

Lords of Terror

The Cults of Gorastur



Glórantha

For the RuneQuest fantasy
game, this book is part of
the Glorantha series.



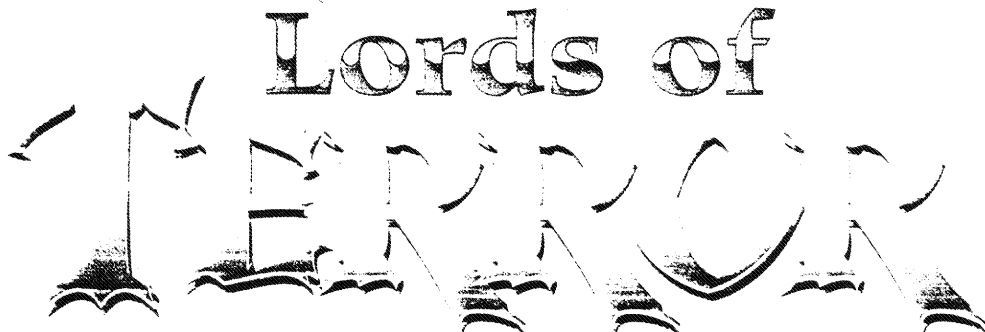
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The Cults of Dorastor

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Dedication

Lords of Terror is dedicated to Chad McGatlin and all of
the other RuneQuestors who have passed beyond Chaos,
and so have no fears.

LORDS OF TERROR: The Cults of Dorastor

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Let him be damned in his going out and in his coming in.
May the Goddess strike him with madness, and Xentha
summon the night to blind him. May Magasta summon the
oceans to drown him and all of his kin. May the heavens empty
upon him thunderbolts, and the wrath of Orlanth flay his
substance in the present and future worlds. May Yelm light
against him and Maran Gor gape her maw to swallow him up.

The Wounded World

Cults and Worshipers of Chaos in Gloranthan Campaigns

This supplement is a *RuneQuest Glorantha* source pack featuring chaos-worshipping cult descriptions and sinister antagonists for campaigns in Genertelan settings. Gamemasters should be familiar with *Dorastor: Land of Doom*, which describes the lands and peoples of a region cursed by chaos. *Lords of Terror* follows the rules published in Avalon Hill's *RuneQuest Deluxe Edition*, and refers to cult descriptions, divine spells, and creatures presented in *Gods of Glorantha*, *Elder Secrets*, *River of Cradles*, *Shadows on the Borderland*, and *Dorastor: Land of Doom*.

The Riddle of Chaos

Glorantha is a fragile bubble of stability in an infinite maelstrom of chaos. In forming, the world resolved from disorder to a state of order. But the Godswar weakened that order, and admitted chaos into the world, where it still exists.

Chaos tends to reestablish itself. This tendency threatens the existence of Glorantha and its deities. Though chaos is in itself formless and structureless, mutual corruption of chaos and order occurs at the weakened seams of the world where chaos leaks in. This corruption, like all of Glorantha, is personified and manifested in foul, cruel, maleficent deities.

Chaos can enter Glorantha in any of several ways. Spontaneous appearances are rare but possible. As the world randomly arose from chaos, so chaos may randomly reassert itself. Once in the world chaos will spread. This process is apparent when an obvious chaos manifestation duplicates itself, whether by the replication process of the walktapus or the casting of the Blessing of Chaos ritual.

However, chaos can also enter the world through the chance or purposeful actions of people. For example, in Orlanthi rituals, participants commonly summon and face their foes, overcoming them to

recreate the world. If they fail in their trials, chaos may enter the world, as it did when Orlanth slew Yelm. Chaos can also be deliberately summoned, as when the Unholy Trio allowed Wakboth the Devil to enter the world. Tragically, even the best of people, desperate to save themselves and the things they love, unwisely invite evil into the world in this way.

The divine manifestations of chaos usually parody the wholesome gods or forces of Glorantha, since they represent corruptions or perversions of them. Thus Malia is the Mother of Disease, yet once had properties to aid life and growth. However, many chaotic deities represent concepts incomprehensible to sane and normal Gloranthan life, since these entities originate in the outer Void, where nothing is sane or normal.

Intelligent mortals naturally fear obvious forms of chaos. Atrocities against nature like the Crimson Bat are easily recognized. Other travesties are more difficult to detect, concealed within the framework of society, like the assassins of Krarsht. But chaos also includes good, or so advocates of Lunar worship would have us believe. Through the Path of Illumination, creatures of chaos can overcome fear and resist the soul-blasting temptations to which their nature impels them. Few folk believe in the virtues of chaos, however, and the battle against chaos is integral to the mythology of Glorantha. Without an appreciation of this holy crusade, the world as it exists is not understandable.

Lords of Terror

Lords of Terror is a book about the Bad Guys of Glorantha, the enemies of creation, the foes against whom every fight must be fought. These forces are worthy of fanatical opposition, for once loosed in the world (or a campaign) they are difficult to dislodge. The book also investigates the Gloranthan perspec-



tives upon chaos, focusing on the views of Genertelien peoples of Maniria, Dragon Pass, and Peloria. (Studies of chaos in other Gloranthan lands must await future publications.)

Lords of Terror is intended as a companion book to *Dorastor: Land of Doom*. A full understanding of many races and beings presented there is impossible without the background in this text. This book uses cult descriptions, mythology, philosophy, new game rules, and living examples to illustrate a few of the countless forms taken by chaos.

Preceding the cult write-ups are selections documenting the history of chaos in Glorantha. These essays and fragments are complemented throughout the text by other viewpoints exploring the many facets of chaos, often from contrasting points of view.

The first two sections are "What the Priests Say" dialogs based upon those found in *Gods of Glorantha*. The first, "What is Chaos?" details an Orlanthi Wind Lord's explanation of chaos and its place in the world. This essay can be photocopied and handed out to players as soon as they arrive in Riskland. The second section, "Secrets of the Chaos Gods," is intended for the gamemaster's use. It is told from the point of view of one of Ralzakark's Sword Broos, and describes the more important chaotic deities known on the continent of Genertela from a Dorastan broo's perspective.

The third section presents various cult and cultural perspectives on the origin and nature of Gbaji, an evil chaotic god of crucial importance in First Age histories. Whether Gbaji ought or ought not be identified with Nysalor, a deity whose worship is embraced by the Lunar Empire, is an issue of profound doctrinal and political significance in current day Genertela.

The Cults

Although chaos cults are repellent in nature, do not infer that creatures of chaos are necessarily corrupt. The Path of Illumination (presented in *Dorastor: Land of Doom*, pages 123-128) gives new insight into the behavior of certain "chaotic" creatures, and this further developed here, especially in the "Who Was Gbaji?" articles. Note also that otherwise honorable persons may sacrifice to or even worship some of the depraved entities described herein. However...

IMPORTANT NOTE: Contributors, editors, and publisher intend that these cults be used solely for Non-Player Character antagonists. Player Characters should not join these cults. Only YOU can prevent the abuse of these cults.

Following each cult are one or more supplementary rules discussions, essays, or non-player character descriptions. Guidelines and suggested changes to the rules for chaotic features are given, along with greatly expanded disease rules.

Statistics are provided for seven medium- to high-level chaotic NPCs. These individuals may be introduced into a Dorastan campaign at the gamemaster's discretion. Each is provided with full statistics, motivations, and scenario suggestions.

Lords of Terror includes complete cult descriptions for Primal Chaos, Malia, Bagog, Thed, Krjalk, Pochamgo, and Krarsht. Additional details of the Thanatar cult and the Path of Illumination (published in *Shadows on the Borderland* and *Dorastor: Land of Doom* respectively) are followed by brief notes on other cults common in Dorastor. Note that many spell descriptions have changed from those presented in *Gods of Glorantha* and elsewhere. The spell descriptions here supersede those in other sources.

Expanded systems and descriptions for Passion Spirits complete the book, with an index listing all new or changed skills and spells for gamemaster and player reference.

Chaos Lore

A new Lore is added to the list of common skills. Knowledge of Chaos Lore represents practical and scholarly knowledge of chaos (roughly corresponding to the information presented in this book). A member of the Orlanthi culture, for instance, automatically knows about common forms of chaos in Dragon Pass, such as Snakepipe Hollow or the Urain or broos. Regardless of his skill level, however, he would never have knowledge of krjalki (Fronela and Dorastor), huan to (Kralorela), or the Nargan Desert (Pamaltela) unless he specifically was taught or researched those areas. When in doubt, the GM may require a successful Culture Lore roll as well.

Initial skill level depends on the individual's culture, since civilized cultures are usually farther from chaos. For trolls, Praxians, elves in chaotic lands, Orlanthi, and chaotic and allied races, the base skill level is 15%. For most nomad, barbarian, and primitive cultures (including dragonewts and other elves) it is 10%. For most civilized cultures in Glorantha (including dwarfs) it is 05%. For some isolated cultures (such as most islanders), it is 00%. The base level for Pelorian and Lunar characters varies with their homeland and upbringing, but is usually between 5% and 10%.



Chaos Lore (Knowledge skill)

This skill represents knowledge of chaos, both from a cultural and a universal viewpoint. The adventurer who makes a successful Chaos Lore roll can identify standardized forms of chaos (such as determining whether or not that creature is a broo or a beastman), know the common means to avoid or defeat such a foe, and recognize the signs of chaos or chaotic taint in an area. This last aspect is the least reliable, and not even a sage with 100% in Dorastan Chaos Lore will always recognize the taint of chaos in an area from examining the local flora and fauna; more reliable methods (such as the senses of the Uroxi) may be required.

The Book of Drastic Resolutions

The Book of Drastic Resolutions (see page 5) can be used to inject some of the horror of the *Call of Cthulhu* game into a RuneQuest campaign. Gamemasters can use rumors or stories of this book to generate adventures, have references turn up in Lhankor Mhy or Irrippi Ontor research, or have adventurers find portions of its text. The latter option offers many possibilities. The characters could attempt to sell it to the Sages, then end up charged with chaotic activities or subjected to Lunar inquisition as the Empire tries to acquire a copy of the book. A player character scholar could study the work; the benefits may be great, but the risks are profound.

Reading this work takes 10 weeks of uninterrupted study, longer if the reader has no knowledge of Chaosspeech. ("Chaosspeech" Salonar Tamaskil's name for the obscure tongue used to record the Book of Drastic Resolutions; this tongue is

also widely used in Dorastor by Ralzakark and his followers – in particular, by literate broos in his service.) Reading the book increases the reader's skill level in Chaos Lore by 13%; his skill in Chaosspeech, Ceremony, World Lore, and Summon by 1d6% each; and in Glorantha Lore by 2%. If he knows no Chaosspeech, he has his INT x5% chance to gain 1d6 + Knowledge bonus in that language.

The reader also has an INT x5% chance to learn each of the spells contained in the work. The gamemaster should choose appropriate Sorcery spells (mainly Summon <creature> and Worship <chaotic deity> spells), or adapt appropriate spells from the *Call of Cthulhu* game.

Reading the Book of Drastic Resolutions adds 10% to the chance of a character becoming Illuminated as detailed in *Dorastor: Land of Doom*. Additionally, the spells contained in the book are chaotic in nature (even if presented as Sorcery spells), and each time such a spell is learned or cast the reader gains a 1% cumulative chance to receive a chaotic feature. Once a character is both Illuminated and has gained a chaotic feature, his knowledge of chaos will drive him insane, though the exact nature of the insanity is left up to the gamemaster.

Various excerpts from the Book of Drastic Resolutions appear in this book (for example, see below). These fragments are presented as examples of the ravings contained in the book; many also provide (possibly true) information on various chaotic entities, information which does not fit within the context of other sections of this work. Gamemasters should feel free to adapt this information to their specific needs, changing the source or tone of each fragment as they see fit.

Where in the World: Dorastor: Land of Doom

Dorastor was a center of cosmopolitan culture in the First Age. The Golden Empire of Nysalor was the pinnacle of the land's history, but was destroyed by Arkat the Liberator, the greatest hero of his age. In the Gbaji Wars, armies and potent magics utterly destroyed Dorastor's civilization, cursed and blasted its lands, and scattered or exterminated its peoples.

At some point in the Second Age life rekindled in the wastelands of Dorastor. This life was warped by chaos, and the desolate land was repopulated by broos and nightmare horrors. At the center of this reborn Dorastor is the enigmatic figure of Ralzakark, King of the Broos. He orders great armies of broos, treats as a diplomatic equal with the Lunar Empire, and claims to have been a companion of Nysalor in the First Age. Other powerful forces and peoples have large

stakes in the land as well, from the krjalki of the Hellwood to the Telmori werewolves of the Tobros Mountains, from the besieged elves of the Poisonthorn Forest to the new Orlanthi settlement of Riskland. The stage is set for grand events, and only the most foolish claim to know the final outcome. The beginning of the Hero Wars have found their way to Dorastor in this book!

Chaotic Dorastor and the Orlanthi lands of the Bilini are in southwestern Peloria. They lie on the northern margin of the Rockwood Mountains, and are centered around the Erinflarth River, a major tributary of the Oslir. The cultures of these lands represent two radically different aspects of the contradictory Lunar Empire. See *Dorastor: Land of Doom*, a *RuneQuest* Gloranthan supplement, for a more detailed description of the land's history, inhabitants, and permanent geographical features.



The Book of Drastic Resolutions

Many and multiform are the dim horrors of Dorastor, infesting her ways from the prime. They sleep beneath the unturned stone; they rise with the tree from its root; they move beneath the stagnant waters and the corrupted earth; they hover in the outermost void; they burst forth betimes from the shuttered prisons of rigid stone, the deep vaults sealed with iron and lead. For each form long known to man, a dozen others as yet unknown abide hidden unto the terrible latter days of their revealing, those most dreadful and loathliest to behold bapiv still to be declared. And of all forms revealed aforetime or made manifest in their veritable presence, there is one that may not openly be named for its exceeding foulness — that spawn which the hidden indweller has begotten upon Dorastor, his veriest face.

The legendary Book of Drastic Resolutions is the most infamous of lost texts expounding upon chaos. Mentions of the original document in First Age histories of Dorastor's destruction agree that Arkat destroyed all known copies of the work.

Those claiming knowledge of it dispute its nature. Enemies of Nysalor claim it was penned by Gbaji as a tome of chaos magic. Some Nysalorians claim it was a "Handbook for the Defense of Dorastor," a guide to the summoning of the dark side of Nysalor in desperate times. Others claim it was a "Handbook for the Destruction of Dorastor" used by the enemies of the Lord of Light, a means to destroy him by summoning his shadow (variously identified as Arkat, or Gbaji, or both). Respectable scholars doubt its survival, though credulous Orlanthis are fearful even of its rumor.

Our selections are taken from a remarkable manuscript bearing this name, apparently penned in the late 16th Century by an Orlanthis named Salonar Tamaskil. The author's claim of access to a complete copy of the original cannot be authenticated. The text begins with a convoluted speculation that a

little bit of insanity is necessary, even beneficial, to the seeker of truth. The rest of the manuscript consists of ravings, prophecies of the future, warnings of doom, and extensive catalogues of the creatures and cults of chaos. Salonar cites history, astrology, numerology, and world-wide mythology to support his claims, supplemented by tantalizing references to forbidden knowledge beyond mortal ken. Dorastor is repeatedly identified as the original and future source of all chaos in Glorantha. Ralzakark is discussed (among other horrors), and described as the least of the terrors waiting within the Land of Doom.

The manuscript itself consists of tattered sheets of parchment bound into a folio at a later date. The scholar's often illegible scribbles are recorded in a Sartarite script, although fragments are in Chaosspeech and an even older tongue. Salonar claims defied all efforts at translation. The pages are illustrated with arcane charts, symbols, and star maps (the latter claimed by the author to be more accurate than those of the High Observatory in Yuthuppa). The book is widely rumored to conceal many blasphemous spells within its obscure writings and signs, though such rumors have yet to be substantiated.

Salonar Tamaskil was born in Jonstown in 1543. He became a Sage of Lhankor Mhy at an early age, and was known to be familiar with ancient and modern works on the nature of chaos. He was widely traveled, and gained access to many collections of forbidden lore, including the Pelorian *Enigmas of the Serpent*, and the *Krjalki Fragments* kept in the University of Sog. At some point the Sages judged his studies and practices unsound. He was excommunicated in 1576 for Corruption of Chaos; records of the proceedings suggest the scholar was suspected of being illuminated. First accounts of the Book of Drastic Resolutions appear in Jonstown in 1594, although rumors of the book circulated widely in southern Peloria almost a decade earlier.



Salonar Tamaskil and the Book of Drastic Resolutions



What is Chaos?

What the Wind Lord Teaches

Where did chaos come from?

The world grew from nothing, created by Umath and his family, and nurtured by Orlanth Lifebringer and his companions. Chaos came from the Outer Void, to harm the eternal Silence we can never know. It seeks to return the world to nothing, for it hates all Creation.

Where does chaos come from now?

Chaos comes from all around us. The greatest source of chaos in the world is Dorastor, the cursed land, and we must guard against it with our lives and souls. Broos are everywhere. Chaos also comes from the north, when the Crimson Bat comes at the Emperor's call. Chaos comes from the West, where the atheists refuse to believe in evil. In my homeland of Dragon Pass chaos comes from a place named Ginijji, which outsiders call Snake-Pipe Hollow, and from Delecti's Swamp, and from the invading Lunars. Only our center is true.

Why do we die?

Once the world was a perfect place. Everyone was happy, and no one ever got angry. Then the evil gods grew jealous, thinking that only they should be happy, and so they released death into the world. When death did not grant them the power they sought (for Orlanth's deadly brother tamed it), the Unholy Trio released chaos as well, and the old world was destroyed. Only Orlanth and his companions saved us. Praise them every day for saving us, and look forward to the day when Death, servant and brother of Orlanth, sends you to our Lord's Hall.

Why am I here?

You are here to guard against our enemies, of which the greatest is chaos. You must destroy it, whether you seek it out like the crazed Uroxi or defend against it in your home like the brave farmers of Barntar. If you are like me you will follow the winds, and they will take you where you are needed the most. As long as you follow Orlanth you need never fear death at the hands of chaos.

How does chaos do magic?

All chaos magics are evil, and require the conquest or death of other entities, whether gods, spirits, or men. If you ever find one of the broo fetishes you should bring it to the Storm Voices or Kolati, so that they can heal or release the poor souls which the evil ones have enslaved. If you ever find one of their foul altars you should come tell me, and I will lead you in destroying it.

I have heard of other evil things. Can you tell me the truth about...

...dwarfs?

Mostal is hollow, but he is not chaos. The Mostali are greedy and empty, and are like undead in many ways, but they are alive. They do not know joy or love or the free winds, but they do not work to harm the world. However, their works can let chaos back into the world, as they did in the First and Second Ages, but if you stay away from their machines and do not go underground, they will not bother you.

...sorcerers?

The Emptied Ones have sold their souls for evil magic. They do not care for honor or truth, sacrificing everything in their lust for knowledge and power, perverting the gifts given to all men by Orlanth Lawspeaker. They seek to master the world, but cannot even master themselves. Most of them are not of chaos, however, and some fight against it even as we do. But we can never be friends.

...trolls?

Kyger Litor is evil, but she is not chaos. Her children the trolls are always hungry, and will eat you as soon as a cow, but they are not chaos. They fought against the Devil with Orlanth, and bore the worst of the fighting after our Lord left with the Lightbringers to redeem us. Avoid them when you can and kill them when you must, but do not hate them, for they hate chaos even more than you do.

...werewolves?

The Telmori were originally as natural to the world as our Yinkini brothers. But they followed Gbaji the Deceiver and took the taint of chaos to strengthen themselves, and now they are all evil. Sartar tried to tame them, and even allowed them into his kingdom, but they betrayed him, and now guard the Lunar puppet in Böldhome. They are only a little chaos since Laughing Talor cursed their chaotic powers, but you should stay away from their homes on the Wolf Plateau, for they would eat you as soon as they would a deer.

...the Lunar Empire?

The Lunar Empire is the new source of chaos in the world. The Lunars try to convince people that chaos has the potential for good, but only the Appeasers believe them, and they will learn their mistake soon enough. The Evil Empire has driven us from our homes, stolen our property, and tried to keep us from worshiping Orlanth, but they will not be able to bind us forever. Here in Riskland we are free to worship, and they think themselves generous to allow us this. They are fools, for we are not Deceived. Soon we will rise up and drive them back into the Void, as we must all chaos.

THE EVIL GODS

Bagog, Scorpion Queen

This monster is the mother of the Scorpion Men, and long ago sold her children into the slavery of chaos. She is the Devourer, worse even than trolls, for at least what they devour stays eaten. Her meals turn into foul parodies of the things eaten, and I once had to kill my own cousin when I saw him returned from death as a foul scorpion hybrid. I have never faced so deadly or tragic a fight, but I liberated his soul to return to Orlanth, bless the winds.

The Crimson Bat

This creature is the greatest chaos monster in the world, second only to the Goddess in its evil and horror. It was banished by Arkat the Savior, but the Red Goddess brought it back to prove her chaotic nature. The Evil Emperor keeps it always in our lands, to oppress us and shame Orlanth for his failure to kill chaos at Castle Blue. It was killed at Böldhome, but returns at the Emperor's call, to devour our bodies and our souls.



Gbaji

The Deceiver almost destroyed the world in the Dawn Ages because foolish people would not listen to our ancestors. The people of that age dreamed of recreating Yelm's stagnant kingdom, and tricked many others into following them. They wanted to rule the world, and turned to chaos in their wickedness. Gbaji was beautiful to behold and spoke pleasantly, but his face and words were but masks for his evil ways. Arkat slew him, but was destroyed in the process, and together they let chaos back into the world, not just once now but many times. Beware those who ask strange questions, for they allow the Deceiver to come in whether they know the answers or not.

Lokamayadon

Lokamayadon is our greatest enemy and our greatest shame, for he was an Orlanthi who conspired with Gbaji to let chaos into the world. He replaced Orlanth's clean winds with the foul winds of Ragnaglar, and enslaved his own people for personal power. He betrayed his own Ring, and so Orlanth Lightbringer sent Harmast to save us and kill the Mad God once more. Beware your inner voice, for it can lead you to evil if you let it drown out the teachings of Orlanth Goodvoice.

Malia, Foul Mistress

Malia is the Mistress of Plague, one of the Unholy Trio, and Midwife of the Devil. She and her followers breed disease in the world. The broods revel in her foul sacrifices, and those who let hate burn out their souls sometimes follow her as well. She is the great illness, and when blessed Chalana finally cures the world, we will be free from her taint forever.

Ragnaglar, the Mad God

This evil god was the Father of Wakboth the Devil, and it was he who first traded his soul for the powers of chaos. His twisted brood children turned on him, and so gained the blessings of chaos as well. Mighty Urox slew him with his horns of iron and so we are free of his madness, but the evil that first came from him infects the world, and will until his last child is dead. There are secrets of the Mad God which I will tell you when your soul is strong enough to face the terrible truth.

Shepelkirt, the Red Moon

Everyone knows of this evil goddess, for the wound in Orlanth is visible in the sky to all. She claims to be able to master the terror of chaos to serve life, but she uses Gbaji's lies to enslave the souls of her misguided worshipers, and she will destroy the world if not stopped. We fight against her with every breath we take, and with every prayer to Orlanth. She is afraid to face us directly, and so uses her chaotic tools to conquer us: the Crimson Bat, her son the Red Emperor, and the Land of Doom.

Thanatar, the Severed God

This god is a headless monster with no mind or magic of his own, and so he steals the heads of others to bring terror into the world. He was beheaded and almost slain in the Darkness by the sons of Urox, but was brought back to unholy life by Gbaji, and his followers still hunt the heads of others to steal their magic and knowledge. His victims are doomed to a tor-

mented undead existence, and only the desecration of their already-violated bodies can free their souls.

Thed, Mother of the Broods

Thed was wounded by Urox in the Storm Age, but turned to chaos to gain revenge on the entire world instead of just her enemy. She is the best example of the torment of chaos, for she lost everything she had when she gave birth to Wakboth. She was turned inside out, and now haunts the Spirit Plane, spurring her children to ever greater acts of evil and horror. She was abused by her child the Devil, and each abuse she allowed brought more chaos into the world.

Urain

Violence has always been a tool and strength of Orlanth, for war and death can be used as tools of life. But when violence knows no restraint it becomes a tool of chaos and destruction, creating nothing in its wake. This first happened when the black clouds of chaos dropped the Bad Rain into the world, but it has happened often, whenever a warrior or berserker allows the violence to completely fill their soul. Do not let violence take control of you, for even the blessed healers cannot calm the soul of Urain, and any warrior with the battle madness must be put down like a rabid beast.

Vivamort

Vivamort created the first vampire, and those men afraid of death sometimes turn to him to defy the natural ways of the world. He gained evil powers from the Devil, at the cost of his soul, and any vampire which is destroyed is gone forever, into the void of chaos. He is the source of the evils of the Upland Swamp in my homeland, for the Necromancer Delecti is a master of his undead powers.

Wakboth the Devil

Wakboth the Devil was the greatest manifestation of chaos in the world. He was the child of the Unholy Trio, and he embodied the fear and hatred of Ragnaglar, Thed, and Malia with an unholy glee. His presence doomed the world, and only the actions of Orlanth and his brothers saved us then. Urox the Berserker rallied all of the forces of life to slay him, and Humakt the Sword used the powers of Death to slay the Void that remained. Then mighty Orlanth rallied all of the forces of the world to trap the hollow shell that came to destroy even the dead, grinding it into dust and liberating Arachne Solara to reweave the world. Wakboth can never come back, though pieces of him are sometimes found and used to create new forms of chaos, such as Gbaji, Zistor, and Shepelkirt.

Zistor, the Machine God

Zistor is a foul parody of life, a created being with the powers of a god but no soul. He was created by the God Learners in the Second Age, when the atheists of the West ruled the world. He taught his empty secrets to many people before he was destroyed by Orlanth, and remnants of his evil can still be found in the machines of the dwarfs, which allowed his release in the first place. He is worse than undead, for he is empty even of the will to live again, since he was never alive in the first place.



Secrets of the Chaos Gods

What the Sword Broo Says

Where did the world come from?

The world was ripped from the Void of Chaos to torment each of us forever. One day Chaos will devour the world, and we will all be at peace again, forever.

Where did I come from?

The gods of this world tore you from chaos because they hate you and want to make you suffer. You were born from the suffering of your host-mother, and you in turn will make others suffer, through your life and the lives of the children you spawn.

What happens after we die?

There is nothing after you die, if you are lucky. If you are trapped by life you may be forced to return here again and again, or — worse yet — have an afterlife and remain there forever. Better to live for the present, and hope that the future holds nothing for you. Until that day, you must give your service to Ralzakark, or he will make the pain of your life last an eternity, as his does.

Why am I here?

There is no meaning or purpose to life. It just is. You must take what you can. You must live and suffer, and make the world please you, if you are strong enough. If you are not you will die. You are here to spread death and destruction through the world, hastening its inevitable end in chaos and entropy. Hate and anger are the only comforts which exist, and vengeance against the world your only hope. Fill your soul with them, as I have mine.

How do we do magic?

All magic requires the enslavement or annihilation of lesser entities to prolong your own life and existence. Slave spirits provide small magics. If you are strong enough, you will rip power directly from one of the gods of chaos, who have great power. Learn all the magic you can, for to do otherwise is folly.

I have heard of other powers. Can you tell me the truth about...

...Lunar Gods?

It is hard to tell whether the Lunar Way is favorable or not. Many broos think so, and have given their allegiance to the Red Goddess, helping her destroy the world. Others do not, and plot to destroy the Lunar Empire. Some say one thing but do another, as everyone always does who serves their own interests. Ralzakark allows the Lunars to go enter his domain, but he is only using them for his own purposes. You should do as he and I do, and take what power you can from them while they are here.

...Monotheists?

These men from the West use a kind of magic called sorcery, which does not rely on spirits or gods, but takes from both. It is very powerful, and you should learn some if you are lucky enough to find someone to teach you. Then you will be able to Tap power from anyone or anything you want. Some of the

sorcerers think they can understand the powers of chaos, and even use them for their own ends, but they only hasten their own destruction. This is proven by their actions, for it is they who awakened Ralzakark and Dorastor so long ago, and who are now our Lord's abused slaves.

...Other Gods?

All of the gods are prey to the secret powers of chaos, even the gods of chaos themselves. If they were all destroyed, it would be to our profit. Some chaotics, like the ogres, can pretend to be like one of these gods, and even gain magic from worshiping them, but it is very dangerous, and you should not try it. Take what you can from these gods and their followers, and work with me to bring about their doom.

...Primitive Spirits?

Even as the beings of the mundane world are the prey of our spears and stones, these spirits are the prey of our spells and shamans. They are weak and unprotected, and so are easy to conquer and steal from. When you are ready I will allow you to fight one, and keep it as a slave if you defeat it.

THE LORDS OF TERROR

Bagog, Poison

This goddess devours any living thing, and the magicians among her scorpion people can give birth to monsters by eating intelligent creatures. The Scorpion Folk are our allies, but would take all that we have from us if they had the chance. You should do the same to them, for your first duty is to yourself.

Cacodemon, Anarchy

The Cacodemon is the embodiment of anarchy and destruction. It is the strongest piece of Wakboth left in the world, and is well-suited for its purpose. Beware of its ogre followers, for they are mindless and disorganized like their master, and cannot be trusted. Encourage them in their self-destructive violence, for everything they destroy is one less thing that you will have to.

Gbaji, Liberator

Gbaji was the child of Jotimam, and he tried to destroy this part of the world, which the humans call Genertela. He was defeated in the Darkness, but hid within the fabric of the world, and came again centuries ago to release us all from the agony of empty existence.

Gbaji's reappearance should have signalled an end to our wretched existence. Instead, the gods of life resisted their pre-ordained end, and cast Gbaji out of this world back into the Void, where he awaits his next rebirth. The foe Arkat led this fight, but was doomed and destroyed in the process, as are all of our enemies.

Humakt, Death

Humakt is the human name for Death. They call him a servant of life, but we know that he is the greatest of the Lords of Terror, for he is the Harbinger of Chaos, and brings death wherever he goes. His sword made the great wounds in the world through which chaos oozed, and it liberated Gbaji in the Chaos Wars, so that now he is present in all of the world. We gladly use the powers he grants us, to slay the foes of our lord Ralzakark.



Jraktal, Tap

Jraktal led the invasion of the southern part of the world, which humans call Pamaltela. He did not return to us. Humans say that he was defeated, but he survives, as the use of Tapping among the Men of the West proves to us. Each time they call on him, all unknowingly, they hasten the end of the world.

Kajabor, Entropy

Kajabor is the God-Killer, who destroys all vestiges of matter and energy, annihilating every possibility of individual or united existence. Entities slain by Kajabor have never returned, and even their names have been lost after being pulled from the universe. He was the strongest of the chaos gods.

Kajabor was enslaved by the gods, and his powers bound forever into the world. Thus, his destruction is part of the world even though he can no longer act, and entropy will eventually destroy all of it, matter and energy, beyond even memory. Then we will be free.

Malia, Disease

Malia is Queen of the World. No place is free of her touch — she goes where she pleases, spreading her diseases and plagues across all lands. She is the embodiment and source of the world's illness, the Cosmic Disease, and she provides her gifts freely to all who ask. She is as natural as water, yet if the gods of the world were ever all in harmony she would disappear. But this will never happen.

Pocharngo, Mutation

Life futilely resists being destroyed by Chaos, but Pocharngo does not destroy — he changes. When the old world rebelled he turned it into a vast sludge of protoplasm, and sent out lesser monsters to hasten this change, which survived. You can gain great power from worshiping Pocharngo, but you will be changed, warped and twisted in body, mind, and soul. Such is the price of power.

Primal Chaos

True chaos is impersonal: less than mindless, naught but a primal force. To know it is to be it. Each of us can easily touch it, and take a piece of it into us forever, and all glory in the experience. You will have the chance when you are ready. If you are lucky you will gain great power from the contact. If you are cursed, you will probably die, although it might make you stronger instead.

Ragnaglar, Evil

Ragnaglar sought to destroy the world, and he enlisted the forces of chaos and brought them into the world. He made us live — curse his dead soul. Malia and Thed joined him in the Unholy Trio, cursed by him and cursing us in return. He was destroyed by the Bull, who allowed us to live so that he could punish us forever. We bless Ragnaglar more than any other god, for he alone caused more destruction and death than everything else in the world together.

Ralzakark, Lord

Ralzakark is our lord, and we worship and serve him faithfully. His requirements may seem unnatural to you, but you must

obey him without question, or you will feel his anger for all eternity. Just be glad that he has not required you to prove your loyalty by becoming one of the *castrati*. Ralzakark has come to prepare the world for its destruction, and everything he does is for that goal, though it takes another thousand years to complete.

Thed, Rape

Our accursed mother was a slave of Ragnaglar, and inflicted our pain on us when she brought us into the world. She teaches us her ways, to inflict more pain on the creatures of the world. She curses us and so is a part of each of us, even as we are all parts of her. She blesses us with her fertility, to bring more destruction to life. She hates us as we hate her.

Wakboth, the Devil

Wakboth is the senseless, terrifying, and wanton disregard for life, continuous brutal destruction. Twisted and foul, Wakboth is the force which defiles the world and makes the gods suffer for our troubles. He is the greatest example we can take, and you should seek to become more like him with every thought or action. He is our brother, for his parents were cursed Thed and hated Ragnaglar.

Wakboth was dismembered by the Uroxi, but his pieces are still here, infecting the world, and we know where they are. One day we will put him back together, and then he will complete the destruction he started in the Darkness.





THE REMINISCENCES OF PAULIS: Hahlggrim's War

Accompanying the cults and appendices in the book are excerpts from a narrative penned by Paulis Longvale. Paulis was a cousin of chief Hahlggrim of the Bilini, sent by his father Peterin for a summer's seasoning on the frontier before posting to a bureaucratic position within the Heartlands. Peterin Longvale had been converted to Lunar ways years before, but kept close clan ties, even among the Traditionalists. That summer stretched into several adventure-filled years, as young Paulis experienced the turmoil of a typical buffer kingdom both as an educated young man of the Empire and as a blood cousin of a powerful Orlanthi family.

At that time Paulis was an initiate of Irrippi Ontor, and he kept to the ways of his faith even as he developed a cosmopolitan respect for the gods and ways of his cousins. Many years later the cult commissioned him to create a narrative from the deposited materials, which he did after much prodding.

A bright, humorous young man, Paulis grew colder and more cynical as the years passed, and the first version of the events which he produced frequently was both cruel and inaccurate. To his credit this work finally repelled Paulis, and upon retirement he created a new version of events to which later historians refer as much for its deft portraits of the principals as for the light it casts upon events. It is from this latter version that these translations have been made.

Paulis affected to be a man of letters, though the work which he left behind is mostly unread today. He wrote in an antique Pelorian literary style which was sometimes quaint to read even then; the translators have attempted to render that element of his style as well.

The Bilini

Four kings of the Bilini are important to the narrative: Eric Norallson, Hakon the Swimmer, Bolthor Brighteye, and Oddi the Keen Ralzakarksbane. Their story is told in Holrik No-Neck's *Bilinisaga*; portions of this appear in the *Dorastor: Land of Doom* handouts (pages 10-12), and the rest of the tale is presented here.

Eric Norallson: Eric was a son of Norall of Oakstead, famous for the wild mountain cats he bred. Norall was the son of Killer Garril, who had slain all of his kinsmen who dared to join the Lunar religion. Garril held his lands at the pleasure of King Hrodar Grizzlebeak, though Garril was older than Hrodar by far. How the scion of such a Traditionalist family came to be an Appeaser puzzles historians, especially since his grandfather was still alive when Eric was named king by the Red Emperor.

Eric was slain by Ketil White Eye in single combat, but the Bilini nobility refused weregeld, swearing blood feud upon him instead. The kingslayer was forced to flee to the Orlanth temple at Oxhead, where he served for many years, gaining the respect and friendship of many powerful men, even among the Bilini.

Hakon the Swimmer: Hakon was elected king after the death of Eric. He had a famous rivalry with a Bilini noble named Hahlggrim, a chieftain of the Bilini whose family had long feuded with Hakon's. Though not present at the battle where Eric died, Hahlggrim was already an enemy of Hakon the Swimmer when that lord ascended the throne, for both came from rival families struggling for control of regional trade.

Having taken power, Hakon persecuted Hahlggrim's kin and took away their trading position after Hahlggrim accused Hakon in council of harboring an agent of the Red Emperor. Hahlggrim held his honor, and Orlanth Rex found against the king for a large sum, which was paid. With part of the bloodpain debt, Hahlggrim took his immediate family into exile with the neighboring Skanthei (since many of Hahlggrim's lands had been granted by the King to the Lunars). Hakon resumed his persecution of Hahlggrim's clan, so Hahlggrim returned in 1621 S.T., slew Hakon, and burned the confiscated home of his childhood.

After the tribal moot held to choose the new king almost ended in civil war, Hahlggrim returned to the Skanthei, where he became a Wind Lord at the Oxhead temple. There he met Ketil Ericbane and became fast friends. Renekot the Stone, son of Hakon, received weregeld for

... Finally Bolthor arrived. Hahlggrim had told me this would happen, but I had not believed that any man of honor in time of need would seek to humble he whose aid he sought. The King was arrogant and portly; his well-fed richness contrasted sharply with the poverty outside his gates. About him hung a white Eubuck cape. It was rather shorter than fashionable, and he looked fairly like a snow-capped hummock. A gold circlet, shining with a glow of its own, held his long hair. His shaggy trews looked poor, but he was famous for them (Bolthor Hairybreeks was one of his appellations; others held less compliment). At his side, as token of the disturbed state of the kingdom, he wore Ironbreaker, the sword wielded long ago by Distan, general for the legendary Arkat the Destroyer. Many tales portrayed its magical power, far greater than suggested by the dwarf-wrought silver matrices circling the hilt. This sword had been in Bolthor's line for generations, and it was as much to see it as to see Bolthor (my first King in the flesh) that I had asked to accompany Hahlggrim.

Only Hahlggrim was seated when Bolthor entered, and he rose in a casually polite manner once the King had come to his attention. Bolthor belonged to many cults, as rulers often do; as an Orlanthi initiate he exchanged the tedious alliterative poetry with Hahlggrim which it pleases Orlanth to have spoken. Why a god should choose such an old-fashioned,

repetitive mode has never been clear to me — why one cannot say a thing and have done with it slides beyond my understanding.

The two leaders then spoke some storm tongue which I did not understand, and the conference began.

Or should have. Bolthor even here could not bring himself to actually make his request, though his chamberlain had made the matter clear beforehand. First the King called for wine. Then he fussed with the fire. Then he asked for paper and ink, and made dubious scratches on it, though Hahlggrim had told me that this foolish man could neither read nor write. At last, though, his voice trembling, the King made the Lightbringers' Summons:

Chaos stalks my world.

Broos have bruised me, the Hand has pawed me.

I have taken the impossible path

And seek those who must aid my task.

You are not the first of my friends.

Others walked with me to destroy.

Gbaji took them, they died.

I failed to save them: chaos grows!



his father's death, renounced the feud against Hahlgrim and his clan, and returned to Hazard Fort to maintain his vigil against Dorastor. Years later he followed Hahlgrim Doomsword into battle against Ralzakark, eventually becoming one of Oddi's most trusted thanes.

Bolthor Brighteye: Bolthor was a member of the Osteri clan, which had held the Ironsword for centuries. He was chosen as a compromise at the disastrous moot of 1622, most likely because of his possession of this relic. He permitted Lunar influences which he thought would benefit his people (though Lunar dancing girls were more common than any other import), and recovered parts of Lakrene through marriage, Imperial grant, and negotiations, including Hahlgrim's lands. The kingdom of Bilini drifted under his rule, and he acted as little more than a Lunar caretaker. His political acceptance of a Lunar bride did not endear him to the Traditionalists, despite the return of some Bilini lands, but without Hahlgrim to lead them they kept the peace.

Bolthor's neglect led to increasing encroachment by the forces of chaos from Dorastor. As the kingdom deteriorated the Lunar regional command became worried, and Appius Luxius himself ordered Bolthor to put his kingdom in order or be replaced. Bolthor was statesman enough to know where to ask for help — from Hahlgrim.

The text begins here, and covers the three years of Hahlgrim's deadly war against Dorastor, particularly against Ralzakark and his allies. When Bolthor was discovered to have trafficked with the forces of chaos, possibly from the start, Hahlgrim slew Bolthor with Ironbreaker, as related in the text. Oddi the Keen became king, and finished the war which his brother had started, though few survived the final battle besides he, Ketil, and Paulis.

Oddi the Keen: Little is known of Oddi's history after the events of the text, since no records exist apart from conflicting sagas and fragmentary documents. Some details can be gleaned from "The Tragic Saga of Oddi the Keen," a lay composed by Holrik No-Neck as a companion to his *Bilinisaga*. Unfortunately, Holrik died before it could be completed, and we may never know the truth of what hap-

pened to Ralzakark and Oddi. One historian's version of this future history is presented below. Gamemasters may use this as the basis of a (later) epic campaign, as the source of obscure prophecies, or ignore it in favor of their own interpretation of events.

Future History

Many sources agree that Oddi's reign brought peace and plenty to the land for a time. During his reign he taught his cult of Urox that worship of Nysalor was not chaotic, for if it were, then his followers would be sensed as chaotic by the followers of the Bull. Since Illuminates were not sensed by Uroxi, they were therefore not chaotic. From this foundation, Oddi persuaded the Uroxi that the Lunar Empire itself was also not chaotic, though parts of it certainly were.

Oddi later waged war against the Appeasers, long a force in Dorastor since before Ralzakark awakened. However, Oddi himself was an Appeaser, and this public war was evidence of the turmoil growing within him. His goal was to drive the Appeasers out of Talastar, and then to provoke Ralzakark into war against the Lunar Empire. Oddi succeeded in this task in 1629.

When Ralzakark's armies marched forth from Dorastor, Oddi went to his clan chiefs and told them that he wanted to face the horde alone, with just his personal forces, and send his people away to safety. The clans of course refused, and Oddi was forced to reveal his true intentions to them. He told them that he planned to join the chaos forces in plundering the Lunar Empire. The people, led by Ketil Howler'sbane, swore to follow him. Oddi was touched by their loyalty, but further embittered and dissipated by his failure to save them from what he now recognized as his Doom.

The results of the assault on the Lunar Empire are not known, for there is no record in the Lunar annals of any such invasion. All that is known is that Oddi led his entire tribe to a tragic end. He survived, this time without even Ketil, and returned to Bilini and Dorastor. There he proved his heroic worth by meting out the Final Death to Ralzakark with Ironbreaker, though it cost Oddi his life and the sword.

Any master of a Lightbringer cult must answer the legitimate call of the Summons, or lose all power and benefit of their god. Even though a formality at times, it is nonetheless always binding, and one may escape only by providing another type of divine assistance. Hahlgrim would have been the last to deny the challenge.

"I hear and stand before you," Hahlgrim replied, "but I am only one man. What would you have of me?"

Again Bolthor found it hard to speak, and silence grew. He cleared his throat several times. Rarely since have I seen a man of noble blood whose guilt sat so clearly.

"I have returned your lands to you, kingslayer," Bolthor said at last, "though I am loth to seek your aid. My men die; my people suffer. The horrors of Dorastor creep beyond their ancient borders."

Hahlgrim nodded.

"I know that you have allies among the Skanthi, who fight well against creatures of chaos. You and I would be enemies on other ground, but peril stalks us both here. By Orlanth, I tell you that it is true the dead walk freely upon the earth, that the trees scream and bleed when cut, that the very air has sometimes been poisoned. How foul the world is when the very essence of Urox can be made impure and sicken the Great Bull's worshippers."

"Such things are true," Hahlgrim agreed. "It was not always so." It seemed to me that Hahlgrim referred to the days when his family had been powerful at court, before the fear grew and the land was ruined.

"As a final gift, to aid your battle, I offer you this." The King rose and unbuckled Ironbreaker, with its rich scabbard and belt, and held it out in his palms. There were gasps from his coterie, and several nobles rushed part way to him, then stopped in shock. A general crowding-forward of the watchers then occurred, and I had to retreat to the side of the chamber to stand upon a bench, for I could not see over these long-legged warriors.

Hahlgrim told me that even he was surprised by the offer of Ironbreaker, and that the utter seriousness of the gift gave him full token that victory would come in the end. Of course, we did not know then of the fate which would overtake both these lords, so different and yet joined together to make a desperate struggle.

"I am unused to such price, King Bolthor," Hahlgrim said.

"I ask your fealty in return, Hahlgrim," the King replied. "I may ask of you your life. Are you used to that price?"

"Men are dead but once," Hahlgrim said.

Then Bolthor seated himself, and Hahlgrim laid Ironbreaker across the King's lap, and swore him fealty and honor, and the alliance was made.



Who Was Gbaji?

That the Chaos gods and all their works are detestable is a fundamental tenet of most of the Great Religions of Genertela. The worshipers and practices of most Chaos cults are so loathsome and depraved that such a tenet seems self-evident. A more difficult doctrinal issue is that of Nysalor and the Bright Empire, a historical period described in some sources as a flowering of Genertelan wisdom and culture. With the assimilation of Nysalor into the cults of the Lunar Empire, the origin and fundamental nature of Nysalor (or Gbaji, as Nysalor is commonly identified by many cults) are topics of great significance widely discussed in scholarly tracts and public testaments of faith. The following selection of documents and recorded speeches is representative of a vast literature treating this topic.

Who Was Gbaji?

Source: tract of the cult of Arkat Chaosbane, distributed in Tortun (Ralios), Sacred Time, 1622 S.T.

The birth of Gbaji was an intrusion into the natural world (as defined by the Compromise), and as such could only be interpreted as a return of chaos. Though his creators and slaves called him Nysalor, the Bright God of Chaos is known only as Gbaji to us, for that is what Arkat Chaosbane first called him.

Though only a skirmish compared with the Chaos Wars of the Great Darkness, the Gbaji War was fought to preserve the universe from an evil as cruel as any of the Great Gods of Chaos. Kingdoms and peoples fell throughout the West as Arkat the Savior led the seventy-five-year crusade against the Chaos God and his minions of the Broken Council.

Arkat cleared Ralios and Fronela of these perverted followers, but was unable to cross into Dorastor because of the Krjaliki Lord in Kartolin. Gbaji himself came to face Arkat at the Pass, and it was many years before Arkat recovered from the foul wound he took there. But the fight cost Gbaji more than it did the Liberator, and the thing which grew from his severed arm was slain years later by a Dara Happan army.

Acting on the words of the Old Man, Arkat sought another route over the mountains. He prepared his armies to sail south and east, and march through Dragon Pass into Dorastor. This land was unknown to the Westerners, and was thought by them to be a volcanic land teeming with krjaliki, which they called Srvuela.

Arkat landed in Esrolia, and was aided by enemies of Gbaji's dark forces. The combined army moved into the "old highlands" of Dragon Pass, and were there joined by the armies of the dragonwits and the Aurox. A major confrontation cleared the Pass of all chaos presence, but after several years of skirmishing it became obvious that the followers of the Evil One were regaining their strength. Weary to his soul, the battered chieftain once again took up his sword and led his sorrowful allies to the final battle with the Deceiver. In his lust for vengeance he swept like a hurricane through Saird, defeating the forces of Gbaji along the way.

As the army marched into Dorastor Gbaji gathered his own strength about him, and the two met on the plains by Karlan's Ring. All might have been lost by the betrayal if the army of the Laughing Son had not broken through Kartolin to massacre the still-human parts of Dorastor, including the priests of Gbaji.

Among those that fell in the storming of the City of Miracles were the last of the Inner Circle sorcerers who had created Gbaji, and who had supported him with unholy worship. The battle raged for two days, and at the end of that time most of the combatants on both sides were decimated, leaving only Gbaji and Arkat and their closest followers. The battle raged for another day, and the conflict was so terrible that the earth itself groaned and rolled over, burying the City of Miracles beneath tons of stone. In the end, the Laughing Son fell, but not before sending the last of the krjaliki to the nameless Void. The Deceiver was dismembered by Arkat's great sword,

which broke from the task. The Liberator staggered out of the dusty ruins, bearing the bodies of his enemy and friend with him. The friend was laid to rest at Arkat's Last Tower, to guard the pass against evil for all time. The parts of the Deceiver were buried separately as far away as the Elder Wilds, hidden in distant places by Arkat's allies. The land of Dorastor was left barren after Arkat's Last Passing, when the Curse of Cleansing was invoked to seal the land and its terrible secrets forever. It remained so until the unwitting followers of the Deceiver revived the Mask of Gbaji. Pray to Arkat to deliver us from the evil which still grows in the Unholy Land. Amen.

Who Was Gbaji?

Source: tract of the cult of Arkat the Savior, distributed in Tortun (Ralios), Disorder Week, Sea Season, 1623 S.T.

Gbaji was a god, yet he was not claimed by any of the divine tribes. He fought against the gods of all the tribes, however, and was named by them to be an enemy. He fled from the immortal realms, and sought safety in Acos, the lands of men.

He landed first in Srvuela, and was joyously greeted by the people there, for men had not yet learned of the Deceiver's banishing from the holy circles. There he corrupted the people whom he came in close contact with, and they vowed to follow where he went, and go before him to prepare his way. They crossed the Barrier to preach the word of their false god, and many believed their lies.

But in time men learned of the god's real nature, and asked for help from the Heavenly gods. And they sent us Arkat, the Liberator. He told the people that the gods could not come into the world, and so he had been sent to lead the people of Acos in capturing and killing the Deceiver. The peoples of Acos mustered their strength to fight the evil god, though some had been corrupted by his lies, and fought for him instead.

Gbaji fled back across the Barrier and disappeared, but he left behind his servants to cause trouble and wreak havoc in the world. The Riddlers were wily foes, but Arkat destroyed them, though it cost him his best friend. The werewolves were deadly foes, but Arkat defeated them as well, though it cost him his son. And the krjaliki were the most horrible foes imaginable, but Arkat destroyed them as well, though it cost him his soul. Give thanks to the Savior, who sacrificed himself that we might live.

Who Was Gbaji?

Source: tract of the cult of Arkat the Deceiver, distributed in Tortun (Ralios), Harmony Week, Sea Season, 1623 S.T.

Gbaji was the first son of the Chaos Gods to walk the earth. He was a powerful and clever god, and could assume any shape he desired. He was sent by his parents to Genertela to cause war and trouble, so that the Evil Lords could regain their ancient properties.

When he first entered the world due to Ehlum's sin, Gbaji went to Brithos, where the wizards lived. But even with his comely disguise and great power he did not stay there long, for the wizards called upon Malkion to help them drive all taints of evil chaos from the island. Gbaji and his followers barely escaped in time, and they hid throughout the world, separate and alone, but still plotting. Gbaji went next to the land of the Seshnegi. He appeared before the king, who was wise and did not trust the god. But he allowed Gbaji to remain, for he was not one to question the gods. And so the Deceiver turned the king's own virtues against him.

Gbaji first appeared in a beautiful form, and more than one woman fell to his charms. Thus, there were sons of the Deceiver in the land of the Seshnegi after that, who grew to full strength in a very short time. One of those who had fled from Brithos, a sorceress named Peandla, bore the first of these krjaliki children. And Gbaji turned his human followers into demons by burning out the mortal within them with the unholy fires of the Void. But none knew this, for they retained the pleasing shapes of joyous men.

When Gbaji finally left the king was glad to see him go, though he did not dare say so for fear of incurring the wrath of Gbaji's followers, who had grown powerful in a short time. He was warned in



a dream not to trust the god, and so had the Mostali make enchanted weapons for him and his followers in preparation for the fight to come. He held the mightiest weapon in the world, a sword forged in Lodrieta (the Land of Fire), and so felt himself prepared against any foe.

Gbaji went to Ralios, where he incited the lords of the land into wrath against the Seshnegi, whom they feared. For nine years Gbaji stayed in Ralios, deceiving the lords and begetting more children to further his cause. The growth of the new cult was slow but steady, and the frequent deaths of leaders opposed to it on all levels went unnoticed or unremarked, at least for a time.

When Gbaji left Ralios he crossed the Wall of Rock into the land of Sruvaelia, where none but the children of the gods lived. There he called the krjalki to him. Soon the chaos demons outnumbered the gods, and the land worshiped Gbaji as its lord, even the races which had resisted him before, such as the dwarfs.

When Gbaji was ready, his followers in Ralios urged the men into war against Seshnela. The kingdom was hard-pressed to hold its lands. The soldiers were divided about the war, since the followers of Gbaji were still active in the kingdom. Thus, the war continued for a long time, and both lands were lessened by the fighting.

And so Ralios was in confusion when the krjalki entered the land through Kartolin (ruled by a son of Gbaji). The krjalki gathered in secret, and did not wait long to attack. They razed Srotolin, for with the army away in Seshnela there were none but women, children, and old men to defend it, and they did not last long against the demons. The men were killed, but many of the women were forced to yield to the caresses of the krjalki, and so was formed the race of half-demons which plagued the land for many centuries after. When the men of Ralios heard this, they retreated and rushed to defend their homes. Soon fighting broke out between the city states, incited by the krjalki and by wolf demons sent by Gbaji in the shape of men. In Telmorla the cult of Gbaji had taken over so completely that there was hardly a person in the land without chaos blood in him.

Many of the cities were able to hold out against the krjalki, though they all fought losing battles for many years. Such was the situation when the Liberator came, son of the Storm God and a queen of the Brithini. He turned the wolfmen back into wolves, and sent them far away, then freed the cities, one by one, from the krjalki.

The Liberator was true to his father's heritage. His body was as tall as a spear and as hard as iron, and his laughter turned the clear noon sky into thunder. The sword he wielded was as strong as he was, and unmatched in all the world. He knew the Deceiver represented all that was dark in the world, and he was dedicated to the light.

The Liberator followed the secret enemies of Gbaji, who led him a secret way over the Wall of Rock. Though the path was blocked by krjalki and worse, he and his companions entered the Land of Doom after a terrible struggle. The Liberator slew the Deceiver and his krjalki companions, then buried the pieces in deep stone and iron tombs in the mountains where none could find them, guarded by the Deceiver's own krjalki.

Who Was Gbaji?

Source: tract of the cult of Orlanth, distributed in Tortun (Ralios), Movement Week, Storm Season, 1623 S.T.

Some say that Gbaji was the god who stopped the Sun in the sky, and because of that he was slain by Arkat, servant of the gods. Others say that Gbaji was the evil god who tried to enslave the world, and that Arkat the Liberator saved the world from chaos. I even heard one priest from Peloria say that Nysalor was the last piece of the Sun God, the one that should come to all men, and that Arkat the Traitor was Gbaji, the shadow which destroyed what he could not understand, or who destroyed a friend out of jealousy and greed.

