spread over upland Ralios, Maniria, upland Peloria, and southern Fronela. Strong Orlanth centers thrive in Enkloso and Vralos as well. Orlanth is also worshiped in lands neighboring on these, though less strongly. Thus, in regions such as Prax or Fonrit, his cult is also important, but by no means dominant.

Orlanthi temples come in all sizes — shrines are found in rural backwaters, minor temples in towns, major temples in small cities, and great temples in large cities or special holy places. Shrines teach Cloud Call.

Great temples of Orlanth are each ruled by a high priest. He is served directly by chief priests, who in turn have their own priests and acolytes. The temple Wind Lords are separate from this hierarchy — they are sworn to the high priest and their own liege lords alone. Smaller temples have a reduced structure, but the basic principles remain the same.

# **IV. Initiate Membership**

If an applicant for initiate was born into a family in which at least one parent was an initiate, he may join automatically by spending a point of POW upon reaching adulthood. An outsider must follow the usual initiation requirements. The skills in which proficiency must be demonstrated are Jump, Speak Own Language, a Weapon Attack, and a Weapon Parry.

Initiates must give 10% of his income to a priest each season; this need not be the initiating priest. Initiates may not become either sorcerers or shamans. They are required to spend five weeks a year in defense of their priest and in performing tasks for him.

Initiates take their place in the Orlanthi culture as adults. Most clans require initiation for their adult members. Membership in the clan guarantees them a roof and walls, and a blanket; a share in any profits to the clan; 50 hours of training a year in skills available from teachers in the clan; 1 point of Spirit Magic every five years; and legal protection in all cases. They are taught the Orlanth cult language of Stormspeech for free up to 25%. Initiates may sacrifice for Divine spells on a one-use basis; associate spells are not available.

**Spirit Magic:** Bladesharp, Demoralize, Detect Enemies, Disruption, Heal, Mindspeech, Mobility, Strength.

# V. Wind Lord Membership: Orlanth Adventurous

A Wind Lord is the embodiment of the Warrior. His life task is performing deeds to honor his god. He seeks danger and strife, impetuously taking up quarrels and fearlessly defending his friends. A candidate for Wind Lord must have been an initiate in good standing for a year. He must have a 90% Sword Attack plus 90% in any four skills chosen from among the following: Climb, Hide, Oratory, Ride, Scan, Sneak, Stormspeech (the Orlanth cult tongue), Weapon Attack, or Weapon Parry. He must also pass an easy test, which he can fail only by rolling 96-00 on 1d100 or by being insincere (which is checked by Divination). There must be a need for a new Wind Lord.

Wind Lords have the immense benefit of being called upon for many dangerous tasks and outshining their contemporaries in feats of glory. They are the leaders of the tribal warriors, and servants of the cult. New Wind Lords receive an iron weapon to mark his status. Rich tribes may provide their Wind Lords with a piece of iron armor as well, or even an entire suit. They are under the special eye of their god. When a Wind Lord checks for Divine Intervention, he rolls 1d10 rather than 1d100.

Wind Lords must donate 90% of their income and time to the cult. In return, the cult supports them, pays for their ransoms, and provides them with cult spells. Wind Lords must spend at least one season out of the year training initiates. They are not reimbursed for this training.

Wind Lords have special obligations to meet. If a solar priest or lord is met peacefully, a Wind Lord cries out the following call:

> Wandering Sun, Jealous Uncle, I have a new Toy here, see it? Test me, twice if you can For a gold piece each right answer.

The two then engage in a contest (usually one of riddles). The loser pays a wheel for each wrong answer. There is a minimum of one question each.

If a friendly Earth priestess is met the Wind Lord must offer his services to her with the following chant:

> Sweet Green Woman, Look at me! I am come, the Conqueror! None can stand before me. I am yours, what Dark shall I fight?

She may then order him to pursue any force of Darkness or Chaos which has bothered her in the last week. In return, the Wind Lord may make one demand upon her Fertility spell in the next spring rite. (Earth cults include Ernalda, Aldrya, Eiritha, and so on.)

The Wind Lord must assist and succor other Lightbringer cultists, as per this greeting poem:

Good greetings in ill times, Friends! No person can risk the world alone. Join others you can share with, They need not be like you.

Upon initiating battle with an intelligent chaos foe, or when otherwise appropriate, the Wind Lord issues the following challenge:

# THE CULT OF ORLANTH

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Foul slime, curse of existence, begone! Turn your back and flee from me. I will kill you, you are evil. Lie and whimper before me.

The Wind Lord must attempt to slay any chaos thing he encounters. If the chaos horror is too powerful, he may retreat, but must return with help to get rid of the threat as soon as possible.

Wind Lords may obtain the following Rune spells reusably:

Common Divine Magic: Sanctify, Worship Orlanth. Special Divine Magic: Bless Woad, Command Sylph, Flight, Shield, Wind Words.

# VI. Storm Servant (Acolyte) Membership: Orlanth Thunderous

Potential acolytes must fulfill the same requirements as do Storm Voices, and all normal acolyte responsibilities as well. They have access to Rune spells as do Storm Voices.

# VII. Storm Voice (Priest) Membership: Orlanth Thunderous

The Storm Voice of Orlanth Thunderous is a priest. He is the vessel for the magic of his god. He is responsible for the spiritual health of his entire ministry, and must spend much time performing proper rites to bring the rain and storms and to keep the winds blowing to bless the world.

A candidate for Wind Priest must meet all normal requirements and pass the normal tests; Speak Stormspeech must be known rather than Speak Own Language. He has normal priestly responsi-bilities and restrictions. He must have 90% Sword Attack plus 90% proficiency in any two of the following skills: Hide, Jump, Listen, Orate, Read / Write or Speak Stormspeech, Scan, any Weapon Attack, any Weapon Parry. He may try to gain an Allied Spirit during the ceremony by rolling under his POW x 3% on 1d100 (*Gods of Glorantha*, p. 20).

Wind Priests must donate 90% of their time and income to the cult. In return the cult supports them, pays for their ransoms, and provides them with cult spells. Wind Priests must spend at least one season out of the year training cult members; they are not reimbursed for this training. They have no skill limitations. They are supported by the congregation, and can get 100 hours per year in free training in return for teaching Spirit Magic and blessing cropland or tribal lands. Priests initiate new members, and keep the goods given as part of an initiation examination. The priest must own a cart to carry the necessary paraphernalia for services. This cart must be at least two-wheeled, and drawn by at least two oxen.

Storm Voices must try to succor an endangered member of their congregation. They must eat an egg once a week (a sign of contempt for Yelm), and can never use birds as familiars. Shadow cats are the preferred familiars.

Storm Voices can call upon aid from other Air cultists (Storm Bull, Orlanth, Wild Hunter, Thunder Bird, etc.), but the helpers may demand a price for it afterwards. The cost must meet the standards set forth in Orlanth's poem:

> Breath is in everyone: all Air is your friend All air must move for storm or breeze. Answer the call for assistance Then charge what is fair, in your own eye. Pay all debts, even if it breaks you. Especially those gained in emergency. If you demand payment in your turn You will expect to be paid. Give freely! Do not break a friend. In emergencies a fair man will aid. But take praise and cheer for pay. Do it freely, they will, too.

Storm Voices can sacrifice for the spells available to Wind Lords (except Bless Woad) on a one-use basis. **Common Divine Magic:** All.

**Special Divine Magic**: Bless Thunderstone, Cloud Call, Cloud Clear, Command Sylph, Decrease Wind, Increase Wind, Thunderbolt, Wind Warp.

# VIII. Orlanth Special Divine Spells

Bless Thunderstone (Storm Voices) ritual Enchant spell, stackable, reusable

1 point

1 point

This spell may only be learned by a full Storm Voice. It may only be cast on the High Holy Day of Orlanth upon a properly prepared flintstone, and thus can only be cast once a year.

The thunderstone must be activated before its magic will operate. This is done by spending one magic point while touching it, when the stone begins to spark and crackle. The stone must be thrown, slung, or held in one's hand and struck against a target. Once the stone has damaged a target, or one melee round after activation in any case, it shatters and becomes useless.

For each point of Bless Thunderstone stacked in the casting, the stone does 1d6 hit points of damage and destroys 1d6 magic points of a struck target. Armor protects normally against the hit point damage done by the stone. The magic point drain can be stopped by protective spells — each 1d6 drain acts as 1 point of divine magic for purposes of blocking. If a 5-point thunderstone strikes a target with Countermagic 8 or Shield 4, he loses only 1d6 magic points. Each time a thunderstone is Blessed, the caster loses 1 point of POW. Once a stone is enchanted, additional castings of Bless Thunderstone have no effect.

#### Bless Woad (Wind Lords)

ritual Enchant spell, stackable, reusable

This spell may only be learned by a full Wind Lord. It may only be cast during the High Holy Day of Orlanth upon a properly prepared pot of woad (a blue dye GVVSTLADXOU: AR ~ & WOR + & AY # O X T

derived from the woad plant), and thus may only be cast once a year.

The woad must be smeared over the naked body of the user. A casting of the spell enchants enough woad to coat one man.

For each point of Bless Woad stacked in the casting, the woad acts as 1 point of armor and gives 1 point of magical protection. Any hostile spell affecting the wearer must contain more magic points than he wears points of woad.

Each day that the woad is worn, it declines in potency by 1 point. If the user ever puts on armor or clothing, the woad immediately loses all its magic power.

Once a pot of woad is enchanted, additional castings of Bless Woad will not enhance its enchantment. As long as its pot is kept sealed, blessed woad never spoils.

#### Decrease Wind (Storm Voices)

ranged, temporal, stackable, reusable

1 point

100m rad. around caster, temporal, stackable, reusable This spell decreases the average wind STR by 1d6 for the duration of the spell. Each additional point used either reduces the STR by another 1d6 or increases the radius of effect by 100m. This spell has no effect upon temperature or wind direction.

# Flight (Wind Lords)

1 point

The caster may transport one object weighing up to SIZ 6 through the air for the duration of the spell. Convert Encumbrance to the equivalent SIZ. Each extra point of Flight increases the potential weight carried by 6 SIZ.

To pick up something nailed or glued down, the caster must use his current magic points to over-come the STR of the nails or glue (which must be determined by the gamemaster) on the resistance table. An object affected by Flight moves at 3m per strike rank. An unwilling target's magic points must be overcome or the spell has no effect.

# Increase Wind (Storm Voices)

1 point

100m rad. around caster, temporal, stackable, reusable This spell increases the average wind STR by 1d6 for the duration of the spell. Each additional point used either adds another 1d6 to the STR or increases the radius of effect by 100m. This spell has no effect upon temperature or wind direction.

# Wind Warp (Storm Voices)

100m rad. around caster, temporal, stackable, reusable

1 point

This spell changes the direction the wind is blowing by 1d10 degrees in the direction of the caster's choice. Each additional point adds 1d10 more degrees of directional change or increases the radius of effect by 100m. When the spell ends, the wind hesitates, motionless, for one melee round, then abruptly returns to its former direction. Small whirlwinds may form at the spell's boundaries, where the wind is forced to clash with itself.

# Wind Words (Wind Lords)

1 point

ranged, temporal, nonstackable, reusable Downwind, the caster can use the wind to bring conversations to his ears as if he were next to the speakers.

# **IX.** Subcults

#### **Spirits of Reprisal**

Usually called Enforcers, there are several types of these spirits. Some of the common varieties are:

Flint Slingers: These long-legged spirits are capable of great leaps (50m at a time) and with an 80% Throw ability. 1d4 + 1 appear at a time to plague cultists who steal from Orlanth or his associated cults. They appear when the offender is in combat or a stress situation, circle the fight in visible but insubstantial form throwing 1 magic stone per melee round. Each strike saps 1d3 magic points from the target. They sling until their target is reduced to 0 magic points or they are dispelled (they act as a 1 point Divine Magic spell per Flint Slinger present for purposes of dispelling — each must be dispelled individually).