But we know that it does not matter whether Nysalor or Arkat was Gbaji, or what Gbaji was, or whether they were one person, or two. It does not matter who triumphed in the Land of Doom (whence evil comes always) and buried the body of his enemy, for any such triumph is only disaster. Both were corrupt, and brought a





weakness into the world which allowed chaos to come back, not just once but many times. Because of them it is still here today, even though Orianth banished it for all time in the Darkness, and again after the Dawn. Because of them it has risen once more into Orianth's realm, when it should have been gone forever.

Who Was Gbaji?

Source: Therophis of Jrustela: The Monomyth

Chaos entered the world through cracks caused by the fighting of the Godswar. The first chaos creatures to slither through were small and weak, but each opened the cracks a little wider, allowing greater monsters to enter the world.

Wakboth was the doorway of chaos into Glorantha. He spread death and destruction across the land, preparing the way for his kinsmen. Finally, he led a great army and assaulted the last fortress of the gods. He entered into the Perfect Palace, abused the Cosmic Empress, and then destroyed the Spike. This began the Greater Darkness, also called the Chaos Wars or the Age of Chaos.

When the Spike exploded, Jotimam was released. He was the Void at the center of existence, and from his nothingness stepped the greater gods of Chaos, often called his children. These beings of Chaos invaded the world. Though Jotimam was quickly assaulted by the waters of the world and then slain by Humakt's Sword, he can never be completely filled, and the hole in the world remains.

In the North (the land of the Hsunchen and Brithini) Wakboth had already destroyed most of the defenders. Gbaji led the battle against the remnants, who were directed by Genert until he was slain. In that battle the men and Elder Races fought until their leaders were killed, then battled alone. At this time the Wastes of Valind and Genert were formed. The fighting was finally brought to a halt by the Mostali, with great help from the lesser races. They defeated Gbaji, and thought they had thrown him completely out of the world. However, unknown to them he hid within the fabric of the universe, and later came back after the Sun rose.

In the southern lands the chaos monsters were led by Gbaji's brother Jraktal. This war was fought primarily by Men, including some newly created for the fight, but the elder races assisted as well. The main contributors were the Hsunchen, the eldest race of men. The Ivamali, plant-men, also helped, but they were few in number, and the newest race, the Naga, did not help at all. These defenders were led by Pamalt. He was more successful than his brother Genert, and Jraktal was defeated, though not before he reduced much of the fertile land to burning sand and pools of acid.

The blessed eastern land of Vithela was untouched by chaos (being too pure to be assaulted), but on the Western continent the forces of Chaos were led by Xamalk. There chaos was most easily defeated, for many of the Elder Races still lived there, and armies of luathans and other superhuman races reduced that daemon to little more than a bad memory. The damage done to the land was little, and the losses were few compared to the other continents.

Tyram the Sky Horror invaded the immortal lands of Heaven. In the beginning the battle wavered, but with the defeat of Pole Star the forces of chaos gained the upper hand. For a time Tyram advanced, forcing even pure Dayzatar back, blasting the Field of Purity and poisoning the Celestial River. Finally Orianth came, armed with thunderbolts and lightning, and dismembered the monster. The Lords of Light threw the foul parts from Heaven, but some pieces still remain, as the constellation named the Bad One makes visible to all.

Chaos also entered the underworld, not content to leave even the dead their meager existence. The trolls had fled the light of the dead Sun, and so few defenders remained, though they were constantly strengthened by new victims of chaos. Tyram's sister Vakalta led the battle there, and it was only the light of the dead Yelm, weak and shadowed though it was, which kept the Halls of the Dead intact. Even so, Vakalta was never driven out completely in the long fight. She still rules one of the Hells, and so part of the underworld is still dangerous even for those dead who are protected by powerful gods.

And so ended the Great Battle, but it is not over yet. At any time Gbaji may lead the Gods of Chaos to reinvade Acos. Each man must play his part in the Final Battle, laying aside his personal hatreds to fight for the existence of the entire world. This did Arkat do when he slew Gbaji in the Dawn Ages, and this each must do within his heart.

Who Was Gbaji?

Source: Therophis of Jrustela: "Cults of Glorantha"

Images: No images of the living god survive, but in Pelorian manuscripts Nysalor is depicted as a radiant man floating above the ground in a pose of meditation, his legs crossed. In Western manuscripts, Gbaji is portrayed as a demonic figure—an evil parody of the human form, almost always shown suspended off the ground and glowing from within, his handsome face twisted with a snarl. He is usually also shown with leathery wings, and sometimes a barbed tail. Both Nysalor and Gbaji are often pictured with a third eye (of Enlightenment) upon their forehead.

Runes: Nysalor is associated with the Runes of Light and Mastery. Where he is known as Gbaji, he is associated with one of the Runes of Chaos as well. He is classified as the deity of Seductive Chaos, and is a chaos god of the first degree.

Ecology: The realities of the world are constantly in question, and there are always new revelations and perceptions which may alter a being's outlook on the universe. Because people cannot refrain from asking questions about the nature of existence, Nysalor will continue to exist until all questions have been asked and answered. And because there are some things which cannot and should not be answered, Gbaji will always exist as well.





Holy Days: There were set holy days in the First Age, when the living god was worshiped, but knowledge of these days is lost. Individuals wishing to worship Nysalor or Gbaji can do so as the inner inspiration moves them.

Holy Places: The land of Dorastor was the center of power of the First Age propnents. The places where the sections of Nysalor's body are buried might be considered holy places, though there are no special effects from them, nor do worshipers gather at the sites. All of the known sites are outside of Dorastor, though unverified reports of sites within Dorastor abound.

Friendly Cults: Nysalor has good reputation with a number of cults in Peloria. In those places temples may contain a shrine to the god, and acknowledge it as a place where illuminates are welcome. Occasionally, a shrine or statue to Nysalor can be found in elf or light god temples outside of Peloria, or in temples to local deities. Nysalor is also known and worshiped in Kralorela under the name Rashoran, and his shrines are found there as well.

Associated Cults: Gbaji is associated with the Primal Chaos, although worshipers gain no direct benefits from this association, and must join a normal chaos cult to access the Primal Chaos ritual Blessing of Chaos.

Who Was Gbaji?

Historical Analysis Briefing Report, classification Gold 1123-997 (report numbers translated from Mostali octal code)

Prepared By: Academician Dirantian Third, Gold caste member of the Second Nidan Instructional Institution

Subject: Identity of Gbaji

Fundamental Data: Heretical Mostali collaborated with elves, trolls, and other non-Mostali in an incorrect procedure to repair what they mistakenly believed to be a malfunctioning part of the World Machine. See report Gold #371-80 (High Council of the Land of Genertela). The attempted repair caused further damage to the World Machine, resulting in the entrance into the operating system from outside of the World Machine of the hostile entity labeled as Gbaji.

Heresy Involved: *Openbandism.* Greatway heretics believed that they could repair the Sun with the aid of non-Mostali, to restore it to its proper place in the Sky.

The heretics were mistaken in two areas. First, the Sun is not broken, and does not need further repair. Its regular wandering since its restoration to the Sky Dome is due to the improper balance of forces in the Sky Dome that must be corrected before it can be restored to its correct stationary position. Second, the inclusion of non-Mostali in a reconstruction or repair project (except as raw materials) would have resulted in substandard work.

Effect on World Machine: As with all chaos, Gbaji came from outside the World Machine. Its very entrance into the World Machine resulted in the malfunction of several systems, and broke a gear in the nineteenth subsystem of the Sky Dome system.

Repairs Effected: As an unnecessary and dysfunctional replacement part, Gbaji had to be destroyed rather than repaired. Due to its inherent flaws, recycling was impossible. Even since its destruction there remain associated forces which continue to cause malfunctions. All of these forces have now been contained.

Repairs to damaged portions of the Nidan complex have been completed. Many broken or improperly programmed Mostali have been repaired and reeducated, including most of the Greatway heretics involved in the incorrect procedure.

Repairs Still Required: There remain some Mostali who mistakenly believe the Sun to still be in need of repair. They must be brought in for reconditioning, or isolated so that their beliefs do not cause damage to other systems. The Sky Dome has been reestablished after the damage caused by Gbaji, and repair can now continue following its original schedule (see report Diamond 1-1). Once

the sky is righted to its correct balance, the Center can be reestablished, and the sun restored to its correct position in the center of the Sky.

Who Was Gbaji?

Source: Yellowstamen, a shaman of the Rist elves, 173 S.T.

Long ago, when Giorantua was tender, the children of Flamai spread across the garden which was the world. Grower became three: Arroin, Gata, and Yelm, and they gave sustenance, protection, and light to the seeds of Flamai. The world was perfect, and the Green Age began. It was a time of communion and growth, a spring which could never end. And then it ended.

From the Cold Land there appeared a new entity, the beast named Zorak Zoran. The beast brought Death, and none were safe from his Hunger. The sun was eaten and the waters drunk away. Even the fertile earth turned cold and barren. Finally, the beast ate Flamai, and the world died.

We did not realize it then, but that was the first coming of Gbaji. When Voria returned to Dance the Rites of Spring, the world was reborn. Earth, sun, and water were restored to the world, but none was complete. Barren stone still lay across Gata's body, scars. Yelmario drifted through the sky, rootless. Arroin's life blood poured from the wound at the center of the universe, bleeding. It seemed that the Green Age would never come again.

The High Council tried to restore Yelmario. They created a new god, Nysalor, who contained all of the power which Yelmario had lost. Nysalor would have healed the Sun, who would have grown roots again and been restored to the Universe.

But Gbaji came again instead. He called himself Arkat, but that was a mask, just as the face of Zorak Zoran was a mask. At the heart of the deception was the troll-beast who had destroyed all life. He slew the Healer, Nysalor, and the hopes of Aldrya and the world were once more shattered.

Gbaji is the primal force which seeks to destroy all. He has taken numerous names, Arkat and Zorak Zoran being two of many, and he has always done ill to the world. Just as there is a Grower, who brings life from lifelessness, there is a Taker, who seeks to return all to the Void. This is the true face of Gbaji.

Curses and Prayers

It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the nomad pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there; neither shall the dwellers of far cities come to inhabit its broken houses; neither shall the men of stone come to build the city anew.

But black monsters shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and harpies shall dwell there, and broos shall dance there.

And the wild beasts of the mountains shall cry in their desolate houses, and demons in their pleasant palaces, and even the trees in their haunted forests: and her time is near to come, and her days shall not be prolonged.

— Curse Upon the City of Dokat

O friend and companion of blackest night, thou who rejoicest in spilt blood and the howling of ghouls, thou who wanderest in the midst of wraiths among the hills, thou who longest for blood and bringest primal terror to men, O Gorgoth, Mormeth, thousand-faced Ralzakark, look favorably on our sacrifices!

— old evil prayer



Who Is Gbaji?

Source: a (papyrus) broadside distributed in Yuthuppa, 1623, by Jannisan Galvannius

The following is a speech given in 753 in Yuthuppa by Jannisan Galvannius, a proselitizer of the Seven Mothers faith. He was a Dara Happan noble who had converted to Lunar ways, and was a famous preacher and illuminate in the late Seventh and early Eighth Wanes. In this sermon, Jannisan provides an account of the Gbaji Wars which agrees with most reliable sources, and provides information available nowhere else today. He extols the virtues of Illumination in the sermon, a trait for which he was famous.

The popular fad among the disaffected youth of today to ape evil has finally reached its zenith since they have been chalking the signs and even the name of Gbaji, the Deceiver, upon the walls of our once beautiful city. I have seen citizens outraged and angry, some even afraid, because of this graffiti. Please, fellows, let us not panic over this empty echo of forgotten evil. For comfort, come to the listening at the Temple tonight. Listen to "The Gbaji Secret" and find simple relief.

THE GBAJI SECRET

When Nysalor was Planned

In the ancient days there were two great powers who contended for power in this land. One followed the Storm King, unruly and warlike; the other followed the Emperor Sun, stable and mighty. After many years of warfare the equine warlords were driven out, and instead a new body of rulers was made, which advised the Emperor so that all from Ralios to the Elder Wilds were ruled in harmony.

People were greater then than they are now, and they were closer to their gods. They had miraculous things, and one was a Pseudocosmic Egg. It was still formable (with enough interest and commitment), and so the leaders gathered together in Dorastor to decide on what to do.

Everyone said that the best thing to do would be to make something which would ensure perfect harmony between all men and their gods, so that the lands would not again fall into the fearful ways of war and devastation. The greatest leaders among them discussed the ways this might be done, in practical terms, and after a few years they summoned everyone to the Ruby Harbor, where the Pseudocosmic Egg was kept.

The Pseudocosmic Egg hung in the sky above the Ruby Harbor, which got its name from the formation which the Egg imposed on the land beneath it. A huge inverted crystal of precious ruby crawled up the sides of the valley for miles, as if blighted with a scarlet crystalline disease.

The whole council gathered there, including the Dara Happan Emperor and the High Dryadess, the Nonhuman King and a Dwarf Lord, and a host of kings and priests. There were numberless chieftains there, led by their highland council. Even the trolls were there, represented by a monster — one which could stand to be in the light of the Emperor — who spoke for their entire race.

It was the approach of the Sacred Time, when the world is renewed. The leaders said they had been called to assist in the making of a new god, who would lead them all into perfect harmony. And at that moment, the perfect image of what was possible glinted within the egg for all those assembled there to see. And at that moment all the world was perfect for those who saw.

However, some refused their vision, and wished to spoil the perfection. They departed, one by one, from the place.

The first to go were the trolls. They disappeared like shadows before the Sun, but this is what they have always done, and the leaders were ready for it. After they left there was a whole tribe of humans in their place who worshiped the Darkness, and who ate raw meat and did other disgusting and inhuman things to prove that they were troll-worthy.

Next to go were the dragonewts. The mighty Nonhuman King uncoiled himself slowly, sounding like soft copper slithering over itself, and with a grace impossible for any other creature lifted its great bulk from the ground and snaked across the sky, wings flapping majestically. The hordes of colorful, terrifying dragonewts abandoned their camps below at the same time. After they left, a whole tribe of humans took their place, whose ancestors were snakes, turtles, and wyverns. They metamorphized, and were painted with the sacred signs by their kinsmen.

The hill council was divided, and some of them left and some of them stayed. As was expected, some tribesmen who followed the Orlanth god were unhappy and went away. This was anticipated, and Lokamayadon was ready for it with something, and so they were not even missed.

When Nysalor Was Made

The making of the New God was not a simple or short task, and required the vigilance of many hundreds of people at all times, for the term of many years. It was the center of many other rituals, and leading priests from all lands came to participate in the ceremonies. The great hard stone of the valley was the first part of the world to change: it disappeared and was gradually replaced by a lush and verdant wild, without sign of previous human habitations.

In the ceremonies of the Storm Gods there is always a time when they display their warlike powers by Summoning, then destroying, some form of their enemy. When they were summoned by Lokamayadon over these years they were always trolls, dragonewts, and Heortlings.

When Nysalor Was Born

At last the moment came when the New God was to be born. The moment was one which would be remembered forever. The fearful and ignorant barbarians believed that it was going to make the world end, but they had already removed themselves from the secret by their own internal dissent, and so they could not see the truth.

Over one thousand great priests and priestesses, and even some saints and demigods, were gathered to participate. It was as if time stood still when each person felt themselves integrated into the New World made by the being now hatching. Being there was like finding oneself to be the crack in the shell which was liberating the God, just a tiny bit of the whole, but One for that moment.

Though I was there (as are all who have been Illuminated), I never saw the eclipse. The beauty of the birth was all I could understand, or needed, at that moment. But most people who were not present reported that a great shadow moved across the sky and blocked out the daylight for a time. In truth, no one told me this would happen, and it was unexpected, if it even happened.

Whatever occurred was quickly healed when OSENTAUKA stepped forth from the glowing area which hung where the miraculous Egg had been. The shell lay about the ground like bits of dwarf stuff and vines. She was a baby there for a moment in the light, then emerged as a little boy and blessed everyone. It was easy to care for any remaining problems back home with these blessings.

When Nysalor Grew

Nysalor taught his tutors, as we all know. He blessed his followers, and yet underwent the normal tribulations of childhood and adolescence, although admittedly faster than most children.

Nysalor proved to be the source of harmony which had been predicted. He was kind and wise in all his judgements (even as a babe in arms), and he never wearied of passing simple judgement on any problems. Following his decisions always brought bounty except to the wicked and cruel, who suffered for them, as is proper.

We all know how he ran away from the palace where he was raised, and spent years among the Pelorians. Everyplace he stayed became better than it had been before he got there, even long after he had left. And every time that he was at a place during a holy



day, he took a moment to teach his acceptance, open-mindedness, prayer to anyone who would listen. Everyone talked about him, and said the prayer afterwards, and in this way the people changed their minds about some things, and were never again so hostile or frightened.

The Rist elves have a similar memory, and a whole variety of plants which have "the prince's touch" on them. They still have their distinctive "leopard-lily" flowers, even though they have been gone from Peloria for centuries now.

Though he loved the surrounding lands, Nysalor returned to the cities of the Bright Empire to mingle with the people of power. He was not troubled by their fierce tests of his ancestry to qualify for the highest Imperial position. He eluded the most vile intrigues by his nature, and either converted or destroyed the simpler ones. Even the hill people were calmed, and they learned that there is a reason for prolonged peace. In order to honor those who insisted upon the warrior elite, he reinstituted the ancient Blood Games with spectators.

The obligatory sacred war in Dragon Pass went well, and the three foes were all swiftly conquered. The Dragonewt Speaker agreed to surrender, and to have his race serve as military allies of Nysalor. The Heortlings surrendered to the light, and were placed under restrictive rule. Only the trolls refused, and instead killed the many messengers, attendants, and guards who brought the messages. Nysalor and his advisors helped the army, and for her defiance and audacity their monster goddess was cut deep into her spirit before she was allowed to escape, as always, from the light.

The best part of Nysalor's blessing was that it was easy to understand and pass on. Even as far away as Ralios a veneer of peace and prosperity came over the lands. The magnitude of Nysalor's bounty enriched those who accepted it and were capable of tolerance.

An exception was in the West. In the western lands they have one god, who taught sorcery to men and refuses to let them learn magic from any other god. They consider everyone else to be evil, and go so far as to say that Emperor Yelm is an aspect of the Devil!

The oldest of the western lands was called Brithos, and there people lived as in the Godtime, in harmony with their lands, and never dying. Zzabur, the First Sorcerer, was still alive and living there. And there, hidden in a forest, was born the shadow of Nysalor. He called himself Arkat, but is called by us Kragfils, "the Eclipse," and by his own folk he is named "the Deceiver." In their language, and now ours too, this is Gbaji.

When Nysalor Fought

We did not pay attention to what the godless did in their own lands. If messengers came to us they were not recognized. But who, steeped in innocence, can recognize his own shadow?

Gbaji did his work efficiently. When he could not find support for his crusade against Nysalor, he manufactured a dread disease which swept the western lands. It could not be cured by their sorcerers, white or black, nor even by the pagan healers who were brought in. Then Arkat's Gbaji priests stepped in, declared that it was the work of the humble Nysalor beggars, and inaugurated a purge. This so ingratiated him to the nobles that they followed him on a lucrative war against Ralios.

In Ralios the Dangers were true worshipers of Nysalor, initially taught by Holy Estorex, who helped create Nysalor, and who tutored him. The nearby allies responded to defend their lands from the godless sorcery peoples, and so the war was long and bitter. But as the foes moved through Ralios, lord Lokamayadon accepted inappropriate personal challenges, and kept information from the rest of the Council, so they thought that just another warlord threatened them again from the West.

But Arkat was more than that. He had discovered the underside method of learning a being's nature and existence. With trained companions he found the way to undermine a being's spiritual surety, and through this process secretly weakened his enemies before attacking them with the great armies of his allies.

When Lokamayadon faced Arkat he misjudged his foe completely, and was struck down, wounded, robbed, and nearly captured. Many of his companions fell, and the battle was a great loss for the Council. Emergency measures were called for as the whole of the Orlanthi regions fell to Gbaji's armies. At last, with the gathered forces of Ralios at his back, and the heroes of Ralios and the West at his side, Arkat the Deceiver came to the gates of Kartoin. This castle guards the only pass over the Rockwood Mountains, which separate Ralios from Dorastor.

By the strength of his magic Arkat made this confrontation into a great and terrible magical meeting, but the Council was readier than he was. Arkat arranged it so that a single person had to come out of the castle and fight him. He was prepared, in a short time, to be a great dragon-slayer like those whom he had just conquered. This was supposed to surprise the Council.

It required only the Seven Guardians to dispatch him and his companions, and before the assembled armies they were dismembered and their parts given to buzzards and ravens, wolves and pigs and dogs, and small dark hairy things never seen before or since.

The great army of the West dispersed, and everyone thought the problem had been dealt with. The Council mourned the many dead of Ralios, as they had been mourning them for years. Now, though the land had been lost to them, there was peace. Perhaps the fond memory of Nysalor remained. I do not know.

There was another outbreak among the Orlanthi, as expected, and Lokamayadon was quick and efficient in putting it down. He retained his position, though his subjects were unruly, as they still are today. He accepted this loss of stability, income, and prestige with the low humor common to his type.

When Nysalor Died

No one expected the return of Arkat. He had not only been killed, but his essence was captured and imprisoned in a place where normal human souls could not go.

Yet he did return, and the Council did not know why for a long time. Later it was discovered that he was brought back from the dead by a living person. No one believed this, for it had never been done before by mortals. Only Orlanth and Yelm had enacted this type of magic before.

Then they learned that it was an Orlanthi who had done this, who had been under the very nose of Lokamayadon, who should have sought the rebel out and destroyed him, preventing the unthinkable from happening. Lokamayadon claimed he did not know of it, and so we were betrayed, once again, by Orlanth.

Arkat moved swiftly after his revival. He landed first in the south of Slontos. That was when Nysalor made his Cry for Castles. He summoned architects from all across his empire to come to Dorastor and create defenses for the people, creatures, and great works of art which had been collected there.

In Slontos Arkat gained many friends through bribery and deceit, then many more through power, and he marched on to Dragon Pass. There the trolls, who had been dormant since their defeat, rose to trouble every caravan, supply train, and trooper getting food. The dragonewts refused to help Nysalor, despite their oaths. The Heortlings joined the invader when he reached Dragon Pass. The battle was great, but the Iron Vrok was struck down. Even Saird fell to the rebellious tribes.

The Council was closely threatened now. Those "damned flying holy men" could reach Dorastor, if they worked together, and Arkat would ensure that they did. That was when Nysalor made his Cry for Captains. The leading heroes and defenders of the land gathered together, and made plans to defend the empire.

But the plans were useless, for evil had been allowed into the heart of the world, and it could not be exorcised. Arkat led his companions and armies into Dorastor, and they defeated the defenders of the Bright Empire. Arkat met Nysalor in the Heart of Dreams, and his darkness overcame the Lord of Light, and so Nysalor was slain. Arkat's troll allies then ravaged the fair land, until nothing was left but a ruined wasteland, which Arkat then cursed out of spite, for that was all he knew.



When Nysalor Returned

The western world rejoiced, and said that they had won their battle. But, as always, they did not have enough knowledge or wisdom to understand the whole truth. They never do. They had taken the great god, the Knower Beyond Knowing, and dismantled him into bits and components, which were hidden in impossible places and surrendered to nameless things.

For eons Nysalor had no worship, but he did not diminish, and so he waited, suspended between life and death, light and shadow. Many people searched for him, and they prepared the way for his eventual return even in their failure. Many people were ready, in many ways and at many times. Like the god, they were divided up.

The Red Goddess is the one who finally found Nysalor, and she was a human like you or me. She communicated with the lost searchers, and brought the fifths and quarters back together again. And when Nysalor was whole once more he was received by the many who were ready for him in their own ways and times.

Thus, in the end the coming of Gbaji, the Evil One, resulted in your own enlightenment. The apparent destruction of the Cosmic Illumination was an illusion, for it was spread throughout all of the cosmos so that ordinary people, like you and I, can now understand it. We should thank Gbaji, the Liberator, for destroying the ancient cadre which held Nysalor to themselves. We should give thanks also to the Red Goddess, who brought him among us all at last.

I believe that we have proven, once again, the ability of Nysalor to adjust, to modify himself and the world to accommodate Truth.

So fear no darkness, nor even the Deceiver, if you have the illumination yourself.

from The Book of Drastic Resolutions

On the Origins of Dorastor

And it has been said that another realm, beneath that of common occurrence, lies waiting those who dare to enter. Many have tried through drugs and herbs to locate the Gate, while others employ magics to journey to that foul subterranean realm. Within much can be learned first-hand from the Lords of Terror.

Those who would travel in these darkest hearts of chaos must ward themselves against the foul guardians of this unholy Gate. This protection is partially afforded by the sign of wise Buserian, feared as much as anything by the beasts that live in the pestiferous burrows that honeycomb this nightmarish underland.

This the odd man, traveler from foreign realms, related to me. How the thing had been spawned on the flesh of monsters and of human beings and of the Lords of Terror themselves. How it was secreted beneath a great mountain in a fearsome world of darkness where it would lie for eternal ages; feeding, growing, and waiting for release. How the Sword Lord had tried to release it, and failed. This man did claim that it comes, and comes soon. I deemed him mad, but soon later he was murdered by the agent of the Faceless One....

Notes on the Creatures of Chaos

from an unattributed manuscript recovered in Benksland

Scorpion-Men

The Scorpion-Men are foul, partially-human creatures spawned during the malignancies of the Great Darkness, when Chaos oozed into the world and corrupted all that it touched. During that time many creatures elected to join with the evil, and the taint of Chaos lingered upon them long after their evil gods were slain.

Scorpion-Men are relatively unintelligent, and their war-bands reflect a consequent lack of social organization, usually grouping a few followers around one superior individual. Often this grouping is no more than a dominant mother and her children.

Broos

The Broos are a scar upon the face of the cosmos, a bruise upon the body of the world. They were born when their mother-goddess Thed consorted with the Devil, chief among the Chaos Gods, to further her vengeance against the world. The spawn of that union littered the world during the Chaos Wars, and after millennia of fighting still scourge the earth with their miserable lives.

Broos are intelligent creatures which, in combination with their other predilections, only makes them more loathsome. Unlike some other chaotic creatures they gladly work together, even though they respect only strength. They have no true magic, but seem to draw power from the worship of diseases and their foul ancestress. Like all active followers of chaos, they do evince those apparently random characteristics called Chaotic Features by the ignorant.

Ogres

Ogres are a foul and corrupt race who eat all types of sentient creatures. They were formed when a race of mortals followed the Cacodemon in the Great Darkness, and that remnant of the Devil gifted them with great strength and appetite. They often try to fit into human society, indulging their cannibalistic tendencies only in

secret or when none can gainsay them. In this guise they often try to infiltrate lawful cults, seeking magic and victims both. They are known to worship the Cacodemon still.

Ogres are intelligent creatures, and usually work individually. Occasional families of these evil creatures are found when their hunger grows so great that it cannot be contained. Their false worship of true deities often gives them access to true magic, making them the most dangerous of the chaos breeds.

Walktapi

The walktapi are creatures of chaos, spawned in unholy and downright disgusting union between two widely divergent species. Ordinarily, such a union would have been unsuccessful, but in the time of the Great Darkness the Oils of Chaos let slip the laws of the universe, allowing the birth of this and similar abominations.

The walktapi is a formidable and terrible foe to fight, despite its lack of intelligence. Ignorant men often try to kill it and, to their sorrow, too often succeed. The walktapi may be killed, but instead of dying properly it shows its chaos heritage and splits into two similar and completely whole walktapi. Even fire will not destroy it completely, although it will slow the replication process.

Harpies

These foul hybrid women are a degenerative race of beast folk, possibly related to the Swan Maidens of Kerofinela. They are not truly of chaos, but worship many of the same foul and evil daemons as do the broos. They delight in filth and torment, and seek to capture human males to use for breeding purposes.

Harpies are almost always found in flocks of up to a few dozen individuals. They are not tolerated near any normal society, but are known all across Genertela. When humans are not available they will breed with almost any species, resulting in some truly abominable monsters, of which the broo bats of Dorastor are most commonly known.

Primal Chaos

The Chaos Ooze



Mythos and History

Primal Chaos is the fundamental potency of random change. It entered the world through the cracks in the universe caused by the Godswar, and is the ultimate source of all later chaos things. Though few worship Primal Chaos directly, worship of any chaotic deity incorporates worship of the Primal Chaos.

The Primal Ooze is rarely depicted. It is not conceived as having personality or identity. When described, it is often conceived as a vast sea of chaos, with waves of ooze washing upon the world of Glorantha. In the cult rituals of chaotic beings, any convenient lump of swamp ooze may be used to represent Primal Chaos.

Chaos creatures that die do not go to a normal afterlife, Heaven, or Hell. They are vomited back into the wells of Chaos beyond the world instead.

Chaos is not tied to any particular Rune, though it can be associated with any: no power, element, or form is free from the taint of Chaos. Primal Chaos is often identified as the source of the Chaos Rune.

Cult Ecology

Outside the bubble of Gloranthan reality is Chaos, ever trying to penetrate and reclaim the world. If it succeeds, the world will end so utterly that none would remain to mourn the loss. Primal Chaos is the embodiment of that assault upon the world.

Chaos is easy to become infected by, but hard to get rid of. Even Divine Intervention cannot remove a chaos taint, though it can cancel out the effects of a chaos feature. Certain lawful cults have dangerous Heroquest rituals which can cleanse an individual of the taint of chaos, but these are rare, dangerous, and often deadly.

Chaos is persistent. For example, every right-thinking nation since Time began has tried to exterminate the broos, and much time and effort has been

spent in doing so. Entire cults are devoted to hunting down and killing these foul creatures. Yet there are still plenty of broos, and likely always will be.

Chaos is not an end to itself, but a means to the end of the universe. No being can worship the Primal Chaos directly. Devotees of Chaos must usually be shamans devoted to chaos or members of a chaos cult. Occasional chaotic sorcerers of great power have also been able to contact the Primal Chaos.

Cult Rituals and Holy Days

The cult has no specific holy days. Since chaos is ever present, all times are appropriate to show reverence to the Primal Source.

Rituals vary with the impulses and inspirations of the cultists. Most commonly, when a Devotee of Chaos offers worship to the Primal Ooze, he shapes an irregular blob from any substance available (ideally chaos ooze), then places the form in the center of the gathering. Those who wish to demonstrate exceptional piety may sacrifice a magic point to the blob. Those who do so must roll over their POW x5 on 1D100 or have the sacrificed point reflected back at them in the form of a Disrupt spell. During the ceremony the Devotee performs whatever sacrifices or other devotions he wishes; these have no influence upon the success of the worship service.

After the leader indicates that worship is over, he breaks the form he shaped in two, leaving part on the altar or ground and crumbling the rest to dust. The part left behind is sometimes shaped into the image or sacred signs of a specific demon or entity, but this is not a consistent practice.

Individuals who participate in the worship of no other chaos entity during a year, and who donated one or more magic points to the chaos ooze during that year, may check for a POW gain roll at year's end. Having a magic point reflected does not count as a donation, and the number of points successfully



sacrificed does not affect the POW gain roll, nor does the frequency of such worship. As long as at least one entity successfully worshiped in one of his ceremonies, the priest or shaman also gains a POW gain roll at year's end.

The Cult in the World

Only allies and creatures of chaos belong to this cult. Most also worship some other chaos thing, and many chaotics completely ignore their connection to the Primal Chaos.

Active chaos temples are usually tucked away into chaos nests. The largest chaos nests in the world include Dorastor (in Peloria), the Krjalki Bog and the Tunnelled Hills (in the Genert Wastes), the Alkali Sea, and the Maslo Mountains (both in Pamaltela). There are smaller chaos nests scattered across the world as well, such as famed Snakepipe Hollow or the rumored Plague Island.

Temples to Primal Chaos are always shrines, which teach Blessing of Chaos. They can sometimes be found alone, but are usually included as part of a larger temple to another chaotic deity.

Membership

Any being possessing a chaotic feature is automatically an initiate of Primal Chaos. No POW need be sacrificed, and there are no other requirements. Candidates for admission who can impress the local Devotee may be allowed to sacrifice for the Chaos Feature ritual, thereby becoming initiates of the cult automatically. Initiation is permanent: even if the chaos feature is someday lost, only secret and perilous HeroQuests have been known to remove a chaos taint.

This cult teaches no spirit magic, although none is forbidden. Devotees of chaotic cults or local shamans are usually willing to sell or trade spell knowledge to other chaotics, setting whatever price they desire.

Devotees of Chaos

Any being who attains the status of shaman or priest in any chaotic cult can become a Devotee of Chaos; the being need not possess a chaos feature, although a shaman with a chaotic feature who is not a member of a cult can also become a Devotee. Any being possessing six or more chaotic features of any kind may also become a Devotee, even if it worships no other entity. Other beings have attained the status in the past without meeting any of these requirements. The specific paths taken are not known, but could probably be duplicated.

Devotees have no specific time or income requirements. They can hold worship services to the Primal Ooze when they desire, but are not required to do so. They are usually priests or shamans of a chaos daemon, and will usually devote most of their time to worshiping or serving that entity.

Devotees can learn the Blessing of Chaos and Worship Primal Chaos rituals; these spells are not available to initiates. Devotees can attempt to join almost any chaotic cult, though they must meet the specific requirements of that cult to be accepted.

Primal Chaos Special Divine Spells

Blessing of Chaos

5 points

ritual Ceremony spell, one-use

This ritual takes 12 hours and gives the target a chaos feature. It must be cast on a willing recipient, who rolls 1D6. A roll of 1-3 means that the feature is standard (beneficial), while a roll of 4-6 means that it is "reversed" (detrimental). This spell is often simply called Chaos Feature.

For each chaotic feature an individual accepts, he adds 10% to the cumulative chance of turning into a broo. This transformation may neither be resisted nor altered, and is permanent once it takes effect. The probability for the transformation is rolled immediately upon the assumption of each chaotic feature.

Associated Cults

All cults tied to the Chaos Rune are associated with this cult, and most are capable of teaching the Worship Chaos ceremony to cult leaders; most also gain access to the Blessing of Chaos ritual as well. This association is one way only, and Devotees of Chaos do not gain access to any special spells, skills, or training from it.

"Chaos always was, is now, and ever shall be. Before the beginning, whatever there was, it was of chaos. Now, all of the world is Chaos, but does not know it. Later, we shall all be One again in Chaos."

"I have heard men say many things, most often what they want to hear. They have taken Chaos and shaped it, measured it, and classified it in a hundred different ways. And they have ALL—each of them—been right in their observations! EVERYTHING YOU CAN SAY ABOUT CHAOS IS TRUE."

"Ah, but my greatest pleasure is the suffering which all of Life undergoes, every waking moment of its miserable existence, because they hate Chaos. They scorn us, they kill us, they vilify us for not being like them. They say they love each other and hate us, but they really hate themselves instead because they dare not admit that even they, sweet Life, are made from Chaos, and will return to it."

—a broo commander in the Lunar Army



MISTRESS DEVOURER

Male broo shaman, Devotee of Primal Chaos

STR	16	R Leg	2/9
CON	19	L Leg	2/9
SIZ	14	Abdomen	6/6
INT	14	Chest	6/7
POW	19	R Arm	2/7
DEX	12	L Arm	2/7
APP	8	Head	3/6

Move: 3

Fatigue: 35

Hit Points: 17

Magic Points: 19 + 23 (fetch) + 13 (stored) + 6 (crystal) = 55

DEX SR: 3

Arms and Armor: Total encumbrance = 3. Fatigue = 32 (35-3).

Carries a large mace, which can be used one- or two-handed.

Wears troll-skin armor on all locations except head for 2 points of armor protection.

Weapon	SR	Att/Par	Damage	ENC/AP
Head Butt	8	63/—	1d6+1d4	
Garrotte	8	63/—	1d4	0/3
1-H Mace	7	94/37	1d10+2+1d4	2.5/10
R Fist	8	66/—	1d3+1d4	
L Fist	8	35/—	1d3+1d4	

Notes: Garrotte is not a normal combat weapon, and can be used only from behind or in desperation. See *Shadows on the Borderlands*, page 77, for a full description. It does damage equal to damage bonus only if it hits the head or an extremity. Once it hits, it remains in place on subsequent rounds, automatically striking the same location again.

Casting Ironhand 6 increases R/L Fist attack chances to 96/65, and increases damage to 1d3+1d4+6.

Spirit Magic (109%): (known by fetch) Countermagic 4, Jumping 3, Protection 4; (in matrices): Heal 2, Darkwall (2), Demoralize (2), Ironhand 6

Divine Magic: (See pp. 86-90 for special spells.) Blessing of Chaos (one-use), Cause Wasting Disease, Command Chaos Snake, Command Gorp, Curse of Thed x2, Devour Troll 15, Fear x2, Hate Sky 2, Cause Madness, Pain Blow x2, Power Drain, True Garrotte x2, Vomit Acid, Worship Cacodemon, Worship Ikadz, Worship Krjalk, Worship Lemure, Worship Malia, Worship Primal Chaos, Worship Than, Worship Thed, Worship Tyram, Worship Vakalta x2

Plundered Divine Magic (all one-use): Blinding x2, Create Shadow 3, Dark Walk, Moulder x2, Seal Wound

Chaotic Features: Reflects spells up to 5 points back at caster (spells visually target his horns, which glow with a green light for an instant, then "shoot" the spells back); No reproductive organs; Regenerates 1d6 FAT per round, regardless of activity.

Special Features: Cursed by Lhankor Mhy - unable to learn Spirit Magic spells. He can use them from his fetch or matrices, and can summon Spell Spirits for others to learn spells or for enchantments.

Mistress Devourer is unable to successfully worship Atyar, due to his profaning of a shrine and his murder of its High Priest. He can worship Than normally. He has lost the use of his original cult gift (2 points of Countermagic protection against spells cast by Sky cultists), but his geasa remain in effect: Never Lie to a Thanatari, Eat Only the Flesh of Sentient Creatures (his favorite food is troll).

Currently has 13 extra magic points from his last troll sacrifice. These points must be used before his own points are used, and do not count when rolling any magic point versus magic point contest. He can use his fetch's or crystal's magic points before using these.

Skills:

Agility (+1): Climb 49, Dance 59, Jump 63, Throw 49

Communication (+8): Orate 26, Sing 39

Knowledge (+4): Animal Lore 53, Chaos Lore 92, Dorastor Lore 35, Human Lore 25, Plant Lore 69, Troll Lore 37, World Lore 67

Magic (+14): Ceremony 97, Enchant 76, Summon 105 Manipulation (+9): Devise 63

Perception (+14): Listen 86, Scan 69, Search 47

Stealth (-11): Garrotte 63 *, Hide 46, Sneak 37

* See *Shadows on the Borderlands*, page 77, for a full description.

Languages: Chaospeech 32/16, Darktongue 39/42, Bilini 44/27

Special Items: Enchantments on chest and abdomen provide four points of armor protection to each location. Enchantments on arms and legs provide three additional Hit Points to each location. Troll-skin glove (worn on left hand) holds matrix for Ironhand 6. Tattoo of a horned skull on forehead (between his eyes) holds matrix for Demoralize. When the spell is cast, the tattoo glows briefly with an eerie black light.

A flint statue of a troll holds a matrix for Darkwall. This was taken from the body of a troll eaten by Mistress Devourer, and appears to have been chewed into its current shape.

A preserved human hand holds a matrix for Heal 2. It was also taken from the body of a troll.

Attuned to a combination Magic Crystal (total POW 8) which stores 6 magic points and adds 2 points to all Heal spells cast through it. It is a small, green piece of rough, smoky quartz-like stone. It is usually kept hidden within his lair, or carried in a hidden pocket in his skins.

A necklace of troll teeth around his neck holds no magic, but is of great sentimental value. It holds a single tooth from each troll he has eaten. Anyone possessing it would be attacked on sight by any troll unless they can come up with a good explanation (in Darktongue, of course) as to why they have it. Destroying it with the right ceremony would release the spirits of many trolls to their proper afterlife, although only a troll shaman would be able to sense the spirits hovering around the item.

Fetch: INT 11, POW 23

Spirit Magic (119%): see above.

Divine Magic (one-use): Curse of Thed, Madness, Spirit Block 2.

Controlled Spirits: Wound Spirit (POW 5), Fear Spirit (POW 9).

Background and Roleplaying Notes

Mistress Devourer was born in 1588, and was originally human. He was Terpin Redlock, a member of the Osteri Clan of the Bilini tribes. He was initiated to Lhankor Mhy, but after years of studying chaos he became seduced by it, and turned to worship of the evil god Atyar. In the process of this betrayal he brought his initiating priest as a sacrifice. He then served the Dorastan cult's dark masters for years.

When Terpin became one of the Doomed (acolytes), he accepted a gift from Thanatar, which caused him to turn into a broo; this transformation did not drive him mad, quite. However, soon after, his priest became a victim of cult politics, and Terpin was abandoned to a troll raiding party. He was badly wounded by both the Atyari and the trolls, and barely escaped with his life; his sanity was



left behind. When he recovered he sought revenge on the cult, a process which set him on the shaman's path and took him almost ten years. He finally destroyed the Atyar shrine where he had once worshiped, and sacrificed his former High Priest as a last offering to his former patron.

When Terpin abandoned Lhankor Mhy he was cursed, but Atyar protected his convert. When Terpin sacrificed his High Priest of Dark Truths Atyar removed his protection, and Terpin became subject to the curse of the Lord of Knowledge. This is the source of his inability to learn Spirit Magic spells.

Out of favor with his god, and hunted by the remnants of his cult, Terpin fled Dorastor. Over the next ten years he wandered through many lands, learning much of chaos and worshiping many obscure chaos deities before returning to his native land. He has sacrificed to many spirits and daemons over the years, and has a large complement of Divine spells. He is also a Devotee of Primal Chaos, though he does not hold worship ceremonies often, reserving his time for more "profitable" worship opportunities.

Terpin barely escaped becoming the main victim in a ceremony of the trolls who captured him, and he now hates trolls even more than he does the Atyari. After he destroyed his shrine he abandoned his former name, and took the name of Mistress Devourer to mark his status. He has spent much Power worshiping Vakalta, the deity of Hell Chaos, and has many uses of the Devour Troll spell. He has personally devoured four Mistress Race trolls, and once plundered the magics of the race while on HeroQuest. Most of these stolen spells have been used, but a few remain, which he uses only in emergencies.

Mistress Devourer has taken on many troll characteristics, both physical and mental, perhaps as a chaotic side-effect of magical ingestion of his foes. He himself would deny any such tendencies, and would not hesitate to kill any creature, broo, human, or otherwise, who remarked upon these similarities.

Mistress Devourer has heard of a powerful Mistress Race troll in Dorastor, and he wants to find and eat her. He knows she is called Mistress the Last and that a geas prevents her from leaving Dorastor, but he knows nothing else about her powers or history. Anyone who could provide him with information on her or her whereabouts would earn his special favor.

Appearance: Mistress Devourer is a typical broo: hairy, dirty, and as close to an animal as a sentient being can be. He has a horse's head and magnificent ram horns. He sports a very large belly, and appears hunched and overweight to most broo and human observers. He also has prominent troll-like tusks. His only concession to civilization is in his dress: he always wears robes or clothes made from troll skin.

Personality: Mistress Devourer is a typical broo: evil, depraved, and obsessed with destroying everything which is not of use to him. He is obsessed with and passionately hates trolls, and will go out of his way to trap, kill, and eat them. He is most active at night and in Dark Season (when the trolls of the Yolp Mountains often raid into Dorastor), and has started to develop a form of "day blindness." He is also sensitive about his former name, and mentioning it sends him into fits of angered madness.

Mistress Devourer hates worshipers of Atyar almost as much as trolls. He will go out of his way to kill them and destroy their works. He was often hunted by them in the past, but he has killed enough of their priests and assassins that they now simply avoid him. He enjoys encouraging or tricking worshipers of Than into killing their Atyari counterparts.

Combat Notes: Mistress Devourer does not waste his time with

combat. He prefers attacking foes from afar with spells or in Spirit form. The only exception is trolls, whom he enjoys killing with his bare hands (always attacking from an advantage, of course). He will usually cast Ironhand and Protection when going into personal combat, and resorts to Divine spells only at great need (especially his plundered spells, which cannot be replaced).

If faced with personal combat at even or bad odds, he will flee (using his Jumping spell to surprise his foes), and will use plundered spells if necessary to ensure his escape. He is vengeful, and will follow those who have routed him, picking them off one by one with spirits and Divine spells.

Followers

Mistress Devourer has no permanent group of followers. As a Devotee of Chaos and a "priest" of many chaotic demons, he can always find a group of worshipers, who are recruited as long- or short-term followers; depending on his needs. His singular goals, and his tendency to abuse his followers, ensures that even the most self-abusive broos do not stay with him for long, and so a third of the time he is encountered without any followers.

When Mistress Devourer is encountered, the gamemaster should decide how many followers he has; any group of broos, ogres, or other chaotic races could be used. Suitable gangs are available in *Snake-pipe Hollow* (pages 39-42, 45-47, and 52), *River of Cradles* (pages 106-107), *Shadows on the Borderlands* (Pullout, pages 8, 10, and 15-17), and *Dorastor: Land of Doom* (pages 41-44).

Scenario Ideas

Lunch with Mistress Devourer

The players encounter Mistress Devourer, possibly even far from Dorastor. If there is a troll in the party they are probably doomed, though an amoral character might be able to buy his freedom by offering the troll as a snack. Otherwise, Mistress Devourer will ask the players if they have ever met or heard of a troll called Mistress the Last, or if there are any trolls in the area. If they answer affirmatively, they may be able to buy their freedom with information or assistance. Otherwise, they will have to fight him and his followers.

If the players provide information to Mistress Devourer, he will probably insist that they lead him as well, just to ensure that they are not lying to him (he is still an Atyari and sage at heart, and detests people who lie). If they are not able to escape, he will probably offer them the chance to share in any feast he prepares; if they refuse, he will treat them as enemies. If the players lead him into a trap (especially one set by trolls), he will use every means at his disposal to ensure that they die with him if he cannot escape.

On the Trail of the Mistress Devourer

The bodies of two visiting trolls are found a few kilometers from Hazard Fort, their bodies almost entirely eaten. Caspar Godsmen (the Argan Argar merchant) recognizes the signs of a secret chaos daemon, and petitions Renekot for aid in gaining revenge for his kinsmen and eliminating a chaotic threat to the settlement. He threatens economic sanctions if Renekot does not act, and the players are sent to Caspar to help him investigate. He does not personally help, but will send Wilmar Darkdrake (his assistant) along if the players are persistent.

Once evidence is found, the players must decide whether to pursue (Wilmar's suggestion), or return with the information (and possibly lose the trail for good). If they follow the trail, they will eventually find Mistress Devourer and his followers (he never bothers hiding his trail, secure in his power), probably to their regret. Wilmar will suggest that he return to Hazard Fort for assistance (he is a coward at heart, like most ducks), and charges the others to remain and keep the chaotic shaman under surveillance.



Chaotic Features

Chaos is the essence of creation and randomness, and so chaotic creatures do not obey ordinary laws of growth and reproduction. While most members of a chaotic species do have common statistics and appearance, a significant percentage exhibit differences from the norm: one two-headed dragonsnail is not necessarily like another, and no two broos look alike. These differences are called chaotic features.

Chaotic features should be selected by the gamemaster with care, both to personalize creatures of chaos and to aid in the development of a scenario or encounter. Proper design of a creature's chaotic features heighten the realism and suspense of a scenario, can give a foe a last means of defense or escape, and can provide a vulnerability which players can exploit if discovered. Remember that a creature's chaotic features are an integral part of it, as natural as its ability to move, fight, or reproduce, and it will always make full use of its strengths while minimizing its weaknesses. Even detrimental chaotic features can enhance role-playing: if the creature has managed to survive to adulthood even with a major disability, it is likely to be that much tougher or more cunning than its fellows.

Many players and gamemasters treat chaotic features as invisible powers or strengths for a given monster. While this is sometimes true, usually it is not. A chaotic feature is not only a source of chaotic power to a chaos thing, it is also a source of chaotic mutation. If a broo has the feature of 6 points of skin armor, for example, it will usually show in some way: large sagging bags of leathery skin, masses of scabs over its body, or metallic plates of armor. A worshiper of Pocharngo who gains the ability to reflect spells might gain mirror-like skin, or grow a new body part that visibly returns the spell (such as a third eye). This is true even of characteristic enhancements: increased STR could take the form of huge, twisted muscles; increased INT might be visible as a bloated head or forehead, etc. The more powerful the feature, the stronger the taint of chaos, and the more likely that there will be an accompanying physical mutation.

The decision as to whether or not a chaotic feature has a physical manifestation is left up to the gamemaster, but as a rough guide about 5/6 of chaotic features should have some visible manifestation. The mutation may be inobvious, but should be present or discoverable in some way. Remember, however, that certain features may not become obvious (or even usable) until the death of the creature ("Explodes upon death" is an obvious example), and others are automatically obvious (such as extra limbs). A creature that can breathe fire may appear burned, or might have hellfire visible through its eyes and mouth. When all else fails, giving the creature one or more slimy tentacles to accompany its chaotic feature is always acceptable.

Although it is recommended that chaotic features be selected with care (especially for major encounters and leaders), this may not be possible due to time constraints, large numbers of followers, random encounters, etc. The following tables have

been provided to generate these special features for creatures of chaos. These tables are not absolute, and should be viewed as examples: gamemasters are free to use the tables provided in *RuneQuest* and *Gods of Glorantha* or make their own. Another way to speed up the selection of chaotic features is to create smaller tables of common features, useful for generating random encounters, or to differentiate large numbers of followers or statistics that are reused. One such table is the "EZKustomKwik Broo Chaos Feature Table" from page 17 of the *Shadows on the Borderlands* GM Reference Pullout.

Two tables are provided for Beneficial and Detrimental Chaotic Features. A chaotic feature has an even chance of being basically good or bad. Whenever a chaos feature is gained, 1d6 should be rolled. On a roll of 1-3 the feature should be rolled on the Beneficial Chaotic Features table, and on a 4-6 it should be rolled from the Detrimental Chaotic Features table. However, this does not take into account that many creatures with detrimental features are less likely to survive, especially when the predatory nature of most chaotic species is taken into account. The method given above should thus be used only when a new feature is gained, or when the creature would be likely to survive regardless of how bad its mutation is. When a creature of chaos is encountered "in the wild," it is more likely to have beneficial than detrimental features, and so a roll of 1-4 should use the Beneficial Chaotic Features table, and a 5-6 the Detrimental Chaotic Features table.

Examples are given for many of the chaotic features on the tables. Again, these are not absolutes, and the gamemaster should select any similar ability which strikes his fancy. However, in most cases six examples have been given, to allow the gamemaster to roll 1d6 if he lacks inspiration.

No table has been provided for spirits, though many standard chaotic features do not apply to spirits. The standard tables can be used for spirits, though modifications and improvisations may be necessary. The chaotic feature could be modified, or might only manifest when the creature has possessed an embodied creature. Alternately, the spirit may possess a number of chaotic features, which it then makes available to its worshipers, as is the case with the ogre ancestral spirit on page 47 of *Snake-Pipe Hollow*.

Depending on their parentage, broos in particular may have special abilities not directly related to a chaotic feature. A broo fathered on a spider would look much like a spider, and might have some or all of the "mother's" natural abilities, even as the other children of spiders do: spinning webs, walking on walls, etc. A broo fathered on an ostrich might very well have a long neck and legs. While these abilities are usually classified as chaotic features by people, they are distinct from the variations enforced on the race by its chaotic nature. Of course, the broo's actual chaotic features might also be related to the abilities of its host mother, enhancing or twisting its normal ability. Thus, a spider-broo might spit its webbing, and an ostrich-broo might be able to eat any substance (as ostriches are only reputed to do).





Beneficial Chaotic Features

01-02	+2d6 STR	59-60	Explodes upon death for 1-6 d6 damage to all within 1d6 meters. Armor will protect against this damage
03	+4d6 STR	61	If killed, its spirit attacks the slayer in Spirit Combat. It can use chaotic features it had in life, if appropriate. If it reduces its victim to 0 magic points, it takes control of the body permanently, and regains all of its normal chaotic features, plus any of the body it inhabits. The former inhabitant of the body is dead, destroyed by chaos, or trapped in the body
04-05	+2d6 CON	62-63	Can Befuddle (as the Spirit spell) one foe per round in addition to all other actions, on SR 1. Must overcome the target's magic points
06	+4d6 CON	64-65	Chaotically hideous (APP = 0): all who see must roll under their POW x5% or be Demoralized (as the Spirit spell)
07-08	+3d6 SIZ	66	Other spell-like ability: Disrupt one opponent per round, turn invisible at will (must become visible to attack or use magic), all weapons which strike affected by Dullblade, anything touched Ignites, Drain Fatigue or Magic Points by touch. Hypnotize/Stupefy foes by its gaze or appearance, etc.
09-10	+2d6 DEX	67-68	Absorb spells up to 1d6 magic points; adding magic points absorbed to its magic point total
11-13	+2d6 POW	69-72	Reflect spells up to 1d6 magic points back at caster, with no harm to itself
14	+4d6 POW	73-74	Reflect spells up to 2d6 magic points back at caster, with no harm to itself. Obvious mutation causes the reflection: reflective skin, third eye, warping of the universe/spell around the creature, etc.
15	+1d6 INT	75	Undetectable by the use of magic; magical skills (such as Sense Chaos or Sense Assassin) work normally
16-17	Move +2d6 meters per action rank	76-85	Functional extra appendage or body part: tail, wings, extra legs, extra arms or tentacles, segmented body, extra head or face, etc.
18-19	Capable of leaping up to 3d6 meters per round	86-90	Enlarged or improved body part: attacks with 1d6 meter-long tongue, functional eyes covering body (impossible to surprise), stilt-like legs, octopus-like tentacles instead of arms, large bat-like ears (+50% Listen), feet and hands covered by suckers (+50% Climb), etc.
20	Special movement ability: swims/walks (if land-/water-based), increased Climb rate, etc.	91-92	Valuable object or substance visible on or hidden within body: eyes are gems, skin made of valuable metal, bones or internal organs made of valuable metal, blood is a magic potion, stomach filled with the indigestible remains (possibly valuable) of earlier meals, secretes a valuable substance, etc.
21-23	Regenerate 1d6 Hit Points per 10 minute turn	93	Special environmental adaptation, including appropriate mutations: aquatic (gills, flippers for feet, skin must be kept wet), amphibious (webbed feet and hands, operate in water with no penalties, dries out easily), volcanic (walk on hot surfaces, breathe smoke, resistant to heat), subterranean (clawed hands, see in darkness, eat dirt), sylvan (plant-like body, camouflage ability among plants, draw nourishment from soil, reproduce by seeds or spores), human society (appears human [troll, elf, dwarf]: all chaos features inobvious or can be "demanded," can mate with humans [trolls, elves, dwarfs]), etc.
24	Regenerate 1d6 Hit Points per round	94	Becomes silent when moving (+50% Sneak)
25-26	Regenerate 1d6 FAT per round	95	Double creature's normal chaotic ability (i.e., gorp has 16 point acid, jack o-bear harmonize two targets per round, etc.). If no natural chaotic ability, a previously-rolled chaos feature is double strength or enhanced in some way
27-30	Appearance confusing: -20% to all foes' attacks	96-00	Exotic feature or roll twice more
31	Appearance extremely confusing: -40% to all foes' attacks		
32-37	1d3+3 points of skin armor		
38-40	1d6+6 points of skin armor, with appropriate physical effect: wiry hairs, armor plating, etc.		
41	12 points of skin armor, with obvious physical mutation: crystal tumors, shifting plates of bone and/or metal, etc.		
42	Hard to kill: ignores damage unless it incapacitates location, severs limb, or causes death; not incapacitated by wounds; does not die until reaches -HPs; requires special substance or attack to kill (cannot be killed from wounds no matter how much damage is taken); never surprised (always acts first in the first melee round of any combat); damage done to creature is done to attacker as well; etc.		
43-44	Immunity to specific substance or energy (choose one): fire, poison, lightning, Disrupt spells, weapon-enhancing spells, acid, etc.		
45	Appears to be a harmless creature or object		
46	Apparently invincible: shows no damage or fatigue until it drops dead or unconscious		
47-48	Project fire (or other energy) 1d6 times per day for 3d6 damage; single target, range is 2d6 meters. Energy can be breathed from mouth, or can come from other source with appropriate mutation: glowing or burning eyes, flaming tail or other appendage, etc.		
49-50	Spits acid of 3d6 POT 1d6 times per day with a 1d6 meter range		
51-52	Exotic breath or spit ability: Insect Swarm, Spit Gorp, Howl like a Ghoul, Webbing, Smelly musk, poison gas cloud, etc.		
53-54	Poisonous bite or claws, POT = 3d6. Attack must penetrate armor for poison to take effect		
55-56	Bite drains blood - 1d6 FAT (1 STR and 1d6 FAT after FAT reaches 0) per attack which penetrates armor		
57	Secretes damaging or chaotic substance: acid, poison, glue-like resin, horrible-smelling musk, disease-carrying liquid, blood is corrosive acid, etc.		
58	Stench overpowering: all within 3 meters must make a CON x5% roll or lose consciousness. All within 10 meters must make the same roll or suffer -25% to all skill and melee rolls		

Notes

If an incomplete creature rolls an increase for a characteristic it does not possess, it gains the rolled score in that ability. Consult "Lacking and Gaining Characteristics" in the *RuneQuest Creatures* book (pp. 190-191) for the effects of gaining a characteristic. Because this is chaos, the gamemaster can choose to ignore the detrimental effects of such a change. A chaotic spirit which gains SIZ might still be able to initiate Spirit Combat, and a chaotic wraith might still be able to drain magic points with no limit.