Flint Slingers also attack any initiate who apostatizes, breaking his word and leaving the cult. They afflict him 1d3 times and attack apostate Wind Lords and Priests at least a dozen times.

**Impests:** These small creatures cause rashes, coughs, hives, or minor bodily aches and problems for cultists who have committed minor infractions.

Wind Fists: These ugly, bat-winged creatures attack with bronze fists to punish worshippers who murdered a cult member, who killed someone protected by Orlanth's hospitality, or who profaned an Orlanth holy place. The Wind Fists appear when the violator is in combat or other stress situations. 1d6 appear and are visible but immaterial, beating upon the offender with the effect of 1d6 damage directly to a random melee hit location each combat round. They stay for 1d6 combat rounds, then disappear. They cannot be dispelled and appear once for each offense made.

#### Drogarsi

Drogarsi is the god of war dances and music, and is a favorite god of Orlanth's. He provides the Orlanth cult with the spirit magic spell Glamour.

#### The Four Magic Weapons (Wind Lords)

In Orlanth's victories, he acquired four special tools to help him on his quests. These tools proved of enormous help to him during his battles and the Lightbringer's Quest. Each of the four weapons is now a separate subcult, providing a separate Rune magic. These spells are reusable to Wind Lords. Storm Voices can get them on a one-use basis.

**Lightning Spear:** This is derived from Lightning Boy, whom Orlanth wrested from his foes, the grim sky gods. The subcult teaches the spell of Lightning. GVVSTLADXOU: AR ~ & UO242AY CX

# The Cult of Issaries 2, 111 # Market Cult 2, 111 #

# I. Mythos and History

Issaries is the son of Larnste and Harana Ilor, god and goddess of the Celestial Court who ruled over Change and Harmony, respectively. He grew up in the idyllic pastures of the magical world of the Spike during early Godtime, where all was calm and perfect. He was noted for his cleverness and smooth tongue and wanderlust. While still ignorant of his own powers he was found wandering in distant realms. One story says he was the messenger carrying secret notes from Sky to Earth which led to the begetting of Umath.

Issaries was found in many places and roles during the Gods War. He is sometimes a conciliator, as when he settled an early argument between Yelm and Orlanth. He sometimes helped in wartime, as when he taught Humakt the language of his enemies in return for protection. He was often a mere spectator, as when he saw Orlanth kidnap Huraya for his concubine.

When the darkness closed in upon the world, Issaries was not panicked, for he had seen the Darkness in his travels. But the march of Death disturbed his nature, and he sensed chaos at the end of the trail. He prepared the Spell of Passage and set off to find the light of communication with which to rekindle the world. On his way he met others, and they succeeded in their journey, becoming the Seven Lightbringers.

In the passage through chaos and darkness Issaries led the Lightbringers through all troubles. His reliability was unbroken until they were deep in transit, then failed. Issaries learned from this failure the secrets of motion and stillness, and when his tongue failed him he learned the secrets and terrors of silence. After the Sun's rebirth, Issaries' three children, Harst, Garzeen, and Goldentongue, carried his secrets to all mankind.

Where there were simple farmers, herders, hunters, or fishers, there was a god called Harst, also called "Spare Grain." He appears as an old man, bearded and carrying a pot, a sack, and a carved amulet with Communications Runes. Legend says that he was in love with the daughter of a lazy king and sought her hand in marriage. Her father stated that no one could marry into his family who could not use his arts to provide for them all. Harst, who had taught a neighboring people to speak, went to these friends and asked for a handful of spare grain from each. With this he traded for a batch of clay pots from his brother, and then traded these to the people who'd given him grain, thus making another profit and repay-ing his friends at the same time. He got his wife, and established forever the standards of trade.

Garzeen Middleman is the name of Issaries' second son. He gained popularity where there were towns or cities or other established markets. At first people gathered there and could not speak with each other, but he taught them his language (afterwards called Tradetalk) and passed among many different races. Some were willing to pay for Garzeen's special aid, and so he found his first profession. He took payment and used his pay to trade where they were needed or stored them until the need arose.

Garzeen looks rotund and bearded, and shows his wealth and status with excessive dress and luxury. With this he once hoped to attract Fenela, daughter of King Froalar in the west. She scorned his materialism, and distrusted the advances of a god, fearing infidelity after a time. She made him swear to fulfill a vow before she'd marry him, and then told him he must reassemble the body of the pretemporal deity Genert. The body's pieces were floating about in various guises, and a mystical "growing ground" in the depths of the desert was rumored. Assembling the whole god was impossible. But now, when a follower of Garzeen's way comes across such a piece, he is obliged to depart for Genert's Desert within one week to try to fulfill the ancient vow. The only way to prevent the quest is to sell the fragment to a Desert Tracker of the Trader Princes, or to die.

The third son was Goldentongue, Trader Prince. Unlike his brothers he refused to stay in one place, and thereby exploited the ways of their father the most. He was a singer and a wanderer, and in his travels met the daughter of Lhankor Mhy named Mother Language. They had a son named Herald, but the pair did not stay together. Goldentongue founded the subcult of wandering merchants, who travel the world and know no home but their caravan. One of his followers was Caarith, first of the Desert Trackers and a woman.

The cult makes great promises to its worshippers. Issaries is the psychopomp (escort of the dead) for all Lightbringer worshippers, and Issaries initiates are guaranteed to be guided to their proper station in the afterlife, and promised that there are many opportunities in that afterlife. Initiates are told that they can take some magical items and abilities beyond the grave. Priests receive guidance from Issaries in measure appropriate to their sacrifices to him in life.

At funerals, the Issaries cult includes many grave goods for travel on the Other Side. Priests are adept at preparing certain items to travel with them. Issaries insists that his merchants contribute 10% of their earthly goods to a celebration among strangers after the funeral is over.

His Runes are Movement, Harmony, and Communication. Also called the Issaries Rune, Communication is known to few spirits other than Issaries or his children, save those who received it from Issaries.

# II. Cult Ecology

Issaries is the god of language and speech, of communication in general, of passage and transit, travel, trade, and roads; the Guardian of the Way. Among primitive societies, the priests of Harst are the individuals who deal with outsiders, thanks to their special language skills. The very existence of trade and exchange rests upon the skills of middlemen, and civilization could not exist without this exchange. Goldentongue provides long-distance communication between parts of the cult and, less directly, parts of the world.

# THE CULT OF ORLANTH

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Sandals of Darkness: These were stolen from Kyger Litor.

# Dark Walk

1 point

ranged, temporal, nonstackable, reusable

This spell allows the user to be totally invisible and soundless in darkness and shadow to anyone within the stated range. Blend-in is total.

**Scarf of Mist:** The Scarf of Mist was a water spirit named Huraya. Orlanth saved her life. In return, Huraya shielded Orlanth from the view of his foes.

#### **Mist Cloud**

1 point

ranged, temporal, stackable, reusable

This spell creates a natural-looking mist 2m in diameter per point used in its creation. Visibility in or through the mist is limited to 1m. The cloud can be made to encircle and blind an opponent.

Shield of Arran: This shield first belonged to Ernalda, but she had no use for it and gave it to Babeester Gor. Orlanth obtained it, too, and has made great use of it in his combats.

# **Great Parry**

3 points

touch, temporal, nonstackable, reusable

This passive spell must be cast upon a shield. It effectively gives the shield an infinite amount of armor points for the spell's duration. However, knockback still affects the holder of the shield.

# X. Associated Cults

# **The Lightbringers**

Orlanth had several companions on his epic quest. All are remembered with great affection by Orlanthi. The Lightbringers that provide spells to Orlanth's cult include Chalana Arroy, Eurmal, Issaries, and Lhankor Mhy. These deities have a special relationship to one another; their worshippers call on each other for help when needed. All spells provided by fellow Lightbringers are available reusably to Wind Lords and Storm Voices.

# **Chalana Arroy (Lightbringer)**

The merciful healing goddess lends Restore Health <Constitution> to Storm Voices and Wind Lords.

#### Ernalda

Ernalda, Orlanth's bride, and the source of many myths, is worshipped elsewhere. Orlanth is her best-known husband; she shares more myths with him than any other husband. She provides the spell Restore Health <Strength> to Storm Voices.

#### Eurmal (Lightbringer)

Eurmal the trickster proved his value many times on the quest, and was finally conquered, though not tamed, by Orlanth. He teaches Charisma to both Storm Voices and Wind Lords.

# Heler

Heler, the Rain God, is Orlanth's aide. His name is a watchword for loyalty among Orlanth worship-pers; to be called "staunch as Heler" is a high compliment. He teaches his spell Rain to Storm Voices.

#### Rain

ranged, temporal, stackable, reusable

This spell can only be cast when the sky is at least 90% clouds. Rain will then fall within a 100m radius of the caster. Each extra rain spell stacked together increases the radius of effect by another 100m. When the spell ends, the rainfall stops.

# **Issaries** (Lightbringer)

Issaries was the guide of the Lightbringers. Without him, the travelers would have wandered forever lost until the universe caved in. He gives Lock to both Storm Voices and Wind Lords.

## Lhankor Mhy (Lightbringer)

Lhankor Mhy, god of wisdom, advised Orlanth through the entire Lightbringers Quest. He gives Analyze Magic to Storm Voices and Wind Lords.

# Mastakos

Mastakos, God of Motion and Change, was freed by Orlanth on the Lightbringer's Quest. He is often called Orlanth's Charioteer. Through Mastakos, Guided Teleportation is available to Storm Voices, and Teleportation to Wind Lords. If a Storm Voice sacrifices for Teleportation or a Wind Lord for Guided Teleportation, the spell is one-use.

# Storm Bull

Storm Bull, Orlanth's brother and comrade-in-arms, is now his brother's dangerous servant. He gives the spell of Face Chaos to Wind Lords.

#### Yinkin

Yinkin, god of Shadow Cats, is Orlanth's half-brother, and many Orlanthi dignitaries have cats as their familiars and allies.

# Identify Scent (Wind Lords)

1 point

ranged, temporal, nonstackable, reusable

This spell enables the target to perfectly identify the nature of any familiar scent he encounters while under the spell's influence. It does not give range or direction, just nature. If the scent is of a substance or entity that the target has never before encountered, he only knows that an unknown scent has been encountered.

# XI. Miscellaneous Notes

# Weather

Initiates of Orlanth can always tell when a change in the weather is coming. Wind Lords and Storm Voices are able to tell approximately what it will change into a day in advance.

1 point

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He is worshipped by merchants, caravaneers, traders, heralds, interpreters, and shopkeepers. During the Second Age, his worship was spread through all the civilized world, and his cult is the most widespread organized religion of Glorantha.

This cult has a dislike of hyenas, which are parts of the body of dead Genert. If found alive by a merchant of Garzeen, the merchant must go on his trek to the desert to fulfill Garzeen's unfinished task. Thus, the worshippers of Harst and Goldentongue kill hyenas on sight, if possible.

Issaries has a friendly rivalry with the cult of Lhankor Mhy. Common concerns bind them. Like all Lightbringers they hate chaos and dislike darkness. While they can be neutral towards the races of darkness, they cannot be neutral about chaos.

Holy Days for the cult can be any market day, selected by the current High Priest. However, they especially revere the Sacred Time, like other Lightbringer cults. The Wild Days occurring during Sacred Time are especially sacred, and no trading takes place on those days.

# III. The Cult in the World

Merchants may well be unimportant in terms of official power, but the individuals are often of such obvious consequence that their true sway is quite extensive. On the other hand, the populace may so dislike merchants as to confine this influence totally.

Issaries is the traditional cult of tradesmen among the Orlanthi. The more civilized the Orlanthi, the more numerous this cult. Thus, among the savages of Brolia, Issaries is nearly unknown, while among the cultivated folk of the Holy Country, the cult is widespread.

The Issaries cult has spread beyond its origins, and is now worshipped in areas far beyond the ken of most Orlanthi. The cult was a favorite of the world-spanning God Learners in the Second Age, and thus was seeded throughout Glorantha.

Temples to Issaries are rarely found except in cities or other trade centers. Temporary meeting places may be set up in any place where more than one merchant happens to meet. Since merchants tend to congregate, most worship sites are at least minor temples. Shrines to Issaries teach Lock.

The members of this cult generally attempt to set up trade networks wherever they exist, but these rarely acquire any permanent status. The great Middle Sea Empire of the Jrusteli God Learners depended upon just such a system.

To determine rulership of a temple or marketplace, all initiates present hold an election to select one Chief Priest to be the High Priest. The High Priest must belong to the subcult of Garzeen unless none are available. This status must be renewed at least every year in a city, and in a temporary marketplace the status does not last more than a week. Each initiate, priest, and allied spirit may cast one vote.

# **IV. Spare Grain (Harst)**

The members of this subcult are merely lay members who worship Issaries on the side to aid in trading their surplus goods, should they have any. Any non-Chaotic being can join this subcult by sacrificing 1 POW. No other requirements exist except that the new member must worship at cult ceremonies when available.

The only benefit is that all Issaries merchants are constrained to give a better deal in trade to local Spare Grain members than to their noncult neighbors. They may also train in Tradetalk from cult priests.

The value of this cult lies in the fact that it provides traveling merchant priests with a local supply of initiates to organize a shrine or temple for him at need.

# V. Initiate Membership

A candidate for initiation must meet the standard cult requirements. Skills checked include Bargain, Ceremony, Evaluate, Speak (any) Language, and Speak (any other) Language.

Initiates must vow to uphold the cult ideals and never to defile any Issaries holy ground or market. They may use only Tradetalk in cult functions. They do not have to report to a priest, and are quite independent. Many shop-owners join simply to assure themselves that their region will be protected by some higher magics.

Initiates are required to learn Tradetalk to at least 25% from cult priests before they learn any other skill or spell. Afterwards, they may also learn the special cult skill of Bargain.

Spirit Magics Available: Glamour, Glue, Mindspeech, and Mobility.

# VI. Trader Prince (Goldentongue)

Trader Princes are given to wandering and travel, strife and adventure. They live to enjoy and exercise the mundane side of their god. They are also priests, with access to reusable divine magic.

A candidate for Trader Prince must have been an initiate for at least a year, and be a member in good standing. In addition to normal requirements, he must have Evaluate at 90%.

A Trader Prince priest need donate only 50% of his income and 10% of his time to the cult. They are not supported financially by the cult in any way. They are obliged to go to the aid of any Issaries priest in trouble. They must protect all their own followers even if this puts their own life at risk. This is a formal obligation which may be temporarily hired by outsiders. They may never steal, except from someone who stole from them or from a creature of chaos.

Common Divine Magic: All.

Special Divine Magic: Create Market, Lock, Passage, Path Watch, Spell Trading.

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# VII. Merchant Priest (Garzeen)

Merchant Priests construct and maintain their neutral market ground in the changing world, and use it as a basis in communication and trade. They use their special Rune magic to aid exchanges and trade. Being a priest does not ensure success as a merchant, however, only at making a marketplace!

A candidate must have been an initiate in good standing for at least a year and have another priest serve as a sponsor. In addition to normal require-ments, a 90% Bargain skill is required. A Merchant Priest need donate only 10% of his income and 50% of his time to the cult. They are not supported financially by their cult in any way. A Merchant Priest is never allowed to steal, except from someone who stole from them or from a being of chaos. They must come to the aid of fellow cultists, except where such aid greatly endangers them and they decide the potential danger involved).

Common Divine Magic: All.

Special Divine Magic: Create Great Market, Create Market, Lock, Passage, Path Watch, Spell Trading.

# **VIII. Issaries Special Cult Skills**

**Bargain (Communication skill 05%)**: This is the skill of buying something for a lower price than asked. To use it, one must be in a position where bargaining is reasonable; bargaining for the sacred axe of a Babeester Gor temple guard is not feasible. The bargainer must state the price at which he wishes to purchase an item, and for each 2% difference between that price and the asking price, he subtracts 1% from his Bargain skill. The person selling the item will not take a loss, no matter how well he is Bargained with. If a bargaining attempt fails, the user may increase his offer and try again.

For example, Hilarian the merchant wishes to purchase a magic sword. The owner asks 400 guilders, and Hilarian offers 240. Hilarian has a skill of 60%, but he wants the sword for 40% less than normal, so his chance for success is reduced by 20 percentiles to only 30%. He rolls 49 and fails. He then offers 280 guilders, which is 70% of the normal price, reducing his Bargain chances by only 15 percentiles to 45%. He rolls 03, succeeding.

**Tradetalk (Communication skill 00%):** This is the Issaries cult language. It has spread all over the world and is now popular even among people who do not worship Issaries at all. It is of divine origin, and quite easy to learn; when learning Tradetalk the student gains 1d6 – 1 percentiles per increase rather than 1d6 – 2 (as for other languages). However, because this language is quite simple, it cannot express more abstract concepts, and cannot be used past an effective level of 50%. However, it can still be of benefit to know the language above 50%. In distant lands Tradetalk may vary, penalizing a foreign speaker of Tradetalk up to 50%. A Master of Tradetalk at 100% skill would always use the skill at least at 50%, no matter where he travelled.

# **IX. Issaries Special Rune Magic**

# **Create Great Market**

ritual Ceremony spell, one-use

This spell is available only to High Priests of Garzeen. It allows all priests of the cult to combine their Create Market spells to make one gigantic, protected marketplace. Thus, if six Create Market spells are present, anyone with ill intent entering the zone defined by those spells takes 6d3 damage.

# **Create Market**

3 points

1 point

ritual Ceremony spell, reusable

This spell creates an invisible protected zone identical to a Warding 1 in most respects. However, Create Market affects the enclosed area, not just the boundaries, provides modest illumination of goods after dark. The priest must use 1-meter staffs carved with likenesses of Issaries to define the boundaries of the zone. Unlike Warding, it does not detect just anyone entering, but only activates on those who enter the area with a hostile intent. Theft is a hostile intent.

# Lock

ritual Ceremony spell, duration 8 weeks, nonstackable, reusable

This spell may be cast on a door, chest lid, bag opening, or similar device. It thereafter acts as a Glue spell with a Strength equal to the magic points used to strengthen the spell when it was cast. It is personalized to the caster, and he (only) may open the door (or whatever) as many times as desired and, when it is closed, the Lock will work again. This spell cannot be removed by Dispel, Dismiss, or Neutralize Magic. If the Lock's STR is overcome with brute force, and later closed again, the Lock will work again, unlike Glue. This spell may be stacked with Passage.

# Passage

#### 1 point

ritual Ceremony spell, duration 8 weeks, stackable, reusable This spell must be stacked with Lock. Each point of Passage allows one additional person to pass through or open the enspelled aperture besides the priest. It is cast on the door (or whatever), and the person(s) getting the Passage must also be present, laying their hands on the opening while the spell is intoned. These additional persons cannot boost the priest's Lock spell with their magic points (unless in Mindlink with him).

# Path Watch

2 points

2 points

self only, duration variable, nonstackable, reusable This spell is used when traveling through dangerous or questionable territory. It must be laid upon a known path or visible road which will be traveled by the caster. The spell alerts the user to the direction and number, though not type, of all enemies and traps within a 100m radius. The spell lasts as long as the road lasts and as long as the caster stays awake.

# Spell Trading

# touch, instant, nonstackable, reusable

This spell allows the priest to trade one use of any of his reusable Rune spells (except this one!) in exchange for one use of any reusable Rune spell known by

# 1 point

# **River of Cradles**

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another priest of any cult. The trade must be voluntary. The spell traded cannot be regained by its original owner until its new owner has cast it or died. Spells which are one-use to the owner may not be traded.

A special format must be followed or this spell will not work.

1. The trade must be done in an Issaries Market. This protects the priest from persons with ill intent, so that a thief who intends to 'accidentally' cast a Mindblast at the Issaries priest is detected by the market spell.

2. Traded items must be stated. Exact prices are negotiable, but Issaries insists on a negotiated clear profit for his priest in one form or another.

3. Some sort of token must be passed as part of the trade, and it must represent in some way the spell being traded. Thus, Shield uses a shield, a Humakti spell a knife, and a Command Sylph a bag of air. This is in addition to any traded items.

4. Each priest's player simultaneously rolls 1d100. If 01-95 is rolled by both, the spell was passed successfully, but a 96-00 result by either means that the spell actually was activated against the other priest, and immediately takes effect. If a Sunspear was being traded, the intended recipient is struck by the blast, for instance. Even if one of the partners fails to pass the spell properly, he still receives the spell from the other party.

# X. Subcults

#### The Spirit of Reprisal: Raw Greed

This spirit inhabits certain jewels known as Greed Gems. It is loosed by the god against any cult member breaking his vows. It may also be summoned by a Divine Intervention by a priest to curse someone who has stolen from him or otherwise offended him. In either case, the culprit finds a Greed Gem in his hand the next time he attempts to spend money or exchange an object in barter. Greed Gems always have 51 facets, come in various colors and shapes, and are always of exceptional size, purity, and value.

Anyone picking up such a gem is attacked in spirit combat by the spirit of the gem. Raw Greed has a POW of 2d6 + 12 and attacks vs. the target's POW (not magic points). It attacks until it is defeated through loss of magic points, when it returns to the spirit plane, leaving the gem behind. Each time it overcomes the target's POW, that target receives a 5% Greed Factor. Thus, if the target was overcome 4 times before he defeated the spirit, he would have a 20% Greed Factor.

This curse should be handled as an ability. A character with Raw Greed in him must test his Greed Factor in any appropriate situation. If he succeeds, then his lust for the object is obsessive. This does not imply an overwhelming desire, but it does magnify current desires far out of proportion and make the victim crave possession of the object or object type.

# The Children of Issaries

After the Sun's rebirth, Issaries went about the world to remind people of his secrets and to guide them back to civilization. His children were left as guides, and each of these children developed into a specialized subcult, depending on local needs. The most famous are Garzeen, Goldentongue, and Harst, which have developed into the major aspects of the cult.

There was also a daughter of Issaries, named Etyries. After a thousand years she grew tired of tending pots and counting stones and decided to travel a great distance to hear the words of a young goddess of the far north. She left her family and went to listen. The goddess was the Red Goddess, still on earth and in mortal form. The daughter of Issaries learned that she could use her great innate powers and still enjoy other pursuits. The Red Goddess taught Etyries that she was the guide upon the threads of the Lunar pantheon.

# Herald Goodword

Herald was a mythical son of Issaries and Mother Language (a Lhankor Mhy spirit). This is a special-ized subcult. Heralds do not trade goods. Instead, they hire as strictly neutral parties to all who need them, especially enemies, and always carry words between them with honesty and good will.

The subcult has the same skills and spells as other Issaries subcults, but depends solely upon words for income.

# **XI. Associated Cults**

#### **Chalana** Arroy

This cult provides the spell Regrow Limb.

# Eurmal

This cult provides the spell Clever Tongue.

#### **Clever** Tongue

1 point

ranged, temporal, nonstackable, reusable Doubles the target's skill percentiles in Orate and Fast Talk for the duration of the spell.

#### Lhankor Mhy

This cult provides the spell Analyze Magic.

#### Orlanth

This cult provides the spell Flight.

# XII. Miscellaneous Notes

#### Mules

Mules are the favorite cult beasts. They are said to be an invention of Issaries, conjured up by him in order to make something to sell out of nothing. They are useful both as workbeasts and trade items. Also, they may claim these beasts as not-horses among horse-haters (such as Doraddi and Praxians), and as horse-kin among horse-lovers.

# Neutrality

The neutrality of the cult is widely known and respected, but there is no guarantee they will be trusted. The attitudes of locals to any trader, whether permanent or passing through, may vary considerably.