If a characteristic is reduced to 0 or below, the gamemaster has several options. He can reroll, either the amount of the reduction or the chaotic feature itself. He can reduce the characteristic to 1 but no further. If the spell

was cast as a curse, he can rule that the victim dies. Alternately, he can change the creature as follows, giving it a specific disadvantage. In this case he should also consult "Lacking and Gaining Characteristics."

STR: creature becomes incapable of physical action. It is still affected by the physical world (and so could Dodge), but cannot affect the physical world in return, except by magic or special abilities.

CON: creature becomes an undead-like creature, similar to a skeleton. It has no General Hit Points (though location Hit Points are calculated normally), and is immune to poison. It may or may not still use FAT, at the gamemaster's option.



Detrimental Chaotic Features

01-02	-2d6 STR		
03	-4d6 STR	55-56	Bleeds easily: all wounds bleed regardless of amount of damage done to Hit Location. Bleeding can be stopped by First Aid or magic.
04-05	-1d6 CON	57	Secretes hindering or obnoxious substance: acid (damage to self unless constantly cleaned off), poison, cement-like glue, horrible-smelling musk (reduces all of creature's skills by 25%), flammable oil, wax-like build-up (1 ENC worth accumulates per hour), etc.
06	-3d6 CON	58	Roll under CON x5 each hour or lose consciousness for 1 hour.
07-08	-2d6 SIZ	59-60	Exposure to a specific substance is deadly to the creature. If exposed to the substance or energy, the creature explodes for 1-6 d6 damage to all creatures within 1d6 meters. Choose one: fire, acid, water, lightning. Disrupt spells, healing spells, etc.
09-10	-2d6 DEX	61	Cannot resist or attack in Spirit Combat: spirits overcome magic points on a roll of 01-95 regardless of POW or magic points.
11-13	-2d6 POW	62-63	Befuddled (as the Spirit spell) at all times.
14	-3d6 POW	64-65	Demoralized (as the Spirit spell) at all times.
15	-1d6 INT. INT may also become fixed, at GM's option.	66	Other spell-like disability: effects of Heal and Disrupt spells cast on it reversed, parts of body turn visible and invisible at random; all weapons wielded affected by Dullblade, chaotically insane (roll effects on Madness spell table each hour), must overcome own magic points whenever casting a spell (whether offensive or not), spells cast at opponents have same effect on creature, etc.
16-17	Movement reduced to 1 meter per strike rank.	67-68	Costs 1d6 FAT (Spirit Magic or Sorcery) or 1d6 magic points (Divine Magic) to cast a spell, in addition to normal cost of spell.
18-19	Unbalanced: 1 leg, asymmetrical, legs radically different sizes, no legs; legs in unusual location, legs end in stumps or other awkward appendages, etc. Creature suffers special knockback result from all melee blows; Dodge is reduced to DEX as a percentage and cannot be increased.	69-72	May not resist spells up to 1d6 points.
20	Immobile - incapable of any Agility skill except Parry, cannot move without being carried unless has a special ability (flight, etc.)	73	May not resist any spells.
21-23	Can only heal naturally - magical healing (even Divine Magic) useless.	74	Attracts all spells cast within 3d6 meters.
24	Can only heal with magic - First Aid and natural healing ineffective for any purpose. This may also apply to skills such as Treat Poison and Treat Disease, at the GM's option.	75	Any magical Detect, Sense, Find, or similar spell always triggered by creature. Does not apply to magical senses (such as Sense Chaos and Sense Assassin).
25-26	Cannot regenerate Fatigue naturally - must use spells or special ability to recover lost FAT.	76-80	Gain new useless or hindering body part or organ: mouths all over body, eyes glow brightly in dark, masses of tentacles sprout from body locations, etc.
27-30	All foes have +20% chance to hit; can Dodge or Parry normally.	81-85	Body part(s) or organ(s) inconveniently rearranged or otherwise do not function properly: eyes relocated onto elbows or feet, hands attached to cheeks instead of arms, internal organs exposed or on outside of body (can wear no armor in that location), legs attached at knees in addition to hips, eyes or stomach pump blood, eat and excrete through opposite organs, etc.
31	All foes have +40% chance to hit; can Dodge or Parry normally.	86-90	Body part missing or useless: no skeleton, no arms, no legs, no sensory organs, withered limb(s), no reproductive organs, etc.
32-37	Takes double damage from one type of damage (choose one): natural weapons, blunt weapons, edged (non-impaling) weapons, impaling weapons, pure runic metals, constricting/entangling weapons, etc.	91-92	Body extremely mutated. Hit Locations and stats likely to be very different from species norm.
38-40	Takes +1 point of damage per die rolled from all weapons.	93	Special dietary requirement, must eat a special substance regularly or will die of starvation (choose one): precious metal or substance, human/troll/elf/dwarf flesh/blood/brains, chaos slime, magic items, specific plant, gorp, etc.
41	Takes double damage from all weapons.	94	Agonizing screams (from mouth or body) in one circumstance: when moving, wounded, using magic, speaking, procreating, sleeping, etc.
42	One Hit Location becomes vital. If it takes even a single point of damage, creature dies instantly.	95	Creature loses its normal chaos ability (i.e., gorp with no acid, jack o'bear unable to harmonize, etc.). If no natural chaos ability, a previously-rolled chaotic feature is weakened, has a bad side effect, or is rendered detrimental in some other way.
43-44	Special vulnerability: takes double damage or effect from a substance or energy (choose one): fire, poison, lightning, Disrupt spells, weapon-enhancing spells, acid, etc.	96-00	Exotic feature or roll twice more.
45	Fanatic (as the Spirit spell) at all times.		
46	Easily surprised: always acts last in the first melee round of any combat.		
47-48	Attracts all attacks of a specific nature within 1d6 meters (choose one): Disrupt spells, Missile Weapons, lightning, fire, Befuddle and Demoralize spells, melee weapon attacks within 1 meter, etc.		
49-50	Takes 1d6 General Hit Point damage per round of exposure to specific common substance (choose one): sunlight, water, darkness, healing spells, smoke, plants, etc. Alternately, an inert substance could be treated as a damaging one: water as acid, smoke as poison gas, etc.		
51-52	Flesh raw and easily irritated: take 1 point of damage each round clothing or armor are worn.		
53-54	Creature is more offensive to one species than the rest of the world. Members of that species will attack the creature in preference to other targets; if intelligent, must make an INT x3% roll to		

SIZ: creature becomes immaterial, possibly a spirit. It might be able to affect the physical world (gamemaster's option), but it is not subject to physical attacks (though weapon-enhancing magic might still affect it, like a wraith). The gamemaster should record its originally rolled SIZ as its apparent SIZ.

INT: creature becomes unintelligent, effectively equivalent to a rock or other non-sentient object. It may not act of its own volition (much as an elemental will not act unless commanded); it might be able to react to stimuli, but might not.

POW: creature becomes an undead-like being, incapable of regenerating

magic points. Initial magic points are equal to originally rolled POW. Unless creature has a way to gain new magic points (such as a special drain ability, or a sorcery spell), it is limited to these magic points only.

DEX: creature becomes a gorp-like creature. It might still possess all of its other abilities (and even some of its former appearance), but may use no Agility, Manipulation, or Parry skills, and none of its existing Attack skills. It may attack like a gorp (enveloping its opponent), but this may do no damage if the creature did not have some special attack mode (though attacks like Head Butt might be allowed).



Observed Distributions of "Chaos Features" in the Field

Source: Jannisor Quilltongue, of the Filichet Icrippi Ontor Temple

Based on my detailed research, I can state that most of the previous statements on so-called "chaotic features" are blatantly incorrect. My studies involved over 200 broos; almost 100 scorpion-men, 47 gorp, 21 dragonsnails, and 34 ogres. My results are based only on sightings fully documented in Lunar and Orlanthi Knowledge temples, evaluated with the strictest truth requirements.

Statistics on most other chaotic creatures are not available, as no reliable sources could be found detailing the features of such creatures. Information was gathered on 22 harpies and 12 Hellwood elves from Dorastor; results cannot be considered representative for those species, and most likely give the appearance of a higher rate of chaotic features than is the norm. 18 grayskins were also studied, with somewhat more reliable results. Research of these and other species may shed additional light on this subject.

I give first the long-accepted data from Everseer's Compendium of Species (volumes 1 and 2) and Floriat Derby's "Appendix Chaotica." My information contradicts and refutes theirs completely. I am unable to determine if these differences represent errors on the part of these earlier and most eminent scholars, or changes in the nature of chaos since the Second Age.

Previous Accepted Estimates

Broos:	30-33% possessing chaotic features
Dragonsnails:	100% possess chaotic features, evenly divided among 1, 2, and 3 features
Gorp:	10-11% possessing chaotic features
Ogres:	5% possessing chaotic features
Scorpion-Men:	35% possessing chaotic features

Results of My Research:

Broos:	82% possessing chaotic features
Dragonsnails:	100% possessing chaotic features, 56% with 1 and 2 features, 31% with 3, and 13% having 4 or more
Gorp:	36% possessing chaotic features
Ogres:	26% possessing chaotic features
Scorpion-Men:	65% possessing chaotic features

As these results show, from two to five times as many members of these species possess chaotic features as was previously recorded. This is either indicative of the sloppiest scholarship imaginable, or evidence of an alarming trend in the prevalence and power of chaos in the world. This latter prospect I find extremely disturbing, and the possibility alone is enough to warrant further research.

In the case of ogres I do not read too much from the figures, since so few were studied. It can be presumed that many more ogres exist that do not have chaotic features: it stands to reason

that those with such abnormalities would be discovered more often than those without. I will note that a family of 10 ogres was found (in Dragon Pass); all of whom possessed chaotic features; apparently derived from the worship of some foul chaotic spirit. They were not considered in the compilation of this data.

A more detailed analysis of the study is available upon request. I note here only a few of the results; those which I found most relevant or interesting.

Proposed Taxonomy of Chaotic Features

Chaotic features can be broken down into 9 categories; based upon their function. These categories are not exclusive, and it is common for a physical mutation to provide an enhancement or special ability as well. Among these 9 categories, a total of 484 chaotic features of 67 different types were catalogued. Previous research has stated that half of all chaotic features are beneficial to the creature affected, and half detrimental, but my research proves that at least 88% (428 out of 484) are beneficial. This is further evidence for the alarming trend mentioned above.

Physical Enhancement	7% (34)
Defensive Ability	26% (125)
Offensive Ability	9% (43)
Movement Ability	6% (28)
Magical Ability	21% (103)
Post-death Ability	3% (14)
Physical Mutation	19% (92)
Mental Mutation	3% (15)
Other	6% (30)

Of species which normally do not possess such mutations, only one human and one giant have been documented with chaotic features; as well as two griffins, one giant spider, one snake, four jack o'bears, two walktapi, one basilisk, and two spirits. At least ten "monsters" or chaotic "demons" have been encountered as well, although additional ones (in Dorastor especially) are likely.

Of the chaotic features catalogued, 62 (13%) consisted of some form of armor or protective skin, by far the most common. Other common features included spell reflection (40), regeneration (25), difficulty in hitting the creature (25), acidic spit or spray (22), and extra limbs or organs (22). These six represent over 2/5 of all chaotic features encountered. Spell absorption, leaping, increased magical capacity or constitution, confusion ability, enlarged body parts, and various useless mutations together made up another fifth. Of the remainder, 19 features were unique to the creatures possessing them.

The most remarkable chaotic features encountered were a griffin that was charged with lightning, a broo that attracted spells cast within 10m, a broo that spit pain spirits, a miniature scorpion-man, and a broo that bestowed temporary chaos features on whatever it touched. I note that all of these creatures were encountered in Dorastor.

"Here is what we have to say. Long ago we saw a terrible foe, a thing which had no place in the world. We left our homeland, and travelled far to fight the Bad God. Long was our journey, and many the barriers placed before us by our foe: blue men fought us, the winds of Sikkanos came at us from all directions, and the White Shadow brought terror even to the bravest men. But at last we came to the land of the Bad God. Alas, he had already been chased from the world. Now we await his return."

"Soon the time will come again. When darkness rides upon the fire, and death rides upon the bear, when the wolves run upon the water, and the dragon returns on a tide of blood, then Gbaji comes again. Once he came against P-malt, and once he came again; twice has he been driven away, but we wait for the third time. This time we shall be ready, and he will not escape again."

— from the Idunuk Gbaji [Holy War of Gbaji], a portion of "Eleven Generations Late," a lament of the Pithdaros Agimori

The Cult of Malia

The Foul Mistress



Mythos and History

Malia was born a child of the Darkness, a spirit of healing with great properties to aid growth and birth. Like all shadows she grew in the Darkness, but she soon grew jealous of those greater than herself. When death came she discovered nourishment within the wreckage and destruction of the Gods War. Thus Malia became a corruption of Death itself, a spiritual engine of destruction, tainted and degraded from the swift brightness which Orlanth and Humakt used. The more she ate, the faster she grew, and the faster she grew, the more she ate. After a time, however, she feared that her food would completely fail, so she altered the style of her feeding, from lightning plagues that depopulated entire nations to the slow spread of death by disease, so that the misery of the world would last forever, eternally celebrating the goddess's glory.

But the ancestral diseases, each the source of new disease, were gradually defeated by Malia's foes. Each culture has its own hero who it claims defeated Malia: among the Orlanthi it was Chalana Arroy, among the Dara Happans it was Yelm or one of his sons, among the elves it was Arroin, among the Kralori it was the emperor Shavaya, but a vengeful Malia recalls each of these defeats. Because of her enemies' actions, the ancestral diseases have been destroyed, and all diseases now breed true, rather than spawning new diseases each time they feed.

When Thed and Ragnaglar combined to create chaos, Malia joined them, though whether willingly or under compulsion varies with the tale and the teller. She was thereafter known as one of the Unholy Trio, and served as midwife to the birth of Wakboth the Devil. Ragnaglar's children, the Broos, gave her worship, and she in turn aided them and provided immunity to her spirits so that they could further the spread of her diseased dominion. She blessed them with her gifts, both as a sign of her favor and to

ensure that she would always have slaves to do her bidding. She finally parted company with Ragnaglar and Thed, but may never be freed from the stain of that association.

From fear and respect other chaos creatures came to worship her. As her powers increased, men, trolls, and elves came to her out of fear alone, praying to her to spare their tribes. Many endured the scourge of disease through their propitiation of Malia, and she continued to grow in power from such devotions.

Malia is pictured by most humans as an old woman, pockmarked and dripping with diseases; she often pushes a cart loaded with the dead. Broos see her as a powerful female broo, surrounded by spirits of disease, standing over the corrupt forms of her many victims. Praxian sand drawings and Lodrili wall paintings depict her as a headless body with a single huge maw in its belly, two stout legs, and many arms sprouting from her torso. Trolls picture her similarly, chewing her image out of flint or basalt, then smashing it to the ground, usually under the feet of Kyger Litor or Zorak Zoran. The elves see her as a diseased dryad, eating her way out of her tree, from which spirits of disease hang like fruit.

Malia's faithful know that there will be no reincarnation for their spirits, and that all they can hope for is a safe eternity serving the goddess. Some of them may return to the world as Spirits of Disease, to spread her blessings, though only the greatest may be so blessed. Some humans who worship Malia believe that they will be reborn as broos if faithful, and thus immune to her diseases forever.

Funeral rites are simple. The body is infected with at least one Spirit of Disease, then placed in the earth so that Darkness and Death become one in the worshippers. Only the ignorant or foolish will disturb such unmarked graves.

Malia is associated with the runes of Death and Darkness. Where she is worshiped by broos and other horrors, she is associated with Chaos as well.



Hahlggrim traced the tip of his dagger along a crack in the tabletop. "First we must weaken the chaos close at hand," he said. "Boithor's people are healthy, yet their Chalana Arroy priestesses are paupers. I suspect that the minions of the Mother of Disease are here, though her priests might stand within spear-thrust of us and we would not know it." We all glanced around the sleepy inn. "Ketil, you prepare a party of only the healthiest men, and guard old Torvald the Healer. Seek with him the work of Malia — he will know her signs."

Ketil departed, taking with him Oddi the Keen, Hahlggrim's brother. Hahlggrim replaced the dagger in its oiled sheath, and we left also.

We gathered the peasants of the area before him. They were a sorry lot, exhausted and with fear-haunted eyes. Hahlggrim related his history and origin.

"In my lands," he said, "the people do not tolerate the slow death, for we know the power of the Healing Mother and uphold her. You must foreswear your sacrifices to Malia. Rely upon the Healers." The crowd had been shuffling, as uncouth peasants will, until he spoke Malia's name. Then they fell as still as stone.

"Easy for you to say," scowled an old hag at last, "but for us there is life to be lost and life to be gained. Why should we forsake one who keeps her filthy word for the White Goddess, who seems weaker?" And many nodded at this, yet without passion; the pride of these farmers had been hobbled.

Hahlggrim studied the hag. Her wares were baskets, and under his gaze she shrank a little behind them, as though they were a wall to dim the blaze of his eyes.

"It is the duty of the old to speak wisdom," he replied, "not fear," and she shrank back still further. "What worth your offerings, Basket Woman, when broos hobble past your doors with plague dripping from spearpoints? Your prayers and offerings strengthen the broos, and Ralzakark their king fattens his folk on your power!" Not a few in the crowd made protective signs to ward off the evil power of the King of the Broos, of fearful Dorastor.

"You speak that name lightly, O mighty Lord from Far Away," the old woman said sorrowfully. "Whom would you have us strengthen?" She paused. "It may be there is little difference between the kick of a broo and the kick of a nobleman."

"So it might seem, yet I will show you differently. Hear me! Each who trades for a spell from the Chalana Arroy priestess will receive a small pig from my temple, or its equal value in barley or beer. From my own purse will I in addition pay for each spell you gain from the priestess of the White Goddess, whether one or many, nor will I demand you use these great cures. All this is yours if you promise to never again worship Malia, and that I swear by the mighty Air itself!"

The crowd gasped at his gifts, and so they were gifts, for never in all their lives could these poor pay back half of what Hahlggrim would give them that day.

"My gracious lord," the old woman said, trembling, "may all the mercies of the gods be yours for your promise. Forgive me that I spoke harshly." And Hahlggrim did there forgive her.

Cult Ecology

Malia is the Goddess of Disease, sometimes called the Foul Mistress, the Last Death, or the Cosmic Disease. She commands diseases, plague, and pestilence, and death at her hands is unclean and vile. Some filthy creatures such as broos and harpies dedicate themselves to her worship. Most beings, however, give her only propitiary worship, sacrificing Power and Magic Points so that she will not menace them.

Under the terms of the Great Compromise, Malia is the necessary bane of the mortal races, and at last will lead them to Hell even if they avoid every other fate. Even her most faithful worshiper knows that he is not safe from her embrace if he outlives the span of years allotted to him. In popular terms she is the Keeper of the Cart which carries souls to the Sundering Stream. She is thus a part of the world of Time, despised as evil, but in the accounting of some, not inherently a thing of chaos.

Malia's willing minions generally support other chaotic cults. On the other hand, those who worship her in a propitiary manner do so only out of fear of disease, and typically detest and persecute chaos worshipers. Devoted Maliants revel in the suffering of others, but take special delight in collecting Power for the goddess from the sacrifices of devout foes of chaos. Maliants despise all cults associated with life, peace, or plenty. They hate healers, in particular the Healers of Chalana Arroy, who devote themselves to the abolishing of disease. Yelm's cult is also hated, because of Yelm's ability to resist disease, and because Yelm and his sons destroyed many ancestral diseases during the Darkness, driving Malia from the world. Orlanth, Urox, and their kin are disliked for the cleansing winds they command. Malia hates those races able to make themselves immune to her touch, such as the dwarfs, whose hero Ironman defeated her in the Darkness.

Malia's holy days are the same as Chalana Arroy's, the Wildday of each Fertility Week. The high holy time is the second week of the Sacred Time, when Disease Masters plan their activities for the year.

The Cult in the World

All Gloranthan societies outlaw the worship of Malia. If discovered, initiates are killed immediately, and their bodies, possessions, and properties burned or otherwise purified as a safeguard against the outbreak of disease. Any time a source of disease is found, local authorities and cults scour the countryside to root out and destroy Malia worshipers.

The spread of disease is pervasive throughout Glorantha; there are no centers of power for the cult.



A pit near the base of the Rockwood Mountains is said among the Bilini to be the site of the First Infection, but its location is unknown. Two places in Glorantha, the Forest of Disease (in Laskal) and Plague Island, are sites of appalling pestilence, and accounted sacred by Malians. The Fever Trees (between Teshnos and the Wastes) are believed sacred to the broos of the Wastes, though broos are rarely found in that place.

Malia's temples consist in the persons of her Disease Masters. A Disease Master of moderate status is the equivalent of a minor temple. Malia's worship is institutionalized among broos, and the equivalent of major or great temples are not uncommon. Even a Master of modest status (i.e., equivalent to a shrine) is capable of providing all cult spells, if sufficient worshipers are present. Regardless of the number of worshipers, all shrines teach Command <Disease Spirit>, the exact type differing according to the Master, and sometimes more than one type is available (see Miscellaneous Notes).

Propitiatory Worship

Malia accepts worship from anyone. Her worship is ingrained in the broos, who are members at birth, and automatically unaffected by Spirits of Disease, although they can be possessed by them. A creature of any other race sacrificing a point of Power to her at any time becomes a member, gaining increased resistance to disease. There are no other requirements.

Worshipers of Malia gain protection from disease by sacrificing magic points on seasonal holy days. For each point sacrificed, the person adds 1 point to the relevant characteristic when defending against disease, until the next holy day. Magic points sacrificed are disease-specific: if a person sacrifices 5 magic points each to protect against Soul Waste, Creeping Chills, and the Shakes, he will still lack protection from other diseases. Magic points cannot be sacrificed to defend against Plague.

If there is a lapse in sacrificing on a holy day, the person is no longer a worshiper, and must sacrifice another point of Power on the next holy day to rejoin. There are no other benefits gained by propitiatory worship of Malia, and a person must become an initiate to gain any further training or benefits.

Involuntary Initiation

If a person becomes possessed by a Spirit of Disease (whether or not he had sacrificed to Malia previously), he may sacrifice a point of Power to Malia, calling upon her to arrest the ravages of the disease. If he

"This is more than our own king, Burpey Bolthor, ever would swear. I see truly why you displease him, and know why your people wait upon your word," said a burly youth, and the crowd came near.

Three sites of festering plague were found. Hahlgrim gave orders for their cleansing, then called for wine. I write this description that all may know of his great generosity and believe it, for even Ketil could not understand at first the gifts of our lord to these humble people.

"Giving farmers gold?" he cried. "How should anyone give a thousandth of that for the promise of a peasant?"

"There is a time for sacrifices," replied Hahlgrim, studying the sweep of the valley beyond. "I have no need of gold if what I cherish grows freely and proudly."

Hahlgrim left soon thereafter, to seek a shaman in the wilds who could protect the farmers permanently. To let Ketil learn humility and generosity, he ordered him to administer the giving of the gold to a hundred whining farmers. While Ketil counted gold and swore, I played the flute outside, in the warmth of the afternoon.

rolls under his POW x5 or less on d100 he has succeeded, and is now an involuntary initiate of Malia. If he fails, he may try again after the next loss from the spirit, sacrificing another point of POW. POW sacrificed to Malia in the past during Propitiatory Worship does not aid the person in becoming an initiate.

Once successful, the initiate no longer suffers additional losses from the disease (although lost characteristic points are not restored), as long as he sacrifices a magic point to Malia each holy day. If he fails in the sacrifice, he again becomes subject to the spirit's attacks until he makes the sacrifice. The Spirit of Disease possessing him is not exorcised from his body, although it becomes inactive. The new initiate becomes a carrier of the disease, as described in Disease in Glorantha, pp. 36-37.

The new initiate can still other contract diseases if attacked by another Spirit of Disease. An involuntary initiate might never seek additional training or status within the cult. There is no way to break the connection to Malia, however, save for initiation into the cult of one of her special foes (Chalana Arroy, Yelm, Arroin) or Divine Intervention; even exorcism of the Spirit of Disease doesn't release the sufferer.

Initiate Membership

Involuntary initiates wishing to progress in the cult must seek out a Disease Master; no other benefits or training are available unless they do so. They must be devoted to Malia and spreading disease. If not already an involuntary initiate, the Disease Master causes the initiate to be possessed by a Spirit of Disease, thereafter following the same procedure as



involuntary initiates for acceptance. Alternatively, once possessed, the Disease Master can cast a Carry <Disease> spell upon the person in place of the die roll, ensuring success.

Broos wishing to become initiates of Malia simply sacrifice a point of Power; acceptance is automatic. They do not have to become a carrier of disease, although this is encouraged.

An initiate must sacrifice a magic point each holy day; this is in addition to points sacrificed for protection from diseases. The initiate must obey the commands of his Disease Master without question or delay. Although there are no specific time or income requirements, such will certainly be set by the Disease Master. The initiate is given such material support (food, board, healing, etc.) as the Disease Master chooses to provide.

An initiate who follows a Disease Master is taught such skills as the Disease Master knows. He is also taught Spirit Magic spells at whatever rate the shaman wishes to charge, though he is taught at least one point every five years for free. He is usually taught Sneeze upon acceptance.

Both types of initiates may use Divine Intervention following the normal procedure. Malia cannot or will not bring an individual back from the dead, and will not halt the effects of disease in another, although halting a disease for the initiate is possible, making him or her the carrier of an additional disease.

Spirit Magic: all common spells are available from cult shamans, as is the special spell of Sneeze.

Disease Masters (Shamans)

A Disease Master is a source of disease. His duty is to spread infection throughout the world, and to hinder efforts to heal. His main tools are the Spirits of Disease which he learns to bind and control. Some learn specialized abilities, such as the making of infectious potions or powders, or the possession of a victim, causing disease as a disease spirit does. Disease Masters are shamans and priests, and have access to reusable Divine spells.

An applicant to become an Assistant Shaman must have been a voluntary initiate of the cult for a year, in addition to other requirements. If accepted, the applicant is trained in the secrets of Malia shamanhood. When judged ready by the Disease Master, the applicant becomes a shaman by normal methods. The spirit faced has the same characteristics as the Bad Man, but is known to the cult as Niorra, a dread Spirit of Healing. The Disease Master's fetch takes on the characteristics of a Spirit of Disease; this is always a random type from the disease spirits available at the local shrine.

The Disease Master has all of the abilities of a shaman. He is immune to the disease which his fetch carries, and cannot be possessed by that type of Spirit of Disease. He must aid and train his initiates, and must always seek new ways to spread disease. The fetch of the Disease Master also acts as an allied spirit, and can sacrifice for one-use cult Divine spells.

Common Divine Magic: Binding Enchantment, Divination, Sanctify, Worship Malia

Special Divine Magic: Carry <Disease>, Cause <Disease>, Command <Disease Spirit>

Malia Special Spirit Spell

Sneeze

2 points

ranged, instant

The caster must overcome the target's Magic Points with his own. If successful, the target begins sneezing the next strike rank, and continues sneezing for 1D10 strike ranks. During this time the target is nearly incapacitated, and can only parry or dodge at half normal effectiveness. If casting a spell, he must make a Concentration roll for each strike rank he is sneezing while attempting the spell; a single failure will ruin the spell.

Malia Special Divine Spells

Binding Enchantment

This spell is as described in *Runequest*, except that Disease Masters of Malia may only use it to bind Spirits of Disease and cult spirits. They may learn the Spirit Magic version of this spell to bind other entities, but may never use any spell to control or bind a Spirit of Healing. This spell is also used by Disease Masters to add a spirit to the ones available at a shrine or temple.

Carry <Disease>

2 points

ritual Enchant spell, nonstackable, one-use

This ritual must be cast on a target who has been possessed by the appropriate Spirit of Disease, or stacked with an appropriate Cause <Disease> spell. It causes the target to become immune to the attack of a single type of Spirit of Disease. The spirit still possesses the target, but he suffers no losses. The target becomes a carrier of the disease and a source of infection spirits, and anyone he comes in contact with may contract the infection form of the disease; see "Carrying Disease," p. 36. Runes are carved into the flesh to serve as the focus for the enchantment. If the runes are destroyed, the spirit is freed, and may attack the person it currently possesses.



A specific Carry <Disease> spell can only be learned at a shrine or temple with the appropriate Spirit of Disease bound to it. Thus, to sacrifice for Carry Soul Waste, the shaman would have to locate a shrine with at least one Soul Waste spirit tied to it. Regardless of the spirits present at a shrine, a shaman can always sacrifice for the disease carried by his fetch, at any worship site.

Cause <Disease>

2 points

ranged, instant, nonstackable, reusable

This spell instantly summons a random Spirit of Disease of the appropriate type, which attacks any target within 100m, as designated by the caster. The Spirit of Disease possesses the target normally if it reduces his magic points to zero (or 10 less than the spirit's). Access to diseases is limited in the same manner as for Carry <Disease>. The disease spirit need not manifest to attack its target, in contradiction of the standard rules for Spirit Combat.

Subservient Cults

Spirit of Reprisal

Malia punishes offenders with disease. Propitiatory and even initiate worship are transitory at best, and initiates leaving the cult have no special susceptibility to disease, though an involuntary initiate leaving the cult again becomes subject to his or her disease, if the Spirit of Disease has not been exorcised.

Disease Masters who leave the cult or cure diseases find all of their immunities to disease removed. The Spirits of Disease possessing them begin attacking the shaman normally, as do their fetches. As such spirits are likely to be of great power, this usually ensures that shamans do not abandon the cult.

The bodies of apostate shamans serve as a Binding Enchantment for all of its spirits, allowing the spirits to roam within an area 1 km in radius. The spirits attack all who come within this area, often ganging up on individual targets. This continues until the apostate's body is burned or until a worshiper of Chalana Arroy (or similar cult, such as Erisa or Yelm) successfully practices the Treat Disease skill on the body to remove the taint of disease. At this point, the binding is destroyed, but all of the individual Spirits of Disease must also be defeated as well.

Pestilence

Malia is the source of Pestilence, and she has specific diseases which affect only plants. They are similar to normal diseases, but affect plant vitality instead of human organs and tissue. Thus, a Pestilence Spirit

might affect a plant's ability to grow straight, or to extract water through its roots. Pestilence spirits can possess an area of plantlife instead of a single plant, and so one might possess an entire field of grain, though initially it would possess a single stalk of wheat, gradually spreading to other plants until the entire crop was afflicted. Very powerful spirits have been known to destroy entire forests, as the Dead Wood of Dagori Inkarth proves.

Such diseases, while mostly harmless to humans, are deadly to elves and other aldryami, and their shamans spend much of their time defending their charges against such spirits. See Daughter of Ralzakark, p. 35, for examples.

Plague

Although the ancestral diseases were defeated in the Godtime by various deities, one escaped—the Spirit of Plague. It is still the source of unique diseases capable of depopulating whole nations. Such plagues were common in the Darkness, but have been rare since the Dawn. The most famous case of Plague during human memory was in Fronela before the Dawn, where Xemela, holy mother of Saint Hrestol, sacrificed her life and soul to end the Black Swelling which afflicted her people.

The Spirit of Plague is difficult to find, but a Disease Master who locates it can become infected by it. Such pieces of the spirit are immensely powerful (Power of 100 or even more), and almost assuredly will multiply and spread throughout a populace very quickly. Involuntary initiation and Carry <Disease> are no protection against plagues.

Through her connection with the Spirit of Plague, Malia has access to a special ritual Divine spell, Alter Spirit of Disease. This spell can be used to draw on the virulent nature of the Spirit of Plague to change the type of disease caused by a Spirit of Disease. It is only available to Disease Masters of Malia.

Alter Spirit of Disease

1 point

ritual Ceremony spell, nonstackable, one-use

This ceremony takes a full hour, and allows a Disease Master to change the type of disease caused by a Spirit of Disease. This change is permanent. The spell can be cast on any Spirit of Disease (except a Plague Spirit), which must usually be bound to the Disease Master's fetch to prevent it from leaving the area.

Thus, a Spirit of Disease which carries Creeping Chills could be changed by means of this spell so that it now inflicts Soul Waste on its target. As normal, the new type of disease must already be bound to the shrine. This spell is most often used by a traveling



Disease Master to acquire a new Spirit of Disease at a shrine without having to sacrifice additional Power for a spell to summon the spirit.

Associate Cults

Theði

The goddess of rape has been associated with Malia since the Greater Darkness. They often work together to further the spread of misery and suffering, though little trust or affection is wasted among this fellowship. Theði provides Chaos Spawn to Disease Masters. When cast by a Disease Master, this spell summons a random Spirit of Disease 50% of the time, and functions normally the rest of the time. A Spirit of Plague is never summoned by a Chaos Void.

Vivamort

During the Darkness, Malia and Vivamort aided each other for a time. Malia taught Vivamort some secrets of disease, and he in turn returned to her some of the connection to the Primal Darkness she had lost to chaos. The two cults have been known to share counsel and resources.

Miscellaneous Notes

Spirits of Disease

A shrine to Malia does not normally have access to all Spirits of Disease, and so can not have access to all diseases. For each worship site, the gamemaster must decide how many types of Spirits of Disease are available. Additional spirits can be sought by a Disease Master, but binding such to the worship site sacrifices personal use of the spirit. Such "donations" are rare unless the shaman has an excess of spirits, and needs to get rid of one anyway. Very powerful Disease Masters have been known to force lesser Disease Masters to bind their own spirits into a shrine, providing access to many spirits at low risk to the ruling shaman.

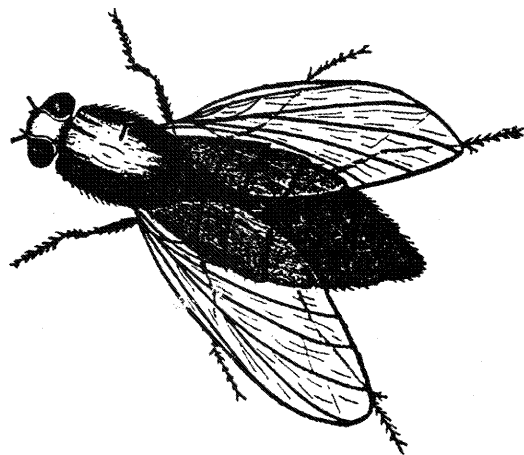
For each worship site, roll on the following chart to determine how many types of Disease Spirits are available. If a disease type is rolled twice, it should be rerolled until a different type is found. Note that the definitions given below correspond to those listed in *RuneQuest*, but normally only shrines of Malia can be found, and these represent the numbers of diseases available to Disease Masters with a more or less permanent congregation of the appropriate size.

<u>worship site</u>	<u># of diseases</u>
site	none
shrine	1d3
minor temple	1d6
major temple	1d10
great temple	2d6+1

The number of disease spirits indicated above is for a permanent site, representing spirits sent by Malia or captured by Disease Masters in the past, and permanently bound to the temple by use of the Binding Enchantment. If the Binding Enchantments are broken, the spirits are released (usually to attack the destroyer), and new ones must be captured and bound if the temple is to be reestablished. A temple may have more or less than the number of spirits indicated above, but these figures represent the range of spirits and spells available for learning and capture at most sites of that size. Gamemasters should decrease the number of spirits at will, especially in the case of new shrines or those with varying numbers of worshipers.

Insects

Malia is associated with certain insects, notably flies and a few types of beetles. Malia defeated some of Gorakiki's children in the Darkness, and she gains power from this association. Such insects are the preferred hosts for cult spirits, especially Spirits of Disease, which can possess such insects even though most diseases (except for certain insect-specific diseases) do not affect them; this is an exception to the normal disease rules. While possessing these insects, a Spirit of Disease does not reduce characteristic or magic points, and may linger for an indefinite length of time. A Spirit of Disease cannot infect other individuals while bound to an insect, but can be Commanded to leave the insect host at any time.





DAUGHTER OF RALZAKARK

Female Broo, Disease Master of Malia

STR	15	R Leg	4/7
CON	18	L Leg	7/7
SIZ	21	Abdomen	7/7
INT	16	Chest	9/7
POW	20	R Arm	6/7
DEX	13	L Arm	6/7
APP	3	Head	7/7

Move: 4

Fatigue: 33

Hit Points: 20

Magic Points: 20 + 23 (fetch) + 23 (power spirits) = 66

Dex SR: 3

Arms and Armor: Total Encumbrance = 2. Fatigue = 31 (33-2). No armor, but has Armoring Enchantments on all Hit Locations (see above). She carries a magical long spear named Traklion.

Weapon	SR	Att/Par	Damage	ENC/AP
Traklion	4	121/107	1d10+5+1D6	2.0/23
Head Butt	6	83/-	1d6+1d6	-/-
Dagger	6	82/63	1D4+2+1D6	0.5/6
Traklion**	4	146/107	1d10+10+1d6	
Head Butt**	6	108/-	1d6+5+1d6	

** With spells cast (see Combat Notes).

Spirit Magic (118%): Bladesharp 5, Countermagic 5, Heal 3, Sneeze (2); (known by fetch) Fanaticism (1), Ironhand 5, Shimmer 5; (known by intellect spirit) Dispel Magic 7

Divine Magic: Alter Spirit of Disease, Binding Enchantment (Spirit of Disease) x2, Binding Enchantment (Power Spirit), Binding Enchantment (Intellect Spirit), Carry Creeping Chills, Carry Soul Waste, Carry Withering Disease, Cause Creeping Chills x2, Cause Barkskin x3, Cause Petal Rot x2, Cause Root Blight x2, Cause Soul Waste x3, Cause Wasting Disease x2, Cause White Eye, Chaos Spawn x2 (one-use), Command Creeping Chills Spirit, Command Joint Rot Spirit, Command Soul Waste Spirit, Divination x2, Sanctify x3, Worship Malia

Chaotic Features: Overpowering stench: if a CONx5 roll is not made, people within 15m fall unconscious for 1D6 minutes. This stench can only be smelled by humans, elves, and broos; other species are not affected by it. Broos alone become accustomed to the stench after long contact with Daughter of Ralzakark; subtract 5 from the die roll for each day the broo spends in continuous contact with her.

Geases (gained on HeroQuest): Never aid a child of Aldrya (including normal plants); infect at least one intelligent being per week with a disease.

Diseases: Daughter of Ralzakark is possessed by a number of Disease Spirits, and so carries the following diseases (spirit's POW is in parentheses): Creeping Chills (18 POW); Joint Rot (15 POW); Petal Rot (13 POW); Ringing (12 POW); Soul Waste (12 POW); Thunder Lung (13 POW); and Wasting Disease (11 POW). As a broo, she is immune to the effects of these diseases.

Normally, non-plants cannot Carry plant diseases (such as Petal Rot), but Daughter became a carrier on one of her HeroQuests. She is diligently seeking a way to allow other beings to Carry the special diseases she has discovered.

Skills and Bonuses:

Agility -5: Climb 57%, Dodge 88%, Jump 31%, Throw 47%

Communication +8: Orate 93%

Knowledge +6: Animal Lore 42%, Broo Lore 61%, Chaos Lore 85%, Dorastor Lore 68%, Plant Lore 77%, Treat Disease 37%, World Lore 66%

Magic +18: Ceremony 95%, Enchant 83%, Summon 116%

Manipulation +11: Devise 35%

Perception +15: Listen 75%, Scan 91%, Scent 64%, Search 84%, Track 76%

Stealth -18: Hide 11%, Sneak 10%

Languages: Chaosspeech 57/—, Tradetalk 37/—, Spirit Speech 51

Special Items: A long spear named Traklion, created on HeroQuest. It is magically sharp (1D10+5 damage) and strong (23 AP). In addition, it produces disease. Every time someone is struck by Traklion, they are exposed to a disease chosen randomly from among the following: Blotches, Brain Fever, Creeping Chills, Shakes, Wasting Disease.

A tarnished silver medallion bearing a stylized representation of a unicorn's head. Daughter of Ralzakark usually keeps this medallion hidden. It is a symbol of her heritage, taken from her father.

A carved bronze amulet of Malia holds an Intellect Spirit Binding Enchantment (holds a spirit of INT 7, POW 11).

A bronze ring carved with the runes of Death and Darkness holds a Power Spirit Binding Enchantment (holds a spirit of POW 14).

A severed broo hand holds a Power Spirit Binding Enchantment (holds a spirit of POW 9).

Fetch: Dottersun

INT 11, POW 23

Spirit Magic (115%): see above

As the fetch of a Disease Master, Dottersun has the characteristics of a Barkskin Spirit. It controls 1 Spirit of Disease: a Joint Rot Spirit of POW 9.

Combat Notes: Daughter of Ralzakark is unafraid of physical conflict, leaping straight into a fight when necessary. Even when surrounded by her followers she heads to the front of a battle after casting her battle magic. If angered, however, she becomes possessed by fits of rage and fights madly to the death. If this occurs, Dottersun will cast Fanaticism upon her and as many followers as it can spare the magic points for. Except when so enraged, Daughter of Ralzakark avoids combats she thinks she might lose.

Daughter of Ralzakark normally prepares for combat by casting Bladesharp 5 on Traklion, and Shimmer 5, Countermagic 5, and Ironhand 5 on herself. During battle, Dottersun uses Dispel Magic as needed to eliminate spells cast by enemies.

Unless berserk with anger, Daughter of Ralzakark prefers to let enemies flee. Provided that a combat has lasted a few rounds (and enemies have had ample chance to contact one or more diseases), she and her followers will make no attempt at all to chase fleeing foes. She often casts Cause Disease spells at enemies as they flee, an activity she views almost akin to a sport.

Background and Roleplaying Notes

Although no one knows if her claims of descent from Ralzakark are true (and Ralzakark has declined to comment on the matter), it is clear that Daughter of Ralzakark is a powerful force in Dorastor. She leads several hundred worshipers of Malia (including broos, harpies and even humans) in regular worship services; unlike many Dorastan priests and shamans, she does not use massed grayskins to augment her worshipers. Her shrine to Malia (which contains bound Disease Spirits for all of the diseases she controls) can be located wherever desired by the gamemaster, as long as it is not too close to Fort Wrath. We suggest it be placed in the darkest depths of the Rotground.



For years, Daughter of Ralzakark tried to gain admittance to the cult of Thed. She was refused with great abuse, turned away as a useless female (see page 55). She finally turned to Malia, and quickly gained much power in the cult. She still hates the treacherous followers of Thed; she often hunts them for sport, and would never release one alive after capturing it. She has heard of a broo who is trying to become the father of the Devil, and she would love to eat him alive, piece by piece, if she could find him.

After Daughter of Ralzakark became a Disease Master, she began to walk the Hero Plane, seeking to increase her power and the power of Malia. On one of her trips she conquered a powerful Disease Spirit called Traklion, and bound the Plague Spirit into her spear. When the Hellwood Elves destroyed her first shrine several years ago, she was granted the assistance of three powerful pestilences on another HeroQuest.

While HeroQuesting, Daughter of Ralzakark has learned much about her patron, Malia, and also of the true nature of Thed. She now thinks it would be possible to change the nature of Thed, to open the cult to female broos. Unfortunately, she is not experienced or powerful enough to attempt such a large manipulation. Thus, she is seeking more information on the Hero Plane, trying to talk to others who have walked the Paths of Lost Chaos, especially any who might be privy to ancient God Learner knowledge.

Daughter of Ralzakark has no regular contact with her alleged sire, Ralzakark. In general, the two avoid each other; she harbors no plans to attack the Plateau of Wrath, and she avoids his followers when possible. No one knows the reason for this continued avoidance, although Ralzakark has been heard in the past to make particularly crude jokes about the Daughter of Ralzakark when jesting with guests.

Appearance: Daughter of Ralzakark is an extremely hideous female broo. Although her head is that of a unicorn, she looks nothing like the noble beast. Uneven fangs fill her mouth. Her hair is matted and filthy, with clumps missing from the black mane. Oozing scabs and huge growths cover her body. She has three horns: two are ram-like and rather small, and the central one is broken off just a few inches from the base. Looking at this horrid broo, many can not believe that she is the daughter of the handsome, polite Ralzakark. A few have suggested that perhaps she is actually descended from that "other fellow", though no one has said this in her presence and survived.

Personality: Although Daughter of Ralzakark is cunning and wily, she is not an intelligent long-term planner. However, she has three main passions which drive her. She seeks always to increase her power. In addition, she hates worshipers of Thed with a vengeance, and engages in cruel and evil acts against them whenever possible. Finally, she seeks to spread the corrupting power of her patron, Malia, across all of Genertela. In revenge for wrongs against her, she has targeted the aldryami as her primary foes in this quest.

Daughter of Ralzakark's greatest weakness is her temper. If pushed too far, she goes mad with rage, and several deaths usually occur before she regains control of her violent emotions. Even when in control she is psychotic and deranged, and her actions often seem random, though almost always cruel and calculating.

Followers

Daughter of Ralzakark has several hundred followers in Dorastor. The majority of the time, she is able to lead a major temple to Malia.

Most of Daughter of Ralzakark's followers are harpies and broos. There are also some warped humans, a few exceptional grayskins, and many others. Daughter of Ralzakark will usually have

at least ten of her followers with her, evenly divided between broos and harpies.

The Harpy Queen

Daughter of Ralzakark's most powerful associate is the queen of her harpy followers. Many of them look first to the Harpy Queen for guidance, and all of them respect her as the source of their race's fertility. Her goals are not always the same as Daughter of Ralzakark's, and this has caused conflict on occasion. Several times, the Harpy Queen has taken a liking to a male broo or elf, only to have him snatched away and killed to satisfy Daughter of Ralzakark's constant thirst for vengeance and power.

The Harpy Queen worships Magra and Ikadz. She cares little for Malia, and would not associate with Daughter of Ralzakark at all if so many of her people did not look to Malia for power and support.

Scenario Ideas

A Letter from Home

Players at Fort Wrath are asked by Manslime to deliver a letter from Ralzakark to his self-proclaimed daughter. This may be offered as a chance to gain Ralzakark's favor, or as the only option players have to escape Fort Wrath alive. Manslime might even offer the task in lieu of the normal fee for passage through Fort Wrath (one magic item per person).

The gamemaster must decide what message the letter carries. Is it a sign of fatherly love, or a warning for Daughter of Ralzakark to stay away from the lands around Fort Wrath? Only Ralzakark (and the gamemaster) know for sure.

Similarly, the players could be hired by Daughter of Ralzakark to carry a message to Fort Wrath. She has heard of the God Learners he keeps there, and wants access to their knowledge of the Hero Plane. If diplomacy does not get her what she wants, she may even hire the players to infiltrate Ralzakark's fortress and steal the information (or God Learners) for her.

Raid on the Shriners

The players are called to make a daring raid into the Rotground and destroy Daughter of Ralzakark's shrine to Malia. This request could come from any number of sources, since everyone fears disease, and Daughter of Ralzakark is becoming too powerful: if not defeated soon, she might never be stopped! Although a time will be chosen when the defenses are thought to be at a minimum, the attack will still be extremely dangerous. The players will have to face the inhabitants of the Rotground, guardians surrounding the shrine, and, finally, the Disease Spirits bound into the shrine itself.

However, if the shrine is successfully destroyed, Daughter of Ralzakark's power in Dorastor will be crippled. Even if she rebinds a number of spirits into the shrines, it will take her many years to locate the unique Disease Spirits she controls. Needless to say, the players will also have made a lifelong enemy if she survives.

Dangerous Liaisons

The player characters are captured by a large harpy band and taken to the Harpy Queen in secrecy (since a number of them are male, and thus potential mates). However, Daughter of Ralzakark finds out from one of the harpies, one more loyal to her than to the Queen. She and the Harpy Queen end up fighting over the matter, and the players must try to escape in the middle of the tumult. Clever characters may even cozen up to the Harpy Queen, playing her off against Daughter of Ralzakark to create an opportunity for escape.



New Diseases

Daughter of Ralzakark has captured Disease Spirits which carry three diseases which only affect plants (including elves). Cause and Carry Disease spells thus only affect plants as well, although she has managed to become a Carrier of one of them through Hero-Quests. These pestilences are her primary tools in destroying the forests of first Dorastor and then all of Genertela.

Spirits of all three diseases are bound into the shrine at the center of Daughter of Ralzakark's temple. Powerful disease masters occasionally come to Dorastor seeking these diseases. She always sets them difficult tasks to "prove their worthiness," but usually allows them to sacrifice for any spells they desire. After all, they will have to return to her to renew them, since she has a virtual monopoly on these rare diseases.

Barkskin

This pestilence causes the plant to become covered with a crust of bark-like material. As the covering develops, more and more of the plant's resources are diverted to it, until the plant eventually dies — its leaves cannot draw nourishment from the Sun, and it turns into an inert stump. Barkskin can be contracted in the mild or acute stage only.

In game terms, each attack transforms 1 Hit Point of a random hit location into 1 Armor Point (AP). If the plant has only APs already, each attack transforms 1 AP into a point of armor protection only.

A Chaotic Interlude

Excerpts from a private letter of a Lhankor Mhy sage, c. 1599 S.T.

The words 'chaos' and 'chaotic' usually are misused and misapplied, adding to confusions. In western Genertela, the word *krjalki* means chaos monsters, yet western manuscripts from every age refer to both trolls and dragonewts as *krjalki*, clearly a misapplication of the term...sometimes it seems that anything someone fears is called chaotic....

Perhaps many creatures or beings have been maligned. [Kralori philosophy] considers all of creation a mistake, or at least that it is a mistake to worship it or consider it real. [There] Gbaji is known as a great psychic liberator, since Enlightenment frees the person from entanglements with the worldly.

The Kralori acknowledgement of one of the Lords of Terror is a dilemma which has plagued or delighted foreign visitors throughout the ages. Those who wish to save the Kralori from their misguided ways are balked because the people often wholeheartedly embrace that god yet stoutly resist all other chaos creatures and temptations. Most foreign exploiters claim that they are freeing the land from its archetypal enemies, though conditions are inevitably worse for the people they rule than for those they have not yet conquered.

...Kralori are very loyal to dragons. Dragon neutrality in the war of law and chaos is well-known, and their constancy in this is legendary. But in Kralorela, dragons have been known to rise to aid the people against chaos and other forces, a unique situation which raises only more questions.

...Perhaps 'chaotic' really means 'that which we do not understand'...

The concepts of chaos most commonly found in the earliest stories are those treating it as a primal void or emptiness which preceded the earliest gods, or cite chaos as the earliest 'material' used in the creation of the world. Though apparently diametric this approach is similar, treating the proto-cosmos as Beingless, possessed of neither intelligence nor ego. The condition is always passive and inert until acted upon by the gods.

When HPs or APs have been completely converted in all locations the plant dies. Mobile plants (such as runners and elves) become rooted in the final stages of the disease, as their body seeks new sources of nourishment.

Petal Rot

This feared pestilence attacks the outward appearance of plants. Petals drop off flowers, bright colors fade into brown, and plants generally become warped and unappealing. Petal rot can be contracted in any severity.

In game terms, each attack reduces APP and CON by 1 each. Normal plants should be given an effective APP of 1d6 to 3d6, depending on the species; flowering plants gain +6 in appropriate seasons. Reduction of APP to 0 by this disease will not kill the plant.

Root Blight

This pestilence attacks the root systems of plants, rendering them unable to extract nutrients or even water from the soil. As the disease progresses, more and more of the root system is destroyed, until the plant eventually blows away in the slightest breeze. Elves are unaffected by this disease until they root (as most brown elves do in the winter), when they are affected as any other plant. Root Blight can be contracted in the mild, acute, or serious stages only.

In game terms, each attack destroys 5% of a plant's root system. When all of the root system is destroyed, the plant dies. Rare Divine spells available to the elven Arroin cult can regrow roots somewhat like a Restore <Health> spell.

The Six Dragons and the War on Chaos

A Creation Tale

In the beginning, when there was naught but the Void, neither men, gods, nor the world existed. Nestled both within and without the vast Emptiness was only Ouroboros, the Infinite Dragon who existed before even Chaos.

Ouroboros had many thoughts though we know only one, called the Dance of Six Dragons. At first they danced only with each other, but their music disturbed the silence of Chaos, and there rose a being whose existence was begun only to end that of the Dragons.

Orxili is the best-known name for this ancient enemy. Headless, its six limbs grappled with the dragons to destroy them, but the Power of the Dragons is as unchangeable as the Void, and they tore the giant Orxili asunder. They ripped its limbs from its body and cast them into the darkness of the outer Emptiness. Each limb later returned, garnering names of their own, but they were met by other foes than the dragons.

The body of Orxili was placed in the center of the Emptiness and set to spinning on its tip, like an egg. The Dragons gathered around and fanned it with their wings until a world settled into quarters, each of which was an element. Inside of all was the yolk of the egg, a new Being.

Under the thoughts of the Dragons the Yolk-child grew and matured within its shell to become the creature called the Dragon Guardian. Its first act was to shatter its shell, thereby loosing all creation by dividing the cosmos from itself.

Later generations associated Orxili with chaos, or perhaps as the philosophy of the many forms of chaos and how they all fit together. If you have ever tried to reason why all the forms of chaos work as one or are thought of as one thing then you will understand this better.



Disease in Glorantha

Disease is a pervasive menace to Gloranthans. Broos and harpies carry illness, and so do their possessions. Wicked shamans spread sickness by summoning and controlling spirits. Malia is the foul Mistress of Disease, and her worshipers employ special Divine spells to further their foul cause. Many Gloranthan diseases are known by different names to different peoples. Thus, Wasting Disease, Skin and Bones, the Atrophy, Muscle Rot, and the eiven Fiber Blight are different diseases by Gloranthans, but they have similar effects in game terms, and are treated as the same disease for most purposes.

Infection and Possession Diseases

Infection, the most common form of disease in Glorantha, is caused by the malign influences of countless minute disease spirits. In game terms, each Infection Spirit's POW is insignificantly small, but taken collectively they are so numerous as to overwhelm the victim's spirit's resistance, thus causing symptoms of disease in the victim's body.

The game mechanic of spirit combat is not used to resist infection by these tiny disease spirits; instead, the victim's attempt to resist the influences of Infection Spirits is represented in the CON x 5 rolls indicated in the section on "Disease" in "The World," *RQ Deluxe*, pp. 83-84.

Possession, the less common but more dire form of disease in Glorantha, is caused by the victim's covert possession by a single powerful Disease Spirit. Possession by a Disease Spirit is usually more threatening than the attacks of Infection Spirits. The bodies of healthy creatures naturally resist the influences of Infection Spirits, and usually the victim endures and recovers from their harmful effects without skilled assistance. A possessed victim of disease, on the other hand, cannot rid himself of a possessing Disease Spirit; he must enlist the aid of a shaman for an exorcism (or obtain the aid of a number of very rare magical spells which fight possessing Disease Spirits). Further, while characteristic losses from infection diseases are only temporary, characteristic losses from possession diseases are permanent.

Fortunately, the possession forms of disease are relatively uncommon, except where deliberately spread and fostered by depraved agents of cults like Malia. Certain species with natural immunities, like broos and harpies, also carry Infection and possession Disease Spirits without harm to the host.

Possession by disease spirits follows the standard rules for Spirit Combat (see *RQ Deluxe*, pp. 92-93). Even when a disease is caused by a possessing spirit, it is categorized by degrees of severity, judged by comparing the spirit's POW to its victim's on the table below:

Severity	Spirit's POW is:
Mild	less than or equal to half the victim's characteristic
Acute	less than or equal to victim's characteristic x 1
Serious	less than or equal to victim's characteristic x 2
Terminal	greater than victim's characteristic x 2

Spirits of Disease

Spirits of Disease have only POW as a characteristic, and carry disease. The greater spirits that cause possession disease appear as gray stick-like figures with eerie, gaping holes for eyes and mouth, and skeletal arms reaching out for their target; their apparent SIZ equals their POW. The lesser spirits which cause infection disease have no measurable POW. Infection Spirits are almost identical to Disease Spirits in appearance, but are typically tiny and numerous, and very difficult to identify by type, even with magic.

Average spirits of Disease normally have a POW of 3d6, although more powerful ones can be found on the Spirit Plane or summoned by an evil shaman. A Spirit of Disease need not become visible to its victim to initiate Spirit Combat. A Spirit of Disease moves at a rate equal to its POW, and follows a victim as long as necessary unless bound to an object or location, in which case its maximum distance is 10 meters or the area of the location, as applicable. Spirits of Disease bound to a specific object normally attack each person to touch the item until they succeed in possessing one of them.

A victim can only be possessed by a single Spirit of Disease of a given type at a time. Thus, a victim cannot be possessed by two Wasting Disease spirits at the same time, although he could be possessed by a Wasting Disease and a Brain Fever Spirit.

Characteristic-increasing spells such as Vigor, Seastrength, and Enhance do not increase a victim's chance to resist the attack of a Spirit of Disease, but Spirit Screen, Spirit Resistance, and Spirit Block do, at the rate of 2 points of characteristic per point of Spirit Screen or intensity of Resistance, and 10 points per point of Spirit Block used. Once the spirit possesses a victim, no spell can aid him, although spells may produce a temporary increase in the characteristic.

If a disembodied Spirit of Disease is reduced to zero magic points it is forced to the Spirit Plane for 1 day per point of POW, and cannot follow a target. If it was bound into an object such a defeat will not release it, but it cannot remanifest for that length of time.

Average Disease Spirit

Characteristics	Average
POW 3d6	10-11
Move:	equal to Power

Large Disease Spirit

Characteristic	Average
POW 4d6+6	20
Move:	equal to Power

Effects of Disease

If any characteristic is reduced to 0, the victim dies. Resurrection is possible only if the characteristic is raised to 3 or greater (by Divine Intervention or Restore Health spells). Loss of characteristics affect attributes as well.

Maximum Characteristic Loss (Optional)

The severity of a disease (based on the characteristic's value at the time of possession) limits the maximum characteristic loss from any single infection or possession disease, regardless of how many times a CON x5 roll is failed or how many days the victim is possessed by a disease spirit. For example, even though Walks-With-Spirit-Fathers is a frail old man (CON 5, HP 7), he isn't going to die of a mild case of infectious Black Tongue; the mild form may occasionally be fatal to an infant, however.

Severity	Maximum Characteristic Loss
Mild	-3
Acute	-6
Serious	-12
Terminal	unlimited

Carrying Disease

When a subject is possessed by a Disease Spirit he becomes a carrier of the disease. This is true even when the subject cannot be affected by the spirit, as occurs with broos, or when Carry <Disease> is cast upon a Malia worshiper. As the disease progresses, the Disease Spirit spawns Infection Spirits as a by-product, and people coming in contact with the diseased subject are thus exposed to infection forms of the disease. Such infection spirits typically "swarm" upon items touched by the subject, and thus become sources of exposure to infection disease.



Infection spirit swarms do not appear to affect the possessed victims. The swarms abandon the victim when possession ends, but may remain associated with items indefinitely, creating persistent sources of infection.

Infection Spirits also seem to appear spontaneously on the Spirit Plane and in certain locations (e.g., the Forest of Disease in Laskal). Such also can be "seeded," as in the Clanking City ruins in the Holy Country and in certain location in Dorastor; the processes involved are obscure.

Inactive Disease Spirits (Optional)

Normally Disease Spirits continue to attack the characteristic of the possessed victim until the characteristic is reduced to zero, and the victim dies. In some cases, however, the Disease Spirit becomes inactive before it kills the victim.

An inactive Disease Spirit continues to covertly possess its victim, but does not attack the victim's characteristic. The victim no longer displays symptoms of the disease, but the possessing spirit is still plainly present to magical senses.

The base chance for a possession spirit to become inactive after any reduction of a victim's characteristic is 5%, but this base chance may be modified secretly at the GM's discretion. For example, the possession form of Wasting Disease rarely becomes inactive (GM modification to 1%), except in marshy regions in south central and south western Genertela, where inactive forms are quite common (GM modification to 20%).

An inactive Disease Spirit remains inactive indefinitely. Any serious shock or injury, exposure to harsh climate or other diseases, or exceptional exertion may cause the disease to become active again. The GM determines when a test is necessary; the chance for the disease to become active again is its POW x 5.

Curing Disease

A victim of an infection disease is cured when he succeeds in a CON x5 recovery roll. A victim of a possession disease can only be cured when the Spirit of Disease is exorcised from the victim. To exorcise a Disease Spirit, a shaman or healer normally summons a Healing Spirit and directs it to drive the offending spirit from the victim. The Treat Disease skill improves the chance of recovery for victim's of both infection and possession disease.

Treat Disease (Knowledge skill 05%)

When dealing with an infection disease, successful use of this skill doubles a victim's chance of success at his next disease recovery roll CON roll. A critical success triples the next chance of success, while a fumble halves the next chance.

When dealing with possession diseases, successful use of this skill blocks 2d6 magic points of a single possessing Spirit of Disease, reducing the chance of lost characteristics and giving a Healing Spirit a greatly increased chance of defeating and driving out the possessing spirit. On a critical skill roll 4d6 magic points are blocked. (Optional: If a possessing Spirit of Disease is reduced to below 0 magic points by use of this skill, the possession spirit becomes inactive.)

Treat Disease can only be used on a victim once per period in which the disease can attack. Victims of acute, serious, or terminal diseases need constant care to gain this benefit. Victims of mild diseases only require attention one day per week. If more than one Spirit of Disease is possessing a victim, the healer determines which spirit is affected by that use of the skill.

A successful use of Treat Disease assures that an object is free from Infection Spirits. Rituals vary in details from culture to culture, but each attempt requires a period of individual attention every day for one week. Exorcism of bound spirits requires other, more involved rituals.

Divine Intervention

Once a character has been possessed by a Spirit of Disease, he may attempt Divine Intervention to exorcise the spirit (remember that Divine Intervention can only be attempted once per week). If the roll is successful, the exact effects must be determined by the gamemaster based upon the character's religion. An initiate of any healing deity or other special disease foe (Chalana Arroy, Arroin, Yelm, Humakt, Xiola Umbar) may hope the spirit is destroyed. An initiate of a major deity (Orlanth, Ernalda, Kyger Litor, Aldrya) of a pantheon including a healing deity may hope the spirit is exorcised, or at least rendered inactive. Initiates or deities without healing virtues have little chance to benefit from Divine Intervention in this case. Divine Intervention by an initiate of Malia has no effect on a disease; only initiation or the casting of the <Carry Disease> spell can save the victim. (See the "Cult of Malia," pages 27-33.)

Recovery from Disease

Characteristics and skills reduced by infection diseases return to normal after a period of days equal to the number of successful disease attacks. Recovery from such harmful effects requires rest and limited activity; at the GM's discretion, recovery may be delayed or prevented if the victim overexerts himself.

Characteristics and skills decreased by possession diseases are permanently reduced. Possession by a Disease Spirit leaves the exorcised victim weak and disoriented for a period of days equal to the number of successful disease attacks; during this period FAT is reduced to one-tenth of the normal score.

The Divine spell Restore Health to <characteristic> can be used to restore characteristic points lost to possession disease. This spell can be cast on an individual even years after he has been ravaged by disease, and can restore any number of lost points, subject only to the limit of the characteristic's original rolled value. Regardless of whether or not a point is recovered, all skills which were reduced must recover separately, as described above.

Good food and fresh air are great aids to recovery from disease, even as Ernalda and Orlanth are among Malia's greatest foes. For most races, sunlight is also important (trolls require cool shadows). Exposure to sunlight (shadow) and fresh air are necessary for successful recovery from most diseases, and lack of these qualities can lengthen the period of recovery, at the gamemaster's option. In addition, good food, personal care, and the administrations of a healer can, at the GM's discretion, also speed recovery.

Cleansing Disease Tainted Items

Broos commonly carry disease, and broo possessions become associated with Disease Spirits through physical contact. The process may be incidental to the object's use or handling, or it may be deliberate, for broos often ritually urinate and defecate on possessions to mark their ownership, and likewise defile treasure and valuables to spite their enemies. Persons coming in physical contact with or close proximity to infected items are exposed to infection and possession disease.

Most Gloranthans learn that handling broo equipment is hazardous, and objects infected with Disease Spirits are easily discerned by magic sight. Yet sometimes the value of an infected object justifies difficult and laborious cleansing rituals (see the Treat Disease skill above).

Cleansing an item takes a full week. Each item must be cleansed separately, even in the case of multiple small items (such as coins or pieces of armor); this makes it obvious why most broo-owned objects are simply abandoned. The character does not need to watch the item the entire time, but it must be kept in the same location, and so a nomad must settle down for the week.

Every culture has its own cleansing rituals, usually directly related to their mythology and special disease foes. The item must be



buried, washed, and go through various other processes; among humans, the process always involves heat and/or fire, and so wood and porous materials rarely survive the cleansing process. At the end of the week, the person must attempt to make his Treat Disease skill roll. If he succeeds the item is cleansed. If he fails the object is not cleansed, and the Infection Spirit(s) on the object(s) may attack the character (though he will not necessarily know when he is attacked).

Multiple items may be treated in a week, but the Treat Disease skill must be made separately for each item. Once the roll has failed for one infected item all subsequent rolls for that week will fail, and so the rest of the items will remain infected, and may infect the character. It is suggested that the gamemaster make these rolls, and simply ignore the rolls made for items which are not infected.

Successfully cleansing an infected item drives all Infection Spirits from the object. Even if more than one disease infects an item, it need only be cleansed once to make it safe.

Common Diseases

This is a selection of the more common — and generally less malignant — diseases encountered in Glorantha.

Blotches

Victims display red or black blotches on the face and skin that grow steadily as the disease progresses, and are painful to the touch, becoming most sensitive just before death. In game terms, the victim's APP is reduced by 1 per attack.

Black Tongue

Black Tongue affects a victim's tongue and throat, causing them to blacken and swell, making speech painful. Breathing is only affected in the latter stages, when the victim has trouble eating because of the swelling and the pain which accompanies it. In game terms, each attack reduces the victim's CON by 1 per attack, and Communication skills (and taste-based Perception skills) by 5%.

Bloat

The Bloat affects a person's stomach and digestive system, making it difficult to digest food. As the disease progresses, the victim derives less nourishment from food, which begins to pass through his system almost undigested. The stomach begins to swell as the victim must eat more and more food to survive, and eventually he or she starves to death, regardless of how much is eaten. In game terms, each attack reduces the victim's general Hit Points by 1.

Joint Rot

Joint Rot attacks a victim's joints, slowing him down. More speed and range of motion are lost as the disease progresses, until finally the victim is completely helpless, unable to move. In game terms, each attack adds 1 to the victim's base Strike Rank. Movement rate is reduced by 1 for every 5 successful attacks. Once base Strike Rank has reached 20, the victim's joints are locked, and he or she is unable to move.

Ringing

A person who contracts Ringing experiences painful ringing in his ears. Once the disease has taken effect, the ringing is constant, with additional attacks increasing the effect on the target. In game terms, each attack reduces all of the victim's hearing based skills roll by 5%. For humans this is normally only Listen, but troll Darksense is devastated by this disease. When all affected skills are reduced to zero, the victim is permanently deafened.

Sniffles/Sneezing

This is one of the least dangerous diseases known, and one of the most common. It affects a victim's respiratory tract, causing him to

sniffle and/or sneeze constantly. Some healers classify Sniffles and Sneezing as separate diseases, but both are symptoms of the same affliction. The victim sniffles constantly, reducing all smell-based skills by 5% per magic point of the spirit. In the Mild stage sneezing attacks lasting 1d6 minutes come each hour, while in the Acute stage they come every five minutes. Most humans do not have smell-based skills, but (for example) a Telmori in wolf-form or an Orlanthi who uses the Identify Scent smell (see *River of Cradles*, page 161) has appropriate skills reduced.

Thunder Lung

This disease affects a person's lungs, causing shortness of breath and constant coughing and sneezing fits, occasionally violent enough to cause damage to the victim. In the final stages, this disease can cause the victim to literally explode from within. In game terms, the victim's FAT is reduced by 1d6 per attack. On a critical roll, the victim suffers 1d6 damage to his chest as well.

White Eye

This disease affects a person's eyes, making them discolored, weepy, and swollen. Some versions are known where one eye swells to over double its normal size; one common variant makes the eyes very sensitive to light. Vision is affected, and the disease can cause permanent blindness if not treated quickly. In game terms, each attack reduces all sight-based perception skills by 5%. Other sight-dependent skills (such as Weapon and Manipulation skills) are reduced by 3% per attack. When all sight-based skills are reduced to zero, the victim is blinded.

Withering Disease

This disease atrophies portions of the body. Unless the infection is arrested, portion(s) of the body waste away completely. The disease affects only non-vital locations, but can eventually leave the victim without the use of any limbs.

When the victim is possessed, a random non-vital Hit Location (usually a limb) is affected, and its Hit Points reduced by one. Thereafter, each attack reduces the Hit Points again. When the location is at zero Hit Points, a new location (rolled randomly) is affected by the disease.

Locations permanently lost to this disease by possession cannot be healed by skill, spell, or time, although an atrophied limb could be cut off and a new one grown by use of Regrow Limb or Regeneration.

Mortal Diseases

These Gloranthan diseases are commonly life-threatening.

Brain Fever

Brain Fever causes a person to suffer intense fevers, which can burn away intelligence forever. An untreated victim is reduced to an animal existence, and will eventually die. In game terms, the victim's INT is reduced by 1 per attack.

As INT is reduced, the victim may not have enough memory left to remember all of his spells. When INT is insufficient to remember all spells known, the largest spell is forgotten completely, and this process is repeated as INT falls. In the case of spells of the same point total, or of sorcery spells, a random spell is forgotten. Even if INT is restored forgotten spells are not recalled, and must be learned again normally.

If INT is reduced to 2, the victim cannot think effectively, and all knowledge-based skills are reduced by 5%. If INT falls to 1, the victim becomes comatose.



Creeping Chills

This disease weakens the victim's general health and vitality, leaving him vulnerable to the ravages of disease and poison. In game terms, the victim's CON is reduced by 1 per attack.

Shakes

The Shakes attacks a person's nervous system, reducing control over his movements. More motor control is lost as the disease progresses, until the victim is just a mass of quivering ganglia. In final stages, the nervous system collapses, causing death. In game terms, the victim's DEX is reduced by 1 per attack.

Soul Waste

After Plague, Soul Waste is the most feared disease in Glorantha, for it kills a person psychically. A person who dies from Soul Waste has had his spirit destroyed; there is nothing left to go to an afterlife or to be returned by Divine Intervention. As the disease progresses the victim suffers a loss of vitality, motivation, and purpose, and is subject to wild swings from depression to senseless rage. In game terms, the victim's POW is reduced by 1 per attack.

Wasting Disease

This disease causes a person's muscles to atrophy, taking all of the victim's strength and ability to act. As it progresses the victim becomes unable to move and eventually dies, with nothing covering his bones but his skin. In game terms, the victim's STR is reduced by 1 per attack. If STR falls to 2, all affected skills are reduced to 5%. When STR has fallen to 1 the victim is bedridden, unable to move without aid, and all STR-based skills fall to 0.

Plague

Plagues are the most deadly diseases known, for they can depopulate entire regions if not detected and stopped quickly. Fortunately, the several types of Plague are all extremely rare. Each has different symptoms, but all have the same game effects, reducing a person's vital statistics, wasting their body, mind, and soul with equal rapidity. In game terms, STR, CON, INT, POW, DEX, and APP are reduced by 1 per attack.

Non-Human Diseases

Most of the diseases described above can affect any humanoid race in Glorantha, except broos and the Mostali (who are immune to all diseases). Similar diseases affect mammals, but in most cases a human cannot be infected by an "animal" Disease Spirit, and vice versa, though there are exceptions (Plague being the best example). These diseases do not affect plants or insects, or most aquatic animals or reptiles, although similar versions of some of them are known (again, Plague is the best example). From a God Learner point of view, these diseases affect any race descended from the Man Rune, and other types of diseases might affect those creatures descended from the Beast Runes, Plant Rune, and possibly the Dragonewt Rune.

In general, the closer a species is to human, the more likely it is to be affected by the above diseases, and the less likely it is to suffer from unique ones. Thus, trolls have no unique diseases, and are immune only to the Bloat. Similarly, elves are not affected by any of the Common or Mortal Diseases listed above, though they are subject to various similar diseases normally restricted to plants, such as Sap Rot and Fiber Blight.

Disease Summary Table

Most common diseases of central Genertela are noted on the following table, indicating severity and effects for infection and possession forms.

Common Diseases

disease	infection max. severity	possession max. severity**	characteristic attacked to possess	effects per attack
Blotches	mild	mild to acute	APP	-1 APP *
Black Tongue	mild to acute	mild to serious	CON	-5% Comm skills; -1 CON *
Bloat	mild to acute	mild to acute	General HP	-1 general Hit Point
Joint Rot	mild	mild to serious	DEX	+1 Strike Rank; -1 Move/5 attacks
Ringing	mild	mild to acute	INT	-5% hearing rolls
Sniffles/Sneezing	mild	mild to acute	CON	-5% smell-based skills per spirit MP *
Thunder Lung	mild to acute	mild to terminal	CON	-1d6 FAT
White Eye	mild	mild to serious	INT	-5% sight skills
Withering Disease	mild to acute	mild to terminal	General HP	-1 location HP

Mortal Diseases

disease	infection max. severity	possession max. severity	characteristic attacked to possess	effects per attack
Brain Fever	mild to serious	mild to terminal	INT	-1 INT *
Creeping Chills	mild to serious	mild to terminal	CON	-1 CON *
the Shakes	mild to serious	mild to terminal	DEX	-1 DEX *
Soul Waste	mild to serious	mild to terminal	POW	-1 POW *
Wasting Disease	mild to serious	mild to terminal	STR	-1 STR *
Plague	mild to serious	mild to terminal	POW	-1 APP, CON, DEX, INT, POW, STR *

* Characteristic loss decreases skill categories scores as well.

** Though a possessing spirit's POW may be great enough to qualify it at a higher category of severity, maximum characteristic loss is limited to the severity listed on this table. (See Maximum Characteristic Loss, p. 36.)

Random Disease Table

1D100	Disease
01-05	Blotches
06-11	Black Tongue
12-16	Bloat
17-26	Boggle Trot
27-29	Joint Rot
30-34	Ringing
35-45	Sniffles/Sneezing
46-48	Thunder Lung
49-51	White Eye
52-54	Withering Disease
55-64	Brain Fever
65-74	Creeping Chills
75-84	The Shakes
85-89	Soul Waste
90-99	Wasting Disease
00	Plague

Bagog

The Scorpion Queen



Mythos and History

Bagog was one of many creatures led by the Devil into the universe. Her stinging tail was a fearsome weapon, and many races and deities fell to her. At first she was content to enjoy the carnage of the Chaos Age, fighting and eating all who opposed her, but soon other urges shook her. She began to lay eggs which hatched into smaller versions of herself. Her progeny varied with her provender, and so there were scorpion men, scorpion horses, scorpion dragonets, and many other types. Some were unable to live, while others flourished in the Darkness.

The scorpion races ate as Bagog had, and their children gained knowledge and power from their foes. Soon they formed a rough social order, centered about the might of Bagog and her daughters, the first Scorpion Queens. The Dorasta cult of the land of Dorastor has a story of how the land goddess's son Tobros was stung by Bagog at the Seven Hills, and was laid to rest beneath the mountains which bear his name until a cure could be found for Bagog's deadly venom.

The tribes have survived since the Darkness because they live in places that other races dread, impassable mountains and unlivable deserts. They occasionally surge and spread over nearby lands, or are exploited by broods or other beings for their own purposes. Among themselves, and among chaos creatures friendly to them, the scorpion races are known as Djurulgz, which can be translated as "the People." They have sometimes been hired as mercenaries by humans willing to overlook their chaotic nature in return for their military service.

Images and pictures are rarely used by Bagog's crude worshippers, since she is incarnate in the Queen of each tribe. In prehistoric troll and Orlanthi manuscripts she is drawn as a gigantic wrinkled scorpion woman. An ancient Pelorian mosaic shows the war god Shargash presenting a captured scorpion-thing

to Murharxarm (Yelm Imperator), and this may also be a representation of Bagog.

The cult assures its members eternal life in Bagog. The children of Bagog feast upon their dead, assuring the preservation of all knowledge within the tribe.

Bagog is associated with the Runes of Chaos, Beast, and Man. There are minor associations with Darkness, although the mythic context of this relationship is unknown.

Cult Ecology

Bagog is the mother of all Scorpion Folk. Her worship provides the minimum culture needed to survive the hardships of the wilderness, and the lore of the People is passed down through this religion. Bagog accepts worship from scorpion folk only. Beings of other races who desire to worship this horrible entity must first undergo the Ritual of Rebirth and become a scorpion man.

The People hate all things non-chaotic, especially such champions of anti-chaos sentiment as Urox or Zorak Zoran. They are friendly with broods, and are often heavily exploited by broods as shock-troops and slave worshippers of brood spirits. In return, the broods give protection from wilderness diseases by means of Malia worship.

The night of Freezeday of each Illusion week is the holy time for the cult. The high holy night is the holy night of Sea Season, when the cold winter has ended, and the tribes celebrate the return of plentiful food. Great raids frequently begin on this night, preceded by much ritual preparation, readying of new initiates, etc. Such raids usually begin on Wildday night of the same week.

The Cult in the World

The Scorpion Queen is Bagog incarnate, and her word is law. Shamans and acolytes take care of tribal duties, and are directly responsible to her.



Advancement in the tribe is identical to advancement in the cult, and requires that a scorpion man defeat and eat a scorpion man of higher standing to achieve status. Occasional individual scorpion men have gained great power outside of the cult, but this is rare. Bagog is worshiped everywhere that scorpion men survive. Her worship is thus confined to Genertela, particularly mountains, the Genert Desert, and the chaos hellhole of Dorastor. Her children have spread into other lands as well, and can be found almost anywhere on the continent in small groups, though such scattered remnants are usually without a Scorpion Queen.

The Scorpion Queen is the center of power for the tribe. Only one Scorpion Queen can exist in a tribe at a given time, for she is what defines the tribe - if she is slain, the tribe ceases to exist, and the surviving members become just another wandering band of scorpion men, who will track her killers to the ends of the earth. Smaller tribes usually muster enough members to qualify as a shrine, giving the Queen access to the Ritual of Rebirth. Larger tribes may qualify as a minor or major temple, depending on their size.

Each tribe is an independent entity, led by its own Scorpion Queen. Tribes occasionally band together, but long-term cooperation is rare, partly because of the territorial urges of the Queens, and partly because the distance between tribes in the wilderness is often great. Queenless bands are fairly common, and consist of the ragged survivors of a tribe which was destroyed, or of groups which have broken away from their tribe, either temporarily or permanently. Very powerful Queens have allied tribes permanently by killing and devouring other Queens. Queen Gagig Twobarb, for example, founded the Queendom of Jab near the Forest of First Reward (called the Chaos Woods by humans, in Heortland) by defeating and eating three other Queens. Since all four Queens were now incarnate in one body, all four tribes followed Queen Gagig without question.

The Queen is also High Priestess of Bagog, and rules her people both spiritually and temporally. Qualified female acolytes or shamans may challenge her in combat for her position, though certain signs must appear before the challenge has to be accepted.

Initiate Membership

Any scorpion man may join this cult automatically by sacrificing a point of POW. If a scorpion man refuses initiation into Bagog, she is usually driven from the tribe, although exceptions are often made if she

demonstrates membership in another useful cult (such as Malia). Applicants who are not scorpion men must first undergo the Ritual of Rebirth, and then sacrifice a point of POW.

Initiates are the feeders and warriors of the tribe, and must bring 10 SIZ points of food to the tribe each week. They need not give any of their time or income to the cult, but must always obey the commands of the shamans and acolytes.

Every member of the People pledges to protect her clutch-mates, and to defend the tribe and the Queen at all times. Healing, food, and shelter are provided to every initiate if available, though all scorpion men are expected to contribute to providing these. They must accompany shamans and acolytes on raids at least once a season. Tribal shamans are usually willing to teach initiates all types of spirit magic. Initiates can learn one-use Divine spells with the permission of an acolyte or shaman. Initiates have access to Divine Intervention following the normal procedure, but the form taken by such divine aid is limited; see Miscellaneous Notes.

Shaman Membership

A prospective shaman of Bagog may be male or female, and must pass ordinary shaman requirements, including facing and defeating Bagog's Last Husband, a spirit similar to the Bad Man. In addition, before the tribe will accept the new shaman, she must challenge and defeat another shaman. Traditionally, the shaman is from the candidate's own tribe, but she can be from another tribe or even species if the Queen allows. On rare occasions, an elderly shaman may sacrifice herself to Bagog voluntarily, an act highly honored by every scorpion tribe (and doubtless appreciated by the challengers, who thereby gain full shaman status without a struggle).

If the challenge succeeds, the candidate eats the body of the former shaman and becomes a new Shaman of Bagog. Defeat of powerful shamans sometimes is accomplished by several candidates, who all feed on the body. The fetch of the former shaman is not gained by such devourers, of course, but captured spirits can be so gained, no more than one per devourer. The spirit must be recaptured by the new shaman, and this is often her first task as a shaman.

Shamans are expected to officiate at the tribal feasts, when the first captives of the season are consumed. Shamans may select from the prisoners and catches eaten at feasts, choosing after only the Scorpion Queen herself. They are officially subordinate to the acolytes, but traditionally maintain more power, despite their lack of reusable Divine spells.



Though Hahlggrim had been able to raise the main Skanathi tribes from a distance, and knew that portions of their strength were on the march already, he needed to treat with the South Skanathi, a brave but notoriously suspicious folk spread across the hills of Skalsland up to the Rockwood Mountains.

Hahlggrim led us south, past Thunder Mountain and over the Erinflarth ford at Ribbon Sands, for storms in the south and east had flooded the Skalsplitter and raised the Erinflarth below there to a dangerous level. This meant that we must go through wild country, especially the Hardbrush flats, still reputedly safe.

Hahlggrim led the party, mounted on Lightning, a parti-gelding of high intelligence. With us rode Ketil Ericsbane, Oddi the Keen (a storm khan of Urox), and Ellisif the High Healer. Each had brought three of their company, so that we made seventeen in all, including the healers. We had holy bread, salted meat, and a gift from Hahlggrim of holy Clearwine, which could open the mind and season the muscles of the soft.

After we crossed the Erinflarth we slowed our pace so that Oddi might occasionally check the wild animals for chaos taint: the Storm Bull's worshipers had been invaluable in the last few weeks as Hahlggrim began to define the real border between Bilini and the strength of chaos. Several farmers and one merchant were found to be active worshipers of chaos by Oddi's skills alone.

After several hours, Oddi frowned deeply. "I sense what I would sense were we deep in Dorastor. There is chaos here today and yesterday, last week, a season or a year ago. Bolthor has indeed delayed long his stroke."

Hahlggrim decided to press forward, for we would be among the Skanathi on the morrow, yet to return our way and pass east of the Watch Hills might take many days, for none could know the full will of a storm god. As we went, the ground showed occasional mushy dips, and the Healers forbade us water our horses from such depressions, though the Skalsplitter itself was pure though muddy.

Encamping, Yelm quickly left us to slide beyond the Rockwood's peaks, and the cold came. We had set guards about the camp, but the chaos onslaught in the night was powerful.

...After midnight the chaos creatures struck at the horses. Lightning, whom Hahlggrim never picketed, sounded the alarm. The noble steed smashed one of the demons to the ground with a blow of his powerful hooves. But there were several demons among the animals, hairy and glowing in the night, and even as we ran toward them we saw one of the fiends use its claws to slash a great wound in Lightning's haunch. The horse cried out, for he knew doom was upon him. But if the monsters thought they had stumbled across simple hill people, they soon learned differently. Not only did these lumbering creatures make their own light and thereby good target for spear and sword, but the air between us and them began to stir with Rune Magic. Our foes reeled even before our blades could bite.

Bagog shamans may obtain the spell of Worship Bagog reusably. They cannot become acolytes of the cult, but a female shaman could become Queen.

Acolyte Membership

The acolytes link the People to Bagog. They wield her magical skill, and lead raiding parties to provide magical support. Acolytes are a mark of status to a tribe, for only the larger, more important tribes can support their existence. However, they are also expendable, since the tribe's spiritual needs can be (and usually are) fulfilled by the shamans and the Queen herself. Hence, acolytes are widely used in combat instead of being coddled and protected (as are the priests of most cults). Many solitary bands of scorpion men are led by renegade, exiled, or restless acolytes, who may wish to gain the skills necessary to return and challenge the Queen.

To be eligible for this status, an initiate must have proven her ability in hunting and raiding, and must never have stolen from her clutch-mates. She must face and defeat another acolyte and devour its body to gain this status. The acolyte is often from another tribe, and may even be of another cult if the Queen allows. The victor gains the wives or husbands of the other, and will assume her status in the tribe if she can retain it. Only females may become acolytes.

Acolytes of Bagog gain reusable access to cult Divine spells, but may not become shamans. They must celebrate the holy days with their initiates, by leading raids and services to glorify and propitiate Bagog. At some time in their lives they must meet and defeat a Rune Lord, acolyte, or shaman of a non-Chaotic cult and devour its body. This is a prerequisite for acolytes who plan to challenge the Queen.

Common Divine Magic: Divination, Heal Wound, Sanctify, Worship Bagog

Special Divine Magic: Carapace, Claws, Jabbers, Sprout Legs, Venom Boosting

Scorpion Queens

Scorpion Queens are truly dreadful monsters, whose only redeeming feature is that they normally remain hidden in the scorpion village, often confining themselves to a single large cave or burrow. Most non-chaotic people are unaware that Queens exist, and often chaotic races know them only through rumor.

A candidate for Queenhood must challenge and defeat the current Queen, then eat her body. The challenger must be a female shaman or acolyte. There are no other requirements: if a candidate is strong enough to defeat the Queen, then she deserves to rule



the tribe. Scorpion Queens have all of the normal benefits of priests, but none of the restrictions. They have no skill restrictions. When checking for Divine Intervention they roll 1D10 rather than 1D100, although it is limited for them as it is for other members. All members of the tribe follow the Queen's orders except during a ritual Queen battle, when none may interfere on pain of death (delivered by the winner, regardless of whom the scorpion man aided).

Queens obtain the allied spirit of the former queen, which is kept in the body of a scorpion or non-sentient member of the people. This spirit does not participate in any Queen battle (though the current Queen can use its spells and magic points in the fight). Most such allied spirits are hundreds of years old, and very powerful. If the allied spirit is lost, a new one can only be gained by a successful challenger, who receives a new allied spirit from Bagog after she has devoured the former Scorpion Queen. Such new allied spirits have normal POW and INT.

Common Divine Magic: Divination, Heal Wound, Sanctify, Worship Bagog

Special Divine Magic: Carapace, Claws, Jabbers, Ritual of Devouring, Ritual of Rebirth, Sprout Legs, Venom Boosting

Bagog Special Divine Spells

Carapace

2 points

touch, temporal, nonstackable, reusable

This spell may only be cast on a scorpion man. It toughens her exoskeleton, increasing the armor of all hit locations by 8 points.

Claws

1 point

touch, temporal, nonstackable, reusable

This spell can only be cast on a scorpion man. It turns one of her arms into a large scorpion-like pincer. Optionally, the spell can be cast on her tail, in which case it can neither sting nor inject poison for the duration of the spell. The claw has a weapon strike rank of 3 and does 2D6 damage plus any damage bonus. Base Claw Attack equals 25% plus Attack Modifier, and can be increased by experience. The claw attack can do no knockback, and cannot impale.

Jabbers

1 point

touch, temporal, nonstackable, reusable

This spell can only be cast on a scorpion man. It turns one of her arms into a long bony point. Optionally, the spell can be cast on her tail, in which case it can

Oddi, half-armored, reached them first, his face horrible with battle frenzy. He stunned the demon which had attacked Lightning as its claws scraped against his chain mail, and the battle cry of the Uroxi rang out in the night. I raced after Oddi, foolishly not waiting to do more than grab my scimitar. I dodged behind the demon and swung with all my might into the fur behind the thing's knee, the weighted tip of the blade hewing flesh and bone just as my teacher had taught me. The demon bellowed with pain and buckled immediately, which made my heart fiercely satisfied. Yet I forgot that even trees (for the monsters were three meters high at the least) must somewhere fall, and the stinking hulk came crashing down on me while I was still extended from the blow. I heard the brutal thud of Oddi's sword as he lopped off the demon's head with one swing, missing me by little more than a hand's width.

Though it was dead, it was heavy, and I could not pull out from beneath it at once. Its glow persisted, and as I struggled from it I saw things crawling on the corpse, so near my eyes that I cried out in terror and shook even as I pulled free, my skin crawling and my stomach heaving with nausea. By then the rest of the demons were dead or fleeing, and the Healers were gentling warriors from their frenzy.

Hahlgrim and Ellisif argued strongly about healing Lightning, for the stubborn priest did not feel that a horse was worth the drain of Magic, but had he not finally relented I feared violence, for Hahlgrim would not deny a friend, even should it have a mane, and any use of arms against a Healer would bode ill for the war.

When I surveyed the battle site at dawn, I was surprised to see that there were beheaded scorpion men as well as demons sprawled where the horses had been tied. One had a long sharp bone in place of its left arm, and a huge claw like a crab in place of its right. Oddi told me how it had grabbed an initiate with the claw, then repeatedly stabbed her with the wicked bone, fortunately not killing her at once — now she was Healed, and whistling while she saddled her horse. Another scorpion man had missed its aim in the night. It had impaled a stump with its tail stinger, and was then dispatched before it could remove the stinger from the wood. Stinger seemed too light a word for the appendage, which was as long and strong as my arm.

Oddi asked me, a good Lunar worshiper, how I liked my chaos friends, and indeed these were foul and most gruesome, but I stoutly maintained that not all chaos folk were such, at which he shook his head. He also told me his gratitude that I had struck down the demon, but that under the frenzy of the Bull he had come near to beheading me as well as the demon, and that never should I go before a warrior who felt the Power of the Bull.

We stacked all the heads on a pyre and burnt them, and continued toward the looming mountains, whose grand beauty looked most hospitable after the terrors of the night.



neither sting nor inject poison for the duration of the spell. The jabber has a weapon strike rank of 1, and does 1D10 damage plus any damage bonus. Base jabber Attack equals 25% plus Attack Modifier, and can increase with experience. The jabber can impale.

Ritual of Devouring 1 point
ritual Ceremony spell, nonstackable, one-use

This spell is cast before killing and devouring an intelligent victim. Properly done, it enables whoever devours the victim to gain knowledge from it. Each participant in the grisly feast must eat 1D6 SIZ points of the victim to gain benefits. Eating greater amounts does not increase the benefits.

The eater permanently gains 1D6 percentiles in any skill in which the victim was at least 25 percentiles better than the eater. If the victim was 50 percentiles better, the eater gains 2d6 percentiles, and so forth, adding 1d6 for every 25 percentiles difference. This cannot take the eater over 75% in the skill.

For each spirit magic spell the victim knew, the eater must roll his INT or less on 1D100; success allows the eater to gain knowledge of that spell. If more than one person eats a creature, only one of them can gain each specific spell. The eater must have room in his INT for another spell, or none can be gained. Sorcery spells cannot be obtained through this ritual.

If the Devourer is a shaman, acolyte, or Scorpion Queen, a single Divine spell can be gained from the victim. The devourer must roll under his or her POWx3 on 1d100. If successful, all points of a single Divine spell are gained, determined randomly. Spells which were one-use to the victim cannot be so gained. If more than one scorpion man participates in the feast, each can gain a spell. If two or more roll the same spell, the points are divided evenly in the case of stackable spells. If the spell rolled is nonstackable, only one of them can gain the spell, and the other must reroll for the spell gained.

If the devoured victim is another scorpion man, the percentiles gained in skills and the chance of learning a spirit magic spell are doubled. The chance of gaining a Divine spell is not increased, and no more than one can ever be gained.

Only scorpion men gain benefits from Ritual Devouring, though any intelligent species can be profitably eaten. This ritual is always performed before a formal challenge for acolyte, shaman, or Scorpion Queen status.

Ritual of Rebirth 4 points

ritual Ceremony spell, nonstackable, one-use

This spell lasts 4 hours, during which time one or more prisoners must be eaten by the Scorpion Queen. A few days later, the Queen lays an egg for each creature devoured, which hatch after a season. Infant scorpion creatures emerge, with upper torsos and heads similar to the species devoured, and lower bodies like those of scorpions.

If the Queen combines a successful Divine Intervention with the Ritual of Rebirth and devours only one being, the actual person eaten emerges as a member of the scorpion race. He retains all his former skills and spells as well as (most cruelly) a memory of his former life. His skill with the scorpion sting starts at 05% plus bonuses. Individuals forced into this chaotic existence usually go mad. If this ritual is performed on the cult high holy day and only a single victim is devoured, no Divine Intervention roll is required for this result to be achieved. This is the only method whereby someone who is not a scorpion man can join the tribe.

Sprout Legs 1 point

touch, temporal, stackable, reusable

This spell can only be cast on a scorpion man. Each point causes an additional leg to sprout from her side. The leg has the same hit points as other legs, and, like the other legs, damage done to the new leg does not count vs. total hit points. Each two legs sprouted increases the scorpion man's Move by 1, to a maximum of 6.

Venom Boosting 1 point

touch, temporal, stackable, reusable

This spell can only be cast on a scorpion man. Each point increases the venom potency of her tail sting by 1D6 points. The amount of increase is rolled separately each time the sting hits and penetrates armor.

Subservient Cults

Spirit of Reprisal

Bagog has no spirit of reprisal. Renegades lose all cult Divine Magics; their tails shrivel at the rate of 1 Hit Point per day, and fall off when they reach 0 Hit Points. Other retribution is the duty of the People. Captured offenders are cut apart and their sections laid out to rot. The tribe does not devour cult traitors.



Associated Cults

Primal Chaos

Acolytes, shamans, and Scorpion Queens of Bagog gain the spell of Blessing of Chaos from the Primal Chaos.

Miscellaneous Notes

Scorpion Men and Broos

The People and the broos have common grounds for alliance. The broos' superior intelligence and variety of useful magic make them natural leaders for the People in battle. In turn, the People provide a type of cavalry to the broos, their mobility and stinging tails greatly aiding the goatkin in battle.

Melding of the two species occurs whenever a broo undergoes the Ritual of Rebirth, or when a scorpion man accepts chaotic features and transforms into a broo. When the latter happens, only the upper torso (the non-scorpion body) is transformed. Such hybrids are not allowed to challenge the Queen to take her place, but a Queen who transforms into a broo is not forced to step down. Her hybrid nature is not passed on to any children which she may lay.

Multiple Challengers

Powerful members of the People may find themselves challenged by several lesser members at once.

This must be specifically allowed by the Scorpion Queen, and is normally only permitted if each of the challengers is less than half as skilled as the challenger. If the challengers succeed, they may all try and gain the benefits from devouring their foe. In the case of a contest for shaman status, multiple candidates are not normally allowed by tradition, unless the shaman voluntarily sacrifices herself.

Divine Intervention

As one of the deities of chaos, Bagog does not have the natural tie to the universe required for Divine Intervention. However, she can provide a similar ability to her followers through their descent from her. The game mechanic is similar to Divine Intervention, except that a scorpion man who rolls exactly his or her POW when requesting Divine Intervention is destroyed utterly, and does not go to any afterlife.

Bagog can provide the benefit of any available Divine spell in response to Divine Intervention, usually at the ratio of 1 point per three points of POW taken. Other effects are up to the gamemaster, but should reflect her nature as the ancestress of the scorpion men, her chaotic ties, and her dual nature as source of life and devourer.



Fighting Queens



K'RANA

Illuminated Scorpion Queen and Sword of Humakt, former human

	location	melee	missile	surprised	prepared*
STR 23	RH Leg	01	01	5/3	21/4
CON 16	LH Leg	02	02	5/3	21/4
SIZ 16	RC Leg	03-04	03	5/3	21/4
INT 13	LC Leg	05	04	5/3	21/4
POW 22	RF Leg	06	05	5/3	21/4
DEX 20	LF Leg	07-08	06	5/3	21/4
APP 9	Tail	09-10	07	3/6	19/7
	Thorax	11-12	08-10	5/6	19/7
	Chest	13-14	11-15	9/7	25/8
	R Arm	15-16	16-17	9/5	25/5
	L Arm	17-18	18-19	9/5	25/5
	Head	19-20	20	12/6	28/7

Move: 3

Hit Points: 16 (19*)

Fatigue Points: 39 (57*)

Magic Points: 22 + 15 (allied spirit) + 22 (Power spirits) = 59

DEX SR: 1

* With Protection 4, Strength 4, Vigor 3, Carapace, Shield 2

Arms and Armor: Total Encumbrance = 12. Fatigue = 27 (39-12). Chitin armor on thorax and legs (2 AP); Carmanian-style iron helmet (9 AP); scale armor on chest and arms (6 AP). A Strengthening Enchantment has increased HPs.

Weapon	SR	Att/Par	Damage	ENC/AP
Bastard Sword (2H)	3	95/99	1d10+1+1d6	2.0/24 (iron)
Tail	3	117/—	1d6+1d6+POT 16	venom (tail)
RH Bastard Sword	4	103/59	1d10+1+1d6	2.0/24 (iron)
LH Broadsword	4	77/114	1d8+1+1d6	1.5/15 (iron)
Dagger	5	90/63	1d4+2+1d6	0.5/6
Thrown Dagger	1	103/—	1d4+1d3	0.5/6
2H Sword **	3	128/122	2d10+2+2d6	2.0/22
Tail **	3	145/—	1d6+2d6+POT 22	venom (tail)

** With Bladesharp 6, Ironhand 5, Parry 4, Strength 4, Vigor 3, Truesword, Venom Boosting 2

Note: damage to legs does not affect Hit Points, and loss of a leg will not incapacitate K'Rana. Tail venom takes effect 3 melee rounds after hit.

Spirit Magic (130%): Bladesharp 6, Mindspeech 3, Parry 4; (known by allied spirit) Detect Enemies, Ironhand 5, Summon Power Spirit, Strength 4, Strengthening Enchantment; (in matrices) Protection 4, Repair 2, Vigor 3

Divine Magic: Berserk, Carapace x4, Claws x5, Command Cult Spirit (Bagog), Detect Truth x2, Divination (Bagog) x2, Divination (Humakt), Extension 3, Jabbers x4, Mindlink 2, Oath (one-use) x2, Ritual of Devouring (one-use), Sanctify (Bagog), Sanctify (Humakt), Shield 2, Sprout Legs 9, Truesword x2, Venom Boosting 2, Warding 2, Worship Bagog x2, Worship Humakt x2

Chaotic Features: invisible to spirits (cannot sense her. If a sending attacks her, its rolls in Spirit Combat are reduced by 50%); attractive to animals (dogs, rodents, etc. like and trust her. She keeps several pets, including a number of squirrels).

Gifts: +20% Bastard Sword Attack (already included); +4 CON vs. Poison and Disease; Sense Assassin skill; recover magic points at double speed. Geases: Never participate in an ambush; accept no spirit magic Healing; never use poison; never refuse a challenge to single combat; use no mace, maul, hammer, axe, or flail; never lie.

Illumination enables her to rationalize ignoring most of her geases (i.e., she only ambushes those who have already ambushed or attacked her, her tail (part of her body) does not count as poison, etc.).

Skills and Bonuses:

Agility (+11): Climb 73%, Dance 67%, Dodge 60%, Jump 79%, Throw 92%

Communication (+9): Sing 37%, Orate 93%

Knowledge (+3): Animal Lore 47%, Battle 63%, Chaos Lore 37%, Craft/Armoring 75%, First Aid 99%, Human Lore 37%, Scorpion Man Lore 73%, Treat Disease 22%, Treat Poison 37%, World Lore 60%

Magic (+20): Ceremony 75%, Enchant 60%, Summon 77%

Manipulation (+20): Conceal 50%

Perception (+12): Listen 97%, Scan 56%, Search 59%, Sense Assassin 64% **Stealth (-8):** Hide 57%, Sneak 21%

Languages: Bilini 41/12, Chaosspeech 12/—, New Pelorian 22/—, Bagogi (Scorpion Man) 55/—, Sword Speech 47, Tradetalk 36/—

Special Items: **Headtaker.** This iron Bastard Sword, her pride and joy, is strengthened by three additional Humakti gifts: increased APs (included above), double damage vs. broos, double damage when hits a foe's chest. A carving on the hilt is a matrix for Repair 2. This was her sword when she was a Humakti, taken as her birthright from her father where she ran away from home.

Attuned to a blue crystal called "Heler's Shield," a POW 3 Spell Resisting Crystal: adds 3 magic points when resisting spells cast at her.

Quartz crystal is a 10 point crystal; currently holds a Power Spirit of POW 7. Set into a stone necklace.

Flawed amethyst is a 3 point crystal; currently holds a Power Spirit of POW 15. Set into a stone necklace.

Various bits of stone jewelry. A bracelet is a matrix for Protection 4; a ring is a matrix for Vigor 3.

Allied Spirit: T'Nar: INT 12, POW 15.

Spirit Magic (82%): see above.

Divine Magic (one-use): Spirit Block 2, Turn Undead
K'Rana inherited T'Nar from K'Zara, her mother and former Scorpion Queen. It inhabits a normal scorpion, and normally rides underneath her abdomen.

Background and Role-Playing Notes

Rana was born a human of the Bilini tribe, a tomboy in a clan chief's household. When her father refused to allow her to join the Vingans, she severed her ties with her family, and joined a Humakti mercenary troop. She eventually became a Sword, and came to lead her own company. She earned a reputation and a good living by escorting merchants through dangerous lands, and her group became much in demand after several successful trips through Dorastor. At some point she became illuminated and embraced the way of Lunar civilization, though she remained devoted to Humakt.

Finally Rana's luck ran out. The caravan she guarded was ambushed by scorpionmen and all were slain, save Rana, who was captured and chosen by the queen, K'Zara, for the Ritual of Rebirth. When K'Rana hatched, she remembered her former life, but illumination shielded her from madness. Concealing her memories from K'Zara and the tribe, she grew to adulthood, and became a favored bodyguard of the old queen. When K'Rana judged herself ready, she challenged K'Zara, winning easily. She devoured the old Queen and assumed leadership of the tribe. Unfortunately, she also assumed K'Zara's chaotic features. K'Rana mastered the philosophical con-



flicts of her twin natures (Scorpion Queen and Sword of Humakt), then began to teach her people the ways of Humakt.

Few of the tribe were promising pupils. Most became initiates (and now support a shrine), but K'Rana hoped her children would be smarter. Her first hatchlings were of human intelligence, but her second clutch produced a group of bestial siblings, barely above animals. In dreams she consulted K'Zara's memories, and the curse of the Folk was revealed to her: Bagog is a beast by nature, and has intelligent children only when she devours people. While Scorpion Men can eat each other, this only staves off the loss of intelligence for a few generations. Her first clutch produced superior children because she devoured K'Zara, wisest and strongest of the tribe.

In the three years since she became queen, K'Rana has increased her tribe's status, though it remains one of the smaller tribes in Dorastor. She renewed her ties with the Etyries merchant, trading information and escort through Dorastor for goods difficult for the Folk to obtain (e.g., metal armor and weapons).

Personality: K'Rana has stoically accepted her fate; she now works to elevate her tribe from savagery into the fringes of Lunar civilization. She identifies with her tribe, particularly her own spawn, but she envisions extending the benefits of civilization to all Scorpion Folk. Once her tribe is strong enough, she plans to challenge other Scorpion Queens to extend her influence.

K'Rana does not trust or accept broo. She has taught her people what she can of honor, and her followers deal fairly with humans, especially her children/lieutenants. She is proud and utterly truthful, and always honors her word. She expects this of others (even non-Humakti), and righteously punishes those whom she believes have deceived or betrayed her.

K'Rana suffers no qualms about her Humakti and Bagogi natures. She can reflect upon the apparent contradictions of her philosophies with associates or allies, though the dialog ultimately resolves to her dismissal of their views with phrases like, "You can't understand what it is like until you undergo Rebirth yourself and experience it." Further discussion is only possible if the speaker appears willing to acknowledge K'Rana's unique personal perspective.

Appearance: K'Rana appears as she did before, except for her scorpion half. Her hair and skin are fair, and her features delicate and refined. She always wears her armor, and carries all of her weapons with her even when she sleeps or performs her tribe's rituals.

Followers

K'Rana leads a small tribe of about 100 Scorpion Men. Half are of only sub-human intelligence, and only nine (her first clutch of eggs) are smart enough to fully understand what she has taught them. All nine are well on their way to becoming Swords of Humakt, and four are already acolytes or shamans of Bagog. K'Rana also has two non-Scorpion Man followers, slaves who have proven useful.

Tol Angor is an ogre, an illuminated initiate of Cacodemon and Humakt. He is K'Rana's ambassador and spy; because of his human appearance and illuminated nature, he can safely travel through human lands. He seems personable and charming, speaks several languages, and is totally loyal. He has a chaotic feature: metal he touches corrodes very quickly. He poses as a healer in human lands to explain his lack of weapons. He wields a stolen dragonewt klanth and dinosaur-hide armor when not travelling in secret.

Groomer is a trollkin whom K'Rana has trained to polish armor. He also removes parasites from her body with a special tool, and is kept around because of his small size. He is always chained. He was a slave of a troll chaos hunter who came to challenge K'Rana.

Scenario Ideas

The Emissary

A human comes to Hazard Fort carrying a message for Renekot, a proposal for an alliance between K'Rana's tribe and Renekot. She has heard of his problems with other scorpion bands (see *Dorastor*, pp. 97-100), and wants to ensure that his wrath will not fall upon her. She points out that she can offer him much knowledge of and protection against other scorpion tribes, and in exchange asks only that he not attack her tribe.

Despite the obvious reasons for refusal, a few of Renekot's advisors urge him to consider the request, especially since it comes with a letter of recommendation from local Lunar authorities. Compromise with chaos is to be avoided, but in Dorastor, allies are needed to ensure the security of the settlement. If K'Rana can keep Scorpion Folk from raiding, the Risklanders could concentrate on other foes, such as the broos or Telmori. On the other hand, the treachery of chaos is proverbial, and her claims of Humakti honor are believed by few.

Renekot accepts K'Rana's offer, provisional upon demonstrations of good faith over ten seasons. Adventurers are sent back with Tol Angor to deliver the message, along with a Humakti to verify her truthfulness, and perhaps even to extract an Oath from her. The adventurers must confront their own doubts and conflicts about this alliance; Uroxi are unlikely prospects for such a mission.

The Merchant

An Etyries merchant arrives at Hazard Fort with Scorpion Men as guards. When the settlers would attack the caravan, Mother Katharin steps in and prevents bloodshed, welcoming the merchant as an old friend. Tests show no taint of chaos on the merchant, though her guards are another matter. Any Uroxi present must be physically restrained; they leave the fort immediately in protest.