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# The Cult of Lhankor Mhy $\Upsilon \bigtriangleup$ Grey Sages $\Upsilon \bigtriangleup$

# I. Mythos and History

Lhankor Mhy was born before the Gods War of two members of the Celestial Court, Mostal (son of Acos Lawgiver) and Orenoar (Mistress of Truth). He lived with them upon the great Spike of Law and sang songs of Knowledge and Wisdom.

When Orlanth slew Yelm, gods and goddesses of all forms went to Hell. Among them was the goddess of the Light of Knowledge, and Lhankor Mhy was suddenly bereft of inspiration. He set out during the Darkness to find the missing goddess. Along the way he met the other Lightbringers and when the Spike exploded Lhankor Mhy joined with them to rescue the Sun.

When the Lightbringers returned from their successful quest, Lhankor Mhy married the goddess of the Light of Knowledge, and all wisdom was his forever.

While Lhankor Mhy was able to embrace all knowledge, mortals have no such opportunity, and have found ever since that all mortal wisdom is incomplete, and their truths do not always apply to the problems at hand. Yet many follow Lhankor Mhy's constant quest for truth, for the thirst for knowledge remains, and his worshippers constantly search for new truth.

These worshippers of the Seeker and the Sage remain above the quarrels of other gods, and are impartial advisors to all.

Lhankor Mhy's initiates know that they travel to his Court in the Tower of Ivory to sit at the feet of the Eternal Source of Knowledge. Their time and place in the tower depends on how well they have fulfilled their lifetime quest.

Sages prefer to be laid into stone tombs, whether natural or constructed; shaft graves are preferable. The poorer members are simply buried with a rock as a pillow. Cult rites always include long accounts of the deceased's wisdom read aloud during the services.

Lhankor Mhy's primary Rune is that of Truth, but he is also connected to Law.

# **II. Cult Ecology**

Lhankor Mhy is the God of Knowledge. His cult provides the same service to the Material Plane as the god does for the God Plane. The Sages (as priests of the cult are called) provide information to all who pay for it, whether in money, service, or kind. They constantly seek after new information.

Lhankor Mhy is worshipped by wise men and would-be wise men. His sages range from the advisors of wild hill chieftains to sedate urban librarians.

Lhankor Mhy initiates favor their counterparts among the Lightbringer cults if all other factors are equal in a quarrel. They despise those who limit or destroy knowledge. They hate chaos, which destroyed the mythical mountain of The Spike. Godday of Truth week of each season is the cult holy day. The two Goddays of Sacred Time are particularly holy, and are the times of celebration of the return of the Lightbringers from Hell. The first Godday celebrates the return, the second honors the beginning of Time.

# III. The Cult in the World

Like their patron, sages try to avoid political power games with other groups. They may advise the ruling body of a region, but are often not a part of that body.

This repression of involvement in outside politics seems to intensify the constant intratemple bickerings of the cult. A temple may have a number of different factions from different areas who retain their loyalties to their dozens of birthplace cities, tribes, nations, and empires, and their political in-fighting can be fierce.

His cult is not large, and sites larger than minor temples are uncommon. Shrines are rare, since the cult by its nature requires a fairly substantial support base to exist at all. The largest temple is the famous Library of Kethaela. Shrines teach Analyze Magic.

There is a well-established network of Lhankor Mhy temples. No monolithic leader wields power, although the largest temples have the greatest social clout.

Each temple is presided over by a high priest who is also the Official Chief Librarian. He has three subordinates.

**Provost of Apprentices:** This is usually a sage, but may (depending on the size of the temple) be an initiate. He maintains the physical grounds of the temple and arranges for room and board for the apprentices. He is responsible for collecting payment for instruction. For this he takes a 10% tithe of the payments for himself and his retinue.

**Chief of Loremasters:** This worthy must be a sage. He is in charge of administering all non-magical instruction in the skills of the temple and its associated cults. He is also responsible for the copying of books and scrolls and is the main librarian.

**Chief Priest:** The chief priest is in charge of all magical training, both spirit and Rune, and also administers the temple services in the use of Evaluate and Lores, for which he collects 10% of fees charged.

# **IV. Apprentice Membership**

Apprentices are young people who are apprenticed to the sages to become scribes, historians, and other forms of clerks. A candidate for apprenticeship must pass a basic intelligence test (INT x 4 or less on 1d100).

An apprentice is not yet an initiate. He must devote 90% of his time to the temple, and receives in return his room and board, plus 1,000 hours of free training per year. Their time is spent in service to the cult, performing menial tasks assigned by the Provost of Apprentices.

Apprentices are instructed in Evaluate, First Aid, any Lore, Orate, Read/Write any Language, or Speak any Language. They are not taught any magic spells.

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# V. Initiate Membership

A candidate for initiate must have 90% in Read/ Write (any language), Evaluate, or any Lore. Once he has been tested by the cult and proven his status, he is given the title of Master of <his skill> and automatically accepted as an initiate if he was an apprentice. If he was not previously an apprentice, he must pass a test abstracted as a roll of INT  $\times$  2 or less on 1d100. This may be attempted once per game year. All initiates must also sacrifice a point of POW.

Initiates of the Grey Lords have complete access to all cult libraries and instructors. They are also assured of room and board at any temple, as long as they don't mind apprentice fare (which is rarely too bad) and bunking amongst the scrolls. Initiates receive 100 hours of free training yearly by the cult and can pay for more.

Spirit Magic: All Detect spells, Farsee, Mindspeech.

# **VI. Acolyte Membership**

Potential acolytes must meet the same requirements as do priests.

# VII. Sage Membership (Grey Lords, Priests)

The priests of Lhankor Mhy are also known as Sages, or Grey Lords. The central authority of the temple rests with them, and they are the masters of the skill schools, unless there is no sage available who is a master of that school. They remain in constant training in their skills.

A candidate for priest must have been an initiate for at least two years. He must meet all usual requirements, except that the non-ritual skill requirement is to be 90% in each of two different Lores and in Read/Write any one language.

Sages must never mix into individual quarrels nor participate in wars, unless the temple is threatened, a Lightbringer priest is in danger, or if facing chaos. They must spend 50% of their time teaching and 40% of their time in temple duties. They must pay 90% of their income to the temple. They may never marry an initiate, priest, or lord of an Elemental deity (i.e., any god whose Runes include Darkness, Earth, Storm, Water, or Moon), but may marry Sky-worshippers.

They must never allow scrolls, tablets, papers or other records or repositories of knowledge to be threatened. Any items of importance to the acquisition of knowledge must be gathered for the cult.

Grey Lords are served the choicest cuts at every meal. They take formal precedence in all ceremonies and are the most prized of advisors. Sages also use their skills for outsiders, charging 1 penny per percentile the priest possesses in the skill(s) used. Of this income, 90% goes to the temple.

Common Divine Magic: All.

**Special Divine Magic:** Analyze Magic, Clairvoyance, Knowledge, Mind-Read, Reconstruction, Translate, Truespeak.

# VIII. Lhankor Mhy Special Divine Spells

# Analyze Magic

touch, instant, stackable, reusable

This spell gives a true statement of at least one function of one magical item, entity, or substance. If more than a point is cast at one time, more than one truth is discovered. The spells must be cast simultaneously, or the same truths are repeated.

#### Clairvoyance

5 km, temporal, nonstackable, reusable

This spell gives the user the ability to know what is happening in an area within the spell's range which he has previously studied for at least 15 minutes. The user has full visual and audio sense, as if he were in the area.

The user is in full trance, and is completely insensible to his surroundings. However, the priest may terminate the spell at any time.

# Knowledge

touch, temporal, nonstackable, reusable

This spell allows the user to read the past history of an item. If the information cannot be assimilated fully within the 15 minutes of the spell, parts may be lost. If the item has a long history, the spell starts at the beginning unless the user dictates a particular time at which to start.

# Mind-Read

ranged, temporal, nonstackable, reusable

This active spell gives the ability to read the conscious thoughts of the target without his consent, though he can tell there is an intruder in his mind. The priest must overcome the target's magic points with his own for the spell to operate.

#### Reconstruction

ranged, temporal, nonstackable, reusable

This spell causes any 15-minute sequence from the past to replay for the user's senses, as long as he or she is in the immediate area in which it took place. or is in Mindlink with someone who is there. The user is in a trance state and no one else can sense what he senses. The user must state the time and date of starting the vision.

# Translate

touch, temporal, nonstackable, reusable

This spell translates all words touched by the user's index finger at normal reading speed (about 10,000 written words in 15 minutes) while the spell operates, and leave an impression of the meaning afterwards, in a manner which aids in translations of the same language/script. Untranslatable words are not translated, though the user receives an idea of the word's meaning.

#### Truespeak

ranged, temporal, nonstackable, reusable

This spell compels the victim to speak nothing but the truth for the duration and answer all questions in a literal manner. The user must overcome the target's

3 points

1 point

2 points

2 points

2 points

2 points

1 point

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magic points with his own to compel the truth-telling for each question. The target can refuse to speak at all, but if he does speak, and his magic points are overcome, he must tell the truth. With Mind-Read, this spell makes Lhankor Mhy sage a potent inquisitor.

# IX. Subcults

# Spirit of Reprisal: The Brain Flayer

The cult of Lhankor Mhy has little need of spirits of retribution. But if any member grossly disobeys the dictates of the cult, the Brain Flayer spirit is sent against him. This otherworld being is only perceived through its effects. The victim loses one point of INT every season until he either makes recompense or dies. Recompense is usually in the form of a quest for the cult.

#### Dilfar the Deepsighted

This early sage first discovered the talent of Evaluate, which has brought much income to the cult. All Masters of Evaluation are automatically members of Dilfar's subcult.

## The Grey Ones

The Grey Ones are a group of victims of the Great Darkness who found their way clear of chaos to safety before the onset of time. Many of the cult spirits come from among the Grey Ones.

# XI. Associated Cults

# **Chalana** Arroy

The healer, another Lightbringer companion, provide sages with the useful spell Restore Health <Intelligence>.

# Eurmal

Even the Trickster recognized Lhankor Mhy's value on the rigorous journey to restore the lost sun. And Lhankor Mhy's sages recognize the Trickster's importance in the universe now, too. He gives Lhankor Mhy the spell of Clever Tongue.

# **Clever** Tongue

1 point

ranged, temporal, nonstackable, reusable Doubles the target's skill percentiles in Orate and

# Fast Talk for the duration of the spell.

# Issaries

The protector of roads and trade taught Lhankor Mhy how to speak foreign languages. The spell is called Create Market by Issaries merchants, but is altered to Create Neutral Ground for Lhankor Mhy sages, because they use the spell differently.

# Orlanth

The chieftain's cult of the Lightbringer gives a very useful spell, Wind Words, to his favorite advisor.

# XII. Miscellaneous Notes

# The Library

While the priests are dedicated to the collection of knowledge, they have never developed a consistent classification system. After a few years of getting to know the collection, priests are usually familiar with the location of items relating to their specialties. Often, they add to the confusion by starting their own private library from material they take from the main library, and their hoard is not found until after their deaths.

Thus, while all the knowledge of the world might be somewhere in a Lhankor Mhy temple, it may take years to find a particular item. Each High Priest traditionally vows to straighten out the system, but each has a different procedure, and they rarely live long enough to implement their full system and document it. In areas where new information and artifacts are brought in every week, the sages have long since realized that order is impossible, or at least unlikely, until a cult hero arrives to bring law out of disorder. Until this arrival, they merely look for a free shelf or build a new one. Some libraries have areas completely hidden by later construction.

# Appearance

All sages wear beards, symbolic of the god Lhankor Mhy who is constantly in pursuit of the goddess Knowledge. Women and species without natural facial hair wear false beards which are often highly ornamented.

# **Temple Shape**

Temples are built in a Y-shape if at all possible. Each arm of the Y has a special function, with additional functions for the central juncture. The usual layout follows:

Center Juncture, Lower Floor: Temple of Knowledge, Court of Philosophy, Library of Originals.