The merchant has arrived from Fort Wrath, and received dispensation to cross Dorastor because of her connections with a tribe of Scorpion Men, a few of whom serve her as guards. She bears official Lunar letters of passage through Dorastor and Bilini, and Renekot cannot refuse her without angering the local Lunar officials and his father, the king of the Bilini. However, to allow her and her chaotic guards free passage may cost him dire conflicts with his Council and following. Fearing that hotheads and rebellious Council opponents might take matters into their own hands, Renekot assigns the adventurers to accompany the caravan to the edge of Riskland to insure the integrity of Renekot's safe passage.

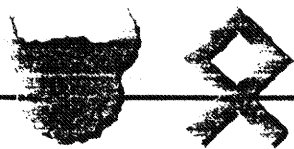
The Long-Lost Daughter

The daughter of the Osteri clan chief was lost in Dorastor four years ago, and was presumed dead. However, a recent band of Dorastan survivors is spreading the tale of a Humakti Scorpion Queen, and he fears that she may have survived, corrupted by chaos. He hires the players to track down the Scorpion Queen and bring him proof of her identity. He describes her and her sword, a family heirloom which she stole when she left home.

Once the chief learns his daughter's whereabouts, he leads a band of Uroxi and Humakti (and the player characters) to destroy her and release her soul to travel to Ernalda. The chief is torn between the shame and betrayal of his daughter's defilement and a repressed feeling of guilt for having driven her away in her youth, and thus being responsible for her current depraved state. He leaves his brother Bolthor to oversee the clan's affairs until he has succeeded, since he does not plan to return until his daughter is free, and he reckons that he might not survive their meeting.

Thed

Mother of the Broos



Mythos and History

Thed was a great goddess prior to the Lesser Darkness; their children were the broos, who then were untainted by chaos. Together with Malia they schemed to bring chaos into the world. In their jealousy and pride, they dreamed of usurping the functions of the universe, lusting to become its unchallenged rulers. Thed herself became the mother of the Devil, and his chaotic malevolence turned her inside out in childbirth.

Wakboth's first act in the world was to slay his father, so that none could be born to rival him. He then forced Thed and the broos to aid him as he destroyed the world. Thed's willing submission to rape provided him with other, more powerful, brothers and sisters, and these monsters served him as lieutenants or champions during the Darkness. Among these horrors were Cwim, Tien the Headhunter, and the Black Goat.

Thed fought in the wars of chaos, but fell to Kyger Litor after Ragnaglar was slain and Malia had left the conspiracy. Wakboth the Devil was finally slain by Urox and cast to Hell, where the Spider Woman devoured him, and Thed dispersed to the dark corners of the Spirit Plane, relatively powerless, and without allies except for her remaining broo children.

The broos still honor and revere Thed. She may be called upon by other beings for aid in raid and battle, and she grants her favor for the perfunctory worship she receives in return.

Though protected in her existence by the Great Compromise, Thed was on the losing side, and she occupies a distinctly minor place in the universe. Her role as Mother of the Broos enables her to maintain but not expand her influence. This connection is also her greatest weakness, as broo hunts are popular activities (especially among trolls and humans), and many believe that the broo population is in decline.

Thed is usually pictured by her children as an bestial female broo, often with snakes for breasts or a gaping fanged mouth where her vagina should be. The Praxians and Orlanthi picture Thed as a gigantic,

slim figure with a long, tufted tail and two deformed, clawed arms. Her head has four curved horns, ropy hair, and five antennae or tentacles arrayed about her mouth. Her eyes or vagina are usually ritually disfigured as a ward against her power.

Thed's worshipers believe that they become daemons of chaos after they die, spending their time hunting the souls of those unprotected by their own deities. These demons know that they will be scouts for the forces of chaos in the Final Battle. The Orlanthi know that there is a special place in the Afterlife reserved for the foul spirits of broos and other horrors, where they are trapped for eternity.

Thed is associated with Spirit and Chaos. There are minor associations with Fertility as well.

Cult Ecology

Among the Orlanthi Thed is accounted the goddess of rape by her own choice, mother of the broos, and one of the Unholy Trio, the conspiracy that created chaos. She wielded great power in the Godswar and could not be wholly dispersed with the coming of Time. Among the Praxians she is one of the greatest of the demons which roam the plains, a deadly remnant of the Devil from whom only their shamans can protect them.

The great majority of Thed's followers are broos and other vile creatures, who worship her as their mother and the source of their existence. Because of her, chaos came into the world. A few humans secretly worship Thed, but these warped souls are rebels and outcasts from human society.

Like most other deities of chaos, Thed hates nearly every other god. Urox slew her husband and his sons slew her children, and she hates him and the Storm gods particularly. She also greatly dislikes the Darkness deities (who fought chaos so fiercely and for so long), especially Kyger Litor, who skinned her in the Darkness, making her only a spirit. She is reasonably friendly to Malia, her old ally. Though Malia has now disassociated from Thed, the beings who worship Thed often worship Malia as well. Her



children often have relations with other chaotic cults, especially followers of Bagog, Cacodemon, and other remnants of the Devil.

Holy days occur on the 7th, 56th, 138th, 186th, and 200th days of each year. High Holy Days occur on the Godsdays during Sacred Time, when covens meet to swear in new initiates and Disease Masters. The length of the ceremonies depends on the orgiastic fervor and stamina of the covenmaster and followers.

The Cult in the World

Among broos this cult is important. Its priests have rapport with Thed and command the tribe with her will. Among humans and other races, Thed has no power except to create fear. Humans discovered belonging to this cult are typically killed and all of their belongings destroyed or confiscated. Personal power is the greatest asset of a worshiper of Thed, and is the most important factor in determining dominance or hierarchy within the cult.

The most powerful Thed worshiper in an area is under obligation to Thed to form a gang. According to Thed, this person knows who he or she is, and much of the petty history of the cult concerns the bloody struggles to prove just who is Thed's instrument in fulfilling this obligation. Normally a shaman or acolyte heads a gang, but if none are available then an initiate may take command.

The gang is the highest formal organization for the cult. Broo gangs occasionally join together in larger numbers for malign purposes, and the dominant personalities arrange themselves into a grudging hierarchy; such gatherings are often called tribes, but this is a misnomer. The dominance process must be repeated at every such gathering, since the bitter results are never the same.

The head of the gang governs by manipulation, bullying, threats, bribery, assault, and murder as he deems necessary. If a member of the gang has the power to challenge the leader, he is under obligation to Thed to struggle for power until one is dominant, dead, or leaves to found his own gang elsewhere. In this way, all gangs are always led by the strongest possible individual. The only restraint to the leader's power comes from Thed, who may instigate a general uprising against a leader who kills too many (or not enough) of his followers, her children.

Thed is worshiped wherever broos are found. Her temples depend upon the size of the broo gang worshiping in a place; usually she has no more than a shrine. Larger temples form when several gangs combine; this is often done annually, or when a special raid is planned. Shrines teach Curse of Thed.

Initiate Membership

Applicants must bring two Gifts (see Miscellaneous Notes), one for Thed and one for the leader of the gang. Male broos may join by sacrificing a point of POW. A non-broo can attend cult ceremonies, but before initiation can take place he must become a creature of chaos, usually through the Rebirth of Chaos or Chaos Feature ritual if he does not already possess the taint of chaos. If he becomes a broo, he is automatically accepted; if he does not, then the gang will kill him, unless he can bluff his way through the ritual. Thed is a jealous goddess, and does not accept females of any race.

Initiates must come at the call of their leader unless they feel the obligation of Thed to form their own gang. They are expected to spread those conditions favored by Thed— anarchy, disaster, famine, cruelty, and rape. Worship of other deities which promote such activities (such as Cacodemon, Ikadz, Malia, and Urain) is encouraged.

Broos belonging to Thed often belong to the dominant cult of their gang, with heightened status and self-importance. Highly skilled worshipers of Thed traditionally teach their skills to lesser initiates at whatever price they wish. Broo leaders rarely teach skills to those who plot against them.



Thed, Mother of Broos



"It will take some men," said Hahlggrim to the King.

"It will take an army!" fumed Bolthor.

They sprawled amid the confusion of the King's private chambers. In the last two seasons the sparring with chaos had taken its toll even here. The once-fine furnishings now looked faded and frivolous, and there were many tokens of war cast about. Here lay the cloven helm of a favored sergeant, there a straw doll which alone had survived the burning of a Frog River farmstead.

"You lead my men to ruin and slaughter," Bolthor continued. "They die, and yet the numbers against us do increase, not lessen. When we sacrificed to the Lords of Terror, we knew some peace from day to day. Now no man knows the measure of his time in the world."

My lord Hahlggrim was undaunted. "Whose life is safe as a plaything of chaos? Soldiers do not find victory in surrender — you dishonor the dead, my king, by such musings. Your men are undaunted. Take you your guide from their courage and persevere."

Hahlggrim had risen, no small man, yet gaunt he seemed when seen next to portly King Bolthor the Comfort-loving. Hahlggrim had many voices, and could command or cajole as he saw best fit the hour. Now his voice was cold with contempt, and Bolthor shrank back before the truth it told. This king, I thought, should have been born in a grassier time far away, when the cattle were fat. But here he was, forced to face the duties of kingliness as well as its pleasures.

The fat of his face drooping, Bolthor nodded at last. "It shall be as you advise, Hahlggrim."

King Bolthor commanded, but his arm rested upon Oddi the Keen, for Hahlggrim had been called elsewhere. One in three of all Bolthor's thanes came that day, and their men, and most of the priests and their guards, and even Queen Monnie the ShriII. Bolthor's Lunar spouse, a Seven Mothers priestess with a powerful reputation. I accompanied to record the deeds, for all would happen by Hahlggrim's will. We were a strong band, yet even the vast armies of other ages would have been lost in the wilds before us.

It was near SIlimestone, where the giant gorp lived, that our outriders reported the enemy gathering, and soon we all could see the howling creatures. As their numbers grew, so did their courage: these were broos of every nature, disgusting to the eye. Some were Thedspawn, others clearly Greyskin, grovellers of Primal Chaos and Pocharnago, warped beyond recognition.

"They are many," Bolthor said soberly.

Oddi nodded cheerfully.

"It would seem that Hahlggrim knows a way to rid himself of at least one enemy," the King said bitterly.

"My lord King Bolthor," Oddi replied, "kinship and honor run deep in our clan — I will not fail you here. Know you that my life is yours. And you have Mastakos' Chariot to return you to safety in Hazard Fort. Fear not — we have come to slay, not to die."

All spirit magic spells are available from cult shamans. Thed is not able to provide Divine Intervention to her children, due to her meager existence trapped on the Spirit Plane. Initiates can sacrifice for cult special Divine spells with the permission of their leader, and are often required to do so before important raids or battles.

Acolyte Membership

A candidate for acolyte must have 90% in Conceal, Hide, Sneak, or Track, plus 90% in any fighting skill, and must bring a Gift to Thed. Acceptance is automatic if these requirements are fulfilled and the initiate desires it. He must undergo the Rebirth of Chaos Ritual, sacrificing his own Power.

Acolytes always outrank initiates, and have high status in broo society. They have access to all Thed divine magic except Rebirth of Chaos. An acolyte must bring a Gift to Thed once a season or lose his status. Most acolytes do not become shamans, remaining acolytes as long as they serve Thed. A lucky acolyte can gain an allied spirit during his investiture ritual. Thed will awaken a goat to full (3d6) intelligence for him. An acolyte who does become a shaman of Malia may keep its allied spirit.

Shamans

Any broo shaman who is also an initiate of Thed qualifies for cult shamanhood, if he wishes. A candidate for cult shamanhood must have brought at least 7 Gifts to Thed within the past season. Once accepted he must undergo the Ritual of Rebirth. He must bring a Gift to Thed each week.

Shamans may seize any coven from its leader. They control cult access to Spirit Magic spells, and can charge any price they wish to teach them to worshipers. They can sacrifice for cult Divine spells on a reusable basis; their fetch acts as an allied spirit, and can sacrifice for one-use of cult Divine spells. Though there are no ties between cult shamans, they are powerful political leaders, especially in times of war. Shamans have access to Divine Intervention, but can only use it to enhance the casting of their spells.

Common Divine Magic: Divination, Sanctify, Spirit Block, Worship Thed

Special Divine Magic: Chaos Spawn, Command <any fixed-INT chaotic creature>, Curse of Thed, Rebirth of Chaos



Thed Special Divine Spells

Chaos Spawn

2 points

ritual Summon spell, nonstackable, one-use

This spell summons a wailing, moaning Void in the air. Anything which enters the void is irrevocably lost, and so this is a popular portal for sacrifices to Thed. After 1D4 minutes the Void vanishes, disgorging a chaos creature. The summoner can choose what creature appears, within certain limits, determined by the sacrifice made.

If no sacrifice is made, the arrival is a gorp. If a fixed-INT creature is sacrificed, the summoned monster can be any fixed-INT chaos creature. If an intelligent creature is sacrificed, the summoned monster can be any chaos creature. If a spirit is sacrificed (most easily done by hurling a binding enchantment into the Void), a chaotic spirit (such as a ghoul or disease spirit) may be summoned.

Neither the POW nor SIZ of the arrival may be greater than that of the sacrifice (unless no sacrifice is made, when a gorp appears). If a successful Divine Intervention is stacked with the spell, it may possess up to twice the POW and SIZ of the sacrifice.

Curse of Thed

2 points

ranged, temporal, nonstackable, reusable

This spell is also called Reverse Chaos. The target's magic points must be overcome by the caster's. If the victim fails to resist he is affected by a detrimental Chaotic Feature. If a successful Divine Intervention is stacked with the spell, the caster may choose the effect he desires.

This spell does not taint the target with chaos, although the target will detect as chaotic for the duration of the spell (it is the spell which is sensed, though this is not normally discernible). If a characteristic is reduced to 0 or less by this spell, the victim dies.

Rebirth of Chaos

5 points

ritual Ceremony spell, nonstackable, one-use

This spell may only be learned by shamans of Thed. It gives the target a chaotic feature, and automatically transforms the recipient into a broo. There is only a 25% chance that the Chaos Feature gained will be a detrimental one.

There is a danger in this. The recipient has a percentage chance of dying equal to 5% plus 5% per chaotic feature possessed. A broo already with two chaotic features stands a 15% chance of death if the spell is cast upon him.

"Yet my heart forebodes," the King said. "The hour is late: may we not post ourselves upon that knoll?" Bolthor gestured to a low rise which commanded the flat ground around it.

"Indeed," said Oddi. "that seems best. Our men will form a shield wall circling the top, upon which the broo assaults will falter like the fists of a child. Our Healers will stay in the center to reach any who fall. The warrior-priests will steady our force if they stand among them. These broos are each a horror, but they will not fight well together unless driven by the will of a great leader.

Bolthor nodded. "It shall be as you suggest," he said, and then ordered his thanes accordingly.

All through the evening parties of broos attacked and were slaughtered by our bold men, who themselves suffered little. Yet the monsters launched themselves onto our spearpoints, so that a wall of dead built up before us. Oddi said that it was ever so, for the race made little of learning and sought only easy revenge for their goddess, who hated them as much the rest of the world. Though the fighting was most determined where we stood, Oddi's senses did not indicate the powerful malevolence of his sliminess, Ralzakark.

Bolthor was napping fitfully when we approached him, and well might he have slept, for fat Bolthor acquitted himself well that night; his sword was notched and his royal armor splattered with the blood of broos. He roused as we came before him.

"Now is the time, my lord King," said Oddi. "The broos waver and hang back before the fires. Our men are ready: the mages of us will make the light of day long before Theya comes, and our swords shall this morn diminish Ralzakark's strength to a tenth part of those who saw the sun rise yesterday."

"We shall lead the charge, fair Oddi," said Bolthor.

"By my life, my lord, we shall."

Both wore full iron chain and plate armor, and both took up an iron bastard sword in each hand. There were murmurs of admiration at the warlike cast of Bolthor's face. His wife Monnie, perhaps for the first time in her life, knelt and bid him a safe return. Close behind were Bolthor's personal guards and Oddi's own housecarls, giants all, each also armed with two swords. Then the helms of these great warriors began to glow and shimmer, and they turned toward the battle as one man. The heavens lit with magical light like day, and the worshipers of the Bull cut through the broos like a plow through the soil, and everywhere overturned them, even the scorpion folk, so that when the true sun rose no broo or other spawn of chaos lived upon the plain before us.

After the Healers had calmed the berserk warriors and led them back to the knoll, the King rewarded Oddi richly, as befitted a true king, and not one who thought he could take up and put down the job, as might a carpenter. At the feast in the camp, I had once more cause to admire how the uncouth ways of the Storm Bull's men complemented and somehow justified their lust for war. Only a man who craves no quarter should give no quarter.



Subservient Cults

Spirit of Retribution

The leader of the gang himself must slay any straying initiate, but shamans and acolytes are struck by the Curse of Thed, receiving a detrimental Chaotic Feature as a permanent curse. This curse cannot be removed by use of Dismiss Magic or similar spells, and not even by returning to the cult. The greater the betrayal, the more terrible the Chaos Feature.

The Spirits of Thed

These peculiar spirits can be contacted by Thed's shamans, and are often found controlled by them. They have 3d6 INT and no POW, and usually have 4d6 magic points. Each also possesses a Chaotic Feature. They are incorporeal, but have a slight link to the physical world, and can be seen as a shadowy aura if one looks closely.

At the controller's command, the spirit can enter its master's body in a sort of benevolent covert possession, giving the master use of its Chaotic Feature while still allowing him control over his own actions. The shaman must give the spirit one magic point when it leaves his body. These spirits can also engage in normal spirit combat and cast spells (if they know any), and can possess an individual if they reduce him or her to 0 magic points. Such possession does not taint the individual with chaos, although he or she will detect as chaotic for the duration of the possession. Reducing these spirits to 0 magic points destroys them permanently.

Thed is known for her ability to devour spirits, removing them from the Spirit Plane forever. Possibly she stole this power from Kyger Litor when she was skinned, for she did not have the power prior to becoming a spirit. Shamans of Thed who sacrifice a spirit of at least 24 POW to her in a Chaos Spawn void can sacrifice for the special spell of Devour Spirit, one time for each such spirit sacrificed.

Devour Spirit

1 point

range special, instant, nonstackable, one-use

This spell may only be cast on a spirit which the caster has reduced to zero magic points in spirit combat; no resistance roll is necessary. The spirit is permanently destroyed, eaten by chaos. The caster gains 1 point of POW if the spirit was of equal or lesser POW, and 1d4 points if the POW of the spirit was greater. This spell has no effect on Spirits of Law, and no POW can be gained from any spirit without POW (such as a wraith or chonchon), though such a spirit could still be devoured.

Associate Cults

Cacodemon

The Cacodemon cult gives the spell of Create Ghost to the Mother of the Devil. Ogres rarely worship Thed directly, but sometimes include her as an associate cult in their worship of Cacodemon.

Malia

Despite Malia's later disassociation from chaos, Thed retains the use of Disease Spirits from her, although she can only Summon those which cause Soul Waste. Broos are immune to all diseases and infections.

The Mad God

Ragnaglar was destroyed during the Godswar, but traces or fragments of his existence still persist. One of these is his association with Thed, from which she possesses the magic energy of their former marriage. Through this, she gains access to the Summon <cult spirit> Divine spell. Thed typically has access to Power Spirits, Intellect Spirits, Fear Spirits, Pain Spirits, Soul Waste Spirits, and Violence Spirits.

Primal Chaos

This universal chaos cult provides Blessing of Chaos. This spell can only be learned by Shamans of Thed.

Miscellaneous Notes

The Duel of Thed

If two members of Thed's cult have irreconcilable differences, the leader of the gang chooses an official date for the duel at least a week in advance. Both parties are expected to bushwhack each other before then, and the date represents the leader's judgment of when the dispute must be settled. Hiring assassins, poisoning food, impersonating friends, and any and every other imaginable tactic are legal in the duel. Contests for the leadership of a gang are always conducted in this manner.

Gifts to Thed

Members of this cult must often bring a Gift to Thed. The gift must have been taken from others, and the taking must have caused the donor pain. Poisoning a well is an example of a good gift. This act would endanger an entire community, which would please Thed very much. Thed is also pleased with ears, sacred items of other cults, cherished personal treasures, children, the severed hands of vanquished chaos fighters, etc.



WAKBOTLAR "Father of Devils"

Broo male, Shaman of Thed

		Location	Missile	Melee	Points
STR	16	R Leg	01-03	01-04	5/6
CON	17	L Leg	04-06	05-08	5/6
SIZ	19	Abdomen	07-10	09-11	5/6
INT	16	Chest	11-15	12	5/7
POW	23	R Arm	16-17	13-15	5/5
DEX	12	L Arm	18-19	16-18	5/5
APP	12	Head	20	19-20	5/6

Move: 4

Fatigue: 33

Hit Points: 18

Magic Points: 23 + 25 (fetch) + 13 (Power Spirits) = 61

DEX SR: 3

Arms and Armor: Total Encumbrance = 2. Fatigue = 31 (33-2). No armor, but chaotic feature provides 5 point armor protection on all locations except head. Carries wooden club.

Weapon	SR	Att/Par	Damage	ENC/AP
Head Butt	7	36/--	1d6+1d6	
Heavy Club	6	69/36	1d8+1d6	1.0/7
Club & Spells*	6	104/41	1d8+6+2d6	1.0/7

* Bludgeon 6 (on club), Strength 3 (on self)

Spirit Magic (115%): Bludgeon 6, Binding Enchantment (Pain Spirit), Darkwalk (2), Ignite Flesh (2), Mobility 2, Strength 3; (known by fetch) Binding Enchantment (Power Spirit), Dispel Magic 6, Heal 2

Divine Magic: Blessing of Chaos (one-use), Chaos Spawn x2 (one-use), Command Gorp, Command Dragonsnail x2, Command Spirit of Thed, Create Ghost, Curse of Thed x3, Devour Spirit (one-use), Divination x2, Rebirth of Chaos (one-use), Sanctify, Spirit Block 4, Summon Pain Spirit, Summon Power Spirit, Worship Thed

Chaotic Features: body covered in wiry hair (provides 5 points of armor protection); can cast Disruption at will without magic point cost, one time per round, if he takes no other action in that round; immune to Disruption spell effects (including Shattering).

Skills and Bonuses:

Agility -4: Climb 53%, Jump 47%, Throw 69%

Communication +14: Orate 47%

Knowledge +6: Animal Lore 43%, Broo Lore 83%, Chaos Lore 56%, Craft Bone 41%, Craft Stone 33%, Craft Wood 63%, Dorastor Lore 79%, Plant Lore 62%, Spirit Lore 67%, World Lore 39%

Magic +20: Ceremony 73%, Enchant 49%, Summon 89%

Manipulation +11: Play Drums 33%

Perception +17: Listen 67%, Scan 77%, Scent 69%, Search 53%,

Track 40% Stealth -20: Hide 23%, Sneak 47%

Languages: Chaosspeech 42/37, Tradetalk 12/—, Spirit Speech 47

Special Items: Finger bone fetish holds a Binding Enchantment for a Pain Spirit (holds a spirit of POW 7).

Carved wooden amulet of Thed holds a Binding Enchantment for a Power Spirit (holds a spirit of POW 6).

Attuned to a tainted Spirit Supporting Crystal (POW 5) called Thed's Gift; whenever the user is overcome in Spirit Combat, he takes 1 point of damage (as a Disruption spell) to a random Hit Location, in addition to magic point loss. Note that Father of Devils is immune to this effect, due to his chaotic feature.

A piece of black wood which detects as magic and chaos. It contains an enslaved plant spirit named White Elf's Pain, INT 3, POW 9. It knows Extinguish 3, and can intercept any plant spirit which attacks its holder in Spirit Combat. It can not be used by elves (even the Hellwood elves), who are under ritual obligation to return it to a Great Tree so that it can be released. Possession of this item will cause elves to attack on sight, unless the holder can convince them of his or her sincere desire to free the spirit.

A set of drums made of black oak and stretched with human skin, used by Father of Devils in most of his shamanic rituals. The sides of the drum are carved in various obscene and vile symbols and pictures. A stick carved of the same material and set with a piece of broo horn is used to play the drums.

Fetch: Thedssubb 'Thedspawn'

INT 9, POW 25.

Spirit Magic (139%): see above.

Divine spells (one-use): Curse of Thed, Spirit Block 2

Spirits held by fetch: Pain Spirit (POW 5); Power Spirit (POW 7);

Spirit of Thed (13 magic points; chaotic feature: individual possessed loses 2d6 CON)

Ignite Flesh

2 points

ranged, instant

If the caster of this spell overcomes the magic points of the target, a small fire will be ignited on the flesh of a random hit location. This fire does one point of damage each round, ignoring armor. The fire is not magical and can be extinguished normally, requiring a full melee round and a successful DEX x5% roll. Defensive magics can prevent the spell from taking effect, but will not protect against the damage. Creatures that are resistant to fire damage are not affected by this spell.

Background and Role-Playing Notes

Father of Devils represents the culmination of a project begun six generations ago by Ralzakark. He is as racially pure as a broo can be, as his host and those of his last four ancestors were all normal goats, bred under Ralzakark's direct supervision to be "the Bride of the Devil," an entity mentioned in a few obscure chaos rituals. He was spawned at Fort Wrath, and was given no name. For many years he served Ralzakark faithfully, content with his Divine role. He was kept virgin for his Divine Mate, so he would be pure when the time came for Ralzakark to incarnate Ragnagiar on the physical plane. During this time he advanced far in the cult of Thed, becoming a shaman at an early age.

Years of witnessing broobirth weakened Father of Devils' resolve. Once he fully realized what his final fate was to be he secretly began amassing the power and allies necessary to flee Fort Wrath. He was finally able to escape with many magical treasures during the chaos invasions of 1608, wounding Ralzakark in the process. At that time he renounced the title given him by Ralzakark, and began calling himself Son of Thed.

One night in the Pavis Rubble, Father of Devils was visited by Thed during her High Holy Day ceremony. She revealed to him his true destiny, which Ralzakark had sought to obscure and pervert for his own ends: he was not born to be the Bride of the Devil, but to father Him. When he awakened from the vision, he slew his band of worshipers in a religious fervor, and abandoned his old name. Reborn in blood and death, he would now be known only by his newly revealed destiny: Father of Devils.



Over the next six years Father of Devils sought out forbidden rituals and artifacts to aid him, travelling to the Tunnelled Hills and beyond, seeking the lost pieces of Ragnaglar wherever he could find them. After a successful trip into the Devil's Marsh he decided he was ready to destroy the world, and so he has returned to Dorastor to take up his destiny. He has gathered hideous and deformed female brood to be his "wives," and has begun impregnating them to bring the Devil back into the world. He has tried various rituals, sacrifices, and objects of power, but so far all of his mates have died giving "birth." Thus, all of the brood spawned have been "normal," though many are horribly mutated, even for broods. Most die soon after birth, but the most viable serve him as slaves/followers.

At first, Father of Devils had trouble finding appropriately deformed broods as wives. However, the first generation of "daughters" matured a season ago, and he has impregnated some of them, hoping the process of refinement which worked on him will work on them as well; he is prepared to continue this process for as long as necessary. Creatures such as broobats he views as too unstable and impure to make proper wives.

Appearance: Father of Devils is about as handsome as a brood gets. He is so perfectly formed that many might mistake him as a beastman of some sort, if it were not for his manic expression, his deformed followers, and his presence in the Land of Doom. He has a normal human body covered in wiry white hair (almost like fleece), with a normal goat head.

Personality: Although Father of Devils is ruthless and driven, he is almost always in full control of his lusts and emotions, and will never act foolishly. He uses every available resource to carry out his goal, and does not allow petty concerns (such as vengeance) to interfere with it. He has no qualms about sacrificing his followers to protect his own life if necessary. After all, he knows he can always sire more children - he must do so anyways, because he has not yet fathered the Devil.

Combat Notes: Despite his near-invulnerability, Father of Devils avoids personal combat whenever possible: he is too irreplaceable to risk himself in meaningless disputes. If assaulted he directs his followers to attack while he casts spells. If he has advance notice he will cast Chaos Spawn, then Command the resulting monster. He tries to keep at least one gorp or dragonsnail around at all times in case there is not time for the spell. If directly confronted with melee, he will have his fetch attack his opponent in Spirit Combat while he escapes. However, he casts his personal spells at the beginning of any melee, just in case.

Followers

Father of Devils keeps a more or less permanent base of operations, and ventures out only to seek new mates or when forced to move to a new lair. At any given time, there will be between 3 to 6 female brood captives at his base, guarded by between 5 and 10 heavily mutated brood. These brood are his children, and form a small band which are coming to be known as the Devils. All of them worship Thed, led by Father of Devils.

All of Father of Devils' children have at least one chaos feature (Demoralize opponents who do not make a POW x5% roll), and they have twice normal chances for additional ones. If one has a chaos feature, it has the same chance again for a second, then a third, etc. After their first, pre-determined, feature, each of the additional features has a 2/3 chance to be detrimental.

Some of his more successful children are described as follows:

Wakbotnech 'Little Devil': Wakbotnech is the oldest surviving son of Father of Devils, fathered on one of his first "wives." His mouth is

full of large, black teeth, with prominent tusks on both the upper and lower jaws. He is an acolyte of Thed, and serves as his father's lieutenant.

Chaotic Features: Appearance demoralizes opponents; no horns; reflects spells up to 3 points back at caster.

Nigurram 'Black Spark': Nigurram is the runt of the last litter. He is entirely covered in black hair, and is proving to be an excellent scout and assassin. He also harbors ambitions of replacing Wakbotnech, and will go to almost any lengths to discredit his brother.

Chaotic Features: Appearance demoralizes opponents; covered in black hair (+50% Hide at night); can make a 1d6 electrical attack by touch, 4 times per day.

Arngnak 'Hideous': Arngnak is the most heavily deformed of Father of Devils' children who has survived. He is also the least intelligent, but is totally loyal to Father of Devils. His left arm is a small mass of constantly twisting worm-like tentacles. His body is covered in scars, boils, and wounds, which constantly move around, pop, heal, and reform. He is the best fighter in the group, and always uses Fanaticism or Berserk when he attacks. He is a devotee of the Urain in addition to Thed.

Chaotic Features: Appearance demoralizes opponents; in constant pain from chaotic wounds (must roll POW x5% each round to act, unless Fanatic or Berserk); agonizing screams when moving; one arm is a mass of small tentacles (Manipulation skills reduced to species minimum).

Scenario Ideas

Ralzakark's Slave

Ralzakark is unaware of his former slave's project, and if he found out about it he would be annoyed for two reasons. First, being the Father of the Devil is his prerogative, not some upstart's, especially one whose role in the blessed event is preordained. Second, he has wondered about the fate of his "bride" for many years, since he wounded Ralzakark when he escaped. He also left with a number of magical artifacts. Most of them have been destroyed in Father of Devils' attempts to father the Devil, but one remains, which Ralzakark would want returned: Ralzakark's Pain. Knowledge of the loss of the other items would not increase Ralzakark's annoyance: punishment is more important than recovering the relatively minor items taken.

Once the Big R learns of Father of Devils' plans, there are a number of possibilities. He might muster an effort to find his former slave, though only if it is sufficiently distracting or amusing. He could give the players instructions to destroy Father of Devils, or simply to bring back news of his whereabouts to Fort Wrath. He also might send them to recover Ragnaglar's Pain, uncaring of Father of Devils' fate afterwards. Such a task might be presented to a likely group as the requirement for passage through Fort Wrath, in lieu of the normal payment of one magic item each.

Ralzakark instead might decide that he doesn't care about Father of Devils any more. After all, if Wakboth returned it is likely he would become an annoyance to Ralzakark, who has more important things to occupy his time than the destruction of the world. However, an ambitious Lunar trader learns about Father of Devils from a chance remark by Ralzakark, and decides that hunting down this slave would earn him unparalleled influence with Ralzakark, not to mention vast monetary reward. The players are hired to do the dirty work, since the trader wants to avoid direct involvement to prevent political complications. What will be



Ralzakark's reaction when Father of Devils is returned: will he take up his project again, or is his "bride" no longer pure enough for the Devil? What reaction might Ralzakark's current favorite, Son of Ralzakark (see below), have to the appearance of this rival for his father's "affections"? Will he order all of the humans destroyed because they know too much?

Regardless of Ralzakark's decisions, if he discovers that Father of Devils has Wakboth's Will (which has been lost since the Great Darkness), things will change radically. This item could advance Ralzakark's plans by centuries in a single night, and he will muster all of his forces to obtain it. In addition to sacrificing thousands of creatures to it to make it the largest magic battery in Glorantha, Ralzakark knows how to awaken many of its other powers.

Abandoned Broo Camp

The players come upon an abandoned broo camp. There they find the bodies of two female broos so hideous it is almost impossible to determine they were broos. Both show signs of broobirth, and the abominations are found nearby, one of them a siamese twin-like monstrosity. Both broos have been slain, and signs at the camp point to their death at the hands of other broos, in the midst of an apparently hurried abandonment of the camp.

Investigating further, the adventurers find tattered and filthy scrolls bearing legends of the birth of Wakboth the Devil and various rituals of chaos, fertility, and imbuing an unborn child with power, all the darkest of Black Magic. Forbidden symbols have been carved into the skin of one of the female broo, and these still register a faint magic even though the broo died hours before.

Following the trail of the broos is not difficult, but they have found a more secure base in a cave-system at the base of Nangtali's Plateau. Flushing them out would require a major expedition, and each day the adventurers remain increases the likelihood of a major horror coming upon them. Father of Devils and his crew will also launch a number of raids against any beseigers, seeking to kill them so that he can resume his search for suitable mates. These forays might be preceded by Father of Devils in Spirit form; he may even attack in this manner alone if the party does not include a shaman or powerful priest.

A passage in The Book of Drastic Resolutions comes to the attention of the players (either at the camp or upon research at the Lhankor Mhy temple). It tells of the rebirth of the Devil during the Wars of the Heroes, and the players should become worried about

what the future holds. The entire adventure should suggest a cthuloid atmosphere, with dark hints of ancient evil and soon-to-be-released terror.

Son of Ralzakark

While the players are at or near Fort Wrath, the commander of the Fort Wrath defense forces, Son of Ralzakark mobilizes a number of patrols in the surrounding area. A new broo gang has been encountered recently, known as the Devils, which consists of unusually hideous and deformed broos. They seem better organized than most such bands, with specific tactics and goals. Rather than causing random mayhem, they made a quick raid on one of Ralzakark's broo tribes, and took several female broo captive.

The players can get involved in a number of ways. If at Fort Wrath, the mobilization can prevent them from leaving until the broo band has left the area or been dealt with. Son of Ralzakark may even draft them for a patrol, or use them as bait to try and draw the renegade broos out. The players may be on their way toward or past Fort Wrath, and might have difficulty getting safely to their destination. Any large mobilization in Dorastor will draw the attention of Renekot the Stone and Vyrope (the priestess at the Dorasta Shrine), and the players could be sent by either to gather more information.

The players could become caught between the Devils and Ralzakark's forces, forced to battle one or both groups to save themselves. They might be captured by one group (possibly as spies?), then face the dubious benefit of being rescued by the other.

Son of Ralzakark is one of Ralzakark's most useful parts. He is about seven feet tall, with glossy brown hair over his entire body. His head is deer-like, with a bald, pink-skinned face. He has a large elk-like antler on the left, and a large ram-like horn on the right. His legs are sometimes like those of a deer (such as when he needs to move quickly) and sometimes like those of a human (such as when he needs to climb or ride). He is usually found at Fort Wrath, but often surveys the defenses and area around Fort Wrath, riding on a huge broobat.

Son of Ralzakark is in almost constant mental and spiritual contact with Ralzakark. He is in charge of the military, defense, and command functions of Fort Wrath and the surrounding area. Anyone speaking to him finds him friendly and open, willing to discuss even the most sensitive matters in what often seems too much detail.

Female Broos

Broo are essentially magical in nature, like all forms of life, and have features peculiar to them. The most obvious feature is that most appear male; previous studies have indicated that only 10 to 15% are female, with a fairly common mutation of hermaphroditism (5%).

Thed is said to be a jealous goddess, who wants only males as worshipers, but the truth goes much deeper. Thed was conquered by a brutal storm god during the Gods War, and in her pain and anger she wished to avenge herself upon the entire world. To this end she allowed herself to be used by Ragnaglar, and so brought Wakboth the Devil into the world. She allowed herself to be abused by her child as well, and chaos filled the cosmos. But Thed still seeks revenge, and broo are her tools for this vengeance.

A broo can mate with an organism of any race or sex and produce offspring, a larval broo which eats its way out of the abdomen of its host. Broo thus enforce Thed's will upon the rest of the world in vengeance for the crime inflicted upon her. This inflicting of pain is her greatest joy, and it is for this reason that she

is rightly known as the Goddess of Rape. In this taking of vengeance, female broo are useless to Thed, having no more power to resist than she did. For this reason she spurns them. The hermaphrodites she accepts as followers, but she does not favor them as she does her wholly male children, since they can also be victimized.

Most female broo seek power through the Malia cult, since she is a much friendlier goddess (to them), and allows many the chance for their own revenge. Since any mating of a female broo (with any species) also results in broo offspring, female broo avoid sexual liaisons of any kind: any mating by a female broo is sure to prove deadly to the mother, regardless of the race of the father.

Some male broos prefer female broos as mates, especially the more powerful shamans and priests. Some tribes have legends of the rebirth of the Devil from such a mating, while others maintain that the children of such unions are stronger, more cunning, or more powerful than beast-born broo. Regardless of the rationale behind such matings, the deadliness of any such union ensures that female broo avoid this fate whenever possible.



Vivamort: Lord of the Undead

I renounce the worship of gods, ghosts, and spirits. I set aside the tales of childhood, and upon the lonely path of Darkness shall I travel, accepting my solitary burdens, forsaking the comforts of lies. I commit myself to thy service, knowing you are no god, but the enemy of all gods.

— from *Vanus Credo*, the Vivamort Creed

In the myths of Glorantha, Vivamort is generally accounted a god of Chaos. This contradicts the assertions of Vivamort cultists, who insist that Vivamort is not a god, that in fact Vivamort's teaching denies exalted status to the beings Gloranthans worship as gods, and that Vivamort's followers despise all who foolishly accept such claims to godhead at face value.

Vivamort teaches that Gloranthan 'gods' are indeed powerful spirit beings, but mocks the implausibilities and contradictions of the myths told by the various cults to sanction their special significance in the scheme of things. Vivamort acknowledges the existence and prodigious spiritual power of the creatures that call themselves gods, but doubts the truth of the stories told about these 'gods,' dismissing them as clumsy fabrications designed to conceal the naked, self-serving greed of these powerful daemons and the priests who serve them.

The Vivamort cult indeed has little in common with the other cults described in *Lords of Terror*. For example, Vivamort offers his followers no spirit or divine magic; as in the cults of the Mostali and the Invisible God, only sorcerous magic is available to initiates through the cult. Further, Vivamort offers no benefits of a life after death. Upon death, the

...And so we found an exhausted Hahlgrim asleep, while his allied spirit (a snarling alynx) prowled the perimeter of his camp to watch for foes. Our column halted to eat, and we held council with our battle lord after he awakened.

"Karnoor is no more," he told us, "unless she knows not the bite of silver nor fears blessed water. It was a mighty struggle." So we believed, for the waking days of Karnoor, a vampire princess of great power, had spanned countless ages of the world.

"Orlanth spoke full to me of her and her ways, and so she was confounded where she thought herself most safe. The Tower still stands, and her followers still exist. She died last night: they will remove themselves tonight unless we strike first. Should we strike, old Ralzakark will be shorn of another arm, and he shall feel like the worshiper who joins too many cults, and has his coin tithed away at every hand." Perhaps this last was not a jab at Bolthor, famous for joining cults and then whining at the cost, but so we all took it. Bolthor glowered, and later would speak only with his thanes and blood-kin.

Though we were weakened by the fight with the broos, Hahlgrim found enough Rune Magic among us to fortify our compact and powerful band. Most of the army (including Bolthor) was sent home: the remainder he separated into a strong screening force and a few of the most powerful, who would precede the force and attempt to enter the Tower unnoticed, posing as worshipers whom the vampires might summon to milk of Power after Karnoor's demise. Hahlgrim saw fit to leave me with the screening force, under Ketil.

At that point a message came from Bolthor, urgently commanding a meeting. Hahlgrim opposed a second parley, yet we pleaded with him for it, even knowing of Bolthor's treachery, since a new insult to the King might leave him intractable. Hahlgrim bridled (for the time was valuable), but the greatest lord goes against friendly counsel at his peril. At length we cantered away from the Woods to meet Bolthor in the mud of the Bugswarm Swamp.

Bolthor demanded the return of Ironbreaker. His new sword, the King said, did not fit his hand well, and he craved the return of the heirloom. Hahlgrim had connived to keep secret the full knowledge of the sword's power, as evidenced by his own explanation of the fight with the vampire princess, and therefore the King had been deceived.

Hahlgrim had no expression on his face as he answered. "My lord King, with this great weapon did you make fast my fealty and also gain the alliance of my family and brethren. It was I who showed you that the forces of chaos cannot stand against determined men, and that the Lifebringers will triumph, always, when their bravery and intelligence are emulated. Should I return this sword to you, so then will I return to the lands of the Skanthi, for I deem not that you would then withhold your hand against the lands so recently reconfirmed to me. Even this last evening I learned of fields burnt along the Erinflarth. Who then will stand between you and the fury of Ralzakark when he takes the field himself? Ironbreaker alone will not frighten the hero of the broos. He will sweep across Bilini, and the Great Bat will come to call, and even your wife will not keep you your throne should the Bat be used. Trust the word of honest men, Lord Bolthor, and keep your crown. Become Bolthor Giftgrabber, and your worst fears shall be truth. My fealty remains as sworn, unless you have it otherwise. How say you?"

Bolthor twisted in the saddle while his advisors spoke to him, and his face grew dark. "Keep the toy," he growled at last, and galloped toward his army. No more of him that day did we hear, though we dreaded it.

Hahlgrim swore mightily once the King and his entourage had left, and bid us speed toward the Tower. Later he told me that Ironbreaker had a spirit like to the heart of a child, and that if the holder honestly admired the weapon and praised it for itself, then it would speak in return, and reveal all of its secrets. But if the holder beheld and praised Ironbreaker only so that the sword reflected glory upon its wielder, then the sword would do no more than it was



Vivamort cultist's spirit is simply annihilated. The fortunate initiate who dies in the ritual translation to high initiate status continues existence indefinitely as an undead creature untroubled by the limits of natural mortality. Lacking a spirit, however, the vampire high initiate is void of all magical power, save that which he can suck from willing worshipers or unfortunate prey.

Vivamort and his high initiates candidly admit that they are greedy, self-serving, and exploitative of their followers; thus, the cult draws willing converts only among individuals who honor such values. However, few enter the cult of their conscious free will; most are unwitting victims seduced by the uncanny hypnotic persuasion of the vampire's will and the Ecstatic Communion of the vampire's feeding.

The sorceries of the cult mysteries involve creation of and mastery over undead entities such as ghosts, skeletons, zombies, and ghouls (though an extended lifetime permits Vivamort high initiates to become extraordinary masters of many sorcerous disciplines).

Like Krarsht, Vivamort is a most secretive cult, its members living isolated from society or passing among the unsuspecting public in disguise. Vivamort initiates are rarely unmasked, even by the vigilant and persistent Uroxi. Nonetheless, the legend of the vampire looms large in Gloranthan myth; the taint of chaos compounded by the appalling sacrilege of undeath makes the Vivamort vampire the most imposing bugbear of all Gloranthan nightmares.

(A complete Vivamort cult description is planned for publication in *Tower of Night*, a campaign supplement featuring the Vivamort cult.)

bidden. "Of this latter sort is Bolthor, a self-loving man in whom fear and greed constantly strive for dominance."

In all, nine set out for the Tower. We followed at a good distance, so that any watcher on the ground could not spy both us and Hahlgrim's band at the same time. With Hahlgrim was his brother Oddi the Keen and other stalwart fighters, as well as a powerful Healer. Our leader's fears proved sound — Yelm raced to the west, and the shadows deepened. The meeting with Bolthor had cost much; we would have to face the vampires at the beginning of the night.

Hahlgrim's party crossed the last stream before the Tower of Lead, and entered the spider tree forest. All about them misty curtains hung from the branches, and tiny jewels of light danced and bobbed among the gathering fog. We avoided the webs as we could, for the lights were spiders, and the wise among us told of horrible nightmares, fevers, and painful death upon the bite of the strange creatures.

Suddenly, great shapes loomed in the night, and wolves were upon the daring men. The wolves were actually vampires in were-form, for blades magically slid off their fur. The Healer sent back the alarm, and we raced to the rescue, some of us (myself included) crossing the stream above and below the fight, to catch the vampires in the curves of the scimitar, as the saying goes. I had barely dismounted, when no wolf but a tall, gaunt warrior loomed up before me. I cannot describe the dismay I felt when my blade would not bite and the terrible creature reached out his hand through my armor to send a chilling cold through my shield shoulder. I cast the most powerful Mind Blast upon him which I could, and knew great joy when the unclean thing collapsed and began to flop about upon the ground, bereft of all intelligence. With my silver dagger (a parting gift from my father) I cut away the thing's head, and later burned separately both the head and body.

I came upon Lord Hahlgrim and Ironbreaker. This was surely a great weapon, for it sang and glowed as it swung, and the vampire against whom he fought parried desperately

as it tried to dissolve to smoke and disappear. But Hahlgrim skewered the smoke even as it hung; the air flashed with power, and its vanishing scream testified that the vampire had been annihilated.

Around us the fight continued, and many of our force fell, for the vampires were a dozen or more, and some of them great mages. But Hahlgrim and Oddi had planned well. Some of us retreated toward the stream, while others poured out holy water to make an island, so far as the vampires were concerned, of the battle ground. Bounded by water on all sides so that they could not escape, and outnumbered a dozen to one, even the mightiest of them fell, though not before fifty or more of us were dead or mortally wounded. The fighting was fierce, and our Power had been savaged. We brought back the undead remains as we could, to burn them, but some were never recovered, and all thought the fight the hardest they had known. I spent much of my force dispelling the chilling shadows the creatures called up, and more than one of my comrades praised me for my mastery of Lunar magics, which made me proud.

One vampire had been captured, and it we held in a silver slave collar, allowed just enough of its twisted spirit that it might answer our questions. Before we dispatched the arrogant, unrepentant wight, we learned something of vampires and their ways, and learned also that Raizakark had regained that day an old ally, though our captive knew, or would tell, no more....

After spiking the vampire beds and making much general destruction and looting of the Tower, we rode away, coming across the camp of a large troop of Tricksters farther down the valley, who had wandered through broo country from Kartolin Pass and Ralios, though they had seen no caravans on the Lunar Trade Route. They did many entertainments, and Oddi particularly enjoyed them, drinking and riddling and bandying the most outrageous stories with them far into the night.

Krjalk

Lord of Monsters



Mythos and History

When the gods of chaos crawled from the Void after the destruction of the Spike, Krjalk was among them, a formless shifting monstrosity. At the height of his power, merely uttering or even conceiving his name had the power to transform the speaker or thinker into a chaos horror — a slave to Krjalk. Yet in the Gods War, Krjalk was confounded and devoured by Zorak Zoran. Only tiny particles survived to seed the souls of traitors, parricides, and apostates everywhere.

In the Dawn Age, the Krjalk cult was rediscovered and became widely known. In Ralios and Fronela, many people who joined Gbaji's Empire gladly sprouted chaotic features and became krjalki. When Arkat razed the land, Krjalk was defeated again, and has never since enjoyed the same level of worship.

Worshippers of Krjalk portray the god in countless twisted manifestations. Among the Hellwood elves, Krjalk is represented as a Black Slime Tree, a rare three-trunked plant which yields a gorp-like slime in Dark Season. In Zorak Zoran rituals, Krjalk is shown in different forms, always with a noose around his neck and a spike protruding from his chest.

There are no established funerary practices or beliefs in an afterlife. Those that do believe in an afterlife see themselves as small pieces of Krjalk, immortal within his being. Where his worshippers gather in groups, cannibalism is not unknown, but bodies are often simply left to rot where they fall. The Hellwood elves often feed their dead to carnivorous plants, perhaps in belief that the dead elf shall someday return to life as a new sprout.

Krjalk is associated with the Runes of Chaos, Harmony and Change.

Cult Ecology

The followers of Krjalk are few, but are not furtive; unlike the worshippers of Krarsht or Gbaji, they flaunt their chaos status openly, and proudly display many loathsome chaotic features. They often are found as leaders of small chaotic communities, though not where other, more organized, chaotic cults are

strong. The cult itself has no official power except in the Hellwood, where its members comprise the power elite, with many cultists in the Forest Council.

Worshippers of Krjalk both feed and feed off of the evils of the world. Every time a piece of Krjalk finds root in the hatred, greed, or desire for vengeance of another being, and that person betrays their former allegiances, Krjalk grows stronger.

One of the cognomens of Krjalk is Seed of Chaos, and he is mainly associated with beings who have converted to chaos, rather than those native to it. In particular he is the god of apostasy, and whenever a person leaves his former cult, Krjalk is made more powerful, and more pieces of him descend into the world. Some philosophers speculate that he was powerless until Arkat the Traitor awakened him permanently through his actions in abandoning cult after cult, to the bane of all creation.

Worshippers of Krjalk have few common features. Most are insane by human standards, and all are vile, evil, and depraved. They embrace chaos, and spread its blessings throughout the world. This is done in an obvious manner (through use of Conversion and Corruption spells), and in a more subtle manner by encouraging and serving as an example for betrayal and apostasy.

There are no days particularly holy to Krjalk. Worship services are convened at the whim and whimsy of the officiating priest.

The Cult in the World

Worship of Krjalk is unknown in Pamaltela, and even in Genertela is rare. Because his worshippers so openly display their afflictions, incursions by the cult are relatively easy to detect and eradicate in most lands. Krjalki can be found at the edge of every Genertelan society, especially in Fronela and Ralios, and his worship is rampant in Dorastor. He shows no favoritism among chaotic races, but most of his worshippers throughout Genertela are human.

When two or more priests of Krjalk gather together, the most powerful will rule. Such dominance is established without violence, often



determined simply by the number of obvious chaotic features each krjalki manifests. Among the Hellwood elves, this dominance system has evolved into a strict hierarchy, paralleling the natural Aldrya system. However, this is the exception, not the rule, and probably a unique feature of the atypically large and long-established Krjalki community of Hellwood.

Krjalk's temples are few in number, normally only found in highly chaotic areas such as Dorastor. Because of the wide-spread nature of the cult in the First Age, shrines can be found almost anywhere west of the Wastes (and even in Kralorela). Larger structures are rarely found, though the Hellwood elves of Dorastor boast a Great Temple at Seven Hills. Shrines to Krjalk teach Conversion.

Krjalki (Initiate) Membership

Any non-chaotic being may join the cult of Krjalk, requiring only a desire to embrace chaos, for whatever reason, and that he or she receive the blessing of the Conversion spell at least once. A chaotic being can only join if it has undergone some alteration in its basic nature; this does not include the taking on of chaotic features. For example, casting the Primal Chaos spell of Chaos Feature itself would not allow a chaotic being to join the cult, but the spell can also change the recipient into a broo, and that transformation would qualify it to join. The Bagog Ritual of Rebirth transforms a creature into one of the scorpion races; the Pochamgo spell of Corruption turns the recipient into a shambling horror. A chaotic entity who has undergone one of these (or similar spells) would qualify to become a krjalki. An Illuminate may also join, as may a broo who has undergone the Thed Rebirth of Chaos ritual. Acceptance is automatic for all applicants who meet the requirements. A point of POW must be sacrificed at the time of acceptance.

Krjalki must obey the orders of any priest of Krjalk when in their presence. There are no time or monetary requirements for initiates, but there are few benefits. The cult provides no Spirit Magic spells, but none are prohibited; the occasional shaman who becomes a krjalki usually teaches spells to other worshipers of Krjalk for a fee. Krjalki do not have access to Divine Intervention, but may sacrifice for one-use of all cult Divine spells except Conversion.

Krjalki Priests

The main duty of krjalki priests is to serve as an example of their god in the world, and so they are often horrors with multiple chaos features, engaging in foul practices and spreading the polluted word of

their god. To become a priest, a candidate must have been krjalki for at least a year, and must have at least one obvious chaos feature (even if Illumined). The applicant must go to a shrine of Krjalk and sacrifice another point of POW. If he succeeds in a roll of his POW or less then he becomes a priest. If he fails the point of POW is lost, and he may try again in a year.

Among the Hellwood elves of Dorastor, the procedure is more formalized. Since the cult has a permanent power structure, there are regular priests at the shrines and temples. A candidate for the priesthood must bring an appropriate gift to the priest (such as a magical item or the head of a Poisonthorn elf). The candidate must be Illumined, and must have a skill level of 50% or better in Orate, Ceremony, and a Weapon Attack. There must be a need for a new priest. Finally, he must sacrifice a point of POW and roll under his POW on 1d100, as above. If he fails the roll, he may try again in a year, if there is still a need for another priest.

Among the Hellwood elves, a priest must give 50% of his time and income to the cult. He must lead worship services on a regular basis, and must provide for the teaching of appropriate skills and spells to krjalki who worship regularly. He must obey the orders of the priest who ordained him and other senior priests. He must spread the word and powers of Krjalk throughout the world by deed, magic, and example.

In other krjalki communities, a priest must give 10% of his time; there is no income requirement. He must lead worship services whenever he can gather enough krjalki together, though he has no obligation to such worshipers.

Common Divine spells: Dismiss Magic, Extension, Sanctify, Warding, Worship Krjalk

Special Divine spells: Conversion, Fear, Madness, Power Drain

Krjalk Special Divine Spells

Conversion 3 points

touch, duration one day, nonstackable, reusable

This spell must be cast on a non-chaotic creature, who may choose not to accept it, with no resistance roll needed. It gifts the target with a beneficial chaotic feature without automatically tainting him or her with chaos, but gives an increasing chance that he will become chaotic by accepting the aid of chaos. If the spell is cast on an illuminate or a creature tainted with chaos in any way, it automatically fails. When the spell is cast, the target receives a random chaotic feature. The target does not detect as chaotic or illumined to any spell, skill, or ability. The chaotic



feature gained is always beneficial, and causes no mutation or abnormal physical effects.

In addition to the aforementioned benefit, the target must roll 1d100 when the spell is cast. If he rolls under 5%, he must roll 1d6 and consult the following chart, applying the result immediately. This chance is cumulative, so a target would have a 15% chance to be cursed the third time he accepted the benefit of this spell. Unless a 1 is rolled, the target becomes permanently tainted with chaos.

- 1 target gains 3d6 chaos features for 1d6 days.
- 2 target becomes tainted with chaos, but does not show it in an obvious way. He does register as chaotic to Divination, Sense Chaos, etc.
- 3 target turns into a brood.
- 4 target undergoes the effect of the Corruption spell.
- 5 target gains a "detrimental" chaos feature.
- 6 target gains a "detrimental" chaos feature and an obvious physical mutation.

Power Drain 2 points

ranged, temporal, nonstackable, reusable

The recipient of this spell gains the ability to drain magic points by touch. He must touch a victim with his bare hand; the spell works through clothes or armor. The recipient must match his magic points against the victim's. If the victim is overcome, he loses 1d6 magic points. This can be done once each turn for the duration of the spell.

Note that the MP vs. MP contest is based on the recipient's magic points, but all drained points go to the caster of the spell. When the spell ends, any points in excess of the caster's normal magic point score are lost.

Subservient Cults

Spirit of Reprisal

There is no known Spirit of Reprisal for the krjalki: once devoted to Krjalk, one cannot sever the tie. Since members have few if any commitments, there is really nothing to be punished for. Even krjalki priests who abandon the cult and seek to halt the spread of chaos are not punished, for their act is itself a betrayal, and thus sacred to the god.

The Hellwood elves punish those who betray the cult or the elves, but this vengeance is purely a community matter, not a cult obligation.

Hellwood

The mutant elves of the Hellwood have embraced Krjalk, and are an active part of chaotic Dorastor. They have warred with their cousins in the Poisonthorn Forest since their arrival in the land after the reawakening of Dorastor. The krjalki elves have

discovered or created a special spell as worshipers of Krjalk which allows the Hellwood elves at least the semblance of normal aldryami culture.

To join this subcult, a Hellwood initiate of Krjalk must sacrifice a point of POW and sacrifice for at least one use of the spell Become Krjalki. Any chaotic appearance or feature disappears immediately, and only reappears when the spell is used. Additional chaos features or appearances gained afterwards are permanent, unless the Krjalki sacrifices an additional point of POW to Krjalk, in which case all additional chaotic attributes become part of the Become Krjalki spell as well.

Become Krjalki

1 point

self, duration 1 hour, nonstackable, reusable

This spell causes the Hellwood elf to assume his or her krjalki form. Any chaotic features, attributes, or appearances which the elf has gained (in any way) take effect for the duration of the spell. Thus, if a Hellwood elf had the chaotic features of extra body part (a Tail) and +15 STR, he would appear as a normal brown elf until he cast the spell, at which time he would double in strength and grow a tail (with other corresponding changes in appearance). When the spell ends all chaotic semblance is lost, and the spell must be regained (or resacrificed for, in the case of initiates) to gain further use of the elf's chaotic attributes. Most Hellwood elves that know this spell sacrifice for multiple uses.

Associated Cults

Pocharngo

This monstrous daemon (known as the Cosmic Cancer) is the god of corruption. His cult is very similar to Krjalk's, and the two often cooperate, and usually share worshipers. He provides Corruption to the priests of Krjalk.

Primal Chaos

This ubiquitous and universal chaos cult offers the spell of Blessing of Chaos to priests of Krjalk, useful because the cult spell of Conversion will not affect those already blessed by chaos.





BLACKTHORN

Male Hellwood elf, age 99, illuminated priest of Krjalk, initiate of Aldrya

Note: statistics in parentheses are for Krjalki-form.

STR 14 (28)
CON 15 (30)
SIZ 13
INT 16
POW 20
DEX 19
APP 17 (5)

Elf Form

Location	Melee	Missile	Points
R Leg	01-04	01-03	6/5
L Leg	05-08	04-06	6/5
Abdomen	09-11	07-10	6/5
Chest	12	11-15	6/6
R Arm	13-15	16-17	6/4
L Arm	16-18	18-19	6/4
Head	19-20	20	6/5

Krjalki Form

Location	Melee	Missile	Points
R Leg	01-03	01-02	11/7
L Leg	04-06	03-04	11/7
Tail	07	05	5/6
Abdomen	08-10	06-09	11/7
Chest	11-12	10-13	11/9
R Wing	13	14	5/7
L Wing	14	15	5/7
R Arm	15-16	16-17	11/6
L Arm	17-18	18-19	11/6
Head	19-20	20	11/7

Move: 3 (3/7 flying)

Fatigue: 29 (58)

Hit Points: 14 (22)

Magic Points: 20 + 13 (elf bow) + 9 (crystal) = 42

DEX SR: 2

Arms and Armor: Total Encumbrance = 16; Fatigue 29-16 = 13 (58-16 = 42). Wears a suit of enchanted copper plate armor (6 AP).

Shortsword is also enchanted copper, and he often carries a normal spear.

Weapon	SR	Att/Par	Damage	ENC/AP
1H S. Spear	6	143/107 (150/114)	1d8+1 (+1d6)	2.0/10
Elf Bow	1,4,7	127/— (134/—)	1d8+1	0.5/8
Shortsword	6	119/87 (126/94)	1d6+1 (+1d6)	1.0/10
(Tail)	7	94/—	1d6+2d6+POT 15 poison	

Notes: Shortsword is only damaged if it takes over 20 points of damage. In Krjalki form, Blackthorn can attack with a weapon, then attack with his tail 3 strike ranks later.

Spirit Magic (121%): Befuddle (2), Disruption, Extinguish 2, Food Song (1), Firearrow (2), Heal 2, Mobility 2, Second Sight (3), Speedart (1); (in matrices) Control Shade, Darkwall (2), Multimissile 4, Spirit Screen 5, Summon Shade

Divine Magic: Arrow Trance (one-use), Become Krjalki x3, Blessing of Chaos (one-use), Conversion x2, Dismiss Magic 6, Extension 8,

Fear x4, Heal Body (one-use) x2, Madness, Power Drain x3, Sanctify, Silence Sphere (one-use), Warding 3, Worship Krjalk

Chaotic Features (Krjalki form only): Rut Like a Broo (Blackthorn can mate with almost any species and produce plant-like offspring. The body of the host must be buried; as the offspring grows like a plant. This is fatal to the host.); Barbed tail injects plant-based poison; leafy wings sprout from back; Bark provides 5 APs; increased STR and CON (already included).

Skills and Bonuses:

Agility +8 (+15): Climb 69%, Dodge 57% (87%), Fly 87%, Jump 42% (87%), Throw 52%

Communication +15 (+9): Orate 87%

Knowledge +6: Animal Lore 39%, Chaos Lore 67%, Elf Lore 96%, First Aid 49%, Mineral Lore 97%, Plant Lore 115%, World Lore 86%

Magic +21: Ceremony 77%, Enchant 31%, Summon 93%

Manipulation +17 (+23): Devise 59% (with plants only)

Perception +14 (+21): Earthsense 118%, Listen 63%, Scan 97%, Search

102%, Track 101%

Stealth -4: Hide 81%, Sneak 73%

Languages: Aldryami 86/47, Bilini 37/—, Chaosspeech 61/—, Darktongue 33/43, Tradetalk 47

Special Items: Elf Bow (POW 13). Contains a matrix for Multimissile.

3 living copper arrows (do +2 damage when fired from Elf Bow).

Copper amulet carved with detail of Yelmario (enchanted to 6 APs) is a matrix for Control Shade and Darkwall.

Gold and topaz neck torque is a matrix for Spirit Screen and Summon Shade. Value as jewelry is 500 Lunars.

Shortsword is made of enchanted copper with gold highlights. An unpowered crystal set into the hilt holds 9 magic points.

Armor is made of enchanted copper, hammered thin to be less encumbering. Provides 6 APs to all normal human locations. Special cuts in the back allow his wings to operate normally in krjalki form, but may cause some confusion if noticed while he is in elf form.

Attuned to powered crystal (POW 7) which serves as a focus for any Disruption spell cast at a broo, causing it to do double damage. It will do this up to seven times per day.

Shadow Seed. When planted and 1 POW sacrificed, this seed grows into a Shade in 1d6 minutes (day) or rounds (night). The shade is 1 cubic meter in volume per magic point spent. It will take Blackthorn 1d6 seasons to obtain a replacement seed.

Combat Notes: Blackthorn always takes krjalki form when dealing with outsiders, usually Extended to last at least an hour. He avoids direct combat when possible, though invaders harming the forest may enrage him. Even when confronted with such enemies, however, he will usually cast spells from a distance; if in dire need, he will use his Arrow Trance spell and pick them off from a great distance. Afterwards, he will always try to recover his copper arrows.

Background and Role-Playing Notes

Blackthorn is one of the Hellwood elves, and sprouted in the year 1522. He was one of the first of a generation of increasingly chaotic elves, and he knew his connection to the Primal Chaos even before he was initiated into the bosom of Aldrya, the Great Mother. He believes that chaos is the one and only true way of the aldryami, and supports the spreading of its blessings even among those elves newly sprouted.



Blackthorn spent 35 years as an Aldrya initiate before finally becoming illuminated and joining the cult of Krjalk. He has risen in the service of Poisonbark (a member of the Hellwood Gardeners Circle), and is now a full priest of Krjalk. He is currently in charge of the Hellwood scouting forces in the Foulvale; this includes the human area of Riskland, although he rarely sends his scouts there.

Blackthorn often takes to the field, and is occasionally sent by Poisonbark as a messenger or emissary to Fort Wrath. He usually travels as a normal elf and, since he does not detect as chaotic in that form, often tries to pass himself off as a Poisonthorn elf, a deception which works only against humans, broos, and other inferior species. If threatened, he takes krjalki form immediately, and either annihilates his attackers or haughtily flies off, ignoring their efforts to harm him.

Personality: Blackthorn is utterly ruthless, combining a plant's empathic sense of survival with a broo's cruelty and viciousness. He is dedicated to the Hellwood, and will perform any act necessary to ensure the forest's continued health and growth.

Appearance: Blackthorn appears as a normal brown elf, darker than most. His hair looks like black moss, and his eyes are very dark. In krjalki form, he sprouts a tail and wings, which are plant-like in appearance: the tail is tipped with a thorn, the wings look like great, dark brown (almost black) leaves. His skin grows rough and brown, and his mouth develops fangs. His limbs become twisted and gnarly, becoming as thick and strong as great roots.

Followers

Blackthorn has a small band of permanent followers and worshipers, and he can call up additional musters of Hellwood elves when necessary. He prefers elves who have become corrupted by chaos, since he feels they have a better edge in combat and are closer to what he believes is the ultimate ideal of the aldryami. His permanent followers are all blessed by chaos, and any elf who seeks to join his personal guard must accept a chaotic feature as well.

Scenario Ideas

The Fugitive

A wounded elf is discovered near one of the outlying steads of the Riskland settlement. He is near death, and appears to have been fleeing the Hellwood. His body bears evidence of a long period of torture; to move him a great distance would mean his death, and so he is reluctantly taken into the settlement in great secrecy.

Once he has recovered and awakened, he tells of three seasons of torture at the hands of Blackthorn, of his escape attempt with four other captives (one a Risklander), and of the death of the others during his escape. He warns that Blackthorn will be searching for him, since he personally wounded the Krjalki Lord. Renekot must decide whether to keep him at Hazard Fort until he is recovered enough to move, or send him away for the safety of the settlement. Either way there is a risk: from the Hellwood if he stays, and from the Poisonthorn if he is sent out to his death. In the end, compassion wins, and he is tended in secrecy in the Lightbringers' quarters.

A messenger is sent to the Poisonthorn to seek aid in returning the elf to them, but it is slow in coming, for the Poisonthorn elves are suspicious of all humans. Over the next few weeks Hellwood scouts are seen closer and closer to the settlement, and finally Blackthorn himself arrives, flying above the settlement. He demands that the elf be turned over to him, or he will wipe the insignificant

humans off the face of Glorantha. He has a few scores of elven archers and spearmen to back up his claim. A messenger tells that a force of Poisonthorn elves have finally left their woods, but they will not arrive for three days, and may be reluctant to fight their cousins so far from their own lands.

Plant Spies

While traipsing through the Foulvale or the outskirts of the Hellwood, the player characters are surrounded by elves. If they try to flee or fight they will be trapped and killed, but if they act peacefully or surrender they are not harmed, though they are treated very roughly. Since they are greatly outnumbered, surrender will seem to be the obvious choice, even though a number of the elves bear the marks of chaos.

The players are brought before a greatly mutated elf, who is introduced to them as the lord Blackthorn. He has need of humans right now, and so he will allow them to live as long as they continue to prove useful to him. He sends them on an errand of some kind, possibly to Fort Wrath or into the Poisonthorn, or maybe even back into Riskland. However, he attaches a small parasitic plant to each of them to ensure their cooperation. Through these plants Blackthorn can sense some of their actions, and can cause great pain and harm to their bodies.

If the players return successfully Blackthorn may even remove the plants. However, there is no guarantee of this, and he may try to use them as his spies for years, especially if they are trusted in Hazard Fort. The plants will slowly link their roots into the players' nervous systems, and after only a few seasons will be impossible to remove without killing or crippling the host.





Description of a Troll Ceremony from the Jord Mountains

Source: Severen Trollfriend, Zorak Zoran Death Lord

I'll tell you the story like you want; but it's hard to think like a human again after so long. I've lived with the uz for so long now that sometimes I forget I'm not one of 'em; sometimes they forget it too.

It was four years after I had lived with the uz when old Kablorg, my Death Lord, invited me to come along for one of their ceremonies. He said I could watch, but I couldn't join in, since (as he put it) "even the enlo have less fire than you do." I was surprised at the offer, but I think he took me along as a test, and to help me understand uz attitudes toward chaos. Kablorg is very scholarly for an uz, and might have been a sage if he'd of been born human.

The ceremony was unusual for a number of reasons. First, it was held during the day. The priestesses all had slaves holding coverings for them, and even the enlo were required to attend, though the Enemy burned them fiercely! The ceremony was also in the wrong part of the year, during the height of Summer, when the uz ancestors and spirits were at their weakest. Kablorg wouldn't tell me why, and he may not have even known: the ceremony has been performed in this way for as long as the tribe has existed!

We left around midnight, and arrived just before noon at the most desolate spot I've seen anywhere, even in the twenty years since then. Kablorg stayed with me the entire way. Most of the uz objected to my presence, even though I had been initiated to the old Death Lord for almost two years. They said it would bring evil to them, as we humans always do. Even the Korasting acolyte (whom I knew well) hissed at me, then gave a soundless shriek which almost knocked me out! But I wouldn't back down, for I knew my staying through the ceremony would bring me fuller into the tribe, and that any weakness meant death. I bit my arm, and spit blood at her to show that I was not afraid. She left me alone after that.

I kicked the enlo out of Kablorg's way, then followed him up the ridge before the others could object. He picked up a large stone as he topped the rise, and growled at me when I started to do the same. As I went down into the small valley I was astounded at the number of loose stones in the valley, piled and thrown about seemingly at random. There was a small, nearly bare section in the center of the valley, and it was to this spot that we came, the priestesses and other high-ranking uz beginning to growl as we got near it. The enlo shook with terror, but I saw that they went up on their own, and didn't have to be driven, despite their fear of the place.

All of the uz and enlo carried rocks of varying sizes, even the Ancestress and her retinue! Three priestesses remained at the top of the rise invoking an ancestress, but every other troll from the tribe was there, including Baztok the Drunkard (sober for once) and Janjan the Firestarter. Even the Argan Argar merchants were there, who had left two seasons ago for Dagori Inkarth! Some of

the uzdo carried huge boulders, and even the priestesses carried stones larger than I could have lifted.

The Ancestress chanted for a while in Darktongue. I had finally learned enough to understand most of what she said, but you'll have to be satisfied when I say that I'm forbidden to repeat it, even after all that's happened between me and them: I can tell you that I still didn't understand what was going on, if that makes you happy.

After she was done, each troll walked up to the bare spot and added their rock to the pile, which grew quickly (there were over 700 uz there, including almost 50 uzdo). I followed Kablorg up, and noted how torn the ground looked, as if someone had been digging in it, perhaps even chewing it. I asked if there were any romal in the area that might have done that, but he just growled at me to be quiet.

When the last fearful enlo had added her rock and run fearfully to hide, the Ancestress spoke the ending verses to the ritual, then called to her daughters on the ridge. They answered, then picked up the largest boulders they could and sent them atop the pile without discernable effort (from almost a kilometer away!), one after another, for a long, long, long time.

When they were done, the endo began dragging the rest of the boulders in the area to add to the pile, and the enlo were sent after to fill in the cracks with smaller stones. They finished just about dusk. While they worked, Kablorg explained that the tribe had come here every year for 30 generations, in accordance with their most ancient agreement. Tribal spirits and guardians kept even animals out of the valley, but every year when they returned the pile was almost completely gone, no matter how high it was piled the year before. One of the oldest priestesses recalled that they had come once when she was a child, and found all of the rocks thrown away from the center, and something starting to come out of the ground, but they quickly covered it up again, and gathered stones from adjacent valleys to hold it down for the next year.

I asked what it was that they guarded here, and the Ancestress addressed me directly for the first time since I had joined the tribe as a Zorak Zorani. "We no longer remember, little almost-brother, but we know that it is evil, and must be guarded, for the sake of the world." She then turned and left, followed by the priestesses, and Kablorg and I followed behind with the rest of the uz. None of them growled at me, and I knew from the priestess' words that I had been accepted at last, if not as a troll, then at least as a member of the Death Lord's cult.

There's really not much else to tell. I went back every year after that. None of them said I'd bring bad luck anymore, so Kablorg (and later his successor) let me help after that first time. In fact, this is the first year I've missed, and I hope for their sake that it doesn't bring them bad luck that I'm NOT there this time. But that's politics for you, ain't it? I guess no matter how good a Zorak Zoran I was, I still wasn't enough of an uz for them after all.



Thanatar: The Severed God

Thanatar is one of the most complicated chaos cults known, formed in the Gbaji Wars of the First Age when two cults, Than and Atyar, were combined into a more powerful whole. Its worshipers steal the heads and knowledge of victims, and guard their foul temples with insane ghosts. Worshipers of the two aspects are often found separately as well.

Devotees of Than and Atyar can worship at each other's shrines, but have only limited spell access unless worshipping at a full temple to Thanatar. The special spell of Darklight was developed in the Second Age by a cult hero, and is only available at such locations.

A full write-up of the Thanatar cult is found in *Shadows on the Borderlands*, although the version presented there is native to Carmania. The cult of Thanatar known in Dorastor is different, with a tripartite system of Doom Lords of Than, Doom Priests of Atyar, and Doom Shamans of Thanatar sharing equal roles in the cult.

Atyar: Devourer of Knowledge

For centuries, Atyar was worshiped in Kraioreia as a patron of occult thieves. The cult spread westward in the First Age, when it was united (or reunited) with the deity Than to form the cult of Thanatar. Atyar is the Devourer of Knowledge, who takes knowledge from minds and books, leaving blank slates behind.

Worshipers of Atyar are most commonly found among the cult of Thanatar, but independent worship is still found, especially in Kraioreia and Dorastor. Priests of Atyar especially hate the Sages of Lhankor Mhy, and parody them in a dark and twisted way. Most common Divine spells are not available, but the special spell of Consume Mind allows the caster to steal knowledge and spells from a ritually prepared victim. Devour Book is typical of the knowledge-stealing spells available to the cult.

Atyar is symbolized by a wooden post, to which are nailed the hands of victims as offerings to this vile god. He is pictured by his foes as a silver ram-horned skull with blazing eyes. Knowledge of any kind is an appropriate sacrifice to the Devourer, especially in the form of Sages of Lhankor Mhy.

We stayed at Bolthor's country rest for several days. We had picked off Ralzakark's strength while it was uncoordinated; now all Dorastor would know of the heavy blows against him. As he gathered his forces, what would he do next?

Hahlggrim argued mightily that the rest of Bolthor's strength must be raised, and that some should again press up the Sludgestream to engage those chaos forces it might, while the main army should go around the Tobros Mountains, bypass Ralzakark's musters, and destroy him and his citadel on the Plateau of Wrath.

After three days Bolthor had agreed to nothing, and he offered little reason for his delay, except that delay was what he did best, as Ketil grumbled. We ate in our apartments at sunset, then I sat down to compose a letter to my father.

Hahlggrim watched the reflection of the Red Moon from a window while I wrote. Ketil had taken a horse to visit a lady love in a village half an hour away, while Oddi added accounts in another room (a task he had taken to with an ease surprising to all of us, including him). I felt a draft, and looked to where the door to the hall swung silently open. Hahlggrim turned too, and we watched Bolthor, in full armor, walk in, and a dozen of his thanes also, all armed and some with heavy crossbows.

Lord Hahlggrim was overly mindful of me, and would not at first resist. He sighed rather, saying "You are the 'old ally' of Ralzakark, Bolthor? I thought it might be so, yet I hoped against it, for you could well serve out your days safely."

The King would not respond. He drew his sword and held it by the blade. "You will return my sword to me and accept this one, Hahlggrim. I have agreed with Ralzakark that my

forces will not patrol beyond the Dorasta Shrine, and that his forces will not penetrate beyond the Oilstream and Frog rivers. The patrol work will be well for your abilities, Lord Hahlggrim." He stared pointedly at me, and I hated this fat fool.

Hahlggrim, his face masklike, made no reply.

"Give me the sword, Hahlggrim," Bolthor commanded. This demand he made thrice, and still Hahlggrim made no sign.

When last Hahlggrim stirred, he smiled grimly, making a curious small gesture as he said, "Bolthor."

But instead of completing the sentence, we all heard a loud crack from the other end of the room. The scabbard holding Ironbreaker to the wall literally exploded, and the jewels from it rolled noisily across the stone floor while shreds of leather fell everywhere. Such we saw but did not attend, for Ironbreaker itself did not fall but rose swiftly into the air, brightly glowing. Several thanes made magical passes at it while others fired their crossbows, and the cruelest thane shot my lord Hahlggrim through the lungs. Though Hahlggrim fell, Ironbreaker did not pause. Bolthor screamed and his thanes scattered, but the sword came still through the air.

"Thanatar!" the King squeaked. A new horror came into the room, teleporting silently behind the collapsing Hahlggrim. The teleporter was a thin man in black, and around his waist he wore many shrunken heads. He knelt beside the motionless Hahlggrim, who was still down though I'd poured my Healing upon him. The dark figure swiftly produced a silver garrote, and I knew his purpose. I launched myself at him and upset his cast even as Oddi the Keen burst through the door beyond.



Than: Headhunter

The word Than is a corruption of Tien, a son of the Devil who was beheaded in the Gods' War by a son of Urox. He remained afterwards as a headless corpse, and was worshiped by monsters during the Darkness. He gives the ability to steal knowledge and magic from the heads of properly sacrificed victims.

Worshippers of Than are most commonly found among the cult of Thanatar, but independent Doom Lords often follow Than exclusively, especially if their progression in the cult is blocked by internal politics. As with Atyar, most common magics are not available, but the Create Head ritual of the cult allows Doom Lords to retain the heads of their victims as sources of magic. Worshipers use special weapons called garrottes, and the spell of True Garrotte is often used to enhance such weapons. Worshipers of Than have a psychopathic hatred of the Storm Bull and all of his sons.

Images of Than are made by piling up the rotten heads and skulls of victims. Such piles are common near Tien shrines, and are often guarded by the insane ghosts of former victims. Than himself is

usually depicted as a headless man cloaked in black robes. Sacrifices are usually of sentient beings, and most are beheaded. Urox and the worshipers of Yelm (and other sun cults) are favored sacrifices.

True Garrotte

1 point

touch, temporal, nonstackable, reusable

This spell is identical to the True <Weapon> spell in *Runequest*. On a special roll, a True Garrotte will sever the head or limb it is wrapped around if the location is brought to zero Hit Points. If the garrotte is made of enchanted silver, any normal success roll will accomplish this if the location is brought to zero Hit Points.



We all seemed to hesitate, though not truly. Perhaps the memory of the moment would be chiselled in anyone who saw the blazing sword hover over the squealing king, then descend like lightning through his skull, his torso, and his armor, and plunge thunderously into the marble floor, quivering there with a sound like pork sausage sizzling. Bolthor, superb armor and all, had been split fish-wise.

Meanwhile, the Thanatari cultist and I rolled on the floor, grappling, the heads around his waist shrieking as we weighted on them or sent them thudding against the cold stone. Our brains swarmed with Rune magics, yet one could not defeat the other. This man was as strong as a demon, and at last he got the garrotte around one of my wrists. Even as I squeezed my thumbs into his throat, he desperately jerked the loop closed, and severed my hand. I remember seeing the member fall, but so filled with blood lust was I that I merely held tight to him with the other hand and shoved my stump into the assassin's face, so that the blood rushed into his eyes to blind him. He teleported and I fainted.

When I woke, I was Healed, and Hahlgrim was dead. No resurrection cast succeeded, though Oddi howled to Orlanth that the god had no reason to despise such a hero as Hahlgrim. At last Oddi lay weeping beside his brother, the sword Ironbreaker in his grasp. Silently we kept vigil over the body for an hour, then Oddi related the rest.

Bolthor's thanes had fled when their lord was slain, for as with Hahlgrim he could not be healed or resurrected. In his dying, Hahlgrim saluted Oddi as the new owner of Ironbreaker, and told him the secret of the sword. One of the properties of the weapon was that it would infallibly kill one person, but that the death would be paid for by the infallible

death of the sword's wielder as well. Hahlgrim had decided upon his own death when he realized that he could not protect me from the crossbow quarrels: this revelation made me profoundly humble, unworthy of this great man's death, and I begged forgiveness from his brother, which Oddi granted without stint.

Oddi had Healed me and arranged his brother in the Orlanthi burial position, and then had saluted Ironbreaker, which revealed its full self. With the great sword, Oddi set out for revenge, and found a dozen of Bolthor's best thanes in frightened council. He was on them like a thunderclap, and with the terrible Ironbreaker slew them all in moments. One of the servants told me that Oddi had been like an avenging god, and that he alone broke the best of Bolthor's clan in half an hour's time, penning them within the Hold's walls and forcing them to jump or be slain where they cowered (for Bolthor's kin were no more valiant than the fat king himself). Oddi had smashed down armored doors and torn through strong walls to corner the rats of Bolthor, and indeed I saw much evidence of Oddi's towering rage and mighty vengeance.

A vision had alerted Ketil, and he rode in with a hundred or more followers to secure the grounds and aid in the funeral preparations. After new attempts at resurrection (for then we could not believe that a sword could be made so that a god could not undo its work), we burned our Lord on Ash Hill, overlooking his lands, and Oddi prayed to Orlanth to take his brother's spirit into the god's hall.

Oddi thereafter would observe only the forms of worship, and would not swear by any god.

Pocharngo

Source of Mutation



Mythos and History

Pocharngo was first seen shortly after the Spike exploded. It was most active on Genertela, where it was a great foe of the trolls, but it (or a deity like it) was also known in Pamaltela. There, Pochungo was the leader of the chaos army that followed Jraktal or Vovisibor. It created many monsters in its wake (including the tentacled horrors called charnjibbers) before being driven off of the continent, presumably north to Genertela.

In Genertela, portions of things which Pocharngo touched ran before it and outside it, and some of these cancerous parts even now run free. It faced an army of trolls, and mutated them into the tainted creatures known as cave trolls. Like a growing, slogging swamp it moved across the continent, turning the Old World into a sickening tumultuous slough of cancer. According to the trolls of Dagori Inkarth, it was finally smashed by Zorak Zoran, who scattered its pieces. The monster could not be wholly destroyed, however, and its pieces reformed after Zorak Zoran had gone. The trolls of Halikiv and Guhan have never heard of Pocharngo, but they remember a similar deity called only the Gorp god, whose body was shattered by Zorak Zoran and the pieces turned upon each other, changing the evil into impotency. It is likely that both creatures were Pocharngo, who is sometimes called the Father of Gorp in troll and EWF manuscripts.

Pocharngo is usually represented by his worshipers as a large gorp. In troll rituals, the sacrifice who takes the part of Pocharngo is stripped and painted with a special, foul-tasting slime.

Worshipers of Pocharngo know of no afterlife, and care for none. They know that everything eventually returns to the Pools of Chaos, from which everything came eons ago. They care only for the moment, and for spreading the mutations of their god through the world. There are no funeral practices for the cult; most bodies are given as food to gorp, manlings, or other creatures spawned by the cult.

Pocharngo is known in many places and by many names, but is always associated with the runes of Chaos and Change.

Cult Ecology

Pocharngo is the chaos god of corruption and mutation — change from without. It possesses a power which changes that which is good into that which is bad, and nothing it touches is safe from degeneration. It is worshiped primarily by chaos monsters, and its cult cannot exist in any human society. Individual members worship for a number of reasons as varied as the god itself, usually for the powerful spells the cult teaches, but some apparently for mystical reasons associated with Pocharngo as a source of chaotic fertility.

Pocharngists have no social power in any society in Glorantha, chaotic or otherwise. No standard rituals or observances are recognized; followers rarely gather together for any purpose except worship. Pocharngists have no generally shared views or preferences, except their desire to bring the change of chaos to the world.

Holy days are impulsively determined by the priest, who notify cultists of the next worship service at their discretion. This is usually at least once per season. Services are held in different locations each time, selected by the priest. There was once a high holy day for the cult, but it changed, and so was lost.

The Cult in the World

Worshipers of Pocharngo are found throughout Glorantha but are most common in Pamaltela, especially in Fonrit and other chaos-dominated areas. In Genertela, they are only known in Dorastor and Dagori Inkarth, though the cult was apparently active in the West in the First and Second Ages. Members come from any race; humans predominate, but many cultists are difficult to classify by race or sex due to the mutations they have undergone.

Pocharngo's temples are small and scattered. Temples do exist, but shrines are far more common. Even at larger sites, attendance at services may rarely qualify as anything greater than a shrine. In Dorastor, the cult is relatively large and active, and minor and even major temple gatherings are not uncommon. Shrines to Pocharngo teach Create Gorp.



Initiate Membership

Initiates of Pocharngo consist of those deranged or chaotic enough to embrace the change of chaos. The only requirement is that the candidate must possess an obvious chaotic feature or disfigurement and must sacrifice a point of POW to Pocharngo.

Initiates must dedicate 10% of their time to the cult, but have no other requirements. They need not obey their priests, though they often find it to their advantage to do so. They must sacrifice a random number of magic points to Pocharngo each holy day, determined by rolling 1d6. This must be done even if they do not attend an actual worship service.

There are few requirements to join the cult, and commensurately few benefits to be gained from it. Pocharngists do not have access to Spirit Magic spells, though none are forbidden, and priests encourage their initiates to learn spells from other sources. Pocharngists do not have access to Divine Intervention. Initiates can sacrifice for one-use of Divine spells, at the whim of their priest. Pocharngo has few if any prejudices, and an initiate may become a sorcerer or shaman if he wishes.

Shamblers (Priests)

Priests of Pocharngo are dedicated to manifesting their god in the world, through continual use of his Divine spells. They are often called shamblers, since many of them are so warped and mutated as to be unrecognizable as intelligent beings. The warping of their body usually warps their mind as well, so that the randomness of the cult practices is in part a function of the randomness of their minds.

A candidate for priesthood must have voluntarily undergone the Corruption spell. He must also pass the Test of Holiness (roll POW x3 or less on 1d100). He must lead worship services on an irregular basis, although the definition is deliberately vague; services every five years could satisfy the requirement. He must devote half of his time to the cult's affairs and to the spreading of mutation, but there are no other established requirements.

Priests of Pocharngo gain access to reusable Divine Magic spells. They are under obligation to cast them whenever possible, preferably in ways that will further the cause of chaos and change in the world. Priests have also been known to receive allied spirits, usually in the form of a gorp or other Spawn of Pocharngo. The chance is the priest's POWx3% or less when they undergo the Corruption ritual as part of ordination. If they do not receive an allied spirit

then, they have a 1% chance to receive one at any worship service they hold. If an allied spirit is killed, a new one can be gained in the same manner. This gorp will always obey the priest's commands, and will never attack him.

Common Divine Magic: Dismiss Magic, Divination, Sanctify, Worship Pocharngo

Special Divine Magic: Command <Spawn of Pocharngo>, Create Gorp, Consume, Corruption, Spawn <Creature>, Wither

Pocharngo Special Divine Spells

Consume

1 point

ranged, temporal, stackable, reusable

This spell does 1D3 damage to a random hit location of a target whose magic points are overcome, ignoring all armor. During the bookkeeping phase of subsequent rounds, the target must try to roll his current magic points x5 or less on 1D100. If he fails, he takes another 1D3 damage in the same location. This continues until the hit location is completely destroyed (turned into gray slime) or the victim succeeds in his magic point x5 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. Damage done can be healed normally.

This spell will only affect a single Hit Location per casting. Each additional point stacked decreases the target's magic point x5 roll by 25 percentiles (to a minimum 5% chance of success). If a victim had 18 magic points and was afflicted by Consume 2, he would have to roll 65 or less to halt the spell's affect.

Corruption

4 points

touch, instant, nonstackable, one-use

This spell completely transforms the target, whose magic points must be overcome. Over the next 1D10 rounds, the target is warped and transformed into a gruesome horror. Roll 2D6 for each characteristic. If the result is odd it is subtracted from the characteristic; if even, it is added. The 2D6 roll is always subtracted from APP. If any characteristic is reduced to 0 or less the being becomes incapable of survival, and dies immediately.

Only Divine Intervention can halt the transformation process once it has begun, and it will prevent the target from being tainted by chaos if performed before the process has been completed.

**Create Gorp**

1 point

touch, instant, stackable, reusable

This spell is performed over the earth itself, and takes 1d6 minutes to cast. 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. Other characteristics are determined randomly.

Wither

3 points

ranged, instant, stackable, reusable

The caster of this spell must overcome the target's magic points with his own. 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 area is affected (such as the head, chest, or abdomen) the target dies. A Withered limb cannot be Healed, but it could be amputated and then Regrow Limb or Regenerate used to restore it properly.

Subservient Cults

Spirit of Reprisal

Pocharngo has no desire to force his worshipers into any set mold or pattern, and so members are free to come and go, worship or not, as they please. Even priests have no set rules, and the requirement that a priest hold irregular worship services is interpreted loosely.

However, any priest who betrays the principals of mutation and chaotic growth is subject to the Curse of Changes. Characteristics which were affected beneficially by the Corruption spell will now be affected detrimentally instead. Thus, if a priest had a STR of 14 when Corruption was cast on him, and rolled a 10 for STR, it would be added for a total of 24. If he was then affected by the Curse of Changes, it would be subtracted instead, leaving a new STR of 4. If the Curse of Changes reduces a characteristic to 0 or below, the individual immediately dies.

Spawn of Pocharngo

In the Darkness, Pocharngo spawned a number of creatures. The best known are the gorp, but many other grotesqueries, less well-known, owe their existence to Pocharngo. A priest of Pocharngo can learn the spell of Spawn <Creature> at any shrine. Each shrine has a different spell, and the same shrine may provide different spells at different times or to different priests. Spawn are unintelligent, but as

children of Pocharngo they can participate in worship services, which explains why priests of Pocharngo can maintain a functioning shrine with few or no followers.

Some creatures spawned include Manlings, Purple Frogs, Slime Rats, Lead Eaters, Crawling Hands, and Fog Bugs. The spell of Spawn Crawling Hand is given below as an example of Pocharngo's fertility. Other Spawn <Creature> spells might be cast upon an object, the body of the caster, or an element such as earth or water. Many are cast upon gorp, transforming them into some other creature. See *River of Cradles*, page 139, for another example of a Spawn <Creature> spell, Spawn Manling.

Spawn Crawling Hand

1 point

ritual Enchant spell, nonstackable, reusable

This ritual must be performed upon a corpse. It detaches and animates one of the hands of the victim. Once this has occurred, the hand cannot be used as part of a Resurrection ritual because of its chaotic taint. The limb can be Regrown or Regenerated.

The crawling hand appears to be unintelligent, but active at command, with a fanged mouth at the wrist. It can survive indefinitely if provided proper food, usually gorp and other Spawn. Once it dies, the hand withers and decays rapidly. While animate, the hand will serve its creator. It responds to spoken commands of its creator only, but, with its small size and lack of leverage, rarely has a STR of more than 3. It has the SIZ and HPs it possessed in life, rarely more than 2 each. It has a Move of 2, and is capable of leaping up to its STR in meters.

Associated Cults

Krjalk

Krjalk is the chaos god of treason and apostates, and his krjalki have much in common with worshipers of Pocharngo. The deities have similar motives, and each draws upon the worship of the other to maintain its power in the world. Priests of Pocharngo learn Conversion from the krjalki.

Primal Chaos

This cult is the source of all chaos. Even more than most deities, Pocharngo calls upon the randomness of chaos to empower its worshipers. The Primal Chaos is also a source of chaotic fertility, an aspect which Pocharngo embodies. Blessing of Chaos is available to priests of Pocharngo.



SHAMBLER

Original race and sex unknown, Priest of Pocharngo

		Location	Missile	Melee	Points
STR	32	R Leg	01-02	01-02	5/5
CON	7	M Leg	03-04	03-04	4/5
SIZ	23	L Leg	05-06	05-06	3/5
INT	25	Abdomen	07-10	07-10	3/5
POW	29	Chest	11-13	11-12	5/6
DEX	13	R Arm	14-16	13-15	3/5
APP	3	L Arm	17	16	3/2
		B Tent	18-19	17-18	4/4
		Head	20	19-20	6/5

Move: 3

Fatigue: 39

Hit Points: 15

Magic Points: 29 + 16 (allied spirit) = 45

DEX SR: 3

Arms and Armor: Total Encumbrance = 0. Chaos Feature gives between 3 and 6 points armor protection (see above). Hasn't been able to find a tailor willing to make the alterations necessary for proper clothing.

Weapon	SR	Att/Par	Damage
R Hand Fist	6	72/—	1d3+2d6
M Leg Kick	6	45/—	1d6+2d6
Tentacle Slam	6	88/—	1d3+2d6+Special

Notes: If the tentacle hits, it covers the target with a foul-smelling musk. Target must roll under his or her CONx5 on 1d100 or be driven into a helpless state of convulsing and vomiting. The CON roll must be made every round until the musk is washed off.

Spirit Magic (181%): Befuddle (2), Fanaticism 1, Protection 4, Shimmer 6; (known by allied spirit) Disruption, Slow 4

Sorcery (Free INT 9): Palsy (63%), Spell Resistance (44%), Venom (52%)

Divine Magic: Blessing of Chaos (one-use), Command Gorp x5, Consume 2, Conversion 3, Corruption x2 (one-use), Create Gorp 12, Dismiss Magic 5, Divination x2, Spawn Crawling Hand, Spawn Fog Bug, Spawn Lead Eater, Spawn Manling, Spawn Pseudopodic Gorp, Spawn Purple Frog, Spawn Slime Rat, Sanctify, Wither 5, Worship Pocharngo

Chaotic Features: Regenerates one hit point per location per round; Absorbs spells up to three points and adds them to magic point total, up to POW; Long slender tentacle emerges from center of back, secretes poison musk (appears as pink viscous slime); Third leg protrudes obscenely from groin; Extra mouths scattered over body; Attracts all Disruptions cast within 4m; Telegraphs actions (+20% to hit); Huge gorp-like growths covering body provide armor protection, but soft tissue beneath takes double damage from impaling weapons; Birds attack it on sight; Tremendously obese.

The shambler's altered characteristics come from Corruption spells cast on it in the past, as do the enlarged right and withered left arms.

Bonuses and Skills:

Agility+1: Climb 73%, Dodge 57%, Jump 23%, Throw 82%

Communication+22: Sing 36%

Knowledge+15: Animal Lore 61%, Chaos Lore 70%, Dorastor Lore 77%, Plant Lore 41%, World Lore 48%

Magic+36: Ceremony 86%, Intensity 73%, Enchant 84%,

Summon 46%

Manipulation+29: Conceal 43%

Perception+24: Listen 64%, Scan 70%, Search 35%, Track 59%

Stealth-29: Hide 11%, Sneak 15%

Languages: Chaosspeech 37/—, Firespeech 27/—, Balazaring 36/—, Tradetalk 42/—

Special Items: **Rag doll.** The shambler is never without a large, child-sized, ancient, decaying embroidered rag doll. It has no practical or magical use, but if someone touches it, the shambler goes wild and attacks the offender. This item may be a relic of the shambler's past, or merely a scavenged keepsake.

Bag of microgorp. The shambler often drags along a sack or bag with a number of microgorp. These it uses in many sacred rituals, and at other times they become a tasty snack. Its most unusual use for them is to draw a circle in the dirt and drop several in the center. It then tries to knock out the most microgorp from the circle using one of the spare ones (roll Throw skill: success = 1, special = 2, critical = 3 microgorp knocked out, fumble = microgorp thrown remains in circle). As its usual opponent is one of its Spawn, the shambler usually wins. If players find it in a good mood, it may challenge them to a match.

Allied Spirit: Awakened Zoomer Gorp

STR	0	Move: 4
CON	16	Hit Points: 14
SIZ	12	Fatigue: n/a
INT	11	
POW	16	
DEX	0	

Spirit Magic (82%): see above

Divine Spells (one-use): Consume 4

Notes: Because of the shambler's deranged condition, it often experiments upon and loses its allied spirit. Fortunately, the shambler's great devotion to Pocharngo usually supplies a replacement soon after.

Followers

The shambler is always surrounded by numerous gorp and various Spawn, twenty to thirty individuals of up to seven varieties (the number of Spawn spells he knows). The shambler is blessed such that 25% of the gorp it creates are special. Instead of regular acid gorp, they are often rainbow, sky, exploding, glue, breeder, or other unusual gorp types. The shambler is currently on a religious quest to create as many pseudopodic gorp as it possibly can (see below).

Background and Role-playing Notes

The shambler does not know its name, species, or even sex, though its knowledge of Balazaring and Firespeech say something about its origin. As is often the case with Pocharngists, it is completely insane. Only gorp and Spawn of Pocharngo can tolerate its presence for long and not provoke its sporadic wrath.

The shambler has recently created a new form of gorp, which can extend pseudopods out from itself up to a few meters away. It was created by accident while in a religious fervor, and is clearly a new version of the Spawn of Pocharngo. The shambler is overjoyed at this success, and now spends most of its time filling the world with this new form of life. Only when it forgets this master plan does it occasionally create other Spawn and regular gorp.

If the gamemaster wishes, the shambler may have only created the pseudopodic gorp by accident. In that case, it is desperately trying to recreate the ritual which was so blessed by Pocharngo.



Appearance: This entity has become so warped through worship of Pocharngo that its race and sex are no longer recognizable. More than anything else, it resembles an enormous, multimouthed, appendaged Gorp. The large pustules of flesh covering its body are sickening to look at. Pink slime oozing from its tentacle contrasts unpleasantly with the general grey-brown of the rest of its lumpy body and misshapen limbs. Few would recognize this twisted horror as originally humanoid, except for one peculiar feature—long, golden curls of beautiful hair that hang in filthy tangles framing a grotesque caricature of a human face.

Personality: The shambler is mad and deranged, as likely to become berserk Uroxi as friends as it is to attack worshipers of Pocharngo in the middle of a ceremony. A good way to simulate this is to roll percentile dice at the start of any encounter with the shambler, or even once every few rounds. The lower the roll, the friendlier the reaction; the higher the roll, the more hostile. There are no modifiers to this roll.

Combat Notes: The shambler never attacks the same way twice. It usually casts at least one defensive spell and one offensive spell (Spirit or Sorcery) before wading into melee, but there are no other consistent actions. When faced with multiple foes, it impulsively casts a few random Divine spells. All attacks and castings are punctuated by short orations celebrating the glory of Pocharngo in a gibberish composed of confused phrases from various languages.

Scenario Ideas

The Strange Gorp

A large number of strange gorp have been sighted recently in the vicinity, especially in swamp and river areas. The forms taken by the gorp are very regular, but local experts (such as Eystin Forbeck and Peacock in the Riskland area) claim they are unique and unprecedented.

The adventurers are sent to investigate. When they find the shambler, they must decide whether to confront it immediately or send for reinforcements. If the former, expect numerous casualties from the long-distance attacks of the pseudopodic gorp. Throughout the combat the shambler is effusively friendly, passionately lamenting the deaths of victims slain by the tentacles of its gorp allies. If personally attacked, the shambler goes raving mad, vowing fanatically to destroy those who "threaten its sacred quest" or perish in the attempt.

The Mysterious Stranger

The adventurers are contacted by the agent of a rich stranger. The agent explains that his client searches for a long lost brother/sister. The only clue the agent provides is a rumor of a creature sighted in the nearby marshland that carries a child-sized, colorfully-embroidered rag doll with it: the missing sibling possessed just such a doll when he/she disappeared. The agent offers to pay handsomely for evidence of the missing sibling's death; at the same time, without coming right out and saying it, the agent hints that if the missing sibling is still alive, the agent would pay even *more* handsomely for evidence of the missing sibling's death. [If pressed, the agent admits that inheritance of land and wealth is at issue, though he refuses to speak further on the subject.] Recovery of the remains of the missing sibling or the rag doll would satisfy the agent.

When the adventurers search the marshes, they find abundant evidence of the passage of the shambler and its followers—beaten paths marked with grotesque footprints, greasy middens of raw, gnawed animal bones, bizarre worship sites—but the quarry

itself is only glimpsed at a distance over dank fen waters or heard giggling in the dark beyond the campfire. When at last the adventurers come face-to-face with the shambler, they discover a hugely fat giant tot with Shirley Temple curls that slobbers copiously as it invites the adventurers to play house with its grubby dolly and legion of grotesque followers.

Perhaps the shambler really is the missing sibling, and the adventurers can earn a few fat coins for collecting the head of a foul chaos monster. Or maybe the shambler is a dauntingly powerful, yet strangely sympathetic creature which has only scavenged the doll from an unrecognizable corpse, or received it as a gift from a broo worshiper, and is perfectly willing to trade the doll to the adventurers for some captivating bauble. The mysterious stranger and his agent, on the other hand, are oily and repellent, interested only in the inheritance, and caring nothing for the fate of the lost sibling. Ideally the adventurers should find the stranger and his agent more loathsome and contemptible than the chaos monster they are being paid to track down and slaughter.

Pseudopodic Gorp

Creation of the Shambler of Pocharngo

These Spawn of Pocharngo are recent creations of the shambler. They have large bulges which come and go in the surface of their "skin," which can be extended into pseudopods. A gorp can use these pseudopods to attack targets within 3 meters with half the potency of its normal acid attack. They are similar to normal gorp in all other respects: Casting Spawn Pseudopodic Gorp on a normal gorp does not affect its statistics, except to provide it with a DEX of 1d6.

Sample Pseudopodic Gorp

STR	0				
CON	9	<i>location</i>	<i>melee</i>	<i>missile</i>	<i>points</i>
SIZ	27	Body	01-14	01-17	0/18
INT	1	Pseudopod 1	15-16	18	0/1
POW	17	Pseudopod 2	17-18	19	0/1
DEX	3	Pseudopod 3	19-20	20	0/1
Move: 1					
Fatigue: n/a					
Hit Points: 18					
DEX SR: 4					

<i>Weapon</i>	<i>SR</i>	<i>Att</i>	<i>Damage</i>
Envelope	1	100%	8 point acid
Pseudopod	7	70% *	4 point acid

* For every meter away the target is the attack chance is reduced by 10%.

Combat Notes: It costs the gorp one hit point to create a pseudopod, which is regained if the pseudopod is absorbed; this takes a full melee round. A gorp can attack with up to 3 pseudopods each round, at the same strike rank. Damage to pseudopods causes the loss of 1 hit point (the one used to create the pseudopod), and causes it to create a new one; this takes a full melee round, during which it may attack with the remaining pseudopods. The gorp may envelop foes in the same round it uses its pseudopods.

Weapon attacks have no effect on the gorp's body. Impaling weapons do not affect the pseudopods, although a successful hit with a slashing or crushing weapon will destroy a pseudopod.

Chaotic Feature (one specimen only): absorbs spells up to 4 magic points; these points go to the Shambler, not to the gorp. This specimen is shambler's favorite, pampered and coddled by its proud parent.

Krarsht

The Waiting Mouth



Mythos and History

The endless bickering and jealousies of the gods weakened and eventually tore the fabric of the world. Through these cracks and tears oozed unnatural horrors, authors of the fear and terror of the Godswar. One such creature is called Krarsht, an ancient Pelorian word which means Eater. Also known as the Hungry One and the Devouring Mother, Krarsht survived by feeding on what she perceived as the refuse of Glorantha.

It is thought that Larnste, Elder God of Change, once saw the squirming being of Krarsht and sought to eliminate it from the world. When he tried to step on the foulness, however, it sprang back and bit the god, breaking his divine skin and infecting the wound immediately, so that he limped ever after. Where the god bled there rose up a foul and evil forest, perfect nesting ground for all things chaotic. The exact location of this chaos nest is disputed; people in the Holy Country claim it is the Foulwood in Heortland, but the Bilini know that this is the origin of the swamp called the Foulvale.

In the Darkness Krarsht reigned unchallenged, but at last had to face Urox and his sons. The Bull seriously wounded the Devourer, and each time he cornered her he cut off a part of her being. Krarsht tore great wounds in the hide of the mighty Storm Bull, tasting his blood and stealing some of his secrets for her own, but was finally driven from the surface world. She was forced to eat holes in the world in which to hide. At first the sons of Urox followed her into these tunnels, but the Devouring Mother was clever, and laid traps which destroyed many of them. Some of her amputated parts survived, and they grew into minor versions of their mother. They followed her underground and began eating diversionary tunnels.

During the ages which followed, Krarsht grew more comfortable in her underground domain. Save

for errant Mostali miners her rivals were few, and she recovered some of her former strength. Her losses in direct confrontation with the forces of Order had taught her the usefulness of patience, and she became known as the Waiting Mouth to those few who still knew she existed.

Throughout Time, Krarsht has never tried to hold surface lands, knowing she owns much of the world beneath the surface. Instead, her cult tunnels through society as she tunnels through the earth. Her forces work against individuals on the surface, those in responsible positions who are ambitious and tempting, or the honorable men who oppose the unprincipled. In fact, Krarsht may be the ultimate tool (if not the actual cause) of the decay and underlying evil of many mundane empires which began with bright promise. But the truth is unknown, for the cult keeps no written records: only Krarsht herself knows the true scope of her deeds.

Krarsht is often pictured as a pool of chaos ooze, formless but for fangs and claws; in this form she is known from the Godtime. The Krarshti picture her as a tentacled creature like an octopus with multiple fanged mouths, and this is often carved into altars. In some troll rituals a foe is dressed like her for sacrifice, decorated with wire ropes for arms. The Mostali do not picture her, but recognize all of these images as manifestations of the Hungry One.

Krarsht promises that every loyal follower shall become her in death, learning her every secret and having available her every power. This shall be true for every follower, even though there shall always be only one Krarsht. Dara Happan philosophers who have studied this question declare that her promised Many Into One is an illusion fostered on the cult during the First Age by followers of Gbaji, and that her cultists are merely absorbed into her being after death. Most of her worshipers do not care, since power in life is all that is important to them.



Though indomitable in war, Oddi knew black moods between battles, and often he was difficult to be with.

The war with Ralzakark went well. The wily foe lost many battles, and the Sludgestream itself had cleared greatly, yet Oddi was unable to bring the final strength of the broos to battle. The upper reaches of Dorastor were broo-held, and the pass into Ralios lay closed, sealed from both sides. [Even the Teimori kept to the Plateau, afraid to test the mercies of either side.]

Ketil and I rode out from the Hold, for we had been too close upon our work. I knew not the farms and vales west of Oddi's family holdings, so we went there for the rare cheeses which Ketil promised surpassed all others. On our fourth day there we were interrupted in our easy explorations of friendly larders by a young farmhand with very frightened eyes.

He and his brothers had been digging a well and struck curious rock which rang hollow to their picks. With difficulty they broke through, discovering a strange underground tunnel large enough to walk upright in. They explored the way in both directions a little, but judging themselves better outfitted for farming than for fighting, they withdrew and sent for the local Storm Servant, who in turn sent the farmhand to advise us of the discovery.

... To the northwest the tunnel ran on without turn or interruption for many hours walk. In the other direction the passage went scarcely a kilometer before several other tunnels branched off. There was no dust on the floors, and the air was fresh. The tunnels were circular and very smooth, more like tubes than caves. Neither of us had known anything like it. I consulted with Eystin Forbeck, a learned Sage in Shomashill, who located several references to such underground structures. At the priest's first utterance of the name "Krarsht," Oddi instantly resolved to enter the tunnels in force at once.

... Where the tunnel branched, a new shaft was sunk, and we continued our exploration with secure communications. One tunnel was a dead end, but the other two opened into a mad labyrinth of tubes travelling without reason up and down, over and under, through each other and around each other in loopholes and spirals. When at last we made our way to what we supposed was the main chamber, we drove new shafts directly to it, bypassing the bewildering maze.

The complex was a hopeless muddle of tubular rooms and ways, but most astonishing was the main hall. Here the diggers had carved straight tunnels in grids along all three dimensions of existence, producing an enormous open lattice-work cube, perhaps a hundred meters on a side, and the height unreachable by torchlight. The mood of the hall was oppressive and threatening, for what Forbeck had revealed of the Krarsht was unnerving, and I didn't like thinking about what the darkness above might hide.

"I have bred large cats to fight large rats," said Ketil, "but there are no cats great enough to rule here."

Krarsht is associated with the runes of Chaos and Hunger. In some societies she is also associated with the runes of Change and Stasis: Change for the gradual corruption she enforces upon society, and Stasis for the stagnation her worship always brings. There are minor associations with the Death and Disorder runes as well.

Cult Ecology

Krarsht is the deity of intrigue and power-seeking. Her hunger never fails, and since the Dawn she has infested many civilizations. This religion appeals to bureaucrats, con men, unscrupulous traders, and in general those whose foremost desire is to always be on the side of power. The cult's assassination arm can conveniently eliminate rivals and enemies, and the cult structure is a clandestine network making any service or item available at a profitable price.

The cult emphasizes secrecy, and its operatives know only as much as they need to function effectively. It always conceals its existence, even in those areas where significant numbers are cultists. The name of Krarsht is often unknown to those who worship her, and scarcely a rumor to those who do not. Even her own worshipers rarely know what ends they serve, and most never meet one of the awful tunnel-monsters which dig her traps and mazes. Initiates may never know the face of a Jaw (assassin) of Krarsht — except in the final moment.

Worshipers of Krarsht work for the day when she again controls the surface. They hate everyone who would oppose this, including all of the non-chaotic peoples and cults of the world. The Urox and his berserks are especially hated, because of the wounds he inflicted in the Godtime and because of the Urox ability to sense her works and workers in the world. Similarly, followers of Humakt are hated and feared because of their ability to thwart the cult assassins. Tongues and Lips (priests and acolytes) always require that initiates report the presence of such foes to them immediately.