**Center Juncture, Upper Floor:** Quarters of the High Priest and the Chiefs of the Three Branches.

Left Arm, Lower Floor: Lightbringer Cult associated training in skills and spells.

Left Arm, Upper Floor: Initiates' quarters. Right Arm, Lower Floor: Cult training in skills and spells.

**Right Arm, Upper Floor:** Sages' quarters. **Base Arm, Lower Floor:** Gymnasion for STR, CON, and DEX training and space rented to other cults.

Base Arm, Upper Floor: Apprentices' quarters.

This is only an ideal, of course, and many temples do not have such an elaborate setup. Most start out with a single wing and add the central juncture and two additional wings as the temple grows. Temples that expand beyond the limits of this usually add basements or third and fourth stories to their building.

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# The Cult of Chalana Arroy X III Healer Cult X III

# I. Mythos and History

Chalana Arroy is the daughter of Glorantha herself. Her father is unknown. Even in the earliest myths she is always the same, already showing the depths of her character. Noted for kindness and purity, she aided Orlanth, Yelm, Hykim, Ernalda, and others in many tales. Her son Arroin, beloved by all the world, was begat by one of these gods, but the exact father varies with the myth.

When the Darkness came and the Spike exploded, Chalana Arroy met with her son in the center of the world. There they found a being they could not heal, for it was dead. Chalana Arroy decided that passivity no longer worked, though her son urged her to keep her purity for the sake of the cosmos. While they debated, they were met by Flesh Man, who was witless from seeing the death of the world even before it was over.

Arroin tried to heal the fugitive with healthy magic, but Flesh Man still fled. Chalana Arroy laid aside her passivity and acted. She left her son and followed Flesh Man to search for and heal the Wound in the cosmos. While so seeking, she became one of the Lightbringers, and went to Hell to return Emperor Yelm to power.

Arroin stayed behind, protected by every living thing that could help him, and helping everyone whenever he could. Even so, his fate was wretched, for he attracted the emptiness of Chaos to him, and each time he tried to heal Chaos his magic powers broke. He was wounded continually, and at the end lay close to death. When Chalana Arroy returned with Yelm and Orlanth to make the new world, she found and healed her son, but his powers were never the same.

Chalana Arroy's healers know that after life they will continue existence as healing spirits, continuing to comfort the torn and battered. Their corpses are buried after death. It is not uncommon for a healing plant to grow spontaneously over the grave of a holy cult member or priestess, so such individuals are often buried in temple gardens. Chalana Arroy is the prime source of the Harmony Rune and is always also associated with Fertility

# **II. Cult Ecology**

As the goddess of healing and comfort, worship of Chalana Arroy will continue until there is no need to heal anyone again. The cult makes a show of withholding favoritism, promising to heal any who need it. Even Lord Yelm and her fellow Lightbringers are subject to this. In practice, individual healers are left to make their own decisions about who gets precedence in healing, who is healed by divine magic, and so forth.

Chalana Arroy is worshipped by chirurgeons, nurses, and healers of all types. Not all healers worship her, but nearly all respect her worshippers. The theory is simple and innocent. The healers hope that treating everyone with peace will inspire everyone else to treat them peacefully. Naturally, this attitude is naive, for there are beings which care nothing for such benignity, such as broos or certain troll cults which want nothing of Chalana Arroy's and show no favor to her healers. Thus, healers often show fear when near chaos or trolls. This is not an official cult belief, though it is a common trait.

Wildday of each Fertility week are holy days of the cult. The high holy day is a week-long festival running throughout the second week of Sacred Time, celebrating the return of the goddess with Yelm and the Lightbringers from Hell.

# III. The Cult in the World

Chalana Arroy's worship is extremely harsh and prohibitive. The worship of such a passive deity is a luxury which few can afford in troublesome times. Thus, her religion is restricted to the most devout individuals and most advanced civilizations.

Chalana Arroy is worshipped throughout Peloria and the Barbarian Belt. She is popular in the Pamaltelan elf jungles, as well as in Enkloso and Vralos. Her largest temple is the Grand Hospital in the Holy Country.

Great or major temples to Chalana Arroy are few, and found only in special holy or traditional spots. Shrines are found in cities. Some large cities hold minor temples or larger worship sites. Some shrines sit in the wilderness or rural lands, tended by a lone acolyte, and supported by grateful locals. The particular spell taught at a Chalana Arroy shrine varies with the culture and local needs.

Her temples are loosely organized. In each temple is a high priestess, served by a body of healers, each in turn often served by several initiates. Other than this, there is no formal organization and healers often travel from temple to temple.

# **IV. Initiate Membership**

Anyone with a sincere wish to heal may join, and this sincerity is checked with Divination. There are no qualifications other than acceptance of the restrictive cult vows and the sacrifice of a point of POW. Even creatures of chaos have been known to join, and the Wild Healer of the Rockwoods is a broo.

An initiate must take an oath never to harm an intelligent creature or needlessly cause pain to any living thing. She must become a vegetarian and is forbidden to learn any combat skill but Dodge. An initiate must give 50% of her income to a high healer of Chalana Arroy.

Foes incapacitated by a Chalana Arroy initiate (e.g., through the use of a spell such as Befuddle or Sleep) are under her protection. She may not allow them to be harmed in any way, though they may be disarmed or captured. Chaotic foes are exempt from this protection.

Initiates of Chalana Arroy may become shamans or even sorcerers, so long as they maintain the cult vows. GVVSTLADXOU: AROXUO2@QAY#OX7

An initiate is healed at her own temple for free, with the use of any magic applicable. She receives room and board at any Chalana Arroy temple. As a healer, she is welcomed most places.

An initiate can take up to 600 hours yearly of free training at her home temple. Skills taught are Refine Medicine, First Aid, Treat Disease, and Treat Poison.

Chalana Arroy teaches no sorcery, but initiates are not forbidden to learn it, except for certain spells. The following spirit spells and sorcery are forbidden. Candidates for initiation must forget any of these proscribed spells known before they can join the cult.

Forbidden Spirit Magic: Bladesharp, Bludgeon, Control <species> any, Demoralize, Disruption, Fanaticism, Firearrow, Fireblade, Ironhand, Multimissile, Speedart.

Forbidden Sorcery: Animate <substance>, Cast Back, Create Spells, Damage Boosting, Diminish <characteristic>, Dominate <species>, Drain, Palsy, Phantom <sense>, Shapechange <species>, Smother, Stupefaction, Tap <characteristic>, Venom

An initiate may sacrifice for one-use divine magic. There are no acolytes in the cult of Chalana Arroy or any of her subcults.

Chalana Arroy's special spirit magic of Sleep may not be taught to outsiders under any circumstances. Befuddle was once a cult special spell as well, but unwise teaching of it beyond the cult led to its use in attacks, perverting its merciful origin. That mistake has not been repeated.

Spirit Magic: Befuddle, Dullblade, Endurance, Heal, Light, Shimmer, Sleep.

# V. High Healer Membership

The leaders of Chalana Arroy's subcults are called Healers. Female members are usually called White Women. They have the awesome duty of passing the benefits of their goddess onto needy recipients. They must be proficient in many healing arts.

A potential healer must be 90% in one of the four cult skills, and 50% or more in two others, as well as Ceremony. She must know at least Heal 6 and never have broken the cult vows since she became an initiate. She must have 10 points of cult divine magic and must pass the Test of Holiness (symbolized by rolling POW x 3 or less on 1d100). If there is no opening at the local temple, she may be anointed anyway, but must leave the temple to begin her own temple, to become a wandering healer, or to work for a fortunate employer.

Healers have all normal priestly restrictions. Even freelance healers must give 90% of their income to the Chalana Arroy cult. They must obey the cult vows as stringently as before. A temple healer must devote 200 hours a year to train initiates, but receives no training, herself.

The Chalana Arroy healer is inviolate in the eyes of most people. Almost anyone harming a healer would become an outcast. Healers are always welcome at feasts and festivals and are much honored. Many non-Chalana Arroy temples set aside a Healer's Room, reserved for any wandering healer who needs a place to stay. Healers are loved by the poor and helpless.

**Common Divine Magic:** All but Warding. Also, she may not learn any Binding enchantments except for those binding Healing, Intellect, or Power spirits.

Special Divine Magic: Comfort Song, Command Healing Spirit, Cure Chaos Wound, Heal Body, Regrow Limb, Restore Health <all types>, Resurrect.

# VI. Chalana Arroy Special Skills

**Refine Medicine (Knowledge skill 00%):** This skill must be used with specific raw materials, obtained by use of Animal, Plant, or Mineral Lore. Chalana Arroy temples have supplies of such substances and sell them to initiates, at a cost of 50L per point of potential potency.

A successful Refine Medicine skill roll transforms the raw materials into medicine of the appropriate potency. A special success on the skill roll adds 1 to the POT. A critical roll increases POT by ½ (round fractions up). A failure means that the product is ruined and the raw materials wasted. A fumble means that the resultant potion is useless or even poisonous, but that the maker is unaware of that fact.

Healing potions, poison antidotes, and medicine (curing disease) can all be made with this skill. One point of damage is healed per POT in a healing potion or salve, which takes one hour to work.

Each POT of a poison antidote will counteract 1 POT of poison, and is specific to a particular type of poison.

**Types of Poison:** Basilisk, Giant Ant, Ghoul venom, Grampus gas, Insect Swarm, Manticore, Octopus, Scorpion Man, Snake, Stoorworm gas, Walktapus gas, Wyvern.

Medicine type is specific to the disease it cures. Medicine works by matching its POT against the disease's resistance. If the disease's resistance is overcome, the patient is cured.

Disease Resistance Table		
	Resistance to	
Туре	Medicine	
Mild	2	
Acute	6	
Serious	12	
Terminal	20	

If a disease has been caused by a disease spirit, the medicine must match its POT vs. the spirit's POW. If the spirit's POW is overcome, its victim may engage it in spirit combat. If the victim reduces the spirit to 0 MP, it is expelled.

Treat Disease (Knowledge skill 05%): Successful use of this skill doubles a victim's chances for success at his next recovery CON roll. Victims of acute, serious, or terminal diseases must be tended constantly to get this bonus. Victims of mild diseases need only be tended for one day per week. A critical roll indicates that the victim's chances to recover are tripled. Specials mean

# **River of Cradles**

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nothing. A fumble indicates that the victim's disease progresses to the next stage (i.e., acute becomes serious or serious becomes terminal — a terminal victim dies).

Treat Poison (Knowledge skill 05%): A successful use of this skill purges the victim of 2d6 POT of poison. It must be performed before damage is taken. A special roll purges the victim of 4d6 POT, and a critical roll purges him of all poison. A fumble indicates that the victim's chance of resisting the poison is halved. A skill attempt may be performed only once per poisoning.

# VII. Chalana Arroy Special Spirit Magic

# Sleep

ranged, temporal

3 points

If the caster overcomes the target's MPs, the target falls into a deep sleep for the duration of the spell. The target only awakens if injured or if a hostile spell is targeted on him.

# VIII. Chalana Arroy Special Rune Magic

#### **Comfort Song**

1 point

range earshot, duration length of song, nonstackable, reusable This spell allows the user to sing a Song of Power which keeps all hearers from feeling pain, effectively anesthetizing the body while still permitting consciousness. It is often used during childbirth and

after battles. Characters that would normally be

# incapacitated can act, though damage is unhealed.

Cure Chaos Wound

1 point

ranged, instant, nonstackable, reusable

This spell is of no use by itself, but can be stacked with any spell used to cure a wound or other affliction received from a chaotic creature. It provides all the magic points needed to work the spell. As such it has little effect on most Rune spells, though it helps with Heal Wound. For instance, if it was stacked with a Heal 6 spell, the spell would cure six points of damage and cost the user no magic points.

# Resurrect

3 points

ritual Ceremony spell, non-stackable, reusable This Resurrect spell is identical to the normal *RuneQuest* spell, except that it is reusable, uniquely in Glorantha.

# **IX.** Subcults

Chalana Arroy has many subcults. To learn one of the subcult spells, a healer must go to a temple where the appropriate subcult is worshipped. Subcults of Chalana Arroy are often geographically restricted.

# **Spirit of Reprisal: Infection**

Enemies who defy the pacifistic and healing ways of the cult are cut off from cult healing. Healers will not knowingly heal such individuals. Members who actually betray the cult doctrines will find their ability to resist disease reduced. Whenever exposed to a disease, they will always catch at least the chronic form of the disease, though they can attempt CON rolls normally to keep the disease from progressing to worse forms.

# Arroin

Arroin's selfless service has gained him friends from every corner of the world. Every Chalana Arroy temple larger than a shrine has a small altar dedicated to him. No formal worship is performed there, but it is a mark of great piety to sacrifice POW to Arroin. He can provide nothing in return since he was broken in the Gods War.

# Erissa

Erissa is an angelic daughter of the sky who came to earth to salve its wounds. She is worshipped in solar Peloria and the Lunar Empire.

# **Restore Vision**

1 point

touch, instant, nonstackable, one-use

This spell restores normal sight to the target, whether it was lost permanently or simply through the temporary use of a spell such as Blinding. If the eyes themselves were damaged or destroyed, a Heal Wounds must be cast on each eye as well.

# The Sisters of Mercy

This is a sisterhood of Chalana Arroy's daughters, adopted or otherwise. Malamse, Oronio, and Amprefesne are the three holy Sisters most often called upon. It stems from the time of the Empire of the Wyrm's Friends and is the subcult worshipped in Prax, Maniria, and south Peloria. The Sisters of Mercy have the special spell of Heal Constitution.

# **Heal Constitution**

touch, instant, nonstackable, reusable

2 points

Use of this spell heals general hit points or Constitution temporarily ravaged by poison or similar attack such as an unsuccessful Sever Spirit, though it will not heal permanent CON damage (for which Restore CON is needed). It heals up to half the original CON of the afflicted person. Thus, if CON 16 character with 15 hit points lost 10 hit points from poison, the Healer could restore 8 of them with this spell.

# Zotulla

Zotulla is an ancient nymph who became Arroin's lover and healer. Her subcult is found in Ralios, barbarian Fronela, and western Peloria. She teaches Absorption.

# X. Associate Cults

# Aldrya

The elves honor Arroin and in gratitude provide his mother with their spell of Accelerate Growth.

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#### Issaries

Merchants of Issaries always provide a gift of healing herbs to initiates of Chalana Arroy. Issaries provides Chalana Arroy with the spell called Create Market by the merchant priests, but since the healers have put it to a different use, they have renamed the spell "Create Neutral Ground." This version of the spell costs only 1 point, and does not actually cause damage, but instead creates a sensation of pain designed as a warning to the transgressor.

# Lhankor Mhy

Initiates of Chalana Arroy are taught reading and writing in the temples of Lhankor Mhy. In addition, the spell of Analyze Magic is made available.

# Orlanth

Temples of Chalana Arroy are always under the protection of any temple of Orlanth. He grants her the use of Shield, a handy defensive spell.

# Storm Bull

Chalana Arroy worshippers have the ability to bring a Storm Bull warrior out of a berserk rage. The chances for success are equal to POW x 5 for a high healer, and POW x 4 for an initiate.

# Yelm

Chalana Arroy was part of Yelm's imperial court from the beginning. Every ruling Yelm noble is required to keep a Chalana Arroy healer in his entourage. Yelm gives Chalana Arroy his healing spell of Fight Disease.

# XI. Miscellaneous Notes

# **Healers as Adventurers**

Chalana Arroy healers should never accompany adventuring parties on simple looting expeditions, and may even perform Divination rites to be sure of the motives of a given group. However, they do participate in rescue missions and will aid close friends against their enemies. They generally walk in the center of any party, distinctively garbed so that all will know who they are. They are forbidden to use spells such as Befuddle or Sleep against anyone who does not attack or seem to be attack-ing them first. Anyone overcome by a Chalana Arroy's spell is officially under her protection from then on, unless he later attacks the party or the healer. For their services, most healers expect at least the pick of any loot which aids in their work.

# **Healing Spirits**

Chalana Arroy healers, especially in more primitive environments, sometimes gather huge numbers of healing spirits. Some temples of Chalana Arroy attract these spirits, and their resident priestesses may receive the use of one or more spirits every holy day for free. Not all healing spirits are from Chalana Arroy, but those that are can often be bound by a healer priestesses automatically. This allows many healers access to extremely powerful healing spirits.

Sadly, healing spirits are good only for a single use, when they fade back onto the spirit plane. Thus, Chalana Arroy healers charge extra for the time and effort used in obtaining such a spirit.

# **Payment for Services**

Healers do not usually ask for payment for specific healing deeds, though many salaried healers work in the courts of nobles and kings.

There is a custom, strongly upheld by the entire Chalana Arroy cult, that anyone saved from disease, poison, maiming, or death by the actions of a healer should give the healer's temple (or the nearest temple, if the healer is an unaffiliated Wild Healer) an appropriately generous gift or percentage of the character's income for the next year. A king might fund a hospital or way-station. A farmer may give half a year's milk from his cows to the healers. The greater the gift, the more honored the giver, and the happier the healers next time they administer to his wounds. Patients who grudgingly donate a pittance to the temple are placed low on the list of priorities next time healing is required.

Priests and other high cult members of friendly cults usually have their bills paid by their own cult.

More mundane healing through spirit magic usually is paid for at the usual rates for shaman spirit magic.

If an individual comes to the healers seeking magic, the healers charge normal prices for the type of healing needed. Prices are higher for non-associated cults.

# Priorities

Ideally, Chalana Arroy's healers value all life equally. In practice, a hierarchy of value exists; plants are eaten for food, and an animal can be killed if necessary to heal a person or another, more valuable, animal. Animals are also killed to obtain ingredients for healing potions, poison antidotes, or medicine. Such slaughter must be done sparingly and as mercifully as possible.

The killing of an intelligent being is never acceptable. In the case of an individual dying painfully of something incurable, a healer might request a nonhealer friend to perform a mercy-killing. Even this is not permitted by healers in some cultures and it is always traumatic when it happens.

# Uniforms

Chalana Arroy cultists wear simple and distinctive clothing to set themselves off from the world. In most lands, this is a white shirt, blouse, or short robe sashed over the right shoulder with a green or brown band. Initiates simply wear a white sash over any type of clothing. In jungle Pamaltela, cultists are not allowed to wear robes or skirts, but lack other leg-wear restrictions. Most wear trousers or go bare-legged, elf-style.

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# I. Mythos and History

Zola Fel is one of the descendants of the Ocean of Terror. He was born during the invasion of the world by the waters during the Godtime, and went ahead eagerly to scout the (then) forests of Prax ahead of the invasion of the Waters. He had penetrated deep into the Rockwood mountains before the coming of Chaos.

When Chaos destroyed the Spike, many sea gods leapt into the hole in the world to try and plug it. Most were destroyed. The Homeward Ocean began to succeed, and all the waters of the world flowed to him to lend their power. Zola Fel received the call on a clifftop in the Rockwoods. He leapt from the cliff to the valley and flowed back to the sea, setting his present course.

Two meetings during the Greater Darkness affected Zola Fel. He was the first of the sea's children to meet the Elder Giants of the Rockwoods. He was the first party to an agreement that led the giants to send some of their warriors to the sea to aid the fight. The second meeting was with a god who had found a way to travel over the waters. This god, Diros the Boater, was on his Voyage of Pacting in the Silver Age, making agreements with the waters of the world to let his boats sail on them. He and Zola Fel came to a mutually advantageous deal.

The cult of Zola Fel has been quiet since the coming of Time, as befits such a small cult. There have been few dealings with land dwellers, partly due to the inconvenience and partly due to an antipathy for Waha. The most important disturbance was the Giants' Revenge and the Bunging of Feroda, feats performed to stop the plundering of giant cradles on their way to the sea. When Pavis came, he defeated the old foe, Waha, but he also drove out the friendly giants. This ambiguous relationship has continued since then.

When the people of the Sun Dome temple came to the River Valley soon after, Kinope the Nymph, daughter of Zola Fel, entered into a ritual marriage with their founding count, Arinsor Clearmind. The river annually rises to fill the canals of the sun folk, and they in return provide Zola Fel's followers with a measure of their barley harvest. Thus does the rising of the waters enrich the entire river valley.

The cult promises its dead that they will flow to the Heart of the Sea to be purified before returning to the world again. This will continue until the spirit is pure enough to remain at the Heart. There is no guarantee that the spirit will be reborn in the River of Cradles. Funeral rites are performed by committing the body to Zola Fel to make the trip to the sea, beginning with chants asking the river to cleanse the soul of its grosser impurities as it flows downstream.

The runes of the Zola Fel cult are Water and Movement. There are minor associations with Fertility and Harmony as well.

# **II. Cult Ecology**

The cult exists to help the river flow strongly and cleanly, keeping the Void filled with water. The cultists also serve as the main source of river transport, and many wrest a livelihood from the waters with Zola Fel's blessing. Fishermen and boatmen alike need this cult.

Zola Fel is not interested in the doings of most landdwellers. His priests, when they come on land, are friendly advisors to the boatmen and potential advisors (friendly or not, depending upon the advice; Zola Fel is a subtle cult, and not averse to treachery) to Pavis. Elsewhere, the priests avoid entanglements with the affairs of landsmen.

Zola Fel is friendly to Diros and the few water spirits of Prax, and allied with most of the other rivers of the world as well as his parent sea, the Ocean of Terror. Like most water deities Zola Fel disdains the quenchable fire and sky gods. He also dislikes the storm gods, for they can bring freezing cold and blocking ice. He is neutral toward the Lunar pantheon which so recently invaded Prax, although he has resisted attempts by the Lunar priestesses to learn his secrets.

Zola Fel has special hate for Waha, for in the Darkness Waha degraded and polluted Zola Fel's sister, the Good river, forcing her to wash away the remains of the Devil. Zola Fel hates all chaos, and uses his powers to cleanse the world when he can.

Holy days occur on the Waterday of every Movement Week. The cult high holy day is in Sea Season, when Zola Fel answered the call of the sea gods. This is a time for pilgrimage from the Leaping Place to the mouth, renewing the pledges of power and support to the father waters. These pilgrimages are often spectacular, with rafts and decorated floats following the Temple Barge downstream, and leaping fish churning the waters. Towns along the way greet the participants with food, floral offerings, and sacred waters from sibling rivers.

# III. The Cult in the World

Zola Fel is worshipped only in the Valley of Cradles, but worshippers are accepted by other river cults wherever they travel. Similarly, any worshipper of another river god would be welcome as an initiate at any temple or shrine of Zola Fel.

Once there were three Major Temples to the river: at the mouth of the river, at Leaping Place Falls (where Zola Fel jumped to begin his return to the sea), and in Old Pavis, but the latter site was abandoned since the city fell. When New Pavis was built, a new temple was established on a boat in the river, the Temple Barge. There are numerous shrines along the valley, including one where each of Zola Fel's daughters rejoin him on his way to the sea, and a half dozen Minor Temples.

The most important temple, with the high priest, has always been at the river mouth in the delta. The current site of this temple is at a sacred spring on the island of Corflu. The Old Pavis temple site was the least  $G \nabla \forall \bullet \dagger \wr A \Box X O \sqcup : A R \infty & U O R & Q A Y # O X T$ 

important, and the only one with any great part out of the water. Though comprising the smallest congregation of the major temples, the New Pavis temple finds itself increasingly entangled in landsmen affairs in the wake of burgeoning river travel and trade fostered by the Lunar colonies at Corflu and in the Grantlands. Though the oldest and most sacred site, the the Leaping Place temple has a small congregation and little importance except during High Holy Day rituals.