Members of other cults are ignored or exploited as appropriate. Most other chaotics are looked upon as too blatant, ignorant, and rash to even comprehend the plans of the Mother, much less assist in them. An occasional broo or other chaos horror is accepted into the cult, but humans and ogres are preferred, since they can work in human society. The cult has tried to gain a following among trolls or elves for centuries, so that those societies can also be infiltrated and influenced, but so far has met with no success. Even the krjalki elves of the Hellwood have resisted the advances of the cult.



The cult has deliberately aligned its holy nights to conflict with the Storm Bull's holy days. Thus, its holy days are during Stasis Week in each season: Freezeday in Sea Season, Waterday in Fire Season, Clayday in Earth Season, Windsday in Dark Season, and Fireday in Storm Season. The cult high holy night is on the Wildday of Motion Week in Storm Season, celebrating Krarsht's escape from Urox into the earth, where she still reigns.

The Cult in the World

Worship of Krarsht is found on the fringes of most civilized societies in Glorantha. It is always hidden or in the shadows, and disappears untraceably if discovered. Her cult is known to exist in Dorastor, Ralios, southern Peloria, and Fonrit, and rumored to exist in Kralorela, the Jrusteli Isles, Umathela, and civilized Prax.

Her temples are usually small and secret, no larger than shrines when only humans are members. In areas where cult members can contact krarshtkids and krarshtides, vast temples are carved by these teeming spawn of the Mother. These complexes use the swarming masses of monster-initiates to sustain a major or great temple, giving the comparatively few human worshipers access to much more Divine Magic than their own numbers would warrant.

Local shrines consist of small stone altars, usually well hidden, where the local initiates worship; they are often carved with the image of the Mother, and are draped in black silk during ceremonies. Shrines are good for sacrifice of Power to the Maw, but cannot be used to learn or renew Divine spells. If for some reason enough humans gathered to form a minor temple, only the spell of Venom Bite would become available.

The true temples of Krarsht are much larger affairs, though they are equally hidden. They consist of vast underground labyrinths with several disguised openings to the surface world. The land around each opening is always controlled by an initiate of the cult, or else is far from any habitation. All Divine spells are available at full temples.

Through the unity of Krarsht and the tunnels of the Krarshtkids, temples maintain a reliable flow of information. Direct communication between far-flung temples is difficult, but smaller satellite temples and shrines are closely controlled by parent temples which may command an area of 50-200 km across.

Tongues and Lips (priests and acolytes) travel to the subordinate shrines to perform worship services to the Maw and induct new Drools (initiates), but spend most of their time at their temple. The senior

When one of us heard movement far above we alerted everyone, and well we did, for suddenly Krarsht demons fell among us from above with hideous shrieks.

These foul things were named but not described in the Sage's lore: doubtless Irrippi Ontor's references are more complete. We found these monsters to be thin and circular, perhaps two meters across, with six legs. Standing they were no more than a meter tall, but their legs give them great springing ability: I saw one jump six meters or more from a standing start. When it landed, it struck its target so that its mouth (which is in the middle of the body) engulfed the head of its victim. It folded its body somewhat around its victim, from the top down, bringing the massive digger claws at its extremities to bear upon the victim. Their spit and tongues were also death-dealing. Their favored attack was dropping from darkness above to surprise, and the creature could scarcely miss in the narrow vertical tunnels . . .

. . . When we returned with stout pikes, we contrived the doom of all the beasts we could lure into attacking us. Ketil rigged stopper bars on the wooden hafts, and when the terrible things fell upon us again, they were firmly impaled by their own weight in falling. The bars extending from the hafts stopped the beasts from quite reaching the carriers of the pikes. There they squirmed and screamed, their foul stinging fluids spattering the poor pikemen, who kept their nerve and stood firm, though it was hot work.

Within days we had carried the battle to the few cautious creatures hanging back in the vertical shafts, and here again Ketil was ingenious in improvising pole arms that could be braced against the rock walls as we ascended the steep passages.

By the will of the Goddess, I found this the grimmest fight I ever experienced, for the enemy was bloodthirsty, the way mysterious, and the fighting often in pitch blackness. When we were satisfied that all of the monsters were dead, we turned a stream from its course and diverted it into the shafts. We mustered the militia for expeditions down the long tunnels in either direction until they passed out of the very land of the Bilini, but we found no end to them. The Uroxi among the parties reported no chaos, not even in the tunnel leading straight to Dorastor. At last we sealed and destroyed what we could, and flooded the rest, but we could have fed the Erinflarth into those holes, and still never filled them....

On the surface near the shafts we had found a temple of the Hungry Goddess new-built, awaiting the followers who might have gathered to practice their horrible rituals. The farmer on whose land the true (disguised) entrance had been found was gone without a trace, and a Storm Bull search of the area revealed no chaos. Had we known what the place was from the start we might have kept the discovery secret, but the rumors soon brought all the curious and meddlesome within many hours walk to gawk at the site and pester the locals, and for the season a militiaman could trade his grim tale, scarcely embellished, for many frothing pints of lager.



Tongue of a temple takes the title of Mouth, and delegates authority and tasks to other Tongues, Lips, and Drools. Only the Mouth has any authority over the Jaws (assassins) of the cult, whom he can assign to cult (or personal) missions as he sees fit.

Members of unrelated temples rarely meet, and there is no official method of determining status between such members. If two Tongues meet, they usually cooperate with or refuse to deal with each other, and the same is true of other cult members in most cases, although all initiates must obey any Lip, Tongue, or Jaw.

Drool (Initiate) Membership

Members of the cult are called Drools, although this term is often used to describe a gathering of initiates rather than an individual. Drools are rewarded for bringing in reliable members, and punished or killed for suggesting fools and traitors. Any applicant is questioned closely by a group of initiates (though never told why). Applicants found to be members of any cult of order, particularly cults of Truth, never leave the questioning session. The cult typically accepts any ambitious, disciplined, and greedy being.

If a member is found to be acceptable, he is tested by the Tongue, although he is rarely if ever aware of this testing. This follows the normal procedure; the skills tested are Ceremony, Hide, Net Attack or Parry or Craft Net, Sneak, and any Weapon Attack. Applicants who fail may be approached again in a few seasons if they show promise, but those who fail twice have lost the trust of Krarsht and, unknowing or not, are fed to her children.

Once accepted, the applicant must vow complete secrecy about the existence of the cult and all matters concerning it. This vow is of the utmost seriousness, and the new initiate is warned (once) that he will never be allowed to leave the cult alive. He must then sacrifice a point of Power to Krarsht, and participate in a foul rite of sacrifice.

Drools have few direct requirements. They must provide 10% of their time and income to the cult, or 40% of their income and no time. Initiates accomplish the majority of recruitment for the cult, and each initiate must bring an intelligent being to the cult once each year as a new member or a sacrifice; failing in this twice results in the wayward cultist's sacrifice. Drools are relied upon to pass on all news, rumors, and other useful information to their Lip or Tongue. They often make contact with potential clients.

Initiates in good standing who have been members for two or more years, and who express a desire for advancement, may be singled out to form

their own Drool. Such initiates command a number of lay members, who are usually unaware of the true nature of the deity they worship. Such groups serve as information and criminal networks for the temple, and often have close relations to local thief cults and organizations, even to the point of supplanting them completely. Many of the street urchins infesting every large town are lay members of such a Drool. Local thieves' gangs also often act as a front for a nearby Krarsht temple.

The cult relocate initiates who are under suspicion by local authorities, but lay members are rarely given such assistance unless not doing so would endanger the cult. Expendable members are typically killed outright by their leaders, and this includes initiates. Initiates can be found in all occupations and as lay worshipers of almost any cult. They help each other find lucrative positions, and occasionally make emergency loans to each other, often at the request of the temple.

Initiates are trained by Lips and Tongues in the cult specialty skills. This skill training is provided in amounts equal to time spent serving the cult; additional training can be purchased, often at discount rates. Skills normally available include Bribery, Devise, Disguise, Hide, Scan, Search, Sleight, and Sneak; Weapon skills always include Blowgun, Dagger Attack, Dart, and Shortsword, and may include such cult specialties as Net Attack and Parry and Teeth of Krarsht (see Miscellaneous Notes). Other weapons or skills may be available as well, depending on the resources of the temple and the expertise of its members. If a student is especially promising, he may receive training from a Jaw, one of the cult's sacred assassins. This is rare, and can never be commanded by the Mouth of the temple.

Initiates of Krarsht have normal access to Spirit Magic spells. The spells of Food Song and Peaceful Cut are forbidden, and must be forgotten if known. Initiates have access to Divine Intervention, which takes a different form than normal (see Miscellaneous Notes).

Spirit Magic: Befuddle, Brew Pratzim, Disrupt, Glue, Silence, True Net

Lip (Acolyte) Membership

A candidate must have been a member of the cult for three years, and must have led his own Drool for at least a season. He must meet all other requirements for Tongues.

Lips serve as lieutenants for the Tongues, overseers of one or more Drools, and outside contacts for the temple among local criminal or chaotic



groups. They must give 50% of their time and income to the cult, and usually begin making plans to leave their surface life and occupation. They teach spells and skills to initiates, recruit and bring in sacrifices and initiates, and perform worship services to the Waiting Mouth at their temple's satellite shrines.

In return, Lips command the initiates of the cult. They gain reusable access to most cult Divine spells.

Jaws (Rune Lords)

Jaws of Krarsht are sacred assassins, a select band in an already secretive cult. They are usually required to give all of their time and income to the cult, although they may be required to maintain a surface identity (though never in regions dominated by the Uroxi). This public cover permits the Jaw to be intimately acquainted with the religious, political, and economic conditions in the area, and it is said that experienced Jaws know years in advance who their clients and victims will be. Entire political structures may be infested with Krarsht worshipers; even so, none but the Tongues will know the Jaws.

No worshiper of Krarsht can be accepted as a Jaw if he has not been trained by one, and such training cannot be compelled by any priest. In order to be approached by a Jaw for training, a Drool must be ruthless, ambitious, and (most of all) disciplined. If the Drool demonstrates all these traits, the initiate is selected by a Jaw for further training of an especially ruthless and dangerous nature. If the Drool survives (best cult skill as a % each year), he receives double the number of skill increases as normal initiates. Each year, he must succeed in the POW x1 roll again or his special training will cease. If an initiate has not been selected for such training by his third year in the cult, he will never be so blessed.

Any initiate who has been trained by a Jaw (even years in the past) may apply to become a Jaw; acceptance is automatic if all of the requirements are met. The candidate must have a 90% skill level in Hide or Sneak, a Missile Attack (Blowgun, Dart, Teeth of Krarsht, or Thrown Dagger), an easily-concealable hand-held Weapon Attack, and two additional skills from the following list: Bribery, Climb, Devise, Disguise, Hide, Listen, Search, Sleight, and Sneak. A Tongue or Lip can never be accepted as a Jaw, and the converse is also true.

A Jaw must give up all of his income and 90% of his time, but the cult supplies all his needs — free refuge, food, weapons, spells, and various luxuries. He may select initiates for training (usually no more than one at a time), and has the use of such initiates as virtual slaves for as long as he trains them.

A Jaw must accept any contract given to him by the Mouth of his temple, and must always fight in the defense of the temple, but he cannot be commanded by any other priest. He may accept independent contracts with the approval of the Mouth, and can keep 50% of any such profits for himself; such profits are usually used to fund a ring of informants, purchase special luxuries, etc. Contracts to Krarsht (both sacred and independent) are performed for non-cultists who may be too squeamish or under too much suspicion to undertake an action themselves. While usually confined to assassinations, such contracts can also include theft, kidnapping, the spread of rumor or gossip, or other activities. The cult never declines any contract which will further the will and domain of Krarsht.

A Jaw is contacted through a local Drool. Once the veracity of the client has been verified, the initiate arranges an interview with a Lip or Tongue in a safe place, who questions the client on himself and the contract. The client never meets the Mouth or Jaw (although one of them may be listening to the questioning), but once the list of questions has been answered satisfactorily (and payment in full has been made) the contract is accepted, pending approval by the Mouth. If the Mouth declines the contract, payment is returned to the client; in any case, the client never meets with the cult again. If the questions are not answered satisfactorily, the interview is ended; depending on the circumstances, the client may be referred elsewhere, turned down, threatened, or quietly eliminated.

Contracts can be 'one-legged' or 'six-legged.' For a negotiated price, the cult makes one attempt to complete a one-legged contract. For six times the price the cult agrees to a six-legged contract, to be attempted until successful. If the Jaw is killed in the course of a six-legged contract, the cult usually returns half of the fee to the client and ends the contract, although they can accept the contract again from the same client at the full original fee.

Jaws retain access to one-use Divine spells, and roll 1d10 for Divine Intervention rather than 1d100.

Tongues (Priests)

Tongues of Krarsht run the cult. They induct new members, maintain the shrines and temples, and oversee the feeding of sacrifices to the Waiting Mouth and her children. They rarely serve as intermediaries between the cult and the outside world; this is usually left to Drools and Lips. Most Tongues forsake the Surface World completely, and exist only to serve Krarsht and themselves.



In order to be accepted as a Tongue, a candidate must have been a Lip for at least two years. He must speak the local language at 30% or better, and must meet all other normal requirements for priests. There must be a need for a new priest, usually due to a death or the establishment of a new (subservient) temple. If he fails, he may try again in another year. If he fails twice, he has lost the faith of Krarsht, and is devoured by an assembled mass of Krarshtkids and Krarshtides.

Tongues can command any Lip or Drool of the cult, but may not command the Jaws unless they are the Mouth (High Priest) of the temple. If a Tongue succeeds in a roll of his POW x3 or less during his ordination, he receives a krarshtide (see Subservient Cults) as an allied spirit. This krarshtide cannot be bound into an object, but instead remains incorporate (like a shaman's fetch), becoming Visible at will. It may not sacrifice for Divine spells, but attacks as directed by the Tongue. If a krarshtide is not gained at ordination, one is automatically gained when (and if) the Tongue becomes a Mouth, High Priest of his own temple.

Tongues must give 90% of their time and income to the temple, and in return receive housing, food, healing, and other support. They may not marry outside of the cult. They need not bring sacrifices to Krarsht, but must perform at least one sacrifice each season or lose their status permanently. Tongues with allied spirits who lose their status are attacked for six rounds by their allied spirit, which departs permanently after that.

Common Divine Magic: all

Special Divine Magic: Chomping, Sweat Acid, Venom Bite

Krarsht Special Skills

Bribery (Common Skill)

Communication skill, base skill level varies

This skill allows the user to successfully bribe a person who is susceptible to bribery. It also includes such aspects as knowing whether or not a person might respond to bribery, and what sort of payment would be required. Using the skill requires up to 15 minutes of conversation or observation before the roll can be attempted. When the skill is used, the gamemaster may use the target's Bribery, Human Lore, or other appropriate skill as an opposed skill, if he wishes.

On a successful roll, the target has been bribed successfully, if the right incentive was offered by the player. If the bribe offered was too small that

information is communicated to the character, who can attempt a second roll at no penalty if a higher bribe is offered. On a critical roll, the target may not even realize he or she has been bribed. On a failed roll the person was not bribed, and may or may not sound the alarm or report the briber, depending on his nature. On a fumbled roll, the target makes every effort to have the character arrested, blackmails or threatens him, etc.

Bribery is a common skill, and may be available from other cults or organizations. Base skill level varies. For civilized characters or characters raised in large, bureaucratic cults, the base chance is 15%. For nomad and barbarian characters, the base chance is 10%. For primitive characters, the base chance is 05%.

Disguise (Common Skill)

Knowledge skill, base 05%

This skill allows the user to disguise himself or someone else. If the person is to be disguised as a particular individual, the chance of success is halved. If the person is to be disguised as a member of another race or species, the chance of success is 1/4 to 1/10, depending on the disparity between species. It is impossible to disguise a human as a dark troll or merman (for example), but it might be possible to disguise one as an elf or trollkin.

On a successful roll the disguise will fool most viewers; use Scan vs. Disguise roll only if someone specifically is looking for discrepancies. On a critical roll, only disguises of a specific person or another race can be detected, and only by someone familiar with that person or race. On a failed roll, anyone may see through the disguise with a successful Scan roll. However, a disguise of a specific person or race might succeed even with a failed roll, if the viewer has never seen that person or race before. On a fumbled roll the disguise is instantly seen for what it is, even by people who would have no reason to suspect a disguise was being used, or who are unfamiliar with the person or race imitated.

Disguise is a common skill, and may be available from other cults or organizations.

Krarsht Special Spirit Spells

Brew Pratzim

1 point (memorization only)

ritual Enchant spell

This spell allows the caster to successfully brew pratzim, a glue-like substance which can be used to entangle foes. The brewing takes 4 hours, and requires 1 STR-worth of the caster's blood per batch brewed and a single point of Power. The STR loss is



regained at the rate of 1 point per week. A Lip or Tongue must also provide the necessary Krarshtkid spittle as a base for the potion; the price for this varies from temple to temple and priest to priest. Pratzim may be used by someone other than the enchanter, since all Drools are taught the proper ritual phrase to activate the material. A normal batch of pratzim has a Strength of 2d6+6; on a critical the STR of the pratzim is 2d6+12, while on a failed roll it is only 1d3.

Once brewed, pratzim remains inert until activated, and so can be stored in almost any form of container for any length of time. To use pratzim, the thrower must hurl it at a target within 3m and spend one magic point. The pratzim expands and forms a conical web about 2m in diameter; use Throw skill to determine if the target is hit.

If the target succeeds in a STR vs. STR roll, he may remove the substance without hindrance, although this takes 1d10 segments. If the roll is failed, the target is bound; he may not move, and all skills are halved. If the roll is fumbled, the victim is hopelessly entangled; he may not move or use any skills, and will begin to suffocate.

True Net

variable

ranged, temporal, passive

This spell affects only nets, increasing the chance to hit by 5 percentiles per point of spell, and increasing the net's strength by 1 per point. The spell is not compatible with other weapon-improving spells.

Krarsht Special Divine Spells

Chomping

1 point

touch, temporal, stackable, reusable

For the duration of the spell, each point of spell stacked increases the target's Bite Attack by 10% and damage by 1d6. The target's jaws and teeth visibly enlarge and sharpen.

Command Cult Spirit

This common spell operates as described in *Gods of Glorantha*. Krarsht's cult spirits include intellect spirits, power spirits, spell spirits, and krarshtkids.

Sweat Acid

2 points

touch, temporal, nonstackable, reusable

This spell must be boosted with one or more magic points. If the target is unwilling, the caster must overcome his magic points with his own. The target's skin secretes an acid whose potency equals the magic

points in the spell. The target is not affected by this acid, but anything he touches is, including anything he wears or holds that is vulnerable to acid, such as his clothes, armor, and weapons. If the target is struck by a weapon he takes normal damage, but the weapon is then affected by the acid.

Venom Bite

2 points

touch, temporal, nonstackable, reusable

This spell can only be cast on an initiate or greater of Krarsht. It must be boosted with one or more magic points. For the duration of the spell, the target injects a poison with a potency equal to the magic points on successful bite attacks which penetrate armor.

Subservient Cults

Spirit of Reprisal

Krarshtides are special spirits which act as Spirits of Reprisal for the cult (among other things), and are unknown outside of the cult. They are thought to be pieces of Krarsht's spirit which somehow survived her dismemberment. They are shadowy but palely luminescent images of the Mother Mouth, identical in shape to Krarshtkids (see *Glorantha Bestiary*, page 27). They attack apostate Drools and Lips once, apostate Jaws and Tongues six times, then depart.

Krarshtides

characteristics average

INT 3d6	10-11	Move: equal to POW
POW 2d6+12	19	

Krarshtides attack in spirit combat, matching their magic points against the victim's POW. Each successful attack reduces the victim's POW by one in addition to 1d3 magic point loss. In this way, they can permanently destroy their target. Additionally, if the victim is reduced to 0 magic points, they may drive him insane. They match their POW versus the victim's on the resistance table and, if successful, thoughts and terrors of chaos devour his mind. This reduces INT to species minimum and permanently affects the victim as possession by a passion spirit (with type determined by the gamemaster based on the victim's personality). If this POW vs. POW roll fails, the krarshtide departs. The krarshtide attacks to cause insanity unless commanded otherwise.

Krarshtkids

From bits hacked from the mother by Storm Bull and his sons in the Darkness grew the krarshtkids. Each appears identical to the Hungry Mother, with a central body surrounded by six legs. The mouth takes up most of their underside, and they can eat anything, though they prefer loam, clay, sand, and limestone. (See *Glorantha Bestiary*, p. 27.)



Where krarshtkids are an active part of a Krarsht temple. Tongues gain access to a special Divine spell unavailable in more isolated temples, and from which they presumably draw their name. This spell is available to Jaws and Lips on a one-use basis.

Tongue

3 points

ranged, temporal, nonstackable, reusable

This spell can only be cast on an initiate or greater of Krarsht. For the duration of the spell, the recipient's tongue elongates, and can be used as a weapon. It has a range of 3 meters, and has a base attack chance of DEX x3%, which can be increased by experience. The Tongue causes no damage on a successful hit, but conducts a magical attack. If the recipient overcomes the target's magic points with his own, the target takes 2d6 damage (as the Disrupt spell) to the location hit. Armor does not protect the target, but spells which protect against Disrupt protect against this effect as well.

The Disrupt-like ability can be used repeatedly for the full duration of the spell. If the tongue is severed, the spell immediately ends, and the recipient takes full damage to the now-normal tongue.

Associate Cults

Primal Chaos

The Primal Chaos is the basis for all chaotic cults, including Krarsht's. Tongues (only) may learn the Blessing of Chaos ritual, though any initiate or greater of Krarsht can receive the benefits of the ritual. However, since operation within normal society is often difficult for the possessor of a chaos feature, the ritual is rarely used, and all "mistakes" (deformed or mutated results) are destroyed or driven insane by krarshtides and employed as temple guardians.

Miscellaneous Notes

Divine Intervention

Krarsht is proud, and wants no worshiper to avoid becoming her when it is his time. She is sometimes willing to help, but because of her chaotic nature cannot provide normal Divine assistance. Instead, if a follower asks for Divine Intervention and she deigns to give it, she sends 2d3 krarshtkids and 1d3 krarshtides to her worshiper. For 15 minutes he has control over these entities, as a member of another cult might have control over an elemental. After that time, the spawn return to whence they came.

Teeth of Krarsht

The Teeth of Krarsht are cult weapons similar to shuriken and other types of throwing stars. They have six points and a hole in the center, and are

crafted to deliver a contact poison, typically of POT 2d6+3. Their stats are as in *RQ Deluxe*.

Krarsht Temples

When a Mouth has satisfied himself that a new temple is needed, and has secured a surface area proper for the comings and goings of the cult, he (or another Tongue) consecrates the site in a brief worship ceremony. The consecration notifies Krarsht that a new temple is needed. If She concurs, krarshtkids tunnel toward the spot for months thereafter, then start construction without further prompting from the Mouth. Krarsht will then reveal the completion of the complex and its only existing entrance in a vision to the consecrating priest.

A temple of Krarsht is built to Krarsht's personal specifications. Each is different, but there are always ceremonial halls, quarters for the Tongues, Jaws, and Lips, and feeding pits for the krarshtkids. The complex contains many connecting tunnels, confusing shafts in all directions which go nowhere, and a single tunnel to the main temple (if the new temple is a satellite temple). Pits open without warning, streams occasionally break through in unexpected places, and passages dead-end and connect with each other to form a true maze. The first exploration of a Krarsht temple is both a sacred thrill and a mortal terror for the consecrating Tongue.



Krarsht Altar



Report of a Spoken Word Agent

The following represents translations from cipher-secured documents delivered to Spoken Word Intelligence Monitors in the Office of Provincial Affairs in Thubana. Each personal note is accompanied by what appears to be a word-for-word transcription from a Krashiti ritual litany, doubtless collected at great risk. The fate of this Spoken Word agent is not known.

"Boss, I've penetrated the 'Inner Circle,' but I think there's a layer below it! The Old Guy in grey leads the IC like we thought, but I don't know who, if anyone, gives orders to Red -- she seems to come and go as she pleases. In any case, here's a summary of the doctrine they spout in the IC to us Drools. It sounds like drivel, I know, but when you're Down There it feels somehow like you're outside of time, and their story of how it REALLY happened is oddly compelling. It could just be abjuru as I always say, but when the O.G. gets to ranting and preaching I almost start in believing him. I'm losing my sense of reality -- there's something strange about the tunnels where the IC meets, and I keep thinking I hear scuttling noises behind me whenever I go there. Enclosed is a diagram of the Altar chamber; I don't know how accurate it really is, as they could have something which fools Darksense.

"I don't know how long I can keep this up. I'm sure the O.G. has Mindlink or something like it, and it's hard to watch my thoughts all the time. And I don't even want to think about Red! One slip up and I'm a goner. Get me out of here!!

"All hail DX, etc."

Zabgor

P.S. I sent the rest of the info under separate cover using the old drop procedure, like before. I don't know if I'll be able to communicate again, the IC watches us drools real close-like when we're Outside. GMDoh!

The Great Goddess

Many and glorious are the works of the Goddess. She is all-powerful, and is known to us in three great aspects and a myriad of lesser forms. The Great Goddess as Glorantha created the world; as Arachne Solara She preserves it; and as Krashiti the Devourer She will destroy it at the end of Time. All that She consumes is remembered, and will be used in the next regeneration of the world. The Goddess is patient, and She will eat each creature in the proper time, holding them in Her Womb of Rebirth until the recreation of the world. Only through being consumed by the Goddess can one's soul survive the destruction and recreation of the world.

In Godtime the world was attacked by the forces of entropy which came out of the Void. Half-beings from the Void lived on the fringes of the real world, hungering for true existence; one such being was Wakboth the Evil. Misguided deities gave him entrance into our world, calling him in and giving him form and substance from their own. The Goddess at that time had not come to Her full strength, and so by guile She defended Her creation. She seduced some of Wakboth's forces into following Her instead, and led them against an unbreakable troll stronghold. They were destroyed and She slipped away, as planned. This She did many times.

"Boss - this bit is from Red, not the O.G. She spouts this stuff like she was in a trance. The whole IC shuts up and listens when she gets like this, but she doesn't talk much otherwise, just looks and listens real hard. She is really a loner, and quick to keep it that way. Sometimes she disappears for a week or two at a time -- I think she goes out on jobs; but the O.G. never leaves the temple, and is so

white and light-blind that I don't think he has in years. I don't know which one is spookier.

"I don't think she has anything to do with any Lunar faction, despite the following, and certainly not those you suspected. And I KNOW she is not Illumined. I think she actually believes this stuff, which is even scarier!

"All hail, etc. I'll be waiting for you to activate the escape plan. Don't expect further word from me before then; because Red has been watching me closely -- I think she may suspect something, either that or she is just getting hungry again. Get Me Out of Here NOW!!!

The Deliverance

Three Ages of the world have passed, and three are yet to come. The freedom brought by Time is an illusion, but a comforting one. Our world is doomed to replay the folly of the Gods Age before the divine plan of the Goddess can be completed. The False Gods interrupted the cycle of creation, rebirth, and destruction by sabotaging the coming of the sixth and highest element.

Six is the perfect number. In each recreation of the world, six ages are experienced. The great powers of Godtime failed because of their weakness and fear, letting chaos into the world and disrupting the plan of the Goddess. We who live within Time must struggle to succeed where our predecessors failed. Only in this way can our flawed creation be consumed and reborn in a more perfect state, as was planned from the Beginning by She Who Devours the World.

The First Age is the Age of Darkness, and ended in the Darkness brought by Arkat the Destroyer. The Second Age is the Age of Water, and was destroyed in Water with the sinking of Seshnela, Brithos, and Jrustela. Our Age is the Age of Earth, and will end in Earth.

The Fourth Age is the Age of Fire, and will be like the Golden Age of Godtime. For five centuries the world will live in peace and light. Mankind will be happy, but will fall away from worship of the Goddess, until only a few true believers are left. But ever will the children of the Goddess wait with patience, far beneath the troubled surface world.

Then will stagnant peace be shattered, again. The Fifth Age, the Age of Storm, will come after the great fires destroy the world. Mankind will be a pitiful remnant once again, and monsters of the Outer Void will freely roam the Earth. At the end, Orlanth will dominate all as he did before, but his victory will be an empty one. All will suffer as he is chained, as was his father before him. Then he will perish in his own storms.

Then will the Sixth Age come, as it could not before. The Perfect One will return to heal the Daughter of the Great Goddess, who is the New Goddess to come. The Shattered Moon will reunite, and rise once more to rule the Age of Moon. The broken body of Glorantha will be healed, and the true Arachne Solara will rule for a thousand years of harmony and peace.

Then when the world is healed will the Goddess rise to devour all. Krashiti's true name will be revealed at the end of Time, and the Goddess will be left alone in the Void. Then will She give birth to the new world, as She herself was reborn. Those who served Her in this life will be rewarded in the new creation; ruling it as the gods of old ruled this world.

This is the Way and the Plan of the Great Goddess. Those who threaten Her threaten the rebirth of the world. They must be destroyed, fed to the Goddess to fuel Her recreation at the end of Time. We hope that in their next incarnation they will see the error of their ways, and come to serve the Goddess, even as we do. Praise the Goddess, and you will feel Her blessing upon you. Milk.



the newly-shifted rock. The Jaw then made his way back to the fort and assumed his disguise.

In the morning Falco "discovers" the Tax Collector and the revenues missing from his room in the Seven Mothers hostel. The poor subordinate clerk panics, fearing he will be held responsible for the loss of the season's taxes (test the Krarshti's Fast Talk; if failed, some hint of falsity may be Scanned). He shrilly blames the disappearance on Orlanthi Lunar-haters, demands an investigation, and sends for Lunar troops.

Subtle (skillfully planted) evidence points to a forced entry into the hostel, but there is no sign of a struggle. Perhaps the Tax Collector stole the taxes and fled; if this is suggested, the clerk (overacting splendidly) denies the possibility while appearing to be surprised, but privately worried, as though this thought hadn't occurred to him. Under close questioning, Falco shyly admits that his master had been having money troubles lately (these all-too-real money troubles were engineered by the Krarshti); the clerk appears to be afraid to admit to an Orlanthi that a Lunar official might be capable of such deeds.

Why does Onil abduct the tax collector instead of killing him? The explanation says something of the efficient cunning of those who serve the Waiting Mouth. First, suggesting that the taxes were absconded with (all too common and plausible) directs attention away from the real perpetrators. Second, though infamous for their sometimes audacious murders, Krarshti Jaws often use abduction as an important means of furthering temple policy. In this case the hapless Tax Collector is tortured and interrogated for names, plots, shameful crimes, Lunar procedures, intelligence contacts, layouts of official residences — in general, sucked dry of useful information. Finally, the higher the status of the official sacrificed, the more delicious the feast for the Mother Maw and more generous the reward for the diligent cultists.

Version A: The Straightforward Tunnel Crawl

In this version, the Krarshti doesn't anticipate tracking by scent; someone (PC or NPC) suggests having an alynx (hunting cat) track the missing tax official. An alynx follows the scent to the gorge and rock slide. Mineral Lore or River Lore notes that the rock has been recently disturbed. Devise or Engineering permits excavation of the rubble-sealed krarshtkid shaft.

The PCs are chosen/volunteer to search the tunnels with the alynx to follow the scent. (The party might include the Argan Argar priest Caspar Goodman or Storm Bulls from Hazard Fort.) The scent is lost in the foul muck of the krarshtkids, but the trail clearly leads through fifteen miles of tunnel to a minor shrine where a Priest is waiting for the paralysis to wear off Graftus so the torture/interrogation can begin. The tax monies are there in the temple, guarded by a group of krarshtkids. (A Krarsht priest and a minor shrine are described in the "Rabbit Hat Farm" scenario in *Sun County*, p.91).

Version B: The Challenging Mystery

In this version, the Jaw foiled scent tracking by covering his trail with pepper. The Krarsht tunnel is not found (not at least until much later). Falco Tubrother leaves immediately to continue on his tax collecting itinerary, and a squad of Lunar auxiliaries (use the Lunar Provincial Survey Field Team, *Shadows on the Borderlands*, GM Pullout, pp. 19-20, minus Hazphar Pharates) arrives to investigate the disappearance. Renekot orders the worldly, experienced PCs to assist the auxiliaries in tracking down the missing tax official and monies.

The decurio organizes a standard police investigation. The watches at the towers are certain that no one could have escaped

by land, but acknowledge that the sound of the river might have hidden a skilled swimmer (the Krarsht assassin drifted downstream with his captive and went to land beyond sight of the fort). The banks of the river downstream are searched for tracks or signs of foul play; only a few very deep footprints of foreigner footgear are found along the river. Locals are closely quizzed on their activities and checked for alibis. Lhankor Mhy cult magics are placed at the decurio's disposal, but the assassin's use of a Worship Krarsht ritual (temporarily making the room a cult shrine) to cover his actions in the tax collector's room foils one attempt. However, in time, the falsity of the evidence planted by the assassin is revealed, and the false evidence itself hints at a clever plot.

As negative evidence of local involvement mounts (Truespeak spells confirm alibis), and no evidence of the tax collector's running away appears, suspicions should fall upon the now-absent tax clerk.

Someone (PC or NPC) finally persuades the decurio that Falco Tubrother should be questioned under Truespeak: The PCs may accompany the decurio and the auxiliaries on their journey to intercept the tax collector on his scheduled route of collections. At the GM's discretion, the resolution may be decisive and dramatic or indefinite and open-ended:

— *Decisive and Dramatic*: The PCs and the auxiliaries, personally unknown by face to the assassin, confront him and a desperate struggle ensues, resulting in the likely suicide of the assassin.

— *Indefinite and Open-ended*: When the PCs and the auxiliaries catch up with the tax collection procession, they discover that Falco Tubrother was suddenly taken sick and returned to Jillaro. On further pursuit, they find the clerk has disappeared en route.

Krarsht Campaign Notes

Krarshti Infiltration of the Provincial Bureaucracy

The Imperial Bureau of Taxation in the Lunar Provinces is infiltrated by Krarshti. The Krarsht cultists are typically skilled accountants in minor staff positions under a regional Tax Inspector. (The Tax Inspector is usually a political appointee; the Bureau affairs are actually run by the subordinate bureaucrats.) The Krarshti siphon cash from tax revenues into Krarsht coffers, which are in turn secretly recycled as personal loans to public figures in power. Once caught in debt and blackmailed, these public figures become subtle tools of Krarshti policy.

Krarsht and Ralzakark

Ralzakark is intimately allied with the Krarsht cult. Fort Wrath is underlain with miles of tunnels and krarshtkid hives, and networks honeycomb the Dorastor basin. Major arteries cross into Ralios through the ancient Mostali works in the Rockwoods and into the Orlanthi lands and beyond into the Lunar Provinces. Ralzakark receives useful intelligence in the Lunar Provinces, especially in Sylila and the Orlanthi hill country; and corruption of the Imperial bureaucracy administering this region weakens it for Ralzakark's plans of expansion. In return, the Krarsht cult is granted direct participation in policy and counsel in Ralzakark's affairs. For example, the Lunar Trade Treaty may be a scheme devised by the Krarshti to give Ralzakark direct communications with the Empire. The Krarshti have made themselves the trusted tools of Ralzakark in Dorastor, knowing that the tool-user becomes dependent on the tool; eventually the tool-user is himself shaped by his tool.

Normally the Krarshti do not permit anyone but Krarsht cultists to enter the tunnels. Ralzakark, however, has been granted permission to travel with a small entourage, which may partially explain his uncanny ability to appear and disappear at will throughout Dorastor.



Other Cults in Dorastor

Many spirits and daemons are worshiped in Dorastor in addition to the cults presented in *Lords of Terror* and *Dorastor: Land of Doom*. Some are normal, decent religions, while others are foul and evil. New cults are founded from time to time; old cults fade into obscurity as worshipers abandon shrines or are wiped out. Some cults are large and widely-known; others venerate obscure, nearly powerless demons. The Grayskins, for example, worship the Mad Sultan, and many broos worship Ralzakark; though their followers gain no benefits from this worship, Ralzakark and the Mad Sultan assuredly do. The people of the Dorasta Shrine pray to the Wolfbear (though they have never received any answer), and offerings are left to Barkuli (a satyr-like nature spirit) throughout Riskland. Many foreigners bring their strange deities with them, and temporary shrines to many a central Genertelan deity are found in Riskland at one time or another.

Lesser chaos deities presented here are similar in power and nature to those entities worshiped in Spirit Cults (see *Gods of Glorantha*, page 40). Rather than requiring a given number of worshipers to perform a standard worship service, however, many entities may grant their benefits to even a single individual if a suitable sacrifice is made. Even major chaotic deities, such as Malia, Thanatar, or the Cacodemon, can be solicited in this fashion, without formally joining the cult. On the other hand, conventional worship services may be ignored, or even capriciously scourged, by inconstant, unpredictable chaos deities.

Many of the following cults are available in other *RuneQuest* supplements; see also *Gods of Glorantha* for additional information on cults and cult worship.

Cacodemon

Remnant of the Devil

A cacodemon is a demonic remnant of the Devil, left over when Wakboth was smashed by the gods of Law. This being more closely resembles a huge monster than a demigod, but is the center of a loosely organized cult. Cacodemon is associated with the runes of Chaos, Death, and Disorder.

While the cacodemon is most commonly worshiped by ogres, it is also often contacted directly on the Spirit Plane by evil shamans. Those few that survive can gain great powers from it. Additionally, its frequent appearance in Dorastor ensures that other beings, including broos, worship with some regularity. Such worshipers delight in death and destruction, and no broo or other creature is safe from their depredations. This cult provides spells such as Vomit Acid and False Form, which allows an ogre to appear as a normal human for the duration of the spell.

A cacodemon is usually about twelve feet tall, winged, clawed, and tailed. Sooty dirt begrimes its thorny skin. It is accompanied by a stench of sulfur and carrion, and various other chaotic details, which seemingly change from appearance to appearance. These changes, coupled with the rare appearance of a cacodemon over thirty feet tall, have led some scholars to speculate that the daemons normally called cacodemons are in fact mere servitors of the true Cacodemon. Such lesser demons have been termed fiends by such students of chaos. Any sentient creature is an appropriate sacrifice to the Cacodemon, as is any act of destruction.

A full write-up of the Cacodemon cult is available in the Avalon Hill supplement *Elder Secrets*, pp. 103-107.

Chalana Arroy

Goddess of Healing and Compassion

One of the Lightbringers, this merciful goddess is revered throughout Orlanthi lands as the bringer of health and healing to the world. She knows how to heal all diseases and wounds, and even healed the sun and the world after the Great Darkness. Chalana Arroy is always associated with the runes of Harmony and Life.

Everyone desires her blessings; during plague and famine she is even more popular. She is worshiped by surgeons, nurses, doctors, and dedicated healers of all types. Her worshipers must swear never to harm an intelligent creature or needlessly cause pain to any living thing, although most believe these oaths do not apply to chaos. Foes incapacitated by a healer (usually through the use of spells such as Befuddle or Sleep) are under her protection, and may not be harmed in any way, although they may be disarmed and captured.

Some broos in Ralzakark's service worship an entity they identify as Chalana Arroy, but all decent peoples deny this strongly. They know that the White Goddess would never accept the worship of such filth. Even the Lunar traders who pass through Fort Wrath contradict the broos' claims, asserting that the broos actually worship a Lunar healing deity introduced there in the beginning of the Seventh Wane. That such worship remains strong suggests that these broos advance toward true civilization.

Chalana Arroy's cult is small but widespread, and usually shrines are the only available worship sites, especially in less civilized areas. Her worshipers provide healing and comfort to anyone in need, and teach the skills of First Aid, Treat Disease, and Treat Poison. The particular spell taught at a shrine varies with the culture and local needs, and many shrines to obscure spirits and heroes provide special healing spells unavailable or unknown elsewhere. The spells of Heal Wound, Heal Body, Regrow Limb, and Restore Health are commonly available, but spells such as Fight Disease and Invigorate are rarer, though well-known in the lands around Dorastor.

A full write-up of the Chalana Arroy cult is available in the Avalon Hill supplement *River of Cradles*, pp. 169-172.

Fight Disease

1 point

touch, instant, nonstackable, reusable

This spell must be cast on an individual who has been infected by a disease. It doubles the appropriate statistic for resisting the disease spirit for the duration of the spirit's next attack. If the spirit is inactive, it has no effect on the individual. The spell cannot benefit an individual more often than the disease or spirit can attack; i.e., once per week, day, hour, or minute.

If the victim is infected by multiple diseases, the caster determines which characteristic is affected. The spell still cannot be cast more often than the most powerful spirit or disease can attack.

Invigorate

1 point

touch, instant, nonstackable, reusable

This spell restores the Fatigue Points of the target, up to the maximum of his STR + CON minus his current encumbrance. The target's previous Fatigue Points may have been negative or positive.

When used on a victim of Thunder Lung, Invigorate will restore 1d6 Fatigue Points permanently. This spell cannot be used until the disease has been cured or the spirit exorcised.



Dorasta

Land Goddess of Dorastor

Dorasta is the Land Goddess of Dorastor, including the surrounding lands of Bilini and Skanthiland. Once she was powerful, but actions within Time have left her broken, worshiped by a few loyal beings in a land of horror. One common myth calls her Nysalor's wetnurse, and she was one of the sources of Dorastor's greatness and bounty in the First Age. The God Learners associated the Land Goddesses with the runes of Earth, Plant, and Harmony.

Dorasta is worshiped mostly by farmers and other folk close to the land. Because of the close proximity of chaos to her people, she has many protectors among the local cults. She has numerous shrines and a few small temples, but the only true priestess supervises the Dorasta Shrine. The Cleft of Dorasta is found there, an ancient spot said to be the place where Dorasta returned to the body of her mother to save herself from Arkat the Destroyer.

Dorasta is typical of Grain Goddesses in the spells she provides. She has one important subcult, that of her child Tobros. Tobros was born in the Golden Age, and rapidly grew to the size of a mountain. He was wounded by a chaos monster (some say Bagog), and laid to rest under the mountains which bear his name until a cure can be found. He provides the spell of Earthmight to Dorasta's priestesses, who may only cast it on a worshiper of one of Dorasta's protectors (usually Orlanth and Urox).

A full write-up of the Dorasta cult is available in the Avalon Hill supplement *Dorastor: Land of Doom*. Descriptions of the Dorasta Shrine and its priestess are also provided in that book.

Gloomshark

Chaotic Source of Hunger

The Gloomshark is a monster which prowls the oceans of Glorantha. It is the source of Hunger, and anything which enters its bottomless maw is lost to the world forever. It is unknown in most of Glorantha, but is a special terror of the Triolini. It is associated with the runes of Hunger, Chaos, and Water. The God Learners believed it was one of many natural creatures mutated by the flood of chaos into the world, and associated it with the Beast Rune as well.

Many sailors and mermen worship the Gloomshark in a propitiatory fashion, hoping that it will accept their sacrifices instead of themselves. A number of beings worship the Gloomshark for the power it can give, although they must also beware of calling upon it too often, lest it feed on them instead of their enemies or sacrifices. It provides spells like Drown (*Gods of Glorantha*, p. 89) and Summon Shark. Although veneration of such a monster in Dorastor, hundreds of miles from the nearest large body of water, seems bizarre, a shrine is known to exist in the Bugswarm Swamp (in the Foulvale), although the Gloomshark itself has never been seen there.

The Gloomshark is depicted as a great armored fish with multiple fins, its gaping maw filled with multiple rows of teeth and surrounded by numerous tentacles. Sacrifices to the Gloomshark are always of sentient races; worshipers must usually sacrifice parts of their own body as well.

Humakt

God of War and Death

Humakt is Death. He is the unyielding fate of all living creatures, both mortal and divine. To his barbarian followers, Humakt is a frightening but necessary agent of eternal change who must be invoked in a courageous and noble way to preserve the world.

Thus, the Orlanthi both worship and fear Humakt. Humakt is said to be the source of the Death Rune, and is usually associated with Truth as well.

Humakt is not widely worshiped in the lands around Dorastor. The Skanthi are too primitive to maintain shrines to this martial deity. The cult has always been small among the Bilini (who prefer less demanding war gods) but his worship has been on the rise in the last few decades, due to the encroachments of the Empire. Worshipers of Humakt are often mercenaries, but even the basest sellswords respect the honor and strict professionalism of their god. Humakt provides spells like Truesword and Morale to his worshipers.

Many broos in Razakark's employ also worship an entity they identify as Humakt, although the Bilini claim it is just another daemon. These broos form the core of Razakark's Sword Troops, and they do seem to follow a much stricter code of honor and discipline than any other broos in Glorantha. In addition to most of the spells available to regular Humakti, these broos can also learn the spell of Fumble (as per *Gods of Glorantha*) from their patron; Berserk is also commonly used.

Humakt is pictured by the Orlanthi as an ornate sword, sometimes made from exotic materials, or as a burly armed man bearing a sword. He wears full armor, which is always painted black. The broos picture their god as a black sword dripping blood, or as a heavily armored broo (without horns) wielding a greatsword. Sacrifices to the deity worshiped by Razakark's Sword Broos usually consist of the arms and armor of defeated foes, and often parts of the bodies as well. Many of the broos are known to mutilate themselves to honor Razakark and their god, and the core of the Sword Troops are formed by the loyal and fanatical *castrati*.

A full write-up of the Humakt cult is available in issue 5 of the British *RuneQuest* fanzine *Tales of the Reaching Moon*.

Hungry Jack

"The Hungry Eater"

Hungry Jack was spawned in the Great Night, and was probably one of the creatures of nature corrupted and mutated by the flood of Chaos. It was encountered and slain in the Mislari Mountains by Ethilrist, but it was not eradicated, for its seeds took root in the world and developed into lesser versions of the original, called Hungry Eaters. Some people claim that it was only one of these lesser entities which was slain by Sir Ethilrist, but the hero denies such speculations. Associations are also postulated between the Hungry Eaters and the Jack O'Bears, but no such link has ever been proven. The Hungry Jack is associated with the runes of Chaos, Harmony, and Plant.

One of the Hungry Eaters is known to exist in Dorastor, and it is sometimes used as the focus for a loose cult. Whatever shaman has contacted the Jack rules until he runs out of worshipers or he is killed by another. Such shamans often use grayskins to establish and maintain contact with the spirit, but this is not always necessary. Hungry Jack provides the spell of Draw Human. No one knows if the spell may be used on any race of human (including creatures such as elves, trolls, ducks, and ogres), or whether separate spells are available to the worshipers for each of the races descended from the Man Rune. It is known that creatures which are not descended from the Man Rune cannot be affected by the cult. The reason for this limitation is unknown, for no other connection to the Man Rune is known.

The Hungry Eaters are shaped like giant pumpkins. They possess rough mouths and eyes, which appear to be carved out



of their body. They can draw individuals to them over incredible distances, all to feed their chaotic hunger. Any form of living being is an appropriate sacrifice to the Hunger Eater, except that it does not appear to savor elves or other forms of vegetable matter. Other Hungry Eaters are known to be less fussy.

Draw Human

1 point

ranged, temporal, nonstackable, reusable

This active spell affects one intelligent human. If the target's magic points are overcome, it must move towards the caster at walking speed. The caster can halt this motion, stopping the human in its tracks, and begin it again at will for the duration of the spell.

Ikadz

God of Pain and Torture

This entity receives the souls of evildoers and cleanses them before they can join the other dead. A few evil folk worship Ikadz directly, and receive magic from their worship. This cult is tolerated in certain Lunar provinces, and Razzakark is known to employ an Ikadz "priest of pain" as his personal torturer. Ikadz is associated with the runes of Death and Disorder.

Those few beings who worship Ikadz delight in pain and torture, for they believe their reward in the afterlife to be directly related to the amount of suffering they have inflicted in the world. The cult is especially hated by the Humakti, who view it as a corruption of death almost as evil as Malia. Many chaos cults view the worshippers of Ikadz with mistrust, since their long-term goals are not always the same: most chaotics strive to end the world, but the followers of Ikadz must preserve the world so that they can continue to inflict pain upon it. Ikadz provides many spells and Curses to torture foes and prisoners, of which the easiest to learn is Pain Blow. He is also known to provide Command spells for Pain spirits.



Spirits

Ikadz is pictured as either a set of pincers or as a man holding one or more instruments of torture. He is pictured by trolls as a round troll carved from lava rock, with six X's incised in a triangle on his back. The Humakti picture him as a rusty dagger, usually striking from behind. Any act which causes pain is an appropriate sacrifice to Ikadz, and torture of a Humakti or Chalana Arroy is the highest form of worship of this god.

Pain Blow

2 points

ranged, temporal, nonstackable, reusable

This spell must be cast on a weapon. It causes any hit that penetrates armor to incapacitate the location struck in addition to normal damage. The victim can recover from this incapacitation by rolling under his CON x2 on 1d100, and he can try to do so each round. If a target has been injured in more than one location by a Pain Blow, he need only roll his CON x2 a single time to be freed of all incapacitating effects.

Korbog

Chaos Hunter

Many chaotic beings sustain themselves by hunting, especially among the Scorpion Folk, and Korbog is their patron. The Scorpion Men claim him as the first child of Bagog, born after she devoured some hapless demigod. He is associated with the runes of Chaos and Death.

Korbog is similar to many Hunter deities across the world, both in his attributes and the abilities he provides. However, he cares nothing for the souls of his prey — if the entire world were to fall to his hunger and not be renewed, it would be for the better. As such, the Peaceful Cut has no place in his worship, though Hunters do learn the skill of Craft/Butchery in order to make the best use of their prey. Unlike Hunters in other lands, the followers of Korbog do not have an animal species associated with them (such as the alynxes of the Orlanthe). However, some Dorastan cultists have domesticated grayskins to flush out game, with varying degrees of success.

In Dorastor, chaos snakes, slime deer, and walktapi are the most common prey. Especially great hunters may go after more dangerous game, such as broobats, glargs, hydras, stoorworms, Telmori wolves, or elves. In addition to the spell of Sureshot, Hunters of Korbog can learn Command spells for Chaos Snakes, Gorp, Slime Deer, Stoorworms, Walktapi, and a host of other chaotic species native to Dorastor.

A description of the practices of the Hunter deities is available in *Gods of Glorantha*, pages 43-44. In addition to his cult among the Scorpion Men and some broos, Korbog can be worshiped in the same manner as other chaotic daemons, providing the spell of Sureshot.

Kyger Litor

Mother of Trolls

Kyger Litor is the ancestress of all the troll races. When the Sun was slain she invaded the surface world with her children, conquered the land, and bore the brunt of the fighting against chaos. She skinned foul Thed, then used the skin to form a magical drum which she used to frighten Thed's children, the broos. Her cult is simple and primitive, often savage or brutal in the eyes of humans. Kyger Litor is associated with the runes of Man and Darkness, and has strong ties with the Spirit Rune as well.

Kyger Litor is worshiped by almost all trolls as their primary deity. She provides most of the troll shamans, and gives great



powers to fight chaos or other enemies. Included in her worship is that of her greatest children, called the Seven Sacred Ancestors: Boztakang the Chaos Fighter, Hombobobom the Great Drummer, Jakaboom Dancer in Shadows, Jeset the Ferryman, Karrg the Warrior, Korasting Mother of Many, and Vaneekara the Hurler.

There are no troll tribes in Dorastor (though small bands and a few famous individuals can be found there), but the trolls in the nearby Yolp Mountains often raid into Dorastor during Dark Season, when broo captives are needed for some important rituals. Kyger Litor provides spells like Blinding and Darksee, as befits her origin in the Primal Dark, but she also provides special anti-chaos rituals through the Seven Sacred Ancestors, including the Skin Broo ritual available through Hombobobom.

A full write-up of the Kyger Litor cult is available in the following Avalon Hill supplements: *Trollpak*, *Troll Gods*, and *Elder Secrets*.

Skin Broo

1 point

ritual Enchant spell, stackable, one-use

This ritual is available to priestesses only, and may only be cast during a Worship ceremony on a cult holy night. The ritual takes the same general form as most Kyger Litor rituals (see *Troll Gods*, *Troll Facts* book, page viii). During the fifth stage of the ritual, when trolls normally experience the Oneness with Kyger Litor, a broo captive is brought before the priestess. She must slay and skin the broo, then use its skin to make a drum. This ritual takes one hour to cast per point of spell used, though it must end before Dawn. No POW is expended; any additional POW needed for the ritual is torn from the cesspool which serves the broo as a soul.

The broo used in the ritual must not have a chaotic feature; if it does, Counterchaos must be Extended to cover the broo through the entire ritual, or it will fail automatically. Any broo may be used, but females are preferred, since they fill the ritual position of Thed. The troll priestess must kill the broo herself, but there is nothing to prevent others from softening it up first.

At the end of the ritual the priestess will have created a magic drum. When activated by any Kyger Litor initiate (at the cost of 1 point of Power), the drum plays itself for the duration of the original ceremony. It can only be activated once per night, any time after sunset.

While the drum is playing, any broo within 100m who can hear it will be Demoralized (as the Spirit Magic spell). Broo priests and shamans are not affected by the drum unless additional magic points are used to activate the drum. Any additional points are matched against the magic points of the broo runemaster when it first hears the drum that night. If the drum overcomes the broo's magic points, it is Demoralized as well. If more than one drum is playing at a time, each may attempt to Demoralize the broo runemaster, starting with the weakest first. Once a given drum has been resisted, a broo runemaster is not affected by that drum for the rest of the night; it could be affected on a different night.

The entire troll congregation must support the priestess during the ritual, or it will fail and she will be in great danger. The congregation actively participates in all stages, from the stalking and slaying of the broo to the invocation of Kyger Litor into the drum (a process similar to the invocation of a Kygerlith). Failure of the ritual exposes the priestess to the taint of chaos, and is a bad sign for the coming season. Extra raids against broos are called for by the trolls in that case, to try to regain the favor of their ancestress.

Lemure

Source of Passions

Lemure is the title given to an obscure deity of chaos. Similar to Malia in many ways, Lemure's original associations with pleasant dreams and clarity of thought have been corrupted to insanity and mad passion spirits. The Lemure is linked to the runes of Disorder, Darkness, and Illusion.

The extent of this cult is unknown, and nothing is known of its rituals. Some commentators speculate that each time a being indulges an obsessive, unrestrained passion, Lemure is strengthened. No evidence of an organized cult has been demonstrated, but many chaotic shamans call upon him for aid, and many beings serve him unwittingly. He provides the spell Cause <Passion> to summon various Passion Spirits. (See "Passion Spirits," pp. 93-95.)

Cause <Passion>

2 points

ranged, instant, nonstackable, reusable

This spell instantly summons a random Passion Spirit of the appropriate type, which attacks any target within 100m designated by the caster. The Passion Spirit possesses the target if it can reduce his magic points to zero (or 10 less than the spirit's). The Passion Spirit need not manifest to attack its target, in contradiction of the standard rules for spirit combat.

Magra

Harpy Ancestress

Magra is the ancestress of the harpies. Little is known of them or their mythology, but she is thought to have originated among the Beast Peoples. She followed evil deities, and was killed by some right-thinking hero before the Dawn. Harpies are rare, surviving in places such as mountains and the Wastes, but Dorastor has been a haven for them since its reawakening in the Second Age. Magra is associated only with the Man Rune.