Each of the Minor Temples is governed by a priest or acolyte, and has jurisdiction over one or more shrines, many of which are only maintained seasonally or irregularly by an acolyte. The two Major Temples (plus the Floating Temple) are each presided over by a priest or acolyte, who is responsible to the high priest at the mouth. Many priests and acolytes of this cult are from cultures which migrate seasonally, and may be found at various sites at any time over the course of a year. Shrines to Zola Fel teach Float.

There are two major holy places along the river, and a number of less important ones. The most important is a site at the mouth of the main channel in the delta where the river's ritual return to its parental sea is celebrated. The other is the Leaping Place. Of the other holy places, only one is of more than local importance: the Pool of Kinope, the sacred spring in the North Bog that is home to that daughter of Zola Fel.

# **IV. Initiate Membership**

The cult of Zola Fel accepts most races into the cult except for creatures of chaos, although it favors aquatic and amphibious races. Aquatic races native to the river are automatically accepted if they sacrifice a point of Power; amphibious races may do the same if they Swim at 90% or better, otherwise they must pass the test as a land-dweller. Land-dwellers must have lived in the river valley for at least two years, must Swim at 50% or better, and must pass the standard test; skills tested are Boat, Devise, Swim, and World Lore.

Initiates must pledge to keep the river pure and clean, and to respect the laws of the priests. They must fulfill all normal requirements, including 10% tithe each holy day and 10% of their time. They may become a shaman, but may never become a sorcerer. They will receive training in the skills of Boat, Net Attack, River Lore, Swim, Swim Quietly, Taste, and World Lore, for as many hours of training as they spend serving the cult.

Initiates are forbidden to learn the spells of Ignite, Firearrow, and Fireblade, and must forget them if already known. They may sacrifice for one-use of Divine spells, and obtain normal Divine Intervention, although it is limited to those calling for aid while on or in the river or one of its tributaries.

Spirit Magic: Extinguish, Glue, Mobility, River Eye.

# V. River Servant (Acolyte) Membership

Zola Fel's River Servants have all standard requirements as per priests. They assist the full priests, tend shrines, and otherwise act as acolytes in other cults. Unlike full priests, they may become shamans, though they will never be able to advance in the cult.

# **VI. River Priest Membership**

River Priests determine and interpret the needs of the river, then communicate and act upon them. They speak for the god in spiritual matters, delivering his requests and demands; maintain the river's importance in the plans and considerations of the land-dwellers; and are responsible for detecting pollution, obstruction, and unauthorized use of the sacred waters. They also serve as go-betweens for wholly aquatic members of the cult and others.

A candidate for River Priest must have been an initiate or acolyte for three years, must speak Boatspeech and a local land tongue (Old Pavic, Praxian, Sartarite, Lunar) at 30% each, must have Swim at 90% (or as a natural ability), and must have one skill from the following list at 90%: Boat, Net Attack, River Lore, Swim Quietly and Taste. They must meet other requirements as normal, including 100 points of ritual skills and 10 points of Divine spells; they may not become a sorcerer or shaman.

A River Priest may never stay two consecutive nights out of the river or one of the temples (they can thus stay on the Temple Barge indefinitely). He must make regular inspections of the part of the river for which his temple or shrine is responsible, and must make a pilgrimage each year to both the river mouth and the Leaping Place. He must answer the summons of the high priest, and is responsible for safeguarding the river and river trade. He must attempt to keep non-cult water traffic off the river, although outsiders may normally be granted temporary lay membership on a seasonal basis by any priest or acolyte. Approval of requests for temporary membership are contingent on donations made to the cult. A donation of 1 Lunar per day is appropriate for members of allied cults (i.e., Orlanthi and Yelmalion cults), while donations of 10 Lunars a day are expected from other cultists (i.e., Lunar cults). Such donations may be waived or reduced at the priest or acolyte's discretion.

River Priests have the normal benefits of priesthood, including support, POW increase rolls, and Spirit Magic. They gain the ability to survive for up to a quarter of an hour without requiring a breath of their native element, a useful ability when acting as go-between for landdwellers and full aquatics. Even when out of the river or its tributaries they have access to normal Divine Intervention.

**Common Divine Magic**: Divination, Excommunicate, Find Enemy, Sanctify, Soul Sight, Spellteaching, Summon Naiad, Summon Undine, Worship Zola Fel

Special Divine Magic: Breathe Air/Water, Command Undine, Fire Shield, Float.

# VII. Special Zola Fel Skills

**Boatspeech (Communication 00):** This is the cult language not only for Zola Fel, but for all of the rivers and river cults of the world, regardless of geographical separation. It is derived from the non-human tongue

# **River of Cradles**

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Seaspeech, a langauge spoken only by mermen and undines. Speakers of Seaspeech and Cetoi understand Boatspeech at 1/5 their ability, while speakers of Boatspeech understand Seaspeech and Cetoi at 1/10 their ability. Boatspeech is often known as Riverspeech, and is spoken by many sailors of Glorantha as a common tongue.

**River Lore (Knowledge 00%)**: This Lore skill represents knowledge of river ecology. It combines knowledge of geology, physical effects, animals, and plants, and gives information not only on the normal attributes of the river, but also the effects on the ecology from outside changes. It works equally well with rivers in any land.

Swim Quietly (Stealth 05%): If this skill is used in conjunction with a successful Swim roll, the swimmer makes little or no disturbance while stalking prey or escaping foes; even tell-tale currents are reduced, and do not warn observers or wary fish. The swimmer moves at half normal swim rate. A character's Swim Quietly can never be greater than his Swim skill.

# VIII. Special Zola Fel Spirit Spell

**River Eyes** 

1 point

ranged, temporal, active, reusable This spell allows the user to see through water as if looking through air (or vice versa, for water-dwellers). It accurately eliminates all reflections and refractions. If the water is murky, or the air foggy or smoky, the spell will not render the medium transparent.

# IX. Special Zola Fel Divine Spell

#### **Fire Shield**

1 point

ranged, temporal, non-stackable, one-use

This spell reduces the damage from all fire-related attacks upon the recipient by one-half (drop fractions) for the duration of the spell, after armor and protective magic is taken into account. For example, if a Fireshielded character with 3 points of armor and 4 points of Protection were struck by a Fireblade doing 12 points of damage, the character would have 5 points of damage penetrate his defenses. These 5 points would be reduced to 2½ points by the spell, rounded down to 2 points of damage taken by the character.

# X. Subcults

# **Glubaw** Drowner

Glubaw Drowner was one of Zola Fel's many daughters. She taught the priests of the cult how to fight, but was overcome by a chaotic spirit in the Greater Darkness, and was turned inside out. She now serves as the cult Spirit of Reprisal. She will attack the first time an apostate comes within 10m of the river or one of its tributaries. She manifests as a large (7 cubic meter) undine with 72 Hit Points, 50 STR, and move 12 underwater or 3 across land. Her POW is 30 and her INT is 10, but she only attacks physically, until either her body is destroyed or the culprit is dead or more than 30m from the river. She attacks initiates only once, but acolytes and priests will be attacked once for each year they served the cult.

# The Cleansed One

This was originally a broo who encountered the Three-Bean Circus in the Darkness and was made aware of his chaotic condition. Rather than destroy himself in selfloathing, he quested mightily to remove the taint of chaos from his being. He was finally able to find true purification in the Deep Waters, and used Zola Fel as his route to the Heart of the Sea. He is now a symbol of the chaos-destroying powers of the river.

The Cleansed One provides the spell of Purify Water to the cult, gained from his time in the Purifying Waters in the Heart of the Sea. He can also lead questors on a path to cleanse themselves of a chaotic taint. The quest is difficult, but is not as deadly as some of the other local purifying quests known to the Praxians.

# XI. Cleansed One Subcult Divine Spell

# **Purify Water**

1 point

ceremony ritual, stackable, reusable

This spell causes all particulate matter in a 10 cubic meter volume of water to settle. It will not work on living tissue (such as blood), nor on material dissolved in the water (such as salt).

The spell can also be used to create cult holy water by casting it on a small volume (1 liter or less) of distilled river water cleansed of all contaminants. Such holy water is used in worship services. It is also useful against vampires, who are harmed by the touch of holy water (1d6 non-regeneratable damage per vial) and cannot cross a line of it poured on the ground.

# XII. Associate Cults

# **Diros the Boatman**

The river gods were befriended by Diros, one of the earliest gods of ships, and his cult became associated with Zola Fel. The aquatic worshippers feel the association is superfluous, but the air-breathers and merchants in the cult find the Boatman invaluable. Since the Opening of the Oceans by Dormal the cult of Diros Boater has fallen upon hard times, but it is still maintained in those areas the Closing never touched: the rivers, lakes, and inland seas of the world.

Diros is the source of the cult Float spell, although the river gods are no longer dependent on Diros himself for the spell. In fact, since it involves the use of Zola Fel water, a priest of Diros must join Zola Fel's cult (or the proper cult for the particular body of water) in order to use this spell on the River of Cradles.

# Pavis

When Pavis arrived after the giants had left, Zola Fel gave support and friendship in return for trade and influence. The spirits of Pavis were joined by a undine,  $G \nabla \forall \bullet t \underline{A} \Box X \odot \sqcup : \Delta R \sim \mathcal{A} \sqcup \Box \mathcal{A} \bullet \mathcal{A} \Box Y :: O \mathcal{A} \land \Lambda$ 

and the priests of the river cult have access to the Pavis masons and craftsmen when they need assistance in building a dock or temple. The river cult is dependent on river trade for most of its income; the cult fishermen sell most of their catch in the city of Pavis, and so Zola Fel's cult is linked solidly to Pavis.

# **Other River Cults**

Zola Fel's skills and spells are, in general, quite similar to those of other river cults. Initiates and priests of Zola Fel would find it easy to switch cults if they were to move to another river basin, and other river worshippers would find it as easy to begin worshipping Zola Fel.

# XIII. Miscellaneous Notes

# **Aquatic Races**

Most of the members seen by others are human, but the majority of the members are actually water-dwellers. Over the entire river length, only about 25% of the cult members are land-dwellers, mainly human fishermen, boatmen, and a few traders; 20% of the members are amphibious races mainly consisting of newtlings, with a few ducks. The other 55% are full water-dwellers, composed of a few triolini (including those in Christians Bay), some of the river elves from the Puzzle Canal (in the Big Rubble), and the intelligent fish of the river.

The river's intelligent fish do not come from a single species. Rather, every species of fish in the river has a small proportion (less than one in a thousand) of intelligent members; almost all of these special fish become initiates of Zola Fel. These special fish have a POW of 3d6, rather than the normal fishy maximum of 2 or 3, and are one of the reasons the cult is so strong with so few "normal" members. They do not oppose the controlled harvesting of others of their species, as long as no intelligent fish are slain; some in fact help the fishermen in their endeavors in return for various objects unattainable underwater.

# Temples

A Zola Fel temple may be located in shallow or deep water, at a bank or in a pool, though they are always located in still water for convenience. When landdwellers are likely to join a worship service, a boat or section of the shore is set aside for them. In every worship ceremony, however, there comes a time when even the land-dwellers must enter the water (at least up to the waist).

# The Cult in Pavis

The Zola Fel cult is heavily influenced (in the Pavis area) by the Ingilli family of fishermen, who became founding members of the Old Pavis Temple. They are still powerful in the cult and the city, and prefer that the Temple Barge (at least) be run by a human priest or priestess.

# Tributaries

The tributaries of the River of Cradles are mostly mountain streams without cults of their own. The spirits of these streams are generally subservient to Zola Fel, and he watches over them; in many cases, they are considered to be his children. There are usually small shrines where the tributary enters Zola Fel. These tributaries are considered part of the river for the purpose of determining priest restrictions.

# **Frog Masks**

The first frog masks were created during the time of the glory of the city of Pavis. They were used by Pavis and Zola Fel spies to journey back and forth underwater. They spied, wrote their findings, on parchment which they kept in watertight containers, then swam back to Pavis undetected. The secret of making the masks was lost long ago and many frog masks have been lost or destroyed since their original creation, though a few remain. Most of the masks known still to exist are in the hands of the Zola Fel cult.