Magra is the ancestral cult of the harpies, and all worship her to some degree. Few devote themselves to her entirely, preferring the more powerful blessings of Malia and Ikadz, but she is the source of fertility for the race, and every Queen of a harpy flock must be a shaman of Magra. There are no male harpies, so female harpies must capture males for breeding. Harpies can mate with any human species (including trolls and elves) as is obvious from the race's general mongrel appearance, but humans are preferred. Only generations of pure breeding result in the genetic homogeneity of the baboon-harpies of the Wastes or the broobats of Dorastor.

Worship of Magra is a degraded form of Ancestor Worship. Less commitment is required, and the only spells available are Axis Mundi, Free Ghost, Summon Ancestor, and Worship Magra. She also provides the Mating Ritual to her shaman-priestesses, used on a captive male to allow breeding. The captive is afterwards the main course in a great feast, with the "wife" getting the prime portion.

Magra is not pictured by her worshipers, who collect pretty items to offer at her shrines (pretty stones, bits of metal, skulls, male genitalia, etc.). A Dara Happan wall mosaic shows Vrimak, the Bird of Heaven, flying above the broken body of a harpy, and this is thought by some to represent her casting out from the race of birds for some evil. Human (and humanoid) males are the best sacrifices to Magra, often just the genitals, hands, or feet.

See the cult of Daka Fai available in the Avalon Hill supplement *River of Cradles*. Harpy Ancestor Worship generally follows this format.



Mating Ritual

2 points

ritual Ceremony spell, nonstackable, reusable

This spell is cast upon a single, mature harpy female and a male of any humanoid species. The spell allows the two to mate, although the fertility of the union is not guaranteed. The ritual lasts for 2 hours, and the "wife" of the captive usually makes full use of her time. The ceremony is of great importance, and the entire tribe watches and participates in the ritual, which always ends in the painful death of the "husband," whether through wounds, terror, or raw exhaustion.

When the "husband" is a human, the viability of the union is almost assured, and pregnancy results in three of four cases. With other races the chances are poorer, as little as one in ten for an elf. A successful pregnancy results in the laying of a single egg, which hatches in two seasons. The harpy bears some resemblance to her father, but does not deviate far from the form of her mother. This spell protects the mother from the trauma of broobirth.

Sidana

The Black Goat

When Thed submitted to her child the Devil, she became mother to the many chaos horrors of the world. Firstborn of these was Sidana, the Black Goat, who retained the twisted fertility of her mother. She was once popular with the broos, but their enthusiastic following of her cult practices soon reduced them to nothing. She is associated with the runes of Chaos and Fertility, and was classified by the God Learners as the goddess of incest.

Sidana's cult has never been large, and where broos are involved soon is reduced to nothing by their incestuous practices. Unlike her mother she welcomes female broo, but most refuse to serve her, for obvious reasons. An ancient Seshnelan dynasty is said to have revered her, but they were exterminated before the Dawn, and little is known of their practices. Those who violate the incest taboos of their culture inadvertently strengthen the goddess, and sometimes serve as the beginnings of a cult, which is usually wiped out when discovered, or else degenerates after a few generations. One tribe of broos in the Wastes is known to worship Sidana. They are popularly known as the Mofo, since their true name is taboo even for them to speak.

Temples to Sidana are unknown, but any worship site of Thed can be used to contact the Black Goat; independent shamans have also been known to contact her. She commands passion spirits of Forbidden Desire, and is rumored to possess a number of blessings comparable to the passionate spells of the Ulerians. The only spell reliably encountered is called Sidana's Blessing.

Sidana is represented as a Black Goat by those few human cultures which know of her. Most cultures do not distinguish her from Thed, and she is often viewed as a mere subcult of the broo religion. Broos picture her as a black broo with a goat's head and prominent breasts.

Sidana's Blessing

2 points

ritual Ceremony spell, reusable

This spell cast on a single living creature of any race permits it to recreate itself through its normal sexual process. The being's next incestuous union (only) will succeed to the greatest degree possible, often producing twins. If reproduction is normally impossible, this spell does not make it possible, nor does it protect a female broo from the usual consequences of broobirth.

Telmor

Father of Wolves

Telmor is the father of wolves and, more specifically, ancestor of the Teimori tribes. The Teimori believe themselves to be wolves and the children of wolves, and in this are typical of hsunchen tribes. They are unusual in that they are cursed, tainted with chaos. He is associated with the runes of Beast and Motion. Since the Dawn Ages, he has also been tainted with Chaos.

Telmor is the main cult for the Teimori, and deviance from this way of life is rare. The shamans of Telmor are the leaders of the religion, and often have authority even over the tribal chiefs. Great warriors are called Wolfrunners, Wolf-Brothers, or Wolf-Warriors; these serve as the warleaders of the tribe. They generally correspond to the acolytes of other cults. Special shamans called Ituvani devote themselves to creating magical enchantments for tribal warriors.

A full write-up of the cult of Telmor is available in the Avalon Hill supplement *Dorastor: Land of Doom*, as are descriptions of the Teimori tribes which inhabit the area.

Tyram

Sky Terror

Tyram is the deity of Sky Chaos. When Chaos invaded the world, one of the Monster Lords ascended into Heaven. After fierce fighting the monster was driven out, but traces of it can still be seen in the sky gorp and the constellation known as the Bad One. It is thought by some scholars that the deity called Tyram is a God Learner creation, constructed from other, local, demons, but there is no denying the current power of this entity. Tyram was associated by the God Learners with the runes of Chaos and Fire.

Worshippers of Tyram are few and far between. Although he is of great power, he has no organized cult, and most contact is through shamans. Some renegade trolls have been known to contact this god, claiming he is one of the demons commanded by Zorak Zoran, but most trolls shun him. Some shamans have claimed great power from contact with this entity, commanding Hell Hounds and summoning Hellfire at will, but the only spell which has been proven to come from this deity is Hate Sky.

Tyram is portrayed in whatever way is most convenient for its worshippers. He is most often depicted as a sky gorp or as a burning man. Any living entity can be sacrificed to Tyram; such sacrifices must always be burned alive, in the hottest flames possible.

Hate Sky

2 points

instant, stackable, reusable

This spell causes all non-magical flames of 1d6 intensity or less within 50 meters to be extinguished. Additional spells stacked add 50 meters to the radius or 1d6 to the intensity of fires affected. Alternatively, the spell can be targeted against a single magical fire. Each spell used gives an intensity of 2d6. If the intensity of the Hate Sky spell is greater than the intensity of the magical fire, the fire is extinguished. Each point of Power expended on an enchantment in the form of a flame counts as 1d6 potency.

Urain

The Evil Wind

In the Darkness, when light and life left the world, the black clouds of chaos gathered, dropping no rain. They sank down to the ground, and monsters came out of them. Orlanth fought them and drove Nasty Urain away, but he always came back, bringing death and destruction in his wake. He spread poisoned winds



across the world, polluting what even he could not destroy. He also slew many gods and sent them to Hell, and spread confusion and warfare everywhere. Finally, though, he faced his kinsman and was himself sent to Hell by the power of Death. The Runes of Urain are Disorder, Chaos, and Storm.

The Urain is the evil wind, rough, raw, and capable of scrubbing flesh from bone. He is the ruthless power of rage and hatred. His primary purpose is to challenge and defeat the clean winds of the world. He is not normally worshiped, although some broos in Dorastor have been known to call on him, and such bands of Berserkers are greatly feared even among the other horrors of that land. Some Uroxi who have gone too far in their love of violence and death are often said to have been possessed by the Urain, and must usually be put down for the sake of the normal people around them. The Urain provides spells like Berserk and Fear to his worshipers.

The Urain is usually pictured as a black cloud, with monsters or red lightning pouring out of it. The Dorastan broos portray it as a bull-headed broo wielding a bloody sword or axe, often foaming at the mouth like a vicious dog. Any act of destruction is an acceptable sacrifice to the Urain, especially if it involves bloodshed. Worshipers of Urox are often sought as worshipers of the Urain, and make the best sacrifices if they resist conversion.

Vakalta

Haunter of Hell

Vakalta is the deity of Hell Chaos. When Chaos invaded the world in the Great Darkness, one of the Lords of Terror led her army into the Underworld. She made great gains, but was finally stopped at the outskirts of the Realm of the Bright Dead by Yelm's light. The forces of Darkness left in Hell routed her forces, but could not drive her away completely. It is thought by some scholars that Vakalta is a God Learner creation, like Tyram, constructed from various local demons, but there is also no denying her power now, especially among the foes of the trolls. Vakalta was associated by the God Learners with the runes of Chaos and Darkness.

As with her brother Tyram, Vakalta has few worshipers, since other more popular chaotic deities (e.g., Than and Malia) share her connection with the Primal Darkness. She is a favorite of chaotic shamans in all lands where trolls are found, especially the Maslo Mountains (in Pamaltela) and Dorastor. She provides Devour Troll to her shamans. Some worshipers claim to reach greater powers through her, though these claims have never been proven.

Vakalta is most commonly shown as a warped and twisted troll (usually of the mistress race), gleefully devouring its sisters and children. She is also depicted in some stories as a frightening

shadow, colder than night and more fearsome than the Dehori. Trolls obviously make the best sacrifices, eaten alive. Other victims are usually staked out on the darkest nights; they are always found dead by Dawn, burned black by intense fear and cold.

Devour Troll

1 point

ritual Ceremony spell, stackable, reusable

This spell allows the caster to ritually devour a living troll, gaining magic points in the process. For each Hit Point of the troll eaten, one magic point is gained, up to a maximum of the number of points of spell stacked. If the troll devoured is of the Mistress Race, the magic point gains are double, while a trollkin provides only half of the points of other trolls.

The magic points received from this spell can take the caster over its normal limit. Excess magic points remain until used.

Other Deities

If you do not possess *King of Sartar* or the *RuneQuest* supplement *Gods of Glorantha*, some of the deities mentioned in *Dorastor: Land of Doom* and *Lords of Terror* may be unfamiliar. Thumbnail descriptions of many deities are provided below for easy reference. Full write-ups for many of these cults are available in various *RuneQuest* supplements. Many of these deities correspond roughly to the standardized deities from the *RuneQuest Deluxe Magic Book*.

Orlanthi Deities

Asrelia — no equivalent. Goddess of Wealth, some Earth powers.
Babeester Gor — War Goddess, some Earth powers; daughter of Ernalda.

Eiritha — no equivalent. Herd Mother, daughter of Ernalda.

Elmal — Sun God. This cult is similar to that of Yelmalo, available in *Sun County*.

Ernalda — Earth Goddess. Wife of Orlanth. A full write-up is available in the *RQ Deluxe Glorantha Book*.

Eurmal * — Trickster, Clown.

Issaries * — no equivalent. Goodvoice, God of Trade. A full write-up is available in *River of Cradles*.

Lhankor Mhy * — no equivalent. Lawspeaker, God of Knowledge. A full write-up is available in *River of Cradles*.

Odayla — Hunter God. Son of Orlanth.

Orlanth * — Storm God/Ruling God. A full write-up is available in *River of Cradles*.

Ty Kora Tek — Underworld Goddess, some Earth powers.

Urox the Storm Bull — Storm God/War God. Rage Bellow, Berserk Killer of Chaos: A full write-up is available in *River of Cradles*.

from The Book of Drastic Resolutions

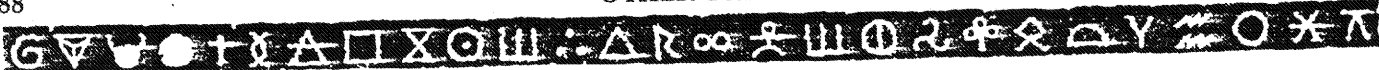
The Devil

The Devil is the Howling Void — all chaos voids in Glorantha are The Devil. Each hole is a part of the Devil — like individual leaks in a boat, yet all let in the same Ocean. The Devil is the Ocean. The personification of the Devil is a mistake or misconception resulting from ignorance. Wakboth is the Guise of the Devil — the insulation between the Devil and Glorantha. He was the ultimate scab formed by the world to protect itself from the invasion of chaos.

Thed is called the Mother of the Devil, which is to say that she opened the hole into the Void. Her broo followers recreate this act when they worship her, creating other holes into chaos to sacrifice their foes and gain new allies.

Rashoran knew this secret, and tried to teach it to the gods of the world; but only a few understood it. The Unholy Trio killed him when they thought they had all his knowledge. They planned to reduce the world to its primal essence and then remake it in their own image, but they failed because they did not understand what Rashoran had tried to teach them. Thus, they were doomed to ultimate failure: The Devil remade them even as they made Wakboth, and they became their own nightmares.

Only I understand the terrible secret of Rashoran, and this has brought me to the sill of sanity. We are all chaos, for life does not exist. We are all Wakboth, fighting against ourself to save the non-existent world. I am Wakboth, I am The Devil, and I write this book to show you that you too are The Devil, if only you could realize it.



Vinga — no equivalent. Adventurer Goddess, some Storm powers.
 Voria — no equivalent. Spring Goddess, daughter of Ernalda.
** this deity is one of the Lightbringers, a brave band of heroes who fought their way into the Underworld to rescue the Sun, thus ending the Long Night.*

Lunar Deities

Crimson Bat — no equivalent. Chaotic daemon, Steed of the Red Goddess.
 Deezeola ** — no equivalent. Goddess of Healing, some Earth powers.
 Etryies — no equivalent. Goddess of Trade.
 Hon-Eel the Artess — Agricultural Goddess, War Goddess.
 Hwarin Dalthippa — no equivalent. War Goddess/City Goddess, the Conquering Daughter.
 Irrippi Ontor ** — no equivalent. God of Knowledge.
 Red Goddess — Moon Goddess. Sister of Chaos, Lurker upon the Veil.
 Teelo Norri ** — no equivalent. Goddess of Innocence and Youth.
 Yanafal Tarnils ** — War God.
 Yara Aranis — War Goddess. Goddess of the Reaching Moon, special enemy of the horse nomads.

*** this deity is one of the Seven Mothers, a band of mystics and heroes who recreated the Red Goddess. These missionaries of the Lunar Empire spread the word of the Goddess and defend her citizens from her enemies.*

[Though] the allies of Bolthor among the Bilini were few. Oddi the Keen hunted them down without rest, until all were dead, chastened, or exiled. Bolthor's head-halves we kept atop the main gate at the capital, so that all might see that he would never return.

Oddi was not yet settled to becoming a king, though the Bilini had acclaimed him unanimously at a hastily held moot. Strange fits of anger came upon him; occasionally he would rage about the palace. Many thought he would harm himself or doom innocents, but we made friends with his needs and kept our distance, for usually he was gentle and considerate. These spells abated as the death of Hahlgrim grew distant. Ketil he kept at his right hand, for Ketil was as careful with the wealth of the kingdom as he had been with Hahlgrim's coin.

...One day in late Sea season, Oddi, I, and a few trusted men rode to Oddi's lands in the north, to settle the debts of Hahlgrim and to hunt. We headed for the Copperbark, where Eubuck and sand-nosed deer live abundantly. On the second day a cold wind blew from the northwest. That night we saw the sky in that direction glow as bright as the Red Moon, and our horses grew skittish. The next morning the birds did not sing, nor saw we other life. We rode toward where the bright glow had been, and saw the cause.

In the valley below rested a red shape, as long and as high as a castle wall. My heart leapt as I praised my luck: this was the fabulous Crimson Bat, upon whose legendary back the Red Goddess had returned from the God Plane to reclaim her earthly empire. I sent a prayer to She Who Leads the World.

My companions were not so pleased. It is an unfortunate truth that the worshipers of The Bat are an arrogant and self-pleased group, who pay little heed to others except as Bat food. I do not know how many actually are eaten, though it has a prodigious appetite in war. Any number may be more than convenient for a sparse-populated country, and there the

Aldryami Deities

Arroin — no equivalent. God of Healing.
 Babeester Gor — War Goddess, some Earth powers.
 Ernalda — Earth Goddess. See the *RQ Deluxe Glorantha Book*.
 Flamai — no equivalent. Plant Ancestor.
 Voria — no equivalent. Goddess of Spring.
 Yelmaio — Sun God. A full write-up is available in *Sun County*

Troll Deities

Argan Argar — Night God, also serves as God of Trade. A full write-up is available in *Troll Gods*
 Hombobobom the Drummer — no equivalent. A troll ancestress. Another spell from Hombobobom is found in the Other Cults section of *Troll Gods*
 Zorak Zoran — War God. A full write-up is available in *Troll Gods*

Other

Ancestor Worship — no equivalent. Shamanic worship of one's ancestors. See Daka Fal Ancestor Worship in *River of Cradles*.
 Spirit Cults — no equivalent. Shamanic worship of local spirits, each of which provides unique spells or abilities. Usually worshiped through a shamanic deity such as the Horned God (universal), Kolat (Orlanthi), Gardener or Shanasse (elves), or Dehore (trolls).

Emperor, may He bless and be blessed, must keep The Bat.

Oddi swore a most foul oath, for though the creature was just across the border from Bilini, yet the Bull had not told him of its coming. Lord Renekot was also silent, reminded that his long vigil on Dorastor protected only against the horrors from within Dorastor, and not from those which did lie without.

It was our fortune then to see the camp break up. The select rode upon The Bat itself: the rest, initiates and prospective fodder, kept pace on the ground in a long caravan paralleling the flight of the creature. It flew no faster than a horse would walk, and its enormous wings flapped at an awesomely slow rate: no non-magical beast could have so stayed aloft.

We followed the cult for several hours, and all of us were relieved that its course took it back within Lunar territory shortly. Oddi said that it might be going back to Dragon Pass, for he knew of fighting there.

Once The Bat swooped down upon a poor farm and ate the inhabitants. Another time it chased fleeing peasants, uprooting trees and huge rocks to feed upon those who sought safety beneath. My friends were livid with rage but did nothing, for here they had no power but their own, which was little against The Bat. I hung my head that my people would employ such method against the weak, and suppose that this occurs only because The Bat has not entered the Heartlands for many years, and that no one there knows now how it lives.

When we crossed back into Bilini we all were silent, but Oddi's silence lasted longer, for the creature was a thing of chaos, yet his Uroxi sense had betrayed him, and he had known nothing chaotic was at hand.

When we came to the palace his mood was heavy, and he retired to his quarters for two days, seeing no one and eating nothing...



Storm Bull Psychology

An excerpt from The Psychology of the Storm Bull Cultist, a documented erudition of Alkiv Jahnus, Wild Sage of Lhankor Mhy As presented to Systrom, Chief of Loremasters, and other sages of the Temple of the Blade Savants of Lhankor Mhy, Jonstown, Sartar On Windsday, Truth Week, Storm Season, 1619 S.T.

"I hesitate to generalize about culture, civilization, or species, but my research of the past year has led me to believe that the followers of the brute god Uroxi are admirable men and women, unique in their tragedy.

Before you leap to revile these supposedly contemptuous and base barbarians may I add that my conclusions are irrefutable and by the Grey Lord my impartiality should never be questioned!

Direct questioning of Uroxi and their ways are inevitably futile at first; I expected that. When a cultist returns to civilization he is a quiet, detached and very unapproachable fellow. He would prefer to contemplate his efforts to destroy what he can of chaos before he can return to a more passive existence. He realizes, in many ways, the enormity of this task, and thus is a fatalistic, morose, and often violent person, one whom anyone would wish to avoid whenever possible.

The Uroxi do not like to rest; I noted that worshipers of the Storm Bull, particularly initiates or those of higher status, can resist the urge to sleep for many days. The berserker frenzy can numb any physiological demands made by the shell wherein the soul is placed. This is very dangerous, however, as was made clear to me when I accompanied a party of such berserks into the intractable western body of Dorastor, beyond the surer Riskland.

The Uroxi themselves were Risklanders, living in the gutted ruins of the ancient citadel Komah Kulan, nick-named 'Monster Bones' by the Orlanthi stead-holders of Lord Renekot the Stone. In order to join them on their foray into the Land of Doom I offered gifts ranging from food and ale to numerous herbs and plants I brought with me from the markets of the Holy Country.

All in all, I spent a week or so convincing them of my worth as a companion and advisor and, more importantly, as an experienced adversary of chaos. The khan (who looked like a red-faced ruffian) was quietly impressed with my knowledge of chaos, and eventually accepted me, albeit with a tone of begrudgement and caution.

We broke the crust of the Land of Doom a week later, entering near the Forest of Thirst. The khans could quite clearly 'see' the land, what was mutable and what was palpable, and our passage was relatively safe. I had to chew the healing plant Osafr to kill the spores I breathed in when one of the worshipers attacked a tainted fungus, to protect me from the many deadly infections inherent in the bodies of the spores.

Hours passed until we reached a foul altar by a tentacled tree. The altar itself was the hulking body of a dismembered feral giant, its remains dessicated by millions of spores into a semi-decaying state.

Any meeting with chaos is an absolute terror. The Uroxi knew that hideous slime brood seeped silently through the tunnels and

warrens that ran beneath the corpse of the giant, but it seemed to make them only the more eager to enter the hellhole; so we found an opening and made our way down.

By the Grey Lord I was like a frightened child, flinching at even the smallest flicker of movement in the darkness. After an hour of arduous searching the Uroxi finally found what they were looking for. One of the berserks knew immediately that the warren belonged to Thed. He shouted a warning (physically appearing to spasm), then screamed in agony as he spotted a pack of howling mis-shapes lurching toward us. After we returned to Riskland (many hours later), the cultist in question said that a Thed covenmaster had shredded his side one time when he and his khan had killed chaos. Thus he could now tell 'Feverchaos' from all other forms by the burning sensation that would sprint through the scars about his ribs. Another mentioned that his eyes would sting like the harshest Bull-driven storm when he spied a bastardized brood of Thed, whilst a third revealed that he would recall the cries of frightened children whenever he encountered 'Feverchaos.' I observed that these physical traumas struck them only momentarily, and had an effect similar to pouring oil on a dying campfire, causing it to flare briefly before drowning it completely.

From the moment that my companions waded through the broken bodies of the broods they became possessed. I could not hope to keep to the pace they set, cleansing the place for hours. They were not phased by the horrors that fed on the constant seeping blood and cursed nutrients of the feral giant's body above ground, and which haunted the complex. Mutilations would drop upon the Uroxi, figures clad in waste would lurch at them, but they continued unhindered as they roared through the tunnels like a great gale. Many shouted until their throats were ravaged and bleeding; I saw one man weep with anger as he gutted the body of a screaming brood.

My mind and body could not withstand such torture. I begged the cultists to cease but they continued onwards, and in truth I do not think they even heard me. Their indifference was incalculable; I feared my soul would be with the Grey Lord before long. They valued my life as much as they valued their own, that is little or not at all. I imagined they would soon turn from all this perversion, but they continued on, unheeding of their own safety.

'No longer!' I cried, but the cultists ignored my pleas and marched deeper and deeper into horror. Another onslaught, this time of humans and broods, fell from the shadows above us, but the cultists dispatched the slime with only one casualty. I could walk no longer, be it forward or back. As the rest of the party disappeared deeper into the darkness, I hid beneath the corpse of the dead Uroxi, his soul now having no need for it. I think I fell asleep then, from sheer exhaustion, though I cannot be sure. My sleep was uneasy at best. I do not know how long I slept, but I awakened when the party returned, victorious. They did not appear joyous. A torch was set to the dead heroes so that their souls would wait with the Bull. I returned to Hazard of New Fortunes and followed the cultists to the Well of Light, an inn sometimes favored by Soren Ashford and those Issaries worshipers favoring neutrality toward the Evil Empire.



The Uroxi drank and said nothing except that they felt a little comfort, but knew that the need would arise for them to return to such slaughter once more. Their faces were sore and their eyes reddened, and many coughed unceasingly. They said disease was not the cause, and that it was just their way. Indeed it was then that I realized they looked no different from when they had first entered Dorastor. I called upon the local Chalana Arroy priestess, using my blessings as a Lightbringer, but she reported no ills. I bought them more ale and food in the hopes that a warm belly and a light head would open them up to my questioning. It helped, I may say, but the berserks were still unresponsive.

They did comment on their individualist abilities to sense different types of chaos; much to my delight. These types, amongst others, were Feverchaos (worshippers of the vile Malia and Thed), Betraychaos (from the Forest of Thirst, and from the Splinter-Gases and Anti-Nimbus Poisons of Dorastor), and Shiftingchaos, the latter reserved for the chaos-taint gifted to some worshippers of the Red Moon, or to chaos that is oblique and insidious, such as the broos who worship Gbaji.

Their sense affected them physically, and sometimes sensorarily. Some would feel intense pain in an old wound, while others would see, smell, or hear something that no other could. The worst 'sense' was physical; Uroxi would recall a moment of excruciating pain suffered from a particular form of chaos.

Hence, the Uroxi are driven by an unimaginable visceral and instinctive frenzy. Pain is the catalyst, mostly in khans, a simple and brutally effective magic employed by the Storm Bull. I asked the khan what happened if a worshiper encountered a new strain of chaos, and the answer was blunt: "He must learn and remember. He will know it is chaos, but will not be able to perceive its form. Yet when chaos maims, he will remember. By the Bull, he will remember." Thus, depending on a worshiper's status or previous abuse or injury from chaos, he may have a bleeding scar or recall the severance of a limb. This is the raw, unthinking demand made by Urox on his worshippers.

After a few hours of strained conversation and uneasy, sometimes offensive looks from the other inhabitants of the inn, I decided to leave. Their philosophies were neither crude nor senseless as I had originally thought, and I found myself regarding them as tragic characters. Indeed, I forgave them for abandoning me in the warrens, and thought that I was privileged to know their ways. There was no sympathy expected, and I understood why. The degradation they would force themselves into would, indeed, turn a troll's stomachs. "Chaos is absolute" were the last words of the khan as I left them to recover. "The children of the Red Moon will

tamper too many times with entropy; it is no one's right. The world runs down at a terrifying speed, and the Lords of Terror are hurtling from the edge of space toward our world. I fear for my life and I fear for every one of us. Yet I will continue to destroy every last manifestation of chaos, even if it haunts me every minute of my life."

As I walked away from the inn I heard a crash and a clatter which I assumed to be the overturning of tables. I then heard the sound of swords being drawn. I left my former companions safe in the knowledge that they would resolve the problem in their own inimicable way. My thoughts were not of aversion or of an odious nature, but respect and an almost fond admiration. Days later I was informed by Forbeck that the khan and his followers had wrecked the inn and all those drinking within. To the bewilderment of my colleague I laughed aloud, and thanked the Storm Bull for his unruly children.

This I attest by the Lord of Thought and the unyielding, unrelenting God of the Desert Storm. Let it be so recorded.

Roleplaying and Storm Bull Psychology

In the context of role-playing possibilities, use this elaboration of the Storm Bull 'Sense Chaos' to inspire colorful interactions between player-characters and gamemaster characters.

As the gamemaster you should record sensations, such as sounds, smells, tastes, feelings, and emotions that affect characters when they encounter particular strains of chaos. You should then 'feed back' this information when the characters come across similar chaos manifestations. This can eliminate the use of a die roll on the part of the gamemaster. It requires the characters to remember and sift through the information that was, and is offered, to them.

As the characters become more powerful, more information will be recalled, yet this information must be more easily remembered, i.e., pain, vague visual remembrances, etc. In many respects, as the characters get closer to an encounter with chaos, they get 'hotter,' with information becoming more accessible and less abstract. Immediate information should be comparatively difficult or trivial, so that players do not realize straight away that something is up. Thus, this technique of visual, olfactory, and other clues must be used on a regular basis, with all characters. This can only add to the realism of any RuneQuest experience, and should be appreciated by all.

As a gamemaster have a field day playing this with your players, dropping clues wherever appropriate, and often when unimportant. More emphasis is then placed on the characters' recollection capabilities (in all aspects of play), taking a chip off that big block of randomization.





Notes on the Path of Illumination

The Path of Illumination was presented in *Dorastor: Land of Doom*, pages 123-128. Following are additional notes on this philosophy, including clarifications of the abilities of Illuminates.

The Nature of Illumination

Illumination is not a game mechanic, but a dramatic device managed at the gamemaster's discretion for the Gloranthan setting. No player character becomes Illuminated simply by making the proper rolls, or by learning the right information. It is a way of seeing the world, and cannot be reduced to mere game mechanics. The gamemaster is always the final arbiter of who is or is not Illuminated.

Illumination is not achievable through the deliberate efforts of the character (or player). Illumination is a state of awareness transcending the normal limits of an individual's perceptions, and there is no way to prepare oneself for it. Indeed, those who actively seek to become Illuminated (as opposed to merely exercising an interest in the phenomena) rarely if ever attain the state.

If Illumination is not directly accessible, neither is the dark side. Many evil beings know of and seek the dark powers available to worshipers of Gbaji, but without success. People with such bad intentions lack a critical requirement for Illumination, and can never attain the proper state of mind for any form of enlightenment. The Underside of existence is not directly accessible: one can fall, but one cannot start out at the bottom.

Immunity to Spirits of Reprisal

This includes immunity to Excommunication. Divination cannot determine that an individual is Illuminated or has become apostate.

It is dangerous to exploit this indetectability by joining different cults and learning their special spells. For example, people would be suspicious of an Orlanth priest who raised zombies or used Fire spells. Most people of central Genertela are taught of this aspect of Illumination, and to guard against Illuminates tempted to abuse this power.

The Ability to Learn Nysalor Riddles

An Illuminate can always ask any Riddles which he answered prior to becoming Illuminated, without any

POW cost. An Illuminate can use meditation to learn the answer to additional Riddles. This takes 1 season per Riddle, and requires a roll of INT or less on 1d100 (help from an Illuminate who knows the answer can increase this chance). A non-Illuminate (or an Illuminate ignorant of the answer) asking a Nysalor Riddle will not evoke any response from listeners.

Note that Nysalor Riddles cannot of themselves cause a person to become Illuminated. However, if a person is predisposed to Illumination (or possesses the capacity for Illumination), then Riddles may aid him in achieving that state. Thus, a person who does not have the proper state of mind (as determined by the gamemaster) will NEVER become Illuminated, no matter how many Riddles he answers.

The Arkat Cult

Although the Arkat cult was destroyed in the Second Age by the God Learners, worshipers who call themselves Arkati still exist, mostly in Ralios, where a number of Arkat cults and secret societies thrive. While most of these are of little practical significance, at least one Malkioni sect worships Arkat as a saint, and thereby wields considerable power.

The Arkati maintain a vigilant watch on themselves and the rest of the world. Their strict moral code is clearly within the bounds of acceptable non-chaotic behavior. Their great duty is to eradicate chaos; they know no limit to this duty, and will not rest until it is done. They have special abilities to deal with chaos, especially the hated Gbaji worshipers.

An Arkati will never accept the use of chaotic magic. They will not deal fairly or honestly with any chaotic being, knowing that their end justifies any means necessary. They consider themselves the epitome of the Bright Side of Nysalor, and condemn without hesitation those who fall prey to the Underside. They pride themselves in their steadfastness, taking great pains to perform good deeds in the world and protect the good name of their god, who suffered so much and who paid the ultimate price for his knowledge.

Notes on the Path of Illumination, by Pericippus, priest of Etyries

"There are many paths to Illumination. Orlanthi barbarians believe that just asking a person certain kinds of questions (called Riddles) can subvert the listener to this subtle form of chaos, and they blindly slay persons who ask strange questions. The Dara Happans view Illumination as a state which unites the One and the Many in the Illuminate, claiming



that Nysalor is the bridge between Yelm and men. Among the Kraiori, Illumination is a form of psychic liberation which frees one from entanglements with the world. But at the core is one truth — no being can be Illuminated unless somewhere within the seed of Illumination resides.

"Illumination is an integral part of the Lunar faith, and a specific requirement for initiation into the deepest secrets of the Red Goddess. Ignorant peoples outside the Lunar Empire often treat the cult and the state as a single entity, but this is a profound misconception. A provincial fear of chaos and hatred of the Moon blinds these misguided souls to the many facets of the Lunar Way. Most citizens of the Empire have nothing to do with chaos, and many Lunar heroes have gained great fame for killing broos or smashing Thanatar heads. Only a small number of worshipers have followed the path of the Red Goddess, thereby balancing the influences of chaos with their solemn devotions in the world.

"Illumination is only relatively common in Peloria, despite the claims of the Empire's enemies. Illuminates are found elsewhere in Genertela, most often in Kralorela and Ralios, though they are rare

even there. A few people claiming Illumination dwell in Jrusteia and Vralos as well, although these claims have not been verified.

"The philosophy of Nysalor and Illumination extols few particular prejudices. Narrow-mindedness and ignorance are disliked, and most members are uncommonly tolerant of other races and creeds, but even these traits are not universal. Illuminates often tend to shrink from performing or advocating extreme actions of any sort, but the definition of extreme action varies from person to person.

"The magnitude and variety of abilities attributed to the Illuminate by the popular mind is simply amazing. While most of these conceptions are fanciful (immunity to the sight and actions of the gods, the ability to worship any number of deities without fear of retribution or excommunication, and the ability to corrupt people with chaos merely by speaking with them!), evidence of some uncommon powers is persuasive. Illuminates appear to be immune to detection as chaotic by any means. They are also believed to be able to recognize each other in some other way, and most claim some form of Secret Knowledge as well."

"Whom else should I tell?" Oddi laughed. "It was all prompted by those Trickster rascals and their riddles, you know. How could I have not understood before now — here, where Ralzakark has finally been forced to fight us — that I had been Illumined?" He shook his head with chagrin, but without the black moodiness which I had known for days. "How can I tell my clan and my cult? They would cut off my head! But I thought you, a Lunar, should know, for if it becomes known, you will be supposed to have converted me to your foul ways and will thereby be in great danger from those who love me best."

This seemed true to me, though I would let it be as the Goddess willed and had no thought of flight from my post.

"There is a connected matter," Oddi added. "How shall I fight this battle today, feeling as I do? The hate has gone out of me, and I have no lust for war."

He said this matter-of-factly, as though declining a platter of eels. How much attitude makes of us all, for the day before he would have fallen on his sword before such words escaped him! I pondered what should be replied. I was young and strained for the fight myself, yet saw here a great chance to bring my noble barbarian cousin to the ways of the Goddess and of true civilization.

"My king, it is said there is a dim and a bright side to all of existence, and that only those who are Illumined see that the difference resides not in existence but in the way we choose to see it. What Nysalor would tell you I know not, for Illumined I am not, but the Lunar Way is this: the man who

knows best will know best his duty. It matters nothing that we fight here today on the side of order, and that Ralzakark and his hordes fight for chaos, for if we all willed it in reverse, so then would we fight, each in the other's place. The Goddess knows that just as chaos can corrupt order, so can order undermine chaos. These ways of alignment are of our birth and our training, but they are not ways of living. Life itself does not care, and the Spider will weave Her web regardless, for all was made so by the Compromise.

"If you are a King without hate and lust, then your subjects will praise you only more, so long as you pursue your duties with diligence and honor. Why you came to be here this day with this knowledge only the Spider can know, and you must take it up with Her. But if you will remain King, then kingly you must be in the same way you are just now friendly with me. Do, and exist: hesitate and lose life for it.

"We must ponder our responsibilities, using them as we might use masks or disguises. What lies beneath the mask only you can say. But if you will be King, why then ride we must against Ralzakark, and slay without stint, and take honor for those who have followed you." Oddi nodded at last, and we rose from the hummock where we had rested. Yelm rose as we rode toward the mountains. The ten thousand spears of Ralzakark glinted far in the distance. About us our brave thanes and warriors gathered and sang. With clear eyes we rode resolutely to our destiny.



Passion Spirits

The RuneQuest Deluxe Creatures Book (p. 222) details three varieties of Passion Spirits: Fear, Pain, and Madness Spirits. Other less common varieties of Passion Spirits exist. Many are encountered in Dorastor, possibly representing vestiges of pre-Time or Gbaji War demons and demigods.

Passion Spirits have only POW as a characteristic. Apparent SIZ is usually equal to POW. They engage targets in Spirit Combat. Passion Spirits move at a rate equal to their POW, and follow a victim indefinitely unless bound to an object or location, in which case they cannot travel more than 10 meters beyond the specified object or location. Passion Spirits bound to an object normally attack each person to touch the item until they succeed in possessing a victim.

Some Passion Spirits are tainted with chaos, especially those found in areas like Dorastor. A typical Passion Spirit has a POW of 4d6, although larger ones are known, particularly in chaos-tainted lands. Chaotic Passion Spirits may also possess chaotic features, although this is uncommon.

Passion Spirits attack their victim's INT. If the spirit overcomes the characteristic, the victim loses 1d3 magic points. If the spirit reduces the victim's magic points to 0 (or 10 less than the spirit's), it covertly possesses the victim. Spirit Screen, Spirit Block, and Spirit Resistance aid a victim in resisting a Passion Spirit, but have no effect after possession. Spells like Vigor or Sapience, however, do not increase a victim's resistance. If the victim reduces the disembodied spirit's magic points to zero, the spirit is forced to the Spirit Plane for 1 day per point of POW it possesses. If bound into an object or location, such a defeat does not release it, but it cannot remanifest for that length of time.

Possession

An individual can never be possessed by more than one Passion Spirit at a time. Possession by a Passion Spirit is often discernable in the victim's vacillating or uncharacteristic behavior, or in the brief but intense parade of expressions across the victim's features as he struggles against the spirit. However, possession can be less obvious, especially if the spirit reinforces the character's normal behavior. Such possession may go unnoticed for seasons, as the spirit may not greatly alter the behavior of the victim.

Possession by a Passion Spirit generally occurs in one of two situations:

1. *Accidental possession.* A Passion Spirit may enter the world from the Spirit Plane for unknown reasons. This is a rare occurrence, but documented in the records of trolls, Lunars, Orlanthi, and Dara Happans — most notably in the case of a miscarried summoning.
2. *Malign sending.* More commonly, a Passion Spirit is summoned and sent to possess a victim. Usually the summoner is a living being but may also be a hostile otherworld being. Such sendings are usually curses, but may also provide defenses against intruders. Primitives and fanatics sometimes voluntarily permit themselves to be possessed by Passion Spirits, but this practice is considered to be evil by most cultures and religions.

Observable Influences of Passion Spirits

The presence of powerful Passion Spirits disturbs the moods of nearby beings. This can occur whether or not the spirit manifests, although usually not after it has possessed a victim. The influence is not consciously sensed, and is often expressed as an alteration of mood or the presence of unusual urges. Persons with especially strong or weak spirits seem most susceptible, as are those with strong emotions similar to those caused by the spirit. Animals

usually react to any Passion Spirit with fear or uncertainty rather than a specific emotion.

Suggestions as to the nature of these influences are given under each spirit's description, but these effects are inconsistent and unpredictable, and cannot be quantified in game terms. No duration or range is provided, and the definition of "powerful" or "weak" is left up to the gamemaster. Use these influences to develop setting and mood — for example, to evoke the eerie atmosphere of ancient ruins and cursed items. Require characteristic rolls to resist these influences, or improvise modifiers to skills or actions at your discretion. Alternatively, limit the weird effects of passion spirit to role-playing atmosphere if you prefer. These influences should rarely have a profound effect on a character, unless he or she is actually possessed by the spirit.

Example: Hamar (POW 18) is the first to pass into the darkness of a shrine. Within is a figurine with a Fear Spirit (POW 21) bound into it as a defense against thieves. The figurine is several meters away from Hamar, invisible in the darkness, but the gamemaster decides that it affects him. He hands Hamar's player a note: "As you enter, you feel a sense of oppression - for no reason you understand, you do not like it in here."

Hamar does not share his uneasiness with the rest of the group, worried about disgracing his god Humakt with any show of fear. Of the others, only Tiana (POW 6 after a recent Divine Intervention) feels any effects, but she dismisses them as a remnant of fear from her recent journey (however brief) to the Land of Death.

The group eventually finds the object, and Hamar touches it first (still trying to overcome his fear). He appears to become obsessed with it for a moment (while in Spirit Combat) before returning to normal. No effects are noted then, but in the next combat Tiana sees that Hamar, usually the first to fight, supports the others with spells from the rear. Only when he breaks during another battle and runs do they realize that something is very wrong, and take him to the healers to seek a remedy.

Exorcism

In addition to the normal methods of exorcism employed by shamans, certain Passion Spirits might be used to exorcise others, though this would leave the new spirit in possession of the host. There are also spirits called Mentality Spirits which can exorcise Passion Spirits. These spirits cannot possess a body, and are similar to Healing Spirits, driving out the Passion Spirit and then leaving. They appear similar to Healing Spirits when they manifest, and radiate an aura of calm and clear thought.

Though healers and alchemists have tried for centuries, no form of medicine has been found which is effective against any type of Passion Spirit. Some rare spirit cults or healing subcults might have spells or skills which are effective in curing those afflicted by Passion Spirits, or at least alleviating the symptoms, though such remedies usually affect only one type of spirit.

Divine Intervention can also be used to gain relief from a Passion Spirit, although as with Disease Spirits the effect must be determined by the gamemaster based on the victim's religion. Deities of truth and healing (such as Yelm, Humakt, or Chalana Arroy) provide the greatest benisons, while deities who inspire strong emotion (such as Storm Bull or Lodril) might have no power at all over such passions.

Mentality Spirits

Characteristics	Average	
POW 4d6	14	Move equal to POW



Types of Passion Spirits

Twelve Passion Spirits are described below, and gamemasters are encouraged to use these descriptions as models for creating others. The game-system descriptions are accompanied by the notes of the God-Learner Melbotast, a Second Age researcher of the Spirit Plane. He studied spirits throughout Genertela, and recorded thousands of observations. The gamemaster should decide whether these commentaries are still reliable in the late Third Age, since no such comprehensive study has been made since his death in Dorastor in 792 S.T.

Amnesia Spirits

Possession makes it hard for the victim to remember things; INT-based skills are reduced by the spirit's POW. A successful attack causes the victim to forget the events of the past 2d6 hours. Lost memory returns when the spirit is exorcised.

Amnesia Spirits appear as blank spots, like the eye's blind spot. People in the vicinity of Amnesia Spirits often become forgetful, especially of their reason for being in the area. They are common in all lands, though most are feeble.

Confusion Spirits

Possession Befuddles the victim (as the spell) until the spirit is exorcised. He can act independently, but will not be able to tell friend from foe, true from false, etc. This confusion cannot be "thrown off" or dispelled. A successful attack causes the victim to act as if newly possessed, thus forgetting any decisions made since the last attack.

Confusion Spirits constantly shift and change, roiling with disorder; the face manifested is often a parody of the viewer. People near Confusion Spirits tend to become dazed or confused, unsure of their purpose or goal. These spirits are common in elf woods, and are often employed as guardians by that race.

Deceit Spirits

Possession makes a person inclined to lie, even when the lie is obvious. The host can resist this urge, but the spirit often seeks to enforce this attitude by attacking. If it succeeds, the victim is forced to lie (or be deceitful). The victim's utterances trigger truth-detecting spells even when he does not lie.

Deceit Spirits manifest shifty visages, constantly throwing off one form to reveal another beneath it. They radiate an aura of distrust, and have been known to interrupt peaceful negotiations by their mere presence.

Fear Spirits

Possession Demoralizes the victim (as the spell) until the spirit is exorcised. A successful attack causes the victim to become extremely fearful (as the Divine spell Panic; see *Gods of Glorantha, Cults Book*, page 71) for 1d3 hours.

Fear Spirits appear as black wells in space, with pale faces and skeletal hands, and are among the most common Passion Spirits. The presence of Fear spirits makes people distrustful or fearful. Pentan shamans are said to drive out Fear Spirits with Violence Spirits (since violent behavior is better than cowardice in their eyes).

Greed Spirits

Greed Spirits only attack if commanded or challenged. Reaching for the spirit counts as a challenge; if the spirit is bound, touching the object also counts as a challenge. Even when a Greed Spirit manifests, it becomes visible only to its victim. Possession causes the victim to become enamored of a specific item. The item is always

appropriate to the victim: a Sage might choose an ancient scroll, a Humakti his sword, a husband might become insanely jealous of his wife, etc.

A successful attack fills the host with an intense desire for the object for 1d3 hours. He will only be able to study the scroll, polish or sharpen the sword, etc. He will seek to hide the object from others, and will go off by himself with it if possible. If someone interferes during this time he may become violent, even if he is normally quite peaceful.

The appearance of a Greed Spirit varies, depending on the viewer. It may be seen as a gold orb floating in the air, or as a powerful magic item, or in a host of other guises. It always appears as an object which the viewer desires. These spirits are especially feared by the Mostali.

A subtype of Greed Spirit is the Gluttony Spirit. Rather than causing desire for an item, they make their hosts crave a substance or stimulus. This is typically some food or drink, but can be less tangible: battle, sex, or pain, for example. The same spirit can cause different desires in different victims, and the healers I spoke to theorized that the spirit merely awakens a latent desire in the victim.

Grief Spirits

Possession incapacitates the victim with a wave of grief for the spirit's POW in minutes. Thereafter, he is depressed at all times, though he can act normally. A successful attack overcomes him with inconsolable grief for 1d3 hours. A critical success indicates that he is passively suicidal: he will not try to kill himself, but will walk into dangerous or possibly fatal areas, won't Parry or Dodge, etc.

Grief Spirits appear as wailing figures, paining the heart to see and hear. Sorrow often radiates from them, causing those near them to recall lost loves, deceased relatives, and other sorrows from their life. They are relatively common, especially among barbarians. Many people believe that they are the lost souls of those who have died of a broken heart.

Hate Spirits

Possession makes the victim irritable and surly. Once in possession of a body, the spirit only attacks when its host is alone with another being. If the spirit overcomes its victim, he becomes filled with hate for the other person, and is driven by cruel impulses to inflict as much suffering and misery as possible on the other, even to the point of brutalization, torture, rape, or worse. In the end, the possessed victim often kills the creature as painfully as possible. Individuals so possessed usually avoid being alone with another person: after the first few seizures, they know what will happen.

Hate Spirits are cruel, heartless shades, as black and cold as death. They radiate an aura of hate which those present can feel, inciting them to senseless acts of cruelty. They are the rarest type observed (though widely reported), and are thought by many to be the cursed souls of the cruellest murderers.

The Brithini sorcerer Giand reported in 673 that Hate Spirits could be driven out by Love Spirits. I tried several times to duplicate this, but was unsuccessful. I cannot say if this is because it is impossible, or because the Love Spirits were too weak, or for some other fault in my experiment. Giand may have employed a Lust Spirit instead (he may not have known the difference).

Idiocy Spirits

Possession reduces the victim's Intelligence by 1/2 the spirit's POW. All Knowledge skills are reduced by 5% per point of INT lost, and cannot be increased until the spirit is exorcised. If INT drops below 6, the host is Stupefied (as the spell) until the spirit is exorcised.



If INT is insufficient to remember all spells known, the largest spell is forgotten, and this process is repeated until the points available are equal to or less than remaining INT. In the case of spells of the same point total or of sorcery spells, a random spell is forgotten. Forgotten spells must be relearned once the spirit is exorcised.

Idiocy Spirits are dull, vacuous shades, their visages void of any hint of intelligence. Those near them often act in an idiotic manner, their thinking clouded by the spirit's presence. Idiocy Spirits do not normally attack their victims unless they have been commanded to. Some of my colleagues (who apparently know nothing of spirits or scholarship) have suggested that the spirits are too stupid to attack of their own volition.

Love Spirits

Possession causes the host to fall in love with the first compatible partner he or she sees (the definition of "suitable" varies — some spirits select plausibly attractive candidates, others select hideously inappropriate ones). Until he falls in love he is distracted, searching for he knows not what. This reduces all skills by the spirit's POW until an appropriate love object is found. Love Spirits usually attack when a person is distracted or sleeping (often appearing in an erotic dream), and always bring pleasure to the viewer.

Once a love object is found the host is consumed with passion, and becomes infatuated until the spirit is exorcised. This has varying effects, depending on the victim: one might consummate his love immediately (regardless of surroundings), while another might pine in silence for seasons. Because possession is similar to normal infatuation, it may continue for a long period without arousing suspicion.

Love Spirits appear as naked humanoid figures of haunting, physical beauty. In many lands they are believed to serve Uleria, Source of Love. I have also heard of their clandestine use in Dara Happa to make loveless marriages more bearable.

Some Love Spirits are tainted with Chaos. Called Lust Spirits, the feelings they evoke are darker, more extreme and dangerous. Some even cause the victim to become infatuated with animals or members of the same sex. Lust Spirits are sometimes confused with succubae, and my research indicates that succubae may actually be intelligent Lust Spirits.

Possession by a Lust Spirit compels the victim to dominate and possess the object of his passion, resorting to betrayal, deception, and force if necessary to attain his desire. Lust Spirits attack their hosts whenever they see the love object. If they succeed, the victim is consumed with uncontrollable lust. If frustrated in his lust (whether by the love object or another person), he may become violent or suicidal, depending on his personality. When the victim is not near the object of his desire, he is distracted as when first possessed by the spirit; he will seek to be near the love object if possible, and will pine for it if he cannot.

Love Spirits and Lust Spirits can be used to exorcise each other, although this leaves the new spirit in possession of the body. They can also be exorcised by Hate Spirits, though this is usually even less desirable. I have been told by several Orlanthi "sages" of cases where the host has died when kept from the object of his lust.

Madness Spirits

Possession incapacitates the victim with some form of madness (unreasonable fear, hysterical laughter, catatonia, etc., at the gamemaster's option, but the victim's thought-processes, speech, and behavior always become irrational). Some Madness Spirits always cause the same affliction, while others cause different

effects in different individuals. Madness Spirits are often called Lunacy Spirits, especially when associated with Lunar magicians.

For unknown reasons, 2/3 of Madness Spirits become inactive after 2d10 hours. The victim becomes lucid again, and remains so for an unpredictable period before the next attack. Attacks last 2d10 hours, and may occur after stress situations or without apparent provocation: each day upon awakening, when a certain color is seen, etc., at the gamemaster's whim. This cycle of madness and sanity continues until the spirit is exorcised.

Madness Spirits appear as ghastly swirls in the air with a gibbering, laughing, or screaming face. The face is distorted, constantly reforming and shattering. Madness Spirits are relatively common, and their presence often causes people to act irrationally. I am unable to determine if there is a regional correlation to the types of madness caused.

I have discovered a subtype of Madness Spirit called a Fever Spirit. They are often identified as Disease Spirits, although I could discover no contagious cases. Each time the spirit attacks, the type of the madness changes. Thus, a victim may be catatonic, then deliriously, hysterically happy, then obsessively suspicious or fearful of friends and acquaintances, all within the space of a single day.

Pain Spirits

Possession incapacitates the victim with a wave of agony for the spirit's POW in minutes. Thereafter, the victim is conscious of a dull ache in his body, which flares into shooting pains whenever he moves quickly or concentrates. This reduces all of his skills by the spirit's POW until it is exorcised. Successful attacks incapacitate the host for 1d3 hours (CON x1 roll required to take any action).

Pain Spirits appear as pulsating, infected welts in space, and hurt the eyes to look at. They are among the most common Passion Spirits, and can be found anywhere. People in the presence of a Pain Spirit begin to feel old wounds and aches more strongly; even ancient scars cause pain again. An Orlanthi healer sang a song which made one of her patients forget his pain, but it returned as soon as she stopped.

Violence Spirits

Possession makes the victim Fanatic (as the spell) for the spirit's POW in minutes. Thereafter, the victim acts in a violent manner more readily than before. The spirit also attacks when the victim enters combat. If it succeeds, he becomes Fanatic for the duration of the combat. Unlike a Fanatic warrior, however, the victim attacks any target until nothing alive is within movement range. He does have some control over his actions, and usually attacks foes before friends.

Violence spirits appear as mad clouds, boiling with conflict. Faces appear and disappear, contorted with rage. A group of barbarians in Ralios allow these spirits to possess them on their holy days, to their neighbors' detriment. A troll shaman told me that these spirits can be exorcised by Fear Spirits, although I was unable to duplicate the results, since he would not teach me the accompanying ritual.





Index of New Skills, Spells, and Creatures

This appendix lists the new or changed skills, spells, and creatures described in *Lords of Terror*. Spells and skills described in *Deluxe RuneQuest*, *Gods of Glorantha*, or *Dorastor: Land of Doom* are not duplicated in this book. Many spell descriptions in the cults are changed from *Gods of Glorantha* and elsewhere. The spell descriptions given here supersede those in other sources.

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Shortly before I returned home, though, I made the brief ride to Oxhead to visit Eric, who now was Chief Priest of Orlanatus there. Though perhaps as penny-pinching as before, he set for the two of us a fine table. We exchanged formalities over the meat, pleasantries over the bread, and got serious over the mead.

"That Oddi," Ketil said. "I can't quite trust him. He has something strange about him now. He laughs at the wrong times. Sometimes he changes his mind too quickly from serious matters.

"There's no doubting he's a good king," Ketil added. "I'm astounded that he can get Lunar goods as he wishes and yet keep out the Etyries merchants." This was more astounding than I could tell Ketil, for the dispensation had come from the Emperor himself. "He tithes his farms regularly, and does not harass the peasants. His seasonal sacrifices are feasts of roasted cattle for all those that work his lands. Yet...." Here Ketil could but shake his head disapprovingly.

"Everyone, not just his hired poets, sing his generosity and wisdom," I agreed. "And he is honorable and courageous." Oddi had great reputation as a fighter; already arrogant fame-seekers sought to slay him, but all those Oddi had killed calmly, without grin, tear, or boast afterwards.

"Yes," Ketil said, "Oddi the Brave they call him. And who else could have stood twice against great Ralzakark, and killed that monster twice in one melee?" We both smiled,

recalling that day of blood and triumph.

"He is just, too," I added, for I wished to put Ketil's mind at ease as best I could. "And pious." Orlanth ordered his worshipers to have six virtues. Oddi had all.

But Ketil grimaced. "Yes, he is just, and he pays his tithes." Poor Ketil. Oddi had shown no interest in more than cursory membership in Orlanth. We investigated the mead again, and then I spoke more of Oddi's devotion to his people. Then I requested that the poet in the corner sing Beovarg's Song, the tale of a scandalously impious hero of another Age, always a favorite of the Orlanthi. After I had made some promises for Oddi, and given a few presents of my own, Ketil's mood changed somewhat. "Well, no man is perfect," he admitted.

"Perfection is for the gods," I suggested, and we drank to the idea.

Ketil agreed to underwrite the new temple which Oddi wanted at New Fortune. He affirmed his vows next morning, while I left early to follow the Erinflarth on the first leg of my trip to see my long-missed family. Oxhead would send priests far up the Sludgestream to follow the farmers who were reclaiming its lower reaches. Oddi would be as pleased as he could be. The thought made me smile. I wished the land and its people a just peace while I was gone, never realizing that my duties there had ended, and that never would I see Oddi, Ketil, or any of my friends from there again.