Frog masks appear to be made of whitewood, but the surface is always slick, even when dry. They are shaped like a frog's face, with a closed mouth and clear volcanic glass in the eye holes, permitting the wearer to see out through them.

A frog mask supplies a character with all the oxygen he needs for one hour underwater. At the end of that time, the mask must be exposed to fresh, circulating air for an hour, after which it is ready for use again.



Towing a Boat on a Long Pool in Sun County

# The Grotto of Pocharngo

Caverns Beneath the Devil's Playground in the Big Rubble (Auld Pavis)

Devil's Playground

+25 m

0 m

-25 m

-50 m

-75 m



# Legend

Ogre Island

issbeds

River Zola 1

to

Krarshtkid tunnels C & D B: Junction of shaft A and A: Shaft to surface

- C: Krarshtkid tunnel toward New Pavis
- D: Krarshtkid tunnel toward
  - E: Dragonsnail Chamber Trolltown
    - F: First Passage
      - G: Walktapus Chamber
- H: Second Passage
  - I: Oll's Chamber

K: To the Eye of Wakboth Chamber (not shown) ): Oll's Pool

Diagrams are not to scale.

above or below Zola Fel high water mark. Depth is expressed as distance in meters

# **River of Cradles**

# Lands and Peoples of Pavis and the Zola Fel Valley

*River of Cradles* is the complete and essential player and gamemaster reference for RuneQuest adventures and campaigns in civilized Prax. Revising and updating essential materials from the classic, out-of-print Gloranthan supplements *Cults of Prax, Borderlands, Pavis, and Big Rubble, River of Cradles* contains:

Extensive historical and geographical notes on the Zola Fel River Valley of western Prax, including:

- the seaport of Corflu
- the Grantlands and Lunar frontier settlements
- the city of New Pavis
- the Big Rubble

*Troubled Waters*, an epic adventure sequence for new and low level characters, beginning in the Zola Fel delta and ending beneath the Devil's Playground in the Big Rubble.

Seven expanded cult descriptions for popular player character cults, including:

Orlanth Lhankor Mhy Daka Fal Storm Bull Issaries Chalana Arroy Zola Fel

You must own RuneQuest Deluxe Edition to play River of Cradles.

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# **RuneQuest Glorantha**

RuneQuest is a fantasy roleplaying game for two or more players, ages 12 or older. In RuneQuest, players create adventurers who explore an ancient world, rich in magic. Everyone uses spells, and anyone can be a warrior, equipped with cold steel and stout armor. The gods provide fantastic powers to their mortal worshippers and can intercede on their behalf. Each RuneQuest adventurer is unique, belonging to a distinct culture and shaped by the crafts, trades, and skills of his parents.

Glorantha is a fantasy world of exotic myth and awesome magic, self-contained and unique in its creation. The existence and use of the magical and mythic realm are central to the physics of Glorantha. Here the gods and heroes ward and guide their followers, sharing divine magics while pursuing their own enigmatic ends.

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## Common Knowledge

What Everyone Knows About the Zola Fel Valley and Prax

#### The Wasteland

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The Wastelands are the arid, sparsely populated region of Genertela. Outsiders refer to this region as the Wastelands; natives distinguish between the western, more fertile and populous area they call Prax and the vast desert wilderness to the east of the River of Cradles they call the Wastelands.

The harsh climate of the Wastelands supports only desert and arid prairie vegetation, the animal herds that graze this vegetation, and the nomad tribes that depend on the animal herds, including the Five Great Tribes (the Sable Riders, Alticamelus Riders, Impala Riders, Bison Riders, and the nonhuman Morocanth) and various lesser Independent Tribes (i.e., Rhino Riders, Bolo Lizard Folk).

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#### Prax

The semi-arid and comparatively fertile western region of the Wastelands, these lands are the holy land of the animal nomads. The nomad tribes migrated from Prax to the eastern Wastelands in the second age, though most tribes return regularly to visit the Papas and Sacred Ground there.

#### The Dalley of Crables (the Zola Fel Dalley, the River of Crables Dalley)

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Zola Fel is the patron god of the Zola Fel River. This great watercourse rises in the mountains south of Dagori Inkarth and runs south through Prax to the Rozgali Sea.

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Once the glants in the north sent their infants in great cradles down the Zola Fel to the sea. Godlearners plundered these cradles for their magical treasures, but the Godlearners

#### Sun County

This civilized agricultural society has survived in the valley for eight centuries. Yelmalio is the state cult, and the rule of the cult's priests and lords is strict and authoritarian. The Sun Dome Templars, their famous standing army, sometimes serves as a mercenary force. Nominal allies of the Lunar Empire, Sun County retains considerable political independence, though its count acknowledges the Lunar governor of Prax as his overlord.

#### The Grantlands

The valley south of Chomoro and Sun County borders is known as the Grantlands. The Lunar Provincial Government encourages frontier settlement here, and the Empire transports political excles here to begin a new life. The most prosperous settlement here is Weis Domain, with its frontier fort of Ronegarth, where the Lord Duke Raus of Rone has made great progress taming the wild valley for civilized agriculture.

#### Corfu

This seaport in the Zola Fel delta was founded in 1611 by the Lunar Empire and Pavis business interests. The Corflu Trade Alliance is the joint Lunar-commercial venture created to develop and adminster the port and its facilities. A sizable settlement of Zola Fel-worshipping native riverfolk has grown in addition to the seaport and fort there.

#### **The Block**

This glant rectlinear block of rock, 500m on a side and 2km





disappeared in the Second Age, their settlements at Robcradle and Feroda were abandoned, and by the Third Age giant cradles no longer floated down the Zola Fel.

Since the beginning of the Third Age, the river valley has provided excellent grazing grounds for the warring tribes of Prax to fight over. Since 877 civilized Yelmalio-worshipping farmer-soldiers have inhabited the central river valley. Now the Lunar Empire rules the civilized northern valley, and has begun settlement of the Grantlands, the frontler region of the southern Zola Fel.

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#### The Lunar Empire

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This grand dominion is the political manifestation of the Red Moon, a goddess created in 1220 by several renegade priests and shamans from other cults. The goddess left behind her empire and ascended into the heavens 27 years later, bringing the first moon to the skies of Glorantha since Godtime. The Empire has used its tles with chaos to control it and put it to service. This attitude has made the Empire many enemies throughout Glorantha, but few foresee a challenge to Imperial military and political influence in the region in the near future.

1. Sector

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The Empire has conquered its inland regions and extended south into Dragon Pass and the Kingdom of Sartar, then marched into Prax, seeking a seaport in the Zola Fel defta. The entire River of Cradles Valley is presently under Linar sway. The dominant nomad tribe in the region, the Sable Riders, are now Linar allies.

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#### Sartar

The Kingdom of Sartar was a proud kingdom of hill barbarians in Dragon Pass which unsuccessfully resisted the encroachments of the Empire. During its last years, a prince of the royal house brought settlers and founded the city of New Pavis. In 1602 the Lunar Empire finally conquered Sartar, which is now a client state with a puppet monarch. Pavis is full of Sartarite refuges, and the Imperial forces there are constantly on the alert for disaffection and plots to liberate Sartar. The capital of Sartar, Boldhome, is west of Pavis about 190km.

#### Pavla County

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The northern Zola Felhas long been settled by farmers of

tall, stands as the most remarkable landmark in Prax. Utsible on a clear day from anywhere in the valley, this tower of stone pins beneath it the remains of Wakboth, the Devil, which are steadily eroded by the ministrations of the Good River.

Before Time began, a great mountain of Truth called the Spike sat in the center of the word. During the God Wars a chaos army invaded the Spike and caused it to explode, sending pieces of truestone hurtling through the cosmos. One huge chunk bounced off the sky and plummeted to earth. It anded in Prax where the Storm Bull was wrestling with the Devil. The great stone smashed into the Devil, smearing him across the plain and removing him from his body.

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The Block, the word's largest plece of truestone, is never mined. Truestone is nearly unbreakable. Only adamant, a mythic metal of forged truestone, can cut raw truestone. Any tool made of truestone is a godtreasure, unknown to men. The Block is a Storm Bull holy place, guarded by his worshippers. They believe that removing any fragment of truestone aids the Devil, and thus patrol to prevent searching the nearby hills for impact fragments of truestone. They sometimes trade truestone they have confiscated from others.

#### The Devil & Marsh

When the Devil was crushed beneath the Block, Waha dug the Good Canal to drain away waters polluted by the decaying chaos horror. The Devil's Marsh is the place where the Good River, shamed by her defilement, hid her head. This marsh is infested with every sort of chaos travesty, and is of great importance to animal nomads, since no one can become a khan until he has hunted and killed chaos in this very marsh.

#### J'he Pape

The Paps are the holy ground of Eiritha and her son, Waha. The Paps themselves are a maintained ruin dating from the Godtime, when the earth was far more fertile. The priests and priestesses in the Paps maintain a fuxurious existence, quite removed from the toils of nomadic life. Uestiges of many cults no longer worshipped anywhere can be found at the Paps.

#### The Dead Place

In his fight with the Devil, the Storm Bull was thrown to earth, nearth dead Afte mate Firitha hiding in the earth strinned



with the aid of the Lunar administration. ates nave also been transporteo nere ano encourageo to settle

### Pavis Olew Pavis, or Pavis-Outside-the-Walls)

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pact with Orlanth and moved to the new settlement. outside the cyclopean walls of the Pavis Rubble. The Spirit of Pavis, which had protected the ruins of the Rubble, made com-In 1575 settlers from Sartar founded a trading post and fort

the region. The nearby Rubble is an attraction for adventurers since grown as the seat of provincial government and trade for seeking robber's loot, exotic treasures, or ancient artifacts. In 1610 New Pavis surrendered to a Lunar army. It has

#### The Big Rubble (OR Pavis

dugouts and outlaw hideaways. It is widely believed that treaand the ruins of many cultures lie inside, as well as many trol boldiy dominated by trolls, and often used as a place of refuge Since then, the ruins have been furtively occupied by humans by outlaws or as a place of adventure by the foolhardy. the mighty city fell to Jaldon Goldentooth, the nomad hero. ing nomads for 300 years. During the eclipse of the Empire, Triends, sometimes friend and sometimes foe of the surroundfrom Paragua, and began a human settlement at the site. of their sea-bound cradles. In 830 the hero Pavis drove them erected the great walled city of Paragua to guard the progress Feroda . A band of Giants smashed Roberadle and in its place river-borne cradles by the Godlearners at Robcradle and Long ago the Giants revolted against the raids upon their The giant-built walls are property in scale with their makers The city of Pavis was a firm ally of the Empire of the Wyrm

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Rubble, deprived of its spirit, is thus known as the Big Rubble from the Rubble to the new temple in New Pavis. The Pavis sures lie amidst its ruins and death lurks in its shadows. The Pavis Spirit, long destitute of proper worship, moved

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Oasis A City **Prax** Map

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him off until the Block pinned the Devil to his death resurgent, the Storm Bull sprang again at his foe and fought

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ands and outlaws may take refuge here, for normal folk will have nothing to do with it. as a rock-hard clay which bakes and cracks in the sun. Brighangs in the air, damaging lungs and burning skin, or deposits this region, it dries quickty, leaving a fine alkaline dust which poisonous. When flash floods or desert showers bring rain to el. Only the hardlest plants grow there, and they are mainly ken by steep, hard-sided gulles, impeding cross-country trav-The Dead Place is a region of flat, sun-baked terraces bro-

1300m

400m

power used within its confines. Some speculate that sufficient seem inclined to make the sacrifice to test this theory. sacrifice of power here may restore the land's potency, but few for it when the user leaves the area. The land consumes all divine magic becomes lost when invoked, requiring resacrifice points while within the region's boundaries, and any reusable remained dead to this day. It is impossible to regain lost magic The area of Prax which Eiritha stripped of its potency has







